

**From:** Sally Stuart <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 18 May 2021 4:43 pm  
**To:** haveyoursay  
**Subject:** Submission to the Waitomo District 10 Year Plan: Attention Joanna, Rooding Officer  
**Attachments:** submission 2.docx

To whom it may concern

I would like to submit my concerns regarding the Sealed Pavement Rehabilitation and Footpath Improvement and Renewal Infrastructure Projects, included in the attached file.

These are my own opinions based on personal experience and opinions of people in the community that I have had conversations with.

I have also been in contact with Cait Cresswell, regional connectivity connector Sports Waikato, who prompted me to put in this submission.

Kind regards  
Sally Stuart

Mobile no [REDACTED]  
Home no [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Te Kuiti 3910

17 May 2021

My Submission to the Waitomo District Council 10 year plan concerns the planned Infrastructure Projects, with particular reference to the Sealed Pavement Rehabilitation and Footpath Improvement and Renewal.

I am interested in the provision of footpaths which are safe, accessible and inclusive to all members of the community, especially those who use the footpaths for recreation, as a means of travel to access friends, family and goods and services in Te Kuiti CBD, and a showcase for our visitors and tourists.

I will define why the Te Kuiti footpaths are not safe, accessible and inclusive by using examples of three different groups who are pedestrians, wheelchair users and mobility scooter users. At times all three groups may have a temporary or permanent disability that issues of Health and Safety impact on their ability to use our footpaths.

The small numbers of new footpaths in the town are a vast improvement on the old broken, cracked and uneven ones. It is important the new kerbs have smooth seamless concrete between the pavement and road and to link pathways together to form a continuous flow along a route.

An example of this not being the case, is the new pavement along the railway side of Rora Street north where there is a gap between where it stops and the Carroll Street railway crossing. Wheelchair and mobility scooter users have to use another route. For pedestrians, the new footpaths are wider and allow two people to walk side by side and wheelchair and mobility scooters users more space to manoeuvre safely, although some of the new kerbside crossings are less than smooth.

However the completion of Te Ara Tika overbridge will be a huge asset for Te Kuiti making a big difference to these groups and their ability to access the town safely from one side to the other.

I am a regular walker along Te Kuiti footpaths and from this perspective I can see the appalling state they are in. I have slipped and tripped over them at times. Pedestrians who use walking sticks or walking frames encounter the same problems.

Replacing all the footpaths in Te Kuiti must be a priority for the Footpath Rehabilitation project as soon as possible.

Improving kerbside crossings is a major concern for the other two groups when navigating footpaths.

I was recently in the position of pushing a wheelchair around the Te Kuiti footpaths for a friend who had broken her leg. Our route started at the Stadium in King Street, South Street, Seddon Street, Carroll Street, Queen Street, back to South Street, Bayne Street, Princess Street, King Street and back to the Stadium. In varying degrees most crossings have a steep slope down into the kerb and a steep slope upwards, often with a 7cm ridge to the bottom of the kerb. Some have double ridges, a 7cm ridge upwards with a 14 cm gap, or are broken in parts, crumbling or have loose rubble in the gutter. A few driveways have a metal plate across the kerb making access easy. Many crossings were hard to push into and up onto the road. Some crossings necessitated going backwards and turning around in the road and in reverse on the other side which made my friend feel unbalanced and in fear of

tipping out especially crossing at odd angles to get over the damaged kerbs. This is definitely not the best and safest way.

One of the worst crossings is on Queen Street outside St. Josephs School. A grandmother went to pick up her granddaughter in a wheelchair and found the official crossing impossible to navigate. There is no break in the kerb and channelling so she couldn't manage the wheelchair on her own and had to ask for help at the school. The wheelchair was lifted down the kerb and then lifted up the other side onto the pavement where the car was parked. She was exhausted at the end of it all.

There will be an increase in wheelchair traffic with more users becoming independent and wanting to utilise our footpaths. It is very important to make all our footpaths safe and accessible for wheelchairs in the Footpath Improvement and Renewal project.

Similarly there is an increasing number of mobility scooter users who use the footpaths instead of the roads, giving them the independence to move around the township on their own at will. They encounter the same problems when crossing roads and with a different wheel base to wheelchairs, have a tendency to get stuck in the kerbs.

I have seen scooter users drive off the kerb in one place and then travel along the road until they can find a suitable kerb to return to the pavement, as the most logical one straight across is too damaged and hard to navigate.

Of the random mobility scooter users I have talked to, all agree that the footpaths are shocking and hard to navigate, often forcing them onto the road where they don't feel safe or up and down kerbs at an angle where they feel unbalanced.

One event took place at a New World Crossing where the mobility scooter wheel became stuck in the kerb leaving the scooter half on the pavement and half on the road. A truck driver stopped and lifted it over the kerb.

Again, it is very important to make all our footpaths safe and accessible for mobility scooters in the Footpath Improvement and Renewal Project.

When all these concerns are addressed and implemented, Te Kuiti will have safe, accessible and inclusive footpaths and all pedestrian traffic will have the confidence to use them to go where they want, when they want.

Sally Stuart.