



SOUTH WAIRARAPA
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Kia Reretahi Tātau

Terms of Reference

Martinborough Access Reference Group

1. Purpose

The Martinborough Access Reference Group (MARG), under the operational oversight of the South Wairarapa District Council (SWDC), will provide community-informed advice on roading and access related issues affecting Martinborough, with particular focus on safety, accessibility and the impacts of visitor and freight traffic.

2. Background

Martinborough has experienced increasing pressures on its roading and foot traffic network as well as parks and reserves, arising from population growth, tourism activity and freight movements through and around the township. These pressures have heightened community and Council concern regarding road safety, heavy vehicle impacts, pedestrian and cycling accessibility, the usability of parks and reserves and the overall attractiveness of the town.

Several complex and interrelated issues have been identified, including the movement of heavy vehicles through residential areas, the suitability of current bypass arrangements, the role and alignment of State Highway 53, and the need for safe cycling and walking infrastructure for residents and visitors, including the possibility of shared space centred on the Square. Addressing these matters requires careful consideration of local knowledge, technical information and long-term planning objectives.

Establishing a community-based reference group provides a structured mechanism for informed local input into Council decision-making. The MARG is intended to support South Wairarapa District Council by bringing together community perspectives, exploring options, and developing well-considered advice on roading and access-related matters affecting Martinborough.

3. Principles and group composition

The MARG's role is advisory. All final decisions rest with SWDC and, where applicable, other road controlling authorities.

The MARG will comprise individuals with relevant experience or interests covering the scope of the Group's mandate, and a representative from the Martinborough Community Board.

- Members will be appointed through a transparent process facilitated by Martinborough Ward Councillors and the South Wairarapa Mayor.
- Group members are voluntary and unpaid.
- Membership will be between 6-8 people, with flexibility depending on the Expressions of Interest.



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The group will work constructively with Council staff, Waka Kotahi (where relevant) and other stakeholders as required.

Its work should be evidence informed, with consideration given to available data, best practice and expert advice, as well as local lived experience. Council staff will provide technical advice, data and administrative support as appropriate.

3. Scope of matters for consideration

The MARG will consider access-related issues within and immediately surrounding the Martinborough township, including but not limited to:

- Pedestrian safety and connectivity within the town centre
- Integration of cycling and walking infrastructure with existing roads, including the use of shared spaces
- Revitalising the square, taking into account the existing square management plan
- The development of a safe cycle track or loop around the township, particularly to access vineyards
- An assessment of alternatives to the current heavy traffic bypass
- Consideration of proposals to terminate SH53 prior to the Square
- Appropriate signage, speed management, and intersection improvements
- Implications of these issues for through-traffic town centre safety, and economic activity

It is not intended that the MARG will develop a comprehensive and detailed plan that is delivery-ready and costed in detail, but rather that it provides the Council with a set of recommendations and evidence of their appropriateness in preserving safety, better accessibility, local character and the local economy. The Council will consider these recommendations in the context of its annual and long-term plans.

4. Meetings and operations

The MARG will meet as required, with an expectation of regular meetings to progress work. The Council will appoint a Chair who will be responsible for meeting facilitation and liaison with the Council. The Group should provide progress updates to Council as required, with a final report on completion of its work, but no later than August 2026, so that recommendations can be fed into the next iteration of the Council's Long-Term Plan.

The effectiveness and scope of the group may be reviewed periodically by SWDC and MARG members.