

Boulter Consulting
urban and transport planning

Roger Boulter, 281 High Street South, PO Box 89, Carterton 5743
Tel 06 379 8909, mob 021 872 654, email roger@boulter.co.nz
website www.boulter.co.nz

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Dear

With Christmas approaching, I thought it would be a good time to keep in touch and let you know a bit about what I have been doing.



Dr Imran Muhammad, for whom I lectured at Massey University, with myself, my son-in-law Milan (next to me), and visiting Indian Professor Dinesh Mohan

pic: Massey University

Last year, 2013, was very eventful in personal ways, and one of those was my daughter's marriage to Milan, an Indian young man, in India. Quite an event! Milan is now in New Zealand, and opposite you see him joining me as we went to hear a visiting Indian professor at Massey University, Palmerston North. Also in the picture is Dr Imran Muhammad, who had me cover his 'Transport and Urban Planning' paper within the Bachelor of Resource and Environmental Planning degree. I gave twelve lectures over the first

semester of the year, to third year students, set their assignments, marked their papers, and set and attended their examination. The University gave me my own room for one day each week, and it was interesting conversing with other staff in the 'School of People Environment and Planning'.

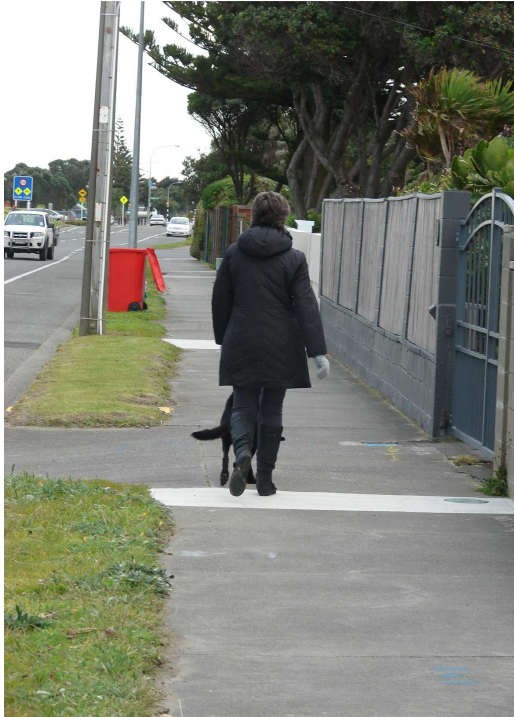
For many years I've worked in the area of planning for walking and cycling. At first I thought this was rather too specialised, but it is also very interesting because it is topical to the wider public. People latch onto cycling as iconic of something, whether negative stereotypes (like bad road behaviour), or as heroes who will save the planet. It's in the public eye more than perhaps bus services or even whether we need more roads. The myth that you need to be a left-wing 'greenie' to like cycling was blown in 2009 when the Prime Minister endorsed the proposed 'NZ Cycle Trail'. This year has seen further positive developments, with a draft Cycling Safety Panel proposing several



A 'separated cycle lane' showcased at the Nelson '2WalkandCycle' conference. Several local Councils are trying these out in order to attract those who don't feel safe in traffic

pic: Peter Kortegast

law and other changes, a new 'Urban Cycleways Fund' of \$100 million – Crown money, not National Land Transport Fund – and a step-change increase in NZ Transport Agency staff numbers dedicated specifically to cycling. As I write, New Zealand's once-every-two-years walking and cycling planning conference has just concluded. Cycling facility design does not stand still, and this conference showcased some new concepts. There seems a new concern to meet the needs of people who would like to cycle but currently feel unsafe on roads as they are now.



Footpath wide enough? Well-maintained? Obstructed? Visibility from driveways? There at all? These are the sorts of issues likely to concern this walker from Kāpiti Coast District.

pic: yours truly

me on to draft a 'Footpaths Policy' for them. This covered the more practical and (dare I say it – pun intended) 'pedestrian' issues, like whether a road should have footpaths on one or both sides. Less theoretical you might think, but possibly more of concern to the people who actually do the walking!

For many years, New Zealand has had conferences bringing together people working in planning for walking and cycling – professionals, politicians, and advocates. I was involved in planning the early ones, from 1997 and 2000 onwards. A few years ago, the two separate walking and cycling conference streams combined in a joint conference. Some were concerned that in joint conferences the less 'sexy' area of walking would be neglected alongside the more 'iconic' cycling, and personally I think this concern does have some justification. That's why I'm particularly pleased that Kāpiti Coast District Council took



I say, here I am just before the 2WalkandCycle conference dinner, chatting to Patrick Morgan of the NZ Cycling Advocates' Network – splendid chap. The theme was 1920s, and I won the prize for best costume. My son Henry lent me the hat. Patrick and I have known each other for many years, he's a seasoned campaigner, and often the Cycling Advocates' Network's public face in the media.

Pic: 2Walkand Cycle Conference

Finally, give me a call if I can help you; best wishes for peace, joy and relaxation of the festive season; and may 2015 bring you positive things!

Roger