

A silhouette of a person riding a mountain bike on a trail, set against a dramatic sunset sky with golden light breaking through dark, textured clouds. The rider is positioned on the right side of the frame, moving towards the left. The foreground shows the dark silhouette of a tree branch in the upper right corner and a distant horizon line.

VICTOR HARBOR MOUNTAIN BIKE STRATEGY

November 2021



This report was prepared by TRC Tourism for The City of Victor Harbor in relation to the development of Victor Harbor MTB Strategy.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of the lands, waters and communities we work together with. We pay our respects to their cultures; and to their Elders – past, present and emerging.



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City of Victor Harbor Your Say Survey 2021

The majority of mountain bike riders undertake their sport away from Victor Harbor mostly at locations south of Adelaide at Kuitpo Forest and O'Halloran Hill. They have intermediate skills and are capable of riding more demanding trails and obstacles. Intermediate Blue Trails are the most common trail sought and there is a very strong desire for more trails at this level and a variety of trails including downhill and single tracks, and overwhelmingly more local trails that reflect the local environment.

1 Introduction

The Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy has been prepared to guide and plan for the future development and activation of a network of Victor Harbor trails with connections to the broader Fleurieu area.

The strategy will define a vision and future for mountain biking, consider existing and future trails, and recommend strategies that provide the very best social, economic, community and environmental benefits. The trails will provide enjoyable experiences for local people and visitors.

To guide the strategy, the City of Victor Harbor sought the views of the broader community including children and youth through a Your Say online survey, a Drop in Session at Encounter Bay and through a stakeholder workshop with important community members, cycling groups, business and education providers.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The primary objective of the 'Victor Harbor MTB Strategy' is to guide and encourage collaborative planning, development and activation of a network of inspiring and connected mountain bike trails within the Victor Harbor area that are linked to the broader Fleurieu Peninsula.

The recommendations provided in this Strategy focus are strategic, realistic, evidence-based and targeted to attract investment and provide enjoyment and clear community benefit.

The Strategy ensures the current and potential contribution of trails is understood and supported by stakeholders across the region and that any related infrastructure investment will be designed to provide maximum benefit.

The use of and demand for trails has increased globally, along with the trend for visitors to have experience-based holidays or breaks and find more authentic and immersive ways to experience places and people.

Trails play an important part in community health and wellbeing by improving the liveability of communities and providing visitors with a reason to visit, stay and invest. They can also generate economic and commercial benefits.

Recent research estimates that people who mountain bike spend approximately \$27.10 per ride and whilst on holidays that revolve around mountain biking, they would typically spend \$2,485.75 each trip.¹

¹ GHD Report for AusCycling - Mountain Biking in Australia: An Economic and Participation Analysis

Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu Peninsular are well placed to benefit from future investment. The research and Australian wide examples included within this Strategy indicate attracting mountain bikers to purpose-built locations can have significant economic benefit and attract and retain people to communities that provide adventure experiences such as mountain biking.

Governments at all levels are recognising the growing popularity of mountain biking and its significant market potential by developing strategies and policies to guide investment and planning.

Outdoor active recreation including trail running, walking, mountain biking and gravel riding have become increasingly popular ways for people to enjoy and appreciate natural areas. Mountain biking, (cycling off-road on a variety of unsealed surfaces, typically through a natural setting) and cycle tourism more broadly are considered one of the fastest growing recreational activities globally.

COVID-19 has made predicting visitor growth and the economy challenging. During 2020 there was unprecedented growth in cycling business indicated through repairs and bike sales and activity on trails.

“Families are buying bikes and hitting the cycle paths in hordes. Gravel bikes, touring bikes and adventure bikes are in great demand”.²

In the last few years there have been significant advances in mountain bike technology, which is redefining the type of experience desired by riders. Electric and power assisted bikes represent one of the fastest growing segments of the bike industry as they allow riders to extend their cycling distances. Electric bikes help in overcoming hilly terrain or a lack of fitness, can assist in rehabilitation after injury or illness and are a cost effective and green transport solution.

The social make up of Victor Harbor and future growth of the Fleurieu Peninsula has been an important consideration in the development of recommendations and reflected in the Strategies, Vision, Guiding Principles, Strategies and Actions.

Figure 1. Benefits of trails



² Latz Report May 2020

Community survey responses indicated an overwhelming desire for more purpose built MTB trails and networks including off road and single use trails.



2 City of Victor Harbor and Fleurieu Peninsula Strategic Directions

The City of Victor Harbor's vision, strategic direction and future are guided by regional and state policy frameworks - these frameworks and community views provide an important context for this Strategy.

2.1 CITY OF VICTOR HARBOR PLANS, STRATEGIES AND DIRECTIONS

City of Victor Harbor Community Plan 2030

The City of Victor Harbor Community Plan was adopted in August 2020 and recognises that Victor Harbor and its surrounds is a growing community with the population forecast to reach 17,900 by 2030.

Population projections prepared by the Department of Planning Transport & Infrastructure suggest that Victor Harbor will continue to grow with an estimated 18,774 people likely to call Victor Harbor home by 2036.

From a recreation sense, while Victor Harbor has one of the oldest populations in the country, there are four schools and a growing number of young people and families moving to the area. The Council has recognised that it is important to plan for facilities that suit both younger and older people.³

The summary of key findings from the Community Plan indicates:

- Victor Harbor's population and economy is impacted by seasonality. In the summer months, Victor Harbor's population doubles, jumping from 15,000 to 30,000, and the economy is heavily reliant on income derived from tourism
- migration patterns suggest that Victor Harbor is losing residents aged between 15-30 years while gaining in all other aged brackets, with the greatest gain experienced between 60-80 years of age
- the household budgets and individual incomes of people who live in Victor Harbor are significantly below the state average
- the Victor Harbor community is heavily dependent on government welfare to support living expenses with 39% of the population being directly welfare dependent compared with the state average of 22%
- projections suggest that the jobs of the future will come from the health & community services sector, in response to the ageing of the population.⁴

³ City of Victor Harbor Community Plan 2030

⁴ City of Victor Harbor Community Plan 2030

The Council has recognised that it is important to plan for facilities that suit both younger and older people. Mountain biking is one of many activities recognised for attracting and retaining people within a community.

The Community Plan captures feelings, aspirations and priorities most relevant to this strategy and includes:

- providing more things for young people and families
- the importance of nurturing and expanding tourism
- creating jobs that are not just seasonal
- collaborating with neighbouring councils to promote the region as a whole (Alexandrina Council to the east and the District Council of Yankalilla to the west).⁵

This has specific resonance to the development of a strategic approach to trails and Mountain Biking across the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Victor Harbor aims to be bold and visionary, at the same time as protecting all of the things the community loves about Victor Harbor.

The population in Victor Harbor aged 65 years or older is expected to grow by 71% by 2031. 0-14 years will grow by 33% and 15-64 years will grow by 39%.⁶

⁵ City of Victor Harbor Community Plan 2030

Victor Harbor Economic Development Strategy 2020-2030

The Economic Development Strategy acknowledges that there are challenges ahead with the projections for a dependent and ageing population. The City of Victor Harbor aims to leverage Victor Harbor’s competitive advantages to attract and cultivate a community that will strive for an economy that is strong and resilient.⁷

Figure 2. City of Victor Harbor Aspirations



⁶ 2018 Victor Harbor Economic Profile

⁷ Victor Harbor Economic Development Strategy 2020-2030

The City of Victor Harbor Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2017– Strategic Directions Community Wellness

The plan seeks to establish as key community priorities:

- developing an active, healthy and engaged community through recreation and activated places
- increasing and improving pathways and trails to support walking and bike riding.

Victor Harbor Urban Growth Management Strategy 2008-2030

The plan identifies a high demand for walking and cycle tracks however the plan recognises that existing paths require major upgrades to meet this demand.

The strategy recognises opportunities and challenges including:

- support for tourism growth
- changing community diversity as new people move to the area
- planning for demand for facilities as the population grows
- considering changing community recreational preferences.

Reduction in tourism expenditure in the region has been identified as a challenge, however creating new nature-based tourism and recreation experiences are recognised as important to provide visitors with a reason to visit.⁸

Victor Harbour Bicycle Strategy 2016

The Bicycle Strategy recognises the challenges and opportunities across the range of cycling activity and specifically for Mountain Biking. The Strategy identified:

- a lack of mountain bike opportunities in the area and as such the community is missing out on a popular form of recreation and potential income from visitors
- the responsibility for providing mountain bike opportunities will largely be with State Government agencies or private landholder with Council's role to help 'promote' this activity
- liaison is recommended with the Department for Environment and Water (DEW), South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC), ForestrySA, Yankalilla and Alexandrina Councils, BikeSA and local cyclists to enable more mountain biking, and promote the opportunities as they become available
- Council should work with local cyclists, Yankalilla Council and ForestrySA to promote the existing use in Second Valley Forest (Jagger Forest)
- explore future unique opportunities on the border with Alexandrina Council at Brown Hill, north-east of Waterport Road.⁹

⁸ Victor Harbor Urban Growth Management Strategy 2008-2030

⁹ Victor Harbour Bicycle Strategy 2016

2.2 TOURISM PLANS, STRATEGIES AND DIRECTIONS

The South Australian Visitor Economy Sector Plan 2030

The plan identifies strategic priorities for tourism development relevant to Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu Peninsula including:

- public infrastructure is recognised as an enabler of the SA visitor economy, therefore maintenance and development of hiking and cycle trail infrastructure to support nature-based tourism is considered important.

The Visitor Economy Sector Plan recommendations for experience and supply development include:

- support the development of unique and appealing experiences that are focussed on South Australia's strengths
- leverage opportunities provided by the State's natural assets on both public and private land and encourage tourism engagement through the development of compelling experiences.¹⁰

The South Australian Regional Visitor Strategy 2025

This plan recognises the strong opportunity in regional South Australia to combine stunning natural assets with creatively designed new and enhanced experiences.

More than 48 per cent of South Australia's total visitor expenditure is now spent in regions, up from 44 per cent at the end of 2019 – pre bushfires, drought and COVID-19.

Regional experience development priorities identified within the Regional Visitor Strategy include:

- since COVID-19 visitors are continuing to seek more nature-based experiences for social physical and mental benefits. There is now increasing demand and interest from all regions to boost nature trail-based activities like hiking, cycling and soft adventure experiences with a focus on enhancing existing and creating new signature experiences.
- With visitor infrastructure priorities to include:
- new hiking and cycling paths through the regions to support ongoing growth in popular nature-based experiences
- There is great opportunity to exploit and enhance the Fleurieu's preeminent position for adventure/activities-based tourism.¹¹

Victor Harbor can play an integral part in developing the Fleurieu's unique experiences and support tourism developments which match the aspirations of their communities.

Nature Like Nowhere Else (An Action Plan for the Activation of South Australia's Nature-based Tourism Sector)

Mountain biking and the development of Victor Harbor as a trail destination can link and connect with the activation of Nature-based tourism particularly through access to new and emerging destinations.

Victor Harbor can play a lead role in creating momentum and galvanising the collective effort of Traditional Owners, the managers of natural areas, Government, local government, non-government organisations, tourism businesses and regional tourism organisations to support existing and create new Nature-based tourism experiences.

¹⁰ The South Australian Visitor Economy Sector Plan 2030

¹¹ South Australian Regional Visitor Strategy 2025

The Government and operators and providers in the Fleurieu Peninsula have the opportunity to create jobs and drive tourism demand by investing in standout trail journeys across the landscape and connecting with unrivalled native wildlife experiences, marine wildlife experiences and cutting-edge sensory experiences that leave a lasting impression.

The resilience of regional communities that are adapting to changing economic circumstances should be supported through investment in emerging nature-based tourism opportunities including trails.

Opportunities should be sought where businesses can capitalise on the State Government's existing investments in Nature-based tourism projects like mountain biking.¹²

Opportunities include upgrade and extend trails along the Inman River and Hindmarsh River and creating walking loops through the river trails and connections between the ranges and the coast.

Mountain bike trails and tourism are aligned with many of the policy areas and themes which were identified for sustainable development in the region. Some projects will have a regional value such as mountain bike facilities, and potential partnerships with Alexandrina Council and Yankalilla Council.¹³

¹² Nature Like Nowhere Else (An Action Plan) for the Activation of South Australia's Nature-based Tourism Sector)

¹³ Parks 2025: Wild South Coast Way

¹⁴ Fleurieu Peninsula Regional Profile, prepared by SATC, May 2020

Tourism investment

The South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) has set targets for the Fleurieu Peninsula to achieve \$643 million of visitor expenditure in 2025 and \$807 million in 2030.¹⁴

The Department for Environment and Water has initiated a State-wide Trails Strategy that will include a significant focus on mountain bike opportunities. This strategy is in its early stages but will include the Fleurieu Peninsula.

There is recognition from investors that development of tourism in Victor Harbor present economic benefits, with the world's largest hotel operator (Wyndham Group) investing over \$40 million in development of the Anchorage Hotel precinct which will address a major tourism infrastructure need for Victor Harbor.¹⁵

This project includes preservation and updating of the Anchorage State Heritage Building (food and beverage, guest rooms), a new hotel building and conference centre, the Steam Ranger heritage train arrival precinct, and a three-story carpark. This redevelopment has already commenced and after construction, is expected to provide 112 FTE local and regional jobs, with a focus on young employees in the tourism sector.¹⁶

ForestrySA and District Council of Yankalilla

ForestrySA are recognised for their strong commitment to the development of recreation visitor facilities in forests across the Mount Lofty Ranges including multi-use recreation trails and purpose-built infrastructure such as mountain bike tracks.

The District Council of Yankalilla has developed a Tracks and Trails Strategic Action Plan to guide future management of trails and to ensure they are sustainable and meet community needs.

¹⁵ Anchorage Hotel Development - Victor Harbor: Economic Impact Assessment (Hudson Howells, May 2019)

¹⁶ <https://anchoragehotel.com.au/development-plans/>

The Action Plan has recognised a lack of trails in the district combined with growing demand from residents and visitors. The Council has developed a partnership with ForestrySA to develop mountain bike trails in the Mount Hayfield and Second Valley Forests and at the popular Ingalalla Falls area. The Yankalilla Council Mountain bike trails are situated some 30 kilometres from the Victor Harbor Council area.

The plan will create a blueprint prioritising upgrades to existing trails and proposing new trails and areas for further investigation. The focus will be on the development of a range of mountain bike trails across the different trail difficulty categories and will look to support future mountain bike events.

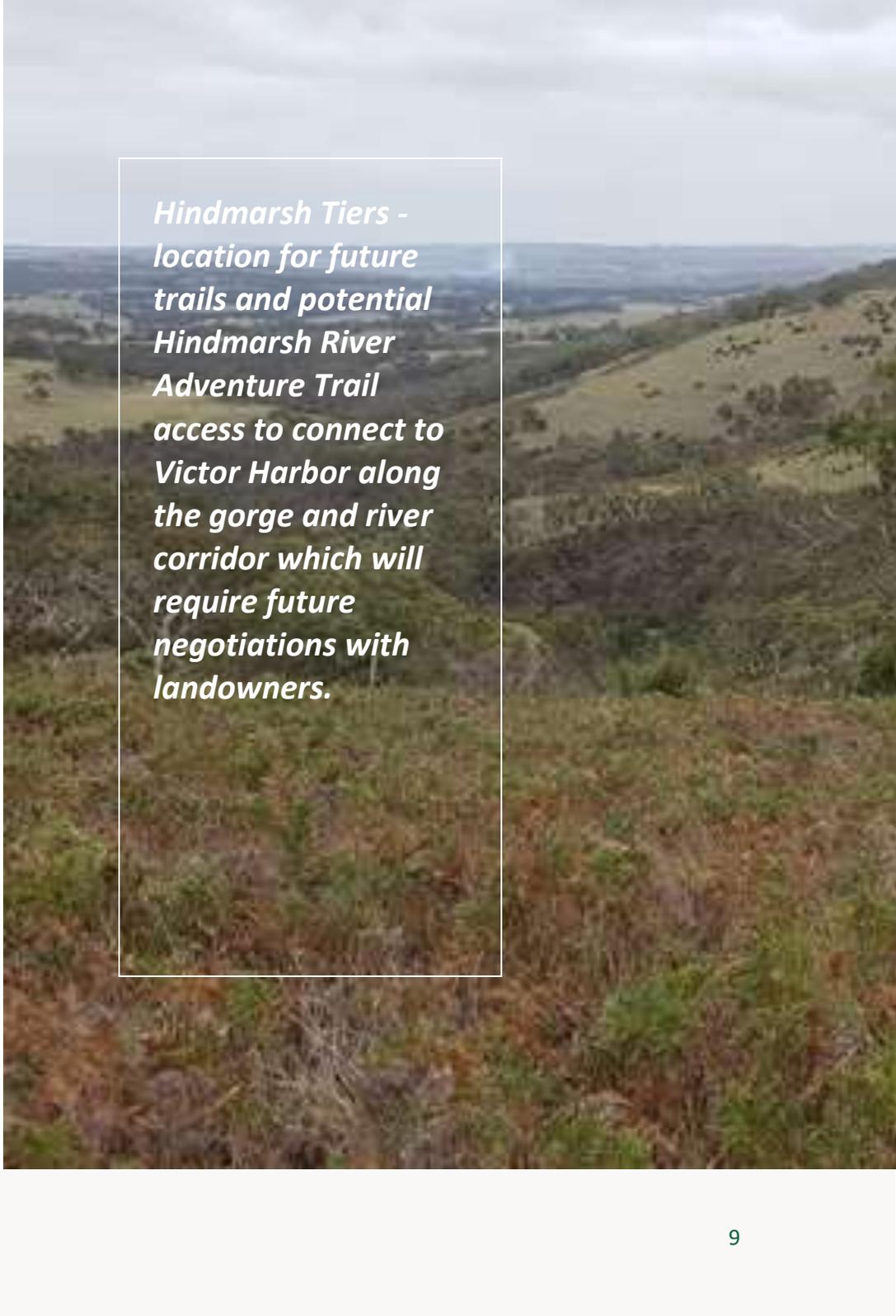
Trail user survey and map consultation was completed in May 2020 with detailed concepts for each of the priority trails provided. The District Council of Yankalilla Tracks and Trails Strategic Action Plan will assist Council to seek funding.¹⁷

Parks 2025

The Wild South Coast Way project seeks to upgrade sections of the iconic Heysen Trail from Cape Jervis to Victor Harbor to create a five-day, four night hike and other high quality trail-based experiences.

The project will include Investment of \$6 million over four years and will be delivered in partnership with First Nations, Yankalilla District Council, City of Victor Harbor, The Friends of the Heysen Trail, park users and the private sector service providers.¹⁸

The Parks 2025 program has seen an allocation of \$3 million investment to formalise designated mountain-biking and hiking trails in Fleurieu Peninsula parks and reserves including land within the Hindmarsh Tiers.



***Hindmarsh Tiers -
location for future
trails and potential
Hindmarsh River
Adventure Trail
access to connect to
Victor Harbor along
the gorge and river
corridor which will
require future
negotiations with
landowners.***

¹⁷ District Council of Yankalilla Tracks and Trails Strategic Action Plan 2020

¹⁸ <https://www.parks.sa.gov.au/park-management/improving-sa-national-parks>

3 The Mountain Bike Market

Outdoor active recreation including trail running, walking, mountain biking and gravel riding have become increasingly popular. In many parts of the world trail networks have become significant visitor destinations which attract international visitors and contribute to economic sustainability and provide recreational opportunities and health benefits for regional and local communities

3.1 WHAT IS MOUNTAIN BIKING

Mountain Biking is an activity with increasing participation rates worldwide. Mountain Biking encompasses a broad spectrum of activities ranging from international level competition and extreme events to school sport programs and recreational riding.¹⁹

Mountain biking can be undertaken across a range of settings however it is most commonly recognised as riding specialised bikes on dedicated off road trails.

Traditionally riders have sought to ride single track trails which enable riders to connect with the landscape and be challenged through varying levels of technical difficulty. More recently there has been a tendency towards flow and gravity trails that provide an increased level of speed and technical features.²⁰

A full description of Mountain Bike Trail types and descriptions can be found in Appendix A (Table 17).

Mountain Bike User types

Mountain Bike Australia have developed a table of trail user types to assist land manager to define the groups being targeted. This description of user types is important in defining the market potential for the Victor Harbor mountain bike experience.

Through the consultation process it is evident Victor Harbor's local users and future visitors will fit within the leisure, enthusiast type with a growing interest in gravity riding.

Mountain Biking as a sport is popular through events in the Mount Lofty Ranges and interstate, opportunity for future events will be incorporated into planned trail networks in the Yankalilla Council area.

¹⁹ Australian Mountain bike Trail Guidelines Mountain bike Australia 2019

²⁰ Australian Mountain bike Trail Guidelines Mountain bike Australia 2019

Different Mountain Bike Markets

The size, activity patterns and needs of the Australian market as described in Table 1 can be broadly divided into:

- core riders (technical, endurance and allrounders)
- non-core riders (leisure riders).

Mountain bikers are generally categorised in either the riding genre (all-mountain, cross country, downhill) and/or by their ability (e.g. beginner, intermediate, advanced) and riders look for trails that suit their skills, abilities and challenges sought.

Mountain Bike Australia has revised the Mountain Bike Trail Difficulty Rating System based on the International Mountain Bike Association and grades trails according to their relative technical difficulty.²¹

The updated Trail Difficulty Rating System has been included within Appendix B.

Different Needs

Mountain bike markets can be further separated into the categories of local, domestic visitors and international visitors to gain an understanding of the needs and expectations of each.

The cycle tourist is much more likely to undertake a range of other activities compared to non-cycle tourists, explaining why the cycle tourist's average spend is much higher than non-cycle tourists. Of interest is their tendency to eat at restaurants, go to licensed venues and go shopping; all activities which would benefit the economy of Victor Harbor. Table 2 on page 17 summarises the needs of local domestic and international mountain bike visitors.

²¹ Australian Mountain bike Trail Guidelines

Table 1. Size, activity patterns and needs of the Australian market



NON-CORE MOUNTAIN BIKERS

- Complete novices
- Road bikers that occasionally ride MTB
- Families seeking safe enjoyable places to ride away from cars
- School groups (often guided by tour operators)
- Off-road bike tourers
- With increased skill, may eventuate into Core mountain bikers.



CORE RECREATIONAL MOUNTAIN BIKERS

- High levels of expenditure on gear and equipment
- High amount of time spent mountain bike riding
- High willingness to travel to go mountain biking
- A large proportion of the MTB market
- Little likelihood of participating in competitive events.



CORE COMPETITIVE MOUNTAIN BIKERS

- High levels of expenditure on gear and equipment
- High amount of time spent mountain bike riding
- High willingness to travel to go mountain biking
- Strong likelihood of participating in competitive events.

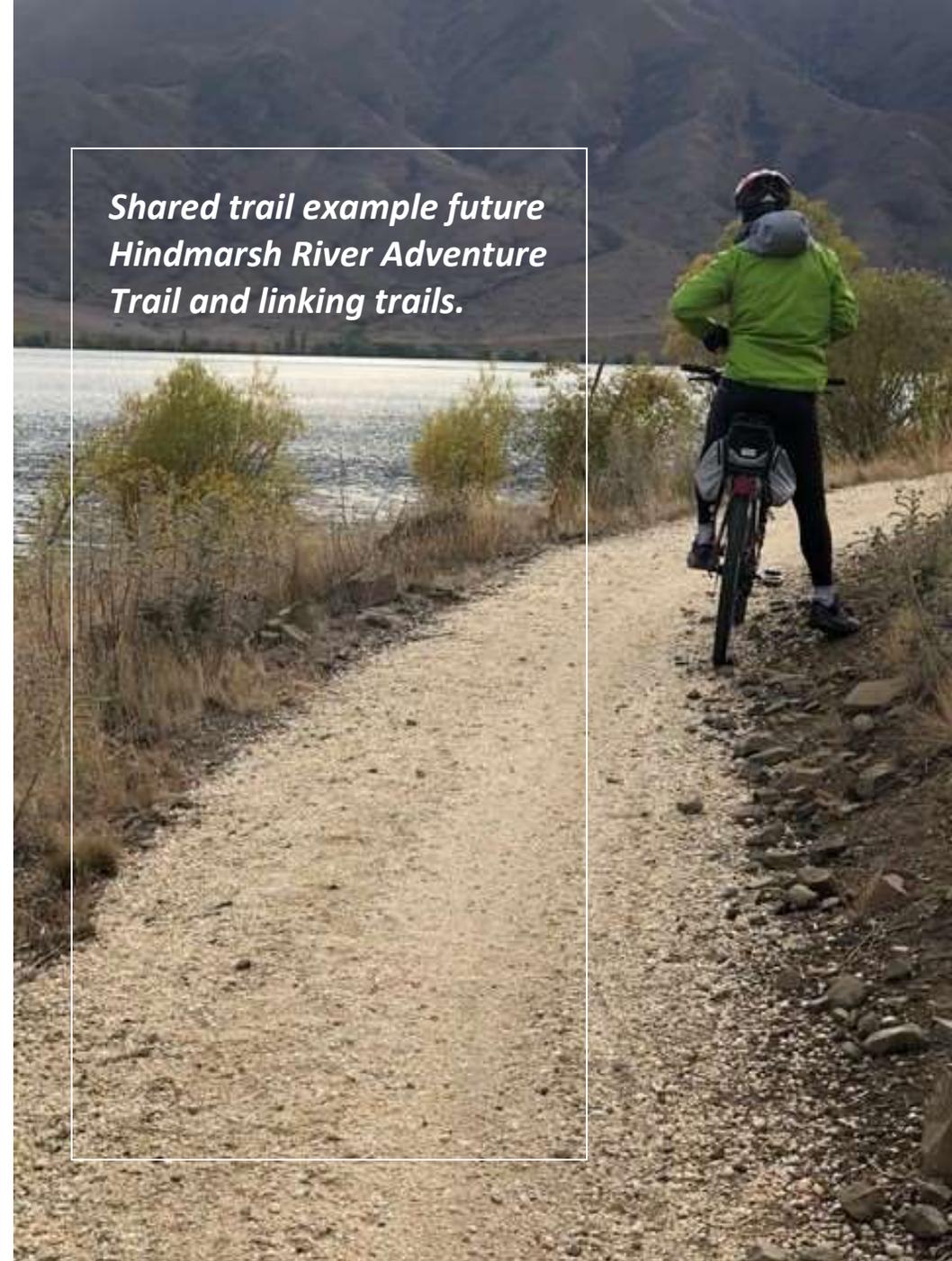
Single Use and Shared Trails

Single use trails are developed for and used solely by a single users group often the case in mountain biking where design and construction can allow for challenges not suitable for other users. Single use trails often referred to as single track trails need to be clearly identified to ensure the very best experiences are had by all users and to avoid conflict.

Shared trails generally include any trails that can be used by more than one user group. Within the context of the Strategy users include mountain bikers, trail runners, walkers and in some cases horse riders. Responsible Mountain Biking is generally compatible with other trail users and can help build relationships with other users.

Shared use trails can be further separated into divided trails such as on busy asphalt capped trails often used for higher speed cycling and commuting where the two separate lanes are provided. Shared use trails including a future Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail and off-road linking trails e.g. within the Ring Road corridor will be natural surface or gravel trails as indicated in the photo opposite.

*Shared trail example future
Hindmarsh River Adventure
Trail and linking trails.*



Mountain Biking Locals and Visitors

In the last few years there have been significant advances in mountain bike technology, which is redefining the type of experience desired by riders. Australian, New Zealand and international bike industry reports indicate that many of these trends have continued and have in fact increased.²²

Electric and power assisted bikes represent one of the fastest growing segments of the bike industry as they allow riders to extend their cycling distances. Electric bikes (Ebikes) help in overcoming hilly terrain or a lack of fitness, can assist in rehabilitation after injury or illness and are a cost effective and green transport solution.

Data compiled by Sport Australia, as part of the AusPlay survey estimates that approximately 341,900 Australians participate in mountain biking (approximately 1.6 percent of the population). The data found that participation is generally skewed towards males and that generally participation is causal and non-organised (rather than through an organisation or at a specific venue).

In terms of growth, the AusPlay report indicates that mountain biking has a market opportunity to grow considerably.²³

Mountain biking was the sixth most popular recreational activity across Australia which adults participated in more during the April to June 2020 COVID-19 lockdown. These activities, particularly those that can be done solo or physically distanced, were more immune to COVID-19 disruption.²⁴

COVID-19 has made predicting visitor growth and the economy challenging. During April and May 2020 there has been unprecedented growth in cycling business both through repairs and bike sales.

There is rapid interest in cycling of all types through investment in off road cycling experiences. Consumers who have taken up cycling amidst social

distancing may not continue particularly with increasing traffic as the world returns to “normal”.

Importantly however it is evident that there will be added interest in local and intrastate travel as international travel restrictions will continue.

Overnight trips in Australia involving nature and other outdoor activities have fared better than those involving arts and heritage and/or social activities in June quarter 2020.²⁵

The increased demand in cycling can be traced to two main groups: existing cyclists upgrading their equipment, and newcomers. The subsequent bike upgrade sales for the newcomers will create a new demand that otherwise would not have happened prior to the COVID-19 disruption.

Australian Ebike sales, which are measured through wholesalers sharing their sales data, have just recorded their fourth consecutive year of rapid growth. For the 2019/20 financial year sales were 48,000 units, up almost 50% from 32,500 units sold in 2018/19. Using a \$3,000 average retail sale price estimate would mean \$216 million in annual retail sales this current 2020/21 financial year for a product category that virtually didn't exist in Australia five years ago and is only set for further development and growth.

Government policy and funding into bike infrastructure is also inducing more demand for bikes and equipment.

²² Latz Report 2020

²³ Sports Australia. 2019. AusPlay. State of Play of Mountain Biking

²⁴ Early impact of COVID-19 on sport and physical activity participation (AusPlay, October 2020)

²⁵ Tourism Research Australia - National Visitor Survey Results June 2020 - Year ending June 2020

3.2 FLEURIEU VISITORS

Annual visitor expenditure in the Fleurieu Peninsula is \$493 million.²⁶ This data is based on the annual average for three years from year end December 2017 to year end December 2019. In 2018-19 there were 3,300 people directly employed and 1,300 indirectly employed by tourism in the Fleurieu Peninsula.²⁷

Collectively, expenditure in regional South Australia is significant, representing 48 per cent in every dollar spent in the State.²⁸ The Fleurieu Peninsula is an important contributor to the South Australian visitor economy, second only to the Adelaide region in terms of direct and indirect gross value added.²⁹

Annual visitor expenditure in Victor Harbor is \$156 million, with an average spend per trip of \$156 per visitor. There are 156 tourism businesses, although nearly 40% of these are non-employing.³⁰ This data is based on a four year average from 2016 to 2019.

Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, the Fleurieu Peninsula was receiving 3,778,000 total visitors per annum, with nearly 80% of these coming from domestic day trips. 96% of the visitors to the Fleurieu Peninsula are domestic with only 4% being made up by international visitors. The average length of stay in the Fleurieu Peninsula is three nights.³¹ This data is based on the annual average for three years from year end December 2017 to year end December 2019.

Victor Harbor has long been a favoured seaside holiday destination, attracting 1.2 million visitors annually.³² Just over 80% of the visitors to Victor Harbor are domestic day trippers. Just over 99% of the visitors to Victor Harbor are domestic with less than 1% being made up by international visitors. The average length of stay in Victor Harbor is also three nights.³³ This data at a local level is based on a four year average from 2016 to 2019.

²⁶ Fleurieu Peninsula Regional Profile, prepared by SATC, May 2020

²⁷ Tourism Research Australia Fleurieu Peninsula Regional Tourism Satellite Account 2018-19

²⁸ The South Australian Visitor Economy Sector Plan 2030

²⁹ Tourism Research Australia Fleurieu Peninsula Regional Tourism Satellite Account 2018-19

³⁰ Tourism Research Australia Victor Harbor Local Government Area Profile 2019

³¹ Fleurieu Peninsula Regional Profile, prepared by SATC, May 2020

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Visitor demographics

A significant proportion of the total visitors to Victor Harbor are 55+ years (over 500,000 visitors annually) and 35-54 years (over 400,000 visitors annually). At least 70,000 visitors annually are aged between 15-34 years.³⁴

There is potential to tap into this age group through activities such as mountain biking and to encourage them to return again as a repeat visitor for an active, nature-based holiday.

The majority of the visitors to Victor Harbor are likely to be travelling as couples, and friends/relatives travelling together would be the next most common travel party, followed by unaccompanied visitors and then family groups.³⁵

Holiday is the most common reason for visiting Victor Harbor (over 800,000 visitors), followed by visiting friends and relatives (295,000 visitors). However, it is not possible to establish how many visitors go to Victor Harbor for business or other purposes due to the data not being publishable.³⁶

Visitors seek social activities which often involve sightseeing and looking around. Activities that involve outdoor and nature are popular with experiences involving trails being an important way to connect with nature.

³² City of Victor Harbor Community Plan 2030

³³ Tourism Research Australia Victor Harbor Local Government Area Profile 2019

³⁴ Tourism Research Australia Victor Harbor Local Government Area Profile 2019

³⁵ Tourism Research Australia Victor Harbor Local Government Area Profile 2019

³⁶ Tourism Research Australia Victor Harbor Local Government Area Profile 2019

The top activity for domestic overnight, day trip and international visitors in the Fleurieu is “social activities” – eating out, visiting friends and relatives and sightseeing/looking around with “outdoor nature” being the next most popular activity.

These results indicate that all visitors to the Fleurieu currently see value and enjoy nature-based activities and experiences during their visit to the region.³⁷

3.3 VISITOR PROJECTIONS

Tourism

Adelaide visitors currently contribute 61% of the visitors to the Fleurieu Peninsula.³⁸ Due to this significant proportion, it is important to consider the population growth expected for Adelaide in future visitor projections for the Fleurieu Peninsula region. The revised population growth scenario in the updated *30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide* is that Greater Adelaide will grow by up to 545,000 people (almost 350 per week) by 2045. This will result in a total population of almost 2 million people.³⁹ However, with the recent disruptions to migration caused by COVID-19 it is also important to note that nearly all (over 90%) of the population growth in Adelaide in 2018-19 was attributed to overseas migration, and that this trend may not continue at this level in the short term.⁴⁰

Mountain biking - Regional tourism vision

As the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) for the region, Fleurieu Hills Tourism does not currently have a destination management plan or tourism strategy in place.

The regional visitor strategy however identifies the South Australian Tourism Commission’s (SATC) priorities for the Fleurieu Peninsula Regional Profile which includes trails and cycle paths which include the development of mountain bike trails:⁴¹

- to encourage year-round visitation and drive visitor yield
- to grow spend from day-trippers as well as convert some day-trips into overnight stays
- provide new hiking and cycling paths through the regions to support ongoing growth in popular nature-based experiences.

³⁷ Tourism Research Australia Bespoke Data

³⁸ Fleurieu Peninsula Regional Profile, prepared by SATC, May 2020

³⁹ The 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide (2017 Update)

⁴⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/regional-population/2018-19>

⁴¹ Fleurieu Peninsula Regional Profile, prepared by SATC, May 2020

Trails promotion

Trails and adventure promotion in Victor Harbor is focussed through the *Victor Harbor Encounter It All* Program. Descriptions of regional walking and cycling is featured and is available on the Council website

www.encountervictorharbor.com.au

There is currently no dedicated platform to promote mountain biking other than user and community based online sources including All Trails, Strava and Trail Forks.

Victor Harbor is developing strategies and activities that are attractive to younger families and an age cohort that is working and creating economic opportunities, while balancing out the high proportion of the population that are over the age of 65 (a trend that has been forecast to increase). Future activities and programs will seek to influence those under 50 years of age and will be developed to influence their decisions to visit, establish a business, relocate as a working and earning citizen or invest in the City creating opportunities that drive a far more sustainable future.⁴² Successful mountain bike locations such as Tasmania's St Helens are attractive to this age cohort and encourage people to come and stay and invest in the community.⁴³

Mountain Bike Types

A number of mountain bike riding types have evolved since the sport began in the 1980's. Cross-country riding is the most popular style of riding due to its relative ease of participation, however there has been significant growth in recent years in gravity riding styles such as Gravity Enduro and also the jump and stunt focussed styles such as Freeride and Dirt Jumping. Table 19 in Appendix A identifies mountain bike trail Types most commonly encountered in Australia and will be reflected in future mountain bike design.



Hindmarsh River Gorge in the Hindmarsh Tiers area offers existing track access and future opportunity for adventure trail experiences utilising the Gorge and connecting to Hindmarsh Tiers trail activities and Victor Harbor Town.

⁴² City of Victor Harbor 2021

⁴³ Break O' Day Council 2021

Needs of local, domestic and international mountain bike riders.

The table below describes the general description and the needs of local and domestic mountain bike riders with some discussion around international mountain bike riders who will be attracted to the greater South Australian mountain bike experiences and who may participate in future Victor Harbor riding.

Table 2. Needs of local and domestic mountain bike riders

MARKET	WHO THIS LOOKS LIKE	NEEDS
Local Victor Harbor residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and families seeking a safe entry level or skills development/progression experience. • Riders in the young adult to middle age groups. • Riders in the ageing population group who will use Ebikes and will seek easy trails for fitness and social interaction. • Experienced local riders who have ridden for many years in the region and who continue to contribute to the trail network through building, maintenance and other activities. • Schools, outdoor education and youth groups from within and near the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trails and bike parks accessible from population centres and together offering a range of trail types. • Inter-connected trail networks offering a range of difficulty levels and technical challenges. Ideally offering at least a day's riding. • Skills parks, and skills coaching. • Participative and competitive events. • Trailheads with appropriate facilities including car parking, bike wash-down, food services, shuttle transport. • A range of trails accessible for shorter 1 to 4-hour rides near places of work and living. Trails generally for the local user market although locals will travel more broadly to key trails regionally and will travel nationally for longer weekend breaks and short holidays. • Some feature rides that locals seek might include long descents, well designed and constructed features and outstanding scenery. • Diversity of offerings including technical trails.
Domestic visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riders in the young adult to older age groups who may visit the region specifically to ride a trail network or bike park. • Riders in the young adult to older age groups who may visit the region to undertake a range of activities including the beach and surfing. May look to mountain bike trails when beach conditions are poor. • Club members on trips. • Schools, outdoor education and youth groups from nearby and outside of the region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trail networks and bike parks that offer 2 to 3 days riding and a range of trail type and difficulty levels. • Iconic and challenging rides. • Multi day epic trails with support services to make experience more accessible. • Trailheads with appropriate facilities including car parking, bike wash-down, food services, shuttle transport. • Bike hire and repair services. • Good pre-trip information and booking. • Engaging immersive interpretation. • Nearby accommodation including camping, facilities and transport that is bike friendly, allowing for washing, storage and access to bikes. • School or special interest group, guided experiences that offer environmental or cultural learning, outdoor skills development, challenge and team building opportunities.

MARKET	WHO THIS LOOKS LIKE	NEEDS
International visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainly visitors from UK, USA, Germany, Canada, Netherlands aged from young adult to over 55s, travelling alone or with a partner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iconic and challenging rides and trail journeys. Outstanding trail networks and bike parks that offer 2 to 3 days riding and a range of trail type and difficulty levels. Multi day epic trail with support services to make experience more accessible. Trailheads with appropriate facilities including car parking, bike wash-down, food services, shuttle transport. Bike hire and repair services. Accommodation and food and beverage appropriate for people travelling long distances for an outstanding experience. Good pre-trip information and booking. Signature events.

4 Economic Benefits of Mountain Biking

“The Blue Derby \$3.1 million trail network is reportedly attracting more than 30,000 visitors every year, that spend four to five nights in Derby then another five nights elsewhere in Tasmania, delivering an estimated return on investment of more than \$30 million per year from visitation alone.”⁴⁴

4.1 ECONOMIC HEALTH BENEFITS

The Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines (ATAP) provide a framework for estimating the benefits associated with cycling and walking. While this data source is not mountain bike specific, it provides a good proxy to estimate the contribution of mountain biking to society’s social and physical wellbeing.

The ATAP guidelines estimate the health benefits of cycling at \$1.58 per km (in 2020 dollars). This is a cumulative value and includes the following benefits:

- Health and physical activity (in terms of increased life expectancy and reduced risk of disease and illness)
- Health system benefits (in terms of a reduction in costs borne by the health system as a result of physical inactivity).⁴⁵

Further, physical activities, such as cycling and mountain biking are also likely to contribute towards higher societal productivity and production due to reduction in absenteeism and presenteeism in the workplace, because of improved physical and mental health.⁴⁶

The productivity benefits of sport and active recreation are estimated at \$11,325 million nationwide. This is approximately \$767 of productivity benefits per individual who participates in a sport and recreational activity per year.⁴⁷

With Mountain Biking this can often show added benefit in the form of trail building and maintenance, or club/event officials. Volunteering in the sport and active recreation sector is estimated to add \$6,327 million to the Australian economy. This converts to approximately \$3,214 of volunteering benefit per volunteer per year.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Source: Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy

⁴⁵ Transport and Infrastructure Council. 2016. Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines, M4 Active Travel

⁴⁶ Derived from QFSR Skills Alliance (2019), Economic, Social and Health Impacts of Sport and Active Recreation in Queensland, prepared by Adept Economics

⁴⁷ Derived from QFSR Skills Alliance (2019), Economic, Social and Health Impacts of Sport and Active Recreation in Queensland, prepared by Adept Economics

⁴⁸ Derived from QFSR Skills Alliance (2019), Economic, Social and Health Impacts of Sport and Active Recreation in Queensland, prepared by Adept Economics. Assuming QLD values as a proxy for Australian values

Encouraging riders at an early age is an important component to healthy communities and the need for local riding was presented during consultation for this Strategy.

Research and observations from the United Kingdom indicate the importance of small, focussed trails and skill areas that don't have to be exciting but must be local. Local pump tracks and "learn to ride" areas have given kids a safe and accessible entry point to provide a fun and progressive path to them becoming lifelong cyclists, along with all the benefits that brings.

Everyone should have the opportunity to ride and riding needs to be local to where they live.⁴⁹

4.2 MOUNTAIN BIKE SPENDING

Research by GHD and AusCycling estimate that people who mountain bike spend approximately \$27.10 per ride.

On intrastate holidays for the primary purpose of mountain biking they would typically spend \$1,707.95 each trip, typically with one to three trips completed annually.

When people go on an interstate holidays that revolve around mountain biking they would typically spend \$2,485.75 each trip, typically with one to two trips completed annually.⁵⁰

The research and Australian wide examples indicate attracting mountain bikers to purpose-built locations can have significant economic benefit.

⁴⁹ Phil Saxena Velosolutions UK/Australia 2021

⁵⁰ GHD Report for AusCycling - Mountain Biking in Australia: An Economic and Participation Analysis

Table 3. Summary of MTB expenditure

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE	MTBA MEMBER	NON-MTBA MEMBER	TOTAL RIDERS
Expenditure per ride	\$25.95	\$28.25	\$27.10
Annual expenditure per ride	\$2,726.20	\$1,849.90	\$2,282.90
Annual expenditure on items equipment and clothing	\$5,990.65	\$3,875.20	\$4,921.95
Expenditure on intrastate MTB holiday per trip	\$1,934.55	\$1,412.15	\$1,707.95
Expenditure on interstate MTB holiday per trip	\$2,594.10	\$2,305.90	\$2,485.75

Table 4. Economic contribution of mountain bike riders to Australia⁵¹

IMPACT	OUTPUT (\$M)	VALUE ADD (\$M)	WAGES AND SALARIES (\$M)	EMPLOYMENT (FTE)
Direct Impact	\$630.8	\$358.0	\$233.7	4,163
Indirect (Type 1 Impact)	\$339.1	\$156.0	\$78.9	769
Indirect (Type 2 Impact)	\$443.1	\$234.5	\$100.2	1,163
Total Impact	\$1,413.0	\$748.5	\$412.7	6,095

⁵¹ GHD Report for AusCycling - Mountain Biking in Australia: An Economic and Participation Analysis

A photograph showing four children from behind, riding their bicycles on a gravel path. The children are wearing helmets and casual clothing. The path is surrounded by green grass and trees, with a wooden fence visible in the background. The lighting suggests it's late afternoon or early morning.

When asked what would encourage you to mountain bike around Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu in the future?

The most popular response was bike trails that suit their ability followed by good maps or information and access to trails in riding distance of home.

5 Assessment of Victor Harbor as a Mountain Bike Destination

Until recently the Fleurieu has not generally been recognised as a mountain bike destination and was not included in previous Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges mountain bike planning and development.⁵² There is strong opportunity for South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula to combine its stunning natural assets with creatively designed trails that link the coasts and ranges through exceptional experiences that combine with a growing enthusiasm and demand for local mountain bike and trail riding opportunities.

5.1 COMMUNITY VIEWS

During March and April 2021, the City of Victor Harbor sought assistance from the community to plan for the future development and activation of a network of trails throughout Victor Harbor and the broader Fleurieu area. Targeted Stakeholder consultation, Your Say Surveys and a Drop in Session generated strong views from the broader community including from children and youth on the future of trails and mountain biking.

The consultation sessions generated significant interest attracting 295 responses to the survey and over twenty interested residents and visitors expressed their views at the drop in session.

The survey sought to hear from those that currently ride and from those who would like to mountain bike in the future and any perceived barriers. The survey indicated a strong future for Mountain Biking with 86.5% respondees commenting they are keen to mountain bike in the future.

Interestingly almost 20% of respondents were under 17 years old which reflects the interest in Mountain Biking generated through schools, the community and through school camps and recreation providers.

The overwhelming result was a desire for more purpose-built mountain bike trails and networks, including the desire for off road and single track trails. Commonly when asked what would encourage you to mountain bike around Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu in the future they said; Access to bike trails that suit my ability (39.1%) followed by Good maps or information (24.1%) and Access to trails within riding distance of home (17.1%)”.

The majority of mountain bike riders undertake their sport away from Victor Harbor mostly at locations south of Adelaide at Kuitpo Forest and O'Halloran Hill. They have intermediate skills and are capable of riding more demanding trails and obstacles. Intermediate Blue Trails are the most common trail sought and there is a very strong desire for more trails at this level and a variety of trails including downhill and single tracks, and overwhelmingly more trails that reflect the local environment.

⁵² Establishing the Adelaide Ranges as an International Mountain bike Destination 2015



The survey indicated a strong future for Mountain Biking with 86.5% commenting they are keen to mountain bike in the future. Interestingly almost 20% of respondents were under 17 years old which reflects the interest in Mountain Biking generated through schools, the community and through school camps and recreation providers.

5.2 EXISTING PLACES TO RIDE

Community responses and assessment of user sites such as Trailforks, (trail database, map & management system for users, builders and associations) provided the background to existing trails, number of places to ride on the South Coast and limitations with few sanctioned trails.

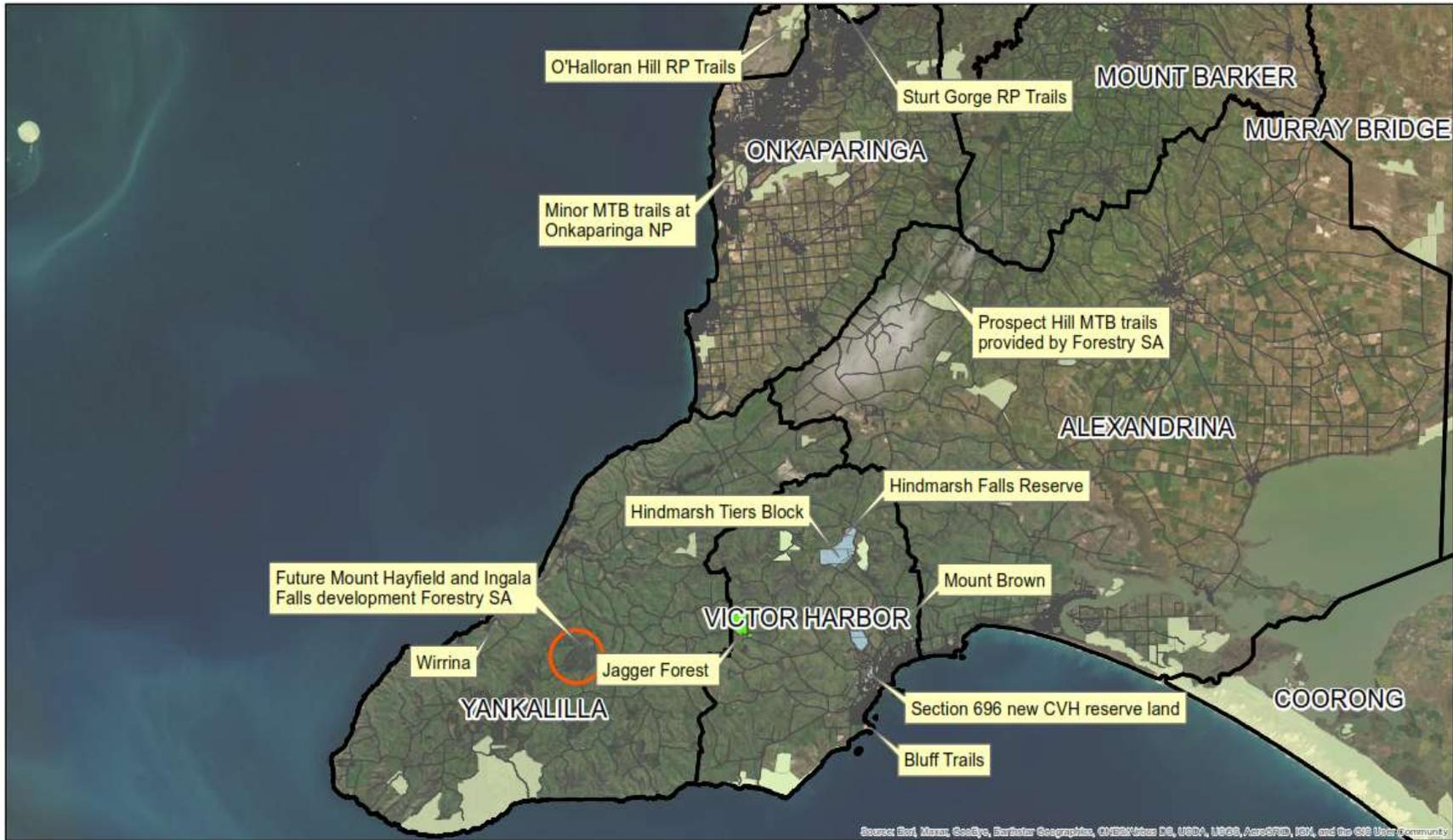
The District Council of Yankalilla and ForestrySA in partnership are developing a range of trails including Mountain bike trails located in the Mount Hayfield and Second Valley Forest Reserves. A small number of trails are being developed on private land at Wirrina on the western coast of the Fleurieu Peninsula.

A locally based school adventure camp and activity provider has developed purpose built mountain bike trails on their land and operate bike programs throughout South Australia providing short, full day and multi day mountain bike programs.

The City of Victor Harbor has a small number of sanctioned mountain bike trails developed by local riders in the saddle below the Rosetta Head (The Bluff).

Local riders also use existing shared use trails including those adjacent to the Inman River (section 696) and adjacent to the Hindmarsh River on the Hindmarsh River Trail and on undeveloped trails linking the Hindmarsh estuary with Alexandrina Council. These trails are not designed specifically as mountain bike trails they do however present interesting local riding opportunities.

Figure 3. Current and Potential future MTB Trail opportunities



Legend

- LGA
- NPWSA Properties

Current and Potential future MTB Trail opportunities discussed in this Strategy



5.3 MOUNTAIN BIKE POTENTIAL

A successful mountain bike destination is more than its physical trails. A combination of factors creates a destination that continues to attract visitors through its reputation for quality and a special experience.

At the core of attracting trail visitors is the environment and setting, the quality and quantity of trails, their accessibility and the interest and challenge offered. The provision of an adequate supply of services is also critical. Trail users today have higher expectations about their trail experience.

The following characteristics tend to define successful mountain bike destinations:

- Diversity of trail types, styles and destinations
- Concentration of trail opportunities
- High quality, sustainable trail infrastructure
- Leading and supporting trails
- Accessibility
- Effective governance, coordination and management
- Community and industry engagement and support
- Trail Maintenance and Day-to-Day Management
- Distinctive experiences
- Quality pre-trip information
- A range of quality support services and facilities
- Trail, food, beverage and retail products and businesses
- Strong trail destination positioning and marketing.

The potential opportunity for Victor Harbor

The Strategy identifies Victor Harbor's positioning as a mountain bike destination however it is important to consider the Fleurieu as a whole, including connectivity between sites and points of difference across the region. Taking a regional approach ensures future Mountain Biking activity reaches its full potential and contribute the most benefit to communities.

Victor Harbor has limited mountain bike trails and improvements and investment will need to be made from the ground up.

Table 5 provides an assessment of Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu's potential and Opportunity for mountain bike Development.

Victor Harbor can be considered a future regional mountain bike Trail Hub particularly when included and planned as a part of the greater Fleurieu network which offers trail networks for local and domestic visitors and utilising different sites from 2 -3 hours per day and visits up to 1-2 days.

Figure 4. SECTION 696 the previous SA Water Land provides shared trail experiences within a riverine trail corridor and links the Inman and



Table 5. Potential and Opportunity for Mountain Bike Development

TRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE, DESIGN, SUPPORT FACILITIES AND MANAGEMENT	VICTOR HARBOR	FLEURIEU
Diversity of trail types, styles and destinations	Topography and soil types provide opportunity to develop a diverse range of trail types and styles. Some combination of public and private land trail destination opportunities. Victor Harbor mountain bike trails will be located within 1.15 hours from the Adelaide CBD and a population of approximately 1.3 million people.	Diversity of trail experience currently under development across the range on public land. The Fleurieu mountain bike trails will be located within 1.30 hours from the Adelaide CBD and a population of approximately 1.3 million people.
Concentration of trail opportunities	Future opportunities to develop at least two linked trail networks concentrated within riding distance of the centre of Victor Harbor. Local future skills park and pump track site opportunity.	Mount Hayfield and Second Valley Forest providing concentration of trails forming a trail network with potential links with Victor Harbor trails.
High quality, sustainable trail infrastructure	Investment will be required to ensure high quality and sustainable new trail networks. Hindmarsh Tiers is attracting investment in trail infrastructure.	Investment currently being directed however it will need to be maintained to ensure retention of a high quality network.
Leading (Signature) and supporting trails	Trail develop will prioritise at least one important unique signature experiences and linked supporting trails. Trail connectivity will be the key to a Victor Harbor trail experience.	Mount Hayfield and Ingalalla Falls will provide lead mountain bike trails.
Accessibility	Challenge to provide off road riding access to future mountain bike networks. Trails and access need to be off-road away from fast roads with safe and comfortable trail access. Future shuttles, local skills park, pump track and improvements to local river trails fundamental to success.	Public land accessible some distance from population centres will require vehicle access or shuttles.
Effective governance, coordination and management	City of Victor Harbor will need to provide leadership. Success will require effective future investment, management ownership and governance.	Arrangements between Forestry SA and Yankalilla District Council important in developing infrastructure.

TRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE, DESIGN, SUPPORT FACILITIES AND MANAGEMENT	VICTOR HARBOR	FLEURIEU
Community and industry engagement and support	Evidence of strong community support through consultation process, development of innovative school and adventure provider support in mountain bike initiatives. Business and Tourism Authority support for coast and ranges trail initiatives and strong schools program.	Development of innovative school and adventure provider support in mountain bike initiatives. Business and Tourism Authority support for coast and ranges trail initiatives.
Trail Maintenance and Day-to-Day Management	Indication of community support for maintenance and management. Public land management support for some developing initiatives.	Indication of community support for maintenance and management. Public land management support for developing initiatives.
Distinctive experiences	Coast and ranges experiences will be different from Mount Lofty Ranges network and strong links to established coastal adventure experiences such as surfing. The Hindmarsh River Gorge provides opportunity to establish distinctive experiences including a cable bridge option linking to an exciting adventure trail.	Coast and ranges experiences will create a point of difference from the from Mount Lofty Ranges network.
Quality pre-trip information	Established Victor Harbor, Fleurieu and DEW marketing and visitor information services will provide the basis for new promotion, information and marketing.	Established Yankalilla Council, Fleurieu and ForestrySA marketing and visitor information services
A range of quality support services and facilities	Existing and emerging bike support services including potential for shuttles, repairs and accommodation providers in Victor Harbor and surrounds.	Linked service to Victor Harbor and Yankalilla town facilities.
Trail, food, beverage and retail products and businesses	Wide range of food and hospitality providers within riding or driving distance with potential to increase and diversify with the development of networks.	Food, hospitality including brewery within riding or driving distance with potential to increase and diversify with the development of networks.

5.4 VICTOR HARBOR OPPORTUNITIES

For Victor Harbor to develop as a distinctive Local/Regional Mountain Bike Hub requires commitment, leadership and investment. It also requires additional linked trail networks that are attractive, provide a range of trail types and styles and are connected to each other and Victor Harbor town.

Three sites have been identified as providing future Signature mountain bike trail networks that will combine with existing supporting and local trail networks, skills parks and connecting off road shared trails to develop Victor Harbor as a distinctive mountain bike Town or Trail Hub. These Signature experiences will be described in Victor Harbor Signature Projects in 7.4 below.

The combination of a future Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Hub and the Mount Hayfield and Second Valley trail networks within Yankalilla Council have the potential to develop the Fleurieu into a unique South Australian regional mountain bike destination.

The Potential Victor Harbor Mountain bike Trail Network

A future Victor Harbor mountain bike trail network will include a combination of signature, supporting and local trails.

Signature trails

A small number of outstanding trail experiences that have the pulling power to persuade a visitor to come to the Victor Harbor and generate the greatest economic and local benefit.

Example of future Victor Harbor outstanding trail experiences could include adventure trails along the Hindmarsh Gorge, river, ranges to the coast and complimented by mountain bike trail networks in forest settings.

Supporting trails

A less prominent visitor offering but providing quality visitor and local experiences to support Signature trails and hubs and important recreational opportunities for local communities.

Example, improving existing shared use trails and providing new trails that provide quality mountain bike experiences, provide extended loop trails between the coast, the town and the rivers and connected and support the Signature Trail.

Local trails

Important to the local community often developed through local action.

The local Bluff mountain bike trails and the Bike Park are good examples of trails frequented by local people due to their proximity to the town and being connected by off road access.



6 The City of Victor Harbor Mountain Biking Strategy

6.1 VISION

Victor Harbor connects the special values of the ranges, river valleys and coastal landscapes through extraordinary mountain bike trails and adventure experiences linking to growing communities, locals, visitors and supported by innovative tourism experience providers.

6.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles provide guidance for achieving this ambition and are consistent with the Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy.

High quality and diversity

The offer will provide quality regionally significant trails, trail infrastructure and experiences targeted for a diversity of mountain bike user and trail types through purpose built sustainable trails with high quality trail head and information systems.

Inclusive

The Victor Harbor mountain bike destination will have broad appeal and a diverse range of cycling options for people of different capacities and interests including adaptive mountain biking.

Sustainable

Mountain bike trails and infrastructure will be financially, socially and environmentally sustainable. Good well-resourced maintenance will be fundamental to sustainability of the experience and the assets. Trails should have minimal impact and should contribute to regional biodiversity through landscape restoration.

Collaborative

The success of the strategy relies on the City of Victor Harbor, clubs, volunteers, schools, private sector partners working together to build a positive culture for Mountain Biking and sharing trails within Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu.

Connected

Mountain biking experiences are integrated with the broader experience offer of Fleurieu Peninsula's linking the landscape to the ocean. This distinction means that mountain biking becomes a cross-cutting theme and influences the way that marketing and promotion of the region reinforces seeing and experiencing the Fleurieu and the region by bike as a core proposition. "Surf the morning mountain bike the afternoon".

Benefits

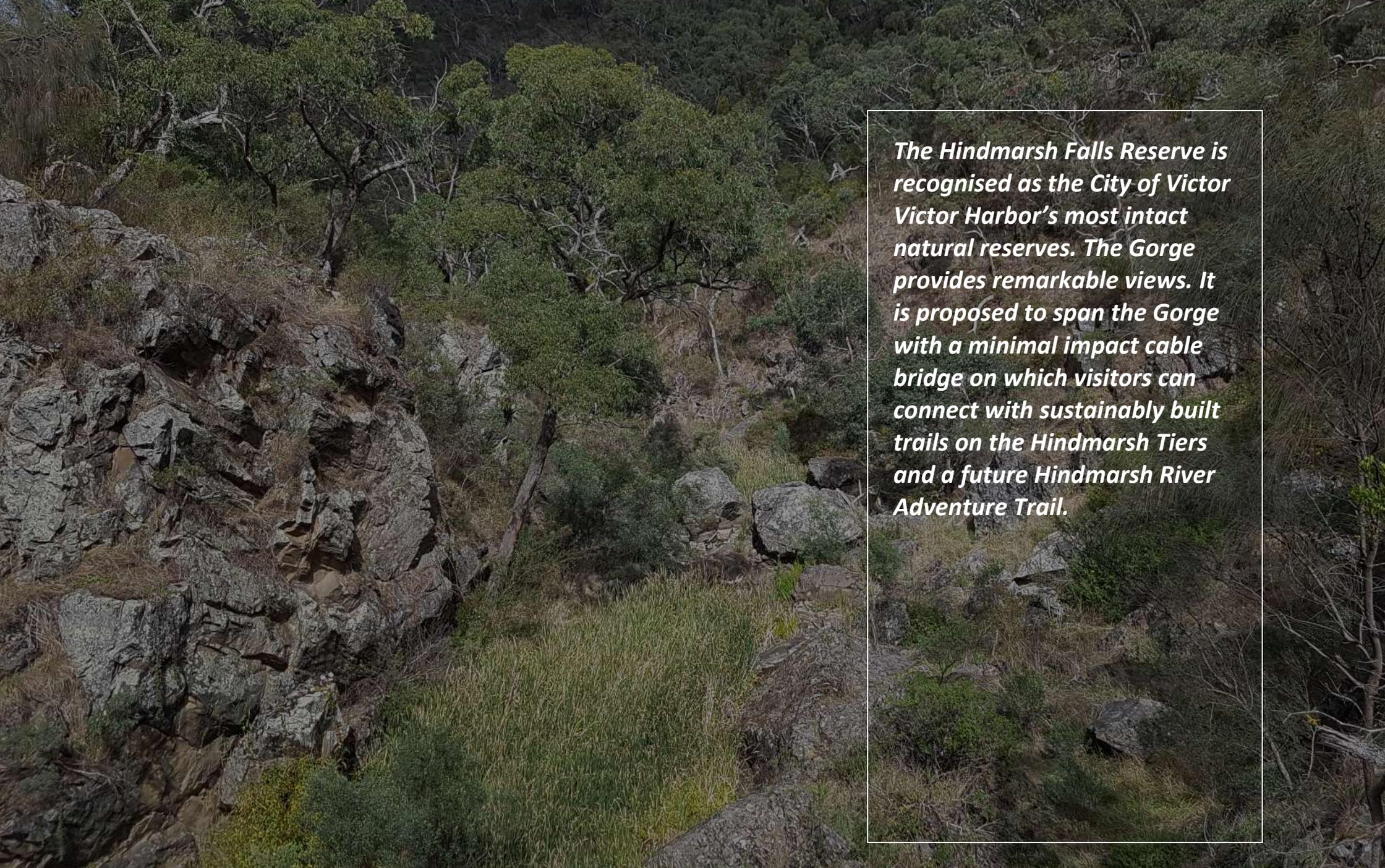
Mountain biking will deliver social, economic and health benefits to the Victor Harbor community and will contribute to retaining youth, attracting families and generating active opportunities for our elders.

6.3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of The Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy are:

1. Establish Victor Harbor as a regional mountain bike and trail Hub on the Fleurieu Peninsula.
2. Deliver mountain bike infrastructure, experiences and services to meet market needs and provide a reason to for young families and youth to stay.
3. Increase and diversify Victor Harbor attractions through mountain bike and unparalleled trail visitor experiences to increase visitor yield and length of stay.
4. Provide a range of cycle infrastructure that connects the extraordinary ranges and the coast and links and improves existing trail network.
5. Secure public and private sector investment to meet the needs of mountain bike visitors.





The Hindmarsh Falls Reserve is recognised as the City of Victor Harbor's most intact natural reserves. The Gorge provides remarkable views. It is proposed to span the Gorge with a minimal impact cable bridge on which visitors can connect with sustainably built trails on the Hindmarsh Tiers and a future Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail.

6.4 VICTOR HARBOR SIGNATURE PROJECTS

The Strategy has recognised three signature projects that identify with the Mountain Biking vision for Victor Harbor:

- 1 Hindmarsh Tiers within DEW land, Hindmarsh Falls Reserve and the Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail
- 2 Mount Brown Descent at a site to be chosen that provides an iconic descending and ascending trail experiences, views and connections with coastal and river trails.
- 3 Jagger Forest as part of Forestry SA Second Valley Forest Reserve at Inman Valley

Signature Trails

The Strategy identifies three sites as potential outstanding mountain bike destinations, these include:

- Approximately 500 hectares of Hindmarsh Tiers range country and the Hindmarsh River Gorge currently under transfer arrangements from SA Water to DEW and contiguous with Section 680 Hindmarsh Falls Reserve currently owned and managed by the City of Victor Harbor.
- An area including Mount Brown to the north of Victor Harbor which would provide opportunity for spectacular coastal views and spirited descending trails.
- The 200 hectare Forestry SA plantation pine forest known as Jagger Forest situated in the Inman Valley which due to its topography, landscape and soil type provides for an exciting future mountain bike network.

These three sites provide opportunity for unique and iconic trail experiences that complementing one another to produce an exciting mix of trails.

A mix of future Victor Harbor Signature trails would be developed in a manner that complement the Yankalilla Mount Hayfield trails to provide the right trail mix to generate an outstanding Fleurieu Regional Trail Network.

Signature 1 - Hindmarsh Tiers and Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail

The Hindmarsh Tiers provides opportunity for a diverse mix of trail experiences including mountain bike trails, walking trails and shared use trails that suit riders seeking easy to intermediate trail experiences.

The elevation of the Hindmarsh Tiers provides a remarkable opportunity for a 14-kilometre Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail that starts at the Hindmarsh River Gorge and includes a stunning cable bridge crossing of the Gorge to link up with benched descending shared use trails and connections to a future Hindmarsh River trail and a wider trail network.

The ultimate experience that includes the Hindmarsh River Trail will require community support and access agreements through a range of properties along the river corridor.

Immediate access can be provided from the Tiers to connect to Victor Harbor through quiet backroads and accessible links along the Hindmarsh River corridor which will enable riders and walkers to access the Hindmarsh River and Tiers from the Encounter Bikeway or via a loop trail from the Inman River.

Further experiences could include linking these trail experiences to future camping and cabin style accommodation setting within the Hindmarsh Falls Reserve land or adjacent cleared farmland.

The trail connections and accommodation opportunity provides a valuable future Heysen Trail connection via a spur trail northwards via Haskett Road to the Woodcone Hill section of the Heysen Trail. This provides the Heysen Trail with a direct connection down the Hindmarsh River Valley to Victor Harbor. Table 6 below includes details of the future trail experience.

Table 6. Hindmarsh Tiers within DEW land, Hindmarsh Falls Reserve and the Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail

MTB Description	Cross Country Single track and shared use
Difficulty Level	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 10px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">  <p>Very easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">  <p>Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills, and off-road bikes</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">  <p>Easy with Intermediate Sections Likely to be single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface and some obstacles Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for mountain bikers with mountain bikes</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">  <p>Intermediate Single trail with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles May include steep sections Suitable for skilled mountain bikers with mountain bikes</p> </div> </div>
Approximate Distance of trails	Approximately 14 Kilometres of trails
Trailheads	McEwin Road, Hindmarsh Falls Road and Hindmarsh River Estuary
Key Features	Hindmarsh Falls, Hindmarsh Gorge and River cable bridge experience and river valley adventure trail from the Tiers to the sea
Lowest Elevation	5 metres Hindmarsh Estuary
Highest Elevation	290 metres Hindmarsh Falls
Vertical Elevation Range	Approximately 285 metres
Land Tenures	Hindmarsh Valley Land ex SA Water now DEW public land. Hindmarsh Falls, City of Victor Harbor public land reserves and easements (future private land by negotiation and arrangement)

Description
<p>These contiguous land parcels provide opportunity for exceptional off road mountain bike single track and shared use combined with general visitor and short walking experiences. The landscape provides opportunities to attract a diversity of trail users of all abilities, featuring experiences for a range of riders and recognising the shared nature of some trails. Special and unique gorge viewing options with adventurous cable bridge experiences cross the gorge to link the highest land section to the Hindmarsh Tiers Adventure Trail. The management tracks on the property provide initial access from the Hindmarsh Falls Reserve to the Hindmarsh River and beyond to a range of easy and moderate single track and shared use mountain bike trails and the McEwin Road Trail Head.</p> <p>The established use at the Hindmarsh Falls will continue however there should be a greater emphasis on recognising the unique Gorge features and attraction with options for future camping and accommodation development. A suitable corridor and trail alignment and construction methodology approach will be developed between DEW and City of Victor Harbor reflecting user types, experiences and encouraging tourism providers. Specialised construction techniques for the future gorge trails and bridge infrastructure will need to be considered due to the terrain/slope and important environmental values.</p> <p>The professionally built trails will embrace sustainable design and construction and provide outstanding visitor experiences. The attractive landscape, natural beauty and cultural attractions will be the draw together with the off-road connections to a variety of mountain bike trails and Victor Harbor linking trails.</p>

Advantages

Opportunities will be provided through the topography and attractive forested and gorge riparian landscape dominated by the Hindmarsh River.

Experiences will be provided for non-riders, beginner riders and visitors who engage in Mountain Biking as part of a wider experience. The future infrastructure will provide opportunities for events and growth.

New trail alignments allow future trails to be planned with clear focus on the experience and sustainability.

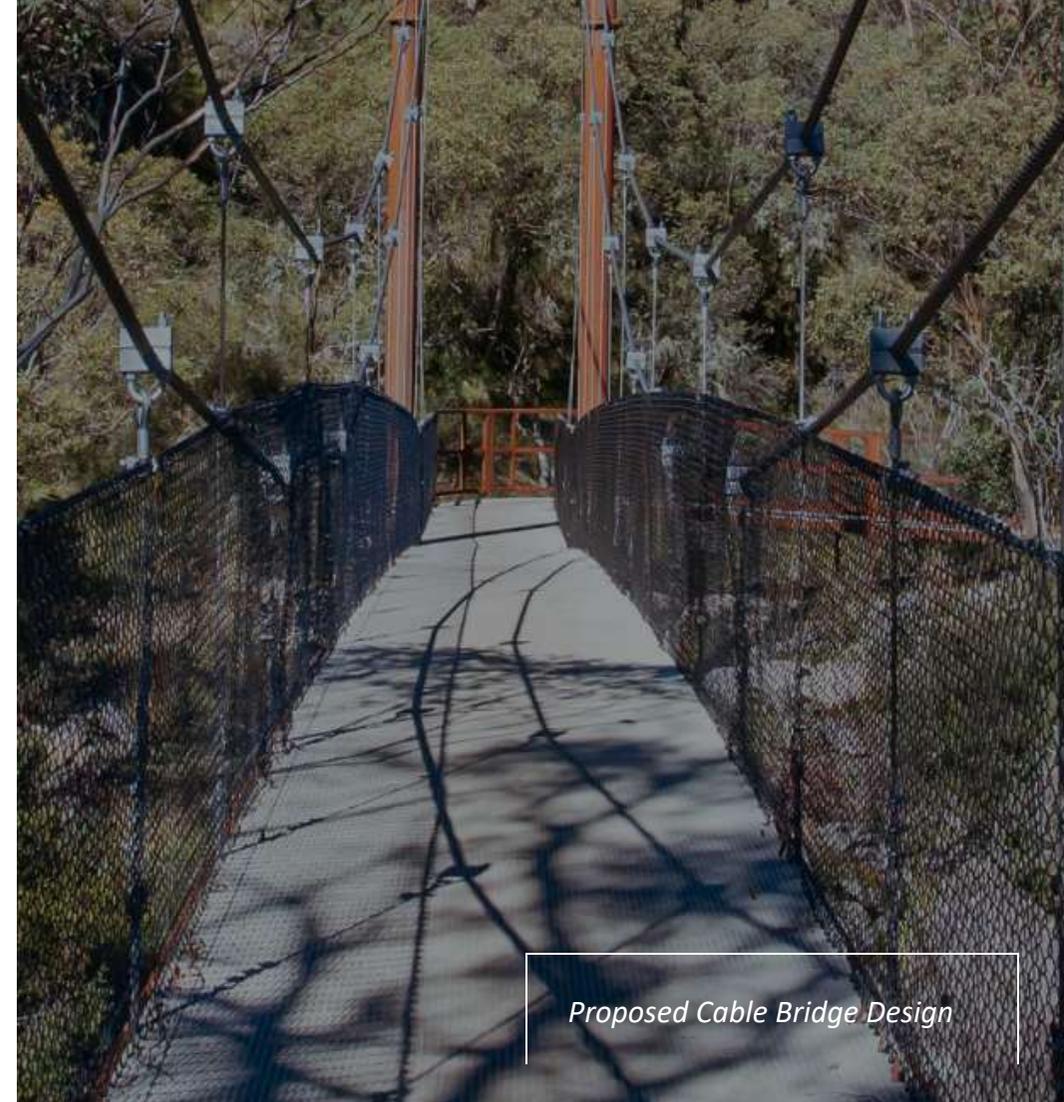
Land tenure for the beginning of the Hindmarsh River Adventure Ride sits within public land. The complete adventure package will require agreement with a number of private landowners.

Trails will provide the steppingstone connections for existing and future trail riding experiences accessing Victor Harbor and the Coast.

Options on public land for unique visitor accommodation including camping and cabin experience and investment.

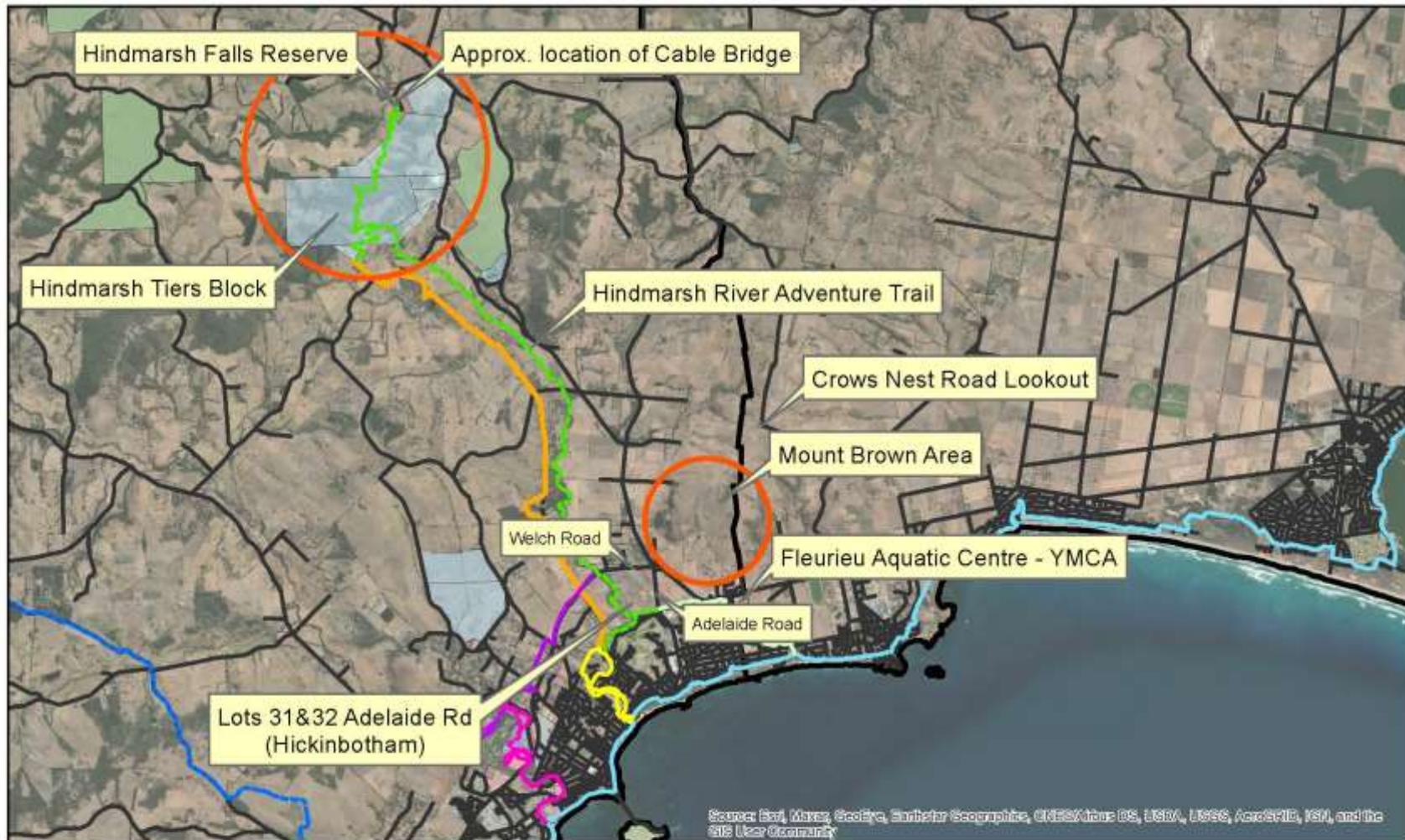
Disadvantages

Planning and approval will be required to minimise impacts on the natural values within the vegetated sections. The attractive nature of the Hindmarsh River Gorge creates challenges for trail construction and for river crossing. The ultimate Adventure Trail alignment will require innovation and community and landowner support.



Proposed Cable Bridge Design

Figure 5. Signature 1 - Hindmarsh Tiers and Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail



Source: Esri, Maxar, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

- Legend**
- Proposed_Hindmarsh_River_Adventure_Trail
 - Hindmarsh_River_Trail
 - Hindmarsh_River_Trail_Extension
 - Other_Link_Trail_Options
 - Heyson_Trail
 - Hindmarsh_River_Trail
 - Wetland_Link_Trail
 - Encounter_Bikeway
 - Waggon_Henry_Road_Link
 - CVHLGA_area
 - CITY OF VICTOR HARBOR
 - MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT & WATER
 - SA WATER CORP

Signature 1 - Hindmarsh Tiers and Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail



Signature 2 - Mount Brown Trails

To position Victor Harbor as a popular Regional Mountain Bike Hub requires the inclusion of attractive and different mountain bike experiences. Victor Harbor as an attractive place to visit is clearly influenced by its landscapes and in particular the Southern Mount Lofty Ranges and the South Coast.

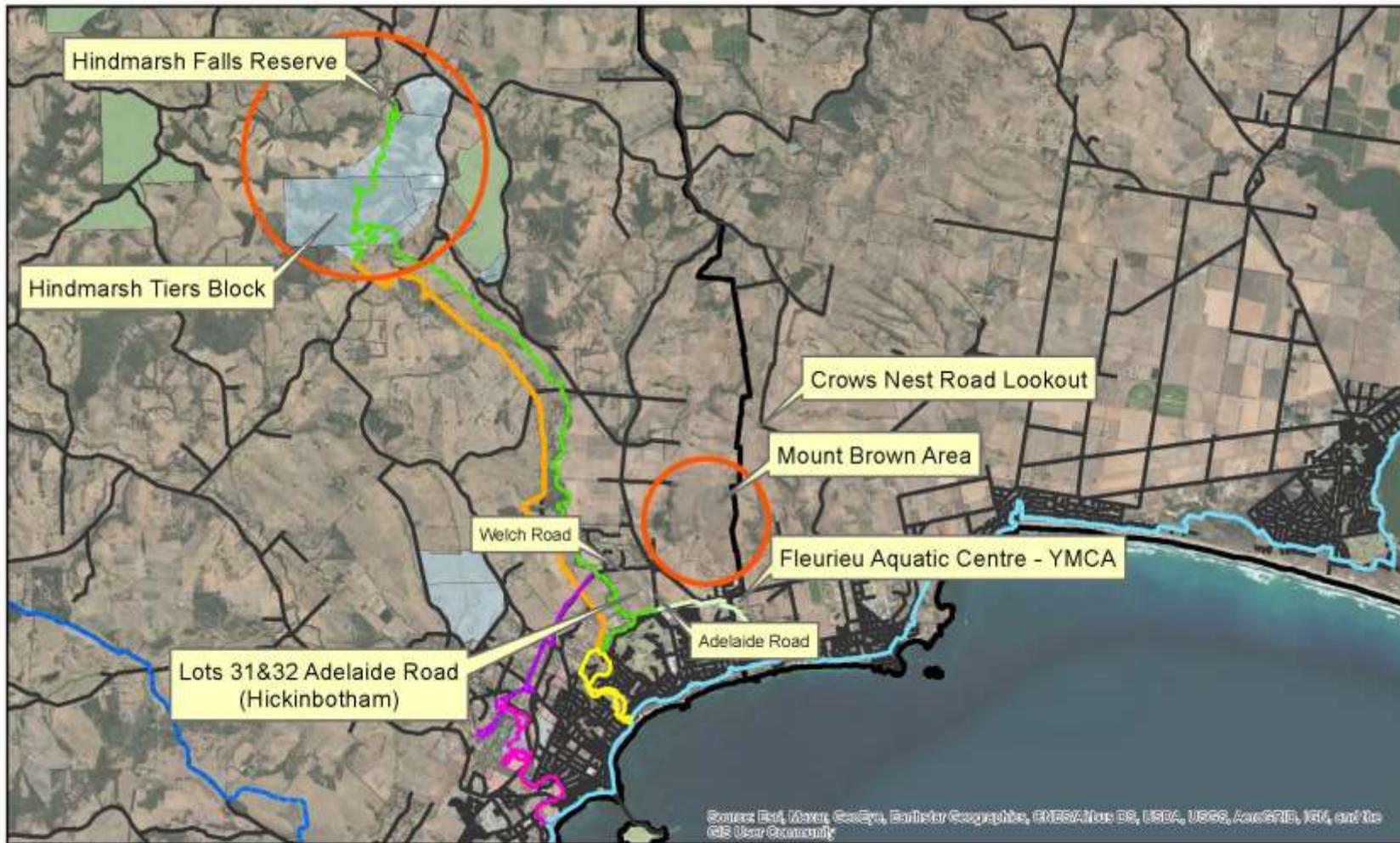
The ranges that overlook the coastal plain provide through altitude and aspect opportunity for an outstanding mix of downhill and adventure trails that could be tailored for a range of abilities, skill levels and users. The location of the ranges overlooking the coast provides the opportunity for a range of visitors to experience the great views. Trail access for the ranges would be linked to the coast and supported by the Encounter Bikeway and other local trails.

Access to the ranges land behind Victor Harbor is limited as most suitable land is within private ownership. Discussions and consultation would need to take place with landowners and the community to find innovative solutions to provide access for an outstanding contribution to the Victor Harbor and Fleurieu trail network.

Table 7. Mount Brown Trails at a site to be agreed provides an iconic descending and ascending trail experiences with views

MTB Description	Cross Country – Gravity Downhill
Difficulty Level	<p>Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient, smooth surface Downhills are not serious, long and wide Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills, and off-road bikes</p> <p>Easy with Intermediate Sections Likely to be single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface and some obstacles Downhills are not serious, long and wide Suitable for mountain bikers with moderate skills</p> <p>Intermediate Single track with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles May include steep sections Suitable for skilled mountain bikers with moderate skills</p> <p>Intermediate with Difficult Sections Suitable for competent mountain bikers, used to physically demanding terrain Expect long and variable descents and ascents Challenging and suitable with some steep climbs or descents and loose surfaces</p> <p>Difficult Suitable for experienced mountain bikers, used to physically demanding terrain Navigation and personal survival skills are highly desirable Expect long, dangerous and variable descents and ascents Challenging and suitable with long steep climbs or descents and loose surfaces Downhills are not serious</p>
Approximate Distance of trails	Approximately 15 Kilometres of trails
Trailheads	Potential entry points and car parks off Crows Nest lookout Road subject to future landowner negotiations.
Key Features	Steep valley descent trail to the coastal plain and linking to views and the Encounter Bikeway and Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail.
Lowest Elevation	5 metres Hindmarsh River Estuary
Highest Elevation	260 metres Crows Nest Road Lookout
Vertical Elevation Range	255 metres
Land Tenures	Private Land some road reserves
Description	There is no current endorsed access for mountain trails within the Brown Hill area.
Advantages	Terrain provides unrivalled opportunity for descent and ascent trails.
Disadvantages	Will require further consultation and planning to ensure sustainable access and governance arrangements

Figure 6. Signature 2 - Mount Brown Area Trails



Signature 2 - Mount Brown Trails



Signature 3 Jagger Forest Forestry SA at Inman Valley

The Jagger Forest site is on sloping ground falling 110 metres to the north into the Inman River valley from Robinson Hill creating opportunity for a range of trail types and experiences. This sites topography and soil types could enable the inclusion of mountain bike trails that are more challenging than proposed for other Victor Harbor locations and could including some more technical trails whilst also including the more popular easy and intermediate trails. Jagger Forest would contribute to an integrated Victor Harbor system designed to enable skill progression from easy trails to the more challenging trails.

ForestrySA as a multi-use forest land manager partners with key stakeholders and recognises their significant knowledge and expertise in trail development and event management. Forestry SA recognise the limitations on their resources and are committed to developing in partnership with these stakeholders a range of mountain bike trails across the Mount Lofty Ranges and the Fleurieu.

ForestrySA are supportive of future mountain bike experiences in Mt Hayfield in the Yankalilla Council area and will continue to work with the Fleurieu Mountain Bike Group on trails however at this time ForestrySA is not supportive of additional trail networks in the Jagger reserve as they do not have the resources to adequately monitor trail networks at Jagger Forest.

Jagger Forest provides the landscape suitable for range of great trails that would complete the mix of Fleurieu and Victor Harbor mountain bike experience. Any new trails must be supported by ForestrySA as the land manager and include a self-sustaining approach to governance and management. ForestrySA will review this approach should further resources become available.

Table 8. Forestry SA Jagger Forest, Second Valley Forest Reserve at Inman Valley

MTB Description	Cross Country – Gravity Downhill
Difficulty Level	
	<p>Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills, and off-road bikers</p>
	<p>Easy with Intermediate Sections Likely to be single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface and some obstacles Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for mountain bikers with mountain bikes</p>
	<p>Intermediate Single trail with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles May include steep sections Suitable for skilled mountain bikers with mountain bikes</p>
	<p>Intermediate with Difficult Sections Suitable for competent mountain bikers, used to physically demanding routes Expect large and unavoidable obstacles and features Challenging and variable with some steep climbs or descents and loose surfaces</p>
	<p>Difficult Suitable for experienced mountain bikers, used to physically demanding routes Navigation and personal survival skills are highly desirable Expect large, dangerous and unavoidable obstacles and features Challenging and variable with long steep climbs or descents and loose surfaces Some sections will be easier to walk</p>
Approximate Distance of trails	Approximately 15 Kilometres of trails
Trailheads	Entry points and car parks Robinson Hill off Hancock Road top and Prouse Road.
Key Features	The Jagger Forest (Second Valley Forest) is sloping recently harvested pine plantation site
Lowest Elevation	110 metres north western corner
Highest Elevation	220 metres Hancock Road Robinson Hill
Vertical Elevation Range	110 metres

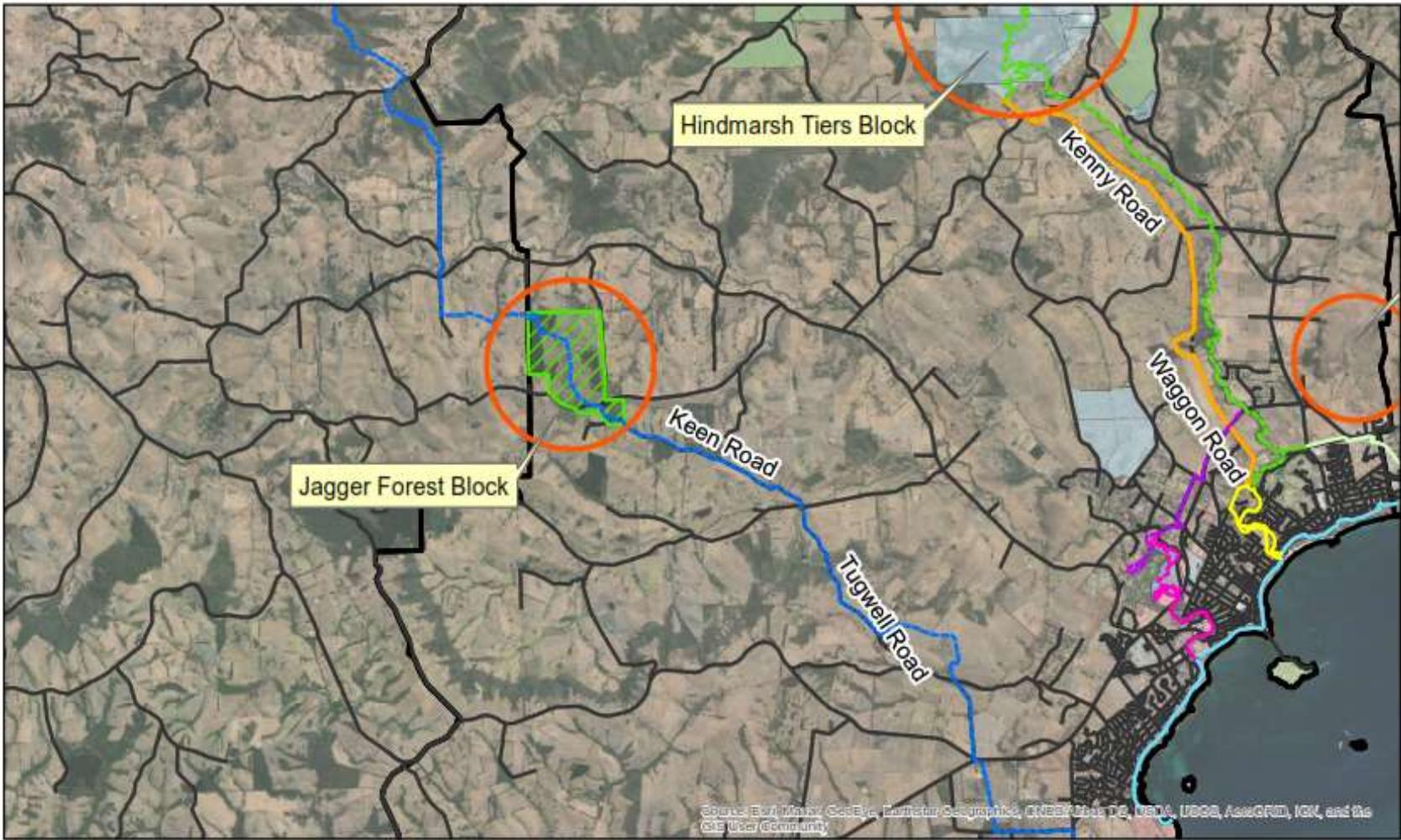
Land Tenures Forestry SA

There are no mountain formal bike trails within Jagger Forest. Existing use includes cycling (on management tracks), walking, dog walking, trail running and permitted horse riding. The Heysen Trail also traverses the forest with trail bush camping available at Robinson Hill to the north of the forest. The forest was harvested in 2020/2021. The fall from Robinson Hill on undulating land provides opportunity for a range of trail types complimenting the existing Mount Hayfield trail development and the more passive Hindmarsh Tiers experience.

Advantages Terrain and the recent harvest provide opportunity for flow trails across a range of difficulty levels. More challenging and technical trails would contribute to Victor Harbor’s mix of trails for visitors and locals. There is opportunity to permanently establish trail corridors for future build due to recent harvesting.

Disadvantages Will require approval of ForestrySA as they currently have no capacity to develop manage or coordinate any new trail systems. ForestrySA current focus is on the Mount Hayfield trail network 30 kilometres west of this forest location.

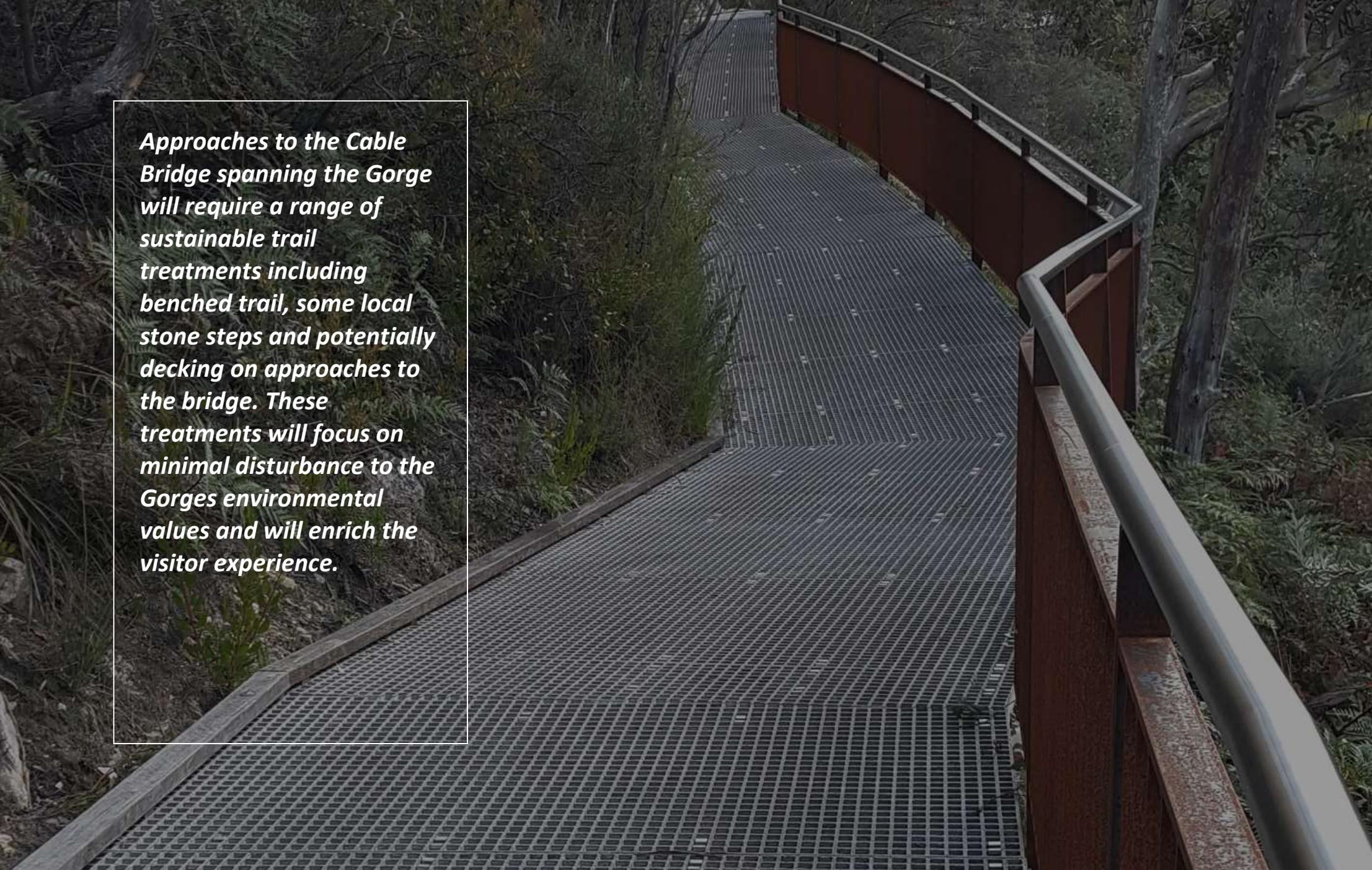
Figure 7. Signature 3 Jagger Forest Forestry SA at Inman Valley



Signature 3 - Jagger Forest with access roads and Inman Valley



Approaches to the Cable Bridge spanning the Gorge will require a range of sustainable trail treatments including benched trail, some local stone steps and potentially decking on approaches to the bridge. These treatments will focus on minimal disturbance to the Gorges environmental values and will enrich the visitor experience.



6.5 VICTOR HARBOR SUPPORTING AND LOCAL TRAILS

Supporting Trails

Hindmarsh River Trails

The Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail and extension of Hindmarsh River Trails will be a key contributor to the Victor Harbor experience. Connecting the Hindmarsh Tiers trails to Victor Harbor town, future housing developments, the Encounter Bikeway via the existing Hindmarsh River Trail, The Fleurieu Aquatic Centre and the Inman River trails by predominantly off-road shared use trails will provide quality well used experiences for locals and visitors.

The extended Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail will in the short term be accessed via quite back roads including Waggon and Kenny Roads together with existing road reserves not currently open to vehicle traffic. An outstanding future Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail would follow the river corridor upstream north of Welch Road and the Trotting Track to the Hindmarsh Tiers however as this is situated on mostly private land it will require significant consultation and goodwill.

The future Hindmarsh River Trail from Waggon Road to the coast will require placement of a shared use trail on the Welch Road reserve, crossing of the Hindmarsh River and an underpass trail under the Welch Road Bridge over the Hindmarsh River. Access is proposed along the Hindmarsh River through lots 31 & 32 Adelaide Road (Hickinbotham) between from Welch Road to the existing Hindmarsh River Trail near Greenhills Estate to the Encounter Bikeway near the Hindmarsh River Estuary.

Connecting trails are also proposed on the road reserve to Victor Harbor Road and via Strawberry Hill Road to the Council Reserve off Kleinig Road to the Aquatic Centre and from there through the Beyond Housing Development under the underpass to the Encounter Bikeway.

Table 9. Hindmarsh Tiers Connections

MTB Description	Shared use trail connecting Hindmarsh Tiers to Victor Harbor town and Fleurieu Aquatic Centre
Difficulty Level	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Very Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes</p> </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills , off-road bikes</p> </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Very Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes</p> </div> </div>
Approximate Distance of trails	Approximately 14 Kilometres of trails
Trailheads	McEwin Road
Key Features	Connecting trail from the coast to Hindmarsh Tiers mountain bike and trails network
Lowest Elevation	5 metres Encounter Bikeway at the coast
Highest Elevation	145 metres McEwin Road
Vertical Elevation Range	Approximately 140 metres
Land Tenures	Council maintained quiet roads and road reserves. Council Reserves and DEW Parks.
Description	The trail follows quiet back roads (Kenny and Waggon Roads) and connects with new subdivision on the Hindmarsh River south of Welch Road where an underpass/boardwalk will be required under the bridge. The core trail meets new subdivision land and proceeds along the Hindmarsh River on a new constructed shared use trail until it meets the existing Hindmarsh River trail which will take the user to the Hindmarsh

River Estuary and connect with the Encounter Bike Way with bike access to Victor Harbor and Goolwa. Some upgrading will be required as the existing trails are not built to suitable shared use standards and bridge connections to the Greenhills subdivision will be required. The spur trail to the Fleurieu Aquatic Centre will require construction of safe access across the Victor Harbor Road (underpass to be considered) to the Strawberry Hill Road Reserve and connect via existing trails on the reserve land. The trail will follow existing paths to the Beyond housing development and to Chiton Rocks to meet with the Encounter Bikeway.

Advantages

The existing road reserve and quiet road provides immediate options for use. Accessing through the new subdivisions provide opportunity to build fit for purpose sustainable trails.

Disadvantages

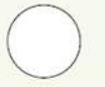
The existing quiet back roads network provides immediate access however this does not provide the very best experience. The Hindmarsh Tiers descent trail will be the unparalleled experience. A river corridor trail along the length of the Hindmarsh River would make this an exceptional shared trail experience. Further negotiation with landowners for long term trail access along the river is required.

Jagger Forest Connections

Access to Jagger Forest is limited to quiet back roads including Tugwell and Keen Roads. These roads provide suitable cycling access for locals and visitors along the route which is the current alignment for the Heysen Trail as it leaves the coast at Kings Beach.

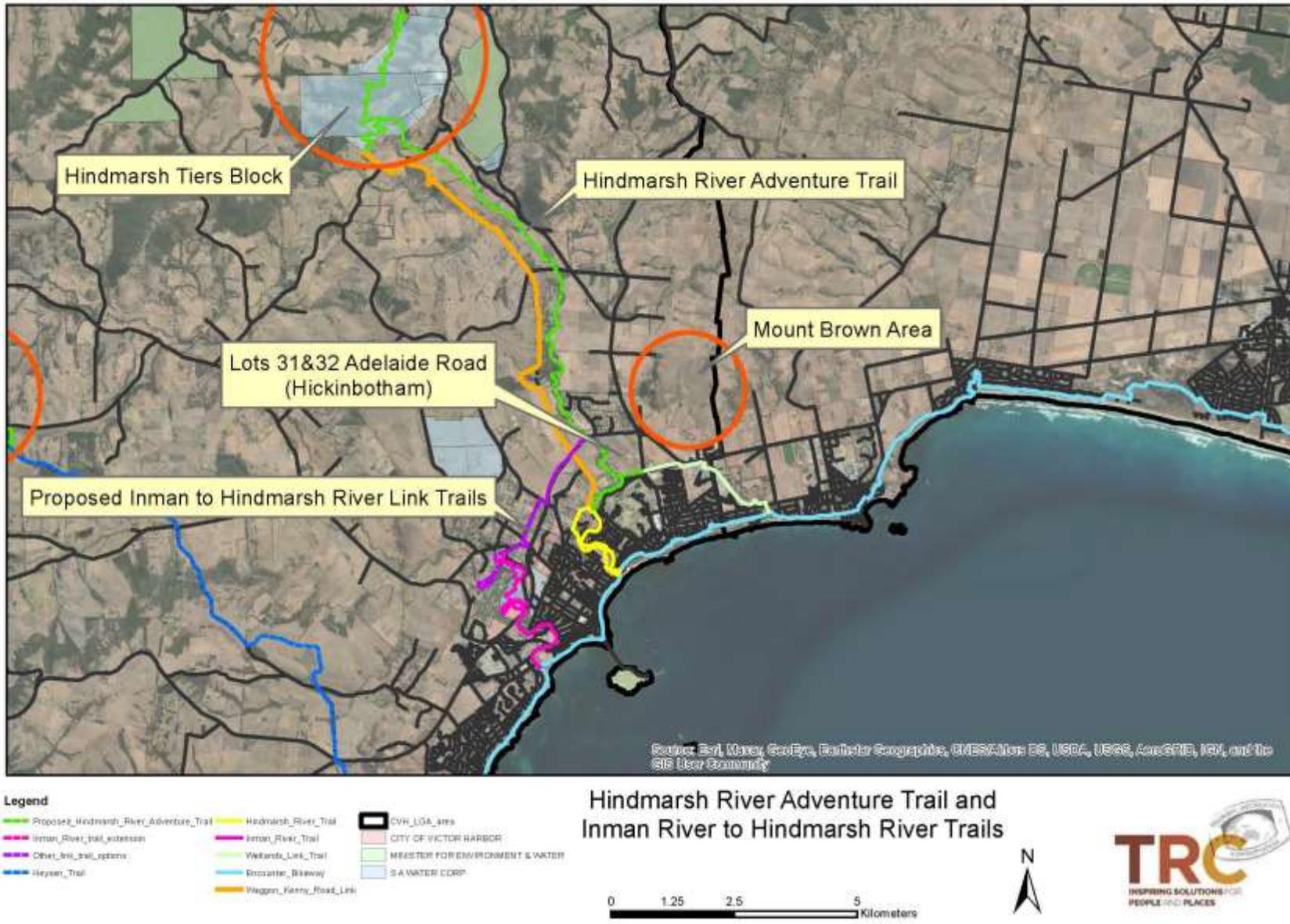
The Inman Valley Road is unsuitable for bike access as it is narrow, winding and with safety rails is considered unsafe for cyclists. The Inman Valley Road is however the most direct vehicle route to Jagger Forest for shuttles and independent access.

Table 10. Jagger Forest Connections

MTB Description	On back roads connecting Jagger Forest with Victor Harbor via Keen and Tugwell Roads and Encounter Bay
Difficulty Level	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Very Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes</p> </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills , off-road bikes</p> </div> </div> </div>
Approximate Distance of trails	Approximately 14 Kilometres of trails
Trailheads	Robinson Hill off Hancock Road
Key Features	On Road connecting from the coast at Encounter Bay to Jagger Forest future mountain bike and Trails Network
Lowest Elevation	6 metres Encounter Bikeway at the coast
Highest Elevation	216 metres Robinson Hill
Vertical Elevation Range	Approximately 200 metres
Land Tenures	Council maintained quiet roads and road reserves and crossing the Waitpinga Road to the backstreets to Encounter Bay and the Encounter Bikeway

Description	The trail follows quiet back roads and the Encounter Bay suburbs. The roads share with local traffic and the Heysen Trail.
Advantages	Most immediate and direct route not including busy, fast and hazardous Inman Valley Road.
Disadvantages	Shared road with vehicles and dust. Part of the route includes suburban roads and crosses the busy Waitpinga Road. Limited options for off road access trails.

Figure 8. Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail and Inman River to Hindmarsh River Trails



Victor Harbor Trails Section 696

This 38 hectare land section follows the Inman River floodplain between the Victor Harbor Golf Club and the SA Water Effluent Ponds, Pumping Station and the Horse Tram horse stables. A short 1.4 km walking/shared use trail is situated to the south of this land and connects to the Inman River trails via the Armstrong Road bridge. The existing Section 696 trails are popular with dog walkers, runners, walkers and mountain bike riders.

Agreement has been reached for the City of Victor Harbor to take over ownership of the Section 696 land. This enables the development of some 3 kilometres of multi-use and mountain bike trail experiences through the river corridor and floodplain to the Victor Harbor Cemetery and in the future potential links to Swains Crossing Road and the Stock Road development. Much of Section 696 is shared with the horse agistment infrastructure and training area for the Granite Island Horse Tram. The horse area limits access for walking and Mountain biking pushing trails closer to the floodplain and along the river corridor.

The floodplain by its nature is subject to flooding and the SA Government Flood Awareness Mapping indicates significant flooding of the floodplain in the 1:20 year scenario. From observations it is apparent that the river will flood the floodplain more regularly than that.⁵³ Trail development will take into account the flood potential and ensure trail users will not be at risk from floods and that the infrastructure is designed to be sustainable and robust enough to withstand flood damage.

Section 696 provides opportunity for a mostly off-road route to connect the Inman River Trails with the Hindmarsh Trails via a 3 kilometre route from the Victor Harbor Cemetery and utilising options such as via Henderson Road, Finniss Road, Fuller West Road and on the road reserve on the north western side of Armstrong Road and Welch Road to connect with Waggon Road.

Section 696 will be a valuable contributor to Victor Harbor Trails providing exciting trail experiences for locals and visitors in a riverine park like setting.

⁵³ Flood Awareness Map - Home (waterconnect.sa.gov.au)

Table 11. Victor Harbor Trails Section 696, Inman River Trails and connections to the Hindmarsh River Trails

MTB Description	Single track, shared use and loop trails through the Inman River floodplain that connect to the Inman River trails and the Victor Harbor Bike Park. To the north the trails connect near the Victor Harbor Cemetery to Finniss Road with connections to the Hindmarsh River and Hindmarsh Tiers trails.
Difficulty Level	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Very Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills , off-road bikes</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Easy with Intermediate Sections Likely to be single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface and some obstacles Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for mountain bikers with mountain bikes</p> </div> </div>
Approximate Distance of trails	Approximately: 6 Kilometres of trails within Section 696, 4 kilometres of trail to connect to the Hindmarsh River and 1.5 kilometres to connect with the Victor Harbor Bike Park.
Trailheads	Canton Place
Key Features	Inman River floodplain loops and off-road connections with Inman River trails, the Bike Park and links via quiet roads and road reserves to Hindmarsh River and Hindmarsh Tiers trails.
Lowest Elevation	6 metres river valley
Highest Elevation	10 metres Canton Road and 76 metres Fuller Road West
Vertical Elevation Range	Approximately 4 metres on floodplain and Inman River Trails. 70 metres across the range to Hindmarsh River via back roads.
Land Tenures	Council reserves and road reserves
Description	Trail loops within the Inman River flood plain present pleasant riding and walking within a park like setting. Inman River trails are comfortable rides for a range of users.

Access to Hindmarsh River involves quiet back roads and the Armstrong Road Reserve with separation from fast traffic on purpose built shared trails.

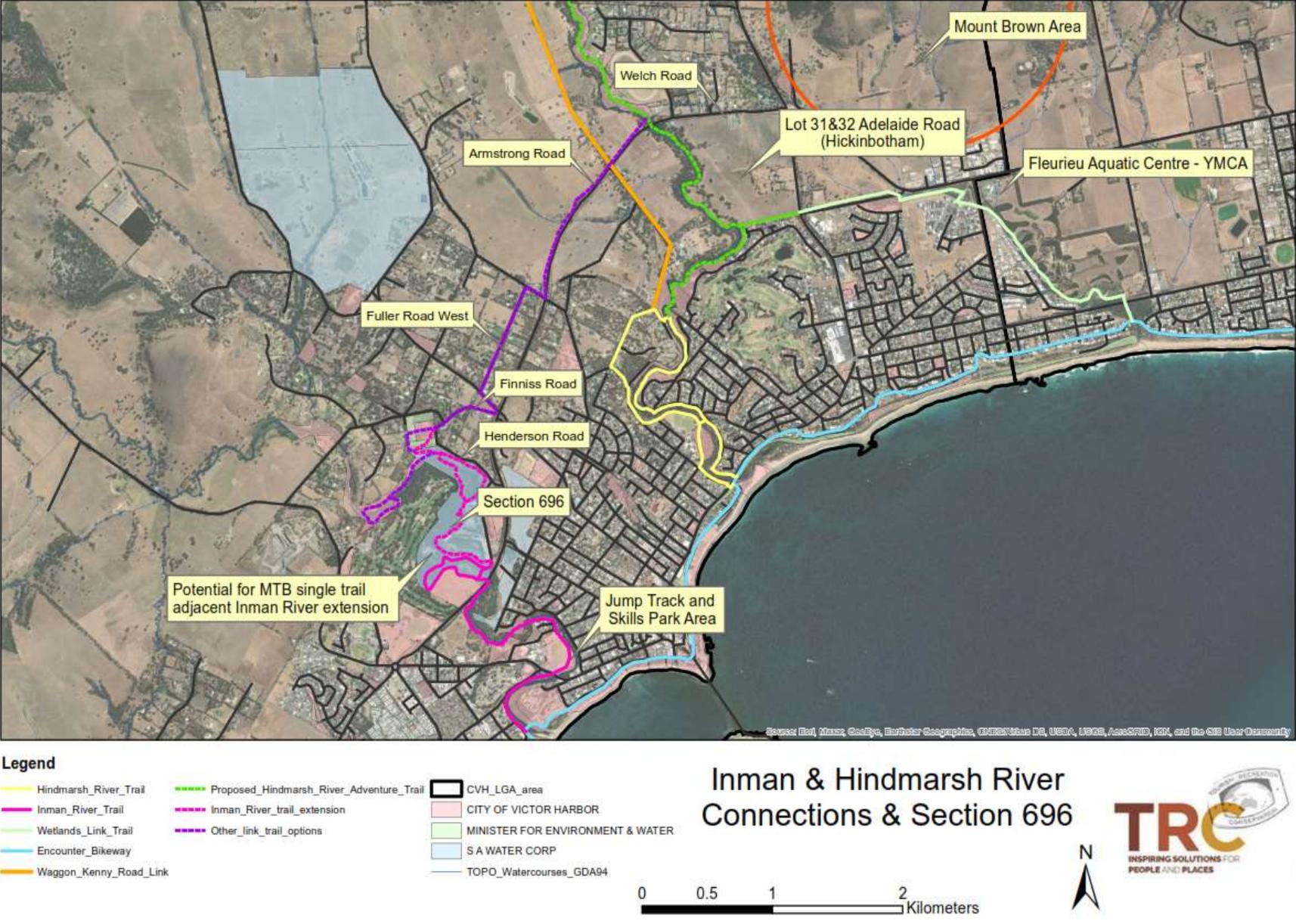
Advantages

Pleasant entry level and enjoyable riding within the floodplain complemented by connections with the Bike Park and the coast and to the North the Hindmarsh River trails.

Disadvantages

The existing road network provides some of the access to the north and towards Hindmarsh River. The floodplain by its very name floods creating access and sustainability issues. The use for horse agistment and grazing causes access issues and pushes the trail closer to the river which can increase the flooding issues.

Figure 9. Victor Harbor MTB Strategy Inman & Hindmarsh River Area and Connections to Section 696 Trails



Inman River Trails

The Inman River Trails connect the existing and proposed Section 696 trails with the Encounter Bikeway at Kent Reserve and provide a valuable connection with the Victor Harbor Oval Bike Park. The trail follows the Inman River on a shared use path.

Victor Harbor Bike Park

The Bike Park at the Victor Harbor Oval has provided enjoyment and skill development for generations of Victor Harbor kids. The site has a number of roughly developed earth jumps and concrete features. The central location is next to one of the two main sports ovals, adjacent to the Victor Harbor High School and on the Inman River Trail. The Bike Park provides a great venue for further development as a Bike Skills Park. Future development of an asphalt pump track, upgraded jump track area and skill development features will encourage mountain bike skill progression and will make this a valuable contribution to local and visitor experiences and in particular children and youth.

International and Australian experience indicate the popularity of local skills parks and pump tracks with these facilities in strong demand. For example the majority of towns and cities in UK have at least one pump track.⁵⁴ The Victor Harbor Oval site is ideally located as a pump track site to replace the current ageing infrastructure.

Table 12. Victor Harbor Bike Park

MTB Description	A local Bike Park where improvements in the facilities will encourage activity, cycling skill development and progression. Addition of a pump track will complete the Victor Harbor mountain bike experience and be a significant attraction for local riders.
Difficulty Level	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Very Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes</p> </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills, off-road bikes</p> </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Easy with Intermediate Sections Likely to be single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface and some obstacles Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for mountain bikers with mountain bikes</p> </div> </div>
Approximate Distance of trails	Approximately: 1.5 kilometres of trail, skills park and pump track
Trailheads	Victor Harbor Oval
Key Features	Pump Track, skills park and introductory trails.
Lowest Elevation	N/A
Highest Elevation	N/A
Vertical Elevation Range	N/A
Land Tenures	Council Reserve
Description	Asphalt pump track and constructed skill park. The skill park will replicate mountain biking conditions and introduce riders to a range of trail difficulty levels and prepare them for riding trails
Advantages	Local to the heart of Victor Harbor and next to the Victor Harbor Oval, Camping Parks, Schools and where families can meet and be involved with a range of activities.
Disadvantages	Limited area for further develop of trails.

⁵⁴ Phil Saxena Velosolutions UK/Australia 2021

Rosetta Head (The Bluff Trails)

A small 2.0 Hectare unsanctioned mountain bike area has been established in the saddle below the Bluff (Rosetta Head). Six interconnected intermediate and easy trails have been developed in this area.

The site provides one of the few local, purpose-built mountain bike trail areas within the Victor Harbor Council area. It is used mostly by younger riders due to its location close to town. The riding experiences are limited and due to the friable nature of the granite landscape there is limited scope for extension of the riding. There is also some risk of conflict with other trail users as the Bluff is popular with walkers runners and dog walkers.

Further unsanctioned trails have been built on the south-eastern exposed side of the Bluff providing cycling access to the top and linking to a downhill experience on the existing eroded walking trails.

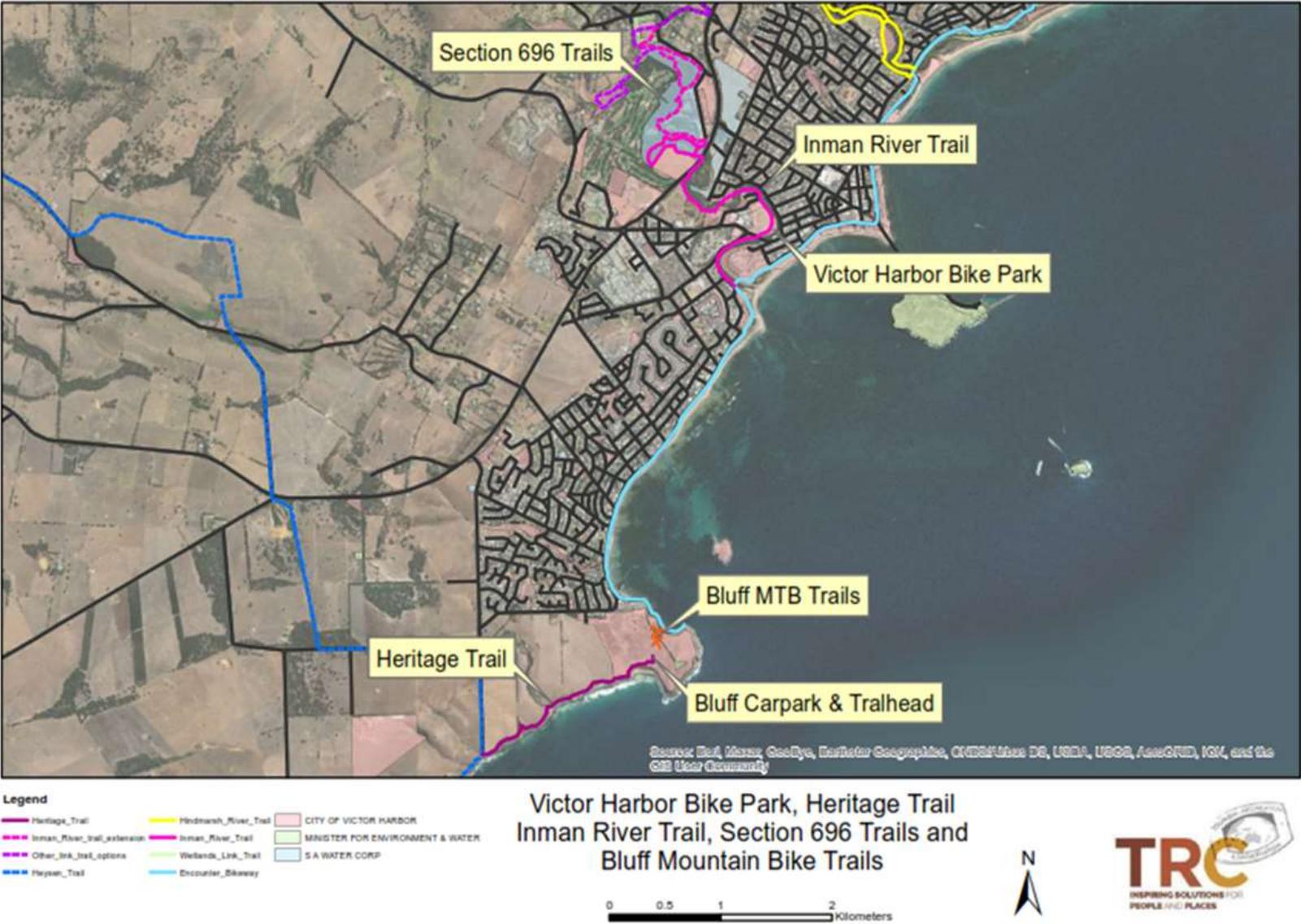
This site is the most adjacent mountain bike destination to the town centre. The importance of having mountain bike trail “close to home” is backed up by international research⁵⁵ and through comment by respondents to the YourSay trails survey undertaken as part of the Strategy development.

Table 13. Rosetta Head (The Bluff Trails)

MTB Description	Six interconnected (unsanctioned) intermediate and easy trails have been developed in this area. The site provides one of the few sites with local purpose-built mountain bike trails within the Victor Harbor Council area. It is used mostly by younger riders due to its location close to town.
Difficulty level	<div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Very Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes</p> </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills , off-road bikes</p> </div> </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div> <p>Easy with Intermediate Sections Likely to be single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface and some obstacles Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for mountain bikers with mountain bikes</p> </div> </div>
Approximate Distance of trails	6 trails within the 1.5 kilometres of trail
Trailheads	The Bluff Car Park
Key Features	Easy to intermediate trails within a scenic location and close to town to with riding access on the Encounter Bikeway.
Lowest Elevation	6 m
Highest Elevation	50 m
Vertical Elevation Range	44 m
Land Tenures	Crown Land under the Care and Control of Council
Description	A range of short single track trails in the saddle between the Bluff, housing development and the Bluff Ring Road. The trails weave between the trees.
Advantages	Close to the heart of Victor Harbor.
Disadvantages	Limited area for further development of trails. Temptation to extend the trails and ride off the Bluff which is problematic due to erosion and conflict with other users. Will require inclusion within strategic planning for the Bluff through a master planning project reflecting future use and users.

⁵⁵ Phil Saxena Velosolutions UK/Australia 2021

Figure 10. Victor Harbor Bike Park, Heritage Trail, Inman River Trail, Section 696 Trails and Bluff Mountain Bike Trails



Encounter Bike Way

Not technically a Mountain bike Trail but an important Regional Trail and a connecting trail providing future coastal access between the Hindmarsh and Inman Rivers, the Bluff, Alexandrina Council and other trails including the Heysen Trail.

Local Trails

The Strategy seek to ensure there is a good balance of trails that provide the very best community benefit. This can be achieved by providing sustainable linking trails that connect users to future mountain bike networks and complement the existing Encounter Bike Way. The connecting local trails have been developed over time generally as walking trails but with some becoming informal shared use trails used by cyclists, disability scooters and prams and strollers.

A presentation of proposed Lead, Supporting, Connecting and Local Trails have been incorporated in maps linked to trail sections.



When asked what would make you get more involved in mountain biking, Your Say Survey most popular responses were; trails close to Victor Harbor, access, availability and time, better maps, more trails closer to home, having to work less and more places to ride.



7 Benefits of the Strategy

The investment and development of mountain biking in Victor Harbor will be popular with local people and visitors. Discussions with the community indicated that there is a serious lack of mountain biking opportunity in Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu. Currently locals travel to Kuitpo Forest as the closest mountain bike trails. Local trails will be attractive and will seek to retain locals here to ride and also to live.

Mountain biking plays an important part in community health and wellbeing by improving the liveability of communities and providing prospective visitors with a reason to visit and stay. They also generate economic and commercial benefits and opportunities for new jobs within the visitor economy.

Analysis of the potential impact of an increase of cycling to Victor Harbor Council area indicates that targeted future trail development combined with new infrastructure at Hindmarsh Falls has the potential to introduce more than 20,000 new visitors per annum to the local area (dependent on the scale of investment) which would grow over forthcoming years.

As examples

More than 31,000 riders visited La Larr Ba Gauwa Park in Victoria in its first 18 months of opening. This visitation provided a huge economic boost to the region, with visitors spending an estimated \$1.6 million in the first 12 months.⁵⁶

The opening of the ForestrySA Fox Creek Bike Park saw a rapid return to Mountain bike riding with some 40,000 riders visiting the park in the first six months after opening following repairs after the 2019 bushfires.⁵⁷

The opening of the Fleurieu Peninsula's Myponga Reservoir reflects the current popularity of trail activities with 98,262 visitors undertake cycling, walking, running and kayaking from its opening in April 2019, to the end of May 2021.⁵⁸

Dwellingup in Western Australia sought to “position Dwellingup as a trails destination of national significance” and to revitalise a declining town with a new town image and regional direction. Through a range of strategic planning and business analysis the community and the Shire obtained \$12.86 Million from a range of sources to invest in adventure trails and a Visitor Centre Precinct. The focus was on adventure for everyone with brands including *Wild at Heart* and *Where Trails Meet*. The success was reflected in Jobs created through investment and tourism growth including 50 direct & 156 indirect jobs during construction and after completion 55 direct & 28 indirect jobs.⁵⁹

7.1 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND REGIONAL STIMULUS

Increased visitation and expenditure in the region as a result of investment in the Victor Harbor trail network are likely to attract further investment.

The trail network presents an opportunity for entrepreneurs to develop products and services to meet the needs of visiting riders. This could include transport, merchandise, camping and accommodation, food and beverages, and other ancillary services.

There are existing operators in the region that will also stand to benefit considerably from the increase in visitation. They are likely to capitalise on this opportunity and provide additional services, products and experiences for the trail users.

Development, promotion and branding of Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu as an exciting mountain bike location will have positive benefits as experienced in other localities such as Northeast Tasmania.

Future trail activities, events and experiences are likely to encourage a younger cohort to visit, establish businesses, relocate as working and earning citizens or invest in the City creating opportunities that drive a more sustainable future and encourage residents to stay.

⁵⁶ Victorian Government Media Release. 2019. Mountain bikers flock to Mount Alexander region

⁵⁷ ForestrySA 2021

⁵⁸ Department for Environment and Water 2021

⁵⁹ Dwellingup *Wild of Heart* Shire of Murray Western Australia 2021

Table 14. Victor Harbor Opportunity

OPPORTUNITY	DELIVERY
Bike shops and repairs	Located especially near trailheads. They may not sell many bikes, but accessories, consumables, repairs etc. are critical for visiting mountain bikers.
Shuttle services	In areas with good vertical elevation and gravity trails, riders will happily pay for comfortable and reliable transport back to the top of the hill or arrange rides to the three Signature trail network and to other Fleurieu trails
Coffee	Bike riders of all disciplines love a good coffee shop. The closer to the trailhead, the better.
Bike hire	Most core mountain bikers are inclined to bring their own bikes, but there is still a good market segment of non-core riders looking to hire good quality mountain bikes and E Bikes.
Guided tours and mountain bike tuition	Can be an excellent way for non-core mountain bikers to try the sport and be engaged in skill progression. Victor Harbor has a strong School and School Camp culture and schools and businesses are currently seeking new experiences. Solo travellers, small and large group activities including team building also has an emerging presence and seeking mountain bike guiding or bike hire opportunities.
Bike Friendly services	Accommodation, cafes/coffee shops, places for bike service and repair.
Accommodation	Mountain bikers cover a wide spectrum of incomes and have wide ranging expectations for accommodation. Anyone that can cater towards cycling someway in their accommodation offering will have a competitive advantage. This can be as simple as providing secure bike lock up facilities. The Hindmarsh Tiers provides a setting for a range of new accommodation linked to Mountain Biking and trail activity including the Signature Adventure Ride to the coast and the Heysen Trail.
Food and Beverages	There appears to be a growing overlap with boutique food and beverage tourism segments. Breweries and wineries are popular with mountain bikers, with the increasing establishment of gourmet trails in picturesque and rural settings.
Groceries and other travel needs	During travel, visitors require basic grocery and sundries. There are opportunities to provide on trail or close to trail and trail hub conveniences.
Medial, physio and massage services	Provision to ensure ongoing health and wellbeing benefits for riders, particularly those on holidays who wish to incorporate adventure and relaxation into their travels.
First aid and on-trail support assistance	Similar to on-trail first aid and operational support provided at ski fields, there are opportunities during peak seasons and events to offer this level of support on mountain bike trails.
Other entertainment services and or experiences	For many riders, the trail is only one component of the overall experience. Riders are also looking for complementary activities and experiences that become a part of the overall journey. In addition, during events or when family and friends are travelling to support core riders providing additional activities and experiences for non-riders will keep them engaged in the region for longer.

7.2 COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

An economic impact assessment of the proposed Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Trail development was developed with modelling based on estimates of annual users of the trails and other assumptions utilised in quantifying spending in the region. The economic impact assess is summarised here with the full analysis available on the City of Victor Harbor website www.victor.sa.gov.au

This report provides an economic impact assessment of the proposed Victor Harbor MTB development. The results are indicative of the potential benefits from the development and operation of the trail network.

The modelling is based on estimates of annual users/rides (in different categories); and other assumptions utilised in quantifying spending in the areas adjacent to the trail segments. The trail network covers 2 local government areas, Victoria Harbor LGA and Yankalilla LGA.

The economic impacts of the trail arise from:

- spending by these users/visitors in the towns adjacent to the trail and other spending in the broader region
- health benefits of active recreation activities
- and a notional value of the trail to individual users.

Visitors from outside the region (particularly overnight visitors/users) generate significant expenditure covering: food and beverage; accommodation (for overnight stayers); recreation and other services; and transport.

The economic impact analysis has been undertaken by Michael Connell & Associates (MCA) - economic consultants.

The Trail development will generate substantial positive economic benefits for the areas adjacent, during the construction phase and in the operations phase.

⁶⁰ Estimated development cost, TRC June 2021

Trail Use & Regional Spending

For the Medium Case (the most likely case), rides increase from 22,000 in year 1 to around 33,000 in Year 10. With the proximity to the Adelaide metro area, a major component of users are day visitors (including local residents of the two LGAs). Overnight visitors are from further afield and include regional visitors, interstate visitors and some international visitors.

For sensitivity analysis a Low Case (conservative) and a High Case (less likely) are also modelled.

The combination of user numbers by type, average spending and average length of stay is used to estimate annual spending (in constant 2021 dollars) in the region. For the Medium Case, total spending in the region by trail users increases from \$3.316 million in year 1 to \$5.298 million in Year 10.

Construction Phase Jobs

A significant number of jobs and an increase in regional income will be generated during the construction phase of the project. Construction cost for the trail, including project management costs is estimated at \$6.655 million.⁶⁰

A total of 28.7 FTE jobs (23.8 direct jobs and 4.9 indirect/induced jobs) would be generated during the construction period. The direct jobs comprise 20.5 jobs in on-site construction and 3.3 jobs in materials/equipment supply.

Operations Phase Jobs

The operations phase economic impacts of the trail are driven by the expenditure of visitors/users in towns adjacent to the trail and in the broader region. MCA's regional economic model is used to estimate the employment and income impacts of the trail. The ongoing growth in user numbers will support an increasing number of jobs in the region.

- The operation of the trails would generate a total of 15.7 FTE jobs in year 1 increasing to 24.9 jobs in year 10
- Of the total jobs in year 10, day visitors would account for 6.3 FTE jobs, and overnight visitors for 18.6 FTE jobs.

On a sector basis, the jobs (FTE- direct and indirect) generated by trail users are mainly concentrated in:

- accommodation
- food and beverage
- recreational services and other visitor products and services
- transport (including shuttles)
- other retail.

Health Benefits

A report by Marsden Jacobs Associates indicates that exercise of cycling/active walking in Victorian Parks has net healthcare benefits (in terms of avoided health costs) of \$15 per hour in terms of a reduction in lifetime health costs (adjusted for injury).⁶¹ For this analysis MCA have used a conservative figure of \$10 per hour and an average time on the trails of 4 hours.

Healthcare benefits are measured as the net (adjusted for injury) avoided costs to the national healthcare system (private costs and government costs) attributable to nature-based outdoor activity.

For the analysis of the trails, we have assumed an average cycle period of 4 hours per day and the health benefits are calculated for local, regional and metropolitan users.

⁶¹ Victoria's Nature-Based Outdoor Economy- Key Estimates and Recommendations, Marsden Jacobs Associates, January 2016 P10 & 21.

⁶² The trail covers 2 LGAs Victor Harbor LGA and Yankalilla LGA. Benefits are based on the share of regional visitors that Victor Harbor LGA represents. Victor Harbor accounts for 71% of visitors and Yankalilla for 29% . The 71% share has been applied to the total benefits to estimate those which are attributed to Victor Harbor LGA for the benefit/cost analysis.

- This indirect health benefit is estimated at \$9.862 million over the 10-year period.

Benefit/Cost Analysis

A benefit cost analysis shows that for the total project a 7% discount* rate (appropriate for a trail project) yields a positive Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 3.0. Meaning for every dollar spent there is a benefit of \$3.00 over a 10 year period.

In addition, an analysis was undertaken for the costs to be funded by Victor Harbor Council as part of the total project. For a 7% discount rate the Council's investment in the project yields a BCR of 5.2.⁶²

BCR Total Project Funding

Table 15 below show the benefits and costs of the operations of the trails over a 10-year period. The benefits are measured by:

- The increase in regional income generated by trail users over a 10-year period; the estimated health benefits; and the user value
- The costs include construction costs, and asset maintenance costs.

For the comparison, the present value of the benefits is calculated using 3 discount rates (4%, 7% and 10%)⁶³. The capital costs cover the funding of the whole project.

⁶³ *Discounting is used to measure the difference between present values and future values. The difference between present and future values makes it difficult to compare costs and benefits over time, and it can affect the outcome of policy analysis. Policymakers can use discounting to adjust for this difference and ensure that the costs and benefits of a policy are compared consistently.

Table 15. Benefits and Cost Analysis –Total Trails Project - 10 Year Period (\$2021 prices)⁶⁴

Trails Development: 10 Year Operations Period (Total Project)	Discount Rate 4%	Discount Rate 7%	Discount Rate 10%
Construction Costs (\$) (2021 prices)	\$6,664,400	\$6,664,400	\$6,664,400
Costs - Asset Maintenance (2% per year- 10 years)	\$1,332,880	\$1,332,880	\$1,332,880
Total Capital Costs	\$7,997,280	\$7,997,280	\$7,997,280
Regional Benefits (increase in regional income generated)	\$19,627,519	\$19,627,519	\$19,627,519
Indirect Benefits (health benefits)	\$9,862,449	\$9,862,449	\$9,862,449
Direct Benefits - User Value (shadow user price)	\$3,149,188	\$3,149,188	\$3,149,188
Total Benefits (2020 Prices)	\$32,639,156	\$32,639,156	\$32,639,156
Total Benefits (\$) Present Value	\$27,048,860	\$23,932,512	\$21,306,215
Net Present Value (\$)	\$19,051,580	\$15,935,232	\$13,308,935
NPV/ Costs	2.4	2.0	1.7
Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)	3.4	3.0	2.7
<Total Benefits: Present Value/Total Capital Costs>			

⁶⁴ MCA modelling & estimates, June 2021. Note: Direct benefits are the value to users of a facility; usually this is measure by user payments/fees. In this case there are no user charges for the trail and a shadow price has been applied (\$25 per ride) as a measure of user value. Therefore, benefits are the increase in regional income generated by visitor spending, the health benefits of exercise activity and the user value.

Victor Harbor Council Funding

The following table and chart show the benefits and costs of the operations of the trail over a 10-year period.

- **Costs:** are only those to be funded by Victor Harbor Council as part of the total project.
- **Benefits:** The trail covers 2 LGAs Victoria Harbor LGA and Yankalilla LGA. Benefits are based on the share of regional visitors that Victor Harbor LGA represents. Victor Harbor accounts for 71% of visitors and Yankalilla for 29%.⁶⁵ The 71% share has been applied to the total benefits to estimate those which are attributed to Victor Harbor LGA for the benefit/cost analysis.

Table 16. Benefits and Cost Analysis –Victor Harbor Council Component - 10 Year Period (\$2021 Prices)⁶⁶

Trails Development: 10 Year Operations Period (Victor Harbor Council Component)	Discount Rate 4%	Discount Rate 7%	Discount Rate 10%
Construction Costs (\$) (2021 prices)	\$2,756,600	\$2,756,600	\$2,756,600
Costs - Asset Maintenance (2% per year- 10 years)	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Total Capital Costs	\$3,256,600	\$3,256,600	\$3,256,600
Regional Benefits (increase in regional income generated)	\$14,001,869	\$14,001,869	\$14,001,869
Indirect Benefits (health benefits)	\$7,035,669	\$7,035,669	\$7,035,669
Direct Benefits - User Value (shadow user price)	\$2,246,566	\$2,246,566	\$2,246,566
Total Benefits (2020 Prices)	\$23,284,104	\$23,284,104	\$23,284,104
Total Benefits (\$) Present Value	\$19,296,101	\$17,072,963	\$15,199,416
Net Present Value (\$)	\$16,039,501	\$13,816,363	\$11,942,816
NPV/ Costs	4.9	4.2	3.7
Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)	5.9	5.2	4.7
<Total Benefits: Present Value/Total Capital Costs>			

⁶⁵ TRA Local Government Profiles , 2020 for the two LGAs.

⁶⁶ MCa modelling & estimates, June 2021. Note: Direct benefits are the value to users of a facility; usually this is measure by user payments/fees. In this case there are no user charges for the trail and a shadow price has been applied (\$25 per ride) as a measure of user value. Therefore, benefits are the increase in regional income generated by visitor spending, the health benefits of exercise activity and the user value.

8 Effective Governance and Management

This section provides a discussion on governance, why it is important and what is required to ensure a successful mountain bike future for Victor Harbor.

8.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

In reviewing successful mountain bike destinations, clear, effective governance is one of the central pillars that helps the destination operate effectively and become internationally recognised.

An effective governance model will be required for the Victor Harbor experience if it is to become a successful mountain bike destination.

The most successful management models for trail networks across Australia and New Zealand have the following characteristics:

- Governance and accountability is clear and simple to initiate and administer over the longer term
- The strengths and expertise offered by each partner in the model are recognised and the preferred model allocates responsibilities and authority accordingly
- The visitor experience and presentation of the trail network are substantially improved or continually improving, and the new model facilitates commercial tourism positioning, product development and marketing
- The trails are supported by a range of funding sources with a revenue raising mechanism to enhance cash flow to enable self-generated investment into facilities, assets and services

- An effective control environment is in place to reduce key risks (to staff, volunteers and visitors) and each agency's operations are not adversely affected (i.e. there is no dilution of effectiveness)
- The benefits of the new model are visible to the community and it is inclusive of user and community groups.

8.2 FEATURES OF EFFECTIVE TRAIL GOVERNANCE

Clear, committed and skilled governance entity

Trails that realise their potential and operate sustainably over time tend to have governance entities with:

- a clear mandate for trail development and provision of leadership and vision
- a clear statement of roles and responsibilities of the various parties involved in the governance structure and in management tasks
- the skills and experience relevant to leadership and effective decision-making related to the trail and governance tasks
- arrangements/agreements at an organisational level with any agencies tasked with trail management and maintenance.

Effective trail planning

Strategic planning by the trail governance entity for development and operation of the trail over time is important to provide a consistent direction, identify objectives, provide strategies to address issues and achieve objectives, identify investment needs and define roles and responsibilities. Where trails are developed in stages dependent on the availability of funds, a strategic plan, master plan or business plan will provide clarity on future funding needs.

Clear coordination function

Where trail governance and management involve multiple partners, there needs to be clear allocation of coordination responsibility. There needs to be an organisation, group or person that can drive an integrated and consistent approach to trail management, follow up on tasks and planning priorities, and report to the governance entity on progress.

People resources dedicated to management

Trail management requires people resources to provide:

- executive support to, and implement the decisions of, the governance body (whatever its structure) oversee implementation of actions in trail plans
- coordinate activities by other agencies and stakeholders.

Adequate resources for trail operations

Operating a trail entails a host of tasks that impinge on land management and may include:

- infrastructure maintenance and repair (trail surfaces, signage, parking areas, amenities, waste management)
- ensuring trails are performing to the intended classification or difficulty levels
- environmental management – erosion and runoff control, vegetation management, weed and pest control, significant species protection and fire management which will have associated legislative requirements
- emergency management – emergency access provision, issue of emergency notices (such as for fire, flood) and trail closures
- visitor management – overseeing compliance with any use requirements, management of trail events.

⁶⁷ <https://www.sthelensmtbtrails.com.au>

Ongoing funding

The lack of funding and a high reliance on government grants has characterised the development of many trails in Australia. Trail development often occurs in a 'stop-start' sequence dependent on successful grant applications and in some cases, there has been limited provision of funds for future management and maintenance, leading to a lack of adequate maintenance or in some cases a heavy reliance on volunteers.

Stakeholder and community partnerships

The mechanisms used for involving the community, business and tourism stakeholders in trail development and visitor experiences vary widely and include:

- representation on governance boards, steering or advisory groups
- coordination of groups such as a Fleurieu Mountain Bike Group
- friends groups, which serve as a focus for community stewardship, volunteering and donations
- liaison with local user and health groups and organisations to develop opportunities for local people, health and exercise initiatives and events
- schemes to encourage tourism operators to provide trail-related products and services – examples include the St Helens MTB Trail Network Trails Ambassador Program⁶⁷, Bibbulmun Track Foundation's Walker Friendly Business Program and the Queenstown Trails Trust's Official Partners Program.

Government policies, plans and programs

Supportive government environments that encourage and support trails and identify trail investment priorities have been important for the funding of trail development and management. Ideally, trail governance entities need to have the skills and resources to leverage such potential opportunities offered by a supportive Government environment in applying for grant funding.

Marketing, promotion and experience development

Understanding a trail's current and potential local and visitor markets is an important part of trail business – it assists promoting a trail to, and developing the right products and services for, the people most likely to be attracted to the trail. Most trails will involve a combination of local and visitor markets.

Monitoring and evaluation frameworks

Monitoring and evaluation are essential elements of good governance and good management, but ones often overlooked. Elements that may need to be monitored include:

- visitor numbers and expenditure patterns to determine the cost effectiveness and profitability of the trail hub/destination
- types of visitor – are the markets targeted responding to the information and types of experiences (including trail classifications) offered?
- visitor satisfaction including areas for improvement of the products, services and experiences had in the destination (these can be periodic)
- environmental performance – is the trail development supporting strong environmental stewardship or is it having some consequence to strong environmental performance on site?
- how is the trail supporting good economic outcomes in the business and broader community surrounding the hub or destination?

8.3 DIFFERENT MODELS OF MANAGEMENT

There is no one governance model that suits every destination and each model has its advantages and disadvantages. The models fall into three broad categories:

Option 1: Sole Agency Management

This model essentially provides for the one authority to utilise the land they are individually responsible for or licenced to use for trail development and use. There is no sharing of accountability and user groups are allowed or supported to volunteer their services. This model applies to the mountain bike trails generally built on one land tenure, and not involving community or business directly (and in some cases indirectly).

In this example, marketing is generally undertaken by the agency although some external marketing through mountain bike clubs or third-party websites such as Trail Forks may occur.

Visitor servicing is also generally directly undertaken by the management agency although in some cases, this may fall to the local clubs who are permitted to use the land for mountain biking purposes.

Option 2: A Public/Private Partnership Structure

This model would see a greater role for user groups in a partnership with Local Government. This model provides for the land manager to focus on core business (parks and reserves and Council operations) and remain a partner in the development of the trail network. Several variations to this model can occur including the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the expanded roles of Trust models and reducing the number of authorities involved through contracts or other models.

If a partnership is the appropriate model – there are several mechanisms in which this can occur. These are broadly described as:

An MOU

Generally applied to less formal arrangements where coordination and sharing tend to be the higher order functions for the partnership. This model can best be applied when one dominant land manager occurs. For example, if 70% of all trails are in Forest, and 30% is Victor Harbor, an MOU may be developed to allow one partner to manage with support and input from other partners.

An Incorporated Association

Incorporated Associations are created and administered under the ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991. They must have a minimum membership, become a legal person that can enter into contracts and can sue or be sued.

This form of partnership has advantages and disadvantages. Incorporated Associations are usually only used in complex situations where land managers, trail users, governments and businesses seek to develop a formal partnership. It can also bind members to a set of rules commonly known as a constitution.

Delegation and Volunteerism

This model applies to land managers who are comfortable delegating the running, operations, maintenance or other elements of the trail destination to a voluntary group. In some instances, these are established through formal agreements. The trails must be free to the community and the club must be affiliated with Mountain Bike Australia (MTBA).

Option 3: Private Arrangements

This model would potentially see one entity take management control of the trails, raises the necessary funding to operate, market and maintain the trails and puts management control and authority in one entity. This usually occurs on private land.

Appendix C provides examples of some trail governance arrangements under each of the categories.

Criteria for determining the right model for the City of Victor Harbor

Trail managers and developers have a range of options to consider when developing the most appropriate governance arrangements for their trails. The following questions may help the City of Victor Harbor and its key stakeholders consider the best model for their circumstance, noting that most mountain bike developments have their own nuances to be considered.

The questions to be answered are:

- Does the model provide the simplest and clearest governance for the land tenure and purpose of the trail destination?
- Are the accountabilities clear for the land manager and entity governing the users?
- Is the proposal legal and allowed for under SA Legislation, regulation and policy?
- Does the proposed model maximise the partnership opportunities with other organisations where it adds value?
- Will the new model provide the optimal visitor servicing for the markets chosen?
- Does the model maximise the commercial viability of the proposed mountain bike hub, noting the need for ongoing maintenance and income for growth?
- Does the model allow for community input and engagement and does it allow for community volunteerism?
- Does the model reduce duplication and uncertainty?
- Does the model provide a suitable mechanism for managing risk including safety?

Answering the questions will enable managers and stakeholders to work logically through the process of determination of the best model for their circumstances.

Working towards a preferred model of management

The recommended model for governance of the Victor Harbour mountain bike trail network recognises the significant land managers in particular The Department of Environment and Water (DEW), Forestry SA and The City of Victor Harbor.

The City of Victor Harbor owns and has Care and Control of significant land which includes important trails and land that contribute to this Strategy. ForestrySA as a multi-use forest land manager partners with key stakeholders and recognises their significant knowledge and expertise in trail development and event management. Forestry SA recognise the limitations on their resources and are committed to developing in partnership with these stakeholders a range of mountain bike trails across the Mount Lofty Ranges and the Fleurieu.

Forestry SA support the inclusion of Jagger Forest in the mix of Fleurieu and Victor Harbor mountain bike trails, however it is limited by a lack of resources to manage any future operations at Jagger Forest. This includes managing community groups, therefore until the agency has more resources Jagger Forest will not proceed.

DEW will be managing and maintaining future land in the Hindmarsh Tiers and any future trails together in partnership with any community interest groups associated with trail development and management and environmental restoration.

The City of Victor Harbor will be responsible for the management of land that is currently under its care and control together with parcels of land that will be acquired from time to time include land along the Inman River corridor and resulting from arrangements for parklands, trails and open space negotiated within future land subdivisions and related to this Strategy. Trails can be placed

adjacent to and on quiet back roads or on purpose-built trails on the Victor Harbor Ring Road, road reserve.

There may be opportunities for private land development of and other trails and experiences connected to this Strategy including camping and accommodation facilities. This could include offers of access to parcels of land for trails under management by the landowners or by agreement with Council or other incorporated bodies.

It also may be that Council identifies future land important to developing a Signature Trail system (e.g., Adventure trails off the ranges) or land that provides strategic connections between trail networks that form an integral part of the Victor Harbor mountain bike Hub. For example, the Hindmarsh River valley provides a corridor connection between the Hindmarsh Valley land and Victor Harbor, but it is under private ownership and provides an important water source for agriculture together with other issues such as biosecurity and personal privacy. Properties change hands from time to time which provides opportunity for Council to acquire river front land parcels or some property owners may be willing to enter into access agreements such as easements to ensure long term access for trails along the corridor.

The long-term objective would be to seek the very best trails backed up by a level of permanency to ensure investment in trails is ensured.

This mix of land ownership and trail opportunities requires strong leadership, governance and management. The City of Victor Harbor could well provide the leadership role in developing a mountain bike trail network however it would not be expected to contribute to the ongoing management of the trail network outside of its direct control.

A governance and management model

Reflecting the multiple land tenure arrangements and future management responsibilities it is recommended that a partnership model be developed that sits across all agencies and potentially private land. Legislative, policy and agency guidelines would continue to apply and the agency has the option to engage and share responsibility for trail management with a skills-based group brought together under an MOU or an incorporated body depending on the agreed level of responsibility sharing.

This group would ensure collaborative leadership in the development of the new trail experiences and assist with the ongoing management and development of the leading and supporting trails. It will also be instrumental in seeking commercial investment, resources from grant opportunities and through land manager, philanthropic and or future revenue from events, user fees or from budget allocations.

This model would see a greater role for user groups in a partnership with future ForestrySA Jagger Forest arrangements and the SA Government land.

It provides for the land manager to focus on core business (parks and reserves, forestry and Council operations) and remain a partner in the development of the trail network.

ForestrySA and The City of Victor Harbor Mountain bike Strategy

ForestrySA have been recognised for their strong commitment to recreation within forest reserves and have committed to the development of mountain biking and additional shared use trails within the Mount Hayfield and Second Valley Forest within Yankalilla Council area.

Mountain biking is permitted on existing management trails within Jagger Forest. ForestrySA supports future mountain bike trail development however at the time of publishing this Strategy Forest resources are stretched and they cannot commit to development, management or maintenance of any new trails.

Any future development of mountain bike trails in Jagger Forest would require a strong governance and management model that sees a greater role for user groups in a partnership with Forestry and Local Government. There would need to be an effective Deed of Agreement or a strong MOU with an incorporated body to make this work.

At this time ForestrySA is not supportive of additional trail networks in the Jagger Forest as they do not have the resources to adequately monitor trail networks.

Any new trails must be supported by ForestrySA as the land manager and include a self-sustaining approach to governance and management. ForestrySA will review this approach should further resources become available.



Jagger Forest potential for a range of cross country and gravity downhill trails

9 Strategies and Actions

The objectives of The Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy are:

1. Establish Victor Harbor as a regional mountain bike and trail Hub on the Fleurieu Peninsula
2. Deliver mountain bike infrastructure, experiences and services to meet market needs and provide a reason to for young families and youth to stay
3. Increase and diversify Victor Harbor attractions through mountain bike and unparalleled trail visitor experiences to increase visitor yield and length of stay
4. Provide a range of cycle infrastructure that connects the extraordinary ranges and the coast and links and improves existing trail network
5. Secure public and private sector investment to meet the needs of mountain bike visitors.



Table 17. Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy Strategies and Actions

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
<p>1 Establish Victor Harbor as a Regional Mountain Bike Hub.</p>	<p>1.1 In partnership with the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) establish the Hindmarsh Tiers including connections to the Hindmarsh Falls Reserve as a distinctive trails and mountain bike network with a focus on minimal ecological impact, easy and intermediate trails.</p> <p>1.2 Establish three Signature Regional trail networks in the ranges above Victor Harbor that are linked by unique off road adventure trails to the coast and connected to river trails, the Victor Harbor Bike Park and the Encounter Bikeway.</p> <p>1.3 Develop an iconic Hindmarsh River Adventure trail from the Hindmarsh Falls via a distinctive cable bridge over the Hindmarsh River Gorge and the river valley trail that connects the Tiers to the Coast and links to the Hindmarsh and Inman River trails, the coastal Encounter Bikeway and the Town Centre.</p> <p>1.4 Consult with and seek the views of landowners along the Hindmarsh River corridor to seek solutions for future compatible access for trails and undertake environmental, cultural and permitted activity assessment.</p> <p>1.5 Work with landowners and the community to develop a third uniquely Victor Harbor Signature trail network in the Brown Hill area to the north of Victor Harbor that focusses on spectacular views and descending flow trails.</p> <p>1.6 Develop a network of existing and new trails that provide local mountain bike riding experiences within the City of Victor Harbor that are connected by off road and shared use trails that link the Victor Harbor community through the Hindmarsh and Inman River valleys and the coast.</p> <p>1.7 Partner with Hickinbotham Estate and other developments along the Hindmarsh River between Welch Road and Greenhills Estate to incorporate enjoyable, safe and strategically linked shared trails to the Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail and the Victor Harbor trails network.</p> <p>1.8 Develop Victor Harbor and Fleurieu as a place for mountain bike skill progression and skill development.</p> <p>1.9 Develop the existing Victor Harbor Oval bike tracks as a Bike Park including a mountain bike Skills Park and Pump Track.</p> <p>1.10 Establish the Bike Park as a place for bike fun, skill development and as a popular place for families and friends to meet and congregate.</p> <p>1.11 Develop a mountain bike Skills Park at the Bike Park that encourages skills confidence and ensures new riders progress to riding Victor Harbors developing trails.</p> <p>1.12 Incorporate the future of the local Bluff trails within a future Master Planning exercise for the Bluff to consider all trail opportunities.</p>

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
	<p>1.13 In partnership with the Victor Harbor Mountain bike community contribute to future governance and management arrangements for Jagger Forest mountain bike trails when ForestrySA as the land manager have the resources to commit and approve trail development.</p> <p>1.14 Link Victor Harbor to future Fleurieu mountain bike experiences and events planned for Mount Hayfield and Second Valley Forest Trails within Yankalilla Council area. Undertake concept planning for a predominantly off-road trail from Victor Harbor to Mount Hayfield.</p>
<p>2 Seek investment, community and landowner support and encourage service providers to support the needs of users and the mountain bike market and the facilities for the sustainable growth of trails that provide real benefit to the community.</p>	<p>2.1 Encourage planning and investment into a range of Hindmarsh Tiers accommodation including camping and cabins linked to the Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail, Hindmarsh Tiers and a potential connecting trail to the Heysen Trail at Woodcone Hill.</p> <p>2.2 Actively support the involvement of mountain bike tour operators and guides to provide services for experiences including shuttles, bike servicing and hospitality.</p> <p>2.3 Engage with landowners along the Hindmarsh River corridor to seek agreement for compatible access for trails.</p>
<p>3 Integrate a spirit of collaboration between different trail users, visitors and actively contribute to Fleurieu</p>	<p>3.1 Ensure trail design and build has minimal impact on the ecology of the Fleurieu Peninsula and where possible environmental restoration will be undertaken along trail corridors to contribute to biodiversity. Where required all proposed trails will be submitted for assessment under the Native Vegetation Act 1991.</p> <p>3.2 Encourage shared trail values and cooperation on trails that are designed for a range of users. Trails are to be clearly identified through good trail head information and interpretation of trail classifications and standards and present what visitors should expect on trails.</p> <p>3.3 Develop effective trail management and maintenance plans and identify resources and risk assessment programs to ensure trail experiences, difficulty ratings and standard are maintained.</p>

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	
sustainability and biodiversity.	3.4	Utilise professional trail builders and encourage trail building and maintenance skill development. Ensure trails are built and maintained to the highest sustainable standards and to defined difficulty ratings. Trail use, rider numbers and quality of rides are monitored.
4 Develop strong governance arrangements that focus on expertise and collaboration and provide the energy and direction for the sustainable development of Victor Harbor trails.	4.1	Encourage and provide the energy and direction for the sustainable development of Victor Harbor trails and strengthen its links to the Fleurieu and the greater Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges experience.
	4.2	Develop strong partnership arrangements between DEW and City of Victor Harbor for the cooperative development and management of trail and visitor focussed experiences in the Hindmarsh Tiers.
	4.3	Explore revenue streams including commercial investment, resources and grant opportunities. Recognise the contribution of volunteers establish roles within the new governance arrangement.
5 Increase mountain bike and trail visitors to Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu through positioning, promoting and marketing of the future mountain bike experience.	5.1	Promote and market Victor Harbor Trails as the place to be for exciting trail experiences and ensure pre visit and on site trail information is up to date and available through established and digital media including on site QR codes that target new and current riders.
	5.2	Develop and promote future trail activities, events and experiences that encourage a younger cohort to visit, establish businesses, re locate as a working and earning citizen or invest in the City creating opportunities that drive a more sustainable future and encourage residents to stay.
	5.3	Coordinate the consistent branding of the Victor Harbor Mountain Bike experience across land managers and the Fleurieu mountain bike community and reflect this through innovative logos, trail heads and information material.
	5.4	Integrate the future Victor Harbor and Fleurieu trail and mountain bike experiences across Fleurieu and Victor Harbor marketing strategies.

Strategy Implementation and Indicative Costs

Table 18 below provides indicative costs for the implementation of the strategic directions identified in the Strategy. Funding for these strategies has not yet been established and will be subject to a grant application process.

The City of Victor Harbor and other partners may be eligible to apply for grants from a range of sources including:

- **SA Office for Recreation and Sport** from a range of Infrastructure Projects
- **The Department for Infrastructure and Transport**, the Planning and Development Fund provides investment into the planning and improvement of open space and public realm in South Australia through two grant programs (Open Space and Places for People).
- **The Federal Government** \$1.29 billion Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) supports the Australian Government's commitment to create jobs, drive economic growth and build stronger regional communities into the future. The fund invests in projects located in or benefiting eligible areas outside the major capital cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, and Canberra.
- **Bike SA** from time to time has grants available for cycling infrastructure and events.
- **Commercial businesses and property developers** contribute to infrastructure such as on the Hickinbotham Group housing development adjacent to the Hindmarsh River and Welch and Victor Harbor Roads.

Trails and mountain bike networks and parks often receive philanthropic donations and project support donations from business such as the St Helens Trails Ambassador Program in Northeast Tasmania.

The Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy has been prepared to guide and plan for the future development and activation of a network of Victor Harbor trails with connections to the broader Fleurieu area.

The cost estimates provided below are based on understanding of current market rates and experience from previous studies.

Project implementation will require additional approvals and detailed design and documentation stages prior to trail and infrastructure build.

Table 18. Indicative Costs

	ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRAM	RESPONSIBLE	COST BY OTHERS	PROJECT STAGES	INDICATIVE COST CVH
Program Short = 1 year; Medium = 2 - 4 years; Long = 5 years +							
1 Establish Victor Harbor as a Regional Mountain Bike Hub.	In partnership with the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) establish the Hindmarsh Tiers including connections to the Hindmarsh Falls Reserve as a distinctive trails and mountain bike network with a focus on minimal ecological impact, easy and intermediate trails.	Locals and visitors view, use and enjoy the high-quality trails and landscape experiences across the Hindmarsh Tiers as one contiguous adventure park	Medium	DEW CVH	\$3.0m	Planning, design and implement	Assets trails
	Establish three Signature Regional trail networks in the ranges above Victor Harbor that are linked by unique off road adventure trails to the coast and connected to river trails, the Victor Harbor Bike Park and the Encounter Bikeway.	Locals and visitors are provided with 2 - 4 hours riding within these signature trails across a range of environments and difficulty levels	Medium	DEW CVH ForestrySA Private Landowners		Planning, design and implement	Costs identified individually below
	Develop an iconic Hindmarsh River Adventure trail from the Hindmarsh Falls via a distinctive cable bridge over the Hindmarsh River Gorge and the river valley that connects the Tiers to the Coast and links to the Hindmarsh and Inman River trails, the coastal Encounter Bikeway and the Town Centre.	The trail experience from The Hindmarsh Falls to the Hindmarsh River Estuary will be recognised as one of South Australia's great trail experiences	Long	CVH		Planning, design and implement	Bridge \$450,000 Trail, fencing, bridges \$670,000 \$1,120,000

ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRAM	RESPONSIBLE	COST BY OTHERS	PROJECT STAGES	INDICATIVE COST CVH
Consult with and seek the views of landowners along the Hindmarsh River corridor to seek solutions for future compatible access for trails and undertake environmental, cultural and permitted activity assessment	Landowners and the community support trails and see the benefit of trails and supported arrangements are in place to allow trail corridors on some private land	Long	CVH Community		Planning	Planning \$30,000 \$30,000
Work with landowners and the community to develop a third uniquely Victor Harbor Signature trail network in the Brown Hill area to the north of Victor Harbor that focusses on spectacular views and descending flow trails.	The Brown Hill trail and viewing experience will be in integral part of the mountain bike Experience attracting many visitors and encouraging business investment	Medium	CVH Community		Planning, design and implement	Trail \$350,000 Lookouts \$50,000 Road Crossings safety \$30,000 \$430,000
Develop a network of existing and new trails that provide local mountain bike riding experiences within the City of Victor Harbor that are connected by off road and shared use trails that link the Victor Harbor community through the Hindmarsh and Inman River valleys and the coast.	Hindmarsh River, Inman River and the Encounter Bikeway are all connected by predominantly off-road trails and create a Victor Harbor loop trail which connects locals and visitors to mountain bike Experiences.	Medium	CVH Hickinbotham Homes and developers	\$48,800 Trails \$380,000 2 Trail Bridges \$480,000 Underpass	Planning, design and implement	Trails \$280,000 Safety Fencing \$26,000

ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRAM	RESPONSIBLE	COST BY OTHERS	PROJECT STAGES	INDICATIVE COST CVH
Partner with Hickinbotham Estate and other developments along the Hindmarsh River between Welch Road and Greenhills Estate to incorporate enjoyable, safe and strategically linked shared trails to the Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail and the Victor Harbor trails network.	Hickinbotham Estate is connected to the trail and locals visitors and school children enjoy safe comfortable trails access including an underpass beneath the Adelaide Road			\$908,800		\$306,000
<p>Develop Victor Harbor and Fleurieu as a place for mountain bike skill progression and skill development.</p> <p>Develop the existing Victor Harbor Oval bike tracks as a Bike Park including a mountain bike Skills Park and Pump Track.</p> <p>Establish the Bike Parks as a place for bike fun, skill development and as a popular place for families and friends to meet and congregate.</p> <p>Develop a mountain bike Skills Park at the Bike Park that encourages skills confidence and ensures new riders progress to riding Victor Harbors developing trails.</p>	The Victor Harbor Bike Park is the major local attraction for skill development, recreation and activity and is the popular place for families and friends to meet and congregate.	Medium	CVH		Planning, design and implement	\$350,000

ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRAM	RESPONSIBLE	COST BY OTHERS	PROJECT STAGES	INDICATIVE COST CVH
Incorporate the future of the local Bluff trails within a future Master Planning exercise for the Bluff to consider all trail opportunities.	Local riders have local mountain bike trails to ride. All Bluff trails are well planned and all users are considered within a Master Plan.	Medium	CVH DEW		Planning	\$40,000 Master Planning \$40,000
In partnership with the Victor Harbor Mountain bike community contribute to future governance and management arrangements for Jagger Forest Mountain bike trails when ForestrySA as the land manager have the resources to commit and approve trail development.	The Signature Mountain bike Trail networks have an incorporated skills-based group that work within management and policy guidelines to develop and maintain trails and run events. Jagger forest is ready to move forward when ForestrySA have the resources to proceed.	Long	CVH ForestrySA		Planning	\$10,000 Planning for trails and groups \$10,000
Link Victor Harbor to the future Fleurieu mountain bike experiences and events planned for Mount Hayfield and Second Valley Forest Trails within Yankalilla. Plan for a predominantly off-road trail from Hindmarsh Tiers to Mount Hayfield.	Mountain bike rider visit the Fleurieu over a couple days to ride a combination of trails and locals spread their riding experiences across the Fleurieu	Long	CVH Yankalilla Council		Planning	\$30,000 Planning \$30,000

	ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRAM	RESPONSIBLE	COST BY OTHERS	PROJECT STAGES	INDICATIVE COST CVH
2 Seek investment, community and landowner support and encourage service providers to support the needs of users and the mountain bike market and the facilities for the sustainable growth of trails that provide real benefit to the community.	Encourage planning and investment into a range of Hindmarsh Tiers accommodation including camping and cabins linked to the Hindmarsh River Adventure Trail, Hindmarsh Tiers and a potential connecting trail to the Heysen Trail at Woodcone Hill.	The Hindmarsh Tiers is an active place where a range of trail visitors and locals immerse themselves in the landscape	Medium	CVH DEW		Planning	\$30,000 Planning \$30,000
	Actively support the involvement of mountain bike tour operators and guides to provide services for experiences including shuttles, bike servicing and hospitality.	Shuttle services are operating between trail sites and trail users are connected to good coffee and hospitality on and off the trail. School groups and outdoor education providers are active on the trails	Medium	CVH Yankalilla Council		Planning	Existing program support
	Engage with landowners along the Hindmarsh River corridor to seek agreement for compatible access for trails.						
3 Integrate a spirit of collaboration between different trail users, visitors	Encourage shared trail values and cooperation on trails that are designed for a range of users. Trails are to be clearly identified through good trail head information and interpretation of trail classifications and standards and present what visitors should expect on trails.	There is an active culture of support across all trail users. Trail information and signage supports a culture of shared use	Medium	CVH DEW		Design and implement	\$50,000 Sign and info package \$50,000

	ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRAM	RESPONSIBLE	COST BY OTHERS	PROJECT STAGES	INDICATIVE COST CVH
and actively contribute to Fleurieu sustainability and biodiversity.	Develop effective trail management and maintenance plans and identify resources and risk assessment programs to ensure trail experiences, difficulty ratings and standard are maintained.	Trails remain at the appropriate difficulty levels. Trails are clear of debris and hazards and riders have safe and comfortable riding experiences.	On going	CVH			2% of invest budget
	Utilise professional trail builders and encourage trail building and maintenance skill development. Ensure trails are built and maintained to the highest sustainable standards and to defined difficulty ratings. Trail use, rider numbers and quality of rides are monitored.	There is a cohort of skilled professional and volunteer trail builders situated in Victor Harbor and the Fleurieu. Trails are sustainable and fun to ride.	Long term	CVH DEW		Implement	\$20,000 Training
							\$20,000
	Ensure trail design and build has minimal impact on the ecology of the Fleurieu Peninsula and where possible environmental restoration will be undertaken along trail corridors to contribute to biodiversity. Where required all proposed trails will be submitted for assessment under the <i>Native Vegetation Act 1991</i> .	The ecology of the Fleurieu Peninsula and Hindmarsh Tiers shows recovery through land restoration activities and sustainable trail design. Visitors appreciate and recognise the natural landscapes of the Fleurieu.	Long term	CVH DEW		Planning	\$40,000 \$40,000

	ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRAM	RESPONSIBLE	COST BY OTHERS	PROJECT STAGES	INDICATIVE COST CVH
4 Develop strong governance arrangements that focus on expertise and collaboration and provide the energy and direction for the sustainable development of Victor Harbor trails.	<p>Encourage and provide the energy and direction for the sustainable development of Victor Harbor trails and strengthen its links to the Fleurieu and the greater Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges experience.</p> <p>Develop strong partnership arrangements between DEW and City of Victor Harbor for the cooperative development and management of trail and visitor focussed experiences in the Hindmarsh Tiers.</p>	<p>The trail visitors recognise a well-managed and maintained trail network that is enjoyable and comfortable to ride.</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>CVH</p> <p>DEW</p> <p>ForestrySA</p>		<p>Planning</p>	<p>Existing program support</p>
	<p>Explore revenue streams including commercial investment, resources and grant opportunities.</p> <p>Recognise the contribution of volunteers establish roles within the new governance arrangement.</p>	<p>Volunteers belonging to incorporated groups are an integral part of the Victor Harbor trail network and are regularly seen and contribute to trail development and management.</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>CVH</p> <p>Local Bike Groups</p>			<p>Existing program support</p>

ACTION	OUTCOME	PROGRAM	RESPONSIBLE	COST BY OTHERS	PROJECT STAGES	INDICATIVE COST CVH
				Cost by others		CVH
Indicative investment costs including project management costs Not including GST				\$3,040,000		\$2,756,600
*Estimates Annual Maintenance Costs CVH \$50,000				\$908,800		
Total Project Costs				\$3,948,800		\$6,665,400



10 Benefits Summary

The Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy identifies ways in which the community and visitors can connect through great trail experiences to the special values of the ranges, river valleys and coastal landscapes.

The landscape provides the topography and terrain on which extraordinary mountain bike and adventure trails can be developed whilst the linking trails provide the safe, comfortable and sustainable ways for locals and residents to connect with the trails.

These trails will provide attractions for visitors and importantly add to the mix of opportunities that attract people to seek Victor Harbor as a place to live and those that live here to stay.

The mountain bike and future adventure trails provide adventures for everyone and include opportunities for youth and the not so young.

Significant health benefits are provided with this approach where greater numbers of people become more active with the added benefit of developing community engagement and pride.

The Victor Harbor Mountain Bike Strategy provides a framework where innovative tourism experience providers can develop existing business and invest in new business around trails, servicing, hospitality and accommodation.

Investment in mountain biking and trails will provide real benefits to the Victor Harbor and Regional Community with investment estimated to return for the full investment (\$6.655 million) across the whole project some 28.7 FTE Jobs during construction and 15.7 operational jobs from year one to 24.9 jobs in year 10.

The benefits from a Victor Harbor mountain bike and trail future are evident and experience through COVID-19 has shown the willingness for the community to seek new outdoor experiences and embrace trails.

The recognition of the importance of local and development of new adventure trail experiences trails was evident during the consultation process.

The popularity of trails for wellbeing during these COVID-19 times has been recognised and the benefit of a well-planned, designed and different innovative adventure trail experiences will make Victor Harbor stand out as a significant South Australian trails destination for everyone.



Shared use trail example

Appendix A – Mountain Bike Trail Types

Table 19. Mountain Bike Trail Types ⁶⁸

Type	Description
Cross Country (XC)	Primarily single-track oriented with a combination of climbing and descending, and natural trail features of varying technicality. Cross country trails appeal to the majority of the market and can also cater for timed competitive events. Typically, bikes are lightweight with shorter travel dual suspension or have no rear suspension.
Flow (FL)	Flow trails typically contain features like banked turns, rolling terrain, various types of jumps and consistent and predictable surfaces. Flow trails do not contain abrupt concerns or unforeseen obstacles. Bikes are typically light-medium weight with medium-travel dual suspension.
All Mountain (AM)	Similar to Cross Country and primarily single-track oriented, with greater emphasis on technical descents, with non technical climbs. All mountain trails can cater for timed competitive events. Bikes are typically light weight with medium-travel dual suspension.
Gravity / Enduro (GE)	Like All Mountain with greater emphasis on steep, fast, technical descents. Gravity / Enduro trails can cater for timed competitive events. Gravity / Enduro trails appeal to more experienced riders who enjoy technical descents but are still happy to ride back to the top of the trail. Bikes are typically medium to long-travel dual suspension and are built for strength.
Downhill (DH)	Purely descent only trails with emphasis on speed and technical challenge and focus on skill development. These trails can cater for timed competitive racing. Downhill trails usually require uplift to the trailhead via chairlift or vehicle shuttling. Bikes are designed for descending and are typically long travel dual suspension and built for strength over weight.
Freeride (FR)	Typically, descent focused trails with emphasis solely on technical challenge and skill development. Trails feature both built and natural terrain technical features with focus on drops and jumps. Appeals to the more experienced market and caters for competitions judging manoeuvres and skills. Bikes typically medium to long-travel dual suspension and are built for strength.
Park (PK)	Built feature environments with an emphasis on manoeuvres, skill development and progression. Appeals to a wide market including youth and can cater for competitions judging aerial manoeuvres. Can include Jump and Pump tracks and Skills Parks. Typically, dirt surfaced but can include hardened surfaces. Bikes are typically built for strength, with short travel suspension.
Touring (TO)	Typically, long distance riding on reasonably uniform surface conditions and lower grades. Touring trails are dual direction linear trails or long-distance circuits with focus on reaching a destination. Touring trails can include rail trails, access/fire roads and single track. While there is a limited market for long distance mountain biking, touring trails can be ridden in sections making them accessible to all. If carrying panniers bikes are usually robust with limited suspension, however, for short sections or day tips most mountain bikes are suitable.

⁶⁸ Australian Mountain Biking Trail Guidelines

Appendix B – Trail Difficulty Ratings

- The Trail Difficulty Rating System (TDRS) provides seven levels of difficulty for mountain bike trails. The TDRS enables visitors to understand the nature of the trail before beginning their ride and allows them to plan their ride for enjoyment, appropriate level of challenge and safety.
- Trail ratings can be communicated in several ways. Pre-visit information may include a more detailed description of the ratings, while a shorter description is required for trailhead signage and maps. Rating colours should be used on all on trail directional signage. Mountain bike TDRS short trail descriptors should be used at trail signage, on brochures and maps or similar applications.
- The use of the bike in the centre of each symbol is optional and will likely depend if the trail network consists of multiuse & shared use trails or single use.⁶⁹
- <https://www.auscycling.org.au/nat/news/australian-trail-difficulty-rating-system-revised>

DIFFICULT SYMBOL	SHORT DESCRIPTION
	Very Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes
	Easy Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills , off-road bikes
	Easy with Intermediate Sections Likely to be single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface and some obstacles Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks Suitable for mountain bikers with mountain bikes
	Intermediate Single trail with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles May include steep sections Suitable for skilled mountain bikers with mountain bikes
	Intermediate with Difficult Sections Suitable for competent mountain bikers, used to physically demanding routes Expert large and unavoidable obstacles and features Challenging and variable with some steep climbs or descents and loose surfaces
	Difficult Suitable for experienced mountain bikers, used to physically demanding routes Navigation and personal survival skills are highly desirable Expect large, Dangerous and unavoidable obstacles and features Challenging and variable with long steep climbs or descents and loose surfaces Some sections will be easier to walk
	Extreme Suitable for highly experienced mountain bikers, used to physically demanding routes Navigation and personal survival skills are highly desirable Severe constructed trails and or natural features, all sections are challenging Includes extreme levels and exposure and / or risk Expert large and unavailable and features Some sections will be easier to walk

⁶⁹ <https://www.auscycling.org.au/nat/news/australian-trail-difficulty-rating-system-revised>

Appendix C - Governance Case Studies



CASE STUDY: Rotorua, New Zealand

In a country with some great mountain biking, this 180-kilometre trail network on the southern outskirts of the city are some of the finest.

Rotorua is a mountain bike haven famous for the Whakarewarewa Forest with a diverse and unique mountain bike trails. These trails have been expertly built and crafted to suit everybody, from complete beginners through to experts. The trail network is well signposted, with the length and grade of the trail clearly visible helping you to choose a track appropriate to riding ability.

Rotorua is also home to a number of international events throughout the year, including the ever popular and community-based Rotorua Bike Festival through to being the first stop on the Crankworx World Tour.⁷⁰

Annual spending in the region by people who mountain bike in the Whakarewarewa Forest:

- For all riders estimated spending ranged from \$29.274 million (lower estimate) to \$47.321 million (upper estimate).
- For riders whose primary reason was to use the forest trails, spending ranged from \$21.521 million to \$37.680 million.
- Spending by locals was estimated at \$2.423 million (lower) and \$3.958 (upper).
- The major contributor to spending was domestic overnight visitors and international overnight visitors.

Estimates of the direct spending by people mountain biking in the Whakarewarewa Forest for the period 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018 -Mountain Biking in Whakarewarewa Forest Economic Impact Study. July 2018

⁷⁰ <https://www.rotoruanz.com/visit/see-and-do/cycling-mountain-biking>

There are several mountain biking areas in Rotorua:⁷¹

Whakarewarewa Forest: known simply as ‘The Redwoods’, the 5600-hectare Whakarewarewa Forest is a mountain biking mecca. It is also one of the reasons Rotorua was awarded gold-level ride centre status by the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) – one of only six centres in the world.

Skyline Gravity Park: the world’s first year-round, gondola-accessed downhill mountain bike park features six different trails catering for riders of all abilities, and dedicated gondolas to take the hard work out of getting to the top of the trails’ 200-metre vertical rise. From the top of Mt Ngongotaha, there are panoramic views across Rotorua, its lake, and surrounding countryside.

Rainbow Mountain: less than half an hour south of Rotorua, experienced mountain bikers can enjoy this challenging ride through an amazing geothermal setting with a soak in a natural hot pool afterwards.

Moerangi Track: is all about appreciating the rivers and forests - now protected as the Whirinaki Forest/Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Park, the forest is now the realm of the birds, and visited by hikers, hunters and mountain bikers who penetrate this remote wilderness via a network of trails. Passing through the heart of the park, the 35km Moerangi Mountain Biking Trail follows old hiking routes for much of the way, as well as newer sections built especially for mountain bikers.

Employment Impacts in Region ⁷²

All riders in the forest generated a total of 210.1 full time equivalent jobs (178.5 direct jobs and 31.6 indirect/induced jobs) for the lower estimate of spending and 339.9 full time equivalent jobs (288.8 direct jobs and 51.2 indirect/induced jobs) for the upper estimate.

⁷¹ <https://www.newzealand.com/au/feature/top-mountain-biking-tracks-in-rotorua/>

⁷² Mountain Biking in Whakarewarewa Forest Economic Impact Study. July 2018

Direct jobs are those in the businesses (accommodation, food service, MTB services etc.) where the initial spending occurs and indirect/induced jobs are those generate in other sectors by the initial round of spending and multiplier impacts. All these jobs are located in the Rotorua District.

Overnight visitors (domestic and internationals) are a major driver of these jobs because of the breadth of their spending covering accommodation, meals, bike hire and other MTB services. They account for around 75% of the total jobs generated for the lower and upper spending estimates. Local riders provide a base of support for MTB businesses in the region and their spending accounts for around 10% of jobs.

Income Impacts in Region ⁷³

Riders and their spending have a significant impact on regional income in the Rotorua District.

All riders in the forest generated an estimated \$12.98 million in regional income (\$10.98 million direct and \$1.99 million indirect/induced income) for the lower estimate of spending and \$21.00 million in regional income (\$17.77 million direct and \$3.23 million indirect/induced income) for the upper estimate.

Overnight visitors (domestic and internationals) are a major driver of this regional income due to the breadth of their spending in Rotorua covering accommodation, meals, bike hire and other MTB services.



⁷³ Ibid



CASE STUDY: ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy

Twelve months ago, more than 60% of the Cudlee Creek Forest was destroyed by the devastating Adelaide Hills bushfire.

Before the fires, excellent soil, elevation and forest landscapes motivated the design and construction of some 48 km of professional mountain bike trails. Known by many names, including Fox Creek, the forest contains the largest number of mountain bike trails in Adelaide's Mount Lofty Ranges, with over 20,000 mountain bike visitors enjoying the trails each year.

The tragic fires of December 2019 impacted many people and took away many things, including the destruction of both the Fox Creek pine plantation and these popular Adelaide Hills trails.

Forged out of the flames came a new beginning, an opportunity to reimagine the Fox Creek mountain bike experience. Working together, community members, local mountain clubs, Bike SA, ForestrySA and the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing looked at ways to rebuild the trails, while supporting the recovery of the local community.

The ForestrySA Cudlee Creek Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy was born as the means to define a new beginning. Many people, both locals and visitors commented on the importance of the Cudlee Creek Forest trails, benefitting from not just mountain biking but a range of activities including trail running, recreational walking, dog walking and enjoying nature. It became evident that the Cudlee Creek Forest had the opportunity to become more than just trails. A combination of experiences, infrastructure and services were recommended, as a means of attracting visitors to not only the trails, but a destination offering high quality, unique experiences.

A strong, united vision

Cudlee Creek Forest will be the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges nationally recognised mountain biking destination providing exceptional experiences, skill progression and events in harmony with the forest environment and within a culture that welcomes other forest visitors, families and a diversity of abilities.

The vision articulates the need to grow from the former mountain bike experience and invest in new trail types including gravel and off-road cycling. The expanded and enhanced trail offer will meet the needs and preferences of a range of trail users including the higher yield cycling market, generate broader tourism and economic benefits and establish the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges as a true mountain biking destination.

The trail to recovery

In addition to recovering from bushfires, development of the Forest Trails Fire Recovery Strategy encountered further challenges presented by COVID-19. Predicting visitor growth, trends and the economy continually evolved with initial declines due to lockdowns followed by unprecedented growth in cycling and trail use, bike sales and servicing.

To start afresh, the name Fox Creek Bike Park was chosen as an exciting name to reflect the Strategy's vision and reduce previous confusion generated by a number of alternative names for the site.

The Strategy identifies several objectives, the Fox Creek Bike Park will:

- be the primary mountain bike and trails event centre for the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges
- integrate a spirit of collaboration between different trail users and visitors and actively contribute to Cudlee Creek sustainability and biodiversity
- develop the parks status as the place for skill progression and skill development from entry to highly skilled and competitor status

- establish governance and management arrangements that encourage direction, leadership and long-term maintenance and resourcing
- integrate the trail experience with the Adelaide Hills community and encourage the further development of trail friendly support services, hospitality and accommodation
- increase mountain bike and trail visitors to Cudlee Creek Forest and the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges through positioning, promoting and marketing of the Cudlee experience.

Recommendations specifically for bike riders and trail users include:

- reinstatement of the previous trails and progressive development of up to 50 kilometres of additional introductory to advanced Fox Creek Bike Park trails
- connections with future Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Epic or hero ride across the Yurrebilla alignment and links to a future Epic Adelaide Hills Descent.



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