

Agenda

Ordinary Meeting of Council

11:30 am, Wednesday 27 August 2025
Council Chamber, Corryong Council Office
76 Hanson Street, Corryong, Victoria

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

This information is available in alternative formats on request.

**Agenda for the Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held at
76 Hanson Street, Corryong, Victoria
on Wednesday 27 August 2025 commencing at 11:30 am**

Commonly Used Acronyms

Abbreviation	Title
Council Officers	
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DIE	Director Infrastructure and Environment
DCP	Director Community and Planning
DCOD	Director Corporate and Organisational Development
MF	Manager Finance
SAE	Senior Asset Engineer
Government/Organisation	
CH	Corryong Health (formerly Upper Murray Health and Community Services)
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
DJSIR	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
GMW	Goulburn Murray Water
HRGLN	Hume Region Local Government Network
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
NECMA	North East Catchment Management Authority
NERPEN	North East Regional Procurement Excellence Network
NEW	North East Water
NEWRRG	North East Waste and Resource Recovery Group
RCV	Rural Councils Victoria
RDA	Regional Development Australia
RDV	Regional Development Victoria
THS	Tallangatta Health Service
VGC	Victorian Grants Commission
WBNC	Walwa Bush Nursing Centre

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1 Opening Prayer

"Almighty God, we ask that you be present at this meeting to assist us in our service to the Community through Local Government.

We pray that our decisions will be wise and taken with goodwill and clear conscience.

Amen."

2 Councillor and Officer Presence at the Meeting

Councillor Attendance

Crs Whitehead, Anderson, Wortmann, Tolsher and Pitman

Officer Attendance:	Title:
Ms Phelps	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Heritage	Director Infrastructure and Environment
Mr Florence	Director Community and Planning
Ms Taylor	Director Corporate and Organisational Development

3 Apologies and Granting of Leave of Absence

4 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

Section 130 of the Act requires that a 'Relevant person' (which means a person who is a Councillor, a member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor or a member of Council staff) disclose any conflict of interest in the manner required by Council's Governance Rules and exclude themselves from the decision making process in relation to the matter including any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting.

Council's *Governance Rules* state as follows:

A2 Obligations with regards to conflict of interest

Councillors, members of delegated committee, and Council staff are required to:

- a. Avoid all situations which may give rise to conflicts of interest;*
- b. Identify any conflicts of interest; and*
- c. Disclose or declare all conflicts of interest.*

A3 Disclosure of a conflict of interest at a Council meeting

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council meeting at which he or she:

A3.1 is present must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the Council meeting immediately before the matter is considered; or

A3.2 intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Council meeting commences a written notice:

A3.2.1 advising of the conflict of interest;

A3.2.2 explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and

A3.2.3 detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the:

- a. name of the other person;*
- b. nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and*
- c. nature of that other person's interest in the matter, and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer under this sub-Rule.*

The Councillor must, in either event, leave the Council meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

5 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meetings listed below were circulated to Councillors following each respective meeting. Confirmation of the minutes is now sought.

Ordinary Council Meeting held on 23 July 2025

Special Council Meeting held on 31 July 2025

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 23 July 2025, and Special Council Meeting held on 31 July 2025 be confirmed.

6 Petitions and Joint Letters

Nil

7 Public Question Time

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, all questions must be submitted to Council in writing by 2.00pm on the day prior to the Council meeting.

An online form is available on Council's website, and a hard copy of the form is available at both the Tallangatta and Corryong Council offices.

Public Notice of Public Question Time was included in the advertisement for the Council meeting.

The CEO will advise of any Public Question Time submissions at the meeting.

8 Informal Meetings of Councillors

In accordance with Council's *Governance Rules*, a written summary of the matters discussed at each informal meeting of Councillors is to be tabled at the next convenient Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

The Meeting Records from the Informal Meeting of Councillors held on 23 July 2025 and 13 August 2025 are attached as follows:

1. Councillor Workshop Agenda - 23 Jul 2025 [**8.1.1** - 3 pages]
2. Councillor Workshop Agenda - 13 Aug 2025 [**8.1.2** - 4 pages]

Recommendation:

That the information be noted.

9 Organisational Improvement

9.1 Risk and OHS Bi-Monthly report

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Loren Murray, Manager People and Safety. At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Council's Risk and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) strategy, performance, activities, and key initiatives for the reporting period.

Summary:

The Risk and OHS bi-monthly report provides a summary of the following:

- High level summary of incidents and injuries in the business and WorkCover claims,
- High potential incidents and near misses (HPIs), that have occurred during the reporting period and details of the identified causes, recommended controls, and the progress of developing and implementing these controls to date,
- An insurance report on notable public liability claims that occurred during the reporting period,
- Progress on close out of major hazards by site,
- A high-level summary of the major projects underway and progress on systems development and implementation.

Recommendation:

That the Risk and OHS Bi-Monthly report be noted.

Attachment:

Documents have been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Background/History:

The Risk and OHS report shows how Council is performing against its OHS strategic plan and accepted industry standards. Council's Risk and OHS management

performance measures and indicators quantify the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of a risk management system. They identify whether the risk management processes are implemented and working as intended; and if the risk management system is effective.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

No relevant laws are applicable with any Council decisions or actions required from this report.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Not applicable.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Not applicable.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Innovations and improvements during this reporting period:

- At the August Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), the Committee reviewed and endorsed the Risk Management Risk Matrix, proposed Risk Management Calendar of Events and importantly the final draft of the Risk Appetite Statement (RAS).
- The Safety Incident Management Software (Skytrust) was purchased this reporting period and with the recruitment of a Training and Development Officer in July, implementation is underway.
- Development of the Psychosocial Risk Management and Respect at Work framework is underway. BLC Consulting has been engaged to develop the framework policy and procedure, registers and deliver training. This work will begin in August 2025 and will be completed by the end of the calendar year.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Not Applicable.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible, and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not Applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities.

6. Organisational Improvement - Maintain a high performing customer-centred organisation that works with the community to develop and deliver priorities.

6.7 Provide a safe and healthy workplace for all Councillors and staff in a continually evolving environment

6.13 Continually improve the risk management and governance frameworks and practices

Council Policies:

Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

Risk Management Policy.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Project activities are prioritised commensurate to the likelihood and impact of identified business and OHS risks.

Officer's View:

This reporting period has seen the commencement of three strategic OHS projects that are key for delivering the OHS strategic priorities in the Council Plan.

- Completion and Audit and Risk Committee endorsement of the Risk Appetite Statement
- The purchase and commencement of implementation of the Safety Incident Management Software (Skytrust)
- Commencement of development of the Psychosocial Risk Management and Respect at Work framework.

The commencement of these projects is a step toward a complete, compliant and holistic OHS management system and the systematic management of business risk.

9.2 Long Term Financial Plan - DCOD

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Narelle Taylor, Director Corporate and Organisational Development.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Draft Long Term Financial Plan to be placed on public exhibition.

Summary:

The Long Term Financial Plan is a critical component of the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework as set out in the Local Government Act 2020. It links the Community Vision, Council Plan and Asset Plan with the financial resources required to deliver on these objectives for our communities.

Recommendation:

That:

- The Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035 be endorsed for public exhibition for a period of 28 days;
- The Draft Long Term Financial Plan be presented and considered at a future Council meeting taking into account all submissions made; and
- If no submissions requesting changes are received, the Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035 be adopted without further resolution.

Attachment:

1. Draft LTFP FY 26 [9.2.1 - 16 pages]

Background/History:

The Long Term Financial plan is a 10 year forward plan outlining allocation of Council resources, key financial indicators, and our future financial sustainability.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

The *Local Government Act 2020*

Under section 91 of the Local Government Act 2020, every council must prepare a Financial Plan covering at least 10 years, adopt it by 31 October in the year following a council election, and review it annually.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Not applicable.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

No economic, social or environmental sustainability factors for the municipal district is required to be promoted through this report.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

The Draft Long Term Financial Plan is to be publicly exhibited to receive feedback and comments in line with the Engagement Policy.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Council has utilised the Better Practice Guide for the preparation of the Long Term Financial Plan, issued by Local Government Victoria, in collaboration with FinPro.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

The Draft Long Term Financial Plan highlights the ongoing financial sustainability challenges facing Council. Some key points to consider:

- A conservative approach has been taken regarding forecasting one-off capital grants, with nil income in future years. It is highly likely that we will attain one off capital grants, however as we have no assurance of this, or of the value, we have not recognised any income in this regard.
- Employee costs are significant, particularly in proportion to rates revenue. We note that approximately 25% of employee costs are related to Early Years service, which is funded through user charges and fees and childcare subsidies.
- Asset renewal requirements for roads, bridges, drainage, buildings and improvements, plant and equipment are funded 100%.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:
Not applicable.

Council Policies:
Not applicable.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

The Draft Long Term Financial Plan is conservative with revenue projections, while also allocating significant capital expenditure to new assets – informed by the Council Plan preparation, which has identified significant demand on Council resources to provide new infrastructure to our communities. The future cash position in 10 years highlights the reliance that Council has on one-off Capital grants to be able to fund the demand for new infrastructure.

Officer's View:

It is the Officers view that the Draft Long Term Financial Plan meets the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and reinforces the need for Council to be prepared and diligent in its efforts to attain State and Federal funding to deliver new infrastructure in our shire.

10 Community Wellbeing

10.1 Cudgewa Football Oval Lighting Project Tender

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr. Michael Stanton, Manager Community Wellbeing

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide information to support the assessment of tender submissions for the Cudgewa Football Oval Lighting Project. The report seeks approval to appoint the recommended contractor.

Summary:

This report demonstrates the tender process followed for the procurement of a suitable contractor to undertake the installation of Football Oval Lighting at Cudgewa Recreation Reserve, and provides a recommendation for the appointment of a contractor to undertake these works.

Recommendation:

That:

1. Contract No. 2024/2025-055 for the supply of Cudgewa Football Oval Lighting Project be awarded to Positive Electrical Services for the lump sum of \$261,857 excluding GST;
2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal Contract No. 2024/25-055 in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and
3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the total value of the allocated budget.

Attachment:

A comparative tender evaluation for Contract No. 2024/25-055 has been provided to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Background/History:

The Sports Oval Lighting project will deliver vastly improved lighting infrastructure at the Cudgewa Football Oval. The new lighting infrastructure will incorporate the use of energy saving LED technology to achieve minimum 50 Lux standard lighting, meeting both AFL facilities standards for amateur training.

The current lighting infrastructure at Cudgewa Football Oval places significant limitations on the usage of this important community facility. The existing light towers provide limited lighting to less than half the sports oval. The current light levels do not meet the recommended sporting industry standards for training and are certainly below the preferred facilities guidelines for practice and competition matches.

This project was developed through a strong partnership between Council and the Cudgewa Football Netball Club.

Council has been awarded grant funding of \$250,000 from the Victorian Government to support the delivery of this project. The funding was received through Sport and Recreation Victoria's Local Sporting Infrastructure Fund.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

The *Local Government Act 2020* Section 109 states:

"A Council must comply with its Procurement Policy before entering into a contract for the purchase of goods or services or the carrying out of works".

The procurement process followed for this tender and the subsequent assessment and recommendation have been undertaken in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy adopted in June 2023.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

In terms of achieving the best outcome for the municipal community, including future generations, two options are proposed for consideration:

Option 1 – Approve the tender as presented and award Contract No. 2024/25-055 to Positive Electrical Services **(Recommended)**

Option 2 – Make an alternate decision to appoint a different contractor or to seek a new process.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Economic

This project will use local contractors providing a positive impact on the local economy.

Social

The successful completion of this project will significantly improve opportunities for sporting and recreation activities, and community events for the local community and visitors alike.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

The Sports Oval Lighting project was developed through strong partnerships between Council and the Cudgewa Football Netball Club. The final project design and delivery will realise the aspirations of the community. Council will maintain contact and engagement with the Cudgewa Football Netball Club committee throughout the construction phase of this project.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

This project will deliver vastly improved lighting infrastructure at the Cudgewa Football Ground for the benefit of the Cudgewa and wider community. The new lighting infrastructure will incorporate the use of energy saving LED technology to achieve minimum 50 lux standard lighting.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

This project has demonstrated excellent collaboration between Council, State Government via Sport and Recreation Victoria, and the local community, to achieve a positive outcome.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought, and all expenditure will be monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

The Cudgewa Football Netball Club has committed to a contribution of \$47,000 to this project. Council has committed to a contribution of \$48,427 to the project.

In addition, the newly constructed asset will be owned by the Committee of Management for Cudgewa Recreation Reserve, so ongoing costs will not be borne by Council.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

No regional, state or national plans and policies need to be considered in strategic planning and decision making through this report.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities.

2. Community Wellbeing - Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.

2.4 Support the development of recreational activities and infrastructure to encourage active lifestyles for all ages and stages

Council Policies:

Procurement Policy

The procurement process followed for this tender and the subsequent assessment and recommendation have been undertaken in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy adopted in June 2023.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public. The tender evaluation report has been distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting, as it contains confidential information, being:

Local Government Act 2020 S3 (g): private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that:

- 4. relates to trade secrets; or*
- 5. if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage;*

Risk Assessment:

The project design and development, and the tender stage, have included strong risk management assessment. The due diligence exercised through the evaluation process has served to mitigate any significant risks associated with the project.

A risk for this project is the time frame available to spend the allocated grant funding. This risk will be mitigated through active management of project delivery and supervision of the contractor.

The appointment of an experienced contractor with strong referrals will facilitate the project being as low risk as possible.

Officer's View:

It is the officer's view that the awarding of Contract No. 2024/25-55 to Positive Electrical Services will result in successful project delivery and an excellent outcome for Council and the community.

10.2 Culture and Inclusion Report

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Danielle Brooke, Senior Community Development Officer – Culture and Inclusion and Ms Katherine Lanigan, Senior Community Development Officer – Tallangatta Neighbourhood House.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officers did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide information.

Summary:

This report provides an overview of Community Development activities across Culture and Inclusion and the Tallangatta Neighbourhood House for the period 1 February 2025 to 31 July 2025. A summary of the key activities during this time is as follows:

Youth

- Towong Shire Council Youth Strategy 2025-2029.
- Youth events, programs and activities.
- Engage and Youth Fest funding.

Inclusion activities

- Draft Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and implementation of actions, including cultural awareness training.
- Early Years First Nations Art Workshops.
- Reconciliation week, NAIDOC Week and IDAHOBIT Day recognition and events.
- Planning for LGBTQIA+ reference group.
- Seniors Week and Voices for NAIDOC funding.

Community Wellbeing

- Draft Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and consultation details.

Creative Arts

- Murray Arts and Regional Arts partnership engagement.
- Community partnership and support, such as Mitta Valley Art Show and Snowy Mountain Tango Festival.
- Local school student involvement in art installations for inclusion events in

libraries.

Libraries Report

- Corryong Elyne Mitchell Library, internal refurbishment project, including consultation, successful funding and procurement progress.
- Successful grant application from Australian Library and Information Association for activation of library programs \$9,900.
- Visitation increases at the libraries.
- Library programming, Storytime, book chats, author talks.

Tallangatta Neighbourhood House

- Knitting workshops.
- Australia's Biggest Morning Tea.
- Tai Chi.
- Craft and Connect.
- Connecting Community Project, inclusive of monthly community lunches.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 Culture and Inclusion July 2025 [**10.2.1** - 7 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - TNH Council Report 1 Feb to 31 Jul 2025 [**10.2.2** - 3 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Towong Shire Libraries Newsletter - July 2025 [**10.2.3** - 4 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - Tallangatta Neighbourhood House Newsletter - July 2025 [**10.2.4** - 16 pages]

Background/History:

This report is provided every six months to inform Council and the community of progress and activity across the Culture and Inclusion department and the Tallangatta Neighbourhood House.

Full details of all activities and highlights across Culture and Inclusion, libraries and the Tallangatta Neighbourhood House are provided in Attachments 1 and 2 to this report.

This report has been prepared with contribution from the following positions within the Community Wellbeing team:

Manager Community Wellbeing

Senior Community Development Officer - Culture and Inclusion. This position includes arts, culture, youth, libraries and social inclusion.

Senior Community Development Officer - Tallangatta Neighbourhood House.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

Not applicable.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

The Culture and Inclusion, and Tallangatta Neighbourhood House activities support community wellbeing by promoting connectedness and engagement, as well as offering community members opportunities to develop skills, and to exhibit talents and expertise.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

The Municipal Health and Wellbeing plan promotes economic, social and environmental sustainability factors for the municipal district as outlined in the overarching Victorian Health and Wellbeing framework.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Community engagement was specifically conducted during the following:

- Development of the Towong Shire Youth Strategy 2025-2029.
- Development of the Draft Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 – 2029.
- Development of the plans for the internal refurbishment of the Corryong Library.
- During the preparation of the LGBTQIA+ Inclusion and Wellbeing report.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

The successful grant application for the internal renovation of the Corryong Elyne Mitchell Library and project plan represents continuous innovation in community library facilities.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

The Youth Strategy, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, LGBTQIA+ report, Reconciliation Action Plan, and networking with stakeholders all feature strong opportunities to engage and support the Towong community to enhance social community capital.

Collaboration with important partners within the community and outreach services in the youth space, health services, schools, First Nations groups, LGBTQIA+ community, Neighbourhood House and Centres has played and will continue to play a pivotal role in improving health and wellbeing outcomes for the whole community of Towong Shire.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible, and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Activities have been conducted in accordance with relevant state and national plans including:

- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- The Victorian State Government's Creative State 2016-2020
- Victoria's Gender Equality Act 2020
- Victorian Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities.

2. Community Wellbeing – Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be happy, healthy, connected and resilient.
 - 2.6 Develop a strategy for arts and culture offerings across the Shire.
 - 2.8 Renew the Youth Plan to embed the "youth voice" in all aspects of service delivery.

- 2.11 Support our communities to ensure that Shire places are welcoming to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and LGBTQIA+ communities are inclusive and connected.
- 2.12 Build relationships and develop understanding of Aboriginal people and consider the commitment to an ongoing reconciliation action plan process.

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities.

- 2. Community Wellbeing - Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.
- 2.3 Maintain a contemporary Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan which reflects our community priorities
- 2.5 Review opportunities for communities to access library resources and connect through libraries
- 2.6 Develop a strategy for arts and cultural offerings across the Shire

Council Policies:
Not applicable.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable

Officer's View:

The last six months have been productive in developing community stakeholder relationships and connecting to local community networks to develop a solid foundation to future culture and inclusion activities and community wellbeing.

The focus over the coming six months will be the implementation of the Youth Strategy and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan in addition to the management of the Corryong Library internal refurbishment.

10.3 Funding Extension - Emergency Recovery Victoria - Rebuild Services

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Sven Erikson, Strategic Emergency Management Coordinator.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide information and seek a decision of Council to authorise the CEO to engage Gateway Health to continue the Rebuild Support Program and Rebuild Brokerage Program as outlined in the fourth Deed of Variation and Delivery Plan for the Victorian Funding Agreement OPP 610.

These programs were previously funded directly by Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) to Gateway Health. The funding for the continuation of these programs will be paid by ERV to Council to specifically fund Gateway Health as the nominated provider by ERV.

Summary:

This report explains the circumstances for the exemption to the procurement process in order for Council to support access for Gateway Health to the necessary funding and provides a recommendation to execute a Contract with Gateway Health.

Recommendation:

That:

1. Contract No. 2025/26 - 016 for the continuation of the Rebuild Support Program and Rebuild Brokerage Program, be awarded to Gateway Health for the sum of \$560,000 excluding GST;
2. The procurement exemption for this contract be endorsed for the Chief Executive Officer to approve;
3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal Contract No. 2025/26 - 016 in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and

4. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the value of the total allocated project budget.

Attachment:

Nil

Background/History:

Since the 2019/2020 bushfires, Council has been part of a rebuild program supporting community members who lost their primary place of residence. Council has been funded by Emergency Recovery Victoria to deliver services in collaboration with a team providing psychosocial and health support services from Gateway Health (Rebuild Support and Rebuild Brokerage Program).

The Rebuild program has been extended to June 2026 with Emergency Recovery Victoria providing funding to Council to extend Council's services. Due to a change in funding categorisation, ERV is not in a position to provide funding directly to Gateway Health to continue providing services under the Rebuild Support and Rebuild Brokerage Program. ERV is able to provide the funding to Council and has requested Council to engage Gateway Health to provide the continuation of services.

Council has accepted the fourth Deed of Variation to funding agreement OPP 610 to now receive funds for the Rebuild Support Program and for the Rebuild Brokerage Program. Council has negotiated a service agreement (Contract) with Gateway Health in order for Gateway Health to receive the funds and recommence delivering the Rebuild Support Program and Brokerage Program by providing Psychosocial and Health support.

Council's procurement policy requires a Council public tender process before entering a contract of this size. Due to the unique circumstances of Emergency Recovery Victoria funding Council to then provide funding to Gateway Health, and with Gateway Health being named as the nominated service provider in the deed of variation, a public tender process is not required, but that variation needs to be acknowledged and accepted by Council.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018.
The Local Government Act 2020

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

In terms of achieving the best outcome for the municipal community, two options are proposed for consideration:

Option 1 – Authorise the CEO to execute Contract No. 2025/26 - 016 to Gateway Health **(Recommended)**

Option 2 – Not authorise the CEO to execute the contract. Council would be obligated to return the funds to ERV and the service would not be able to continue via funding from ERV to Council. Fire impacted community members would not be able to receive the support of Gateway Health.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Not applicable.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

This program and contract demonstrate collaboration between Council, State Government via Emergency Recovery Victoria and Gateway Health to achieve the best outcomes for fire impacted community members.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, via Funding Agreement OPP 610 where Emergency Recovery Victoria is providing \$560,000 for Council to then transfer to Gateway Health under Contract.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

State Emergency Management Plan
Hume Regional Emergency Management Plan
Towong Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities.

2. Community Wellbeing - Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.

- 2.14 Support our communities to drive their recovery from bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic and improve their mitigation of and resilience to future adverse events

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities.

4. Land Use - Ensure that Council's planning, building and environmental health services support all aspects of liveability and sustainable population growth.

- 4.1 Support the rebuild process for fire impacted properties

Council Policies:

A procurement process exemption is required for this contract.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

The psychosocial case support for fire impacted community members rebuilding is at risk of not being able to be continued without Council supporting Emergency Recovery Victoria in providing a funding pathway for the programs to continue.

The contract outlines the obligations of Gateway Health including reference to the program guidelines for both the Rebuild Support and Brokerage programs as outlined by Emergency Recovery Victoria and federal funding partners. This contract mitigates Council's program delivery responsibility and ensures the program can be continue to be delivered by Gateway Health.

Officer's View:

It is the officer's view that the awarding of Contract No 2026/26 - 016 to Gateway Health for the value of \$560,000 will result in the continuation of the Rebuild Support Program and Rebuild Brokerage Program by Gateway Health.

11 Asset Management

11.1 Plant Replacement Program – Tender Evaluation Backhoe Tallangatta Depot (DIE)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Greg Karlson, Co-ordinator Circular Economy and Environment.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide information to support the assessment of tender submissions for the supply of a backhoe for the Tallangatta depot and to seek Council approval to appoint the recommended supplier.

Summary:

This report outlines the tender process followed for the procurement of a new backhoe loader which will be used for infrastructure works such as drain repairs, culverts, road maintenance and general roadside cleanup activities predominantly within the Tallangatta and surrounding areas. This report also provides a recommendation of the most suitable supplier to supply the best value for money and preferred equipment type to undertake the above works.

Recommendation:

That:

1. Contract No. 2025/2026 – 003 for the supply of a CAT 432 model backhoe be awarded to William Adams for the lump sum of \$192,656 net of trade in excluding GST;
2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal Contract No. 2025/26-003 in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and
3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the total value of the allocated budget.

Attachment:

A comparative Tender Evaluation Report for Contract No. 2025/2026 – 003 and supplier tender documentation has been provided to Councillors prior to meeting.

Background/History:

This report provides information on the tender process undertaken for the purchase of a backhoe as part of the plant replacement/upgrade program. The tender includes trade-in of the ageing and high maintenance 2017 JCB Elite backhoe (Plant No. 4006) located at the Tallangatta depot.

Tenders were released through the Municipal Association of Victoria's (MAV's) Procurement Vendor Panel (VP) which closed on 21 July 2025. The contract reference number is: 2025/26-003 reference number VP467512. Two (2) suppliers submitted tenders, the details of which have been circulated.

A budget of \$225,000 was assigned for this purchase in Council's 2025/26 capital works program. Both tender prices came within this budget amount.

The tenders were evaluated on the basis of price, suitability, service backup, machine quality and historical reliability. A copy of the Contractor Evaluation Tool assessment has been circulated to Councillors.

All prices within this report are exclusive of GST and stamp duty.

Evaluation

The Co-ordinator of Circular Economy and Environment and the Manager Infrastructure Asset and Environment assessed each tender based on the criteria of price and suitability for scope of infrastructure work performed by the outdoor crews. Due consideration was also given to service backup, machine quality and historical reliability.

The officer has reviewed all the tenders which called for backhoe rear end hydraulic side shift and tilting quick hitch for hoe operations. The CAT 432 backhoe comes out as the more suitable machine. Moreover, the CAT 432 is within the allocated budget range and there will be no additional requirements for extra buckets and other attachments as these are already available at the depot. Ergonomics are aligned with other backhoe machines within Council's fleet along with operator familiarity, spare parts and servicing requirements.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

Section 109 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states:

"A Council must comply with its Procurement Policy before entering a contract for the purchase of goods or services or the carrying out of works."

The procurement process followed for this tender and the subsequent assessment and recommendation have been undertaken in accordance with Council's *Procurement Policy* adopted in June 2023.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

A public tender process is generally the best way to ensure we achieve the best outcome for these specialised, high value items of plant.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Economic

This tender used preferred suppliers from Vendor Panel's accepted supplier network, with the primary dealers working closely with local dealerships under their network. This will have a positive impact on the local economy through the purchase of local materials and services over the life of the asset.

Climate change/Environmental

This capital expenditure will have a minimal contribution either positive or negative to carbon emission levels due to the slow advancement of alternate fuel types for heavy vehicle equipment.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Not applicable.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Not applicable.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible, and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not Applicable

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans: The tender has been conducted in accordance with the *Procurement Policy* and supports the following *Council Plan 2021-2025* priority:

4. *Deliver 100% of the annual plant replacement program.*

Council Policies:
Procurement Policy

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Minimal risk is associated with this acquisition despite prolonged lead times on supply with current machinery equipment in use being adequately resourced to deliver capital works projects and/or Council asset maintenance programs. These risks will be mitigated by active management and continued servicing of machinery equipment in accordance with scheduled maintenance programs with little downtime expected. CAT through its online

Officer's View:

After a thorough assessment of both tender submissions and consultation with Council plant operators and mechanics, the assessment panel recommends the purchase of the William Adams CAT 432.

- CAT is a major industry player in the heavy vehicle earthmoving market whose brand is most reputable and is well regarded in the civil earthworks industry;

- Engine specifications and safety features are far superior and afford greater safety, flexibility and functionality for everyday tasks;
- The CAT 432 backhoe is largely compatible with Council's existing backhoe fleet and depot operators are familiar with CAT equipment.
- Our depot mechanics are well-versed in servicing the CAT brand as most of the existing heavy equipment fleet are CAT, affording greater efficiency gains when performing mechanical maintenance and machine servicing related tasks;
- The international backing of a reputable industry player demonstrates the ability to provide a quality end product along with a dedicated aftercare service offering delivering good value and low risk to Council. After-sales support from the supplier is readily available, and the unit comes with an extended 36-month warranty with comprehensive coverage that includes Powertrain+Hydraulics components, as well as additional electrical and structural components

11.2 Road Management Plan

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Bivek Regmi, Manager Assets and Environment.

At the time of preparation of the report the officer did not have a general or material conflict interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

To obtain the endorsement of the recently reviewed Road Management Plan (RMP) 2025 by the Council.

Summary:

A full review of the Road Management Plan has been undertaken in March 2025, resulting in updates to improve clarity, statutory compliance, and operational effectiveness. The amendments address scope, responsibilities, asset records, inspection regimes, service levels, and emergency management provisions. The following table summarises the major changes proposed in this version for Council's consideration:

Section / Paragraph	Change Summary	Reason for Change
1.1 Purpose of the Plan	Expanded detail on Council's role as Coordinating Road Authority and interaction with other agencies (VicRoads/DTP, DEECA, Parks Victoria, Goulburn-Murray Water).	Clarify statutory responsibilities and demarcations.
1.2 Exceptional Circumstances	Broadened criteria to include natural disasters, labour shortages, and other disruptions; added CEO-led activation and public notification requirements.	Strengthen governance and ensure flexible response to emergencies.
2.7 Recreational Paths	New section recognising off-road paths as road-related assets with maintenance duties under the Act.	Capture additional assets and clarify management responsibilities.
2.8 Vehicle Crossovers	Expanded guidance on owner and Council responsibilities; clarified maintenance boundaries.	Reduce disputes and improve consistency.
3.1–3.3 Inspection Regimes	Adjusted inspection frequencies; added post-flood inspections for high-risk assets; clarified proactive vs reactive inspections.	Improve hazard identification and resilience.
3.4, Table 8 Response Standards	Revised hazard response timeframes; added provision for temporary safety measures when immediate rectification is not possible.	Balance safety, cost, and operational capacity.
4.1–4.2 Design & Service Levels	Clarified minimum design targets; reviewed defect tolerance levels.	Ensure sustainable, realistic service standards.

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Draft Road Management Plan 2025-2029 be endorsed for public exhibition for a period of 28 days from 1 September 2025;
2. The Draft Road Management Plan 2025-2029 be presented and considered at a future ordinary council meeting taking into consideration all submissions made; and
3. If no submissions requesting changes are received, the Draft Road Management Plan 2025-2029 be adopted without further resolution.

Attachments:

1. Road Management Plan - DRAFT Aug 2025 [**11.2.1** - 28 pages]
2. Road Register - Aug 2025 [**11.2.2** - 12 pages]

Background/History:

Council's Road Management Plan (RMP) was first adopted in 2004. It was developed in accordance with Part 4, Division 5 of the Road Management Act 2004 and it is aligned with the Local Government Act 2020.

The RMP identifies the roads for which Council is responsible and documents the management system in place to ensure that the road assets continue to be effectively maintained to provide a safe road network for the community.

The processes within the Road Management Plan are necessary to ensure that Council meets its risk management, insurance and asset management obligations in regards to its roads infrastructure. The plan states that it is to be reviewed every four years and it has recently been reviewed and the updated version is being presented to Council for endorsement.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

Local Government Act 2020 – s.92 - Asset Plan.
Road Management Act 2004.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Not applicable.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

4. Economic
5. Social
6. Climate change/Environmental

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

The plan is being made available to the public for feedback and comment, in line with Council's Engagement Policy.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Not applicable.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

The review of the RMP 2025 does not have a financial impact, however it will influence the development of future asset renewal budgets. This is considered in the Long Term Financial Plan.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council's asset management policy;
Council's asset management strategy;
Council's road asset management plan.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this report in an open meeting.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable.

Officers View:

It is the officers view that it is appropriate for the road management plan 2025 be endorsed for public exhibition.

11.3 Resealing of TSC Roads Contract 2025/26

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Syed Abdullah, Civil Asset Engineer.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to appoint the recommended contractor for Spray Sealing and Associated Services.

Summary:

This report describes the tender process followed for the procurement of a Spray Sealing contractor to undertake the resealing of Council roads and recommends the appointment of a contractor to undertake the work.

Recommendation:

That:

- Contract No. 2024/25-058 for the resealing of Council roads be awarded to Szabolics Construction Pty Ltd for the lump sum of \$686,415.00 excluding GST for the year 2025/2026.
- The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal Contract No. 2024/25-058 in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and
- The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the total value of the allocated project budget.

Attachment:

Nil

Background/History:

The resealing of Council roads is completed annually as part of the capital works program. In 2025 Procurement Australia was appointed to act as a tender agent for the purpose of seeking resealing tenders under their contract 2024/25-058 - Spray Sealing and Associated Services for the North-East Regional Procurement Excellence Network (RPEN) group of Councils.

This is a regional contract designed to achieve the best value and quality control through a bulk procurement process.

The North-East RPEN Councils participating in this process include Benalla Rural City Council, Moira Shire Council, Wodonga City Council and Towong Shire Council.

Tenders were invited from qualified parties to be part of a panel of providers for the supply and delivery of spray sealing and associated services on Council's rural and urban roads.

Six tender submissions were received from the contractor panel under Contract 2024/25-058 for the 2025/26 financial year. Tenders were received from Boral Resources (VIC) Pty Ltd, Country Wide Asphalt, Szabolics Construction Pty Ltd, Head – Transport for Victoria t/s Sprayline Road Services, Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd and Downer Pty Ltd. A detailed comparative analysis was completed based on the selection criteria and weighting to determine the preferred contractor.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

The *Local Government Act 2020*

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Option 1 - Approve the tender as presented and award the contract to Szabolics Construction Pty Ltd for the lump sum of \$686,415.00 excluding GST.

Option 2 – Select a different tender submission to approve.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Economic

The resealing works are sourced from the budget allocated for this financial year.

Social

Successful completion of the project will improve road safety in various townships.

Environmental/Climate Change

The contractor will use crumb rubber, a recycled tyre product that increases the life of seals on rural roads.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Not applicable.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

The tender process has been a collaboration between the municipalities of Benalla Rural City Council, Moira Shire Council, Wodonga City Council, Towong Shire Council and Procurement Australia.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible, and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations. The costs to reseal specific roads within the schedule of works will be sourced from the 2025/26 reseal capital budget.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not Applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities*.

1. Asset Management - Maintain and improve our Shire's infrastructure to meet the levels of service established in consultation with our communities.

1.1 Deliver 100% of the annual capital works program and bushfire recovery projects

Council Policies:

Procurement Policy

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Due to the quality process followed through Procurement Australia, the risks for this contract are low.

Officer's View:

The references provided by Szabolics Construction Pty Ltd in their tender submission as well as the quality of the work delivered for Council in 2024/25 for Stabilization of major patches, support the view that they will deliver work of a high quality and provide good value and low risk to Council.

It is the officer's recommendation that Szabolics Construction Pty Ltd are awarded Contract No. 2024/25-058.

12 Land Use Planning

12.1 PA25002 - 257 Drummond Road Talgarno (DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mrs Margaret Fox, Contract Planning Officer.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

A decision is required in relation to a Planning Permit PA25002 application for the re-subdivision of the land in two lots, the use and development of the land for two dwellings and two outbuildings within 100m of a waterway and within 500m of land used for extractive industry.

Summary:

Council has received a Planning Permit application for the re-subdivision of two separately titled lots into two lots, the use and development of the land for two dwellings and two outbuildings within 100m of a waterway and 500m of land used for extractive industry. The land is formally known as Lot 1 TP318077D and Lot 1 on TP681750P being part of 257 Drummond Road Talgarno. The land is within the Rural Activity Zone and is subject to the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1, with a small portion of the land subject to the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1.

The proposal would result in two lots each containing a dwelling and shed. Lot 1 is proposed to be a battleaxe style allotment of approximately 6.2ha and will be bordered by the Murray River Road to the west and south. Lot 2 will border the Murray River Road to the south and Drummond Road to the east and have an area of 5.47ha. Both allotments will be accessed via Drummond Road.

The application has been assessed and several key considerations associated with the proposal which include the:

- Creation of small rural lots with no definitive agricultural use proposed
- Fragmentation of agricultural land
- Potential for conflicting land uses
- Intensification of small rural lots
- Impact of vistas from the public real and specifically the Murray River Road tourist route

- Visual impact of the proposal in the landscape

Recommendation:

That Council:

Refuses Planning Permit application PA25002 for the subdivision of the land formally known as Lot 1 TP318077D and Lot 1 TP681750P being part of 257 Drummond Road, Talgarno into two lots, use and development of the land for two dwellings and two outbuildings within 100m of a waterway and 500m of land use for extractive industry on the following grounds:

- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 12.03-2 – the siting of the proposed dwellings will detract from the natural and aesthetic value of the landscape.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 12.05-2S – the two dwellings and sheds will detract from the natural qualities of a significant landscape area.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 1307-1S – the applicant has not demonstrated that the use and development of the land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1S – the proposal does not protect productive agricultural land from unplanned loss due to permanent changes in land use. The proposed land use is uncertain. The proposal will create two isolated small lots in the rural zone for use for dwellings.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1L-01 – the proposal has not demonstrated that the proposed use and development of dwellings on the land are compatible with the agricultural and environmental characteristics of the area.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1L-02 – the subdivision will lead to a concentration of lots that would change the general use and character of the area.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-2S – the proposal has not demonstrated that it will lead to the sustainable use of the land for agriculture.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 15.01-6S – the visual amenity of the rural landscape and character of the area along the Murray River Road tourist route will not be protected.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 16.01-3S – the proposal will result in the development of small lots in the rural zone for residential use.
- The proposal is not consistent with the purpose of Clause 35.08 – the proposal has not demonstrated that the land will be used for agriculture and that the use and development will not adversely affect the surround land use.

- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 35.08-5 – the proposal has not demonstrated methods for sustainable land management; the dwellings and sheds will result in the fragmentation of agricultural land; the proposed land use has not been established and therefore there is uncertainty about the compatibility with adjoining and nearby land uses; there is a potential for adverse amenity impacts from the extractive industry; and the siting will impact on vistas from Murray River Road.
- The proposal is not consistent with the purpose of Clause 42.03 – the proposal will not conserve and enhance the character of the significant landscape; the dwellings and sheds when viewed from the western boundary from the Murray River Road will detract from the landscape character.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 42.03-5 – the proposal does not protect Lake Hume and the surrounding landscapes from visual intrusion.

Attachment:

1. 257 Drummond Road - Planning Report Rev B [**12.1.1** - 34 pages]
2. APPENDIX 4 - Lot 1 Dwelling plans [**12.1.2** - 5 pages]
3. APPENDIX 4 - Lot 2 Dwelling plans [**12.1.3** - 5 pages]
4. APPENDIX 6 - Existing site plan [**12.1.4** - 1 page]
5. APPENDIX 2 - Proposed plan of subdivision and site plan [**12.1.5** - 1 page]
6. 501251 Sheds Plans and elevations [**12.1.6** - 3 pages]
7. 257 Drummond Road - Additional RAZ Planning justification 02 (1) [**12.1.7** - 25 pages]
8. 257 Drummond Road - Additional RAZ Planning justification 02 [**12.1.8** - 25 pages]
9. PA250002 257 Drummond Road Talgarno Delegate Report [**12.1.9** - 26 pages]

Background/History:

The subject land is formally identified as Lot 1 TP318077 and Lot 1 TP681750 and is commonly known as part of 257 Drummond Road Talgarno.

Lot 1 TP318077 is the largest of the two allotments and is an irregular shaped allotment with an area of 10.07ha. The land slopes from the west to the east and contains a dam near the northern boundary. A minor drainage line bisects the western tip of the subject site and flows to the northeast to the neighbouring allotments. The parcel is mostly cleared of native vegetation with the exemption of four scattered trees. The land is currently used for grazing. The southern boundary abuts the Murray River Road Reserve.

Lot 1 TP681750 is a 20m wide parcel that runs adjacent to the northern boundary of Lot 1 TP318077 from east to west. This parcel is free from any development and contains part of the drainage line and three native trees.

The subject land forms part of a larger landholding that is separated by a Lot1/743910 to the north that is under separate ownership known as 215 Drummonds Road.

The subject site is in Talgarno on the north side of the Bethanga Peninsula, approximately 9.5km northwest of Bellbridge and 17km west of Albury. The land surrounding the subject site comprises a broad range of lot sizes and land uses. Lot sizes of neighbouring properties range from 1.3ha up to 100ha. The smaller allotments are used as rural lifestyle properties with the balance used for grazing purposes.



Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

The Planning & Environment Act 1987 provides the standard process for assessing a planning permit application.

The Towong Planning Scheme sets out the planning permit triggers that require a planning permit application.

A planning permit is triggered under the Rural Activity Zone for:

- The subdivision of the land
- The use of the land for a dwelling
- The development of the land for a dwelling
- The development of the land for a dwelling within 100m of a waterway
- The development of the land for a dwelling within 500m of land use for extractive industry.

A planning permit is triggered under the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 for the subdivision of the land. Only part of the land is subject to the Environmental Significance Overlay and is not relevant to the development of the land for a dwelling.

A planning permit is triggered under the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 for the development of the land for a dwelling.

A detailed assessment of the proposal is contained within the attached Delegate Report.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

It is the officer's view that the proposal is not consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy, the Planning Policy Framework and the objectives and decision guidelines of the Rural Activity Zone, the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 and the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

The proposal does not meet the sustainability policies of the Planning Policy Framework; the applicant has not demonstrated that the proposed lots can sustain an agricultural use of the land.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Notice was undertaken to all adjoining and nearby landowners and occupiers

pursuant to Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

No objections or submissions were received.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not Applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Not Applicable.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

As with all planning matters, there is a risk that this matter may be appealed pursuant to Section 78 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). It is the officer's view that proceeding to VCAT would have a budgetary impact. It is not possible to quantify this now.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

The proposal is not consistent with the Planning Policy Framework as discussed in the attached Delegate Report.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following Council Plan 2021-2025 priorities.

4. Land Use - Ensure that Council's planning, building and environmental health services support all aspects of liveability and sustainable population growth.

Council Policies:

The proposal is not consistent with the Municipal Strategic Statement as discussed in the attached Delegate Report.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

The attached Delegate Report outlines many of the sensitive considerations associated with the proposed subdivision and use and development of the land for dwellings and outbuildings. Upon assessment it is not considered that the proposal is consistent with the policies relating to the protection of agricultural land and to avoid the creation of small lots and the intensification of development in rural zones. Further the proposed dwellings will result in the proliferation of buildings in the landscape and detract from the significant landscape character.

Officer's View:

The site is located within the Peri-Urban area of Towong Shire (Clause 02.04 Strategic framework plan) where rural residential development is to be encouraged. Clause 02.03-6 Housing – Rural Residential Development also supports rural residential development but aims to achieve this through appropriate rezoning of land rather than allowing ad hoc development to occur. The proposal is not supported by the following policies:

- Clause 02.03-2 Environmental and Landscape value - Landscapes
- Clause 12.05-2S Significant Environments and Landscapes – Landscapes
- Clause 13.07-1S Land Use Compatibility
- Clause 14.01-1S Agriculture - Protection of Agricultural Land
- Clause 14.01-1L-01 Agriculture – Dwellings in Rural Areas
- Clause 14.01-1L-02 Agriculture – Subdivision in Rural Areas
- Clause 14.01-2S Agriculture – Sustainable Agricultural Land Use
- Clause 15.01-6S Built Environment and Heritage – Design for Rural Areas
- Clause 16.01-3S Housing – Rural Residential Development
- Clause 35.08-5 Rural Activity Zone – Decision Guidelines
- Clause 42.03-5 Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 – Decision Guidelines

It is considered that, while the applicant has demonstrated that the proposed subdivision and dwellings would not have any impact on any waterways, all effluent could be disposed of on-site, and the risks associated with climate change and bushfire could be mitigated via planning permit conditions, the land would be removed from agriculture and result in an intensification and proliferation of buildings that would change the landscape character.

On balance the proposal is not consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy, Planning Policy Framework and the objectives of the Rural Activity Zone, Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 and the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1.

On this basis the application for the re-subdivision of the land and the use and

development of the land for dwellings and outbuildings is not an appropriate outcome for the site. It is recommended that Council resolves to refuse the application on the following grounds:

- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 02.03-2 – the siting of the proposed dwellings will detract from the natural and aesthetic value of the landscape.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 12.05-2S – the two dwellings and sheds will detract from the natural qualities of a significant landscape area.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 1307-1S – the applicant has not demonstrated that the use and development of the land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1S – the proposal does not protect productive agricultural land from unplanned loss due to permanent changes in land use. The proposed land use is uncertain. The proposal will create two isolated small lots in the rural zone for use for dwellings.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1L-01 – the proposal has not demonstrated that the proposed use and development of dwellings on the land are compatible with the agricultural and environmental characteristics of the area.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1L-02 – the subdivision will lead to a concentration of lots that would change the general use and character of the area.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-2S – the proposal has not demonstrated that it will lead to the sustainable use of the land for agriculture.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 15.01-6S – the visual amenity of the rural landscape and character of the area along the Murray River Road tourist route will not be protected.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 16.01-3S – the proposal will result in the development of small lots in the rural zone for residential use.
- The proposal is not consistent with the purpose of Clause 35.08 – the proposal has not demonstrated that the land will be used for agriculture and that the use and development will not adversely affect the surrounding land use.
- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 35.08-5 – the proposal has not demonstrated methods for sustainable land management; the dwellings and sheds will result in the fragmentation of agricultural land; the proposed land use has not been established and therefore there is uncertainty about the compatibility with adjoining and nearby land uses; there is a potential for adverse amenity impacts from the extractive industry; and the siting will impact on vistas from Murray River Road.
- The proposal is not consistent with the purpose of Clause 42.03 – the proposal will not conserve and enhance the character of the significant landscape; the dwellings and sheds when viewed from the western boundary from the Murray River Road will detract from the landscape character.

- The proposal is not consistent with Clause 42.03-5 – the proposal does not protect Lake Hume and the surrounding landscapes from visual intrusion.

12.2 PA240059 - Omeo Highway Mitta Mitta - Mitta Mountain Bike Trail (DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mrs Margaret Fox, Contract Planning Officer.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

A decision is required in relation to Planning Permit PA240059 application for the construction of a mountain bike trail and the removal of native vegetation.

Council received seven objections to the proposal, and it is considered appropriate that the application be presented to Council for consideration and decision.

Summary:

Council has received a Planning Permit application for the construction of a mountain bike trail and the removal of native vegetation on Crown Land on the outskirts of the township of Mitta Mitta. The proposed track will be contained within the Mitta Mitta State Forest and utilize the northern slopes of Mt Welcome. There are two privately owned parcels within the the State Forest. While the applicant initially understood they had the landowner's permission to use the land for the trail, no written permission has been provided and accordingly these areas will be excluded from the proposal.

The land is within the Public Conservation and Resource Zone and is subject to the Bushire Management Overlay. Pursuant to Clause 36.03-3 of the Towong Planning Scheme the consent of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) for the construction of the trail is required and has been obtained. A planning permit is also required for the removal of native vegetation pursuant to Clause 52.17 of the Towong Planning Scheme.

The consent from DEECA requires Towong Shire Council to enter into a suitable land management agreement to consolidate and specify land areas, responsibilities and requirements of each party. It is likely that such an agreement will take the form of a Land Usage Licence.

The application was advertised widely to all owners and occupiers of adjoining land and the wider township of Mitta Mitta. Seven objections and 45 letters of support

were received. Of the seven objections, six were from residents of Mitta Mitta while the 45 letters of support were predominantly from people within 100km of Mitta Mitta.

The application has been assessed against the relevant provisions of the Towong Planning Scheme. It is considered that the concerns raised by the objectors can be mitigated through conditions on a planning permit.

Recommendation:

That the Planning Permit application PA240059 be approved subject to the following conditions:

Instrument of Agreement

1. Works must not commence until a suitable tenure and management type, and formal Instrument of Agreement has been agreed by both DEECA and the Towong Shire Council.
2. This Agreement will articulate all governance and regulatory matters to effect appropriate management of the defined land area to be the responsibility of Towong Shire, and the activities of the proposal.
3. If appointment of the Towong Shire Council through an agreed tenure type, all costs associated with the appointment of the Towong Shire Council through a Licence Agreement (survey and plan preparation) must be borne by Towong Shire Council.
4. In the event that an Agreement cannot be reached between DEECA and Towong Shire Council, this permit cannot be executed.

Compliance with documents approved under this permit

5. At all times what the permit allows must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of any document approved under this permit to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Commencement of permit

6. This permit will operate from the issued date of this permit.

Approved and Endorsed Plans

7. Before the use commences, a Multi-Agency Emergency Response Plan must be approved and endorsed by the responsible authority. The plans must:
 - a. Be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority
 - b. Be drawn to scale with dimensions
 - c. Be submitted in electronic form
 - d. Show the following details:
 - i. Details of the agencies engaged in the preparation of the plan
 - ii. Preparedness arrangements including but not limited to

- iii. Communication planning
- iv. Access arrangements – Omeo Highway and Ottos Road
- v. Response arrangements
- vi. Control, Command & Coordination
- vii. Incident Command Post
- viii. Safety & Risk Assessment
- ix. Activation of Response
- x. Injured persons
- xi. Media Communications
- xii. Staging Areas
- xiii. Aircraft management
- xiv. Responder Information
- xv. Briefings, debriefings and review
- xvi. Contact lists
- xvii. Maps of Emergency access

Buffer around private land

- 8. No tracks or trails are to be constructed with 20m of the land described as CA A8 Parish of Dorchap and CA A7 Parish of Dorchap (also known as Ottos Road Mitta Mitta). A 20m buffer must be maintained at all times.

Runoff Control

- 9. Polluted and/or sediment laden run-off must not be discharged directly or indirectly into any waterways or drainage lines.

Ongoing soil erosion control

- 10. All works must be undertaken in a manner that minimises soil erosion to greatest extent practicable, and any exposed areas of soil must be stabilised to prevent soil erosion, to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority.

Environmental weeds

- 11. No environmental weeds referred to in the Advisory List of Environmental Weeds in Victoria M. White, D. Cheal G.W. Carr et al. April 2018 may be planted on or allowed to invade the site.

Review of Traffic & Carparking Demand

- 12. Within 6 months of the commencement of the use of the land a traffic and carparking assessment must be undertaken. The assessment must include the following:
 - a. Carparking demand assessment
 - b. Traffic movement assessment
 - c. Incident report including all traffic related incidents within 100m of the entrance to The Mill campground and Ottos Road.

Bushfire protection measures

13. The bushfire protection measures forming part of this permit or shown on the endorsed plans, including those relating to construction standards, defensible space, water supply and access, must be maintained to the satisfaction of the responsible authority on a continuing basis. This condition continues to have force and effect after the development authorised by this permit has been completed.

Goulburn Murray Water – Construction activities

14. All construction activities must be in accordance with the EPA Publication 1834.1 Civil Construction, Building and Demolition Guide (September 2023) and there must be no transport of sediment or other materials to waterways either during or following construction.

Goulburn Murray Water Works within waterways

15. Proposed works must be undertaken in accordance with the relevant Works on a Waterway Permit as issued by the North East Catchment Management Authority.

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) - Native Vegetation

Native vegetation permitted to be removed, destroyed or lopped

16. The native vegetation identified in Native Vegetation Removal Report ID: RGE_2024_003 and permitted to be removed, destroyed or lopped under this permit is 3.055 hectares of native vegetation, which is comprised of:
 - a. 3.055 hectares of native vegetation, including zero (0) large trees.

Native vegetation offsets

17. To offset the removal of 3.055 hectares of native vegetation, the permit holder must secure a native vegetation offset in accordance with Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DELWP 2017). The permit holder must secure the following offsets:
18. A general offset of 1.431 general habitat units located within the North East Catchment Management boundary or Towong Shire municipal area, with a minimum strategic biodiversity value of at least 0.582.
19. Within six (6) months of the completion of the works, a follow up assessment of the actual impacts from the construction works on native vegetation, including retained trees and associated Tree Protection Zones (TPZ), must be conducted by an appropriately qualified and experienced arborist, to identify any discrepancies from the current Native Vegetation Removal Report associated with this permit (NVR Report ID No. RGE_2024_003). The arborist's assessment report must be provided to the responsible authority and DEECA.

20. Within six (6) months of the completion of the project, the offset requirements can be reconciled with the written agreement of the responsible authority and DEECA.

Offset evidence

21. Before any native vegetation is removed, evidence that the offset required by this permit has been secured, must be provided to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. The offset must be in the form of a credit extract(s) allocated to the permit from the Native Vegetation Credit Register.
22. A copy of the offset evidence will be endorsed by the responsible authority and form part of this permit.

Construction Environmental Management Plan

23. Before any works start, including removal of native vegetation, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) must be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and submitted to and approved by the responsible authority in consultation with DEECA. When approved, the CEMP will form part of this permit. The CEMP must include (but not necessarily be limited to) details regarding the following:
24. Measures to be implemented to protect the native vegetation and other biodiversity values to be retained on the work/impact site and on land directly adjoining the work/impact site, during and post construction works. These measures must include the erection of native vegetation protection fencing around all native vegetation to be retained on site, including the tree protection zones of all native trees to be retained in accordance with AS 4970-2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites.
25. Details for the implementation of recommendations and mitigation measures from the Native Vegetation Report: Detailed Assessment (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting 23 February 2024) to mitigate impacts on biodiversity.
26. Details for the implementation of the recommendations, methods and techniques in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan (High Country Arborist Reports, 29 January 2025) to avoid and minimise impacts of construction works on retained trees, including works within Structural Root Zones (SRZs) and Tree Protection Zones (TPZs).
27. Identification of all stockpiles, storage, parking and vehicle/machinery storage locations and appropriate management requirements for these – all to be located within the identified facility development and impact areas.
28. Details of management measures to be implemented before, during and after the construction phase, including weed control, sediment control, erosion and drainage management, rehabilitation and stabilisation of the site and impacted areas, vehicle/plant hygiene requirements.

29. Measures to protect aquatic habitats and vegetation outside of the construction footprint from the impacts of sediment run-off, erosion, work-related debris, and construction activities, with appropriate control measures in accordance with all relevant EPA Victoria guidelines (EPA Publications 175, 275, 480, 960, and 1834). All erosion and sediment control measures should be established prior to the commencement of works and be monitored regularly throughout the entire duration of construction, particularly after heavy rain events.
30. Details regarding the retention of habitat features such as coarse woody debris and rocks etc, and relocation (if necessary) into adjoining areas of native vegetation.
31. The CEMP should also include details and requirements regarding fauna management.
32. Pre-clearance surveys must be undertaken by a qualified ecologist and within an appropriate timeframe, before impacts occur, e.g. 2 weeks or less, in accordance with the recommendations of the Detailed Assessment (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting 23 February 2024).
33. Native fauna salvage, handling or relocation to be conducted by an appropriated qualified, experienced and licenced handler.
34. Details pertaining to timing of works to avoid impacts during key times such as breeding and nesting periods.
35. Monitoring and reporting requirements for all aspects and actions identified in the endorsed CEMP.
36. Identification of persons responsible for all aspects and actions identified in the endorsed CEMP.
37. All persons undertaking works on site must be fully briefed on all aspects and requirements of the endorsed CEMP. All works constructed or carried out must be in accordance with the endorsed CEMP, to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Protection of native vegetation to be retained

38. Before works start, native vegetation protection fencing must be erected around or along native vegetation to be retained on and in the direct vicinity of the work site/footprint. This fencing must be erected in accordance with the AS 4970-2009 Protection of Trees on Development Sites. The fence must be constructed of highly visible, durable materials to the satisfaction of the responsible authority. The protective fence must remain in place until all works are completed to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
39. Except with the written consent of the responsible authority within the area of native vegetation to be retained and any tree or vegetation protection zone associated with the permitted use and/or development, the following is prohibited:
 - a. vehicular or machinery access

- b. trenching or soil excavation
- c. storage or dumping of any soils, materials, equipment, vehicles, machinery or waste products
- d. entry and exit pits for the provision of underground services e. any other actions or activities that may result in adverse impacts to retained native vegetation.

Other conditions

40. Before any works start, including native vegetation removal, an Operational and Trail Management Plan must be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and submitted to and approved by the responsible authority in consultation with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Hume Region. When approved, the Trail Management Plan will form part of this permit. The Trail Management Plan may be generally in accordance with the Trail Management Plan (Mitta Valley Inc) and must include (but is not necessarily limited to) details regarding the following:
- a. Trail and surrounding area management and responsibilities
 - b. Maintenance requirements, including schedule of works
 - c. Site environmental values
 - d. Ongoing biodiversity matters; vegetation management, sediment control, management of pest plants and animals,
 - e. Regular monitoring and reporting, identifying any potential hazards and compliance requirements
 - f. Event management
 - g. Transport arrangements to and from the site for patrons, to ensure that impacts on road traffic are minimised on event days.
 - h. Car parking locations
 - i. Contingency provisions in the event of traffic accidents, breakdowns and illegal parking on road reserves on event days.
 - j. Appropriate signage and traffic measures between the site and car parking areas
 - k. How patron numbers will be controlled and monitored
 - l. Staffing and other measures which are designed to ensure the orderly arrival and departure of patrons.
 - m. The location for emergency vehicle access and width of emergency vehicle assess and location of an emergency assembly area.
 - n. Road signage on event days
 - o. Management structure, roles, responsibilities, powers and procedures
 - p. A compliant hotline for the duration of the event in relation to patron and security issues.
 - q. Post closure rehabilitation standards

41. If the trail and associated infrastructure is no longer required or closed, the subject site must be rehabilitated to the satisfaction of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Hume Region.

Bushfire and emergency management

42. Prior to commencement of use of the Mountain Bike Park, an Operational Emergency Management Plan (OEMP) must be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action. The EMP must include (but not limited to):
- a. Access controls
 - b. Bushfire and user safety
 - c. Evacuation procedures
 - d. Any other matters raised in consultation with DEECA relating to the protection of human life on the site.

Expiry – Development and use

43. This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:
- e. The development is not started within 2 years of the issued date of this permit
 - f. The development is not completed within 4 years of the issued date of this permit.
 - g. The use does not start within 2 years of completion of the development
44. In accordance with Section 69 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987, an application may be submitted to the Responsible Authority for an extension of the periods referred to in this condition.

Permit Notes

Goulburn Murray Water

45. The subject property is located within an area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity. Should the activity associate with proposed development require a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP), planning permits, licences and work authorities cannot be issued unless a CHMP has been approved for the activity.

North East Catchment Management Authority

46. In the vicinity of the proposed bike trails, Deep Gully (along the western side of the site) and a tributary, along with an unnamed waterway draining north toward the Mitta River, are gazetted by the Authority to be designated waterways under the *Water Act 1989*.
47. A Works on Waterways permit must be obtained from the Authority in accordance with By-Law No 2024/01 Waterways Protection prior to commencing any works in, on or over designated waterways (such as landscaping, access crossings, stormwater outlets, etc.).

Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action

PUBLIC LAND

48. Before any works on public land start, if any flora species listed as protected under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) Act 1988* are to be removed, a permit to take protected flora will be required. To obtain a permit to take protected flora or for further information, please contact, Hume Natural Environment Program - Hume_NEP@deeca.vic.gov.au.
49. The granting of this permit does not exempt the holder of a permit from the requirements of other Commonwealth and State legislation or policy.

Attachment:

1. P A 240059 Omeo Highway Mitta Mitta - Cultural Heritage Management Plan [12.2.1 - 71 pages]
2. P A 240059 Omeo Highway Mitta Mitta - Environmental Management Plan [12.2.2 - 30 pages]
3. P A 250059 Omeo Highway Mitta Mitta - Trail Management Plan [12.2.3 - 48 pages]
4. P A 240059 Omeo Highway Mitta Mitta - Trail Map [12.2.4 - 18 pages]
5. PA240059 Omeo Highway Mitta Mitta Summary of Objections [12.2.5 - 13 pages]
6. P A 240059 Omeo Highway Mitta Mitta - Objections Response [12.2.6 - 24 pages]

Background/History:

The subject site is located to the south and west of the township of Mitta Mitta. The land is Crown Land. A trail head has already been established on the opposite side of the Omeo Highway at The Mill Campground that contains public carparking and toilet facilities. The site contains walking trails that lead to Mt Welcome.

The land contains two privately owned parcels that are not able to be developed. The land consists of forest with steep slopes. The land is currently managed by DEECA. The plan for the Mountain Bike Park has been funded through a State Government grant. Funding has also been secured through the Victorian State Government's Local Economic Recovery program for the completion of the first stage of the development.

The proposal will provide additional cycling options within the North East Region that has become Victoria's premier cycling destination. It is anticipated that the trail will provide an additional tourism offering for Mitta Mitta.

It is intended that Towong Shire Council will secure and Licence agreement with DEECA which will detail the delivery of the requirements of any planning permit issued.



Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

The *Planning & Environment Act 1987* provides the overarching standard process for assessing a planning permit application.

The Towong Planning Scheme sets out the planning permit triggers that require a planning permit application.

A planning permit is triggered under the Public Conservation and Resource Zone and the Bushfire Management Overlay.

Clause 36.03-1 identifies the use of the land for Informal Outdoor Recreation as a section 1 use where the use is being conducted by or on behalf of a public land manager. The applicant is not the public land manager and therefore a planning permit is required.

Clause 36.03-2 identifies that a planning permit is required to carry out works associated with the use of the land for Informal Outdoor Recreation that are not carried out by or on behalf of the public land manager.

Clause 36.03-6 Requires consideration of the following decision guidelines:

- *The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *The comments of any public land manager or other relevant land manager having responsibility for the care or management of the land or adjacent land.*
- *Whether the development is appropriately located and designed, including in accordance with any relevant use, design or siting guidelines.*

Response

The proposal is consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework as discussed below.

The public land manager is the Department of Energy Environment & Climate Action (DEECA) which has consented to the issue of a planning permit subject to conditions. The approval is conditional upon Towong Shire Council being securing an agreed tenure agreement with DEECA.

The trail will meander through the forest and only trees and understorey that is necessary to be removed for the safe operation of the trail will be removed. The tracks are proposed to be narrow. The track will intersect the existing walking track but will not utilise any of the existing tracks to avoid any conflict in land use. The trail head will be located at the The Mill campground. This is located on the opposite side of the Omeo Highway. Any permit issued for the proposal will require the applicant to prepare traffic and car parking assessments after the first 12 months of operation. Further an incident report will be required in relation to any traffic incidents that have occurred within 100m of the The Mill Campground and the entrance to Ottos Road.

A planning permit is triggered under the Bushfire Management Overlay. Clause 44.06-2 identifies a planning permit is required for works associated with the use of the land for Leisure and recreation.

Response

The application was referred to DEECA as the relevant authority. DEECA proposes to include a condition requiring the preparation of an Operational Emergency Management Plan before the use can commence.

Clause 52.17 identifies that a planning permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation. Clause 52.17-1 states *"A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation"*

Clause 52.17-4 requires consideration of the decision guidelines associated with a basic, intermediate or detailed pathway. The proposed vegetation removal falls within the Detailed Pathway. An application for the removal of native vegetation in a Detailed Pathway must be referred to DEECA.

Response

DEECA have reviewed the application material and ecological assessment and has consented to the issue of a planning permit subject to extensive conditions as outlined above.

Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework

Clause 02.03 sets out the strategic direction for Towong Shire to achieve its aspirations. Clause 02.03-1 identifies Mitta Mitta as a compact settlement with a quaint character and scenic setting that attracts many visitors. It is described as a popular stop along the Omeo Highway. The strategic direction aims to facilitate development that contributes to a network of settlements that support each other in their service base and offer a variety and choice of lifestyle opportunities. It is anticipated that the mountain bike trail will strengthen the existing tourism for the town. It will also provide an additional recreational activity for the wider Mitta Mitta Valley Community.

Clause 02.03-2 (Environmental and landscape values - Biodiversity) aims to protect and enhance areas of identified landscape and environmental value and assist the protection and conservation of biodiversity, particularly remnant vegetation. While native vegetation will be removed for the construction of the trail, the trail has been designed to avoid and minimise the loss of native vegetation.

Clause 02.03-3 (Environmental risks and amenity) requires consideration of the impact of climate change. Further consideration of the impact of bushfire and erosion and landslip. Any permit issued for the proposal will require the preparation of an Operational Emergency Management Plan to ensure the trail is managed to protect visitors in the event of bushfire. The trail has also been designed to minimise the risk of erosion and landslip.

Clause 02.03-7 (Economic development – Tourism) aims to encourage land use and development that results in tourism investment and support opportunities for eco-tourism and cultural tourism. The trail will provide an additional offering for the Mitta Mitta Valley and wider Towong Shire. With the opening of the Omeo

Mountain Bike Trail the Mitta trail will provide an additional offering on the way to Omeo.

Clause 12 of the Towong Planning Scheme provides the policy basis concerning 'Environmental and Landscape Values'. The policy contained in Clause 12.01 (Biodiversity) focuses on protecting Victoria's biodiversity, particularly from unnecessary removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation and the fragmentation of habitat and the spread of pest plants, animals and pathogens into natural ecosystems. The applicant has provided a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan outlining how the environment will be protected during the construction phase. As discussed above the native vegetation proposed to be removed is to the minimum extent possible to ensure the safe operation of the trail. Clause 12.01-2S aims to ensure there is no net loss of biodiversity. The proposed vegetation removal will be offset, and the applicant has already provided a quotation to secure these offsets.

Clause 12.03-1S (Water bodies and wetlands) aims to protect and enhance waterway systems and limit earthworks in the proximity of waterways. Any permit issued for the proposal will require that all waterways be protected from any construction activities. A further condition will require the control of any environmental weed species that may invade the site.

Clause 12.05-2S aims to ensure significant landscape areas such as forests are protected and to ensure development does not detract from the natural qualities of significant landscape areas. While some native vegetation will be removed to make way for the trail the ongoing maintenance requirements will ensure weeds are controlled and the remaining vegetation is protected.

Clause 13 operates in much the same way as Clause 02.03-3 and requires consideration of the impact of climate change, bushfire risk and soil degradation. As previously discussed, the trail will be constructed to ensure there is no soil degradation or impact on any waterways. Permit conditions have been included to protect riders from the risk of bushfire.

Clause 17.04-1S (Tourism – facilitating tourism) aims to encourage tourism development to maximise the economic, social and cultural benefits of developing the State. Clause 17.04-1L aims to encourage the development of tourist trails based on the cultural heritage and significant landscape features of the Shire. The proposal is supported by this policy.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

The proposal will provide additional recreational facilities for the Mitta Mitta Valley and wider Towong Shire. It will contribute to the wider tourism objectives of the Hume region and link the network of mountain bike trails and parks throughout the northeast with the newly opened mountain bike park at Omeo.

The creation of trails within the State Forest will result in some loss of biodiversity and could lead to the introduction of weed species to the site. The proposal has considered these factors and aims to minimise the impact of the trail on the environment.

It is considered that the objectors concerns can be mitigated through conditions on any permit issued for the proposal and, on balance, it is the officers view that the proposal is consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Economic

It is anticipated that the proposed trail will attract tourism to the Mitta Mitta Valley and contribute to the economic sustainability of the small township of Mitta Mitta.

Social

The construction of a mountain bike trail will provide an additional recreational facility for the community of the Mitta Mitta Valley and the wider Towong Shire community.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

The application was advertised, and seven objections were received. There were 45 letters of support received. It is the officers view that the concerns of the objectors relating to traffic management, rider safety and threats to biodiversity can be address through conditions.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not Applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Not Applicable.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

As with all planning matters, there is a risk that this matter may be appealed pursuant to Section 82 of the Planning and Environment Act 1998 to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). It is the officer's view that proceeding to VCAT would have a budgetary impact. It is not possible to quantify this now.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

The proposal is consistent with the Planning Policy Framework as discussed above.

Council Plans and Policies:

Council Plans:

This report supports the following *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities.

4. Land Use - Ensure that Council's planning, building and environmental health services support all aspects of liveability and sustainable population growth.

Council Policies:

The proposal is consistent with the Municipal Strategic Statement as discussed above.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

The relevant law section outlines many of the sensitive considerations associated with the proposed construction of a Mountain Bike Trail. Upon assessment it is considered the proposal is generally consistent with the policies and can be supported.

The risk factors considered relate to the risk to:

- The environment through the removal of native vegetation and the potential impact on biodiversity.
- The increase in traffic, car parking and speed limits
- The increased bushfire threat
- The response to rider incidents and injuries

Any permit issued for the development contains conditions that aim to mitigate these risks.

Officer's View:

It is the officers view that the proposal is consistent with the requirements of the Towong Planning Scheme and that it is appropriate for a Notice of Decision to Grant be issued subject to conditions.

13 Environmental Sustainability

There are no Environmental Sustainability reports to present this meeting.

14 Economic and Tourism Development

There are no Economic and Tourism Development reports to present this meeting.

15 Councillor Reports

An opportunity is provided for Councillors to table or present a Delegate's report.

16 Urgent Business

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules, matters of urgent business can only be considered if:

- a) It relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and
- b) It cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting; and
- c) The Council resolves to admit an item considered to be urgent business.

17 Committee Minutes

There are no Committee Meeting minutes for review or confirmation this meeting.

18 Council Policies

There are no policies for review or adoption.

19 Sealing of Documents

Nil.

20 Confidential

Section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020* declares that meetings are to be open to the public unless the following specified circumstances apply:

1. *A Council or delegated committee must keep a meeting open to the public unless the Council or delegated committee considers it necessary to close the meeting to the public because a circumstance specified in subsection (2) applies.*
2. *The circumstances are –*
 - a) *the meeting is to consider confidential information; or*
 - b) *security reasons; or*
 - c) *it is necessary to do so to enable the meeting to proceed in an orderly manner.*
3. *If the circumstance specified in subsection (2)(b) or (2)(c) applies, the meeting can only be closed to the public if the Council or delegated committee has made arrangements to enable the proceedings of the meeting to be viewed by members of the public as the meeting is being held.*
4. *For the purposes of subsection (3), the arrangements may include provision to view the proceedings on the Internet or on closed circuit television.*
5. *If a Council or delegated committee determines that a meeting is to be closed to the public to consider confidential information, the Council or delegated committee must record in the minutes of the meeting that are available for public inspection –*
 - a) *the ground or grounds for determining to close the meeting to the public by reference to the grounds specified in the definition of confidential information in section 3(1); and*
 - b) *an explanation of why the specified ground or grounds applied.*

As defined in section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 "confidential information" means the following information

- a. *Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released;*
- b. *Security information, being information that if released is likely to endanger the security of Council property or the safety of any person;*

- c. *Land use planning information, being information that if prematurely released is likely to encourage speculation in land values;*
- d. *Law enforcement information, being information which if released would be reasonably likely to prejudice the investigation in an alleged breach of the law or the fair trial or hearing of any person;*
- e. *Legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies;*
- f. *Personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;*
- g. *Private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that –*
 - (i) *relates to trade secrets; or*
 - (ii) *if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage;*
- h. *Confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a);*
- i. *Internal arbitration information, being information specified in section 145;*
- j. *Councillor Conduct Panel confidential information, being information specified in section 169;*
- k. *Information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition; and*

Information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989.

Nil.

21 Closure of Meeting

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Agenda

Councillor Workshop

23 July 2025 Wednesday – Corryong

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Tolsher, Anderson, Wortmann, and Pitman
Juliana Phelps, CEO and officers as listed below

Apologies:

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest:

9.30am Councillor feedback/issues/questions:

Cr Wortmann:

7 Jul – Project scoping – Bethanga Pavillion v Boathouse

Cr Tolsher:

14 Jul – Tallangatta Early Years Infrastructure

Cr Anderson:

20 Jul – Tiny homes policy

20 Jul - Mitta Valley and Dartmouth

20 Jul – Early Years Parent committees

20 Jul – Foodshare update

21 Jul – Bellbridge Kindergarten

Hospital Rally update

Cr Pitman:

Cr Whitehead:

20 Jul – Weather station Corryong



10.00am Council Meeting

11.00am Director Infrastructure and Environment *(Jamie Heritage)*

Corryong CBD toilet
Springdale Road bridge
Colac Colac Caravan Park

11.30am Director Corporate and Organisational Development *(Narelle Taylor)*

Corryong Cemetery entrance structure
Rates notices

12.00pm Acting Director Community and Planning *(Michael Stanton)*

Tallandoon Tennis project
Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan

12.30pm Lunch

12.45pm Resilient Building Program *(Sven Erikson & Jenny McCoy)*

Mobile generators display

1.00pm CNC – Youth Space - 42 Hanson Street, Corryong

Sara Jenkins (Co-ordinator)
Thea Newton (Board Member)

2.30pm Hanson Street Murals Opening

Black Sheep Café – Hanson Street, Corryong



3.30pm **Chief Executive Officer** (*Juliana Phelps*)

Enterprise Agreement
Hospital Rally

4.30pm **Councillor time**

5.00pm **Close**

Agenda

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 13 August – Tallangatta

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Tolsher, Anderson, Wortmann and Pitman
Juliana Phelps, CEO and officers as listed below

Apologies:

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest:

9.30am Councillor feedback/issues/questions:

Cr Wortmann:

'New' Tallangatta 70th anniversary
Rascally rabbits in Granya
Enabling infrastructure – State Council motion
Penalty interest – non-payment of rates
Corryong Cemeteries Trust

Cr Tolsher:

Regional Energy Accord
Office signage

Cr Anderson:

Cr Pitman:

Cr Whitehead:

Automated weather station Corryong



10.00am Director Corporate and Organisational Development *(Narelle Taylor)*

[Briefing re: August Council Meeting reports](#)

Quarterly Budget Report
Corryong Cemeteries Trust
Occupational Health and Safety

[Updates:](#)

Colac Colac Caravan Park
Rates notice
Council Plan
Long Term Financial Plan

12.00pm Planning update *(Margaret Fox)*

Murray River Road and Cudgewa Valley Road, Cudgewa
257 Drummond Road, Talgarno

12.20pm Applicant - 257 Drummond Road, Talgarno

Matthew Elliot (10 min)
Simon Hollis – Planning Consultant

12.30pm Lunch

1.00pm Planning Scheme Amendment Update

Caz Redding – Schemology
Katie Xiao - Tomkinsons



2.00pm Director Community and Planning (Mark Florence)

**Michael Stanton and Danielle Brooke will be present for some of the items listed below*

[Briefing re: August Council Meeting reports](#)

Land Use Planning
Culture and Inclusion
Tallangatta Neighbourhood House

[Updates:](#)

Cudgewa Recreation Reserve – Lighting Tender
Tallandoon Tennis project
Bethanga Pavillion project announcement event
Granya Recreation Plan consultation
Bellbridge Container Café
Mitta Mountain Bike park
'Opening event' Rowen Park Lighting
Draft Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29
KISP report

4.00pm Director Infrastructure and Environment (Jamie Heritage)

[Updates:](#)

Asset Management Plan Review
Road Management/Road Register Plan Review
Corryong streetscape
Attree Centre trees

4.00pm Chief Executive Officer (Juliana Phelps)

[Updates:](#)

Hospital advocacy – next steps
Enterprise Agreement
Meeting with Indigo and Alpine Councils (2 Sept)
Meeting procedure training (tentative 10 Sept)
360 Review
CEO leave



4.30pm Councillor time

5.00pm Close



Towong Shire Council Financial Plan

—

2025 - 2035



towong.vic.gov.au

Front Cover Image:

Two participants make their way through the scenic course of the annual Run Upper Murray event, held each spring near Thowgla in Victoria's North East. The event showcases the natural beauty of the region and brings together runners of all ages and abilities.

Model Financial Plan Reports**Page**

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2. Financial Plan Statements	6
3. Financial Performance Indicators	16

Disclaimer

The Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2025/2026 to 2034/2035, including financial statements, has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* (Vic). While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this document is accurate and complies with relevant Victorian legislation, Towong Shire Council makes no representation, warranty, assurance or guarantee as to the accuracy or completeness. Please note, forecasts may not reflect actual future outcomes due to imperfect data, assumptions not materialising as expected, unforeseen events or changes in market conditions.

1. Financial Plan Context

This section describes the context and external / internal environment and considerations in determining the 10 year financial projections and assumptions.

1.1 Financial Policy Statements

This section defines the measures that demonstrate Council's financial sustainability in order to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	Forecast Actual											
			2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	
Consistent underlying break even results	Adjusted underlying result greater than 0%	\$0	-14%	-4%	2%	0%	0%	-1%	-1%	-1%	-1%	-1%	-1%	
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due.	Current Assets / Current Liabilities greater than 1.25	1.25	2.68	2.45	2.36	2.27	2.06	1.94	1.82	1.72	1.56	1.40	1.24	
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal capital in order to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life.	Asset renewal and upgrade expenses / Depreciation above 100%	100.00%	157.10%	175.35%	108.18%	98.88%	111.19%	97.65%	95.59%	93.43%	101.32%	100.95%	100.59%	
That Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate income and growth of the municipality.	Total interest on borrowings / Total income to remain below 10%	10.00%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Council maintains sufficient unrestricted cash to ensure ongoing liquidity as well as to address unforeseen cash imposts if required.	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities to be maintained above 70%	80.00%	18%	189%	185%	176%	155%	142%	131%	120%	104%	87%	70%	

1.2 Assumptions to the financial plan statements

This section presents information in regard to the assumptions to the Comprehensive Income Statement for the 10 years from 2025/26 to 2034/35

Description and table of annual escalations, for the 10 year period, for each income and expenditure line item contained in the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Escalation Factors % movement	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
Rates and charges	2.75%	2.75%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Statutory fees and fines	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
User fees	3.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Grants - Operating (Recurrent)	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Other income	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Employee costs	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
Materials and consumables	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%
Utilities	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Other expenses	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%

2. Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information in regard to the Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2025/26 to 2034/35

This section includes the following financial statements prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* (Vic)

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

2.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

	Forecast / Actual 2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Income / Revenue											
Rates and charges	10,702	10,976	11,278	11,588	11,936	12,294	12,662	13,042	13,434	13,837	14,252
Statutory fees and fines	241	377	386	396	406	416	427	437	448	459	471
User fees	1,263	1,607	1,655	1,738	1,825	1,916	2,012	2,113	2,218	2,329	2,445
Grants - Operating (Recurrent)	7,755	7,875	8,111	8,355	8,605	8,863	9,129	9,403	9,685	9,976	10,275
Grants - Operating (Non-Recurrent)	4,164	2,516	816	716	737	760	782	806	830	855	881
Grants - Capital (Recurrent)	1,516	1,866	2,216	2,332	2,332	2,402	2,474	2,548	2,625	2,703	2,785
Grants - Capital (Non-Recurrent)	4,065	4,622	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contributions - monetary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(253)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other income	2,254	4,409	4,528	2,612	2,686	2,763	2,841	2,922	3,005	3,090	3,178
Total income / revenue	31,707	34,248	28,990	27,737	28,527	29,413	30,328	31,271	32,244	33,249	34,286
Expenses											
Employee costs	10,812	12,229	12,029	12,390	12,762	13,144	13,539	13,945	14,363	14,794	15,238
Materials and services	13,304	9,721	8,468	8,764	9,071	9,388	9,717	10,057	10,409	10,773	11,150
Depreciation	6,904	6,904	5,919	6,097	6,279	6,468	6,662	6,862	7,068	7,280	7,498
Utilities	205	197	207	217	228	239	251	264	277	291	306
Other Operating Expenses	316	277	285	294	303	312	321	331	341	351	361
Finance Costs - leases	-	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Other Community Expenses	-	1,500	1,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total expenses	31,541	30,844	28,424	27,777	28,659	29,568	30,506	31,474	32,474	33,505	34,569
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	166	3,404	566	(41)	(131)	(154)	(178)	(203)	(229)	(256)	(283)
Total comprehensive result	166	3,404	566	(41)	(131)	(154)	(178)	(203)	(229)	(256)	(283)
Adjusted Underlying Surplus / (Deficit)	(3,899)	(1,218)	566	(41)	(131)	(154)	(178)	(203)	(229)	(256)	(283)

2.2 Balance Sheet

	Forecast / Actual										
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Assets											
Current assets											
Cash and Cash Equivalents	22,550	19,875	19,239	18,205	16,228	15,062	13,978	12,998	11,409	9,792	8,140
Trade and Other Receivables	2,519	2,717	2,282	2,154	2,221	2,290	2,362	2,429	2,512	2,591	2,672
GST Receivable	203	160	109	112	122	118	121	123	132	136	140
Inventories	464	464	464	464	464	464	464	464	464	464	464
Prepayments	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66	66
Other Current Assets	1,285	1,285	1,285	1,285	1,285	1,285	1,285	1,285	1,285	1,285	1,285
Total current assets	27,087	24,568	23,445	22,286	20,386	19,286	18,276	17,365	15,868	14,333	12,767
Non-current assets											
Property Plant and Equipment	57,088	58,908	60,189	61,809	64,248	65,902	67,486	68,569	70,262	71,999	73,782
Infrastructure Assets	226,903	230,431	230,711	230,127	229,522	228,876	228,188	227,872	227,521	227,134	226,707
Investment Property	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275
Investment in Associates and Joint Ventures	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43
Total non-current assets	285,309	290,657	292,218	293,254	295,088	296,096	296,991	297,759	299,101	300,451	301,807
Total assets	312,396	315,225	315,663	315,540	315,474	315,382	315,267	315,124	314,969	314,784	314,573
Liabilities											
Current liabilities											
Trade and other payables	2,139	2,064	1,936	1,853	1,918	1,980	2,044	2,105	2,179	2,249	2,322
Trust funds and deposits	886	886	886	886	886	886	886	886	886	886	886
Unearned Income	5,426	5,426	5,426	5,426	5,426	5,426	5,426	5,426	5,426	5,426	5,426
Employee Benefits	1,668	1,668	1,668	1,668	1,668	1,668	1,668	1,668	1,668	1,668	1,668
Total current liabilities	10,119	10,044	9,916	9,833	9,898	9,960	10,024	10,085	10,159	10,229	10,302
Non-current liabilities											
Employee benefits	227	227	227	227	227	227	227	227	227	227	227
Landfill Rehabilitation Provision	710	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210
Total non-current liabilities	937	437	437	437	437	437	437	437	437	437	437
Total liabilities	11,056	10,481	10,353	10,270	10,335	10,397	10,461	10,522	10,596	10,666	10,739
Net assets	301,340	304,744	305,310	305,270	305,139	304,984	304,806	304,603	304,373	304,118	303,834
Equity											
Accumulated surplus	129,569	132,973	133,539	133,499	133,368	133,213	133,035	132,832	132,602	132,347	132,063
Reserves	171,771	171,771	171,771	171,771	171,771	171,771	171,771	171,771	171,771	171,771	171,771
Total equity	301,340	304,744	305,310	305,270	305,139	304,984	304,806	304,603	304,373	304,118	303,834

2.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2025 Forecast Actual				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	301,174	129,403	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	166	166	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	301,340	129,569	171,771	-
2026				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	301,340	129,569	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,404	3,404	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	304,744	132,973	171,771	-
2027				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	304,744	132,973	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	566	566	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	305,310	133,539	171,771	-
2028				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	305,310	133,539	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(41)	(41)	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	305,270	133,499	171,771	-
2029				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	305,139	133,368	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(154)	(154)	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	304,984	133,213	171,771	-

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2030				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	305,139	133,368	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(154)	(154)	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	304,984	133,213	171,771	-
2031				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	304,984	133,213	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(178)	(178)	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	304,806	133,035	171,771	-
2032				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	304,806	133,035	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(203)	(203)	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	304,603	132,832	171,771	-
2033				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	304,603	132,832	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(229)	(229)	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	304,373	132,602	171,771	-
2034				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	304,373	132,602	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(256)	(256)	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	304,118	132,347	171,771	-
2035				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	304,118	132,347	171,771	-
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(283)	(283)	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year	303,834	132,063	171,771	-

2.4 Statement of Cash Flows

	Forecast / Actual										
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities											
Rates and Charges Received	10,984	10,910	11,253	11,565	11,904	12,264	12,632	13,014	13,399	13,804	14,218
Grants - Operational Received	12,234	10,329	9,048	9,061	9,318	9,600	9,888	10,187	10,488	10,805	11,129
Grants - Capital Received	5,728	6,449	2,567	2,323	2,331	2,396	2,468	2,543	2,618	2,697	2,778
Interest Received	1,286	1,661	1,711	1,762	1,815	1,869	1,926	1,983	2,043	2,104	2,167
User Fees Received	1,426	1,757	1,816	1,905	1,999	2,099	2,204	2,315	2,430	2,552	2,680
Statutory Fees and Fines Received	272	412	424	435	446	457	468	480	492	504	517
Other Receipts	807	3,005	3,092	1,113	956	980	1,005	1,030	1,056	1,082	1,109
Employee Costs Paid	(10,793)	(12,266)	(12,045)	(12,363)	(12,728)	(13,113)	(13,506)	(13,915)	(14,326)	(14,759)	(15,201)
Materials and Consumables Paid	(14,608)	(10,725)	(9,428)	(9,616)	(9,948)	(10,298)	(10,659)	(11,034)	(11,415)	(11,818)	(12,231)
Utilities Paid	(225)	(217)	(227)	(238)	(250)	(262)	(275)	(289)	(304)	(319)	(335)
Landfill Rehabilitation Expenditure Paid	-	(500)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GST Received / (Paid)	2,234	1,966	1,361	1,341	1,453	1,424	1,448	1,478	1,574	1,625	1,672
Other Payments	(347)	(1,978)	(1,981)	(476)	(350)	(360)	(370)	(381)	(391)	(403)	(414)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	8,998	10,803	7,592	6,812	6,947	7,057	7,229	7,412	7,662	7,875	8,088
Cash flows from investing activities											
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(14,036)	(13,477)	(8,228)	(7,846)	(8,925)	(8,223)	(8,313)	(8,392)	(9,251)	(9,492)	(9,739)
Proceeds from sale of financial assets	2,654	19,882	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(11,382)	6,405	(8,228)	(7,846)	(8,925)	(8,223)	(8,313)	(8,392)	(9,251)	(9,492)	(9,739)
Cash flows from financing activities											
Finance costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest paid - lease liability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of lease liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	(2,384)	17,207	(637)	(1,033)	(1,978)	(1,166)	(1,084)	(980)	(1,589)	(1,617)	(1,652)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	5,052	2,668	19,875	19,239	18,205	16,228	15,062	13,978	12,998	11,409	9,792
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	2,668	19,875	19,239	18,205	16,228	15,062	13,978	12,998	11,409	9,792	8,140

2.5 Statement of Capital Works

	Forecast / Actual										
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property											
Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Buildings	788	577	664	682	701	720	740	760	781	803	825
Leasehold improvements	-	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total buildings	788	727	664	682	701	720	740	760	781	803	825
Total property	788	727	664	682	701	720	740	760	781	803	825
Plant and equipment											
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,397	993	531	850	1,647	841	749	225	812	832	853
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	99	-	32	33	34	35	36	37	37	38	39
Computers and telecommunications	182	100	54	55	57	58	59	61	62	64	66
Total plant and equipment	1,678	1,093	617	938	1,738	934	844	323	912	934	958
Infrastructure											
Roads	3,639	7,646	2,103	2,141	2,220	2,281	2,343	2,825	2,902	2,982	3,063
Bridges	1,248	1,041	390	400	410	420	430	441	452	463	475
Footpaths and cycleways	452	160	126	130	133	137	140	144	148	152	156
Drainage	126	300	71	73	75	77	78	80	82	84	87
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	1,233	30	140	143	147	151	155	158	162	166	171
Parks, open space and streetscapes	2,894	295	299	307	315	322	330	339	347	356	365
Other infrastructure	216	750	808	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other capital projects	-	-	2,154	2,208	2,263	2,319	2,377	2,437	2,498	2,560	2,624
Waste Management	486	210	108	110	113	116	119	122	125	128	131
Total infrastructure	10,294	10,432	6,199	5,512	5,675	5,822	5,973	6,546	6,717	6,892	7,071
Total capital works expenditure	12,760	12,252	7,480	7,132	8,114	7,476	7,557	7,629	8,410	8,629	8,854
Represented by:											
New asset expenditure	1,914	146	1,077	1,104	1,131	1,160	1,189	1,218	1,249	1,280	1,312
Asset renewal expenditure	5,742	7,664	5,326	4,925	5,851	5,156	5,180	5,193	5,912	6,069	6,230
Asset expansion expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asset upgrade expenditure	5,104	4,443	1,077	1,104	1,131	1,160	1,189	1,218	1,249	1,280	1,312
Total capital works expenditure	12,760	12,252	7,480	7,132	8,114	7,476	7,557	7,629	8,410	8,629	8,854

2.6 Statement of Human Resources

Staff expenditure	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
Staff expenditure											
Employee costs - operating	10,812	12,229	12,029	12,390	12,762	13,144	13,539	13,945	14,363	14,794	15,238
Total staff expenditure	10,812	12,229	12,029	12,390	12,762	13,144	13,539	13,945	14,363	14,794	15,238

Staff numbers	2024/25 FTE	2025/26 FTE	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE	2028/29 FTE	2029/30 FTE	2030/31 FTE	2031/32 FTE	2032/33 FTE	2033/34 FTE	2034/35 FTE
Staff numbers											
Employees	109.1	120.9	120.9	122.0	123.1	124.2	125.3	126.4	127.5	128.6	129.8
Total staff numbers	109.1	120.9	120.9	122.0	123.1	124.2	125.3	126.4	127.5	128.6	129.8

A summary of human resources expenditure categorised according to the organisational structure of Council is included below:

Department	Total \$'000	Comprises Permanent		
		Full Time	Part Time	Casual
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Asset Management	4,396	3,880	344	172
Community & Wellbeing	4,370	1,584	2,516	270
Economic & Tourism Development	222	202	20	-
Environmental Sustainability	307	291	-	16
Land Use	63	-	63	-
Organisation & Development	2,871	2,130	741	-
Total staff expenditure	12,229	8,087	3,684	458

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff in relation to the above expenditure is included below:

Department	Total	Comprises Permanent		
		Full Time	Part Time	Casual
Asset Management	45.3	40.9	2.5	1.9
Community & Wellbeing	45.4	14.0	28.5	2.9
Economic & Tourism Development	2.2	1.9	0.3	-
Environmental Sustainability	3.0	2.9	-	0.2
Land Use	0.8	-	0.8	-
Organisation & Development	24.4	17.1	7.3	-
Total staff	120.9	76.7	39.3	4.9

**2.7 Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure
For the ten years ended 30 June 2035**

	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
Asset Management										
Permanent - Full time	3,880	3,430	3,532	3,638	3,748	3,860	3,975	4,095	4,218	4,345
Women	160	165	170	175	180	185	191	197	203	209
Men	2,727	2,242	2,309	2,378	2,450	2,523	2,599	2,677	2,757	2,840
Person of self described genderer	993	1,023	1,053	1,085	1,118	1,151	1,186	1,221	1,258	1,296
Permanent - Part time	344	354	365	376	387	399	411	423	436	449
Women	106	109	112	116	119	123	127	130	134	138
Men	238	245	252	260	268	276	284	293	301	311
Total Asset Management	4,224	3,784	3,897	4,014	4,135	4,259	4,386	4,518	4,654	4,794
Community & Wellbeing										
Permanent - Full time	1,584	1,632	1,680	1,731	1,783	1,836	1,891	1,948	2,007	2,067
Women	623	642	661	681	701	722	744	766	789	813
Men	605	623	642	661	681	701	722	744	766	789
Person of self described genderer	356	367	378	389	401	413	425	438	451	464
Permanent - Part time	2,516	2,591	2,669	2,749	2,832	2,917	3,004	3,094	3,187	3,283
Women	2,080	2,142	2,207	2,273	2,341	2,411	2,484	2,558	2,635	2,714
Men	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Person of self described genderer	436	449	463	476	491	505	521	536	552	569
Total Community & Wellbeing	4,100	4,223	4,350	4,480	4,615	4,753	4,896	5,042	5,194	5,350
Economic & Tourism Development										
Permanent - Full time	202	208	214	221	227	234	241	248	256	264
Women	202	208	214	221	227	234	241	248	256	264
Men	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part time	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26
Women	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26
Men	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Economic & Tourism Development	222	229	236	243	250	257	265	273	281	290
Environmental Sustainability										
Permanent - Full time	291	300	309	318	328	337	347	358	369	380
Women	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Men	291	300	309	318	328	337	347	358	369	380
Permanent - Part time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Men	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Environmental Sustainability	291	300	309	318	328	337	347	358	369	380

Land Use										
Permanent - Full time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Women	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Men	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part time	63	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	80	82
Women	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Men	63	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	80	82
Total Land Use	63	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	80	82
Organisation & Development										
Permanent - Full time	2,130	2,194	2,259	2,325	2,393	2,464	2,537	2,611	2,688	2,767
Women	1,247	1,284	1,322	1,361	1,399	1,440	1,483	1,525	1,571	1,618
Men	690	711	732	754	777	800	824	849	873	897
Person of self described genderer	193	199	205	211	217	224	230	237	244	252
Permanent - Part time	741	763	786	810	834	859	885	911	939	967
Women	370	381	393	404	416	429	442	455	469	483
Men	164	169	174	179	185	190	196	202	208	214
Person of self described genderer	207	213	220	226	233	240	247	255	262	270
Total Organisation & Development	2,871	2,957	3,045	3,135	3,227	3,323	3,422	3,522	3,627	3,734
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	458	472	487	503	519	536	554	572	590	609
Total staff expenditure	12,229	12,029	12,390	12,762	13,144	13,539	13,945	14,363	14,794	15,238

3. Financial performance indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10 year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Indicator	Measure	Forecast											
		Actual	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
Operating position													
Adjusted underlying result (an adjusted underlying surplus is generated in the ordinary course of business)	Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit) Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue		-23.77%	-14.11%	-4.11%	1.95%	-0.15%	-0.46%	-0.52%	-0.59%	-0.65%	-0.71%	-0.77%
Liquidity													
Working Capital (sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	Current assets compared to current liabilities Current assets / current liabilities		360.63%	267.68%	244.60%	236.44%	226.64%	205.95%	193.62%	182.31%	172.19%	156.20%	140.12%
Unrestricted cash (sufficient cash that is free of restrictions is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities Unrestricted cash / current liabilities		40.90%	17.61%	189.06%	185.09%	176.13%	154.99%	142.32%	130.60%	120.10%	103.58%	87.06%
Obligations													
Loans and borrowings (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Loans and borrowings compared to rates Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Loans and borrowings (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue		0.22%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Indebtedness (level of long term liabilities is appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities)	Non-current liabilities compared to own-source revenue Non-current liabilities / own source revenue		4.78%	6.60%	2.52%	2.45%	2.68%	2.59%	2.51%	2.44%	2.36%	2.29%	2.22%
Asset renewal (assets are renewed as planned)	Asset renewal compared to depreciation Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation		162.16%	157.10%	175.35%	108.18%	98.88%	111.19%	97.65%	95.59%	93.43%	101.32%	100.95%
Stability													
Rates concentration (revenue is generated from a range of sources)	Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue		46.35%	38.72%	37.05%	38.90%	41.78%	41.84%	41.80%	41.75%	41.71%	41.66%	41.62%
Rates effort (rating level is set based on the community's capacity to pay)	Rates compared to property values Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipality		0.30%	0.30%	0.31%	0.32%	0.33%	0.34%	0.35%	0.36%	0.37%	0.38%	0.39%
Efficiency													
Expenditure level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Expenses per property assessment Total expenses/ no. of property assessments		\$6,207	\$6,958	\$6,804	\$6,270	\$6,128	\$6,322	\$6,523	\$6,730	\$6,943	\$7,164	\$7,391
Revenue level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Average rate per property assessment General rates and municipal charges / no. of property assessments		\$2,325	\$2,361	\$2,421	\$2,488	\$2,556	\$2,633	\$2,712	\$2,793	\$2,877	\$2,964	\$3,052



Culture and Inclusion Report – 1 February 2025 to 31 July 2025

This report was prepared by Ms Danielle Brooke, Senior Community Development Officer Culture and Inclusion. This role oversees the Council's culture and inclusion functions, along with Libraries. The role supports culture, inclusion, and access for marginalised groups including young people, older people, those with a disability, LGBTQIA+ and First Nations People to improve equity and wellbeing for all people.

YOUTH

Towong Shire Youth Plan 2025-2029

The Draft Towong Shire Youth Strategy 2025-2029 was presented to Council on 30 April 2025, exhibited publicly for feedback, and subsequently adopted at Council's June meeting.

This new document will be an important strategic resource for guiding council efforts in the youth sector, building key partnerships and building a foundation of youth engagement.

Northeast Skate Park Series Event – Tallangatta Skate Park

The opening event for 2025 Northeast Skate Park Series by Al's Skate Co was supported by Council occurring on Mother's Day 11th May 2025 at Tallangatta Skate Park. The event was attended by approximately 80 people (competitors, family and supporters), included a free BBQ and prizes for all competitors across a range of ages categories. St John's Ambulance provided First Aid for the event and Ambulance Victoria community engagement team also attended the event. The day was successful and inclusive with all children encouraged to participate.

Al's Skate Co will also host another event in November supported by Council and has been the successful recipient of a \$50,000 Border Trust Grant to run a Series of events across Towong Shire over the next 12 months.

Engage Funding

Towong Shire Council will be collaborating with Alpine Shire Council, and Indigo Shire Council to deliver a third of the QueerLe \$113,000 Engage Funding Gateway Health successfully received. This funding is for youth leadership and entrepreneurship programs for young LGBTQIA+ people. This will provide \$12,500 of funding each year over three years for Towong Shire Council to provide Youth



Engagement programs, planning for this year's activities is currently underway with the assistance of LGBTQIA+ and Youth Consultant Sal Kimber. Under the agreement with Alpine and Indigo Shire Council's events across all three Shires will be available for youth to participate in with support from the funding.

Youth Fest Funding

Successful funding of \$2,000 has been obtained for a mini youth fest these funds will be combined with VicHealth funding to provide a youth Voices NAIDOC event to occur in September.

Parallel Wilds

Council supported Parallel Wilds in their successful grant application for \$5,000 from Border Trust Grant to run 3D Workshops with the Towong Shire Primary Schools. The project will be launched at the TICC in October.

INCLUSION

Reconciliation Action Plan

The third iteration of the Draft Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) reflect RAP has been lodged with Reconciliation Australia, and we await feedback.

As part of the RAP actions the following has occurred.

- A number of First Nations cultural awareness training sessions were conducted for Council staff from February through May. Narelle Urquhart First Nations Cultural Awareness and Reconciliation Officer facilitated the workshops with a personal story, raising awareness for council staff.
- Social media posts to recognise important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates and events (Reconciliation, Sorry Day and NAIDOC week).
- First Nations cultural has been included in Councils staff induction program.
- Early Years First Nations Art Workshops have occurred resulting in a painting for Early Years entry.



- **Reconciliation Week**

Reconciliation week was recognised by a series of Art Workshops run with local schools facilitated by Ms Narelle Urquhart the First Nations Cultural Awareness and Reconciliation Officer. Local children created art works, which were installed in the Tallangatta Library for viewing during May and June.

A morning tea occurred on Thursday 29th May 2025 to officially recognise Reconciliation Week and bring awareness of what Reconciliation means. Guest speakers were the Mayor Andrew Whitehead, Culture and Inclusion Officer Ms Danielle Brooke, First Nations Cultural Awareness Officer Ms Narelle Urquhart and Director Community and Planning Mr Mark Florence.

Approximately forty people attended the Morning Tea with representation from Gateway Health, Tallangatta Health Service, Tallangatta Secondary College and Tallangatta Primary School leadership students and teachers.

- **NAIDOC Week**

NAIDOC week was recognised with a twilight event in the Tallangatta Library and an installation of 50 years of NAIDOC week posters. Guest speakers from the First Nations Community and Council discussed the messages and meaning of NAIDOC over time. Approximately twenty people were in attendance.

- **RAP Working Group**

An expression of interest for internal and external representation on the Towong Shire RAP working group was advertised in July. We are hoping to finalise the members and have the first meeting in late August.

- **VOICES Event**

Council was successful in funding from VicHealth for \$4,000 grant to run a youth event celebrating NAIDOC, funds from Youth Fest of \$2,000 will be combined to run song workshops with local schools and secure a performer with an event by both student and performer scheduled for September 2025.

LGBTQIA+

- **IDAHOBIT**

To raise awareness and in recognition of IDAHOBIT Day, two events were held on Thursday 15th May 2025 in the Tallangatta and Corryong Libraries. The Tallangatta event was attended by approximately 30 people from the LGBTQIA+ community, council staff, Gateway Health, Tallangatta Health, Headspace, Tallangatta Secondary College, and the police.



The Corryong event attended by approximately 40 people, including members of the LGBTQIA+ community from the Upper Murray, the CAMP group, council staff, Gateway Health, Corryong College staff, Headspace, and the police.

Council also supported the CAMP group in Corryong to run a separate event.

- **LGBTQIA+ Reference Group**

As an action and recommendation of the inclusion report, consultant Sal Kimber has been conducting research in the best way to set up a LGBTQIA+ reference group.

Seniors

In addition to Council's allocated \$3,000 in funding for Senior's week, Council has been successful in applying for an additional \$10,000 in Senior's week funding for an inclusive LGBTQIA+ senior's event. Currently planning is underway for two general musical concerts available for free for all seniors in Tallangatta and Corryong, events will occur during October.

ANZAC Day

An ANZAC Day art installation in Tallangatta Library with art contributions from Tallangatta Primary School.

WELLBEING

The Draft Towong Shire Council Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 has been prepared with the principal author being Senior Community Development Officer – Culture and Inclusion Ms Danielle Brooke.

The process involved:

- Examining evidence from State, local and leading industry organisations.
- Consultation with Early Years Services.
- Consultation with Maternal and Child Health Nurses.
- Consultation with Tallangatta Neighbourhood House.
- Consultation with Community Wellbeing Team.
- Preliminary draft shared with Towong Alliance.
- Consultation with Walwa Bush Nursing Centre, Corryong Health, and Tallangatta Health.

Wellbeing Partnership Engagement

Meetings have occurred with key partnership organisations to establish networks connection in wellbeing activities. These organisations have been, Gateway Health, Tallangatta Health Service, Corryong Health Service, Orange Door, Women's Health Goulburn Murray Northeast, Public Health Unit Wodonga, Alcohol and Other Drug network meeting, Northeast Youth Network, Towong School health and wellbeing representatives.

LIBRARIES

Towong Shire libraries continue to be highly valued by our communities for meeting diverse needs with visitation increasing from 937 in July 2024 and peaking at 1647 in May 2025 a 75.8% increase. Table 1 below shows the visitation during the reporting period. During May the highest visitation was recorded to date with 1,647 visitors in our libraries. Visitors used our spaces, Wi-Fi, technology, reading materials, and friendly staff assistance. Borrowing has remained stable with a total of 13,377 total loans over the 24/25 financial year led by Tallangatta Library. Membership rose by 7.5% and online catalogue visits have grown by 10.8% over the year however there is still some capacity to increase online catalogue awareness.

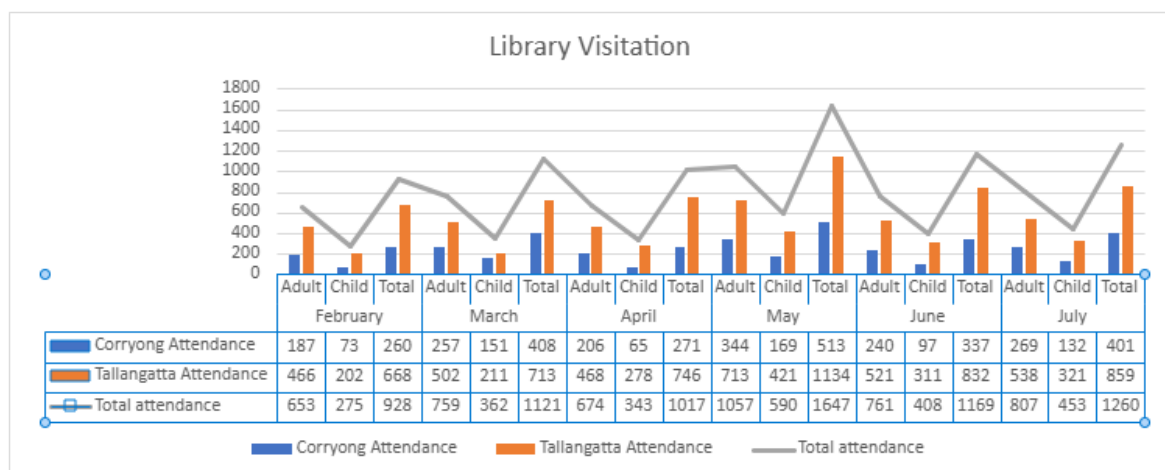


Table 1 Library Visitation

The library team continues to manage community engagement, collection development and host a range of activities through regular programming and story time to book chats, author talks, and special inclusion events coordinated through community wellbeing.

The Library has introduced a new e-Newsletter which we aim to put out each month, It has been sent to a small list of around 80 emails including members who have



signed up, community groups and schools and we expect this list to continue to grow.

Living Libraries Infrastructure Program

- Community consultation occurred during February in collaboration with consultant Eames Architecture in preparation for the grant application.
- Eames Architecture and Council representatives met with Living Libraries funding team on site.
- Eames Architecture prepared design drawings and budgets from consultations.
- Grant application submitted by Community Wellbeing team.
- Successful grant application announced in June 2025 for \$320,000 for the internal renovation of the Corryong Elyne Mitchell library.
- Tender for building works contractors issued 29 July 2025.
- Project program timeline projecting works to be completed by early 2026.

Regular Programming

- Storytime occurs in both libraries twice each week for 18 month - to 3-year-olds and a separate one for under 2-year-olds.
- Bolga Court Aged Care visits the Tallangatta Library once a month.
- Regular book chats are occurring every month.

Cultural and Special Programming

- ANZAC Day Art Display from Tallangatta Primary School.
- National Simultaneous Storytime 21st May 2025.
- IDAHOBIT Day recognitions.
- Reconciliation Art Installation and morning tea.
- NAIDOC 50-year poster display and twilight event.
- Author Chats by Ian Trevaskis and Shelley Burr.
- Warm winter reads promotion.
- National Poetry Slam upcoming in August.



ARTS

Partnership Engagement

- Membership has continued with Murray Arts, along with participation in several networking events by Murray Arts. Murray Arts continues to support local activities via promotion of any events on their website and calendar.
- Regional Arts Victoria membership collaboration.
- Council supported the Mitta Valley Art Show during Easter with two competition prizes.
- Council supported Bridge Murray Arts exhibition during Easter with provision of space at Davis Cottage. Council has met several times with this group to understand their activities and ways support can be given.
- Council has supported Upper Murray Performing Arts group in their efforts to activate the Snowy Mountain Tango Festival coming up in August.
- Council has worked with local schools in any student involvement in inclusive art installations.

Community Services Report Tallangatta Neighbourhood House

1 February to 31 July 2025

The objective of the Neighbourhood House is to support, develop and engage the community of Tallangatta and surrounds through a broad range of social, learning and recreational opportunities to support mental health and wellbeing, build resilience and foster a sense of connectedness within the community.

Activities of the Neighbourhood House are aligned to the 2021-2025 Council Plan, Community Wellbeing strategies to:

- Encourage active lifestyles and facilitate access to activities that have meaning to our community members to improve wellbeing;
- Support our communities to be inclusive, warm and welcoming; and
- Collaborate with community service providers and groups to collectively support community needs.

Throughout the reporting period, the Neighbourhood House has undertaken activities in the following key service delivery areas:

Community Development & Support

- Neighbourhood House promoted as a venue to escape the heat during heatwave conditions;
- Design and printing of posters for multiple Tallangatta Senior Citizens events, Tallangatta Carer Connections, Hub Saturday Craft group and Australian Light Horse Chauvel Ride;
- Collaboration with Tallangatta Community Share Garden on delivery of Heirloom Seeds workshop;
- Drop in space for community members needing support or information. (One gentleman visits every week for an hour of art therapy and connection with a Neighbourhood House volunteer);
- Opportunity for community members to volunteer at the Neighbourhood House;
- Free regular meeting space for six community groups (Boomerang Bags, Dungeons & Dragons, Kurrajong CWA, Horticultural Society, Food Swap & Community Share Garden)
- Promotion of community group activities via Neighbourhood House Facebook page; and
- Promotion of community group activities via Neighbourhood House Newsletter including a new Community Spotlight section. Link to latest newsletter: <https://mailchi.mp/towong/latest-happenings-from-the-house>

Community member feedback received via Facebook comment:

"Tallangatta Neighbourhood House is one of the most delightful things about this town. From the activities to the garden, this is where I found friends. So glad it exists."

Collaboration with Organisations and Services

- Meeting with Tallangatta Library team to share information on programming for cross-promotion;
- Collaboration with Tallangatta Health Service - Health Promotion Officer to promote First Aid training and Mums & Bubs walks, and hold a Women's Health Week event in September;
- Attendance at Upper Murray Region Neighbourhood House Network AGM;
- Completion of Neighbourhood Houses Victoria Annual Survey;
- Feedback and input on Council Plan and Community Health & Wellbeing Plan;
- Planning for community digital support sessions with Tallangatta Secondary College – Vocational Major Students teacher; and
- Free use of venue for external service provider visits including Hume Riverina Community Legal Service, Skills & Jobs Centre and Towong Shire Council Supported Playgroup.

Programs, Activities and Events

A wide variety of activities were delivered during the reporting period:

TERM 1 2025	Frequency	Attendance	TNH \$ Funded
Ukelele Group	3 sessions (monthly)	22	0
Polymer Clay Jewellery	One-off	8	274.89
Tai Chi	4 sessions	5	+64.51
Preserving Vegetables	One-off	7	376.02
Paper Tole	2 sessions	5	+18.80
Needle Felting	One-off	3	127.43
Games Night	Monthly	7	0.00
TERM 2 2025	Frequency	Attendance	TNH \$ Funded
Ukulele Group	3 sessions (monthly)	16	0
Knitting	4 sessions	6	+15.42
Watercolour Embroidery	4 sessions	5	437.62
Tai Chi	8 sessions	12	+177.40
Games Night	3 sessions (monthly)	13	0
Mosaics	4 sessions	6	645.87
Polymer Clay Jewellery	One-off	6	206.18
Heirloom Seeds	One-off	12	+63.80
Biggest Morning Tea	One-off	41	335.45
Perfect Pastry	One-off	6	297.43
Death Café	One-off	21	150.91
Craft & Connect	9 sessions (weekly)	38	0
CONNECTING COMMUNITY – T1 & 2	Frequency	Attendance	CC \$ Funded
Lunch (at TNH)	6 sessions (monthly)	116	1879.00
Café (at Yellow Picket Fence)	11 sessions fortnightly)	45	129.55
Cuppa (at TNH)	5 sessions (monthly)	39	0

**TNH Funded: To ensure affordability, participant fees are heavily subsidised. Provider fees less participant fee income determines the TNH \$ contribution using DFFH - Neighbourhood House Coordination Program budget.*

**CC Funded – Connecting Community in Upper Hume Social Prescribing Project funded by Ovens Murray Mental Health, Alcohol & Drug Alliance.*

Program highlights:

- Knitting Workshops: attended by a diverse group including a young mum with baby, a home-school student, retirees and a male Doctor;
- Australia's Biggest Morning Tea: collaboration with a passionate community member, attended by 43 people (max. capacity), with support from local businesses and raised \$1666 for the Cancer Council;
- Tai Chi: ongoing classes delivered in four-week blocks on different weekdays with a cost of \$5 per session to ensure accessibility;
- Craft and Connect: a new weekly craft group providing the opportunity for craft workshop participants (e.g. Knitting, Watercolour Embroidery) to continue visiting the House to build connections whilst working on unfinished craft projects; and
- Connecting Community Project: monthly lunches continue to be well attended and whilst Café attendance is small it is encouraging to see at least one new face at each session. A short, written survey was conducted with the 20 people in attendance at the May lunch with results as follows:

- 20/20 said they have met new people
- 7/20 said they don't attend social activities elsewhere
- 14/20 said Connecting events have made a positive impact on their life

Responses when asked "Why do you attend our Connecting events"

- *Gets me out of the house and I do not need to cook an evening meal*
- *I have retired from work so I need to maintain social connection elsewhere*
- *To meet other people from Tallangatta*
- *Social connectedness as I live alone*

Responses when asked "What do you enjoy most about our Connecting events"

- *Very happy place and friendly*
- *The variety of people who attend and the friendliness and inclusivity*
- *The food and having a day out*
- *Meeting new people*

Library Newsletter



Hello from Towong Shire Libraries!

Welcome to our eNewsletter

We're excited to share the latest from our Tallangatta and Corryong libraries each month - including what's new, what's on, and where to find it!

This week, we celebrated NAIDOC Week, recognising the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Drop by Corryong or Tallangatta library to see our displays of over 50 years of vibrant NAIDOC posters.

We're also embracing the chilly season with our Warm Winter Reads program - the perfect excuse to cozy up and dive into that reading list.

We've put together a fun first issue to get things rolling.

Enjoy!

Dates for Your Calendar

Shelley Burr Author Talk

Corryong Library: Friday 25 July, 1.00pm

Tallangatta Library: Saturday 26 July, 10.30am

Ask a Librarian for Library & Information Week

Both libraries: Tuesday 28 July, 12.00pm - 2.00pm

Poetry Slam @ Tallangatta Library

Workshop: Friday 8 August, 1.00pm

Heat: Saturday 9 August, 10.30am

Book Chats - Now Every *SECOND* Friday of the month

Tallangatta: Friday 8 August, 10.30am

Corryong: Friday 8 August, 2.00pm



**THE NEXT
GENERATION:
STRENGTH,
VISION &
LEGACY**
6-13 JULY 2025



Corryong NAIDOC Week poster display



Author Talk With Shelly Burr

Step into the world of rural crime fiction with award-winning author Shelley Burr, as she shares the inspiration behind her chilling thrillers WAKE, TIPPER and new release VANISH.

Discover how real-life mysteries shape her storytelling and ask your questions in this author event!

Corryong Library:
Friday 25 July, 1.00 PM - 3.00 PM

Tallangatta Library:
Saturday 26 July, 10.30 AM - 12.30 PM

Light Refreshments provided.

Bookings: please email library@towong.vic.gov.au or phone 02 6071 2955



Warm Winter Reads

1 June – 31 August

Looking for a cosy way to spend winter? The Warm Winter Read is a statewide campaign from Public Libraries Victoria that invites adults (16+) to read, relax, and connect.

By exploring your current reading habits, you can discover more ways to make time for books – and even go into the draw to win a prize!

Ask a library team member for more details or follow this link to join now: [ReadBooks](#)



Poetry Slam!

Get ready to be inspired and heard at the Australian Poetry Slam at Tallangatta Library!

Join us on Friday 8 August for a dynamic Poetry Slam Workshop to sharpen your skills, then come back on Saturday 9 August to compete in or cheer on local voices in the Towong Shire APS Heat - where words have power and every voice matters.

More details and bookings on our website: [Australian Poetry Slam Workshop and Heat with Andrew Cox - Towong Shire Council](#)

Family time at the Library



Book Buddies

Wednesdays, 9.30 - 10.15am

Songs, Stories and playful activities that spark imagination in curious little minds.

Ages 2+

Baby Bookworms

Wednesdays, 10.30 - 11.00am

A gentle, interactive session with songs and simple stories to support early language and bonding.

Ages 0 - 24 months



School Holidays

Keep warm at the library these school holidays with plenty of games, activities, WiFi and books during the school holidays.

6 - 21 July

Can you guess the book?

Some books stay with us long after we've read them. Can you recognise a book from just one sentence? Put your bookish brain to the test with this month's mystery quote:

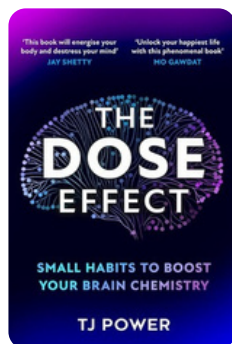
"All children, except one, grow up."

Hint: This classic tale was originally published in 1904.

Think you know it? Be sure to check our next newsletter for the answer!



Staff Reads



The Dose Effect by TJ Power

A practical and inspiring guide to optimising your brain chemistry for a healthier, happier, and more productive life. Neuroscientist and Neurify co-founder TJ Power reveals how simple lifestyle changes can unlock your brain's full potential

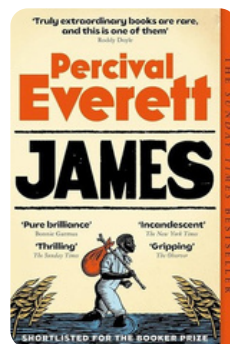
Recommended by Kate



Stories my grand... by Meby Andra

A powerful debut uncovering the hidden World War II histories of two Latvian women. When Andra breaks her family's long silence, she uncovers stories of survival, migration, and resilience that echo across generations

Recommended by Jane



James by Percival Everett

A brilliant and thought-provoking reimagining of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, skilfully giving voice to Jim's perspective with both wit and poignancy. Breathes new life into this classic tale.

Recommended by Vicky

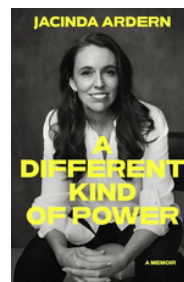
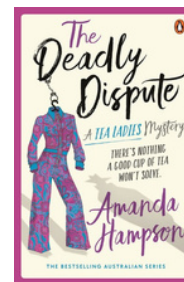


Swept Away by Beth O'Leary

Zeke and Lexi wake up lost at sea on a drifting houseboat. With no way to call for help and only each other for company, they must find a way back to shore – and reckon with the surprising bond forming between them.

Recommended by Georgie

New Arrivals



Spotted something
you like?

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eAudiobooks,
magazines and
newspapers
anytime,

anywhere with BorrowBox –
available with your library
membership! From bestsellers to
the latest issues, there's something
for everyone.



Need help getting started?

Just ask one of our friendly library
team members - we are always
happy to help!

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tallangatta neighbourhood house

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Neighbourhood House Newsletter

ISSUE #6 JULY 2025

Another jam-packed newsletter with info on the next batch of fabulous activities coming soon to the House, some happy snaps from recent activities plus latest community news. So, find a warm spot, get comfy and read on....

Celebrating Two Years!

It's hard to believe that we have now been at our happy home at 5a Banool Rd for two years! Having this space has meant we can do so much more for our community including hosting visiting support services; offering a variety of day and night-time activities; becoming a home for special interest and community groups; hosting community lunches; being a drop-in space for coffee and connection and a place for information and support. It has been fabulous to see our offerings and participation from the community grow and we can't wait to see what the next two years brings!

Change of Hours

Please note the House will be closed on Fridays until further notice. Our Open Hours will be Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 2.30pm. We are also closed for the school holidays from Friday 11 to Sunday 20 July inclusive.

House Happenings

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)**Puzzle Time!**

Never buy a jigsaw puzzle again! The House now has a fabulous Jigsaw Puzzle Library thanks to a donation of puzzles from a generous community member. There are currently 30+ puzzles in the library with a wide variety of designs and subject matter to choose from.

Borrowing is free and everyone is welcome to use the library. To borrow drop in to the House during open hours.

**DEMYSTIFY
YOUR DEVICE!**

A photograph of two people, a young woman and an older woman, sitting on a couch and looking at a tablet together. The young woman is pointing at the screen, and the older woman is looking at it with interest.

The logo for Tallangatta Secondary College, featuring a stylized blue mountain peak above the text "Tallangatta Secondary College".

MONDAYS
28 July
4 August
11 August
18 August

Demystify Your Devices

Need help sending photos, using Google Maps, video chatting with family, shopping online, using email and Facebook, or have loads of other "how do I..." questions? Over four Mondays the Vocational Major students from Tallangatta Secondary College students will be at the House to give you one-on-one help with your devices. Book your FREE spot by calling or dropping in to the House during open hours.

Mondays 28 July, 4, 11 & 18**August****9.30am to 10.30am****FREE**

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Community Winter Warmers Lunch



**WED
30
JULY
12pm**

WHAT'S ON THE MENU?

Roast Beef, Vegies,
Gravy & Crusty Bread
Scones Jam & Cream

Catered by:



course lunch that is sure to warm you up! The heaters will be on and the House will be toasty warm inside! A great chance to enjoy a cuppa and lunch for only \$10. Our Community lunches are designed to bring our community members together to make new connections. The meal of Roast Beef, Vegetables & Gravy followed by Scones, Jam & Cream will be catered by Yellow Picket Fence.

Wednesday 30 July

12pm

Cost \$10

alcohol ink



Alcohol Ink

Experience the magic of handblown alcohol ink painting over four fabulous Monday afternoons with Kylie. Using inks, traditional Japanese Yupo paper and a variety of ceramic pieces, you will experiment and learn a range of techniques to master this beautiful and fluid artform. The cost includes expert tuition, all materials, tools and safety equipment.

Mondays 4, 11, 18, 25 August

1pm to 3pm

Cost \$90 (covers all 4 sessions)

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Information Session



**FIRE
SAFETY
PROGRAMS**



happen in Victoria each year and 60% start in the bedroom or living area. Prevention, quick detection and safe escape plans are crucial. The session will include practical demonstrations with kitchen fire blankets and extinguishers; information on electrical safety, smoke alarms and home fire escape; plus time for questions. Everyone is invited to this free session which includes morning tea. Book your spot by calling or dropping in to the House during open hours.

Wednesday 6 August
10am to 12pm
FREE

Kantha Stitching

four
week
series



Kantha Stitching

Kantha, one of the oldest forms of embroidery, originates from India and can be traced back 500 years when the Bengalis upcycled old saris and household textiles into decorative quilts. You will learn how to layer colourful recycled fabrics and stitch down with a variety of running stitches, then superimpose a bird shape adding decorative stitching to bring it to life. Your finished piece could be used as an insert into a patchwork, a cushion, placemat, bag or framed for display.

Friday 8, 15, 22 & 29 August
1pm to 3pm
Cost \$39 (covers all 4 sessions)

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PHOTOGRAPHY



SAMARA CLIFFORD
PHOTOGRAPHY

FOR SMARTPHONES & CAMERAS

of landscapes, portraits or food? Whether you have a budget-friendly smartphone or a digital camera with all the bells and whistles, these courses will enhance your skills to capture visually striking images. With hands-on guidance from professional photographer, Samara Clifford, you will learn the fundamentals of photography, maximising equipment features, techniques for working with light and understanding composition.

Smartphones - Sunday 10 & 17

August – 1pm

Cameras - Tuesday 19 & 26

August – 7pm

Cost \$50 (covers the 2 sessions of chosen course)



Tai Chi

Balance your mind and body. Join us for a 6-week series of Tai Chi classes with experienced teacher, Barb Ritchie. The slow and gentle movements to peaceful and relaxing music can be made standing or seated and so are suitable for all ages and fitness levels. You will leave feeling mentally and physically ready to tackle the week ahead. Very limited places available.

Wednesdays 13, 20, 27 August,

3, 10, 17 September

9.30am to 10.15am

Cost \$30 (covers all 6 sessions)

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teacher and CWA member, Mary Grant, you will learn everything you need to know about working with patterns to start sewing your own tailored garments with confidence. There are only 4 places available to ensure participants receive hands-on individual support and leave with the skills and passion to be sewing outfits for years to come!

Wednesdays 13, 20, 27 Aug & 3 Sept

7pm to 9pm

Cost \$50 (covers all 4 sessions)

Book now on Eventbrite

Book your spot for Neighbourhood House activities on Eventbrite.

For help with bookings or more information,

email tallangatta.nh@towong.vic.gov.au,

call us on 0408 573 474

or visit the House at 5a Banool Rd from

Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 2.30pm.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Uke Group Monday 4 August 7pm All skill levels welcome Tuition available First Monday of every month FREE and no need to book	Craft & Connect Tuesdays from 1pm BYO craft projects Enjoy a cuppa & a chat while you get creative FREE and no need to book
Skills & Jobs Centre Wednesday 13 August FREE monthly job and career	Games Night Friday 1 August 6.30pm Cards, board games,

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your appointment

FREE and no need to book

Connecting Community

Café: 1st & 3rd Monday
10am at Yellow Picket Fence
Cuppa: 2nd Wednesday
2pm at the House
Lunch: 4th Wednesday
12pm at the House

Dungeons & Dragons

Thursdays 5pm
Fun and adventure filled
tabletop role-playing game
led by a Game master
Call Naomi on 0456 610 777
for more information

Game On!

If you love cards and board games and a bit of friendly competition, then our Games Night is for you! It might be chilly outside but it's warm and toasty here at the House! But if you want to be extra sure you are welcome to wear your pjs or other comfy cosy winter attire!



There is no need to book, just come along with a couple of your favourite games and some nibbles (totally optional). Don't have any games, no worries, just come along, there will be plenty of games available and people to teach you! This social night is free and all ages are welcome. (Children need an accompanying adult.) Games Night is held on the first Friday of every month!

LOOKING BACK**Mosaics mastered!**

Check out a couple of the gorgeous mosaic masterpieces created at our recent weekly mosaic workshops led by the lovely Kylie from Art Starts Here. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to make new connections whilst learning a new skill and unleashing their creativity.

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Pastry delights!

Big thanks to Mary G for another fabulous cooking workshop. Tips and tricks were shared for making sweet and savoury pastry goodies from scratch. Half a dozen happy bakers attended and everyone had a great time!



Nothing is certain except for death & taxes!

And that's why it pays to be prepared! Tracey and Claire from the "Good2Go

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plans, death doulas, wills, palliative care and more. We plan to hold another session in September.



Thanks for your support!

The Biggest Morning Tea was a great success with around 45 attendees enjoying chats, cuppas, yummy local food, some tricky trivia games and a raffle. A huge thanks to passionate community member Robbie Thorpe who was the driver behind this event and also to the local businesses who generously supported with vouchers and prizes. A fabulous \$1342.00 was raised on the day, and the grand total including friends and family donations, has reached \$1607.00 for donation to the Cancer Council of Australia.



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Community News

COMING UP

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Australian Poetry Slam Workshop

Australia needs all of its stories to inspire the world, not just those told by people in power. A poetry slam is a place for all voices. Listen and get HEARD! Before you enter your local Australian Poetry Slam (APS) Heat polish up your poetry, write your words, modify your meter and shine up your stanzas at an APS Poetry Workshop.

Andrew Cox will guide you in writing words that electrify the imagination. Express your creative ideas or reshape existing work into competition-ready pieces. Learn about poetry slams and how to use your voice and body to bring the house down on stage. Whether this is your first time experimenting with thoughts to the page or you have been writing for years this workshop is for you.

Friday 8 August | 1.00pm – 3.00pm | Tallangatta Library

Spots Limited | Free Entry | All Ages

Register Here: [Poetry Workshop with Andrew Cox Tickets, Fri, Aug 8, 2025 at 1:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

Australian Poetry Slam Heat

Towong Shire Heats The Australian Poetry Slam (APS) is giving the bullhorn back to the bards. The word nerds. The oral storytellers. The quiet thoughtful

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Local poets get two minutes to wow with their ideas in a form of spell casting called Slamming Poetry. They electrify your imagination. Then the audience sends two of these writers to represent Towong Shire in the Victoria State Final with nothing but the mic, words and deep exhales of honesty. Who will make it to the National Final at the Sydney Opera House? You decide!

Elect a Poet – A National Slambassador for 2025 who will win a prize worth \$20,000, including publication and a tour of Austral-Asia, sharing their creative thoughts and inspiring people everywhere to speak their own poetry.

Saturday 9 August | 10.30am – 1.00pm | Tallangatta Library

Doors open/poet sign-up at: 10.30am | Slam starts at: 11.00am

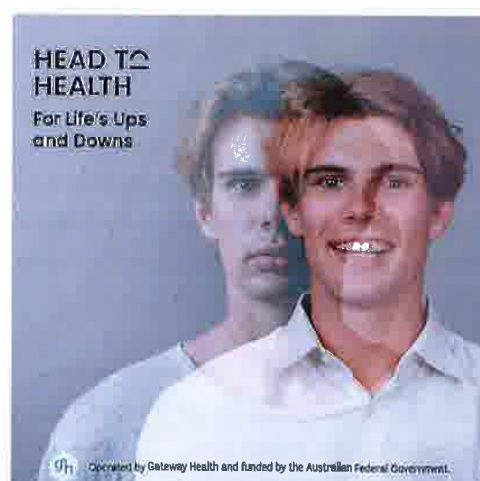
Spots Limited | Free Entry | All Ages

Register Here: [Australian Poetry Slam Towong Shire Heat featuring Andrew Cox Tickets, Sat, Aug 9, 2025 at 10:30 AM | Eventbrite](#)

Content may include strong language or adult themes

Poets of all experience levels are invited to enter and must perform in their residing state or territory and nearest heat. Full APS '25 rules

here: www.australianpoetryslam.com/rules



Head to Health – Mental Health Support Program

Gateway Health has launched a new way for the Tallangatta community to access free, confidential mental health support, right from your local medical centre. The service is open to anyone needing support with stress, anxiety, depression, or other challenges affecting their wellbeing. You don't have to face it alone.

Located at Tallangatta Medical Centre, 25 Barree Street. No referral needed. Speak with your GP or call 1800 657 573 to learn more or make an appointment.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)**Need a hand getting back into study or work?**

The *Skills First Reconnect* program offers free personalised support to help you get back on track with training or employment. Whether you're unsure where to start or facing challenges, friendly Pathways Officers can meet you right here in Tallangatta and surrounds to help you build confidence, explore your options, and create a plan that works for you.

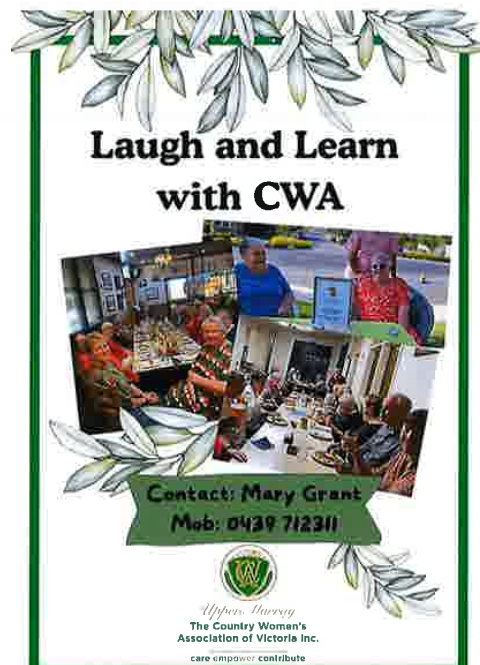


You will be supported every step of the way—helping with enrolments, connecting you to local services, offering training fee assistance for approved courses, and providing ongoing, wrap around support to keep you on track. *Eligibility applies-* [click here](#) to learn more or get in touch to see if the program is right for you. Call 0458 910 686. reconnect@wodongatafe.edu.au

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT**CWA in the Upper Murray**

Interested in working in your community? Did you know CWA is active in the Upper Murray with day and night branches, and even a virtual branch for the state. And yes, of course, we make the best scones and jam!

But there is also a political arm to CWA and representatives sit on many State Government Committees, fighting against the Emergency Services Levy, challenging decisions made on farmer's mental health programmes and championing the cause of industrial hemp and pulses for examples.



The focus of our fundraising is to support vulnerable women and children in our local community with funds to food banks, schools and refuges. The Cudgewa branch meets monthly in the Cudgewa Hall; the Tallangatta

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Women of all ages are most welcome! For further information, contact Mary Grant on 0439 712 311

Craft & Chat

A gathering of ladies to try out new crafts and practice old ones and chat.

Generally the first Thursday of the month from around 11am to 2pm. Held at Tallangatta Senior Citizens Rooms, Towong St.

Contact Janice on 6071 0280 for more information.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)A colorful poster for Lakeside Garden Tallangatta. At the top, there's a banner with various vegetables like pumpkins, tomatoes, and eggplants. Below this, the title 'LAKESIDE GARDEN TALLANGATTA' is written in large, green, serif capital letters. Underneath the title is another banner with more vegetables. Below the banner, the words 'Community', 'Events', and 'Growing' are arranged horizontally, separated by vertical lines. A green button with white text 'Join Us!' is centered below these words. To the left of the button is a list of bullet points: 'Facebook - "Lakeside Garden (Tallangatta)" for events, meetings and information!', 'Committee - All welcome to join', and 'Meetings - held every first Tuesday of the Month at the Garden 12:30pm - Lakeside Drive, Tallangatta'. To the right of the button is a quote: 'A space for all of community to share, bringing people together to benefit our collective health & wellbeing, by being in nature.' Below the quote is another paragraph: 'Events will be hosted at the space to share skills, knowledge & fun while also gardening using organic practices & growing organic fresh produce for all to enjoy.' At the bottom of the poster, there's an illustration of a person wearing a yellow shirt, green vest, brown pants, and blue boots, kneeling and planting small green seedlings in a row. To the left of the person is a yellow bag filled with vegetables, a brown pot with a green plant, and a red watering can.

In each newsletter we feature local community and service groups to help keep you informed of what is on offer in our fabulous little community. If you would like to be included, please get in touch.

WHAT'S ON AT TALLANGATTA LIBRARY?

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Warm Winter Read now until 31 August. Snuggle up with a good book and join this statewide reading campaign for all ages. Ask staff how to take part.

Storytime every Wednesday:

- Book Buddies (2+ years): 9.30am – 10.15am
- Baby Bookworms (0–24 months): 10.30am – 11.15am

School Holiday Fun from 6 – 21 July. Drop in for free activities, games, craft, Wi-Fi, and of course, plenty of books.

Book Chat – a relaxed space to share what you're reading and discover new favourites. Friday 4 July from 10.30am – 11.30am

Author Talk with Shelley Burr - Saturday 26 July, 10.30am – 12.30pm.
Light refreshments provided. Bookings essential - email
library@towong.vic.gov.au or phone 02 6071 2955

Library & Information Week - Celebrate curiosity and learning! Kids welcome. Tuesday 28 July from 12.00pm – 2.00pm

Poster Exhibition - 50 Years of NAIDOC. Explore five decades of poster art and reflect on the evolving messages of strength and vision. All July.

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Drop in or give us a call

Open hours Monday to Thursday 9.30am - 2.30pm

5a Banool Rd, Tallangatta 3700

0408 573 474

Email us on: tallangatta.nh@towong.vic.gov.au

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Road Management Plan

Adopted September 2021
Draft Review March 2025

Version 3.00

DRAFT

Towong Shire Council

Road Management Plan

Schedule of Changes & Amendments

Version	Date	Changes/Amendment
Draft V1.00	1/11/2004	Adopted
V1.00	Nov 2013	Reviewed – consider Limited Access Rd adoption
V2.00	Dec 2015	Reviewed – refining road designation descriptions and service levels
V2.01	Oct 2016	Additions to align with MAV's Road Management Plan Guidance Doc May 2016
V2.02	Sep 2021	Changes made to tidy up language and response timeframes
V3.01	Mar 2025	Review of whole document and ensuring consistency with MAV guidelines and clarifying extent of Council responsibility in Council's road reserve.

NB:

1. Prime number changes to Versions (e.g. V1.00 to V2.00) will be made when the document undergoes its regular review and when significant changes are made to standards and guidelines for inspections, intervention levels or work
2. Point number changes (V1.00 to V1.01) will apply to minor amendments that do not materially impact the document and are intended only to clarify or update issues. Refer to Section 5.5.1 of the Council Asset Management (AM) Strategy on reviewing & updating the plan and version numbering system.

Towong Shire Council

Road Management Plan

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Towong Shire Council

Road Management Plan

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Introduction

1.0 Purpose of the Plan

Towong Shire Council has developed this Road Management Plan (**RMP**) in accordance with Part 4, Division 5 of the Road Management Act 2004 (**The Act**).

The RMP identifies the roads for which Council is responsible and documents the management system in place to ensure that the road assets continue to be effectively maintained to provide a safe road network for the community.

1.1 Scope of this Plan

The provisions of this plan apply to road infrastructure and road-related infrastructure for which council is the responsible road authority. This infrastructure may be in roads where council is the designated co-ordinating road authority or in roads where another authority is the designated co-ordinating road authority e.g. Vic Roads. The demarcation between council and VicRoad's responsibilities is detailed in the "Road Management Act 2004 Code of Practice – Operational Responsibility for Public Roads". Council road infrastructure and road-related infrastructure includes the following.

- Sealed roads
- Unsealed roads
- Footpaths and shared paths
- Kerb and channel and table drain
- Pit lids
- Bridges and Major Culverts
- Traffic control devices

1.2 Exceptional Circumstances

Council will make every effort to meet its commitments under its RMP.

While Council will make every endeavour to meet all aspects of its RMP in the event of natural disasters and other events including, but not limited to fires, floods, droughts or storms; or, a prolonged labour or resource shortage due to a need to commit or redeploy council staff and/or equipment elsewhere, together with human factors, such as availability of suitably qualified Contractors, Council reserves the right, pursuant to Section 83 of the Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic), to suspend compliance with its RMP.

In this event, where the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Council has considered the impact of such an event on the limited financial resources of Council and its conflicting priorities, and determined that the RMP cannot be met, then pursuant to Section 83 of the Wrongs Act, the CEO will write to Council's officer in charge of its plan and inform them that some, or all, of the timeframes and responses in Council's RMP are to be suspended.

Once the scope of the event/s have been determined, and the resources committed to the event response have been identified, then there will be an ongoing consultation between Council's CEO and Council's Officer responsible for the RMP, to determine which parts of Council's plan are to be reactivated and when.

Council statements to residents about the suspension or reduction of the services under the RMP will include reference to how the work that will be done has been prioritised, and the period for which it is likely to be affected.

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1.3 Key Stakeholders

Stakeholders with an interest in this RMP include:

Table 1: Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Level of Consultation	Type of Consultation
Road users: require a safe and efficient transport network	Inform	- Council Website - Towong Shire Council Facebook - Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
VicRoads: the Coordinating Road Authority for freeways and arterial roads within the Shire	Inform	- Council Website - Towong Shire Council Facebook - Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
Towong Shire Council: the Coordinating Road Authority for municipal roads within the Shire; Council is also the Responsible Road Authority for sections of arterial road not used for through traffic	Inform	Internal Email
Adjoining Municipalities: The Coordinating Road Authorities or Responsible Authorities for municipal or non-through traffic areas of arterial roads where they cross Local Government boundaries within the state of Victoria	Inform	- Council Website - Towong Shire Council Facebook - Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
Other Road Authorities: Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA); Parks VictoriaNote: Goulburn-Murray Water has not been declared under legislation to be a road authority.	Inform	- Council Website - Towong Shire Council Facebook - Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
Utilities: service authorities which have assets for the provision of water, sewerage, gas, electricity, telephone, telecommunication or other like services located on roads	Inform	- Council Website - Towong Shire Council Facebook - Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
Emergency Service Agencies: (Police, Fire, Ambulance, SES)	Inform	As per the Municipal Emergency Management Plan
State and Federal Governments that periodically provide support funding to assist with management of network	Inform	- Council Website - Towong Shire Council Facebook - Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
Residents and business owners within the road network	Inform	- Council Website - Towong Shire Council Facebook - Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
Pedestrians including those with disabilities and the elderly with restricted mobility	Inform	- Council Website - Towong Shire Council Facebook - Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction

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Users of a range of miscellaneous smaller, lightweight vehicles such as cyclists, mobility scooters, wheelchairs and prams etc.	Inform	• Council Website • Towong Shire Council Facebook • Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
Vehicle users such as trucks, buses, commercial vehicles, cars and motorcycles	Inform	• Council Website • Towong Shire Council Facebook • Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction
Tourists and visitors to the area (for recreation, sport, leisure and business)	Inform	• Council Website • Towong Shire Council Facebook • Signage at specific sites as required for hazard reduction

1.4 Purpose of the Road Management Act 2004

The Road Management Act 2004 (the Act) sets out the powers, duties and functions of road authorities, establishes the legal framework for the management of roads and defines the rights, powers and duties of road authorities, utility providers and users of the road networks. The Act also provides consistent and updated road provisions for declared arterial roads managed by VicRoads (or Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), and public roads managed by other government organisations.

Towong Shire Council is the designated 'co-ordinating road authority' for municipal roads within the shire and is responsible for their care and management. The Act also enables road authorities to put their own reasonable road management plan and maintenance policies and procedures in place. This includes developing and publishing a Road Management Plan (RMP) incorporating the performance of their duties in relation to the inspection, maintenance and repair of roads, having regard to the type of road, the resources available to the council and its budgetary and policy priorities. The Road Management Act requires that a road authority keep a register of public roads. The register includes all roads the council has deemed are 'reasonably required for general public use or the subject of a declaration under section 204(1) of the Local Government Act 1989 or a municipal road declared under section 14(1) of the RMA". The Act also establishes through a Code of Practice the allocation of responsibility between road authorities for managing the different parts of the road reserve (e.g. roadway, footpath, service road). It also defines powers and obligations in regard to traffic management, access management and road works by utilities and others.

The purpose of the Road Management Act 2004 (**The Act**) is to reform the law relating to road management within Victoria.

It sets out the rights and responsibilities of road users and the responsibilities of Road Authorities for the management of roads.

1.5 Road Authority Responsibilities

The Act includes provisions for:

- The making of road management plans as part of the management system to be implemented by a road authority
- The keeping of a register of public roads in respect of which the road authority is the coordinating road authority
- The construction, inspection, maintenance and repair of public roads
- Issues relating to civil liability arising out of road management.

1.6 Duty of Road Users

Road users have a duty in respect of the use of a public highway.

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The Road Management Act 2004, Section 106, refers to the obligations of road users as set out in Section 17A of the Road Safety Act 1986 as follows:

- A person who drives a motor vehicle on a public highway must drive in a safe manner having regard to all relevant factors including (without limiting the generality) the –
 - Physical characteristics of the road
 - Prevailing weather conditions
 - Level of visibility
 - Condition of the motor vehicle
 - Prevailing traffic conditions
 - Relevant road laws and advisory signs
 - Physical and mental condition of the driver.

1.7 Relationship to the Council Plan

The Council Plan 2025-2029 defines Asset Management as one of its Key Result Areas with the strategic goal “to maintain and improve the Shire’s infrastructure to meet agreed levels of service.”

A copy of the Council Plan is available for inspection at the Council Offices and Council’s website.

Council’s asset management strategy includes:

- Maintaining and implementing Asset Management Plans for each class of asset
- Conducting condition assessments for each class of assets every 3 to 5 years
- Periodically reviewing levels of service by community consultation to ensure sustainability
- Preparing Financial Plans to fund identified renewal targets.

1.8 Asset Management Policy

Council has an Asset Management Policy. The policy states how Council will fulfil its stewardship obligations for the management of assets.

A copy of the Policy is available for inspection at the Council Offices and Council’s website.

1.9 Roads Asset Management Plan

Council has developed Asset Management Plans for the Road Network including roads, bridges and footpaths.

This plan will set the renewal intervention targets for road assets based on condition assessments to be conducted every 3 to 5 years.

The Moloney Asset Management System is being utilised by Council to predict the future funding required for the renewal and replacement of road infrastructure, as well as the projected annual maintenance demand. If renewal targets cannot be fully funded, maintenance costs will increase, or service levels will need to be reduced to meet the available budget.

1.10 Financial Plan

The financial plan develops a long-term strategy for funding for the renewal targets, taking account of the projected maintenance costs and available funding.

Council has a capital works database (CAPEX) which is reviewed annually having regard to the priority of projects and available funding.

2.0 Asset Description

2.1 Road Register

Council is the coordinating road authority for municipal roads within Towong Shire.

The Register of Roads for which Council is responsible is appended as **Schedule 1**.

The roads on the register are those determined by Council to be **reasonably required for general public use**.

The addition or removal of roads from the road register must be approved by Council.

2.2 Road Hierarchy

The hierarchy of roads established under the Act refers to State Roads, for which the Department of Transport and Planning is the coordinating road authority, and municipal roads, for which Council is the coordinating road authority.

Municipal Roads have been classified as **link**, **collector**, **access**, **limited access** or **natural surface** roads in accordance with their function.

The following key principles have been adopted in developing the road hierarchy classification system:

- The classifications are functionally based. The function of the road determines its place in the hierarchy rather than traffic volumes or the current standard of construction.
- The classifications are generally consistent with the Austroads Classification system.
- Only those roads which are determined by Council as being "reasonably required for general public use" will be maintained by Council and included in the Council's Register of Roads.
- Other roads, which may be available for public access but are not formed, or not constructed to an acceptable standard, will not be included in the road register and are classified as **natural surface** roads.
- Roads which are declared unused and licensed for the purposes of agricultural grazing remain the responsibility of DEECA.

2.3 State roads

State Roads comprise freeways, arterial and non-arterial roads for which the Department of Transport and Planning is the coordinating road authority.

Roads managed by the State within Towong Shire are:

- Murray Valley Highway including Hanson Street, Corryong
- Omeo Highway including Main Street, Eskdale and Main Street, Mitta
- Cudgewa Valley Road (Cudgewa – Tintaldra) including Main Street, Cudgewa
- Lockhart Gap Road
- Murray River Road including Main Street Tintaldra and Main Street Walwa
- Granya Road including Main Street Granya
- Dartmouth Road
- Shelley-Walwa Road
- Benambra-Corryong Road.

2.4 Municipal Roads and Footpaths

These are local roads and footpaths which include all urban and rural roads and footpaths for which Towong Shire Council is the coordinating road authority and are classified as shown in **Tables 1 and Table 2** (below).

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Table 2 Municipal Road Hierarchy

Road Classification	Functional Definition	General Road Description and Performance
Urban Link Road	Links and distributes traffic from local urban areas to the wider rural arterial roads. They provide for a high percentage of through traffic, access to abutting properties, and are generally for higher traffic volumes. Urban Link Roads generally cater for Class 1 to Class 9 vehicles with Class 10 to Class 12 vehicles only via Council permit.	Year-round use road, sealed, 2-lane roads. Good quality surface, maintained to a high standard. Direct property access generally permitted. Typical design speed 60km/hr. Often marked with a centreline.
Rural Link Road	Links and distributes traffic from rural localities to the wider arterial road network. They provide links to significant towns, locations and industries, access to abutting properties, are for a high percentage of through traffic, and are generally for higher traffic volumes and traffic speeds. Rural Link Roads are generally for Class 1 to Class 9 vehicles with Class 10 to Class 12 vehicles only via Council permit.	Year-round use road. Predominantly sealed, 2-lane roads. Good quality surface, maintained to a high standard. Roads of high local priority. Direct property access generally permitted. Delineation provided by guideposts and often centreline marking on sealed roads. Typical design speed 60 – 100km/hr depending on terrain.
Urban Collector Road	Collects traffic from urban residential areas and provides a feeder service on to Link roads. They provide property access in urban areas, access to industries, a moderate percentage of through traffic, and allow for moderate traffic volumes. Urban Collector Roads generally cater for Class 1 to Class 9 vehicles with Class 10 to Class 12 vehicles only via Council permit.	Year-round use 2-lane road. Usually sealed. Medium quality road surface maintained to a good standard. Direct property access permitted. Typical design speed 50 – 60km/hr depending on terrain.
Rural Collector Road	Collects traffic from rural residential areas and provides a feeder service to Link Roads. They provide property access, access to minor locations and industries, allow for a moderate percentage of through traffic, and for moderate traffic volumes and speeds. Rural Collector Roads generally cater for Class 1 to Class 9 vehicles with Class 10 to Class 12 vehicles only via Council permit.	Year-round use 2-lane road. Usually formed and gravelled or single lane sealed road with gravel shoulders. Medium quality road surface maintained to a good standard. Direct property access permitted. Delineation generally provided by guideposts. Typical design speed 50 – 80km/hr depending on terrain.
Urban Access Road	Provides predominantly direct access to residential properties and industries from a Link or Collector Road. They provide low traffic volumes and low traffic speeds and allow for a low percentage of through traffic. Urban Access Roads generally cater for Class 1 to Class 9 vehicles with Class 10 to Class 12 vehicles only via Council permit.	Year-round use road required for residential access only. May be sealed or unsealed and of varying width. Medium quality road surface maintained to moderate standard. Typical design speed 40 – 60km/hr depending on terrain.
Rural Access Road	Provides predominantly direct access to residential properties and industries from a Link or Collector Road. They provide for low traffic volumes and low traffic speeds and allow for a low percentage of through traffic. Rural Access Roads generally cater for Class 1 to Class 9 vehicles with Class 10 to Class 12 vehicles only via Council permit.	Year-round use road where required for residential access only, catering for 2-way traffic. Usually formed and gravelled. Medium quality road surface maintained to moderate standard. Delineation generally provided by guideposts. Typical design speed 40 – 70km/hr depending on terrain.
Limited Access Road	Provides for access to rural non-residential properties only.	Access is only guaranteed in dry weather for non-residential purposes. Varying road width.

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	They provide for low traffic volumes and low traffic speeds and allow for a very low percentage of through traffic. They allow access for Primary producers.	Usually formed, sometimes gravelled in sections in rural areas. Low quality road surface maintained only on request within available budgets prioritised for the purposes of emergency services access and economic development/weather dependent. No delineation provided. Typical speed 10 – 50km/hr depending on terrain.
Fire Access Tracks	Provides for occasional fire access. A formed or unformed road consisting of locally available earth material with no imported processed gravel. Fire Access Tracks can be a cleared, flat, bladed track providing seasonal access. Refer to Section 2.1.4 for details about maintenance on roads for fire access.	They typically include roads in rural areas, which are maintained at a basic level for occasional fire access. Low quality road surface maintained only when deemed necessary by Council in emergency situations. Typical speed 10 – 30km/hr depending on terrain.

Table 3 Municipal Footpath Hierarchy

Footpath Classification	Functional Definition	General Footpath Description and Performance
High traffic	Major retail areas, schools, hospitals, elderly homes	Concrete footpath varying in width
Normal use	Provides majority of access to residential properties	Multiple surface types include but not limited to concrete, bitumen or granitic sand
Recreational footpaths and cycle paths	Provides longer recreational walking and/or cycling opportunities	Multiple surface types include but not limited to concrete, bitumen or granitic sand

2.5 Fire Access Tracks

Some roads or sections of road that are not listed on the Register may be identified as fire access tracks where they provide access to Parks, State Forest, stream frontage or private land beyond the end of the maintained road network. These roads, although not regularly maintained by Council, may be graded occasionally to provide access for fire tankers. This work may be funded by contribution from CFA, DEECA, Parks Victoria or any other body.

These roads include:

- Hagertys Track
- Ley's Track
- Pooley Hill Track
- Saunders Lane
- Mt Alfred Track
- Snake Gully Track
- Settlement Track
- Packers Track
- Pub Track
- Wermatong Track
- Mount Charlie Track

Water point access tracks include:

- Briggs Gap Road
- Langheims Rd

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- Edgars Rd
- Tallangatta Creek
- McNamara Bridge

2.6 Other Roads

Listed below are roads within Towong Shire that are the responsibility of other road authorities.

DEECA:

- Trappers Gap Rd
- Firebrace Track (from Granya Rd)
- Forest access roads through DEECA managed land
- Unused roads licensed for grazing purposes to adjacent landholders.

Parks Victoria:

- Firebrace – Mt Lawson Rd
- Cudgewa Bluff Rd (through National Park) (maintained by Council by agreement)
- Plateau Rd (First 500m from Georges Creek Rd is maintained by Council, Named Langheims Rd)
- Cottontree Reserve access (culvert at Webbs Ln is maintained by Council)
- Park access roads.

The following roads are the responsibility of Goulburn-Murray Water although they are not declared by legislation as a road authority:

- Lakeside Drive, Tallangatta
- Foreshore access roads, Tallangatta
- Horsfall (Six Mile Creek) Rd (from bridge at 0.925 Km).

Some Council managed roads are maintained by other authorities by agreement as follows:

- Bullhead Rd – within the Crown Land boundaries maintained by DEECA
- Cravensville Rd – maintained by DEECA
- Hempenstalls Rd – maintained by Hancocks Victorian Plantation (HVP).

2.7 Recreational footpaths and cycle paths

Section 40 of the Road Management Act 2004 (the Act) provides that a road authority has a statutory duty to inspect, maintain and repair public roads including a pathway. A pathway is defined in Section 3 of the Act to include a footpath, bicycle path or other area constructed or developed by a responsible road authority for use by members of the public other than with a motor vehicle and as such may include pathways not located within road reserves.

To address this issue and comply with Section 40 of the Act Council will undertake to inspect, maintain and repair off-road pathways for which it is responsible which at this time is limited to the:

- Walking path in Tallangatta adjacent to the high-water mark of Lake Hume
- Sealed surface of the rail trail from Tallangatta to the Sandy Creek Bridge
- Walking path on the Bellbridge foreshore from the Boat Club toilet block to the last shade shelter (refer to the register of public footpath)
- Tabor Walking Path in Dartmouth
- Eskdale walking path from town to the Recreation reserve
- River Road Walking Track, Walwa

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- Walwa to Jingellic bridge track
- Tintalra to Recreation Reserve
- Towong walking track from the Racecourse to the river
- Corryong Circuit Trail sections include Playles Hill and Cemetery creek
- Cudgewa from town to the Recreation Reserve
- Colac Colac walking track from Colac Colac to Corryong.

References to these assets are made in Councils Register of Public Footpaths.

2.8 Management of Vehicle Crossovers (Driveways)

Vehicle crossovers refer to the crossing which provides access from the road to the property boundary including the lay back kerb.

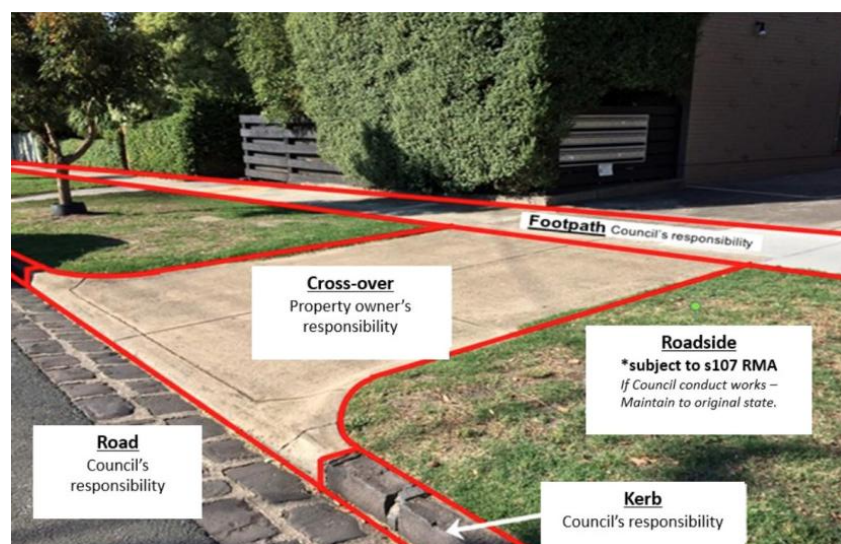
Whilst vehicle crossovers are considered to be private property and any damage to them is the responsibility of the property owner, Council remains responsible for any section of the crossover that is used by the general public as a footpath. This section of footpath is subject to the same inspection and maintenance standards applied to other public footpaths.

Should defects be identified within the area of driveway that is the property owner's responsibility, Council will inform the property owner of the identified defect and provide them with a timeframe in which to rectify the defect.

Where a property owner's asset is presenting a hazard in an area of road or footpath that Council is responsible for, the property owner should be notified and provided with a timeframe in which to rectify.

If a property owner fails to remove the hazard within the specified timeframe, Council will remove it and invoice the owner for the associated costs. This can include but is not limited to tree branches overhanging the footpath, gardens constructed on nature strips or any other protrusion from a property. Where a property owner elects to remove the hazard themselves, Council will monitor the situation until the hazard is removed. The following diagram illustrates the layouts of a typical vehicle crossover and areas of responsibilities:

Typical Urban Crossover



Typical Rural Crossover (1)



Typical Rural Crossover (2)

Vehicle crossovers on Council roads must comply with Council's specifications and standards. Landowners must obtain a Works Within Road Reserves permit (WWRR) and comply with permit conditions and Council specifications when constructing vehicle crossovers.

Any works conducted in a road reserve by an adjacent property owner will require a "Works Within Road Reserve" permit through Council.

2.9 Asset Registers

2.9.1 Municipal Roads

Council, as coordinating road authority for municipal roads within Towong Shire, is responsible for the assets on these roads, including bridges, footpaths and kerb & channel infrastructure.

Council's Asset Management Systems holds registers of these assets. Summary extracts from the asset registers could be found in Asset Management Plan for:

- Bridges
- Footpath Kerb & Channel

2.9.2 State Roads

The Department of Transport and Planning is the coordinating road authority for state freeways and arterial roads. Council, however, is the responsible road authority for various assets within road reserves where they form part of the urban road network within Towong Shire's townships.

2.10 Demarcation

The Road Register (Schedule 1) also refers to agreements with other road authorities where the road management responsibilities are transferred by agreement to the road authority which is maintaining the road.

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The agreements specify the maintenance targets, inspection and recording procedures to be achieved by the responsible road authority.

Bordering Municipalities

In the instance of boundary roads with other municipalities the responsibility is allocated according to an agreement between municipalities. Each agreement allocates routine maintenance responsibility on an agreed cost share basis. Capital works: reseals costs are shared as per agreement by both municipalities.

Arterial Roads

For arterial roads VicRoads is the Coordinating Road Authority. Hard copy sketches of the line of demarcation between Council and VicRoads have been developed based on the Operational Responsibility for Public Roads Code of Practice.

A State Road may be a Freeway, a Declared Arterial Road or a Non-Declared Arterial State Road.

In the rural areas, Department of Transport and Planning is responsible for the full width of the road reserve, from property line to property line.

Crown Land

A number of roads are located on crown land managed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action Victoria. Where these roads do not service a Council asset or ratepayer, the road may be the responsibility of the relevant Department. In some instances, a road may pass through the crown land and Council may remain the responsible authority

Private Roads

Council has a role in supervising the construction of private subdivisional works that occur within the municipality. This ensures that assets are constructed to an appropriate standard. Roads which are constructed as part of a subdivision are generally private roads until such time as the Statement of Compliance is finalised at which point they become public roads. There are some roads which remain privately owned and maintained. Council is not responsible for these roads.

3.0 Inspection targets

Inspections of the road assets are conducted on the following basis:

3.1 Condition Inspection

An independent condition assessment carried out on all road, footpath, kerb and channel, bridge and major culvert assets at intervals **not exceeding five years**, giving each asset a 0 (New) to 10 (beyond repair) rating at a component level and an assessment of the remaining useful life of the asset.

These condition assessments also provide an indication of the likely ongoing maintenance requirements. This is then used to determine annual capital works programs in line with adopted levels of service.

The Moloney Asset Management System is updated to reflect these ratings and to track the degradation rate of the assets, facilitating future renewal requirements.

3.2 Proactive Defect Inspection

The purpose of proactive defect inspections is to ensure that the road assets do not deteriorate beyond the tolerable defect level.

Proactive defect inspections are performed by Council Officers on roads, bridges and footpaths on a regular schedule with all data recorded in Asset Asyst.

Defect inspection frequencies have been determined following community consultation and having regard to potential hazard, the road classification and available resources.

The target proactive defect inspection frequencies are shown in **Tables 4 and 5** below:

Table 4 Road target proactive defect inspection frequency

Road Classification	Proactive Defect Inspection	Proactive Night Inspection
Link	4 times annually	Annually
Collector	Bi-annually	Annually
Access	annually	Annually

Table 5 Bridges and footpaths target proactive defect inspection frequency

Bridge – Proactive Defect Inspection	High Traffic Area Footpath – Proactive Defect Inspection	Normal Use Area Footpath – Proactive Defect Inspection	Recreational and cycle paths
Annually & after flooding	Bi-annually	Annually	Bi-annually

3.3 Reactive Defect Inspection

Reactive defect inspections are conducted in response to a perceived hazard or potential risk reported through Council's Service Request System, by a Council Officer, or from a maintenance report.

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The urgency of the response will be directly related to the details provided by the Service Request System, Council Officer or maintenance report.

In circumstances of multiple hazards and limited inspection resources, priority will be given to High traffic Footpaths and Link Roads.

The target maximum reactive defect inspection response timelines are shown in **Table 6** below, however are resource dependent.

Table 6 Target maximum reactive defect inspection response timelines

Asset	Maximum timeframe for reactive defect inspection (all timeframes are in normal business hours)
Link Roads	72 hours
Collector Roads	72 hours
Access Roads	72 hours
Bridges	72 hours
High traffic Footpaths	72 hours
Normal use Footpaths	72 hours
Recreation Footpath and cycle paths	72 hours

Reactive Defect Inspections will be carried out within the timeframes designated above from when the report is received. Appropriate actions will be taken to address or repair the defect or provide appropriate warning following the inspection.

The timeframe for corrective actions will be determined based on targets in **Table 8**. Only hazards determined to present an extreme risk will be repaired on the same day as the inspection.

3.4 Response standards

The response time is the maximum time allowed before a response is required on a defect that is above intervention. Response time is measured from the time the defect is entered as a Service Request and is determined from the defect intervention level.

Within the relevant response time, Council may at its discretion and where appropriate employ temporary measures to defects that exceed the stated intervention level utilising one (or more) of the following:

- Provision of warning signs
- Provision of safety barriers
- Traffic control, which may include
 - Diverting traffic around the site
 - Installing temporary speed limits
 - Lane or road closure
 - Closure of road to certain vehicles and/or load limits
- Spray painting (highlighting) a defect on a footpath (this is dependent on traffic use, and allowable for up to a maximum of 3 months)

Although Council endeavours to maintain the specified service levels, there may be circumstances where immediate physical rectification of defects is not feasible. In such instances, Council will prioritise and schedule the necessary rectification work based on available budgetary and resource constraints.

4.0 Asset Standards

4.1 Design Targets

The minimum geometric design targets for roads and bridges for the different road classifications are set out in **Table 7** below.

The design targets represent the minimum standards to be met when reconstruction or replacement of the asset is undertaken. These are sourced from the Infrastructure Design Manual and Austroads Guidelines.

The existing assets are generally of a lower standard, and this standard will be maintained until any upgrade works are programmed.

Table 7 Minimum geometric design targets for roads and bridges for the different road classifications

Road Classification	Traffic Volume (vpd)	Seal Width (m)	Pavement Width (m)	Pavement Depth (mm)	Formation Width (m)	Bridge Width (m)	Bridge Design Loading
Urban Link	> 1000	6.2	7.0	250	9.2	7.4	SM1600
	500-1000	6.2	7.0	250	9.2	7.4	SM1600
	< 500	6.2	7.0	250	9.2	7.4	SM1600
Urban Collector	> 150	6.2	6.6	200	9.2	6.6	SM1600
	50-150	4.0	4.4	200	7.0	6.2	SM1600
	< 50	4.0	4.4	150	7.0	4.5	SM1600
Urban Access	> 150	6.2	6.6	200	9.2	4.5	SM1600
	< 50	4.0	4.4	150	7.0	4.5	SM1600
	> 50	4.0	4.4	150	7.0	4.5	SM1600
Rural Link	> 1000	6.2	6.6	250	9.2	7.4	SM1600
	500-1000	6.2	6.6	250	9.2	7.4	SM1600
	< 500	6.2	6.6	250	9.2	7.4	SM1600
Rural Collector	> 150	6.2	6.6	200	9.2	6.6	SM1600
	50-150	4.0	4.4	200	7.0	6.2	SM1600
	< 50	4.0	4.4	150	7.0	4.5	SM1600
Rural Access	> 150	4.0	4.4	200	7.0	4.5	SM1600
	< 50	4.0	4.4	150	7.0	4.5	SM1600
	> 50	4.0	4.4	150	7.0	4.5	SM1600

4.2 Service Level Response Targets

These service level response targets have been established in accordance with the recommendations of a Best Value Review for roads which was carried out by a facilitated community consultation process during December 2011 and subsequent results of community satisfaction surveys.

These targets represent a refinement of the previous maintenance standards and targets balanced against the available road maintenance funding. Council will review these service levels target annually in response to community acceptance of the tolerable defect limits and annual funding limitations.

The service level response targets and response times for the various road maintenance activities and road classifications are described fully in the **Table 8**.

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Table 8 Schedule of Service level Response Targets

Activity	Description of hazard	Response time		
		Link	Collector	Access
Sealed pavements				
Potholes	Where the pothole exceeds 50mm in depth and 350mm in diameter.	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks
Regulation of wheel ruts and depressions	Regulate if rutting depression holds water or exceeds 25mm in depth under a 1.2m straight edge transverse, or under a 3m straight edge longitudinal.	1 Month	2 Months	3 Months
Minor surface treatment	Treat when stripping (50% loss of aggregate), bleeding or crazing exceeds 5m ² and the surface has not failed to the extent that it requires replacing.	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months
Pavement cleaning	Cleaning of roadway including intersections and kerb & channel to remove debris.	1 month	2 months	4 months
Edge repair	Repair when edge break exceeds 75mm laterally over 1m length or exceeds 200mm laterally.	3 months	4 Months	6 Months
Edge Drop	Repair shoulders when the drop from edge of seal to shoulder exceeds 75mm over 20m length or exceeds 100mm.	3 months	4 Months	6 Months
Unsealed Roads				
Potholes	Where the pothole exceeds 50mm in depth and 300mm in diameter for > 25% of the road over 200m length. OR Where the pothole exceeds 75mm in depth and 450mm in diameter	3 weeks	1 month	3 months Note: These repair targets will not apply to unfenced roads or to sections of road used for regular stock movements except where adjacent landholder has met the requirements of the Council's Stock Grid Policy.
Corrugations and rutting's	Repair when corrugations or rutting exceed 50mm over 25% of the road over 200m length.	3 weeks	1 month	3 months Note: These repair targets will not apply to unfenced roads or to

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				sections of road used for regular stock movements except where adjacent landholder has met the requirements of the Council's Stock Grid Policy.
Drainage				
Drainage Pit (Lids/Surrounds)	Missing lid.	1 Working Day	1 Working Day	1 Working Day
	Damaged lid or surround suffering significant structural damage.	1 month	2 months	2 months
Stream Maintenance				
Stream maintenance	Remove any log debris >150mm in diameter or any accumulation of debris greater than 400mm deep within 10m of structure.	4 Months	4 Months	4 Months
Roadside Vegetation				
Clearance Roadways	Restricting visibility at intersections or road signage and 30 m either side of rest areas	2 Months	2 Months	2 Months
	New tree or shrub growth is within drains, the shoulder or verge.	3 Months	6 Months	12 Months
	Minimum 4.5m height clearance over trafficable portions of pavement and shoulders.	2 months	3 months	6 months
Road Furniture				
Signs	Repair, re-instatement and cleaning of signs and supports.	4 months	4 months	4 months
	Replace missing, damaged or illegible or not visible from 150m at night, on low beam.	2 months	3 Months	4 months
Guardrail	Repair or replace guard rails that are missing or damaged making them substantially ineffective.	4 Months	4 Months	4 months
Guideposts	Replace at critical locations.	4 Months	6 Months	12 Months
	When not visible from 150m at night, on low beam.	4 Months	6 Months	12 Months

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Pavement marking	When > 30% of markings for curves or barrier lines are worn through, or >10% of Regulatory markings are worn through, or >30% of RRPM's are missing.	6 Months	6 Months	6 Months
Structure				
Bridges, Culverts and Floodway's	Structural damage affecting structural performance or safety.	1 week	2 weeks	4 weeks
	Damage or missing Bridge signage, damaged barrier.	3 Months	3 months	6 months
Footpath, Walking Track				
		High traffic	Normal use	Recreational footpath and cycle paths
Concrete	Vertical displacement >20mm.	2 Months	3 Months	2 Months
	Vegetation encroaching pathway <2.5m.	3 Months	4 Months	6 Months
Sealed	Crack in seal greater than 20mm wide.	4 Months	4 Months	3 Months
	Potholes > 150mm diameter and > 25mm deep.	4 Months	4 Months	3 Months

Notes:

- Response targets may be affected by prolonged periods of wet weather or severe storms. At these times, defects will be assessed, prioritised and programmed for treatment as soon as possible.
- The maintenance targets will not apply for pavements, drainage and guideposts on unfenced roads and roads affected by regular stock movements unless the adjacent landholder is subject to and has satisfied the requirements of Council's Stock Grid Policy.

5.0 Defect risk assessment methodology

5.1 Goal

To ensure assets are maintained, rehabilitated, and renewed with a view to **minimising risk** and **optimising life cycle**, at a sustainable level for present and future generations.

5.2 Inspections

Council sets inspection regimes for all asset classes at varying frequencies determined by combinations of the following aspects:

- Functionality of asset
- Usage of asset
- Deterioration rate of asset
- Resource availability.

An example of this may be that an asset class with a slow deterioration rate may have an inspection frequency of every two or three years compared to an asset class that may deteriorate rapidly and thus become a risk in a shorter period of time if condition not detected.

Council maintains a history of when, and by whom, inspections were carried out on each asset.

5.3 Defect recording

Any defects detected during the inspection will be recorded in Council's asset register against the relevant asset.

Defects are recorded and assessed using criteria established by Council staff and management. Combinations of the criteria and statistical information recorded against each asset will enable prioritisation of works. After completion of works relevant details will be recorded against the defect.

Full histories of inspections and outstanding maintenance defects are included for each asset in the asset register. Completed works are then tracked through a works order system. The condition rating in the asset register is updated on a 5 yearly cycle using an independent assessor. This information will become vital in assessing efficiency and life cycle economy requirements.

5.4 Criteria

All defects will be assessed using the following three ratings:-

Likelihood Rating

The likelihood of the defect causing an incident.

The criteria for assessing likelihood are the number of contributing factors present.

A road defect may cause an incident due to the following contributing factors:

- Sight distance to the defect
- Deviation from travelling alignment and/or braking
- Lack of traction
- Hazard to other road users.

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Table 9 – Likelihood Rating (Risk Management)

Criteria	Likelihood Rating	Example Description
Total of four factors	A – Almost Certain - 5	Is expected to occur in most cases.
Total of three factors	B – Likely - 4	Will probably occurs in many cases.
Total of two factors	C – Occasionally - 3	Might occur in some cases.
One factor	D – Unlikely - 2	May occur in a very few cases.
No factors	E – Rare - 1	Could occur only in exceptional cases.

Consequence Rating

The severity or impact of the incident:

- The physical factors that can influence the severity or impact of the incident
- The criteria for assessing the severity are the number of contributing factors present.
- The severity of an incident may be affected by the following contributing factors:
 - Width of road (more narrow = more severe consequences)
 - Road speed limit (higher speeds limits = more severe consequences)
 - Curved alignment (more or tighter curves = more severe consequences)
 - Structures or trees that may be impacted (more structure/trees = more severe consequences).

Table 10 – Consequence Rating (Risk Management)

Consequence Rating	Criteria for severity	Example Description
5 – Catastrophic	A total of four factors	Permanent injury or death, huge financial loss, irreparable damage to property.
4 – Major	A total of three factors	Serious non-permanent injury, major financial loss, major detriment to health, major damage to property.
3 – Moderate	A total of two factors	Injury (medical treatment required), high financial loss, moderate detriment to health, moderate damage to property.
2 – Minor	One factor	Injury (self-treatable – minor cuts or abrasions), medium financial loss, minimal detriment to health, minor damage to property.
1 – Insignificant	No factors	No injuries, low financial loss, no detriment to health, no damage to property.

Risk Score = Likelihood x Consequence

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Risk Analysis

Results from the **likelihood**, **consequence** ratings are calibrated as above to determine the risk score.

Table 11 – Risk Assessment and Analysis

Risk Score – Likelihood x Consequence	Risk Category	Action	Recommended Time Frame for Inspection	Maximum time frame for action to make safe based on resource availability
0 to 3	Low	Monitor condition.	No work required, monitor as per inspection schedule	No work required, monitor as per inspection schedule
4 to 6	Moderate	To be programmed in regular maintenance schedule.	Within 1 months	Within 2 months unless stated otherwise on table 4.2
7 to 9	High	Attention needed.	Within 3 days	Within 5 days
10 to 12	Urgent	Urgent action required.	Within 24 hours	Within 48 hours
>=13	Critical	Critical action required.	Within 12 hours	Within 24 hours

Risk Matrix

		Consequence				
		1 (Insignificant)	2 (Minor)	3 (Moderate)	4 (Major)	5 (Catastrophic)
Likelihood	5 – Almost Certain	5 → High	10 → Urgent	15 → Critical	20 → Critical	25 → Critical
	4 – Likely	4 → Moderate	8 → High	12 → Urgent	16 → Critical	20 → Critical
	3 – Occasionally	3 → Low	6 → Moderate	9 → High	12 → Urgent	15 → Critical
	2 – Unlikely	2 → Low	4 → Moderate	6 → Moderate	8 → High	10 → Urgent
	1 – Rare	1 → Low	2 → Low	3 → Low	4 → Moderate	5 → High

Deprivation Rating

The asset lifecycle consequences of not rectifying the defect quickly.

The criteria for prioritising all low and moderate risk defects in both maintenance and capital work categories when resources aren't available to complete all works within one financial year.

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The lifecycle consequences may be affected by the following contributing factors:

- Increased cost to Council
- Rapid deterioration of asset as a result of defect
- Increased traffic hazard
- Effect on other assets.

These criteria are used to prioritise non urgent works where there are limited resources available to perform all works concurrently

Table 10 – Prioritisation Criteria

Deprivation Rating	Criteria	Example
5 – Catastrophic	A total of four factors	Huge financial loss, threatens lifecycle of asset.
4 – Major	A total of three factors	Major financial loss, budget impacts high.
3 – Moderate	A total of two factors	High financial loss.
2 – Minor	One factor	Medium financial loss.
1 – Low	No factors	Low financial loss.

5.4 Hazard Assessment

The inspection of defects will include a risk assessment which will be used to prioritise maintenance programs in order to comply with the response times as specified in the maintenance targets.

6.0 The risk assessment procedure is documented in section 5 - Defect Risk Assessment Methodology Asset Management System

6.1 Asset Renewal

The Moloney Asset Management System is used to record asset condition assessments.

The system is updated not more than every five years to include the current condition rating following the not more than every five years condition assessments. It is further updated annually on completion of the capital works program.

The modelling function of the system is used for future projections, depreciation and renewal gap reporting. Bridges will be independently assessed at a maximum of 10 years intervals due to the slow deterioration rate.

6.2 Asset Maintenance, Inspection and Repair

Towong Shire Council utilises the *RoadAsyst* Maintenance and Inspection Module (MIM) of the *AssetAsyst* and iform builder for the recording of inspections, defects and repairs.

6.3 Service Agreement

Towong Shire Council manages the maintenance of its roads with its in-house works team. Operations are carried out from depots at Tallangatta and Corryong. Additional works are supported by contractors when required.

6.4 Service Request System

Towong Shire Council maintains a Service Request System to electronically record maintenance requests.

This system operates in conjunction with the *RoadAsyst* MIM to record all reported defects and the subsequent inspection and action taken.

6.5 Customer Research

Towong Shire Council carries out a range of community consultation activities to ensure that assets are meeting the needs of users and is committed to involving its community in determining acceptable levels of service.

Council has endeavoured to assess this through the following means:

- Community Satisfaction Surveys
- Review of Service requests
- Through seeking community feedback.

6.6 Amendment of Road Management Plan

If the adopted level of service is proven to be not achievable, the level of maintenance effort may need to be varied.

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An annual review may result in variation of levels of service based upon the quantity of works achievable within Council's budget, reviewing available resources resulting in a new revision of the RMP proposed.

The revised Plan would be subject to the consultation and approval processes as detailed in Division 5, Section 54 of the Road Management Act 2004.

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Schedule 1 - Register of roads

Refer to Attachment with this Road Management Plan

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
1	Acocks St	Donaldson St	0	Jardine St	300	309	Corryong
2	Akuna Av	Towong St	0	Towong St	704	717	Tallangatta
3	Alan Cr	Craig Dv	0	End	250	253	Bellbridge
4	Ambroses Rd	Thowgla Rd	0	Gate at Ambroses	2,000	2,000	
5	Annandale Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Gate	6,190	6,190	
6	Anzac Av	Towong Rd	0	Donaldson St	297	305	Corryong
7	Armstrong St	Jobling St	0	Jury St	212	225	Bethanga
8	Ashstead Park La	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	0	End Seal	576	599	Cudgewa
9	Avondale Gardens Rd	Avondale Rd	0	Avondale Gardens	1,820	1,820	
10	Avondale Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Powerline Rd	13,900	13,900	
11	Back Cudgewa Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	4,400	4,540	
12	Back Thowgla Rd	Greenham St Corryong	0	Thowgla Rd	4,840	4,840	
13	Baileys Rd	Back Cudgewa Rd	0	end	1,300	1,300	
14	Banfield St	Jobling St	0	Beardmore	244	244	Bethanga
15	Banimboola Rd	Dartmouth Rd	0	End	362	367	Dartmouth
16	Banool Rd(North)	Towong St	0	Matonga St	201	208	Tallangatta
17	Banool Rd(North)S-Bnd C'Way	Towong St	0	Willong St	106	110	Tallangatta
18	Banool Rd(South)	Towong St	0	Womaatong St	145	149	Tallangatta
19	Barber St	Jephcott Av	0	End	290	296	Corryong
20	Barree St	Towong St	0	Wondah St	330	339	Tallangatta
21	Barree St P/B	Bend	257	End	295	38	Tallangatta
22	Bartlett St	Greenham St	0	Acocks St	85	95	Corryong
23	Baude St	Omeo Hwy	0	End	100	100	Eskdale
24	Beardmore St	Hollow St	0	Banfield St	1,096	1,107	Bethanga
25	Beardmore St S/R	Hewitt St	790	Jury St	903	113	Bethanga
26	Beers Ln	Guys Forest Rd	0	Grid to Property	1,765	1,765	
27	Bennetts Rd	Benambra-Corryong Rd	0	End at Gate	2,335	2,385	
28	Bethanga Bay Rd	Bridge St	0	Lake Rd	2,575	2,575	
29	Bethanga Ln way 2	Wise St	0	End	80	80	Bethanga
30	Bilborough Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Gate	2,390	2,390	
31	Blairs Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	760	760	Bullioh
32	Blind Creek Rd	Yabba Rd	0	Grid	1,880	1,880	
33	Bluff Falls Rd	Cudgewa Nth Rd	0	Burrowa Pine Mountain	3,860	3,860	
34	Bolga Tk	Tallangatta Lookout Rd	0	End	1,703	1,703	Tallangatta
35	Bonds Rd	Benambra-Corryong Rd	0	End	520	520	
36	Boundary St	Sugarloaf Rd	0	Pioneer St	418	431	Corryong
37	Bowler La	Omeo Hwy	0	Gate	2,400	2,450	
38	Bowler Ln	Gate	2,400	End	3,140	740	Eskdale
39	Bownds Ln	Martins Rd	0	End	880	880	
40	Bramley Ct	Hamilton Cr	0	End Bowl	48	52	Corryong
41	Bramleys Ln	Shelley Rd	0	End	760	760	
42	Braniff St	Towong Rd	0	End	50	50	
43	Bridge St	Bethanga Bay Rd	0	Banfield St	385	379	Bethanga

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
44	Bridle Track	Mullhollands Road	0	End	1,926	1,926	Georges Creek
45	Briggs Gap Rd	Stock Route	0	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	9,940	9,940	
46	Brooke St	Murray River Rd	0	Bridge	950	1360	
47	Brooke St S/R-RHS	Brooke St	0	Heales St	230	230	Towong
48	Broome St	Hewitt St	0	End	442	473	Bethanga
49	Bryant St	Donaldson St	0	End	170	175	Corryong
50	Bryants Gap Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Shire Boundary	4,125	4,125	
51	Bucheen Road	Tallangatta Creek Road	0	End	3,818	3,818	Tallangatta Valley
52	Bullhead Rd	Mitta North Rd	0	Gate	3,360	3,360	
53	Bullioh Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Granya Rd	700	700	
54	Bunroy Rd	Upper Murray Rd	0	Little Niche'	19,010	4,015	
55	Burrowye Rd	Guy's Forest Rd	0	Murray Valley Hwy	19,415	19,415	
56	Burtens Ln	Mt Alfred Rd	0	End	450	450	Burrowye/Walwa
57	Bushbank Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	End	800	800	
58	Butler Ct	Wondah St BOK	0	End	25	35	Tallangatta
59	Callaghan Creek Rd	Dartmouth Rd	0	Yabba Rd	30,490	30,490	
60	Campbell Ln	Murray River Rd	0	End	565	565	
61	Campbells Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Gate	1,420	1,420	
62	Carkees Ln	Cudgewa Valley Rd	0	End	900	900	Cudgewa
63	Carman's Rd	Yabba Rd	0	Gate	840	840	
64	Carmodys Rd	Benambra-Corryong Rd	0	End	920	920	
65	Carmodys Rd		920	End	1,720	800	Nariel Valley
66	Cascade Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Grid/Gate	2,620	2,620	
67	Cascade Rd	Grid/Gate	2,620	End	3,140	770	Tallangatta Valley
68	Cemetery Rd	Bethanga Bay Rd	0	End	750	775	
69	CFA Rd	Dartmouth Rd	0	Murtagh Pl	68	68	Dartmouth
70	CFA Rd C/P	Start Car Park	22	End Car Park	43	21	Dartmouth
71	Chalkers La	Omeo Hwy Service Rd	0	Green Waste Station	300	300	Eskdale
72	Chambers Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at House	260	260	
73	Church St Bethanga	Jury St	0	Broome St	284	284	Bethanga
74	Church St Walwa	Shelley-Walwa Rd	0	End	220	223	Walwa
75	Clarke Rd	Sandy Creek Rd	0	Cudgewa Bluff Rd	800	800	
76	Coghill Ct	Hamilton Cr	0	End Bowl	48	52	Corryong
77	Coghills Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Cont. into Plantation	1,600	1,600	
78	Colac Colac Caravan Park Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	650	650	Colac Colac
79	Coleman Ct	Jitea St	0	End	192	197	Dartmouth
80	Coles Rd	Kurrajong Gap Rd	0	End	542	542	
81	Colquhoun Cres	Omeo Hwy	0	Mitta North Rd	145	160	Mitta Mitta
82	Conness St	Murray River Rd	0	Doubleday St	250	264	
83	Cooks Rd	Annandale Rd	0	Ends at Gate	1,640	1,640	
84	Cooks Rd	Ends at Gate	1,640	End	5,000	3,360	Bullioh
85	Coorilla St	Tooma St	0	Showend gate	193	202	Tallangatta
86	Cottontree Creek Access Rd	Webbs Ln	0	End	80	80	

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
87	Coulstons Rd	Lucyvale Rd	0	Ends at Grid	1,080	1,080	
88	Coulstons Rd	Grid	1,090	End	3,350	2,260	Beetoomba
89	Counsells Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Grid/House	240	240	
90	Coysh Ln	Martins Rd	0	End	210	210	
91	Craig Dv	Hillcrest Av	0	Mitta Ave	712	721	Bellbridge
92	Crawford Crt	Jitema St	0	End	180	185	Dartmouth
93	Cronin St	Mildren St	0	End of Road	67	67	Corryong
94	Cross Ave	Scales St	0	Banmboola Rd	199	199	Dartmouth
95	Cudgewa Bluff Rd	Sandy Creek Rd	0	McNamaras Track	11,950	11,950	
96	Cudgewa Nth Rd	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	0	McNamaras Track	9,400	9,400	
97	Cudgewa Rd	Cudgewa-Tintaldra Main Rd	0	Murray Valley Hwy	2,365	2,394	Cudgewa
98	Cudgewa-Tintaldra Main Rd	South End	0	End Seal	135	135	Cudgewa
99	Cudgewa-Tintaldra Main Rd S/R 1	South End	0	Ashstead Park La	275	287	Cudgewa
100	Cudgewa-Tintaldra Main Rd S/R 2	Opp. Hotel	0	North End	372	372	Cudgewa
101	Cudgewa-Tintaldra Main Rd S/R 3	Opp. Back Cudgewa Rd	0	North End	205	205	Cudgewa
102	D Rd - D-F Link - F Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	6100	6100	
103	Daly St	Barber St	0	Harris St	375	362	Corryong
104	Darbyshire La	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	560	560	
105	Davis St	Harris St	0	Strezlecki Way	132	144	Corryong
106	Donaldson St	Greenham St	0	Stock Route	1,372	1,365	Corryong
107	Donaldson St S-E Bnd C'Way	Greenham St	0	End Div. Rd	953	929	Corryong
108	Donnells Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at Grid	1,080	1,110	
109	Doubleday St	Conness St	0	Webb St	235	242	
110	Drages Rd	Sandy Creek Rd	0	Ends at Grid	1,020	1,020	Walwa
111	Drages Rd			End		1,000	Walwa
112	Drummond Rd	Murray River Rd	0	last house	2,570	2,570	
113	Drummond St	Omeo Hwy S/R Nth	0	End	121	124	Eskdale
114	Dunstans Ct	Omeo Hwy S/R Sth	0	End	67	73	Eskdale
115	Dunstans Rd	Benambra-Corryong Rd	0	End	1750	1750	
116	Dwyer Cr	Lyndon Av	0	Hillcrest St	186	195	Bellbridge
117	Dwyers In	Schintlers La	0	Gates	1,180	1,180	
118	Dye St	Little Snowy Creek Rd	0	End	70	70	Eskdale
119	Dyring St Bethanga	Hollow St	0	End	183	193	Bethanga
120	Dyring St Tallangatta	Towong St East BOK	0	End	75	84	Tallangatta
121	Eddys La	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	1,620	1,620	
122	Edgar Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	House Grid	4,900	4,900	
123	Eighty Acre Rd	Murray River Rd	0	House	3,700	3,700	
124	Elizabeth Cr	Alan Cr	0	End	179	184	Bellbridge
125	Ellis La	Mitta North Rd	0	Gate	310	310	
126	Ellis La	Omeo Hwy	310	End	880	570	Mitta Mitta
127	Eucalypt Dr	Lake Rd	0	End	165	177	
128	Eustace St	Tokes Cr	0	Banimboola Rd	182	192	Dartmouth
129	Evans La	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at House	1,310	1,310	

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
130	Evans St	Thomas La	0	End	226	236	Corryong
131	Factory Ln	Murray River Rd	0	Gate	280	280	
132	Fairyknowe Rd	Callaghan Creek Rd	0	End	950	950	Tallangatta
133	Farran St	Donaldson St	0	End	172	178	Corryong
134	Ferry Ln	Murray River Rd	0	End	170	170	
135	Fire Ln	Left Hand Rd	0	Wyeboo Rec Res	300	300	
136	Fisher Dr	Towong St East	0	End	103	110	Tallangatta
137	Flagstaff Rd	Martins Rd	0	End	2,825	2,825	
138	French Wrights Rd	Spring Creek Nth end	0	Spring Creek Rd Sth end	6,500	6,500	
139	Georges Creek Rd	Jarvis Creek Rd	0	Murray River Rd	20,380	20,431	
140	Germans Rd	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	0	Grid / Fence	2,960	2,960	
141	Gibb Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	End	3650	3650	
142	Gilbert St	Smart St	0	End	305	310	Old Tallangatta
143	Gill St	Kurrajong Gap Rd	0	End	100	100	
144	Giltraps Rd	La Fontaine St	0	Grid	4,870	4870	Mitta Mitta
145	Goddess Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Gate/Closed	4,170	4,170	
146	Grant St	Hume St	0	End	520	480	Towong
147	Green Wattle Gap Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Gate / Grid	5,510	5,510	
148	Greenham St	Donaldson St	0	Kiell St	551	551	Corryong
149	Greenhams Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Gate	2,035	2,035	
150	Guys Forest Rd	Shelley Walwa Rd	0	Murray River Rd	15,545	15,625	
151	Hagertys Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Fence	2,050	2,050	
152	Hall Tk	Thowgla Rd	0	End	550	550	
153	Hamilton Cr	McKay St	0	Strzlecki Way	435	447	Corryong
154	Hamiltons Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Gate	1,750	1,750	
155	Hanley Ln	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at Gate	815	815	
156	Hanna St	Murray River Rd	0	End	175	193	Walwa
157	Hanson St	Sugarloaf Rd	0	Donaldson St	1,924	0	Corryong
158	Hanson St SW C/W	Start Div. Rd	185	McKay St	1,235	0	Corryong
159	Hanson St SW C/W Pt 2	Jardine St	1,666	Donaldson St	1,924	0	Corryong
160	Hardings Rd	Mt Alfred Rd	0	End	1000	1000	
161	Hardys Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Locked Gate	3,410	1,370	
162	Harris St	Donaldson St	0	End	1,440	1,444	Corryong
163	Harris St pt.2	Lebner St	0	End	170	181	Corryong
164	Harvey St	Shelley-Walwa Rd	0	Murray River Rd	249	260	Walwa
165	Heales St	Brooke St	0	Macadam St	92	122	Towong
166	Bullhead Rd	Yabba Rd	0	Grid	6,615	6,615	
167	Hedley La	Omeo Hwy	0	End	380	380	Mitta Mitta
168	Hempenstalls Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	900	900	
169	Hewitt St	Beardmore St	0	Broome St	233	244	Bethanga
170	Hibbertsons Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Gate	1,030	1,030	
171	Hibbertsons Rd	Gate	1,110	End	1,910	800	Tallangatta
172	Hillcrest Av	Lake Rd	0	End	336	336	Bellbridge

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
173	Hills Rd	Kiells Rd	0	Grid	1,320	1,320	
174	Hindleton Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at House	6,250	6,250	
175	Hollow St	Beardmore St	0	Beardmore	1,385	1,385	Bethanga
176	Honeysuckle Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Gate	4,840	4,885	
177	Hores Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at Gate	1,715	1,715	
178	Horsfall Rd	Dartmouth Rd	0	Bridge Aburment	925	925	Dartmouth
179	Hovell St	Grant St	0	Gate at Racecourse	550	550	Towong
180	Hume St	Brooke St	0	End	330	382	Towong
181	Hunt Court	Church St	0	End of Bowl	45	45	Walwa
182	Indi Bridge Rd	Upper Murray Rd	0	Bridge	225	225	
183	Jardine St	Strzlecki Way	0	Black Thougla Rd	1,095	1,079	Corryong
184	Jarvis Creek Rd	Lake Rd	0	Lake Rd	14460	14460	
185	Jarvis Lane	Tintaldra Link Rd (West)	0	End	90	90	
186	Jarvis Lane	Back Tintaldra Rd	0	End	125	125	
187	Jeffcott Jewell Rd Extension	Jeffcott Jewell Rd	0	Cont. over Grid	405	405	
188	Jeffcott Jewell Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Locked Gate	4,190	4,190	
189	Jephcott Av	Pioneer Av	0	Wheeler St	932	944	Corryong
190	Jillico Av	Queen Elizabeth Dr	0	Queen Elizabeth Dr	700	709	Tallangatta
191	Jitema St	Dartmouth Rd	0	End of Bowl	775	783	Dartmouth
192	Jitema St C/P	Start Car Park	178	End Car Park	231	53	Dartmouth
193	Jobling St	Bridge St	0	Broome St	403	411	Bethanga
194	Juranics Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	end	200	200	
195	Jurgies Tk	Georges Creek Rd	0	End	450	450	
196	Jury St	Armstrong St	0	End	146	156	Bethanga
197	Karrika St	Noorooma St	0	End	324	328	Tallangatta
198	Keadys Rd	Wallaces Rd	0	Ends at House	625	625	
199	Kemps Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	620	620	
200	Kendells Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Gate	1,155	1,155	
201	Kiell St	Harris St	0	Greenham	455	447	Corryong
202	Kiells Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Gate	7,100	7,100	
203	Klippels Ln	Nariel Gap Rd	0	End	760	760	
204	Koetong Creek Rd	Murray River Rd	0	End	7500	7500	
205	Koorilla Ln	Lake Rd	0	End	180	180	
206	Kurewa St	Towong St	0	Coorilla St	164	176	Tallangatta
207	Kurrajong Gap Rd	Lake Rd	0	Hollow St(Bethanga)	4,300	4,300	
208	Kyilla St	Barree St	0	End Bowl	59	62	Tallangatta
209	La Fontaine Rd	Mitta North Rd	0	end	700	700	
210	La Fontaine St Mitta	Omeo Hwy	0	Bridge (Mitta River)	490	490	Mitta Mitta
211	Lake Findlay Rd	Left Hand Rd	0	Ends at Gate	3,750	3,750	
212	Lake Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Murray River Road	34,790	34,790	
213	Lakeside Dr	Queen Elizabeth Dr	0	Wondah St	595	595	Tallangatta
214	Lamberts Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Grid	2,420	2,420	
215	Lamberts Rd (Nth)	Lamberts Rd	0	End	600	600	

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
216	Laneway 1 (Lizard La)	Akuna Ave	0	End	306	306	
217	Laneway 2	Towong St Sth	0	End	84	84	
218	Laneway 3	Banool Rd	0	End	272	272	
219	Laneway 5	Akuna Ave	0	End	39	39	
220	Laneway 6	Akuna Ave	0	End	160	160	
221	Laneway 7	Karrika St	0	End	119	119	
222	Laneway 8	Laneway 7	0	End	100	100	
223	laneway 9	Jardine St	0	End	210	210	
224	Langheims Rd	Georges Creek Rd	0	End	500	500	
225	Larsen Ct	Towong St East	0	End Bowl	84	93	Tallangatta
226	Lavertys Rd	Lucyvale Rd	0	Gate	2,390	2,390	
227	Lawrence Lookout Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Lookout	1,450	1,450	
228	Leakes Rd	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	0	Cudgewa Nth	4,745	4,775	
229	Lebner St	Hanson St	0	Strzlecki Way	260	185	Corryong
230	Lees Cr	Lyndon Av	0	Hillcrest Av	259	267	Bellbridge
231	Left Hand Rd	Tallangatta Creek	0	Closed Gate	5,960	5,985	
232	Left Hand Rd		5,960	End	9,200	3,240	Tallangatta Valley
233	Legge St	Sparrow St	0	Conness St	160	162	
234	Lehmans Rd	Georges Creek rd	0	End	720	720	Georges Creek
235	Leys Rd	Mitta North Rd	0	Dairy	3,400	3,400	
236	Leys Rd	Dairy	3,400	End	5,500	2,100	Mitta Mitta
237	Little Snowy Creek Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Gate/House	11,615	11,615	
238	Lizzies Ck Rd	Benambra-Corryong at 20.91 km	0	Ends at Gate	2,280	2,280	
239	Lloyds Ln	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	600	600	
240	Lobban St(Lower)	East End at Pole	0	End	120	120	Bethanga
241	Lobban St(Upper)	Toohey St	0	End	172	172	Bethanga
242	Lucyvale Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Logan Green	11,680	11,680	
243	Lucyvale Rd	Logan Green	11,680	End	12,100	420	Beetoomba
244	Lyford Ln	Omeo Hwy	0	End	240	240	
245	Lyndon Av	Lake Rd	0	Craig Dv	269	269	Bellbridge
246	Macadam St	Hume St	0	End of Pavement	645	667	Towong
247	Mahers Rd	Talgarno Gap Rd	0	Ends at House	750	750	
248	Mahon St	Toohey St	0	Wise St	145	145	Bethanga
249	Mansells Rd	Luckyvale Rd	0	Cont. through Gatew	3,300	3,300	
250	Maples Ct	Kiell St	0	End of Court	158	162	Corryong
251	Martin St	Armstrong St	0	End	114	120	Bethanga
252	Martins Rd	Hollow St	0	Talgarno Gap Rd	3,580	3,580	
253	Masters Tk	Thowgla Rd	0	End	2000	2000	
254	Matonga St	Wonga Gv	0	Queen Elizabeth Dr	468	477	Tallangatta
255	McCallums Ln	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	End	880	880	
256	McCormack Gap Track	Bunroy Road	0	End	3267	3267	
257	McCormack Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Bridge	1420	1420	
258	McCormacks Gap Rd	Thowgla Rd	0	End	1200	1200	

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
259	McCormacks Gap Rd		1,200	End	3,200	2,000	Corryong
260	McDonald Ln	Tatonga Ln	0	House Ent.	160	160	
261	McEwen St	Broome St	0	End	90	90	Bethanga
262	McFarlanes La	Granya Rd	0	Ends at Gate	2,390	2,390	
263	McHargs Rd	Sandy Creek Rd	0	Ends at Gate	970	1,055	
264	McKay Ct	Towong St East	0	End	50	61	Tallangatta
265	McKay St	Wheeler St	0	Strzlecki Way	453	459	Corryong
266	McKimmie Rd	Briggs Gap Rd	0	Ends at Grid	2,500	2,500	
267	McKinnon St	Harris St	0	Hamilton Cr	75	84	Corryong
268	McLachlans Rd	Thowgla Rd	0	Gate	770	770	
269	Memorial Av	Pioneer Av	0	Parish La	202	217	Corryong
270	Memorial Av pt.1	Sugarloaf Rd	0	End	137	144	Corryong
271	Mildren St	Towong Rd S/R	0	End of Road	456	462	Corryong
272	Millers Rd	Guys Forest Rd	0	Grid to House	3,140	3,140	
273	Mitchell Ct	Hamilton Cr	0	End Bowl	48	52	Corryong
274	Mitta Av	Lake Rd	0	Craig Dv	183	187	Bellbridge
275	Mitta North Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Bridge (Mitta Mitta River)	18,100	18,155	
276	Mongans La	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Grid	1,970	1,970	
277	Montgomerie St	Hollow St	0	End	100	100	
278	Moscrops Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Property Ent.	760	760	
279	Mt Alfred Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Guys Forest Rd	11,890	11,905	
280	Mulhollands Rd	Georges Creek Rd	0	House Ent.	1,925	1,925	
281	Mullaveys Ln	Spring Creek Rd	0	House Ent.	300	300	
282	Mullawar St	Matonga St	0	Jillico Ave	86	96	Tallangatta
283	Murphy St	Scales St	0	End	182	187	Dartmouth
284	Murray Pl	Mitta Av	0	Lyndon Ave	172	181	Bellbridge
285	Hollow St	Bridge Rd	0	Hollow St	140	140	Bethanga
286	Murray River Rd E C/W P/B	Harvey St EBL	0	Hanna St	348	348	Walwa
287	Murray River Rd W C/W P/B	Harvey St EBL	0	End	406	406	Walwa
288	Murtagh Pl	Banimboola Rd	0	Jitema St	148	158	Dartmouth
289	Murtagh Pl S/R	Start Service Rd	16	End Service Rd	134	118	Dartmouth
290	Murtagh Pl S/R C/P	Start Service Rd	16	End Service Rd	134	118	Dartmouth
291	Nariel Gap Rd	Thowgla Rd	0	Benambre-Nariel	6,300	6,300	
292	Neilson Rd	Mitta North Rd	0	End	400	400	
293	Nicholls Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	End	300	300	
294	Nichols Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	915	915	
295	Nichols Rd		915	End	1,665	750	Beetoomba
296	Nirimba Av	Jillico Av	0	Matonga St	87	95	Tallangatta
297	Noorooma St	Akuna St	0	Womaatong St	98	106	Tallangatta
298	Nugents Rd	Mt Alfred Rd	0	Ends at Gate	1,370	1,370	
299	Nugents Rd		1,370	End	4,500	3,130	Burrowye
300	Nursery Ln	Murray River Rd	0	Jingellic Reserve	400	400	
301	O'Connells La	Mitta North Rd	0	Gate	1,045	1,045	

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
302	O'Halloran St	River Rd	0	Gate	78	88	Walwa
303	Old Granya Rd	Granya Rd	0	Ends at House	980	1,020	
304	Old Jarvis Creek Rd	Jarvis Creek Rd	0	End	260	260	
305	Old Stockyard Lane	Tintaldra Link Rd (East)	0	End	270	270	
306	Olson St	Hewitt St	0	Beardmore St	310	300	Bethanga
307	Omeo Hwy S/R-Nth	Little Snowy Creek Rd	0	Gas Filling Station	395	395	Eskdale
308	Omeo Hwy S/R-Nth 2	Omeo Hwy	0	Omeo Hwy	90	90	Omeo
309	Omeo Hwy S/R-Sth	Little Snowy Creek Rd	0	Park Hill Rd	425	425	Omeo
310	Omeo Hwy S/R-Sth 2	Omeo Hwy	0	Omeo Hwy	150	150	Omeo
311	Ottos Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	End	560	560	
312	Packers Rd	Sirls Rd	0	End	1300	1300	
313	Parish La pt.1	Jephcott Av	0	Memorial Ave	203	215	Corryong
314	Parish La pt.2	Wheeler St	0	Stockroute Rd	774	754	Corryong
315	Parish La pt.3	Wheeler St	0	End	120	122	Corryong
316	Park Hill Rd	Omeo Hwy S/R-South	0	End	315	332	Eskdale
317	Paton St	Broome St	0	End	130	130	Bethanga
318	Paton Ln	Thowgla Rd	0	End of Pavement - Prop Ent	450	450	
319	Pearce Ct	Wondah St	0	End	56	71	Tallangatta
320	Pearce St	Wattle St	0	End	270	270	Tallangatta
321	Perkins Rd	Lucyvale Rd	0	Reedy Creek Tk	4,355	4,355	
322	Peterson Ct	Banimboola Rd	0	End	49	54	Dartmouth
323	Philby Ln	Murray Valley Hwy	0		300	300	
324	Pierce Pl	Mahon St	0	End	45	45	Bethanga
325	Pine Mountain Creek Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Gate	4,600	4,660	
326	Pioneer Av	Hanson St	0	Boundary St	725	738	Corryong
327	Playles Hill Rd	Back Thowgla Rd	0	Lookout	342	342	Corryong
328	Pleming Ln	Spring Creek Rd	0	End	1,500	1,500	Tallangatta
329	Polmear St	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Grid / Rec Reserve	450	465	
330	Pooleys Hill Rd		1,300	End	10,500	9,200	Bethanga
331	Pooleys Hill Rd(Packers Rd)	Sirls Rd	0	Gate	1,325	1,325	
332	Price Hills Ln	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Grid	1,635	1,635	
333	Queen Elizabeth Dr	Towong St	0	Towong St	1,700	1,708	Tallangatta
334	Racecourse Ln	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at Gate	505	505	
335	Racecourse Ln	Racecourse Entrance	505	End	1,400	530	Towong
336	Racecourse Ln (north)	Murray River Road	0	Racecourse Entrance	320	320	
337	Ranch Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Grid	7,550	7,550	
338	Tintaldra reserve access are	Tintaldra	0	End of Seal	70	70	Tintaldra
339	Rec. Res. Rd Bethanga	Hollow St	0	End	170	181	Bethanga
340	Rec. Res. Rd Mitta	Mitta North Rd	0	Grid(Entrance to Park)	80	89	Mitta Mitta
341	Red Cutting Ln	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	2,030	2,030	Corryong
342	Reservoir Ln	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	495	495	
343	Retallicks Rd	Talgarno Gap Rd	0	Ends at Gate	2,065	2,065	
344	Rifle Range Rd	Lucyvale Rd	0	Ends at Gate	1,745	1,745	

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
345	River Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at Park	1,080	1,096	Walwa
346	Roberts Ln	Murray Valley Highway	0	End	200	200	
347	Rosella Crt	Wise St	0	End	80	80	Bethanga
348	Ross La	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Grid	2,800	2,800	
349	Ross Ln	Starts at Grid	2,820	End	4,470	1,650	Cudgewa
350	Ross Rd	Honeysuckle Rd	0	Gate	1,485	1,485	
351	Rousseaus Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Gate	2,880	2,880	
352	Rousseaus Rd		2,870	End	4,920	2,050	Tallangatta Valley
353	Rowley Ln	Bownds La	0	End	430	430	
354	Sandy Creek Rd	Shelly Walwa	0	Ends at Gate	11400	11,400	
355	Saunders Rd	Murray River Rd	0	End	1,750	1,750	Talgarno
356	Saxon Ln	Little Snowy Creek Rd	0	Saxons Bridge	100	100	
357	Scales St	Dartmouth Rd	0	End	330	345	Dartmouth
358	Schaefers Rd	Ross Rd	0	End	1000	1000	
359	Schaefers Rd		1,000	End	1,900	900	Tallangatta Valley
360	Schintlers La	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Dwyers Rd / Grid	4,205	4,205	
361	Schintlers Ln	Murray Valley Hwy	4,160	End	4,810	650	Colac Colac
362	School La	Stock Route	0	Ends at River	2,530	2,570	
363	Scrubby Creek Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Gate	5325	5,325	
364	Scrubby Creek Tk	Benambra-Corryong Rd	0	End	200	200	
365	Service Road P/B	Omeo Hwy		End		280	Eskdale
366	Settlement Rd	Murray River Rd	0	End	2,790	2,790	
367	Seymours Rd	Thowgla Rd	0	Ends at Gate	300	300	
368	Seymours Rd	Start at Gate	300	End	1,320	1,020	Corryong
369	Shanahans La	Omeo Hwy	0	Second Gate	400	400	
370	Sheathers Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Gate	680	850	
371	Shelley-Walwa Rd P/B	Murray River Rd	0	End K&C	250	250	Walwa
372	Simpsons Creek Tk	Benambra-Corryong Rd	0	Ends at House	610	610	
373	Simpsons Creek Tk	Starts at House	610	End	2,280	1,670	
374	Sirl St	Jobling St	0	Lobban St	164	164	Bethanga
375	Sirls Rd	Springdale Rd	0	Jarvis Creek Rd	11,815	11,845	
376	Smart St	Wattle St	0	Gilbert St	71	85	Old Tallangatta
377	Smythes Rd	Little Snowy Creek Rd	0	Grid/End	5,635	5,635	
378	Snake Gully Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at Gate	670	670	
379	Soldiers Settlers Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Tallangatta Creek Rd	5,115	5,195	
380	Sparrow St	Murray River Rd	0	Legge St	55	66	
381	Spring Creek Rd	Yabba Rd	0	Tallangatta Creek Rd	13,630	13,675	
382	Springdale Rd	Bridge St - Bethanga	0	Lake Rd	7,690	7,690	
383	Spy Ct	Elizabeth Ct	0	End Bowl	71	75	Bellbridge
384	Steers Rd	Williams Rd	0	End	440	440	Tallangatta Valley
385	Stock Route	Parish La	0	Thomas La	2,550	2,574	Corryong
386	Stockyard Creek Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Gris/End	3,160	3,160	
387	Strzlecki Way pt.1	Donaldson St	0	McKay St	553	562	Corryong

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
388	Strzlecki Way pt.2	McKay St	0	Lebner St	1,070	1,146	Corryong
389	Sugarloaf Rd	Hanson St	0	Green Wattle Gap Rd	3,620	3,620	Corryong
390	Sugarloaf Rd P/B-L	Memorial Dv	600	End Kerb	696	96	Corryong
391	Sullivan St	Towong Hill Rd	0	Thomas Mitchell Pl	1,221	1,227	Towong
392	Sutherlands Rd	Shelley Rd	0	End	240	240	
393	Swasbrick Rd	Mitta North Rd	0	Gate	1,775	1,775	
394	Talgarno Cemetery Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Talgarno Gap Rd	1,625	1,625	
395	Talgarno Gap Rd	Springdale Rd	0	Murray River Rd	9,360	9,360	
396	Talgarno School Rd	Murray River Rd	0	End	175	175	
397	Tallangatta Cemetery Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End at Gate	925	925	
398	Tallangatta Creek Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Gate	37,200	37,200	
399	Tallangatta Lookout Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Lookout Top	1,640	1,640	
400	Tallangatta Pumphouse Rd	Towong St East	0	End	300	300	
401	Tallys La	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Ends at Gate	1,025	1,025	
402	Tankards	Murray River Rd	0	End	410	410	
403	Tatonga Ln	Omego Hwy	0	House Ent.	220	220	
404	Thologolong Rd	Murray River Rd	0	End	3,300	3,300	Bungil
405	Thomas La	Towong Rd	0	End	2,220	2,250	Corryong
406	Thomas Mitchell Pl	North End	0	South End	405	405	Towong
407	Thowgla Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Greys Br	19,950	19,950	
408	Timberlane Rd	Yabba Rd	0	Gate	6,635	6,635	
409	Tintaldra Back Rd	Tintaldra Rd	0	Murray River Rd	789	789	Tintalda
410	Tintaldra Link Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Tintaldra Rd	312	0	Tintalda
411	Tintaldra Rd P/B	Tintaldra Rd	0	Tintaldra Back	82	0	Tintalda
412	Tintaldra Rd S/R	Tintaldra Rd	0	Tintaldra	230	230	Tintalda
413	Campbell Ln	Murray River Rd	0	Tip Gate	565	565	
414	Tokes Cr	Murphy St	0	Banimboola Rd	277	287	Dartmouth
415	Toohey St	Jobling St	0	Lobban St	176	176	Bethanga
416	Tooma St	Towong St	0	Coorilla St	203	211	Tallangatta
417	Touzel Rd	Whiteheads Rd	0	Grid	1,950	1,950	
418	Towong Hill Rd	Towong Rd	0	Murray Valley Hwy	7,135	7,185	
419	Towong Rd S/R-L	Donaldson St	0	Thomas La	1,219	1,324	Corryong
420	Towong Rd S/R-R	Donaldson St	0	Thomas La	1,219	1,240	Corryong
421	Towong St	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Wagara EBL	1,403	1,447	Tallangatta
422	Towong St East	Wondah St	0	Murray Valley Hwy	825	835	Tallangatta
423	Towong St East S/R	Dyring St	248	Larsen St	390	202	Tallangatta
424	Towong St P/B Rt	Seal Change	127	Weramu St	248	49	Tallangatta
425	Towong St Sth C'Way	East End	0	West End	430	433	Tallangatta
426	Tregilgas Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	550	550	
427	Trewella Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Gate	960	370	
428	Turners Rd	Ranch Rd	0	1.28 Grid	1,340	1,340	
429	U/N Rd (8007 on CRB Map)	Start	0	House	600	600	
430	Un-named	Cudgewa Valley Rd	0	End	568	568	

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
431	Un-named (Wymah Point Rd)	Murray River Road	0	End	265	265	
432	Un-named 10	Cudgewa Valley Rd	0	End	130	130	
433	Un-named 10	Cudgewa Valley Rd	130	End	330	200	Cudgewa
434	Un-named 13	Hillier access road	0	End	1,200	1,200	
435	Un-named 14	Thowgla Rd	0	End	350	350	Corryong
436	Un-named 15	Spring Creek Rd	0	End	380	380	
437	Un-named 16	Murray River Rd	0	End	200	200	Talgarno
438	Un-named 17	Callaghan Creek Rd		End			
439	Un-named 21	MV highway		End			Corryong
440	Un-named 3	McFarlanes Ln	0	End	150	150	
441	Un-named 4	Springdale Rd	0	End	1,000	1,000	Bethanga
442	Un-named 5	Mitta North Rd	0	End	90	90	
443	Un-named 6	Leys Rd	0	End	120	120	
444	Un-named 7	Omeo Hwy	0	End	300	300	
445	Un-named 8	Murray Valley Hwy	0	End	30	30	
446	Un-named 9	Hibersons Rd	0	End	300	300	Tallangatta
447	Un-named rd 19	Tallagatta Creek Rd		End			
448	Un-named Rd 23	Talgarno Gap Road	0	End	655	655	Bethanga
449	Un-named Road 18	Ranch Road	0	End	860	860	
450	Un-named St 2	Hollow St	0	End	100	100	
451	Un-named St 1	Craig Dve	0	End	30	30	
452	Upper Murray Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Damms Bridge	21,720	21,720	
453	Vincent's Rd	Wises Creek Rd	0	Ends at Gate	1,430	1,430	
454	Vista Ct	Craig Dv	0	End Bowl	41	45	Bellbridge
455	Wagara St	Towong St	0	Bend	144	151	Tallangatta
456	Wallaces Rd	Burrowye Rd	0	Gate	1,550	1,550	
457	Waller St	Hanson S	0	End	260	260	Corryong
458	Walshs Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	Grid	1,345	1,345	
459	Walter Pl	Mildren St	0	End of T sect Sth	67	67	Corryong
460	Walwa Ln way 1	Hanna St	0	End	138	138	
461	Walwa Ln way 2	Harvey St	0	End	152	152	
462	Warra St	Queen Elizabeth Dr	0	Jillico Ave	97	105	Tallangatta
463	Water Pl	Towong St East	0	Gate	75	75	Tallangatta
464	Waterfall Creek Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	Grid/House	2,420	2,420	
465	Waters La	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Ends at Gate	3,530	3,530	
466	Wattle St	Pearce St	0	Start Causeway	572	572	Old Tallangatta
467	Wattle St S/R	Wattle St	0	Pearce St	100	100	Old Tallangatta
468	Webb La	Granya Rd	0	Ends at House	1,900	1,900	
469	Webb St	Doubleday St	0	Granya Rd	230	244	
470	Weramu St	Towong St	0	Coorilla St	171	184	Tallangatta
471	Wheeler St	Donaldson St	0	Sugarloaf Rd	1,905	1,916	Corryong
472	Wheeler's Rd	Back Cudgewa Rd	0	Gate 'Fairview'	1,060	1,060	
473	Whiteheads Rd	Cudgewa Valley Hwy	0	Gate	3,180	3,180	

S.no	RMP 2025	Start Datum	Start Chainage	End Datum	End Chainage	Length (m)	Location
474	Williams Rd	Tallangatta Creek Rd	0	End	1730	1730	
475	Willong St	Queen Elizabeth Dv	0	Jillico Ave	740	749	Tallangatta
476	Wilson St	Harvey St	0	End	152	157	Walwa
477	Wire La	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at Grid	1,270	1,270	
478	Wise St	Jobling St	0	Loban St	190	199	Bethanga
479	Wises Creek Rd	Murray River Rd	0	Ends at Gate	5,530	5,530	
480	Womaatong St	Noorooma St	0	Banool Rd	170	174	Tallangatta
481	Wombat Gully Rd	Omeo Hwy	0	End	120	120	
482	Wondah St	Towong St	0	Lakeside Dr	335	340	Tallangatta
483	Wonga Gv	Jillico Av	0	Willong St	186	196	Tallangatta
484	Woolcocks La	Mongans La	0	Ends at Grid	865	865	
485	Wortmanns Ln	Granya Rd	0	House Ent.	980	980	
486	Wrights Rd	Lake Findlay Rd	0	Ends at Gate	380	380	
487	Yabba Rd	Murray Valley Hwy	0	Omeo Hwy	31,300	31,367	
488	Yamba St	Weramu St	0	End Bowl	169	176	Tallangatta
489	Yonson Rd	Kurrajong Gap Rd	0	End/Grid	277	277	
490	Younghusband St	Donaldson St	0	L.H. Branch	185	190	Corryong
491	Younghusband St RH Branch	T-Junction	0	End	137	137	Corryong
492	Unnamed (off-Towong Road Near School)	Towong Road	0	Driveway	150	150	Corryong

SUBMISSION TO TOWONG SHIRE COUNCIL



Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

257 DRUMMOND ROAD, TALGARNO 3691

LOT 1 TP318077

LOT 1 TP681750

Prepared for Joan and Barry Elliot | November 2024 | Ref: 501251

DESCRIPTION	
Address	257 Drummond Road, Talgarno
Lot Description:	Lot 1 TP318077
	Lot 1 TP681750
Project Number	501251
Project Manager	Matthew Elliot
Reviewed by	
Revision	B
Document Status	Final for submission to Council
Date	November 2024

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2. INTRODUCTION

This planning permit application is for a two lot resubdivision of the existing two allotments at 257 Drummond Road, Talgarno and for the use and development of each proposed allotment for a dwelling and construction of a shed on each lot.

Details of the site and its surrounds are provided in Section 3, details of the proposal are provided in Section 4, and an assessment in relation to the provisions of the Towong Planning Scheme is identified in Section 5.

The following documents must be read in conjunction with this report and are provided as part of the application:

- Copy of title (Appendix 1)
- Proposed Site Plan (Appendix 2)
- Land Capability Assessment (Appendix 3)
- Dwelling layout and elevation drawings (Appendix 4)
- Site and context plan (Appendix 5)
- Existing site plan (Appendix 6)

3. SUMMARY

A Planning permit is required subject to the following planning provisions of the Towong Planning Scheme:

Provision	Clause	Trigger
Rural Activity Zone	35.08-1	Use and development of the land for a dwelling
	35.08-3	A permit is required to subdivide land, including resubdivision.
	35.08-4	A permit is required for a building or works associated with a section 2 use
Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1	42.03-2	A permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works
Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule	42.01-1	A permit is required to subdivide land

3.1 ABORIGINAL HERITAGE ACT

The subject site is not located within an area of cultural heritage sensitivity. The proposed dwellings are not a high impact activity. A Cultural Heritage Management Plan is therefore not required for this development pursuant to the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.



Figure 1: Map of the subject sites and surrounds showing areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity. ACHRIS, November 2024.

4. SITE AND SURROUNDS

Formally identified as Lot 1 TP318077 and Lot 1 TP681750, and are commonly known as part of 257 Drummond Road, Talgarno.

Lot 1 TP318077 is the larger of the two allotments and is irregular in shape with an overall area of approximately 10.7ha. The land slopes gently from west to east and contains a single circular dam near the northern boundary with no existing buildings or other development. A minor natural drainage line (grassed gully) bisects the western tip of the property and flows to the northeast to neighbouring allotments. The parcel is mostly cleared of all native vegetation with the exception of four isolated native trees dotted around the centre of the property and the southern boundary. It contains a small farm dam. The subject site is used for grazing agriculture. Electricity is available to the subject sites via existing power poles with access from an existing crossover to Drummond Road on the eastern boundary. The DTP managed Murray River Road bounds the southern boundary of this Title.



Figure 2: View of the larger lot 1 from Drummond Road via the existing crossover looking west across the site.



Figure 3: View of the larger lot 1 from the centre of the lot looking north.

Lot 1 TP681750 is a 20m wide parcel that runs adjacent to the northern boundary of Lot 1 TP318077 from east to west. This parcel is free from any development and contains part of the aforementioned drainage line and three native trees.

Both Titles are part of the same landholding as 257 Drummonds Road that contains Titles further north, however, they are not adjoining. The subject Titles are separated by Lot 1/743910 to the north that is under separate ownership known as 218 Drummonds Road.

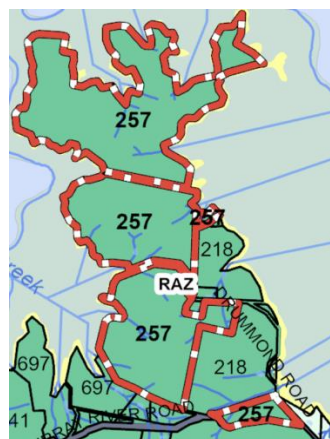


Figure 4: Existing Planning Mapshare Extract- Property Site Map of the subject sites. VicPlan 2024

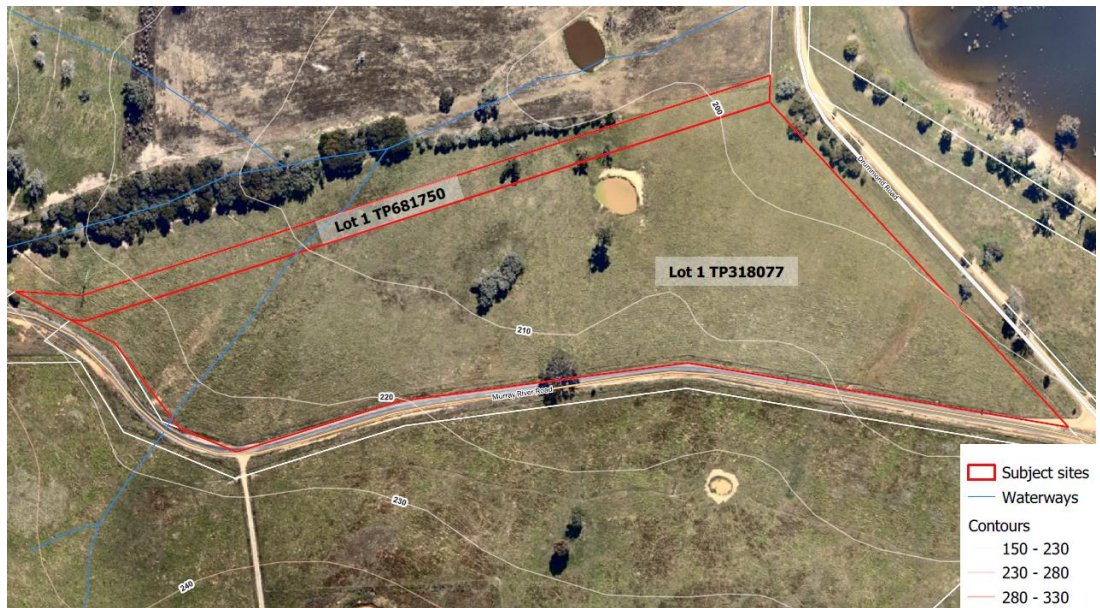


Figure 5: Existing Site Map of the subject sites. Nearmap 2024 - see Appendix 6.

The subject site is located in Talgarno on the north side of the Bethanga Peninsula, approximately 9.5km northwest of Bellbridge and 17km west of the Albury CBD. The immediate area surrounding the subject sites comprises a broad range of lot sizes and land uses. Lot sizes of neighbouring properties range from 1.3ha up to 100ha where many smaller lot sizes also contain dwellings not associated with agriculture. There are 14 dwellings on individual allotments located within 1.8km of the subject sites in all directions (see site and context plan in Appendix 5).



Figure 6: Aerial plan showing the location of existing dwellings in the area surrounding the subject sites. Nearmap 2024 - see Appendix 5.

The subject sites are both located under the Rural Activity Zone and are affected by the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 and is partially located within the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 in the southeastern corner. The planning scheme amendment C14 (2007) that rezoned all land in Towong Shire formally under the Rural Zone into the new Farming Zone and Rural Living Zone did so according to high- and low-quality agricultural land. Some areas were also rezoned to Rural Living Zone and Rural Conservation Zone. The high-quality agricultural land was rezoned to Farming Zone and the low quality agricultural land, including the subject site land, was rezoned to Rural Activity Zone.

North of the subject site is a larger allotment (62.4ha) also used for grazing agriculture that is mostly cleared of native vegetation, contains two existing dams and is undeveloped. This parcel forms part of a larger land holding that encompasses the peninsula to the north.



Figure 7: View along the eastern boundary looking north.

Drummond Road (all weather) borders the eastern boundaries of the subject sites with a similar sized lot on the opposite side of the road that contains an existing dwelling. Lake Hume is located further east and meanders around the larger peninsula. The land to the south east of the subject sites extends into the Farming Zone with small lots, each containing dwellings, located along Murray River Road.



Figure 8: View along Drummond Road looking east towards the intersection to Murray River Road. The existing crossover to the site is in the foreground.



Figure 9: View of Lake Hume looking east from the centre of the subject site. Drummond Road is located at the tree line.

The southern border of the larger Lot 1 runs adjacent to Murray River Road, which is located under the Transport Zone 2. This road extends to the east and west and connects Bethanga Peninsula with Bellbridge and Albury/Wodonga to the west and Talgarno and other Towong Shire towns further west along Lake Hume and the Upper Murray River. The larger allotment on the south side of Murray River Road is used for

both grazing agriculture and contains a small quarry used for road base by Towong Shire Council. The area is located under Works Authority 742 (WA742). The extent of the quarry is located 150m from the southern boundary of the subject site and does not contain any fixed plant and is not subject to blasting. The quarry cannot be seen from the subject site, see Figure 10 below. Typically, the Quarry is rarely used throughout the year. The owners have advised that its recent pattern of use appears to be for a short period (Eg: a week or two during business hours) for a particular local road project and then it could be a year or two before being used again. Disturbance to the amenity of the immediate area during the quarry's operation is minimal.



Figure 10: View south from the subject site. Murray River Road is located at the fence line with the neighbouring quarry beyond the tree line in the distance.

West of the subject sites are smaller RAZ allotments ranging in size from 4.5-6ha, each containing an existing dwelling along Murry River Road. These parcels are not used for agriculture, nor are the larger allotments further west due to topography rising from the shores of Lake Hume. The township of Bellbridge is located approximately 9.5km south west of the subject site. The land to the south and south west of the subject sites rises steeply into the centre of the peninsula from the lake level at 190AHD to 640AHD over a distance of about 4.5km. The presence of Lake Hume and this steep topography make the majority of land on the Bethanga Peninsula unsuitable to traditional agricultural land uses.

5. THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is for a two lot resubdivision of the land and the use and development of the two proposed allotments for a dwelling and shed on each lot.

Lot 1 – will comprise a battle axe style allotment measuring approximately 6.2ha. The proposed allotment will be located on the western half of the subject site with access provided from Drummond Road.

Lot 2 – will occupy the eastern half of the subject site and be approximately 5.5ha in area. Access will be provided via the existing crossover to Drummond Road.

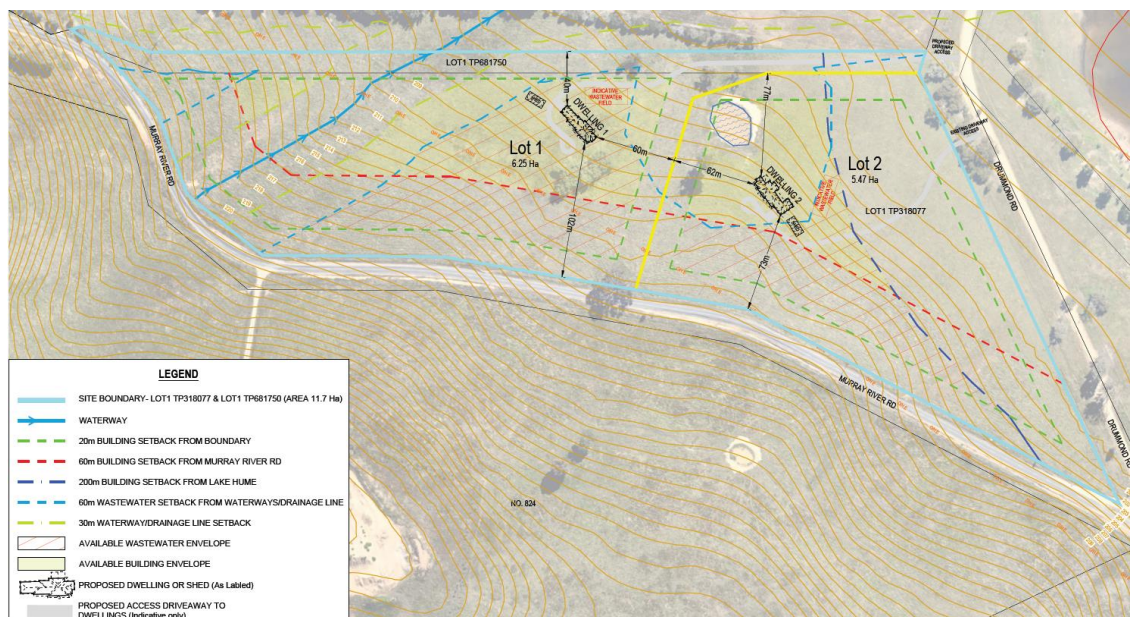


Figure 11: Proposed plan of subdivision and site plan showing proposed dwellings and sheds.

The proposal also includes the use and development of each Lot for a dwelling.

The proposed Lot 1 will contain a single story dwelling comprising four bedrooms, two bathrooms, double garage, kitchen, lounge room, study, rumpus, laundry and outdoor entertaining area. The proposed dwelling will have an area of 392 square metres with a cross hipped colour bond steel roof design and an overall height of 6m. The dwelling will be setback 40m from the northern boundary and 60m from the eastern shared boundary and will be clad in Red brick and colourbond roof to reflect the muted rural tones of the surrounding area.

The proposed Lot 2 will contain a single story dwelling with a different layout but in a similar style and size of the proposed dwelling on Lot 1. This dwelling will also comprise four bedrooms, two bathrooms, double garage, kitchen, lounge room, theatre room, laundry, work room and outdoor entertaining area. The dwelling will be setback 77m from the northern boundary and 62m from the western shared boundary and will be clad in grey weatherboards with a colourbond roof to reflect the muted rural tones of the surrounding area.

Both of the proposed dwellings will be setback at least 75m from the southern boundary adjacent to the Transport Zone 2 Murray River Road. The proposed dwelling on Lot 2 will be setback 240m from the full lake supply level of Lake Hume and the proposed dwelling on Lot 1 will be setback 370m from Lake Hume.

A Land Capability Assessment (LCA) has been prepared to accompany the application. The submitted LCA demonstrates that each of the proposed allotments can adequately treat and contain all wastewater generated by the proposed dwellings onsite. The proposed wastewater envelopes can be appropriately located more than 200m from the full supply level of Lake Hume and more than 60m from any nearby waterways and the onsite dam.

Due to the size of the subject sites, the proximity to Lake Hume and the marginal quality of the land for agriculture demonstrated as being under the Rural Activity Zone, the land cannot be viably used for its previous or traditional agricultural uses such as animal grazing or cropping. The economic viability of these land uses has become somewhat economically unviable if the land is freshly purchased and alternative new style farming uses should be considered. For these existing parcels, this reality applies regardless if the subdivision proceeds or not. Farming types are likely to be far more boutique or niche to efficiently use the land while also adhering to the environmental controls relating to runoff into Lake Hume. Traditional/historic farming practices are not likely to make economic sense for the land value.

Intensive farming opportunities are mostly ruled out due to proximity to other neighbouring residences (See Site and Context Plan in Appendix 5) and environmental sensitivities with the catchment draining to neighbouring Lake Hume. Therefore, new farming uses with onsite dwelling accommodation appears the most suitable and practical farming use.

Agricultural land use opportunities for the two proposed allotments may include:

- Boutique Equine breeding and training
- Specialist small stock breeding (eg: Stud)
- Beekeeping
- Herb Farming
- Hydroponics
- Microgreens
- Nursery (Baby Trees)
- Exotic Poultry
- Mushroom Farming
- Specialist agriculture support businesses

It is envisaged that the future landowners can undertake one of many niche agricultural land uses that fall within the Section 1 land use definition for Agriculture under the Rural Activity Zone. Similarly, other appropriate land uses can be undertaken on the proposed allotments that still fall within the Section 1 land use definitions under the RAZ including Bed and Breakfast, Domestic Animal Husbandry and Poultry Farm

No native vegetation will be removed as part of this application and no access to Murray River Road is required for either proposed allotment.

5.1 Municipal Planning Strategy

The following Planning Policy Framework (PPF) clauses are considered relevant to this proposal:

CLAUSE	RESPONSE
Clause 02.03-1 – Settlement	The proposal has been designed to ensure the management of wastewater and appropriate setbacks to all waterways can be appropriately achieved on both proposed allotments – addressing the key issue raised under the Settlement Strategy and strategic directions of Clause 02.03-1.
Clause 02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values	The proposal does not require the removal, or consequential loss, of any native vegetation. The proposed shared boundary has been located to avoid the existing large trees on the subject site. The proposed dwelling designs are both single story and will sit below ridgelines to avoid any adverse impact to areas of identified landscape value. The design of the dwellings is understated and represent a rural aesthetic, in keeping with the character of the surrounding areas.
Clause 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity	The subject sites are not located under a floodway or bushfire overlays and are appropriately setback from any contiguous forested areas, making the properties appropriate locations for the two proposed dwellings in the face of climate change impacts, supporting the strategic directions of Clause 02.03-3. The subject sites do not contain any steep topography.
Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management	Clause 02.03-4 seeks to protect the agricultural viability of the Shire's economic base, primarily on land under the Farming Zone. The proposal is located on land under the Rural Activity Zone, which is considered low quality agricultural land. The clause goes on to state; <i>'...rural residential development are better located on agricultural land of low to moderate quality in the 'transitional Towong', and/or peri-urban land to the north west of the Shire within 40 minutes of Albury/Wodonga.'</i> The proposal meets all of the parameters stated in the strategic direction above by being located on low quality agricultural land, in the northwest of the

	shire and well within 40 minutes of Albury/Wodonga. The proposal also supports the strategy of increasing rural diversity and facilitating a wider cross section of the farming sector, including small farms. Clause 02.03-4 is also concerned with the protection of water quality in water catchments. The proposal includes a detailed Land Capability Assessment that demonstrated all wastewater generated by the two proposed dwellings can be treated and contained inside the lot boundaries, in excess of 200m from the full supply level of Lake Hume.
Claus 02.03-6 Housing	The proposal supports the strategic direction of Clause 02.03-6 by providing two rural living opportunities in proximity of existing towns, particularly in the western part of the Shire to diversify living options and strengthen existing communities. The Clause also states the peri urban land to the north west of the Shire (western Towong and Bethanga Peninsula) offers further opportunities for the provision of additional rural living development. The proposal for the two lot resubdivision of two existing allotments and the use and development of this land for two dwellings directly supports these strategic directions for Towong Shire in the appropriate areas.

5.2 Planning Policy Framework

CLAUSE	RESPONSE
Clause 11 – Settlement Clause 11.01-1S Settlement Clause 11.01-1L-04 Smaller settlements	The proposal seeks to support the Settlement framework by directing rural residential use and development into an area identified by the MPS. The proposed dwellings will allow for a rural residential opportunity in an area that is already dominated by this land use.
Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values Clause 12.01-1S Protection of biodiversity Clause 12.01-2S Native vegetation management Clause 12.03-1S River corridors, waterways, lakes and wetlands	Clause 12.01-1S is concerned with the protection of biodiversity. The proposal will not result in the removal or destruction of any native flora and fauna. The proposed subdivision and dwellings have

Clause 12.05 Landscapes	been designed to purposefully avoid the loss of any native vegetation. The subject site contains a designated waterway that runs through the northern edge of the property. The proposed dwellings and associated wastewater envelopes have been sited to avoid any adverse impacts to nearby waterways and Lake Hume (see proposed site plan in Appendix 2). The proposed subdivision and dwellings will not adversely impact the significant views and landscape identified in the area under the SLO and Lake Hume surrounds. The proposed dwellings are appropriately setback from Murray River Road and Lake Hume and will sit below any ridgelines and appropriately blend into the landscape with their chosen design and muted colour finishes.
Clause 13 – Environmental Risks Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire planning Clause 13.07-1S Land use compatibility	The proposed dwellings have been sited to ensure there is no added risk to human life and property from the threat of bushfire. The proposal is considered appropriate given the low bushfire risk in the area due to the largely flat terrain, well managed neighbouring properties, and the large setbacks to the nearest fuel loads of the proposed buildings. In addition, the proposed dwellings will meet the minimum 12.5 BAL rating required of all dwellings located in designated bushfire prone areas in accordance with AS3959. Given the surrounding land uses are predominantly rural residential properties on a mix of lot sizes, the proposed use of the proposed lots for a dwelling will not adversely impact on these surrounding land uses..
Clause 14 – Natural Resource Management Clause 14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land Clause 14.01-1L-01 Dwellings in rural areas Clause 14.01-1L-02 Subdivision in rural areas Clause 14.01-2S Sustainable agricultural land use Clause 14.02-2S Water Quality Clause 14.02-2L Effluent disposal and water quality Clause 14.03-1S Resource exploration and extraction	The proposed use of the land for a dwelling on each proposed allotment is consistent with the two objectives of Clause 14.01-1L-01. The subject sites are not located on land that is classified as high quality agricultural land. Planning Scheme amendment C14 (2007) rezoned all land in Towong Shire formally under the Rural Zone into the new Farming Zone and Rural Living Zone did so according to high- and low-quality agricultural land.. The high-quality agricultural land was rezoned to Farming Zone and the low quality agricultural land, including the subject site land, was rezoned to Rural Activity Zone and other rural zones. Additionally, the location of the properties within proximity to Lake Hume makes them

unsuitable to intensive agricultural land uses due to runoff and water quality issues. The relatively small size of the existing parcels also restricts the use of the land for anything other than niche agricultural pursuits. The land is therefore not considered to be of high agricultural quality.

While a dwelling is not required onsite for the agricultural use, all surrounding land is used sparingly for the same land use (see Site and Context Plan in Appendix 5), and most only contain dwellings on smaller allotments. As outlined in Section 3 above, the area is characterised by unproductive farmland that is only capable of supporting sparse animal grazing. The proposal is considered compatible with surrounding land uses.

The proposed dwellings are appropriately sited, taking into account neighbouring land uses and environmental and landscape constraints. The proposal meets the objectives and strategies of Clause 14.01-1L-01.

The proposal is considered in accordance with the strategies of Clause 14.01-1L-02 Subdivision in Rural Areas as the land is not located in the Farming Zone, the application is for a re-subdivision of two existing allotments and no additional parcels are being created, clearly responds to the constraints of the site, is not located in remnant bushland or other visually exposed area.

Clause 14.02 Water seeks to protect water quality. The proposed dwelling and resubdivision will not adversely impact upon water quality into or out of the subject site. All buildings are sufficiently setback from any nearby waterways. An LCA (Appendix 3) accompanies the application that ensures the land can treat and contain all wastewater generated by the proposed dwellings. With the prevalence of dwellings on smaller surrounding allotments, the larger subject sites will not be adversely impacted by the proposal.

The proposed dwellings will not adversely impact the ability of the quarry to the south of the subject sites to continue operation. The quarry is relatively small in size, worked infrequently for road base material and is not subject to any blasting or permanent plan. The quarry is appropriately setback from the proposed dwellings.

Clause 15 – Built Environment and Heritage Clause 15.01-6S Design for rural areas Clause 15.01-6L sheds and outbuildings	Clause 15.01-6S seeks to ensure development respects valued areas of rural character. The proposed dwellings and shed are setback in excess of the minimum RAZ minimum setbacks from any lot boundary, are both single story and are sited away from any local waterways and ridgelines. The low profile and large setbacks meet the objective of the provision and ensure the preservation of the rural residential character of the area. The proposed sheds meet the strategies listed in Clause 15.01-6L with appropriate setbacks, colours and material finishes near the proposed dwellings.
Clause 16 – Housing Clause 16.01-1S Housing supply Clause 16.01-3S Rural residential development	The proposal seeks, in part, to address the objective and strategies of Clause 16.01-1S by providing two additional dwellings in an area that is predominantly characterised by rural residential land uses to increase housing supply in an area that typically has low vacancy rates and general supply. The proposal will provide an increase in the range of options available to the local community in an area in commuting distance to Bellbridge and Albury and Wodonga. The Rural Residential Provision is provided to identify land suitable for rural residential development. The proposal is on an allotment surrounded by an existing rural residential land use pattern. Most neighbouring properties are smaller than the proposed allotments and cannot support agricultural activities. The prevailing rural residential land uses also prevent more intensive agriculture on neighbouring lots due to offsite amenity impacts to existing dwellings and environmental concerns for Lake Hume The existing agricultural land uses on surrounding properties demonstrate that the area does not contain high quality productive agricultural land. There are no nearby animal production uses that will be impacted by the proposal. The proposal meets the strategies and objectives of Clause 16.01-3S.

5.3 Zone/Overlays

5.3.1 Clause 35.08 Rural Activity Zone

The site is included within the Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) under the Towong Planning Scheme.

Purpose

- *To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework*
- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To provide for other uses and development, in appropriate locations, which are compatible with agriculture and the environmental and landscape characteristics of the area.*
- *To ensure that use and development does not adversely affect surrounding land uses.*
- *To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.*
- *To protect and enhance natural resources and the biodiversity of the area.*
- *To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.*

Pursuant to Clause 35.06-1, a planning permit is required for the use of land for a dwelling. The use of land for a dwelling must meet the requirements of Clause 35.06-2.

- The proposed dwellings will have access via an all-weather road.
- An appropriate septic system will be installed to treat all wastewater in accordance with the recommendations of the Land Capability Assessment submitted with this planning application.
- The dwellings will include water tanks for both firefighting and potable water supply.
- The dwellings will be connected to a reticulated electricity supply.
- There are no existing or proposed wind energy facilities located within one kilometre of the subject site.

Pursuant to Clause 35.08-3 a planning permit is required to subdivide land, including the resubdivision of two existing allotments.

Pursuant to Clause 35.08-4, a planning permit is required for a building or works associated with a Section 2 land use (dwelling).

Schedule to Clause 35.08 Rural Activity Zone

Purpose

- *To provide for a range of land use and development that does not adversely affect surrounding uses.*
- *To recognise the need to strengthen and diversify the economic base of the Shire.*
- *To provide a flexible approach to the consideration of land use and development proposals to off-set the adverse effects of economic restructuring and climate change on the agricultural sector.*
- *To encourage opportunities that contribute to population stability and growth in the Shire.*
- *To recognise the natural beauty and "pure" image of the Shire.*

Decision Guidelines	Response
General ▪ The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework. ▪ Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land. ▪ The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent. ▪ How the use or development relates to sustainable land management. ▪ Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.	The proposal has been designed in accordance with the PPF. A detailed LCA (Appendix 3) has been prepared for the subject site that confirms the land can treat and contain all generated wastewater from the proposed dwelling. The proposed dwellings are compatible with surrounding land uses. The area contains a mix of small agricultural lots and nearby Lake Hume. Most surrounding privately owned land contain a single dwelling on each lot for rural residential purposes. The subject is able to contain some low levels of stock for animal grazing. The proposal will ensure the land, and native vegetation is maintained. The proposal is consistent with the pattern of surrounding land use. The proposed dwellings will allow for the opportunity for several possible niche agricultural land uses listed in the proposal section above, dependent on future landowner preferences.
Agricultural issues ▪ Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production ▪ The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. ▪ The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use. ▪ The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure. ▪ Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site.	The proposed subdivision and use and development will not likely be directly associated with the previous agricultural land uses. The subject sites are considered low quality agricultural land where alternative agricultural uses will be more appropriate onsite. The proposed dwellings will not remove any meaningful amount of land from agriculture and will open up different agriculture activity opportunities for the site such as listed in this application. The proposed development is sufficiently setback from all neighbouring lot boundaries to avoid any conflict with existing or proposed agricultural uses. Most surrounding land has already been developed for rural residential uses or do not have large enough lots to accommodate any future intensive agricultural uses. An integrated land management plan has not been prepared for the proposal. Any specific land management items deemed necessary to the proposed dwellings and landscape, including landscaping and/or revegetation, can be conditioned on any potential planning permit.
Accommodation issues ▪ Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.	No further fragmentation of agricultural land will result from the proposal considering this land is already fragmented from continuous adjoining

- Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation - Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. - The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture.	ownership. The proposal is also for a resubdivision of two existing lots on land that is not currently used for any intensive agricultural land use. The proposed dwelling will not be adversely affected by any neighbouring agricultural uses. No intensive uses are located near the subject site as detailed in Section 3 above. The proposed dwelling is sited to ensure large setbacks to neighbouring allotments. The dwelling will have a negligible effect on the viability of any adjoining agricultural uses. The surrounding area has already been developed for rural residential land uses on relatively small allotments. The proposal will not create any additional allotments, and this will not lead to proliferation or concentration of the existing land use pattern. This pattern of land use is considered established in this area along Murray River Road as shown on the Site and Context plan. The relatively small lot sizes lend themselves for this land use, in addition to the relatively poor soil conditions, ensuring that land consolidation cannot provide for any intensive agricultural uses.
Environmental issues - The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality. - The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds. - The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area. - The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	The quality of the soil and water on the subject site will remain unchanged from the proposed development. The submitted LCA (Appendix 3) demonstrates compliance can be achieved with EPA guidelines. There will be no destruction of vegetation or habitat as a result of the proposal, nor is any proposed to be removed. The proposed effluent disposal field is in accordance with the recommendation of the submitted LCA. The area is located a sufficient distance from the designated creek to the northwest and is setback from all established native vegetation and habitat.
- Design and siting issues - The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts. - The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance. - The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas,	The site of the proposed dwelling will be setback approximately 200m from the neighbouring property to the west and 180m from the nearest neighbouring boundary to the east. The proposed dwelling is also sited 100m from the southern boundary, ensuring it will not impede the operation of any neighbouring agricultural uses. In any case, only sparse animal grazing exists on neighbouring properties. The design of the proposed dwellings included muted colours and natural materials that lend themselves to the rural aesthetic of the area. Their location is considered appropriate given the generous setbacks to waterways, the main road,

water, drainage, telecommunications and sewerage facilities. ▪ Whether the use or development will require traffic management measures. ▪ The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990.	Lake Hume and neighbouring lot boundaries. The proposed dwellings respects the rural character of the area and will not adversely impact on any views or vistas. The proposed dwellings will be located below any ridgeline and setback from all neighbouring boundaries ensuring no loss of amenity. The nearby quarry to the south of the subject sites will not be adversely impacted by the proposed subdivision or dwellings. The quarry is small in its operational capacity, is used infrequently and is not subject to blasting or permanent plant creating noise and dust. The quarry is primarily used for road base on local roads. The proposal is considered appropriately located given the parameters of the quarry.
--	--

5.3.2 Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay

- *To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework*
- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.*
- *To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.*
- *To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.*
- *To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone*

A planning permit is required for subdivision pursuant to Clause 42.01-2

Statement of Environmental Significance

Agricultural landscapes are generally valued for their productivity, quality of land and water resources, and their strongly connected communities.

High quality agricultural land has an inherent advantage over other land from a productivity point of view and is a resource that is more adaptable for a range of different farming enterprises. Such lands are considered the best to retain for food production. Areas of the Towong Shire rural landscape identified as being of high quality for the purpose of agriculture are an important resource that will continue to underwrite the economy of the Shire and directly contribute to the overall economic wellbeing of the broader Towong Shire community.

The ESO1 covers land located under the Farming Zone, with a small buffer outside of this zoning to convey high quality agricultural land. Given the ESO1 only applies to a tiny area of the eastern tip of the subject site, the statement of significance is not considered to cover the subject site and the permit trigger is a technicality in this

instance given the Rural Activity Zoning of the land as lower quality agricultural land. The subdivision of the land will have no impact upon the area the ESO1 covers on the subject site.

5.3.3 Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay

- To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework.
- To identify significant landscapes.
- To conserve and enhance the character of significant landscapes.

A planning permit is required pursuant to Clause 42.03-2 to construct a building or construct or carry out works.

Statement of nature and key elements of landscape

Lake Hume is an important environmental and recreational resource that provides considerable economic, social and cultural benefits to both local and downstream communities. Lake Hume and its tributaries contain many important landscape features. There are several landscapes within the environs of Lake Hume that are classified by the National Trust. These include:

- Bethanga lookout.
- Wodonga-Cudgewa railway line.
- Mitta Mitta Valley.

The use and development of land around the Lake can have an impact on the way the area is perceived and enjoyed by the visitors who use the Lake and also by residents who seek out this environment for the lifestyle and amenity it provides. It is intended to protect the scenic and environmental values of the Lake Hume and its environs in order to preserve the values that attract people to live and recreate in this attractive part of the Shire.

Landscape character objectives to be achieved

- To ensure that development is sited and designed so as to minimise the visual impact from an aesthetic and landscape impact perspective.
- To protect the Lake and the surrounding landscapes from visual intrusion from obtrusive development that may spoil the landscape attributes.
- To maintain, protect and enhance the character and diversity of Lake Hume landscapes including sites of remnant vegetation and sites of environmental significance.
- To encourage land development that does not degrade environmental values.
- To prevent land use and development from degrading water quality and polluting Lake Hume.

Decision Guidelines	Response
• The impact of the proposed buildings and works on the landscape due to siting.	The proposed buildings will not be silhouetted against any ridgelines or hilltops and are appropriately setback from nearby roads and Lake Hume. The significance of the landscape will not be adversely impacted by the proposed use and development.

The impact of the proposed design on the landscape including height, mass, scale and exterior colour/finish of the proposed development.	The proposed dwellings and sheds will be relatively low profile and be clad in appropriate colours and materials that blend in with the rural site and surrounds. There are dozens of similarly styled dwellings in the area which will be reflected in the siting and design of the proposed dwellings to keep with this rural residential character.
Visual impact of the proposal from the public realm.	The proposed dwellings and sheds are setback at least 70m from the nearest main road. Passing motorists will retain clear views to Lake Hume when driving due to the slope of the land down to the waters edge from Murray River Road.
The extent to which the site of the buildings and works can be landscaped to mitigate visual impacts.	An appropriate landscape plan can be provided that ensures vegetation screening around the proposed buildings from nearby roads on any potential planning permit.
Whether the proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Lake Hume Land and On-Water Management Plan, 2009.	The proposed use and development are located more than 200m from the full supply level of Lake Hume and can treat and contain all wastewater within the lot boundaries. Each wastewater envelope is appropriately setback from any nearby waterways.
Protection of water quality and compliance with the Environment Protection Authority's Code of Practice for On-Site Waste Water Management.	A Land Capability Assessment has been prepared to accompany the application that demonstrates compliance with the EPA guidelines for wastewater.
- Protection of the environment, including measures taken to minimise earthworks (including driveways) and avoid: - Vegetation removal. - Building and works on steep slopes. - Soil erosion.	The proposal will not require any vegetation removal, consequential or otherwise. No buildings are proposed on steep slopes. The subject site does not contain any steep topography. The proposal will not result in increased erosion.
Before deciding upon any application, the responsible authority must consider the views of National Trust (Victoria) where land is a classified National Trust Landscape.	The landscape around the subject site is not classified as a National Trust Landscape.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposed two lot resubdivision and the use and development of the land for a dwelling and shed on each allotment at 257 Drummond Road, Talgarno is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies as stated in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework of the Towong Planning Scheme. The key points of this submission are:

- The surrounding area is already established as rural residential, with the only predominant agricultural use as animal grazing in the area. The proposal is consistent with this land use pattern.
- The land is located under the Rural Activity Zone which is classified as being of low quality agricultural land. The presence of Lake Hume, local topography and neighbouring residential use limit any intensive agricultural land uses.
- The proposal is for the resubdivision of two existing parcels. No new parcels are being proposed.
- The proposed dwellings have been located and designed to meet all applicable setbacks to waterways, main roads, neighbouring dwellings and quarry.
- The proposed use and development meets the objectives and strategies of the MPS and PPF for rural dwellings and subdivision.

Overall, the proposal represents the most appropriate use and development of the land given its size, proximity to Lake Hume and existing dwellings, and inhibited agricultural potential.

The proposal is commended to Council and, on behalf of our client, we look forward to a positive outcome from the application.

APPENDIX 1 – CERTIFICATE OF TITLES

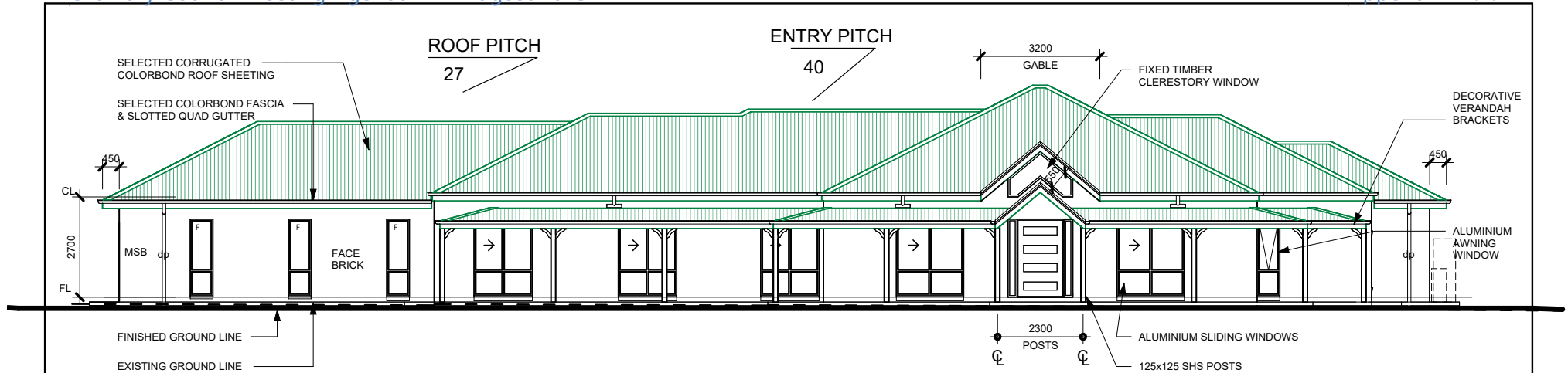
APPENDIX 2 – PROPOSED SITE PLAN

APPENDIX 3 – LAND CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

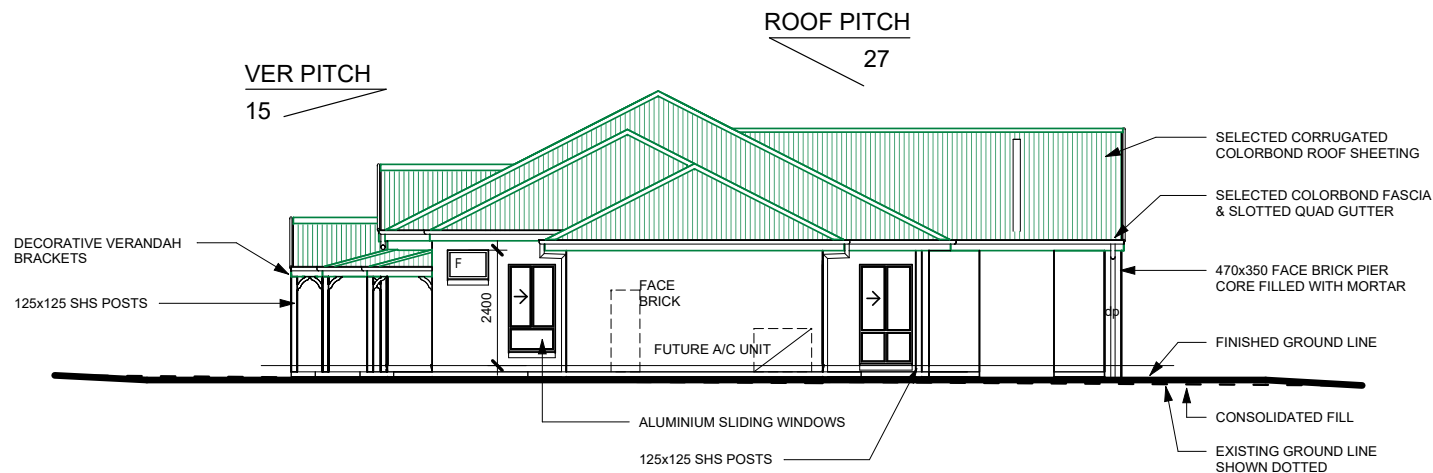
APPENDIX 4 – BUILDING LAYOUT AND ELEVATION DRAWINGS

APPENDIX 5 – SITE AND CONTEXT PLAN

APPENDIX 6 – EXISTING SITE PLAN



SOUTH ELEVATION 1:100



EAST ELEVATION 1:100

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 Albury NSW 2640
 Ph 02 60 412 872
 fax 02 60 211 703
 ACN 005 683 992
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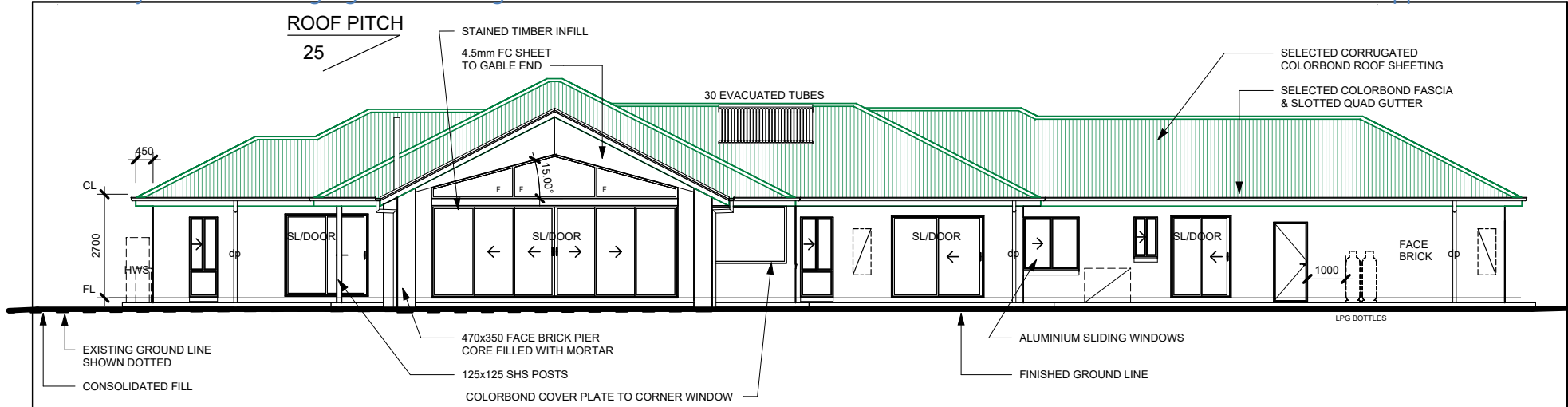
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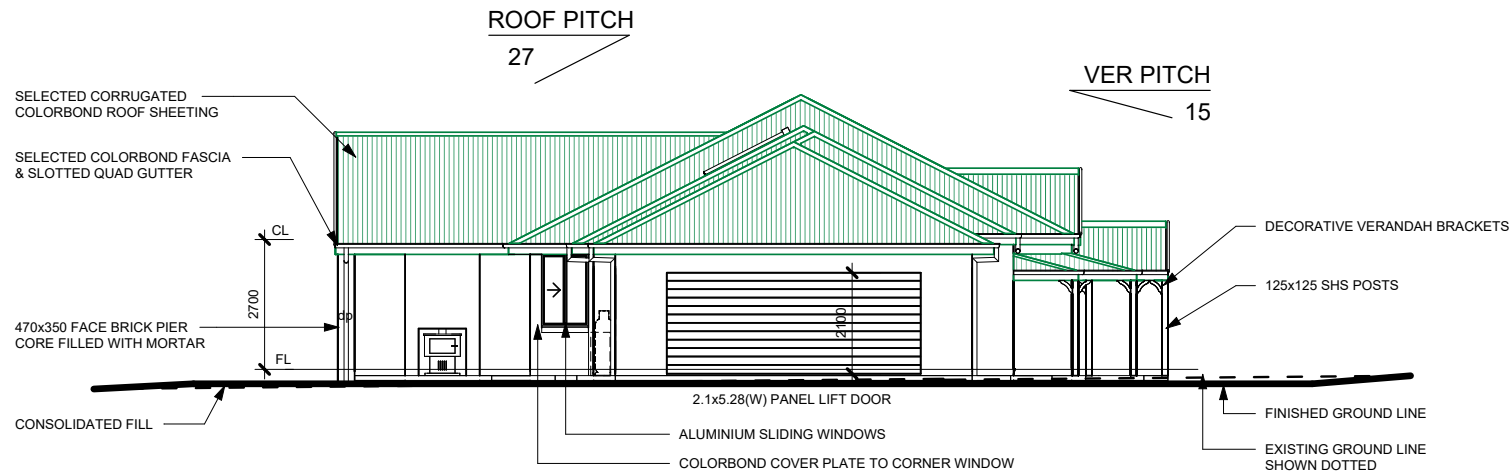
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 J.BAKER

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NORTH ELEVATION 1:100



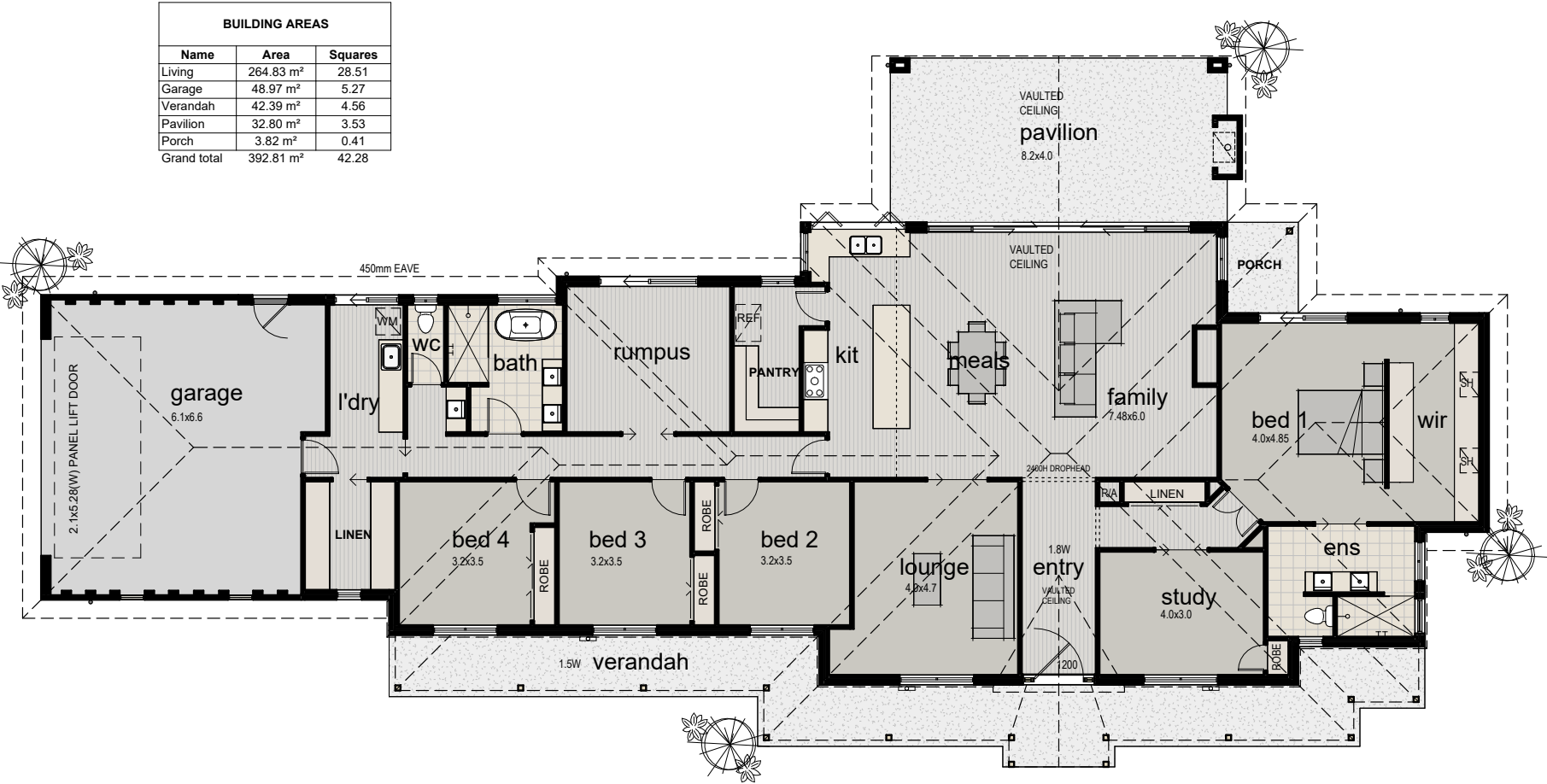
WEST ELEVATION 1:100

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15-08-22

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Approver

Sheet No

727-24

Job No. 501251 – 257 Drummonds Road, Talgarno
Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

House 1 - Proposed External Colour and Material Palette

- Grey Weatherboard (“Hardie™ Plank”)
- White Trim
- Dark Grey Steel Roof, Gutters, & Flashing



House 2 - Proposed External Colour and Material Palette

- Red Brick
- White Trim
- Dark Grey Steel Roof, Gutters, & Flashing

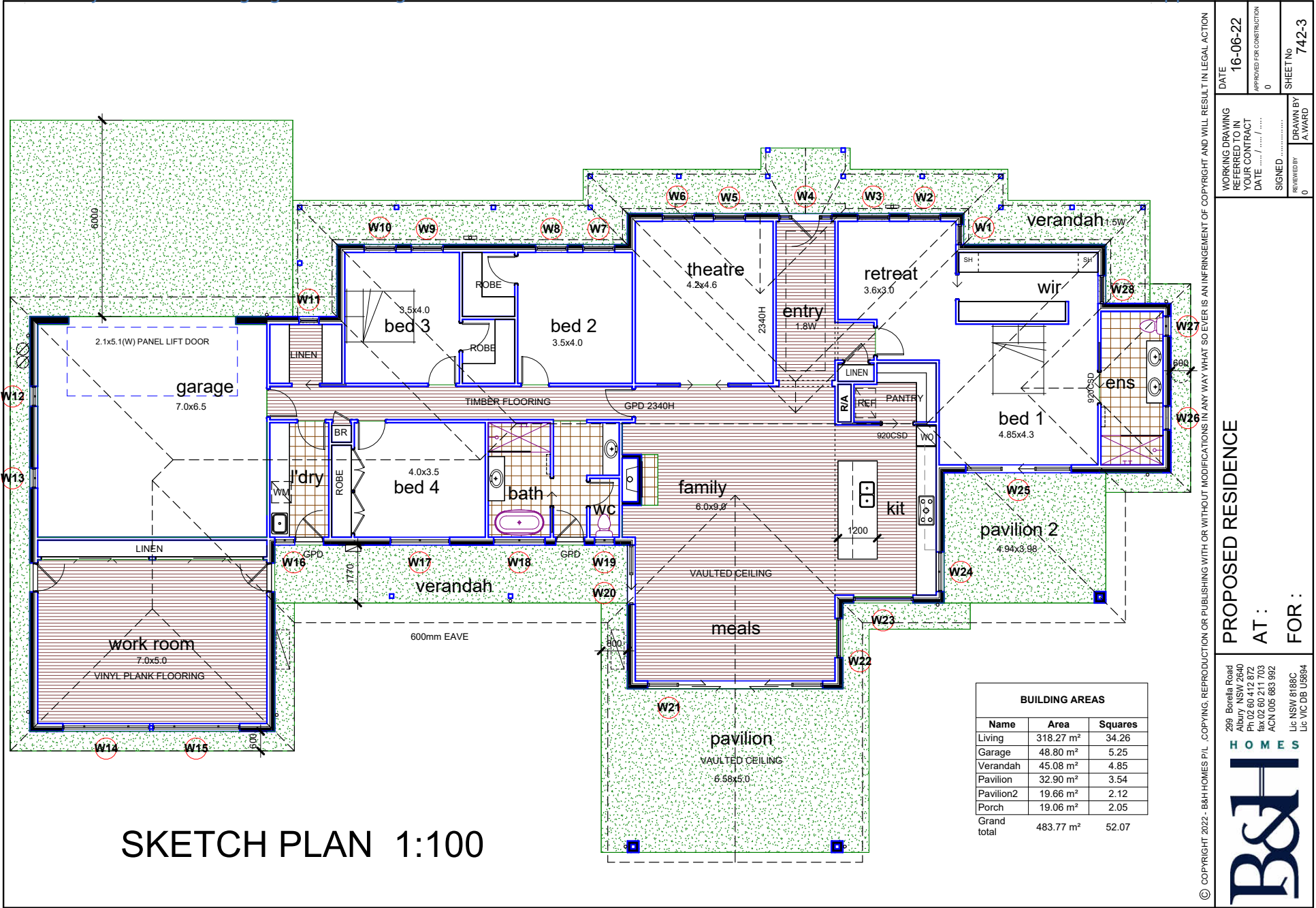


Job No. 501251 – 257 Drummonds Road, Talgarno
Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

House 1 & 2's Sheds – Proposed Colour Materials & Palette

- Steel - Dark Grey Roof, Walls and Roller doors.
- Approximate Proposed Dimensions – 10m wide x 15m Long x 7m high (max)





DATE 16-06-22

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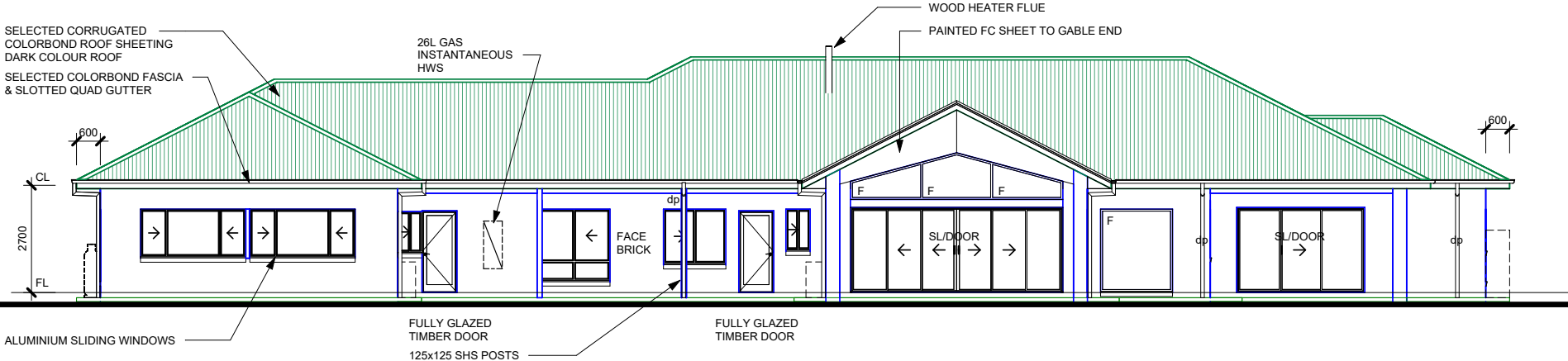
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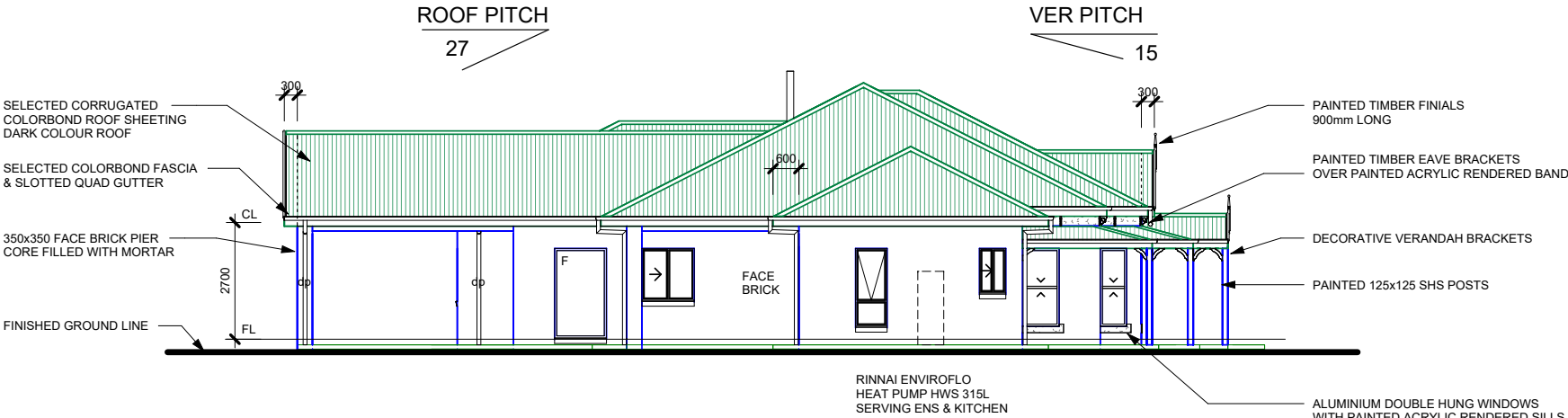
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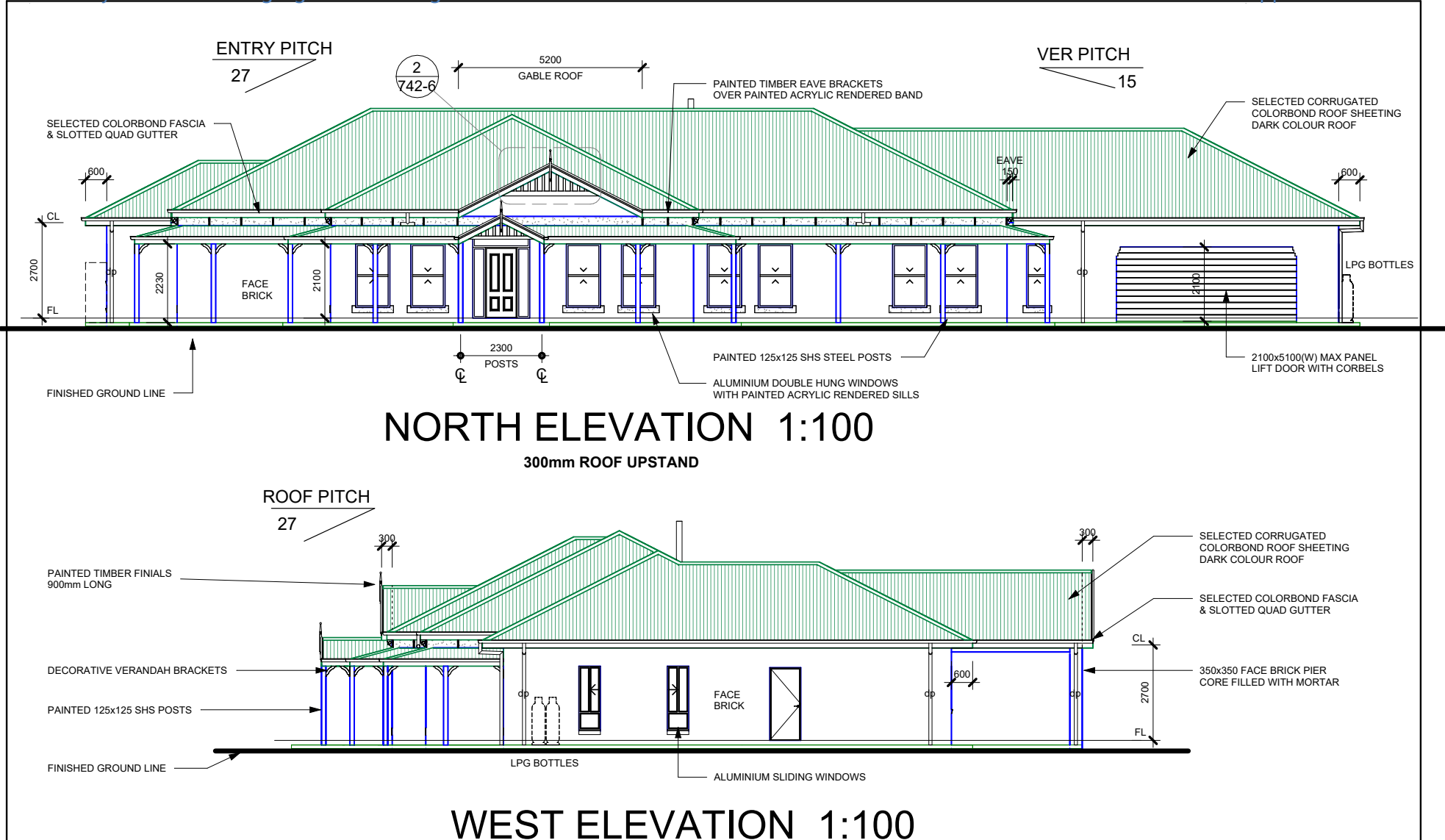
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		FOR :		REVIEWED BY : 0		DRAWN BY A.WARD	
						Sheet No 742-5	

Job No. 501251 – 257 Drummonds Road, Talgarno
Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

House 1 - Proposed External Colour and Material Palette

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- Dark Grey Steel Roof, Gutters, & Flashing



House 2 - Proposed External Colour and Material Palette

- Red Brick
- White Trim
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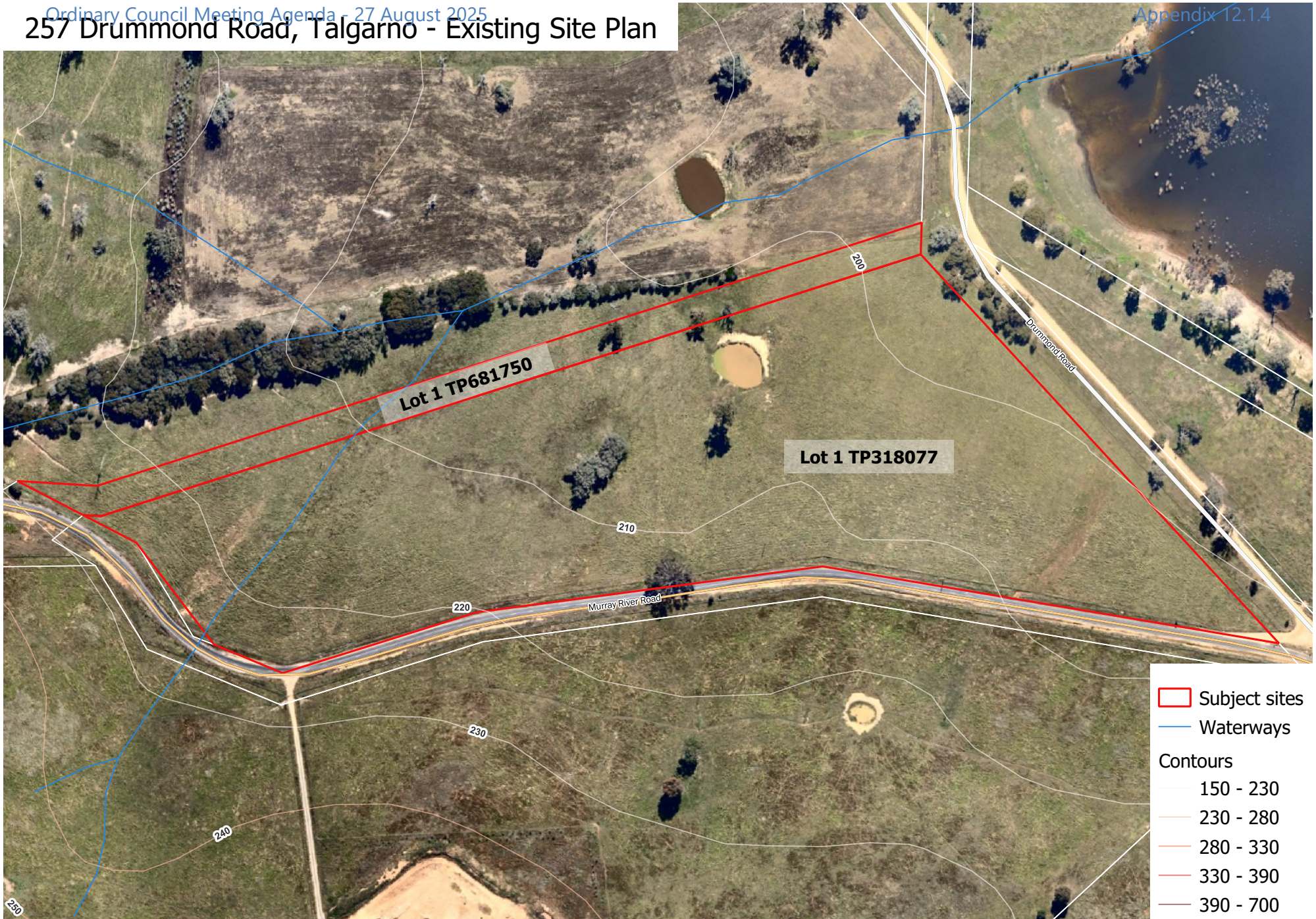
Job No. 501251 – 257 Drummonds Road, Talgarno
Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

House 1 & 2's Sheds – Proposed Colour Materials & Palette

- Steel - Dark Grey Roof, Walls and Roller doors.
- Approximate Proposed Dimensions – 10m wide x 15m Long x 7m high (max)



257 Drummond Road, Talgarno - Existing Site Plan





Job No. 501251 – 257 Drummonds Road, Talgarno
Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

House 1 & 2 Sheds' – Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations

- Approximate Dimensions – 10m wide x 15m Long x 7m high (max) (4m high at 2nd column).
- 1st Bay: 3m wide; 2nd Bay 4m wide; 3rd Bay 3m wide.
- 20 degree pitch roof

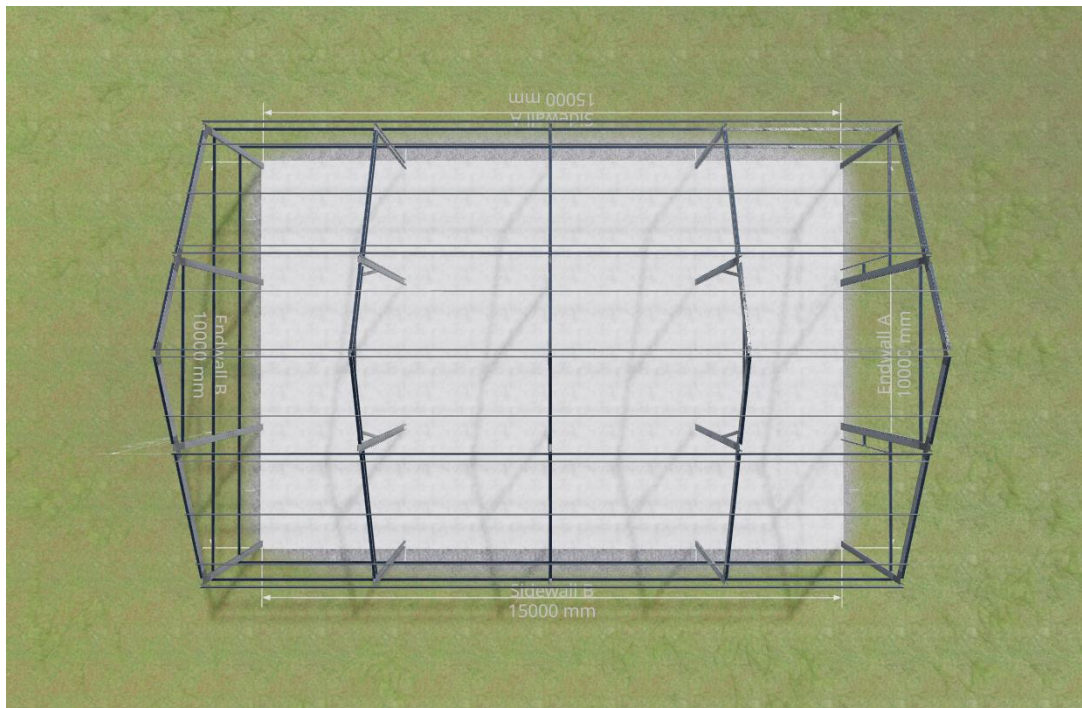


Figure 1. - Proposed Shed Floor Plan view including frame

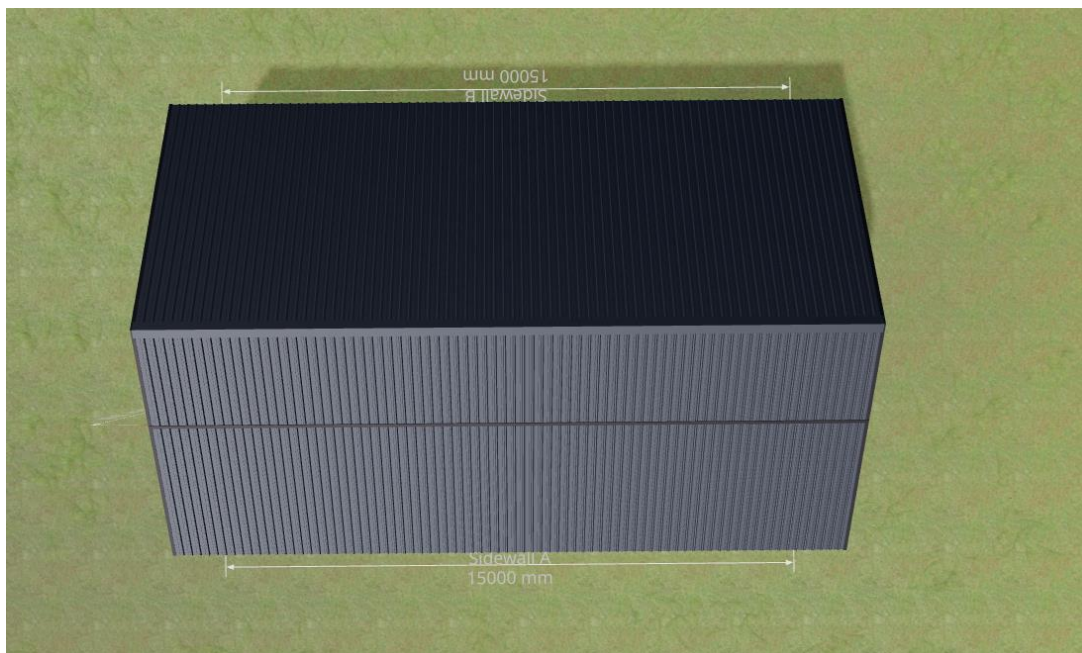


Figure 2. - Proposed Shed Plan View including Cladding

Job No. 501251 – 257 Drummonds Road, Talgarno
Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.



Figure 3. - Proposed Shed Endwall A Elevation view with Roller Doors



Figure 4. - Proposed Shed Endwall B Elevation view



Figure 5. - Proposed Shed Sidewall Elevation View

Job No. 501251 – 257 Drummonds Road, Talgarno
Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

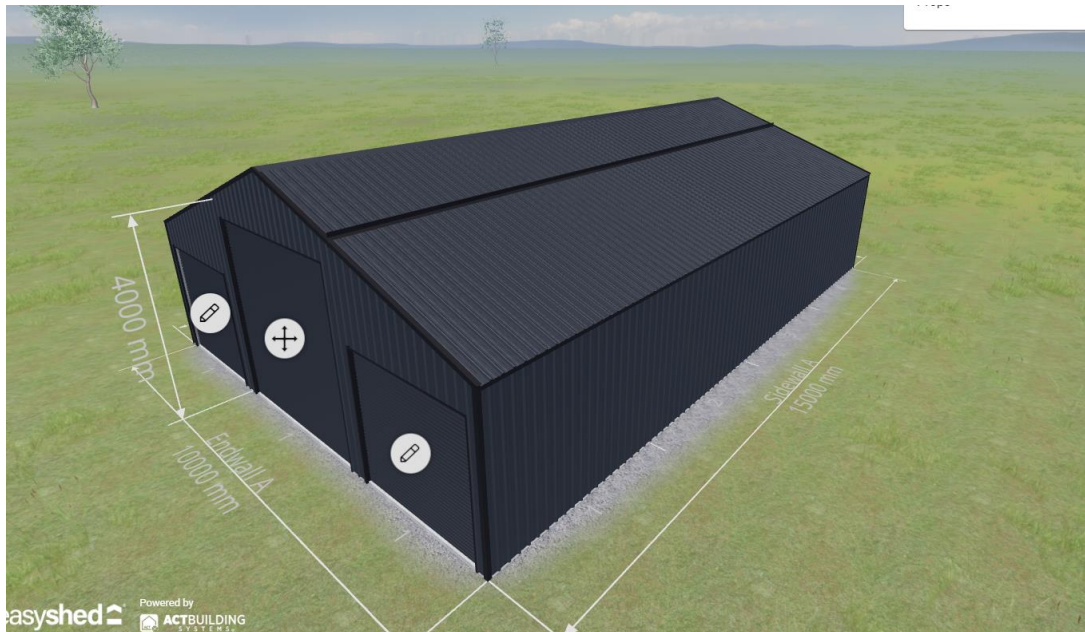


Figure 1. - Proposed Shed Corner Elevation View

SUBMISSION TO TOWONG SHIRE COUNCIL



TOWONG SHIRE PLANNING APPLICATION : PA 250002

Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

257 DRUMMOND ROAD, TALGARNO 3691 - LOT 1 TP318077 & LOT 1 TP681750

**ADDITIONAL APPLICATION JUSTIFICATION FOR SUBDIVISION &
DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE**

DESCRIPTION	
Address	257 Drummond Road, Talgarno
Lot Description:	Lot 1 TP318077
	Lot 1 TP681750
Project Number	501251
Project Manager	Matthew Elliot
Reviewed by	
Revision	B
Document Status	Final for submission to Council
Date	APRIL 2025

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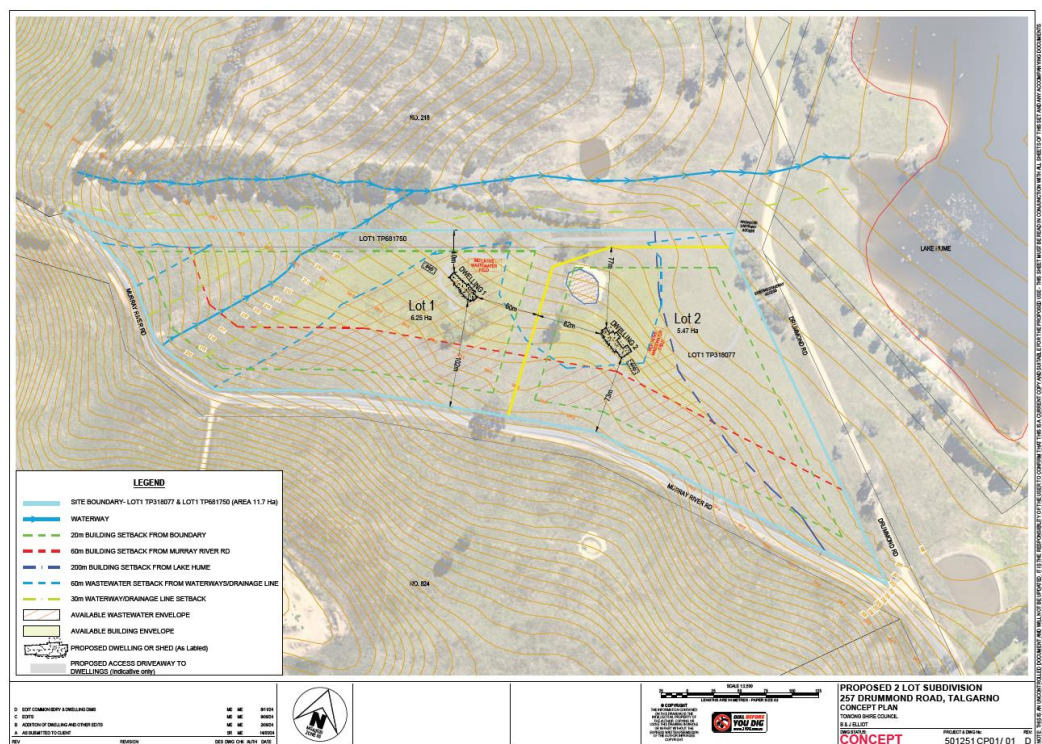
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1. INTRODUCTION

A planning permit application has been submitted to Towong Shire and is listed as PA250002. It is for a two lot resubdivision of the existing two allotments at 257 Drummond Road, Talgarno and for the use and development of each proposed allotment for a dwelling and construction of a shed.

The original application was submitted in November 2024 and should be referred to for all other application detail. Council provided an RFI dated 22 January 2025 requesting additional fees and shed plans and elevations. This RFI response was provided on the 23 January 2025. This application has been referred to various Authorities. DTP has consented with conditions and we are awaiting other RA responses at the time of preparing this additional response. The application has been advertised by Towong Shire and no objections were received.

The Towong Shire planning officer has raised questions about the justification of the application proposal against the Rural Activity Zone provisions and policy. The submitted application provides this justification at a reasonable level, however, to assist further, **this document provides additional detailed justification and discussion on the merits of the Agricultural use of the land for this application's proposal.**



2. RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE (RAZ) APPLICATION JUSTIFICATION

2.1 TOWONG PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW

The following text in **purple** are extracts from the Towong Shire Council Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda - 28 August 2024.

Towong Shire Council's meeting of the 28 August 2024 considered the Towong Planning Scheme Review. This agenda item considered the proposed changes to the Planning Scheme and the report's recommendations were carried at the council meeting.

Page 58: *'The primary purpose of the RAZ zone is to provide for the use of land for agriculture, with the second purpose being to provide for other uses and development, in appropriate locations, which are compatible with agriculture and the environmental and landscape characteristics of the area.'*

'The intention of its (RAZ) application to such large areas of the municipality via Amendment C014 was 'to allow for diversification of development'. The application of the zone on such a large scale has arguably diminished its capacity to allow for diversification, rather it now operates largely similar to the Farming Zone and precludes most of the flexibility that was originally intended.'

The Report's Recommendations included (Page:53):

- *'Revise the Clause 14 local agricultural policies to provide greater guidance for discretion on Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) land by precinct including circumstances where diversification of uses and additional dwellings or subdivision will be supported.*
- *'Introduce three separate RAZ schedules for the three different precincts, with the purpose of each to reflect the objectives of each.*
- *RAZ3 to be applied to the Lake Hume Precinct with a focus on agriculture and lifestyle opportunities to support Albury – Wodonga.'*

While these proposed planning scheme changes have yet to be formally adopted into the planning scheme and they are subject to due process, it does provide clear guidance to Council's justification and intention of RAZ land and particularly within this application's precinct. Ultimately, it demonstrates the application's proposal clearly aligns with the Council's intentions.

Fortunately, for this particular site's circumstances, the Planning Scheme does have the flexibility for Council to provide permission for the smaller Lots and associated development that is sought to be approved. It is not constrained by the current Planning Scheme policies. i.e. The proposal is allowed under the current Planning Scheme policies, and the application contention is primarily subject to the more subjective policies.

Accordingly, Council does have the ability in this case to achieve its strategic intentions without the above planning scheme amendments.

2.2 RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE (RAZ) STRATEGIC BACKGROUND

The following text in **green** are extracts from the Towong Rural Landuse Study (TRLUS) reports Part 1 and 2.

The Towong Shire Council planning scheme amendment C14 was gazetted in 2007, which split the old rural zoning into Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) and Farm Zone (FZ).

The **Towong Rural Landuse Study (TRLUS)** by EDM Group was undertaken in 2009 and documented the history of RAZ and Farm Zone land selection.

'The Towong Shire Rural Land Use Study has been undertaken to provide an analysis of land use planning issues in the rural areas of the Shire and to articulate a direction and vision for the future that includes recommendations for changes content and operation of the Towong Planning Scheme with respect to rural land use planning.'

Page 10 in Part 1 of TRLUS describes the logic in more detail and refers to the original 1985 agricultural quality mapping that the zonings are based on.

The planning scheme change effectively determined the split of agricultural land on the basis of:

1. *The Farming Zone (FZ) to higher quality agricultural lands within the Shire; and*
2. *The Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) to lower quality agricultural lands within the Shire.*

The application of the FZ and RAZ was based on the above mentioned 1:50,000 1985 Agricultural Quality mapping that was undertaken by the then Department of Agriculture. As noted within the C14 Panel Report the following protocol was observed in respect of the application of the Agricultural mapping to land holdings that were within different areas of Agricultural Quality.

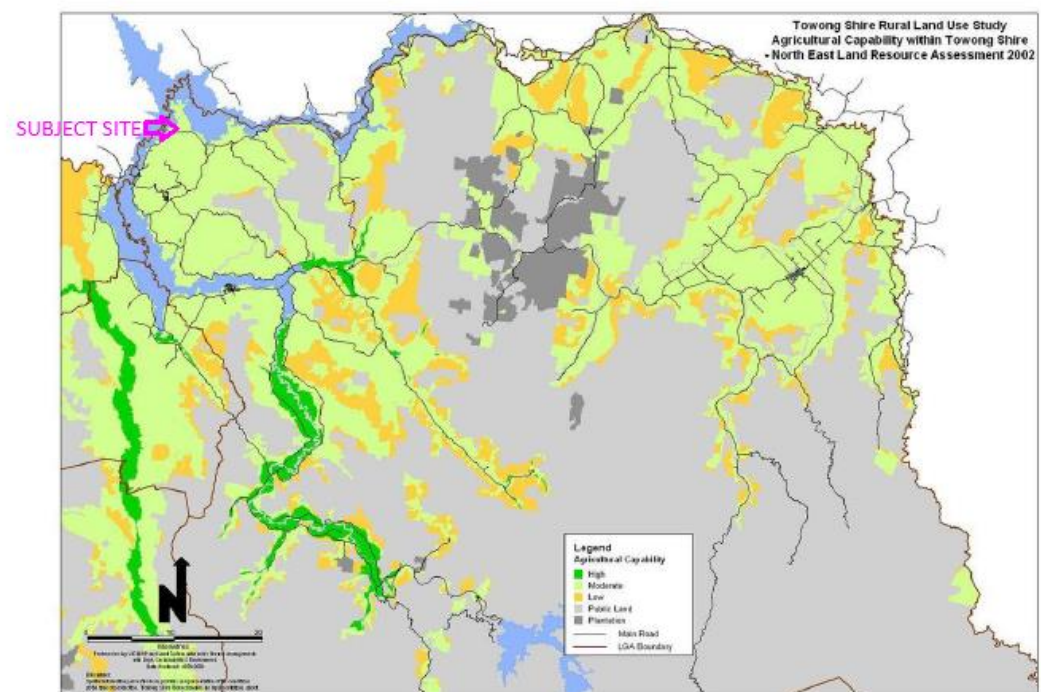
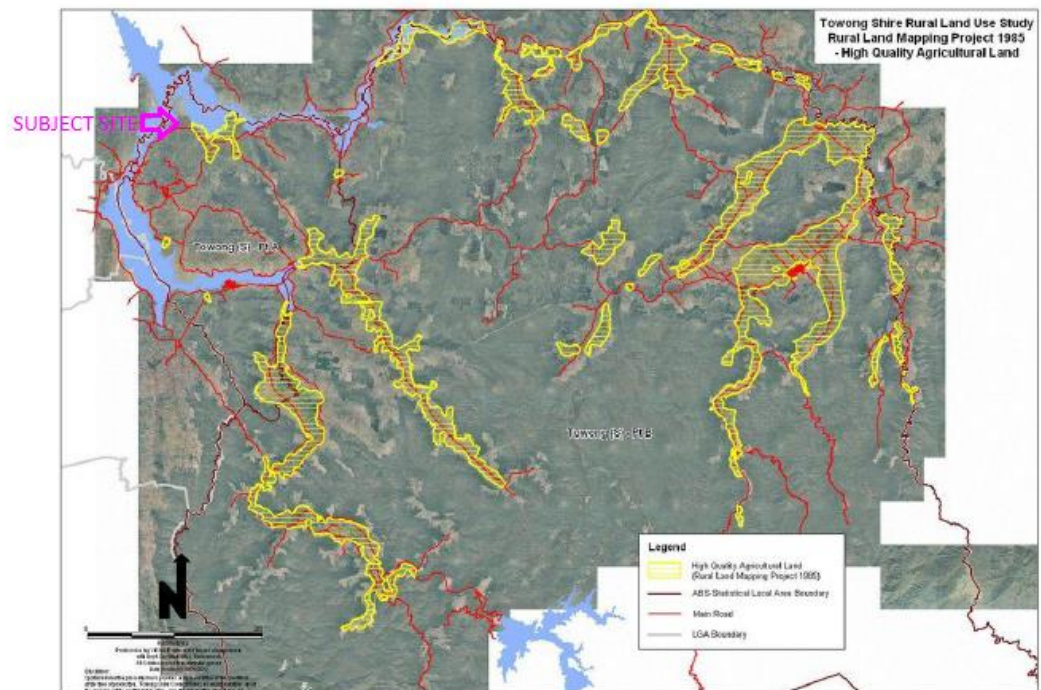
...if any portion of an Individual land parcel was shown to have prime agricultural land, the decision as to whether or not the title would be included in the Farming Zone would depend upon the actual area of the prime agricultural land identified upon a parcel, the slope of the land and the percentage of the land's area included in this prime agricultural classification.

For the purpose of determining the zones it is recommended that the percentage figure be 20% or above and that the nominated land area be 5 Hectares and above. (ie if the actual area was less than 5 hectares and did not constitute more than 20% of an allotment the whole of the allotment would be included in the Rural Activity Zone.⁶

*In developing and applying this protocol it was noted by the Panel that the Council had taken a **very "precautionary approach to protecting higher quality agricultural land through the application of the FZ"**.⁷*

It was the Panel's view that the application and respective provisions of the two zones achieve the kind of planning regime and outcome that were anticipated in the Rural Mapping Guide.

*Nevertheless, the Panel was also firmly of the view that the **successful implementation of the RAZ required a strong policy framework within which the non-farming opportunities afforded under the zone could be managed.***



This background report and high level mapping established that the subject site was not considered highly productive agricultural land and was of moderate capability.

The TRLUS report also states that the Panel when assessing the C14 amendment also considered the availability and likelihood of alternative agricultural uses that are beyond farming practices and that can be managed through the appropriate and strong controls.

The following sections of this justification report discuss and justify how these strong RAZ controls (purposes) are not only met but are the main drivers behind the application's proposal.

The Panel also stated a *'very "precautionary approach to protecting higher quality agricultural land through the application of the FZ"'*. Accordingly, a conservative approach to protecting agricultural land has already been undertaken by Council through the zoning process. Considering the subject site is not FZ and is in the more flexible RAZ controls, any assessment of the proposal needs to understand this very different land status, use opportunities, and agricultural value. i.e. Assessing this application proposal on the basis that it may reduce traditional grazing opportunities, does not rule out the merits of the application. Other diverse agricultural uses are actually encouraged. As justified later in this report, other agricultural uses that are more practical and likely for success for the existing smaller parcel/s are more appropriate.

Page 14 in part 1 of TRLUS describes the community consultation responses about the pressures on traditional agricultural business due to the changing economic circumstances. These circumstances have substantially increased in more recent years with significant inflation having a compounding impact on these same agricultural business.

'There are constant pressures on farm enterprises to adjust to changing economic and climatic circumstances. The need for increased operational scale coupled with the need to provide for farm succession often creates the need to restructure farm holdings. Respondents strongly favoured having "flexibility" within the planning system to enable appropriate responses to changing social, economic and environmental demands.'

The general community preference was to have flexibility in the planning scheme that was performance-based.

From TRLUS Part 1 page 14:

'A consistent theme was the inadequacy of the current uniform and prescriptive minimum subdivision size. A "one size fits all" approach (retaining the current 40 hectare dwelling / subdivision default minimum size) was overwhelmingly not supported by submitters.

Many felt that subdivision decision making should be more performance based enabling assessment on a "case by case" basis whereby the needs of the land owner could be considered together with attributes such as land use and site characteristics to inform decisions about subdivision appropriateness.'

The theme of these community desires for this flexibility has been included into the RAZ objectives and purposes. It is also identified that land size not being the only measure of the agricultural performance.

In section **11.4 FARM BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS**, the TRLUS describes in Page 66 the economic drivers that are causing change from grazing for smaller farming land sizes. Noting a smaller farm being categorised by an Estimated Value of Agricultural Operations" (EVAO) of less than \$200k pa, which would be a farm of a substantially larger size than this subject site's 12 Ha total land size that is under consideration.

'Within the beef sector, many smaller beef producers (48% of all beef enterprises within Towong) have made no productivity gains which impact their ability to maintain real incomes.'

Considering the increased land value and inflation since the TRLUS report, this driver has only increased today. Accordingly, after decades in the current ownership with traditional grazing agricultural use, any

change in ownership will find this land parcel attempting the same traditional use economically marginal to the point it cannot derive an income.

The TRLUS describes the decline in smaller-scale cattle and sheep grazing due to the economic scale across the state and within Towong shire. Therefore, it is again identified that this 12 Ha land on its own will not support a grazing agricultural business in the future. This application has acknowledged this trend and adopts a practical and much more likely successful proposal that encourages alternative agricultural uses, in lieu of these declining traditional practices.

Section 13.2.5 *Price of Rural Land* in the TRLUS notes:

'The attractiveness of the western part of the Shire, particularly adjacent to Lake Hume, as a rural living destination is expressed in the prices paid for land in these areas. The market value of land in these areas no longer is a function of the productive value of the land and in lake side areas such as the south of Bellbridge, properties generally traded in the \$300,000 - \$900,000 range and yielded prices per hectare typically in the order of \$20,000 - \$50,000 (Refer to Volume 2 – Shire Maps).

The data suggests that proximity to Albury-Wodonga and to Lake Hume substantially distorts land values and that there is a strong spatial association between these influences and the higher land prices per hectare.'

This TRLUS report acknowledges the agricultural value of the land is not the driver for this site and the value is inflated by other drivers such as Lake Hume amenity and close proximity to Albury/Wodonga. This application has acknowledged this trend and adopts a practical and much more likely proposal that encourages alternative agricultural uses, in lieu of assuming traditional practices are able to continue.

The TRLUS Part 2: Strategy Paper Executive Summary further justifies this application approach advising: *'It is also apparent however from stated Council Vision that there is also a perceived need for Towong Shire to diversify and broaden its economic base and that it is acknowledged that rural land use planning decisions have the potential to influence the economic well being of the Shire.'*

It is a premise of the Towong Rural Land Use Study (TRLUS) that with careful and consistent planning decision making, changing landuse patterns in themselves do not necessarily pose difficulties for agriculture, particularly if pressure for change is not affecting higher quality lands (i.e are included in the FZ areas) which might otherwise be expected to contribute significantly to agricultural production.

Along with the RAZ objectives (purposes), the TRLUS also identifies the need for the precinct to adopt alternative agricultural uses including **small farms**.

Furthermore, the TRULS Part 2 from Page 2 states:

*In summary, a consideration of relevant issues such as these could then readily lead to the adoption of a planning policy approach that is capable of recognising and fostering rural diversity. This means that apart from single focus on a perceived need to protect rural areas from unplanned loss of productive agricultural land, **planning policy can also aim to factor in the equally valuable economic and social contribution of vibrant agricultural communities. This requires the emphasis of a proactive approach which is more focused on productivity outcomes, rural diversity and support for a wider cross section of the farming sector, including small farms.***

Page 46 of the TRULS Part 2 again identifies the changing drivers (mostly economic drivers) of the land use, particularly when there is a change from older to younger farmers. This again reinforces that this land under consideration very likely needs to change from its current use (animal grazing). It is also likely that it will need off-farm income support to survive. Accordingly, this sites proximity to Albury/Wodonga to provide supporting off-farm income, makes it a prime location for boutique agricultural use and associated dwelling proposal.

‘Clearly however it becomes apparent from this analysis land is not the only input into agricultural production and as land values increase in high amenity areas, technology tends to adapt to reduce the importance of land as input. Examples include advances in transport technology, storage technology and hydroponic production methods.

*Within Towong Shire it is increasingly evident that, grazing at the scale largely undertaken across the Shire has become comparatively less viable than it has been in the past. Response to decreasing viability has, in part, been off set by growth in demand for rural lifestyle options and as previously noted earlier in this report **this is particularly evident in the western part of the Shire where part time agriculture, new boutique’ agricultural activities and the non-agricultural use of rural land increasingly typifies rural land use.** It is also of interest to note that consistent with typical Rural Amenity landscapes, within Towong Shire the following attributes are also evident, namely:*

- Beef production fits well with off-farm employment or on-farm semiretirement and is the predominant agricultural industry.*
- Generally speaking beef farming is a common land use as it has much lower potential for conflict with rural living landuses.*
- Younger farmers will generally undertake off-farm work.*
- Older farmers with high business equity can absorb the declining terms of trade and remain in farming so long as they are healthy and wish to farm.’*

On page 48, the TRLUS Part 2 report again demonstrates the demand of this precinct within 40 minutes of Albury/Wodonga to shift from traditional farming and utilise the land for both multi-functional land use and an associated residence. The agricultural business likely needs to be supplemented by off site employment. The proposal in this application has identified this strong demand of a dwelling with the agricultural use as a part of its justification.

*‘Such areas are rural in appearance **and make a contribution to the value of agricultural production but are typically characterised by a progressive shift away from traditional full time farming and associated production-based dominant land uses to a new multi-functional land use pattern and associated residents, many of whom will commute to nearby urban centres for employment.***

The TRLUS Section 9.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VPP’S AND ECONOMICS, expresses the need for planning decisions to consider the economic realities in decisions, including the shifting in approach to diversification, and focus on productive outcomes, including small farms. This application’s proposal declares that economics of the site are driving the land use change to agricultural diversification and the need for an associated dwelling to support its success.

‘The relationship between economics and planning is frequently overlooked by many planners who tend to be more concerned with physical development and spatial issues. This is especially so in a local government context where it most often tends to be the economic development officer who promotes development opportunities, regional competitiveness, comparative advantage etc. It is contended however that planners should be much better equipped to take a more integrated approach to landuse decision making and that one key factor is the need to develop a clearer understanding of the role that planning actually plays in the economics of development.

The need to be aware of the processes that shape local economies and landuse outcomes is not only relevant in an urban context. The TRLUS supports a contention that far too often across rural Victoria, planners (both state and local) frequently fail to consider that a significant endogenous factor such as the Local Planning Scheme can be strategically drafted and subsequently implemented so as to seek to influence economic performance and to diversify and broaden a Shire’s economic base.

*In response it is noted also that in many respects the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP's) rural zones are actually out of touch with the commonly expressed goal of many rural Shires including Towong Shire who to seek to maintain and expand their respective drivers of productivity and economic performance so as to increase prosperity and living standards of residents and rate payers. As a consequence to adopt a strategic approach to facilitate diversity and comparative advantage the MSS and local planning policy framework need to be carefully crafted so that existing zone purposes aren't compromised while at the same time providing a sound and well reasoned policy basis that not only seeks protect rural areas from unplanned loss of productive agricultural land but also factors in the equally valuable economic and social contribution of vibrant agricultural communities. **This requires the emphasis of the Towong Planning Scheme to shift to a "Get Smart" approach which is more focused on productivity outcomes, rural diversity and support for a wider cross section of the farming sector, including small farms.***

In Section 9.2 A RURAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK, the report highlights the traditional decision making mindset of being the consolidation to large farms and how *'a lot size approach is demonstrably not a successful means of retaining the capacity for sustainable primary production'*. It goes onto conclude that *'Planning Policy should instead be robust enough to capitalise on the advantages of contemporary agriculture while at the same time minimising negative aspects of landscape function decline.'* Fortunately, for this site and the proposal for consideration, the Planning Scheme does have the flexibility for Council to provide permission for the smaller Lots. It is not constrained by the more prescriptive Planning Scheme policies. i.e. The proposal is allowed under the Planning Scheme prescriptive policies, and the application contention is primarily subject to the more subjective policies. The TRLUS report provides strong evidence and justification why the proposal meets these planning policies.

9.2 A RURAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

When one considers the breadth of activity that can be encompassed in the single term —agriculture, it becomes readily apparent that no other landuse gets the same priority in planning schemes across Victoria as does agriculture. Despite this diversity across a wide resource sector planning policy and planning scheme ordinance remains fixated upon traditional broad acre farming. This, despite the changes happening across rural Australia where traditional farming is being transformed in the face of shifting population values and lifestyle aspirations. As noted by Aslin (2006)⁵⁸ this change is leading, in many places, to the emergence of a new kind of countryside, where traditional agricultural production is now part of a complex mix of land uses that reflect new demands on the countryside.

We clearly need to be thinking beyond the notion of simply keeping all rural land in every locality across Victoria in as large holdings as possible. The relatively high level of fragmentation within the Mitta Mitta Valley, the most highly productive precinct within Towong Shire and the high quality agricultural land around Stanley in neighbouring Indigo Shire are both testaments to such a proposition. Other non-agricultural issues are equally relevant across rural and regional areas. In this regard it is relevant to refer to Appendix 5 of the Rural Zones Review Reference Group Report (2003)⁵⁹ where it was noted:

—...when looking at rural zone controls, we clearly need to be thinking beyond the notion of simply keeping all rural land in as large holdings as possible. Other non-agricultural issues are also relevant, including equity, social structure, lifestyle expectations and local demographics, not to mention landscape, biodiversity, environment and amenity issues.

In some respects, it might also be concluded that this situation is also acknowledged in the Future Farms Paper wherein it is noted that although vitally important:

—... agriculture does not purely depend on continuing farm consolidation into fewer, larger farm businesses on great tracts of open land.

As noted by Aslin (2006)⁶¹ the increasing range of interests and demands across rural areas also means that many rural communities are becoming much more diverse.

It follows as a consequence that rural planning policy that continues to simply rely upon the long-standing technique which regards the minimum lot size set out in the planning scheme as being in effect an —as-of-right basis for the subdivision of land and/or erection of a dwelling in rural areas is simply a formula for inequity. This approach unfortunately ignores the fact that there are indeed many different circumstances that can intervene over time to change the way in which land is used. Some of these circumstances can include compressed terms of trade, market fluctuations for agricultural products, the diversification of traditional agricultural, farm successions issues, changes in a land owner's personal circumstances etc and these issues may have absolutely nothing to do with whether there is a dwelling on the land or whether the size of the parcel of land is over or under the expressed default minimum lot size (typically 40ha).

*Furthermore **the minimum lot size approach is demonstrably not a successful means of retaining the capacity for sustainable primary production.** Such an approach can in practice only foster planning by arithmetic rather than by outcomes. As noted by Barr (2003)⁶² the use of subdivision policy, **particularly minimum lot size, as a planning tool —to protect prime agricultural land’ often betrays a —misunderstanding of the dynamic interplay between economic and social forces that are transforming agriculture.**||*

Planning Policy should instead be robust enough to capitalise on the advantages of contemporary agriculture while at the same time minimising negative aspects of landscape function decline.’

In Section 11.4 TRANSITIONAL TOWONG (including this applications precinct), the report again directs towards a flexible use of the land by stating:

*“Transitional Towong” is a part of Towong landscape where the emphasis will be to continue to provide for the use of land for agriculture but where there are more diverse land use aspirations. **Within this context, other uses and development which are compatible with agriculture and the environmental and landscape characteristics of the area can be considered on their merits.**’*

In the concluding Section 12.1 CAPACITY BUILDING, it provides additional justification and examples of RAZ uses and the need for the shire to encourage these diverse uses that can be accommodated on much smaller parcels of land. It also suggests that these opportunities tend to evolve and grow over time rather than launch in an instantaneous manner with a strict agricultural business plan or objective. Ultimately, the opportunities for the shire to diversify its agriculture base will not occur, if the provision of the right land opportunity is not provided first.

It is acknowledged that one major component of the Shires current vision intent is to diversify its economic base, including developing opportunities for value adding and processing of raw agricultural product within the Shire. Analysis of the various themes explored as part of the TRLUS Stage 1 work clearly indicates that to give credibility to this vision it will be essential that new and innovative thinking is fostered together with advancement in science and technology to secure such a future not only for existing industries but new industries seeking value-added opportunities.

*Diversification will also require a need to recognise / identify niche marketing opportunities. To this end it is noted that there is often very little difference between recognising a potential business opportunity and recognising a niche marketing opportunity. **Sometimes people find themselves in a niche market without planning it. For instance a product or service may be difficult to obtain in a particular area, and someone begins to provide the service for themselves. They may soon find that others are asking for that service also (eg custom haying, custom welding, hoof trimming, coolroom facilities, etc).***

New market opportunities could also open as a consequence of imperatives to reduce food miles as a consequence of fuel price rises and lack of availability. In such a scenario more localised food production would see Towong well placed to service the nearby urban area of Albury Wodonga.

*This vision for capacity building within Towong Shire is also set against the context of, on the one hand a declining and ageing population in agriculture and other regional sectors and on the other hand changing consumer lifestyles and expectations that are increasing demand for customised, convenient and niche products. **Such products can include special types of livestock and speciality crops, special use crops (e.g. for industrial or medicinal uses), organic products, custom farming services, ethnic foods, crops traditionally unavailable locally (or at least unavailable in the winter) etc.***

*Improvements in knowledge advancement in science and technology can also have a major influence in transforming traditional agricultural activities, such as dairying, prime lamb and beef to value adding industries. **For instance agriculture diversification towards areas such as agro-forestry, cut flowers, herbs, crops and less traditional types of horticulture could lead to the successful development of niche and specialty market industries.***

In terms of the report's recommendations for the future of the transitional area of Towong Shire (including this precinct) under the RAZ (option 3) was the following:

- The existing RAZ purpose and schedule be amended to reflect preferred land use outcomes. This will include providing for a **mix of small scale agriculture, non agricultural uses**, rural living and environmental outcomes.
- A default minimum subdivision be specified, but provision is made for exceptions as spelt out clearly in an accompanying planning policy.

It is accepted that this is a recommendation for future planning policy and is not the planning scheme policies that this application is currently subject to. However, it outlines the potential for a mix of smaller scale agricultural operations, which this application's proposal seeks to achieve. Fortunately, the recommended policy objectives are not different to what can be achieved under the current planning scheme for this site's circumstances, as detailed in the planning policy framework responses in the submitted planning report. The shire and community preferences together with the economic drivers identified in this report can be achieved by this application.

The TRLUS has identified and provided evidence-based support to this application's proposal. In particular, it establishes that agricultural uses are not just defined by the land size and other diverse uses are possible and more likely to succeed under the economic circumstances.

2.3 SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 35.08 RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE (RAZ)

The site is included within the Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) under the Towong Planning Scheme and lists the RAZ purposes as follows:

RAZ Purpose

1. *To provide for a range of land use and development that does not adversely affect surrounding uses.*
2. *To recognise the need to strengthen and diversify the economic base of the Shire.*
3. *To provide a flexible approach to the consideration of land use and development proposals to offset the adverse effects of economic restructuring and climate change on the agricultural sector.*
4. *To encourage opportunities that contribute to population stability and growth in the Shire.*
5. *To recognise the natural beauty and "pure" image of the Shire.*

Proposal Response & Justification:

- i. The proposed subdivision and development meet these RAZ purposes as explained and discussed below.
- ii. The existing two Lots do not currently provide two practical shaped Lots that allow both parcels to support practical agricultural land use or development. We maintain that these Lots in their current shape or without dwelling permits do not meet the objectives of the RAZ. Considering these Lots can be sold separately "as is", we believe in their current state, it lessens the opportunity to meet the RAZ objectives. The application proposal seeks to realign the common internal boundary to provide two improved shaped Lots that can practically support different agricultural uses and development as intended by the RAZ objectives.
- iii. These smaller sized Lots provide a different range of Lot sizes that cannot easily be found nearby for a greater opportunity for diverse, flexible, economic, or different ranges of agricultural use, which is also sought by the objectives of the zone (i.e. RAZ Purposes 1-4).
- iv. It is clear that the site value of this land is high due to the neighbouring Lake amenity (Lake water views and attractive associated recreational activities) and <40 minute proximity to the large regional centre of Albury and Wodonga. This value is reflected in the Council Rates notice when comparing with other RAZ land across the shire. This value is also identified in the TRLUS.
- v. Furthermore, this existing market value is additionally fuelled by Towong Shires Strategic direction to seek to increase growth in the precinct. This includes the previous attempt of planning scheme amendment C25 to rezone the subject land to RLZ and the TRLUS (as another Strategic Report example). Accordingly, there is speculative longer term investment potential that increases the land value beyond its sole agricultural potential.
- vi. It is anticipated that the existing value is so high (either as a 2x 6Ha Lot arrangement or as one landholding in a 12Ha Lot), that it will very likely make it economically unfeasible for the previous traditional grazing uses to continue as a profitable agricultural business on these particular land parcels (eg: the neighbouring land stock grazing business' cannot justify the capital investment of either or both Lots to expand their operation under the current value).

- vii. For the reasons above, we believe we have established that the high value of this Land then causes the need to consider different future agricultural uses rather than only considering what has been traditionally practiced on these Lots (i.e: traditionally grazing or occasional cropping). These traditional practices typically require a much larger scale that is more economical to form a profitable grazing agricultural business, or off-farm supplemented income. In either the existing or proposed shapes, the land in this application falls well below this traditional land use's economic operational size for investment. Therefore, different agricultural uses need to be considered as the practical and more likely future use. This is the approach and justification that is adopted in this application. This approach is also recognized in the purposes of the Zone: *To provide a **flexible approach to the consideration of land use and development proposals to off-set the adverse effects of economic restructuring and climate change on the agricultural sector.***
- viii. RAZ land allows for a diverse range and flexibility of opportunities for Agricultural uses or uses that support other local agricultural businesses in the region. Many of these do not require large land areas to support their practice. In fact, some of these types of agricultural businesses require a combination of:
- An agricultural business or practice that is supported by appropriate zoning such as RAZ. Some of these businesses would not be permitted or could be problematic uses in other zones such as LDRZ or RLZ. Some RAZ Section 1 uses (No planning Permit required) examples not potentially appropriate in LDRZ/RLZ being:
 - Domestic animal husbandry between 3-5 animals
 - Primary produce sales.
 - Rural store
 - The Lots are more affordable (by virtue of their smaller size, they are more affordable. Eg: these proposed 6Ha Lots market value are estimated at \$300k-\$600k, whereas 10Ha-40Ha Lots in the immediate area would be estimated at \$600k - \$1M+). Therefore, this proposal provides a wider and inclusive opportunity for the potential start up alternative agricultural businesses.
 - Located conveniently near a major centre for agricultural business' associated buying, selling or distribution of services or goods, and the opportunity for "off-farm" supplemented incomes;
 - Provision for an associated dwelling to a). support the agricultural business and/or b). assist with the capital investment burden. To further explain:
 - a) Many of these more boutique agricultural businesses need constant onsite monitoring and/or immediate attendance for their operation (Eg: animal husbandry; 24/7 agricultural service provider).
 - b) Combining the dwelling on-site with the different type of agricultural business use assists by spreading the higher value land across the two purposes for the owner/occupier/Ag business owner or operator. The combined uses substantially reduce the capital investment burden on the agricultural business. In a time of an increasing housing affordability crisis, it is an extremely difficult time to create a new agricultural business and afford a dwelling elsewhere. Sharing the investment cost of a home and a new agricultural business on the same land will assist the success of the smaller agricultural business and provide the necessary flexibility.
 - This is recognised in the purposes of the Zone: *To **encourage opportunities that contribute to population stability and growth in the Shire; and To recognise the need to strengthen and diversify the economic base of the Shire.***

- ix. It has been suggested that it would be more appropriate for the two Lots to be consolidated to one larger Lot. This alternative proposal suggests the larger 12 Ha land area provides a greater opportunity and encouragement for agricultural use. However, we have established above that some smaller RAZ Lots can provide a much greater and more likely opportunity for a different agricultural use, economic stability, and flexibility that the zone purposes seek. For many of these agricultural uses, what can be achieved on the consolidated 12Ha Lot, can also be comfortably achieved on the smaller 6Ha Lot.

- Eg No. 1: A boutique exotic poultry farm of less than 100 birds falls within the Section 1 land use definitions under the RAZ. This can be practically achieved on this site with a dwelling on either a 6Ha or 12Ha Lot.
- Eg No. 2: Specialist agriculture support business such as a farm machinery mechanic or restorer that requires a machine testing field can comfortably operate on 6Ha Lot.
- Eg No. 3: A specialist equine training (eg: dressage or show jumping) facility and stables falls within the Section 1 land use definitions under the RAZ and can comfortably operate on 6Ha.
- Eg No. 4: A Rural Store with a shed under 100m² that is associated with agriculture falls within the Section 1 land use definitions under the RAZ and can comfortably operate on a 6Ha Lot.

Maintaining the existing 2 Lots in a different configuration will **increase the economic agricultural opportunity that off-sets the adverse effects of economic restructuring** of this particular area. Conversely, we argue that consolidation of the Lots could potentially lessen these desired objective's (potentially by half).

- x. Intensive farming opportunities are mostly ruled out due to proximity to other neighbouring residences (See the application's Site and Context Plan in Appendix 5) and environmental sensitivities with the catchment draining to neighbouring Lake Hume. Accordingly, any justification for a larger Lot (i.e. 12Ha) to support intensive agricultural use is ruled out for this site, as well as nearby neighbouring sites.
- xi. A new agricultural use sensitive to neighbouring residences and Lake Hume's catchment appears the most suitable and practical approach to this site. The application proposal provides an onsite dwelling, which in-turn encourages these more sensitive agricultural uses. i.e. If the resident and agricultural business operator is living next to their agricultural business, it is much more likely that it will be relatively residential sensitive and have less impact on other neighbouring residences and the Lake catchment.
- xii. The proposed dwellings and sheds are setback well away from the roads and fit within the natural topography requiring minimal or modest site cuts or earthworks. They are proposed to be a high-quality build and constructed in neutral colours and materials in keeping with other residences and rural character of the area. All existing native trees are proposed to be maintained. We believe the proposal is in accordance with the RAZ purpose to **recognise the natural beauty and "pure" image of the Shire** and provides for a range of land use and development **that does not adversely affect surrounding uses**.

2.4 35.08 RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE (RAZ)

The following text in **black** is included in our original application report. We provide additional justification in **blue**.

The site is included within the Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) under the Towong Planning Scheme and lists the RAZ purposes as follows:

Purpose

- *To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework. The Application is in accordance with the State Planning Policy and Framework.*
- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture. Refer to the justification in section 2.1 and 2.2 above. In summary, the reconfiguration of the two existing Lots' shape and provision for dwellings and shed can provide different and improved uses of land for agriculture that are considered suitable and appropriate purposes in the RAZ and for this precinct.*
- *To provide for other uses and development, in appropriate locations, which are compatible with agriculture and the environmental and landscape characteristics of the area. Refer to the justification in section 2.1 and 2.2 above. This application has identified that there is a need to consider **other agricultural uses** for this land rather than what has been traditionally used (i.e. grazing and occasional cropping) as a result of the increased value of the land.*

The proposal's location in terms of the precinct is appropriate due to its proximity to Albury Wodonga, the Lake catchment sensitivities, and other neighbouring residencies.

The development locations in terms of the site are positioned such to comply with all setback requirements and fit into the landscape with minimal site impacts (i.e. modest site earthworks and no native vegetation losses).

Section 2.2 of this report provides justification and examples of agricultural-aligned uses that are compatible with the immediate area. The proposed dwellings provide additional encouragement for these more compatible uses that are sensitive to the immediate area and existing neighbouring residents. Therefore, the agricultural uses that are available to the proposed Lots are compatible with the environment and landscape characteristics.

To ensure that use and development does not adversely affect surrounding land uses. This application has identified that this precinct has inherited agricultural limitations due to the Lake, existing established neighbouring residents, and the increased value over time. These limitations already exist and the proposal seeks to fit within these existing site limitations, but does not adversely affect them.

The future use of this land needs to consider **other agricultural uses** for this land rather than what has been traditionally used (i.e. grazing and occasional cropping) as a result of the increased value of the land.

This precinct is not suitable for intensive agricultural uses and limits the site to agricultural uses sensitive to the Lake catchment and existing neighbouring residencies. Therefore, the proposed additional residencies do not further limit the agricultural uses of this land or neighbouring land.

In fact, the proposal likely encourages them. The proposed dwellings provide additional encouragement for these more compatible agricultural uses that are sensitive to the immediate area and existing residents.

- *To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.* Similarly to the two purposes responses listed above, Section 2.2 of this report provides justification and examples of agricultural-aligned uses that are compatible for these proposed Lots and development, and

compatible with the immediate area. These example uses are Section 1 uses (do not require a planning permit). We have not listed Section 2 uses (planning permit application required), however, some other limited uses could be appropriate with an approved planning application (eg: Animal production (other than Cattle feedlot, Grazing animal production and Poultry farm)).

- *To protect and enhance natural resources and the biodiversity of the area.* Native vegetation removal is avoided. The subdivision boundaries, dwelling and access locations/alignments have been deliberately selected to avoid existing vegetation.
- To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.

The proposal has strongly considered and adopts an approach that provides comprehensive and sustainable land management and practices that are suitable for the site. In fact, the proposals justification is strongly based on these drivers. This also includes the infrastructure required to successfully support such practices. This is justification is established by:

- Considering the site's agricultural use options are already limited by the proximity of other neighbouring residencies and Lake sensitivities, which prevents intensive farming options on this site or nearby as they would not be appropriate land management practices.
- The small total land area (12Ha) and high site value likely rule out the traditional agricultural use (i.e. grazing). This constraint even applies as an addition to another nearby grazing operation. Therefore, it requires consideration of alternative agricultural uses that are encouraged by the RAZ objectives and to ensure that sustainable agricultural businesses can be achieved.
- The suggested agricultural uses available for the site can be equally achieved on 6Ha as they can be achieved on 12Ha.
- The proposals suggested alternative agricultural uses are sensitive to the local environmental constraints of the site, therefore are considered to be a practical adoption of the comprehensive and sustainable land management practices for this site.
- The alternative agricultural uses available will likely need the support of onsite occupancy for economic, security, and operational functions and require an associated dwelling & shed (infrastructure provision). The dwelling approvals will encourage these types of agricultural business creation.
- The proposal can comfortably support on-site wastewater treatment for the dwellings.
- The relatively close proximity of the site and easy access to Albury/Wodonga, which provides the rural infrastructure support that is required for smaller land size agricultural businesses.

Pursuant to Clause 35.06-1, a planning permit is required for the use of land for a dwelling. The use of land for a dwelling must meet the requirements of Clause 35.06-2.

- *The proposed dwellings will have access via an all-weather road.* Access is via Drummond Road, which is all weather gravel access public road, which connects to the adjacent sealed Murray River Road (DTP managed).
- *An appropriate septic system will be installed to treat all wastewater in accordance with the recommendations of the Land Capability Assessment submitted with this planning application.* A LCA report has been prepared by an experienced consultant and included with the original application. It found on-site waste water treatment can be comfortably achieved on each of the proposed Lots for the dwellings proposed.

- The dwellings will include water tanks for both firefighting and potable water supply. Water Tanks can be provided comfortably on site for both purposes and can be made a condition of a planning permit.
- The dwellings will be connected to a reticulated electricity supply. Overhead power supply traverses the site and reticulated power can be provided to each dwelling.
- There are no existing or proposed wind energy facilities located within one kilometre of the subject site. No wind farm facilities are nearby.

The following text in **black** is included in our original application report. We provide additional justification in **blue**.

Decision Guidelines	Response
General ▪ The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework. ▪ Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land. ▪ The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent. ▪ How the use or development relates to sustainable land management. ▪ Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.	The proposal has been designed in accordance with the PPF. A detailed LCA (Appendix 3) has been prepared for the subject site that confirms the land can treat and contain all generated wastewater from the proposed dwelling. The proposed dwellings are compatible with surrounding land uses. The area contains a mix of small agricultural lots and nearby Lake Hume. Most surrounding privately owned land contain a single dwelling on each lot for rural residential purposes. The subject is able to contain some low levels of stock for animal grazing, or alternative agricultural uses as suggested in Section 2.2. The proposal will ensure the land, and native vegetation is maintained. The proposal is consistent with the pattern of surrounding land use. The proposed dwellings will allow for the opportunity for several possible niche agricultural land uses listed in the proposal section above, dependent on future landowner preferences.
Agricultural issues ▪ Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production ▪ The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. ▪ The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use. ▪ The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure. ▪ Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site.	The proposed subdivision, use and development will not likely be directly associated with the previous agricultural land uses that have been under the same operation and ownership for decades. The subject sites are now considered low quality agricultural land, but are of high site value, where alternative agricultural uses will be more appropriate onsite as explained in Section 2.2. The proposed dwellings will not remove any meaningful amount of land from agriculture and will open up different agriculture activity opportunities for the site such as listed in this application. This precinct's existing limitations result in it being not suitable for intensive agricultural uses and limits the site to agricultural

uses that are sensitive to the Lake catchment and existing neighbouring residencies. Accordingly, the proposed additional dwellings do not further limit the agricultural uses of this land or the neighbouring land considering the immediate area is already limited by the Lake sensitivities and other residences.

The proposed dwellings provide additional encouragement for these more compatible agricultural uses that remain sensitive to the immediate area, Lake, and other existing residents. Accordingly, the Lot boundary realignment and proposed dwellings enhances the agricultural production of this land considering the existing economic drivers and the environmental constraints for the site, which are established in Section 2.2.

The agricultural land quality has been suitable for grazing and occasional cropping. This is because the Land was obtained at a much lower cost decades ago at which time the grazing agricultural business was economically sustainable on this parcel. However, the continual increase in land value of this precinct and only very modest growth in grazing business profitability results in the need to consider alternative future agricultural uses for the land, which are encouraged in the RAZ objectives. Many of these alternative uses (Section 1 uses under the RAZ) can be achieved with smaller land parcels and require an associated dwelling to make them practically operable and profitable. In addition, these uses can operate equally well on 6Ha as they can on 12Ha as justified and established in Section 2.2. Therefore, the proposed boundary realignment to create 6Ha Lots with dwellings has the capacity to accommodate agricultural uses identified and encouraged by the RAZ objectives.

The proposed development is sufficiently setback from all neighbouring lot boundaries to avoid any conflict with existing or proposed agricultural uses that are available. Most surrounding land has already been developed with associated residential uses and therefore are not suitable for future intensive agricultural use opportunities.

There is one small existing dam on proposed Lot 2 and several locations to construct another dam with a reasonable supply catchment on Lot 1. Accordingly, agricultural water supply can be provided on both Lots.

	The RAZ was adopted across the lower quality agricultural land, which is partly due to lower-quality soils. Considering that many of the appropriated alternative agricultural uses suggested in this application do not rely on soil quality for successful operation, the proposal is not reliant on soil quality. Close proximity of the site to the major centre of Albury/Wodonga and its agricultural supporting services and products provides convenient access to this rural based infrastructure. This proximity not only has resulted in increased site value causing a change to future agricultural uses of this site but also adds significant support to the smaller land size agricultural uses that require this convenient access to Albury/Wodonga. Therefore, the site location makes it very suitable for the application's proposal and provides strong justification for the proposed smaller land parcel agricultural use with an associated dwelling. An integrated land management plan has not been prepared for the proposal. Any specific land management items deemed necessary to the proposed dwellings and landscape and/or the future agricultural use, including landscaping and/or revegetation requirements, can be conditioned on any potential planning permit.
Accommodation issues - Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land. - Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation - Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. - The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture.	No further fragmentation of agricultural land will result from the proposal considering this land is already fragmented from continuous adjoining ownership. The proposal is also for a resubdivision of two existing lots (i.e. Boundary realignment) on land that is not currently used for any intensive agricultural land use. The proposed dwelling will not be adversely affected by any neighbouring agricultural uses. No intensive uses are located near the subject site as detailed in Section 3 above. Other neighbouring residencies and Lake sensitives already limit the types of agricultural use of this land. Therefore, aligning future smaller land size agricultural uses with an associated dwelling will not cause or be adversely affected by agricultural uses. The proposal provides is the most practical and most likely opportunity to provide a successful agricultural use without adverse affects to neighbouring properties (either as residents or agricultural uses).

	The proposed dwelling is sited to ensure large setbacks to neighbouring allotments. The dwelling will have a negligible effect on the viability of any adjoining agricultural uses. The surrounding area has already been developed for rural residential land uses on relatively small allotments. The proposal will not create any additional allotments, and this will not lead to proliferation or concentration of the existing land use pattern. This pattern of land use is considered established in this area along Murray River Road as shown on the Site and Context plan and therefore is not a concentration. The relatively small lot sizes lend themselves for this land use, in addition to the relatively poor soil conditions, ensuring that land consolidation cannot provide for any intensive agricultural uses.
Environmental issues ▪ The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality. ▪ The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds. ▪ The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area. ▪ The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	The quality of the soil and water on the subject site will remain unchanged from the proposed development. The submitted LCA (Appendix 3) demonstrates compliance can be achieved with EPA guidelines. There will be no destruction of vegetation or habitat as a result of the proposal, nor is any proposed to be removed. The proposed effluent disposal field is in accordance with the recommendation of the submitted LCA. The area is located a sufficient distance from the designated creek to the northwest and is setback from all established native vegetation and habitat.
▪ Design and siting issues ▪ The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts. ▪ The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance. ▪ The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications and sewerage facilities. ▪ Whether the use or development will require traffic management measures. ▪ The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact	The site of the proposed dwelling will be setback approximately 200m from the neighbouring property to the west and 180m from the nearest neighbouring boundary to the east. The proposed dwelling is also sited 100m from the southern boundary, ensuring it will not impede the operation of any neighbouring agricultural uses. In any case, only sparse animal grazing exists on neighbouring properties. The design of the proposed dwellings included muted colours and natural materials that lend themselves to the rural aesthetic of the area. Their location is considered appropriate given the generous setbacks to waterways, the main road, Lake Hume and neighbouring lot boundaries. The proposed dwellings respects the rural character of the area and will not adversely impact on any views or vistas.

from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990.	The proposed dwellings will be located below any ridgeline and setback from all neighbouring boundaries ensuring no loss of amenity. The nearby quarry to the south of the subject sites will not be adversely impacted by the proposed subdivision or dwellings. The quarry is small in its operational capacity, is used infrequently and is not subject to blasting or permanent plant creating noise and dust. The quarry is primarily used for road base on local roads. The proposal is considered appropriately located given the parameters of the quarry.
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3. PROPOSED CONDITION TO PROMOTE AGRICULTURAL USE

There has been questions raised about the probability of Agricultural use on the proposed smaller Lots & associated dwelling development, and if the neighbouring agricultural uses or practices could cause complaints or disputes from the proposal's future residents.

It has been established that the precinct is already limited to uses that are sensitive to the existing residencies and the lake environment. It is also established that there is a need for smaller RAZ Lots to create the diversity that the RAZ seeks.

The application has adopted a proposal that provides and suggests small scale agricultural opportunities, together with substantial setbacks for dwellings to provide separation from other neighbouring properties' activities that may affect the amenity.

To further support, promote and enforce the intention of the agricultural uses for this application's proposed Lots, the applicant is willing to volunteer a planning permit condition to ensure future agricultural use of the proposed allotments and ensure future owners or potential purchasers are fully aware that agricultural uses and practices operate on the surrounding land.

The proposed volunteered condition is to create a Section 173 Agreement (S173A) and/or Memorandum of Common Provisions (MCP) to adopt the following conditions on the Title:

Prior to the Statement of Compliance of the plan of subdivision, the owner must enter into an agreement with the Responsible Authority made pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the Act) for the following conditions.

1. *The Lot owner and/or occupier of this Lot acknowledges that the land is within and adjoins land under the Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) and this area will be subject to agricultural uses and practices permitted under the Rural Activity Zone. These agricultural uses and activities may affect the amenity of the area from time to time such as noise, dust, odours, or other impacts. The Lot owner and/or occupier acknowledge Council may not act on a complaint from the Lot owner and/or occupier for any neighbouring permitted agricultural use or activity.*
2. *A Rural Activity Zone permitted agricultural use must be undertaken on the Lot within 12 months of the occupancy of the associated dwelling unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Responsible Authority. A Rural Activity Zone permitted agricultural use must continue while the dwelling is occupied unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Responsible Authority. A planning permit must be obtained from the Responsible Authority for any land use under Section 2 to Clause 35.08-1 Rural Activity Zone in the Towong Planning Scheme, prior to the land use commencing on the land.*

3.

4. CONCLUSION

The proposed two lot resubdivision and the use and development of the land for a dwelling and shed on each allotment at 257 Drummond Road, Talgarno is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies as stated in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework of the Towong Planning Scheme.

It has been established that each proposed Lot with a dwelling and shed can support agricultural uses for the following reasons:

- The site's agricultural use options are already limited by the proximity of other neighbouring residencies and Lake sensitivities, which prevents intensive farming options on this site or nearby as they would not be appropriate land management practices in this precinct. Therefore, the proposed residencies do not further limit the land.
- The small total land area (12Ha) and high site value likely rule out the traditional agricultural use (i.e. grazing). Therefore this land requires consideration of alternative or diversification from traditional agricultural uses that are encouraged by the RAZ objectives and to ensure that sustainable agricultural businesses can be achieved. This same assessment is also identified in the TRLUS report.
- There are many agricultural uses that can be supported on the smaller Lots. The TRLUS has identified the need for these uses to evolve and be supported by off-farm supplement income. The proximity of Albury/Wodonga provides this practical support for both off-farm income and the rural infrastructure support that is required for smaller land size agricultural business
- The alternative agricultural uses available will most likely need the support of onsite occupancy for economic, security, and operational functions and require an associated dwelling & shed. The dwelling approvals will encourage these alternative types of agricultural businesses' creation.
- Many of the agricultural uses available for the small land sizes can be equally achieved on 6Ha as they can be achieved on 12Ha. In fact, the smaller Lots with a dwelling can create greater efficiency for these alternative agricultural businesses.
- The TRLUS has identified and provided evidence-based support to this application's proposal. In particular, it establishes that agricultural uses are not just defined by the land size and other diverse uses are possible and more likely to succeed under the economic circumstances.
- The intention of agricultural use of these Lots can be encouraged, maintained and enforced through a Section 173 Agreement.

Overall, the proposal represents the most appropriate use and development of the land given its size, proximity to Lake Hume and existing dwellings, and inhibited agricultural potential.

Furthermore, the application proposal clearly meets Council's strategic planning scheme review intentions. Fortunately, it can be achieved under the current planning scheme.

The proposal is commended to Council, and, on behalf of our client, we look forward to a positive outcome from the application.

SUBMISSION TO TOWONG SHIRE COUNCIL



TOWONG SHIRE PLANNING APPLICATION : PA 250002

Two lot resubdivision and use and development of the land for a dwelling on each allotment.

257 DRUMMOND ROAD, TALGARNO 3691 - LOT 1 TP318077 & LOT 1 TP681750

**ADDITIONAL APPLICATION JUSTIFICATION FOR SUBDIVISION &
DEVELOPMENT IN THE RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE**

DESCRIPTION	
Address	257 Drummond Road, Talgarno
Lot Description:	Lot 1 TP318077
	Lot 1 TP681750
Project Number	501251
Project Manager	Matthew Elliot
Reviewed by	
Revision	B
Document Status	Final for submission to Council
Date	APRIL 2025

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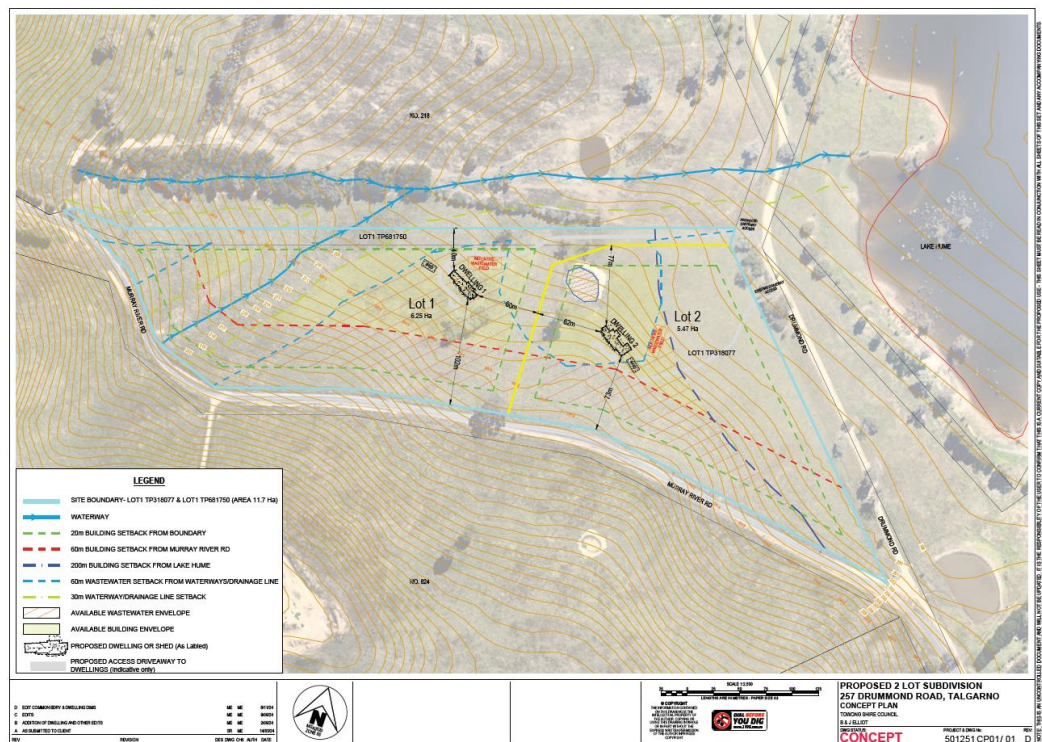
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1. INTRODUCTION

A planning permit application has been submitted to Towong Shire and is listed as PA250002. It is for a two lot resubdivision of the existing two allotments at 257 Drummond Road, Talgaro and for the use and development of each proposed allotment for a dwelling and construction of a shed.

The original application was submitted in November 2024 and should be referred to for all other application detail. Council provided an RFI dated 22 January 2025 requesting additional fees and shed plans and elevations. This RFI response was provided on the 23 January 2025. This application has been referred to various Authorities. DTP has consented with conditions and we are awaiting other RA responses at the time of preparing this additional response. The application has been advertised by Towong Shire and no objections were received.

The Towong Shire planning officer has raised questions about the justification of the application proposal against the Rural Activity Zone provisions and policy. The submitted application provides this justification at a reasonable level, however, to assist further, **this document provides additional detailed justification and discussion on the merits of the Agricultural use of the land for this application's proposal.**



2. RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE (RAZ) APPLICATION JUSTIFICATION

2.1 TOWONG PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW

The following text in **purple** are extracts from the Towong Shire Council Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda - 28 August 2024.

Towong Shire Council's meeting of the 28 August 2024 considered the Towong Planning Scheme Review. This agenda item considered the proposed changes to the Planning Scheme and the report's recommendations were carried at the council meeting.

Page 58: *'The primary purpose of the RAZ zone is to provide for the use of land for agriculture, with the second purpose being to provide for other uses and development, in appropriate locations, which are compatible with agriculture and the environmental and landscape characteristics of the area.'*

'The intention of its (RAZ) application to such large areas of the municipality via Amendment C014 was 'to allow for diversification of development'. The application of the zone on such a large scale has arguably diminished its capacity to allow for diversification, rather it now operates largely similar to the Farming Zone and precludes most of the flexibility that was originally intended.'

The Report's Recommendations included (Page:53):

- *'Revise the Clause 14 local agricultural policies to provide greater guidance for discretion on Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) land by precinct including circumstances where diversification of uses and additional dwellings or subdivision will be supported.'*
- *'Introduce three separate RAZ schedules for the three different precincts, with the purpose of each to reflect the objectives of each.'*
- *RAZ3 to be applied to the Lake Hume Precinct with a focus on agriculture and lifestyle opportunities to support Albury – Wodonga.'*

While these proposed planning scheme changes have yet to be formally adopted into the planning scheme and they are subject to due process, it does provide clear guidance to Council's justification and intention of RAZ land and particularly within this application's precinct. Ultimately, it demonstrates the application's proposal clearly aligns with the Council's intentions.

Fortunately, for this particular site's circumstances, the Planning Scheme does have the flexibility for Council to provide permission for the smaller Lots and associated development that is sought to be approved. It is not constrained by the current Planning Scheme policies. i.e. The proposal is allowed under the current Planning Scheme policies, and the application contention is primarily subject to the more subjective policies.

Accordingly, Council does have the ability in this case to achieve its strategic intentions without the above planning scheme amendments.

2.2 RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE (RAZ) STRATEGIC BACKGROUND

The following text in **green** are extracts from the Towong Rural Landuse Study (TRLUS) reports Part 1 and 2.

The Towong Shire Council planning scheme amendment C14 was gazetted in 2007, which split the old rural zoning into Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) and Farm Zone (FZ).

The **Towong Rural Landuse Study (TRLUS)** by EDM Group was undertaken in 2009 and documented the history of RAZ and Farm Zone land selection.

'The Towong Shire Rural Land Use Study has been undertaken to provide an analysis of land use planning issues in the rural areas of the Shire and to articulate a direction and vision for the future that includes recommendations for changes content and operation of the Towong Planning Scheme with respect to rural land use planning.'

Page 10 in Part 1 of TRLUS describes the logic in more detail and refers to the original 1985 agricultural quality mapping that the zonings are based on.

The planning scheme change effectively determined the split of agricultural land on the basis of:

1. *The Farming Zone (FZ) to higher quality agricultural lands within the Shire; and*
2. *The Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) to lower quality agricultural lands within the Shire.*

The application of the FZ and RAZ was based on the above mentioned 1:50,000 1985 Agricultural Quality mapping that was undertaken by the then Department of Agriculture. As noted within the C14 Panel Report the following protocol was observed in respect of the application of the Agricultural mapping to land holdings that were within different areas of Agricultural Quality.

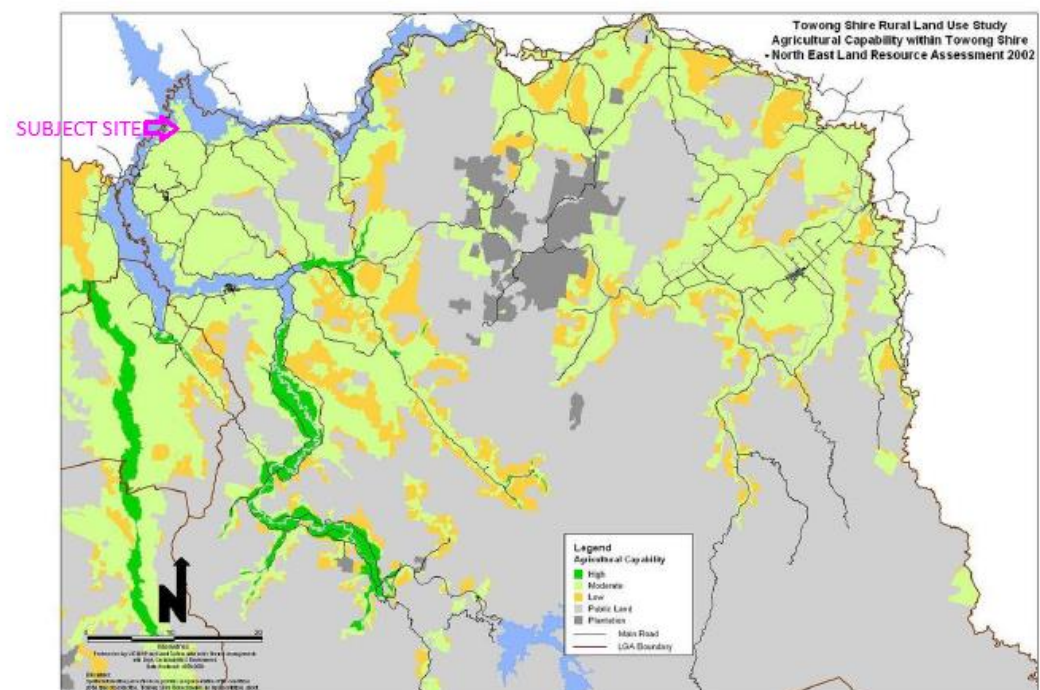
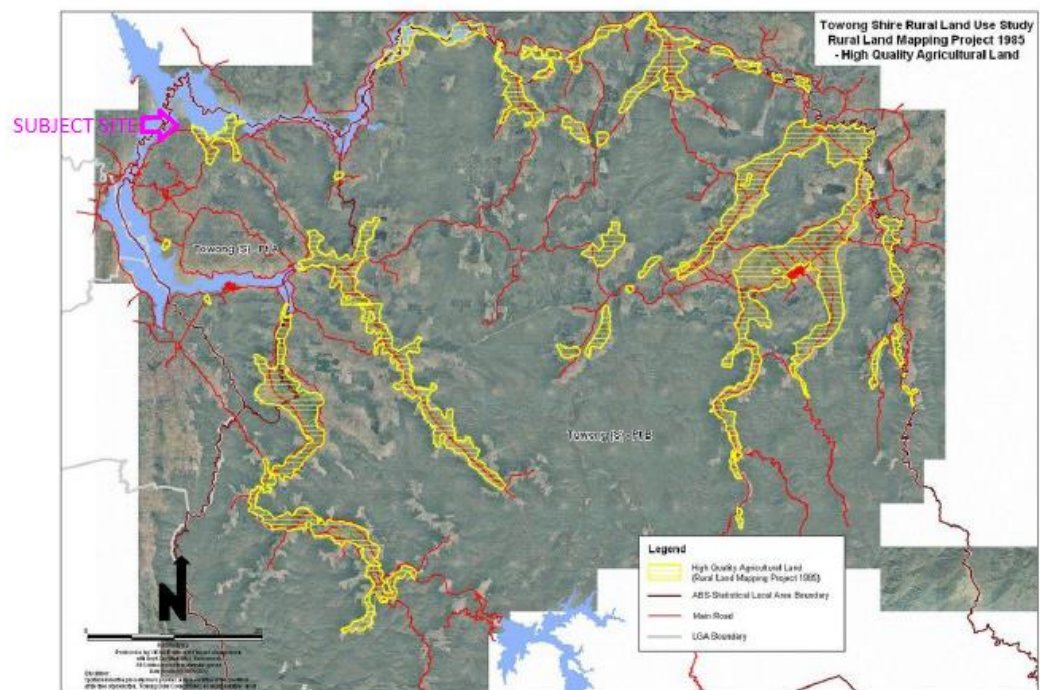
...if any portion of an Individual land parcel was shown to have prime agricultural land, the decision as to whether or not the title would be included in the Farming Zone would depend upon the actual area of the prime agricultural land identified upon a parcel, the slope of the land and the percentage of the land's area included in this prime agricultural classification.

For the purpose of determining the zones it is recommended that the percentage figure be 20% or above and that the nominated land area be 5 Hectares and above. (ie if the actual area was less than 5 hectares and did not constitute more than 20% of an allotment the whole of the allotment would be included in the Rural Activity Zone.⁶

*In developing and applying this protocol it was noted by the Panel that the Council had taken a **very "precautionary approach to protecting higher quality agricultural land through the application of the FZ"**.⁷*

It was the Panel's view that the application and respective provisions of the two zones achieve the kind of planning regime and outcome that were anticipated in the Rural Mapping Guide.

*Nevertheless, the Panel was also firmly of the view that the **successful implementation of the RAZ required a strong policy framework within which the non-farming opportunities afforded under the zone could be managed.***



This background report and high level mapping established that the subject site was not considered highly productive agricultural land and was of moderate capability.

The TRLUS report also states that the Panel when assessing the C14 amendment also considered the availability and likelihood of alternative agricultural uses that are beyond farming practices and that can be managed through the appropriate and strong controls.

The following sections of this justification report discuss and justify how these strong RAZ controls (purposes) are not only met but are the main drivers behind the application's proposal.

The Panel also stated a *'very "precautionary approach to protecting higher quality agricultural land through the application of the FZ"'*. Accordingly, a conservative approach to protecting agricultural land has already been undertaken by Council through the zoning process. Considering the subject site is not FZ and is in the more flexible RAZ controls, any assessment of the proposal needs to understand this very different land status, use opportunities, and agricultural value. i.e. Assessing this application proposal on the basis that it may reduce traditional grazing opportunities, does not rule out the merits of the application. Other diverse agricultural uses are actually encouraged. As justified later in this report, other agricultural uses that are more practical and likely for success for the existing smaller parcel/s are more appropriate.

Page 14 in part 1 of TRLUS describes the community consultation responses about the pressures on traditional agricultural business due to the changing economic circumstances. These circumstances have substantially increased in more recent years with significant inflation having a compounding impact on these same agricultural business.

'There are constant pressures on farm enterprises to adjust to changing economic and climatic circumstances. The need for increased operational scale coupled with the need to provide for farm succession often creates the need to restructure farm holdings. Respondents strongly favoured having "flexibility" within the planning system to enable appropriate responses to changing social, economic and environmental demands.'

The general community preference was to have flexibility in the planning scheme that was performance-based.

From TRLUS Part 1 page 14:

'A consistent theme was the inadequacy of the current uniform and prescriptive minimum subdivision size. A "one size fits all" approach (retaining the current 40 hectare dwelling / subdivision default minimum size) was overwhelmingly not supported by submitters.

Many felt that subdivision decision making should be more performance based enabling assessment on a "case by case" basis whereby the needs of the land owner could be considered together with attributes such as land use and site characteristics to inform decisions about subdivision appropriateness.'

The theme of these community desires for this flexibility has been included into the RAZ objectives and purposes. It is also identified that land size not being the only measure of the agricultural performance.

In section **11.4 FARM BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS**, the TRLUS describes in Page 66 the economic drivers that are causing change from grazing for smaller farming land sizes. Noting a smaller farm being categorised by an Estimated Value of Agricultural Operations" (EVAO) of less than \$200k pa, which would be a farm of a substantially larger size than this subject site's 12 Ha total land size that is under consideration.

'Within the beef sector, many smaller beef producers (48% of all beef enterprises within Towong) have made no productivity gains which impact their ability to maintain real incomes.'

Considering the increased land value and inflation since the TRLUS report, this driver has only increased today. Accordingly, after decades in the current ownership with traditional grazing agricultural use, any

change in ownership will find this land parcel attempting the same traditional use economically marginal to the point it cannot derive an income.

The TRLUS describes the decline in smaller-scale cattle and sheep grazing due to the economic scale across the state and within Towong shire. Therefore, it is again identified that this 12 Ha land on its own will not support a grazing agricultural business in the future. This application has acknowledged this trend and adopts a practical and much more likely successful proposal that encourages alternative agricultural uses, in lieu of these declining traditional practices.

Section **13.2.5 Price of Rural Land** in the TRLUS notes:

'The attractiveness of the western part of the Shire, particularly adjacent to Lake Hume, as a rural living destination is expressed in the prices paid for land in these areas. The market value of land in these areas no longer is a function of the productive value of the land and in lake side areas such as the south of Bellbridge, properties generally traded in the \$300,000 - \$900,000 range and yielded prices per hectare typically in the order of \$20,000 - \$50,000 (Refer to Volume 2 – Shire Maps).

The data suggests that proximity to Albury-Wodonga and to Lake Hume substantially distorts land values and that there is a strong spatial association between these influences and the higher land prices per hectare.'

This TRLUS report acknowledges the agricultural value of the land is not the driver for this site and the value is inflated by other drivers such as Lake Hume amenity and close proximity to Albury/Wodonga. This application has acknowledged this trend and adopts a practical and much more likely proposal that encourages alternative agricultural uses, in lieu of assuming traditional practices are able to continue.

The TRLUS Part 2: Strategy Paper Executive Summary further justifies this application approach advising: *'It is also apparent however from stated Council Vision that there is also a perceived need for Towong Shire to diversify and broaden its economic base and that it is acknowledged that rural land use planning decisions have the potential to influence the economic well being of the Shire.'*

It is a premise of the Towong Rural Land Use Study (TRLUS) that with careful and consistent planning decision making, changing landuse patterns in themselves do not necessarily pose difficulties for agriculture, particularly if pressure for change is not affecting higher quality lands (i.e are included in the FZ areas) which might otherwise be expected to contribute significantly to agricultural production.

Along with the RAZ objectives (purposes), the TRLUS also identifies the need for the precinct to adopt alternative agricultural uses including **small farms**.

Furthermore, the TRULS Part 2 from Page 2 states:

*In summary, a consideration of relevant issues such as these could then readily lead to the adoption of a planning policy approach that is capable of recognising and fostering rural diversity. This means that apart from single focus on a perceived need to protect rural areas from unplanned loss of productive agricultural land, **planning policy can also aim to factor in the equally valuable economic and social contribution of vibrant agricultural communities. This requires the emphasis of a proactive approach which is more focused on productivity outcomes, rural diversity and support for a wider cross section of the farming sector, including small farms.***

Page 46 of the TRULS Part 2 again identifies the changing drivers (mostly economic drivers) of the land use, particularly when there is a change from older to younger farmers. This again reinforces that this land under consideration very likely needs to change from its current use (animal grazing). It is also likely that it will need off-farm income support to survive. Accordingly, this sites proximity to Albury/Wodonga to provide supporting off-farm income, makes it a prime location for boutique agricultural use and associated dwelling proposal.

‘Clearly however it becomes apparent from this analysis land is not the only input into agricultural production and as land values increase in high amenity areas, technology tends to adapt to reduce the importance of land as input. Examples include advances in transport technology, storage technology and hydroponic production methods.

*Within Towong Shire it is increasingly evident that, grazing at the scale largely undertaken across the Shire has become comparatively less viable than it has been in the past. Response to decreasing viability has, in part, been off set by growth in demand for rural lifestyle options and as previously noted earlier in this report **this is particularly evident in the western part of the Shire where part time agriculture, new boutique’ agricultural activities and the non-agricultural use of rural land increasingly typifies rural land use.** It is also of interest to note that consistent with typical Rural Amenity landscapes, within Towong Shire the following attributes are also evident, namely:*

- Beef production fits well with off-farm employment or on-farm semiretirement and is the predominant agricultural industry.*
- Generally speaking beef farming is a common land use as it has much lower potential for conflict with rural living landuses.*
- Younger farmers will generally undertake off-farm work.*
- Older farmers with high business equity can absorb the declining terms of trade and remain in farming so long as they are healthy and wish to farm.’*

On page 48, the TRLUS Part 2 report again demonstrates the demand of this precinct within 40 minutes of Albury/Wodonga to shift from traditional farming and utilise the land for both multi-functional land use and an associated residence. The agricultural business likely needs to be supplemented by off site employment. The proposal in this application has identified this strong demand of a dwelling with the agricultural use as a part of its justification.

*‘Such areas are rural in appearance **and make a contribution to the value of agricultural production but are typically characterised by a progressive shift away from traditional full time farming and associated production-based dominant land uses to a new multi-functional land use pattern and associated residents, many of whom will commute to nearby urban centres for employment.***

The TRLUS Section 9.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VPP’S AND ECONOMICS, expresses the need for planning decisions to consider the economic realities in decisions, including the shifting in approach to diversification, and focus on productive outcomes, including small farms. This application’s proposal declares that economics of the site are driving the land use change to agricultural diversification and the need for an associated dwelling to support its success.

‘The relationship between economics and planning is frequently overlooked by many planners who tend to be more concerned with physical development and spatial issues. This is especially so in a local government context where it most often tends to be the economic development officer who promotes development opportunities, regional competitiveness, comparative advantage etc. It is contended however that planners should be much better equipped to take a more integrated approach to landuse decision making and that one key factor is the need to develop a clearer understanding of the role that planning actually plays in the economics of development.

The need to be aware of the processes that shape local economies and landuse outcomes is not only relevant in an urban context. The TRLUS supports a contention that far too often across rural Victoria, planners (both state and local) frequently fail to consider that a significant endogenous factor such as the Local Planning Scheme can be strategically drafted and subsequently implemented so as to seek to influence economic performance and to diversify and broaden a Shire’s economic base.

*In response it is noted also that in many respects the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP's) rural zones are actually out of touch with the commonly expressed goal of many rural Shires including Towong Shire who to seek to maintain and expand their respective drivers of productivity and economic performance so as to increase prosperity and living standards of residents and rate payers. As a consequence to adopt a strategic approach to facilitate diversity and comparative advantage the MSS and local planning policy framework need to be carefully crafted so that existing zone purposes aren't compromised while at the same time providing a sound and well reasoned policy basis that not only seeks protect rural areas from unplanned loss of productive agricultural land but also factors in the equally valuable economic and social contribution of vibrant agricultural communities. **This requires the emphasis of the Towong Planning Scheme to shift to a "Get Smart" approach which is more focused on productivity outcomes, rural diversity and support for a wider cross section of the farming sector, including small farms.***

In Section 9.2 A RURAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK, the report highlights the traditional decision making mindset of being the consolidation to large farms and how *'a lot size approach is demonstrably not a successful means of retaining the capacity for sustainable primary production'*. It goes onto conclude that *'Planning Policy should instead be robust enough to capitalise on the advantages of contemporary agriculture while at the same time minimising negative aspects of landscape function decline.'* Fortunately, for this site and the proposal for consideration, the Planning Scheme does have the flexibility for Council to provide permission for the smaller Lots. It is not constrained by the more prescriptive Planning Scheme policies. i.e. The proposal is allowed under the Planning Scheme prescriptive policies, and the application contention is primarily subject to the more subjective policies. The TRLUS report provides strong evidence and justification why the proposal meets these planning policies.

9.2 A RURAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

When one considers the breadth of activity that can be encompassed in the single term —agriculture, it becomes readily apparent that no other landuse gets the same priority in planning schemes across Victoria as does agriculture. Despite this diversity across a wide resource sector planning policy and planning scheme ordinance remains fixated upon traditional broad acre farming. This, despite the changes happening across rural Australia where traditional farming is being transformed in the face of shifting population values and lifestyle aspirations. As noted by Aslin (2006)⁵⁸ this change is leading, in many places, to the emergence of a new kind of countryside, where traditional agricultural production is now part of a complex mix of land uses that reflect new demands on the countryside.

We clearly need to be thinking beyond the notion of simply keeping all rural land in every locality across Victoria in as large holdings as possible. The relatively high level of fragmentation within the Mitta Mitta Valley, the most highly productive precinct within Towong Shire and the high quality agricultural land around Stanley in neighbouring Indigo Shire are both testaments to such a proposition. Other non-agricultural issues are equally relevant across rural and regional areas. In this regard it is relevant to refer to Appendix 5 of the Rural Zones Review Reference Group Report (2003)⁵⁹ where it was noted:

—...when looking at rural zone controls, we clearly need to be thinking beyond the notion of simply keeping all rural land in as large holdings as possible. Other non-agricultural issues are also relevant, including equity, social structure, lifestyle expectations and local demographics, not to mention landscape, biodiversity, environment and amenity issues.

In some respects, it might also be concluded that this situation is also acknowledged in the Future Farms Paper wherein it is noted that although vitally important:

—... agriculture does not purely depend on continuing farm consolidation into fewer, larger farm businesses on great tracts of open land.

As noted by Aslin (2006)⁶¹ the increasing range of interests and demands across rural areas also means that many rural communities are becoming much more diverse.

It follows as a consequence that rural planning policy that continues to simply rely upon the long-standing technique which regards the minimum lot size set out in the planning scheme as being in effect an —as-of-right basis for the subdivision of land and/or erection of a dwelling in rural areas is simply a formula for inequity. This approach unfortunately ignores the fact that there are indeed many different circumstances that can intervene over time to change the way in which land is used. Some of these circumstances can include compressed terms of trade, market fluctuations for agricultural products, the diversification of traditional agricultural, farm successions issues, changes in a land owner’s personal circumstances etc and these issues may have absolutely nothing to do with whether there is a dwelling on the land or whether the size of the parcel of land is over or under the expressed default minimum lot size (typically 40ha).

*Furthermore **the minimum lot size approach is demonstrably not a successful means of retaining the capacity for sustainable primary production.** Such an approach can in practice only foster planning by arithmetic rather than by outcomes. As noted by Barr (2003)⁶² the use of subdivision policy, **particularly minimum lot size, as a planning tool —to protect prime agricultural land’ often betrays a —misunderstanding of the dynamic interplay between economic and social forces that are transforming agriculture.**||*

Planning Policy should instead be robust enough to capitalise on the advantages of contemporary agriculture while at the same time minimising negative aspects of landscape function decline.’

In Section 11.4 TRANSITIONAL TOWONG (including this applications precinct), the report again directs towards a flexible use of the land by stating:

*“Transitional Towong” is a part of Towong landscape where the emphasis will be to continue to provide for the use of land for agriculture but where there are more diverse land use aspirations. **Within this context, other uses and development which are compatible with agriculture and the environmental and landscape characteristics of the area can be considered on their merits.**’*

In the concluding Section 12.1 CAPACITY BUILDING, it provides additional justification and examples of RAZ uses and the need for the shire to encourage these diverse uses that can be accommodated on much smaller parcels of land. It also suggests that these opportunities tend to evolve and grow over time rather than launch in an instantaneous manner with a strict agricultural business plan or objective. Ultimately, the opportunities for the shire to diversify its agriculture base will not occur, if the provision of the right land opportunity is not provided first.

It is acknowledged that one major component of the Shires current vision intent is to diversify its economic base, including developing opportunities for value adding and processing of raw agricultural product within the Shire. Analysis of the various themes explored as part of the TRLUS Stage 1 work clearly indicates that to give credibility to this vision it will be essential that new and innovative thinking is fostered together with advancement in science and technology to secure such a future not only for existing industries but new industries seeking value-added opportunities.

*Diversification will also require a need to recognise / identify niche marketing opportunities. To this end it is noted that there is often very little difference between recognising a potential business opportunity and recognising a niche marketing opportunity. **Sometimes people find themselves in a niche market without planning it. For instance a product or service may be difficult to obtain in a particular area, and someone begins to provide the service for themselves. They may soon find that others are asking for that service also (eg custom haying, custom welding, hoof trimming, coolroom facilities, etc).***

New market opportunities could also open as a consequence of imperatives to reduce food miles as a consequence of fuel price rises and lack of availability. In such a scenario more localised food production would see Towong well placed to service the nearby urban area of Albury Wodonga.

*This vision for capacity building within Towong Shire is also set against the context of, on the one hand a declining and ageing population in agriculture and other regional sectors and on the other hand changing consumer lifestyles and expectations that are increasing demand for customised, convenient and niche products. **Such products can include special types of livestock and speciality crops, special use crops (e.g. for industrial or medicinal uses), organic products, custom farming services, ethnic foods, crops traditionally unavailable locally (or at least unavailable in the winter) etc.***

*Improvements in knowledge advancement in science and technology can also have a major influence in transforming traditional agricultural activities, such as dairying, prime lamb and beef to value adding industries. **For instance agriculture diversification towards areas such as agro-forestry, cut flowers, herbs, crops and less traditional types of horticulture could lead to the successful development of niche and specialty market industries.***

In terms of the report's recommendations for the future of the transitional area of Towong Shire (including this precinct) under the RAZ (option 3) was the following:

- The existing RAZ purpose and schedule be amended to reflect preferred land use outcomes. This will include providing for a **mix of small scale agriculture, non agricultural uses**, rural living and environmental outcomes.
- A default minimum subdivision be specified, but provision is made for exceptions as spelt out clearly in an accompanying planning policy.

It is accepted that this is a recommendation for future planning policy and is not the planning scheme policies that this application is currently subject to. However, it outlines the potential for a mix of smaller scale agricultural operations, which this application's proposal seeks to achieve. Fortunately, the recommended policy objectives are not different to what can be achieved under the current planning scheme for this site's circumstances, as detailed in the planning policy framework responses in the submitted planning report. The shire and community preferences together with the economic drivers identified in this report can be achieved by this application.

The TRLUS has identified and provided evidence-based support to this application's proposal. In particular, it establishes that agricultural uses are not just defined by the land size and other diverse uses are possible and more likely to succeed under the economic circumstances.

2.3 SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 35.08 RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE (RAZ)

The site is included within the Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) under the Towong Planning Scheme and lists the RAZ purposes as follows:

RAZ Purpose

1. *To provide for a range of land use and development that does not adversely affect surrounding uses.*
2. *To recognise the need to strengthen and diversify the economic base of the Shire.*
3. *To provide a flexible approach to the consideration of land use and development proposals to offset the adverse effects of economic restructuring and climate change on the agricultural sector.*
4. *To encourage opportunities that contribute to population stability and growth in the Shire.*
5. *To recognise the natural beauty and "pure" image of the Shire.*

Proposal Response & Justification:

- i. The proposed subdivision and development meet these RAZ purposes as explained and discussed below.
- ii. The existing two Lots do not currently provide two practical shaped Lots that allow both parcels to support practical agricultural land use or development. We maintain that these Lots in their current shape or without dwelling permits do not meet the objectives of the RAZ. Considering these Lots can be sold separately "as is", we believe in their current state, it lessens the opportunity to meet the RAZ objectives. The application proposal seeks to realign the common internal boundary to provide two improved shaped Lots that can practically support different agricultural uses and development as intended by the RAZ objectives.
- iii. These smaller sized Lots provide a different range of Lot sizes that cannot easily be found nearby for a greater opportunity for diverse, flexible, economic, or different ranges of agricultural use, which is also sought by the objectives of the zone (i.e. RAZ Purposes 1-4).
- iv. It is clear that the site value of this land is high due to the neighbouring Lake amenity (Lake water views and attractive associated recreational activities) and <40 minute proximity to the large regional centre of Albury and Wodonga. This value is reflected in the Council Rates notice when comparing with other RAZ land across the shire. This value is also identified in the TRLUS.
- v. Furthermore, this existing market value is additionally fuelled by Towong Shires Strategic direction to seek to increase growth in the precinct. This includes the previous attempt of planning scheme amendment C25 to rezone the subject land to RLZ and the TRLUS (as another Strategic Report example). Accordingly, there is speculative longer term investment potential that increases the land value beyond its sole agricultural potential.
- vi. It is anticipated that the existing value is so high (either as a 2x 6Ha Lot arrangement or as one landholding in a 12Ha Lot), that it will very likely make it economically unfeasible for the previous traditional grazing uses to continue as a profitable agricultural business on these particular land parcels (eg: the neighbouring land stock grazing business' cannot justify the capital investment of either or both Lots to expand their operation under the current value).

- vii. For the reasons above, we believe we have established that the high value of this Land then causes the need to consider different future agricultural uses rather than only considering what has been traditionally practiced on these Lots (i.e: traditionally grazing or occasional cropping). These traditional practices typically require a much larger scale that is more economical to form a profitable grazing agricultural business, or off-farm supplemented income. In either the existing or proposed shapes, the land in this application falls well below this traditional land use's economic operational size for investment. Therefore, different agricultural uses need to be considered as the practical and more likely future use. This is the approach and justification that is adopted in this application. This approach is also recognized in the purposes of the Zone: *To provide a **flexible approach to the consideration of land use and development proposals to off-set the adverse effects of economic restructuring and climate change on the agricultural sector.***
- viii. RAZ land allows for a diverse range and flexibility of opportunities for Agricultural uses or uses that support other local agricultural businesses in the region. Many of these do not require large land areas to support their practice. In fact, some of these types of agricultural businesses require a combination of:
- An agricultural business or practice that is supported by appropriate zoning such as RAZ. Some of these businesses would not be permitted or could be problematic uses in other zones such as LDRZ or RLZ. Some RAZ Section 1 uses (No planning Permit required) examples not potentially appropriate in LDRZ/RLZ being:
 - Domestic animal husbandry between 3-5 animals
 - Primary produce sales.
 - Rural store
 - The Lots are more affordable (by virtue of their smaller size, they are more affordable. Eg: these proposed 6Ha Lots market value are estimated at \$300k-\$600k, whereas 10Ha-40Ha Lots in the immediate area would be estimated at \$600k - \$1M+). Therefore, this proposal provides a wider and inclusive opportunity for the potential start up alternative agricultural businesses.
 - Located conveniently near a major centre for agricultural business' associated buying, selling or distribution of services or goods, and the opportunity for "off-farm" supplemented incomes;
 - Provision for an associated dwelling to a). support the agricultural business and/or b). assist with the capital investment burden. To further explain:
 - a) Many of these more boutique agricultural businesses need constant onsite monitoring and/or immediate attendance for their operation (Eg: animal husbandry; 24/7 agricultural service provider).
 - b) Combining the dwelling on-site with the different type of agricultural business use assists by spreading the higher value land across the two purposes for the owner/occupier/Ag business owner or operator. The combined uses substantially reduce the capital investment burden on the agricultural business. In a time of an increasing housing affordability crisis, it is an extremely difficult time to create a new agricultural business and afford a dwelling elsewhere. Sharing the investment cost of a home and a new agricultural business on the same land will assist the success of the smaller agricultural business and provide the necessary flexibility.
 - This is recognised in the purposes of the Zone: *To **encourage opportunities that contribute to population stability and growth in the Shire; and To recognise the need to strengthen and diversify the economic base of the Shire.***

- ix. It has been suggested that it would be more appropriate for the two Lots to be consolidated to one larger Lot. This alternative proposal suggests the larger 12 Ha land area provides a greater opportunity and encouragement for agricultural use. However, we have established above that some smaller RAZ Lots can provide a much greater and more likely opportunity for a different agricultural use, economic stability, and flexibility that the zone purposes seek. For many of these agricultural uses, what can be achieved on the consolidated 12Ha Lot, can also be comfortably achieved on the smaller 6Ha Lot.

- Eg No. 1: A boutique exotic poultry farm of less than 100 birds falls within the Section 1 land use definitions under the RAZ. This can be practically achieved on this site with a dwelling on either a 6Ha or 12Ha Lot.
- Eg No. 2: Specialist agriculture support business such as a farm machinery mechanic or restorer that requires a machine testing field can comfortably operate on 6Ha Lot.
- Eg No. 3: A specialist equine training (eg: dressage or show jumping) facility and stables falls within the Section 1 land use definitions under the RAZ and can comfortably operate on 6Ha.
- Eg No. 4: A Rural Store with a shed under 100m² that is associated with agriculture falls within the Section 1 land use definitions under the RAZ and can comfortably operate on a 6Ha Lot.

Maintaining the existing 2 Lots in a different configuration will **increase the economic agricultural opportunity that off-sets the adverse effects of economic restructuring** of this particular area. Conversely, we argue that consolidation of the Lots could potentially lessen these desired objective's (potentially by half).

- x. Intensive farming opportunities are mostly ruled out due to proximity to other neighbouring residences (See the application's Site and Context Plan in Appendix 5) and environmental sensitivities with the catchment draining to neighbouring Lake Hume. Accordingly, any justification for a larger Lot (i.e. 12Ha) to support intensive agricultural use is ruled out for this site, as well as nearby neighbouring sites.
- xi. A new agricultural use sensitive to neighbouring residences and Lake Hume's catchment appears the most suitable and practical approach to this site. The application proposal provides an onsite dwelling, which in-turn encourages these more sensitive agricultural uses. i.e. If the resident and agricultural business operator is living next to their agricultural business, it is much more likely that it will be relatively residential sensitive and have less impact on other neighbouring residences and the Lake catchment.
- xii. The proposed dwellings and sheds are setback well away from the roads and fit within the natural topography requiring minimal or modest site cuts or earthworks. They are proposed to be a high-quality build and constructed in neutral colours and materials in keeping with other residences and rural character of the area. All existing native trees are proposed to be maintained. We believe the proposal is in accordance with the RAZ purpose to **recognise the natural beauty and "pure" image of the Shire** and provides for a range of land use and development **that does not adversely affect surrounding uses**.

2.4 35.08 RURAL ACTIVITY ZONE (RAZ)

The following text in **black** is included in our original application report. We provide additional justification in **blue**.

The site is included within the Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) under the Towong Planning Scheme and lists the RAZ purposes as follows:

Purpose

- *To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework. The Application is in accordance with the State Planning Policy and Framework.*
- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture. Refer to the justification in section 2.1 and 2.2 above. In summary, the reconfiguration of the two existing Lots' shape and provision for dwellings and shed can provide different and improved uses of land for agriculture that are considered suitable and appropriate purposes in the RAZ and for this precinct.*
- *To provide for other uses and development, in appropriate locations, which are compatible with agriculture and the environmental and landscape characteristics of the area. Refer to the justification in section 2.1 and 2.2 above. This application has identified that there is a need to consider **other agricultural uses** for this land rather than what has been traditionally used (i.e. grazing and occasional cropping) as a result of the increased value of the land.*

The proposal's location in terms of the precinct is appropriate due to its proximity to Albury Wodonga, the Lake catchment sensitivities, and other neighbouring residencies.

The development locations in terms of the site are positioned such to comply with all setback requirements and fit into the landscape with minimal site impacts (i.e. modest site earthworks and no native vegetation losses).

Section 2.2 of this report provides justification and examples of agricultural-aligned uses that are compatible with the immediate area. The proposed dwellings provide additional encouragement for these more compatible uses that are sensitive to the immediate area and existing neighbouring residents. Therefore, the agricultural uses that are available to the proposed Lots are compatible with the environment and landscape characteristics.

To ensure that use and development does not adversely affect surrounding land uses. This application has identified that this precinct has inherited agricultural limitations due to the Lake, existing established neighbouring residents, and the increased value over time. These limitations already exist and the proposal seeks to fit within these existing site limitations, but does not adversely affect them.

The future use of this land needs to consider **other agricultural uses** for this land rather than what has been traditionally used (i.e. grazing and occasional cropping) as a result of the increased value of the land.

This precinct is not suitable for intensive agricultural uses and limits the site to agricultural uses sensitive to the Lake catchment and existing neighbouring residencies. Therefore, the proposed additional residencies do not further limit the agricultural uses of this land or neighbouring land.

In fact, the proposal likely encourages them. The proposed dwellings provide additional encouragement for these more compatible agricultural uses that are sensitive to the immediate area and existing residents.

- *To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.* Similarly to the two purposes responses listed above, Section 2.2 of this report provides justification and examples of agricultural-aligned uses that are compatible for these proposed Lots and development, and

compatible with the immediate area. These example uses are Section 1 uses (do not require a planning permit). We have not listed Section 2 uses (planning permit application required), however, some other limited uses could be appropriate with an approved planning application (eg: Animal production (other than Cattle feedlot, Grazing animal production and Poultry farm)).

- *To protect and enhance natural resources and the biodiversity of the area.* Native vegetation removal is avoided. The subdivision boundaries, dwelling and access locations/alignments have been deliberately selected to avoid existing vegetation.
- To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.

The proposal has strongly considered and adopts an approach that provides comprehensive and sustainable land management and practices that are suitable for the site. In fact, the proposals justification is strongly based on these drivers. This also includes the infrastructure required to successfully support such practices. This is justification is established by:

- Considering the site's agricultural use options are already limited by the proximity of other neighbouring residencies and Lake sensitivities, which prevents intensive farming options on this site or nearby as they would not be appropriate land management practices.
- The small total land area (12Ha) and high site value likely rule out the traditional agricultural use (i.e. grazing). This constraint even applies as an addition to another nearby grazing operation. Therefore, it requires consideration of alternative agricultural uses that are encouraged by the RAZ objectives and to ensure that sustainable agricultural businesses can be achieved.
- The suggested agricultural uses available for the site can be equally achieved on 6Ha as they can be achieved on 12Ha.
- The proposals suggested alternative agricultural uses are sensitive to the local environmental constraints of the site, therefore are considered to be a practical adoption of the comprehensive and sustainable land management practices for this site.
- The alternative agricultural uses available will likely need the support of onsite occupancy for economic, security, and operational functions and require an associated dwelling & shed (infrastructure provision). The dwelling approvals will encourage these types of agricultural business creation.
- The proposal can comfortably support on-site wastewater treatment for the dwellings.
- The relatively close proximity of the site and easy access to Albury/Wodonga, which provides the rural infrastructure support that is required for smaller land size agricultural businesses.

Pursuant to Clause 35.06-1, a planning permit is required for the use of land for a dwelling. The use of land for a dwelling must meet the requirements of Clause 35.06-2.

- *The proposed dwellings will have access via an all-weather road.* Access is via Drummond Road, which is all weather gravel access public road, which connects to the adjacent sealed Murray River Road (DTP managed).
- *An appropriate septic system will be installed to treat all wastewater in accordance with the recommendations of the Land Capability Assessment submitted with this planning application.* A LCA report has been prepared by an experienced consultant and included with the original application. It found on-site waste water treatment can be comfortably achieved on each of the proposed Lots for the dwellings proposed.

- The dwellings will include water tanks for both firefighting and potable water supply. Water Tanks can be provided comfortably on site for both purposes and can be made a condition of a planning permit.
- The dwellings will be connected to a reticulated electricity supply. Overhead power supply traverses the site and reticulated power can be provided to each dwelling.
- There are no existing or proposed wind energy facilities located within one kilometre of the subject site. No wind farm facilities are nearby.

The following text in **black** is included in our original application report. We provide additional justification in **blue**.

Decision Guidelines	Response
General ▪ The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework. ▪ Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land. ▪ The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent. ▪ How the use or development relates to sustainable land management. ▪ Whether the site is suitable for the use or development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.	The proposal has been designed in accordance with the PPF. A detailed LCA (Appendix 3) has been prepared for the subject site that confirms the land can treat and contain all generated wastewater from the proposed dwelling. The proposed dwellings are compatible with surrounding land uses. The area contains a mix of small agricultural lots and nearby Lake Hume. Most surrounding privately owned land contain a single dwelling on each lot for rural residential purposes. The subject is able to contain some low levels of stock for animal grazing, or alternative agricultural uses as suggested in Section 2.2. The proposal will ensure the land, and native vegetation is maintained. The proposal is consistent with the pattern of surrounding land use. The proposed dwellings will allow for the opportunity for several possible niche agricultural land uses listed in the proposal section above, dependent on future landowner preferences.
Agricultural issues ▪ Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production ▪ The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. ▪ The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use. ▪ The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure. ▪ Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site.	The proposed subdivision, use and development will not likely be directly associated with the previous agricultural land uses that have been under the same operation and ownership for decades. The subject sites are now considered low quality agricultural land, but are of high site value, where alternative agricultural uses will be more appropriate onsite as explained in Section 2.2. The proposed dwellings will not remove any meaningful amount of land from agriculture and will open up different agriculture activity opportunities for the site such as listed in this application. This precinct's existing limitations result in it being not suitable for intensive agricultural uses and limits the site to agricultural

uses that are sensitive to the Lake catchment and existing neighbouring residencies. Accordingly, the proposed additional dwellings do not further limit the agricultural uses of this land or the neighbouring land considering the immediate area is already limited by the Lake sensitivities and other residences.

The proposed dwellings provide additional encouragement for these more compatible agricultural uses that remain sensitive to the immediate area, Lake, and other existing residents. Accordingly, the Lot boundary realignment and proposed dwellings enhances the agricultural production of this land considering the existing economic drivers and the environmental constraints for the site, which are established in Section 2.2.

The agricultural land quality has been suitable for grazing and occasional cropping. This is because the Land was obtained at a much lower cost decades ago at which time the grazing agricultural business was economically sustainable on this parcel. However, the continual increase in land value of this precinct and only very modest growth in grazing business profitability results in the need to consider alternative future agricultural uses for the land, which are encouraged in the RAZ objectives. Many of these alternative uses (Section 1 uses under the RAZ) can be achieved with smaller land parcels and require an associated dwelling to make them practically operable and profitable. In addition, these uses can operate equally well on 6Ha as they can on 12Ha as justified and established in Section 2.2. Therefore, the proposed boundary realignment to create 6Ha Lots with dwellings has the capacity to accommodate agricultural uses identified and encouraged by the RAZ objectives.

The proposed development is sufficiently setback from all neighbouring lot boundaries to avoid any conflict with existing or proposed agricultural uses that are available. Most surrounding land has already been developed with associated residential uses and therefore are not suitable for future intensive agricultural use opportunities.

There is one small existing dam on proposed Lot 2 and several locations to construct another dam with a reasonable supply catchment on Lot 1. Accordingly, agricultural water supply can be provided on both Lots.

	The RAZ was adopted across the lower quality agricultural land, which is partly due to lower-quality soils. Considering that many of the appropriated alternative agricultural uses suggested in this application do not rely on soil quality for successful operation, the proposal is not reliant on soil quality. Close proximity of the site to the major centre of Albury/Wodonga and its agricultural supporting services and products provides convenient access to this rural based infrastructure. This proximity not only has resulted in increased site value causing a change to future agricultural uses of this site but also adds significant support to the smaller land size agricultural uses that require this convenient access to Albury/Wodonga. Therefore, the site location makes it very suitable for the application's proposal and provides strong justification for the proposed smaller land parcel agricultural use with an associated dwelling. An integrated land management plan has not been prepared for the proposal. Any specific land management items deemed necessary to the proposed dwellings and landscape and/or the future agricultural use, including landscaping and/or revegetation requirements, can be conditioned on any potential planning permit.
Accommodation issues - Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land. - Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation - Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. - The potential for the proposal to lead to a concentration or proliferation of dwellings in the area and the impact of this on the use of the land for agriculture.	No further fragmentation of agricultural land will result from the proposal considering this land is already fragmented from continuous adjoining ownership. The proposal is also for a resubdivision of two existing lots (i.e. Boundary realignment) on land that is not currently used for any intensive agricultural land use. The proposed dwelling will not be adversely affected by any neighbouring agricultural uses. No intensive uses are located near the subject site as detailed in Section 3 above. Other neighbouring residencies and Lake sensitives already limit the types of agricultural use of this land. Therefore, aligning future smaller land size agricultural uses with an associated dwelling will not cause or be adversely affected by agricultural uses. The proposal provides is the most practical and most likely opportunity to provide a successful agricultural use without adverse affects to neighbouring properties (either as residents or agricultural uses).

	The proposed dwelling is sited to ensure large setbacks to neighbouring allotments. The dwelling will have a negligible effect on the viability of any adjoining agricultural uses. The surrounding area has already been developed for rural residential land uses on relatively small allotments. The proposal will not create any additional allotments, and this will not lead to proliferation or concentration of the existing land use pattern. This pattern of land use is considered established in this area along Murray River Road as shown on the Site and Context plan and therefore is not a concentration. The relatively small lot sizes lend themselves for this land use, in addition to the relatively poor soil conditions, ensuring that land consolidation cannot provide for any intensive agricultural uses.
Environmental issues ▪ The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality. ▪ The impact of the use or development on the flora and fauna on the site and its surrounds. ▪ The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area. ▪ The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation.	The quality of the soil and water on the subject site will remain unchanged from the proposed development. The submitted LCA (Appendix 3) demonstrates compliance can be achieved with EPA guidelines. There will be no destruction of vegetation or habitat as a result of the proposal, nor is any proposed to be removed. The proposed effluent disposal field is in accordance with the recommendation of the submitted LCA. The area is located a sufficient distance from the designated creek to the northwest and is setback from all established native vegetation and habitat.
▪ Design and siting issues ▪ The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts. ▪ The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance. ▪ The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications and sewerage facilities. ▪ Whether the use or development will require traffic management measures. ▪ The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact	The site of the proposed dwelling will be setback approximately 200m from the neighbouring property to the west and 180m from the nearest neighbouring boundary to the east. The proposed dwelling is also sited 100m from the southern boundary, ensuring it will not impede the operation of any neighbouring agricultural uses. In any case, only sparse animal grazing exists on neighbouring properties. The design of the proposed dwellings included muted colours and natural materials that lend themselves to the rural aesthetic of the area. Their location is considered appropriate given the generous setbacks to waterways, the main road, Lake Hume and neighbouring lot boundaries. The proposed dwellings respects the rural character of the area and will not adversely impact on any views or vistas.

from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990.	The proposed dwellings will be located below any ridgeline and setback from all neighbouring boundaries ensuring no loss of amenity. The nearby quarry to the south of the subject sites will not be adversely impacted by the proposed subdivision or dwellings. The quarry is small in its operational capacity, is used infrequently and is not subject to blasting or permanent plant creating noise and dust. The quarry is primarily used for road base on local roads. The proposal is considered appropriately located given the parameters of the quarry.
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3. PROPOSED CONDITION TO PROMOTE AGRICULTURAL USE

There has been questions raised about the probability of Agricultural use on the proposed smaller Lots & associated dwelling development, and if the neighbouring agricultural uses or practices could cause complaints or disputes from the proposal's future residents.

It has been established that the precinct is already limited to uses that are sensitive to the existing residencies and the lake environment. It is also established that there is a need for smaller RAZ Lots to create the diversity that the RAZ seeks.

The application has adopted a proposal that provides and suggests small scale agricultural opportunities, together with substantial setbacks for dwellings to provide separation from other neighbouring properties' activities that may affect the amenity.

To further support, promote and enforce the intention of the agricultural uses for this application's proposed Lots, the applicant is willing to volunteer a planning permit condition to ensure future agricultural use of the proposed allotments and ensure future owners or potential purchasers are fully aware that agricultural uses and practices operate on the surrounding land.

The proposed volunteered condition is to create a Section 173 Agreement (S173A) and/or Memorandum of Common Provisions (MCP) to adopt the following conditions on the Title:

Prior to the Statement of Compliance of the plan of subdivision, the owner must enter into an agreement with the Responsible Authority made pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the Act) for the following conditions.

- 1. The Lot owner and/or occupier of this Lot acknowledges that the land is within and adjoins land under the Rural Activity Zone (RAZ) and this area will be subject to agricultural uses and practices permitted under the Rural Activity Zone. These agricultural uses and activities may affect the amenity of the area from time to time such as noise, dust, odours, or other impacts. The Lot owner and/or occupier acknowledge Council may not act on a complaint from the Lot owner and/or occupier for any neighbouring permitted agricultural use or activity.*
- 2. A Rural Activity Zone permitted agricultural use must be undertaken on the Lot within 12 months of the occupancy of the associated dwelling unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Responsible Authority. A Rural Activity Zone permitted agricultural use must continue while the dwelling is occupied unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Responsible Authority. A planning permit must be obtained from the Responsible Authority for any land use under Section 2 to Clause 35.08-1 Rural Activity Zone in the Towong Planning Scheme, prior to the land use commencing on the land.*

3.

4. CONCLUSION

The proposed two lot resubdivision and the use and development of the land for a dwelling and shed on each allotment at 257 Drummond Road, Talgarno is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies as stated in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework of the Towong Planning Scheme.

It has been established that each proposed Lot with a dwelling and shed can support agricultural uses for the following reasons:

- The site's agricultural use options are already limited by the proximity of other neighbouring residencies and Lake sensitivities, which prevents intensive farming options on this site or nearby as they would not be appropriate land management practices in this precinct. Therefore, the proposed residencies do not further limit the land.
- The small total land area (12Ha) and high site value likely rule out the traditional agricultural use (i.e. grazing). Therefore this land requires consideration of alternative or diversification from traditional agricultural uses that are encouraged by the RAZ objectives and to ensure that sustainable agricultural businesses can be achieved. This same assessment is also identified in the TRLUS report.
- There are many agricultural uses that can be supported on the smaller Lots. The TRLUS has identified the need for these uses to evolve and be supported by off-farm supplement income. The proximity of Albury/Wodonga provides this practical support for both off-farm income and the rural infrastructure support that is required for smaller land size agricultural business
- The alternative agricultural uses available will most likely need the support of onsite occupancy for economic, security, and operational functions and require an associated dwelling & shed. The dwelling approvals will encourage these alternative types of agricultural businesses' creation.
- Many of the agricultural uses available for the small land sizes can be equally achieved on 6Ha as they can be achieved on 12Ha. In fact, the smaller Lots with a dwelling can create greater efficiency for these alternative agricultural businesses.
- The TRLUS has identified and provided evidence-based support to this application's proposal. In particular, it establishes that agricultural uses are not just defined by the land size and other diverse uses are possible and more likely to succeed under the economic circumstances.
- The intention of agricultural use of these Lots can be encouraged, maintained and enforced through a Section 173 Agreement.

Overall, the proposal represents the most appropriate use and development of the land given its size, proximity to Lake Hume and existing dwellings, and inhibited agricultural potential.

Furthermore, the application proposal clearly meets Council's strategic planning scheme review intentions. Fortunately, it can be achieved under the current planning scheme.

The proposal is commended to Council, and, on behalf of our client, we look forward to a positive outcome from the application.

Delegate Report

Application Number:	PA250002
Planner:	Margaret Fox
Application Description:	Re-subdivision of the land into two lots, Use and development of each parcel for a dwelling, and construction of a shed on each allotment, buildings and works within 500m of land used for Extractive Industry and within 100m of a waterway
Applicant:	Matthew Elliot
Property No:	224050
Owner:	Barry Eric Elliot Joan Ann Elliot
Land Address:	257 Drummond ROAD Talgarno Victoria 3691
Title Particular:	Lot 1 TP318077D Volume 08375 Folio 961 Lot 1 on TP681750P Volume 03760 Folio 952
Restriction/S173 Agreement:	Nil
Zone:	Rural Activity
Overlay:	Environmental Significance Overlay Significant Landscape Overlay
Planning Permit Triggers:	35.08-1 Use of the land for dwellings 35.08-3 Subdivision into two lots (boundary realignment) 35.08-4 Buildings & Works associated with the construction of dwellings and outbuildings and within 500m of extractive industry and 100m of a waterway 42.03-2 Buildings & works associated with the construction of dwellings and outbuildings 42.01-2 Subdivision into two lots (boundary realignment)
Current Use & Development:	Cattle Grazing
Cultural Heritage Management Plan Required:	No
Cultural Heritage Management Plan Supplied:	N/A
Special Water Catchment:	Yes, the application was referred to GMW
Proposal:	Re-subdivision of the land into two lots, Use and development of each parcel for a dwelling and a shed

Permit History:

Nil

Delegate Report

Site Description:

The subject land is formally identified as Lot 1 TP318077 and Lot 1 TP681750 and is commonly known as part of 257 Drummond Road Talgarno.

Lot 1 TP318077 is the largest of the two allotments and is an irregular shaped allotment with an area of 10.07ha. The land slopes from the west to the east and contains a dam near the northern boundary. A minor drainage line bisects the western tip of the subject site and flows to the northeast to the neighbouring allotments. The parcel is mostly cleared of native vegetation with the exemption of four scattered trees. The land is currently used for grazing. The southern boundary abuts the Murray River Road reserve.

Lot 1 TP681750 is a 20m wide parcel that runs adjacent to the northern boundary of Lot 1 TP318077 from east to west. This parcel is free from any development and contains part of the drainage line and three native trees.

The subject land forms part of a larger landholding that is separated by a Lot1/743910 to the north that is under separate ownership known as 215 Drummonds Road.

The subject site is located in Talgarno on the north side of the Bethanga Peninsula, approximately 9.5km northwest of Bellbridge and 17km west of Albury. The land surrounding the subject site comprises a broad range of lot sizes and land uses. Lot sizes of neighbouring properties range from 1.3ha up to 100ha. The smaller allotments are used as rural lifestyle properties with the balance used for grazing purposes.



Delegate Report

Proposal

The application is for a two lot re-subdivision of the existing two allotments at 257 Drummond Road Talgarno and for the use and development of each proposed allotment for a dwelling and construction of a shed on each lot. The existing allotments consist of a single parcel of approximately 10ha and a further parcel consisting of a 20m wide strip located to the north of the 10ha parcel. These two parcel form part of a larger landholding that makes up 257 Drummond Road Talgarno.

The proposed Lot 1 will comprise a battleaxe style allotment measuring approximately 6.2ha. It will be located on the west of the land. Lot 1 will be accessed from Drummonds Road via long driveway. Lot 1 is proposed to contain a single storey dwelling comprising four bedrooms, two bathrooms, double garage, kitchen, lounge room, study, rumpus, laundry and outdoor entertaining area. The dwelling will have an area of 392sqm. The proposed dwelling will be of brick construction with a colourbond roof. The proposed shed will 10m x 12m. The dwelling will be setback 40m from the northern boundary, 60m from the proposed western boundary and 102m from the boundary with the Murray River Road.

Lot 2 is proposed to contain a single storey dwelling with a different laying but in a similar style and size as the proposed Lot 1. The dwelling will comprise of four bedrooms, two bathrooms, double garage, kitchen, lounge room, theatre room, laundry, work room, and outdoor entertaining area. The dwelling will be setback 77m from the norther boundary and 12m from the western shared boundary and 73m from the boundary with the Murray River Road. the proposed dwelling will be clad in weatherboard with a colourbond roof. The proposed shed will have the same dimensions as the shed on Lot 1.

The application was supported by a Land Capability Assessment that demonstrated that all wastewater and effluent can be disposed of on site. The proposed effluent fields will be setback in excess of 300m from the high water mark of Lake Hume.

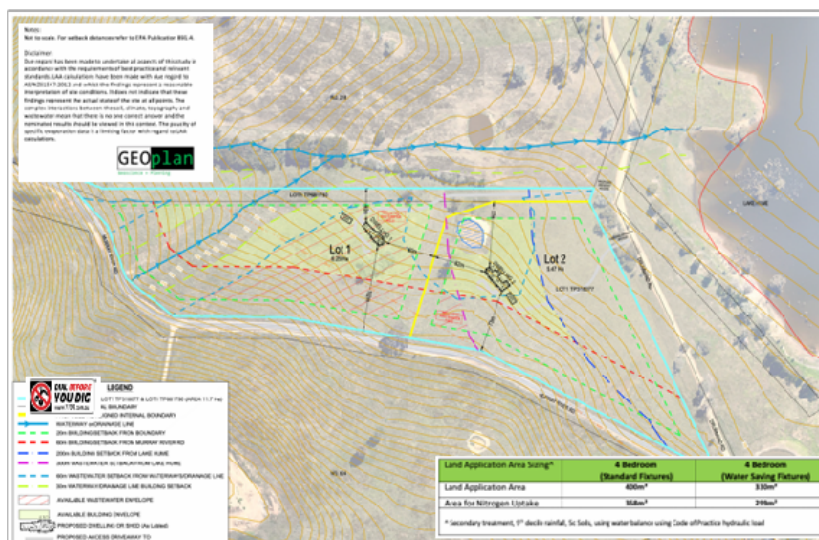
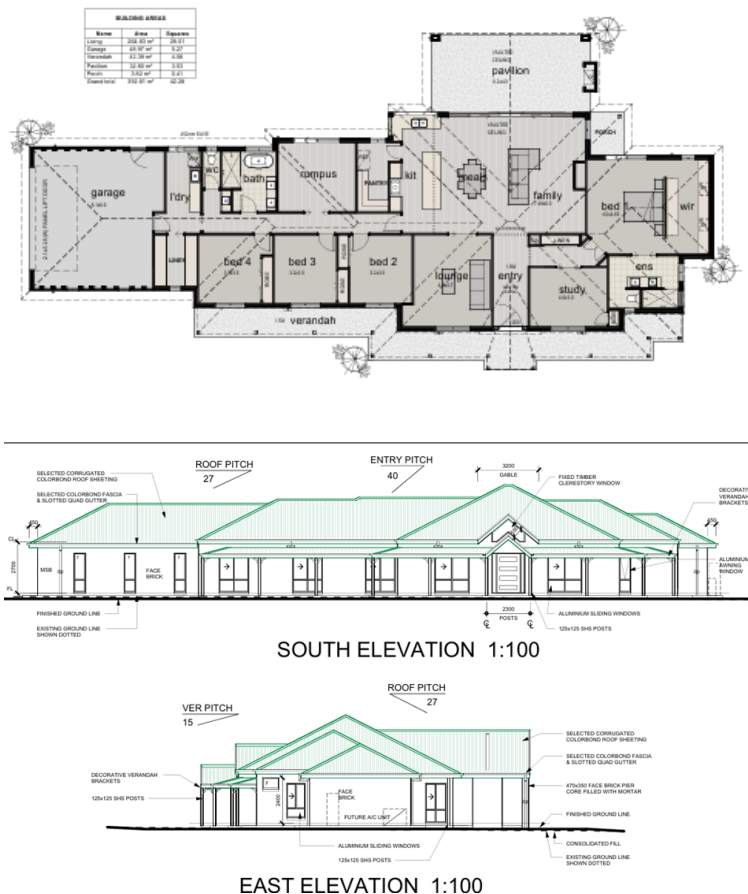


Figure 1 – Proposed Subdivision Layout

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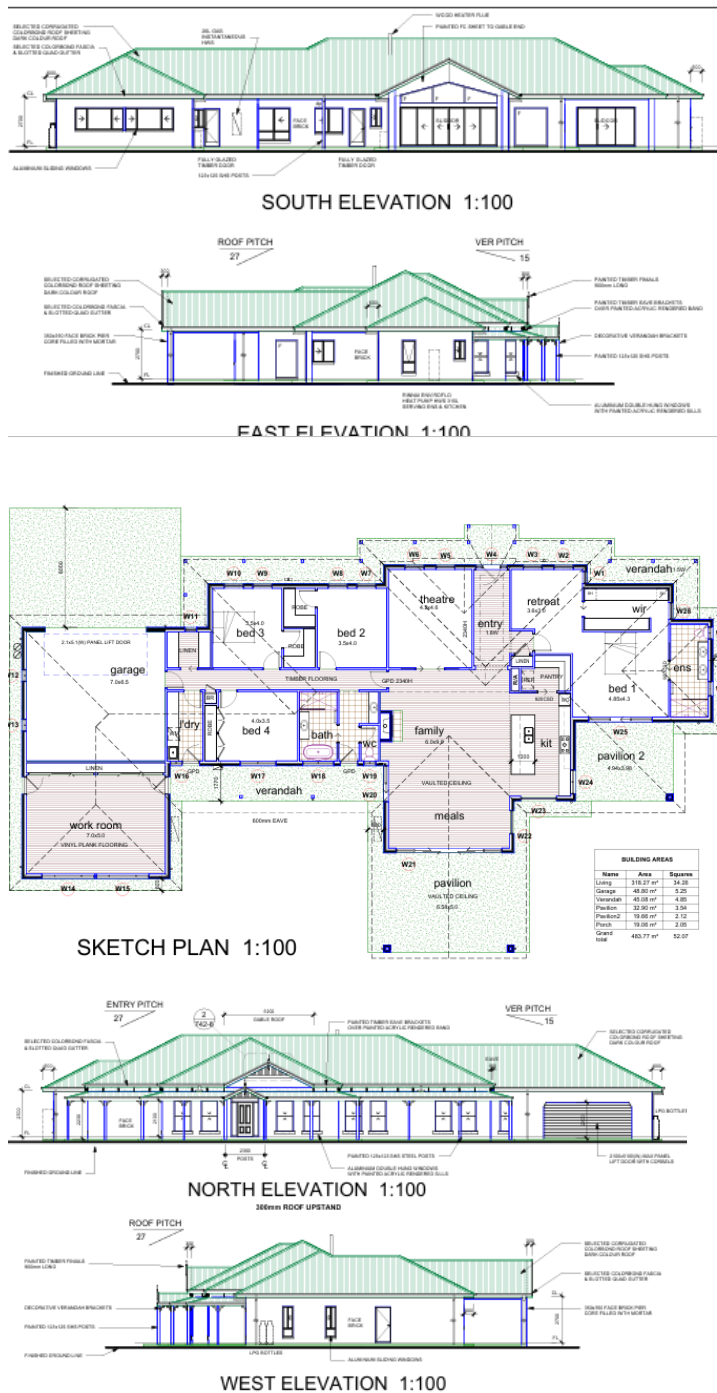


Figure 2 – Floor Plan and Elevations of Proposed Dwelling 1 & 2

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Referral Responses:

The application was referred to

Summary of Section 55 Referrals

Authority	Advice/Response/Conditions	Response
Department of Transport and Planning (Head, Transport for Victoria)	No Objection with Conditions	DTP
GMW (Goulburn Murray Water)	No Objection with Conditions or Comments	GMW

Public Notice: Yes

Letters to Owners/Occupiers: Yes

Date From: 10 February 2025

Sign on Land: No

Date From:

Newspaper: No

Publication:

Date From:

No. Objections received: 0

Nature of Objections:	Officers Comments:
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Assessment & Discussion

State & Local Planning Policy Framework:

Clause 11 Settlement -

1. Clause 11 of the Towong Planning Scheme provides the context of how planning sits within the Shire and must anticipate and respond to the needs of both existing and future communities. Clause 11.02-1R (Settlement Hume) identifies the need to support growth and developments within regional cities, such as Shepparton, Wangaratta, Wodonga and Benalla.

11.03-3S Planning for Places - Peri-urban areas -

2. This clause aims to manage growth in peri-urban areas to protect and enhance their identified valued attributes by protecting areas that are strategically important for the environment, biodiversity, landscape, open space, water, agriculture and other natural resources. It further aims to establish growth boundaries for peri-urban towns to avoid urban sprawl and protect agricultural land and environmental assets. The subject site is within an area identified as being with 'peri-urban' Towong, however it is not within a town and is zone for agricultural use.
3. The proposed development will overlook Lake Hume and will result in a change to the landscape and remove part of the land from agriculture.

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12.01-15 Biodiversity - Protection of biodiversity -

4. This policy aims to protect and enhance Victoria's biodiversity. The proposal does not include the removal destruction or lopping of any native vegetation. The land is mostly pasture that has been grazed over a long period of time and the subdivision and subsequent development of the land is unlikely to have any impact on biodiversity.

12.03-15 Water Bodies & Wetland - River & riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands & billabongs –

5. This clause aims to protect and enhance waterway systems including Lake Hume. It requires development be sensitively designed and sited to maintain and enhance the waterway system and the surrounding landscape setting and environmental assets. It further directs that the design and siting of development minimizes the visual intrusion of development on the natural landscape views from major roads, bridge crossings, public open space recreation trails and within waterway systems themselves.
6. The images of the site below show that the two dwellings will be prominent on the landscape when viewed from Murray River Road and may be visible from Lake Hume



Figure 3 – View of the land from Murray River Road looking northwest.

Delegate Report



Figure 4 – View of the land from Murray River Road looking northeast



Figure 5 – View of the land from Murray river road Looking east

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Figure 6 – View of the land from Lake Hume

12.05-1S Significant Environments & Landscapes - Environmentally sensitive areas -

7. This clause aims to protect and conserve environmentally sensitive areas from development that would diminish their environmental conservation or recreational values.

12.05-2S Significant Environments & Landscapes - Landscapes -

8. This clause aims to ensure development does not detract from the natural qualities of significant landscape areas. The Murray River Road is a tourist drive that provides views over Lake Hume and the Murray River. The proposed dwelling will be setback from the Murray River Road, however due to the topography and the road formation the dwellings will be prominent on the landscape.

13.01-1S Climate Change Impacts - Natural hazards & climate change -

9. The impact of climate change is not anticipated to have any significant impact on the proposal. Any impacts can be mitigated to an acceptable level.

13.02-1S Bushfire - Bushfire Planning -

10. The responsible authority aims to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life. The land is designated as bushfire prone. The dwellings can be constructed to a BAL 12.5 rating and will be able to provide defensible space within the land.

13.02-1L Bushfire - Bushfire planning in Towong -

11. The responsible authority aims ensure that rural subdivision does not lead to an incremental loss of environmental and biodiversity values in an effort to reduce any fire risk and provide rural dwellings with adequate access and water for firefighting. Any permit issued for the proposal will require each dwelling to install a minimum of 45,000L of water with 20,000L set aside for firefighting purposes. The water tanks will be required to be constructed of non-corrosive materials and have CFA approved couplings and metal fittings.

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13.07-15 Amenity Human Health & Safety - Land use compatibility -

12. The responsible authority aims to protect community amenity, human health and safety while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial, infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off-site impacts.

13. The application was accompanied by a farm management plan that demonstrated that some agricultural uses could occur on the proposed lots however no definitive use is proposed to be established. The applicant aims to obtain the permit so that the two lots can be sold with a planning approval for dwellings. It is therefore not known what agricultural uses will be adopted and accordingly it is impossible to determine if the future use of the land will be compatible with the existing and surrounding land uses.

14. There is an existing quarry with a Work Authority (WA742) located on the land to the south of the proposed development that could result in land use conflicts due to noise, dust, vibration and vehicular traffic. The existing quarry is infrequently used. Further discussion of the impact of any quarry operation will be discussed further in the report in the assessment against the Rural Activity Zone.

14.01-15 Agriculture - Protection of agricultural land -

15. The responsible authority aims to protect the state's agricultural base by preserving productive farmland. This policy aims to avoid the permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the state's agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors. Further it aims to prevent inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas. It also aims to limit new house development in rural areas by directing housing growth into existing settlements and discouraging developing of isolated small lots in the rural zones from use for dwellings or other incompatible uses.

16. While the land is described as being of moderate agricultural potential it is productive land and currently forms part of a larger landholding that is used for agriculture. The development will result in two small lots with two dwellings and associated outbuildings and is contrary to these policies. VCAT Member Joel Templar in *Houben v South Gippsland SC [2024] VCAT 1219* in his decision to uphold Council's decision to refuse to grant a permit stated that "I am not persuaded that the dwelling use will be secondary to the agricultural use. Whilst I can see some obvious nexus between the proposed horse breeding operation and the need for a dwelling, the extent to which there is immediate need for presence on the land is not of sufficient scale to warrant a dwelling." In these proceedings a dwelling was proposed on land with an area of 22ha to support horse breeding. The applicant has listed a number of niche agricultural uses that could occur on the land however, in the absence, of a specific land use the dwelling will not be secondary to the use of the land for agriculture.

14.01-1L-01 Agriculture - Dwellings in rural areas -

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17. The responsible authority aims to limit new residential use and development on high quality agricultural land.
18. To ensure that dwellings on rural lots are compatible with the agricultural and environmental characteristics of the area.
19. The applicant has stated in the application that there is already a proliferation of dwellings on small lots within a 5km radius of the land. In *Symmons v Macedon Ranges SC [2024] VCAT 614* Senior Member Bennett in her decision to refuse to grant a planning permit for a dwelling on a lot of 5.7ha stated "I consider that just because other smaller lots have been used and developed for dwellings does not justify further approvals which would undermine those policies seeking to avoid construction of dwellings on small rural lots."

14.01-1L-02 Agriculture - Subdivision in rural areas -

20. This policy discourages subdivision that is likely to lead to a concentration of lots that would change the general use and character of the area. This policy particularly relates to the Farming Zone, however it is not limited to the Farming Zone and is applicable to the Rural Activity Zone as well. While the proposal is the re-subdivision of the land and will not result in any additional lots, the existing lot layout does not change the general use of the land for grazing. The proposal will result in a reduction in the agricultural potential of the land and effectively result in two rural lifestyle properties. The proposal has the potential to change the character of the area. The existing site has sweeping views across the land down to Lake Hume from the Murray River Road. This character will change with the construction of two dwelling and two large sheds on the land.

14.01-2S Agriculture - Sustainable agricultural land use -

21. The responsible authority aims to encourage sustainable agricultural land use. The applicant has provided options for niche uses of the land for agriculture, however there is no certainty that any agricultural use would be sustained on the land once it is subdivided and the dwellings constructed. There is no mechanism to bind a future landowner to a particular type of agriculture.

14.02-1S Water - Catchment planning & management -

14.02-2S Water - Water quality -

14.02-2L Water - Effluent disposal & water quality -

22. The land is located within the 300m buffer for effluent fields from Lake Hume. The applicant has demonstrated that all effluent can be disposed of on-site and outside the 300m buffer distance. The application was referred to Goulburn Murray Water who consented to the issue of a planning permit.

15.01-2S Built Environment - Building design -

23. The responsible authority aims to achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.



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15.01-6S Built Environment - Design for rural areas -

24. The proposal includes the construction of two large dwellings and two sheds. The land slopes from the Murray River Road down to Lake Hume and the construction of four buildings on this parcel of land will result in a change in the rural character of the area and interrupt the rural vistas.
25. The proposal is contrary to this clause in that the visual amenity of the rural landscape and character of the area along the Murray River Road tourist route will not be protected.
26. While the siting of the proposed development will not breach any ridgelines or hilltops the natural scenery and landscape features around Lake Hume will be interrupted by the development.

15.01-6L Built Environment - Sheds & outbuildings -

27. The proposed sheds will be located well away from the Murray River Road and is proposed to be clad in muted tones. Further the sheds will be setback appropriate distances from all waterways.

16.01-3S Residential Development - rural residential development -

28. The responsible authority aims to identify land suitable for rural residential development. This policy discourages development of small lots in rural zones for residential use or other incompatible uses. Further it aims to encourage the consolidation of existing isolated small lots in rural zones. The proposal is contrary to this policy in that it does not result in the consolidation of small rural lots but facilitates the development of two small lots in a rural zone.

Zone – Purpose and Decision Guidelines:

35.08-5 Rural Activity Zone - decision guidelines - general issues

The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

Any Regional Catchment Strategy and associated plan applying to the land.

The capability of the land to accommodate the proposed use or development, including the disposal of effluent.

How the use or development relates to sustainable land management.

Whether the site is suitable for the use and development and whether the proposal is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses. –

29. On balance the proposal is not consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework as discussed above.
30. The proposed dwellings can be setback a suitable distance from Lake Hume and all effluent can be disposed of on site without any risk to the water quality of Lake Hume.

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31. The proposal is for the re-subdivision of the land and the use and development of the land for a dwelling on each of the two lots together with two sheds. It is not considered that the applicant has demonstrated that the proposal is compatible with the adjoining land use. The applicant has provided a range of niche agricultural uses that could be achieved on the land however there is no certainty that the land will be used for these purposes. Therefore, it is not possible to determine if the proposal is compatible with adjoining land uses. The impact of the agricultural uses nearby and the location of the quarry opposite the site may not be compatible with the use of the land for a dwelling.

32. In *Strachan v Latrobe CC [2022] VCAT 35* Member Juliette Halliday in her decision to uphold Council's decision to refuse to grant a planning permit states "I have not been persuaded that if the hobby farm operation is started, it will sustainably persist in the long term. The FMP makes no provision for what is to occur if the hobby farm operation ceases, after the dwelling is constructed. In my view, once the dwelling is constructed, there is real risk that if the proposed hobby farm activity commences, it will not be sustained."

35.08-5 Rural Activity Zone - decision guidelines - agricultural issues

Whether the use or development will support and enhance agricultural production.

The potential for the use or development to limit the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.

The capacity of the site to sustain the agricultural use.

The agricultural qualities of the land, such as soil quality, access to water and access to rural infrastructure.

Any integrated land management plan prepared for the site. –

33. The proposal has not demonstrated that the use and development of the land for two dwellings on small lots will support and enhance agricultural production. In *Coolstream Super Pty Ltd v Macedon Ranges SC [2022] VCAT 490* Senior Member Margaret Baird in her decision to uphold Council's decision to refuse to grant a planning permit stated, "I am not persuaded that there is a 'notable absence of serious farming operations', as the applicant contends. It depends where one looks. There are 'hobby' operations, but I find the applicant's argument that there is now little 'serious' farming in this area underscores an issue that is at the forefront of the scheme's consideration. that is, ad hoc and incremental conversion of agricultural lots into residential lots with little agriculture, that cause gradual emergence of unplanned rural lifestyle precincts to the detriment of agricultural production. I find the proposal would exacerbate such an outcome, contrary to the scheme, including the prospect of inflated land values".

34. The applicant has described the land as being of low agricultural quality and supported this argument by the zoning of the land as Rural Activity rather than Farming. No other evidence of the agricultural qualities of the land such as soil quality or the reliability of the access to water was supplied with the application. It is noted that there is a dam on the site. The zoning of the land as Rural Activity in itself does not deem the land as having no agricultural value and, in fact, the land has been used for cattle grazing as part of a larger farming enterprise.

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Further a small section of the land to the east is within the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 and it's aim is to protect areas identified as being of high quality agricultural land. The land does not stop being productive at the boundary of an overlay.

35. A land management plan was supplied with the application that discussed the potential of the land for a range of niche agricultural uses that could occur on the land however no particular use was proposed. The applicant intends to subdivide the land and sell the land with the dwelling approval.

35.08-5 Rural Activity Zone - decision guidelines - accommodation issues

Whether the dwelling will result in the loss or fragmentation of productive agricultural land.

Whether the dwelling will be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land due to dust, noise, odour, use of chemicals and farm machinery, traffic and hours of operation.

Whether the dwelling will adversely affect the operation and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses.

The potential for accommodation to be adversely affected by vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990. –

36. The proposal will result in the fragmentation of agricultural land. The land is currently used for grazing in association with the larger landholding. While the land has been described as of moderate agricultural quality it is still productive land, albeit to a less extent than the high-quality agricultural land within the Farming Zone or covered by the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1.
37. The subdivision of land into two smaller allotments and the construction of two dwellings and two sheds will remove the area containing both dwellings, sheds and effluent fields from productive agricultural land. The balance of the land will occupy a small area that would no longer be productive.
38. The surrounding land contains a mix of small lots used as rural lifestyle properties and larger lots use for grazing. To the south of the subject site is a quarry with a Work Authority. While it is unlikely that the proposed dwelling will be adversely affected by the activities on the smaller allotments, there is the potential for the dwellings to be impacted by the agricultural activities on the larger lots to the north and the quarry to the south that has an approved Work Authority.
39. It is not anticipated that the proposed dwellings will have any impact on the adjoining land uses.
40. The approved quarry is a gravel quarry that is used intermittently. The current intensity of the use of the quarry is unlikely to have any detrimental impact on the proposed dwelling. There is, however, the potential for adverse impacts if the approved use of the quarry was to



Delegate Report

intensify. Any intensification of the use of the quarry is unlikely to require any further planning permission .

35.08-5 Rural Activity Zone - decision guidelines - environmental issues

The impact of the proposal on the natural physical features and resources of the area, in particular on soil and water quality.

The impact of the use or development on the flora, fauna and landscape features of the locality.

The need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridgelines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.

The location of on-site effluent disposal areas to minimise the impact of nutrient loads on waterways and native vegetation. –

41. It is not considered that the proposed subdivision and construction of dwellings and associated outbuildings will have any impact on soil or water quality. The proposed dwellings will be setback from Lake Hume. The land slopes gently towards Lake Hume. Any permit issued for the proposal will include a condition that environmental controls be put in place during and post construction to prevent any soil or silt leaving the site.

42. No native vegetation is proposed to be removed as part of the proposal and no impact on flora or fauna is anticipated.

43. The on-site effluent systems have been designed to ensure that all effluent can be disposed of on site. No impact on any waterways is anticipated. The application was referred to Goulburn Murray Water who consented to the issue of a planning permit subject to conditions.

35.08-5 Rural Activity Zone - decision guidelines - design & siting issues

The impact of the siting, design, height, bulk, colours and materials to be used, on the natural environment, major roads, vistas and water features and the measures to be undertaken to minimise any adverse impacts.

The impact on the character and appearance of the area or features of architectural, historic or scientific significance or of natural scenic beauty or importance.

The location and design of existing and proposed infrastructure including roads, gas, water, drainage, telecommunications and sewerage facilities.

Whether the use or development will require traffic management measures.

The need to locate and design buildings used for accommodation to avoid or reduce the impact from vehicular traffic, noise, blasting, dust and vibration from an existing or proposed extractive industry operation if it is located within 500 metres from the nearest title boundary of land on which a work authority has been applied for or granted under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990. –

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44. The proposed dwellings and shed will be clad in muted tones to soften the visual impact of the proposal. The dwellings are proposed to be single storey. The dwellings will, however, be a feature on the landscape when viewed from the Murray River Road. The proposed dwelling will interrupt the existing view lines to Lake Hume.



45. Figure 7 – The line of trees to the left of the picture are outside the title boundary. The dwelling on lot 1 will be located between the line of trees and the single tree in the middle of the land. The shed will be forward of the dwelling and between the dwelling and the trees. The dwelling on lot 2 will be located beyond the central trees and located between the trees and the road, the shed will be located to the right of the dwelling. The dwellings are rectangular in shape and will be orientated so that the long edge of the rectangle will be facing this view.

Overlay – Purpose and Decision Guidelines:

A small section in the eastern corner of the subject site is subject to the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1. The proposed dwelling locations are not subject to this overlay however the subdivision of the land must be considered against the decision guidelines below.

42.01-5 Environmental Significance Overlay - decision guidelines

The Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework.

The statement of environmental significance and the environmental objective contained in a schedule to this overlay.

The need to remove, destroy or lop vegetation to create a defensible space to reduce the risk of bushfire to life and property.

Any other matters specified in a schedule to this overlay. –

46. The proposal, on balance, is not consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
47. The objective of the Environmental Significance Overlay is to protect high quality agricultural land and ensure that it is preserved for productive agriculture. Only a small section of the land is within the mapped area. The applicant has advised that the agricultural potential of the land is limited and is of poor quality.



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48. As discussed earlier in this report the subdivision of the land and the construction of dwellings on the land will result in the fragmentation of the land and is therefore not consistent with the intent of the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1.

49. The schedule to the overlay specifically directs the following:

- Unless it can be demonstrated that a proposed development, including subdivision, maintains the productive potential of high quality agricultural land, there will be a presumption against granting a permit for that development.

The land is subject to the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 and consideration of the following decision guidelines is required and discussed below.

42.03-5 Significant Landscape Overlay - decision guidelines

The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

The statement of the nature and key elements of the landscape and the landscape character objective contained in a schedule to this overlay.

The conservation and enhancement of the landscape values of the area.

The need to remove, destroy or lop vegetation to create a defensible space to reduce the risk of bushfire to life and property.

The impact of the proposed buildings and works on the landscape due to height, bulk, colour, general appearance or the need to remove vegetation.

The extent to which the buildings and works are designed to enhance or promote the landscape character objectives of the area.

The impact of buildings and works on significant views.

Any other matters specified in a schedule to this overlay. –

50. The proposal, on balance, is not consistent with the objectives of the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework. This has been discussed above.

51. The assessment of the application against the Statement of nature and key elements of landscape is discussed below.

52. The construction of two dwellings and two out-buildings on the land will not conserve and enhance the landscape values of the area. The Murray River Road runs along the southern and western boundary of the subject site. The land slopes down towards Lake Hume and the construction of two dwellings and two sheds will have an impact of these vistas. The proposed dwellings will be clad in muted tones however the topography of the land and the path of the Murray River Road is such that the dwellings and sheds will interrupt the view lines to Lake Hume from the Murray River Road and change the landscape characteristics.

53. No native vegetation is proposed to be removed as part of the proposal. Defensible space can be provided around the dwellings without the need for the removal of any vegetation.

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42.03-5 1 Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 - statement of nature & key elements of landscape

Lake Hume is an important environmental and recreational resource that provides considerable economic, social and cultural benefits to both local and downstream communities. Lake Hume and its tributaries contain many important landscape features. There are several landscapes within the environs of Lake Hume that are classified by the National Trust. These include:

- Bethanga lookout.*
- Wodonga-Cudgewa railway line.*
- Mitta Mitta Valley.*

The use and development of land around the Lake can have an impact on the way the area is perceived and enjoyed by the visitors who use the Lake and also by residents who seek out this environment for the lifestyle and amenity it provides. It is intended to protect the scenic and environmental values of the Lake Hume and its environs in order to preserve the values that attract people to live and recreate in this attractive part of the Shire. -

42.03-5 5 Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 - decision guidelines

Except with the consent of the responsible authority new buildings and works shall be setback 200 metres from the full supply level of the Lake. Applications to reduce this setback will only be considered where they satisfy the Decision Guidelines and Application Requirements.

The following decision guidelines apply to an application for a permit under Clause 42.03, in addition to those specified in Clause 42.03 and elsewhere in the scheme which must be considered, as appropriate, by the responsible authority:

The impact of the proposed buildings and works on the landscape due to siting.

The impact of the proposed design on the landscape including height, mass, scale and exterior colour/finish of the proposed development.

Visual impact of the proposal from the public realm.

The extent to which the site of the buildings and works can be landscaped to mitigate visual impacts.

Whether the proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Lake Hume Land and On-Water Management Plan, 2009.

Protection of water quality and compliance with the Environment Protection Authority's Code of Practice for On-Site Waste Water Management.

Protection of the environment, including measures taken to minimise earthworks (including driveways) and avoid:

Vegetation removal.

Building and works on steep slopes.

Soil erosion.

Before deciding upon any application, the responsible authority must consider the views of National Trust (Victoria) where land is a classified National Trust Landscape. –

54. the proposed buildings will be setback 200m from the full supply level of Lake Hume and the effluent fields will be setback 300m.



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55. As discussed above the proposed buildings will have an impact on the landscape. The proposal will interrupt significant views of Lake Hume from the Murray River Road and change the landscape characteristics.
56. The western and southern boundary could be landscaped to reduce the visual impact of the dwellings however this landscaping would also interfere with the existing sweeping views of Lake Hume from the Murray River Road.
57. The proposed effluent fields have been designed to be more than 300m away from the full supply level of Lake Hume. The application was referred to Goulburn Murray Water who consented to the issue of a planning permit.
58. The land is not on a steep slope, any permit issued for the proposal will include conditions that aim to minimise the risk to the environment from any earthworks undertaken as part of the development. Further extensive landscaping would also be required as part of any permit that may be issued for the land.

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Municipal Planning Strategy

Clause 02.01 Context

Clause 02.01 provides to context of how Towong Shire fits within the Hume Region and the wider objectives of the State of Victoria.

Towong is identified as having the least diverse economy in the North Eastern Region being heavily dependent on agriculture. It also identifies Towong as having some of the most productive agricultural areas.

In an effort to increase the economic diversity and promote population growth Council has identified three spatial areas with the subject site being with the 'Peri Urban' Towong area. 'Peri-Urban' Towong is identified as an area located within the 40min travel/commute contour of nearby Albury-Wodonga where rural residential development is to be encouraged.

02.03-1 Strategic Directions - Settlement

This policy aims to direct development to settlements and facilitate development that contributes to a network of settlements that support each other in their service base. Talgarno is an area that has limited services based around sporting facilities and has evolved from the development of small lots in the Rural Living Zone and some development in the Rural Activity Zone. The proximity to Lake Hume and the risk of bushfire (particularly grass fires) limits the development and rezoning potential of the land, including the subject site.

02.03-2 Strategic Direction - Environmental & Landscape Values

This policy identifies Lake Hume as a significant water body and of significant landscape value. Significant rural landscapes are also a key component of the Shire's attractiveness as a visitor destination. This policy aims to protect and enhance areas of identified landscape and environmental value. Further the policy aims to ensure development is sited and designed so that it does not detract from the natural and aesthetic values of significant landscapes. The proposed subdivision and development of the two dwellings on the land will result in the intensification of development around Lake Hume. While the proposed dwellings will be downslope from Lake Hume they will be visible from Lake Hume and the Murray River Road and have the potential to be a feature on the landscape.

02.03-3 Strategic Direction - Environmental Risks & Amenity

This policy requires consideration of the impact of climate change and the risks associated with bushfire, flood, soil degradation and erosion and landslip. The land slopes towards Lake Hume. The gradient is not significant and the threat of erosion or landslip can be mitigated during the construction of the proposed dwelling. Further the threat of bushfire can also be mitigated.

Delegate Report

02.03-4 Strategic Direction - Natural Resource Management - Agriculture

This clause identifies agriculture as crucial to the Shire's economy. This policy aims to protect the high-quality agricultural land from development. It identifies the land is within the 40-minute commute to Albury/Wodonga where more diverse land uses and rural residential development are better located on low to moderate quality land. The land consists of two parcels of a larger landholding that has been used for agriculture.

The subject land is isolated from the balance of the property and is described by the applicant as low to moderate agricultural potential. While this policy aims to increase rural diversity and facilitate a wider cross section of the farming sector, including small farms it does not aim to increase the number of small farms through the re-subdivision of land.

02.03-6 Strategic Direction - Housing

This policy supports new rural living opportunities that are provided in proximity of existing towns. Further it identifies the peri-urban land to the northwest of the Shire as offering further opportunities for the provision of additional rural living development.

The policy aims to increase the diversity of housing sizes and types to meet the community needs. Further it encourages additional residential and rural living on the periphery of existing townships and settlements close to urban facilities.

The proposal to develop the land is supported by these policies however the policy aims to achieve this through formalising the rural living areas through appropriate rezoning. The subdivision of the land is not consistent with this policy in that the application does not propose the rezoning of the land.

Decision Guidelines

65.01 Approval of an Application or Plan Before deciding on an application or approval of a plan, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

Decision Guideline	Response
<i>The matters set out in section 60 of the Act.</i>	Considered
<i>Any significant effects the environment, including the contamination of land, may have on the use or development.</i>	Wastewater and effluent can be accommodated on the land
<i>The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.</i>	On balance the proposal is not consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework as discussed above



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<i>The purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision</i>	On balance the proposal is not consistent with the purpose of the Rural Activity Zone, Significant Landscape Overlay and the Environmental Significance Overlay as discussed above
<i>Any matter required to be considered in the zone, overlay or other provision</i>	These are discussed above
<i>The orderly planning of the area.</i>	The proposal does not reflect orderly planning for the area
<i>The effect on the environment, human health and amenity of the area.</i>	It is not anticipated that the proposal will have a significant impact on the environment or human health. The amenity may be affected by any future intensification of the quarrying activities in the vicinity of the proposal.
<i>The proximity of the land to any public land.</i>	The land is located within 100m of the highwater mark of Lake Hume
<i>Factors likely to cause or contribute to land degradation, salinity or reduce water quality.</i>	None are anticipated
<i>Whether the proposed development is designed to maintain or improve the quality of stormwater within and exiting the site.</i>	Any permit issued for the development will require that all stormwater be collected in water tanks and runoff dispersed on the land
<i>The extent and character of native vegetation and the likelihood of its destruction.</i>	No native vegetation is proposed to be removed
<i>Whether native vegetation is to be or can be protected, planted or allowed to regenerate.</i>	Any permit issued for the development will require a landscape plan and the protection of existing trees
<i>The degree of flood, erosion or fire hazard associated with the location of the land and the use, development or management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard.</i>	These can be mitigated
<i>The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.</i>	N/A



Delegate Report

<i>The impact the use or development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system. -</i>	Nil. The proposed access is via existing access in Drummond Road
---	--

65.02 Approval of an Application to Subdivide Land Before deciding on an application to subdivide land, the responsible authority must also consider, as appropriate:

Decision Guidelines	Response
<i>The suitability of the land for subdivision.</i>	The proposal is for a re-subdivision of the land that will create two small lots within the Rural Activity Zone that will reduce the agricultural use of the land
<i>The existing use and possible future development of the land and nearby land.</i>	The proposal will result in an intensification of dwellings in a rural zone. The planning scheme does not support the subdivision of the land as discussed above.
<i>The availability of subdivided land in the locality, and the need for the creation of further lots.</i>	There is land at Trewella Road and Tankards Lane that is zoned a Rural Living. Trewella Road consists of 9 lots and Tankards Lane is a proposed 22 lot subdivision There is land appropriately zoned for this use
<i>The effect of development on the use or development of other land which has a common means of drainage.</i>	All stormwater can be managed on each allotment
<i>The subdivision pattern having regard to the physical characteristics of the land including existing vegetation</i>	This is a two lot subdivision proposal that will not result in any vegetation removal. Each lot has access
<i>The density of the proposed development.</i>	The resultant lots are small and not consistent with the objectives of the Rural Activity Zone
<i>The area and dimensions of each lot in the subdivision.</i>	Refer to the proposed plan of subdivision
<i>The layout of roads having regard to their function and relationship to existing roads.</i>	No additional roads are proposed

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<i>The movement of pedestrians and vehicles throughout the subdivision and the ease of access to all lots.</i>	The proposal is a battleaxe arrangement. Lot 1 will have a long driveway
<i>The provision and location of reserves for public open space and other community facilities.</i>	Non are proposed
<i>The staging of the subdivision.</i>	N/A
<i>The design and siting of buildings having regard to safety and the risk of spread of fire.</i>	Sufficient defendable space will be available to each dwelling to be constructed to a BAL 12.5 rating
<i>The provision of off-street parking.</i>	N/A
<i>The provision and location of common property.</i>	N/A
<i>The functions of any owners corporation</i>	N/A
<i>The availability and provision of utility services, including water, sewerage, drainage, electricity, and, where the subdivision is not a residential subdivision, gas.</i>	Power is available to the lots. There is no town water. An onsite wastewater system will be required. No gas is available
<i>If the land is not seweraged and no provision has been made for the land to be seweraged, the capacity of the land to treat and retain all sewage and sullage within the boundaries of each lot.</i>	A Land Capability Assessment has been supplied with the proposal
<i>Whether, in relation to subdivision plans, native vegetation can be protected through subdivision and siting of open space areas.</i>	No native vegetation is proposed to be removed
<i>The impact the development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system. -</i>	Nil. The access is proposed to be via an existing access

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Conclusion

The proposal comprising of the re-subdivision of the land into two lots, use and development of the land for two dwellings and two outbuildings within 100m of a waterway and within 500m of land used for quarrying is not consistent with the relevant provisions of the PPF and the objectives of the Rural Activity Zone, the Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1. The Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 and requirement of the decision guidelines. It is therefore recommended that a Notice of Refusal be issued on the following grounds:

That the application for the subdivision of the land into two lots, use and development of the land for two dwellings and two outbuildings within 100m of a waterway and 500m of land use for extractive industry be refused on the following grounds:

1. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 02.03-2 – the siting of the proposed dwellings will detract from the natural and aesthetic value of the landscape
2. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 12.05-2S – the two dwellings and sheds will detract from the natural qualities of a significant landscape area.
3. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 13.07-1S – the applicant has not demonstrated that the use and development of the land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.
4. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1S – the proposal does not protect productive agricultural land from unplanned loss due to permanent changes in land use. The proposed land use is uncertain. The proposal will create two isolated small lots in the rural zone for use for dwellings.
5. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1L-01 – the proposal has not demonstrated that the proposed use and development of dwellings on the land are compatible with the agricultural and environmental characteristics of the area.
6. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-1L-02 – the subdivision will lead to a concentration of lots that would change the general use and character of the area.
7. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 14.01-2S – the proposal has not demonstrated that it will lead to the sustainable use of the land for agriculture.
8. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 15.01-6S – the visual amenity of the rural landscape and character of the area along the Murray River Road tourist route will not be protected.

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9. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 16.01-3S – the proposal will result in the development of small lots in the rural zone for residential use.
10. The proposal is not consistent with the purpose of Clause 35.08 – the proposal has not demonstrated that the land will be used for agriculture and that the use and development will not adversely affect the surround land use.
11. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 35.08-5 – the proposal has not demonstrated methods for sustainable land management; the dwellings and sheds will result in the fragmentation of agricultural land; the proposed land use has not been established and therefore there is uncertainty about the compatibility with adjoining and nearby land uses; there is a potential for adverse amenity impacts from the extractive industry; and the siting will impact on vistas from Murray River Road.
12. The proposal is not consistent with the purpose of Clause 42.03 – the proposal will not conserve and enhance the character of the significant landscape the dwellings and sheds when viewed from the western boundary from the Murray River Road will detract from the landscape character.
13. The proposal is not consistent with Clause 42.03-5 – the proposal does not protect Lake Hume and the surrounding landscapes from visual intrusion.

Declaration

In accordance with Section 130(2) of the Local Government Act 2020 and the Governance Rule 24, the following officer declares that they have no interest to disclose in providing this report:

Planning Officer: Margaret Fox



Recommendation:

That the application be referred to a Council Meeting for decision with a recommendation to issue a Notice of Refusal:

Report Officer: Mark Florence

Date: 22 August 2025

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

Cultural Heritage Management Plan No: 18608

Activity Size: Large

Assessment: Desktop & Standard

Sponsor: Mitta Valley Inc

(ABN: 28687938367)

Heritage Advisor: Damian Wall

*Author: Damian Wall, Olivia Hynam
& Jacqui Durrant*

Version 2

Date: 15/3/23

94 Kirby Flat Road,
Yackandandah, VIC 3749
Phone: 0402 344 574
ABN: 797 823 838 29
damian.wall@red-gum.com.au



Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
Section 65

Cultural Heritage Management Plan – Notice of Approval

CHMP Name: Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

CHMP Number: 18608

Sponsor: Mitta Valley Inc

ABN: 28 687 938 367

Heritage Advisor(s): Damian Wall

Author(s): Damian Wall, Olivia Hynam & Jacqui Durrant (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd).

Cover date: 15 March 2023

Pages: i-vi & 1-63

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SECRETARY (OR DELEGATE)	Yes	No
I have considered the Evaluation Report for this CHMP and:		
<i>I am satisfied that the CHMP has been prepared in accordance with the standards prescribed for the purposes of section 53 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.</i>	✓	
<i>I am satisfied that the CHMP adequately addresses the matters set out in section 61.</i>	✓	
<i>In considering this application, I consulted with and considered the views of Aboriginal persons or bodies I considered relevant to the application.</i>	✓	
<i>I have given proper consideration to any relevant human rights</i>	✓	
I, Simon Crocker, Acting Director Heritage Services First Peoples – State Relations, acting under authority delegated to me by the Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet, and pursuant to section 65(2) of the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> hereby <u>approve</u> refuse to approve this cultural heritage management plan: Signed:  SIMON CROCKER Dated: 14/04/2023		
- This notice of approval should be inserted after the title page and bound with the body of the management plan. - The conditions in this management plan are now compliance requirements. Officers from the Department of Premier and Cabinet may attend the subject land to monitor compliance with the conditions.		

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

Cultural Heritage Management Plan
Number: 18608

Activity Size: Large

Assessment: Desktop & Standard

Sponsor: Mitta Valley Inc
(ABN: 28687938367)

Heritage Advisor: Damian Wall

Authors: Damian Wall, Olivia Hynam & Jacqui Durrant

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in the Activity Area:
None

Version 2

Date: 15/3/23

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Compliance requirements are set out in Part 1 of the Cultural Heritage Management Plan. Part 2 describes the Assessment undertaken within the Activity Area.

Activity Area

Mitta Valley Inc ("the Sponsor") is proposing a new Mountain bike trail, located in the Mitta Valley, Victoria. The 30.9km of trail begins just west of the Mitta Mitta township, off the Omeo highway adjacent to the Mitta Mitta River before continuing south towards Mt Welcome and Deep Gully, forming a series of tracks and loops (Figure 1). The Activity area (being a 10m buffer of the track alignment) intersects two (2) planning zones (Public Conservation & Resource Zone and Farming Zone) and is in Towong Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA) in Northeast Victoria. The Activity area is situated on public land south of the Mitta Mitta township, currently managed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP).

The Sponsor

The sponsor for this CHMP is the Mitta Valley Inc (ABN: 28687938367).

The Activity

The activity is the development of a Mountain bike trail network, in the form of a series of trails and loops 30.9 km long. The 2m wide trail be machine built with a mini excavator (1.7-1.8T) within a 20m works corridor. The scope includes the development of 19 trails to suit multiple user demands and abilities, including a skills course, a beginners loop, and appropriate signage throughout. This trail will also include a Day Visitor area at the trail head including a carpark, toilet, bike rack facilities and picnic table installation. Some native vegetation removals along the trail alignment will be required plus some excavation and levelling to create a base for the trail and navigate around natural obstructions. Specific impacts are detailed in Section 4 of this CHMP.

Assessment Undertaken & Results

A Desktop and Standard Assessment were undertaken as part of the preparation of this CHMP. As the Desktop Assessment determined that it is reasonably possible for Aboriginal cultural heritage to be located within the Activity area and in accordance with r.64(1) of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018, a Standard Assessment was deemed necessary.

The Standard assessment did not record Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Activity area and concluded that the majority of works are proposed within areas where that have been disturbed through mining and/or forestry and/or are proposed on steep slope (>1H:1V). Aboriginal cultural heritage was considered 'highly unlikely' or a 'low probability' to occur within the Activity area, therefore a Complex Assessment was not conducted in accordance with r.64 (1).

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in the Activity Area

No Aboriginal cultural heritage material or places were located in the Activity area.

Contributors

Ms Jacqui Durrant' sole and specific attribution to this CHMP is Section 6.3 *Historical and Ethno-historical accounts in the geographic region*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Phillip Murray - Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation

Johnny Murray - Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation

Reg Murray - Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation

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Part 1. Cultural Heritage Management Conditions

These Management Conditions become compliance requirements once the CHMP is approved. Failure to comply with a condition is an offence under Section 67A of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

The Cultural Heritage Management Plan must be readily accessible to the sponsor and their employees and contractors when carrying out the activity.

1. Cultural Heritage Management Conditions

The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* requires a CHMP to set out Management Conditions for measures to be taken before, during and after the activity. No Aboriginal cultural heritage was identified during the Desktop or Standard Assessment, and no areas are identified as likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. No specific cultural heritage management activities are provided; however, one (1) general cultural heritage management condition has been detailed below.

1.1 Management Condition 1: Cultural Heritage Management Plan to be available onsite

A hard copy (or a digital copy on a suitable electronic device) of this approved Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) must be held onsite at all times within the on-site construction office or with the site manager if an office is not provided, where it will remain readily available to all construction staff.

2. Cultural heritage management contingencies

Clause 13(1) Schedule 2 of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018 requires that the management plan must contain a contingency plan for the matters referred to in Section 61 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, the resolution of disputes between the sponsor and the RAP, reviewing compliance with the CHMP including mechanisms for non-compliance, the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage identified during the activity, and the notification requirements in regards to the identification of Aboriginal cultural heritage during the activity.

Note that any notification and/or communication required as a result of adhering to these contingencies should refer to **Appendix 6** for relevant contacts. A Compliance Checklist has been added as **Appendix 5** for use prior to and during the works stage.

2.1 Contingency 1 – The discovery of Human Remains

If any suspected human remains are found during any activity, works must cease. The Victoria Police and the State Coroner's Office must be notified immediately. If there are reasonable grounds to believe the remains are Aboriginal, the Coronial Admissions and Enquiries hotline must be contacted immediately on 1300 309 519. This advice has been developed further and is described in the following 5-step contingency plan. Any such discovery at the activity area must follow these steps.

1) Discovery:

- a) If suspected human remains are discovered, all activity within at least 30 metres must stop
- b) The remains must be left in place and protected from harm or damage, and
- c) Do not contact the media; do not take any photographs of the remains other than those requested by the relevant authorities below.

2) Notification:

- a) If suspected human remains have been found, the State Coroner's Office and the Victoria Police must be notified immediately
- b) If there are reasonable grounds to believe the remains are Aboriginal Ancestral Remains, the Coronial Admissions and Enquiries hotline must be immediately notified on 1300 309 519
- c) All details of the location and nature of the human remains must be provided to the relevant authorities
- d) If it is confirmed by State Coroner's Office that the discovered remains are Aboriginal Ancestral Remains, the person responsible for the activity must report the existence of them to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council in accordance with section 17 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

3) Impact Mitigation or Salvage:

- a) The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council, after taking reasonable steps to consult with any Aboriginal person or body with an interest in the Aboriginal Ancestral Remains, will determine the appropriate course of action as required by section 18(2)(b) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- b) An appropriate impact mitigation or salvage strategy as determined by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council must be implemented by the Sponsor. All costs associated with this will be the responsibility of the Sponsor.

4) Curation and further analysis:

- a) The treatment of salvaged Aboriginal Ancestral Remains must be in accordance with the direction of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council.

5) Reburial:

- a) Any reburial site(s) must be fully documented by an experienced and qualified archaeologist and all relevant details provided to the Registrar
- b) Appropriate management measures must be implemented to ensure the Aboriginal Ancestral Remains are not disturbed in the future.

2.2 Contingency 2 – Aboriginal cultural heritage (excluding Aboriginal Ancestral Remains)**1) Secret / sacred objects**

- a) Any suspected Secret / Sacred Objects must be reported to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council, as per Part 2, Division 3 (sections 21-2) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.
- b) All works must stop within at least 10 metres of the objects
- c) The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council will transfer the object/s to an Aboriginal person that the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council is satisfied is entitled to and willing to take possession, custody or control of the object/s, or otherwise deals with the object/s as the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council thinks appropriate, as per section 21B of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

2) Discovery

If any other suspected Aboriginal cultural heritage, excluding Aboriginal Ancestral Remains and suspected Secret / Sacred Objects, is uncovered or identified:

- i) All works must stop within at least 10 metres of the suspected Aboriginal cultural heritage
- ii) The 'stop works' area around the suspected Aboriginal cultural heritage must be fenced off using appropriate temporary fencing and protected from further disturbance; "no-go zone" signage must be attached to the fencing at all times to prevent the area being disturbed further
- iii) An appropriately qualified Heritage Advisor must be notified within two working days
- iv) An appropriately qualified Heritage Advisor must inspect the suspected Aboriginal cultural heritage within three working days of notification
- v) Relevant Traditional Owner groups must be provided the opportunity to participate in the inspection.

3) Notification

The Department of Premier and cabinet (vahr@dpc.vic.gov.au) must be notified of the discovery of any Aboriginal cultural heritage excluding Aboriginal Ancestral Remains by the Sponsor within five working days.

4) Unexpected discoveries of Aboriginal cultural heritage

If the Heritage Advisor determines that the discovery is Aboriginal cultural heritage, and is not Aboriginal cultural heritage as described in Example Contingency 2.5:

- i) the Sponsor must consider whether it is possible to avoid harm to the Aboriginal cultural heritage, and if harm cannot be avoided, whether harm can be minimised, and salvage excavation of the Aboriginal cultural heritage undertaken to mitigate impact
- ii) if harm cannot be avoided, the Sponsor must arrange a meeting between the Heritage Advisor, relevant Traditional Owner groups (should they wish to attend) and the Department of Premier and Cabinet, as soon as practicable, to discuss and agree an appropriate way of managing the Aboriginal cultural heritage

- iii) all reasonable costs arising from the meeting and any agreed management actions must be borne by the Sponsor
- iv) the temporary fencing around the suspected or identified Aboriginal cultural heritage may be removed, and works re-commence in the “no-go zone”, when the suspected or identified Aboriginal cultural heritage has been investigated and managed appropriately, in accordance with *the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and as agreed in discussions with the Department of Premier and Cabinet
- v) the Heritage Advisor must record the Aboriginal cultural heritage in accordance with VAHR standards and relevant forms must be submitted to the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register as soon as practical.

5) Not unexpected Aboriginal cultural heritage and low-density artefact distributions

If the Heritage Advisor determines that the discovery is a low-density artefact distribution or other expected Aboriginal cultural heritage:

- i) the Heritage Advisor must record the Aboriginal cultural heritage in accordance with Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) recording standards, and relevant forms must be submitted to the VAHR as soon as practical
- ii) works can continue once the Aboriginal cultural heritage has been recorded and all temporary fencing is removed.

2.3 Contingency 3 – Custody and Management

Where the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council determines the approval of a Management Plan, the custody of Aboriginal cultural heritage (with the exception of Aboriginal Ancestral Remains, or secret or sacred objects) discovered during or after an activity must comply with the requirements of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and be assigned according to the following order of priority, as appropriate:

- a. any relevant Registered Aboriginal Party for the land from which the Aboriginal cultural heritage is salvaged
 - b. any relevant registered native title holder for the land from which the Aboriginal cultural heritage is salvaged
 - c. any relevant native title party (as defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*) for the land from which the Aboriginal cultural heritage is salvaged
 - d. any relevant Traditional Owner or Owners of the land from which the Aboriginal cultural heritage is salvaged
 - e. any relevant Aboriginal body or organisation which has historical or contemporary interests in Aboriginal cultural heritage relating to the land from which the Aboriginal cultural heritage is salvaged
 - f. the owner of the land from which the Aboriginal cultural heritage is salvaged
 - g. Museum Victoria.
- 1) Final management arrangements, such as repatriation and / or reburial, must occur within six months of the completion of the activity.
 - 2) If the relevant Traditional Owners request, and if it is practical, provisions should be made to re-bury artefacts within the activity area, in a place which will not be disturbed by future works. (Note, if reburial is to be within the extent of registered place the management plan must allow for that harm to occur.)
 - 3) Any reburial must be documented by a suitably qualified Heritage Advisor and the relevant forms and spatial data provided to the VAHR, as soon as practicable.

2.4 Contingency 4 – Dispute Resolution

This contingency has no application as the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council is evaluating the Management Plan.

2.5 Contingency 5 – Compliance

In the event of suspected non-compliance:

- a) All relevant works must stop
- b) The Sponsor must contact the Statewide Compliance and Enforcement Unit (compliance.aboriginalvictoria@dpc.vic.gov.au) within two working days to review the suspected non-compliance and agree to any required remedies
- c) If agreement cannot be reached by all parties, the Minister may order an audit of the management plan.
- d) All reasonable costs arising from the meeting and any agreed remedies must be borne by the Sponsor.

Part 2. Assessment

3. Introduction

Mitta Valley Inc ("the Sponsor") is proposing a new Mountain bike trail, located in the Mitta Valley, Victoria. The 30.9km of trail begins just west of the Mitta Mitta township, off the Omeo highway adjacent to the Mitta Mitta River before continuing south towards Mt Welcome and Deep Gully, forming a series of tracks and loops (Figure 1).

The activity area intersects two (2) planning zones (Public Conservation & Resource Zone and Farming Zone) and is located in the Towong Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA) in Northeast Victoria. It is recommended that the 2m wide trail be machine built with a mini excavator (1.7-1.8T) within a 20m works corridor.

The scope includes the development of 19 trails to suit multiple user demands and abilities, including a skills course, a beginners loop, and appropriate signage throughout. This trail will also include a Day Visitor area at the trail head including a carpark, toilet, bike rack facilities and picnic table installation. Some native vegetation removals along the trail alignment will be required plus some excavation and levelling to create a base for the trail and navigate around natural obstructions. Specific impacts are detailed in Section 4 of this CHMP.

3.1 The reasons for preparing a Cultural Heritage Management Plan

This CHMP is a mandatory plan under s.46 (1)(a) of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (the Act). A CHMP is required under r.7 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018* (Vic) (the Regulations) if any part of the activity area is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, and any part of the activity is considered to be a high impact activity. This CHMP has been prepared as a result of the following findings:

- The Activity area intersects one (1) mapped area of cultural heritage sensitivity in accordance with r.26 of the Regulations:
 1. Within 200m of a named waterway – Mitta Mitta River, Snowy Creek and Deep Gully; and
 2. The proposed activity is considered to be a *high impact activity* in accordance with r.47 Constructing specified items of infrastructure:
 - (1) The construction of any one or more of the following is a high impact activity if the construction would result in significant ground disturbance—
 - (b) a bicycle track with a length exceeding 500 metres;

3.2 Notice of Intention to prepare a Cultural Heritage Management Plan

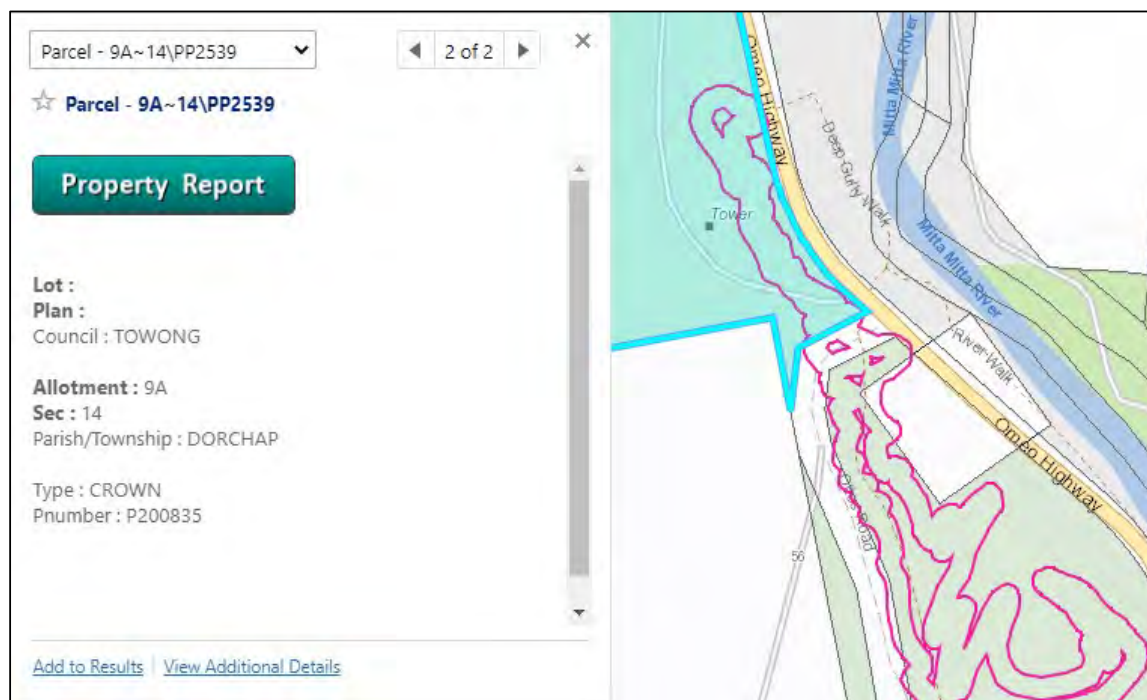
Currently there is no Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the activity area. A Notice of Intention (NoI) to prepare a plan was provided to the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) on 10th February 2022. A copy of this notice is in Appendix 1.

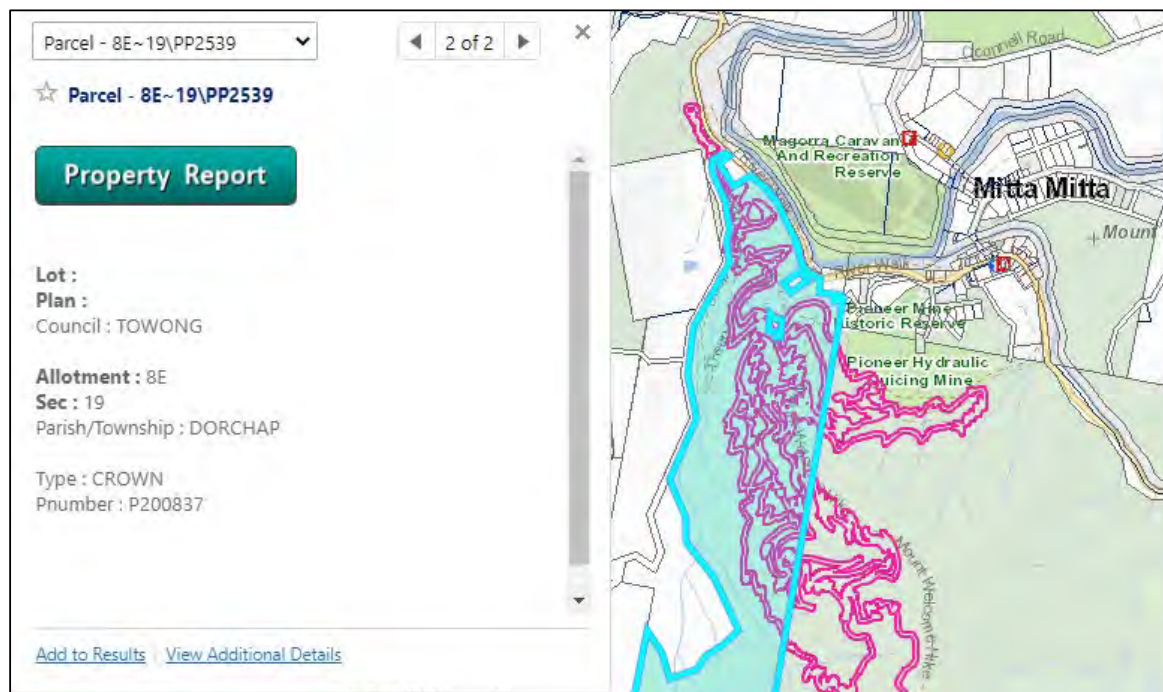
3.3 Location and Extent of the Activity area

The 2m wide by 30.9km long walking path is to be constructed within a 20m works zone, southwest of the Mitta Mitta township located in the Towong Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA) in North East Victoria (Map 1). The entirety of the site is managed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. There are no registered Aboriginal places in the activity area. The Activity area intersects SPI/LPI details listed in Table 1.

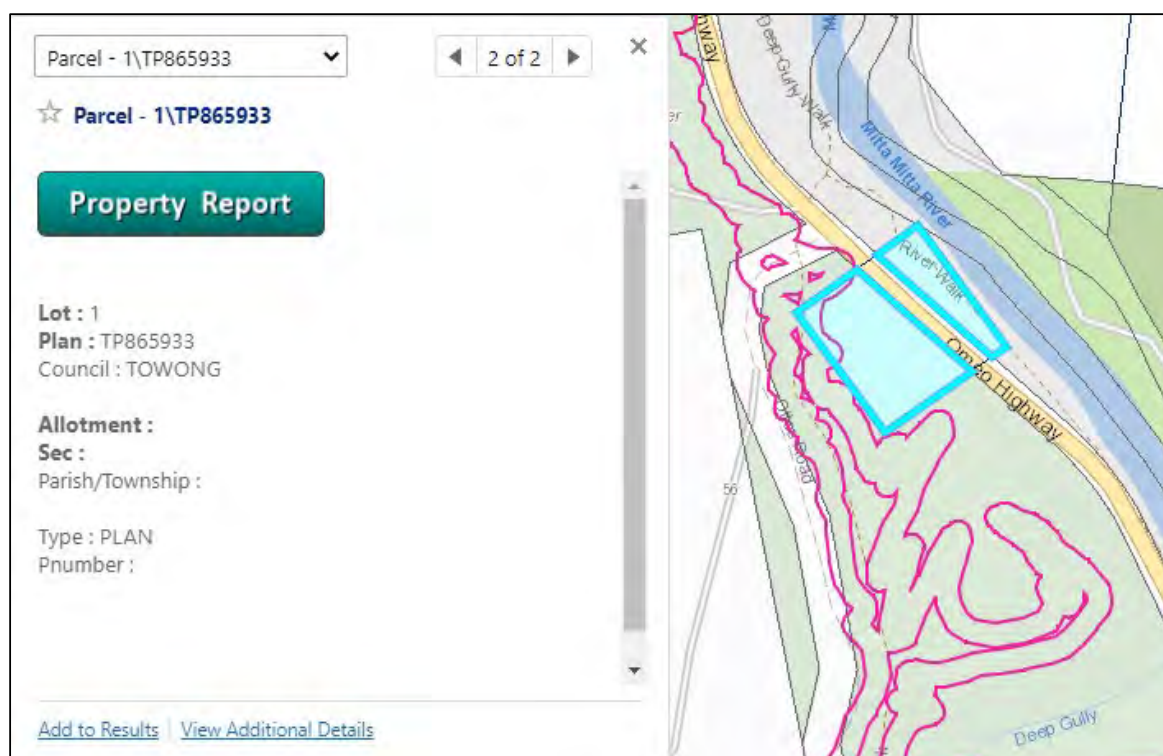
Table 1: Crown Allotment & SPI Details of the Linear Activity area

Crown Description	Address	Standard Parcel Identifier (SPI)	Parish	Screenshot
Allotment 9A	OMEIO HIGHWAY MITTA MITTA 3701	9A~14\PP2539	Dorchap	A
Allotment 8E	OMEIO HIGHWAY MITTA MITTA 3701	8E~19\PP2539	Dorchap	B
Lot 1	OMEIO HIGHWAY MITTA MITTA 3701	1\TP865933	N/A	C
Allotment AE	OTTOS ROAD MITTA MITTA 3701	A8\PP2539	Dorchap	D
Allotment 2015	DISAPPOINTMENT TRACK MITTA MITTA 3701	2015\PP3033	Magorra	E

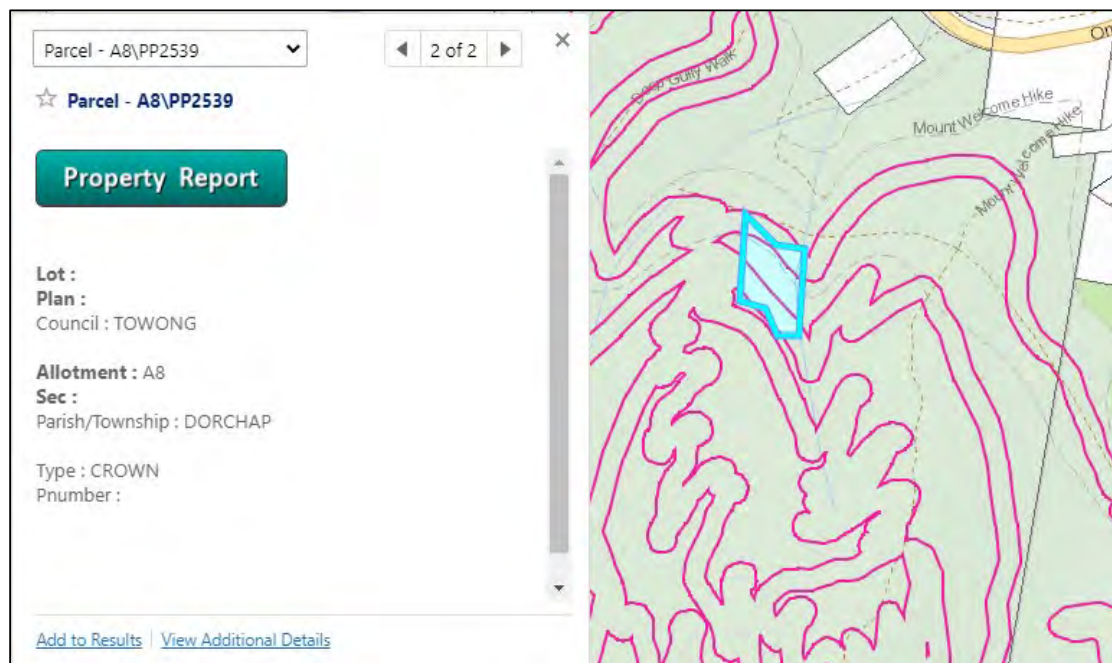
Screenshot A: Allotment 9A¹¹ Screenshots and parcel details obtained from: <https://mapshare.vic.gov.au/mapsharevic/>



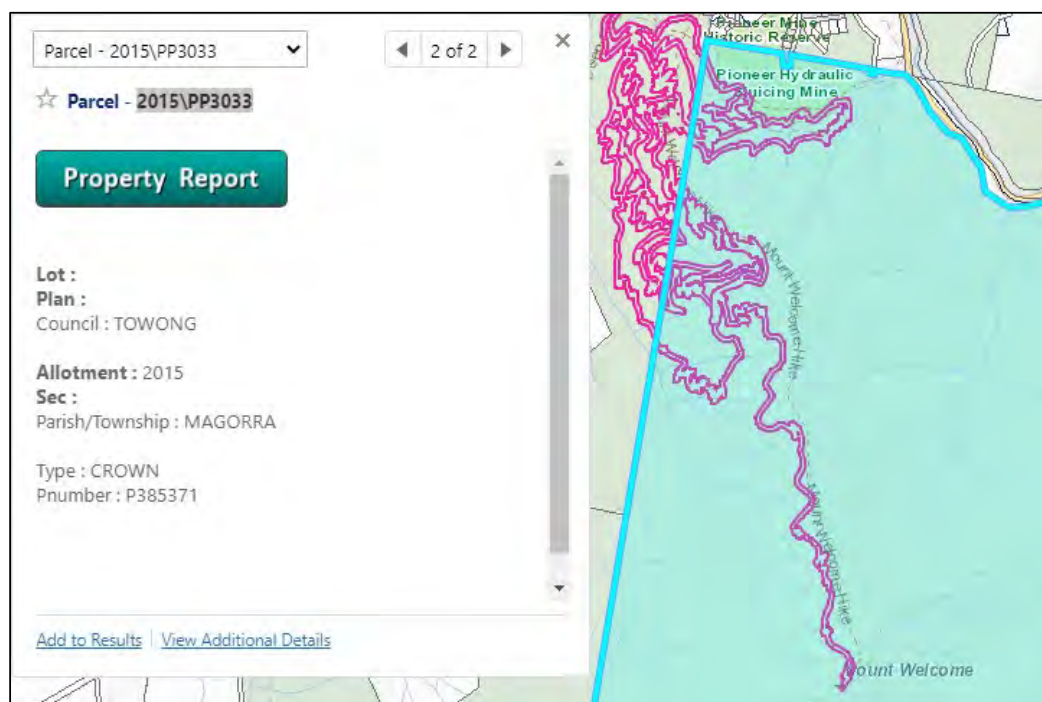
Screenshot B: Allotment 8E



Screenshot C: Lot 1



Screenshot D: Allotment A8



Screenshot E: Allotment 2015

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701CHMP No: 18608

3.4 Sponsor

The sponsor for this CHMP is the Mitta Valley Inc (ABN: 28687938367). The Sponsors contact for the works described in the CHMP is:

Name: Megan Graham

Postal Address: 5557 Omeo Hwy, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

Phone: 0411 645 415

Email: megan.graham@latitude36advisory.com

3.5 Owners and occupiers of the land

The Activity area is situated on public land south of the Mitta Mitta township, currently managed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning.

3.6 Heritage Advisors

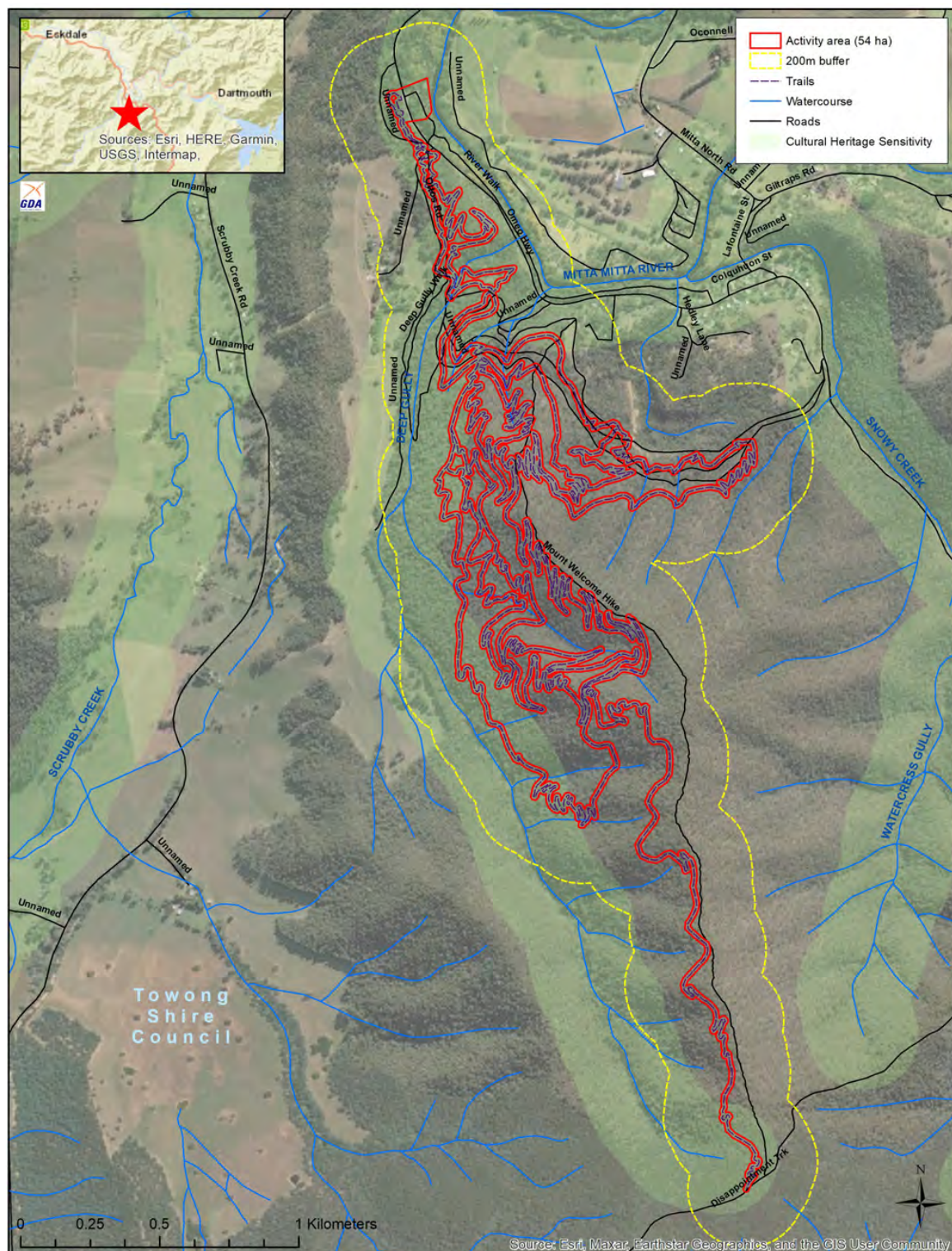
Damian Wall (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd) has 15 years' field experience in Archaeological practice, is a Full Member of the Australian Association of Consulting Archaeologists Inc (AACAI) and has a Graduate Certificate in Cultural Heritage Management from Flinders University (SA). Damian is suitably qualified under section 189 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and appropriately qualified in archaeology to supervise excavation for a complex assessment as specified in Aboriginal Heritage Regulation 2018, s.61(3).

3.7 Registered Aboriginal Parties

Currently there is no Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the Activity area. The Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) will assess this CHMP. The Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation (DDAC) are an interested party in the region including the activity area and had representatives involved in review of the Draft CHMP and development of the Management Conditions.

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

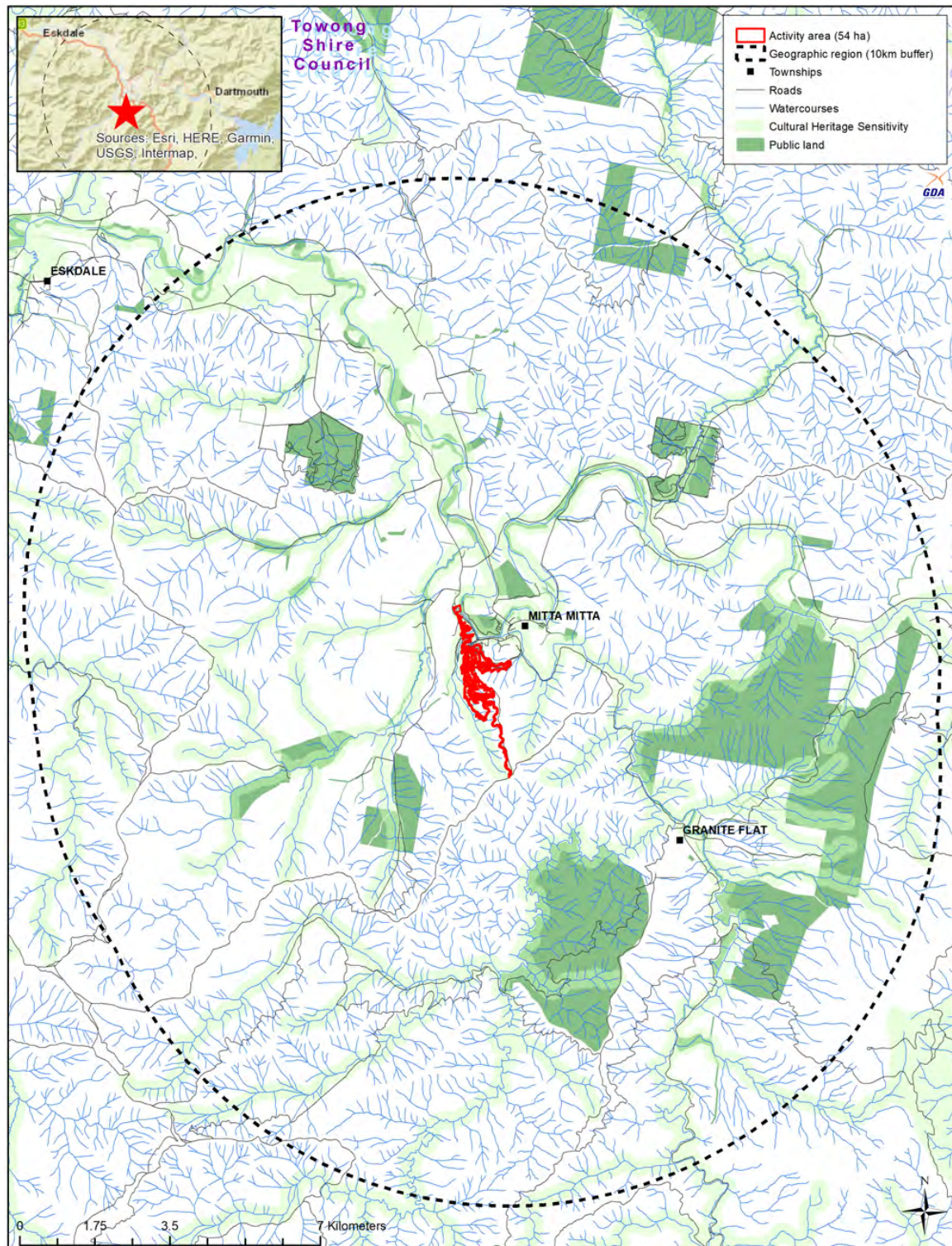
CHMP No: 18608



Map 1: Activity area location. Scale 1:17,000. Source: ESRI Australia, 2022

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

CHMP No: 18608



Map 2: Geographic Region (10km buffer) of the Activity Area, Cultural Heritage sensitivity. Scale: 1:110,000. Source: Nearmap, 2022.

4. Activity Description & Potential Impacts

Mitta Valley Inc ("the Sponsor") is proposing a new mountain bike trail, approximately 30.9km in length beginning just west of the Mitta Mitta township, off the Omeo highway adjacent to the Mitta Mitta River before continuing south towards Mt Welcome and Deep Gully, forming a series of tracks and loops situated in the Towong Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA) in North East Victoria (Figure 1).

The 2m wide trail be machine built with a mini excavator (1.7-1.8T) within a 20m works corridor. The scope includes the development of 19 trails to suit multiple user demands and abilities, including a skills course, a beginners loop, and appropriate signage throughout. This trail will also include a Day Visitor area at the trail head including a carpark, toilet, bike rack facilities and picnic table installation. Some native vegetation removals along the trail alignment will be required plus some excavation and levelling to create a base for the trail and navigate around natural obstructions.

4.1 Statement of Potential Impacts

The proposed activity involves construction of the new mountain bike trail, in the form of approximately 30.9km of trail beginning just west of the Mitta Mitta township, off the Omeo highway adjacent to the Mitta Mitta River before continuing on towards Mt Welcome and Deep Gully, forming a series of tracks and loops. The proposed development will involve disturbance to both surface and potential buried land surfaces. All activities are to be contained within the area assessed by this CHMP.

The proposed trail network from the trailhead to the end of Trail 8 'Ridge descent to Mid Feeder' that connects to Disappointment track (existing) is approximately 30.9km long. It is recommended that the trail be machine built with a mini excavator (1.7-1.8T) within a 20m works corridor. This method will enable easy construction of features of the trail such as jumps, berms, etc. These features are critical to the success and sustainability of the trail.

The scope includes the development of 19 trails to suit multiple user demands and abilities, including a skills course, a beginners loop, and appropriate signage throughout. Trails graded GREEN will be suited for beginners of all abilities, with aims to develop riders skills, these trails will form a loop. Trails graded BLUE will be suitable for intermediate riders. They will be single track trails with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles. Trails graded BLACK DIAMOND will be suitable for the experienced rider. They will provide challenging single tracks with steep gradients, variable surfaces and many obstacles. Trails graded DOUBLE BLACK DIAMOND will be extremely difficult, incorporating very steep gradients, highly variable surfaces and unavoidable obstacles.

The proposed trail network is approximately 30.9km long with elevations ranging between 260-880m. Several sections may require small water crossings/bridges/boardwalk (Photo 1). The rest of the trail is expected to be machine built with a mini excavator (1.7-1.8T), or hand built when required. It is recommended that galvanised steel structures with fibre reinforced plastic (FRP) decking materials are used for the bridges and boardwalk sections. The trail network is to be constructed using the following methods:

- Machine constructed trail – 2m wide max., depth 0.2m max
- Hand constructed trail - 2m wide max., depth 0.2m max
- Rock armouring where required.
- Trailhead facilities – Most facilities are already constructed in the existing rest stop but there may be some minor clean-up required by mini-excavator on the surface of the carpark and entry to the trail (0.05m max depth).
- Elevated boardwalk structures including footing construction - boardwalk width 1400mm, footings: 350mm (W) 600mm (D) approximately.
- Minor bridges including footing construction - bridge width 1400mm, footings 400mm (W) and approximately 600mm (D).
- Signage –information boards, interpretive signage, caution signage - 350mm (W) 800mm (D) and interpretive signage– 350mm (W) and approximately 800 mm (D).
- Wayfinding/Directional totems - 300mm (W) and approximately 600mm (D).

4.1.1 Machine constructed trail – mini excavator

This project will largely be constructed using a 1.7T to 2T mini excavator which is used to create the defined 2m trail width. The following steps outline the process for construction of the trail using an excavator.

1. Review the assessed corridor up to 100-200m ahead of excavator. The assessed corridor is marked using pink flagging tape tied to trees/vegetation during the ground-truthing stage and mapped with GPS. The ground-truthed corridor is defined to include 10m either side of the flagged alignment, subject to other waterway constraints.
2. Determine the exact alignment to be taken within the alignment corridor, factoring in avoidance of SRZs/TPZs or other requirements advised by the heritage and ecology specialists.
3. Clear the 1-2m construction corridor of vegetation. The construction corridor is defined as the horizontal corridor from the top of the upslope batter to the toe of the downslope batter and the vertical corridor to about 2.4 m high (enough to allow passage of the excavator).
4. Cut the bench using cut and fill technique outlined in IMBA Trail Solutions guide. The topsoil and mineral earth removed from the inner side of the bench are used to build up the outer edge of the bench.
5. Clean up the trail tread, removing loose rocks and roots, compacting the tread, back sloping the batter and managing drainage.
6. On flat ground the topsoil is removed to 2m width with the excavated zone refilled with excavated material to a level marginally higher than the surrounding ground. The surface is compacted in the same manner with a slight crown at the centreline to ensure water shedding from the trail surface to the surrounding ground.

4.1.2 Hand Constructed Trail

The process for hand constructed trail is similar to machine constructed trail. It is used in situations where it may be dangerous for a machine to operate, areas of high ecological or heritage sensitivity or where trail widths are required to be kept as narrow as possible. Instead of using a machine to bench the trail tread area as described above, this is cut using hand tools.

4.1.3 Rock Armouring

Rock armouring may be used for small drainage crossings or narrow wet areas to improve the trail tread resistance and avoid damage to the environment.

1. If required, during the trail construction, rocks which are unable to stay in-situ will be re-used as part of the rock armouring process. All rock armouring installation will be in accordance with the IMBA Trail Solutions guidebook.
2. Excavate soil from the area to be rock armoured, to the approximate depth of the rocks to be used.
3. Place rocks in position per requirements in the IMBA Trail solutions guidebook.
4. Once all rock armouring is complete, use any leftover soil/rocks to pack in around the edges of the rock armouring.

4.1.4 Elevated Structures/Minor Bridges/Culverts

These structures are typically used to enable a trail to cross over a waterway or area of soft or boggy ground. The use of Fibre Reinforced Plastic (FRP) decking allows light and water to penetrate through the bridge, thus minimizing the impact on the vegetation below. Where extended elevated board walks are required, footings should be created in a manner which minimises impact to sensitive wet areas. Wherever possible structures should be less than 1m above the ground to mitigate the requirement for handrails which create additional riding hazards.

Construction of elevated structures/bridges should be undertaken after trails are excavated to ensure accurate measurements and easier access to the construction site with materials.

4.1.5 Signage

Wayfinding signage will be located at sections where the proposed trail intersects with other trails to provide information to users, or in locations to provide advance warning while using the trail. The signs will be installed within the 2m corridor where the trail is to be constructed, where vegetation has already been removed as part of the construction of the trails. No additional vegetation removal is required to install trail signage. Trailhead and caution signage will also provide information on use of the trail, including hazards, trail rules and general information.



Photo 1: Concept of the crossings/bridges. Source: Terrain Trail Construction, 2019.

4.1.6 Impacts Summary

These activities listed above have the potential to impact on the current land surface, subsurface deposits, any buried land surfaces and surface and/or subsurface Aboriginal cultural heritage that may be present in the activity area. The activity area intersects two (2) planning zones PCRZ and FZ (Public Conservation & Resource Zone and Farming Zone) and is located in the Mitta Valley in the Towong Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA) in North East Victoria.

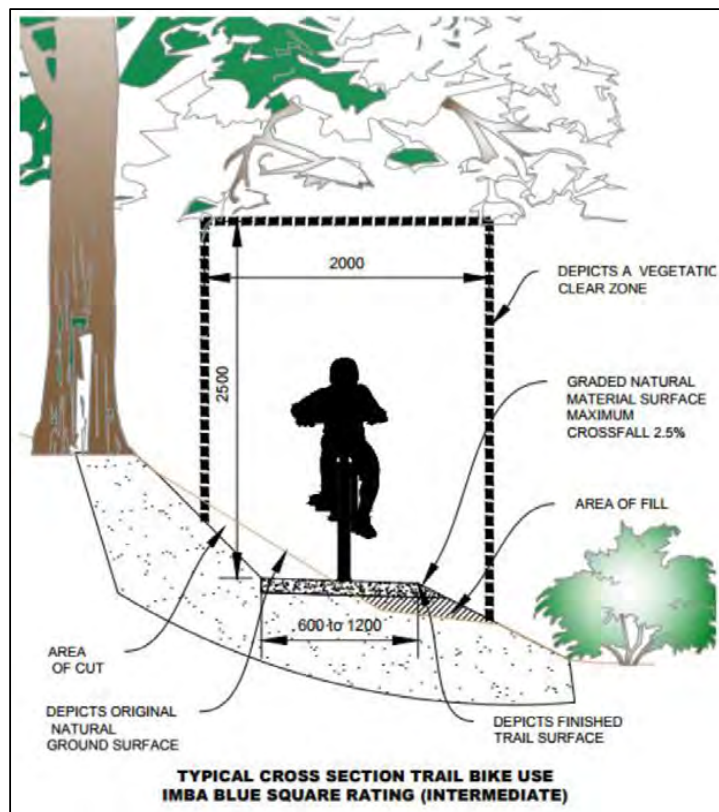


Figure 1: The proposed construction cross section of the bike trail. Source: Terrain Trail Construction, 2021.

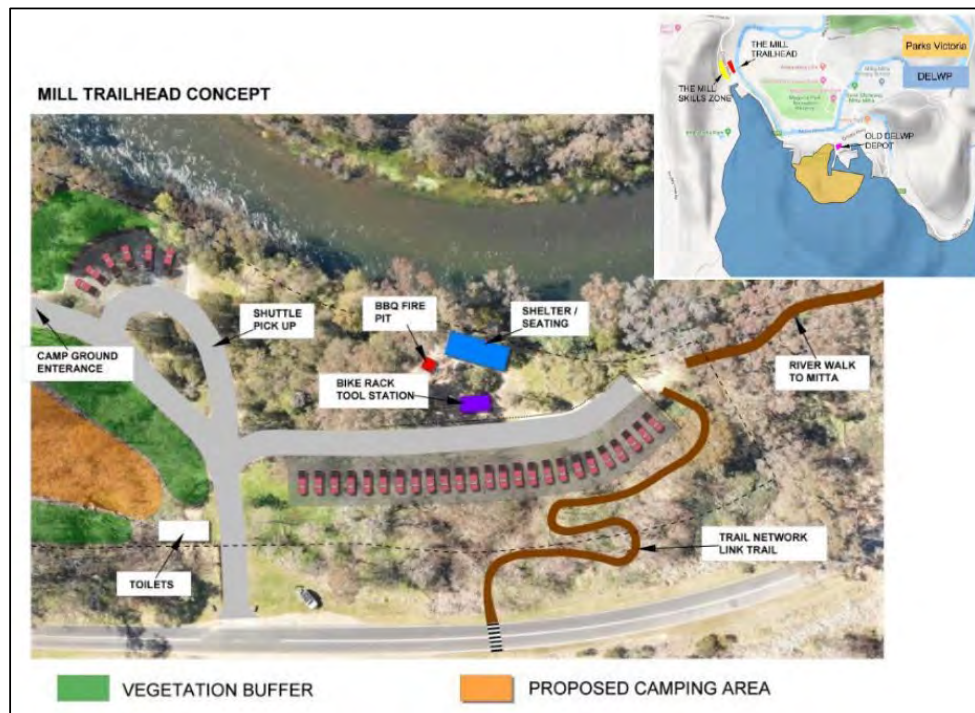


Figure 2: Concept design of trailhead area. Note most facilities are already built at the existing roadside stop. Source: Terrain Trail Construction, 2021.

5. Documentation of Consultation in Relation to the Assessment

A Notice of Intent to Prepare a Management Plan (NOI) was submitted to the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) 10th February 2022 in accordance with s. 54 of the Act (Appendix 1).

An inception meeting between Damian Wall (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd) and Phil Murray (Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation) was held via phone on 4th February 2022 and it was agreed that the survey methodology was to be the heritage advisor walking the entire area with two (2) Aboriginal representatives from Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation (DDAC).

5.1 Fieldwork Participation

A Standard Assessment was undertaken on the 11th of February 2022 by Damian Wall (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd), Phil and Johnny Murray (Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation), and Leigh Holland (Terrain) representing the Sponsor.

An additional walkover/inspection was undertaken on the 16th February 2023 by Damian Wall (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd) and Reg Murray (Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation).

5.2 Consultation in relation to the Management Conditions

A Standard assessment summary and management conditions meeting was held on site post the Standard Assessment on February 11th 2022 between Damian Wall (Heritage Advisor, Red-Gum Environmental Consulting), Phil and Johnny Murray (Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation) also involving Leigh Holland (Terrain) representing the Sponsor.

The meeting discussed the effectiveness of the methodology and the results of the assessment (Section 7). All representatives agreed that the Standard assessment had adequately assessed the Activity area for the presence of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and were satisfied with the proposed Management Conditions and contingencies.

During the second inspection with Reg Murray (DDAC), the assessment approach/effectiveness was reviewed, Reg Murray agreed that the Standard assessment (and additional inspection) had adequately assessed the Activity area for the presence of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and was satisfied with the proposed Management Conditions and contingencies.

5.3 Summary of outcomes

Following consultation with DDAC during the preparation of the CHMP and during the fieldwork stage, Management Conditions and contingencies were developed for the activity. A summary of consultation is presented in Appendix 2.

6. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Desktop Assessment

6.1 Introduction

Under Part 3 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018*, a CHMP must include a desktop assessment and if required, also a Standard Assessment and/or a Complex Assessment. The desktop assessment was undertaken by Damian Wall & Jacqui Durrant to determine the likelihood of the activity area containing Aboriginal cultural heritage and to assist in assessing the significance of any heritage that may be found. Desktop research provides information enabling predictions to be made as to whether a place may contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. This research involves the following:

- Investigating the site registry.
- Reviewing other cultural heritage reports undertaken within the geographic area.
- Reviewing local ethnographic histories of the area.
- Research into past historic landuse.
- Reviewing local histories of the area.
- Researching the geomorphology and geology of the region encompassing the Activity area.

6.2 The Geographic region

For the purposes of this report, the geographic region is considered as a 10km buffer of the Activity area as this area is considered to contain a representative sample of all features that exist throughout the landforms relevant to the Aboriginal cultural heritage that may be present (Map 3). This assessment will study comparable landscape factors including geology, topography, environmental conditions and occurrence of potential archaeological sites. Those sites within the geographic region, that have the most similar landscape features to that of the activity area have been prioritised for scrutiny.

6.2.1 Climate

Climate conditions have been sourced from the nearest weather observation station in Mount beauty, approximately 30 km southwest of the activity area. Average daytime maximum temperatures in Mount beauty are 20 °C with summer time maximums reaching 29 °C and prevailing winds from the northwest. Rain typically falls as thunderstorms in the summer, and in winter with cold fronts, with February the driest month and August the wettest (BOM, July 2022). Rainfall averages out to 1263.2 millimetres (49 in) a year, most of which falls in winter with passing frontal systems; however, these can occur at any time of year, and the main form of rainfall in spring and summer is from thunderstorms (BOM, July, 2022).

Aboriginal people have been in Australia for at least 40–60,000 years and possibly longer (Allen 1989; Jones 1995). This period falls within the last world climatic downturn or glacial period, which commenced about 80,000 years ago. During the glacial period, the climate was up to 6°C lower in the southern hemisphere, the tree line was lowered, and large glaciers formed in Tasmania and on the Great Divide (Gibson et al. 1987). Greater amounts of water held within the large glaciers and ice sheets led to lower sea levels and Tasmania and Papua New Guinea were joined to Australia by land bridges. The climate was much drier and cooler and landmasses stretched to the edge of the continental shelf. After 26,000 years before present (BP) the climatic downturn became more severe and sea levels were at their lowest and the climate at its coldest at 18,000 BP (Bowler et al. 1976: 374; Dodson et al. 1992: 117; Freslov 2018: 27).

Temperatures were up to 6°C lower than today and while Tasmania was heavily glaciated, on the mainland cirque glaciers were only found at Mount Kosciuszko (Peterson 1968: 74–75). As conditions ameliorated following the last glacial, it became milder, but wetter and the tree line increased to its present altitude. Vegetation dependant on wetter conditions expanded, including rainforests and wet sclerophyll forests, reaching its maximum extent during the mid-Holocene at 5000 BP (Gell & Stuart 1989: Figures 6–11). Since 5000 BP, conditions have been cooler and drier, with the ENSO (El Nino Southern Oscillation) weather pattern becoming more dominant (Rowland 1999: 18; Sandweiss et al. 1996). Increased fire risks and extensive fires are associated with a periodic but severe ENSO weather pattern (Freslov & Goulding 2002; Freslov 2018: 27).

6.2.2 Geology

The Activity area is located in the Eastern Highlands (Map 3), which is mountainous with several wide, flat river valleys cutting into the highlands and draining into the Murray River system. The area is part of the Lachlan Fold Belt and within the Omeo Structural Zone, incorporating parts of the High Plains and Corryong subzones, and the Wagga–Omeo Metamorphic Belt (Simpson et al, 2001).

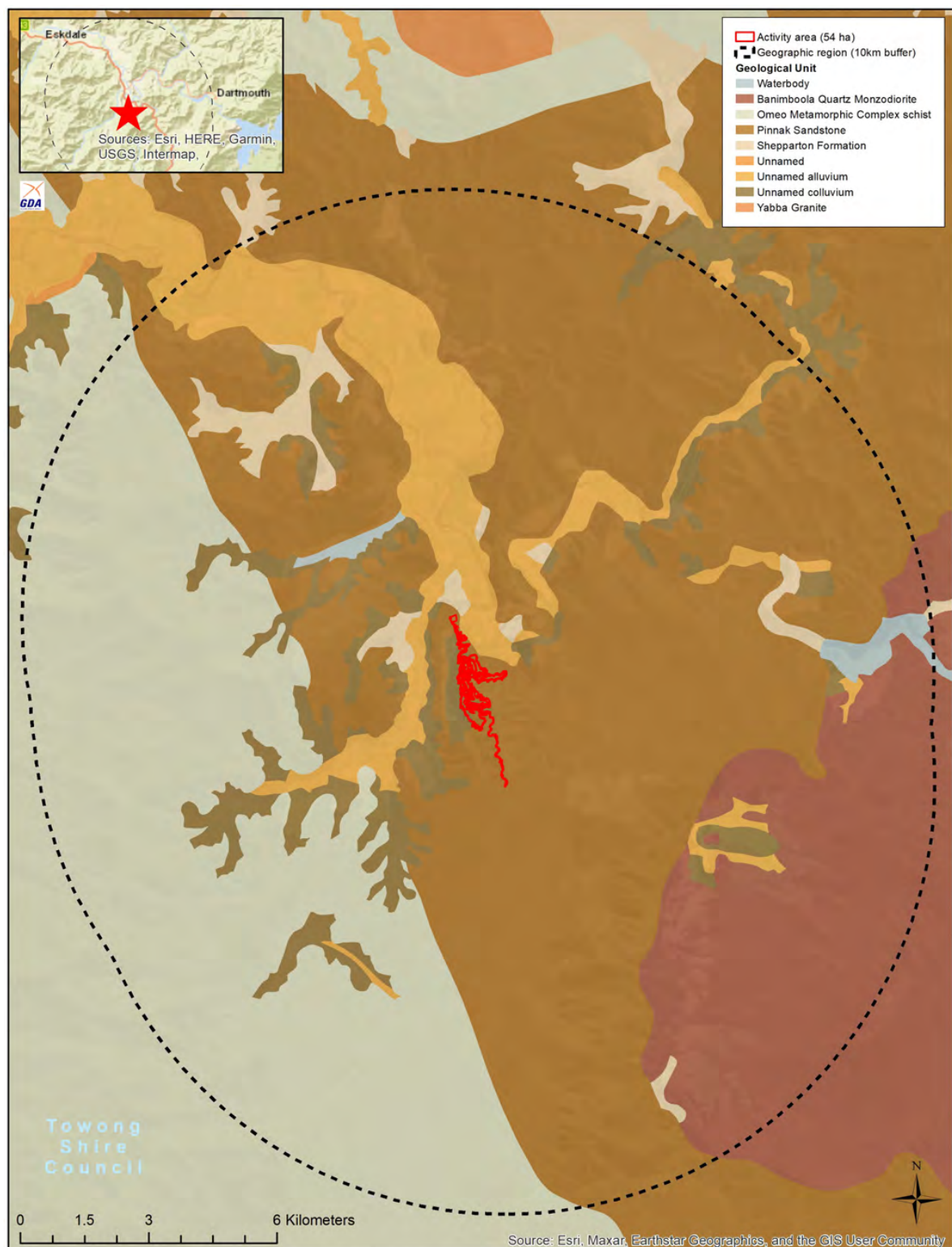
Oppy et al (1995) prepared a report on the Geology and prospectivity of the Tallangatta 1:250 000 sheet which includes the Activity area. The study area covered much of the Omeo Zone of Victoria, and also parts of the Kosciusko Batholith and Kiandra Group of New South Wales. The Palaeozoic history of the Omeo Zone is very complex; a poorly understood episode of sedimentation, volcanism and intrusion may have occurred as early as the Cambrian (The Bethanga Granite Gneiss, and other polydeformed gneisses of the Gundowring Terrane)(Oppy et al 1995).

Submarine sedimentation (the Hotham Group) and minor volcanism (the Kiandra Group and Blueys Creek Formation) in the Ordovician, was followed by regional metamorphism ranging from low to very high grades (involving partial melting in places) and regional folding and faulting during the Early Silurian Benambran deformation (Oppy et al 1995). The metamorphic rocks in the Tallangatta region are collectively known as the Omeo Metamorphic Complex (OMC). The geological history of the Tallangatta region since the Early Mesozoic has been one of uplift and erosion, with sporadic minor outpourings of alkali basalt lavas in the Tertiary and Quaternary (Oppy et al 1995).

The majority of the Activity area comprises of Pinnak Sandstone (Op) which consists of marine turbiditic thick bedded litharenite and minor thin bedded quartz arenite, with interbedded green slaty mudstone, siltstone, and minor chert (Oppy et al 1995). Conodonts from cherts within the Pinnak Sandstone indicate that the formation spans almost the whole of the Lower Ordovician (Oppy et al 1995).

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

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Map 3: Activity area and Geological Units. Scale 1:110,000. Source: GeoVic Online, 2022

6.2.3 Geomorphology

The Activity area is located within the Eastern Uplands (EU) geomorphic division. The EU is centred on the main divide in eastern Victoria, separating streams draining north to the Murray-Darling Basin from those flowing southwards directly to the sea (VRO, 2022). The EU division is variable in height and follows a meandering path as a parting of north and south draining river systems in an extensive area of mountain ridges and high plateau-like surfaces (VRO, 2022).

The Activity area is mapped as two different geomorphological tiers: 1.3.1 Low relief landscapes at low elevation (Cann River south, Silvan, Templestowe) and 1.4.4 Deeply dissected ridge and valley landscapes (headwaters of major rivers such as the Wonnangatta, King and Kiewa Rivers, Mt Cooperacambra).

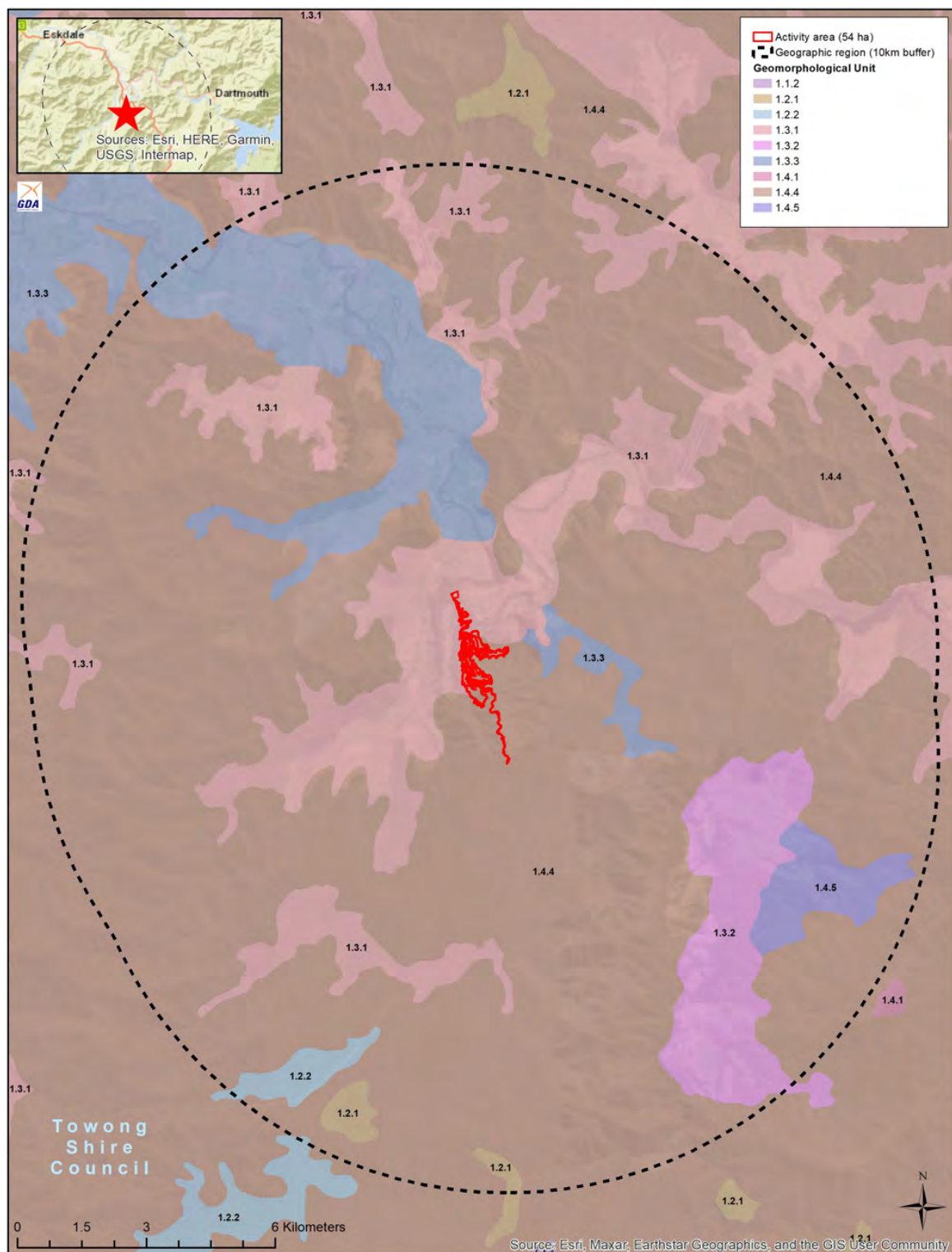
1.3.1 Low relief landscapes at low elevation (Cann River south, Silvan, Templestowe) occurs to the north of the Divide. Areas of undulating plains and low hills cut in Lower Palaeozoic sedimentary rocks and granites, characterise the Wedderburn, Bendigo and Rushworth districts, as the landscape gently descends to the Northern Riverine Plains (Tier 4) (VRO, 2022). The low hills south of Wodonga, and at Chiltern and Springhurst are also included. On the southern side of the Eastern Uplands, a dissected plateau-like surface of hills known as the Nillumbik Terrain extends from the eastern suburbs of Melbourne (e.g., Camberwell and Templestowe) around Mt Dandenong and further eastwards to the NSW border (VRO, 2022). The hilly landscape to the east from Cann River to the border has the appearance of a dissected plateau. The soils in the northern areas are predominantly red to yellow acid texture soils (Kurosols) (VRO, 2022).

1.4.4 Deeply dissected ridge and valley landscapes (headwaters of major rivers such as the Wonnangatta, King and Kiewa Rivers, Mt Cooperacambra) consist of high, narrow-topped ridges that form the divides between the major streams, and steep spurs and side slopes extending down to steeply graded streams (VRO, 2022). Major stream systems (e.g. Thompson, Macalister, Wonnangatta / Mitchell, Kiewa, Mitta Mitta, upper Murray and Snowy Rivers) are deeply incised with intricately interlocking V-shaped spurs and tributary valleys, commonly with local relief of 500-700 m from ridge-top to valley bottom (VRO, 2022). In their upper reaches, stream gradients are steep, and down-cutting is still active so there is little or no accumulation of sediment along the stream margins (VRO, 2022). South of the Great Divide, gradients along the upper parts of streams are generally steeper than in the streams that drain to the north.

Soils vary from red and brown gradational soils (Dermosols) on the moister and more stable slopes to poorly structured gradational soils (Kandosols) on the drier slopes (VRO, 2022). Soils on steep slopes are usually shallow with abundant stones.

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

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Map 4: Geomorphological Units at the Activity area. Scale 1:110,000. Source: GeoVic Online, 2022

6.2.4 Vegetation

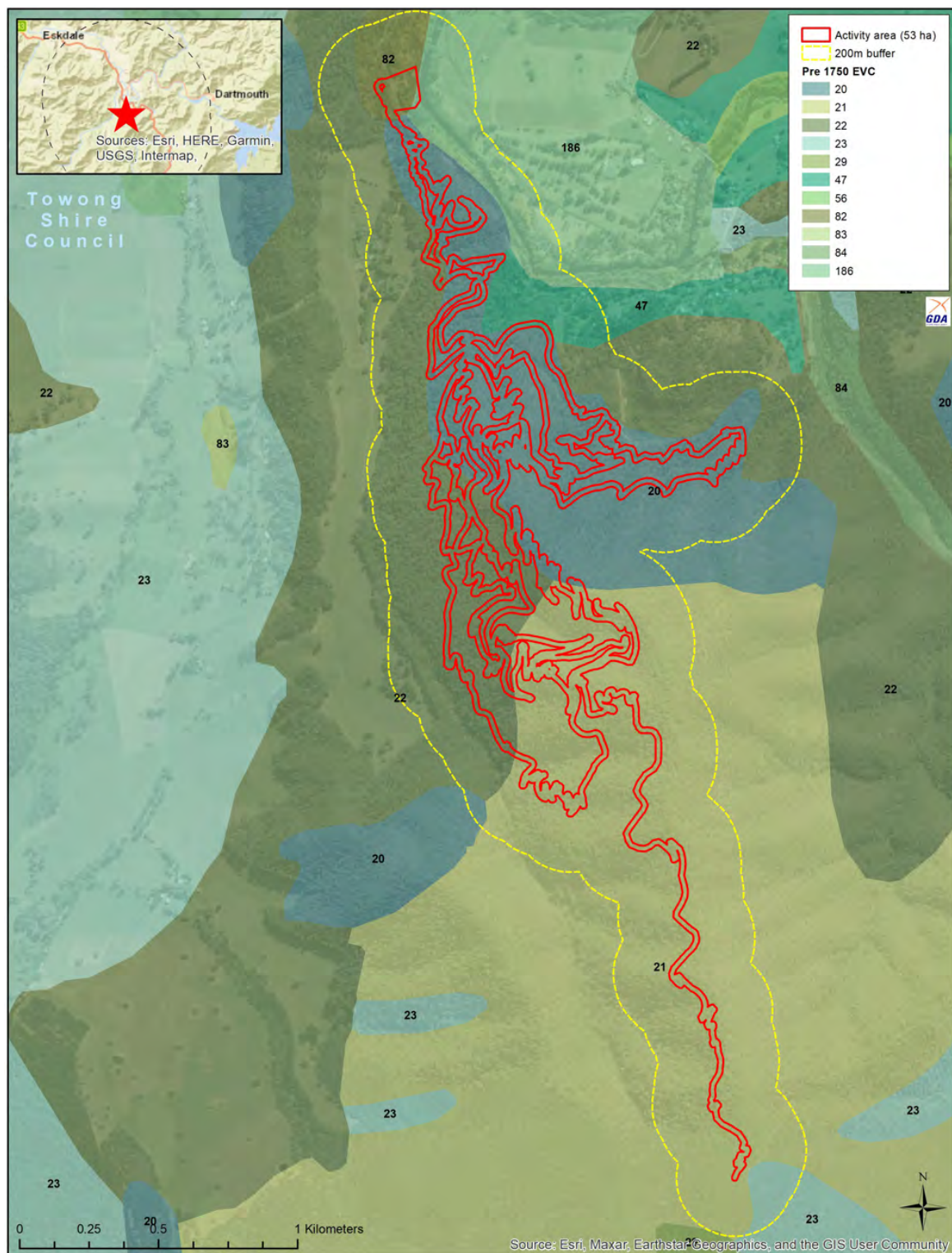
The site at Thowgla Creek is within the Highland Northern Fall bioregion, west of the Great Dividing Range. Mapping suggests that Heathy Dry Forest (EVC 20), Shrubby Dry Forest (EVC 21) and Grassy Dry Forest (EVC 22) are the most likely Pre-1750 Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC) that existed within the activity area (Map 5).

EVC 20 grows on shallow, rocky skeletal soils on a variety of geologies and on a range of landforms from gently undulating hills to exposed aspects on ridge tops and steep slopes at a range of elevations. The overstorey is a low, open eucalypt forest, poor in form to 20 m tall with an open crown cover, dominated by Broad-leaved Peppermint (*Eucalyptus dives*), Brittle Gum (*E. mannifera* ssp. *Mannifera*) and Narrow-leaf Peppermint (*E. radiata* s.l.). The understorey is dominated by a low, sparse to dense layer of ericoid-leaved shrubs including heaths and peas. Graminoids and grasses are frequently present in the ground layer, but do not provide much cover.

EVC 21 occurs on a range of geologies on exposed aspects such as ridge-lines and medium to steep upper slopes, often in high rainfall areas and on shallow infertile soils. The overstorey is a low, open forest to 25 m tall characterised by the diversity and variability of the eucalypts, dominant species include Broad-leaved Peppermint (*E. dives*) and Brittle Gum (*E. mannifera* ssp. *Mannifera*). The understorey often lacks a secondary tree layer but contains a well-developed medium to low shrub layer. The ground layer is often very sparse with tussock-forming graminoids being the dominant life form.

EVC 22 occurs on a variety of gradients and altitudes and on a range of geologies. The overstorey is dominated by a low to medium height forest of eucalypts to 20 m tall, dominated by Broad-leaved Peppermint (*E. dives*). Red Stringybark (*E. macrorhyncha*) and Bundy (*E. goniocalyx* s.l.), sometimes resembling an open woodland with a secondary, smaller tree layer including a number of Acacia species. The understorey usually consists of a sparse shrub layer of medium height. Grassy Dry Forest is characterised by a ground layer dominated by a high diversity of drought-tolerant grasses and herbs, often including a suite of fern species.

Regardless of the vegetation community that occupied the site pre-European settlement, the area (adjacent and upslope from a permanent water source) would have provided a wide range of food and material resources for Aboriginal people. Water rushes and marsh vegetation as well as a number of plant-food resources would have grown in nearby. The rivers, creeks and swamp areas in the geographic region, would have supported various species of fish, eel, frogs and turtle as well as various larger game including kangaroos, wallabies and wombat (Reich 2018).



Map 5: Pre-1750 Modelled Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) at the Activity area. Scale: 1:17,000. Source: DELWP, 2022.

6.3 Historical and ethno-historical accounts in the geographic region

The First Nations people of the Upper Murray area were Dhudhuroa-speaking people/s belonging to one or more local groups ('clans'), one of which can be clearly identified by name: Dyinning-middhang.² The name 'Djilamatang' [a.k.a. 'Gele-matong'], as mapped by Tindale (1974),³ is most likely also a cognate of this name. The first part of the name may derive from the widespread rootword 'djina' meaning 'foot',⁴ while the suffix '—middhang' (rendered many different ways, including '—mittlung') means a 'number or group' of people.⁵ Another Dhudhuroa local group, the Theddora-mitung [a.k.a. Dodoro], occupied the alpine ranges further to the south.⁶

In general, the Dyinning-mitung occupied country centred on the Mitta Mitta River and the Tallangatta Creek (historically known as the 'Nurmlong River') to where these flowed into the Murray River. This country was most likely bounded to the west from the Tallangatta Valley most likely as far as Sandy Creek.

As for their northern boundary, Dyinning-mitung man Neddy Wheeler, reported to ethnologist R.H. Mathews that 'Dhudhuroa was [also] spoken ... on the lower ... Kiewa Rivers, and also the Murray Valley from Albury via Dora Dora [ie: west of present-day Talmalmo], Jingellic, to about Walaregang.'⁷ This is the sole ethnohistorical basis on which Tindale (1974) mapped Dhudhuroa country as extending along the Murray River to at least as far as Wodonga.⁸ Neddy Wheeler's comments regarding the extent of Dhudhuroa language along the Murray River do have a strong geographical basis: while the Murray River Valley above Albury has been altered through the construction of Lake Hume as far as Talgarno, from this point upstream it runs through what constitutes a narrow and well-defined mountain-locked valley. Wheeler's description suggests that this entire geographically distinct valley *on both sides of the river* (as indicated by Wheeler's naming of locations on the northern bank of the river) was occupied by Dhudhuroa-speaking peoples.

Dhudhuroa language was originally described by ethnographer R. H. Matthews in 1909,⁹ and has been more recently analysed as a distinct language by linguists Julie Reid and Barry Blake.¹⁰ Lexio-statistical analysis has demonstrated that Dhudhuroa has a high incidence of shared vocabulary with neighbouring 'Pallanganmiddang' (ie: Waywurru) language to the west. Linguistic comparison between Dhudhuroa and 'Snowy Mountains Language' (a linguistic grouping which includes language from Canberra, the Wolgal people, the Ngarigu-speaking people, and Omeo language), is currently being undertaken by Harold Koch;¹¹ however analysis by Blake and Reid already demonstrates that Dhudhuroa has at least an equal, and potentially far higher proportion of shared vocabulary with Snowy Mountains Language than with Pallanganmiddang.¹² Dhudhuroa language also has a high degree of shared vocabulary with another neighbouring language, Wiradjuri.¹³

These shared vocabularies between Dhudhuroa and neighbouring languages are mirrored in the primary ethnohistoric sources, which indicate that Dhudhuroa people also had a ceremonial relationship particularly with people who spoke Snowy Mountains Language to the north and east: Thomas Wilkinson, the first European occupant of Yallowin station (on the west bank of the Tumut River near Talbingo), who had arrived there in 1838,¹⁴ recalled of his early days at Yallowin in Wolgal country:

² R H Mathews, MS 8006 Series 3 Item 7 Notebook 7, National Library Australia, p.30.

³ Norman Tindale, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia: Their Terrain, Environmental Controls, Distribution, Limits, and Proper Names*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1974.

⁴ Barry Blake and Julie Reid, 'The Dhudhuroa language of northeastern Victoria: a description based on historical sources,' *Aboriginal History*, 2002, VOL 26, p.183.

⁵ Diane Barwick, 'Mapping the Past: An Atlas of Victorian Clans 1835–1904', *Aboriginal History*, vol. 8, 1984, p.106, including footnote 9; Howitt, 'Notes by Howitt on the Omeo Tribe', p. 3. This explanation is given by Howitt's informant Jenny Cooper: 'Mitung = a number, or many [people]'.⁶

⁶ Alfred Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, Macmillan, London, 1904, p.177. Howitt believed that this was a local group of the Yaitmathang 'tribe', but Ian Clark is of the opinion that Theddora is cognate with Dhudhuroa, and that therefore they were a Dhudhuroa-speaking people. See: Ian Clark, 'Dhudhuroa and Yaitmathang languages and social groups in north-east Victoria – a reconstruction,' *Aboriginal History*, 2009 Vol. 33, pp.201-229.

⁷ R. H. Mathews, MS8006, Series 5, File 3, Box 6, National Library of Australia.

⁸ Norman Tindale, op cit.

⁹ R. H. Mathews, 'The Dhudhuroa Language of Victoria,' reprinted from the *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 11, No. 2, April-June, 1909, pp:278-284.

¹⁰ Originally identified by R. H. Mathews [R. H. Mathews, MS8006, Series 5, File 3, Box 6, National Library of Australia; and confirmed by Barry Blake and Julie Reid, 'The Dhudhuroa language of northeastern Victoria: a description based on historical sources,' *Aboriginal History*, 2002, Volume 26, pp: 177-210.

¹¹ Harold Koch, per comm with the author, March 2021. Koch prefers the more neutral term 'Snowy Mountains Language' rather than the well-known language name 'Ngarigu', because he does not wish to privilege any particular section of the overall grouping.

¹² Barry Blake and Julie Reid, op cit.

¹³ *ibid*.

¹⁴ 'The late Mr. Thomas Wilkinson,' *The Tumut Advocate and Farmers and Settlers' Adviser*, Tuesday 19 July 1904, p.2.

'The blacks used to come in from Yass, Welaregang, Omeo, and Mitta Mitta, and held corrobories at Yallowin. I have seen 300 there at one time... The blacks increased in numbers after a while, and 600 of them used to come through from Tumbarumba way. Not more than a dozen of them could speak English... On a hill in front of Yallowin homestead there still remains the mark of a ring-formed by the blacks in going through their corrobories which were carried on as part of the ceremony attached to "making men" of the youths after they had attained a certain age.' Wilkinson went on to describe the tooth evulsion ceremony for 'making men', which he says took place nearby, in what is now known as the 'Bogongs Peaks wildness area'.¹⁵

The arrival of 'squatters' (pastoralists) in the Upper Murray area from late 1836 onwards saw violent conflict between local Dyingning-middhang people and the European invaders. When visiting Towong station on 2 August 1839, Crown Lands Commissioner Henry Bingham noted in the record of his itinerary 'The natives were hostile in this part of the District[;] for special report of an affray — [indecipherable] both parties see my letter to the Colonial Secretary 13 August.'¹⁶ This 'affray' may be the origin of the local folk stories relating to the later discovery of a mass grave in Towong Upper (in a gully located on Spring Creek as it crosses the Upper Murray Road, on the western side); reputedly the site of a massacre.¹⁷

In 1936, C. A. Smithwick (whose father owned Jingellic station from 1859, shifting to Talmalmo in 1868¹⁸) also wrote of an historic attack by local First Nations people on Dora Dora station (immediately west of Talmalmo), to which European occupants had responded with lethal force, having been forewarned by a friendly local 'chief', Billy Maracket (Maracket being the pastoral station just east of Talmalmo).¹⁹ In the wake of this attack, Billy Maracket (who was given a breastplate acknowledging his assistance to the Europeans), left the area to live at Tumut in Wolgal country,²⁰ presumably where he felt safe in the wake of frontier violence. King Billy Maracket's decision to relocate to Tumut likewise suggests a cultural affinity between Dhudhuroa people and those who spoke Snowy Mountains Language, such as the Wolgal.

The incursion of European settlers on Dhudhuroa lands from 1836 onwards took an enormous toll on the Dhudhuroa population. By 1858, James Wilson of Tallangatta station reported that 'There are very few aborigines in the Mitta Mitta district, probably not more than twelve (12).' (This figure is probably discounting children borne to Dhudhuroa women and European men.) With respect to the Dyingning-mittung, Wilson added, 'The Tallangatta creek was the hunting ground of the Ginning-matong tribe. There are only three of this tribe now alive.'²¹ Local histories often still attempt to account for the destruction of Dyingning-mittung people by stating that, in an act of inter-tribal warfare, the 'Geelamatong... were supposed to have been ultimately wiped out by a general rising of the various river tribes.'²² However, the decimation of Dyingning-mittung people by gunshot wounds inflicted by stockmen is likely to have played a major role, as A.C. Wills attested was the case in nearby Omeo.²³

By the early 1860s, Dhudhuroa people could be found on the Tangambalanga Aboriginal Reserve [1862-1873]: This is evident from Honorary Correspondent Thomas Mitchell's 1865 report to the Central Board appointed to watch over the interests of the Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria, that 'Of the Tangambalanga tribe [ie: Waywurru] there are only eleven persons left; and of the Upper Murray tribe [ie: Dhudhuroa] sixteen.'²⁴ These numbers are also reflected in a vocabulary collected by Thomas Mitchell at Tangambalanga, titled 'Barwidgee,' which contains as much as 70% Dhudhuroa words.²⁵ However, C. A. Smithwick's story of 'King Billy Maracket' choosing to live at Tumut suggests that some Dhudhuroa people may have also ultimately ended up on Brungle Aboriginal Reserve in New South Wales.

¹⁵ Thomas Wilkinson, 'A Record of Olden Days,' *The Tumut and Adelong Times*, Friday 22 July 1904, p.2.

¹⁶ NRS 906: Colonial Secretary: Commissioners of Crown Lands - Itineraries, Murrumbidgee, Henry Bingham, 10 Jul - Nov 1839, Aug 1843, Jul 1844, Mar - Nov 1845, Apr - Jun 1847 [X812], Reel 2748 [Squatters and Graziers Index, State Archives and Records NSW].

(At present the author has not yet located this letter. The letter would have been directed to Colonial Secretary Deas.)

¹⁷ pers comm. John Murphy and Megan Carter, Corryong, Towong, 28 April, 2121.

¹⁸ Charles Albert Smithwick (J. Henwood & M. Swann, Eds.), *Early History of the Upper Murray*, John Henwood, Camberwell, 2003, p.ix.

¹⁹ Worth noting is that J. F. H. Mitchell attributed this act to 'King George' or 'Gentleman George', in his manuscript notes. These notes were written when Mitchell was in his mid-80s. See:

'John Francis Huon Mitchell papers, 1903-1923,' call number A 1671, State Library of New South Wales.

²⁰ 'The "Prince's" Badge of Honor,' *Border Morning Mail*, Saturday 9 September 1939, p.13.

²¹ James Wilson in *Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on Aborigines, 1858-59*, op cit., p.26.

²² Arthur Andrews, *First settlement of the Upper Murray, 1835-1845: with a short account of over two hundred runs, 1835 to 1880*, D. S. Ford, Sydney, 1920, p.35.

²³ A.C. Wills in *Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on Aborigines, 1858-59*, p.29.

²⁴ 'THE ABORIGINES,' *The Argus*, Thursday 14 June 1866, p.6.

²⁵ Barry Blake and Julie Reid, 'Pallanganmiddang: a language of the Upper Murray,' *Aboriginal History*, 1999, Vol. 23, p.17.

Other First National people who chose to remain 'on country' ended their days living and working on the properties of squatters, including those of Joseph Hanson (initially of Colac Colac and later Elm Hill at the foot of Mount Mittamatite);²⁶ and his half-brother and his wife, Jim and Mary Wheeler, of Colac Colac station;²⁷ Thomas Mitchell after he moved from Tangambalanga to Bringenbrong in 1875;²⁸ and also, according to the Corryong Museum, James Findlay of Towong station.

6.3.1 *Aboriginal Reserves and Honorary Correspondent Depots*

In 1858 the Victorian Government recommended the formation of a Central Board to replace the Protectorate system and take over responsibility for the protection of Aboriginal people within the colony (EDM Group 2008). In 1860 the 'Central Board Appointed to Watch Over the Interests of Aborigines in the Colony of Victoria' was established. The CBA was also responsible for allocating reserves of land variously known as stations, missions or reserves on which Aboriginal people were encouraged to settle (EDM Group 2008). The Board appointed Honorary Correspondents to keep records and distribute rations within their districts.

According to the 6th report of the CBA, the Honorary Correspondent for the area was Mr Curtis A. Reid who was stationed at Reidsdale near Tarrawingee. He reported that he supplied up to 33 Aboriginal people including 11 men, 15 women and seven children, the 'greater number of the latter being half-castes' (CBA 1869:7). The report states that Reid employed several Aboriginal people on his station. Reid notes that the '*original stock of Aborigines is rapidly disappearing and has decreased fully one-half within the last seven years*' (CBA 1869:7). After the 1860s the Aboriginal people that remained in the Murray and Ovens areas were forced to move into Government or Mission controlled stations, such as Coranderk, near Healesville and Cummeragunga, in NSW near Barmah (Long 1996:14).

According to Calladine & Ellis (2008:15) Aboriginal people were able to... '*maintain their traditional clan and moiety identity at these missions; however, the Aborigines Protection Act 1886 excluded 'half-castes' from living on the missions, and resulted in further segregation of Aboriginal people*' (Barwick 1984:113-4; Presland 1994:92-106). Although many of the Indigenous families in the local area were forced onto government stations at Coranderk and Maloga (Cummeragunga) during the nineteenth century, many maintained connections with, and returned to, the North East well into the twentieth century.

There are no Aboriginal Reserves and Honorary Correspondent Depots within the Activity area geographic region.

6.3.2 *Land use history of the activity area, Early Pastoralism.*

The first pastoralists in the area were James and William Wyse, who took up land 16 miles (25km) south of Tallangatta in 1837.²⁹ However, the Activity Area falls into the outer boundary of what became 'Tallandoon run' — originally comprising 16,000 acres, and estimated to stock 900 head of cattle. Tallandoon was first occupied under license from 1839 by Norman C. Lockhart (after whom Lockhart's Gap is named) and Francis Clerk, who held the run until 1857; with the leasehold subsequently passing through a limited number of individuals until the 1880s.³⁰ As the land was only held under lease and was not subsequently made available for selection, it has remained Crown land.

²⁶ Jean Carmody, *Early Days Of the Upper Murray*, Shoestring Press, Wangaratta, 1981, p.56.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p.54.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p.96.

²⁹ R. V. Billis, and A. S. Kenyon, *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip*, Macmillan & Company Ltd., Melbourne, 1932, p.218.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p.256.

6.3.3 Mining

Alluvial gold was first discovered in the Mitta Mitta area as early as February 1852.³¹ However, the area didn't become a major gold field until the 1880s, with the introduction of 'hydraulic sluicing', which used pressurized jets of water to wash gold bearing earth from the mountainside. This technique used to extract gold from the area's largest mine, the open cut Pioneer Mine³² — the historic gold workings of which lay just outside of the northern boundary of the Activity Area.

Supplying this and other mining operations with the vast quantities of water needed for the hydraulic sluicing process meant that the wider Mitta Mitta area was given over to a network of water races, channeling water to mining claims. In particular, the Parish Plan for Dorchap, illustrating the area immediately east of the Activity Area, has notations for dozens of former water races associated with Scrubby Creek.³³ Although no map exists to illustrate the same situation for Deep Gully Creek (inside the Activity Area), in 1914, this Creek reportedly had an operating flume.³⁴

While the lower slopes of Mount Welcome were mined for gold bearing earth, inside the Activity Area, the ridge-line which runs up Mount Welcome from the north, as well as the gully running from this ridgeline into Deep Gully Creek, became an important location for the mining of gold-bearing quartz reefs. Although the mines went by various names — the 'Yellow Boy', 'Yellow Girl' and the 'Pony' [Figure 3] — by the turn of the century, whatever remained to be worked was referred to as the 'Mount Welcome mine', which was considered, along with the Pioneer Mine, to be one of the two 'chief mines' of the area.³⁵ Another mine in Deep Gully, known as the 'Double Knock,' was being re-worked as late as 1914.³⁶

The mine workings included adits (horizontal tunnels cut into the slope) and stopes (dug-out tunnels through which gold bearing rock was removed), as well as surface workings where easily accessible gold bearing quartz could be carried off. [Figure 3]

In addition to the mines themselves, carting the gold bearing rock from Mount Welcome to a nearby location where it could be processed required various infrastructure: In 1901, it was reported that a new 'haulage engine' had been completed at Mount Welcome, and that it 'had successful run with [the] tramway.' It was likewise reported that the mining company was 'Putting finishing touches to [the] battery, and soon as completed will start [to] mill.' They were also 'Completing connections to cyanide plant, and making slime pits.'³⁷

³¹ 'THE MITTA MITTA GOLD FIELD. Talangatta, Mitta Mitta. 14th February, 1852.' *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*, Friday 20 February 1852 - Page 2

³² Jacqui Durrant, *Fire on the Plateau — A History of Fire and its Management in Stanley*, Stanley Athenaeum, Stanley, 2019, p.25.

³³ 'Dorchap-1 Parish Plan, Imperial measure 2539,' A Parish plan from VPRS 16171 Regional Land Office Parish and Township Plans Digitised Reference Set. Public Records Office Victoria.

³⁴ 'MITTA MITTA WARDEN'S COURT.' *Upper Murray and Mitta Herald*, Thursday 13 August 1914, p.2.

³⁵ 'THROUGH THE NORTH-EAST. FROM TALLANGATTA TO MOUNT WILLS.' *Leader*, Saturday 29 June 1901, p.43.

³⁶ 'MINING INTELLIGENCE. MITTA MITTA.' *Upper Murray and Mitta Herald*, Thursday 8 July 1915, p.3.

³⁷ 'MINING NOTES.' *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, Saturday 2 March 1901, p.1.

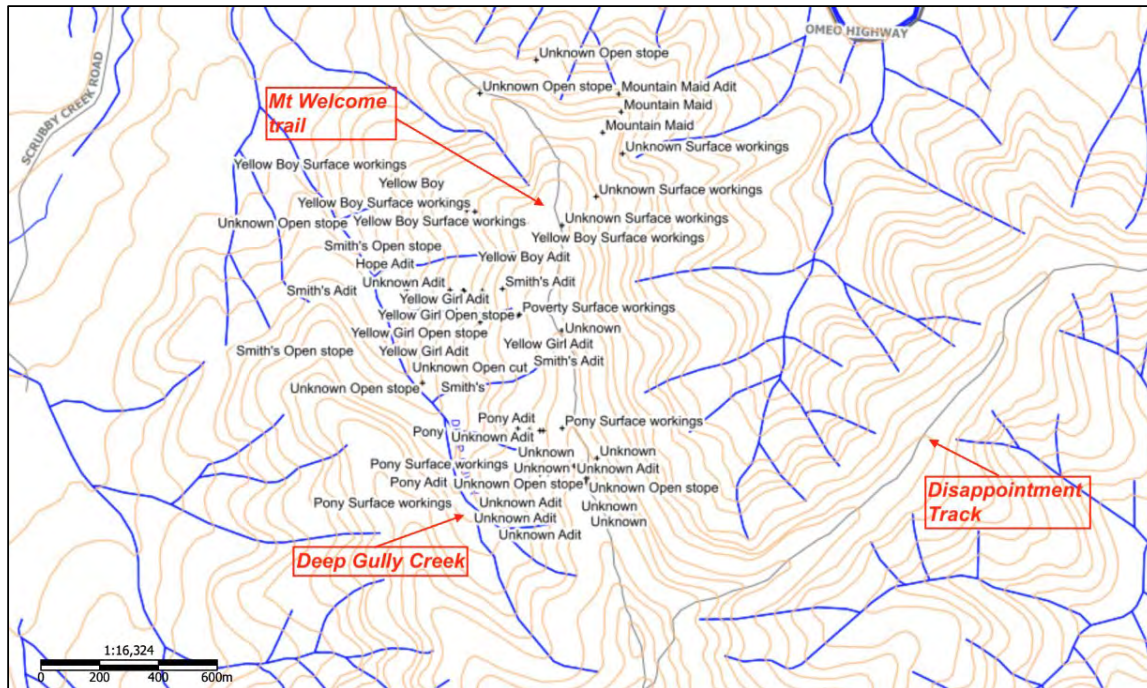


Figure 3: Excerpt from GeoVic earth resources mapping application, State of Victoria, illustrating recorded former mining sites within the Activity Area.

6.3.4 Forestry

Descriptions of logging activities within the Activity Area are virtually absent in the public historical record. However, assumptions concerning logging on Mount Welcome can be made on the basis of more generalised patterns of timber-getting in the immediate region.

In the 1950s, local historian S. A. Colquhoun reported that in the 19th century, Mitta Mitta had saw-pits where timber for hand-sawn for the construction of various local houses and buildings such as Thompson's Store and the local hall.³⁸ Meanwhile, the quartz reef gold mining which occurred on Mount Welcome would have also required timber for use as mine props, and also to fuel the boilers which ran the steam-powered battery stamps that crushed the gold-bearing rock. Doubtless local sawmillers and miners turned to the closest timber reserves they could find.

In terms of larger commercial logging and milling operations, as easily accessible areas of Victorian forests were progressively logged-out in the mid-to-late 20th century, logging operations shifted to the remoter forests of the Upper Murray. In 1947, Dunstan Timber Industries shifted its operations from Glen Wills and Wodonga,³⁹ to a modern sawmill at Eskdale in the Mitta Mitta Valley.⁴⁰ By the early 1950s, six large lorries hauled huge logs, 'some weighing up to six tonnes' through the Mitta Mitta township five days a week for nine months of the year.⁴¹ (This mill burned down in 1975.⁴²) Ruoak Industries followed a similar trajectory: with original operations located in Alexandra in the Upper Goulburn Valley which had subsequently moved to Stanley in the 1960s, it had shifted its milling operations to Corryong in 1988.⁴³

³⁸ S. A. Colquhuon, *Mitta Mitta from the Early Pioneer Days*, Mitta Mitta, 1953, p.66.

³⁹ 'Wodonga Mill Saved,' *The Age*, Monday 16 January 1939, p.16.

⁴⁰ 'Eskdale And Its People,' *Illustrated - Weekly Times*, Wednesday 10 September 1947, p.43.

⁴¹ S. A. Colquhuon, *op cit.*, p.66.

⁴² 'North East Water — Our Water Story — Eskdale,' on-line at: <https://waterstory.azurewebsites.net/listing/eskdale/> Retrieved 16 August 2021.

⁴³ Jacqui Durrant, *op cit.*, pp.28, 30.

The contract timber-fellers servicing such milling operations invariably left numerous logging roads and snigging tracks through whichever forests they harvested. As such operations swept across the landscape of the Upper Murray in search of old growth timber, it can be safely assumed that any remaining stands of alpine ash (*E. delegatensis*) present on Mount Welcome would have been targeted for harvesting, along with blue gum (*E. globulus*).

6.3.5 Conclusion

It is likely that the Activity Area has experienced substantial environment impacts directly from gold mining, associated mining infrastructure, tracks and waste disposal. The area has also likely sustained disturbance stemming from forestry activities, which would have resulted not only in obvious vegetation clearance but also ground disturbance via the creation of roads and tracks needed to transport the harvested logs. The existing tracks which remain within the Activity Area today — principally Disappointment Track, the Mount Welcome Hike trail and tracks associated with Ottos Road and in and around Deep Gully Creek [Figure 4] — are likely only the maintained remnants of what was likely a more complex series of tracks and trails at an earlier stage.

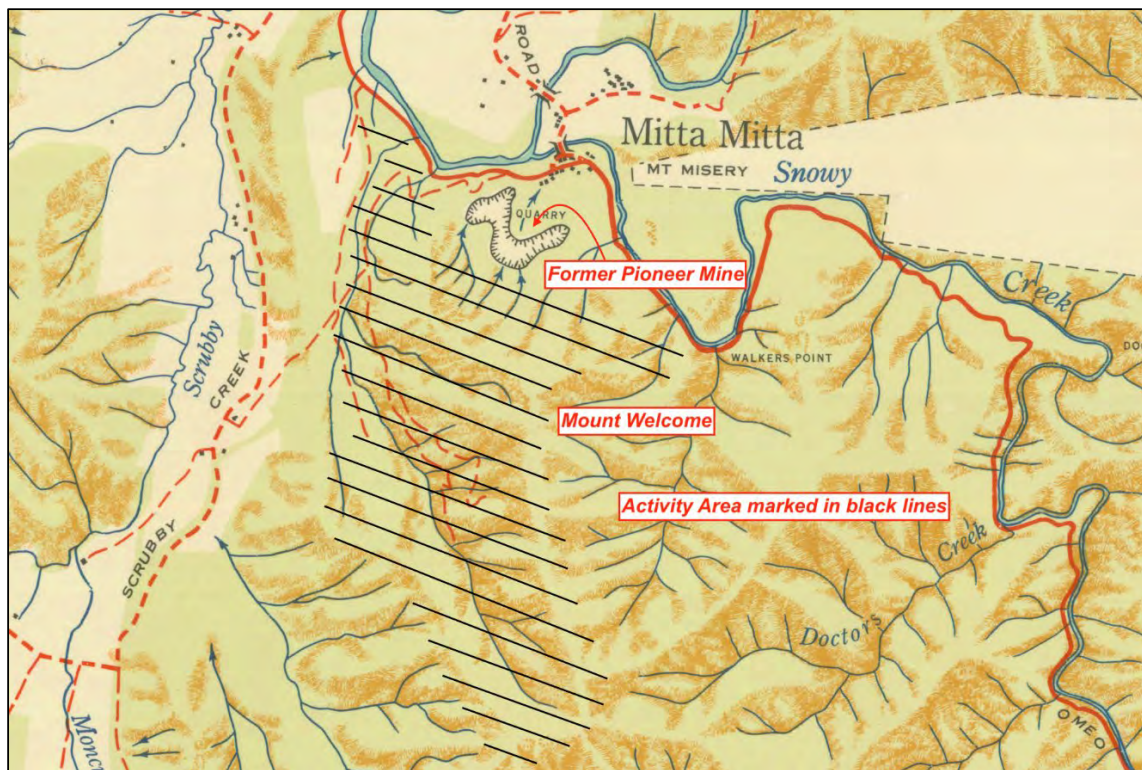


Figure 4: Excerpt from 'Tawanga B, state aerial survey', 1951, illustrating some of the tracks in the Activity Area by the mid-20th century.

6.4 Search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register

The search of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) was initially undertaken on 18th July 2022 by Damian Wall indicated that there are thirteen (13) previously recorded Aboriginal places within the 10km defined Geographic Region consisting of three Scarred Trees (N=3), nine Artefact Scatters (N=9) and one Earth feature (N=1) (Map 6 & Table 2).

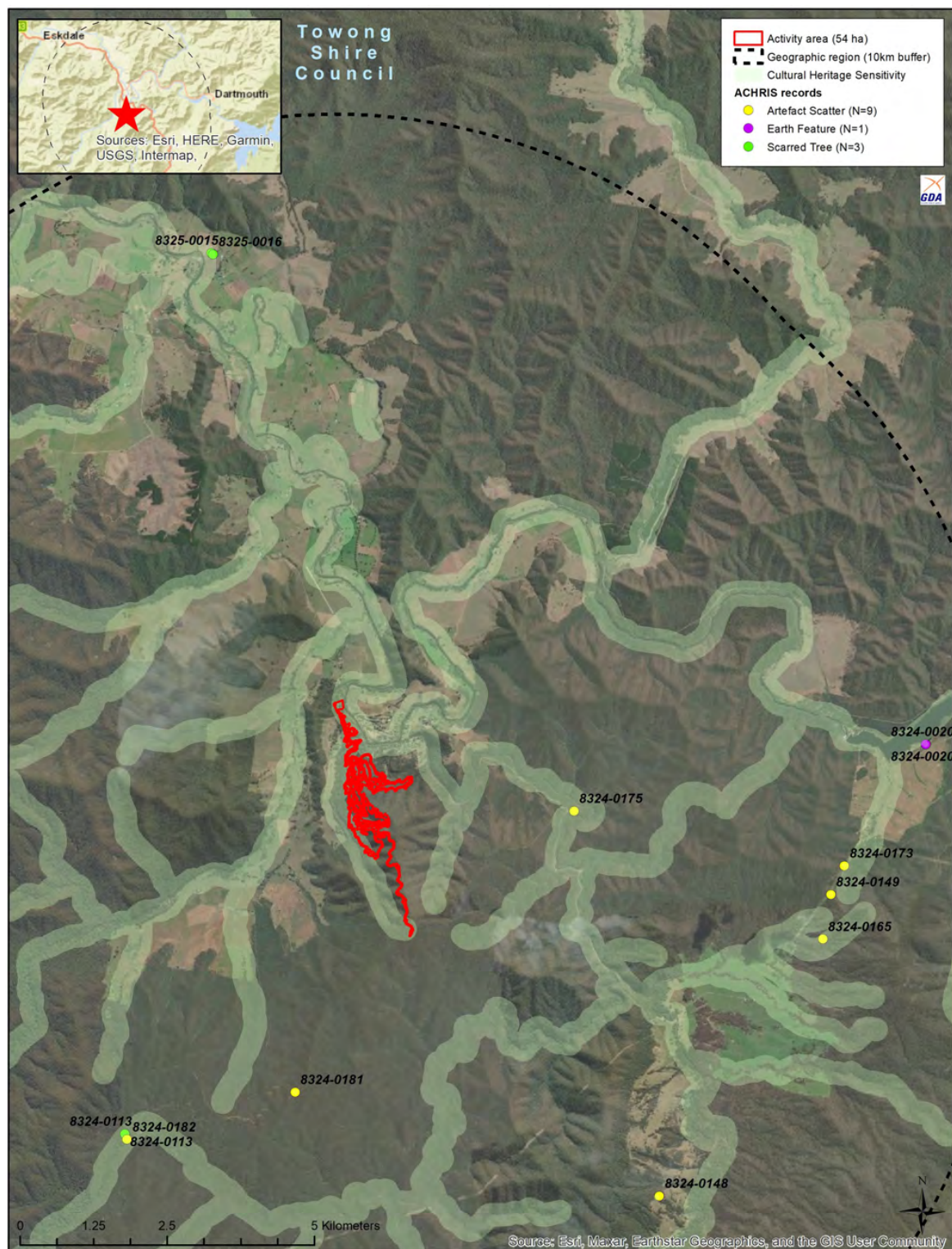
The closest registered place is an Artefact scatter (8324-0175), listed as a 'SNOWY CREEK IA 1' in Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register Information System (ACHRIS), located approximately 2.8 km east of the Activity area. The site consisted of an artefact scatter in the form of a single Quartz flake located on a low spur ridge within 50m of Snowy creek. It was noted that the site had experienced extensive disturbance through mining and bushfires.

Table 2: Registered Aboriginal Places within 10km of activity area.

Aboriginal Place No	Aboriginal Place Name	Component Place Number	Component Type	Distance/Direction from AA
8324-0020	DRP SITE 1	8324-0020-1	Artefact Scatter	8.7km East of eastern end of AA
8324-0020	DRP SITE 1	8324-0020-2	Earth Feature (Soil deposit)	8.7km East of eastern end of AA
8324-0113	FIRE SURVEY LORDS CREEK 1	8324-0113-1	Artefact Scatter	5.9km Southwest of southern end of AA
8324-0113	FIRE SURVEY LORDS CREEK 1	8324-0113-2	Scarred Tree	5.9km Southwest of southern end of AA
8324-0148	HOLLOW WAY 1	8324-0148-1	Artefact Scatter	6.1km Southeast of southern end of AA
8324-0149	MITTA GAP 1	8324-0149-1	Artefact Scatter	7km East of southern end of AA
8324-0165	BEE CREEK 1	8324-0165-1	Artefact Scatter	7km East of southern end of AA
8324-0173	MURPHY CREEK 1	8324-0173-1	Artefact Scatter	7.4km East of southern end of AA
8324-0175	SNOWY CREEK IA 1	8324-0175-1	Artefact Scatter	2.8km East of eastern end of AA
8324-0181	TRAPPERS CREEK TRACK 1	8324-0181-1	Artefact Scatter	3.2km Southwest of southern end of AA
8324-0182	TRAPPERS CREEK TRACK 2	8324-0182-1	Artefact Scatter	5.9km southwest of southern end of AA
8325-0015	OFCV 9	8325-0015-1	Scarred Tree	7.9km Northeast of northern end of AA
8325-0016	OFCV 10	8325-0016-1	Scarred Tree	7.9km Northeast of Northern end of AA

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

CHMP No: 18608



Map 6: Previously recorded Aboriginal Places within the geographic region. Scale 1:80,000. Source: Google Earth, 2022

6.5 Aboriginal Places in the Geographic Region

In the 10 km geographic region surrounding the Activity area, the following types of Aboriginal places have been recorded and registered:

Aboriginal Artefact Scatters: Artefact scatters are the material remains of past Aboriginal people's activities. Scatter sites usually contain stone artefacts, but other material such as charcoal, animal bone, shell and ochre may also be present. Artefact scatters may vary over the ground surface from one square metre to one hectare and contain few or thousands of artefacts. Artefacts often are chipped stone artefacts and occasionally, animal bone, shell, charcoal, hearth stones, clay balls and ochre,

Aboriginal Scarred Trees: Aboriginal scarred trees are the result of people marking or removing bark from a tree for a wide range of uses. Scarring exposes the sapwood on the trunk or branch of a tree, with the tree healing over a period of time, generally leaving a prominent scar. Mature trees with scars are located across Victoria, and more commonly are present on box and red gum eucalypts that occur along the margins of rivers, lakes and floodplains.

Earth features (mounds, hearths, etc): Earth features - Aboriginal mounds are places where Aboriginal people lived over long periods of time. Aboriginal people often cooked their food in earth ovens, to do this, they heated stones or burnt clay lumps and placed them in a pit. The food - a kangaroo or tubers for example - was placed on top of the heat retainers and the pit was filled in. Once the food was cooked, it was removed, and all the cooking debris, such as stone, clay and ash, was swept out. Over time, the debris from cooking and other domestic activities combined with natural sediments to form a mound. Mounds often contain charcoal, burnt clay or stone heat retainers from cooking ovens, animal bones, shells, stone tools and, sometimes, Aboriginal burials. These earth features are usually near rivers, lakes or swamps but occasionally some distance from water, often occurring on floodplains and the banks of watercourses.

6.6 Previous archaeological work in the geographic region

A review of reports and published works about Aboriginal cultural heritage in the geographic region referred to in Section 6.2 is used to provide relevant information to determine if there is any relationship between Aboriginal cultural heritage places, strategic values, geology, landforms and soil profiles. These investigations may provide insight into Aboriginal cultural heritage place patterning.

This evidence informs directly on the desktop site model presented in Section 6.9. Only reports most relevant to this CHMP are discussed in detail below. There is a general paucity of studies in the northeast, a result of the slow movement of development in this region, therefore only a few systematic field assessments have been undertaken in the geographic region, in particular in a similar environmental context.

6.6.1 Regional Studies

On a regional level, Zobel (1984) prepared a report to the Land Conservation Council on the Aboriginal occupation of the North East Study Area. Zobel (1984: 24) notes the paucity of research and, as a result, recorded Aboriginal places in the northeast of Victoria. This has not rapidly changed in anyway as development as increased swiftly around the southern and central hubs and has been slower to move in other regional locations. At the time of Zobel's research, scarred trees were the most commonly registered site type followed by stone artefact occurrences, rock art sites, mounds burials and then, lastly, quarries (Zobel 1984: 24-25). The artefacts identified at sites were interpreted as reflected small, temporary camps associated with a mobile settlement pattern and with tools made and used on the spot then discarded (Zobel 1984: 28-29).

Clark et al (2003) completed a desktop review of Cultural Heritage of the North East Catchment, including the region where the current activity area occurs. The study area is just under 2 million hectares, bordered on the north and east by the Murray River and on the south by the Great Dividing Range. It includes the Ovens, Kiewa, Mitta and Upper Murray Basin catchments. Clark, like Thompsons and Zobel previously, comments on the lack of archaeological investigation

completed in north-eastern Victoria, with research focused on Australia's south-eastern upland region, including the Australian Alpine region. Amidst the lack of documentation of Aboriginal people and territories around contact, a study of primary source information by Wesson (2000) is credited as being the most comprehensive document at the time. The *Theddora* or *Dhudhoroa*, of the *Waveroo* language group, are the traditional owners of the current activity area, are said to have utilised the river systems and resources of the upper Mitta Mitta River. A diversity of resources in the region, reflected in the diversity of landforms, would have influenced the occupation and utilisation of the landscape, relative to season and cyclic changes. At the time of publication 476 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites had been recorded, the majority of which are located along the Murray River, and in the mountains of Mount Buffalo and the Alpine National Park. However, lack of sites recorded in other areas are not reflective of lack of occupation of those sites, but potentially related to the absence of archaeological investigations throughout the region in a systematic fashion. Artefact scatters dominate the archaeological record (60%), followed by scarred trees (27%). Other sites recorded in the study area include rock wells, hearths, mounds, burials, art sites, stone arrangements, quarries and fish/eel traps. A site prediction model for the most likely site types was attempted based on the sites recorded in the area:

- Artefact scatters were predicted to be found in flat gently sloping areas near accessible water and resources; larger sites found at lower elevations and smaller sites in upland areas; sites near to rivers and streams likely to be buried under alluvial deposits; and, in steep terrain and highland areas, sites occur around sheltered areas, ridgelines, spurs, saddle and rocky knolls.
- Scarred trees are possible anywhere where mature stands of eucalypt remnant vegetation occurs, especially along creeks and rivers at low elevations.
- Quarries are associated with exposed rock outcrops.
- Rock art sites are associated with rock shelters and overhangs, especially in granite areas on low/mid slopes.
- Mounds are related with the Murray River and adjoining wetlands

Freslov et al (2004) undertook a broad scale pedestrian archaeological survey of historic and Aboriginal cultural heritage places following a large-scale bushfire that occurred in 2003 of the Chesney Vale Reserves. Freslov concluded that there were a total of 61 previously recorded Aboriginal archaeological sites within the parks, comprising two artefact scatters, 40 scarred trees, 11 isolated artefacts, five rock wells and three mounds. Freslov's subsequent survey of the Chesney Vale Reserves located a further 21 Aboriginal archaeological sites including eight isolated artefacts, two artefact scatters, six scarred trees, three rock wells and two earth ovens.

Flood (1976) Discusses the relationship between Aboriginal people and ecology in the highlands of south-east Australia by drawing upon anthropological, linguistic, ethnographical and archaeological evidence. Flood uses the small tool tradition to indicate the timing of habitation of the highlands and hypothesised that movement into the tablelands originated from the east. She also suggests that due to the presence of European motifs in Victorian rock art indicates this art was a late introduction to southeast Australia. Several ethnographic sources were discussed, and these indicated that the average size of the Aboriginal groups was approximately 500 people. Two examples were given and discussed at length to illustrate the relationship between Aboriginal people and the ecology of the region - Bogong moth-hunting feasts and the Bunya Bunya Nut festival. These examples were used to illustrate tribal relations. Importantly, Flood (1980) remarks upon two things pertaining to tribal distribution in the region; within each group's territory there was both a major food resource and a low-lying frost-free valley suitable for winter occupation, and there was a high degree of correlation between group and physiographic boundaries. She concludes that while occupation in the region may have originally been only seasonal it later developed into year-round habitation.

Kelly (2003) produced a report detailing field survey components of a scoping study of impacts upon Aboriginal cultural values as a result of bush fires within the North East Victorian highlands in 2003. This study attempted to assess the likelihood of Aboriginal cultural values being present in the North East Victoria fire area and of fire and fire suppression activities impacting upon Aboriginal cultural values. The consistent identification of cultural material across the whole study area, even in this small sample, indicates the presence of a substantial Aboriginal archaeological record within the fire affected region. The study established the presence of physical remains of past Aboriginal occupation in a variety of ecological and landform zones within the study area with the notable exception of steep slope ash forests. Scarred trees

and lithic scatters were the dominant archaeological remains. Scarred trees, while present in all ecological and landform zones inspected, were found in greatest concentration within old growth snow gum forests. Lithic remains were most common within mid altitude riparian and lower river valleys: The most common stone tool material within lithic sites was quartz with a lesser occurrence of rhyolite. In general, this study provides evidence that the physical remains of past Aboriginal occupation of the highlands of Victoria have the potential to be both diverse and widespread.

Paton (1993) conducted a survey of six short optical fibre cable routes around Northern Victoria. The closest survey section to the current Activity Area ran 42 kilometres southwest from Baranduda to Yackandandah. Two Aboriginal places were recorded in this corridor survey; both were scarred trees VAHR 8225-0083 and VAHR-0084. In total, twelve Aboriginal archaeological places were located throughout the survey of all six corridors. Paton (1993) attributed the relatively low number of Aboriginal places to a high level of disturbance along the study corridors, but considered other contributing factors may have been poor visibility; the lack of representation achieved by linear surveys; or an actual absence of artefacts. Paton identified a total of twelve archaeological finds consisting of six surface scatters and six scarred trees. Each surface scatter comprised less than five stone artefacts and were defined as isolated finds. Paton's (1993, p. 8) report indicates that a combination of only moderate surface visibility and linear survey may not have provided a representative sample of Aboriginal places across the landscape.

Gunn (2002) conducted a site-specific investigation for Mudgegonga-2 and the Rock Art of North-East Victoria. The site was located in the Foothills of the Great Dividing Range. The investigation looked at 14 rock art sites recorded in NE Victoria, represented by five distinct clusters and one singular site. Analysis suggests they consist of an early phase of small red paintings with a core of 'simple human figures' with a broader suite of 'geometric elements and simple designs'. It is largely homogeneous across the region.

Thompson (1996) conducted an archaeological survey of a large section of northeast Victoria, of which the study area encompassed the current activity area. Over a decade later Thompson (1996: 1) reiterated the observation of Zobel's (1984: 24) that very little dedicated study has been undertaken in the northeast with the result being a limited knowledge of the Aboriginal archaeological record of the region. Thompson (1996: vi) divided the study area into three landscape divisions: Murray Basin Plains, Foothills and Eastern Highlands. Within these divisions were further subdivisions, of which the current activity area fell into the 'Mountains' of the 'Eastern Highlands' classification. Sample surveying was undertaken and a total of 111 Aboriginal places were identified, including 69 scarred trees and 42 stone artefact occurrences (Thompson 1996: 23). However, of the 69 scarred trees, Thompson (1996: 23) suggested that 22 were of European origin. Of the Aboriginal scarred trees, 39 were on Grey box, seven were on Red box and one was on a tree of unidentified species. Of the stone artefact sites, as a general rule (i.e. excluding a particular exception associated with a silcrete outcrop) quartz dominated. Of all the sites recorded, two-thirds were within 100 m of a water source and two-thirds of the stone artefact sites were within 500 m of a permanent water source. In relation to the current activity area, Thompson (1996: 25) identified that the flats and terraces of the Mountains/Eastern Highlands category had high artefact density sites present.

Buckley & Hughes (2000) conducted a desktop survey, Working Toward an Aboriginal Heritage Management System for the North East RFA Region of Victoria. Was based on previous investigations and a map of archaeological sensitivity was developed for the RFA region, taking into consideration geographically represented units, elevation in relation to alpine / sub alpine zone patterning, dissected plateaux patterning, and locations of Devonian granites, Cambrian greenstone, and Devonian sandstone.

Hughes & Buckley (1999) conducted an Aboriginal heritage assessment of North East Victoria RFA. At the time noted that archaeologically the North east is not well known. Found that across the North east Scarred trees were the most common aboriginal cultural heritage place, making up 41%, Isolated artefacts were next with 22%, then surface scatters of artefacts 21% and then rock shelters 10%. 67% of these aboriginal cultural heritage places occurred on freehold land.

Shawcross & Hughes (2002) conducted an Archaeological Investigation of the AAV 8324-0024 (DRP Site 1), Dartmouth regulating pondage, Victoria. Southern hydro partnership proposes to raise the height of the existing Dartmouth regulating dam to increase storage capacity of the regulating pondage. In 1999 Hughes undertook an archaeological survey of the

proposed inundation area, during that survey one site was found (VAHR 8324-0024, DRP Site 1). This site consisted of 17 surface visible stone artefacts and a possible hearth. It was recommended the hearth was excavated by an appropriately qualified and experienced archaeologist. The aims of this survey were therefore to excavate and analyze the Site, and more specifically the potential hearth. The survey and subsequent report concluded that there was insufficient evidence for the putative hearth. Hughes and Shawcross indicated that whilst there were charcoal particles seen during the investigation, they were too dispersed to serve as evidence for a hearth. It is likely that the charcoal was derived from natural fires or the burning of stumps.

Hughes (1999) conducted an Archaeological Survey associated with the proposal to increase the full supply level of the Dartmouth regulating pondage, Victoria. The site was broken into 3 sectors to assess the likely impacts of the proposed works on Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. Sector 1 had the best survey conditions, including 'archaeological visibility'. It was also deemed to be the sector most likely to contain archaeological sites because of its relatively gently sloping terrain and sandy soils. DRP site 1 occurred on one of only two promontories along this sector. However even in this sector with its relatively high archaeological potential the amounts of archaeological material were small. Across the Activity area a scatter of artefacts was found on a very gently sloping, broad promontory leading down to the now-flooded river valley floor. The area is within a large, grassed paddock and the artefacts had eroded out of the eastern side of a 1m high section of a bulldozed track leading down to the pondage. The alluvial soils in the section consisted of 20m of light grey sandy topsoil overlying at least 90cm of yellow grey clayey sand. In total there was a Cluster of 14 quartz artefacts and a large quartz cobble in the bulldozed track section, 3 isolated quartz artefacts on eroded exposures in the area up to 200m to the east of the main cluster of artefacts and a possible Aboriginal hearth about 100m east of the main cluster of artefacts. The results of the survey supported the initial assessment that most of the area which would be impacted by the proposed raising of the full supply level has low archaeological potential.

6.6.2 Local studies

Bell and Grinter (2016) undertook a CHMP (14042) for the replacement Weir and Fishway on the Snowy Creek at Mitta Mitta. The activity area consisted of a heavily modified watercourse and floodplain on three sides with a steep escarpment associated with Mt. Misery making up the northern flank. The activity area sustained some considerable ground disturbance, especially at the site of the weir itself and both upstream and downstream, which would have occurred during initial construction and during periods of maintenance. Landscaping and the installation of utility infrastructure has caused further disturbance within the activity area. The nature of the steep hillslope and the cutting in this area indicated that Aboriginal cultural heritage was unlikely to be identified. No Aboriginal cultural heritage was located in the activity area during the assessment. No areas of potential cultural heritage sensitivity were identified during the standard assessment. Whilst poor ground surface visibility impeded the possible discovery of surface evidence of Aboriginal cultural heritage, this was heavily off-set by the fact that there was little if any, original land surface remaining.

Robb and Freeman (2011) prepared a CHMP (11852) for the Omeo Highway Upgrade. Desktop and standard assessments were undertaken. The proposed works were all located either within the existing roadway or cuttings excavated into the banks, or on steep slopes (greater than 25 degrees). As such there was no likelihood of intact Aboriginal cultural heritage material occurring in the excavated parts, and it is very unlikely that Aboriginal occupation of the area would have left any cultural heritage evidence on the steep slopes as these did not form suitable locations for Aboriginal activities. There were no previously recorded Aboriginal archaeological places in the Activity area and no new places were recorded during this assessment. No areas of archaeological potential were identified. Due to the nature of the proposed activity, the characteristics of the Activity area and the historical use of the Activity area associated with the construction of the current road, there is little likelihood of impacting Aboriginal cultural heritage material within the Activity area.

6.6.3 Summary

Previous assessments summarised in Section 6.6 suggest that the region is sensitive for Aboriginal cultural heritage material, primarily in the form of stone artefact scatters. The types of Aboriginal cultural places occur most frequently in close proximity to the major watercourses that transect the region. Review of CHMPs within the geographic region shows that Aboriginal Cultural heritage is less likely to be located on slopes at an angle greater than 5 degrees and has a greater probability to be located at lower elevations, adjacent to major creeks and rivers.

In fact, it is noted that regional studies have demonstrated that very few (if any) sites in the Victorian Alps occur on steep hill slopes (Freslov et al. 2004, Robb & Freeman 2011, Bell & Grinter 2016). Whilst this observation is a critical factor in determining the archaeological potential of the activity area, other regional and localised studies demonstrate that there is still some possibility of heritage occurring in a range of landforms (Clark et al 2003; Zobel 1984).

Only thirteen (13) Aboriginal places have been previously recorded within the 10km defined Geographic Region, however the lack of recorded sites in the past may be attributed (in part) to lack of survey effort within the region.

6.7 Oral history

No oral history information was collected during the desktop assessment.

6.8 Obstacles encountered in completing the desktop assessment

No obstacles were encountered in completing the desktop assessment.

6.9 Site prediction model

Generally speaking, Aboriginal places would be expected to be situated close to either an ephemeral or permanent water source, providing adequate shelter from the elements and rising floodwaters, and have access to a food source. Additionally, for Aboriginal places to remain *in situ* in these situations through time, the landscape will not have been subject to ground disturbing activities.

The results of the desktop assessment indicate that the Activity area likely comprises three (3) landforms, Ridgelines, Gullies and Mid slopes. The majority of the Activity area comprises of Pinnak Sandstone (Op) which consists of marine turbiditic thick bedded litharenite and minor thin bedded quartz arenite, with interbedded green slaty mudstone, siltstone, and minor chert (Oppy et al 1995). A search of the VAHR database for registered Aboriginal Places within the defined Geographic Region suggests that artefact scatters are the most likely place type to be found in association with the activity area landform.

Review of CHMPs within the geographic region shows that Aboriginal Cultural heritage is less likely to be located on slopes at an angle greater than 5 degrees and has a greater probability to be located at lower elevations, adjacent to major creeks and rivers. In fact, it is noted that regional studies have demonstrated that very few (if any) sites in the Victorian Alps occur on steep hill slopes (Freslov et al. 2004, Robb & Freeman 2011, Bell & Grinter 2016). Whilst this observation is a critical factor in determining the archaeological potential of the activity area, other regional and localised studies demonstrate that there is still some possibility of heritage occurring in a range of landforms (Clark et al 2003; Zobel 1984).

6.10 Conclusions from the Desktop Assessment

The desktop assessment has demonstrated that:

- There are no (0) previously registered places within the Activity area;
- The search of the VAHR indicated that there are thirteen (13) previously recorded Aboriginal places within the 10 km defined Geographic Region consisting of three Scarred Trees (N=3), nine Artefact Scatters (N=9) and one Earth feature (N=1);
- The Activity area intersects statutory areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, being land within 200m of a named waterway (Mitta Mitta River, Snowy Creek and Deep Gully);
- Areas of Aboriginal cultural sensitivity within the geographic region have been deemed as proximity to fresh water on a range of landforms;
- Aboriginal Cultural heritage is less likely to be located on slopes at an angle greater than 5 degrees and has a greater probability to be located at lower elevations adjacent to major creeks and rivers.
- Regional studies have demonstrated that very few (if any) sites in the Victorian Alps occur on steep hill slopes;
- The area would have provided a wide range of food and material resources for Aboriginal people across a range of habitats within the forest environs; and
- Previous land use activities such as cattle grazing, extensive gold mining/prospecting, logging, and road/bridge development, will have impacted the subsurface deposits in the Activity area.

As it is 'reasonably possible' that Aboriginal cultural heritage may be present in parts of the Activity area, a standard assessment is required pursuant to r.62(1) of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018.

7. Standard Assessment

The results of the desktop assessment indicated that a standard assessment was required to further investigate the potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage to be located within the activity area. The specific aims of the survey are to identify and investigate the following:

- All areas of high ground surface visibility for targeted detailed surface inspection;
- Ground disturbance;
- Any surface or obtrusive cultural heritage places, if present;
- Landform patterns and elements;
- Areas of proposed activities that would result in ground disturbance; and
- Test the site prediction model generated by the desktop assessment.

7.1 Methodology

The pedestrian survey was conducted in a systematic manner and in accordance with proper archaeological practice. All areas were examined to determine areas of good ground surface visibility and/or high potential archaeological sensitivity for Aboriginal cultural material. The pedestrian survey examined all accessible areas, landform patterns, elements and attributes. Detailed notes were taken, including descriptions of landform elements, ground surface visibility, ground disturbance, vegetation, water sources and potential Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity (Burke & Smith 2004). The standard assessment was recorded using recording forms to note features and disturbance within the activity area. The location of the features and disturbance were recorded using a dGPS. Photographs of the activity area were also taken using a digital camera.

7.2 Fieldwork participants

A Standard Assessment was undertaken on the 11th February 2022 by Damian Wall (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd), Phil and Johnny Murray (Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation), and Leigh Holland (Terrain) representing the Sponsor.

An additional walkover/inspection was undertaken on the 16th February 2023 by Damian Wall (Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd) and Reg Murray (Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation).

7.3 Oral history

No oral history information was provided during the standard assessment.

7.4 Obstacles encountered in completing the standard assessment

The site has been severely affected by historical mining practices making some areas difficult/dangerous to traverse. The site is also very steep and heavily vegetated making access to many areas proposed for tracks unsafe to access. The survey team agreed to focus survey effort on the accessible areas of the major ridgelines and any exposed areas on the lower slopes leading up from the Mitta River Valley floor.

7.5 Ground Surface Visibility, Survey Areas and Effective Survey Coverage

Archaeological visibility refers to the amount of ground surface that is clearly visible for inspection. The greater the ground surface visibility, the more effective are surface surveys. Examples of high surface visibility are vehicular & pedestrian tracks, dune blow outs (100% per m²); and examples of poor visibility are areas of heavy vegetation cover (0-10% per m²) (Murphy & Thomson 2016).

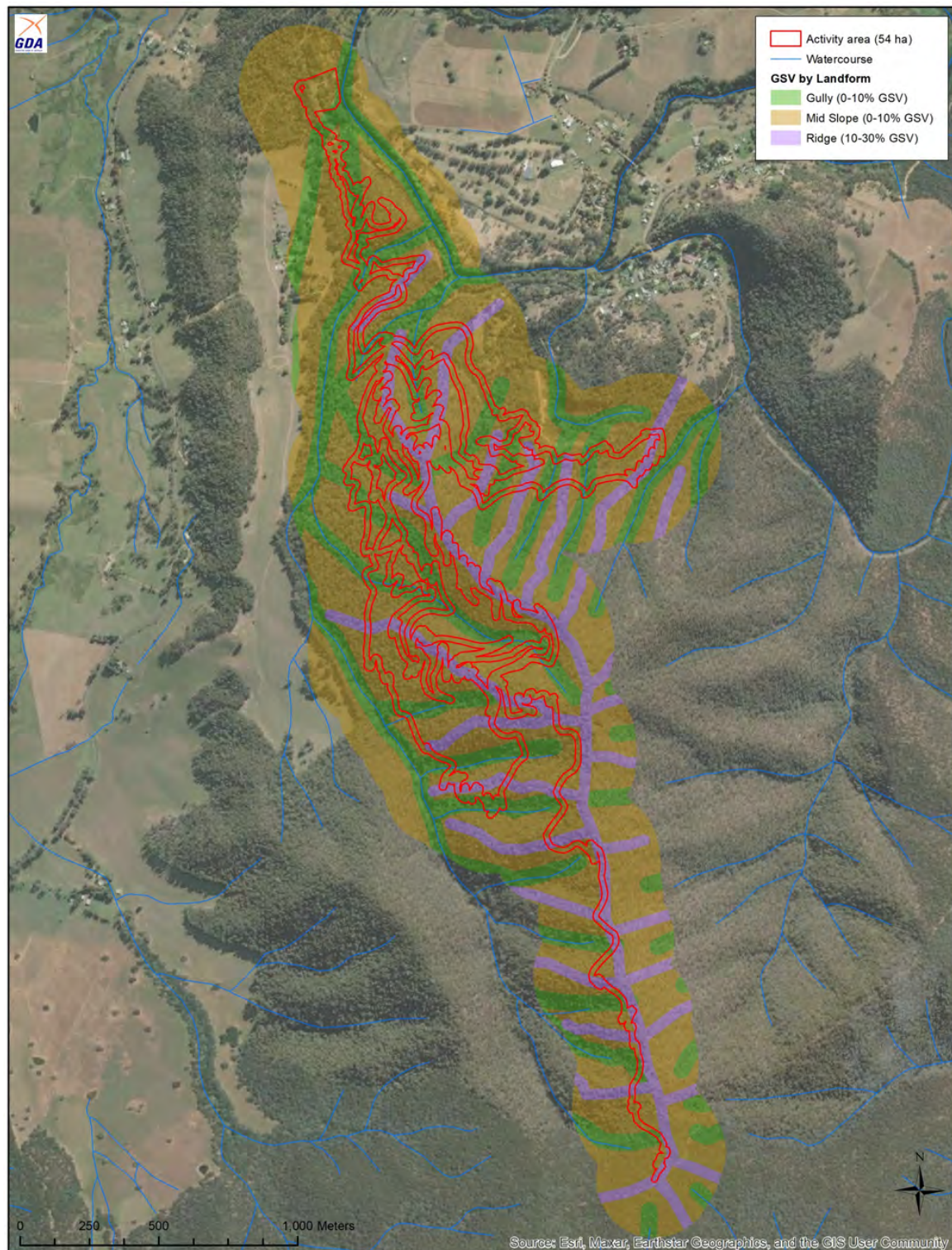
Unfortunately, it is often the case that highly visible Aboriginal cultural heritage places are also often highly disturbed. High ground surface visibility (GSV) is therefore often related to the amount of disturbance that has occurred. This disturbance may be manmade (such as drainage lines, vehicle tracks), by stock (overgrazing, tracks), or due to natural processes (erosion by wind or water). The level of GSV is typically assessed as is shown in Table 3. Effective Survey Coverage (ESC) is a measure of each Survey Unit (identified in the Activity area – Map 8A & 8B) that was adequately surveyed during the Standard Assessment by the survey team (Table 4).

Table 3: Ground Surface Visibility (GSV)

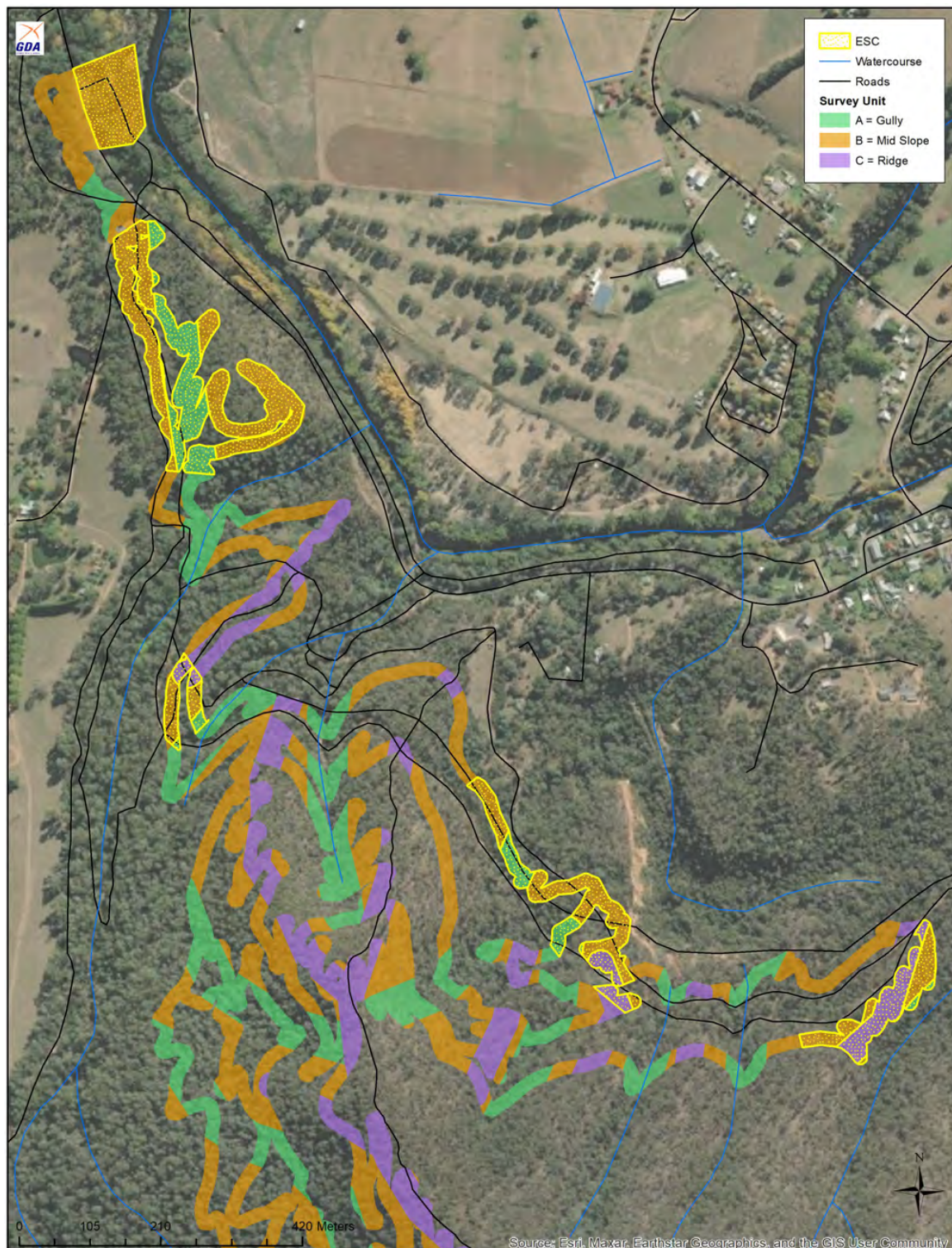
%	0%	0 – 10%	10 – 30%	30 – 50%	50 – 70%	70 – 90%	90 – 100%
Rating	No visible ground surface	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent

Table 4: Effective Survey Coverage

Survey Unit	Area of Survey Unit (ha)	Area Surveyed (ha)	% Surveyed
A (Gully)	12.8	1.9	14%
B (Midslope)	30	6.6	22%
C (Ridge)	11.7	2.6	22%
Totals	54.5 ha	11.1 ha	20%



Map 7: Standard Assessment results showing GSV by landform type in the Activity area. Scale 1:17,000. Source: Google Earth, 2023.



Map 8A: Survey Units in the Activity area. Scale 1: 7,000. Source: Esri 2023.



Map 8B: Survey Units in the Activity area. Scale 1: 6,000. Source: Esri 2023

7.6 Results of the Standard Assessment

The Pedestrian survey confirmed the findings of the desktop assessment in that the entire activity area has been subject to various degrees of disturbance, such as logging, early grazing, track/road/bridge building and most notably historical gold mining and associated impacts. The entire Activity area either utilises or intersects a complex series of old mining and or forestry tracks.

The Activity area traverses three (3) landforms, Ridgelines, Gullies and Mid slopes across a range of elevations (Map 9A & 9B). Due to the area being heavily vegetated and with almost all of the proposed track on steep slopes, the site was difficult to traverse with steep grades of >1V:1H making up a large proportion of the area. GSV was Poor (10-30%) over the areas that were assessed – mainly the ridges (Map 7) due to a thick layer of leaf litter in most situations.

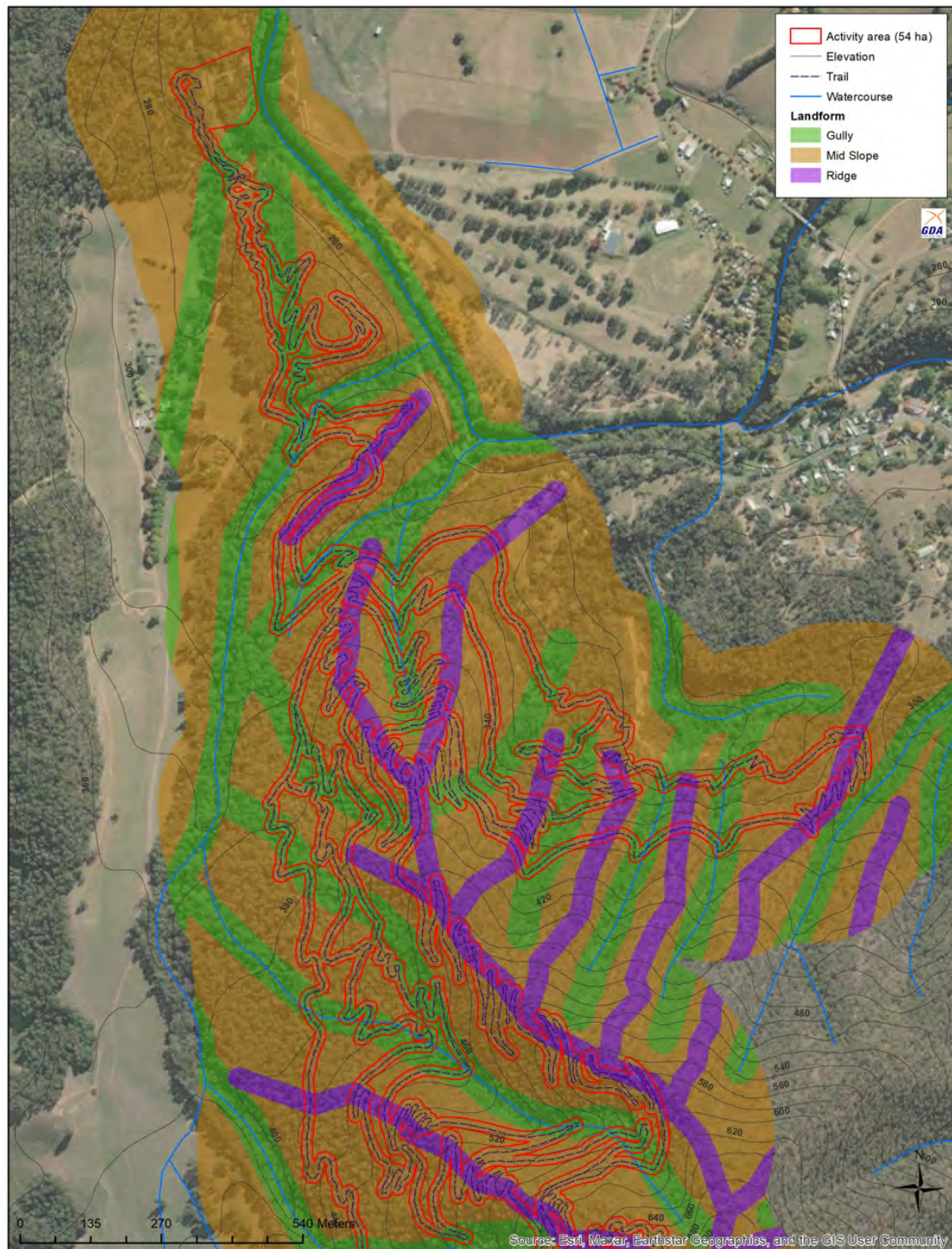
The survey team agreed to focus survey effort on the accessible areas of the major ridgelines and any exposed areas on the lower slopes leading up from the Mitta River Valley floor. The major ridgelines were accessed by 4WD to the highest elevations able to be accessed and pedestrian survey down the ridgelines was initiated from where the access tracks intersected the spurs or ridges.

The existing walking trail that extends from the Mitta township to Disappointment Track was clearly evident along some of the ridges (Photo 2) and GSV (10-30%) in these areas was hindered by heavy leaf litter, however the minimal public use that these areas currently get is maintaining a clearway (Photos 4-6) that was thoroughly inspected.

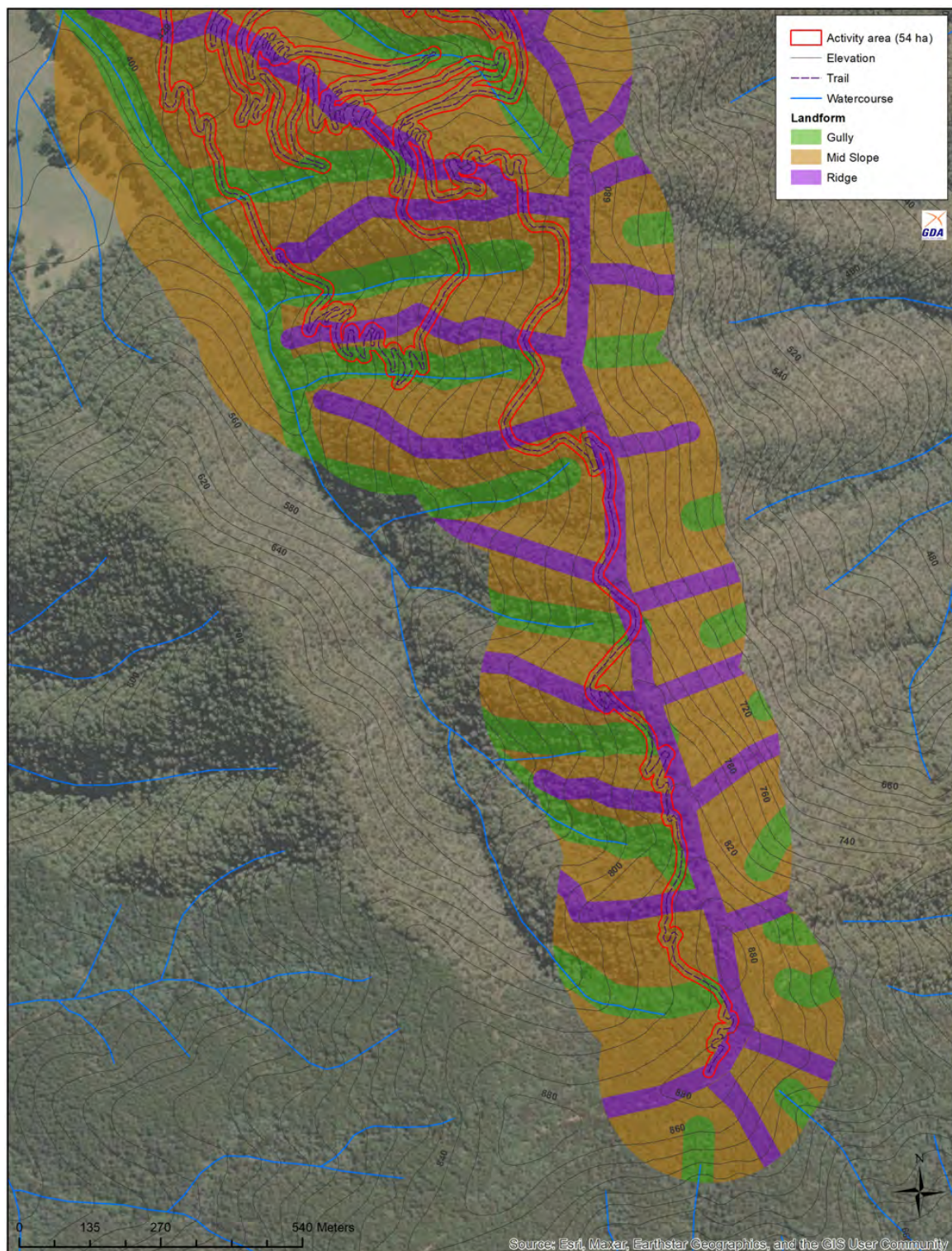
Some old mining (presumably) small tracks to very steep sections of the east and west slopes off the main ridges were observed (Photo 7) and one area on the lower slopes adjacent to the Pioneer Mine site was also inspected as several trails were proposed to intersect at that location. The area had been previously cleared and evidence of a house site was observed (Photo 8). It was noted that very few 'scar age' native vegetation seemed to be present on the steeper slopes or the ridges which is likely due to the extensive mining history that has impacted the majority of the landscape.

Several gullies at on the lower slopes, south of the Mitta township were accessible by 4WD and the survey team observed that these areas were also heavily vegetated and inaccessible aside from some already developed bike and walking paths that have been informally established. Several locations had extensive areas of water races/contour banking and were extensively disturbed (Photo 10).

No scarred or culturally modified trees and no rock shelters or caves that may contain Aboriginal cultural heritage material are present in the Activity Area. There are no naturally occurring waterholes and soaks present within the Activity area. No Aboriginal cultural material was observed during the Standard Assessment.



Map 9A: Landforms within the Activity area. Scale 1:9,000. Source: Google Earth, 2023



Map 9B: Landforms within the Activity area. Scale 1:9,000. Source: Google Earth, 2023



Photo 2: Existing walking track off Disappointment Track. Note the AA is approximately 50m east of this position down a 1V:1H slope. Poor GSV. North orientation. Photo: D. Wall 2022



Photo 3: Ridge conditions showing approximate location of the trail on the western facing slope in thick vegetation. Poor GSV. North West orientation. Photo: D.Wall 2022



Photo 4: Steep ridgeline displaying Poor GSV. Proposed trail 50m to the west down slope. North orientation. Photo: D.Wall 2022



Photo 5: Existing trail conditions, no scar age trees, mid-way down ridge above Deep Gully. North orientation. Photo: D.Wall 2022



Photo 6: Clear zone maintained by foot traffic. Note lack of topsoil and heavy rock substrate. Photo: D.Wall 2022



Photo 7: Old mining track, leaf litter covering ground surface, steep mid slope. Poor GSV. South orientation. Photo: D.Wall 2022



Photo 8: Previous miners cottage site adjacent to Pioneer Mine site, extensively disturbed. Poor GSV. West orientation.
Photo: D.Wall 2022



Photo 9: Lower slopes above Mitta River valley, heavily vegetated landscape unaffected by the AA which is approximately 50m downslope on the steep east aspect: D.Wall 2022



Photo 10: Mining water race on lower slopes of Deep Gully. Poor GSV. North orientation. Photo: D.Wall 2022.

7.7 Areas likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage & Aboriginal cultural heritage scientific sensitivity model

Generally speaking, Aboriginal places would be expected to be situated close to either an ephemeral or permanent water source, providing adequate shelter from the elements and rising floodwaters, and have access to a food source. For intact Aboriginal places to remain in these areas, the landscape will not have sustained ground disturbing activities. Where they do remain in disturbed landscapes or contexts, they are not likely to be *in situ*.

The Activity area traverses three (3) landforms, Ridgelines, Gullies and Mid slopes, therefore, the majority of the trail traverses steep slopes, up and down multiple ridges and gullies. The standard assessment did not record any cultural heritage material within the Activity area with a high degree of subsurface disturbance was noted across the entire Activity area.

The area is heavily vegetated and with almost all of the proposed track on steep slopes, the site was difficult to traverse with steep grades of >1V:1H making up a large proportion of the area. GSV was poor (10-30%) over the areas that were assessed due to a thick layer of leaf litter in most situations.

The results of the standard assessment have been used to refine the desktop assessment Aboriginal cultural heritage prediction model (Section 6.9). Any 'scar age' mature trees within the Activity area were inspected, with no cultural scarring observed.

7.8 Conclusions from the Standard Assessment

The standard assessment has demonstrated that in relation to the Activity area:

- No Aboriginal cultural heritage was identified during the standard assessment;
- The Standard assessment confirmed the findings of the desktop assessment in that the Activity area has experienced substantial environment impacts directly from gold mining, associated mining infrastructure, tracks and waste. Additional impacts to the Activity area would have been early pastoralism/grazing, forestry activities such as land clearing and track building and the construction and maintenance of existing access roads and other fire access tracks, this includes grading road shoulders, maintaining table drains, movement of soil, etc;
- GSV encountered was Poor (10 -30%) across the parts of the Activity area that were accessible, due to thick leaf litter and native grasses covering the ground surface;
- No Aboriginal cultural heritage material was located during the Standard assessment;
- There were no rock shelters or caves within the activity area.
- The site is extremely steep and the track construction is restricted to the gullies, ridgelines and mid-slope landforms which is >1V:1H in many areas. These parts of the landscape are highly unlikely to have been occupied for any length of time or used as rest areas due to the steepness;
- There are no areas that are likely to contain Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and any Aboriginal cultural heritage material that may have existed in the Activity area has likely been destroyed or displaced.

The Standard assessment did not record Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Activity area and concluded that the much of works are proposed within areas that have been extensively disturbed. Aboriginal cultural heritage was considered 'highly unlikely' or a 'low probability' to occur within the Activity area, therefore a Complex Assessment was not conducted in accordance with r.64 (1).

8 Impact assessment – Section 61 matters

In accordance with Section 61 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 an assessment must be made as to whether the proposed activity will be conducted in a way that avoids harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage or be conducted in a way that minimises harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The purpose of the Act is to provide for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. In the first instance, harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage should be avoided. This may be achieved through appropriate management strategies (or specific measures) in relation to the Aboriginal Places and the activity, the use of protective fencing during construction or restricting access, in addition to cultural awareness training for contractors. In the second instance, harm to Aboriginal cultural heritage must be minimised. This may be achieved through re-aligning infrastructure, locating public open space areas over cultural values (if appropriate) or using less invasive construction methods. The final resort is the salvage of cultural heritage where appropriate.

This CHMP has undertaken desktop and a standard assessment in order to investigate the nature and extent of any Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the Activity area and to mitigate the risks to these Aboriginal Places through appropriate management strategies.

8.1 Can Harm to Identified Cultural Heritage Places be Avoided?

The proposed activity will not harm Aboriginal cultural heritage places as there were no Aboriginal cultural heritage places identified within the Activity area.

8.2 Can Harm to Identified Cultural Heritage Places be Minimised?

No specific measures are required as no Aboriginal cultural heritage material was identified.

8.3 Are Specific Measures Needed for the Management of Identified Cultural Heritage Places?

No specific measures are required as no Aboriginal cultural heritage material was identified.

8.4 Are There Particular Contingency Plans That Might be Necessary?

Processes to be followed in relation to delays and other obstacles are outlined in the management conditions in Section 2. Procedures are outlined for factors that may affect the conduct of the activity. These include procedural guidelines in the event that suspected human remains are discovered, as well as safety requirements.

8.5 What Custody and Management Arrangements Might be Needed?

The custody and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage are addressed in Section 2.3.

9 References

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10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Notice to prepare Cultural Heritage Management Plan



**Premier
and Cabinet**

Notice of Intent to prepare a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the purposes of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*

This form can be used by the Sponsor of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan to complete the notification provisions pursuant to s.54 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (the "Act").

For clarification on any of the following please contact Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) enquiries on 1800-726-003.

SECTION 1 - Sponsor information

Sponsor:	Mitta Valley Inc		
ABN/ACN:	28687938367		
Contact Name:	Megan Graham		
Postal Address	5557 Omeo Hwy, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701		
Business Number:	0411645415	Mobile:	0411645415
Email Address:	megan.graham@latitude36advisory.com		

Sponsor's agent (if relevant)

Company:			
Contact Name:			
Postal Address			
Business Number:		Mobile:	
Email Address:			

SECTION 2 - Description of proposed activity and location

Project Name:	Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701		
Municipal district:	Towong Shire Council		

Clearly identify the proposed activity for which the cultural heritage management plan is to be prepared (ie. Mining, road construction, housing subdivision)

Bicycle track

SECTION 3 - Cultural Heritage Advisor

Damian Wall	Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd	damian.wall@red-gum.com.au
<i>Name</i>	<i>Company</i>	<i>Email address</i>

SECTION 4 - Expected start and finish date for the cultural heritage management plan

Start Date:	11-Feb-2022	Finish Date:	31-Mar-2022
-------------	-------------	--------------	-------------

Submitted on: 10 Feb 2022

Premier
and Cabinet**SECTION 5 - Why are you preparing this cultural heritage management plan?**

- ☒ A cultural heritage management plan is required by the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007
What is the high Impact Activity as it is listed in the regulations?

Is any part of the activity an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, as listed in the regulations? 1

- ☐ Other Reasons (Voluntary)
- ☐ An Environment Effects Statement is required
- ☐ A Cultural Heritage Management Plan is required by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.
- ☐ An Impact Management Plan or Comprehensive Impact Statement is required for the activity

SECTION 6 - List the relevant registered Aboriginal parties (if any)

This section is to be completed where there are registered Aboriginal parties in relation to the management plan.

SECTION 7A - List the relevant Aboriginal groups or Aboriginal people with whom the Sponsor intends to consult (if any)

This section is to be completed only if the proposed activity in the management plan is to be carried out in an area where there is no Registered Aboriginal Party.

Duduroa Local Custodians

SECTION 7B - Describe the intended consultation process (if any)

This section is to be completed only if the proposed activity in the management plan is to be carried out in an area where there is no Registered Aboriginal Party.

All aspects of the CHMP will be in partnership with DDAC

SECTION 8 – State who will be evaluating this plan (mandatory)

The plan is to be evaluated by:

- ☐ Joint - Registered Aboriginal Party AND The Secretary
- ☐ A Registered Aboriginal Party
- ☒ The Secretary
- ☐ Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council

SECTION 9 – Preliminary Aboriginal Heritage Tests (PAHTs)

List the Reference Number(s) of any PAHTs conducted in relation to the proposed activity:

SECTION 10 - Notification checklist

Ensure that any relevant registered Aboriginal party/ies is also notified. A copy of this notice with a map attached may be used for this purpose.
(A registered Aboriginal party is allowed up to 14 days to provide a written response to a notification specifying whether or not it intends to evaluate the management plan.)

Submitted on: 10 Feb 2022

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

CHMP No: 18608

Appendix 2: Summary of Consultation

Date	Time	Type	Name (from)	Party (to)	Discussion/Details
4/2/22	9.00	Phone	Damian Wall (Red-Gum)	Phil Murray (DDAC)	DW rang PM to organise an initial meeting and a field visit. PM and DW agreed on the approach to the CHMP development. PM advised that Johnny Murray and himself would be attending site.
11/2/22	8.00	Site Inspection	Damian Wall (Red-Gum)	Phil & Johnny Murray (DDAC), Leigh Holland (Terrain)	Standard Assessment conducted.
11/2/22	15:00	Site Meeting	Damian Wall (Red-Gum)	Phil & Johnny Murray (DDAC), Leigh Holland (Terrain)	Management Conditions meeting.
6/12/2022	19:00	Email	Damian Wall (Red-Gum)	Reg Murray (DDAC)	DW emailed RM a draft copy of the report and requested that DDAC advise if the CHMP was acceptable.
7/12/2022	15:00	Phone	Damian Wall (Red-Gum)	Reg Murray (DDAC)	DW phoned RM to discuss the CHMP and RM advise that the Management conditions etc had not changed from those discussed with Uncle Phil and that the CHMP was acceptable to DDAC.
16/02/2023	9.00	Site Inspection	Damian Wall (Red-Gum)	Reg Murray (DDAC)	Additional site inspection undertaken.
16/02/2023	11.00	Site meeting	Damian Wall (Red-Gum)	Reg Murray (DDAC)	Approach/effectiveness of the assessment was reviewed. Reg Murray agreed that the Standard assessment (and additional inspection) had adequately assessed the Activity area for the presence of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and was satisfied with the proposed Management Conditions and contingencies.

Appendix 3: Qualifications of Heritage Advisors

Damian Wall

Managing Director - Red-Gum Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd

Qualifications:

- Bachelor of Applied Science (Parks, Recreation & Heritage), CSU Albury, 1996
- Master Environmental Management and Restoration, CSU, 2005
- Certified Environmental Practitioner (CENVP), Environment Institute of Australia & New Zealand, 2008
- Full Member Australian Association of Consulting Archaeologists Inc (AACAI)
- Graduate Certificate in Cultural Heritage Management (CHM), Flinders University, 2011
- Heritage Advisor as defined under section 189(1) of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.

Appendix 4: Glossary of terms

Activity	The development or use of land
Activity Area	The area or areas to be used or developed for an activity
Archaeology	The study of the past through the systematic recovery and analysis of material culture.
Artefact Scatter	A group of stone or other artefacts found scattered on the ground surface.
Assemblage	A collection of artefacts that are derived from the same Aboriginal place.
Burial (Aboriginal Ancestral Remains)	Usually represented by a concentration of human bones or teeth. Burials can be associated with charcoal or ochre, shell, animal bone or stone tools. They tend to be located in sandy areas, which were easy to dig or in rock shelters or tree hollows. They are usually exposed through earthworks or erosion.
Culturally Modified Tree	See Scarred Tree
Earth Feature	Includes mounds, rings, hearths, post holes and ovens.
Excavation	The systematic recovery of archaeological data through the exposure of buried sites and artefacts.
Low Density Artefact Deposit (LDAD)	Artefact deposit with average stone density of less than 10 artefacts in a 10m x 10m area.
Material culture	The tangible evidence or cultural remains that are produced by human activity.
Object Collection	A collection of Aboriginal cultural heritage objects.
Quarry	A location from which Aboriginal people have extracted stone for making stone artefacts or mineral such as ochre for use in painting.
Rock Art	Paintings or engravings on the surface of caves or rock shelters, created by Aboriginal people in the past.
Scarred Tree	Trees from which bark has been removed for the manufacture of utilitarian items such as containers, shelter sheets, canoes or medicine.
Shell Midden	A midden is the remains of a meal. In the case of shell middens, marine or freshwater molluscs are the dominant component.
Stone Feature	Rock art consisting of stones arranged in a pattern.

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

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Appendix 5: Compliance Review Check list

COMPLIANCE CHECK LIST CHMP 18608						
Item	Date	Compliance (Y/N)	Issue/reason for non-compliance	Action	Person supervising action	Date to be completed by
Management Conditions						
Is a copy of this CHMP stored at all times in the site construction office? (1.1)						
Contingencies						
If any skeletal remains area identified during the activity have all works ceased & the remains been protected <i>in situ</i> ? (2.1)						
If any skeletal remains area identified during the activity have Victoria Police and the State Coroner's Office been notified immediately? (2.1)						
If Aboriginal cultural material (non-skeletal) is found during the activity have all works ceased within 10 m of the find and a fenced buffer zone been established and clearly marked as a 'no-go' zone? (2.2)						
Have all following steps been followed regarding notification, inspection, reporting, managing, agreement and custody been followed? (2.3)						
Have appropriate and required VAHR forms been completed and submitted as per Section 2.3?						
Has compliance with the CHMP been reviewed (2.5)?						
If any non-compliance has been identified have works ceased (2.5)?						
Have any non-compliance issues been managed as per 2.5?						
Comments (can the process be improved)						
Signature:			Date:			

Proposed Mitta Mitta Mountain Bike Park, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701

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Appendix 6: Communication Contact Table

Name	Role	Company	Phone	Address	Email
Dr Dan Cummins	Manager, Heritage Programs (Hume)	First Peoples - State Relations	(03) 5722 7116 M: 0488 002 141	Level 1, 62 Ovens Street, Wangaratta VIC 3677	dan.cummins@dpc.vic.gov.au
Megan Graham	Sponsor Contact	Mitta Valley Inc	0411645415	5557 Omeo Hwy, Mitta Mitta, VIC 3701	megan.graham@latitude36advisory.com

MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK SITE CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (S/CEMP)

OCTOBER 2024

Version 1



Prepared for Mitta Valley Inc.



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SITE LOCATION

The Mitta Valley is located in North-East Victoria at the foothills of the Great Dividing Range with magnificent views of Mt Bogong. Mitta Mitta is at the end of the Valley on the Omeo Highway approximately one-hour east from Wodonga. With the road now sealed through to Omeo, it is becoming an increasingly popular tourist route between Gippsland and Albury Wodonga. Mitta Mitta is at the junction of the Mitta Mitta River and Snowy Creek. Immediately to the south of the township lays Mt Welcome and the project site. **(Error! Reference source not found.).**

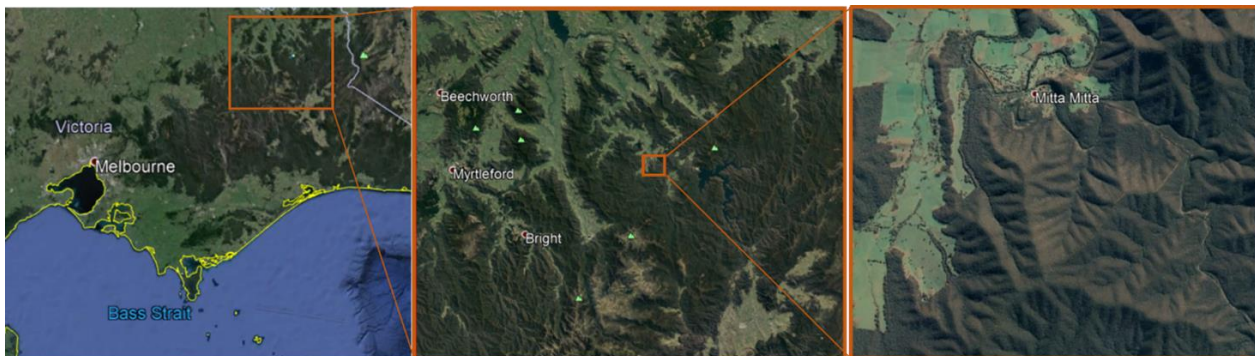


Figure 1

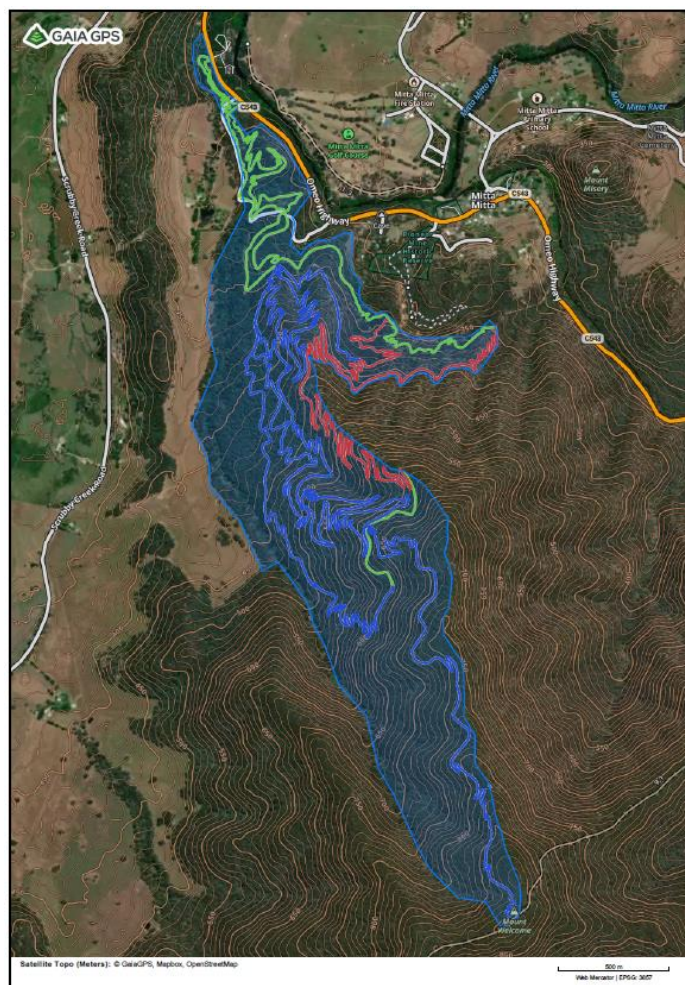


Figure 2

The mountain bike trail network project is located within State Forest south of Mitta Mitta as shown in Figure 2. The subject land is managed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). It is affected by the Bushfire Management (BMO) overlay controls of the Towong Shire planning scheme.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2018, members of the Mitta Valley community successfully sought funding to develop a Masterplan for the construction of a Mountain Bike Park in the Mitta Valley. The Masterplan was completed, along with a multipurpose carparking area that would double as a Trailhead once funding for the park construction had been sought.

The development of the Masterplan involved a comprehensive community engagement process; over half the households in the Valley participated in the process and the support for the development was strong.

In 2021 Mitta Valley Inc. received \$1.5 million through the Victorian State Government's Local Economic Recovery program to deliver the first stage of the trail network. Approximately 50% of the trail network will be developed, in addition to branding, and the establishment of a social enterprise that will assist in the expense associated with maintaining the park.

North East Victoria, branded as Victoria's High Country, is recognised as Victoria's premier cycling destination. With the exception of Towong Shire, each local government area within the region has at least one mountain biking product to capitalise on the growing cycle tourism market. The Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park will remedy this situation.

As outlined in the Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park Masterplan, the Mitta Valley presents highly suitable terrain and geology for the development of a successful mountain bike destination.

This S/CEMP provides construction management, risk assessment and control measures associated with the delivery of these works.

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

Site Establishment and Storage

Primary site establishment and setdown locations will be as indicated on the attached trail maps (see attachment 1).

There are existing hardstand locations with 4WD access allowing material delivery, material stockpiling and vehicle parking. These will be the locations for any material/machinery storage for use during the trail works.

All stockpile areas will be suitably bunded with silt fencing in accordance with attached EPA guidelines.

Working areas are to be maintained, kept free of rubbish and cleaned up at the end of each working day. Once the works have been completed, any waste material is to be removed from site and disposed of at a licenced facility.

A mobile toilet facility and 10' tool container will also be placed at this location.

Site Induction

A site induction for the construction team will be held consistent with standards or conditions outlined in the S/CEMP and related permits and assessments. It will cover the relevant requirements of the Cultural Heritage Management Plan and Native Vegetation Report.

The site induction will cover threatened species identification and incident reporting protocols.

The site induction will cover unexpected cultural finds reporting protocols.

Relevant technical experts will provide this induction.

The Project Manager and contractor Site Supervisor will ensure copies of the endorsed S/CEMP, construction plans and associated requirements including the CHMP are always kept on site while works are conducted.

A Job Safety Analysis (JSA) and Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) will be provided to the Project Manager at the site induction prior to work commencing.

Prior to works commencing, all controls that apply to a stage of works are to be installed, including erosion and sediment controls, tree protection zones and exclusion zones. The limit of works is also to be pegged where appropriate. Once established, a pre-start meeting will be organised with MVI's Project Manager, MVI's Environmental Consultant and the contractor's Site Supervisor.

Construction Zones and Site Access

Vehicle access will be limited to 4WD tracks only and primarily to the site set down/storage areas identified on the attached trail map. (attachment 1)

Any areas close to trail works identified by the Project Manager as '**High Sensitivity Exclusion Zones**' will also be bunted in an appropriate fashion (minimum star pickets and bunting) to prevent inadvertent site disturbance.

Works to be carried out during normal work hours (i.e. 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday; 8am to 1pm Saturdays). Any work that is performed outside normal work hours or on Sundays or public holidays will have measures in place to minimise noise impacts

Plant and Equipment

The works will be conducted using a 1.7 T mini-excavator with a track width of 1m maximum. The machine will be serviced prior to entering the site. Standard checks including, leaks (hydraulic oil, engine oil), rubber tracks in good condition, excavator fitted with a fire extinguisher, etc will also be carried out daily and prior to site entry.

A mini skid steer with a rubber track width of maximum 900mm may also be used to construct trail on very shallow slopes.

Plant will remain on site for the duration of the construction project. Mini-excavators will be left on the trail in a safe manner during periods of no work to minimise trail impact during construction. Refuelling of mini-excavators will be performed on the trail for the same reason. Refuelling will be via a 20ltr jerry can and appropriate funnel/nozzle to prevent spills. A 900mm x 900mm organic absorbent spills mat will be placed below the fuel cap to catch any minor spills whilst refuelling. Refuelling of plant and equipment is to occur a minimum of 50 metres from drainage lines or waterways.

Fuel and oils are not to be stored on site.

Hand tools should be stored in work vehicles or other secure location. Tools should not be left on the trail at the end of the day.

Tools should not be used in areas outside the work site for the duration of the project to avoid the spread of weed and fungus.

Biosecurity and Equipment Washdown

All plant, hand tools and footwear must be thoroughly cleaned prior to entering and leaving the site to avoid the spread of weed, phytophthora and fungus such as Myrtle Rust or introduce anything foreign to the environment. Washdown should be undertaken prior to entering the site and undertaken using a pressurised spray unit containing a disinfectant/fungicide:

- Phytoclean. Add 1 part of Phytoclean® to 50 parts of water (or similar approved product)
- Disinfectant should be allowed to penetrate for at least one minute (preferably 10 minutes) before equipment departs.
- Do not drive through washdown effluent.

- Do not allow mud and wash-down effluent to drain into bushland and surface waters, such as rivers, creeks, reservoirs and dams.

Additionally, to further prevent the spread of weeds, phytophthora and fungus

- Should the trails construction pass through a heavily infested area then the above equipment washdown procedure will be employed before passing into un infested areas.
- All weed material containing seed heads, weeds that contain toxins, and weeds that are able to reproduce vegetatively encountered during construction will be sprayed or mechanically removed. This will be undertaken by the trail contractors as required.
- All herbicides should be used in accordance with the requirements on the label. Any person undertaking pesticide (including herbicide) application should be trained to do so and have the proper certificate of completion/ competency or statement of attainment issued by a registered training organisation.
- Only inert materials free of weed seeds will be brought into the work site.
- No soil is to be brought in for the proposed works.

Existing Services Locations

Prior to construction works being undertaken a Dial Before You Dig will be undertaken to locate all utilities in the vicinity of the trail. The location of the trails is unlikely to have any specific issues due to their remote nature.

Threatened Species Considerations and Biodiversity Management

All requirements in the Native Vegetation Report (NVR) will be undertaken during this project. The construction team will be briefed during the site induction and during daily toolbox meetings on appropriate practices to minimise construction impacts.

The final trail alignment should be micro-sited prior to construction starting to avoid as much high-quality vegetation as possible. No trees beyond sapling size (three metres high) to be removed.

All efforts should be made to retain as much native vegetation as possible during construction. No disturbance to vegetation outside the 1m trail tread will occur.

Wet areas, wet grassland, wetlands and swamps must be avoided by the final alignment. The final alignment must be micro-sited to select existing disturbed areas, trails, game trails and weedier areas for the trail, avoiding any higher quality native vegetation areas wherever possible. Where creeks or wet areas must be intersected, installation of fibreglass boardwalks are to be installed with low impact techniques, including screw piles which can be installed by hand. Crossing points must be selected where existing disturbance exists where practicable, such as game trails or other vegetation clearings. Erosion and sedimentation controls along with relevant permit requirements must be implemented including silt fencing in accordance with attached EPA guidelines.

Avoid and minimise excavation within TPZs and strictly no excavation within SRZs. Large habitat trees, especially those with hollows, must be avoided and no works to occur within their SRZ. If a tree has hollows (potential nesting and glider habitat), low noise and vibration works (hand build) must be conducted within their vicinity to reduce potential disruption to threatened mammals. If SRZ of large trees is unavoidably breached, then no excavation is permitted. Instead use fill created from trail bench construction either side of tree to create a raised level surface for the trail without disturbance being made to the tree or shrub roots.

The trail is to avoid large hollow logs. No fallen timber is to be removed from the study area, but instead can be moved to a location out of the work zone. As a precaution, where any trail clearing is required that involves moving hollow logs or large areas of fallen timber, the project ecologist or a wildlife handler should be present to ensure there are no listed fauna present in the works area. If located, work must stop until the specimen can be relocated away from the work site.

There were no threatened ecological communities identified during site assessments. If potential threatened ecological communities are identified during construction, works must stop immediately, and advice must be sought from the Project Ecologist or DEECA.

Any change to proposed design increasing or changing the alignment of the assessed scope would result in an immediate stop works and subject to further assessment.

The trailhead signage will inform trail users about the Crown reserve assets and educate people about the need to keep to the trail and to stay out of sensitive areas.

If threatened species (or if suspected to be a threatened species) or fauna, are found on site, the Unexpected Threatened Species or Fauna finds procedure includes:

- Stop works within 200m of the detection
- Alert the Project Manager, Project Ecologist or suitably qualified person (DEECA) for assessment and possible re-location during works
- Any confirmed records must be recorded with GPS, and photographs are to be taken where possible
- Any fauna that is encountered during the removal of vegetation or soil disturbance shall be protected and relocated by the Project Ecologist or wildlife handler to a suitable habitat

Cultural Heritage Management

The Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 requires a CHMP to set out Management Conditions for measures to be taken before, during and after the activity. No Aboriginal cultural heritage was identified during the Desktop or Standard Assessment, and no areas are identified as likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. No specific cultural heritage management activities are provided; however, one (1) general cultural heritage management condition has been detailed below.

A hard copy (or a digital copy on a suitable electronic device) of the approved Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) must be held onsite at all times within the on-site construction office or with the site manager if an office is not provided, where it will remain readily available to all construction staff.

In the event that any object suspected of being of Aboriginal origin or of cultural (Aboriginal or European) significance is discovered all construction personnel must:

- Not harm/further harm the object
- Immediately cease all work at the particular location
- Secure and bunt the area to avoid further harm to the object
- Notify the Project Manager immediately, providing details of the suspected object and its location
- Not commence any work at the particular location unless authorised in writing by the Project Manger

Unexpected cultural finds procedure includes:

In the unlikely event that skeletal remains are unexpectedly encountered during the activity, works must cease. The Victoria Police and the State Coroner's Office must be notified immediately. If there are reasonable grounds to believe the remains are Aboriginal, the Coronial Admissions and Enquiries hotline must be contacted immediately on 1300 309 519.

This advice has been developed further and is described in the CHMP 5-step contingency plan. Any such discovery at the activity area must follow these steps.

In the unlikely event that skeletal remains are unexpectedly encountered during the activity, work must stop immediately, the area secured to prevent unauthorised access and NSW Police and Heritage NSW contacted.

Incident Reporting

Any environmental incidents, including chemical spills, fauna injury or death, damage to retained native vegetation or introduction of invasive weeds, are to be reported as soon as practicable to the Project Manager. An incident report is to be submitted along with any other protocols covered in the site induction.

TRAIL WORKS

Construction techniques shall generally be in accordance with the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) Trail Solutions guidelines, contemporary sustainable trail building best practice and comply with all controls and requirement of this S/CEMP.

The final trail alignment should be micro-sited with the Project Ecologist prior to construction starting to avoid as much high-quality vegetation as possible

Prior to works commencing: Thorough knowledge and understanding is required of the project's protocols and recommendations contained in the *Threatened Species Considerations and Biodiversity Management* and *Cultural Heritage Management* sections of this S/CEMP along with the Cultural Heritage Management Plan and Native Vegetation Report.



Construction Techniques

Machine constructed trail – mini excavator

This project will largely be constructed using a 1.7T to 2T mini excavator which is used to create the defined 1m trail width. The following steps outline the process for construction of the trail using an excavator.

1. Review the assessed corridor with the Project Ecologist for a minimum of 200m ahead of the excavator and ground crew. The assessed corridor is marked using pink flagging tape tied to trees/vegetation or ground pins during the ground-truthing stage and mapped with GPS. The ground-truthed corridor is defined to include 10m either side of the flagged alignment, subject to identified constraints.
2. Determine the exact alignment to be taken within the alignment corridor with the Project Ecologist, to minimise impact to higher value vegetation, factoring in avoidance of SRZs/TPZs or other requirements advised by the heritage and ecology specialists.
3. Clear the construction corridor of vegetation. A hazard free corridor of 1.5 metre wide is recommended for a 400mm to 600mm singletrack and allows the riders to ride safely and reduces maintenance. The vertical corridor extends to approximately 2.4 m high (enough to allow passage of the excavator) see Figure 3.

Vegetation removal along the trail corridor is usually undertaken manually using motorized tools such as brush cutters, chainsaws, hedge trimmers and hand tools like loppers, hand saws and secateurs. No mature trees (greater than 3m high) or major tree limbs are to be removed. Trees should be used to add to the rider experience and to anchor the trail to prevent shortcutting. Overhanging small branches that

encroach on the trail corridor should be trimmed. Minor limbs are to be cut flush with the tree trunk making sure that removal will not tear or strip bark from the tree.

Any large or hollow bearing deadfall to be removed must be inspected immediately prior to removal by the Project Ecologist to ensure that no fauna is present. If located, work must stop until the specimen can be relocated away from the work site.

If a tree is deemed unsafe or problematic it will be flagged and advice sort from the project manager prior to works continuing.

All vegetation that is removed is cut into small pieces and dispersed throughout the surrounding area - no large windrows or stockpiles should be present. Do not place vegetative materials in creek lines, drainage (nicks, sumps, etc), or other locations where they would prevent the free flow of water.

At this stage, all vegetation is removed except for ground covers, herbs and grasses (which are left in place for later removal by the excavator).

4. Cut the bench using cut and fill technique outlined in IMBA Trail Solutions guide (Figure 4). Where possible ground covers, herbs and grasses are to be cut with topsoil, similar to a turf sod. This sod is then to be used on batters and the back of berms etc. This will stabilise the works, reduce sedimentation and retain as much native vegetation as possible, minimising construction impacts. Mineral earth removed from the inner side of the bench are used to build up the outer edge of the bench. The trail bench is to be out sloped by min 5% to encourage water to cross the trail, not run down it, minimising erosion.

Cut nicks every 10 metres on shallow side slopes (less than 5%). Construct grade reversal and rolling grade dips as required to ensure water is forced off the trail to minimise erosion. (Figure 5)

5. Clean up the trail tread, removing loose rocks and roots, compacting the tread, back sloping the batter. Install required sediment controls where appropriate such as gully crossings drainage lines etc.

6. On flat ground the topsoil is removed to 1m width with the excavated zone refilled with excavated material to a level marginally higher than the surrounding ground. The surface is compacted in the same manner with a slight crown at the centreline to ensure water shedding from the trail surface to the surrounding ground.

Hand Constructed Trail

The process for hand constructed trail is similar to machine constructed trail. It is used in situations where it may be dangerous for a machine to operate, areas of high ecological or heritage sensitivity or where trail widths are required to be kept as narrow as possible. Instead of using a machine to bench the trail tread area as described above, this is cut using hand tools.

Rock Armouring

Rock armouring may be used for small drainage crossings or smaller boggy areas to improve the trail tread resistance to erosion and avoid damage to the environment.

1. If required, rocks that are won during the trails construction, are to be re-used as part of the rock armouring process. All rock armouring installation will be in accordance with the IMBA Trail Solutions guidebook. No rock is to be harvested from around the trail corridor.

2. Excavate soil from the area to be rock armoured, to the approximate depth of the rocks to be used.
3. Place rocks in position per requirements in the IMBA Trail solutions guidebook.
4. Once all rock armouring is complete, use any leftover soil/rocks to pack in around the edges of the rock armouring.



Elevated Structures/Minor Bridges/Culverts

These structures are typically used to enable a trail to cross over a waterway or area of soft or boggy ground. The use of Fibre Reinforced Plastic (FRP) decking allows light and water to penetrate through the bridge, thus minimizing the impact on the vegetation below. Where extended elevated board walks are required, footings should be created in a manner which minimises impact to sensitive wet areas. Wherever possible structures should be less than 1m above the ground to mitigate the requirement for handrails which create additional riding hazards. Screw piles should be used where practicable to minimise impact.

Construction of elevated structures/bridges should be undertaken after trails are excavated to ensure accurate measurements and easier access to the construction site with materials.

Signage

Wayfinding signage will be located at sections where the proposed trail intersects with other trails to provide information to users, or in locations to provide advance warning while using the trail. The signs will be installed directly adjacent to the trail where vegetation has already been removed as part of the construction of the trails. No additional vegetation removal is required to install trail signage. Trailhead and caution signage will also provide information on use of the trail, including hazards/risk mitigation, trail rules/code of conduct, emergency procedures and general information.

This freshly completed trail was constructed in Dinner Plain Alpine Village following the techniques specified in this S/CEMP



MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK S/CEMP

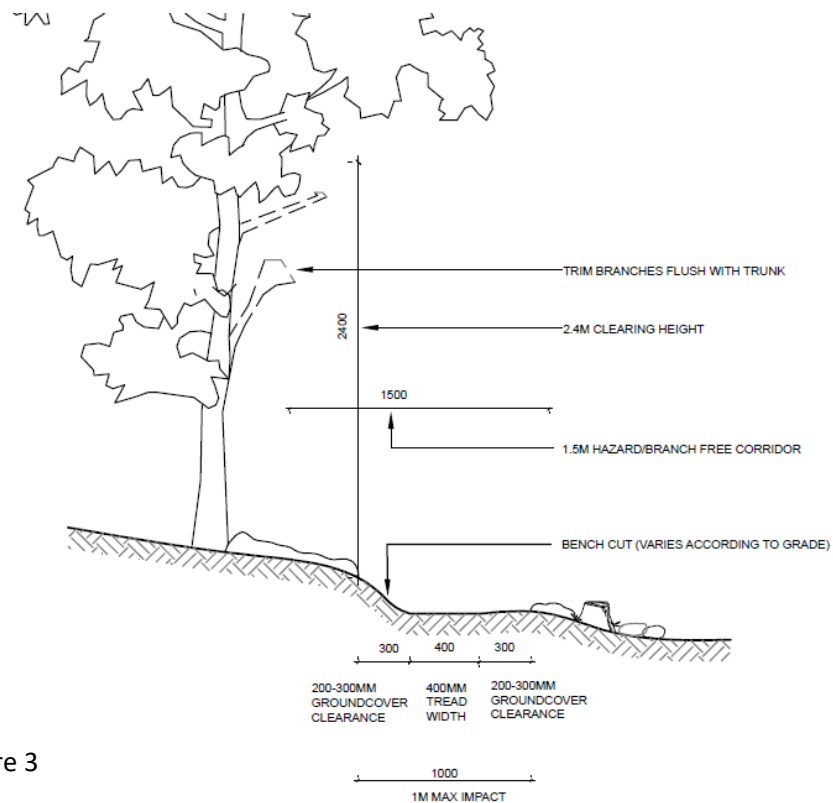


Figure 3

Figure 4

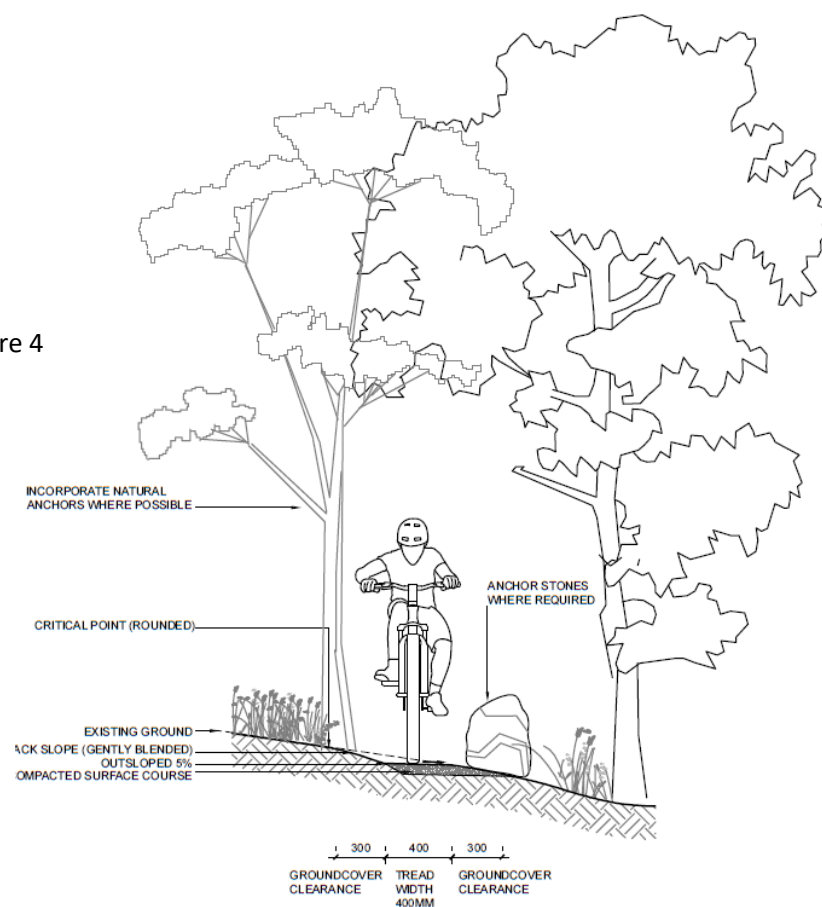
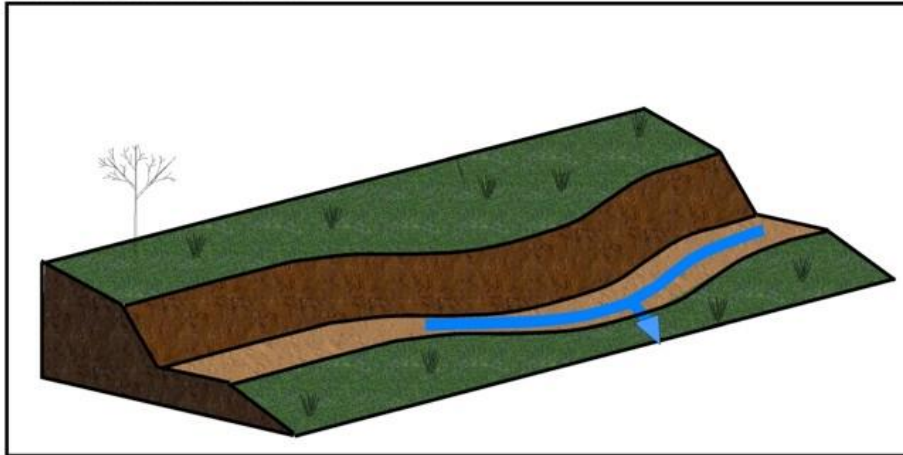
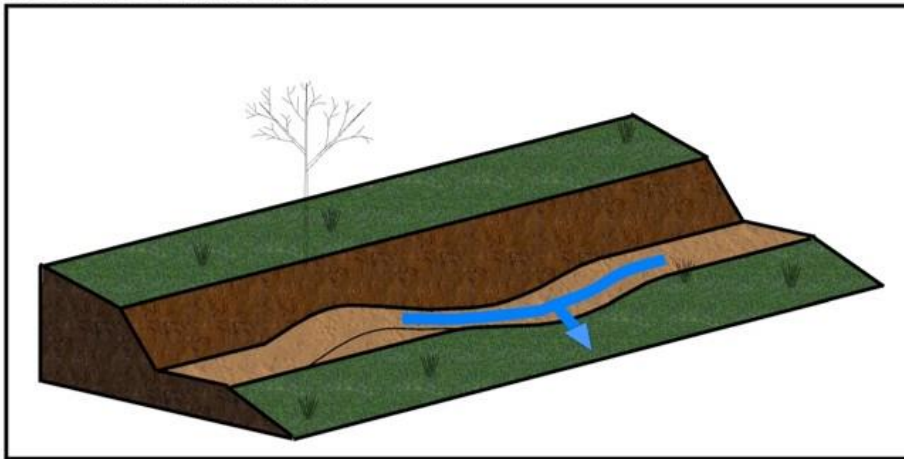


Figure 5

GRADE REVERSAL



ROLLING GRADE DIP



Sediment, Erosion and Dust Control

There is to be no release of dirty water into drainage lines and/or waterways.

Use of sediment control systems are to be used such as silt fencing, Jute Mesh and Coir Logs, to prevent newly constructed trail from creating silt runoff into waterway systems. These will be placed in key areas where this may occur such as waterway crossings or major trail grade reversals on cross sloped sections and stockpiles at the site set down area. EPA silt fencing installation details are provided in the CEMP attachments.

Ensure large storm events are managed in advance by securing machinery, temporary storage items and materials appropriately.

A visual inspection of a new trail's drainage features is to be conducted following the first rain event is particularly important to assess the effectiveness of the trails drainage and to check for sedimentation. A section of trail that shows evidence of ineffective drainage or sedimentation will be rectified with

increased drainage and/or additional sediment control measures to the satisfaction of the Project Supervisor.

Visual surveillance for dust generation will occur at all times. Work will cease when high levels of airborne dust cannot be controlled. Dust suppression techniques will be utilised in response to visible dust, such as watering dusty work areas where practicable and stockpile sites (using non-potable water where available).

Works will be minimised during windy periods to minimise dust creation and ensure no dust impacts occur along public roads or at sensitive receivers.

Rehabilitation work

Rehabilitating temporarily disturbed areas next to the new trails has two key benefits. It provides for a better, natural immersive user experience and allows vegetation to recover stabilising the immediate surrounds of the new trails. If these areas are not stabilised and native vegetation cover is not re-established, they will be sources of erosion and ideal locations for weed establishment. These areas must be returned to a semi-natural functioning state dominated by colonising native plant species from adjacent native woodland, grassland and wetland vegetation. For new trails, the following rehabilitation actions will be implemented:

- Prior to trail works commencing, a site inspection involving the Project Ecologist, the trail Construction Supervisor and Project Manager will be undertaken to work through actions prescribed here and resolve any 'on ground' issues.
- In accordance with the project S/CEMP, soil and vegetation disturbance will be kept to an absolute minimum during new trail construction. This means:
 - Trim vegetation rather than remove entire plants.
 - Minimise unnecessary machinery/personnel traffic across vegetation.
 - Use allocated parking and stockpile areas only.
 - Cut vegetation material (thatch, brush and sods) should be stockpiled for use in rehabilitation along the new trails, including mulching of woody material.
- Develop a maintenance program for high threat weeds or woody weeds along trail edge.
- Areas of active erosion, or where significant drainage issues have occurred post trail works, will be reshaped by hand or with small machinery to restore the natural surface profile. If required, silt fencing, coir sediment logs (organic material only) or weed free straw bales (ideally rice straw) will be used to capture and disperse run off.
- The edges of new trails will be covered with any excess vegetation cut material from new trail construction (i.e. thatch, brush, sods) to naturalise the trail, providing ground cover with organic material. This process of replacing organic material along the trail edges will happen progressively as the trail is built.
- Replanting/re-vegetation of areas will be done with local indigenous plant species relevant to the Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) and in accordance with the DSE guidance: Mid Kiewa Native Plant Lists as approved by the Project Supervisor.

- For ongoing trail maintenance, minimise soil disturbance during vegetation management works and implement only trimming of native plants rather than complete removal.

Construction Monitoring

Trails will be monitored daily during the construction period, including environmental risks. Any issues will be reported as soon as practicable to the Project Manager.

The Project Manager will meet at regularly with the construction team to discuss progress and issues to ensure they can be resolved in a timely manner.

The Site Supervisor will be responsible for undertaking a general daily assessment of positive and negative impacts during the construction program and appropriate photographic records will be kept. Specialist advice on environmental or heritage issues will be sought as required from the project manager and identified specialists during the construction period.

The construction monitoring program for identified risks is outlined in the following table:

Risk	Monitoring response	Frequency of monitoring	Responsibility
1. Local erosion and sedimentation as a result of exposed soil in the immediate vicinity of the trail surfaces (e.g. vegetation smothering)	Visual inspections of trail construction progress including maintaining agreed alignments, gradients, bunded stockpiles and installation/maintenance of sediment control devices. Monitoring of waterways will be undertaken at times when works are being undertaken at each crossing. Where sedimentation is noted, action to rectify will be undertaken, including suspension of works if necessary.	Daily As required at waterways	Site Supervisor Project manager, site supervisor

2. Disturbance and sedimentation of waterways, boggy areas, drainage systems and aquatic habitats including beds and banks for construction of elevated structures and trail surface.	Visual inspection of all bogs, waterway crossings and downstream areas to detect sedimentation point sources. Monitor per 1 above. No works will be undertaken during rain/storm events.	Daily during works in these areas After rain events	Site Supervisor
3. Removal/impact to native vegetation beyond the approved construction corridors	Visual inspection and photo record of pre- and post- construction clearing. Ensure overburden is not spread beyond the 1m corridor. Ensure material staging is on the excavated track bed or defined storage area only.	Daily inspections and weekly photographs	Project Manager and Site Supervisor
4. Introduction of weeds and soil pathogens	Follow up visual inspections to detect weed germination and signs of soil pathogen infection Ensure machinery is fully cleaned prior to use on site.	Weekly during construction and monthly for 1 year after construction completion.	Project Manager, Site Supervisor
	Visual inspections and supervision by project ecologist during trail construction in	As required at alignment mark out	Project ecologist

5. Destruction of threatened flora or their habitats.	identified sensitive areas if required. Ensure and NGZ or TPZ fencing remains in place for duration of works	and when working in these areas As required at alignment mark out and when working in these areas	Project Manager, Site Supervisor
6. Disturbance to terrestrial wildlife	Visual inspections and supervision by project ecologist during trail construction in identified sensitive areas	As required at alignment mark out stage and when working in these areas (e.g. rocky outcrops)	Project Manager, project ecologist
7. Bushfire	Have a spotter observing any welding or grinding operations, and when chainsaws or machinery with hot exhausts are in use. Minimise this type of work during high fire danger periods.	As required during and after such works	Site Supervisor
8. Pollution and litter	Visual inspections of storage and machinery/equipment lay down areas. Ensure elevated structure material off-cuts are removed from the site.	Daily	Site Supervisor
9. Failure of rehabilitation works	Follow up visual inspections of rehabilitation works to assess the success of soil, slope and vegetation stabilisation	Weekly during construction and monthly for 1 year after construction completion.	Project Manager

	Visual inspection of vegetation recovery		
10. Damage to the trees in the immediate vicinity of the proposed trail	Ensure requirements of TPZs are monitored as needed during construction. Engage an arborist if necessary, to seek advice on specific cases where TPZ impacts cannot be avoided – refer also to Environmental Risks section.	As required during works	Project Manager and Site Supervisor
11. Damage to cultural or heritage sites in the vicinity of the proposed trail	Visual inspections of trail works throughout designated heritage sensitive areas. Ensure identified heritage forms are not impacted by construction works in accordance with heritage assessments. NGZ's to be erected, inspected and maintained.	As required during works	Site Supervisor

RISK MITIGATION

Response to previously stated risks are detailed in the following table:

Risk	Mitigation Measures
1. Local erosion and sedimentation as a result of exposed soil in the immediate vicinity of the trail bench construction or from surfacing materials (e.g. vegetation smothering)	The trails will be constructed according to current best practice guidelines for out-sloping and grade reversal. In addition to the construction types described above, suitable erosion control measures will be implemented during all proposed works. The most common sediment control measure to be implemented during the works is a silt fence. Silt fences will be installed on major grade reversals, drainage lines and in wet areas during the construction period and removed once trails have consolidated after a nominal bed-in period. Subject to rain events, sediment traps may also be installed downslope of the mini excavator during construction. This will be determined by the Project Manager and Site Supervisor. Sediment traps (such as silt fences) will be erected at regular intervals to intercept sediment laden run-off and minimise any impacts on surrounding vegetation. Sediment control measures will be checked and maintained at regular intervals and after rainfall events. Coir logs and/or Jute Mesh will also be installed as required
2. Disturbance and sedimentation of waterways, bogs, drainage systems and aquatic habitats including beds and banks.	Works near waterways will be scheduled appropriately. For example, works will be timed to coincide with periods of low flow and completed quickly. Works will be stopped if conditions are not suitable, such as during and after heavy rain. Access to these sites will only be along the built trails or existing access tracks. Any materials for construction will be transported along the trails. Sediment control devices will be installed where sedimentation risks are identified, and stream/bog condition will be regularly visually monitored during and after rainfall events. Minimal riparian vegetation will be removed to allow for works and these areas will be allowed to regenerate or be rehabilitated (where required) when works are complete. The use of a high sunlight penetration

	fibreglass reinforced plastic (FRP) decking will ensure some vegetation cover is maintained under the elevated structures. All requirements will be in accordance with the Works on Waterways permit conditions.
3. Removal of native vegetation beyond the approved construction corridors	Access/egress to the construction corridors will be via the constructed trail alignments or previously established tracks. No new access tracks will be created outside the assessed alignment corridors. Logs/rocks moved from the trail alignment must be placed next the trail in a manner which minimises impact other native vegetation adjacent to the trail alignment. All work must be within the assessed trail corridor being 1m. Site Storage areas will be established on existing hardstand areas such as parking locations or tracks.
4. Introduction of weeds and soil pathogens	Prior to works commencing any machinery, equipment and PPE will be washed down to remove soil and weed seeds. All equipment that has been previously contaminated with soil material will be washed down off-site with Phytoclean anti-fungal solution prior to works commencing. No additional fill material will be imported.
5. Destruction of threatened flora or their habitats. Impacts to threatened ecological communities.	The proposed alignments have been assessed by a professional ecologist. The site induction will cover threatened species identification and incident reporting protocols.
6. Disturbance or injury to terrestrial wildlife	Large logs or rocks will be left in situ to minimise disturbance to fauna habitats where possible. Where rocky habitat is encountered during construction the trails will have a minimal footprint to take advantage of naturally open areas. No large, embedded rocks will be disturbed in rocky habitats. There is no requirement for large tree removal as part of the trail works.

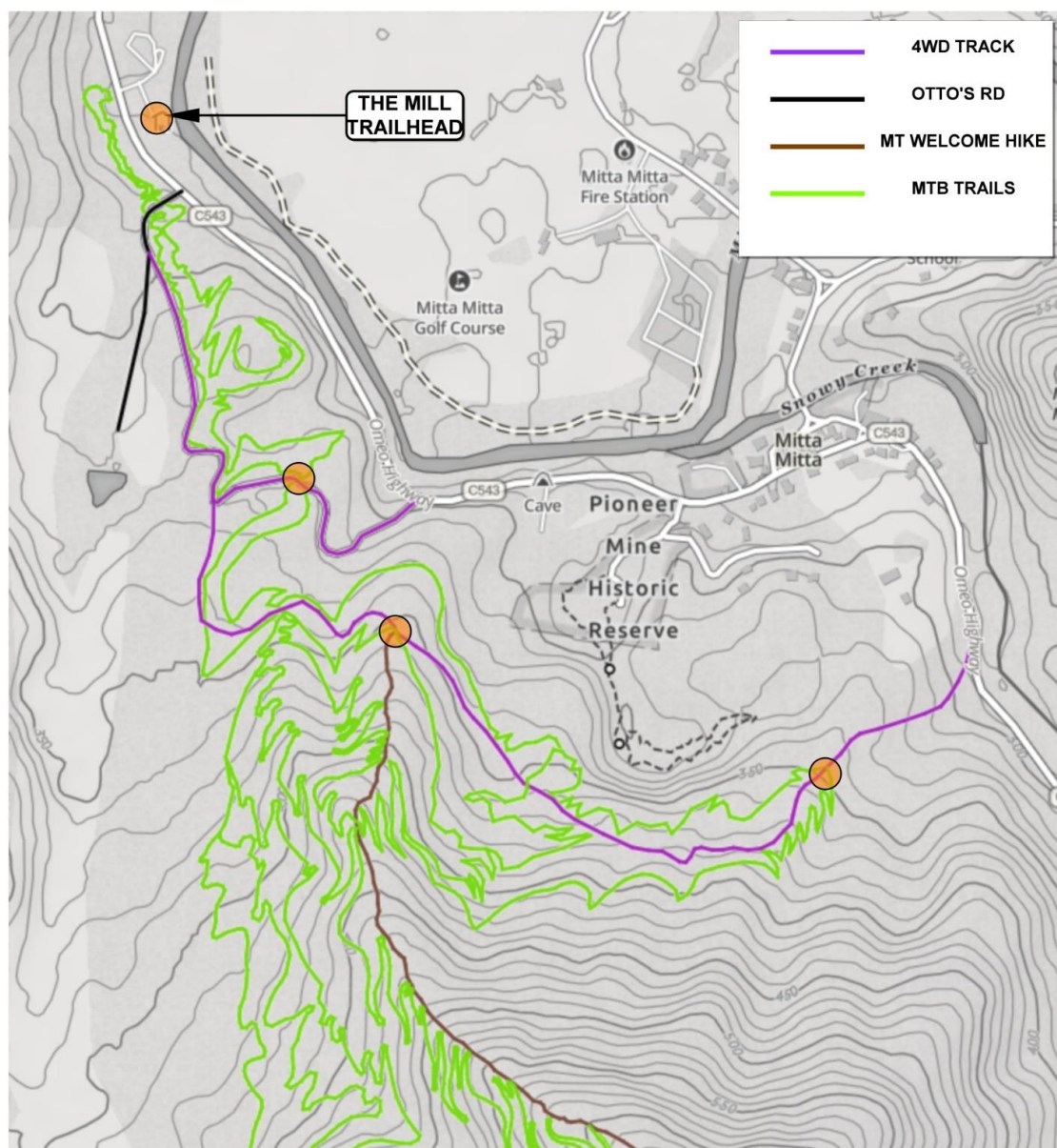
	If any fauna is found to be present, work will stop immediately. The Project Manager is to be notified immediately and a licensed wildlife carer or ecologist should be contacted to assist in relocation.
7. Bushfire	No construction works will take place on days of Extreme or Catastrophic fire risk rating. Construction during Total Fire Bans will comply with CFA requirements. During fire danger periods, risks posed by hot exhausts on chainsaws and machines, will be monitored by a spotter equipped with a fire extinguisher, rake hoe and suitable water supply. Cigarette smoking also poses a risk of bushfire ignition and is not permitted during construction. The construction contractor will be responsible for developing an OHS and emergency plan to deal with issues such as bushfire.
8. Pollution and litter	All litter and materials introduced to the trail corridors will be removed on a daily basis or as trail lengths are completed, this includes items such as flagging tape, contractor equipment and materials packaging. The trails do not require the specific use of any hazardous substances other than machinery fuels and oils. All refuelling shall be conducted at least 50m away from drainage lines and waterways using approved jerry cans and funnels. A 900mm x 900mm organic absorbent spills mat will be placed below the fuel cap to catch any minor spills whilst refuelling. Fuels and oil are not to be kept on site. Machinery servicing and oil changes will not be performed on site and any maintenance is required to be approved by the Project Manager prior to execution.
9. Failure of rehabilitation works	Where possible topsoil will be retained to respread on excavated zones to promote localised regrowth. Ensure trail edges are hand finished with a smooth transition to the trail bed, with rocks/woody vegetation mulched and dispersed.

	Apply erosion mitigating techniques for excavated areas (such as jute mesh) and plant native flora to assist with stabilisation and rehabilitation of these areas. Ensure weed treatments are applied to promote native vegetation recovery along trail edge.
10. Damage to trees in the immediate vicinity of the proposed trail.	Where possible trail alignment will avoid large trees in accordance with TPZ requirements. If a trail is required to enter the TPZ, the tree has been considered lost during calculation of native vegetation offset requirements where >10% of the TPZ is impacted. However, during construction, the tree will be retained where possible and excavation will be minimised to 100mm depth to avoid the structural root zone (SRZ). Where excavation is required within the SRZ deeper than 100mm to establish a trail bed, the trail construction will preferentially utilise fill material in lieu of excavation. If this is not possible the construction team will consult the direction of a qualified arborist. Given the difficulty of calculating SRZs for all trees on site, these can nominally be considered as: · Trees <150 mm diameter: SRZ 1 m radius · Trees >150 mm <250mm diameter: SRZ 1.5 m radius · Trees >250 mm <400mm diameter: SRZ 2.3 m radius · Trees >400 mm <600mm diameter: SRZ 2.7 m radius · Trees >600 mm <800mm diameter: SRZ 3 m radius · Trees >800 mm diameter: SRZ 3.5 m radius The Project Manager will consult the direction of a qualified arborist where specific concerns are identified during the construction process.

11. Damage to cultural or heritage sites in the vicinity of the proposed trail	Where items are uncovered during construction, the trail works will cease until these can be appropriately assessed.
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ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1: Nominated access roads and set down locations.



ATTACHMENT 2: Silt Fences.



EPA
United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Stormwater Best Management Practice

Silt Fences



Permits for Clean Water
NPDES

Minimum Measure

Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control

Subcategory

Sediment Control

Purpose and Description

The purpose of a silt fence is to retain the soil on disturbed land (Figure 1), such as a construction site, until the activities disturbing the land are sufficiently completed to allow revegetation and permanent soil stabilization to begin. Keeping the soil on a construction site, rather than letting it be washed off into natural water bodies (e.g., streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, estuaries) prevents the degradation of aquatic habitats and siltation of harbor channels. And not letting soil wash off onto roads, which readily transport it to storm sewers, avoids having sewers clogged with sediment. The cost of installing silt fences on a watershed's construction sites is considerably less than the costs associated with losing aquatic species, dredging navigation channels, and cleaning sediment out of municipal storm sewers.

A silt fence is a temporary sediment barrier made of porous fabric. It's held up by wooden or metal posts driven into the ground, so it's inexpensive and relatively easy to remove. The fabric ponds sediment-laden stormwater runoff, causing sediment to be retained by the settling processes. A single 100 foot (ft) run of silt fence may hold 50 tons of sediment in place. Most construction sites today do have silt fences. But many do not work effectively because they are not well designed, installed, or maintained. The focus of this fact sheet is—how to make silt fences work.

Design

The three principal aspects of silt fence design are: proper placement of fencing, adequate amount of fencing, and appropriate materials.

Proper Placement of Fencing

Placement is important because where a fence starts, runs, and ends is critical to its effectiveness. Improper placement can make the fence a complete waste of money. Analyze the construction site's contours to determine the proper placement. Segment the site into manageable sediment storage areas for using multiple silt fence runs. The drainage area above any fence should usually not exceed a quarter of an acre. Water flowing over the top of a fence during a normal rainfall indicates the drainage area is too large. An equation for calculating the maximum drainage area length above a silt fence, measured perpendicular to the fence, is given in Fifield, 2011. Avoid long runs of silt fence because they concentrate the water in a small area where it will easily overflow the fence. The lowest point of the fence in Figure 4 is indicated by a red arrow. Water is directed to this low point by both long runs of fence on either side of the arrow. Most of the water overflows the fence at this low point and little sediment is trapped for such a long fence.



Figure 1. Silt fence retaining sediment



Figure 2. Create manageable sediment storage areas



Figure 3. Water should not flow over the filter fabric during a normal rainfall



Figure 4. Avoid long runs of silt fence

Office of Water, 4203M
www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/siltfences.pdf
www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/manual/bmps

EPA 833-F-11-008
April 2012

Stormwater Best Management Practice: Silt Fences

Stormwater Best Management Practice: Silt Fences

Use J-hooks as shown in Figures 5 and 6, which have ends turning up the slope to break up long fence runs and provide multiple storage areas that work like mini-retention areas. If the fence doesn't create a ponding condition, it will not work well. The silt fence in Figure 7 doesn't pond water or retain sediment. Stormwater will run around the fence carrying sediment to the street, which will transport the water and its sediment load to the storm sewer inlet.



Figure 5. Use J-hook fences to break up long fence runs



Figure 6. J-hook silt fences provide multiple storage areas



Figure 7. This silt fence doesn't work

Water flowing around the ends of a silt fence will cause additional erosion and defeat its purpose. The bottom of each end of the fence should be higher than the top of the middle of the fence (Figure 8). This insures that during an unusually heavy rain, water will flow over the top rather than around either end of the fence. Only fine suspended material will spill over the top, which is not as harmful as having erosion at the ends. When there is a long steep slope, install one fence near the head of the slope to reduce the volume and velocity of water flowing down the slope, and another fence 6–10 ft from the toe of the slope to create a sediment storage area near the bottom. A common misconception is that you only have to worry about water running off steep slopes. However, steep slopes may have a relatively small water collection area. The total drainage area



Figure 8. Proper installation, bottom of both ends are above the top of the middle



Figure 9. Poor installation, water can flow around the ends causing additional erosion

of a gentle slope, if large (Figure 10), can be more important than its slope in determining sediment loss. A silt fence should not be placed in a channel with continuous flow (channels in Figures 8 and 9 don't have a continuous flow), nor across a narrow or steep-sided channel. But when necessary a silt fence can be placed parallel to the channel to retain sediment before it enters the watercourse.



Figure 10. Gentle slopes may require a silt fence

Paved streets are major conduits of stormwater and silt, and they drain to storm sewer inlets. The best solution is to retain as much sediment as possible before it reaches paved surfaces. Install a silt fence at the inlet side of a storm sewer or culvert, rather than at the discharge where there is greater velocity and less storage area. Streets cut in the grade, but not yet paved, are also prime erosion conduits. If the streets are not going to be paved right away, they need a containment barrier such as a silt fence. Finally as a construction site's dynamics change, the silt fence layout should be adjusted when necessary to maintain its effectiveness.

Designers and contractors should also consider diverting sediment-laden runoff water to a sediment detention pond. If the site can provide a large enough area, this is usually the most effective and economical best management practice for retaining sediments. Silt fences are needed when there is insufficient space for a detention pond or when roads and other structures are in the way.

Adequate Amount of Fencing

The amount of fencing means the total linear length of the silt fencing runs on the construction site. A reasonable rule-of-thumb for the proper amount of silt fence is—100 ft of silt fence per 10,000 square foot (sq ft) of disturbed area. Soil type, slope, slope length, rainfall, and site configuration are all important elements in determining the adequate silt fence protection for a site, and to what extent it fits the 100 ft per 10,000 sq ft rule-of-thumb. If the amount of fencing provides the volume of runoff storage needed, then over-flowing the silt fence runs will be minimized. This is the basic test; if fences are over-flowing after a moderate rainfall event, the amount of fencing probably needs to be increased to avoid undercutting, washouts, and fence failures.

Stormwater Best Management Practice: Silt Fences

Stormwater Best Management Practice: Silt Fences

Appropriate Materials

There are different types of porous fabrics available, e.g., woven, non-woven, mono-filament, but all types tend to clog rapidly and don't provide lasting filtration. The support posts and installation method are more important than the fabric type for overall sediment retention. However, a lightweight fabric tends to tear where it is attached to the posts. Posts must hold the fabric up and support the horizontal load of retained water and sediment. Hardwood posts (2" x 2") are potentially strong enough to support the loads, but are difficult to drive into the ground more than 6–8". To hold 2 ft of sediment and water, the posts should be driven 2 ft into the ground. Steel posts are best because they can be driven into compacted soil to a depth of 2 ft. The support posts should be spaced 3–4 ft apart where water may run over the top of the fence, 5 ft in most other areas, and 6–7 ft where there isn't a considerable horizontal load. Improper post depth and spacing is often the cause of sagging fabric and falling posts. Some authorities believe a more robust wire or chain link supported silt fence is needed to withstand heavy rain events. However, this may double the cost of a silt fence installation and entails disposing of more material in a landfill when the fence is removed. Installing silt fencing having five interacting features: (1) proper placement based on the site's contours, (2) adequate amount of fencing without long runs, (3) heavy porous filter fabric, (4) metal posts with proper depth and spacing, and (5) tight soil compaction on both sides of the silt fence will usually obviate the need for wire or chain link reinforced fencing. Prefabricated silt fences, e.g., fabric attached to wooden posts in a 100 ft package, doesn't provide for posting after the ground is compacted or allow variable post spacing.



Figure 11. Chain link supported silt fence

Silt Fence Installation

Two commonly used approaches for installing silt fences are the static slicing method and the trenching method.

Static Slicing Method

The static slicing machine pulls a narrow blade through the ground to create a slit 12" deep, and simultaneously inserts the silt fence fabric into this slit behind the blade. The blade is

designed to slightly disrupt soil upward next to the slit and to minimize horizontal compaction, thereby creating an optimum condition for compacting the soil vertically on both sides of the fabric. Compaction is achieved by rolling a tractor wheel along both sides of the slit in the ground 2 to 4 times to achieve nearly the same or greater compaction as the original undisturbed soil. This vertical compaction reduces the air spaces between soil particles, which minimizes infiltration. Without this compaction infiltration can saturate the soil, and water may find a pathway under the fence. When a silt fence is holding back several tons of accumulated water and sediment, it needs to be supported by posts that are driven 2 ft into well-compacted soil. Driving in the posts and attaching the fabric to them completes the installation.



Figure 12. Static slicing machine



Figure 13. Tractor wheel compacting the soil

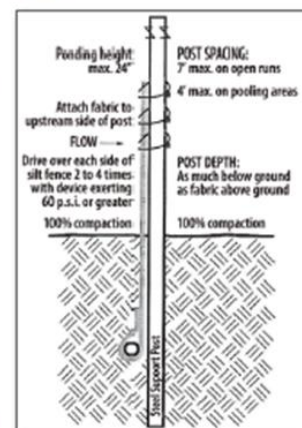


Figure 14. Silt fence installation using the static slicing method

Trenching Method

Trenching machines have been used for over twenty-five years to dig a trench for burying part of the filter fabric underground. Usually the trench is about 6" wide with a 6" excavation. Its walls are often more curved than vertical, so they don't provide as much support for the posts and fabric. Turning the trencher is necessary to maneuver around obstacles, follow terrain contours or property lines, and install upturns or J-hooks. But trenchers



Figure 15. Trenchers make a wider excavation at turns

Stormwater Best Management Practice: Silt Fences

Stormwater Best Management Practice: Silt Fences



Figure 16. Poor compaction has resulted in infiltration and water flowing under this silt fence causing retained sediment washout

can't turn without making a wider excavation, and this results in poorer soil compaction, which allows infiltration along the underground portion of the fence. This infiltration leads to water seeking pathways under the fence, which causes subsequent soil

erosion and retained sediment washout under the fence. The white line on the fence in Figure 16 and red arrow both mark the previous sediment level before the washout. Post setting and fabric installation often precede compaction, which make effective compaction more difficult to achieve. EPA supported an independent technology evaluation (ASCE 2001), which compared three progressively better variations of the trenching method with the static slicing method. The static slicing method performed better than the two lower performance levels of the trenching method, and was as good or better than the trenching method's highest performance level. The best trenching method typically required nearly triple the time and effort to achieve results comparable to the static slicing method.

Proper Attachment

Regardless of the installation method, proper attachment of the fabric to the posts is critical to combining the strength of the fabric and support posts into a unified structure. It must be able to support 24" of sediment and water. For steel posts use three plastic ties per post (50 lb test strength), located in the top 8" of the fabric, with each tie hung on a post nipple, placed diagonally to attach as many vertical and horizontal threads as possible. For wooden posts use several staples per post, with a wood lath to overlay the fabric.

Perimeter Silt Fences

When silt fences are placed around the perimeter of a stock pile or a construction site, the conventional silt fence design and materials discussed previously may not be sufficient.

Stock pile example. A stock pile of dirt and large rocks is shown in Figures 17 and 18 with a silt fence protecting a portion of its perimeter. Rocks that roll down the pile would likely



Figure 17. Back of silt fence on part of the stock pile's perimeter

damage a conventional silt fence. The bottom of the porous fabric is held firmly against both the ground and base of precast concrete, highway, barriers by light-colored stones. An alternative installation would be having the concrete barriers rest directly on the bottom edge of the filter fabric, which would extend under the barriers about 10", so the barriers' weight will press the fabric against the ground to prevent washout. Water passing through the silt fence (red arrow in Figure 18) flows to a storm sewer culvert inlet, which is surrounded by a fabric silt fence (yellow arrows in Figures 17 and 18) that reduces the runoff's velocity and allows settling before the water is discharged to a creek.



Figure 18. Front of silt fence on part of stock pile's perimeter

Bridge abutment example. During the construction of a bridge over a river between two lakes, an excavation on the river bank was needed to pour footings for the bridge abutment. The silt fence along the excavation's perimeter, composed of concrete highway barriers with orange filter fabric, was designed to prevent stormwater from washing excavated spoil into the river and to fend off the river during high flows. A portion of the orange filter fabric that has blown away from the concrete barriers shows the need to overlap and reinforce the joints where two sections of filter fabric are attached.



Figure 19. Silt fence for bridge abutment excavation

Highway example. Because of the proximity of a construction site to a highway, a concrete barrier was required by Minnesota's DOT to protect the highway and an underground fiber optic cable next to the highway from construction activities. The concrete barrier was used to support a silt fence along the perimeter of a large amount of dirt that was stock piled before being used for fill at a different location.



Figure 20. Silt fence protecting a highway and underground fiber optics cable

Stormwater Best Management Practice: Silt Fences



Figure 21. Silt fence protecting a lake shore

Lake shore example.

The lake's shoreline is being restored with plant plugs and seeded with native plant species. A plywood, perimeter, silt fence is used to trap sediment from a construction site on the right-side of the picture, protect the lake shore from

boat-wake erosion, and to prevent geese from eating the seeds and young plants. This fencing will be removed when 70% vegetative cover is achieved.

Inspection and Maintenance



Figure 22. A silt fence full of sediment that needs maintenance

Silt fences should be inspected routinely and after runoff events to determine whether they need maintenance because they are full (Figure 22) or damaged by construction equipment. The ASTM silt fence specification

(ASTM 2003) recommends removing sediment deposits from behind the fence when they reach half the height of the fence or installing a second fence. However, there are several problems associated with cleaning out silt fences. Once the fabric is clogged with sediment, it can no longer drain slowly and function as originally designed. The result is normally a low volume sediment basin because the cleaning process doesn't unclog the fabric. The soil is normally very wet behind a silt fence, inhibiting the use of equipment needed to move it. A back hoe is commonly used, but, if the sediment is removed, what is to be done with it during construction? Another solution is to leave the sediment in place where it is stable and build a new silt fence above or below it to collect additional sediment as shown in Figure 23. The proper maintenance may be site specific, e.g. small construction sites might not have sufficient space for another silt fence. Adequate access to the sediment control devices should be provided so inspections and maintenance can be performed.



Figure 23. New silt fence below the old fence

Permanent Soil Stabilization

When the land disturbing activities are sufficiently completed to allow permanent soil stabilization on the site, the silt fences and sediment basins are removed. The fabric and damaged posts go to the landfill. Steel posts and some of the wooden posts can be reused. Then the sediment is spread over the site to provide fertile soil, and the area can be seeded and mulched to support revegetation.

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MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK TRAIL MANGEMENT PLAN



Prepared for Mitta Valley Inc.





Document History

Version	Date	Author	Purpose
1.0		LH	Initial draft



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Definition of Terms

Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park	MVMTBP
TSC	Towong Shire Council
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
FFM	Forest Fire Management
CFA	Country Fire Authority
IMBA	International Mountain Biking Association
NECMA	Northeast Catchment Management Authority
MVI	Mitta Valley Inc.
TMP	Trail Management Plan (this document)
MTB	Mountain Bike
ESTA	Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority

Purpose

This document provides a detailed maintenance and operating framework for the Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park for Mitta Valley Inc. who hold responsibility for management of the trail network within the Mitta Mitta State Forest.



1. Introduction

Project Description/Background

In 2018, members of the Mitta Valley community successfully sought funding to develop a Masterplan for the construction of a Mountain Bike Park in the Mitta Valley. The Masterplan was completed, along with a multipurpose carparking area that would double as a Trailhead once funding for the park construction had been sought.

The development of the Masterplan involved a comprehensive community engagement process; over half the households in the Valley participated in the process and the support for the development was strong.

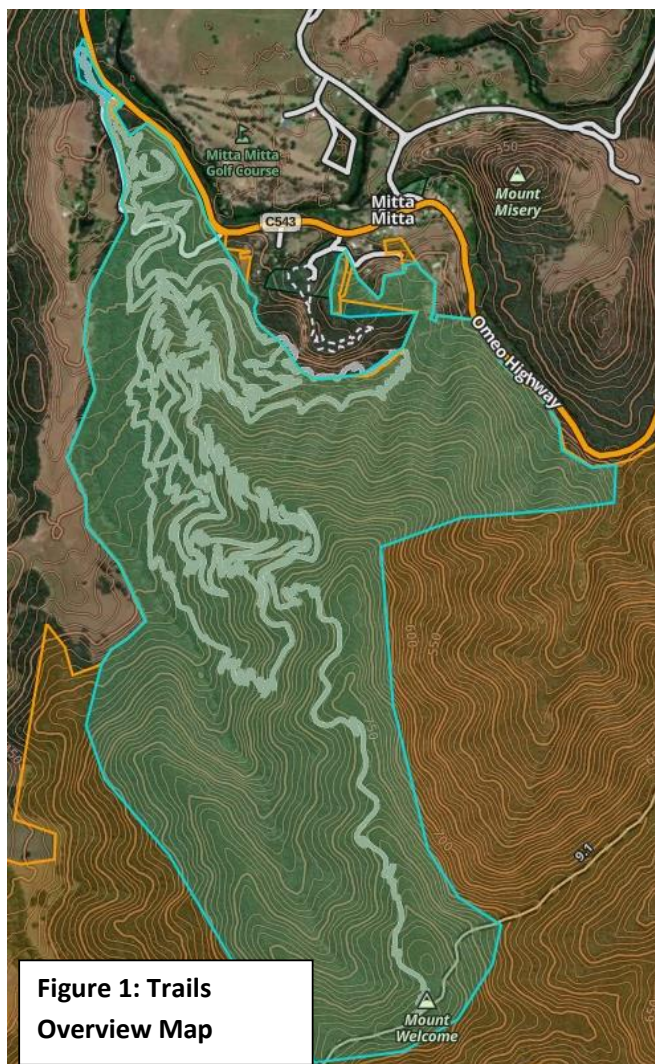


Figure 1: Trails Overview Map

In 2021 Mitta Valley Inc. received \$1.5 million through the Victorian State Government's Local Economic Recovery program to deliver the first stage of the trail network. Approximately 50% of the trail network will be developed, in addition to branding, and the establishment of a social enterprise that will assist in the expense associated with maintaining the park.

North East Victoria, branded as Victoria's High Country, is recognised as Victoria's premier cycling destination. With the exception of Towong Shire, each local government area within the region has at least one mountain biking product to capitalise on the growing cycle tourism market. The Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park will remedy this situation.

As outlined in the Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park Masterplan, the Mitta Valley presents highly suitable terrain and geology for the development of a successful mountain bike destination.



Mitta Mitta has a population of approximately 170, with the wider Valley expanding that number to approximately 600.

Tourism is increasing in the Valley and is focused on the region's strengths of pristine and pure natural assets; fishing, bushwalking and water sports are popular activities. The built assets of the Mitta Pub and Mitta Mitta Brewing Co. are attractions in their own right, regularly bringing day trippers out of Albury Wodonga.

The Valley is at the heart of the Omeo Highway, a popular touring route between Albury Wodonga and Gippsland. With the Omeo Mountain Bike Park soon to be completed, the Valley is increasingly seeing cyclists en route to the new park.

Mitta Valley Inc

Mitta Valley Inc. are a For Purpose Community Group that supports a range of community and business initiatives and events in the Mitta Valley, that promote and facilitate economic and community development.

Mitta Valley Social Enterprise

Mitta Valley Inc. and the wider community are aware that the mountain bike park will bring with it expenses to maintain the park as a quality destination. It is proposed to develop a social enterprise to generate income to support these ongoing costs.

A social enterprise business plan has been developed, which includes activities including but not limited to, e-bike bike hire and the leasing of space for a café pod operation.

Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Masterplan

Following extensive fieldwork and community and stakeholder engagement, the Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park Masterplan was completed in 2019.

The following items summarise the trail networks objectives and requirements.

Develop a large-scale marketable cycle tourism product for Towong Shire Council.

The Mountain Bike Park will complement other cycle assets already situated in Towong Shire, including the High Country Rail Trail for recreational riders and strong



road and gravel cycling offerings. The Park will support the Shire to establish a critical mass of ride product. The Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park will complement the existing bike parks in the region, adding diversity and a new destination within the region to explore.

Develop local area recreational and economic opportunities.

- Improve local community connectivity for the Mitta Valley
- Create business opportunities consistent with cycle tourism
- Improve existing business viability by improving 'off season' visitor numbers
- Improve ownership and pride for local assets

Develop a high-quality MTB rider experience.

- Ensure the trails have broad appeal across targeted MTB rider segments.
- Provide IMBA limited green rated segments for beginner riders, particularly around trailhead areas.
- Remaining trail network to contain 80% IMBA blue rated trail (intermediate), with suitable climbing gradients and flow descent elements.
- Include Technical Trail Features to support advanced level riders.

The trail network will be an iconic, immersive heritage and natural environment experience.

- Inclusion of scenic, natural and heritage interest points
- Provision of interpretive signage
- Create ownership of the landscape to improve conservation outcomes and foster stewardship

Design the trails to be sustainable and minimise impact to heritage and environment.

- Assist and improve access for weed control
- Minimise trail lengths and footprint through high value areas
- Meet or exceed all recommendations determined during heritage and environment impact assessments.
- Avoid and minimise native vegetation removal and meet all native vegetation offset obligations.
- Ensure established land area values are not detrimentally impacted by the trail project.

Develop and maintain robust trail management arrangements.

- Council to become Land Manager or Committee of Management or licensee/lease of the Network area. Mitta Valley Inc to assume responsibility and management of the network area.
- Continually review and update the Trail Management Plan.



- Develop partnerships with local historical societies, Landcare groups and MTB clubs for specific management activities.

1.5.9 Design and build trails using international sustainable trail construction 'best practice' standards.

- Comply with IMBA trail guidelines as defined in the Trail Solutions guidebook
- All new trail to be machine built with key focus on sustainability and safety
- Trail design to meet Australian and international MTB rider/visitor expectations
- Apply a consistent construction technique for all trails
- Separation of descending and ascending trail for user safety. Trail to be single direction where possible
- Descending trail to be 'flow trail' design with bermed corners
- Two-way trail segments to ensure safety of users with appropriate gradients and sight lines
- Multi-use trail segments to consider requirements of AS2156 – Walking Tracks
- Provide modern and user-friendly signage, maps and digitally integrated information platforms
- Undertake detail risk assessment and mitigation processes in accordance with standard land management practices
- Consider emergency access/egress points

Land Tenure

The proposed development site utilises the Mitta Mitta State Forest's northern slopes of Mt Welcome. This area is currently managed by DEECA / FFM. Most of the northern and western perimeter of the subject area adjoins private property. There is a small parcel of private land within the project area. Permission has been granted to cross this for the development of the project.

Crown Description	Address	Standard Parcel Identifier (SPI)	Parish
Allotment 9A	OMEIO HIGHWAY MITTA MITTA 3701	9A~14\PP2539	Dorchap
Allotment 8E	OMEIO HIGHWAY MITTA MITTA 3701	8E~19\PP2539	Dorchap
Lot 1	OMEIO HIGHWAY MITTA MITTA 3701	1\TP865933	N/A
Allotment AE	OTTOS ROAD MITTA MITTA 3701	A8\PP2539	Dorchap
Allotment 2015	DISAPPOINTMENT TRACK MITTA MITTA 3701	2015\PP3033	Magorra



Trail Management Plan Overview

This Trail Management Plan will provide:

- Usage monitoring requirements
- Asset maintenance intervention levels
 - o Trail
 - o Bridges/crossings
 - o Signage
 - o Rock armouring
 - o Drainage
- Preventative maintenance requirements
- Rubbish collection
- Trail closure procedures
- Weed and vegetation management processes
- Dangerous trees removal within the trail corridor
- Environmental/heritage management considerations advised by technical experts
- Emergency Management processes
- Event Management processes
- Visitor enquiries, maintenance requests and feedback

Trail Maintenance

Maintenance of the trail network and ancillary assets is critical to the long-term success of the MVMTBP. MVI is committed to the planning and resourcing of this which initially will be executed in conjunction with the trail building contractors for the first three years. After this three-year period, the proceeds of the MTB Park's operation and ancillary products, services and activities (bike hire, events etc) will be used in conjunction with the future local MTB club to complete maintenance tasks.

Maintenance work will focus on the following elements:

1. Maintaining the trail at the intended trail rating
2. Maintaining the visitor experience
3. Maintaining associated infrastructure and signage to ensure safe recreational use
4. Ongoing minimisation of environmental or heritage impact

Environment and Heritage Impact Minimisation

The TMP includes key asset management activities which ensure there is continued minimal impact to the ecology and heritage within the trail network area.

Managing vegetation along trail corridors is a critical part of the maintenance program to ensure the sight lines and trail bed remains in good operating condition. **A key focus will also be on weed management, including the mitigation of existing weed areas accessed by trail construction.**



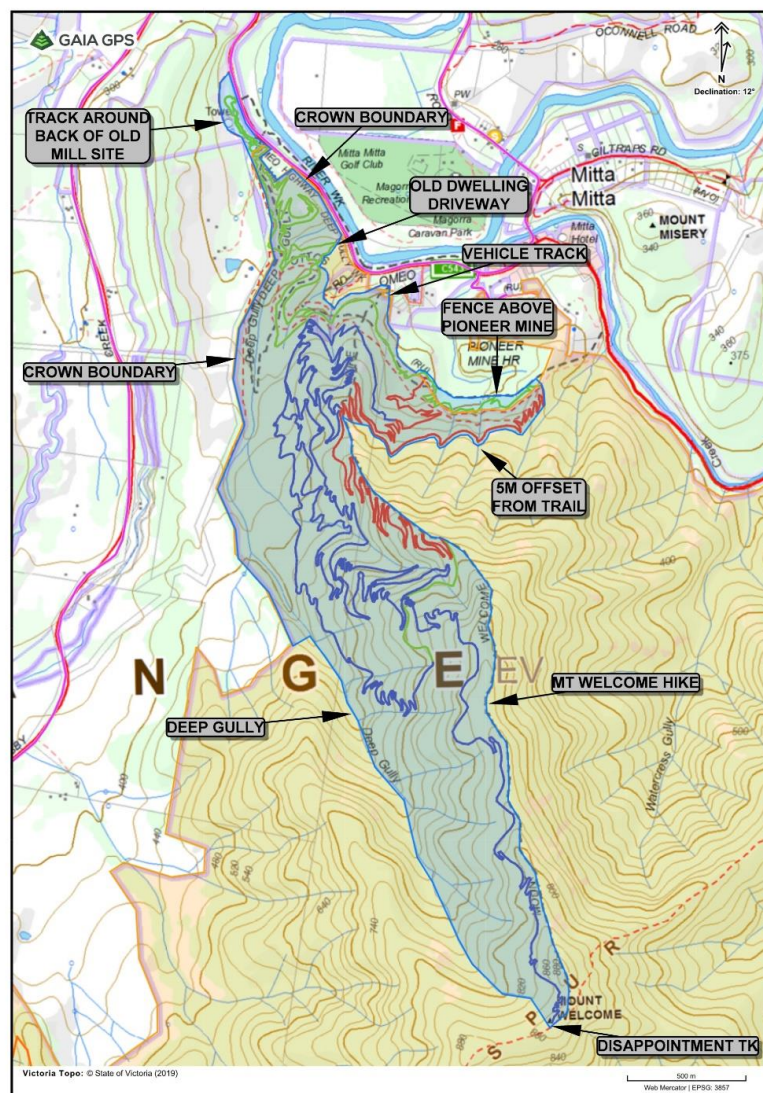
2. Trail Governance

Management Structure

The management arrangement for the Mitta Valley MTB Park area is:

- Establishment of Council as the Committee of Management for the defined trail network area in accordance with Section 14 of the *Crown Land Reserves Act 1978*.
- Re-reserve the trail network area from Forest Purposes to Public Purposes (DEECA).
- Council will establish a Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) to transfer maintenance and operational responsibilities of the MTB Park to Mitta Valley Inc.

Figure 2: CoM Area Map





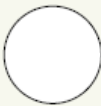
Key Stakeholder Contacts

Stakeholder contacts for all management agreements are contained in Attachment 1.

Trail Design Considerations

Trail Grading

All trails proposed for stage 1 of the project will be designed and constructed in accordance with the Australian Mountain Bike Trail Difficulty Rating System (TDRS) October 2020 (refer to the following table).

<i>Difficulty Symbol</i>	<i>Short Description</i>
	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, and 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 Expect 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 of exposure and / or risk Expect large and unavoidable obstacles and features Some sections will be easier to walk



Most of the trails will fall within an IMBA blue rating category. Green and green/blue trails will be developed lower in the network to support beginner riders and blue/black trails developed higher in the network providing rider progression. This well used progressive 'stacked loop' network design provides a proven risk minimisation strategy.

Existing Walking Trails

The MTB trail network has been designed to avoid and minimise impact on the existing walking trails within the network area with crossing points kept to an absolute minimum. Crossing points are located in areas with good sightlines to maximise safe user interactions. MTB trail design will slow riders prior to reaching crossing points and signage will remind riders to give way to walkers and to stay off walking trails as per the MVMTBP Code of Conduct.

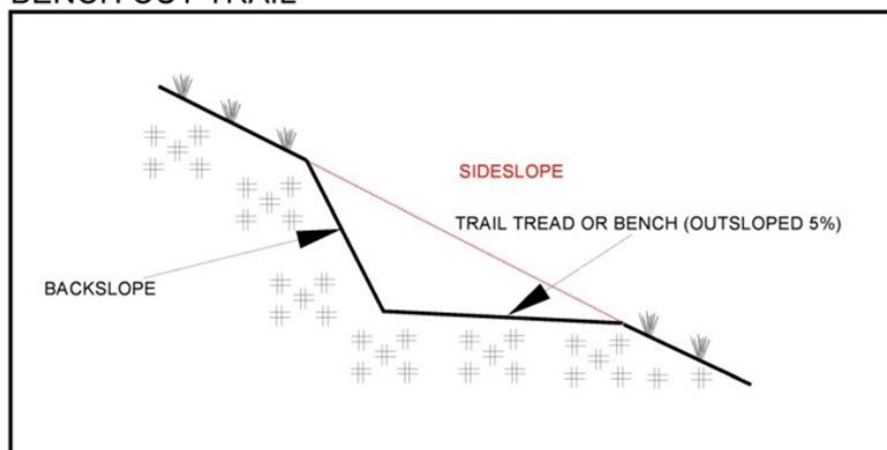
Trail Standards and Details

The trail construction standards are in accordance with the IMBA Trail Solutions Guidebook for single track MTB trail.

This generally has the following requirements:

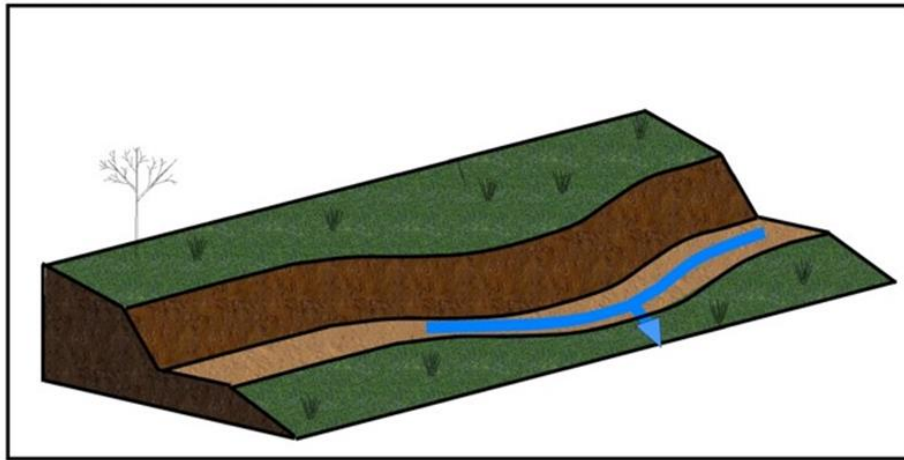
1. Do everything you can to keep water off the tread and users on it.
2. Build on the contour and use frequent grade reversals.
3. Follow the Half Rule: a trails gradient should not exceed half the cross slope.
4. Regardless, average trail gradients should not exceed 10%.
5. Maximum gradients must remain < 15% unless natural or rock structures.
6. Route trails to positive control points: viewpoints, water, heritage/natural features.
7. Use cut-fill bench construction technique.
8. Use rock armouring and elevated tread or structures to avoid damage to sensitive wet areas.

BENCH CUT TRAIL

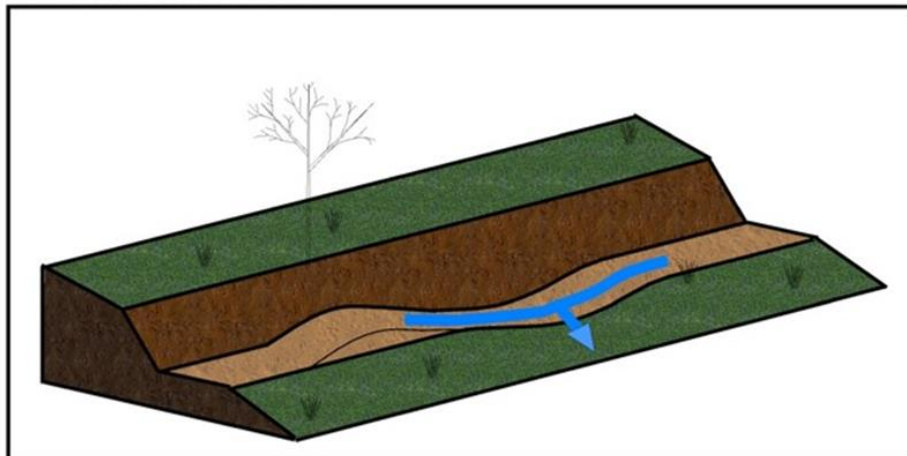




GRADE REVERSAL



ROLLING GRADE DIP



Elevated structures are generally adopted from DEECA engineering drawings for similar projects such as the Indigo Epic in the Stanley SF. Elevated structures use 'minimal impact' construction techniques including hydraulically driven posts or augured piles, small spans (no more than 6m) allowing machinery to transport materials along the trail length and use of FRP decking material with open matrix for light penetration through the structure.

Trail Signage and Information

Trailhead Signage

A Large trailhead sign will be installed at The Mill Trailhead to provide user information such as trail maps, code of conduct, emergency procedures and risk mitigation information. These signs will include digital web App integration via QR Codes, allowing further information to be accessed quickly and easily from smart phones.



Trail User Signage

Way finding and trail identification signage is to be installed in a manner consistent with DEECA requirements. On Trail signage will be kept to a minimum and will be sympathetic to the environment. Signage will be installed immediately next to the trails tread. Way finding and trail identification signage will include hazard, risk mitigation and emergency location identification information. Signage information will be in alignment with AusCycling national standards.



Examples of hazard signage



Examples of trail identification signage

Integrated Digital Maps/Interpretive Information

QR Code link to the Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park website will be included on all signage in the park. This will allow access to trail maps and natural and heritage interpretive information at key 'location specific' points around the trail network to enhance the user experience.



Trail Facilities

Existing Facilities

The Mitta Valley MTB Park trailhead has already been developed at The Mill next to the Mitta Mitta River.

The Mill precinct includes parking, shelter and seating, fire pit, tool station, bike rack, toilet facilities and limited free camping. These facilities are managed by DEECA and under a CoM with Towong Shire Council, Mitta Valley Inc.

The Mill trailhead is the singular key user access point to the trail network.

New Trail Facilities

With the exception of trail signage and elevated trail structures, there are no new facilities being delivered within stage 1 scope of works.

Mining Heritage

The trail network has been designed to mitigate risk to trail users from mining heritage sites. This has been achieved through:

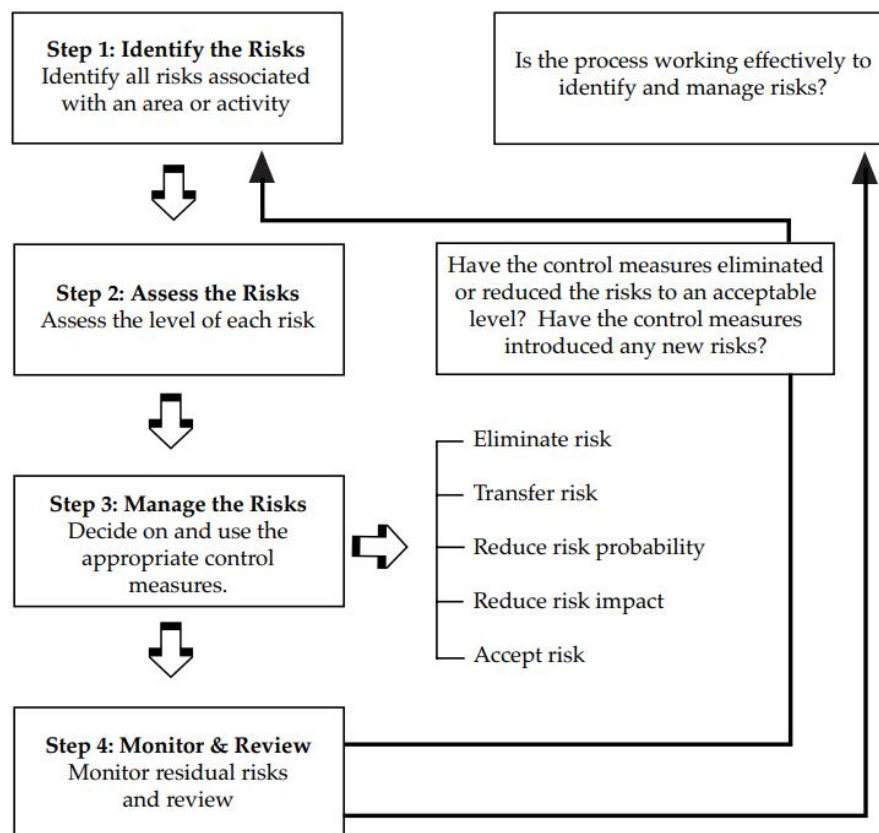
- Deliberate avoidance of areas with dangerous shafts, rockfall hazards and mullock rock heaps.
- Safety signage highlighting mining hazards and the risks of leaving the trail.
- Including a minimum 10m buffer between the trail and mine sites.
- Fencing to prevent access to hazardous locations

3. Risk Management Approach

Overview

Mountain biking as a recreational pursuit contains some risks that are generally expected by users, and which contribute to the enjoyment of the activity. These risks must be recognised and mitigated to an acceptable level of impact.

The Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park proposal includes a high-level Trail User Health & Safety Risk Assessment, in accordance with GUI-131 Risk Management Guideline as developed by Parks Victoria.



User Health & Safety Risk Analysis

The table below provides a nominal risk framework based on the consequence criteria in use under GUI-131.¹

Consequence Matrix – Health & Safety				
Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
No medical treatment required	Medical treatment required, no enduring physical impact	Hospitalisation with potential temporary adjustment to lifestyle	Hospitalisation with ongoing irreversible impairment	Fatality or permanent total disability

Consequence ratings are then used in conjunction with Likelihood to determine a Risk Rating²

¹ GUI-131 Risk Management Guidelines v2.1, Parks Victoria, p19

² GUI-131 Risk Management Guidelines v2.1, Parks Victoria, p22



CONSEQUENCE						
LIKELIHOOD	Frequency	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost Certain	>50%, several times per year	Medium	Significant	Significant	High	High
Likely	25-50%, once per year	Medium	Medium	Significant	Significant	High
Possible	10-25%, once per 2 years	Low	Medium	Medium	Significant	Significant
Unlikely	5-10%, once per 5 years	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Significant
Rare	< 5%, not likely in next 10 years	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

The goal of any risk assessment process is to reduce the risk rating to as low as reasonably practicable. Acceptable risk ratings are LOW or MEDIUM with appropriate procedural management in place.

A summary of the Trail User Health & Safety Risk Assessment is contained in Attachment 2.

The risk assessment highlights the following higher risk areas specific to trail users to be addressed by the project:

1. Rider accident – consideration required on emergency response/access to key trail locations as part of the Trail Management Plan, including defined ESTA locations.
2. Tree/branch or rock falling onto rider – regular inspection and mitigation of, are part of the Trail Management Plan.
3. Bushfire threat – Trail Management Plan highlights arrangements for management of warnings/closures.
4. Heritage mine accidents – the project will actively provide fencing, barriers and signage if deemed to be within the 10m trail buffer as required.



User Conflict

Trail crossings can create user conflict if not established with appropriate planning and design.

Trail crossings must not create high speed interaction particularly between mountain bikers and pedestrians:

- Trail crossings are on climbing only or flat trail segments wherever possible.
- Blind spots are eliminated with good sightlines.
- Trail widths allow safe passing by utilising fire roads where possible.
- Separate mountain bike descending sections from climbing/pedestrian trails where possible.
- Use signage in key areas to highlight risk.
- Use signage to indicate the 'code of conduct' – **riders must give way to walkers at all times**. This is standard protocol internationally and will be adopted for this network.

Mitta Valley Inc. will also actively promote IMBA Rules of the Trail to assist with responsible riding of the Epic Trail (<https://www.imba.com/ride/imba-rules-of-the-trail>).

Safe Work Method Statements

All trail works will require the development of Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) in accordance with Worksafe Victoria requirements. Prior to any work being undertaken all volunteers, MVI staff or contractors will be required to develop or sign onto existing approved SWMS.

SWMS should be developed for the following activities/tasks as a minimum:

- Use of mini excavator (qualified operators only)
- Use of power carrier
- Operation of chainsaw (crosscut – qualified operators only)
- Tree felling (qualified operators only)
- Operation of brushcutter
- Operation of hand tools
- Weed spraying/chemical handling (qualified operators only)
- Rock armouring works
- Minor bridge maintenance works
- Manual handling
- Work during difficult weather conditions
- Use of 4WD or ATV vehicles
- Control of maintenance work zone
- All SWMS should include relevant Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)



4. Asset Management

Trail Head Facilities

The TMP addresses maintenance and operation of the following minor facilities:

The Mill Trailhead

- Trailhead sign
- Picnic shelter
- Picnic table
- Water tank
- Bike repair station
- Bike rack
- Fire pit and seating
- Car park and bollard treatment

Trail Maintenance

Trail Network Overview

TRAIL	GRADE	STYLE	LENGTH (M)
Beginner/skills loop TRAIL 1	Green	Beginner	470
Trailhead to House Site TRAIL 2	Green/Blue	XC	2050
House Site to Lower Hills TRAIL 2	Green/Blue	XC	520
Lower Hills to Knoll Climb TRAIL 4	Blue	XC	870
Knoll Climb to Pioneer TRAIL 4	Blue	XC	510
Pioneer to Knoll Climb TRAIL 6	Blue	Climb	1530
Knoll Climb TRAIL 5	Blue	Climb	2060
Knoll Climb to Lower Hills TRAIL 7	Blue	XC/Descent	1180
Lower Hills to House Site TRAIL 3	Green/Blue	XC	600
House Site to Trailhead TRAIL 3	Green/Blue	XC	1000
Knoll to Lower hills TRAIL 8	Blue	Flow Descent	1460
Knoll to Lower hills TRAIL 9	Blue	Flow Descent	1330
Knoll to Mid Feeder TRAIL 10	Blue	Climb	3000
Mid Feeder TRAIL 11	Blue	Feeder Trail	800
Lower Collector TRAIL 14	Blue	Collector Descent	1800
Gulley Descent TRAIL 14	Blue/Black	Tech Descent	1380
Mid feeder to Lower Collector TRAIL 12	Blue/Black	Tech Flow Descent	3260
Summit to Mid Feeder Trail 15	Blue	Signature Descent	3500
Mid Feeder to Lower Collector TRAIL 13	Blue	Signature Descent	3210

(Table to be updated with trail names post construction)



Signage

Signs will be checked once per year to ensure they are in place and visible. This annual review will assess if additional signs are required and conduct repairs as required.

- Pedestal wayfinding signage
- Caution/hazard signage
- Interpretive signage
- ESTA emergency location signage

Refer to trail alignment maps in Attachment 5 for as installed signage locations.

Deadfall and Vegetation

On a priority basis cut and remove windfall/deadfall over the trail. This should be removed to a minimum of 0.5m from the trail edge or as required for safe use of the trail.

Remove brush and juvenile tree regrowth to 0.5m from trail edge, particularly during the spring growth period. Scatter the cut material adjacent to the trail to assist quick decomposition.

Remove tree limbs/branches to allow 2.4m of overhead clearance and 1.0 – 1.5m total clearance width. Ensure branches are cut clean and without damaging the main trunk of the tree.

Rake accumulated organic matter off the ride lines to expose the trail tread.

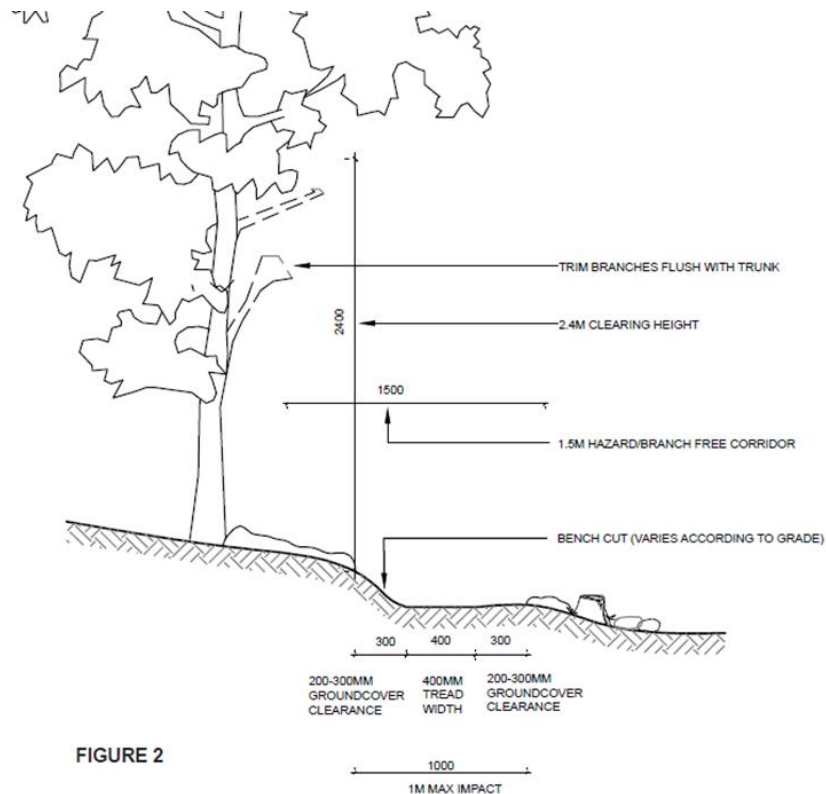


FIGURE 2



Weed Management

Remove and/or spray areas of weed infestation to allow native species to regrow. Chemical spraying must be in accordance with targeted best practice. Spraying adjacent to waterways requires specific consideration to avoid ecological damage.

Erosion/Sedimentation Control

Maintain pipes/culverts and grade reversals to shed water from the trail and avoid damage. Clean out and reset any silt fencing. Ensure sediment build up adjacent to the trail is not smothering vegetation in these areas or entering waterways.

Ensure batter erosion measures are in place and functional. Install silt fencing or jute mesh to areas which require further stabilisation.

Rubbish Removal

Remove rubbish from trail edges during inspections. Rubbish at trailheads to be removed as part of normal public facility garbage collection operations.

Technical Trail Features (TTFs)

TTFs require regular evaluation and to ensure they are kept in safe and working order.

Fall Zones

Keep fall zones around TTFs and berms free of debris and hazards

Sight Lines

Maintain corridor sightlines, particularly at trail junctions and trail crossings.

Hazards

Identify, and where possible eliminate or minimise trail hazards as soon as possible. If the hazards can't be minimised to the extent that the trail will remain unsafe for an extended period, consider closing the trail until the hazard has been repaired or eliminated (refer to trail closure section 5).

Hazardous trees will be assessed by an arborist and removed where the risk is deemed to be a clear and present danger. Assessment may be needed after major storm events.

If hazards to users are caused by conducting maintenance work, ensure that appropriate signage is in place along the trail to warn users.

Trail Tread Maintenance

- Drain and rock armour boggy areas and ensure existing rock armouring is secure.
- Repair washed out or rutted areas
- Remove rocks and roots as necessary to keep the tread clear and rollable
- Undertake surface repair as required, particularly high erosion areas.



Minor Bridges/Structures

Inspect bridges, elevated platforms and retaining structures annually:

- Tighten any loose fixings
- Ensure no damage to structural components or decking
- Ensure footings or retaining components haven't moved or are not being undermined by erosion

Heritage Site Risk Mitigation

Inspect specific items installed as required to mitigate risk associated with heritage mining within the trail corridor buffer:

- Exclusion fencing: ensure fence is secure and not damaged by tree/limb fall, repair as required
- Shaft covers: ensure cover integrity remains in place, repair as required
- Regularly inspect areas along trails for evidence of historic mining sites that have recently become hazardous to users and conducting maintenance works

Trail Access Points

The vehicle tracks around the top of Pioneer Mine and along the western crown land boundary, provide access to parts of the trail network. The majority of these require 4WD vehicles due to the rough ground condition and clearance requirements.

Vehicle access can be impacted by weather conditions, treefall or erosion and should be monitored regularly to maintain vehicle access.

Where a 4WD is required, it is highly recommended that appropriate recovery equipment and support vehicles are also used to mitigate risks associated with travel in these areas.

The Mount Welcome Hike provides key access to the trail network which is now wide enough to accommodate a 4WD following recent fuel reduction burns. This is particularly steep in sections and should only be attempted by experienced 4WD drivers.

Routine Inspections and Response

Asset inspection frequencies vary according to asset type, however all assets must be inspected as least annually. Refer to Attachment 3 for more detail on inspections.

Response to maintenance items will be prioritised based on safety, operations and availability.

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Priority 1 | Trail user safety requires action to be taken within 24 hours. Actions include rectification, warning signage or trail closure. |
| Priority 2 | Item requires action within 1 week to 1 month. |
| Priority 3 | Item requires action > 1 month. |



Maintenance Requests

The primary method for logging maintenance requests will be via Trailforks using the Trail Reports functionality built into this app.

This will be highlighted as part of the information system provided to users via signage and linked digital platform.

Maintenance Records

Maintenance records and hours spent on maintenance tasks will be logged to track and forecast future costs

Machinery & Tools

Plant

Plant will only be used by professional trail contractors for larger maintenance tasks such as trail refurbishment.

Plant required for maintenance activities must be in safe operating condition and appropriate for use on narrow trail widths.

- Mini Excavator: no more than 2T capacity with track width of 1m. This would only be used for large scale repair works executed by a contractor.
- Mini Site Dumper or skid steer: used for carting material along a trail.

Prior to crossing low level bridges, the load ratings should be checked as in some cases may not be possible to cross without damaging the bridge. This requires consideration of trail access points when plant is required for maintenance purposes.

Use of plant during the Fire Danger Period must ensure a 9L pressurised water fire extinguisher is installed in the plant cab.

Power Equipment

All users of power equipment must be appropriately trained in their operation with equipment and ensure use is in accordance with the defined SWMS including use of correct PPE:

- Power Carrier: used for transporting up to 400kg of material along the trail to get to more remote locations.
- Chainsaws: used for deadfall and limb clearing
- Brushcutters: used to trim smaller vegetation/regrowth beside the trail.

Other power equipment may be needed where specialist work is required to rectify bridges or retaining structures – this will be the responsibility of contractors appointed to undertake these works.



Use of power equipment during the Fire Danger Period must ensure a 9L pressurised water fire extinguisher is present at all times.

Hand Tools

Hand tools include mattocks, axes, trail tools, rakes, etc. All maintenance personnel shall be familiar with how to use the tools safely and efficiently. Most maintenance tasks for the trail can be effectively executed using hand tools.

Trail Use Monitoring

Trail use is an important tool to determine which segments of trail are being most impacted by use. This allows maintenance teams to focus on areas which provide the best outcomes for trail users and determine the user patterns. Trail counters will be installed at key locations.

Routine inspections will include retrieval of trail use data which can also be correlated against the Trailforks app user information.

Where there is evidence of trail use by introduced feral animals, counting may also be supplemented with trail cameras to assist with management/removal programs.

5. Trail Closure

Closure Triggers

Trail closures will be executed as outlined in the following sections.

Major Trail Hazard Present

Where a user or environmental hazard is identified which rates as a major unacceptable hazard, a trail segment may be closed until the hazard is rectified.

An assessment of the hazard will be made by MVI or authorised contractor.

Examples include:

- Large scale erosion/flood damage making use unsafe
- Trail embankment collapse or rock fall onto the trail
- Major tree and limb fall from storm damage
- Bridge, TTF, elevated platform failure

Event In Progress

Where an event has been authorised to use all or part of the trail network, specific closures will be in place as agreed with the event organisers for the duration of the event.



It is the event organisers responsibility to set up the closure and signage, inspect the trail post event, re-open the trail if safe to do so and advise MVI that the trail has re-opened.

Maintenance In Progress

Where specific maintenance work impacts the use of the trail, it may be determined that the trail be closed temporarily to reduce hazard to workers in the area. The trail will be re-opened once works are completed

For Operational Reasons (e.g. controlled burn)

Appropriate procedure (generally complete network closure) shall be determined by CFA and/or DEECA FFM and implemented as instructed.

Emergency Management Requirement

Where an emergency management process is activated, access to part of the trail or the whole trail may be prohibited – refer to Section 7 for more detail.

User Notification

Notification of trail closures will occur using a combination of the following methods:

- Social media via MVI
- Physical signage/chains in place at The Mill trailhead, Otto's Rd network access point or appropriate locations within the network
- Notification on MVI and MVMTBP web pages
- Notification on Trailforks app by MVI administrator

Notification should include:

- **WHERE** the closure is located
- **WHY** the closure has occurred
- **WHEN** the closure is expected to start and finishing
- **HOW** to contact MVI/MVMTBP for more information
- Additional information for users such as temporary detours in place



6. Event Management

Application & Approval Process

Use of MVMTBP for events is required to seek approval from MVI – Use of the park for events will attract a fee to cover trail remediation following the event. This will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis to consider the likely impact to the network. Gravity style events generally result in higher user erosion than a XC event.

Event Considerations

The MTB event approvals process will need to consider the following impacts:

- Is the event appropriate for the MVMTBP and Mitta Mitta?
- Minimising impact to general users of the trail network
- Management of parking and increased traffic in the town
- Emergency management planning including response to incidents on challenging terrain
- Risk assessment and proposed mitigation measures
- Insurance
- Waste management and post event clean up
- Course marking and proposed routes
- Promotion of the event in conjunction with MVI and Council
- Development of a detailed Event Management Plan for approval by MVI



7. Emergency Management

Large scale emergency response may require response by emergency service agencies. This process will be managed by the agencies involved and is not covered as part of the TMP.



Active encouragement of users downloading the Emergency Plus app and VicEmergency app to phones will be part of trailhead signage. These apps facilitate contact with Triple Zero, provide accurate location data for users and provide emergency warnings to users based on location.

The following emergency scenarios are the most common for trail users or trail maintenance workers and focus specifically on steps to be taken by MVI.

Fire Danger

Decision making steps will be based on information supplied by the Bureau of Meteorology and/or the CFA under the revised Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) per table below:

Name	Fire Behaviour Index Range	Final community messaging
NO RATING	0 - 11	No proactive community action required
MODERATE	12 - 23	Plan and prepare
HIGH	24 - 49	Be ready to act
EXTREME	50 - 99	Take action now to protect life and property
CATASTROPHIC	100+	For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas



Fire Danger Period

The MVMTBP is within CFA District 24 and will be subject to the declared Fire Danger Period (FDP) for this district. Declarations are made in conjunction with DEECA FFM to ensure FDP alignment with adjacent forest areas normally under DEECA FFM jurisdiction.

Total Fire Ban

If a subsequent day is declared as a Total Fire Ban (TFB):

STEP 1 – Ensure the TFB information is contained on the MVI/MVMTBP website, including specific advice regarding emergency information monitoring.

STEP 2 – Check the Fire Danger Rating and confirm if further steps are needed per below.

STEP 3 – Advise maintenance workers that all activities are hand tools only – **use of plant or power equipment is not permitted on a days of TFB.**

AFDRS No Rating to Moderate (FBI up to 23)

No specific trail management steps are required – refer to information on the website and link through to any CFA/DEECA recommendations. Ensure caution is always used during the fire danger period.

Maintenance operations can continue as planned.

FDR High (FBI 24 - 49)

No specific trail management/advice is required – refer to information on the website and link through to any CFA/DEECA recommendations. Ensure caution is always used during the fire danger period.

Maintenance operations using plant or power equipment (chainsaws/brushcutters) must cease by 12:00PM

FDR Extreme or Catastrophic (FBI >50)

STEP 1 – Physically close trails by 9:00AM with signage in place at The Mill trailhead and Otto's Rd trail network access point. **Note that all Victorian public parks and reserves are closed during a Catastrophic fire rating, including forest access roads.**

STEP 2 – Advise trail closure per section 5.2 User Notification.

STEP 3 – Re-open trail segments where safe to do so based on forecast fire conditions and advise per 5.2.

No maintenance operations are permitted under this scenario.

Fire Activity/Hazardous Smoke in the Local Area

STEP 1 – Follow emergency services advice on trail closures based on local conditions.

STEP 2 – When requested, physically close trails as soon as possible with signage in place at The Mill trailhead and Otto's Rd trail network access point (refer to maps Attachment 5).



STEP 3 – Advise trail closure per section 5.2 User Notification.

STEP 4 – Re-open trail segments where safe to do so based on advice from emergency services. Advise re-opening via 5.2.

Medical Emergency/Major Injury

Medical emergencies and major injuries require contact to emergency services via Triple Zero in all circumstances. MVI will provide assistance to emergency services if requested, although response capability is limited.

STEP 1 – If MVI are contacted by Emergency Services (Police, CFA or Ambulance Victoria) to confirm access/location, information on nearest ESTA marker, provide information on access to this location.

STEP 2 – Confirm if trail closure is required to assist with response. If required, activate per Section 5.

STEP 3 – Re-open affected trail segment once advised to do so by emergency services.

Note: Most of the Trail Network area has Telstra mobile reception.

Storms

Where major storm events are forecast with lightning, rainfall > 50mm in 24 hours or wind speeds > 60km/h the following steps will apply:

STEP 1 – Physically close trail network at The Mill trailhead and Otto's Rd access point prior to the event.

STEP 2 – Advise trail closure per section 5.2 User Notification.

STEP 3 – Undertake trail asset inspection as soon as possible after the storm has passed and when safe for maintenance teams to access.

STEP 4 – Re-open trail segments where safe to do so and advise per 5.2.

STEP 5 – Undertake trail clearing and maintenance in areas where required, re-open remaining areas when safe for use. Advise per 5.2.

Flood

Flash flooding is unlikely to occur within the trail network however, The Mill trailhead is subject to inundation. Flood hazards within the trail network area are more likely related to wash outs and land slips.

STEP 1 – Where possible, safe and accessible, physically close the trailhead or trails affected with signage at all key access locations



STEP 2 – Advise trail closure per section 5.2 User Notification.

STEP 3 – Undertake trail asset inspection as soon as possible after the floodwater has subsided.

STEP 4 – Re-open trail segments where safe to do so and advise per 5.2.

STEP 5 – Undertake trail clearing and maintenance in areas where required, re-open remaining areas when safe for use. Advise per 5.2.

Other Emergency Activation

For all other emergencies MVI will follow the direction of the emergency services agencies and provide assistance where practicable when requested.

Warnings

In addition to the preparation and response elements outlined in this section, prior to these trigger points MVI will also provide warnings and recommendations via the MVMTBP website and/or Trailforks to alert users to the changing conditions within the trail network area.

Attachments

Attachment 1 Key Contacts – Trail Management

Attachment 2 Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park User Health & Safety Risk Assessment

Attachment 3 Maintenance Activity/Asset Inspection Schedule

Attachment 4 Trail Asset List

Attachment 5 Trail Network Maps

References

International Mountain Biking Association, January 2004

Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack

Memorandum of Understanding: Mitta Valley Inc and Towong Shire Council



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Attachment 1 – Key Trail Management Contacts

To be completed during construction period prior to network opening

Management Group	Name	Title	Mobile	Email
Towong Shire Council	TBC			
Mitta Valley Inc	TBC			
DEECA Forest Fire Management	TBC			
Northeast Catchment Management Authority	TBC			
Trail Contractor	TBC			



Attachment 2 – MVMTBP User Risk Management Plan

This Risk Management Plan will form the template for annual or as needed risk assessments relating to the Parks operation.

Risk Management Plan

Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park

Site / Area:	Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park (MVMTBP)
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To Complete a Risk Assessment

1. Complete the table below, including a photo (if available) to assist identifying the area, task, plant or equipment (if relevant).
2. Ensure all people involved in the risk assessment are recorded on this form.
3. Use the Hazard Checklist on page 2 as a prompt/guide, and then record all identified hazards from page 3.
4. Using the **Risk Matrix**, complete the risk assessment process for all identified hazards.
5. For all identified hazards, ensure that you record controls, utilising the Hierarchy of controls, and add comments if applicable; this may include existing control measure effectiveness.
6. A review date should be identified after corrective actions have been implemented to ensure the corrective actions are effective and appropriate.



Risk Assessment Number:		Reason for Risk Assessment	Public space	Date of assessment:		New						
				Next review date:		Revised						
Risk Assessment Team				HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS Start at the top and work down <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Elimination e.g. Discontinue use of product, equipment, cease work process</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Substitution e.g. Replace with a similar item that does the same job but with a lower hazard level</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Isolation e.g. Put a barrier between the person and the hazard</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Engineering controls e.g. Change the process, equipment or tools so the risk is reduced</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Administration controls e.g. Guidelines, procedures, rosters, training etc. to minimise the risk</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Personal protective equipment e.g. Equipment worn to provide a temporary barrier</td> </tr> </table>			Elimination e.g. Discontinue use of product, equipment, cease work process	Substitution e.g. Replace with a similar item that does the same job but with a lower hazard level	Isolation e.g. Put a barrier between the person and the hazard	Engineering controls e.g. Change the process, equipment or tools so the risk is reduced	Administration controls e.g. Guidelines, procedures, rosters, training etc. to minimise the risk	Personal protective equipment e.g. Equipment worn to provide a temporary barrier
Elimination e.g. Discontinue use of product, equipment, cease work process												
Substitution e.g. Replace with a similar item that does the same job but with a lower hazard level												
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Administration controls e.g. Guidelines, procedures, rosters, training etc. to minimise the risk												
Personal protective equipment e.g. Equipment worn to provide a temporary barrier												
Name	Position	Signature	Date									



Hazard Checklist – Use this checklist as a prompt/guide and then complete the table below (on following pages).

1. Cutting, Stabbing and Puncturing		4. Ergonomic / Manual Handling		8. Entanglement	
Can anyone be stabbed or punctured due to:		Can anyone be injured due to		Can anyone be entangled by:	
Y	Contact with a sharp or flying object eg glass being thrown or other projectile?		Poorly designed seating?		Hair, clothing, gloves, jewellery, cleaning brushes, rags or other materials become entangled with moving parts of any equipment, vehicles or materials etc in motion?
	Uncontrolled or unexpected movement of any equipment etc ?		Repetitive body movement; constrained body posture or the need for excessive effort in setting up, moving equipment ?		
	Parts of any equipment disintegrating?		Inadequate or poorly placed lighting?		
	Pieces of any equipment being ejected?		Lack of training/awareness in correct Manual Handling or other techniques?		
	The quality of equipment?		Other factors not mentioned?		9. Burns
	Contact with moving equipment due to testing, inspection, operation, maintenance, cleaning or repair?				Can anyone be burnt due to contact with
2. Crushing		5. Electrocutation			Moving parts of any equipment?
Can anyone be crushed due to:		Can anyone be injured by electrical shock or burnt due to:			Materials being handled?
	Material falling off equipment, limbs from trees etc?		A person contacting live electrical conductors?		Other structures, equipment or activities?
	Uncontrolled or unexpected movement of any equipment?		A person working in close proximity to electrical conductors?		10. Environment
	Any equipment being unable to be slowed, stopped or immobilised?		Overload of electrical circuits? Equipment not tested and tagged?		Can anyone be injured or suffer ill health from exposure to:
	Any equipment tipping or rolling over?		Damaged or poorly maintained electrical leads or cables?		Chemicals, toxic gases or vapours, fumes, dust; noise, vibration, radiation, asbestos and other mineral fibres, extreme temperatures (high or low)?
	Parts of equipment collapsing?		Damaged electrical switches?		
	Coming in contact with moving parts of any equipment during testing, inspection, operation, maintenance cleaning or repair?		Water near electrical equipment?		
	Being thrown off or under plant or equipment?		Lack of isolation procedures?		11. Explosion
	Being trapped between the plant, vehicles, animals etc and materials or fixed structures?		Static electricity or electrical conduction?		Can anyone be injured by explosion of:
3. Slipping, Tripping and Falling		6. Striking			Gases, vapours, liquids, dusts or other substances, triggered by the activities at the event or other activities in the area or during an event in the area?
Can anyone slip, trip or fall due to:		Can anyone be struck by moving objects due to:		12. Lighting	
	An uneven or slippery surface?		Uncontrolled or unexpected movement of equipment or material etc from plant, vehicles or equipment.	Is lighting:	
	Poor housekeeping (area not kept tidy – rubbish present)?		Parts or pieces of equipment disintegrating?	Poor or non-existent?	
	Obstacles being placed in the vicinity of an event?		Pieces of equipment being ejected?	Hazardous - too bright, direct, inconsistent, or flickering?	
	Lack of a proper platform?		Mobility of the equipment?	13. Other – Enter Hazard	
	Lack of proper stairs or ladders?	7. Psychological / Stress		Can anyone become a victim of violence or other crime?	
	Lack of a guardrail?	Can people be exposed to inappropriate levels of:		Children being violated or approached in toilets etc	
	Unprotected holes?		Unreasonable deadlines?	Lack of consideration for access/egress for elderly, etc	
	Penetrations or gaps?		Workplace bullying, harassment or discrimination?	Unauthorised photography of minors (and others)	
	Poor or unstable floor or walking surfaces		Stress?	Interaction between pedestrians and vehicles	
			Duties which they are not qualified for or competent in?	Pests, insects, vermin, animal attacks	



Hazard.	Causes/consequences	Risk rating			Control measures/comments
		C	L	R	
Cyclists falls	- User colliding with and/or falling onto natural feature(s) such as sharp or hard rocks, low hanging branches, tree trunks, etc. - User colliding with / falling onto remnant infrastructure (e.g. an old fence) Any of which could result in: - user sustaining an injury that could be minor (e.g. minor cuts, abrasions, bruising) or need immediate medical attention. <u>amage</u> to property, bike or infrastructure. Likelihood of occurrence is influenced by: - Technical skill level of cyclist. - Weather conditions (eg track surface loose / slippery due to rain) - Mechanical condition & intended capability of bike. Potential extent of injury is influenced by: - Presence of safety wear / equipment on rider	2	4	M	Install signage at The Mill trailhead and MVMTP website that: Advises users of the level of skill required to negotiate the trails. Advises users of Trail Forks App and Emergency Plus App. Advises users of their responsibility to be aware of the possible risks Advises users to wear adequate protective equipment (e.g. helmet, shoes, gloves, pads etc) Provides emergency contact details (ambulance fire police) Advises users of the presence of other users on the trails, intersecting walking tracks, and management access roads. Code of Conduct Advises users of management contact details. Advises users of potential collision with wildlife. Install appropriate warning signage where require for technical trial features. Have a reporting process for concerns relating to trail conditions. Track design and construction: - Track to be designed and constructed to IMBA principles. - Risk of collision with natural obstacles and remnant infrastructure reduced by track route selection. - Loose /slippery surfaces to be avoided or improved as part of track construction. - Fall zones to be cleared of hazards/debris - Park has been designed to minimise cross-over with existing walking paths and management access roads.



Hazard.	Causes/consequences	Risk rating			Control measures/comments
		C	L	R	
Cyclists falling whilst using the trails. - Collision between 2 cyclists - Collision between pedestrian and cyclist - Collision between motorbike and cyclist	- User colliding with another user and/or falling onto natural feature(s) - User colliding with a pedestrian - User colliding with vehicle. Any of which could result in: - user sustaining an injury that could be minor (e.g. minor cuts, abrasions, bruising) or need immediate medical attention. damage to property, bike or infrastructure. Likelihood of occurrence is influenced by: - Technical skill level of cyclist. - Weather conditions (e.g. track surface slippery due to rain) - Mechanical condition & intended capability of bike. - Potential for bush walkers to use the track - Potential for motorcycles/4WD to use the track. Potential extent of injury is influenced by: - Presence of safety wear / equipment on rider	3	3	M	Install signage at the track access points that: - Advises users that the trails are for single file only - Advises other possible users (pedestrians/motorbike/ 4WD) that the trails are for non-motorised use only (mountain bike use only). - Advises users of Trail Forks app and emergency location feature. - Have a reporting process for concerns relating to trail conditions. Track design and construction: - Trails to be designed and constructed to IMBA principles - Risk of collision (passing) reduced by track being constructed for single file only. - Trail entries to be narrow to prevent motorbike and 4WD access and include trail filter - Trail features to deter motorbike access (such as tight corner radii). - Park designed to minimise cross-over with existing walking paths and management access roads.



Hazard.	Causes/consequences	Risk rating			Control measures/comments
		C	L	R	
Risk of object(s) falling on park user Primarily related to natural occurrences:	- Falling tree-limbs / rocks / debris - User being hit / crushed by falling tree limbs / rocks / debris Any of which could result in: - user sustaining an injury that could be minor (e.g. minor cuts, abrasions, bruising) or need immediate medical attention. - damage to property, bike or infrastructure	4	1	M	- Close the park during catastrophic weather events. Additionally, it is unlikely individuals would use the trails during these days. - Inspect track after severe weather for damage to infrastructure and rectify as necessary. - Track inspected as part of regular maintenance. - Track inspected pre-events. - Have periodic inspection of 'at risk' trees that are located close to trails. Implement any action required from inspections.
Risk of blocking trail access Primarily related to conditions after a natural occurrence	Tree limb(s) falling on <u>trail(s)</u>, rocks or debris spread over track after natural event such as high wind or fire that could cause user(s) to crash / fall (see risk 2)	2	3	M	- Have periodic inspection of 'at risk' trees that are located close to trails. Implement any action required from inspections. - Inspect track after catastrophic weather for debris or other risks on trails. - Clear track of loose debris and the like as necessary. - Provide signage that encourages users to monitor the track for fallen branches (and other impassable obstacles) and remove if safely possible, and/or to contact management (provide management contact details).
User (s) engaging in any activity that causes damage to the natural values of the immediate area around the trails.	- User(s) building / creating additional trails and/or changing the trail routes - Users riding off the track - User(s) introducing weeds into the area or spreading weeds in the area - User(s) deliberately harming natural assets in any way - User (s) causing fire	1	3	L	- Where possible, trail route to be designed such that it is the best option, and follows natural desired lines to minimise the appeal to ride off trail and/or create unauthorized trails. - Possible alternatives to be identified and "blocked off" with natural features (e.g. logs or rocks) as part of construction. - Run education programs with youth using the park to decrease chances of



Hazard.	Causes/consequences	Risk rating			Control measures/comments
		C	L	R	
	Illegal trail construction can jeopardise legitimate access to land for mountain biking				them creating unsanctioned trails. - Introduction of new invasive species by cyclists is unlikely due to weeds not being in the areas where cyclist may commence riding from. - Implement weed removal as part of construction activities. - Plant equipment appropriately cleaned prior to construction and maintenance activities to mitigate the chance of introducing new invasive weeds. - By means of signage educate users about the following issues: The environmental problems associated with unauthorised trail building, - Principles of sustainable trail development and the IMBA trial building Principles. - Biodiversity and why it is important. - Environmental weeds and their management. - Invite and encourage users to become involved in trail maintenance and Management.
Risk of fire	- Fire by natural causes, - User(s) accidentally starting fires, - User (s) deliberately starting fires, Any of which could result in: - Damage to natural assets (e.g. vegetation, soil, fauna etc.) - Damage to infrastructure - Damage to persons	2	2	L	- Support DEECA via the CFA with the Forest Fire Management activities (directly surrounding the park). - Liaise with DEECA to identify hazard reduction requirements – implement recommendations accordingly. - The 4WD tracks and the planned fire break above Pioneer Mine will aid crews in the event of a fire. The trails will also provide additional fire breaks and aid crew access to help reduce the spread of fires. - Assist Fire Response agencies (Emergency Services, CFA, DEECA) with known user activity - Follow Park closure protocols as per the Trail Management Plan



Hazard.	Causes/consequences	Risk rating			Control measures/comments
		C	L	R	
Injury from fire	User(s) sustains injury from being caught in a fire event	2	2	L	- Fire Response units (Emergency Services, Rural Fire Brigade, Defence) informed that the track is in regular use. - Checking for users on the track to be part of fire response plan. - No club activities to be held if fire (threat) is occurring or high risk
Trailer User Gets Lost	- Unfamiliar with trailer network Could result in: - Dehydration and heat stress	2	1	L	- Encourage use of Trailer Forks App and Emergency Plus App - Install <u>trialhead</u> and trail wayfinding signage - Encourage self-sufficiency on signage

**RISK MATRIX**

Consequence	Financial	People	Reputation	Operations	Compliance
5. Catastrophic	Greater than \$5.0m	Incident resulting in death or Total and Permanent Disability	- Irreversible environmental damage - Sustained negative publicity in national newspapers.	Organisation failure	Court Conviction
4. Major	\$1.0m to \$5.0m	Incident resulting in lost work time of greater than 1 year	- Environmental issue resulting in major remedial works - Sustained negative publicity in local newspapers. - Singular negative publicity in national press.	Disruption for extended period	Prosecution
3. Moderate	\$500,000 to \$1.0m	Incident resulting in lost work time of 3 months to 1 year	Sustained negative publicity in local newspapers		
2. Minor	\$50,000 to \$500,000	Incident resulting in lost work time of 1 to 3 months	Singular negative publicity in local press.		
1. Insignificant	Less than \$50,000	- No injury or illness, or - Incident resulting in lost work time less than 1 month	- No community impacts, or - No apparent environmental impact, or - Singular negative publicity in local press.	- No property damage - No continuing impact on operations	No breaches of OHS, EPA or other requirements

RISK LEVEL – work out the consequence and likelihood from tables above and to the left, and then where they intersect on this table below is your risk level

Likelihood	Occurrence		1. Insignificant	2. Minor	3. Moderate	4. Major	5. Catastrophic
5. Frequent / almost certain	Every year	1. Rare / practically impossible	Low (L)	Low	Low	Medium	High
4. Likely	1-3 years	2. Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
3. Possible / occasionally	3-5 years	3. Possible / occasionally	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
2. Unlikely	5-10 years	4. Likely	Medium (M)	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
1. Rare / practically impossible	>10 years	5. Frequent / almost certain	Medium	High (H)	High	Extreme	Extreme



Attachment 3 – Maintenance Activity/Asset Inspection Schedule

Activity	Procedure	Frequency	Priority	Responsibility
Trail condition assessment	Walk/ride through all trails and document issues for resolution. Review service requests or issues raised on Trailforks	Monthly	1-2	MVI Trail Contractor
Trail tread rectification	During walk/ride inspections, resurface trail tread, rocks, roots and features to match trail rating.	Monthly	1-2	Trail Contractor
Technical Trail Features	Re-build/reset TTFs to ensure they are safe for use and entry/exit is appropriate for the feature.	Monthly	1-2	Trail Contractor
Trail usage data collation	Access key locations where trail counters are located, document counter numbers. Could be done weekly during busy summer period, monthly over winter months.	Weekly/ Monthly	2	MVI
Trail alterations or major rehabilitation	Assess issues and ensure MVI is made aware of works extent. MVI to execute where contractual engagement and permits are required.	Annually	3	MVI Trail Contractor
Weed management	During walk/ride, address minor weed issues and identify larger scale spraying operations required (strategic Firebreak). MVI to execute where contractual engagement and permits are required.	Monthly/ Annually for major	2-3	MVI Trail Contractor



Erosion management	During walk/ride inspections, address minor drainage issues and ensure reverse grade components are functioning as intended.	Monthly	2	Trail Contractor
Bridges/elevated structures inspection	inspect bridge/elevated structure condition as part of maintenance program. MVI to execute where contractual engagement and permits are required.	Annually or if damage reported	3	MVI Trail Contractor
Trail side retaining structures inspection	inspect retaining structures as part of maintenance program. MVI to execute where contractual engagement and permits are required.	Annually or if damage reported	3	MVI Trail Contractor
Signage/trail assets	During walk/ride inspections, confirm signage condition and fix where minor. Replacement of signage by MVI.	Monthly	2	MVI Trail Contractor
Sedimentation adjacent to trail	During walk/ride inspections, restore silt traps or erosion mitigation systems. Advise MVI if sedimentation of drainage gullies is occurring – may require trail alterations.	Monthly	2	Trail Contractor
Deadfall removal	Where deadfall is blocking safe trail access, remove as soon as possible Use of chainsaws by ticketed operators only. Large scale cross fall removal by accredited contractors only.	As required	1	MVI Trail Contractor
Limb removal	Remove tree limb growth impacting the safe use of the trail. Clean up broken limbs and remove from trail alignment.	Monthly	2	Yack Tracks, BCG



Dangerous tree removal	Felling of dangerous trees by accredited contractors only. Dangerous trees can only be removed after assessment by a qualified arborist and DEECA approval.	Annual inspection/as required	2-3	MVI Trail Contractor
Undergrowth trail edge management	Remove foliage growth crowding the trail ride line during high growth periods in spring and summer. Ensure sight lines are maintained.	Monthly – Spring	2	Trail Contractor
Removal of debris	Rake trail surface to remove litter and loose stones/rocks from the trail tread.	Monthly	2	Trail Contractor
Rock armouring	During walk/ride inspections identify areas for rock armouring repairs or soft areas requiring armouring.	Monthly	2-3	Trail Contractor



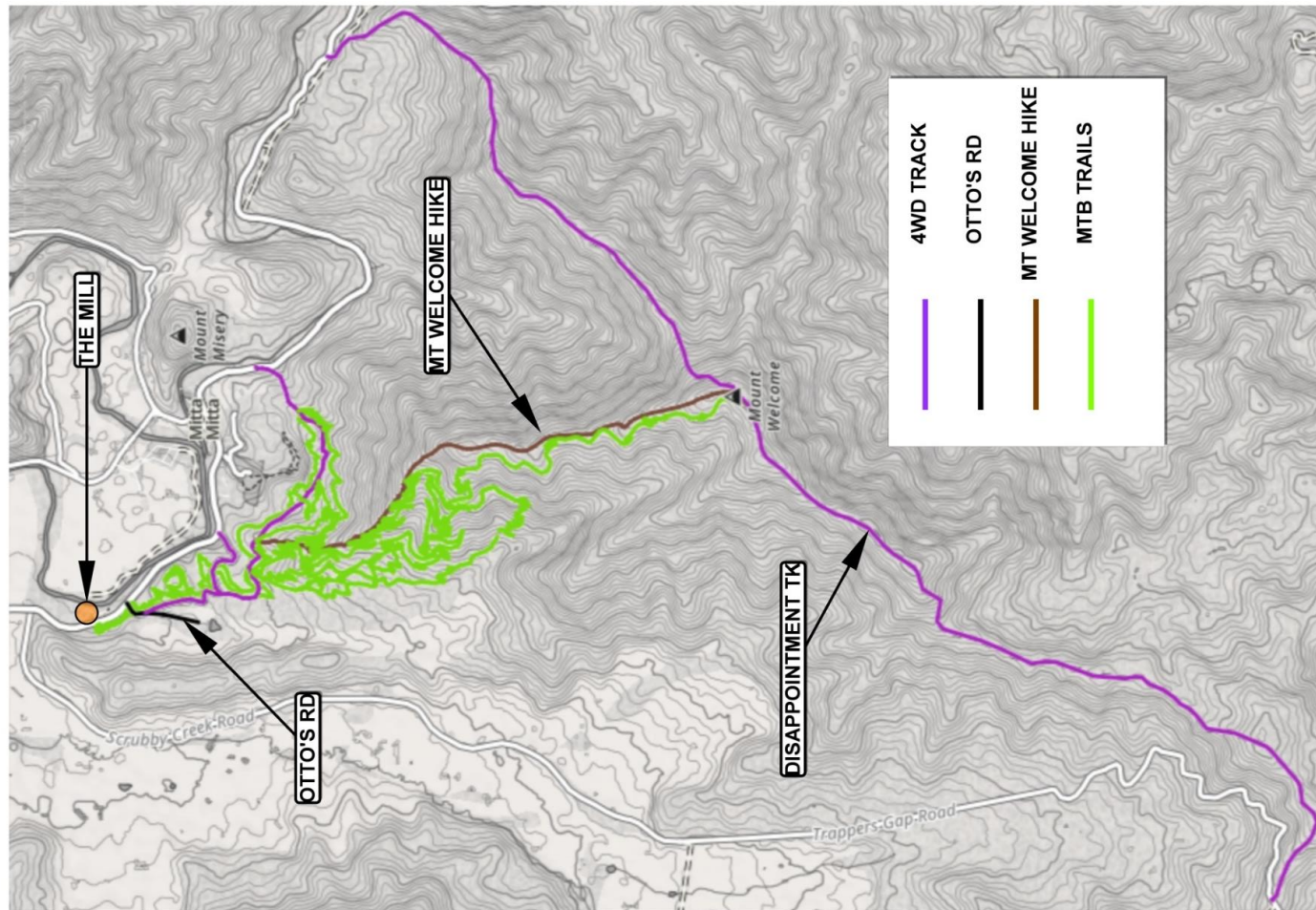
Attachment 4 – Trail Asset List

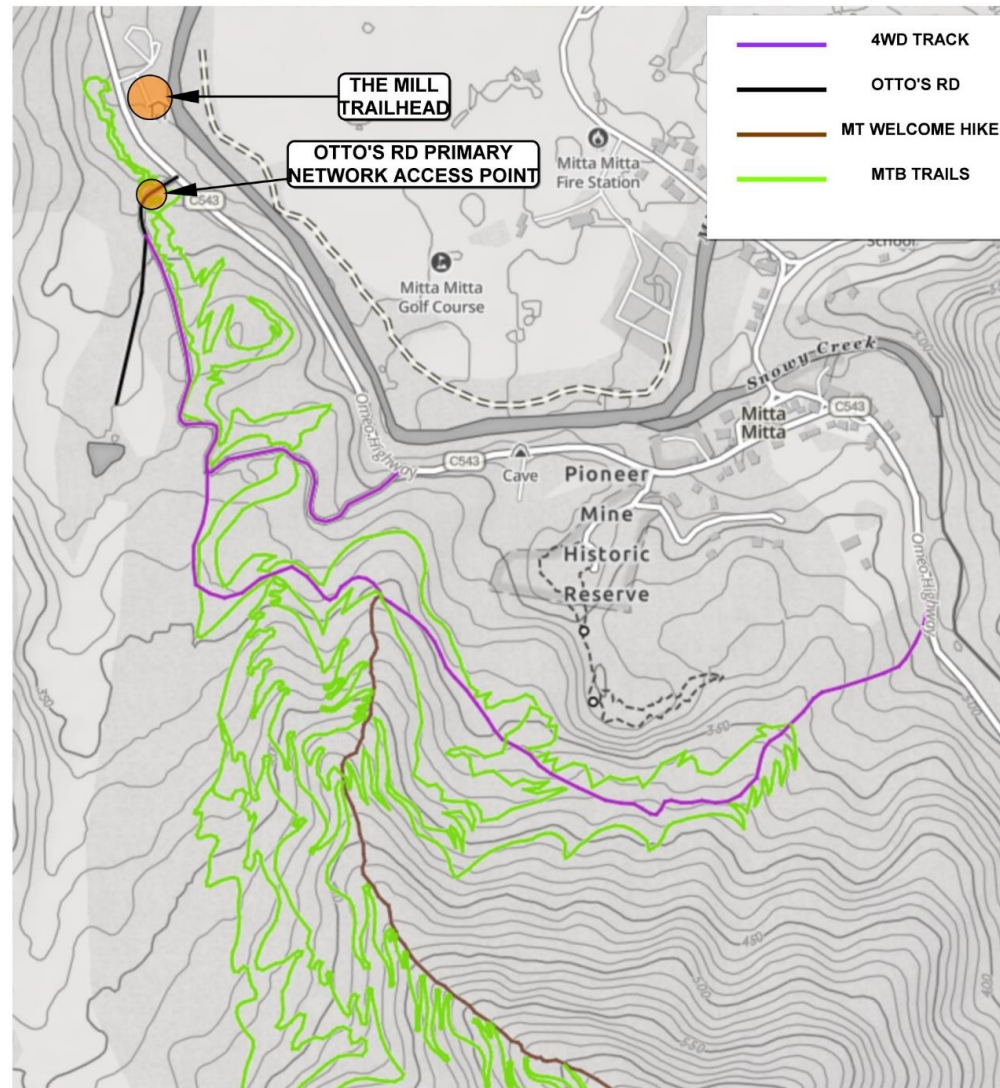
To be completed post construction

Asset ID	Asset Description	Trail Segment	Replacement Cost (\$)	Useful Life (Years)



Attachment 5 – Trail Network Maps





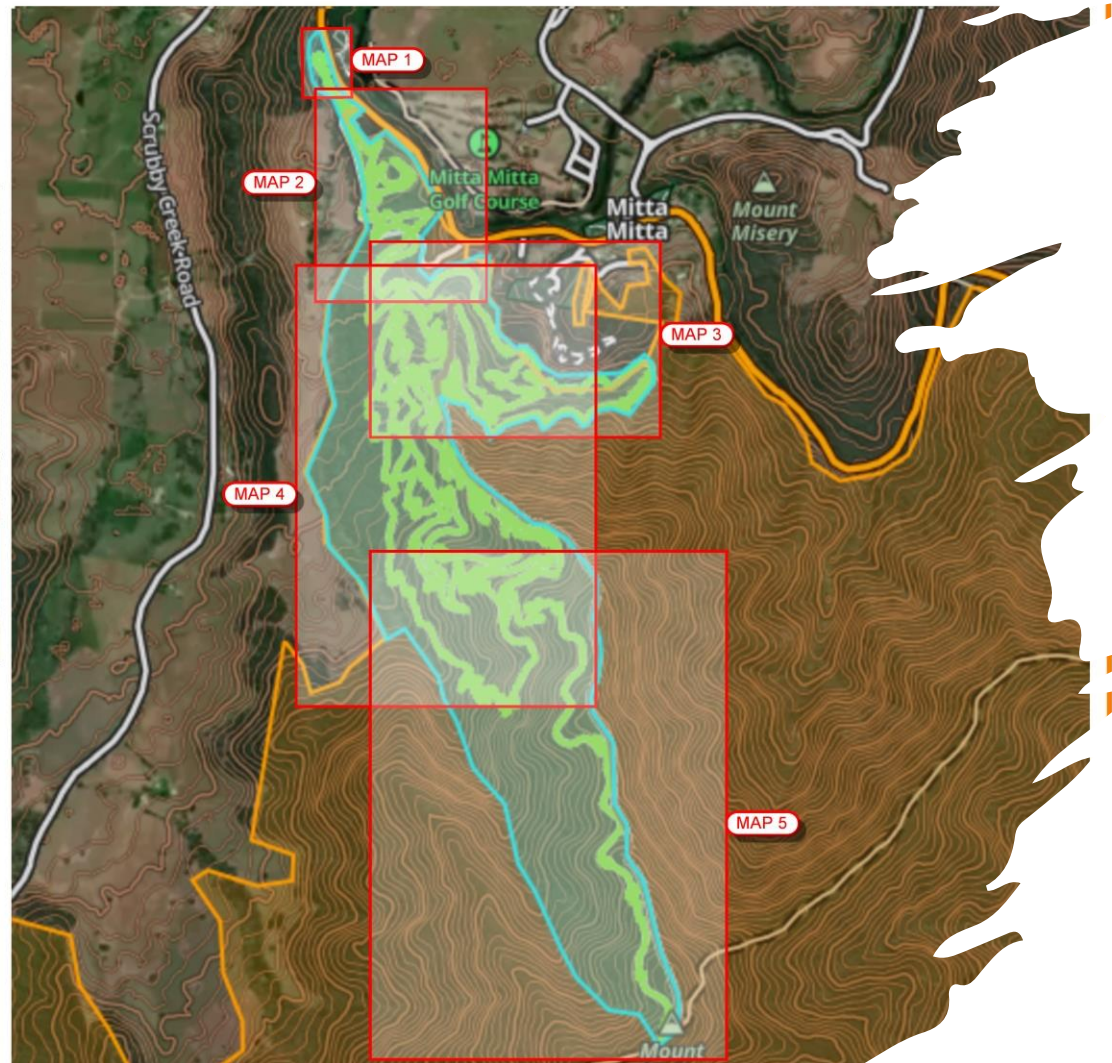
MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK

TRAIL MAP SET

MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION MAP OVERVIEW



-  Crown Land
-  Trail Network Area



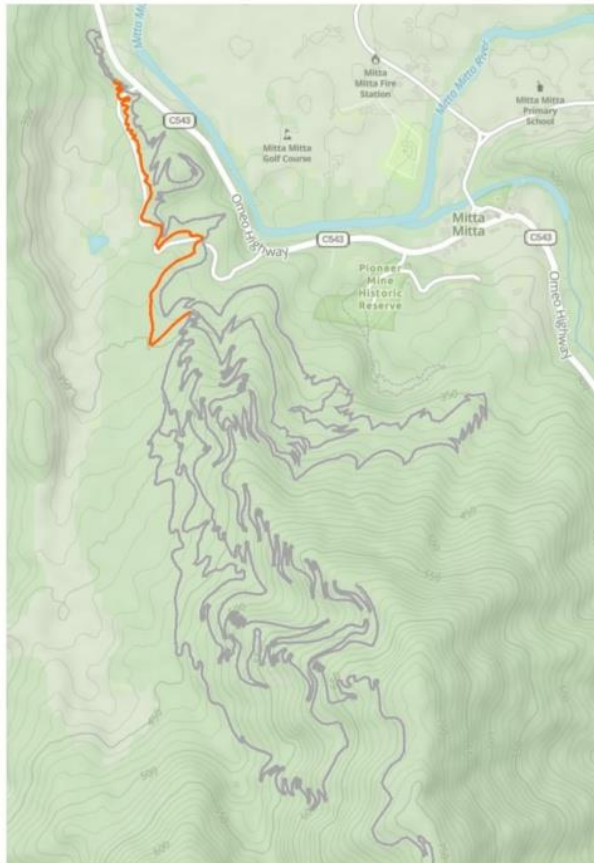
**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 1 TRAIL 1**

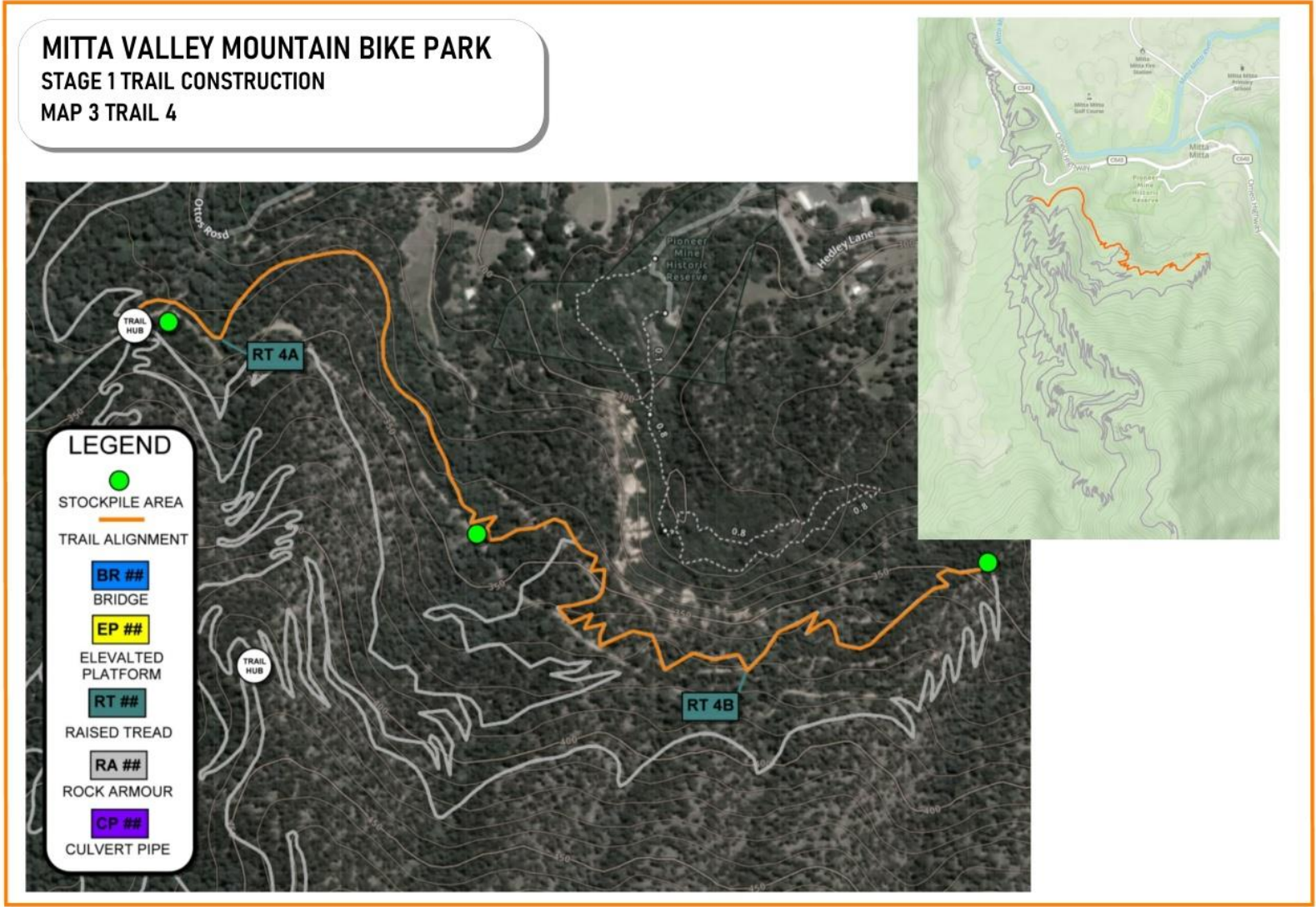


**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 2 TRAIL 2**

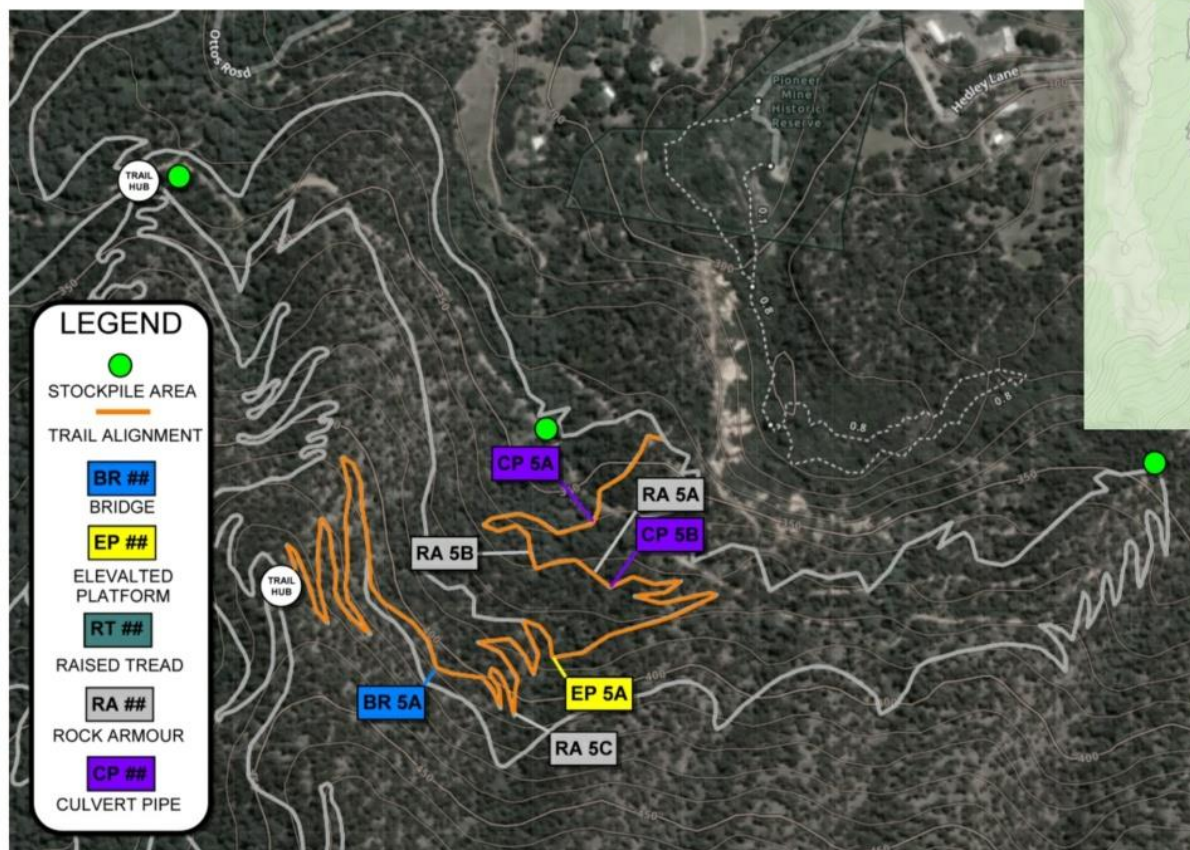


MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 2 TRAIL 3

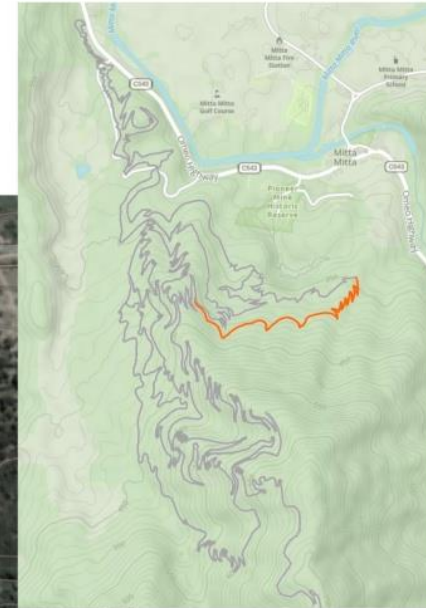
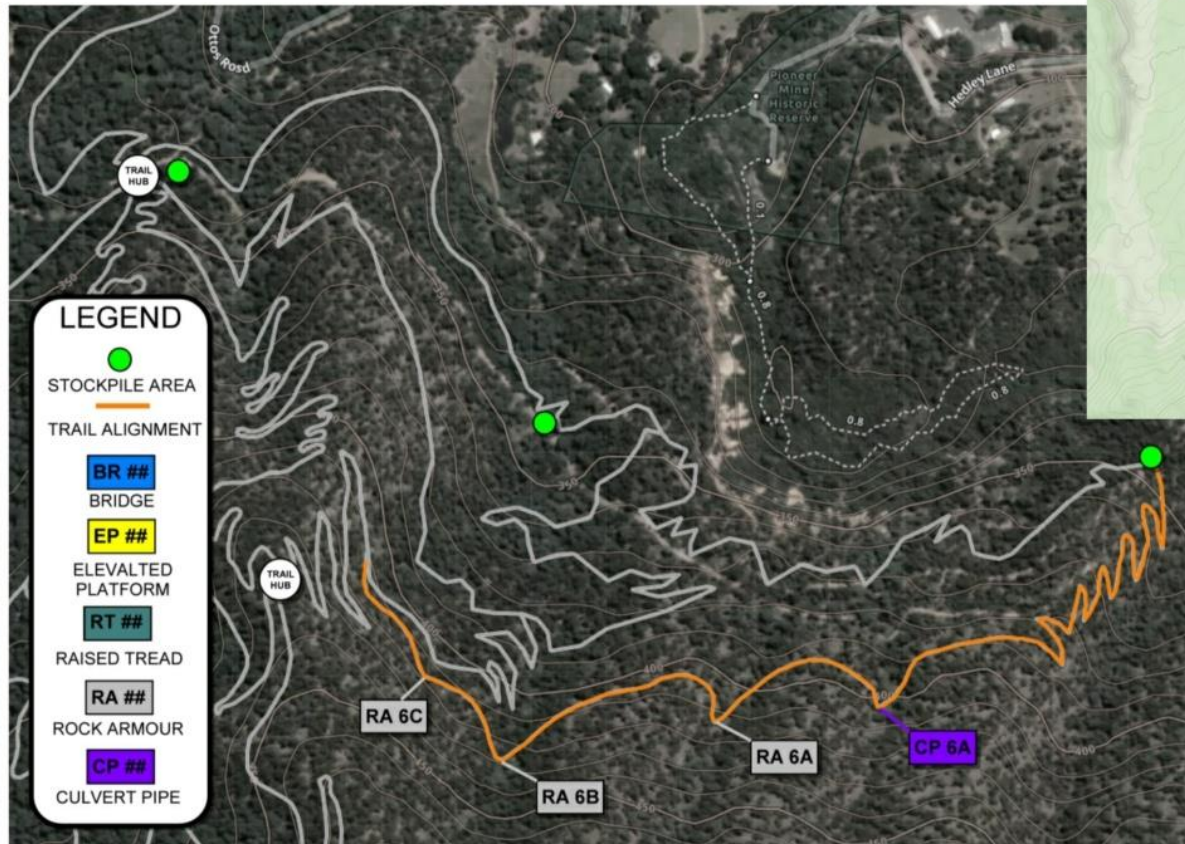


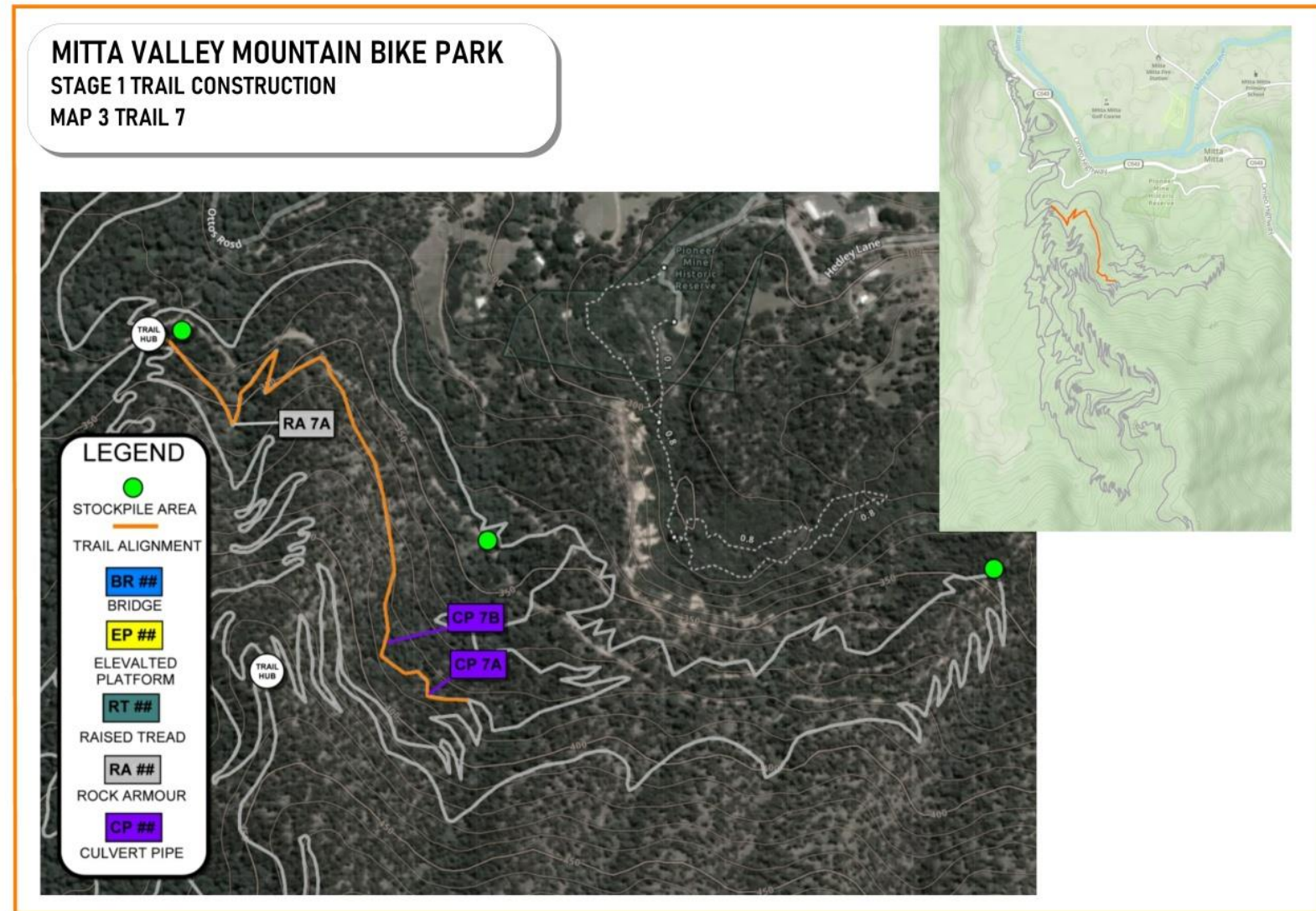


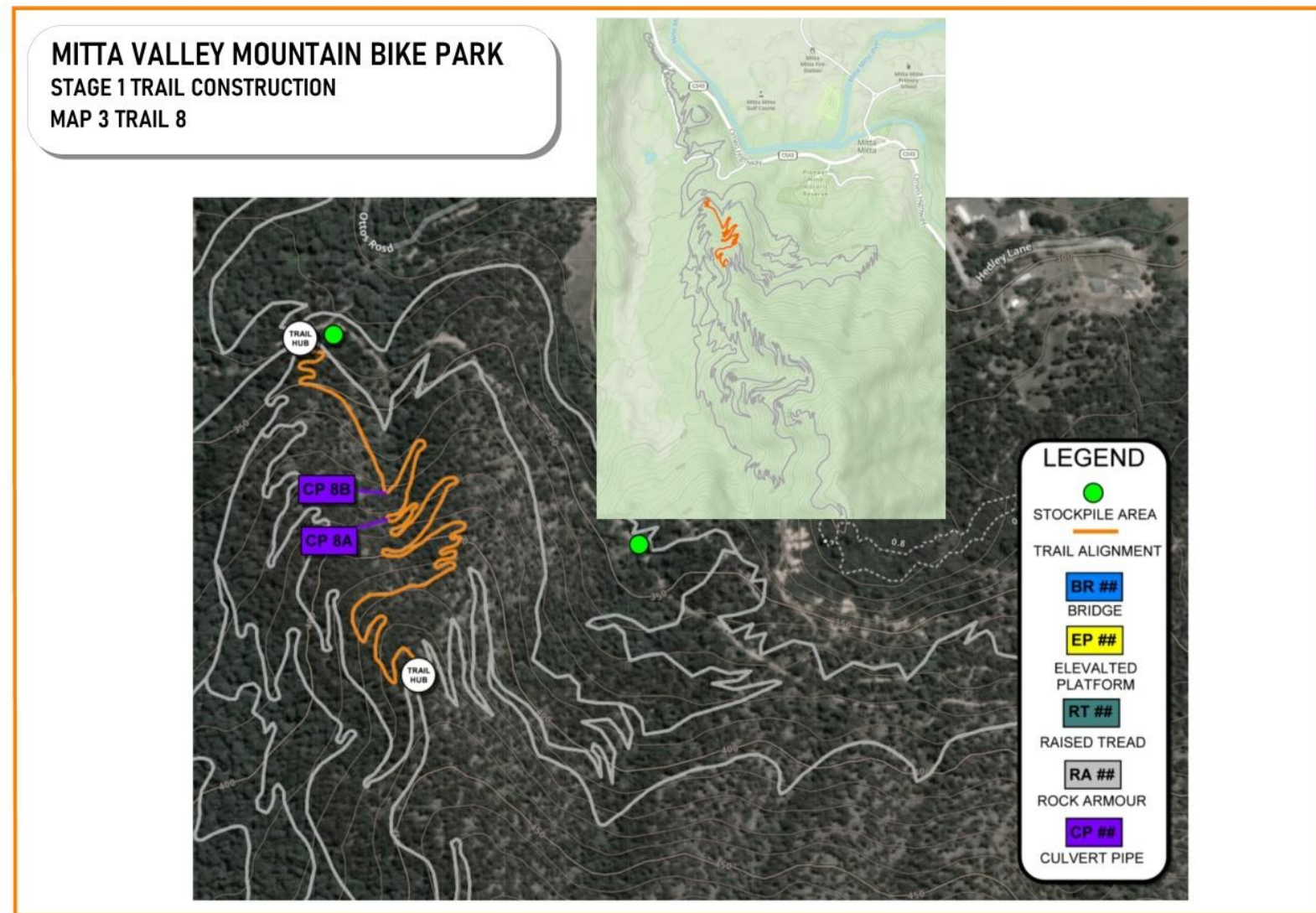
MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 3 TRAIL 5

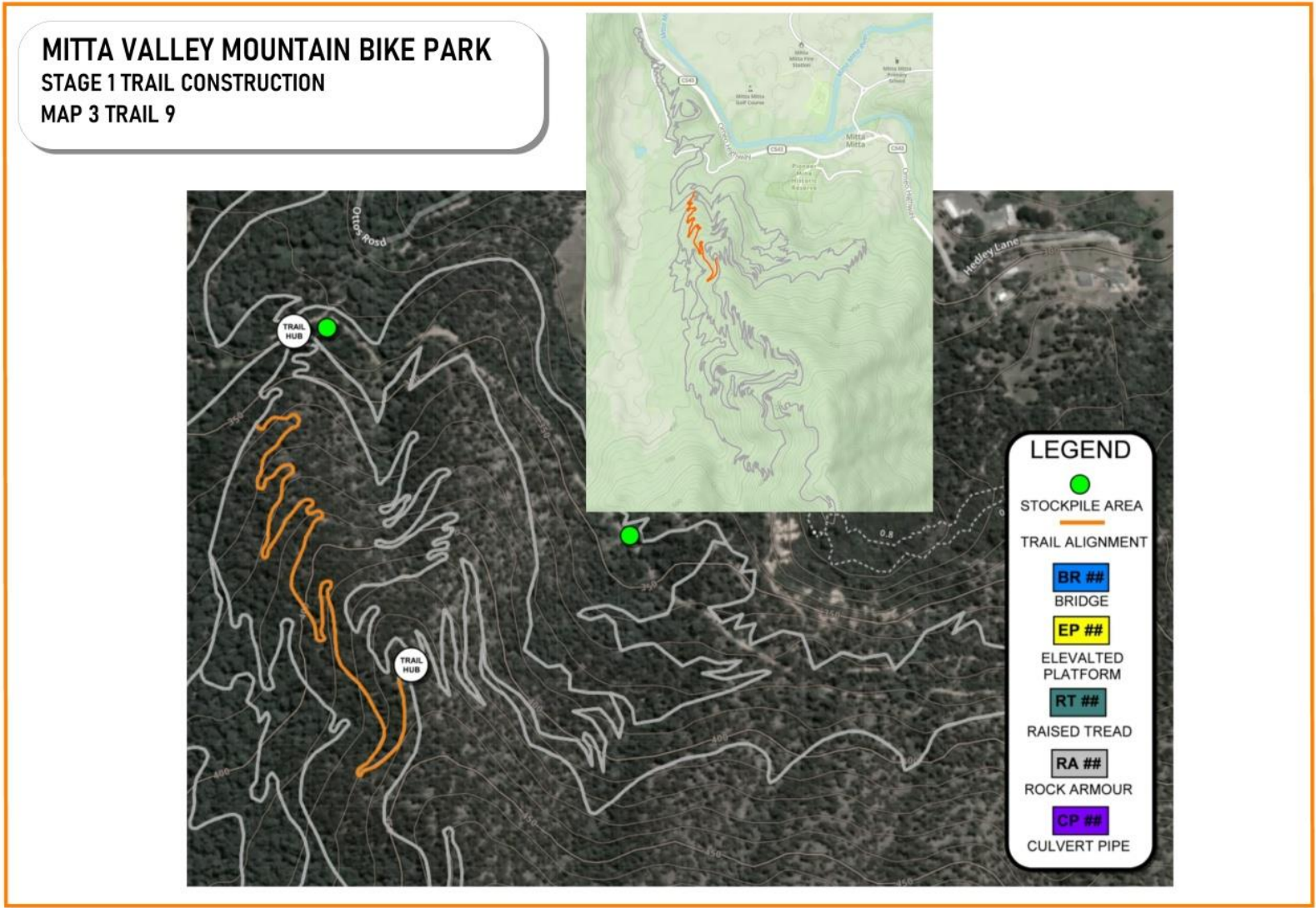


**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 3 TRAIL 6**

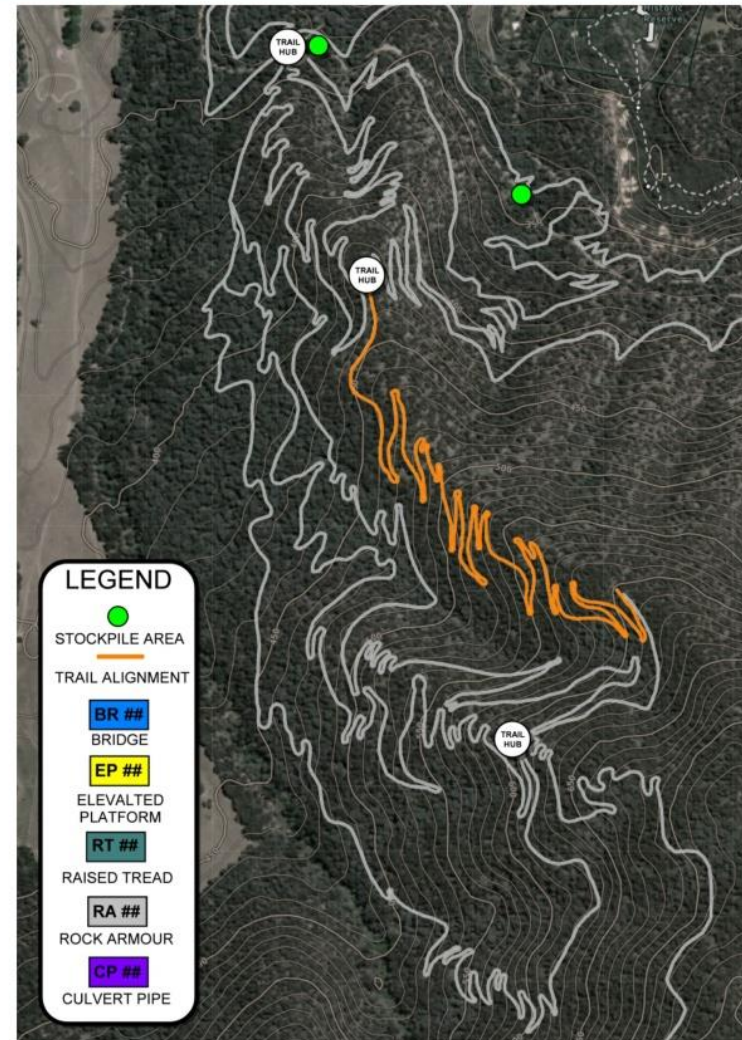
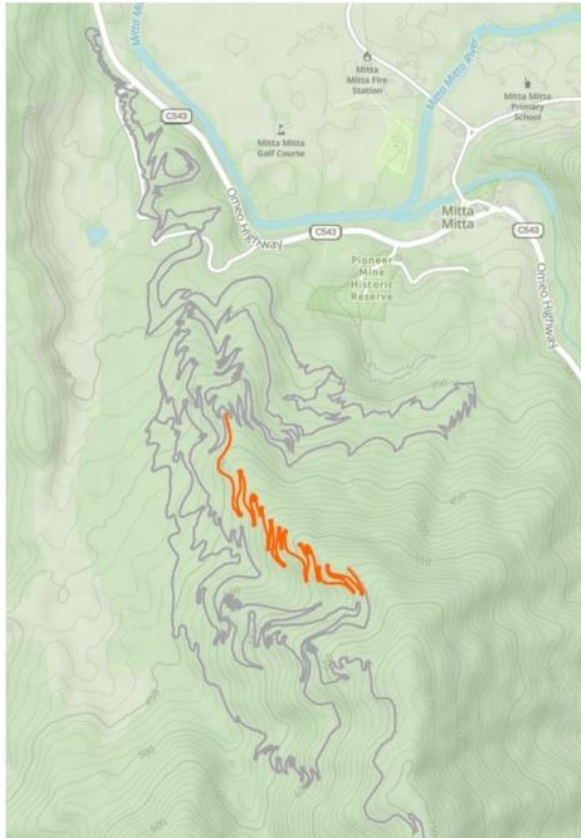




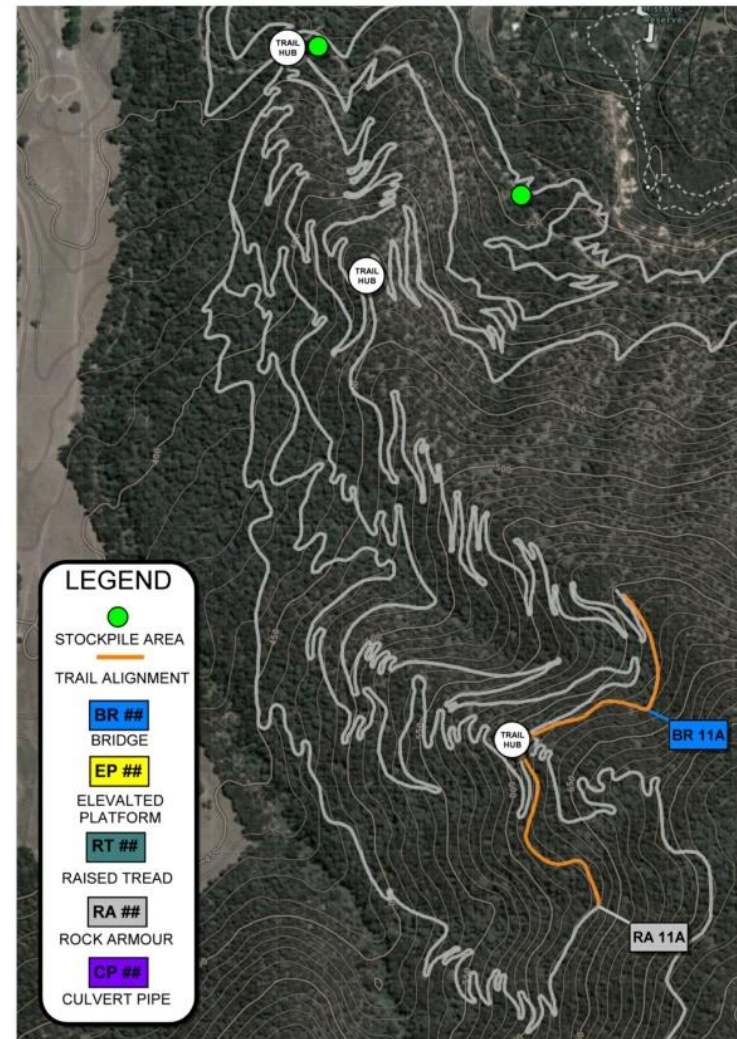
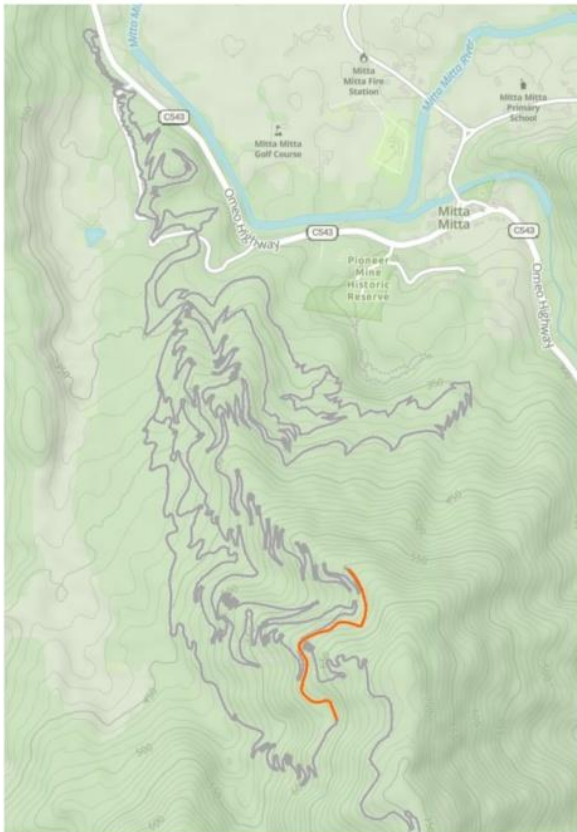




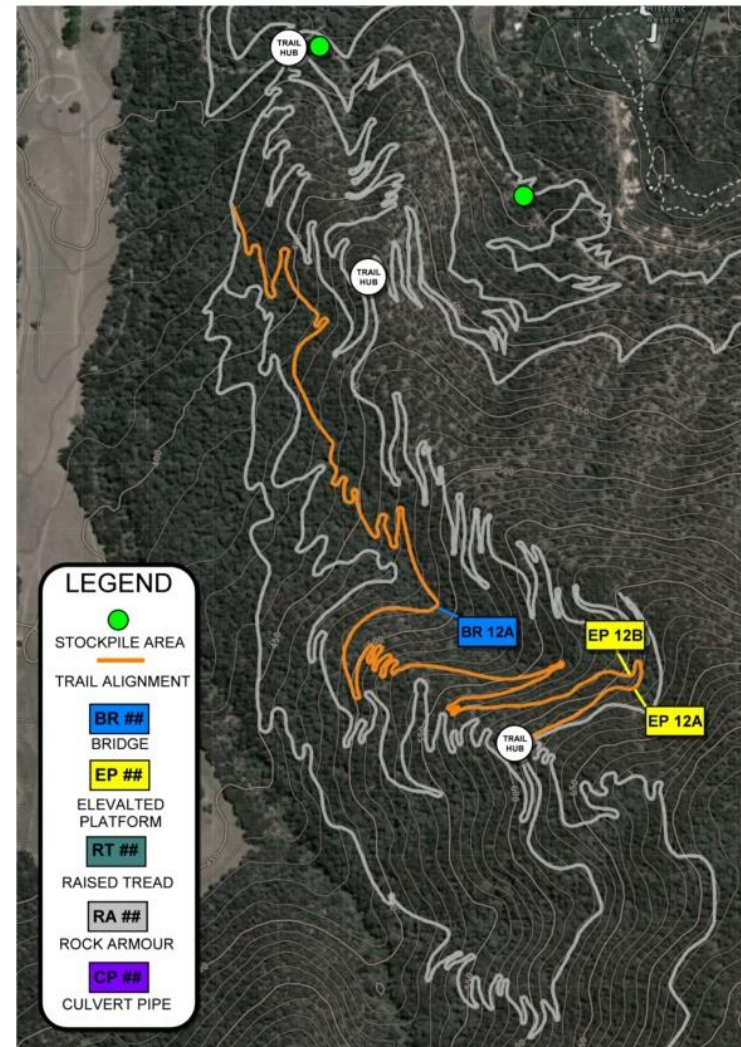
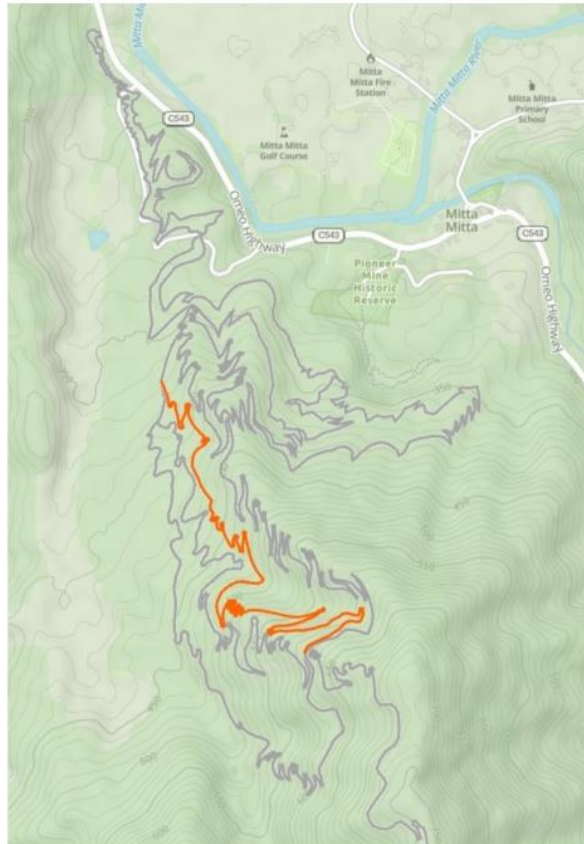
**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 4 TRAIL 10**



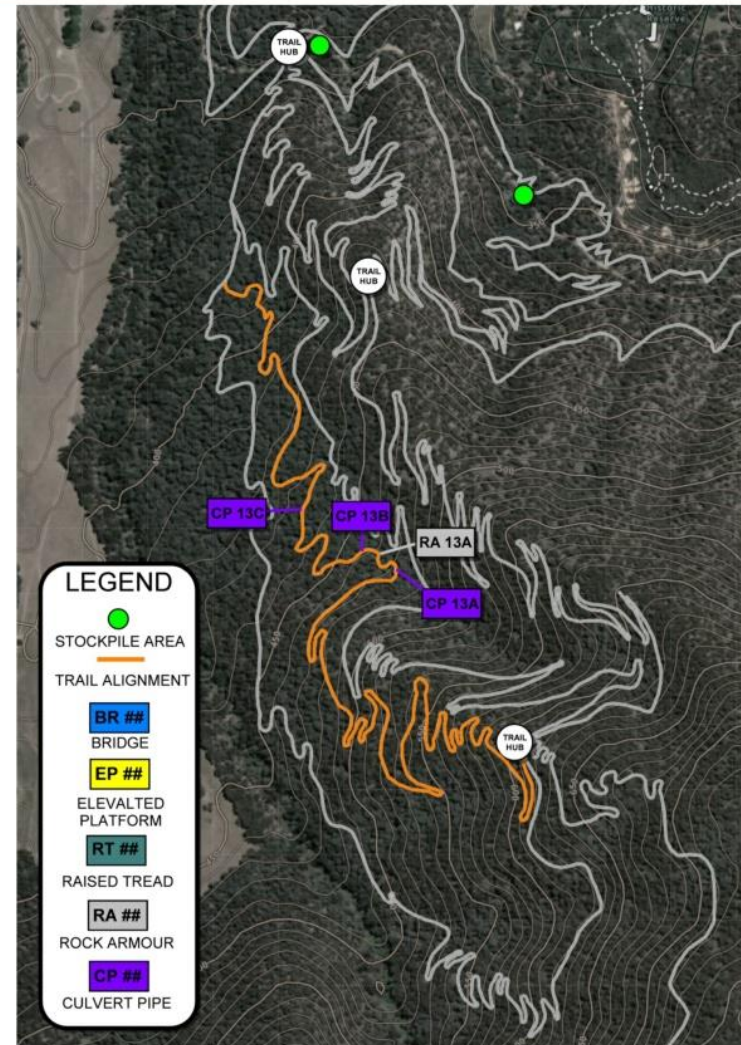
**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 4 TRAIL 11**



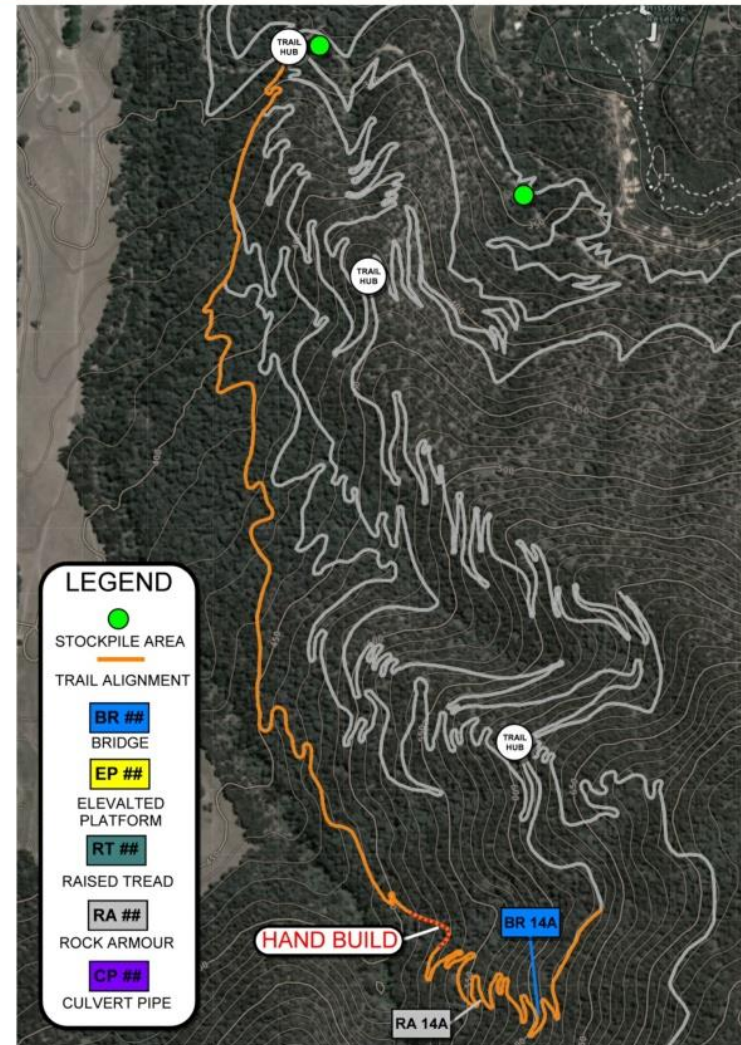
**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 4 TRAIL 12**



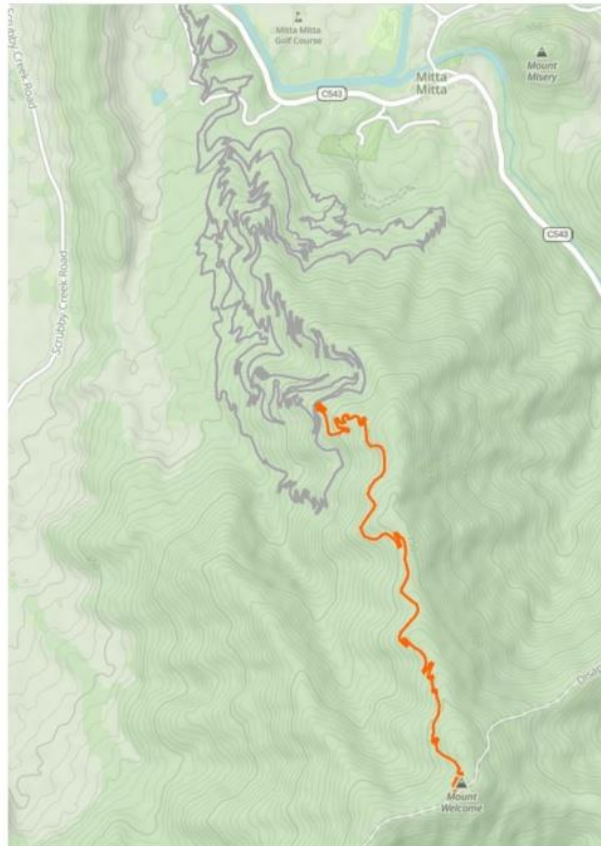
**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 4 TRAIL 13**



**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 4 TRAIL 14**



**MITTA VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK
STAGE 1 TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
MAP 5 TRAIL 15**



TRAIL	GRADE	STYLE	LENGTH (M)	NOTES	RAISED TREAD (l/m)	ROCK ARMOUR (m2)	STORMPRO (No.)	ELEVATED PLATFORM (No.+l/m)	BRIDGE (No.+l/m)	OTHER
Beginner/skills loop TRAIL 1	Green	Beginner	470							
Trailhead to House Site TRAIL 2	Green/Blue	XC	2050		20	10		1X5	1X6	Culvert entry from Ottos Rd.
House Site to Lower Hills TRAIL 2	Green/Blue	XC	520		20					
Lower Hills to Knoll Climb TRAIL 4	Blue	XC	870	thick tea tree in areas	30					
Knoll Climb to Pioneer TRAIL 4	Blue	XC	510	thick tea tree in areas	20					
Pioneer to Knoll Climb TRAIL 6	Blue	Climb	1530			17	1			
Knoll Climb TRAIL 5	Blue	Climb	2060			19	2	1x2.4	1x5	
Knoll Climb to Lower Hills TRAIL 7	Blue	XC/Descent	1180			8	2			
Lower Hills to House Site TRAIL 3	Green/Blue	XC	600							
House Site to Trailhead TRAIL 3	Green/Blue	XC	1000		10				1x3, 1x5	Exit culvert and barrier posts on Ottos Rd
Knoll to Lower hills TRAIL 8	Blue	Flow Descent	1460				2			
Knoll to Lower hills TRAIL 9	Blue	Flow Descent	1330							
Knoll to Mid Feeder TRAIL 10	Blue	Climb	3000							2x view/rest stops
Mid Feeder TRAIL 11	Blue	Feeder Trail	800						1x2.5	
Lower Collector TRAIL 14	Blue	Collector Descent	1800							
Gulley Desent TRAIL 14	Blue/Black	Tech Descent	1380	steep/rocky		15			1x2.5	40m hand built
Mid feeder to Lower Collector TRAIL 12	Blue/Black	Fast Flow Descent	3260	Only Blue/Black due to exposure				2x2.4	1x4	
Summit to Mid Feeder Trail 15	Blue	Signature Descent	3500							view/rest stop
Mid Feeder to Lower Collector TRAIL 13	Blue	Signature Descent	3210			3	5			
		TOTALS	30530		100	72	12	12.2		

Mitta Mountain Bike Trail

List of Objections & Response

A total of seven objections and 45 letters of support were received.

Of the seven objections six of these objections are from residents of Mitta Mitta. One objection was from a resident of Melbourne.

Of the 45 letters of support 3 were located within 10m of the site and 29 were within 100km of the site. The balance of letters of support were located more than 100km from the site.

Summary

The issues raised by the objectors relate to traffic management, car parking, increased demand on wastewater facilities, capacity of emergency services to respond to accidents, demand for accommodation, biodiversity and biosecurity and conflicting land uses with the walking track and the privately owned land within the reserve. Further concerns were raised about the financial viability of the social enterprise however this is not a planning consideration.

It is proposed to include a condition on the permit that the impacts of any increased traffic or car parking demand be monitored over a 12-month period to assess if any traffic calming or signage is required.

It is recognised that wastewater is an issue in Mitta Mitta and no additional wastewater facilities are proposed as part of the development. Any event that increases the demand for toilet facilities will be support by portable toilets.

It is proposed to include a condition requiring the preparation of a detailed emergency response plan for the site that will include liaising with the various authorities

The provision of additional accommodation in Mitta Mitta does not form part of the application. Council does not have any applications for development of additional accommodation in Mitta Mitta. The existing available accommodation will be utilised.

The application was referred to DEECA in relation to the removal of native vegetation and biodiversity impacts. DEECA have consented to the issue of a planning permit subject to conditions in relation to the method of removing of vegetation and to the ongoing management of the trail.

The financial viability of the social enterprise is not a planning consideration nor is the operation of the organisation.

Objections

Theme	Response
Concern regarding biodiversity, biosecurity and public amenity.	The applicant has provided a detailed assessment of the vegetation proposed to be removed. This has been supplied to DEECA.

EPBC Act referral - According to the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas there are 11 species within the project area that are listed under the EPBC Act (see below for details of species). The documents we reviewed did not mention EPBC approvals to clear vegetation, which would be required. We would like to see more specific provisions for avoiding impacts on threatened species in bike path construction and use. Weed invasion – We would like to see biosecurity and weed invasion prevention plans for the project. There is a strong risk that this intact vegetation with very little weed invasion at present will suffer weed and pathogen invasion during the construction period. There is also risk of weeds and pathogens being distributed by bikes over the 30km of new trails weaving throughout the project site. The risk of phytophthora spread is of particular concern given the magnificent grass trees present on ridge lines of Mt Welcome and the recent appearance of phytophthora in the Mitta region. We would strongly advise active avoidance of areas with grass trees as these species are particularly affected by phytophthora. There are questions around the ongoing monitoring and enforcement of biosecurity conditions (sterilizing of bike tires before cyclists enter the bush etc.) – how will this be resourced and implemented? Loss of amenity for town residents – The main existing recreational use of the Mt Welcome area is horse riding and hiking on the Mt Welcome track and around the Lower Pioneer track. The Mt Welcome Walk is the primary tourist walk accessible from the town that tourists are encouraged to use, and the Upper Pioneer track is the most widely used track with walkers, horse riding, and jogging. The existing density of bike tracks on the north face of Mt Welcome will reduce amenity for walkers and horse riders and generate risk and conflict. We strongly recommend removing planned trails 4, 5 and 6 with a view to avoiding conflict with existing recreational use on the existing Pioneer trail. Redeployment of these trails into the west face of Mt Welcome and further south in the crown land footprint would be highly desirable to reduce potential conflict and injury to existing recreational users of this area. Map 5 indicates significant potential use area to the west and southwest of the Mt Welcome walking trail and summit. Track	A detailed Assessment report has been prepared by Redgum Environmental Consulting that has considered the vegetation removal and the ecological impact on flora and fauna. DEECA has consented to the issue of a planning permit subject to conditions.
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maintenance - The soil in the project area is highly soluble and erodes easily, as can most recently be seen by the dramatic land slide and erosion of Watercress Gully onto the Omeo Highway and surrounding gullies and tracks. After this event, graders were used extensively along the Pioneer trail and other tracks to restore access, but a rain event a few weeks later resulted in the tracks being washed out again. A culvert was lost from the river walk, and erosion is again widespread. The maintenance of the tracks will need to be very well resourced as tracks will have dropped branches and will be washed out regularly. It would be a tragedy to clear 30km of track through this largely intact environment to find that the maintenance costs were too high resulting in the project being disbanded. It would be important to have a substantial, ongoing maintenance budget (not funded by tax or rate payers) for this project to be viable. EPBC Act Listed Species (data obtained from the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas) Eastern bentwing bat (critically endangered sighted 1999) Eastern bitter cress (endangered sighted 2011) Mountain phebalium (endangered sighted 2004) Narrow leaf star hair (endangered sighted 2011) River leafless bossiaea (endangered sighted 2004) Spiny crayfish (threatened sighted 2002) Platypus (vulnerable sighted 2021) Poverty wattle (vulnerable sighted 1996) Square tailed kite (vulnerable sighted 2019) Gang gang cockatoo (endangered sighted 2023) Greater glider (endangered sighted 2024)	
The bike and car traffic that will be using Otto's Road adjoining our family property and the effect this traffic will have. 2. How much traffic is anticipated in using Otto's Road adjoining our property and how often will this road be in use? 3. Where will cars be parking in bush land behind our property? 4. There has been a recent creation of another access trail or small fire break along the ridge line from the north end of OTTOS Rd to the South end which directly impacts out family property and its privacy. What is council proposing to do to ensure that the secluded nature of the bush and surrounds is maintained?	Traffic and car parking will be directed to the trail head. Ottos Road is proposed to be use by emergency vehicles to access. The creation of an access track/fire break has been constructed by DEECA as the manager of the land. Any permit issued could contain conditions requiring the bike track to be setback from the property boundary.

As a longtime resident of the Mitta Valley, I am against the bike trail. Because of the increase of traffic on an unsuitable section of the Omeo Hwy, mainly concerning the intersection of Scrubby Creek Road and the Hwy. It's dangerous enough already with the speed vehicles approach the intersection . I have raised my concerns before with the Shire as well as Vic Roads , it would be well justified to reduce the speed limit to 60 or 80 KMH , as they have on the Mitta North road . This should be the number one priority before works begins .	The application was referred to VicRoad who did not object to the issue of a permit with no conditions. Any permit issued for the development will require a review of traffic movement and car parking after 3, 6 and 12 months.
The Head Start Site • There is no potable drinking water available • Insufficient parking available • The highway adjacent has a 100 km/hr speed limit, a serious danger to cyclists crossing the road to access the tracks B) Impact on the Town • There is insufficient infrastructure in the town to handle an influx of visitors: lack of parking, no water supply or sewerage • Residents did not ask for MB Park C) Mitta Valley Inc • Is not an organization representing the community • Does not hold advertised General Meetings • Is a de facto 'chamber of commerce' representing business interests that will financially gain from the project • The Council has a conflict of interest with representation of the working group • The two panel members purporting to represent residents have not consulted or reported to the residents on the progress of the project D) Financial and Business Case • Mitta Valley Inc and the Council will be exposed if there is a financial failure of the project • The project was 'sold' to the community on the basis of excess profits being returned to the public. There is little chance of this occurring.	Any permit issued for the development will require a review of traffic movement and car parking after 3, 6 and 12 months. The proposal is to utilise the existing public toilet facilities and accommodation facilities. The commercial operation of Mitta Valley Inc is not a planning consideration. The commercial viability of the proposal is not a planning consideration No Council staff associated with the assessment of the application have any connection or conflict of interest in relation to the application.
Ambulance Access Concerns Mitta relies on a single ambulance, staffed by local volunteers. Once that is sent on a callout, that means the closest ambulance is at least an hour away, and another hour back to an intensive care unit. 36 people a year are, on	The application was referred to Ambulance Victoria who have not responded to the referral. An in principal letter of support was provided with the application

average, killed in cycling accidents in Australia. Response time is a major factor in determining whether people live or die. The in-principal approval from Ambulance Victoria provided in the appendices of the permit application references both access requirements and difficulty levels for the tracks. Do Ambulance Victoria consider the current layout sufficiently accessible? Is the inclusion of advanced trail features, which were not given in-principal approval by Ambulance Victoria, an issue of concern? How will emergency services know if solo riders are in the park, and possibly injured? Will there be a system to count how many go in and how many come out Traffic congestion. There is no mention in this application of traffic management or parking options, yet the trails begin on Mt Welcome, with the only access via a rough 4wd track with no designated parking areas or emergency vehicle access or evacuation plan. Loss of Vegetation. This planning permit references 30kms of trails, 2m in width, which means a minimum vegetation clearance of 60,000 square metres of native bush, and that's before access road upgrades and suitable parking provisions. How is this to be managed with minimum impact? There is no Native Vegetation Removal Report included with the permit application. There is no Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act approval included in the permit application. There is no mention of biosecurity concerns from imported weed species via bicycle tyres, nor any mention of monitoring and enforcement that would be associated with this. Loss of amenities The current walking trails in the area would be altogether altered by cyclists barreling along them. There is no mention of how cyclists will be deterred from using the existing trails as well as the 30kms of proposed new trails. Sewage systems Inviting lots of newcomers to the valley is one thing, managing the human waste and rubbish generated is another. Again, for a town with no sewerage system it's a major oversight to not consider this in a planning	Any permit issued for the development will require a review of traffic movement and car parking after 3, 6 and 12 months. The applicant has provided a detailed assessment of the vegetation proposed to be removed. This has been supplied to DEECA. DEECA has consented to the issue of a planning permit subject to conditions. The proposed trails cross the existing walking track however it is not proposed to combine the tracks. Cyclists could use the existing walking track now. It is proposed to utilise the existing toilet facilities at the trail head.
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permit. Who will cover the cost of new toilet facilities, or the added stress upon existing ones? Accommodation pressure Where will these people stay? There's very little accommodation in the Mitta Valley, and it's a long, fossil fuel-powered drive to anywhere, with zero public transport options. Can any aspect of this mountain bike park be considered remotely close to responsible social planning in 2025 No on-ground environmental assessments, if indeed they have been undertaken, have been shared with Mitta Valley residents. There is no attached Native Vegetation Removal Report. Just some click 'n' flick overlay assessments, brushed off as if the flora and fauna of the area is utterly unworthy of serious consideration. Flora and fauna which include, and here I'll refer to the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas- the following EPBC Act Listed Species: Eastern bentwing bat (critically endangered sighted 1999) Eastern bitter cress (endangered sighted 2011) Mountain phebalium (endangered sighted 2004) Narrow leaf star hair (endangered sighted 2011) River leafless bossiaea (endangered sighted 2004) Spiny crayfish (threatened sighted 2002) Platypus (vulnerable sighted 2021) Poverty wattle (vulnerable sighted 1996) Square tailed kite (vulnerable sighted 2019) Gang gang cockatoo (endangered sighted 2023) Greater glider (endangered sighted 2024) On-site Aboriginal cultural heritage surveys were undertaken on only 20% of the area proposed to be affected. The reason why other areas were not accessed during the on-ground survey is because the other areas were "very steep and heavily vegetated, making access to many areas proposed for tracks unsafe to access". That this is this case tie into the following point, about emergency services access. A letter is attached to this planning application in which Ambulance Victoria have given in principle support - only - if the project is for beginner and intermediate levels of mountain bike riders, and if emergency vehicle access is available to all parts of the mountain bike park. According to All Terrain Trails, it will consist of 80 percent intermediate trails, with "Technical Trail Features to support advanced level riders". Later in the report blue/black level trails (intermediate/advanced) are also referenced. A quick glance at the map shows that emergency vehicle access will not be	It is anticipated that users of the park will travel from Wodonga/Albury as day visitors. Any overnight stay is likely to reduce the vacancy rate of existing accommodation. DEECA have reviewed the reports submitted with the application and additional information supplied as a result of DEECA requesting further information. This has been assessed by DEECA who have consent to the issue of a planning permit subject to conditions. DEECA have considered the impact on flora and fauna. The application was referred to several emergency services agencies. Any permit issued for the development will require a detailed emergency management plan to be prepared before the use commences.
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available to large areas of the trails. In fact, the Cultural Heritage Assessment that was undertaken was only able to access 20% of the proposed areas, and only 14% of the gully areas, as it was "very steep and heavily vegetated, making access to many areas proposed for tracks unsafe to access". This unsafe access is what Ambulance officers will be relying on to evacuate riders who have fallen afoul of a "Technical Trail Feature". This discrepancy between what Ambulance Victoria have expressed in-principal support for, and what is being proposed, really ought to be resolved before approving a design which is likely to result in overwhelming pressure on local emergency services. There is nothing in this planning permit or it's appendices to suggest that there is a clear plan in place for dealing with emergencies, and it seems that through lack of communication between the trail designers and emergency services, this may create conditions for serious injuries and loss of life, that could be avoided through better design choices made prior to approving this current, unsafe design. The loss of amenity for bushwalkers who will now have mountain bikers zipping across the lovely walking tracks in that area is particularly significant. Residents in Towong shire rated walking and bushwalking as their second and third most preferred recreational activities in a survey published in Towong shire's own Recreational Strategy for 2022-2033. Yet, despite Mountain biking only reaching equal 13th on this list of activities, the current plan cuts through walking trails with these less popular mountain bike trails. Rather than, say, opting to avoid the walking trails, or relocating the trails to an area that will not negatively impact upon existing walking trails. Rather than degrade the experience for people already enjoying Mitta Mittas fine natural features, a better design could, for example, make use of the southern face of Mt Welcome, which is cooler and more shaded during the months in which Mitta Mitta actually receives large visitor numbers, less fire-prone, and currently without any conflicting walking trails. Why on earth would accumulate data from surveys on recreational interests only to preference the 13th option over the 2nd and 3rd option? There has been no viable business case for the Mountain bike park presented to Mitta	The applicant is required to comply with the Cultural Heritage Management Plan
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Valley residents, only a statement that: "Mitta Valley Inc. and the wider community are aware that the mountain bike park will bring with it expenses to maintain the park as a quality destination. It is proposed to develop a social enterprise to generate income to support these ongoing costs. A social enterprise business plan has been developed, which includes activities including but not limited to, e-bike bike hire and the leasing of space for a café pod operation. " The business plan alluded to here, the failure of which would result in maintenance/rehabilitation costs being dumped back onto Towong shire ratepayers, has not, as far as I'm aware, been shown to Mitta Valley residents. It's certainly not on their website. To begin something of this magnitude without a clear and ongoing funding mechanism responsible for trail maintenance is fiscal irresponsibility in the extreme. Weed management, rubbish removal, erosion mitigation, not to mention public liability insurance for the inevitable accidents that will occur - all this requires serious funding. The vague idea that somebody might want to manage the renting of ebikes out of the goodness of their heart, and that a few people renting half a dozen ebikes every now and then could pay, in perpetuity, for maintenance contracts that have not even been costed? It's mind boggling. Even the 1 million dollars round figure chosen for the project on this application comes with absolutely no breakdown of expenses. Finally, parking is not taken into consideration at all in this planning application. Where will the proposed users of this park store their vehicles while they ride? How will they access the top of Mt Welcome? Via the poor condition 4WD only Mt Disappointment track? DEECA state in their attached email that "Upgrading and maintaining for 2WD access is not within the district's current funding or plans for improving strategic fire access across the estate." If users can manage to get to the top of Mt Welcome, where will they park? How many can park before emergency evacuation access to this dry flammable hilltop (which will, if all goes well, start to see far increased traffic levels) compromised? None of this is considered in the plan. In the interest of public safety and amenity this planning application needs to be paused until there is a serious answer to the following:	The viability of the Social Enterprise is not a planning consideration
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1) Demonstrate that there is a long-term financial management team, with ongoing funding or turnover sufficient to implement the project without becoming a burden to Towong Shire ratepayers, and provide costings for this. 2) Emergency vehicle access, and clarification as to whether the trails are only beginner/intermediate, or if they are also intermediate/advanced. 3) Adequate all weather access roads for users, plus sufficient parking that doesn't jeopardize emergency vehicle access. Not even a temporary event permit would be granted without this, because it can easily lead to a preventable death. 4) Adequate on-ground environmental surveys, a compliant Native Vegetation Removal Report, a Site Construction Environmental Management Plan, and a fully costed ongoing Environmental Management Plan.	
Objection to proposal to construct 30km bike paths through Mitta State Forest While we broadly agree with the provision on mountain biking facility in the area, we hold significant concerns about the current proposal from biodiversity, biosecurity and public amenity perspectives. We object to the extensive construction of bike paths on the north/north-east facing slopes of Mt Welcome (Trails 4, 5, 6) and strongly recommend extending the path network to the south and southwest of the Mt Welcome summit walking trail. EPBC Act referral - According to the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas there are 11 species within the project area that are listed under the EPBC Act (see below for details of species). The documents we reviewed did not mention EPBC approvals to clear vegetation, which would be required. We would like to see more specific provisions for avoiding impacts on threatened species in bike path construction and use. Weed invasion – We would like to see biosecurity and weed invasion prevention plans for the project. There is a strong risk that this intact vegetation with very little weed invasion at present will suffer weed and pathogen invasion during the construction period. There is also risk of weeds and pathogens being distributed by bikes over the 30km of new trails weaving throughout the project site. The risk of	The application was supported by a detailed ecological assessment that was referred to DEECA who have consented to the construction of the trail subject to conditions. The detailed assessment includes the impact on flora and fauna. Any permit issued for the development will require the track to be maintained which includes weed control and eradication

phytophthora spread is of particular concern given the magnificent grass trees present on ridge lines of Mt Welcome and the recent appearance of phytophthora in the Mitta region. We would strongly advise active avoidance of areas with grass trees as these species are particularly affected by phytophthora. There are questions around the ongoing monitoring and enforcement of biosecurity conditions (sterilising of bike tires before cyclists enter the bush etc.) – how will this be resourced and implemented? Loss of amenity for town residents and tourists – The main existing recreational use of the Mt Welcome area is horse riding and hiking on the Mt Welcome track and around the Lower Pioneer track (advertised to tourists). The Mt Welcome walk is the primary tourist walk accessible from the town that tourists are encouraged to use, and the Upper Pioneer track is the most widely used track with walkers, horse riding, and jogging. The existing density of bike tracks on the north face of Mt Welcome will reduce amenity for walkers and horse riders and generate risk and conflict. We strongly recommend removing planned trails 4, 5 and 6 with a view to avoiding conflict with existing recreational use on the existing Pioneer trail. Redeployment of these trails into the west face of Mt Welcome and further south in the crown land footprint would be highly desirable to reduce potential conflict and injury to existing recreational users of this area. Map 5 indicates significant potential use area to the west and southwest of the Mt Welcome walking trail and summit. Track maintenance - The soil in the project area is highly soluble and erodes easily, as can most recently be seen by the dramatic land slide and erosion of Watercress Gully onto the Omeo Highway and surrounding gullies and tracks. After this event, graders were used extensively along the Pioneer trail and other tracks to restore access, but a rain event a few weeks later resulted in the tracks being washed out again (see attached photos). A culvert was lost from the river walk, and erosion is again widespread. The maintenance of tracks will need to be very well resourced as tracks will have dropped branches and will be washed out regularly. It	The proposal will provide additional recreational activities for the town. The area is not located within the town centre. The trail will not use the existing walking track. Any permit issued for the proposal will include requirements that the track is maintained in accordance with the Trail Management Plan
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would be a tragedy to clear 30km of track through this largely intact environment to find that the maintenance costs were too high resulting in the project being disbanded. It would be important to have a substantial, ongoing maintenance budget (not funded by tax or rate payers) for this project to be viable. EPBC Act Listed Species (data obtained from the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas) Eastern bentwing bat (critically endangered sighted 1999) Eastern bitter cress (endangered sighted 2011) Mountain phebalium (endangered sighted 2004) Narrow leaf star hair (endangered sighted 2011) River leafless bossiaea (endangered sighted 2004) Spiny crayfish (threatened sighted 2002) Platypus (vulnerable sighted 2021) Poverty wattle (vulnerable sighted 1996) Square tailed kite (vulnerable sighted 2019) Gang gang cockatoo (endangered sighted 2023) Greater glider (endangered sighted 2024)	DEECA have considered the impacts of the EPBC Act and have consented to the issue of a planning permit.
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As a longtime resident of the Mitta valley, I am against the bike trail. Because of the increase of traffic on an unsuitable section of the Omeo Hwy, mainly concerning the intersection of Scrubby Creek Road and the Hwy. It's dangerous enough already with the speed of vehicles approaching the intersection . I have raised my concerns before with Shire as well as Vic Roads , it would be well justified to reduce the speed limit to 60 or 80 KMH , as they have on the Mitta North Road. This should be the number one priority before works begins.	Any permit issued for the proposal will require the applicant to provide a traffic assessment after 3, 6 and 12 months. This information can be used to support any required speed reduction.

Mitta Valley MTB Park Objections Response

Before addressing the objections, it is important to consider some of the original key project objectives.

The 'Our Valley Our Future' Mitta Valley Community Plan 2013 – 2016 identified the following challenges facing the valley including:

- Business and employment opportunities, especially for the young
- Economic diversity and resilience
- Established business profitability/sustainability
- Lack of attractions to drive tourism
- Youth engagement
- Reducing, ageing population
- Social cohesion

The Mitta Valley MTB Park will offer substantial opportunities to address these challenges.

Many concerns relate to park visitation overwhelming current town infrastructure and further impacting local amenity.

It is important to note that this has been acknowledged and considered throughout the planning process. Key points include:

- Following 2019 community consultation, two conceptual town connection trail alignments were deleted due to residents' privacy concerns.
- Following 2019 community consultation, the preferred trailhead site utilising the old DSE Depot was abandoned in favour of The Mill, 1.8km from the centre of town. This was due to residents' concern about traffic congestion and parking pressure.
- Visitation to the park will peak during winter months when alpine parks are closed for winter. This will boost much needed visitation during the Valley's quiet period increasing business sustainability and stabilise staffing requirements.
- Promotion and events will focus on quiet months only, minimising additional pressure on existing infrastructure during seasonal busy periods.

The planning permit application relates to stage 1 (30km of trail) only. It is anticipated that this stage alone will result in modest day visitation from in region and will be of insignificant impact to the towns amenity compared to events such as The Mighty Mitta Muster and Christmas/New Year celebrations.

We feel that this project is being leveraged to push Council for town sewerage and potable water supply. MVI do not question the validity of these requirements but is concerned that as potential collateral damage in the push for town services, this game changing opportunity for the Valley and Shire as a whole is being jeopardised.

Concerns and responses

Mitta relies on a single ambulance, staffed by local volunteers. Once that is sent on a callout, that means the closest ambulance is at least an hour away, and another hour back to an intensive care unit. 36 people a year are, on average, killed in cycling accidents in Australia. Response time is a major factor in determining whether people live or die.

Specific statistics on the number of fatalities exclusively attributed to mountain biking in Australia each year are limited. In the year ending July 2023, there were 46 road deaths involving cyclists in Australia.

[statista.com](https://www.statista.com)

It's important to note that this figure encompasses **all** forms of cycling, including road cycling, commuting, and mountain biking. The exact number of fatalities specifically resulting from mountain biking is not distinctly reported in publicly available sources.

Research indicates that fatalities associated with mountain biking are relatively rare, with estimated mortality rates ranging from approximately 2 to 3.5 per million riders.

[PubMed Central](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/)

This suggests that while mountain biking carries inherent risks, the occurrence of fatal accidents is uncommon.

In 2021–22, there were approximately 8,600 injury hospitalisations attributed to cycling as a sport in Australia, with 7,100 males and 1,500 females affected.

[aihw.gov](https://www.aihw.gov)

In 2021–22, Australian rules football and rugby, encompassing both league and union codes, had a combined total of approximately 8,100 hospitalisations.

[aihw.gov.au](https://www.aihw.gov.au)

Nearly 4 million Australians ride a bicycle each week, with 86% of them doing so for recreational purposes Australian Bureau of Statistics

When adjusted for participation rates, rugby and Australian rules football exhibit higher injury hospitalisation rates per 100,000 participants. In 2021–22, rugby had one of the highest rates, with 185 per 100,000 participants, while Australian rules football had 160 per 100,000 participants.

aihw.gov.au

Summary

While mountain biking does carry risks, fatalities are relatively rare. Detailed annual statistics specific to mountain biking-related deaths in Australia are not readily available, and reported figures often encompass **all** cycling activities. When adjusted for participation rates, rugby and Australian rules football exhibit higher injury hospitalisation rates per 100,000

The in-principle approval from Ambulance Victoria provided in the appendices of the permit application references both access requirements and difficulty levels for the tracks. Do Ambulance Victoria consider the current layout sufficiently accessible?

The majority of mountain biking facilities are by nature remote with accessibility challenges. This is inherent with the landscape and topography required to meet user group expectations and is an accepted risk of the sport.

Consultation with Ambulance Victoria included discussions around proposed trail locations (presented on digital maps with GPS alignments), emergency access points and the commitment to consult with Ambulance Victoria during the construction phase to ensure best access/response outcomes.

The trails for this stage of the MTB park targets beginner to intermediate rider skill levels. The design and features of the trails are strictly guided by the Australian MTB Trail Difficulty Rating System (TDRS). The classification of a trail must reflect the most difficult section of that trail for visitor risk management purposes.

Adhering to this national standard will:

- Help riders make informed decisions
- Encourage riders to use trails that match their skill level
- Manage risk and minimise injuries
- Aid in the planning and design of trails.

Trail classifications allow trail designers, builders and land managers to develop trails appropriate for the anticipated users, based on objective criteria.

Concepts for improving emergency access to the park for future stages were also discussed.

Is the inclusion of advanced trail features, which were not given in-principle approval by Ambulance Victoria, an issue of concern?

All trails and their features will be in accordance with the Australian Trail Difficulty Grading System (TDRS). Any trail feature that elevates risk will be located on sections of the trail with higher accessibility and signed accordingly.

There are no advanced trails proposed for this stage of construction.

How will emergency services know if solo riders are in the park, and possibly injured?

Will there be a system to count how many go in and how many come out?

With the exception of large scale commercial MTB parks such as Whistler (Canada) and Rotorua (New Zealand) trail counters are only used for Park Operations. Knowing rider numbers can help with maintaining the park, such as adjusting staffing levels or ensuring that the trails are not overcrowded. Collecting data also helps parks improve their services, plan for future growth, and track trends in rider behaviour and demand.

Most riders prefer to ride in groups. All riders are encouraged to let people know their intentions and download the Emergency Plus app via trailhead and on trail signage. In the unlikely event a rider is missing in the park, it is a relatively small well mapped search area compared to trying to locate say a hiker, trail runner, horse rider or dirt bike rider.

Traffic congestion.

There is no mention in this application of traffic management or parking options, yet the trails begin on Mt Welcome, with the only access via a rough 4wd track with no designated parking areas or emergency vehicle access or evacuation plan.

The trail network does not begin on Mt Welcome. Trail access and return is via the trailhead located at The Mill, adjacent to the Omeo Highway approximately 1.8km from the centre of town. The trailhead provides picnic facilities, toilet facilities and parking for 15 vehicles. It is anticipated that this will be more than sufficient for stage 1 rider visitation.

The trailhead location was the residents preferred location as identified in the master planning community consultation conducted in 2019.

Emergency vehicle access has been considered in consultation with Ambulance Victoria and evacuation procedures are contained within the Trail Management Plan.

Loss of Vegetation.

This planning permit references 30kms of trails, 2m in width, which means a minimum vegetation clearance of 60,000 square metres of native bush, and that's before access road upgrades and suitable parking provisions. How is this to be managed with minimum impact? There is no Native Vegetation Removal Report included with the permit application. There is no Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act approval included with the permit application. There is no mention of biosecurity concerns from imported weed species via bicycle tyres, nor any mention of monitoring and enforcement that would be associated with this.

The trails construction width is 1m with an impact buffer of 500mm either side of the trail. Parking has already been constructed at The Mill trailhead and no access Rd upgrades are proposed within this stage of construction. A Native Vegetation Report has been completed and a quote for respective vegetation offsets obtained.

Biosecurity concerns are no different for the Mitta MTB Park as they are for any other MTB park in Australia. Trailhead signage will outline the risks associated with the introduction of invasive plant species and encourage cyclists, hikers, and outdoor enthusiasts to thoroughly clean their footwear and equipment.

This is not policed at any MTB facility.

Comparing Biosecurity Risks:

1. **Horse Riding** – The highest biosecurity risk, largely due to manure, potential disease spread (e.g., equine influenza), and hoof damage leading to erosion. Horses also inadvertently spread invasive plant seeds.
2. **4x4 Driving** – High biosecurity risk because of soil compaction, potential for spreading invasive species via mud, and pollution. 4x4 driving can cause significant environmental damage in sensitive ecosystems.
3. **Mountain Biking** – Moderate risk due to soil disturbance and the potential for spreading plant pathogens or invasive species via tires. While it lacks animal-related biosecurity risks (like manure or parasites), it still can damage ecosystems and introduce non-native species.
4. **Hiking** – The least biosecurity risk, though still present. Hiking can cause erosion and introduce plant seeds via shoes, but overall, it is the least disruptive of these activities.

Loss of amenity

The current walking trails in the area would be altogether altered by cyclists barrelling along them. There is no mention of how cyclists will be deterred from using the existing trails as well as the 30kms of proposed new trails.

This concern was raised during the 2019 community consultation. The trail network has been designed to minimise interactions with the existing walking trails. No walking trails form part of the MTB trail network. Wheels give way to walkers trail etiquette will be enforced with signage and walkers only signage installed where required.

This has also been addressed within DEECA's request for further information.

Sewage systems

Inviting lots of newcomers to the valley is one thing, managing the human waste and rubbish generated is another. Again, for a town with no sewerage system it's a major oversight to not consider this in a planning permit. Who will cover the cost of new toilet facilities, or the added stress upon existing ones?

The anticipated rider visitation following completion of stage 1 will be insignificant compared to current events such as the Mighty Mitta Muster. The toilet facilities at the trailhead managed by DEECA will service the majority of rider visitation.

Connection with nature and appreciation of the environment are primary drivers for mountain bikers. They are advocates for these areas and much like hikers, pack out what they pack in.

Accommodation pressure

Where will these people stay? There's very little accommodation in the Mitta Valley, and it's a long, fossil fuel powered drive to anywhere, with zero public transport options.

Overnight accommodation demand resulting from this stage of construction will be catered for with the existing options available in Mitta Mitta, Dartmouth and Eskdale.

It is anticipated that completion of stage one (30km) will mainly attract day visitation from within region.

Where do you start and finish with the fossil fuel argument. At least this user group are using pedal power while they are in the Valley.

Get comment from Debbie at Dart Motor Inn on benefit to business.

Can any aspect of this mountain bike park be considered remotely close to responsible social planning in 2025?

The following has been considered during the planning phase:

1. Environmental Sustainability

- **Trail Design and Maintenance:** The Mitta MTB Park will prioritise sustainable trail construction to minimise environmental impact and reduce lifecycle maintenance. This includes designing trails that prevent erosion, maintain natural hydrology, and preserve the integrity of local ecosystems. The parks management has plans in place for routine trail maintenance to reduce wear and tear and prevent damage to surrounding flora and fauna.
- **Invasive Species Management:** Park management will actively manage the spread of invasive species (like promoting the cleaning of bike tyres and equipment) demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the health of the local ecosystem.
- **Waste Management:** Responsible planning includes effective waste management and toilet facilities for visitors via the trailhead. Ensuring that the park encourages cyclists to pack out rubbish.

2. Accessibility and Inclusivity

- **Accessibility for All Riders:** In 2025, inclusive planning means making mountain biking accessible to a broader audience, including riders with disabilities. This has been addressed by designing beginner-friendly trails that encourage new riders of different backgrounds, ages, and abilities. Creating an adaptive mountain bike trail will be considered in a future construction phase.
- **Diversity of Trail Options:** Responsible planning has ensured that a range of trail difficulties are offered, ensuring that everyone, regardless of skill level, has a safe and enjoyable experience.

3. Community Engagement

- **Involvement of Local Communities:** As a community led project, planning has included collaboration with local communities and stakeholders to ensure the park's impact is positive. Engaging with nearby residents and businesses has been crucial in the planning process. Involving the community in decision-making processes about development, trailhead location, and opportunity creation has directly shaped the project.

- **Education and Awareness:** The park will focus on educating visitors about responsible behaviour, such as the importance of environmental stewardship, safety, and respect for local cultures. Educational signage, workshops, or volunteer programs have been discussed to foster community responsibility.

4. Safety and Well-being of Riders

- **Infrastructure for Safety:** The park will prioritise safety measures, such as well-marked trails, appropriate signage and trail grading and emergency response plans. This reflects the social responsibility of ensuring visitors' well-being.
- **Mental Health Considerations:** Providing spaces for reflection or rest, as well as promoting mountain biking as a mental health-friendly activity, can also be a modern aspect of responsible planning. Encouraging outdoor exercise and community-building through group events or riding clubs contributes to social well-being.

5. Economic Considerations

- **Sustainable Tourism:** The economic model of the park prioritises long-term sustainability over short-term profits. This includes collaborating with local businesses to ensure that the park's success benefits the broader community. Ensuring that the delivery of stage 1 of the park does not overwhelm local infrastructure or increase congestion has been considered.
- **Support for Local Economies:** A park that promotes local tourism, jobs, and offers small businesses opportunities (e.g., bike shops, accommodations, and restaurants) supports responsible economic planning. Partnerships with the social enterprise that help fund conservation efforts or local community projects will further enhance the park's positive impact on the region.

6. Technological Integration for Responsible Planning

- **Data Collection for Improvement:** In 2025, many parks are incorporating technology for park management (such as tracking rider numbers via counters or using apps for safety). Using data to improve operations, address issues like overcrowding, or monitoring environmental health could reflect responsible and forward-thinking social planning.

7. Collaboration with Government and Policy Makers

- **Adherence to Regulations:** Operation of the Mitta MTB Park will adhere to local, regional, and national regulations, such as those related to wildlife protection, land-use zoning, and environmental conservation. Consulting with DEECA will ensure that the park does not inadvertently harm natural habitats or wildlife and forms a key component of responsible governance.

In Australia, there has been a noticeable trend of youth moving away from traditional team sports and taking up individual activities like mountain biking. Several factors contribute to this shift:

1. Changing Interests and Preferences

- **Desire for Individual Pursuits:** Many young people are seeking individual activities that allow for personal freedom, self-expression, and flexibility. Mountain biking provides an opportunity for youth to challenge themselves, push their limits, and explore nature on their own terms, without the structure of team sports.
- **Adventure and Thrill:** The thrill and adrenaline of mountain biking, combined with the chance to explore diverse terrains and natural landscapes, attract many young riders who may be looking for more excitement than traditional team sports can offer.

2. Accessibility and Flexibility

- **Fewer Time Constraints:** Unlike team sports, which often require scheduled practices and games, mountain biking offers greater flexibility. Youth can ride alone or with friends, without the pressure of team commitments. This appeals to young people with busy schedules or those who prefer spontaneous activities.
- **Minimal Equipment Needed:** While mountain biking requires a bike, the cost and equipment are generally lower than those required for some traditional sports, making it more accessible for youth in many communities.

3. Social Media and Influence

- **Influence of Social Media and YouTube:** Many young people are drawn to mountain biking through social media platforms, where they see exciting videos, tricks, and extreme rides. Platforms like YouTube and Instagram feature mountain biking influencers and events, which encourage youth to try the sport themselves.
- **Peer Influence:** Peer groups and local riding communities can significantly impact youth interests. As mountain biking gains popularity, more young people are being exposed to it through friends, family, or local events, which contributes to the growing trend.

4. Growing Infrastructure and Support

- **Improved Mountain Biking Trails and Facilities:** Australia has made significant strides in building mountain biking infrastructure, such as purpose-built trails,

bike parks, and dedicated riding areas, particularly in regions like Tasmania, the mid NSW Coast, and Victoria. These developments provide a safe and exciting environment for youth to explore the sport.

- **Mountain Biking Events and Competitions:** The rise of mountain biking events and competitions, such as the Australian National Mountain Bike Championships, provides young riders with opportunities to compete at various levels. This competitive scene is appealing for youth who might be seeking new challenges outside of traditional team sports.

5. Health and Wellbeing

- **Physical and Mental Health Benefits:** Like team sports, mountain biking offers physical exercise, but it also has mental health benefits, including stress reduction and a sense of personal achievement. Youth who may not thrive in the social and structured environment of team sports often find individual sports like mountain biking to be more rewarding for their mental wellbeing.
- **Connection to Nature:** As part of the shift towards outdoor activities, many young people are drawn to mountain biking's connection to nature. It allows them to escape the screen-heavy lifestyle and engage with the natural environment in a meaningful way.

6. Youth Programs and Initiatives

- **Youth Engagement Programs:** There has been a rise in mountain biking programs targeting young people, helping them develop skills, engage with their peers, and gain confidence. These programs provide a structured way for youth to get into mountain biking while still building social bonds and a sense of community. The Beechworth Chain Gang run a youth rider development program where it is not uncommon to see up to 60 kids on a Wednesday night from surrounding towns.

Mountain biking in Australia offers several social benefits, fostering community engagement, inclusivity, and a positive connection to nature. Here are some of the key social benefits:

1. Community Building

- **Local Clubs and Events:** Mountain biking fosters strong community networks through local riding clubs and events. These gatherings bring people of all ages and backgrounds together, creating social connections.

- **Volunteering Opportunities:** Many trails and events rely on volunteer efforts, allowing people to contribute to their community while building bonds with like-minded individuals.

2. Promotes Inclusivity and Diversity

- **Accessible for All Ages and Skill Levels:** Mountain biking is inclusive, as it caters to a wide range of ages and skill levels. This makes it an activity that can be enjoyed by families, children, seniors, and beginners alike.
- **Inclusive Programs:** Programs are increasingly being introduced to encourage women, Indigenous groups, and people with disabilities to participate in mountain biking, promoting inclusivity and diversity in the sport.

3. Mental Health and Wellbeing

- **Stress Relief and Relaxation:** Riding through nature helps reduce stress and improve mental wellbeing. The physical activity and connection to the outdoors are known to boost mood, reduce anxiety, and promote overall mental health.
- **Social Support Networks:** Group rides and club activities create a sense of belonging and support, offering a social environment where people can connect, share experiences, and support one another.

4. Encourages Active Lifestyles

- **Physical Health Benefits:** Mountain biking encourages physical activity, which in turn leads to improved fitness, cardiovascular health, and overall physical well-being.
- **Family and Group Activities:** Many families enjoy mountain biking together, making it an opportunity for shared experiences that encourage active, healthy lifestyles.

5. Tourism and Economic Impact

- **Tourism Boost:** Popular mountain biking destinations in Australia, such as North East Victoria, Tasmania, and the Otway Ranges, attract tourists, which supports local businesses and fosters community development. In the 2018-2019 period, the Ride High Country campaign, aimed at promoting cycling tourism in the High Country region (which includes North East Victoria), reported that 103,000 cyclists visited the area, contributing to a total visitor spend of over \$80 million. This represents an increase of approximately \$31 million compared to previous years.

- **Local Job Creation:** The rise in mountain biking can generate job opportunities in trail building, guiding, and tourism services, creating a positive economic impact on local communities.

6. Environmental Awareness and Conservation

- **Promotes Sustainable Practices:** Mountain biking in natural areas promotes environmental awareness, encouraging cyclists to adopt responsible practices, such as respecting trails, wildlife, and ecosystems. This can lead to increased conservation efforts within communities.

7. Youth Engagement and Development

- **Youth Programs:** Mountain biking programs for young people provide opportunities for them to develop physical, social, and leadership skills. These programs often focus on discipline, teamwork, and respect for nature, helping to develop positive habits.
- **Mentorship:** Experienced riders often mentor younger participants, fostering intergenerational relationships and teaching important life skills such as resilience and perseverance.

Summary

If a mountain bike park in 2025 considers the above factors — particularly focusing on environmental sustainability, community engagement, accessibility, and safety — it could certainly be seen as engaging in responsible social planning. The integration of technological solutions, inclusive policies, and a focus on long-term sustainability whilst supporting local economies, would mark it as forward-thinking and community-conscious, aligning well with principles of social responsibility.

While traditional team sports still hold significant importance in Australian culture, the shift towards mountain biking among youth is growing. This shift is influenced by a combination of personal preference for individual activities, the thrill of adventure sports, greater accessibility, and the rise of youth-focused mountain biking infrastructure and events. This change reflects broader cultural shifts in how young people engage with physical activities, where the focus is increasingly on personal challenge, flexibility, and connection to nature.

Mountain biking in Australia offers significant social benefits by promoting community, inclusivity, mental and physical health, and sustainable practices, all while supporting local economies and creating positive connections between people and nature.

No on ground environmental assessments, if indeed they have been undertaken, have been shared with Mitta Valley residents. There is no attached Native Vegetation Removal Report.

Just some click 'n' flick overlay assessments, brushed off as if the flora and fauna of the area is utterly unworthy of serious consideration.

Flora and fauna which include, and here I'll refer to the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas- the following EPBC Act Listed Species:

Eastern bentwing bat (critically endangered sighted 1999)

Eastern bitter cress (endangered sighted 2011)

Mountain phebalium (endangered sighted 2004)

Narrow leaf star hair (endangered sighted 2011)

River leafless bossiaea (endangered sighted 2004)

Spiny crayfish (threatened sighted 2002)

Platypus (vulnerable sighted 2021)

Poverty wattle (vulnerable sighted 1996)

Square tailed kite (vulnerable sighted 2019)

Gang gang cockatoo (endangered sighted 2023)

Greater glider (endangered sighted 2024)

As previously addressed, a thorough Native Vegetation Report has been completed and a quote for respective vegetation offsets obtained. DEECA will not support the permit application if this element is not satisfied.

On-site Aboriginal cultural heritage surveys were undertaken on only 20% of the area proposed to be affected. The reason why other areas were not accessed during the on ground survey is because the other areas were "very steep and heavily vegetated making access to many areas proposed for tracks unsafe to access". That this is this case ties in to the following point, about emergency services access.

This was the case at time of study as there currently are no trails to access these areas. Not the case post construction.

A letter is attachment to this planning application in which Ambulance Victoria have given in principle support - only - if the project is for beginner and intermediate levels of mountain bike riders, and if emergency vehicle access is available to all parts of the mountain bike park.

According to All Terrain Trails, it will consists of 80 percent intermediate trails, with "Technical Trail Features to support advanced level riders". Later in the report blue/black level trails (intermediate/advanced) are also referenced.

A quick glance at the map shows that emergency vehicle access will not be available to large areas of the trails. In fact, the Cultural Heritage Assessment that was undertaken was only able to access 20% of the proposed areas, and only 14% of the gully areas, as it was "very steep and heavily vegetated making access to many areas proposed for tracks unsafe to access". This unsafe access is what Ambulance officers will be relying on to evacuate riders who have fallen afoul of a "Technical Trail Feature".

This discrepancy between what Ambulance Victoria have expressed in-principle support for, and what is being proposed, really ought to be resolved before approving a design which is likely to result in overwhelming pressure on local emergency services.

As previously addressed, The majority of mountain biking facilities are by nature remote with accessibility challenges. This is inherent with the landscape and typography required to meet user group expectations and is an accepted risk of the sport.

Consultation with Ambulance Victoria included discussions around proposed trail locations (presented on digital maps with GPS alignments), emergency access points and the commitment to consult with Ambulance Victoria during the construction phase to ensure best access/response outcomes.

The trails for this stage of the MTB park targets beginner to intermediate rider skill levels. The design and features of the trails are strictly guided by the Australian MTB Trail Difficulty Rating System (TDRS) (attached). The classification of a trail must reflect the most difficult section of that trail for visitor risk management purposes.

Adhering to this national standard will:

- Help riders make informed decisions
- Encourage riders to use trails that match their skill level
- Manage risk and minimise injuries
- Aid in the planning and design of trails.

Trail classifications allow trail designers, builders and land managers to develop trails appropriate for the anticipated users, based on objective criteria.

Concepts for improving emergency access to the park for future stages were also discussed.

There is nothing in this planning permit or its appendices to suggest that there is a clear plan in place for dealing with emergencies, and it seems that

through lack of communication between the trail designers and emergency services, this may create conditions for serious injuries and loss of life, that could be avoided through better design choices made prior to approving this current, unsafe design.

Emergency response procedures are contained in the Trail Management Plan.

There has been and will continue to be communication between the trail contractors and emergency services.

We question the experience and expertise of the objector to deem the proposed trail network unsafe.

The loss of amenity for bushwalkers who will now have mountain bikers zipping across the lovely walking tracks in that area is particularly significant. Residents in Towong shire rated walking and bushwalking as their second and third most preferred recreational activities in a survey published in Towong shire's own Recreational Strategy for 2022-2033.

Yet, despite Mountain biking only reaching equal 13th on this list of activities, the current plan cuts through walking trails with these less popular mountain bike trails.

Rather than, say, opting to avoid the walking trails, or relocating the trails to an area that will not negatively impact upon existing walking trails.

Rather than degrade the experience for people already enjoying Mitta Mitta's fine natural features, a better design could, for example, make use Of the southern face of Mt Welcome, which is cooler and more shaded during the months in which Mitta Mitta actually receives large visitor numbers, less fire-prone, and currently without any conflicting walking trails.

As previously addressed, this concern was raised during the 2019 community consultation. The trail network has been designed to minimise interactions with the existing walking trails. No walking trails form part of the MTB trail network. Where there is a crossing, the way to walkers trail etiquette will be enforced with signage and walkers only signage installed where required. The few times a MTB trail crosses a walking trail the location allows for good sightlines and the MTB trail will be directed uphill to slow riders to walking pace. The crossing will be supported by appropriate warning signage.

The connection of the trail network with the township is a critical element of a mountain bike destination product and ensure the economic benefits associated with this user group flow into the local businesses.

The suggestion of moving the trail network to the more remote inaccessible southern side of Mt Welcome contradicts previous accessibility concerns.

The proposed network is largely located in Deep Gully, providing shade and higher soil moisture content. As suggested this provides a cooler, less fire prone environment and a more sustainable soil type.

This has also been addressed within DEECA's request for further information.

Why on earth would accumulate data from surveys on recreational interests only to preference the 13th option over the 2nd and 3rd options?

Mountain biking placing 13th is to be expected when Towong Shire is currently one of the few Local Government Areas within our region that does not possess any mountain bike facilities.

There has been no viable business case for the Mountain bike park presented to Mitta Valley residents, only a statement that:

"Mitta Valley Inc. and the wider community are aware that the mountain bike park will bring with it expenses to maintain the park as a quality destination.

It is proposed to develop a social enterprise to generate income to support these ongoing costs.

A social enterprise business plan has been developed, which includes activities including but not limited to, e-bike bike hire and the leasing of space for a café pod operation. "

The business plan alluded to here, the failure of which would result in maintenance/rehabilitation costs being dumped back onto Towong shire ratepayers, has not, as far as I'm aware, been shown to Mitta Valley residents. It's certainly not on their website.

To begin something of this magnitude without a clear and ongoing funding mechanism responsible for trail maintenance is fiscal irresponsibility in the extreme. Weed management, rubbish removal, erosion mitigation, not to mention public liability insurance for the inevitable accidents that will occur - all this requires serious funding.

The vague idea that somebody might want to manage the renting of ebikes out of the goodness of their heart, and that a few people renting half a dozen ebikes every now and

then could pay, in perpetuity, for maintenance contracts that have not even been costed?

This has all been considered within the masterplan and social enterprise business case.

It's mind boggling. Even the 1 million dollar round figure chosen for the project on this application comes with absolutely no breakdown of expenses.

Finally, parking is not taken into consideration at all in this planning application. Where will the proposed users of this park store their vehicles while they ride? How will they access the top of Mt Welcome? Via the poor condition 4WD only Mt Disappointment track? DEECA state in their attached email that "Upgrading and maintaining for 2WD access is not within the district's current funding or plans

for improving strategic fire access across the estate."

If users can manage to get to the top of Mt Welcome, where will they park?

How many can park before emergency evacuation access to this dry flammable hilltop (which will, if all goes well, start to see far increased traffic levels) is compromised?

None of this is considered in the plan.

As Previously addressed, the trail network does not begin on Mt Welcome. Trail access and return is via the trailhead located at The Mill, adjacent to the Omeo Highway approximately 1.8km from the centre of town. The trailhead provides picnic facilities, toilet facilities and parking for 15 vehicles. It is anticipated that this will be more than sufficient for stage 1 rider visitation.

The trailhead location was the residents preferred location as identified in the master planning community consultation conducted in 2019.

Emergency vehicle access has been considered in consultation with Ambulance Victoria and evacuation procedures are contained within the Trail Management Plan.

Upgrades to the Mt Disappointment track will be addressed in consultation with DEECA as part of stage 2 construction concept development.

In the interest of public safety and amenity this planning application needs to be paused until there is a serious answer to the following:

1) Demonstrate that there is a long term financial management team, with ongoing funding or turnover sufficient to implement the project without becoming a burden to Towong shire ratepayers, and provide costings for this.

This has all been considered within the masterplan and social enterprise business case.

Mitta Valley Inc are acutely aware that the park is to be self sufficient and not rely on ongoing support from council.

2) Emergency vehicle access, and clarification as to whether the trails are only beginner/intermediate, or if they are also intermediate/advanced.

As previously stated, beginner (green) to intermediate (blue) as per Australian Mountain Bike TDRS

3) Adequate all weather access roads for users, plus sufficient parking that doesn't jeopardise emergency vehicle access. Not even a temporary event permit would be granted without this, because it can easily lead to a preventable death.

All weather access road will be factored into the scope of stage 2 development.

Parking has already been addressed.

4) Adequate on-ground environmental surveys, a compliant Native Vegetation Removal Report, a Site Construction Environmental Management Plan, and a fully costed ongoing Environmental Management Plan.

All completed and will be assessed adequate or not by the appropriate determining authority as part of the statutory planning process.

While we broadly agree with the provision on mountain biking facility in the area, we hold significant concerns about the current proposal from biodiversity, biosecurity and public amenity perspectives. We object to the extensive construction of bike paths on the north/north-east facing slopes of Mt Welcome (Trails 4, 5, 6) and strongly recommend extending the path network to the south and southwest of the Mt Welcome summit walking trail.

See below.

EPBC Act referral - According to the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas there are 11 species within the project area that are listed under the EPBC Act (see below for details of species). The documents we reviewed did not mention EPBC approvals to clear vegetation, which would be required. We would like to see more specific provisions for avoiding impacts on threatened species in bike path construction and use.

See previous responses to biodiversity concerns.

Weed invasion – We would like to see biosecurity and weed invasion prevention plans for the project. There is a strong risk that this intact vegetation with very little weed invasion at present will suffer weed and pathogen invasion during the construction period. There is also risk of weeds and pathogens being distributed by bikes over the 30km of new trails weaving throughout the project site. The risk of phytophthora spread is of particular concern given the magnificent grass trees present on ridge lines of Mt Welcome and the recent appearance of phytophthora in the Mitta region. We would strongly advise active avoidance of areas with grass trees as these species are particularly affected by phytophthora. There are questions around the ongoing monitoring and enforcement of biosecurity conditions (sterilising of bike tires before cyclists enter the bush etc.) – how will this be resourced and implemented?

See previous responses to biosecurity concerns.

Construction biosecurity protocols are contained in the Site Construction Environment Management Plan.

Areas containing grass trees were identified during the Native Vegetation Assessment and have been avoided during the final trail alignment process.

Loss of amenity for town residents – The main existing recreational use of the Mt Welcome area is horse riding and hiking on the Mt Welcome track and around the Lower Pioneer track. The Mt Welcome walk is the primary tourist walk accessible from the town that tourists are encouraged to use, and the Upper Pioneer track is the most widely used track with walkers, horse riding, and jogging. The existing density of bike tracks on the north face of Mt Welcome will reduce amenity for walkers and horse riders and generate risk and conflict. We strongly recommend removing planned trails 4, 5 and 6 with a view to avoiding conflict with existing recreational use on the existing Pioneer trail. Redeployment of these trails into the west face of Mt Welcome and further south in the crown land footprint would be highly desirable to reduce potential conflict and injury to existing recreational users of this area. Map 5 indicates significant potential use area to the west and southwest of the Mt Welcome walking trail and summit.

See previous response to walking trail and user conflict minimisation considerations.

The mid and upper part of the Mt Welcome hike sees minimal use.

The area west of stage 1 contains conceptual alignments for stage 2.

Track maintenance - The soil in the project area is highly soluble and erodes easily, as can most recently be seen by the dramatic land slide and erosion of Watercress Gully onto the Omeo Highway and surrounding gullies and tracks. After this event, graders were used extensively along the Pioneer trail and other tracks to restore access, but a rain event a few weeks later resulted in the tracks being washed out again. A culvert was lost from the river walk, and erosion is again widespread. The maintenance of tracks will need to be very well resourced as tracks will have dropped branches and will be washed out regularly. It would be a tragedy to clear 30km of track through this largely intact environment to find that the maintenance costs were too high resulting in the project being disbanded. It would be important to have a substantial, ongoing maintenance budget (not funded by tax or rate payers) for this project to be viable.

The largely sustainable clay/shale and loam soil types that exists in the Deep Gully area were identified early in the planning process. The dry and potentially unstable soil on the upper slopes, east of the Mt Welcome hike, particularly upper Watercress Gully, is the reason this area was avoided.

See previous response to park management/maintenance.

Construction contract includes 3 years trail maintenance.

As a long time resident of the Mitta valley , I am against the bike trail .

Because of the increase of traffic on an unsuitable section of the Omeo Hwy , mainly concerning the intersection of Scrubby Creek Road and the Hwy . Its dangerous enough all ready with the speed vehicles approach the intersection .

I have raised my concerns before with the Shire as well as Vic Roads , it would be well justified to reduce the speed limit to 60 or 80 KMH , as they have on the Mitta North road.

This should be number one priority before works begins.

This is a valid concern that was raised during the 2019 community consultation. MVI will continue to advocate for an extension of speed limit reduction to the Dartmouth Rd intersection or alternatively a side road activated speed limit reduction.

The additional traffic generated by stage 1 construction alone will be minimal.

I have reviewed the proposed document re the establishment of the bike trail and removal of native vegetation re planning permit PA240059 and have the following concerns .

1. The bike and car traffic that will be using Otto's road adjoining our family property and the effect this traffic will have.

No cars or bike will be directed to use Otto's Rd as part of this permit application.

2. How much traffic is anticipated in using Otto's road adjoining our property and how often will this road be in use ?

See above

3. Where will cars be parking in bush land behind our property?

No, cars will be parked at The Mill trailhead.

4. There has been a recent creation of another access trail or small fire break along the ridge line from the north end of OTTOS Rd to the South end which directly impacts out family property and its privacy .

No knowledge of this and is not part of this project. Most likely DEECA works.

What is council proposing to do to ensure that the secluded nature of the bush and surrounds is maintained ?

Addressed and assed by determining authorities as part of the statutory planning process.

The Head Start Site (trailhead?)

There is no potable drinking water available

A water tank is available for water bottle refill.

Insufficient parking available

There is parking for 15 vehicles. See previous response to parking concerns.

The highway adjacent has a 100 km/hr speed limit, a serious danger to cyclists crossing the road to access the tracks

This is a valid concern that was raised during the 2019 community consultation. MVI will continue to advocate for an extension of speed limit reduction to the Dartmouth Rd intersection. An underpass will be included within the scope of stage 2.

There is insufficient infrastructure in the town to handle an influx of visitors : lack of parking, no water supply or sewerage

See previous responses to these concerns. Compared to events such as The Mighty Mitta Muster the increase in daily visitation due to delivery of stage 1 will be minimal.

Residents did not ask for the MTB Park

Business owners and some residents have been advocating for a mountain bike park since the 'Our Valley Our Future Mitta Valley' Community Plan 2013-2016

*Mitta Valley Inc:**Is not an organisation representing the community*

We have strived to attract more community members for many years. This would add considerable weight as an entity, increase community representation and reduce volunteer burn out on the few that put their hand up. Our doors are always open.

Does not hold advertised General Meetings

General meetings are not advertised but AGMs are. All are welcome to attend, become members and contribute.

Is a de facto 'chamber of commerce' representing business interests that will financially gain from the project

Yes. Our goal is to see local businesses succeed, create business and employment opportunities, create economic resilience and see our community prosper.

The Council has a conflict of interest with representation on the working group

Towong Shire Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Priority 3.9 Support Mitta Valley Inc to develop the Mitta Valley mountain bike park

The council representative has provided support until lodgement of the planning permit application at which they have declared a conflict of interest and has purely supported by taking minutes at meetings.

The two panel members purporting to represent residents have not consulted or reported to the residents on the progress of the project

Regretfully, due to substantial delays in the ecological and cultural assessments, there has not been much progress to report. However, project updates and media releases have been posted to the Mitta Valley Inc website.

[Mitta Mountain Bike Park | Mitta Valley](#)*Mitta Valley Inc and the Council will be exposed if there is a financial failure of the project*

All efforts have been made to ensure the success of t

he project. However, as with any business plan involving projections, it is best judgment with the information available at time of writing. In the unlikely event that the management model fails, signage will be removed and the park will simply close.

The project was 'sold' to the community on the basis of excess profits being returned to the public. There is little chance of this occurring.

The project was definitely not sold on the basis of excess profits. The concept of a social enterprise managing the park was in response to feedback received during the 2019 community consultation process that the community wanted to maintain control of the park. Excess profits are unlikely as a result of stage 1 alone. This will be different with the delivery of the full network, including a shuttle service. Being able to use excess profits for other community projects is just a benefit of this management model.

To whom it may concern,

I put forth my objections to the proposed mountain bike park project based on my opinion that the project in its current form is socially irresponsible and economically flawed. A project of this scale will put overwhelming pressure on the existing services and amenities within the community as listed in dot form below:

The township of Mitta Mitta don't have public toilets that have a sufficient capacity to service the large tourist base it already has and an aging (likely non-compliant with EPA regulations) septic system within close proximity to a waterway which also provides untreated drinking water for the community. Further tourism pressure on this asset could increase the risk of contamination of drinking water and health related issues downstream.

See previous responses social responsibility and economic viability.

As previously mentioned, the extra visitation generated by the delivery of stage 1 alone will not add significant pressure on existing infrastructure.

The township of Mitta Mitta doesn't have any water treatment plant or reticulation of potable water system. With increased tourism to the area this becomes more paramount to address which as indicated by the Towong shire likely to ever happen.

See above.

The township of Mitta Mitta is already experiencing congestion and traffic issues due to limited availability of parking. Further tourism development will only increase the frustrations of local rate payers.

See previous responses to parking.

The increased popularity of Mitta Mitta due to promotion and tourism development has led to more holiday houses and AIR BNB accommodation options. This reduces the capacity for people and families to live in our community and fulfil roles that are needed to have a sustainable community. This proposed project will likely further exacerbate this issue and negatively impact the structure of our community. Mitta has long had a symbiotic relationship with tourism and the community understands its importance to our local economy but I fear that this project could move the relationship into a parasitic like relationship.

The number of largely vacant properties used as occasional holiday homes has long been an issue in Mitta Mitta. Not only has housing stock not been available for new residents, the economic benefits to the town derived from regular accommodation guests has also been missing.

Attracting new families to the valley to counter a diminishing, aging population has been a goal for many years. The challenge is not only somewhere to house these new families but also providing the business and employment opportunities to attract and support them when they are here.

The development of the Mitta MTB Park aims to help provide these opportunities.

Mitta Valley Inc will continue to advocate for the appropriate rezoning to enable the carefully considered development of the valley therefore providing housing for new residents.

The fundamental principle of this project being a social enterprise is flawed. the project proponents have failed to identify an appropriate method to generate sufficient income to maintain and manage the asset. I believe there is a high risk to Towong shire, as the responsible land managers of this area, that additional rate payer money will need to be injected to ensure compliance with the regulatory commitments. I sense that there is a growing negative sentiment towards Towong shire being able to justify large spending on tourism related projects when basic services that rate payers expect (waste management, roads repairs, signage maintenance, flood recovery works, community consultation) are being diminished, reduced or not being completed at all.

See previous responses to park management and council risk.