

# RECREATIONAL TRAILS STRATEGY WEST WIMMERA SHIRE



## VOLUME II BACKGROUND REPORT



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# 1. Introduction and Background

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## 1.1 About West Wimmera Shire

West Wimmera Shire (the Shire) is located in the western most part of Victoria, halfway between Melbourne and Adelaide. The Shire is bordered by South Australia to the west, the Glenelg Shire to the south, Rural City of Mildura to the north and the Local Government Areas of Hindmarsh, Horsham and Southern Grampians to the east. The Shire encompasses approximately 9,108 square kilometres of land and has a population of 3,912 people.

As shown in Figure 1, West Wimmera is positioned between a wide range of outdoor adventure and eco-tourism destinations including the great sandstone mountains of the Grampians region, the World Heritage Site at Naracoorte Caves, Ramsar listed wetlands at Bool & Hacks Lagoons, the Kanawincka Geopark and a series of National Parks renowned for a diverse range of landscapes and activities. Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park on the eastern border is of world renown - widely regarded as Australia's top rock climbing area. West Wimmera and the wider region hold great significance to the traditional Aboriginal owners, the Barengi Gadjin and Gunditj Mirring communities with songlines and stories linking across a vast area.

The geographic landscapes and terrain of West Wimmera are unique and varied. From the undisturbed desert and wilderness areas in the north, to the stunning wetlands, the Glenelg River and forested regions in the South.

In the north, Kaniva and Serviceton are close to the undisturbed desert landscapes of the Big Desert Wilderness Area, Red Bluff Flora and Fauna Reserve and the Little Desert National Park. These unique desert landscapes, within 5 hours from both Melbourne and Adelaide, provide great opportunity for adventurous travellers in four-wheel drives and on trailbikes. This area has an interesting history highlighted by the memorabilia displayed at the heritage listed Serviceton Railway Station, providing historical insight into the railway junction built on 'Disputed Territory' between South Australia and Victoria. Kaniva's location provides the strategic opportunity to promote the Shire's attractions to the large volume of people travelling through the region on the Western Highway.

The central areas of the Shire are characterised by the complex and large network of lakes and waterbodies which contribute to 25% of Victoria's individual wetlands. This south-west Wimmera wetland system is recognised to have abundance and diversity like nowhere else in Victoria, supporting a vast array of species and ecosystem functions, as well as recreational, aesthetic and economic value to towns and the wider region. The high levels of biodiversity supported by these water resources includes threatened species and offers outstanding birdwatching opportunities. Water-based recreational activities supported by these environments include canoeing, boating and water-skiing, as well as land-based activities in the associated environments such as walking, driving/touring and photography.

To the south of the Shire, the towns of Harrow and Dergholm are situated along the Glenelg River which is widely recognised for its recreational opportunities downstream, such as houseboats, canoe trails and boating activities. The landscape in this part of the Shire varies significantly from the North, with a green landscape of rolling hills. The Dergholm State Park provides opportunities for camping and bushwalking near the natural formation of ancient giant green granite boulders. The township of Harrow has a unique history involving indigenous, European and sporting themes. The Harrow Discovery Centre is a key attraction to the region, proving insight into the journey of the Australian Aboriginal cricket team that toured England in 1868, Australia's first international cricket team. The town is also located on the Drive Trail which follows the journey of the colonial explorer Major Mitchel across Victoria.

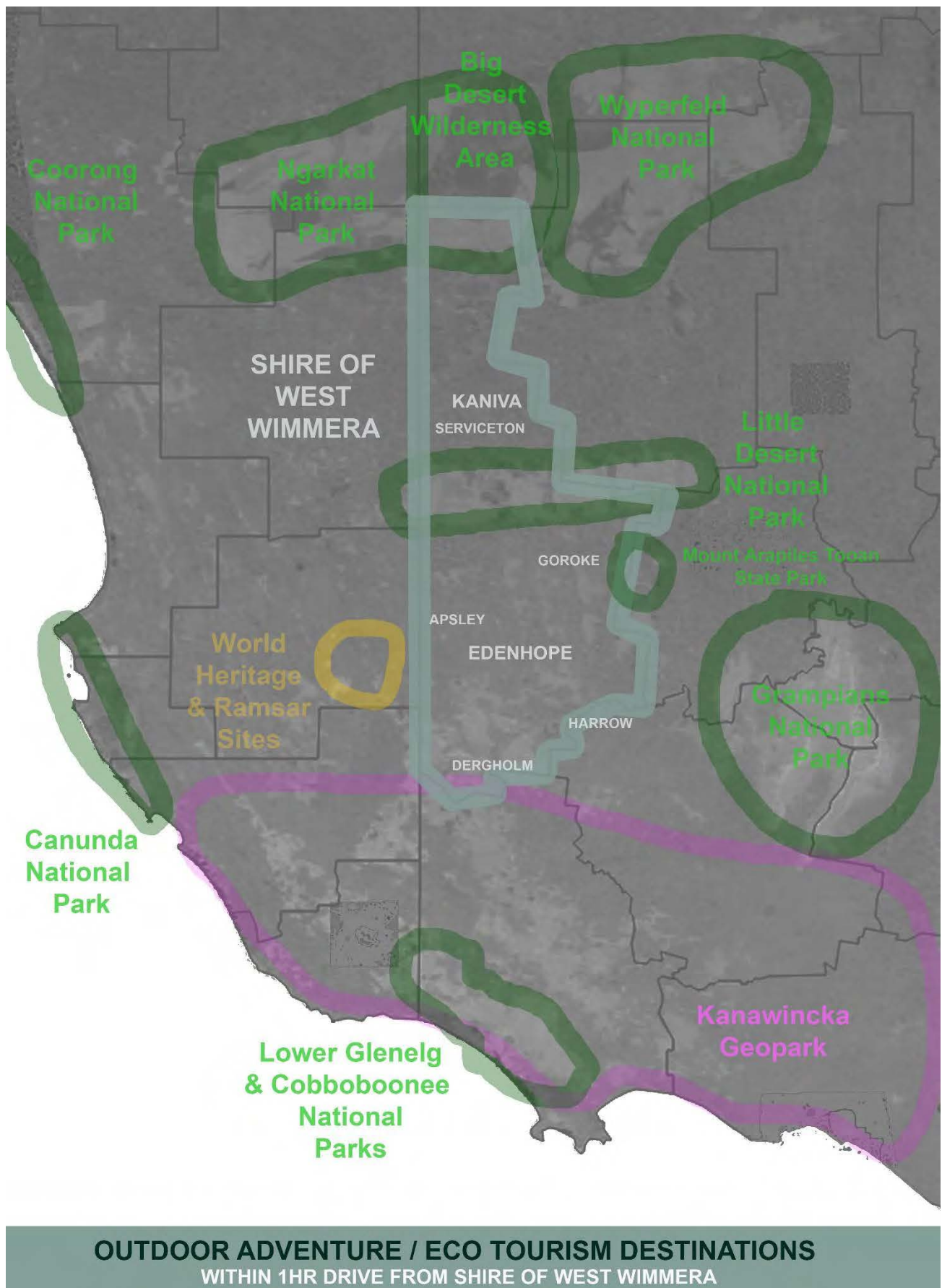


Figure 1: Outdoor adventure / Eco tourism destinations

There is a need in the West Wimmera Shire to encourage and support active lifestyles. The resident population of the Shire has high rates of physical inactivity, overweight, obesity and preventable mortality compared to the average across the State. There is increasing need to provide accessible and affordable physical activity opportunities to encourage regular exercise and healthy lifestyle habits. Local participation data (2015 VicHealth Indicators) show that trail-related activities (i.e. walking, cycling and jogging/running) are popular physical activities for West Wimmera Shire residents.

## 1.2 Project Background and Scope

The West Wimmera Shire Council (WWSC) has engaged Tredwell Management Services to develop a Recreational Trails Strategy to develop a consistent policy framework over a ten year period to guide decisions about the management of, and investment in, trails and to provide a vision of what the trail network across West Wimmera will look like in the future.

Ultimately, the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy will form part of a Municipal Sport and Recreation Strategy to guide broader sport and recreation infrastructure development and complement the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan with the broad mission, goals and priorities of local government to enable people living in the municipality to achieve maximum health and wellbeing. Achieving strategic alignment of these plans is critical to achieving health and wellbeing outcomes in local communities.

The West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy will also look to the tourism and economic benefits that can be realised through a strategic approach to the development of tracks and trails infrastructure.

The term 'trail' for the purpose of this strategy includes all unsealed pathways which are publicly accessible for recreational purposes. It therefore includes fire trails, maintenance tracks, purpose built single and multi-use trails, identifiable trails which have developed over time and sealed recreational paths. This strategy is to include consideration of the following types of trails (but is not limited to):

- All-abilities access
- Walking/ running
- Cycling
- Mountain biking
- Canoeing

While not the focus of the Strategy, some consideration has been given to recreational trails used by motorised vehicles (e.g. driving route trails, 4WD and motorbike areas) which may complement a recreational trails network.

The West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy applies to the West Wimmera local government area in its entirety, however, areas of significant interest which are a key focus of this strategy include:

- Locations where the natural environment can be appreciated and leveraged to increase participation
- Locations where physical activity opportunities are limited within townships
- Locations that link users to recognisable sites
- Inter-municipal and cross-border linkages are also to be considered.

## 2. Strategic Context

### 2.1 Strategic Document Review

The strategic direction for trails is guided by state, regional and local policies and plans. Table 1 provides an overview of the key relevant points included in key state strategic documents which will inform the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy.

**Table 1: State Strategic Documents and Key Relevant Points**

State-level Strategic Document	Key Relevant Points
Active Victoria – A Strategic Framework for Sport and Recreation in Victoria 2017-2021 (2017)	<u>Strategic Directions and Priorities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase the capacity of sport and active recreation infrastructure</li><li>• Increased participation opportunities</li><li>• Flexible and innovative participation options</li><li>• Invest in regional and local infrastructure</li><li>• Invest in infrastructure that enables active recreation</li><li>• Ensure complimentary investment to create collective impact by integrating sport and active recreation with other policy goals.</li></ul>
Victoria's Trails Strategy 2014-2024 (2014)	<u>Strategic Directions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a strategic framework for trail investment</li><li>• Support effective planning, development and maintenance of trails</li><li>• Provide high quality information on trails</li><li>• Create better trail experiences</li><li>• Market trails</li></ul>
Victoria's 2020 Tourism Strategy (2013)	<u>Key Directions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase focus on growth markets, such as China, India, Malaysia and Indonesia;</li><li>• Build stronger collaboration between the Victorian Government and regions to ensure growth in visitation;</li><li>• Increase the tourism benefits of major and business events;</li><li>• Identify and realise key tourism investments.</li></ul>
Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28 - Increasing cycling for transport (2017)	<u>Goals:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invest in a safer, lower-stress, better-connected network</li><li>• Make cycling a more inclusive experience</li></ul>
Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy (2016)	<u>Key Priorities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build on the potential of regional and rural Victoria</li><li>• Improved branding and marketing</li><li>• Maximising the benefits of events</li><li>• Improved experiences for visitors from Asia</li><li>• Better tourism infrastructure</li></ul>



State-level Strategic Document	Key Relevant Points
Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037 (2017)	<p><u>Key Priorities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase opportunities for all Victorians to have daily connections with nature.</li> <li>• Help to create more liveable and climate-adapted communities.</li> <li>• Better care for and showcase Victoria's environmental assets as world-class natural and cultural tourism attractions.</li> </ul>
Water for Victoria – Water Plan (2016)	<p><u>Key Actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include recreational values in water and waterway planning</li> <li>• Help communities understand how to achieve their recreational objectives</li> <li>• Support recreation at water storages through infrastructure and better information</li> </ul>
Parks Victoria – Shaping our Future (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks Victoria's vision is to be a world-class park service ensuring healthy parks for healthy people.</li> </ul> <p>Key themes to delivering the vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Connecting People and Parks – We will forge strong partnerships with people to conserve Victoria's special places and make them accessible to all.</li> <li>○ Conserving Victoria's Special Places – We will aim to ensure that our valued parks, and the natural assets and cultural heritage they hold, can be enjoyed now and by future generations.</li> <li>○ Providing Benefits Beyond Park Boundaries – We will work with the community, businesses and partners, under government guidance, to plan and collectively achieve great outcomes for Victoria's magnificent parks and the landscapes they are located within.</li> <li>○ Enhancing Organisational Excellence – We will constantly strive to be an innovative, world-class park service. We will continue to undertake new research, be responsive to change, and seek out advances in technology that allow us to plan, deliver and perform to a world-class standard.</li> </ul>
Media Release, South Australian Liberal Party (February 2018)	<p>Prior to the 2018 state election, South Australia's Liberal Party leader Steven Marshall vowed intentions to "tap into the lucrative cycling tourism market" with a 1000km bike path between Adelaide and Melbourne, named the "Great Southern Bike Trail". The exact route of the trail will be subject to a public consultation process, but it is anticipated the cycling route would begin in Adelaide and head south over the barrages of the Murray Mouth and down through the Limestone Coast in SA's South-East, eventually linking up with the Great Ocean Rd and into Melbourne. The plan, that has in-principle support from the Victorian Liberal Opposition and the Federal Government, is yet to be fully costed but is expected to require a mix of federal and state funding.</p> <p>Quotes attributable to Steven Marshall:</p> <p>"The trail would also feature a series of tourism-focused loops around some of Australia's most beautiful regions to cater for all levels of cycling ability."</p> <p>"We will begin making this vision a reality by commissioning a study to assess existing cycling infrastructure near the proposed route, looking at what additional would be required"</p> <p>"We will also undertake detailed modelling of the proposed economic, regional and jobs benefits."</p>

West Wimmera is part of the wider Wimmera Southern Mallee Region and also the Grampians and Barwon South-West Region. Many strategic documents are developed at the regional level. Table 2 provides an overview of the key relevant points included in key regional strategic documents which will inform the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy.

**Table 2: Regional Strategic Documents and Key Relevant Points**

Regional-level Strategic Document	Key Relevant Points
Grampians Region Cycling Masterplan – Discussion Paper (April 2018)	<p>Objective: to establish the Grampians Region as a premier tourism destination for cycling and trail related experiences.</p> <p>Key opportunities identified for the West Wimmera Region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grampians and the Wimmera home of the Fat Bike</li> <li>• Edenhope Fat Bike Cross Country Loop</li> <li>• Dergholm Mountain Bike Trail</li> <li>• Goroke to Natimuk Rail Trail</li> <li>• Kaniva to Serviceton Rail Trail</li> <li>• Event: Wimmera Cycling Gran Fondo</li> <li>• Silo Art Trail</li> </ul> <p>Key opportunities identified which may have potential links to the West Wimmera region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horsham – Natimuk Road Cycling Cluster</li> <li>• Horsham to Natimuk Trail</li> </ul>
Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Strategy (2014)	<p><u>Active Transport Projects Identified:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Western Victorian Iconic Walking Trail (Horsham, Hindmarsh and West Wimmera).</b> The project is the staged establishment of a walking trail approximately 140 km in length comprising rail trail, roadside trails and existing tracks. It includes camping facilities (walkers only), signage and interpretative material for local tourism opportunities and the natural environment. The project is from Horsham to Mount Arapiles to Lake Hindmarsh via Goroke, Little Desert National Park, Dimboola and Wimmera River. There are three parts to the project. The project addresses the lack of connected tourism infrastructure associated with the natural attractions of Little Desert National Park and the Wimmera River.</li> <li>• <b>Horsham to Natimuk Regional Cycling Trail Project</b> The project involves construction of a 25km walking and cycling trail to connect Horsham and Natimuk via active transport modes. (Note: There may be potential to further connect Natimuk with Goroke via the Old Carpolac Rail line).</li> </ul>
Grampians and Barwon South-West Region Passenger Services Cost and Feasibility Study (2017)	<p><u>Key Points/Findings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycling tourism is extremely consistent with other regional tourism goals</li> <li>• A growing section of the local tourist market is cycle based tourism</li> <li>• Cycling tourists can be accommodated on most V/Line long distance trains, but there is only limited accommodation for them on VLocity trains and no accommodation on connecting coaches unless the bike is dismantled and placed in the underfloor luggage area.</li> <li>• The V/Line website indicates that bicycles are not permitted on V/Line trains in the Grampians and Barwon South West regions which is likely to be a barrier to increasing cycle tourism</li> </ul>

Regional-level Strategic Document	Key Relevant Points
Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan (2014)	<p><u>Key Future directions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the development of the tourism sector by building on strengths around environment and heritage assets and agriculture</li> <li>• Direct larger scale tourism activities into existing settlements where infrastructure is capable of supporting development</li> <li>• Support infrastructure investment where it will maximise benefits to tourism</li> <li>• Protect and enhance the features of the region that attract tourists</li> <li>• Encourage initiatives that are compatible with heritage conservation to allow residents and visitors to engage with the history of the region</li> <li>• Infrastructure to support tourism opportunities, particularly around the region's key environmental assets</li> <li>• Enable diverse travel choices such as walking and cycling</li> <li>• Provide facilities such as rest areas, signage and information hubs</li> <li>• Tourism marketing such as package tours for daytrips</li> </ul>
Wimmera Southern Mallee: Socio-economic value of Recreational & Environmental Water (2017)	<p><u>Key Points/Findings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This study acknowledges the importance of recreational water to regional economies. It is evident through the research conducted that the water bodies which provide recreation opportunities are very significant to regional economies, both directly and indirectly.</li> <li>• The West Wimmera Shire's water bodies included in the study (Lake Charlegrark; Lake Wallace &amp; Glenelg River at Harrow) are estimated to have contributed \$2.619 million to the region's economy in 2016-17.</li> </ul>
Wotjobaluk Country (Wimmera and Grampians) Indigenous Tourism Feasibility Study (2017)	<p><u>Key Opportunities Identified Within West Wimmera Shire:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade of Johnny Mullagh Centre, Harrow</li> <li>• Aboriginal Cricket Trail Brochure to be redeveloped and onsite interpretation installed in 2017.</li> <li>• Glenelg River Walk, Harrow Inclusion of Indigenous and other heritage, flora and fauna interpretation along the trail</li> </ul> <p><u>Key Opportunities Identified Near West Wimmera Shire:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little Desert National Park (to the east of WWSC Boundary): nature-based and Indigenous cultural tours for group bookings associated with the Little Desert Nature Lodge and Conservation Volunteers Australia.</li> <li>• Hindmarsh Heritage Drive (to the east of WWSC Boundary): Self-guided driving tour to link major heritage tourism attractions. A project plan has been prepared.</li> <li>• Night Sky Tours (Lake Tyrrell) Guided night tours of the lake for Chinese visitors to Lake Tyrrell as there are very few evening activities available to entertain overnight travellers. Focus would be on the interpretation of Indigenous astronomy and photo opportunities given the reflection of clear night skies on the shallow waters of the lake.</li> </ul> <p><u>Region-wide Opportunity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wotjobaluk Country mobile phone app A mobile phone app that will provide interpretive information, storylines and maps of Wotjobaluk Country for self-guided touring and to complement guided tours.</li> </ul>

West Wimmera Shire strategic documents play a key role in guiding the direction of the Shire. Table 3 provides an overview of the key relevant points included in key local strategic documents which will inform the Recreational Trails Strategy.

**Table 3: Local Strategic Documents and Key Relevant Points**

Local-level Strategic Document	Key Relevant Points
West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2017 – 21 (2017)	<p>This Plan is the key strategic document that will be used to prioritise activities between 2017 and 2021.</p> <p><u>Key Relevant Strategic Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality sustainable community services and infrastructure.</li> <li>• Thriving, safe and diverse local communities.</li> <li>• Participating in activities that address health and wellbeing issues.</li> <li>• Providing access to and promoting the natural environment.</li> </ul> <p><u>Key Relevant Priorities &amp; Actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping community assets to improve planning and efficiency</li> <li>• Upgrade / repair / divest council owned and managed assets</li> <li>• Invest in quality infrastructure supported by community engagement</li> <li>• Promote community planning</li> <li>• Encourage place-making projects / initiatives that drive civic pride</li> <li>• Improve walking / gopher paths in townships</li> <li>• Improve recreational access to Lake Wallace</li> <li>• Targeted promotion of West Wimmera as a world-class destination</li> <li>• Foster eco-tourism development</li> <li>• Support the maintenance and upkeep of lake and waterway visitor locations</li> <li>• Link our natural, cultural and historic assets to create a cohesive experience for visitors and residents</li> <li>• Implement outcomes of various visitor related studies - Indigenous Tourism, recreational water and regional trails</li> <li>• Support Committees of Management to develop masterplans for sites</li> <li>• Work with agencies to develop trails combining the region's attractions</li> </ul>
West Wimmera Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 – 2021 (2017)	<p><u>Target:</u> Increase levels of sufficient physical activity for children, youth and adults by 2021.</p> <p><u>Actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify solutions to activity access barriers e.g. all access abilities for walkways and pathways, and all-weather access for pre-schools.</li> <li>• Work with local stakeholders to address barriers to participation in physical activity particularly for vulnerable groups and people from diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>• Promote the benefits of physical activity and active modes of transport through key messages and information sharing ~any movement is good.</li> <li>• Implement healthy workplace programs and environments to reduce sedentary behaviour and promote active lifestyles.</li> </ul>



Local-level Strategic Document	Key Relevant Points
West Wimmera Shire Tourism Strategy 2014 – 2018 (2014)	<p><u>Key Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Product, service and infrastructure development</li> <li>• Industry development, support and partnerships</li> </ul> <p><u>Actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue opportunities to develop multi-use trails, including walking, cycling, mountain biking, horse etc.</li> <li>• Leverage and encourage the development of new tourism initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>Research and identify opportunities with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nature based tourism i.e.. glamping, canoe trails</li> <li>○ Sports and events tourism, including weddings</li> <li>○ Farm stays/ tours</li> <li>○ Indigenous, cultural, pastoral &amp; heritage tourism</li> <li>○ Health and wellness tourism</li> <li>○ Self-drive tours &amp; tour groups, themed trails</li> </ul>
West Wimmera Shire Economic Development Strategy (2014)	<p><u>Vision:</u> 10,000 people by 2050.</p> <p><u>Goals:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be adaptive</li> <li>• Change perception</li> <li>• Invest</li> <li>• Be Active</li> </ul> <p><u>Key Relevant Action:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4.1 Undertake ongoing discussions with Parks Victoria to advocate for Walking Track development in the Shire.</li> </ul>

In addition to the local strategic documents stated above, the following documents were reviewed and will inform the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- Edenhope and Apsley Social Infrastructure Study (2014)
- Kaniva & surrounds Social Infrastructure Study (2014)
- Harrow and Goroke Community Precinct Planning (2015)
- Ngootyoong Gunditj Ngootyoong Mara South West Management Plan (2015)

Further details of information derived from the strategic document review is included in Appendix 1: Strategic Document Review

## 2.2 Peak Trail Bodies

In addition to the state, regional and local strategic directions, the following peak trail bodies play an important role in determining the priorities and direction for the state's trails.

### Bushwalking Victoria

The Bushwalking Victoria Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020 states the following vision: *Better Bushwalking for Victoria. A large and diverse bushwalking community enjoying world class walking opportunities across a wide range of Victorian landscapes.*



Goal 1: Bushwalking is a popular activity recognised by the community as enjoyable, healthy, environmentally responsible and safe

Relevant strategies:

- Promote bushwalking as an enjoyable activity suitable for all ages as part of a healthy lifestyle
- Actively encourage more people to bushwalk by providing information on safety, responsible bushwalking and where to walk
- Contribute our expertise for community benefit

Goal 2: Victoria is recognised for its varied bushwalking opportunities and comprehensive track network

Relevant strategies:

- Work to proactively influence decisions that impact on bushwalking and bushwalkers in Victoria
- Advocate for the maintenance of existing tracks and further development of tracks
- Support the development of appropriate world class bushwalking experiences and facilities in Victoria

Goal 3: Bushwalking Victoria and its member clubs are well resourced and effective organisations that support the bushwalking community

Relevant strategies:

- Assist member clubs to ensure their viability and their ability to influence and improve their local bushwalking environment
- Secure funds and other resources necessary to support our activities

### Victoria Walks

Victoria Walks is an independent health promotion charity, which advocates for safe, accessible and connected environments that support and encourage walking. Victoria Walks is a voting member of the *International Federation of Pedestrians* (IFP) and is a signatory of the *International Charter for Walking*. The organisation's vision is: *People walk whenever and wherever possible, within strong and vibrant communities, with resulting health benefits.*



## Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA)

The Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA) is a leisure trail horse riding organisation which is regarded as the peak body representing the interests of recreational trail riders in Australia. The association provides support to horse trail riders and clubs which includes:

- Advocacy for improved horse riding access at all levels of government in all regions.
- A Code of Conduct to promote good rider safety, horse welfare, and a family-oriented non-competitive riding environment
- Support with insurance, marketing, grant funding for events, accreditation and training



## Canoeing Victoria



Canoeing Victoria's Mission is to: *serve our members by promoting and providing a range of opportunities to paddle safely for enjoyment, personal achievement and improved quality of life.*

Relevant strategic goals:

- Raise the profile of canoeing in Victoria and Canoeing Victoria.
- Target Junior Participation & Pathways

## Mountain Bike Australia (MTBA) - Victoria

Mountain Bike Australia's Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021 identifies the mission to: *to develop and promote mountain biking in Australia for the benefit of all.*



**MOUNTAIN BIKE AUSTRALIA**

Strategic initiatives:

- Ensure Mountain Bike Australia activities are delivered to a consistent standard
- Provide relevant and quality pathways for people to participate in mountain biking

## Cycling Victoria

Cycling Victoria is the peak governing body for both organised competitive, and recreational, cycling within Victoria. The organisation's Strategic Plan 2016 – 2018 identifies the vision to: *Building a love of cycling. More people riding, racing and watching.*



Key tactics:

- Providing unique riding event experiences
- Increasing the provision of cycling specific facilities
- Making it easier for organisers to host races



## Bicycle Network

As Australia's biggest bike riding organisation, Bicycle Network strives to make it easier for everyone, regardless of age, gender or background, to ride a bike.

Relevant key objectives:

- Influence at all levels of government  
Government has a huge role to play because we'll never become a nation of bike riders without facilities, road laws and policy.
- An Australia wide event program  
We'll continue to build events where the primary focus is taking care of bike riders
- Ride2 programs around the country  
Ride2School program changes behaviour. Through these programs we have seen an increase in students riding to school from 20% to 49%.
- A cross section of Australians  
People riding in Australia should be representative of the Australian population.

## Motorcycling Victoria

Motorcycling Victoria is a non-profit organisation that represents motorcycle sport and recreation in Victoria. The organisation's aim is to: *provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for riders, coaches, officials and volunteers to participate in motorcycle sport.*



The *Motorcycling Victoria Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018* states the following vision: *Leaders in engagement and participation in motorcycle sport and recreation, with an objective being to grow non-traditional participation – Female, indigenous, disabled, aged, multicultural.*

## Four Wheel Drive Victoria

At Four Wheel Drive Victoria our vision is: *to create and maintain a vibrant, professional and representative Association to serve the needs of all four wheel drivers in the State of Victoria for their recreational activities under the mantra of "Driving in a sustainable environment"*



Mission:






- To promote and advance four wheel drive touring as a responsible recreation.
- To promote vehicle based dispersed bush camping.
- To encourage and foster the development of Four Wheel Drive Clubs.
- To promote an active interest in conservation and the protection of the environment.
- To co-ordinate and promote the activities of affiliated clubs, members, and associated bodies, and sporting activities.
- To acquire, preserve and disseminate information relating to the recreation of four wheel driving.



## 2.3 Benefits of Trails

Recreational trails offer a diverse range of benefits to our communities and the environment. These trail benefits are clearly apparent when aligned to the existing trail network. Table 4 highlights each benefit, the examples associated with the trail network and ultimately how it delivers on the benefit.

**Table 4: Benefits of trails – local examples**

Benefit		Local Trail Example	Delivers
Health 	Positive health outcomes	The Lake Wallace Perimetre Trail offers residents and visitors the opportunity to engage in physical activity through walking, running/jogging or cycling while enjoying the natural environment and serenity of the lake.	Facilitates both physical and mental health outcomes. such as the recommended 10,000 steps a day (equating to about 8 kilometres or 100 minutes walking).
Transportation 	Practical transportation corridors	The shared-use path in Kaniva encourages active transport, such as walking or cycling, through the township, particularly providing a safe route to school.	Walkers, runners & cyclists can choose to take a safe and quiet route away from roads, linking key destinations.
Conservation 	Preservation of natural areas	The Newlands Wetlands Nature Walk provides an opportunity to for the community to appreciate the conservation value of natural area while having minimal impact on the natural environment.	Defined trails discourage people from deviating into bushland which helps reduce human impacts on sensitive areas. Boardwalks allow trail users to appreciate the sensitive environment with minimal impact.
Economy 	Local economic development	Natural assets, such as Little Desert National Park, attract tourists. Providing and promoting quality recreational trails within these parks encourages visitors to stay longer.	Trail-related tourism contributes positively to the economy by increasing visitation rates and visitor expenditure in surrounding towns.
Cultural identity 	Access to historical and cultural sites	Sites such as the Glenelg River at Harrow, have significant European and Indigenous histories. Some of which is communicated through interpretive signage along the Glenelg River Walk.	Opportunities to embrace the local history of the area, using trails as a mechanism for cultural learning and understanding.

# 3. Demographic & Participation Trends

## 3.1 Demographic Profile

The Wimmera region is home to Victoria's oldest and lowest density population. The West Wimmera Shire has a resident population of 3,912 people across a geographic area of 9,106 km<sup>2</sup>. 65% of the West Wimmera population live in either of the two main townships, Edenhope (24%) or Kaniva (21%), while 24% live in the smaller towns of Apsley, Dergholm, Goroke, Harrow or Serviceton and 31% of residents live in areas outside of these townships.

The demographic make-up of these communities needs to be considered when planning for trails. The communities of the West Wimmera region will increasingly be made up of older adults into the future. Some of these people will use the local trail networks as part of a daily/regular fitness regime to walk, cycle or even travel on a motorised scooter. Some older adults may also be keen to volunteer their time to assisting with the maintenance of trails in their local area.

Key social, demographic and economic indicators are outlined below in Table 5.

**Table 5: Key social, demographic & economic indicators / trends and implications**

Indicator / Trend	Implication for trail planning
<b>High rate of physical inactivity</b> 25.5% of West Wimmera Shire residents were "inactive" (i.e. had not engaged in physical activity during the week) at the time of the 2015 VicHealth Indicators Survey. This is a higher rate of physical inactivity than the average across all of Victoria (18.9%) <sup>i</sup> .	There is increasing need to provide accessible and affordable physical activity opportunities across the Shire to encourage regular exercise and healthy lifestyle habits. As the work-force becomes increasingly sedentary, it is important that lifestyles adapt to maintain physical health. Trails can contribute to health outcomes through providing both recreational opportunities and active transport routes.
<b>High rate of overweight and obesity</b> Over sixty percent (60%) of the West Wimmera Shire community is overweight or obese and these rates are continuing to increase <sup>ii</sup>	
<b>High rate of preventable mortality</b> Preventable mortality rates are higher for the West Wimmera Shire community compared to Victoria in the areas of cancer, lung cancer, respiratory disease, heart disease and circulatory disease <sup>iii</sup> .	
<b>Tourism trends and target markets</b> The tourism industry's outlook is positive with opportunities identified to further develop this industry within the Shire. Key opportunities include nature-based tourism, Indigenous heritage and cycle tourism. Caravan and camping is popular among Australia's domestic tourism market. This market is expected to experience significant growth due to Australia's ageing population and a corresponding increase in retirees who travel around Australia, often seeking destination "off the beaten track".	West Wimmera Shire communities can benefit from the income generated from drive tourists. Higher quality and quantity of trails and associated infrastructure across the region can help to capitalise on these opportunities. Provision and promotion of trail networks attract more visitors to regions and encourage travellers to stay in the area for longer.

Indicator / Trend	Implication for trail planning
<p><b>High rate of volunteerism</b></p> <p>West Wimmera Shire has one of the highest rates of volunteerism in Victoria with 44.9% of the population reported to have done some form of voluntary work in 2016. This is significantly higher than the average of 34.3% across Regional Victoria<sup>iv</sup>.</p>	<p>Many trail projects are dependent on local community support and volunteer efforts which are recognised as an invaluable resource to West Wimmera communities. It is imperative that volunteers are effectively supported, recognised and valued in their role.</p>
<p><b>Low population density</b></p> <p>The West Wimmera Shire has Victoria's lowest population density with 3,912 people across a geographic area of 9,106 km<sup>2v</sup>.</p>	<p>The tyranny of distance can present challenges to residents living significant distances from population centres and facilities. Geographic location of facilities is of high importance to ensure that they are accessible and can be well used by residents and visitors.</p>
<p><b>Declining and ageing population</b></p> <p>Between 2006 and 2016 the population of the West Wimmera Shire declined at an average rate of 1.62% per annum and the median age increased from 44 to 48 years<sup>vi</sup>. Council's <i>Economic Development Strategy</i> (2014) aims to reverse this, with the ambition of reaching 10,000 residents by 2050 including an influx of young people and families.</p>	<p>The trails network of must be sustainable. It is essential that levels of investment are appropriate and that trail experiences provided are relevant to current demand and adaptable into the future. Participation trends and preferences vary across age groups and life stages and it is important that recreation opportunities are relevant to the population and target user-groups.</p>
<p><b>Low-level of cultural diversity</b></p> <p>The Shire has a relatively homogenous community profile with just 5.8% of the population born overseas. This is significantly lower than the average across Regional Victoria where 11.1% are born overseas, with 6.2% coming from non-English speaking backgrounds. Less than 1% of the Shire's population identify as Indigenous which is also below the average for Regional Victoria (1.7%)<sup>vii</sup>.</p>	<p>Despite a low level of cultural diversity among residents, it is important that opportunities offered across the region cater for people from different cultural backgrounds to ensure that the region is welcoming to international visitors and culturally diverse populations in other areas of Victoria and Australia.</p>
<p><b>Varied levels of socio-economic disadvantage</b></p> <p>The West Wimmera Shire has a SEIFA index score of 985 (2016) which indicates a lower level of disadvantage than other local government areas in the Wimmera Region (968) and the average index score for Regional Victoria (974).</p>	<p>Trails provide free physical activity and recreation opportunities to the community. It is important that trails are promoted and accessible to people across the region, encouraging participation, community involvement and increased levels of physical activity.</p>

## 3.2 Participation

*Australasian Leisure Management Journal* has reported that the proportion of Australians who go hiking and bushwalking has skyrocketed over recent years. This study has also noted that when it comes to regular bushwalking and hiking, two very different age groups stand out for their elevated participation rate: *Young Australians* (aged 20-24 years) and *Older Persons* (aged 60 to 64 years). They are also most likely to be from the wealthier end of the socio-economic spectrum<sup>viii</sup>.

The AusPlay Participation Data (October 2015 – September 2016<sup>ix</sup>) outlines that walking (recreational), athletics (including jogging/running), cycling and bushwalking and are among the 10 most popular activities at national and state levels, as shown below with participation rates:

### 10 most popular sport and recreation activities for Australian adults (2016)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participation rate</u>
1. <b>Walking (recreational)</b>	<b>42.6%</b>
2. Fitness/gym	32.1%
3. <b>Athletics*</b>	<b>15.8%</b>
4. Swimming	14.5%
5. <b>Cycling</b>	<b>11.7%</b>
6. Football	5.8%
7. <b>Bush walking</b>	<b>5.4%</b>
8. Golf	5.2%
9. Tennis	4.8%
10. Yoga	4.4%

\*including jogging/running

### 10 most popular sport and recreation activities for Victorian adults (2016)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Participation rate</u>
1. <b>Walking (recreational)</b>	<b>44.5%</b>
2. Fitness/gym	31.6%
3. <b>Athletics*</b>	<b>16.3%</b>
4. Swimming	13.4%
5. <b>Cycling</b>	<b>13.3%</b>
6. Football/soccer	5.3%
7. Golf	5.3%
8. <b>Bush walking</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
9. Tennis	5.2%
10. Basketball	4.6%

\*including jogging/running

Children have higher participation rates in sports clubs/associations and lower participation rates in “self-organised” activities. Athletics, track and field (including jogging and running) features as the 10<sup>th</sup> most popular activity for Victorian children, with a participation rate of 4.3% (2016).

Local data collected through the 2015 VicHealth Indicators Survey generally align with trends noted across the state and the nation, indicating that walking, cycling and jogging/running are popular non-organised physical activities. The participation rates are outlined below.

### 3 most popular non-organised physical activities in West Wimmera (2015)

1. Walking	46.8%
2. Cycling	12.8%
3. Jogging or running	7.2%



## 3.3 Trail User Groups

It is important that the recreational trail planning and provision considers the needs, interests and expectations of trail user groups and cohorts within these groups. The long-term sustainability of trails is reliant on user group requirements being met. Existing or potential trail users in the West Wimmera Shire can broadly be divided into the following groups:

- Pedestrians
- Cyclists
- Horse riders
- Canoeists / Kayakers
- Off-road vehicle users

Within these user groups there often are variety of trail user categories who have varying requirements and expectations of trails. A range of these trail user categories are identified below.

### **Pedestrians**

- The less able  
People whose access to trails is limited due to constraints such as a physical impairment.
- Casual walkers  
People of varying ages and physical abilities and anyone that uses trails in a casual way for low key informal recreation such as dog walkers and families with young children.
- Leisure/occasional walkers/hikers  
People who occasionally walk a range of routes in a variety of settings.
- Trail runners  
Runners using trails for recreation, training and/or for competitive events.
- Bush walkers/hikers  
Experienced walkers who primarily walk in natural and sometimes remote settings on challenging routes.
- Long distance walkers/trekkers  
Bush walkers making trips to undertake iconic long-distance routes over multiple days or more.

### **Cyclists**

- Family/Leisure Cyclists  
Cyclists of all ages and abilities using bicycles for fitness, recreation and/or transport.
- Mountain Bike Riders  
Mountain bike enthusiasts who have a specialised bike for riding off-road on varying terrain. Mountain biking is popular as both a non-competitive, recreational activity and as a competitive sport. There are a range of disciplines including Downhill, Enduro and Cross country. Fat biking is a new mountain bike style suited to sand and snow – the key element is oversized wheels.
- Road cyclists  
Cyclists who use roads rather than off-road trails and are expected to adhere to road rules.

## **Horse Riders**

- **Novice Riders**  
Horse riders who usually do not own their own horse but ride in groups at riding schools or trekking centres, or people who do own their own horses but have relatively low levels of confidence and do not ride on a regular basis.
- **Leisure Riders**  
Includes all kinds of riders with a wide variety of skills and expertise. They are very likely to be riding trails that are close to home on routes that are well known to them and they may do the same routes on a regular basis.
- **Long Distance Riders and endurance Riders**  
Riders who have ability and confidence to ride a very wide range of trails including management tracks and through forests.

## **Canoeists/Kayakers**

- **Single day recreation paddlers**  
Paddlers undertaking single day leisure/recreation excursions.
- **Competition paddlers**  
Paddlers using specialist craft, using trails during training, exercise or competition.
- **Tourers/Expeditioners**  
These can be either self-contained paddlers or guided individuals/groups.

## **Off-road vehicle users**

- **Four Wheel Drivers**  
Four-wheel drive enthusiasts are generally self-contained with specialised vehicles used for recreation and transport. Trips often vary from single day to long-distances, venturing into areas with varying terrain with opportunities to camping at destinations along a route.
- **Trail Bike Riders**  
Trail bike enthusiasts generally have a specialised motor bike for riding off-road on varying terrain. Trail bike riding is popular as both a non-competitive, recreational activity and as a competitive sport. Riders will often venture into remote areas without formalised trail infrastructure.

# 4. Trail Network Planning Principles

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## 4.1 Sustainable Recreation Trails Guidelines

The publication *Sustainable Recreation Trails Guidelines*<sup>x</sup> provides guidelines for the planning, design, construction and maintenance of recreational trails. These guidelines represent industry best practice in Australia, with information derived from various national and international publications.

*Appendix 2: Trail Network Planning Principles* provides detail on the following:

- Sustainable trails.
- Accessible trails
- Environmental & cultural heritage considerations
- Design
- Construction
- Management & maintenance
- Naming conventions
- Signage consideration and classification
- Marketing and promotion

## 4.2 Trail Planning Principles

The following trail planning principles have been developed and will broadly guide the Strategy and Action Plan:

- Ensure socially, economically and environmentally sustainable trail development and management;
- Provide trails which are readily accessible, provide links between key destinations and promote active lifestyles and participation;
- Provide a diverse range of trail opportunities relevant to the needs and demands of the community and encourage the broadest possible community participation;
- Maximise use of existing trails where they are appropriately located and have the capacity to sustain additional use;
- Manage trails professionally, effectively and equitably;
- Provide safe trails through adherence to relevant legislative and activity safety requirements;
- Ensure that universal design principles are embedded into trail design and development
- Maximise the opportunity to attract trail-related programs and events;
- Encourage community involvement in the planning and design of trails;
- Involve local indigenous people in the planning, design and interpretation; of trails which have Aboriginal heritage values;
- Support, promote and advocate for trail users in relation to relevant issues within the region;
- Develop and maintain partnerships with the community, the private sector, local businesses, tourism providers and other tiers of government to provide trails and associated facilities.

# 5. Types of Trails

## 5.1 Victoria's Trail Hierarchy

*Victoria's Trails Strategy 2014-2024* recognises that the state requires a network of trails of different levels of significance in order to attract interest from different markets. The hierarchy determined relates to trails that are significant at international, national, state, regional and local community level. Table 6 indicates the characteristics and attributes of international, national and state significant trails, as defined in the State's key strategic trail document.

**Table 6: Trail categorisation key indicators – international, national and state significant trails**

Characteristics	Attributes	Example
<b>International and national trails</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World-class trail experiences located within the natural and cultural landscapes of Victoria, with the highest standard of management and promotion.</li> <li>Support high yield trail-based tourism products including accommodation.</li> <li>Destinations in their own right, attracting international and interstate visitors.</li> <li>May include major trail hubs that attract high international and interstate use, high level competitions and events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exemplars of the competitive strengths of Victoria and Australia as a trail destination.</li> <li>Uniquely representative of Victoria's natural and cultural landscape values.</li> <li>High priority government support at the State level for trail development and management and listed as a priority within State plans and strategies.</li> <li>Support viable high yield trail-based accommodation and associated products and services.</li> <li>Higher levels of interstate visitation than State significant trails (see description below) and significant international visitation, interest and appeal.</li> <li>Directly and indirectly provide economic benefits to the State.</li> </ul>	<p>Murray to Mountains Rail Trail</p> <p>Great Ocean Walk</p> <p>Grampians Peaks Trail (underway)</p>
<b>State trails</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant trail experiences, representative of Victoria's varied landscapes, with a high standard of management and promotion.</li> <li>Support a range of trail-based products and a motivator for intrastate and interstate visitation.</li> <li>May attract some international visitors.</li> <li>May include some major trail hubs and may attract high level competitions and events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representative of the region's and/or Victoria's natural and cultural landscapes.</li> <li>Government support at a regional level within regional plans and strategies.</li> <li>Support viable trail-based and associated regional tourism products, services and programs.</li> <li>Significant intrastate and interstate visitation, interest and appeal.</li> <li>Directly or indirectly provide economic benefits to a region and/or the State.</li> </ul>	<p>Great South West Walk</p> <p>Great Victorian Rail Trail</p> <p>Surf Coast Walk</p>

Regional and local trails are of most relevance to the West Wimmera Shire's trail network. The characteristics and attributes of these types of trails have been elaborated from the information provided *Victoria's Trails Strategy 2014-2024* and are provided in Table 7.








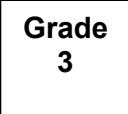


**Table 7: Trail categorisation key indicators – regionally and locally significant trails**

Characteristics	Attributes	Example
<b>Regional trails</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trails and facilities used by people across a wider region, including intrastate visitors, for recreation, transport, health and wellbeing.</li> <li>Generate significant economic benefits to the region</li> <li>May include trail hubs accommodating various trail experiences across a region.</li> <li>Important regional recreational and tourism assets and when combined with other regional scale trail resources they can be seen as state recreation or tourism assets or resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be located within close proximity to residential areas and/or connected to community services and open space areas.</li> <li>Representative of the region's natural and cultural landscapes.</li> <li>Provide access to a diversity of trails of varying difficulty, length and type.</li> <li>Provide opportunities for different trail-user groups for active recreation, health and wellbeing.</li> <li>Be recognised across the region as a popular trail and/ or trail network and frequented by people from the surrounding region.</li> </ul>	<p>Glenelg River Canoe Trail, Dartmoor to Nelson</p> <p>Mount Shank Crater Floor Walk (SA)</p>
<b>Local trails</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trails and facilities used by local residents for recreation, transport, health and wellbeing.</li> <li>Mainly attract local users primarily for independent trail-based recreation activities.</li> <li>Generate economic benefits to the local area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many are located within close proximity to residential areas and are often connected to community services and open space areas.</li> <li>Representative of the local natural and cultural landscapes.</li> <li>Provide access to trails which are generally accessible by users of varying fitness and/or shorter in length</li> <li>Provide opportunities for groups for active recreation, health and wellbeing.</li> <li>Be recognised by local residents as a trail and/ or trail network and frequented by people from the local area.</li> </ul>	<p>Glenelg River Walk, Harrow</p> <p>Newlands Lake Nature Walk, Apsley</p> <p>Lake Wallace Perimetre Walk, Edenhope</p>

## 5.2 Trail Classification Systems

Trail classifications allow land managers to develop trails that are appropriately designed for the anticipated trail users and to provide suitable levels of facilities and management. A number of attempts have been made to classify different types of trails for different user groups. There is no single grading system that is applicable to all types of trail. For example, trails for walking are classified on a difficulty scale from grades one to five, while the canoeing/kayaking scale ranges from *Easy* to *Difficult*. Table 8 provides a summary of the various trail classification systems, with further details on each provided below.

**Table 8: Trail classification systems**

Trail usage	Classification System Used	Easiest classification	Most difficult classification
<b>Walking</b>	Australian Standards (AS2156.1-2001): Walking tracks. Classification and signage.	Class 1 	Class 5  [Class 6: informal trail]
<b>Mountain Bike Riding</b>	International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA): Trail Classification	Very Easy 	Extreme 
<b>Horse Riding</b>	Horse SA: Trail Difficulty Rating System – Horse	Easiest 	Advanced 
<b>Canoeing/Kayaking</b>	International River Grading System	Easy 	Difficult 
<b>Four Wheel Driving</b>	4WD Recreational Track Classification	Easy 	Very Difficult 

## Australian Standard 2156.1-2001 Walking Tracks - Classification and Signage

In 2010, the *Australian Walking Track Grading System* was developed by the *Walking Tracks Grading and Improvement Project* and funded by 'Go for your life' – a Victorian Government initiative aimed at developing stronger, healthier communities through promoting healthy eating and increased participation in physical activity. This system was endorsed by Parks Forum (the former peak body for park management organisations) as a voluntary industry standard and is used by Parks Victoria. The aim of the Australian Walking Track Grading System is to encourage people who are not regular or confident bushwalkers to get out there and give it a go. It is specifically designed to reassure entry level walkers, particularly persons with a disability or people walking with children, that a particular trail is suitable for their skill level.

Under this system, walking trails are graded on a difficulty scale from grades one to five, as follows:



Grade One is suitable for persons with a disability with assistance



Grade Two is suitable for families with young children



Grade Three is recommended for people with some bushwalking experience



Grade Four is recommended for experienced bushwalkers



Grade Five is recommended for very experienced bushwalkers

The first walking track to have been re-graded to this system was the Whipstick Loop Walk in Wombat State Forest near Daylesford. Below is an image of the sign installed which includes the symbol showing the walk's grade as well as information on its distance, time to complete, gradient and quality of path.



### Whipstick Loop Walk

Grade of Walk <sup>1</sup> :	Grade 3
Distance:	Circuit 5.0km
Time:	2 hours return
Gradient:	Short steep hills
Quality of Path:	Formed track, some obstacles
Quality of Markings:	Sign posted
Steps:	Occasional steps
Experience required:	Some bushwalking experience recommended






Figure 2: Whipstick Loop Walk, Victoria



## Mountain Bike Trail Classifications

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) has developed a guide for developing trails to specific ratings or for assessing existing trails. This system has been adopted worldwide and is shown in the table below.




**Table 9: Mountain bike trail classifications**

Classification		Description
Very Easy		Likely to be a fire road or wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and free of obstacles. Frequent encounters are likely with other cyclists, runners, walkers and horse riders.
Easy		Likely to be a combination of fire road or wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and relatively free of unavoidable obstacles. Short sections may exceed these criteria. Frequent encounters are likely with walkers, runners, horse riders and other cyclists.
Intermediate		Likely to be a single trail with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles.
Difficult		Likely to be a challenging single trail with steep gradients, variable surface and many obstacles.
Extreme		Extremely difficult trails will incorporate very steep gradients, highly variable surface and unavoidable, severe obstacles.

## Horse Trail Classifications

The *Horse Trail Difficulty Rating System*<sup>xi</sup> includes a description of horse trail classifications, as shown in the table below.

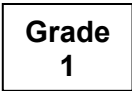
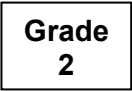
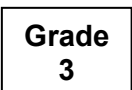
**Table 10: Horse trail classifications**

Classification	Description
Easy 	<p>Easy Trails are most suitable for novices; social groups and others seeking a relatively short distance trail requiring a basic level of skill and horse &amp; rider fitness.</p> <p>Easy Trails are most likely to be fire roads or wide single tracks (bridlepaths) with a gentle grade (not exceeding 10%) and a relatively obstacle free, hardened natural surface.</p> <p>Easy Trails are likely to be shared-use and frequent encounters with other users including cyclists, walkers &amp; runners can be expected.</p>
Intermediate 	<p>Intermediate Trails are most suitable for individuals and smaller social groups seeking a short to medium distance trail requiring a moderate level of skill and fitness.</p> <p>Intermediate Trails are most likely to be a combination single trail and/or fire road with obstacles, variable surface, and a moderate slope.</p> <p>Intermediate Trails are likely to be shared-use so encounters with other users including cyclists, walkers, runners and horse riders should be expected.</p>
Advanced 	<p>Advanced Trails are suitable for individuals and small social groups seeking a very challenging trail requiring a high level of skill, fitness, and basic navigation skills.</p> <p>Advanced Trails are most likely to consist of challenging single trail and/or fire road with many obstacles, variable surface, and steep sections. Some trail routes may not be marked at all.</p> <p>Advanced Trails may possibly be shared-use so encounters with other users possibly including cyclists, walkers, vehicles and other stock should be expected, however, many of these trails may be located in remote areas and encounters with others is expected to be minimal.</p>

## Canoe and Kayak Trail Classification

The International River Grading System<sup>xii</sup> provides an indication of the degree of difficulty of a rapid and/or river. The following table provides a description of the first three grades (Easy, Medium and Difficult) of the rapid ratings, however it has a total of six levels including Advanced, Expert and Extreme.





**Table 11: International river grading system**

Grade	Description
Easy 	Slow to medium flowing water with very small, regular waves or riffles. Relatively few obstacles, with an easy path to find and follow. Suitable for novices.
Medium 	Rapids are straightforward with medium sized, regular waves. The path through rapids can be clearly seen from the water and is often indicated by well-defined chutes or Vs of water. There are some obstacles that require manoeuvring around, but paddlers with a good command of basic strokes can easily miss them.
Difficult 	Rapids have moderate, irregular waves and strong currents. Manoeuvring is required to follow the preferred route. Small to medium sized stoppers may have to be negotiated. The route is difficult for inexperienced paddlers to see and scouting is advisable. Suitable for experienced Whitewater paddlers, with the ability to roll an advantage.

## 4WD Recreational Track Classifications

4WD Victoria endorses this track grading classification scale which has been developed to assist in advising Trip Leaders and participants on 4WD trips of the type of tracks that they can expect to encounter. It is intended, over time, for all 4WD tracks to be rated according to this scale and sign-posted accordingly.

**Table 12: 4WD recreational track classifications**

Classification	Description
Easy 	All-wheel Drive and High Range 4WD. Novice Drivers. Mostly unsealed roads with no obstacles and minor gradients
Medium 	Mainly High Range 4WD but Low Range required. Some 4WD experience or training required. Tracks with some steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy sections. May have shallow water crossings.
Difficult 	Significant Low Range 4WD with standard 4WD ground clearance. Should have 4WD driver training. Tracks with frequent steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy track sections. Possible water crossings.
Very Difficult 	Low Range 4WD with high ground clearance. Experienced drivers. Tracks with frequent very steep and/or rocky/slippery/sandy track sections. May have difficult river crossings.

# 6. Existing Trail Audit

## 6.1 Existing Trail Audit Methodology

Existing trails were audited through a process involving desktop research and on-ground assessments. Trails were identified through the following sources:

- West Wimmera Official Visitor Guide (2014)
- Wimmera Mallee Tourism Website (<https://www.wimmeramalleetourism.com.au/>)
- West Wimmera Shire Council Website (<http://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au/Discover>)
- Stakeholder consultation:
  - Community survey
  - Community forum
  - Project Control Group meeting
  - Informal discussions with community members on-site at trail locations

An on-ground assessment of trails across the Shire was undertaken during January and February 2018, using a GPS device to collect a range of information for each formal and informal trail identified. The information collected included photographs and records of key attributes for each trail.

Data captured by the full audit matrix/database (included in Appendix 3: Existing Trails Audit)::

Trail details	Surface	Marketing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trail name</li><li>• Main attraction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Primary trail tread material</li><li>• General surface condition</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• WWSC website</li><li>• Wimmera Mallee Tourism website</li><li>• WWSC Visitor Guide</li><li>• Other</li></ul>
Location	Signage	Notes/Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Park/Reserve</li><li>• Street/Road</li><li>• Suburb/Locality</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trail head sign</li><li>• Waymarking</li><li>• Interpretive</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consultation notes</li><li>• Audit notes</li></ul>
Tenure	Infrastructure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Land manager</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Car park</li><li>• Public toilets</li><li>• Picnic facilities</li><li>• Seating</li><li>• Stairs</li><li>• Bridge/s</li><li>• Fitness equipment</li><li>• Campground</li></ul>	
Category		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• User type</li><li>• Walking trail grade</li><li>• Trail hierarchy</li></ul>		
Specifications		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Length</li><li>• General tread width</li></ul>		

## 6.2 Existing Trail Provision Overview

The trail audit process has identified 27 recreational trails across the Shire as well as two on-road cycling event routes and three promoted drive trails. These trails are in varying condition, with some being formalised, defined trails and others being informal routes providing opportunity for further development.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of recreational trails, cycling routes and drive trails across the West Wimmera Shire.

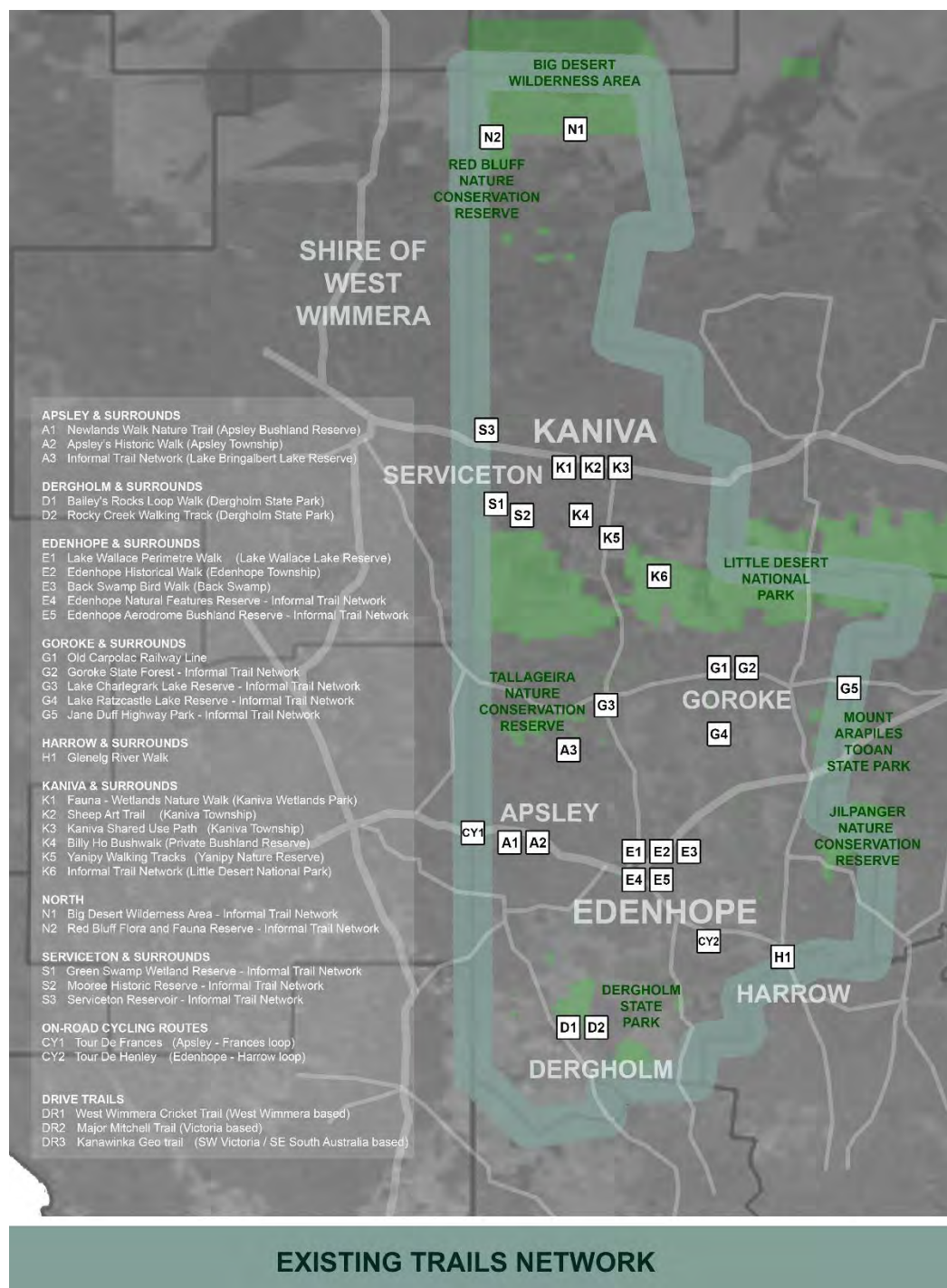













Figure 3: Existing trails network






Table 13 lists the trails identified with key information and site photographs. Further details about each trail are provided in the *Trail Audit Database* and maps which are included in Appendix 3: Existing Trails Audit.

**Table 13: Existing trail provision**







Ref	Trail name/Identifier	Location (Park/Reserve)	Land manager	Approximate length	Photograph
<b>A</b>	<b>APSELY AND SURROUNDS</b>				
A1	Newlands Lake Nature Trail,	Apsley Bushland Reserve / Boikerbert Swamp Lake Reserve	Parks Victoria	5km loop	
A2	Apsley's Historic Walk	Apsley Township	WWSC	600m loop	
A3	Informal Trail Network	Lake Bringalbert Lake Reserve	Local CoM / Parks Victoria	700m each way	
<b>D</b>	<b>DERGHOLM AND SURROUNDS</b>				
D1	Bailey's Rocks Loop Walk	Dergholm State Park	Parks Victoria	400m loop	
D2	Rocky Creek Walking Track	Dergholm State Park	Parks Victoria	5km loop	










Ref	Trail name/Identifier	Location (Park/Reserve)	Land manager	Approximate length	Photograph
<b>E</b>	<b>EDENHOPE AND SURROUNDS</b>				
E1	Lake Wallace Perimeter Walk	Lake Wallace Lake Reserve	WWSC	5.6km loop	
E2	Edenhope Historical Walk	Edenhope Township	WWSC	1km each way	
E3	Back Swamp Bird Walk	Back Swamp	WWSC	300m return	
E4	Informal Trail Network	Edenhope Natural Features Reserve / Edenhope Flora Reserve	Local CoM / Parks Victoria	11km network	
E5	Informal Trail Network	Edenhope Aerodrome Bushland Reserve	Parks Victoria	6.2km network	
<b>G</b>	<b>GOROKE AND SURROUNDS</b>				
G1	Old Carpolac Railway Line - Goroke	Old Carpolac Rail Reserve	Vic Track / DELWP	East of Goroke: 3.6 km each way  West of Goroke: 3.0 km each way	

Ref	Trail name/Identifier	Location (Park/Reserve)	Land manager	Approximate length	Photograph
G2	Informal Trail Network	Goroke State Forest	DELWP / VicForests	5.2km network	
G3	Informal Trail Network	Lake Charlegrark Lake Reserve	Local CoM / Parks Victoria	600m each way	
G4	Informal Trail Network	Lake Ratzcastle Lake Reserve	Parks Victoria	950m each way	
G5	Informal Trail Network	Jane Duff Highway Park	Parks Victoria	1.3km loop	
<b>H</b>	<b>HARROW AND SURROUNDS</b>				
H1	Glenelg River Walk	Glenelg River Corridor	Local CoM / DELWP	2.4km each way	



Ref	Trail name/Identifier	Location (Park/Reserve)	Land manager	Approximate length	Photograph
K	<b>KANIVA AND SURROUNDS</b>				
K1	Fauna - Wetlands Nature Walk	Kaniva Wetlands Park	WWSC	650m loop	
K2	Sheep Art Trail	Kaniva Township	WWSC and Kaniva & District Progress Association	700m each way	
K3	Kaniva Shared Use Path	Kaniva Township	WWSC	900m network	
K4	Billy Ho Bushwalk	Private Bushland Reserve	Private	2.9km loop	
K5	Yanipy Walking Tracks	Yanipy Nature Reserve	DELWP / Parks Victoria	1.5km each way	
K6	Informal Trail Network	Little Desert National Park	Parks Victoria		

Ref	Trail name/Identifier	Location (Park/Reserve)	Land manager	Approximate length	Photograph
<b>S</b>	<b>SERVICETON AND SURROUNDS</b>				
S1	Informal Trail Network	Green Swamp Wetland Reserve	Parks Victoria	2km loop	
S2	Informal Trail Network	Mooree Historic Reserve	Parks Victoria	4.7km network	
S3	Informal Trail Network	Serviceton Reservoir	WWSC	900m loop	
<b>N</b>	<b>NORTH</b>				
N1	Informal Trail Network	Big Desert Wilderness Area	Parks Victoria	-	
N2	Informal Trail Network	Red Bluff Flora and Fauna Reserve	Parks Victoria	-	
<b>CY</b>	<b>CYCLING EVENT ROUTES</b>				
CY1	Tour De Frances	Apsley - Frances	WWSC / Vic Roads	85km loop	
CY2	Tour De Henley	Edenhope - Harrow	WWSC / Vic Roads	72km loop	

Ref	Trail name/Identifier	Location (Park/Reserve)	Land manager	Approximate length	Photograph
DR	<b>DRIVE TRAILS</b>				
DR1	West Wimmera Cricket Trail (Drive Trail)	Edenhope College Oval Jane Duff Highway Park Harrow Dergholm Lake Bringalbert Apsley Mt Talbot (outside of WWSC)	Various	-	
DR2	Major Mitchell Trail	Across Victoria WWSC location: Harrow	Various	-	
DR3	Kanawinka Geo Trail	WWSC location: Bailey's Rocks, Dergholm State Park	Various including Parks Victoria	-	
DR4	Silo Art Trail	No current locations within WWSC. Opportunities may exist for silo art in WWSC in the future.	Various	-	

## 6.3 Current Trail Marketing and Promotion

There are a various websites and brochures providing information on key visitor destinations and trails in the West Wimmera Shire. The key resources providing information relating to trails are listed below, with Figure 4 to Figure 9 showing corresponding images of each.

- West Wimmera Shire Map
- West Wimmera Official Visitor Guide
- Wimmera Mallee Tourism Website  
<https://www.wimmeramalleetourism.com.au/45-explore/122-walking-trails-and-bushwalking>
- Australia's First XI Aboriginal Cricket Trail Brochure
- West Wimmera Shire Council Website Page - "Discover"  
<http://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au/Discover>
- Parks Victoria Website e.g. Dergholm State Park  
<http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/explore/parks/dergholm-state-park>

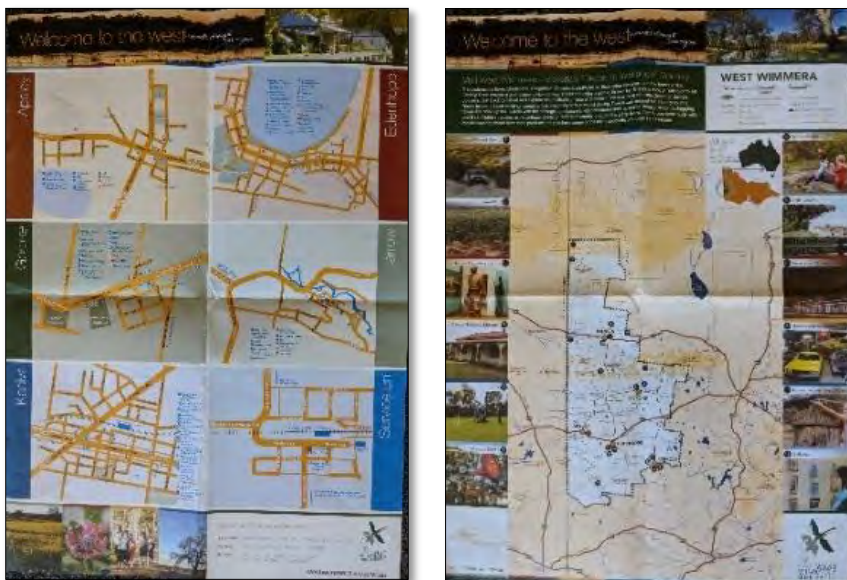


Figure 4: Shire map

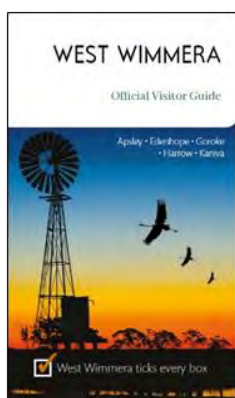


Figure 5: Official Visitor Guide



Figure 6: Wimmera Mallee Tourism website

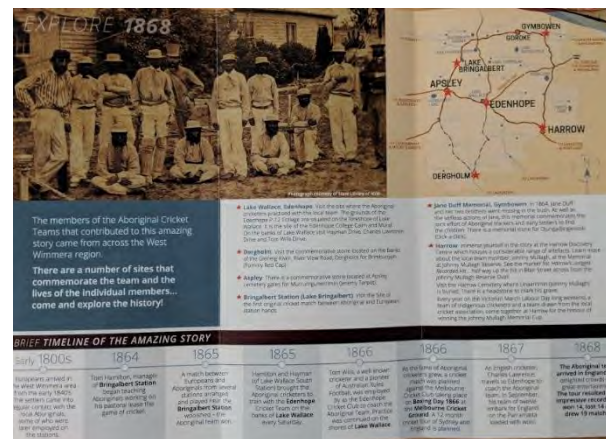


Figure 7: Cricket trail brochure

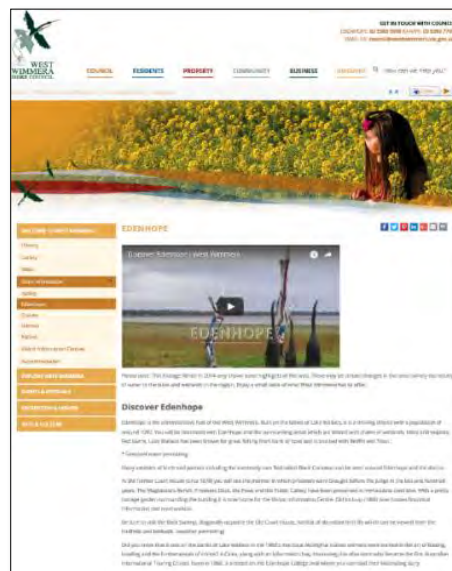


Figure 8: Council website



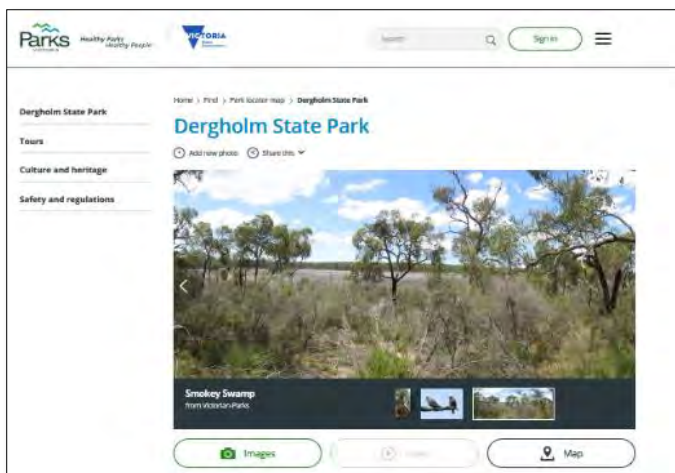


Figure 9: Parks Victoria Website

In addition to the key sources for trail information identified above, there are a range of other websites and brochures referring to trails within the West Wimmera Shire. For example, Apsley's Historic Walk is complemented with a brochure outlining the key destinations along the trail within a brochure provided at the trailhead (**Figure 10**). This brochure is available in hard-copy at the site but is not promoted online.



Figure 10: Apsley's Historic Walk brochure

The Major Mitchell Trail and the Kanawinka Geotrail, are both drive trails which promote unique and interesting elements of the Shire's cultural or geological heritage. The Major Mitchell Trail has a sign on the ground in Harrow (Figure 11) but is not promoted widely online or through a brochure. The Kanawinka Geotrail is promoted through a brochure (Figure 12), which includes reference to the site at Bailey's Rocks, however the website with trail information is no longer maintained.



Figure 11: Major Mitchell Trail sign/map







# 7. Programs, Events & Platforms

## 7.1 Existing Programs and Events

Programs and events play an important role in promoting active participation, influencing the level of usage for trails and related infrastructure and contributing to the region's economy. Table 14 identifies some of the key programs and events held within or close to the West Wimmera Shire Council area which may have an impact on trail planning.

**Table 14: Overview of events**

Area	Program / Event	Overview
Apsley	<b>Tour De Frances</b>	An annual on-road cycling charity event held in June. The cycling route starts in Apsley and crosses the state border, ending in Frances, South Australia. The complete route is 85km, with a shorter 45km option.
Dergholm	<b>Dergholm Endurance Horse Ride</b>	This is an annual event which has been operating for approximately 10 years, beginning at the Dergholm Recreation Area, attracting 80 – 200 participants. The event runs over a 24-hour period (midnight Friday to midnight Saturday). Ride options include: 120km; 80km; or 20km rides. A 160km ride is offered when the Championships are being hosted. The route is primarily on Crown land and road reserves (not private land).
	<b>Dergholm Pub to Scrub Horse Ride</b>	This fundraising event was held in 2016 and incorporated a horse ride from the Dergholm Pub through Crown and private land. A hut facility located on private land (adjacent to Dergholm State Park) provided support facilities such as amenities & horse yards.
Edenhope	<b>Henley on Lake Wallace / Tour De Henley</b>	Henley on Lake Wallace Annual family festival held in February on the shores of Lake Wallace, Edenhope. The Tour De Henley is an associated cycling event which offers three choices to cater for all fitness levels (33km, 66km and 72km). The 72km challenging route takes riders through Harrow, Moree, Kadnook and Edenhope.
	<b>Edenhope and District Community Bank Fun Run/Walk for MS</b>	An annual fun run/walk around Lake Wallace in October to raise funds for the MS Society. The event offers options for 1 lap (5.5km), two laps (11km) or three laps (16.5km) as well as an obstacle course/games for kids.
Goroke and Surrounds	<b>Lake Charlegrark Country Music Marathon</b>	The Music Marathon is held on the 3rd weekend of February each year, on the foreshore of Lake Charlegrark. The event atmosphere is very relaxed, easy listening and family friendly with all ages from the youngest of babies to the oldest of grandparents coming to listen to the music.
	<b>Navrun 4WD Amazing Race – Goroke</b>	This annual family-friendly event is held over the Easter long weekend in the Goroke State Forest. A 'base camp' is set up in the Goroke State Forest and participants form teams to face the challenges which involve finding clues at GPS locations. This event is marketed as an "enjoyable, easy" 4WD event suitable for beginners.
	<b>McCartney's Ride / Jane Duff 'Lost in the Bush' Horse Ride</b>	This horse ride follows the route of Peter McCartney's horse ride in 1864 to fetch legendary Aboriginal Tracker King Richard to assist in locating the lost Duff children who are a renown figure in the West Wimmera region's history. The ride starts at Nhill Racecourse and finishes at the Jane Duff Memorial Site, Mitre, traversing through the Little Desert National Park.

Area	Program / Event	Overview
Harrow	<b>Vinduro - Harrow 100</b>	An annual endurance race for vintage cars, based out of Harrow. The event brings vintage car enthusiasts from Melbourne to use the town's unique topography (e.g. hill climb) and natural surrounds, with suitable infrastructure and facilities provided.
	<b>Johnny Mullagh Cricket Championship</b>	An annual cricket event held in March to commemorate Johnny Mullagh and Australia's first international cricket team who trained and developed in Harrow.
	<b>National Bush Billycart Championships</b>	The annual national championships are held in Harrow, on the same weekend as the Johnny Mullagh Cricket Championship. The course is a long steep hill leading into Harrow's main street, adjacent the Glenelg river.
	<b>Harrow Fun Run</b>	This fun run has been established as a complementary event to the Johnny Mullagh Championship weekend. Participants choose between a 3km walk/run along the Glenelg River or a 6km stair climb and river run.
Other – outside WWSC	<b>Murray to Moyne</b>	This annual team relay cycle event offers three ride options, each beginning at a point along the Murray River (Mildura, Swan Hill or Echuca) and finishing at the Moyne River at Port Fairy. Although the event's routes do not pass through the West Wimmera Shire, there may be opportunity to link in with this event into the future.
	<b>Arapiles Cycling Event</b>	This cycling event offers participants the opportunity to experience the unique and stunning landscapes of the Wimmera through two route options; Horsham – Mt Arapiles – Horsham (128km) or Natimuk - Mt Arapiles – Natimuk (53km). This event takes place just to the east of the West Wimmera Shire and may offer opportunity for towns such as Goroke to be involved into the future.
	<b>Heart Foundation Walking Groups</b>	<p>The Heart Foundation supports and promotes Australia's largest free walking group network. This is a social, fun and easy way for people to walk and be active. It is associated with the Prime Minister's One million steps. While there are currently no registered groups in the West Wimmera Shire, this may present as an opportunity into the future. Nearby townships which currently have registered walking groups include: Bordertown, Casterton; Dimboola; Rupanyup and Hopetoun.</p> <p>Information on how to become a host organisation is provided on the Heart Foundation's Website <a href="https://gowalking.heartfoundation.org.au/become-a-host-organisation/">https://gowalking.heartfoundation.org.au/become-a-host-organisation/</a></p> <p><i>Heart Foundation Walking can help you to set up and maintain walking groups in your local community. Host Organisations and their nominated Local Coordinators come from a variety of organisations such as health and community centres, councils and workplaces, and are a vital part of Heart Foundation Walking. Local Coordinators receive training, ongoing assistance, support and resources.</i></p>
	<b>parkrun</b>	<p>parkrun is a series of 5km runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of open space around Australia. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Junior parkrun events are open to participants aged 4 – 14. While there are currently no registered parkrun events in the West Wimmera Shire, this may present as an opportunity into the future. Nearby communities which currently have weekly parkrun events are: Nhill; Hamilton; Portland and Mt Gambier. Information about how to start a parkrun event is provided on the parkrun website <a href="http://www.parkrun.com/about/start-your-own-event/">http://www.parkrun.com/about/start-your-own-event/</a></p> <p><i>The key to starting any parkrun is to find the right person to lead that event as a local volunteer, to champion its benefits and to slowly but surely build a strong volunteer team to deliver the event going forwards. We will support that person, however it's important to remember that each of our events must be driven by a core team of committed and passionate parkrun volunteers</i></p>

## 7.2 Online Interactive Platforms

Online interactive fitness platforms are continuing to increase in popularity and diversify, with several specialist apps available. There is a wide range of platforms available which provide the opportunity to increase active participation in local communities by allowing trail users to track their activity, share their experience and compete with other users. Many platforms also provide incentives to get active (and to use their platform), such as challenges where users compete with others across their local community or across various countries. For example, the series of *MapMyFitness* apps encourage users to track 1018km of running, walking or jogging during 2018 to win prizes and Strava promotes May as a month for the Grand Fondo Cycling challenge. Table 15 provides an overview of some of the trending online interactive platforms which promote trail use, with reference to the results of a trail/route search across the West Wimmera Shire.

**Table 15: Online Interactive Platforms**

Platform	Description	West Wimmera Routes included (as of April 2018):
<a href="#">Strava</a>	Strava is a free online platform which promotes running and cycling 'segments' and virtual events/challenges around the world which can be tracked to monitor personal improvements and to add an element of competition to individual pursuits. Further use and promotion of Strava in the West Wimmera Shire could help increase active participation while also adding 'segments' to this world-wide database.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lake Wallace Perimetre Trail (Running)</li> <li>• Apsley to Frances (Cycling route)</li> <li>• Edenhope – Penola Rd (Cycling route)</li> <li>• Harrow (Cycling routes)</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Walking Maps</a>	Walking Maps is an online interactive platform delivered by Victoria Walks, providing trail maps and information about different walking routes available. This provides an opportunity to increase promotion of walking routes to encourage locals and visitors to use trails.	Currently there are no trails within the West Wimmera Shire promoted on this platform.
<b>Fitness Apps -</b> <a href="#">MapMyWalk</a> <a href="#">MapMyHike</a> <a href="#">MapMyRun</a> <a href="#">MapMyRide</a>	Fitness apps, such as MapMyWalk, MapMyHike, MapMyRun and MapMyRide are an integrated series of applications allowing users to track their route and time across various devices, compete against themselves and others and become involved in an online active community. Members can search for routes and add new routes via GPS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lake Wallace Perimetre Trail (Running &amp; Cycling)</li> <li>• Various routes around Edenhope Township</li> <li>• Powers Creek Road, Kadnook</li> <li>• Newlands Lake, Apsley</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Trailforks</a>	Trailforks is a mountain bike trail database & management system. Users can contribute data and then local trail associations have the control to approve & curate the data. Ensuring updated and accurate data. Users share their experiences via GPS devices, including integrations with Strava. Users can also add photos & videos which are tagged to trails found on the website. Users also help moderate the site by voting to approve or deny new trails and report bad data. Trailforks helps with the promotion of mountain bike events across Australia	Currently there are no trails within the West Wimmera Shire promoted on this platform.

# 8. Consultation

The development of the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy will be informed by community consultation and stakeholder engagement undertaken during Stage 2: Key Stakeholder Consultation.

## 8.1 Consultation Process

A series of consultation mechanisms were used to engage with the wider community and key stakeholders. These mechanisms were:

- Community Forum  
*Edenhope Mechanics Hall*  
*Wednesday 31st January 2018, 6pm*
- Community Survey  
Online via SurveyMonkey and hard copy at Shire offices  
*Survey open between 15<sup>th</sup> January – 18<sup>th</sup> February 2018*
- Stakeholder meetings  
*Targeted phone calls, email correspondence and meetings*

Figure 13 illustrates the information provided to the community through distribution of an informative flyer. The flyer was distributed in the following ways:

- Emails to the stakeholder database
- Promotion via the West Wimmera Shire Council Facebook page
- Posting of hard copies at town notice boards in across the West Wimmera Shire
- Advertisement in the *West Wimmera Advocate* on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2018
- Advertisement in the *Kaniva Times* on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018



Figure 13: Community Consultation Flyer

## 8.2 Key Consultation Findings

Significant information was gathered from the wider community through the consultation processes. The key community desires communicated through consultation mechanisms were:

- Dedicated, safe cycling routes
- Enhanced recreational water opportunities (e.g. on various lakes/wetlands and the Glenelg River at Harrow)
- Enhanced connectivity (walk or cycle trails) within townships and between key destinations within towns
- Enhanced connectivity (including rail and/or drive trails) between townships and key outlying destinations (e.g. wetlands, historical sites)
- Recreational walking, cycling and/or horse riding trails at around lakes/wetlands (e.g. Bringalbert, Charlegrark, and Ratzcastle)
- Extension of existing trails (e.g. Glenelg River Walk at Harrow, Newlands Lake Nature Walk at Apsley)
- Development of new trail experiences in Little Desert National Park
- Formalisation of horse riding routes through Crown land
- Improved infrastructure at existing trails (e.g. trail tread at Lake Wallace Perimetre Trail at Edenhope and Fauna – Wetlands Park at Kaniva)
- Improved general trail maintenance
- Improved marketing of trail opportunities

## 8.3 Community Forum

The Community Forum was attended by 12 members of the community. Some attendees identified as being associated with the following organisations:

- Friends of Lake Wallace (Edenhope)
- Friends of Newlands Lake (Apsley)
- Edenhope Adult Riding Club
- Wimmera Bushwalking Club
- Landcare
- Kowree Farm Tree Group
- Goroke P – 12 College
- Active Hideaways (Harrow)

The format of the Forum was as follows: an introduction by West Wimmera Shire Council; a presentation by Tredwell Management; large group discussions; and small group discussions. During the small group discussions, attendees were given the opportunity to mark on a series of maps and to fill-in printed pro-forma to help collate information, as well as general discussions.

### Summary of key findings – Community Forum

Key discussions during the community forum centred around the following themes:

- General topics
  - Off-road cycling, horse-riding and walking routes, away from dangers associated with highway traffic
  - Signed on-road cycling routes, starting from townships
  - Safety issues associated with Hwy crossing on horseback
  - Ideas to enhance recreation on the Glenelg River at Harrow (e.g. “river paddle pond”).
- Formalisation of existing informal trails:
  - Harrow to Dergholm Canoe Trail
  - Edenhope Town Ride (horse riding route) through Edenhope Flora Reserve and Aerodrome Bushland Reserve
  - Lake Bringalbert, Lake Charlegrark and Lake Ratzcastle
- Creation of new trails:
  - Kojjak Creek, Apsley
  - Town Walking Trail, Goroke
- Extensions of existing trails
  - Newlands Wetlands Walking Trail, Apsley, to include a trail around the circumference of Newlands Lake.
  - Allow horses to ride around Lake Wallace, adjacent to the bitumen path
  - Extend the Glenelg River Walk trail. To the north, beyond the bridge to the Canoe Tree. To the south, to Fitzgerald’s road.

A complete record of points raised during the community forum is provided in Appendix 4: Consultation Records.



## 8.4 Community Survey

The community survey was available online via SurveyMonkey and was also available as a hard-copy in the Edenhope and Kaniva Shire Offices. A total of 98 community members responded to the survey. 97 were completed online and 1 was completed as a hard copy at the Edenhope Shire Office.

### Trail interests and use

The first survey question related to the user's interest in trail related activities.

#### Q1. What type of trail activities do you have an interest in? More than one option can be selected

The most popular answers were *Walking* (61; 66%) and *Canoeing/Kayaking* (55; 59%) followed by *Bushwalking* (51; 55%), *Horse Riding* (31; 33%), *Cycling* (other than mountain biking) (28; 30%), *Jogging* (25; 23%), *Mountain bike riding* (16; 17%), *Trail running* (11; 12%).

No respondents indicated having an interest in *Wheelchair/Mobility device* or *Social activities* (e.g. picnic, BBQ) and 5 respondents identified *Other* activities which fall within the category *Nature appreciation/Photography*, such as *Wildflower walks; Photography; Birdwatching; wildlife spotting*.

*Other* trail activities stated were: *Camping; Motorbike Riding; 4x4 and motorbike trails; swimming, yabbing, fishing; bird watching*.

The frequency of answers for each category are shown in Figure 14.

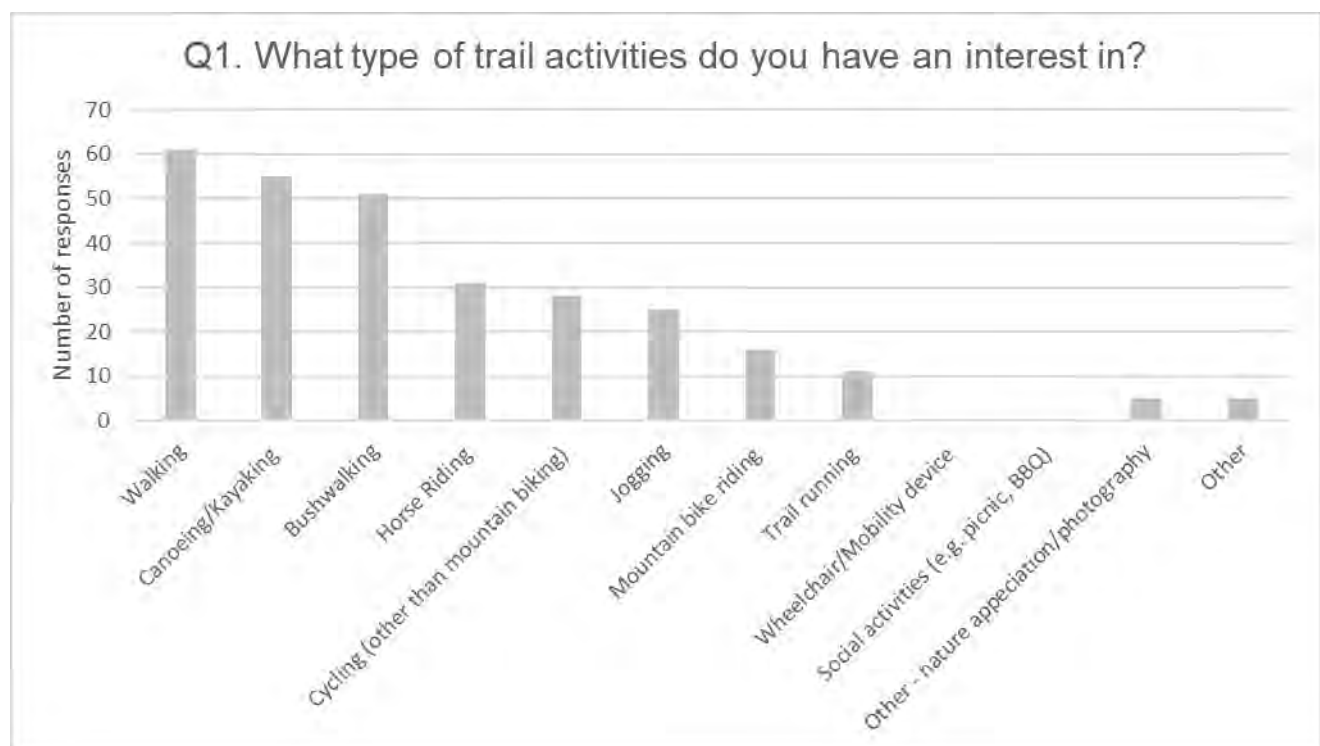


Figure 14: Responses to Question 1



The following two questions gauged how frequently respondents use trails.

**Q2. How often do you participate in trail activities? This may include using trails inside or outside of the West Wimmera Shire**

The majority of respondents (34%) indicated that they participate in trail activities *A few times per year* while a total of 27% indicated that they use trails *Weekly* (13%), *A few times per week* (10%) or *Daily* (4%).



**Figure 15: Responses to Question 2**

**Q3. Have you used a recreational trail in the West Wimmera Shire in the past 12 months? This may include formalised trails or informal trails/tracks**

78% of respondents indicated that they had used a trail in the West Wimmera Shire within the past 12 months, while 22% had not.



**Figure 16: Responses to Question 3**

## Most widely used trails

The following questions aimed to gain insight into which trails are being used the most and what trail users like or dislike about these trails.

*Q4. Please provide details (i.e. name and location) of the trail which you have used most*

*Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?*

*Q6. Please list the name and location of any other trails you have used within the Shire.*

Respondents referred to the following trails which are currently formally provided within the Shire (Questions 4 and 6):

- Lake Wallace Perimetre Walk, Edenhope
- Back Swamp, Edenhope
- Newlands Wetlands Nature Walk, Apsley
- Baileys Rocks Loop Walk, Dergholm State Park
- Glenelg River Walk, Harrow
- Billy Ho Bushwalk
- Kaniva Wetlands/Fauna Park

Respondents referred to the following trails which exist informally within the Shire (Questions 4 and 6):

- Jane Duff Memorial, Gymbowen
- Edenhope Naturalist Trail, Edenhope
- Edenhope Flora Reserve, Edenhope
- Old Railway Line, Goroke
- Glenelg River (Canoeing/Kayaking), Harrow
- Moree Reserve, South Lillimur
- Serviceton Reservoir, Serviceton
- Lake Ratzcastle (Walking and Canoeing/Kayaking)
- Lake Charlegrark (Walking and Canoeing/Kayaking)
- Lake Bringalbert (Walking and Canoeing/Kayaking)
- Bringalbert Lake to Lake Charlegrark.(horse riding route),
- Benayeo Road - Townsend St, Apsley
- Harrow Scrub, Harrow
- Informal trails within Little Desert National Park
- Informal trails in Red Bluff & Big Desert Wildreness Area
- Bill's Gully/Moree back roads (horse riding route), Serviceton
- Collins Lake, Edenhope (Walking and Canoeing/Kayaking)

Respondents identified that they “like” the following aspects about trails they have used within the Shire (Question 5):

- Quiet, natural environment / Ecological values
- Ease of access / convenience
- Historical connections
- Scenic views
- Well maintained trail and landscape
- Support infrastructure (e.g. toilet facilities and water refill station)
- Safe environment
- Great for kids, prams and/or dogs

Respondents identified that they “dislike” the following aspects about trails they have used within the Shire (Question 5):

- Damaged infrastructure / unmaintained trail and landscape
- Weeds / invasive species
- Safety risk (snakes, traffic)
- Difficulty liaising with land manager
- Lack of toilets
- Lack of connectivity due to land tenure
- Lack of interpretation material/signage
- Too much maintenance - lack of natural feel

Verbatim responses to are provided in Appendix 4: Consultation Records.

### **Desired trail experiences and ideas**

Questions 7 and 8 were aimed to collect ideas from survey respondents regarding future trail opportunities in the Shire. Responses to these questions were similar in nature and so have been analysed together.

Q7. What type of trail experiences would you like to see offered in the West Wimmera Shire in the future?

Q8. If you have any ideas of where trail developments, extensions or enhancements could occur within the Shire, please provide details below.

Respondents expressed desires for the following trail experiences (Question 7):

- Walking and running trails
- Horse riding trails
- Multi-use trails
- Canoeing/Kayaking trails
- Nature trails
- Accessible trails (e.g. wheelchair access)
- Safer walking and cycling routes (i.e. away from traffic)
- Improved trail infrastructure (e.g. amenities, signage)

New trail development ideas identified by respondents (Question 8):

- Apsley Loop Walk, Apsley
- Glenelg River Boating/Canoe/Fishing Trail, Dergholm
- Glenelg River Walking Trail, Dergholm
- Town Walk (connecting existing trails), Edenhope
- Safe cycling routes

Extensions/enhancements to existing formal or informal trails identified by respondents (Question 8):

- Newlands Wetlands Nature Trail, Apsley
- Lake Wallace, Edenhope
- Edenhope Flora and Fauna Reserve, Edenhope
- Glenelg River Walk (and associated area), Harrow
- Fauna Park and Wetlands, Kaniva
- Billy Ho Track, Kaniva
- Green Swamp and Moree Reserves, Serviceton
- Lake Bringalbert
- Lake Charlegrark
- Lake Ratzcastle

- Boorooopki Lake
- Bailey's Rocks, Dergholm State Park
- Little Desert National Park
- Ideas relating to long-distance recreational (or drive) trails
  - Off-road cycle/walk trail Edenhope - Apsley
  - "Harrow to the Hills" (Harrow to the Grampians)
  - Trail/s linking the region's wetlands
  - Rail trail/s

Verbatim responses to are provided in Appendix 4: Consultation Records.

### Additional topics and comments

Question 9 provided respondents with the opportunity to add additional information to their survey responses which was not captured in previous answers.

Q9. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about recreational trails within the West Wimmera Shire?

### Summary of key findings – Q9

- Key additional topics raised:
  - Provision of key trail information
  - Promotion of trails
  - Quantity of trails
  - Quality of trails
  - Safety (i.e. traffic risks)

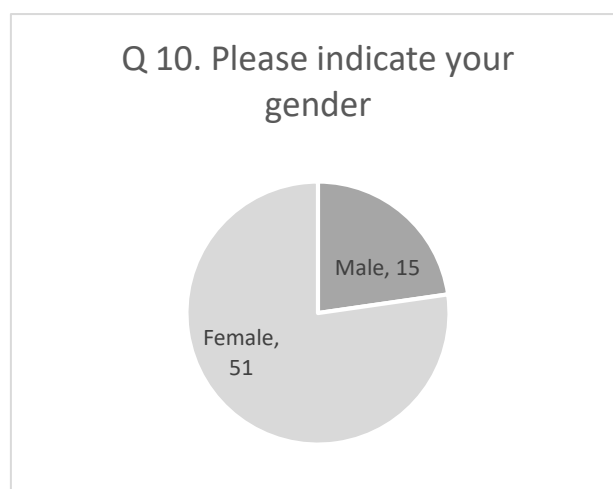
Verbatim responses are provided in Appendix 4: Consultation Records.

### Respondent profile

Questions 10, 11 and 12 asked respondents' information about themselves to provide insight into the profile of survey respondents.

Q 10. Please indicate your gender

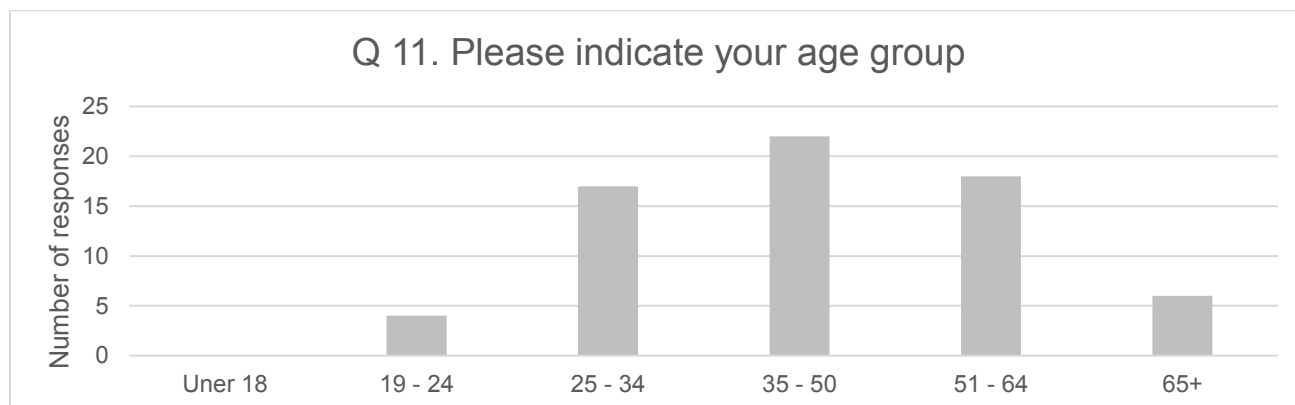
While 32 respondents chose not to indicate their gender, of the 66 who did, 77% (51) indicated *Female* and 22% (15) indicated *Male*.



**Figure 17: Responses to Question 10**

### Q 11. Please indicate your age group

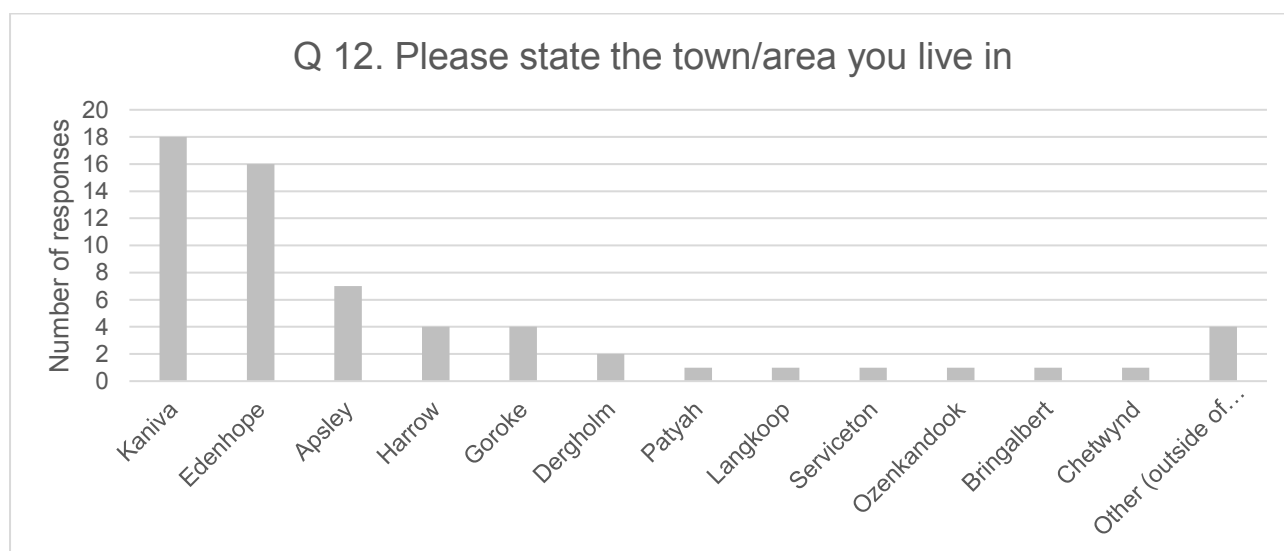
While 31 respondents chose not to indicate their age group, of the 67 who did, 33% (22) were aged 35 – 50 years, 27% (18) were aged 51 – 64 years, 25% (17) were aged 25 – 34 years, 9% (6) were aged 65+ and 6% (4) were aged 19-24 years. No respondents indicated being aged *Under 18* years.



**Figure 18: Responses to Question 11**

### Q12. Please state the town/area you live in:

While 36 respondents chose not to state the town/area in which they live, of those who did, the most popular areas were *Kaniva* (18 respondents), *Edenhope* (16 respondents), *Apsley* (7 respondents), *Harrow* (4 respondents), *Goroke* (4 respondents) and *Dergholm* (2 respondents). Other areas stated by 1 respondent each were; *Patyah*; *Langkoop*; *Serviceeton*; *Ozenkandook*; *Bringalbert*; *Chetwynd*; *South Wimmera*; *Hamilton*; *Natimuk* and *Charm*.



**Figure 19: Responses to Question 12**

### Q13. If you would like to keep updated on the progress of this strategy, please provide your contact details below (optional)

22 respondents indicated that they would like to keep updated on the progress of this Strategy, leaving their name, phone number and/or email address. These details have been added to the project's stakeholder database and will be used to inform respondents about the next opportunity to contribute to the *West Wimmera Recreation Trails Strategy*.

## 8.5 Stakeholder Interviews

A range of key stakeholders have been contacted to provide input into the *West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy*. These organisations have been involved in project meetings have been contacted by email or phone.

### **Project Control Group (PCG) Meeting**

The PCG meeting held in Edenhope on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January provided an opportunity to reiterate the project objectives, raise issues & opportunities and to confirm the audit & consultation approach.

Key points raised during the PCG meeting were:

#### Project background

- This project is funded by Sport and Recreation Victoria (Community Sports Infrastructure Fund) and so is focused on recreational trails which promote active lifestyles and participation in physical activity.
- The vision and principles will be an important tool, giving the community and Council a framework to work with as assessment criteria for future projects.
- The Strategy will be developed acknowledging that sustainability and affordability of trails is of key importance in relation to resources available from Council, particularly financial resources.

#### Consultation

- Parks Victoria (contact: Zoe Wilkinson and team) will be a key stakeholder.
- The wider community will be consulted at the Draft stage of the project, to help identify priority projects.

#### Potential opportunities

- Trail networks within wider-region drive trails (e.g. Wimmera Cricket Trail)
- Nature-based tourism
- Indigenous tourism
- Cycle tourism
- Building on points of interest inside WWSC (e.g. Gateway to Big Desert, Little Desert etc.) and outside of WWSC area (e.g. Grampians, Mt Arapiles)
- Alternative types of trails (e.g. fishing trail, disc golf trails, orienteering, cyclocross).

## Neighbouring Local Government Areas

Relevant staff from the eight local government areas which border the West Wimmera Shire were contacted to discuss trail initiatives and opportunities. Table 16 provides a summary of the interview findings.

**Table 16: Consultation findings - neighbouring Local Government Areas**

Neighboring LGA	Summary of key discussion points
<b>Glenelg Shire Council</b>	The Glenelg Shire Council is currently preparing an <i>Open Space Strategy</i> . This will be an overarching strategic document to guide open space planning in the Shire over the next 20 years. Findings from the preliminary stages of this project relate to opportunities to develop local and regional trails in the Shire, this may include the development of rail trails. The Council Plan (2017) states the intention for Council to develop a <i>Tracks and Trails Strategy</i> in the near future.
<b>Southern Grampians Shire Council</b>	Southern Grampians Shire is currently preparing a <i>Recreation and Leisure Strategic Plan</i> . This is expected to be finalised in June 2018. The Grampians Region Cycling and Trails Infrastructure, Business and Master Plan is anticipated to give direction to trails across the region.
<b>Horsham Regional Council</b>	<p>Horsham Regional Council has been working towards developing a Bicycle Advisory Committee over recent years to help strategically plan for bicycle use. This committee has become most successful since primarily being formed of motivated and interested community members/bike users. The Advisory Committee is currently preparing a Strategic Plan which will help Council to plan for bicycle routes and infrastructure into the future. This Plan will go to Council for endorsement and then be publicly available (anticipated for mid-2018). The Committee's primary focus is on commuter routes but is also looking at recreational opportunities (including mountain biking). Martin Duke (Infrastructure Manager) is currently the Executive Officer of the Committee and will be happy to help the communication flow across the LGA borders of WWSC and Horsham Regional Council.</p> <p>There are some bicycle routes in the west of the Horsham Regional Council area which have been previously determined, such as the Arapiles Big Sky Bicycle Route. These are not in great condition and would require some level of investment to further promote.</p> <p>A cost-effective opportunity to explore connectivity may involve developing dual-purpose roads to accommodate cyclists for recreation and transport between townships.</p>
<b>Mildura Regional Council</b>	The <i>Mildura Regional Council Tracks and Trails Strategy</i> identifies various opportunities for trails along the Murray River, to the north of the Council area. No opportunities have been identified which link with West Wimmera Shire (to the south) as the landscape between the local governments is very remote and consists of the Big Desert Wilderness Area.



Neighboring LGA	Summary of key discussion points
<b>Hindmarsh Shire Council</b>	<p>Currently the main focus is the Wimmera River Discovery Trail (formerly Hindmarsh Trail). A feasibility study and masterplan was developed two years ago and Council has been awaiting funding and outcomes from the Grampians Region Cycling Trails Masterplan. The trail concept is to establish a cycling/walking trail along the Wimmera River corridor linking the Little Desert NP (Horseshoe Bend) and Wyperfeld NP (Lake Albucutya), with the initial focus being the section from Dimboola to Jeparit (Lake Hindmarsh). This has potential to be linked to Horsham via the Wimmera River, and potentially West Wimmera via the Little Desert trail networks.</p> <p>Opportunities may exist with exploring possibilities within the central block of the Little Desert NP (between the Kaniva-Edenhope Rd and the Nhill-Harrow Rd), there may be numerous options for on and off-road cycling routes. Ideally, these would align with initiatives such as the planned Silo Art Trail extension project and there is potentially some heritage route links that could provide themed trail products.</p> <p>There is also the Jane Duff annual ride/event that has been driven by Horsham Rural City Council commemorating the “Lost in the Bush” story which links Nhill with Mt Arapiles.</p>
<b>Wattle Range District Council (SA)</b>	<p>Wattle Range District Council (SA) is interested in connectivity between the region, there has been growing interest in the development of rail trails and region-wide drive trails. Wattle Range District Council was included in the regional trails strategy for the South East Local Government Association in 2015. There may now be opportunity to build upon this Strategy and further explore trail opportunities in the LGA.</p> <p>Opportunities may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Exploration of the Coonawarra Rail Trail Concept (Penola – Glenroy &amp; beyond)</li> <li>○ Enhancements to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the Mary Mackillop Trail / El Camino tours</li> <li>▪ existing coastal trails</li> <li>▪ trails in Canunda National Park</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Linking in with the wider concepts for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Mixed Dozen” Winery Trails</li> <li>▪ Kanawinka Volcanic Trail</li> <li>▪ Shipwreck Trail</li> <li>▪ Gold Rush Trail (Robe – Ballarat)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Naracoorte and Lucindale District Council (SA)</b>	<p>Naracoorte and Lucindale District Council’s key trail priority at the moment is developing an off-road walking and cycling route between Naracoorte and the World Heritage Site at the Naracoorte Caves.</p> <p>There are also various groups within communities who interested in the development of rail trails, e.g. Naracoorte to Penola (north south) and Naracoorte to Hynam (east west), although this has not progressed to date.</p> <p>Wimmera Highway (via Apsley) and Casterton – Naracoorte Road (via Langkoop) have been identified as key entry roads in to the Naracoorte Caves from the east.</p>
<b>Tatiara District Council (SA)</b>	<p>Tatiara District Council has been contacted but have not yet responded to queries relating to the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy:</p>

## Land Owners/Managers

Relevant staff from the agencies which manage land relating to trails in the West Wimmera Shire were contacted to discuss trail initiatives and opportunities. Table 17 provides a summary of the discussions and topics raised.

**Table 17: Consultation findings - land managers**

Land Manager	Summary of key discussion points
<b>Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP)</b>	<p><u>Land Owner Consent</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For land owner consent on DELWP-managed land, plans need to be submitted to DELWP, which we will review and then consider consent.</li> <li>This needs to include a map, showing where exactly the works will be undertaken and a description of the works.</li> <li>Need to address the following: native title, any proposed removal of native vegetation, any proposed impact to listed or protected species &amp; cultural heritage.</li> <li>The timeline for land owner consent, after all required information is provided, is roughly two months (depending on workloads).</li> <li>At sites with a Committee of Management, works require the approval of the Committee. If the committee approve in principle, they will approach DELWP for land owner consent.</li> </ul> <p><u>Glenelg River (canoe trail) (Harrow to Dergholm):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This section of river is Crown water frontage. There are a large number of water frontage licences, mainly grazing licences. There are also some extractive licences</li> <li>Getting approval for this trail may be difficult, as we would have to terminate all the licences within the footprint and appoint an ongoing future manager.</li> </ul> <p><u>Old Carpolac Rail Reserve</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vic Track are the land owner for most of the land. Anything done on this land would need permission from them. There are some places where the road and track intersect - local council will be responsible for these. There are some sections of unreserved Crown land, managed by DELWP. These sections would require land owner consent from DELWP for works to be undertaken on this land.</li> </ul>
<b>Parks Victoria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks Victoria's underlying philosophy is Healthy Parks Healthy People and they are the major venue provider for nature-based tourism in the state, managing at least 3700km of walking tracks which is part of an asset portfolio of approximately 28,000 assets worth over \$1.8 Billion.</li> <li>The local Parks Victoria Wimmera Area manages over 300 parks and reserves totalling around 200,000 Ha. This encompasses approximately 1900km of roads and tracks, many which function as informal walking tracks or 4WD access tracks. In addition, in the Wimmera area there are approximately 250km of formal walking tracks across the parks and reserves including the long distance Little Desert Discovery Walk.</li> <li>Parks Victoria has finite resources and needs to prioritise these. To do this, Parks Victoria works with other government agencies, uses relevant strategies such as state-wide tracks and trails strategies and uses a planning and prioritisation tool called the Visitor Experience Framework.</li> <li>Due to finite resources, Parks Victoria looks for creative solutions that provide sustainable funding for planning, construction and ongoing management. E.g: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Big Sky Bicycle Trail - local government fund construction &amp; maintenance</li> <li>Nhill boardwalk major repairs - local community fundraising efforts resulting in major contributions from the Freemasons, the Victorian State Government and Parks Victoria as well as the community of Nhill.</li> <li>Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park ongoing maintenance - Friends of Arapiles and Victoria Climbing Club collect donations and organise volunteer working bees to support track maintenance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Peak Trail Bodies and Local Trail Groups

Peak trail bodies and local trail groups were contacted to discuss trail initiatives and opportunities. Table 18 provides a summary of the discussions and topics raised.

**Table 18: Peak trail bodies and local trail groups - consultation findings**

Organisation	Summary of key discussion points
<b>Bushwalking Victoria</b>	<p>In relation to other recreation trail use and development, Bushwalking Victoria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advocates that all users adopt a 'minimum impact' ethos equivalent to that adopted by bushwalkers</li> <li>• opposes the use of trail bikes and 4WD vehicles off-road and on management and walker-only tracks in protected areas</li> <li>• advocates that all terrain bicycles should not be permitted off-track in protected areas and should not be permitted where they could cause danger to other users, erosion or land degradation.</li> <li>• advocates that horse riding should be permitted only where supported by an appropriate management plan</li> <li>• advocates that tracks should blend into the environment and be constructed to minimise environmental impacts e.g. erosion</li> <li>• supports the consistent use of relevant standards in the construction, maintenance, signage, and promotion of all walking tracks, <i>AS2156.2 – 2001 Walking tracks</i></li> <li>• advocates for comprehensive, consistent and accurate signage and mapping of all tracks to improve safety and to encourage more people to access the trails.</li> </ul>
<b>MTBA Victoria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no MTB trails currently identified in the West Wimmera Shire.</li> <li>• Trailforks is the go-to site for details on MTB trail networks in Australia. This a crowd sourced database so may have some inaccuracies but is still a great source of information. Many clubs affiliated with MTBA use Trailforks <a href="https://www.trailforks.com/region/australia/">https://www.trailforks.com/region/australia/</a></li> <li>• Both Creswick and Harcourt, west of Melbourne, have received investment for the development of mountain bike trails. Creswick - \$2M+ trail development project. Harcourt - 34 km's on MTB trails.</li> <li>• MTBA national events (32 per year) are delivered in partnership with a local clubs and with support of the LGA.</li> <li>• Ongoing maintenance of trails is an issue that land managers sometimes struggle with.</li> <li>• The vast majority of the 150+ clubs and trail care alliances affiliated with MTBA construct and maintain MTB trails on public land in partnership with land managers.</li> <li>• A supportive partnership between clubs and land managers and financial and human resources support from the land managers is vital to the success of the trails and relationships.</li> <li>• Other than MTBA and clubs, there are a number of private companies that deliver mountain bike events across Australia.</li> <li>• The Grampians Region Cycling &amp; Trails Infrastructure Business Master Plan may have identified potential MTB opportunities in the West Wimmera region.</li> </ul>
<b>Bicycle Network</b>	<p>Bicycle Network is not aware of any relevant current initiatives or trails developments in the West Wimmera region. Topics of conversation related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficulty funding and maintaining trails in areas with low population densities</li> <li>• value of rail trail developments can be "tested" through shorter routes between towns prior to investing heavily. Success can be monitored through community use of shorter trails.</li> <li>• range of background documents analysing and recording the economic benefits of trail developments, such as rail trails. If communities are supportive, these can great for regional areas. Case study: Murray to Mountains Rail Trail.</li> </ul>

Organisation	Summary of key discussion points
<b>Wimmera Mallee Trail Riders Club</b>	<p>Key points discussed with the Wimmera Mallee Trail Riders Club were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members are distributed across a wide region, including Goroke, Tolondo and Marnoo.</li> <li>• Ideal locations for club meets have dedicated free campsites, somewhere to cool down (e.g. Lake) and at least a few hours of trails around the location. For example, the club hosts meets at Lake Ratzcastle.</li> <li>• Club meets are generally 2 nights, 3 days of camping</li> <li>• Riding is generally on tracks and management tracks through crown land</li> <li>• Rides vary from 2km to 20km per day, depending on who is attending</li> </ul>
<b>Wimmera Bushwalking Club</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wimmera Bushwalking Club has not done a lot of walking in the West Wimmera to date, other than a walk around Apsley during Spring to look at flowers.</li> <li>• The club has done some walks in the Little Desert – but not the section that falls within West Wimmera.</li> <li>• The club is not aware of trails within the West Wimmera Shire which would be of interest to members. Members are generally interested in more mountainous terrain e.g. Grampians, Mt Arapiles etc. However, do occasionally undertake the odd 'flower walks' which are usually on flatter ground. These can be in the Little Desert, Grampians or elsewhere.</li> <li>• If the club was made aware of existing or new trails (walking or other) in the West Wimmera, they would certainly consider exploring them and including them on our walk program.</li> <li>• As many members are gradually getting older, the club may look for more gentle options in the future.</li> </ul>
<b>Casterton and District Trail Riders Club</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members are distributed across a very wide area, coming from as far north as the Balmoral area (near Harrow)</li> <li>• The furthest trail ride organised by the club was in the Northern Grampians region</li> <li>• The club rides are usually undertaken over a weekend, including 1-night camping</li> <li>• Ideal tracks to use are on formed roads (minor roads rather than major roads)</li> <li>• Ride organisers map out the intended route well in advance and pursue permissions if required from landowners. The majority of routes used are maintenance tracks on Crown land or State Forests.</li> <li>• An area used in the WWSC area is through Dergholm State Park – using management tracks. There are also some tracks to use in bushland around Connewirricoo and Harrow. It would be great if some ideal trails/routes along maintained tracks were mapped to encourage use</li> <li>• One issue which is common is that campgrounds do not have sufficient space to cater for cars towing horse floats, or space to set up horse yards. Harrow campground has a lot of space and would be good to use for a club ride.</li> <li>• The club usually brings their own horse yards and are self-sufficient regarding feed, water and rubbish removal.</li> </ul>
<b>Dergholm Endurance Ride Event</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The event includes a number of rides over a 24 hour period (between midnight Friday and midnight Saturday. 160km, 120km, 80km, 20km rides This year longest ride will be 120km (160km only when they are hosting the Championships)</li> <li>• All rides start from the Recreation Area, Dergholm and run through scrub and a bit of forest on Crown land and road reserves (not private land)</li> <li>• Attracts around 80-200 participants</li> <li>• Has been running for 8-10 years</li> <li>• This is one event in the calendar – organised by Trish and husband David. They are not for profit organisation – they would always appreciate some sponsorship!</li> <li>• They would be keen for help to install showers at the Rec Area. Toilet facilities are minimal</li> <li>• There may be opportunity to make the ride a permanent trail (some or all of it)</li> </ul>

# 9. Analysis of Trail Provision

The following table provides an overview of the respective strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and areas of concern relating to the provision of trails across the Shire.

**Table 19: Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and areas of concern**

Strengths	Opportunities
Proximity to nationally and internationally significant tourism and outdoor recreation destinations (e.g. Mount Arapiles and the Grampians – rock climbing, various National Parks, State Park and Conservation Parks, Naracoorte Caves World Heritage Site, Bool Lagoon Ramsar Site, Kanawinka Geopark etc).	Increasing participation in individualised sport and fitness activities (walking, running, mountain biking, horse riding); high participation rates of bushwalking/hiking
Highly varied and diverse landscape settings, both within the Shire and the surrounding regions	Trails offer low cost easily accessible recreation opportunities
Located on major thoroughfare between Melbourne and Adelaide	Links to tourism businesses, through development of eco-tourism opportunities
Existing river and water-based recreation activities across the Shire	Enhanced connectivity across the region through drive trail networks linking walk/cycle trails.
Existing drive trails taking users to sites within the Shire (Cricket Trail, Major Mitchell Trail, Kanawinka Geotrail)	Cross administration boundary cooperation
Existing regional art/drive trails with potential to expand into the Shire (Silo Art Trail)	Riverside/lakeside activation
Interesting and unique indigenous and European heritage	Development of on-road cycling networks, opportunities for “fat biking” and potential connectivity via disused rail easements.
Coordinated planning approach to the provision of open space, outdoor recreation and tourism	Health benefits - improving the community's physical and psychological wellbeing
Unique and highly diverse environments with great opportunities for bird watching.	Develop and encourage environmental, land care and “friends of” groups
Distinctive landscape features (e.g. Bayley's Rocks, Glenelg River, Little Desert, Lake Wallace)	Develop a more diverse range of themed trail experiences (e.g. wetlands, habitat, bird watching)
Popularity of 4WD in Big Desert Wilderness Area, Little Desert National Park and Ngarkat Conservation Park	Improved interpretive signage
Proximity to renowned multi-day trail (Great South West Walk)	Showcasing of the region's landscape and cultural heritage (where appropriate)

<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Areas of Concern</b>
Fragmented trails network	Population decline
No identified Universal Access trails (Grade 1)	Inconsistent provision and accuracy of key trail attributes on signage
Limited trail support infrastructure (e.g. car parking, trail signage, toilets)	Limited/dispersed availability of trail related information (online or printed brochures/booklets)
Varied range of signage styles and condition (often relating to the age of the sign)	Limited availability of trail information at Visitor Information Centres
Limited signage, mapping and promotional material	Limited promotion and marketing of trails
No single source providing comprehensive information on trails within the region	Potential impacts upon environmental and cultural heritage values
Varied land tenure	
Not all trails are definitively named/identified	
Some trails are difficult to locate and/or traverse due to condition or lack of signage	
Currently no trail user/ advocacy groups based in the Shire	

Opportunities exist within the West Wimmera Shire to further develop the recreational trails network, building upon the wider region's assets and promoting the varied landscapes across the Shire. Figure 20 and Figure 21 on the following pages visually present the character zones of the West Wimmera Shire trail opportunities.

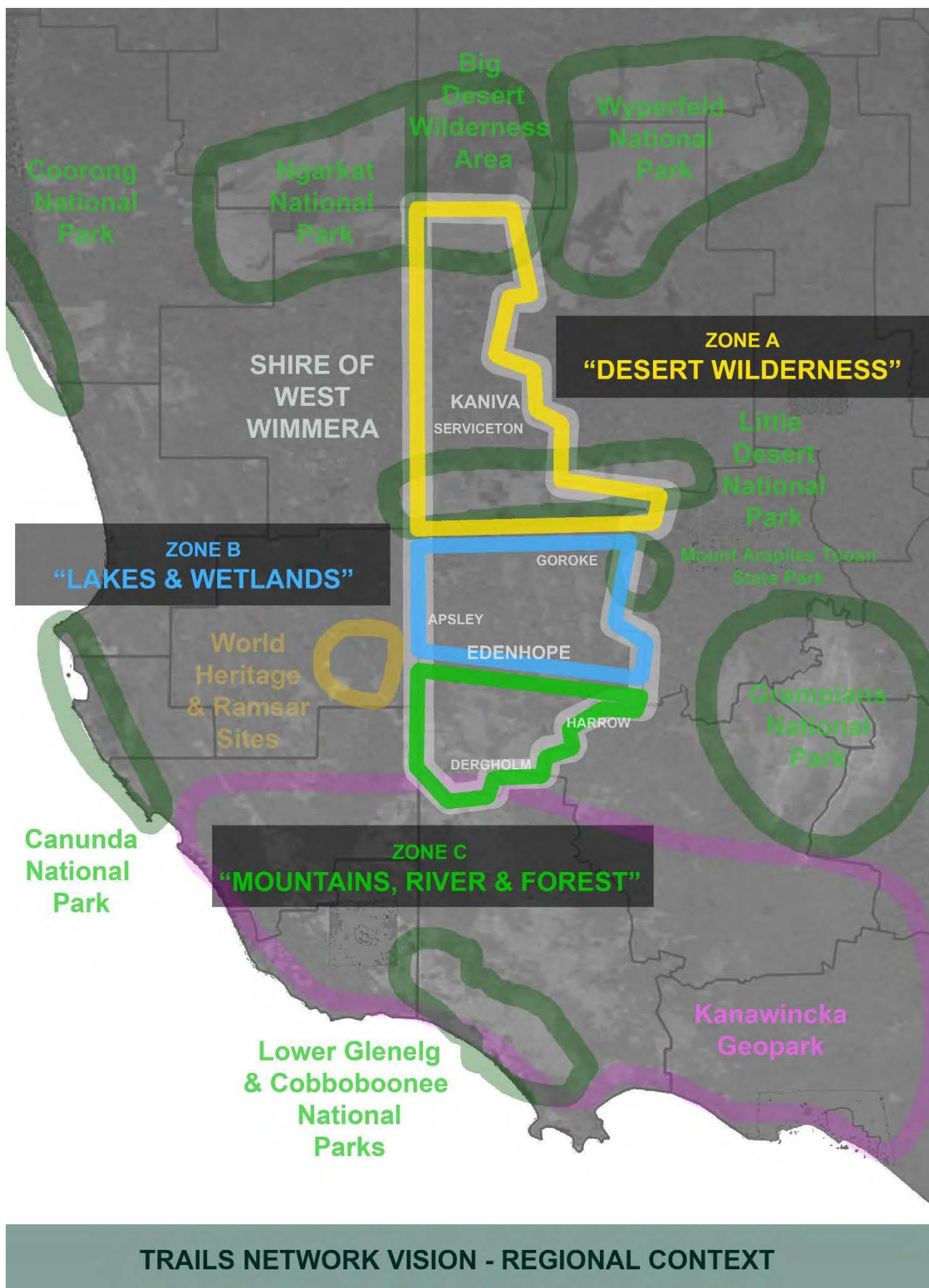
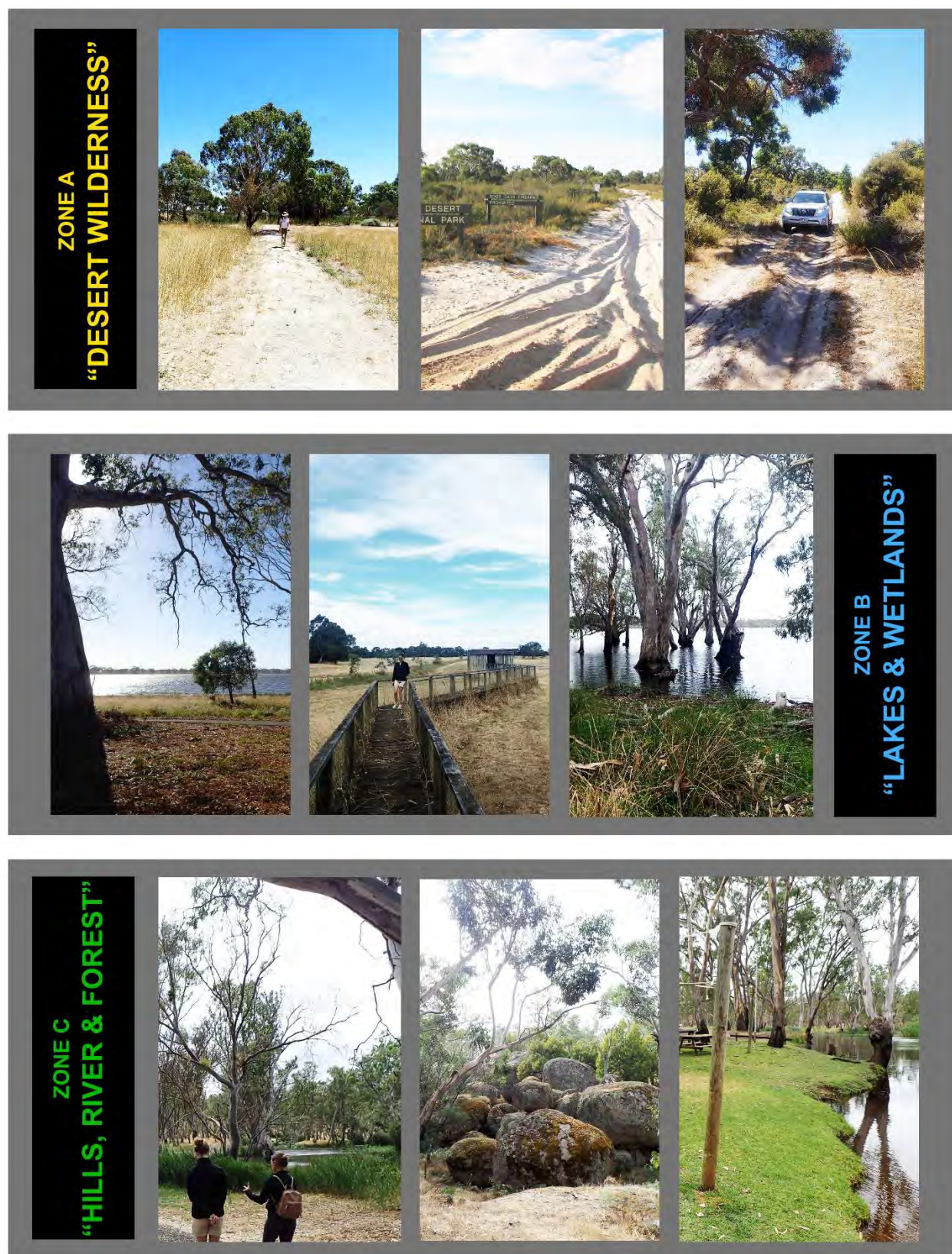


Figure 20: Trails network vision - regional context





## SHIRE OF WEST WIMMERA - CHARACTER ZONES

Figure 21: Character zones

# 10. Project Benchmarks

The West Wimmera Shire possesses distinctive attributes that can be harnessed to develop the trails network, such as the wetlands, river, desert areas, fauna, flora, heritage, history and cultural sites. Throughout Australia there are prime examples of trails that have been well designed to promote, attract, protect and offer people an opportunity to pursue outdoor recreation activities. The table below summarises why the trail examples have been chosen and the relevance to the West Wimmera Region.

**Table 20: Project benchmarks**

<b>June Walking and Cycling Routes, NSW</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	<p>Since 2000, the town of June (population 4,762) in the NSW Riverina region has gradually developed a network of walking and cycling paths. The path network is effective in linking schools and sporting facilities to the town centre so that people can walk or cycle around the town to meet their everyday needs and features a series of loops which are suited for more recreational use.</p> <p>This initiative has gained support the local community as well as health professionals. The trails have signage indicating routes and stances and are promoted with a brochure/map. These brochures/maps are distributed to local doctors, enabling them to 'prescribe' physical activity to their patients by encouraging them to use these marked walking routes.</p> <p>While it is difficult to determine how much the path network has reduced the reliance on cars, it is reported that considerable anecdotal evidence from parents suggests that they "feel comfortable sending their children off to sporting venues on foot or on their bicycle knowing that there is a good safe network for them to travel on".</p>
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	<p>The population of the West Shire has high rates of physical inactivity, obesity and preventable mortality. In order to stop the continual increase in these rates it is essential that infrastructure developments facilitate and encourage more active lifestyles.</p> <p>Townships such as Kaniva and Edenhope offer opportunities to improve connectivity between schools, sporting facilities and other key destinations (e.g. wetlands/lakes) through providing safe, clearly defined active transport routes.</p>
<b>Mudgeeraba Parkrun, QLD</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	<p>The QLD Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing provided \$7,494 of funding to help establish the new Mudgeeraba Parkrun event. The funding enabled the running community to set up the Mudgeeraba parkrun much sooner than if it had to fundraise to purchase the initial set up costs.</p> <p>There is now a regular average group of 83 runners per week who are out and getting active. Parkrun used the funds to purchase barcode scanners and first aid kits to support the new running location at Mudgeeraba. By 2014, the program had engaged over 463 runners which was anticipated to increase to 1000 runners over the following 12 months.</p> <p>Mudgeeraba parkrun is now conducted every Saturday at 7am and is sustainable due to the dedicated volunteers who give their time.</p>
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	<p>Communities in West Wimmera Shire would significantly benefit from increased physical activity for its range of benefits including health outcomes and social connectedness. Programs, such as Parkrun, offer an existing structure for community members to access weekly fitness events at no cost.</p>

Greater Shepparton on the Moove, VIC	
<b>Overview</b>	<p>Greater Shepparton on the Moove is an initiative of Greater Shepparton City Council and many local health promotion organisations. This project forms part of Council's Municipal Public Health Plan. The main aim of the program is for Greater Shepparton to be renowned as the Mooving City, encouraging residents and visitors to get active by walking. The project website is: <a href="http://www.getmoovingshepparton.com.au/">http://www.getmoovingshepparton.com.au/</a></p> <p>Programs and events the Council uses to promote walking include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pedometer Challenge</b> This challenge is held annually in <i>Walktober</i>. Workplaces are encouraged to enter multiple teams to compete against other workplaces and community groups. Both individual and team entrants can view their progress from the leader board and be in the running to win prizes.</li> <li>• <b>The Summer Stroll Series</b> This series is held in six small towns. The series involves a short walk around the township and concludes at either the local recreation reserve or swimming pool.</li> <li>• <b>Audit and mapping</b> Maps have been developed for several walking routes throughout the municipality, with copies available the Greater Shepparton on the Moove website.</li> <li>• <b>Walking Group Directory</b> Council has coordinated a directory of walking groups in the municipality including details such as departure location, time, cost, intensity, average age groups and contact details.</li> <li>• <b>Guided Group Walking Program</b> Older adults living in Greater Shepparton are encouraged to participate in a guided group walking program. Walkers meet three mornings a week (Monday to Wednesday) and then set off for a 30-minute walk around Victoria Park Lake led by a Fitness Instructor. Walkers return to share morning tea and a chat.</li> </ul>
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	Programs and events offer a great way to encourage the local community and visitors to get out and use trails. It is important that a range of programs are offered to suit varying levels of fitness, interests and ages.
Bike-friendly Barossa, SA	
<b>Overview</b>	<p>The Barossa Council has developed the Bike-Friendly Barossa behaviour change initiative and launched the Barossa Cycle Hub, the first regional cycle hub in South Australia. These complementary projects have involved a significant investment in cycling infrastructure and facilities, with the aim of increasing opportunities for transport and leisure cycling. In addition, cycling education and facilities support social connections and community engagement, removing barriers to participation. This project recognised that increasing cycling tourism has economic benefits for the region and worked to attract cycling based events. The region had 1,890 cycle enquiries in 2015-16 and bike hire which generated \$30,000 in revenue.</p>
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	<p>This is one example of the economic impact which can be experienced through investment in recreational cycling trails which are appropriate to the local context and landscapes. The varied landscapes of the West Wimmera Shire may offer opportunity to establish alternative bike trails (e.g. for fat bikes), with an effort to help promote new cycling events and further develop existing events (e.g. Tour de Frances &amp; Tour de Henley).</p>



<b>Bike &amp; Hike Narrandera, NSW</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	A network of on and off-road walking and cycling trails that guide the visitors around the local town and to local points of interest, through adjacent riverside, lakeside and forested areas. Promoted via an A3 colour brochure
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	All the Shire's local townships would benefit from enhanced visitor experiences to show off local points of interest, including formalising intuitive routes to connect key destinations in and around the towns plus enhanced promotion and marketing.
<b>Winton Wetlands, VIC</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	The wetland area offers a wide variety of activities including canoeing, walking, cycling, bird watching and boating with a good online presence
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	The Shire of West Wimmera benefits from an abundance of wetlands, in particular the central region around Apsley and Edenhope and extending beyond the Shire's boundaries. These have the potential to offer a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities and act as a draw card to the region
<b>Waikerie Bird Watcher's Trail, SA</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	A self-guided tour promoting the birdwatching locations, wetlands and scenic locations in and around Waikerie.
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	The West Wimmera Shire has similar attributes with Kaniva and Edenhope being key service centres with small outlying townships offering scenic drives, historical trails, wetlands trails and birdwatching prospects.
<b>Blackwood River Canoe Trail, WA</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	A multi-day canoe trail experience with varying degrees of challenge and multiple opportunities for overnight stays, promoted via downloadable brochure
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	Accessible sections of the Glenelg River in the vicinity of Harrow and Dergholm may present opportunities to develop and formalise canoe/kayak access (and associated infrastructure) and promote to locals and visitors to the region
<b>Mudlangga to Yertabulti Track, SA</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	The track is based around Port Adelaide Enfield and LeFevre Peninsula and shares the stories/ experience of 15 much respected members of the Aboriginal community
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	West Wimmera and the wider region hold great significance to the traditional Aboriginal owners, the Barengi Gadjin and Gunditj Mirring communities with songlines and stories linking across a wide region. There are multiple opportunities to develop sensitive and culturally appropriate visitor experiences around these themes
<b>Bushwalking in the Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park, SA</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	The Flinders Ranges has a selection of hikes/walks for all types of individuals and promotes this in a succinct manner.
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	The Shire has a diverse and varied landscape that can be showcased through an improved and diversified trail network suitable for walkers, cyclists with a range of interests and abilities. Formalised trails in areas such as the Little Desert National Park are likely to encourage active participation for both locals and visitors.

<b>Grampians Drive – Iconic 4WD Experiences, VIC</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	This 4WD drive experience (alongside many others) is promoted by Parks Victoria, with detailed information available online including mapping and safety information
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	The Big Desert Wilderness Area, Little Desert National Park and the Goroke State Forest offer a diverse range of 4WD experiences catering for all abilities – enhanced promotion and formalisation of additional routes would increase the profile and improve accessibility of these experiences (acknowledging the need to protect environmental and cultural heritage values)
<b>Trail Bike Riding – Otways, VIC</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	70km loop ride with visitor information area and amenities, promoted via online information brochure
<b>Relevance to West Wimmera Shire</b>	Little Desert National Park and the Goroke State Forest could provide opportunities to formalise loop trails or a network of trails suitable for trail bike riding (acknowledging the need to protect environmental and cultural heritage values)

# 11. Potential Funding Opportunities

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A variety of funding sources to support infrastructure and programming development are potentially available for recreational trail development projects and are identified below. Funding can be procured from a variety of sources locally and at state and federal levels. These programs change regularly, and it is important to contact the funding agency/organisation to get up to date details on funding guidelines and determine eligibility and a funding strategy eligibility.

## **Federal Government**

**Building Better Regions Fund** - provides funding for infrastructure and community investment projects that will create jobs, drive economic growth and build stronger regional communities into the future. Refer <https://www.business.gov.au/assistance/building-better-regions-fund>

## **Victorian Government**

**Community Sports Infrastructure Fund** - The Community Sports Infrastructure Fund provides grants for planning, building new, and improving existing facilities where communities conduct, organise and participate in sport and recreation. Refer <http://sport.vic.gov.au/grants-and-funding/our-grants/community-sports-infrastructure-fund>

**Visitor Economy Program Stream** - Infrastructure projects under this Regional Infrastructure Fund program stream will create new or redevelop existing tourism and cultural assets that demonstrate a significant impact on the visitor economy. In particular, projects must attract increased visitors to the region and deliver an improved experience for those who visit and reside in regional Victoria. Refer <http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/programs-and-grants/visitor-economy>

**Rural Development Program Stream** - This program stream assists rural Victoria's businesses and communities by investing in local infrastructure, creating opportunities for economic growth and enhancing the appeal and liveability of rural towns and surrounding areas. It aims to assist the growth of rural Victoria by providing grants for infrastructure projects that have the potential to stimulate economic activity in rural towns and their surrounding areas. Projects that will generally be funded include:

- infrastructure that connects communities, links recreation to retail precincts, attracts visitors and promotes recreation activity such as rail trails and walking tracks
- heritage and cultural initiatives of economic significance to the local community such as renewal of historic buildings and sites, arts and cultural centres or resource facilities
- civic renewal to enhance liveability and improve business opportunities such as township entrance points, streetscaping, signage and upgrading of open space areas

Refer <http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/programs-and-grants/rural-development>

## **Commercial and Private Sector Funding**

Commercial and private sector funding is often used by organisations to assist with facility developments and ongoing operations. Opportunities such as facility naming rights and in-kind donations of labour and materials are a potential resource for new facility developments and upgrades.

**Jetstar's Flying Start Program** – provides grants of up to \$30,000 to support community groups and organisations to fund a project that will enrich the lives of people in their local community.

Refer <http://www.jetstar.com/au/en/flyingstart>

### **Not-for-profit organisations**

**Australian Sports Foundation** - The foundation operates the Fundraising4Sport Program to increase opportunities for Australians to participate in sport or excel in sport performance. Refer <https://asf.org.au/>.

**Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal** – provides grant funding for charitable purposes that benefits the residents of Australia's rural, regional or remote communities. Refer: [http://www.frrr.org.au/cb\\_pages/grants.php](http://www.frrr.org.au/cb_pages/grants.php)

**Trusts and Foundations** - There are numerous trusts and foundations established in Australia and a number provide funding for projects such as this. Often they are established by large corporations. Refer [www.philanthropy.org.au](http://www.philanthropy.org.au)

**Peak Bodies, Associations and Clubs** - Contributions from clubs and associations developing facilities and other initiatives is common. This may include funds generated through fundraising efforts, loans and savings. Peak bodies and associations may also have funds which could be contributed towards the projects.

### **Other trails resourcing mechanisms**

There are other not for profit organisations that provide on the ground support in relation to trail maintenance and development, such as:

- Green Corps
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- “Friends of” Groups



# Appendices

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## Appendix 1: Strategic Document Review

### State Documents

#### Victoria's Trails Strategy 2014-2024 (2014)

This Strategy was prepared to provide a whole-of-government approach and clear vision to the planning, management and promotion of trails in Victoria.

*Vision: for Victoria to be recognised as a leading trail-based destination that provides a diverse range of quality trail experiences for visitors, while strengthening the Victorian economy and improving the health, wellbeing and lifestyle of the community.*

#### Key initiatives:

- improve the quality of trail experiences in Victoria
- increase awareness and visitation to Victorian trails
- support complementary tourism and retail businesses
- seek improved understanding of trail-user markets, their motivations and influences.

Parks Victoria manages 4,000 km or 50% of recreational trails; the Department of Environment and Primary Industries manages 2,800 km or 35% of the network; and Local Government and Committees of Management manage 1,200 km or 15% of the trail network. Of the trails managed by Local Government and Committees of Management, some 800 km are rail trails.<sup>4</sup> Victoria is recognised for its range of rail trails that provide opportunities for recreational walking, cycling and horse riding. Rail trails also provide a transport function for local commuters, moving between work and home, while others, such as the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, are tourism attractions in their own right.

#### Opportunities for Victoria:

- Creating an 'enabling environment'
- An internet-reliant audience
- Nature-based tourism
- Building on regional strengths
- Improving Victoria's overall brand health

#### Strategic Directions:

1. Provide a strategic framework for trail investment
2. Support effective planning, development and maintenance of trails
3. Provide high quality information on trails
4. Create better trail experiences
5. Market trails

The Victorian Government recognises there is a need for a mix of trails that are significant at different levels of the state's trail hierarchy (international, domestic, intrastate and local).

**Figure** shows trails across Victoria which are of State, National or International significance. The Grampians Peaks Trail is the closest to the West Wimmera Shire.

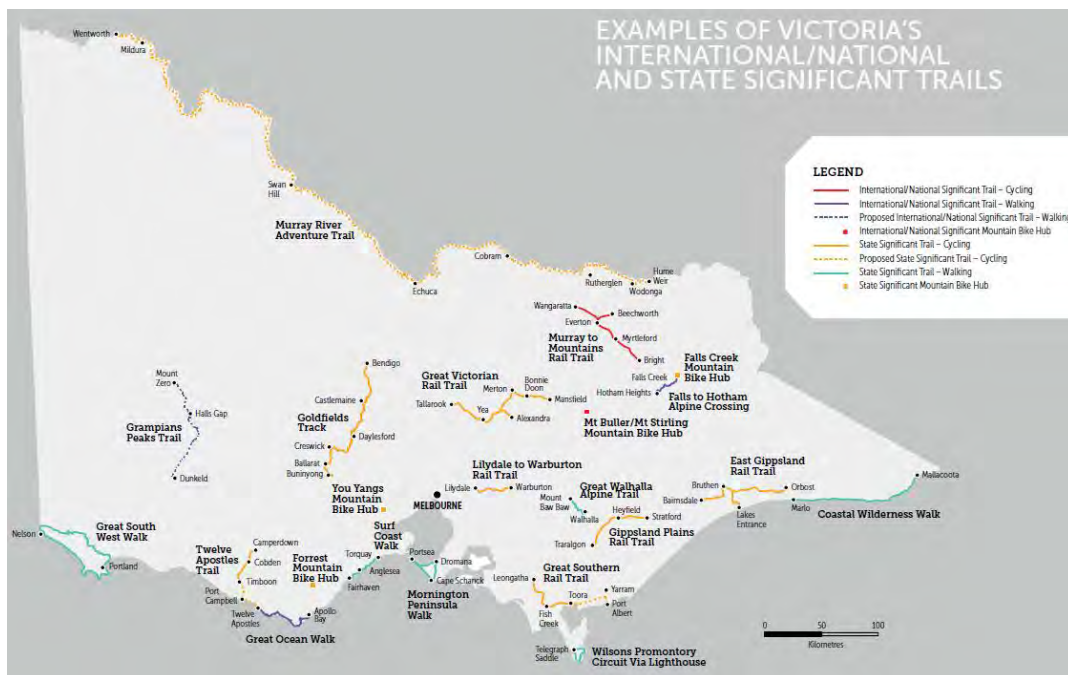


Figure: Examples of Victoria's International/National and State Significant Trails

## Active Victoria – A Strategic Framework for Sport and Recreation in Victoria 2017-2021 (2017)

This document provides a framework for local Councils, Federal Government, sporting associations and the local community clubs to work together to strengthen the sport and recreation sector, boost participation and ensure every Victorian has the chance to be involved. The vision is to be 'more active' with an increased proportion of Victorians participating in sport and active recreation.

Six strategic directions have been established to achieve this and the development of recreational trails in West Wimmera would contribute in some way to all six strategic directions as outlined below:

### 1. Meeting demand

- Increase the capacity of sport and active recreation infrastructure
- Increased participation opportunities
- Flexible and innovative participation options
- Invest in regional and local infrastructure

### 2. Broader and more inclusive participation

- *Flexible participation options for under-represented communities*

### 3. Additional focus on active recreation

- Invest in infrastructure that enables active recreation

### 4. Build system resilience and capacity

- *Support volunteers and the sport and active recreation workforce*

### 5. Connect investment in events, high performance and infrastructure

- *Strengthen linkages between events and grassroots participation*

### 6. Work together for shared outcomes

- *Ensure complimentary investment to create collective impact by integrating sport and active recreation with other policy goals.*

## **Victoria's 2020 Tourism Strategy (2013)**

Victoria's 2020 Tourism Strategy is a whole-of-government document providing a clear vision of how the tourism industry can increase its economic and social contribution to the State. Through seven priority areas, this strategy outlines how Tourism Victoria, working with key stakeholders, will implement identified actions to realise the potential of the tourism market. The major directions identified in this strategy include:

- increasing focus on growth markets, such as China, India, Malaysia and Indonesia;
- building stronger collaboration between the Victorian Government and regions to ensure growth in visitation;
- increasing the tourism benefits of major and business events;
- identifying and realising key tourism investments.

## **Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28 - Increasing cycling for transport (2017)**

Vision: We will increase the number, frequency and diversity of Victorians cycling for transport by:

- investing in a safer, lower-stress, better-connected network, prioritising strategic cycling corridors
- making cycling a more inclusive experience.

The Cycling Strategy recognises the important role that cycling plays in regional Victoria – as part of the transport system, an enjoyable recreation activity, a healthy form of exercise and importantly as a tourism drawcard.

The government has committed to prioritising active transport in regional Victoria by providing good pathways and signs, examining ways to carry more bicycles on regional trains and provide more bicycle cages and racks at regional stations and bus terminals.

Goals:

1. Invest in a safer, lower-stress, better-connected network
2. Make cycling a more inclusive experience

## **Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy (2016)**

This Strategy sets a goal of increasing visitor spending to \$36.5 billion by 2025 and identifies nine priorities to achieve this ambitious goal:

- More private sector investment
- Build on the potential of regional and rural Victoria
- Improved branding and marketing
- Maximising the benefits of events
- Improved experiences for visitors from Asia
- Better tourism infrastructure
- Improved access into and around Victoria
- Skilled and capable sector
- More effective coordination

## **Protecting Victoria's Environment –Biodiversity 2037 (2017)**

This document is Victoria's plan for the future of Victoria's biodiversity. The Biodiversity Plan embraces transformational developments in thinking about conservation and the sustainability of human civilisation and economic development.

- Priority 4: Increase opportunities for all Victorians to have daily connections with nature.

- Priority 7: Help to create more liveable and climate-adapted communities.
- Priority 8: Better care for and showcase Victoria's environmental assets as world-class natural and cultural tourism attractions.
- Priority 17: Deliver excellence in management of all land and waters.

### **Water for Victoria – Water Plan (2016)**

Water for Victoria is the Victorian Government's adaptation response to the impacts of climate change on our water resources and on the availability of water in the future.

The document outlines the priorities for each of Victoria's regions. Priorities in the south west of Victoria which are relevant to the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy include:

- Aboriginal Water Program – Barengi Gadjin Wimmera River Project Stage One
- \$760,000 Victorian Government funding – East Grampians West Wimmera feasibility study
- Continued salinity management
- Emergency water supply points for dryland farmers
- Regional floodplain management strategy led by Wimmera Catchment Management Authority
- Riparian works led by Wimmera Catchment Management Authority
- Five yearly assessment of Western Region Sustainable Water Strategy in 2017

The key actions relevant to the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy are:

- Chapter 7: Recognising recreational values
  - *Action 7.1 Include recreational values in water and waterway planning*
  - *Action 7.2 Help communities understand how to achieve their recreational objectives*
  - *Action 7.3 Support recreation at water storages through infrastructure and better information*

*We will support the wellbeing of rural and regional communities who enjoy the recreational benefits our regional waterways provide. We will consider these values in the way we manage water.*

## Parks Victoria Shaping our Future (2014)

Parks Victoria's vision is to be a world-class park service ensuring healthy parks for healthy people. In delivering our vision, Parks Victoria will focus on the following themes:

- **Connecting People and Parks** – We will forge strong partnerships with people to conserve Victoria's special places and make them accessible to all.

### Goals:

- Encourage more people, to be more active, more often in parks through offering activities and experiences that improve people's physical, emotional and social wellbeing
- Provide contemporary facilities and information to encourage park experiences and tourism
- Unlock the energy of partnerships and park volunteers
- Promote parks as inspirational settings for learning and education

### Key relevant actions

- encourage sensible and sensitive private sector investment in nature-based tourism facilities in parks
  - focus on providing contemporary park facilities in locations that are the most important to visitor experiences
  - promote opportunities for adventure experiences in parks via organised providers, such as clubs, groups and licensed tour operators
  - connect visitors to urban parks and encourage their enjoyment and confidence through relevant park information, facilities and experiences, including utilising new technologies
  - undertake well-considered park planning with the community to ensure the best use of Victoria's open spaces
  - work with partners to promote safe, water-based activities
  - focus on supporting diverse volunteer programs that bring benefits to people and parks
  - explore innovative ways to tap into community skills, knowledge and enthusiasm
  - establish new community-based partnerships that benefit people and parks
  - use the latest technology, methods and materials when designing, building, rebuilding, relocating or repairing visitor facilities.
  - develop a new, accessible and engaging interactive web platform which supports social media, advanced applications and community-generated content
  - work with partners to profile fascinating species and places using electronic media and through community participation
  - support initiatives by partners that involve the youth, newly arrived Victorians and under-represented groups to create and share new expressions of the park experience
- **Conserving Victoria's Special Places** – We will aim to ensure that our valued parks, and the natural assets and cultural heritage they hold, can be enjoyed now and by future generations.
  - **Providing Benefits Beyond Park Boundaries** – We will work with the community, businesses and partners, under government guidance, to plan and collectively achieve great outcomes for Victoria's magnificent parks and the landscapes they are located within.
  - **Enhancing Organisational Excellence** – We will constantly strive to be an innovative, world-class park service. We will continue to undertake new research, be responsive to change, and seek out advances in technology that allow us to plan, deliver and perform to a world-class standard.

## Regional Documents

### Grampians Region Cycling Masterplan – Discussion Paper (April 2018)

This project aims to ‘establish the Grampians Region as a premier tourism destination for cycling and trail related experiences’. The project needs to consider investment required to achieve this and the need to encourage visitor dispersal across the region to create broader tourism and economic benefits.

Key opportunities identified for the West Wimmera Region:

- **Grampians and the Wimmera home of the Fat Bike**  
An unusual niche which can be explored is the development of mountain bike trails specifically for Fat Bikes. Fat bikes are designed for snow and sand, and the Grampians and the Wimmera have unique soils in the context of Australia that are very sandy. An example is the reserve which links Halls Gap to Lake Fyans is excessively sandy, which may not be suited to a standard mountain bike, however would be very suitable for ‘fat bikes’. This could be created as a niche for the area which sets it apart from other mountain biking areas in Victoria.
- **Edenhope Fat Bike Cross Country Loop**  
Edenhope in the West Wimmera has a number of tourism assets that have potential for enhancement including Lake Wallace, Edenhope Golf Club, racecourse and airport. The development of a small mountain bike course that would complement the township and provide locals and visitors an easy and fun circuit to explore. The Edenhope bushland can be explored for this.
- **Dergholm Mountain Bike Trail**  
Some mountain biking activity has been recorded in Dergholm State Park. Further investigation of the opportunities for a formalised cross-country circuit should be considered.
- **Goroke to Natimuk Rail Trail**  
There is potential for a link trail using the rail alignment to link Garoke to Natimuk. This would traverse through scenic areas including Arapiles State Park
- **Kaniva to Serviceton Rail Trail**
- There is a proposal to link Kaniva to Serviceton via a rail easement. The trail would be around 25 kilometres in length.
- **Event: Wimmera Cycling Gran Fondo**  
The Wimmera is not well known for cycling, however is well suited to road cyclists who prefer flatter rides. A gran fondo loop should be devised, commencing in Horsham and traversing through the towns and villages of the Wimmera.
- **Silo Art Trail**  
The silo art trail could be used by road cyclists to tour through the Wimmera. This could be a potential bike packing experience.

Key opportunities identified which may link to the West Wimmera region:

- **Horsham – Natimuk Road Cycling Cluster**  
Horsham has a strong local road cycling culture, and whilst there are a number of highways that meet in Horsham that are not suited to road cycling due to safety concerns, there are short to medium loops that are largely flat that start from Horsham.  
Longer road rides from Horsham include out to Natimuk and Mt Arapiles which provide improved amenity and are potentially a stronger tourism cycling product.  
Loops around Mt Arapiles and up Mt Arapiles are also popular with local and visitors alike.
- **Horsham to Natimuk Trail**  
Establishment of a trail link in the easement of the highway that links Horsham with Natimuk.



## **Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Growth Plan (2014)**

This plan provides a regional approach to land use planning in the Wimmera Southern Mallee and identifies opportunities for encouraging and accommodating growth and managing change over the next 30 years. The plan covers the municipalities of Hindmarsh, Horsham, Northern Grampians, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack.

### **Future directions – Tourism:**

- Encourage the development of the tourism sector by building on strengths around environment and heritage assets and agriculture
- Direct larger scale tourism activities into existing settlements where infrastructure is capable of supporting development
- Encourage smaller boutique tourism activities in rural areas where they are compatible with farming activities
- Support infrastructure investment where it will maximise benefits to tourism
- Protect and enhance the features of the region that attract tourists
- Enhance Halls Gap and the Grampians National Park as a tourism focal point for the region

Specific opportunities identified involve expanding the range of tourist experiences offered in the region involve enhancing less-visited assets such as the desert parks, wilderness areas and large lakes.

### **Future directions – Landscape and heritage**

- Use landscape assessment studies across the region to define valued landscape characteristics and identify areas of regional significance
- Protect landscapes and cultural heritage places from development that detracts from its significance
- Encourage initiatives that are compatible with heritage conservation to allow residents and visitors to engage with the history of the region

### **Future directions - Infrastructure**

- Infrastructure to support tourism opportunities, particularly around the region's key environmental assets, for example the Grampians Peaks Trail.

### **Opportunities to improve transport networks include:**

- improved bicycle access.
- enabling or managing diverse travel choices such as walking and cycling links
- expanding road space through widening, sealed shoulders, duplication, clearways and cycle paths
- tourist routes for all users, including cyclists
- facilities such as wayside rest areas, signage and information hubs
- marketing such as package tours for daytrips.

## **Wimmera Southern Mallee: Socio-economic value of Recreational & Environmental Water (2017)**

This project was designed to make an initial assessment of the economic and social contribution made by the local weirs, lakes and rivers to the regional economy. This assessment is year one of a longer term annual study. The project encompassed assessments of 24 lakes, weir pools and rivers around the region. The West Wimmera Shire's water bodies were: Lake Charlegrark; Lake Wallace & Glenelg River at Harrow.

It has been estimated that the economic contributions of the water facilities to West Wimmera Shire is \$2.619 million. The contributions are categorised and shown in the figures below.

Figure 7.1 2016-17 Estimated Recreational Water Economic Contribution: West Wimmera Shire

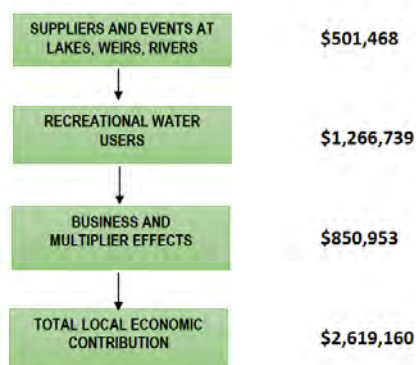
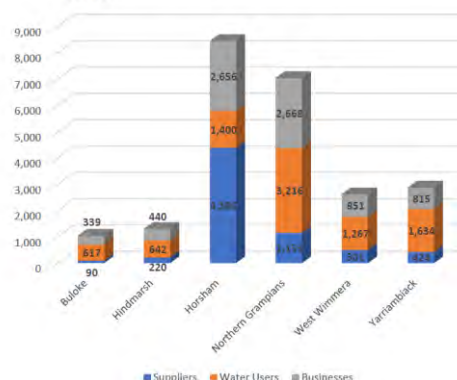


Figure E1 Estimated Recreational Water Economic Contribution to Local Areas, 2016-17: (\$'000)



The calculated total health benefits from participation at WSM recreational water facilities in 2016-17 include: Physical: Annual benefit: \$7,955,132; Mental benefit: \$ 618,421; Total annual health benefit \$8,573,553.

### Wotjobaluk Country (Wimmera and Grampians) Indigenous Tourism Feasibility Study (2017)

This project explores the potential to develop Indigenous tourism enterprise activities for 'Wotjobaluk Country'<sup>1</sup> in the Wimmera-Mallee region. It covers the land area for which the Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) is the Registered Aboriginal Party<sup>2</sup> and takes in, all or part of, the local government areas of West Wimmera, Yarriambiack, Hindmarsh and Buloke.

The existing range of Indigenous tourism experiences in the Wimmera Mallee in West Wimmera are:

- Harrow Discovery Centre / Johnny Mullagh Interpretive Centre
- Jane Duff Memorial interpretation about two Aboriginal trackers who located children lost in the bush in the mid-19th century
- Memorial Weekend at Jane Duff Memorial, involving a horse ride and commemorative activities (annual)
- Aboriginal Cricket Trail – self-drive route including Edenhope, Harrow, Apsley and other locations
- Several sites with low-key Indigenous-themed interpretation.

Opportunities identified relevant to West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy:

- Upgrade of Johnny Mullagh Centre, Harrow  
Upgrade of interpretation which has not been revised since opening 13 years ago. Working more closely with local Aboriginal communities would improve the interpretation.
- Aboriginal Cricket Trail  
Brochure to be redeveloped and onsite interpretation installed in 2017.
- Glenelg River Walk, Harrow  
Inclusion of Indigenous and other heritage, flora and fauna interpretation along the trail
- Little Desert National Park (to the east of West Wimmera Shire Boundary):  
nature-based and Indigenous cultural tours for group bookings associated with the Little Desert Nature Lodge and Conservation Volunteers Australia.
- Hindmarsh Heritage Drive (to the east of West Wimmera Shire Boundary):  
Self-guided driving tour to link major heritage tourism attractions. A project plan has been prepared.

- Night Sky Tours (Lake Tyrell – not within West Wimmera Shire)  
Guided night tours of the lake for Chinese visitors to Lake Tyrell as there are very few evening activities available to entertain overnight travellers. Focus would be on the interpretation of Indigenous astronomy and photo opportunities given the reflection of clear night skies on the shallow waters of the lake (and the current popularity of sharing these images on social media).
- Wotjobaluk Country mobile phone app  
A mobile phone app that will provide interpretive information, storylines and maps of Wotjobaluk Country for self-guided touring and to complement guided tours.

## **Wimmera Southern Mallee: Socio-economic value of Recreational & Environmental Water (2017)**

### Lake Wallace

Lake Wallace was named in 1845 after the first European visitor to the region, William Wallace; reportedly a direct descendant Sir William Wallace, a Scottish knight and leader during the thirteenth century Wars of Scottish Independence. In 1866, the banks of the lake became the main training area for the Aboriginal cricket team that later became the first Australian team to tour England in 1868, with star allrounder and local identity Johnny Mullagh and captain/coach Tom Wills.

Residents of Edenhope overwhelmingly believe that Lake Wallace is one of, if not the, key physical asset in the community, and is the town's lifeblood. Many residents regularly visit, walk, run and picnic around the lake's foreshore. The Henley-on-Wallace event in February 2017 attracted around 900 participants, which was a 50% increase on the 2016 event (when the lake was dry).

GWM Water (in association with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and the West Wimmera Shire Council) is currently investigating the feasibility of extending the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline to provide water to the farm gate in the south-east region of the West Wimmera Shire, where groundwater and surface catchments are unreliable. If feasible, a pipeline extension will reach into agricultural areas where traditionally there has been reliable rainfall. The potential piped water supply could also provide ongoing water security for West Wimmera townships and economic, social, recreational and environmental benefits, possibly including some additional provision for part of Lake Wallace.

The prominence of Lake Wallace in Edenhope means that it has a direct effect on amenity, liveability, business activity, and even real estate values around its perimeter. Although on a much smaller scale, this effect is similar to the suburbs which surround Lake Wendouree in Ballarat. Following drought conditions, Lake Wallace was empty until late in 2016. Table 7.2 summarises real estate sales in Edenhope over the period to 2014 to May 2017, and indicates that sales slumped to just two house and land properties in 2015, and that buyers have returned during the 2016-17 year. Indeed, one Edenhope real estate agent reported that property sales in the whole Edenhope district had escalated to 12 sales (11 house and land properties, including rural, and 1 land only) during the period August 2016 to May 2017.

### Lake Charlegrark

This lake is popular for water skiing and fishing during holiday periods over warmer months. Families are attracted to the camping ground where there are powered facilities, a shower block and barbecue area. Camp fees are \$7.00 per person (free for children under 12 years). Powered sites are \$25. There are also self-contained cottages and a house available for bookings.

There is private boutique style accommodation on the eastern side of the lake (opposite the main camping and caravan park) and a lodge (Langley Lodge) about 3 kilometres from the lake and suitable for large groups, functions and worker accommodation.

Regular maintenance works and small capital improvements are made by the Foreshore Committee. In the 2016-17 year this has included installation of 2 new electric barbecues in Crabtree Hall (the functions facility) within the reserve, upgrading of navigational aids on the lake, a solar panel for Crabtree Hall, and new water pumps. In 2017-18 an upgrade to three phase power and construction of a new amenities building are planned.

An on-site catering business, Charlie's Diner commenced in 2016-17 and trades Friday to Sunday throughout the summer school holidays and long weekends and through October to April on-demand. The Diner offers light meals, snacks and beverages to campers and other lake visitors.

Events held at Lake Charlegrark throughout the year are:

- Lake Charlegrark Country Music Marathon held in February
- Youth Art @ Charlegrark held in March
- Fishing competitions (hosted by several local fishing clubs: Neuarpuur Angling Club, Edenhope Angling Club, Apsley Angling Club, and Wimmera Anglers).
- A range of sporting functions and training sessions, family days and community activities.

### Glenelg River at Harrow

The Glenelg River rises in the Grampians and flows west through Harrow and then south to Casterton and Dartmoor for over 500 km, making it one of the longest rivers in Victoria. There is a water flow measurement point at Harrow.

At Harrow, the river is adjacent to the town centre, and can be accessed from a reserve within 100 metres of the commercial area of town; the Johnny Mullagh Memorial Reserve. This reserve offers camping sites beside the river; unpowered sites for \$8 per night, powered sites for \$16 per night, and a self-contained cabin for \$60 per night. The reserve has barbecues, washing machine, showers and toilets. A large proportion of visitors to the reserve stay in Harrow for events, and town attractions, rather than a focus on the river.

Estimated overnight visitors and day trip users of the Glenelg River at Harrow in 2016-17 are summarised in Table 7.5. These estimates have been developed through interviews on site and in town during March and April 2017, online surveys, data from residents, and discussions with the Johnny Mullagh Park Reserve Committee.

### **Grampians and Barwon South-West Region Passenger Services Cost and Feasibility Study (2017)**

This study relates to eight local governments served by the Ararat railway: Ararat Rural City, Glenelg Shire, Hindmarsh Shire, Horsham Rural City, Southern Grampians Shire, Northern Grampians Shire, West Wimmera Shire and Yarriambiack Shire. The Study is designed to look comprehensively at passenger services.

*Section 2.6.2: Public Transport and Cycling based Tourism* identifies that a growing section of the local tourist market is cycle based tourism. Cycling tourists can be accommodated on most V/Line long distance trains, but there is only limited accommodation for them on VLocity trains and no accommodation on connecting coaches unless the bike is dismantled and placed in the underfloor luggage area. Cyclists also would like to be able to book their bikes on to a trip, to avoid the possibility of being unexpectedly stranded. Cycling tourism is extremely consistent with other regional tourism goals, and V/line should work with tourism authorities to see what improvements can be made.

Although V/Line coaches carry bicycles in north east Victoria, the V/Line website indicates that their carriage is not permitted in the Grampians and Barwon South West regions

### **Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Transport Strategy (2014)**

This report is an evidence-based strategy which identifies priority transport projects of regional significance and ensures the Wimmera Southern Mallee's transport directions are aligned with state, regional and local policies.

#### Section 7.7. Tourism.

A key element of tourism within the Wimmera Southern Mallee Region is focused on walking, cycling and outdoor activities. Active transport is therefore a primary element that needs to be developed and improved to allow for the growth of this type of tourism and economic benefits for the region. In addition to the economic driver of tourism, active transport also has many health and environmental benefits and there are a range of activities that can utilise the same transport infrastructure to accommodate a variety of ages and physical ability. The active transport infrastructure also allows for local communities to enjoy the area they live in, in a healthy way and/or utilising the infrastructure as a route to travel via walking or cycling.

Active transport projects identified which may be relevant to the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy:

- **Western Victorian Iconic Walking Trail** (Horsham, Hindmarsh and West Wimmera).  
The project is the staged establishment of a walking trail approximately 140 km in length comprising rail trail, roadside trails and existing tracks. It includes camping facilities (walkers only), signage and interpretative material for local tourism opportunities and the natural environment.  
The project is from Horsham to Mount Arapiles to Lake Hindmarsh via Gorokey, Little Desert National Park, Dimboola and Wimmera River. There are three parts to the project.

<u>Part</u>	<u>Estimated cost</u>	<u>Expected timing</u>
A – Feasibility Study	\$80,000	Short (0 – 5 years)
B – Master Plan	\$120,000	
C – Construction	\$14 million	

  
The project addresses the lack of connected tourism infrastructure associated with the natural attractions of Little Desert National Park and the Wimmera River.
- **Horsham to Natimuk Regional Cycling Trail Project**  
The project involves construction of a 25km walking and cycling trail to connect Horsham and Natimuk via active transport modes.  
There is no connection between Horsham and the Natimuk – Arapiles bike trail. Horsham is the major transport, accommodation and retail hub. There is limited public transport provided between the towns and this provides an alternative mode of transport.  
Estimated cost: \$5 million.  
Expected timing: Short (0 – 5 years)

Other active transport projects identified through the project prioritisation process:

- **Grampians Peaks Trail**  
The Grampians Peaks Trail will unite a disparate collection of existing tracks into a unified and identifiable trail beginning at Mount Zero in the north and finishing at Dunkeld in the south. Visitors can undertake the walk at any time of year.
- **Stawell to Halls Gap walking/cycling route.**
- **Hindmarsh Walking Trail Project.**
- **Nature tracks – pedestrian and cycling facilities within Buloke.**

#### **Grampians Region Cycling and Trails Strategy (2018)**

[Currently being prepared - anticipated by May 2018]

#### **Local Documents**

##### **West Wimmera Shire Council Plan 2017 – 21 (2017)**

This Plan is the key strategic document that will be used to prioritise activities between 2017 and 2021.

Vision: Our West Wimmera communities are healthy, thriving, diverse, harmonious, prosperous and self-sustaining, with regional and global connectivity.

The Councillors' vision statement for the Shire Council includes the following, *"Visitors are flocking to our stunning wetlands and recreational water and are making a significant contribution to the local economy. Tourism itineraries and quality signage guide visitors through the Shire"*.

Strategic objective 1: A proactive, well governed, professional and financially sustainable organisation that encourages community participation.

Strategic objective 2: Meaningful partnerships to support advocacy priorities and service provision.

Strategic objective 3: Quality sustainable community services and infrastructure.

Priorities & actions relevant to the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- Mapping community assets to improve planning and efficiency
- Upgrade / repair / divest council owned and managed assets
- Invest in quality infrastructure supported by community consultation and engagement

Strategic objective 4: Building on our agricultural and business strengths and supporting economic development.

Strategic objective 5: Thriving, safe and diverse local communities.

Priorities & actions relevant to the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- Promote community planning
- Encourage place - making projects / initiatives that drive civic pride

Strategic objective 6: Participating in activities that address health and wellbeing issues.

Priorities & actions relevant to the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- Improve walking / gopher paths in townships
- Improve recreational access to Lake Wallace and complete retaining wall.

Strategic objective 7: Providing access to and promoting the natural environment.

Priorities & actions relevant to the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- Targeted promotion of West Wimmera as a world-class destination
- Foster eco-tourism development
- Support the maintenance and upkeep of lake and waterway visitor locations
- Link our natural, cultural and historic assets to create a cohesive experience for visitors and residents
- Implement outcomes of various visitor related studies - Indigenous Tourism, recreational water and regional trails
- Support committees of management to develop masterplans for various sites
- Work with multiple agencies to develop linked tourism trails combining the regions attractions



## **West Wimmera Shire Tourism Strategy 2014 – 2018 (2014)**

Vision: West Wimmera Shire Tourism to increasingly contribute to the growth of the local and regional Victorian economy.

### Objective 1: Marketing

To effectively market West Wimmera Shire tourism products and services to the target market using a range of tools, to increase visitor numbers in the region.

### Objective 2: Product, service and infrastructure development

To develop quality tourism products, services and infrastructure to encourage increased visitor length of stay, expenditure in the region and high levels of satisfaction.

Increase the level of private and public investment in new priority tourism projects and existing facilities.

Actions:

- Trail development  
Pursue opportunities to develop multi-use trails, including walking, cycling, mountain biking, horse etc.
- Leverage and encourage the development of new tourism initiatives.  
Research and identify opportunities with:
  - Nature based tourism ie. glamping, canoe trails
  - Sports and events tourism, including weddings
  - Farm stays/ tours
  - Indigenous, cultural, pastoral & heritage tourism
  - Health and wellness tourism
  - Self-drive tours & tour groups, themed trails

### Objective 4: Industry development, support and partnerships

To maximise resources by developing cooperative alliances with federal, state and regional tourism bodies and private sector.

To provide support and increase the tourism industry's capacity to operate businesses that improves the standard of products, services and infrastructure.

## **West Wimmera Shire Economic Development Strategy (2014)**

This strategy and action plan is a direct response to the challenge of population decline facing the Shire. It's a rallying cry that unashamedly targets population growth and retention, with the lofty ambition of reaching 10,000 people by 2050.

Goals:

- Be adaptive  
20 years from now, we want to go forward from where we are at this moment.
- Change perception  
We will change the quality of conversation so people understand the value of West Wimmera Shire.
- Invest  
We will invest in the growth of current and emerging businesses and people
- Be Active  
We will set clear goals, and measure and celebrate our success.

Specific action relevant to the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- 4.1 Undertake ongoing discussions with Parks Victoria to advocate for Walking Track development in the Shire.

## **West Wimmera Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 – 2021 (2017)**

This plan outlines Council's strategy for community health and wellbeing between 2017 and 2021.

### Health indicators relevant to the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- More than 60% of the West Wimmera Shire population is overweight or obese, these rates are increasing
- Reduced access and opportunities to participate in organised physical activities can be a barrier to increasing physical activity for the West Wimmera Shire community.

### Priority 1: Healthy living

Targets relevant to the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- Increase levels of sufficient physical activity for children, youth and adults by 2021.

Actions:

- Identify solutions to activity access barriers e.g. all access abilities for walkways and pathways, and all-weather access for pre-schools.
- Work with local stakeholders to address barriers to participation in physical activity particularly for vulnerable groups and people from diverse backgrounds.
- Promote the benefits of physical activity and active modes of transport through key messages and information sharing ~any movement is good.
- Implement healthy workplace programs and environments to reduce sedentary behaviour and promote active lifestyles.

### Priority 2: Reducing harm

### Priority 3: Inclusive and supportive communities

Targets relevant to the Recreational Trails Strategy:

- Increase connection to culture and communities for adolescents and adults for 2021.

Actions:

- Promote greater use of open spaces and parks to create opportunities for social engagement.

## **Edenhope and Apsley Social Infrastructure Study (2014)**

This document provides insights into the current and future challenges and opportunities relating to social infrastructure provision in the townships of Edenhope and Apsley.

Lake Bringalbert and Lake Charlegrark are both of high importance to residents in Edenhope and Apsley. These two lakes, located within 20 minutes of each township, are used by local residents for camping, water sports and other social events, and are valued for their beauty and accessibility. Each lake is managed by a local committee, and each site has evolved to meet the needs and interests of its user groups.

Lake Bringalbert is very much a local asset and is managed to protect its low intensity usage and solitude. The Committee is keen to avoid overdevelopment. Lake Charlegrark has evolved as a popular seasonal venue, with facilities and infrastructure to support camping, music festivals and other large events.

Lake Bringalbert is seen as a local-level natural asset and

Lake Wallace is a strong natural asset and anchor for the town – it not only provides open space, tourism, recreation and community gathering spaces, but also is an active symbol of the town's livelihood.

Apsley is a progressive, cohesive community with a local action group that appears to be organised, consultative and who are getting things done. Apsley's natural environment and its history are two key assets that the community identifies. In terms of tourism, Apsley Alive (a local event) and the Rusty Rattlers dirt circuit are attractions.

Core areas for project delivery:

- Community connectedness
- Civic engagement
- Social empowerment
- Pride of place

Edenhope Projects relevant to Recreational Trails Strategy

- Lake Wallace Foreshore enhancements
  - Optimise usage of the Foreshore space and infrastructure
  - Better connectivity to commercial core
  - Remove physical barriers
  - Provide focal point for local residents
  - Seasonal and special events
  - Tourism market
  - Interpretative signs/walk
  - Modern amenities
  - Shade structures and more barbecues
  - New directional signage
- New pedestrian linkages between Lake Wallace and Back Swamp
  - Sealed walking track around Back Swamp
  - Extended walking network
  - A new passive recreation space
  - Interpretative signage
  - Connect with Lake Wallace
- Visitor signage that allows visitors to make easy links between key sites
- Tourist information and a Local Guides Network

Apsley Projects relevant to Recreational Trails Strategy

- Upgrade Federation Corner
- Improved local signage

Lakes Bringalbert and Charlegrark Projects

- While there are various infrastructure upgrades identified at the locations, the formalisation of recreational trails has not been identified in the this study.

### **Kaniva & surrounds Social Infrastructure Study (2014)**

This document provides insights into the current and future challenges and opportunities relating to social infrastructure provision in the township of Kaniva and the surrounding districts of Serviceton, Lillimur, Telopea Downs, Lawloit and Miram.

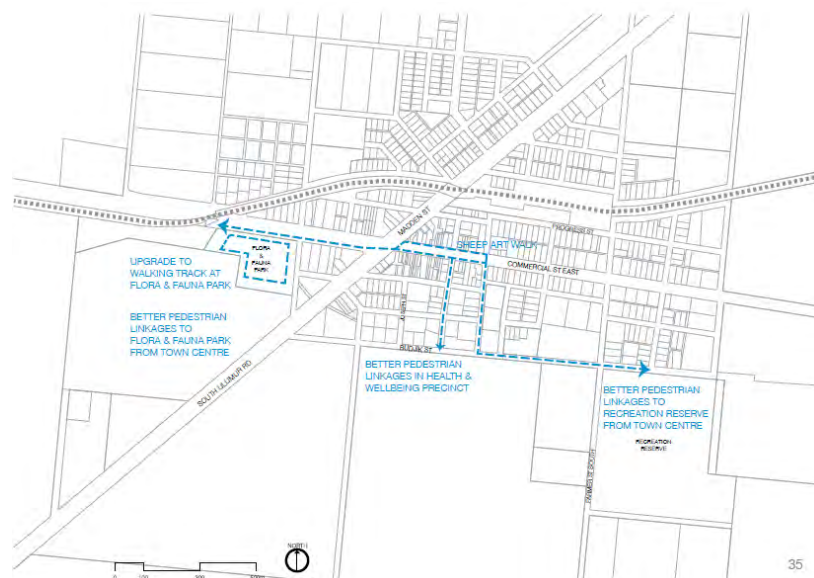
Kaniva Projects relevant to Recreational Trails Strategy

- Improve pedestrian connectivity within the Sports Reserve, and to adjoining Precincts

- Provide access to a range of social infrastructure that promotes healthy lifestyles and social inclusion from the 'Health and Wellbeing Precinct'
- provision of a network of all-weather walking tracks into the 'Health and Wellbeing Precinct', connecting residential and commercial areas to the social infrastructure
- Improve pedestrian linkages into the 'Health and Wellbeing Precinct' from adjoining residential areas
- Support economic growth by providing social infrastructure that is attractive to tourists and visitors, especially parks and gardens, playgrounds and walking trails in the 'Tourism Precinct' (i.e. Fauna Park/Wetlands)
- Create pedestrian linkages between key social infrastructure and other sites of interest
- Optimise social infrastructure usage through better promotion and signage

#### Priority project: Walking Tracks

- A Priority Project to enhance the walkability of Kaniva – by providing all weather, signed and marked walking tracks connecting residential areas with the commercial, sports and recreation, and tourism assets – will provide primary benefits to local residents via increased pedestrian movement, and secondary benefits to the local economy via increasing tourist and visitor access to local assets.



#### Serviceton Projects relevant to Recreational Trails Strategy

- Serviceton Reservoir is a locally significance site for the Serviceton and Kaniva communities. It plays an important role as a social and recreational venue: minor upgrades and enhancements to the existing walking tracks, and the provision of additional shelters and barbeque areas around the Reservoir, would improve the experience for local visitors.

#### Harrow and Goroke Community Precinct Planning (2015)

This plan was prepared to provide a strong strategic basis for Council's investment in social infrastructure in Harrow and Goroke over the coming ten years, and to act as a catalyst for community building and place-making in the two communities.

##### Harrow

The river corridor adjacent to the township, spanning from the Johnny Mullagh Reserve in the south to the bridge crossing in the north - is a high-quality natural environment with abundant native vegetation and birdlife, and is a significant asset to be unlocked by the community.

The waterway and immediate environs is managed by multiple groups: river health is the responsibility of the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority; native flora and fauna, and Crown Land, is the responsibility of State Government; while land to the west, within the Harrow township, is managed by Council, the community and private landowners.

A programme of investment, firstly, in flood management and conservation will open-up the river frontage to community use, and secondly in passive recreation opportunities, will transform the precinct into a significant local and sub-regional asset with direct social benefits for residents and visitors.

Council acknowledges that GHCMA is preparing to undertake a comprehensive project to map the flood waters in the Harrow Township, as part of a process to prepare new planning overlays and controls relating to flooding and land subject to inundation. Given the historical impacts of flooding on the township, and the importance of river management to the future vitality of the town, this project represents a significant opportunity for Council and the community. With active partnership management, Council can seek to broaden the flood mapping process to take in issues around river corridor health and community usage.

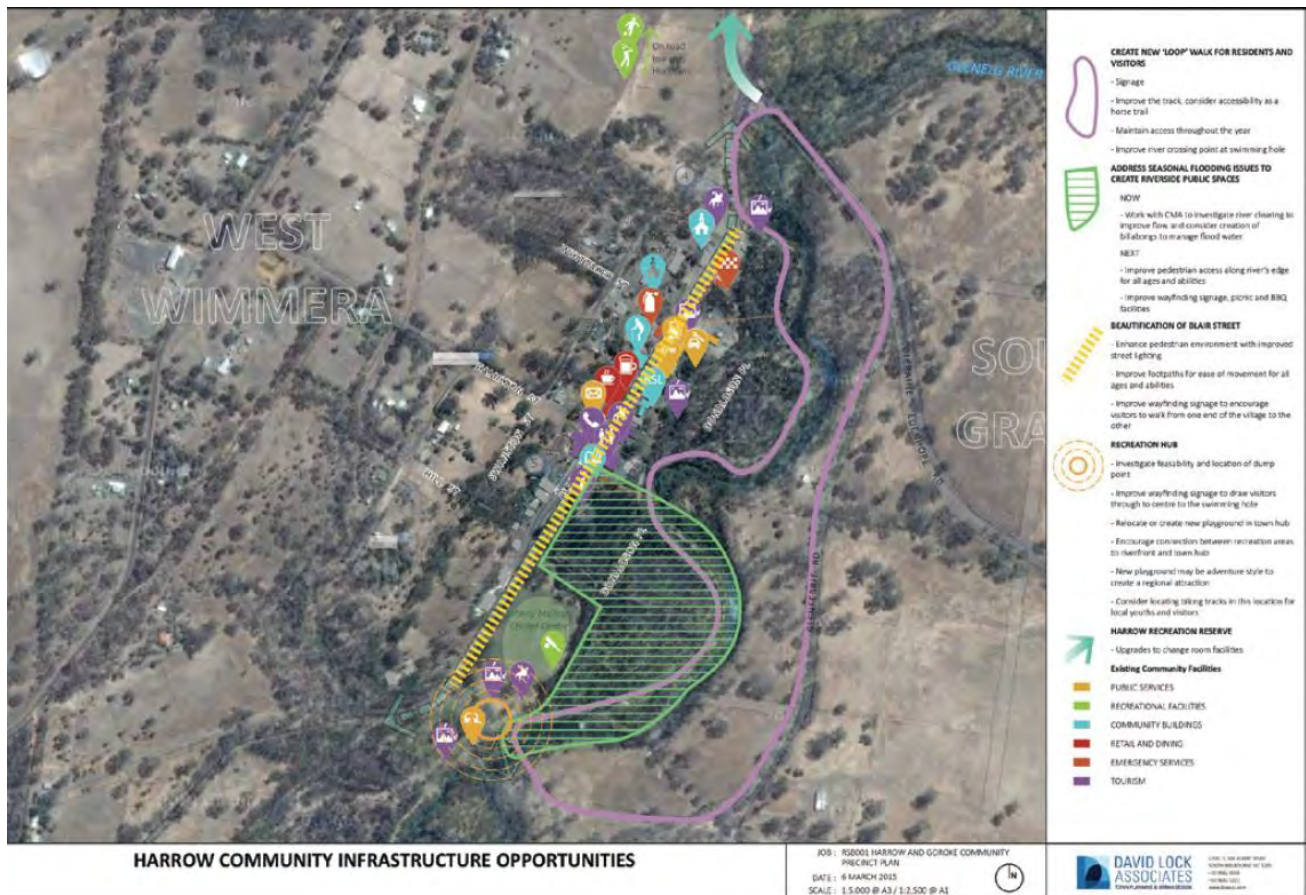
#### Opportunities - Harrow

##### (Short-term)

- Loop trail around the township incorporating the existing river walk. (see map) with consideration of incorporating horse trail/network
- Partner with GHCMA, State Government, community groups and private landowners and devise a programme of short-term remedial works to remove pest plants and improve accessibility
- Actively participate in GHCMA's flood mapping process and find opportunities to leverage new data and insight into the broader programme of waterway management and riverfront activation.
- -

##### (Mid-term)

- Prepare a Glenelg River Corridor Masterplan to guide investment and capital works with a focus on community and environmental benefits. The Masterplan should consider:
- community usage
- accessibility
- recreational activities such as fishing, canoeing and other water sports
- a network of walking tracks with interpretive signage
- mapping areas of ecological value, and creating a network of environmental assets



## Goroke

The Little Desert National Park, located a short distance from Goroke, is a unique natural environment that draws large numbers of visitors to the extensive network of four-wheel drive and walking tracks.

Proximity to the National Park, along with easy access to other natural assets such as Lake Ratzcastle and Lake Charligrark, represents a major social and economic opportunity for Goroke. By directing local resources and investment towards social infrastructure that supports the visitor experience, Council and the community can position Goroke as a 'Gateway to Little Desert' and draw new visitors to explore the region, use local facilities and spend in local businesses. A niche market to explore is the four-wheel drive community, who could use Goroke as a base to explore the tracks within the region.

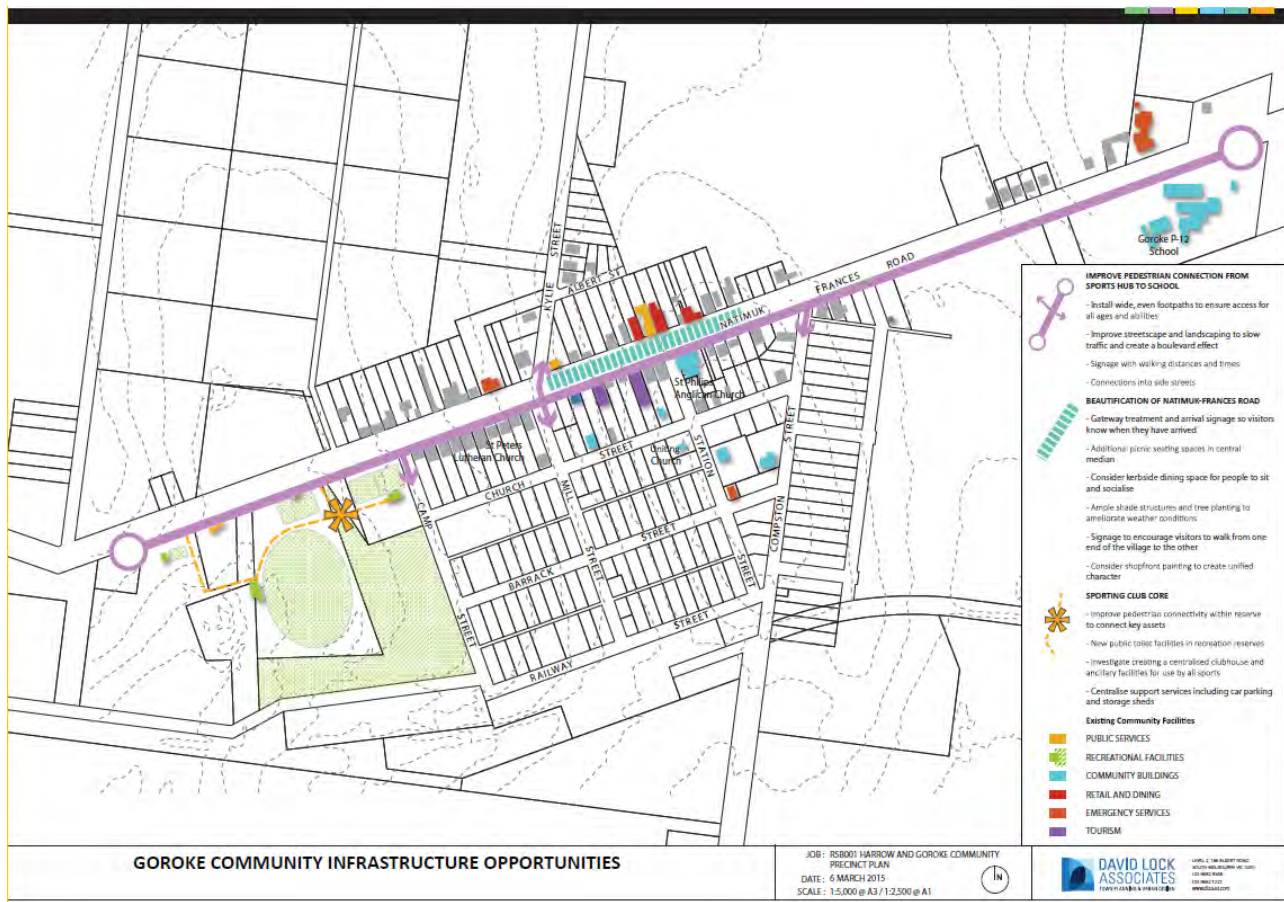
Projects aimed at enhancing the visitor experience can be locally led and managed, and will benefit from shared planning, collaboration and partnering: between Council, community groups, local businesses and also the Regional Tourism bodies.

## Opportunities - Goroke

- Pathways that link existing sports and recreation areas
- Network of all-weather footpaths in central areas
- Safe pedestrian crossing points in town centre
- Signage to connect visitors with community and cultural assets
- Position Goroke as a 'Gateway' and base for four-wheel drive and adventure tourism
- Create a 'hub and spoke' visitor experience that places Goroke at the centre of a network of adventure tourism including Little Desert National Park, local lakes, four-wheel drive tracks, waterholes, campgrounds and historical sites



- Steer local resources and investment towards social infrastructure that support visitors:
  - camping facilities including change rooms, showers and a dump point
  - maps of local sites, and other tourist information
  - community volunteers acting as guides



# Appendix 2: Trail Network Planning Principles

## Sustainable Trails

It is fundamentally important that recreational trails are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Recreation activities that diminish natural values (biodiversity and landscape amenity) are generally inappropriate and not acceptable to the community or other stakeholders. It is vital, therefore, that high quality recreational trail experiences are developed in landscapes that are capable of supporting such activities.

The enhancement of natural areas through the protection of biodiversity and raising environmental awareness are key to the development of an environmentally sustainable trail network. This can be achieved through appropriate trail design, location selection and ongoing management.

Trails must also be economically and socially sustainable. There is a growing body of evidence which identifies the economic benefits that well developed trails can bring to a local community and/or a region through increased visitation, including tourism. However, the development of recreation trails must also take into account the sensitivities and desires of local communities. While well designed and managed recreation trails can enhance the well-being of local communities by improving access and increasing physical activity, recreation trails development must take into consideration the views of local residents and adjoining property owners.

## Accessible Trails

Intertwined with the objective of sustainability is the need for trails to be accessible. One of the main roles of trails is to link communities to a variety of high quality experiences and interesting natural and rural landscapes. In addition, trails can improve mobility and connectivity within and between urban areas. Trails which are readily accessible and provide links between communities and landscapes can enhance lifestyles through the promotion of physical activity, reducing the reliance on motorised vehicles and improving health and fitness.

Accessibility is determined by:

- proximity to the metropolitan area, population centres or tourist attractions.
- proximity to transportation facilities such as railway lines or road networks providing access to the site.
- existing or proposed linkages to other trails and the wider trails network.
- proximity to natural attractions such as scenic views, native vegetation, waterfalls, lakes and coastline.
- presence of existing facilities that may support or facilitate use of the trail such as car parks, toilets, picnic facilities, camping sites, tourist information centres, cafes and tour operators.
- the nature of the terrain and landform.
- access for emergency vehicles.

Proposals for new trails, or upgrades to existing trails, should clearly demonstrate that they meet at least half of the accessibility determinants expressed above. This will assist in the promotion of the trail to prospective user groups and ensure that any associated economic and social benefits are shared amongst nearby communities.

## Environmental & Cultural Heritage Considerations

It is important to consider the relationship between significant environmental and cultural heritage values, relevant legislation and recreational trails.

## Design

Key guidance includes the following:

- Generally, it is preferable to design a trail system with loops and stacked loops that offer a number of options and a variety of experiences, while preventing the need to back track.
- The planning and design phase should clearly determine whether the trail is intended for single or shared-use; shared-use will encourage greater usage; however, they need to be carefully designed to avoid conflict between users.
- Identification of 'control points' (places of interest) will dictate where the trail should commence and finish, the location of parking areas, structures, road and water crossings.
- The most sustainable trails tend to have a low overall grade (less than 10% change in elevation) thereby minimising the potential for water erosion. They also tend to follow existing contour lines.
- Design should respond to 'trail flow'; mountain bike riders tend to travel faster than walkers and horse riders and require a certain tempo/rhythm. Types of flow might be described as 'open and flowing', 'tight and technical', or a combination of both.
- Once a preferred route alignment is identified consideration will need to be given to items such as trail dimensions (corridor/path width & height clearance), construction timelines, logistics of the build and responsibilities for associated infrastructure (such as signage, parking, stiles, crossings).
- Conservation values of the area need to be considered in terms of protecting habitat and areas of cultural significance through control and management of access.
- There may be a need to clear obstacles from the chosen route. Vegetation clearance must adhere to relevant legislation and policy requirements and require express permission to be granted.

## Construction

Key guidance includes the following:

- Trails are usually built on sloping ground therefore some excavation may be required. When tree roots or impenetrable rock make it difficult to establish a full bench a retaining wall can be built to support the downslope side.
- Natural surfaces will be suitable in many circumstances, whilst an artificial trail surface (such as bitumen, crushed rock, sand) may be required if anticipated user numbers are high. Types of surface are also dependent on the type of user.
- Running water will erode the trail so diverting surface water off the trail is a high priority, achieved through the use of cross slopes, grade or drain dips and waterbars.
- Water crossings are sites that may have the greatest impact on water quality and also the greatest potential to damage the trail.
- Where possible, low lying and boggy terrain should be avoided, otherwise a raised boardwalk or reinforced tread may need to be considered.

## Management & Maintenance

The Sustainable Recreational Trails Guidelines (SA) outline the following considerations for the development of a Trail Management Plan and suggests that such a document should be both flexible and responsive to change whilst setting firm guidelines for future directions and priorities. Considerations include:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • philosophical background to trail development | • target user groups and user experiences |
| • statement of guiding principles               | • risk management policy                  |
| • trail construction standards                  | • hazard inspection policy                |

- promotional and interpretation policy
- group usage policy and guidelines
- annual trail maintenance program
- clarification of management roles and responsibilities
- promotional mapping and brochures
- fire management and emergency evacuation procedures

Trail projects will inevitably involve a range of partners and it is crucial to clearly establish roles and responsibilities for all those involved. Ongoing trail maintenance is also essential and a clear and concise management plan including a regular maintenance program will assist in managing ongoing resource demands.

Maintenance can generally be divided between regular inspections and simple repairs, potentially undertaken by a variety of individuals ranging from land manager's staff and contractors to volunteers under skilled supervision. Maintenance activities are most likely to address issues of regrowth vegetation, damage to signage and accumulation of litter/debris.

## Naming Conventions

Trail names play an important role in facilitating:

- visitors to identify and understand the nature of the trail
- management to promote and maintain the trail
- emergency services to access the trail and identify specific locations



Trail names are to be determined by the land manager with respect to the following considerations:

**Table: Considerations for naming trails**

Consideration	Detail
Consistency	Trail naming should be consistently approached throughout the region. A trail's name needs to be clearly determined to prevent confusion for management and users.
Relevancy	A trail's name should reflect the trail's natural and/or cultural features. Interpretive signage may be used to reinforce the relevance of the trail's name whilst educating users.
Representative	Trail names can be used to represent basic information about the trail such as location, key features and characteristics. Non-representative trail names can be misleading.

The following definitions will assist in determining names of trails which are representative of trail features and characteristics and in the promotion of trails:

**Table: Trail naming descriptors**

Trail detail	Definition
Circuit/loop trail	 A trail which starts and ends at the same location. This can be communicated through the trail name and/or a corresponding symbol
One-way trail	 A trail which starts and ends at different locations. This can be communicated through a corresponding symbol
Walking trail	A trail which permits the use of people walking / running
Bridle/horse trail	A trail which permits the use of horse riders

Mountain bike trail	A trail which permits the use of mountain bike riders
Universal access trail	A trail which is accessible for persons with a disability with assistance. (i.e. Grade One in the Australian Walking Track Grading System)
Single-use trail	A trail which permits one user type (e.g. walk, bike, horse ride, canoe/kayak)
Shared-use trail <sup>xiii</sup>	A trail which permits the use of any combination of trail users (e.g. walk, bike, horse ride)

## Signage Considerations and Classification

Key elements for consideration when developing signage for recreational trails are outlined in the table below.

**Table: Trail signage considerations**

Signage consideration	Detail
Adherence to recognised standards	Information conveyed will comply with recognised Australian standards, thereby ensuring a high quality and safe experience for all trail users.
Consistency and uniformity of signage	All signs will conform to accepted standards and will maintain a consistent theme along the entire trail.
Quality information	Quality on-trail information is provided as well as brochures and mapping. It is important that users are confident in the information provided.
Location of signage	Design and placement of signs is determined with consideration to the user's approach speed, impact on the scenic amenity and ability to be seen without obstruction of trees etc.
Visually attractive and simple	Signs are visually attractive, easy to comprehend and suitable to the natural surroundings.
Signage material	Signs are designed to be resistant to factors such as vandalism and extreme weather events.

There are a range of different types of recreational trail signage. These can be classified into the following:

1. Trailhead
2. Waymarking
3. Directional
4. Interpretive
5. Management/warning

### 1. Trailhead signage

A trailhead sign is the primary sign at the location where a user can access a trail and/or a network of trails. A trailhead is an important point of reference and is the appropriate location for associated trail infrastructure such as amenities, car parking and picnic facilities.

Many trail users take digital photographs of the trailhead sign to refer to whilst using the trail or scan a QR code which provides the trail map on a smart phone (appropriate only where mobile network coverage is available). Examples of best practice trailhead signage are shown in the figures below.



**Figure: Trailhead for Perth Hills Heritage Trails, Western Australia**





Figure: Trailhead signage requirements

As outlined in the figure above, It is important that all trailhead signs are professionally displayed, simple to comprehend and include all of the following information.

- ✓ Trail network name
- ✓ Information about the area
- ✓ Navigation mapping
  - Trail alignment
  - Key trail features & support infrastructure
  - North arrow (facing upwards)
  - Scale bar
  - Legend
- ✓ Trail classification system (e.g. Australian Walking Track Classification System)
- ✓ Individual trail information
  - Trail name
  - Trail distance and estimated time
  - Trail system type (e.g. loop, return, one way)
  - Permitted trail user/s (e.g. mountain bikers, walkers, horse riders)
  - Trail difficulty classification to relevant system
- ✓ Safety/management information
  - Advice
  - Permitted trail use
  - Trail user conduct
  - Emergency contact details and procedures
- ✓ Website and/or QR code providing further details

In addition, trailhead signs can be used to enhance the trail experience through providing specific historical, cultural, geological and/or environmental features that can be found along a trail as well as to promote other recreational trails in the region.

## 2. Waymarking signage

Waymarking signs provide trail users with reassurance that they are following the correct alignment. The amount of waymarking necessary is dependent on the type of trail and the target user group; difficult trails designed for experienced users often require less waymarking signage although these users tend to rely more on detailed signage at the trailhead. Waymarking signs are required at the beginning of a trail and at regular intervals along the route as well as at trail intersections. Where one section of alignment is used for multiple trails, all trails should be waymarked on the same signpost with corresponding colours or symbols, as shown in the following figure.



**Waymarking sign in the Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park, South Australia**

## 3. Directional signage

Directional signage is for directing users to or from the trailhead and other features, such as a nearby town, road or car park facility. These signs are particularly relevant at intersections where users are required to choose between a number of routes. It is usually appropriate to indicate the distance to/from the identified feature/s. Directional signage from a trail to a town can have positive economic impacts as users are more likely to impulsively visit the town if they are aware of its close proximity.



**Directional signage on the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail, Queensland**

## 4. Interpretive signage

Interpretive signage conveys educational material about the natural and/or cultural heritage features along a trail. This signage is designed to attract more users to the trail, engage trail users and provide for a well-rounded trail experience. Interpretive information can be provided at a trailhead and at points of interest along a trail.



**Interpretive signage at the Jane Duff Memorial, Mitre**

## 5. Management/warning signage

Management/warning signage is used to advise trail users of dangers, risks or management policies such as trail user conduct, the temporary closure of a trail, bushfire threats or change of land management. The sign should clearly inform users of the risk and advise a precautionary action. These signs play an important role for both users and land managers in the risk and safety management of a recreational trail.



**Management/warning sign at Kinchina Conservation Park, Monarto, South Australia**

## **Marketing & Promotion**

Promotional material is often the primary point of contact with trail users and it should provide potential users with motivation to use the trail, confidence to find the trailhead/correct route and encouragement to appreciate the features of the trail. Key elements for consideration when developing marketing and promotional material for recreational trails are outlined below<sup>xiv</sup>

### **Targeted trail user market and relevant promotion methods**

It is important to target the correct audience (e.g. locals and/or visitors, experienced trail users/novice trail users) by ensuring that materials are appealing to the target market and by distributing information accordingly (i.e. printed copies and/or online distribution).

### **Appropriate trail brochure design**

Formal trails should be featured in a professionally developed trail brochure with an associated map and trail information. The brochure should be designed for users to download and print at home, to use on a smartphone and also for professional print to distribute through locations such as Visitor Information Centres. Printed brochures should be produced at either A4 or A3, printed both sides, and folded to DL (standard envelope) size. They should be produced in at least two colours and professionally printed. Per item printing costs reduce dramatically as print runs grow larger but trails do change and brochures need to be updated, so it is important not to print too many.

### **Relevant trail brochure information**

- A trail brochure should generally have most, if not all, of the following features: clear, concise map/s with distances, trail features, scale bar, north arrow, legend and contours
- trail notes describing key points along the way, relating to distances and directions
- background information about the trail, and the history of the area
- trail code of conduct
- interpretive information about culture, history, geography and environmental values
- information about management and maintenance, including phone numbers for reporting any trail related matters and emergency contact details
- clear indication of routes to and from the trail head and parking areas

### **Trail marketing and promotion methods**

Trails can be marketed and promoted through a range of methods including the following:

- Printed material at Visitor Information Centres, community centres & retail shops
- Websites featuring promotional trail brochures and, where appropriate, videos
- Traditional media such as featured newspaper/magazine articles (this can be encouraged through the provision of media releases relating to trail updates/events)
- Social media such as Facebook and Instagram
- User-generated sites such as travel/fitness blogs and Mapmyrun.com
- Local community involvement in trails, stimulating word-of-mouth marketing

An example of a best practice trail brochure and associated marketing and promotion is the Riesling Trail in the Clare Valley (see <http://rieslingtrail.com.au/>).

## Appendix 3: Existing Trails Audit

REF	TRAIL DETAILS		LOCATION		TENURE		CATEGORY			SPECIFICATIONS		SURFACE		SIGNAGE			INFRASTRUCTURE							MARKETING					
	Trail Name	Main Attraction	Park/Reserve	Street/Road	Locality	Land Manager	User Type	Walking Trail	Trail Hierarchy	Length	General Tread Width	Primary Trail tread Material	General Surface Condition	Trail Head Sign	Waymarking	Interpretive	Car Park	Public Toilet	Picnic facilities	Seating	Stairs	Bridges	Fitness Equipment	Campground	WWSC website	Wimmera Mallee Tourism Website	WWSC Visitor Guide	Other	
								1: Easiest 5: Most difficult	Local District Regional State		0-3m 3-5m 5m+		1: Excellent 5: Unserviceable																
APSLEY & SURROUNDS																													
A1	Newlands Wetlands Nature Walk	Flora, fauna, Newlands Lake	Apsley Bushland Reserve & Boikerbert Swamp Lake Reserve	Newlands Lake Rd	Apsley	Parks Victoria	Walk	Grade 3	District	5km loop	Various	Natural soil or boardwalk	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	
A2	Apsley's Historic Walk	History of the township	Main street	Wimmera Hwy	Apsley	WWSC	Walk	Grade 1	Local	600m loop	0-3m	Cement (footpath)	3	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	Stand-alone brochure/map	
A3	Informal Trail Network	Fishing, yabbying and watersports	Lake Bringalbert Lake Reserve	Apsley-Natimuk Rd	Bringalbert	Local CoM & Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	District	700m each way	3-5m	Natural soil or Sand	3	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓		
DERGHOLM & SURROUNDS																													
D1	Bailey's Rocks Loop Walk	Flora, Fauna, Bushland, 5 million year old pink and green granite	Dergholm State Park	Bailey's Rocks Road	Poolajelo	Parks Victoria	Walk	Grade 2	District	400m loop	0-3m	Natural soil	3	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	Parks Victoria website	
D2	Rocky Creek Walking Track	Flora, Fauna, Bushland	Dergholm State Park	Bailey's Rocks Road	Poolajelo	Parks Victoria	Walk	Grade 3	District	5km loop	Various	Natural soil	3	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	Parks Victoria website	
EDENHOPE & SURROUNDS																													
E1	Lake Wallace Perimeter Walk	Lake, natural surroundings, birdlife, loop trail	Lake Wallace Lake Reserve	Lake Street	Edenhope	WWSC	Walk / Cycle	Grade 2	Regional	5.6km loop	0-3m	Bitumen	4	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
E2	Edenhope Historical Walk	Historical interpretation of township	Edenhope Township	Elizabeth St	Edenhope	WWSC	Walk	Grade 1	Local	1km each way	0-3m	Cement (footpath)	3	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
E3	Back Swamp Bird Walk	Bird life, bird hide	Back Swamp	Orme Street	Edenhope	WWSC	Walk	Grade 2	Local	300m return	0-3m	Boardwalk	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓		
E4	Informal Trail Network	Bushland, flora and fauna	Edenhope Natural Features Reserve; Edenhope Flora Reserve	Charles St	Langkoop	Local CoM & Parks Victoria	Horse / Walk	Grade 3	Local	11km network	3-5m	Natural soil or Sand	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
E5	Informal Trail Network	Bushland, flora and fauna	Edenhope Aerodrome Bushland Reserve	Jennings Rd	Edenhope	Parks Victoria	Horse / Walk	Grade 4	Local	6.2km network	3-5m	Natural soil or Sand	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
GOROKE & SURROUNDS																													
G1	Old Carpolac Railway Line - Goroke	Agricultural land	Old Carpolac Rail Reserve (East & West of Goroke)	Railway Street	Goroke	fc Track / DELWP	Walk	Grade 2	Local	3.6km one way (east) + 3.0km one way	3-5m	Natural soil	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
G2	Informal Trail Network	Flora, Fauna, Bushland	Goroke State Forest	Goroke	ELWP / VicForest	4WD / Horse / Walk	Grade 5	District	Local	5.2km network	3-5m	Sand or Natural soil	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
G3	Informal Trail Network	Fishing, yabbying, watersports	Lake Charlegrark Lake Reserve	Lake Charlegrark Rd	Minimay	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	District	600m each way	3-5m	Natural soil	3	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓		
G4	Informal Trail Network	Nature, Flora, Fauna, Camping	Lake Ratzcastle Lake Reserve	Edenhope-Goroke Rd	Karnak	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	District	950m each way	3-5m	Natural soil	3	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓		
G5	Informal Trail Network	Picnic, camping, walking, "Duff" Monument	Jane Duff Highway Park	Natimuk-Frances Rd	Mitre	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	District	1.3km loop	3-5m	Natural soil	3	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓		
HARROW & SURROUNDS																													
H1	Gleneleg River Walk	Gleneleg River, Aboriginal heritage/use of flora and fauna	Gleneleg River Corridor	Johnny Mullagh Reserve	Harrow	ELWP & Local Co	Walk	Grade 2	District	2.4km each way	3-5m	Natural soil	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓		
KANIVA & SURROUNDS																													
K1	Fauna - Wetlands Nature Walk	Fauna park, wildlife, wetlands	Kaniva Wetlands Park	Commercial St West	Kaniva	WWSC	Walk	Grade 2	District	650m loop	0-3m	Crushed rock or boardwalk	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓		
K2	Sheep Art Trail	Sheep art representing community groups	Kaniva Township	Commercial St East	Kaniva	WWSC	Walk	Grade 1	Local	700m each way	0-3m	Cement (footpath)	3	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓		
K3	Kaniva Shared Use Path	Connectivity between town and schools	Kaniva Township	Farmers St & Commercial St	Kaniva	WWSC	Walk / Cycle	Grade 1	Local	900m network	0-3m	Cement (shared-use)	2	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
K4	Billy Ho Bushwalk	Flora, Fauna, Bushland	Private Bushland Reserve	Lillimur South Road	Kaniva	Private	Walk	Grade 3	District	2.9km loop	0-3m	Natural soil	3	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓		
K5	Yanipjy Walking Tracks	Flora, fauna, camping, picnic area	Yanipjy Nature Reserve	Edenhope-Kaniva Road	Kaniva	DELWP	4WD / Walk	Grade 3	District	1.5km each way	0-3m	Natural soil	3	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓		
K6	Informal Trail Network	Flora, Fauna, Bushland	Little Desert National Park	Edenhope-Kaniva Road	Kaniva	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 5	Regional		3-5m	Natural soil		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
SERVICETON & SURROUNDS																													
S1	Informal Trail Network	Flora, Fauna, Bushland	Green Swamp Wetland Reserve	South Lillimur Road	Serviceton	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	Local	2km loop	3-5m	Natural soil	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	Parks Victoria website	
S2	Informal Trail Network	10,000 year old Koorie history	Mooree Historic Reserve	South Lillimur Road	Serviceton	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	Local	4.7km network	3-5m	Natural soil	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	Parks Victoria website	
S3	Informal Trail Network	Reservoir	Serviceton Reservoir	Reservoir Road	Serviceton	WWSC	Walk	Grade 3	Local	900m loop	3-5m	Natural soil	3	X	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓		
NORTH																													
N1	Informal Trail Network	Remote walking in an undisturbed semi-arid	Big Desert Wilderness Area	Nhill-Murrayville Rd	Big Desert	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 5	Regional																✓	✓	✓	Parks Victoria website	
N2	Informal Trail Network	Remote walking in an undisturbed semi-arid	Red Bluff Flora and Fauna Reserve	Red Bluff Firebreak Track	Telopea Downs	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 5	Regional																✓	✓	✓	Parks Victoria website	
CYCLE EVENT ROUTES																													
CY1	Tour De Frances	Cycling event annually in June	Roads			Various	Vic Roads	On-road cycle	N/A	District	85km loop														✓				
CY2	Tour De Henley	Cycling event annually in February	Roads			Various	Vic Roads	On-road cycle	N/A	District	72km loop														✓				
DRIVING ROUTES																													
DR1	West Wimmera Cricket Trail (Drive Trail)	Memorial cairn and mural	Edenhope College Oval, Jane Duff Highway Park, Harrow, Dergholm, Lake Bringalbert, Apsley	Harrow, Edenhope, Jane Duff Memorial (Gymbowen)	Various	Various	Drive	N/A	Regional					X		X									✓	X	✓		
DR2	Major Mitchell Trail	The journey of the colonial explorer Major Thomas Mitchell	WWSC location: Harrow	Harrow	Harrow	Various	Drive	N/A	Regional					X											X	X	X		
DR3	Kanawinka Geo Trail	Geological history and formations	WWSC location: Bailey's Rocks, Dergholm State Park			Various	Drive	N/A	Regional																X	X	X		
DR4	Silo Art Trail	Silo Art	No current locations within WWSC			Various	Drive	N/A	Regional																X	X	X		



## Apsley and surrounds

### On-ground audit summary

REF	TRAIL DETAILS	LOCATION	TENURE	CATEGORY			SPECIFICATIONS		SURFACE	
	Trail Name	Park/Reserve	Land Manager	User Type	Walking Trail Grade	Trail Hierarchy	Length	General Tread Width	Primary Trail Tread Material	General Surface Condition
					1. Easiest 5. Most difficult	Local District Regional State		0-3m 3-5m 5m+		1. Excellent 5. Unserviceable
<b>APSLEY &amp; SURROUNDS</b>										
A1	Newlands Wetlands Nature Walk	Apsley Bushland Reserve & Bolkerbert Swamp Lake Reserve	Parks Victoria	Walk	Grade 3	District	5km loop	Various	Natural soil or boardwalk	3
A2	Apsley's Historic Walk	Main street	W/WSC	Walk	Grade 1	Local	600m loop	0-3m	Cement (footpath)	3
A3	Informal Trail Network	Lake Bringalbert Lake Reserve	Local CoM & Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	District	700m each way	3-5m	Natural soil or Sand	3

### Newlands Lake Nature Walk



### Apsley's Historic Walk



### Lake Bringalbert



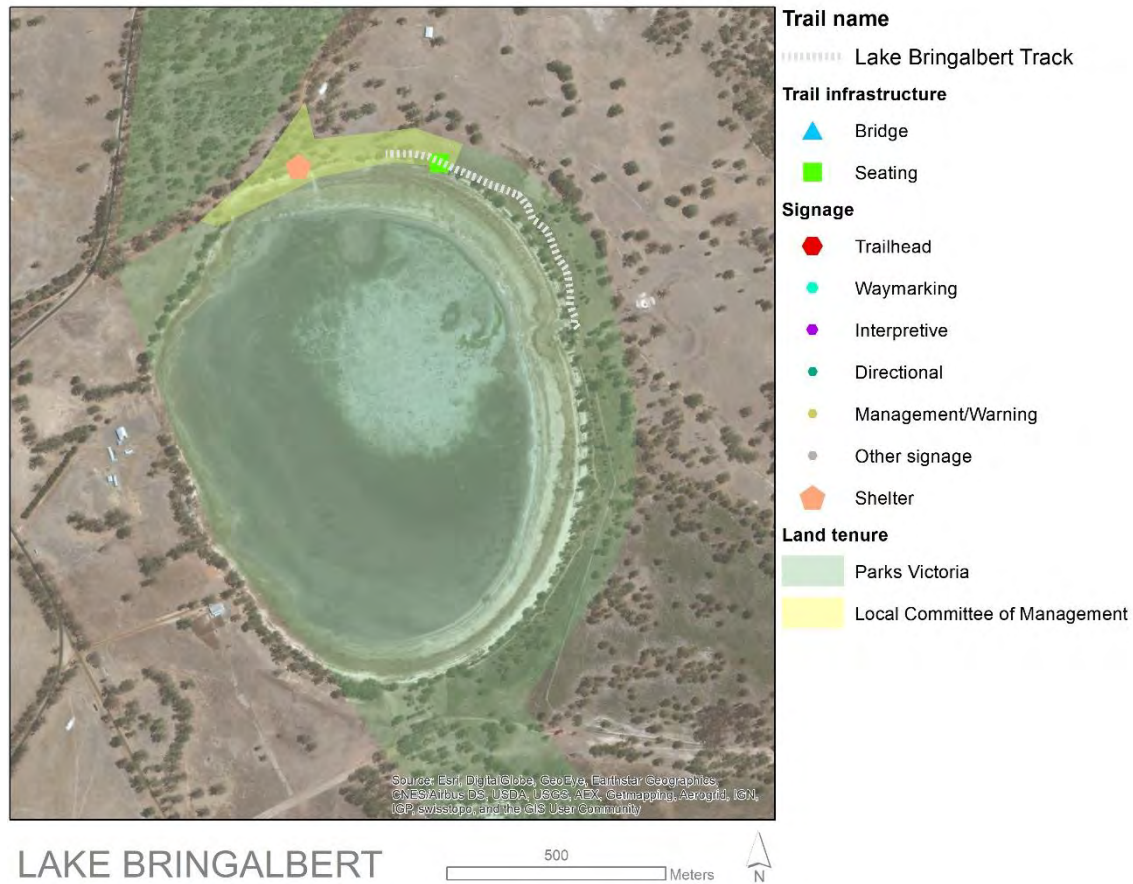


Map A: Apsley



APSLEY

Map B: Lake Bringalbert (15km north of Apsley township)





## Dergholm and surrounds

### On-ground audit summary

REF	TRAIL DETAILS	LOCATION	TENURE	CATEGORY			SPECIFICATIONS		SURFACE	
	Trail Name	Park/Reserve	Land Manager	User Type	Walking Trail Grade	Trail Hierarchy	Length	General Tread Width	Primary Trail Tread Material	General Surface Condition
					1: Easiest 5: Most difficult	Local/ District/ Regional/ State		0-3m 3-5m 5m+		1: Excellent 5: Unserviceable
DERGHOLM & SURROUNDS										
D1	Bailey's Rocks Loop Walk	Dergholm State Park	Parks Victoria	Walk	Grade 2	District	400m loop	0-3m	Natural soil	3
D2	Rocky Creek Walking Track	Dergholm State Park	Parks Victoria	Walk	Grade 3	District	5km loop	Various	Natural soil	3

### Trailhead / Campground



### Rocky Creek Walking Track

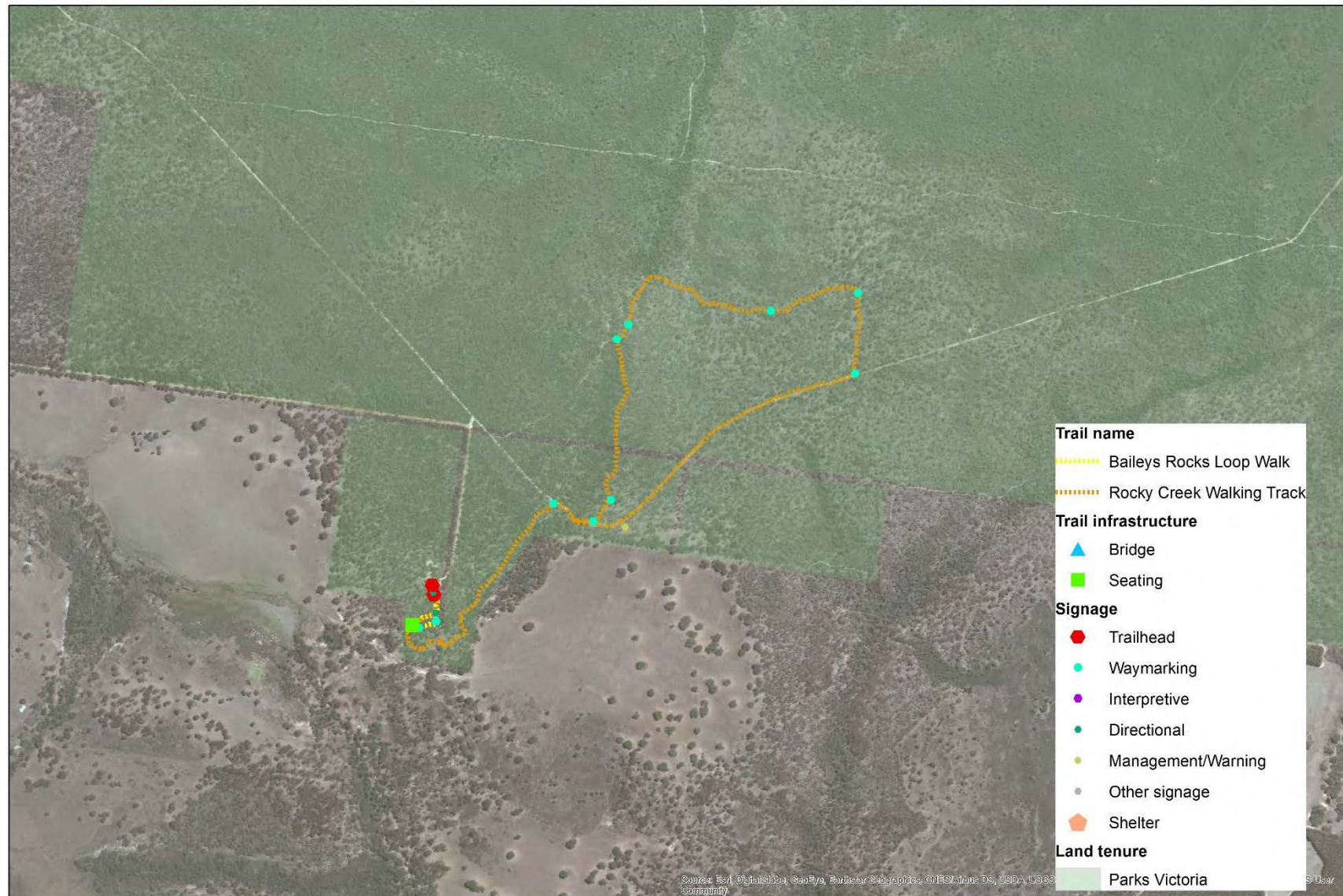


### Bailey's Rocks Loop Walk





Map C: Dergholm State Park (11km north of Dergholm township)



## DERGHOLM STATE PARK

## Edenhope and surrounds

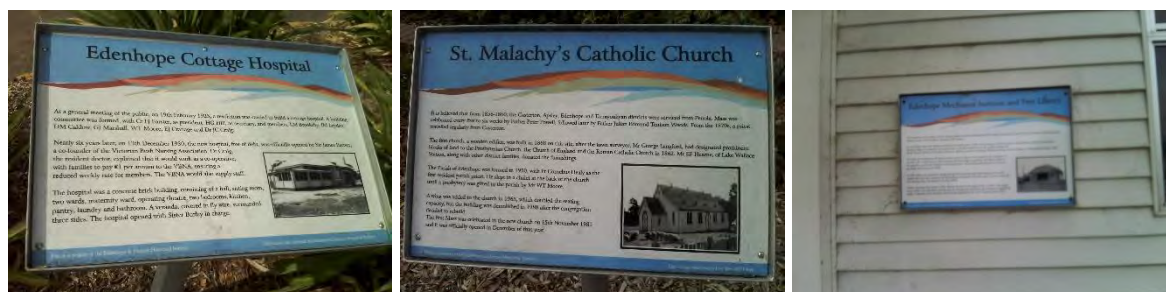
### On-ground audit summary

REF	TRAIL DETAILS	LOCATION	TENURE	CATEGORY			SPECIFICATIONS		SURFACE	
	Trail Name	Park/Reserve	Land Manager	User Type	Walking Trail Grade	Trail Hierarchy	Length	General Tread Width	Primary Trail Tread Material	General Surface Condition
					1: Easiest 5: Most difficult	Local/ District/ Regional/ State		0-3m 3-5m 5m+		1: Excellent 5: Unserviceable
<b>EDENHOPE &amp; SURROUNDS</b>										
E1	Lake Wallace Perimeter Walk	Lake Wallace Lake Reserve	W/WSC	Walk / Cycle	Grade 2	Regional	5.6km loop	0-3m	Bitumen	4
E2	Edenhope Historical Walk	Edenhope Township	W/WSC	Walk	Grade 1	Local	1km each way	0-3m	Cement (footpath)	3
E3	Back Swamp Bird Walk	Back Swamp	W/WSC	Walk	Grade 2	Local	300m return	0-3m	Boardwalk	3
E4	Informal Trail Network	Edenhope Natural Features Reserve; Edenhope Flora Reserve;	Local CoM & Parks Victoria	Horse / Walk	Grade 3	Local	11km network	3-5m	Natural soil or Sand	3
E5	Informal Trail Network	Edenhope Aerodrome Bushland Reserve	Parks Victoria	Horse / Walk	Grade 4	Local	6.2km network	3-5m	Natural soil or Sand	3

### Lake Wallace Perimetre Walk



### Edenhope Historical Walk

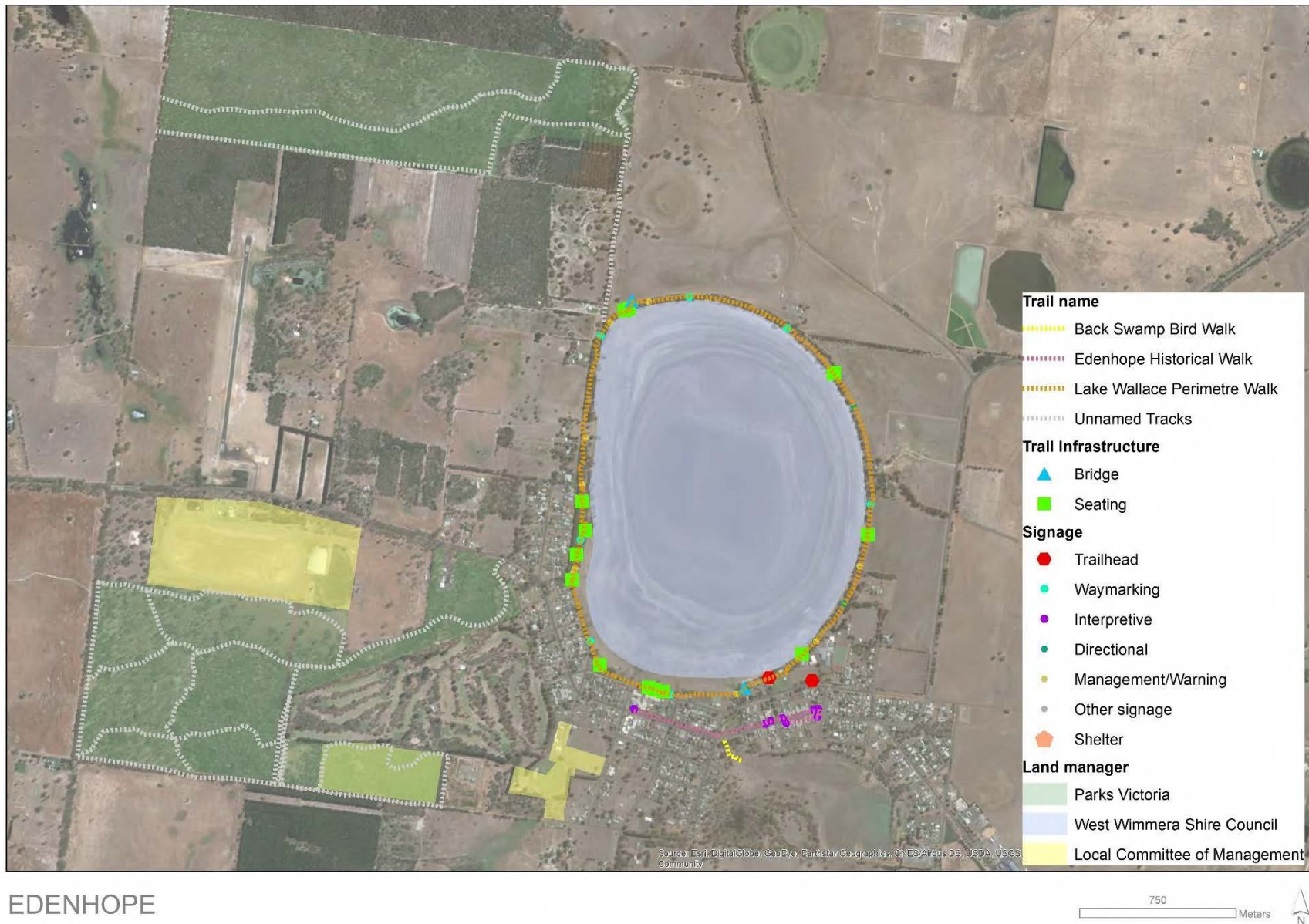


### Back Swamp Bird Walk





Map D: Edenhope



EDENHOPE



## Goroke and surrounds

### On-ground audit summary

REF	TRAIL DETAILS	LOCATION	TENURE	CATEGORY			SPECIFICATIONS		SURFACE	
	Trail Name	Park/Reserve	Land Manager	User Type	Walking Trail Grade	Trail Hierarchy	Length	General Tread Width	Primary Trail Tread Material	General Surface Condition
					1: Easiest 5: Most difficult	Local District Regional State		0-3m 3-5m 5m+		1: Excellent 5: Unserviceable
GOROKE & SURROUNDS										
G1	Old Carpolac Railway Line - Goroke	Old Carpolac Rail Reserve (East & West of Goroke)	Vic Track / DELWP	Walk	Grade 2	Local	3.6km one way (east) + 3.0km one way	3-5m	Natural soil	3
G2	Informal Trail Network	Goroke State Forest	DELWP / VicForests	4WD / Horse / Walk	Grade 5	District	5.2km network	3-5m	Sand or Natural soil	3
G3	Informal Trail Network	Lake Charlegrark Lake Reserve	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	District	600m each way	3-5m	Natural soil	3
G4	Informal Trail Network	Lake Ratzcastle Lake Reserve	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	District	950m each way	3-5m	Natural soil	3
G5	Informal Trail Network	Jane Duff Highway Park	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	District	1.3km loop	3-5m	Natural soil	3

### Old Carpolac Railway Line



### Lake Charlegrark



### Lake Ratzcastle



### Jane Duff Highway Park



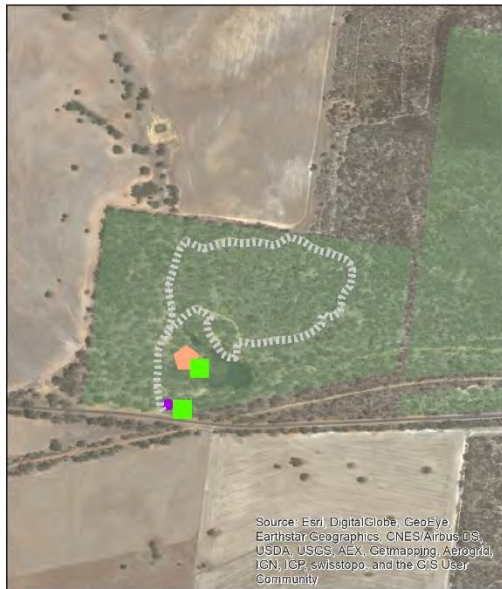


## Map E: Goroke



GOROKE

Map F: Jane Duff Highway Park



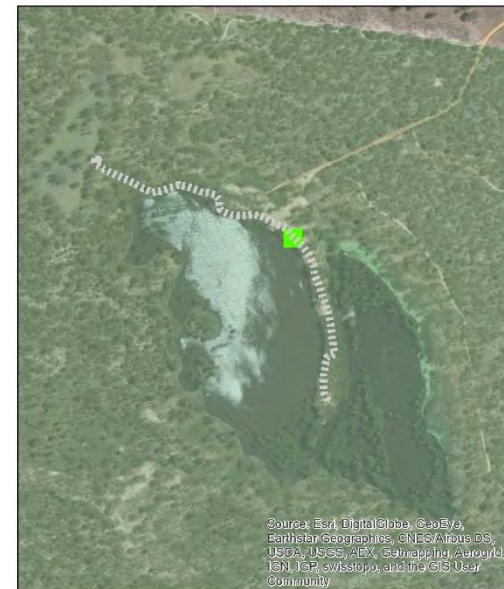
JANE DUFF MEMORIAL

Map G: Lake Charlegrark



LAKE CHARLEGRARK

Map H: Lake Ratzcastle



LAKE RATZCASTLE

#### Trail name

Informal Trail

#### Trail infrastructure

- Bridge
- Seating

#### Signage

- Trailhead
- Waymarking
- Interpretive
- Directional
- Management/Warning
- Other signage
- Shelter

#### Land manager

- Parks Victoria
- Vic Forests
- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Local Committee of Management



## Harrow and surrounds

### On-ground audit summary

REF	TRAIL DETAILS	LOCATION	TENURE	CATEGORY			SPECIFICATIONS		SURFACE	
	Trail Name	Park/Reserve	Land Manager	User Type	Walking Trail Grade	Trail Hierarchy	Length	General Tread Width	Primary Trail Tread Material	General Surface Condition
					1: Easiest 5: Most difficult	Local District Regional State		0-3m 3-5m 5m+		1: Excellent 5: Unserviceable
HARROW & SURROUNDS										
H1	Glenelg River Walk	Glenelg River Corridor	DELWP & Local CoM	Walk	Grade 2	District	2.4km each way	3-5m	Natural soil	3

### Glenelg River Walk



**Trail name**

- Informal Trail
- Glenelg River Walk

**Trail infrastructure**

- Bridge
- Seating

**Signage**

- Trailhead
- Waymarking
- Interpretive
- Directional
- Management/Warning
- Other signage
- Shelter

**Land manager**

- Parks Victoria
- Vic Forests
- Dept. Env. Land, Water & Planning
- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Local Committee of Management

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus OS, USDA, USDA

500  
Meters



## Kaniva and surrounds

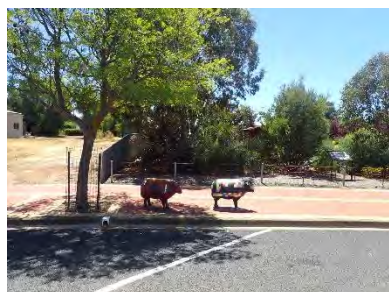
### On-ground audit summary

REF	TRAIL DETAILS	LOCATION	TENURE	CATEGORY			SPECIFICATIONS		SURFACE	
	Trail Name	Park/Reserve	Land Manager	User Type	Walking Trail Grade	Trail Hierarchy	Length	General Tread Width	Primary Trail Tread Material	General Surface Condition
					1. Easiest 5. Most difficult	Local District Regional State		0-3m 3-5m 5m+		1. Excellent 5. Unserviceable
<b>KANIVA &amp; SURROUNDS</b>										
K1	Fauna - Wetlands Nature Walk	Kaniva Wetlands Park	WWSC	Walk	Grade 2	District	650m loop	0-3m	Crushed rock or boardwalk	4
K2	Sheep Art Trail	Kaniva Township	WWSC	Walk	Grade 1	Local	700m each way	0-3m	Cement (footpath)	3
K3	Kaniva Shared Use Path	Kaniva Township	WWSC	Walk / Cycle	Grade 1	Local	900m network	0-3m	Cement (shared-use)	2
K4	Billy Ho Bushwalk	Private Bushland Reserve	Private	Walk	Grade 3	District	2.9km loop	0-3m	Natural soil	3
K5	Yanipy Walking Tracks	Yanipy Nature Reserve	DELWP	4WD / Walk	Grade 3	District	1.5km each way	0-3m	Natural soil	3
K6	Informal Trail Network	Little Desert National Park	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 5	Regional		3-5m	Natural soil	

### Fauna – Wetlands Nature Walk



### Sheep Art Trail



### Kaniva Shared Use Path



### Billy Ho Bushwalk



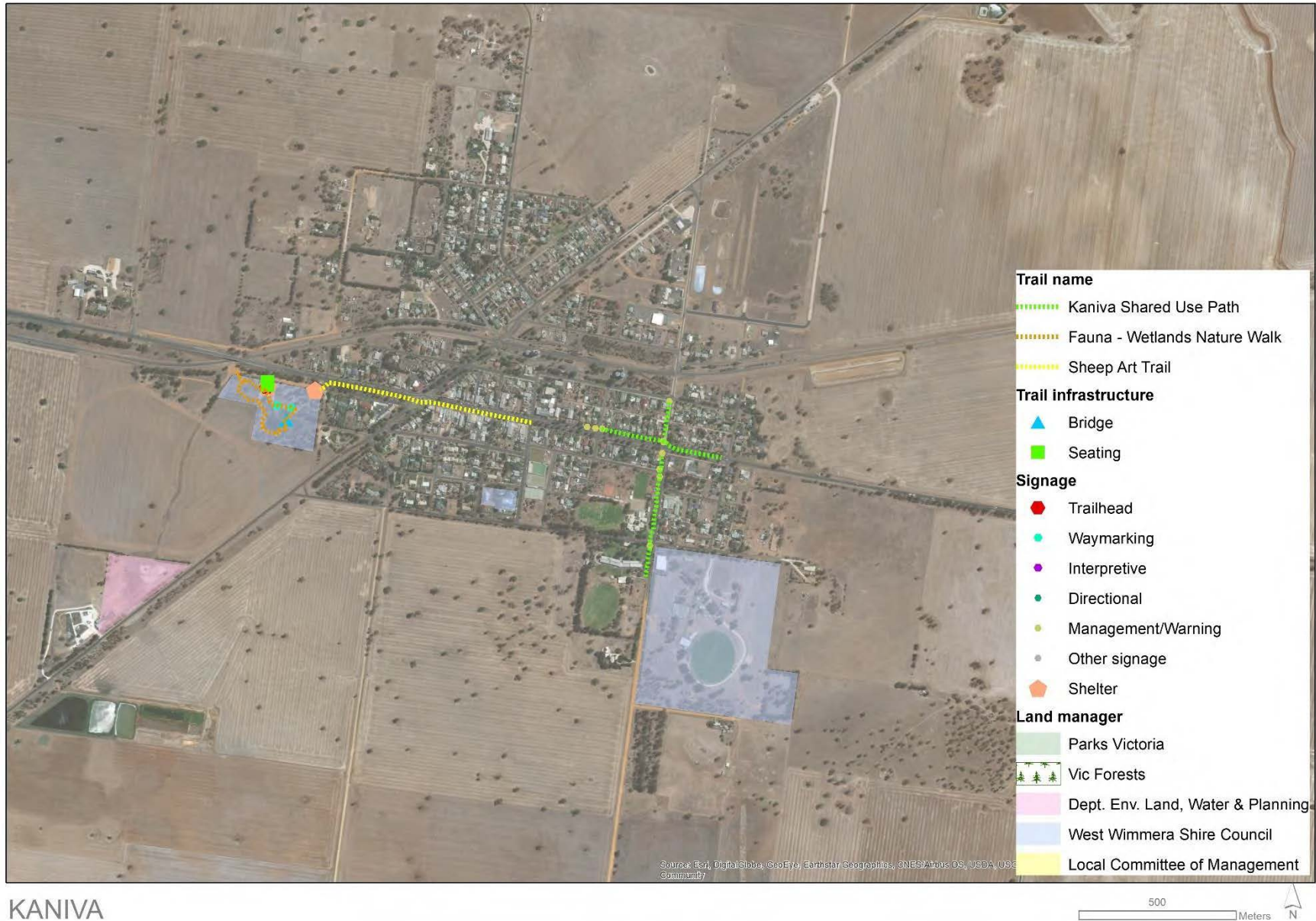
### Yanipy Nature Reserve



### Little Desert National Park



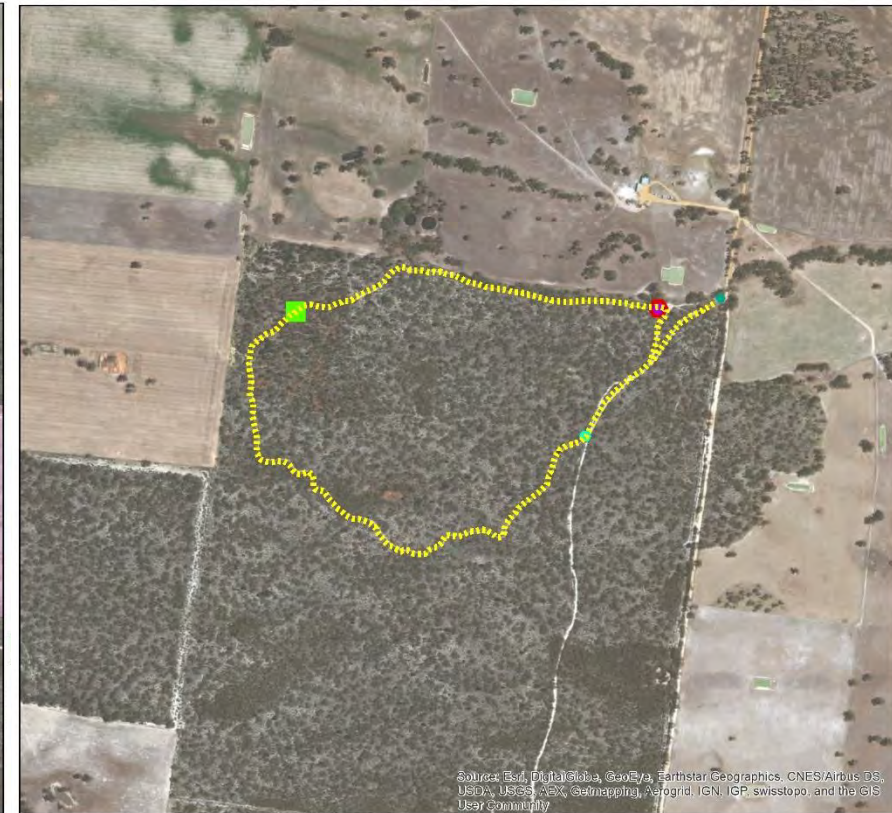








YANIPY NATURE RESERVE



BILLY HO BUSHWALK

#### Trail\_name

- ⋯⋯⋯ Yanipy Bushland Track
- ⋯⋯⋯ Billy Ho Bushwalk

#### Trail infrastructure

- ▲ Bridge
- Seating

#### Signage

- Trailhead
- Waymarking
- Interpretive
- Directional
- Management/Warning
- Other signage
- Shelter

#### Land manager

- Parks Victoria
- Vic Forests
- Dept. Env. Land, Water & Planning
- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Local Committee of Management



## Serviceton and surrounds

REF	TRAIL DETAILS	LOCATION	TENURE	CATEGORY			SPECIFICATIONS		SURFACE	
	Trail Name	Park/Reserve	Land Manager	User Type	Walking Trail Grade	Trail Hierarchy	Length	General Tread Width	Primary Trail Tread Material	General Surface Condition
					<i>1: Easiest</i> <i>5: Most difficult</i>	<i>Local</i> <i>District</i> <i>Regional</i> <i>State</i>		<i>0-3m</i> <i>3-5m</i> <i>5m+</i>		<i>1: Excellent</i> <i>5: Unserviceable</i>
<b>SERVICETON &amp; SURROUNDS</b>										
S1	Informal Trail Network	Green Swamp Wetland Reserve	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	Local	2km loop	3-5m	Natural soil	3
S2	Informal Trail Network	Mooree Historic Reserve	Parks Victoria	4WD / Walk	Grade 2	Local	4.7km network	3-5m	Natural soil	3
S3	Informal Trail Network	Serviceton Reservoir	WWSC	Walk	Grade 3	Local	900m loop	3-5m	Natural soil	3

### Green Swamp Wetland Reserve



### Mooree Historic Reserve

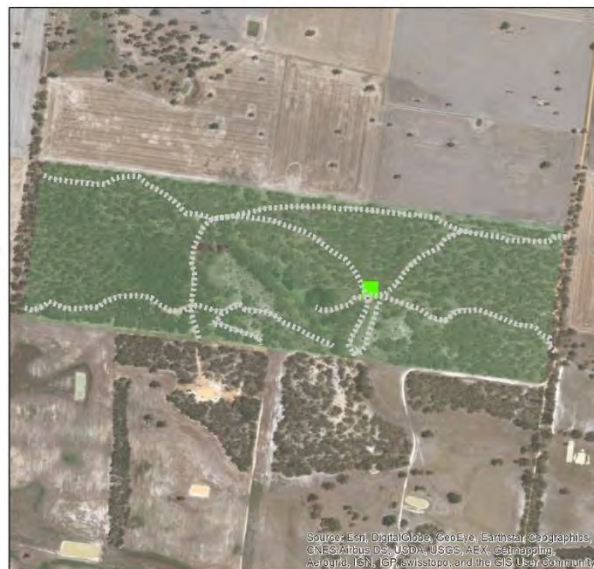


### Serviceton Reservoir





500 Meters  
N  
GREEN SWAMP WETLAND RESERVE



500 Meters  
N  
MOOREE HISTORIC RESERVE



500 Meters  
N  
SERVICETON RESERVOIR

Trail name	Signage	Land manager
Informal Trail	Trailhead	Parks Victoria
<b>Trail infrastructure</b>	Waymarking	Vic Forests
Bridge	Interpretive	Dept. Env. Land, Water & Planning
Seating	Directional	West Wimmera Shire Council
	Management/Warning	Local Committee of Management
	Other signage	
	Shelter	

# Appendix 4: Consultation Records

## Community Forum

The following points were raised during the community forum. These have been categorised by geographic areas.

- Shire-wide and wider-region
  - Create riding tracks on the same easement as main roads but separately to give walkers and bike riders the opportunity to travel between different towns in the shire in relative safety. [Another alternative with wider ramifications would be to upgrade secondary roads and tracks within the shire for the same purpose. In this way the funding could be used to assist in the maintenance and to achieve an enhanced recreational value to these roads and tracks.
  - Formalise on-road bike routes along minor roads. Would require minimal infrastructure - directional signage and map (online and printed)
  - West Wimmera should aim to provide a reason to stop when travelling between wine regions and the Grampians
- Apsley and surrounds
  - Formalise a trail along Koijak Creek, south of Apsley. The creek flows from Leah Swamp - Newlands Lake, through Apsley Bushland Reserve, across Chris Simpons Rd and south of Apsley Golf Club.
  - Create a trail from Apsley township to the cemetery
  - Extend the Newlands Wetlands Walking Trail to include a trail around the circumference of Newlands Lake.
  - Lyons Lake (Patyah - Bringalbert N Rd) could be a potential site to develop trails to enjoy natural environment
- Dergholm and surrounds
  - Harrow to Dergholm Canoe Trail (winter). Some adventurous people have done so, but with formalisation (signage, maps, promotion) more people would use this
  - Trail rides on tracks between town halls would be a good opportunity (e.g. Chetwynd to Dergholm)
  - Motorbikes and horse riders currently use informal tracks in Dergholm State Park
  - There is an annual charity horse ride in the Dergholm area
- Edenhope and surrounds
  - There are various sites of historic value which could be promoted through interpretation signage. E.g. scar tree adjacent Lake Wallace, old rail stations, bush tucker, birdlife
  - It would be great to have a 'floating boardwalk' as an extension to the lake wallace trail. Great for birdwatching!
  - Camping around Lake Wallace and two toilets. One at the over flow and one further around towards the lake Wallace homestead
  - Horse riders currently use the tracks around Edenhope in bushland, starting from the Showgrounds. About 10km. Requires fence maintenance, signage and safe HWY crossing for horses. This could be formalised as an "Edenhope Town Ride" and promoted to visitors. Many people travel through Edenhope with horses in floats, but do not know where horse facilities are (e.g. camping, horse yards, amenities) or where they can ride (i.e. where horses are permitted, access gates, safe road crossings etc.)
  - It is currently difficult/dangerous to cross the Hwy on horseback. It would be beneficial if a safe place was identified and indicated with warning signs to horse riders and Hwy traffic



- Formalise tracks in the Edenhope Flora and Fauna Reserve for horse riding and walking, and possible for motor bikes. The gates and fences require maintenance. There are beautiful wildflowers here during the season.
- There is a sign stating "no horse riding" on the Lake Wallace Perimetre Trail. It is believed that this refers only to the bitumen surface. It would be great if a horse route was identified adjacent the bitumen path. Although, may present difficulties (if water is high) to ride in front of caravan park
- Edenhope Aerodrome Bushland Reserve - motorbikes and horses currently use the informal tracks in here
- Goroke and surrounds
  - A town walking trail in Goroke would be great. The ideal place for the trailhead would be at the swimming pool / sports complex. Trail could go around the showgrounds linking with rail corridor track.
  - Formalise the walking routes at Lake Bringalbert, Lake Charlegrark (link two caravan parks) and Lake Ratzcastle for wetlands, fauna, flora, landscapes.
  - Formalise bike track along disused rail line. Carpolac - Arapiles (40 - 50km) – Natimuk
  - Jane Duff Horse Ride - Nhill to Jane Duff Memorial
- Harrow and surrounds
  - Extend the Glenelg River Walk trail to the north beyond the bridge to the Canoe Tree.
  - Extend the Glenelg River Walk trail around the glenelg river lagoon in Clunie, which is south of the town to Fitzgerald's road and a loop back. Landowners permission has already been granted. Many swans and pelicans nest in this area.
  - Create a loop from Harrow over the main bridge to Glenferrie road and back over the ford to Johnny Mullah park. It would require a very large suspension bridge for all year access however.
  - Harrow Residents have prepared a map in the past of possible walks.
  - Creation of a recreational "paddle pond" adjacent the river and Johnny Mullagh Memorial Park. This would provide a safe water recreation area and also could be of use for emergencies e.g. fire.
  - Creation of a canoe access point at the "old brick pit" through dredging the river.
  - Opening up the silted waterways would improve opportunities for recreation as well as environmental values (e.g. birdlife)
  - There are currently accessibility issues re: stairs to upper level of town. It would be great if an alternate, zig-zagged track was provided for bike access up the hill. Landscaping/terraces and exercise stations would also enhance this area
  - The old Chinese Market Gardens could be a point of interest to extend river trail to the south.
  - The annual Harrow Vinduro brings a car club from Melbourne to use the town's unique topography (e.g. hill climb) and nature
  - Unique road system and hills could provide an excellent circuit for cyclists, mountain bikes and walkers.
  - Harrow to Dergholm Canoe Trail (winter). [see comment above]
  - Approval has been given to hold the Harrow Mud Bash on land just north of town. Improved access to this land would encourage the success of this event.

## Community Survey

### Most widely used trails

Verbatim responses to questions 4 and 5 are shown in the tables below which are categorised by geographic areas.

#### Apsley and surrounds

<u>Q4. Please provide details (i.e. name and location) of the trail which you have used most.</u>	<u>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</u>
<b>Newlands Wetlands Nature Walk</b>	
Newlands trail Apsley	The natural bush and lake.
newlands walking track Apsley	likes: easy access at one end, ecological values, dislikes: weeds, damage to track surface caused by other uses
Fed corner boardwalk out to Newlands Lake	Love the walk but dislike the unkempt track
Newlines Lake walk	Path through bushland, arriving at the lake
The walk from Federation Corner to Boikerbert Lake	Very enjoyable 5 km return.
Horse riding Newlands Lake, Apsley.	Newlands Lake is a great venue for trail riding. Parks Victoria are difficult to deal with.
<b>Other</b>	
Tracks through the Meereek scrub Eg up to dip swamp	It's quiet!
Track between Benayeo rd and Townsend st. Apsley. This is track through the Apsley Common. Also often walk to Newlands Lake, either from Tip rd. or enter near Pahl St. also use Boardwalk from Federation Corner. Used to ride bikes up Splatt Street, past cemetery, left turn along to old Apsley Race Course, across to Newlands and down to township Post Office. this is 7kl bike trail. but parts of mud track need to be graded to be usable. since heavy rains and 4WD have been through.	Bush walks for recreation and exercise. Wildlife always seen and plants to discover and enjoy especially wildflowers in Springtime. Lack of maintenance ie trees fallen over track at Newlands.
Apsley - I don't know its actual name	Convenience. Well maintained

#### Dergholm and surrounds

<u>Q4. Please provide details</u>	<u>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</u>
Bailies Rocks and surround	rocks and undulating

#### Edenhope and surrounds

<u>Q4. Please provide details</u>	<u>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</u>
<b>Lake Wallace Perimetre Walk</b>	



<i>Q4. Please provide details</i>	<i>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</i>
Walking around the lake wallace	Love it
lake wallace walking track	like the lake,trees and aboriginal connection
Walking track around lake wallace edenhope	Great track . Lack of toilets around lake
Lake Wallace walking track	Too much long grass, snake risk around track and lake. Eye sore
Lake Wallace walking trail	Nice view of the lake and nature surrounded by well maintained lawns and trees
Lake Wallace Track	The privately owned section that doesn't have a path.
Lake Wallace bike track	
Lake wallace	Dislike that the track doesn't go around the whole lake.
Trail around Lake Wallace, Edenhope.	It is peaceful, has lovely scenery, easy access and great facilities with the new toilet block at Henely Park.
Lake Wallace walking circuit	I like that it is Clearly marked, it goes all the way around the lake, it has a dirt track section, I can do one circuit or more, there is a water refill station. I feel safe by myself as it's not too isolated. Beautiful scenery, and birdlife.
Lake Wallace Lake track	a lovely walk around the lake, kids can ride easily, great for prams,
Lake Wallace	Good but could do with more signage (interesting things associated with wetlands/lakes etc.)
Lake Walkace	Accessibility
around the edenhope lake	good trail
Lake Wallace walking track, Edenhope	Like - 5.5 kms is a great distance for kids to ride or 2 laps for adults. Great for single lap walk. Dislike - the unsealed 200m as difficult on bikes for the kids. - would be good with interpretive signage - would be good to link with other parts of the township e.g. Back Swamp, Flora Reserve, Racecourse.
Walk around Lake Wallace Most are not formalised trails but are on public land & could become so. Not many Trails exist at the moment	Lake Wallace - very mowed, little space for nature
Edenhope lake	Good for families
Lake Wallace path in Edenhope	The trail goes through the front of two residential properties and makes the user feel like they're invading their personal space. A fence or hedge would be nice
Lake wallace	needs surfacing all the way around, and flattening so not on angle
Lake Wallace	Limited toilet facilities

<i>Q4. Please provide details</i>	<i>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</i>
<b>Other</b>	
Edenhope Naturalist trail at back of Tip.	

### **Goroke and surrounds (includes Lake Charlegrark, Jane Duff Memorial)**

<i>Q4. Please provide details</i>	<i>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</i>
<b>Lake Charlegrark</b>	
It's not an existing trail but I enjoy walking around Lake Charlegrark.	It would be more enjoyable and safer to have a boardwalk around the lake.
Lake Charlegrark.	Limited toilet facilities
<b>Other</b>	
Jane Duff memorial area	Water is there, quite, not far from home.
Old railway line at Goroke	Close to home, no houses, great place for dogs to run, gets very muddy and unpassable at times
Ratscastle	Great area, facilities and location to town is easy day out for the family

### **Harrow and surrounds**

<i>Q4. Please provide details</i>	<i>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</i>
<b>Glenelg River (Walk or Kayak)</b>	
Kayaking Glenelg River at Harrow	Too many reeds made it hard to travel down the river. Otherwise it was easy to access the river at Johnny Mullagh Park.
Harrow Glenelg River trail	Enjoy the river. Would be enhanced through improvements such as interpretation, connecting people to the river through events and recreational fishing facilities. Canoe trips at this point would enhance the town and bring in more tourists
Harrow - along the Glenelg River	Feels snakey
<b>Other</b>	
Unmarked trail through Harrow scrub (runs approximately parallel to Edgars Road at the west)	I like that it's very secluded and runs through many native flowers; it winds through vegetation and is not hilly!

### **Kaniva and surrounds**

<i>Q4. Please provide details</i>	<i>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</i>
<b>Billy Ho Bushwalk</b>	
Billy ho bushwalk	Peaceful. The changing environments as you go around the world walk

<u>Q4. Please provide details</u>	<u>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</u>
Billy ho bushwalk	Overgrown but lovely surrounds
Billy Ho track	Needs upgrading
Billyho	
Billy Ho bushwalk south Kaniva	Love the location but track needs maintenance
Billy ho	Needs clearing on the tracks
Billy ho, Yanipy bush reserve	There are not enough information brochures for either location. There is also not enough signage at the locations.
Billy-ho Bushwalk	Designated track and it is easy and quick
Billy Ho bushwalk out of Kaniva,	Badly maintained
<b>Other</b>	
We use all of the ones in the Kaniva area	
Wet lands Kaniva	It's not much of a trail, very over grown
fauna park Showgrounds	Be good to have a running track or something around fauna park with exercise equipment like edenhope
Not sure on names but within the Little Desert near Kaniva	Some nice views

#### **Serviceton and surrounds**

<u>Q4. Please provide details</u>	<u>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</u>
Mostly use bills gully moree back roads	Biggest problems horse riders face is stupid people driving past too close and at speed
Moree Reserve, South Lillimur	Badly maintained

#### **Other**

<u>Q4. Please provide details</u>	<u>Q5. What do you like or dislike about this trail?</u>
Maryvale track - big hill	Often see red tails, can see mt arapilies to the east
some of the 50plus rec reserves in the west Wimmera,	bushland and wetlands
Travel to most of the recreational reserves andbealk with my dogs	The disrepair

Verbatim responses to Question 6 are listed below.

Q6. Please list the name and location of any other trails you have used within the Shire.

- Apsley and surrounds
  - Lake Newlands in Apsley
  - Apsley bridge track loop near new lands
  - Newlands reserve - bushwalking/photography.
  - apsley boardwalk
  - Kayaking Newlands and Bringalbert Lakes
  - lake bringalbert
  - Lake Bringalbert - walking, combined with boating activities
  - Apsley Common Walk
  - Apsley
  - Block in Apsley is with the orchids north of the highway.
- Dergholm and surrounds
  - Dergohm State Forest Baileys Rocks
  - Baileys rocks
  - Baileys Rocks
  - Bailey rocks
  - Kadnook State forest and Baileys Rocks
- Edenhope and surrounds
  - Lake wallace walking trail
  - Lake Wallace Edenhope
  - lake Wallace walking path around lake Wallace
  - Kayaking Lake Wallace
  - Back Swamp - walking/biking
  - Kayaking Collins Lake
  - Tracks behind the racecourse/golf course between pony club and town.
  - Tracks through scrub and pine trees behind lake wallace
  - Readers Road (great for redtailed black cockatoos),
  - Edenhope Flora Reserve, bushwalking - mostly to take photos of wildflowers.
- Goroke and surrounds
  - Lake Ratzcastle.
  - Lake Ratzcastle
  - Ratzcastle
  - Trails around Ratzcastle
  - Charligrake
  - Lake Charlegrark swamp - kayaking
  - Kayak around lake charigarkHorse riding the track between Bringalbert Lake and Lake Charlegrark.
  - Horse Riding in Little Desert near Goroke
  - Tuckers track
  - Old railway line Goroke
- Harrow and surrounds
  - Glenelg river walk
  - Harrow town track/ John mullah
  - Glenelg River - kayaking and walking
  - Not really a trail but have cannoed in glenelg river at harrow
  - Various tracks through scrub around Harrow and Connewirricoo
  - Yallakar State Forest
- Kaniva and surrounds
  - Kaniva Show grounds
  - Wetlands & Fauna Park Kaniva
  - Bill's Gully
  - Billy Ho Bushwalk
  - Yanipy Nature Reserve
  - Little desert area
  - Broughton's waterhole
- Serviceton and surrounds
  - Serviceton Reservoir
  - Moree Reserve
  - Red Bluff & Big Desert area

## Desired trail experiences and ideas

Verbatim responses to questions 7 and 8 are categorised by theme and/or geographical area below.

### Specified by geographic area

- Apsley and surrounds
  - *Horse riding trail through Newlands Reserve*
  - *Newlands walk has scope for improvements like signage and trail maintenance*
  - *Bringalbert trail could be looked at too*
  - *There are numerous unmade roads around Apsley where walking tracks could be constructed. One suggestion that comes to mind is a side track which could be constructed alongside the Wimmera Highway from Apsley to the Amber Ridge Cafe and garden centre. From there a walk could be continued down the Koijak Road to the Koijak Creek, which has been fenced off under a Riparian preservation program. A walk could be constructed downstream to connect to the existing walk ways in the Apsley scrub. The creek runs through private property which would require agreement from property owners. There are no traditional walking tracks so this would require negotiation with proper safeguards.*
- Dergholm and surrounds
  - *Better trails in and around balies rocks*
  - *I'd like to see a boating/canoe/fishing trail and encouragement for tourism to the township of Dergholm to utilise the nearby Glenelg River. There is great potential and very little tourism signage or riverside maintenance but a walking trail could be implemented with a few bench seats and signs about the river and history etc. There is good access via private property (public access roads) if shire could provide a few seats and maintain the edge of the river for a small section, and have an information sign in the town of Dergholm and sign directions*
  - *Balies rocks*
- Edenhope and surrounds
  - *Lake Wallace - toilet block at overflow*
  - *Toilet around other side of lake Wallace*
  - *Edenhope around the golf course/ racecourse / backswamp could connect these - upgrade signage*
  - *Would there be an area around the Edenhope Golf Course perhaps, that different clubs/schools could utilise??*
  - *Edenhope flora and fauna reserve (in great need of attention, am too fearful to use ..snakes)*
- Gorokey and surrounds
  - *Boardwalk/ trail around Lake Charlegrark.*
  - *boorooki lake*
  - *Lake Charlegrark*
  - *More marked walks around lakes, for example, Ratzcastle, Charlegrark.*
  - *Ratzcastle is a great spot that could be looked at*
- Harrow and surrounds
  - *I would also like to see the river side of glenelg river used to better potential*
  - *Improvements to the Harrow Glenelg River trail.*
  - *Something along the Glenelg River out of Harrow*
  - *At a Harrow meeting there was discussions around a track between Harrow and the Grampians - 'Harrow to the Hills'. This represents a path that the traditional Owners used to use.*
  - *Continue to improve Harrow trails right along the river*
  - *Along the river behind Harrow.*



- *Along the Glenelg River in Harrow, for tourists, clubs, fitness programs. Needs to be close and easy access to maximise use.*
- *Harrow Glenelg River track*
- **Kaniva and surrounds**
  - *Wet lands area Kaniva*
  - *cycling paths around wetlands and around town.*
  - *Near the Kaniva wetlands?*
  - *Wetlands in Kaniva township properly constructed*
  - *Bills Gully*
  - *Extension of Billy Ho track*
  - *Why not a track that would go from kaniva to billy ho and up date a maintain the existing tracks out at billy ho.*
  - *Billy Ho bushwalk done up*
  - *Billy ho could benefit from signage as to habitat influences*
  - *The flora park in kaniva should include some cycling running tracks.*
  - *Outskirts of town around kaniva*
  - *A lake in Kaniva that can be utilised by swimmers, fishermen, kayaks/canoes and a walking track around the edge*
  - *Safe areas around kaniva to ride without danger from other road users*
  - *Some trails would be better than none! Not much at all around Kaniva.*
  - *Any walking trails would be great around Kaniva, also lake Charlegrark.*
  - *As a cyclist i would love to see some cycling and running/walking tracks put around kaniva.*
  - *Fauna park*
  - *showgrounds*
  - *Edenhope rd and broughton rd are dangerous let alone dealing with a Major hwy.*
  - *As a resident of Kaniva, any trail would be good, we often have to walk on the road as there are no footpaths let alone walking trails.*
  - *Tracks near Miram and Kaniva*
  - *Would like to hike across the little desert*
  - *More signed walking tracks through the little desert. As well as more camping grounds.*
  - *Walking tracks and general maintenance at Yanipy and Broughton's Waterhole*
- **Serviceton and surrounds**
  - *Green Swamp has potential too*
  - *Walking tracks and general maintenance at Moree etc.*
- **Other**
  - *uram uram springs*
  - *Lake yallacka - walking riding track*
  - *Burkes bridge; mereek forest*

## **General themes**

- **Walking / Running**
  - *Diverse walking trails with some local stories. attached to make interesting. Cemetery walks with signage. Wildflower tracks maintained for spring walks*
  - *Shady scenic trails for runners & walkers*
  - *Cleared walking paths through bush land that can either be just for walking short distances or that can be linked for larger walks over 15-20 kms.*
  - *More circuits, marked for different fitness levels, a range of terrains and locations, around lakes, through bush, around towns as well. Walks that take from 30 minutes up to 2 hours, with some points of interest on the way.*
  - *Jogging trail*
  - *More walking and running trails*
  - *A walking trail*
  - *walking tracks*

- Horse riding trails
  - *Horse riding*
  - *Horse riding trails*
  - *Horse riding trails*
  - *Horse riding trails*
  - *Safe trail for horse riding, away from busy roads so young riders and/or horses are not in danger from traffic. A trail that could be shared with joggers, walkers, mums with little kids on bikes. Scenery for tourists*
- Multi-use trails
  - *Bike and walking tracks in the towns*
  - *Ones where you can travel from site to site camp overnight and then experience a different theme each day. Day one Canoe, day 2 walk day 3 ride*
  - *More paths which accomodate a range of interests. For example a path that is horse/walker/runner/bike rider friends in one.*
  - *Trails for all kinds of pursuits, including bush walking, township walks (e.g. Harrow river walk), horse riding, cycling, dirt bikes, canoeing, bird watching, wildflowering.*
  - *My children now own motorbikes, so would like Experiences that include camping, bike riding and walking with current popular fishing/yabbying spots. e.g. Lake Ratzcastle, Lake Bringalbert (use the bush to the north of the reserve.)*
  - *Tracks for bikes trail & mountain*
- Canoeing/Kayaking and Lake activities
  - *Canoeing/kayaking.*
  - *More Kayak areas, more water areas in the north of the shire*
  - *kayaking in lakes - creeks, swamps*
  - *It would be good to have some boardwalks that allow people to be over the water in some lakes.*
  - *Canoeing in Ratzcastle or the Glenelg river*
- Off-road cycle/walk trail Edenhope - Apsley
  - *bike track all the way Edenhope to Apsley, separate to road*
  - *A track from edenhope to Apsley*
  - *Perhaps a multi-use track from Edenhope to Apsley*
  - *Edenhope to Apsley*
  - *More variety e.g. Edenhope to Apsley (off hwy) Edenhope to scrubby Lake (off-road)*
  - *Edenhope to apsley.*
  - *A track that can be used for walking running riding from edenhope to apsley would be fantastic*
- Nature trails
  - *More for bird watching*
  - *nature*
  - *wild flower walks when flowers are out*
  - *Orchid Walk Red Tailed Black Cockatoo Walk We offer some great cycling we offer some fantastic natural habitats A variety of circuits for people to walk around in towns & in public land. Well publicised, for locals & tourists*
  - *Bird watching*
  - *West Wimmera Shire is very well represented with native flora, including very small species and orchids, which many people may not realise. Over the years I have heard people talk about the equally impressive number of bird species, and that they wished more was made in promoting the area as a bird watching destination. Trails with information about plants and wildlife specific to that area, and how to treat it respectfully, would be one way to get people to appreciate what's out here.*
- Trail/s linking wetlands
  - *Need to develop a wetlands map for visitors More diversity than Akkadian when wetlands are full and very little up to date information available for locals or tourists*
  - *A wetland trails*

- *Use of wetlands for nature based tourism.*
- *tracks linking wetlands & along creeks*
- *Have a wetland trail tour.*
- **Rail trail / accessible trails**
  - *Some with sections of disabled access. Otherwise any that provide safe access for all generations - rail trails for example. Loops from a central point. Continuous trail - similar to Great South West Walk*
  - *Ones that are easy to get to*
  - *Expand use of the old rail trails as a tourist opportunity*
  - *some suitable for wheel chair access*
  - *Various state forest and old railway line*
- **Safer trails and routes (away from traffic)**
  - *More options for people to ride or walk away from busy roads where is too dangerous to walk etc.*
  - *Off road cycle track from Mt Arrapiles, around lakes to the Naracoorte Caves*
  - *Bike trails that keep riders safe from passing traffic.*
  - *places to ride where there is minimal traffic'hills to ride up and along some along the river*
  - *Walking and riding on the main highways within the shire is really quite hazardous. There are many instances where side tracks could be graded along side highways or on surveyed lanes without roads. The traffick on the major arterial roads within the Shire has grown almost exponentially over recent times.*
  - *Signed off-road Bike trails 5kls, 7kls. 21kls. Different options.*
- **Improved trail infrastructure**
  - *Better rest areas (for picnics or just enjoying the silence/wildlife) and toilets (maintained), would be nice if water (tanks) were installed, signage for flora/fauna in that specific area*
  - *maybe some trails with camping and picnic areas*
  - *More interpretive signage where wildlife is and aboriginal sites. Information on time. difficulty. highlights as other regions have for their trails.*
  - *toilet facilities and eating area*
- **General/Other**
  - *The trails that are there are great, basically WW is the best kept secret in Vic. Just letting people know is half the battle.*
  - *Ban duck shooting so that wetlands can be enjoyed by families.*
  - *Just fix what we already have.*
  - *One suitable for various users*
  - *Would like to see more formalised walking tracks around public lakes.*
  - *We have hardly any trails. We need more to put us on the map as a location between the wineries of SA & the Grampians. The intention should be to not only cater for health & well being of locals but to encourage people to stop in our area*
  - *Probably near the main settlement areas so that there is on flow effect from visits. eg coffee and shops and accommodation options. Go wild in the Wild West.*
  - *Toilet needed for Servi Res. So much toilet paper accumulating in the bushes.*
  - *people using fireplaces to burn all their rubbish including glass bottles and cans.*

## Additional topics and comments

Verbatim responses to Question 9 are provided below:

- *Promotion of trails*
  - *More advertising Use encouraged outside major event timings Don't throw rocks at me but perhaps a community-based West Wimmera Trails Committee with only one Shire representative on board. Why I say that is because a committee made up of Shire Councillors limits community involvement, i.e. Edenhope Cemetery Trust.*
  - *I don't know of any trails, if there is any they should be advertised better.*
  - *I wasn't aware of many within the Shire, but other areas have some beautiful places to run*
  - *encourage use of and how best to get visitors into our region to use them*
  - *I believe it can be difficult for horse riders to get permission to ride on public land. This makes it hard for groups. Most people just go and do it as individuals, but this raises difficulties for clubs. It would be great if people knew where they are allowed and not allowed to ride.*
  - *Well-marked trails may encourage groups, such as a walking group, bird watchers, camera clubs, etc to become more active in our region.*
  - *See above I have often been approached for information from the visitors center and have talked to shire reps re the development of current information*
  - *It is a beautiful place, and exercise is vital to people's long term health, I'd like to encourage them (and myself) to get out in it as much as they can! Thankyou for highlighting this issue.*
  - *I think it could be promoted more. But some of the tracks need to be marked.*
  - *We need to promote our unique landforms that have north-south wetland chains and the bushland reserves near them. This should focus on key public access wetlands, including both permanent water and endangered landforms e.g. shallow freshwater marshes. More publicity for eco-tourism that makes links between transport, accommodation, the variety of activities and the accessibility of the locations, as we usually find in other regions. As this hasn't really been a focus for the region before, it would be good that new experiences are promoted heavily, with guided tours, as Apsley Alive offer of Newlands areas.*
  - *Advertise locations well so people can access them easily. Have camp areas clean and tidy and mowed*
- *Quantity/Quality of trails*
  - *Good walk/run/cycle tracks would be awesome!*
  - *More trails would be great around Kaniva*
  - *A range of lengths to accommodate different fitness levels and wheele chairs*
  - *On the lake track in edenhope it would be fantastic if the last part of the track (in homesteads front yard) was the same as the rest! As it is at the moment it makes it every hard to walk with prams and ride bikes*
  - *There isn't many trails*
  - *Perhaps a trail that could also be utilised by the local schools for cross country or long distance running. People that enjoy walking for fitness, or training for the football club as well as horse riding. Trial along the Glenelg River in Harrow, tourism, fitness for football/netball club/ horse riding.*
  - *Could also be trails that could be completed in a car, for example Aboriginal Cricketers Tour Jane Duff Tour Art & Op Shop Tour Geology Tour*
  - *Considering the focus on health and fitness, i would like to see some recreational trails, there aren't any at all in Kaniva .*
  - *Keep the maintenance up to them and grass low, enough drinking water outlets and information signs and everyone is happy*
- *Safety*

- *It really is scary riding a bike on our road with semis flying past and there not being even a shoulder room to go onto. I love cycling and running but i can not share this with my child as the roads are too dangerous.*
- *Roadsides are not horse riding friendly at all. Unsafe to ride on roads :(*
- **Other**
  - *there are a lot of opportunities and potential to expand on local knowledge*
  - *There are opportunities for the Shire to work with other key agencies and the community to develop and implement this strategy. Agencies such as the Glenelg Hopkins CMA are working with WWS to develop a recreational plan for Harrow. By working together and leveraging funding this will enable the West Wimmera Recreational Trails Strategy to be realized.*
  - *Good luck and well done to work on this topic*
  - *We enjoy what we have got but can always see room for improvement. and protection of nature ie. Wedge Tailed Eagles. Hares ,Echidnas , Frilled necked lizards. Fungus abound in wet season and wildflowers. ie. a rich diversity of nature could be promoted in our area.*
  - *Rubbish issues need to be addressed. Signage needed saying take your rubbish home with you.*
  - *Would like to see some provisions made in all towns not just Edenhope.*
  - *great idea to promote this*
  - *check out Munda Biddi cycle Trail Western Australia. Listed In the top 10 of the world.*
  - *I would like trails to be kept natural. probably need to ensure mobile coverage if participation increases. Yabbies and fishing, canoes and water based activities.*
  - *encouraging more people into this area will have a detrimental effect*



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