



Mansfield Shire

# Tracks and Trails Strategy 2026 - 2046

Volume 1  
Draft Strategy  
April 2026



**TREDWELL**

## Acknowledgments

Mansfield Shire Council acknowledges the Taungurung people as the traditional custodians and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present. Council extends that respect to all members of our community.

The Tracks and Trails Strategy has been developed by the Mansfield Shire in partnership with the Victorian Government, Alpine Resorts Victoria and Tredwell Management.



**Mansfield  
Shire**



**Alpine Resorts  
Victoria**



The development of this Strategy involved input from many stakeholders and community members. Without their contributions, this document would not truly reflect the needs and aspirations of the region. Mansfield Shire Council sincerely acknowledges and thanks all those involved.

Revision	Date	Details	Authorised
R0	12/12/2025	Mansfield Shire Tracks and Trails Strategy Draft Dec 2025	Neil Tredwell, Tredwell
R1	26/3/2026	Mansfield Shire Tracks and Trails Strategy Draft March 2026	Neil Tredwell, Tredwell
R2	20/4/2026	Mansfield Shire Tracks and Trails Strategy Final Draft April 2026	Neil Tredwell, Tredwell

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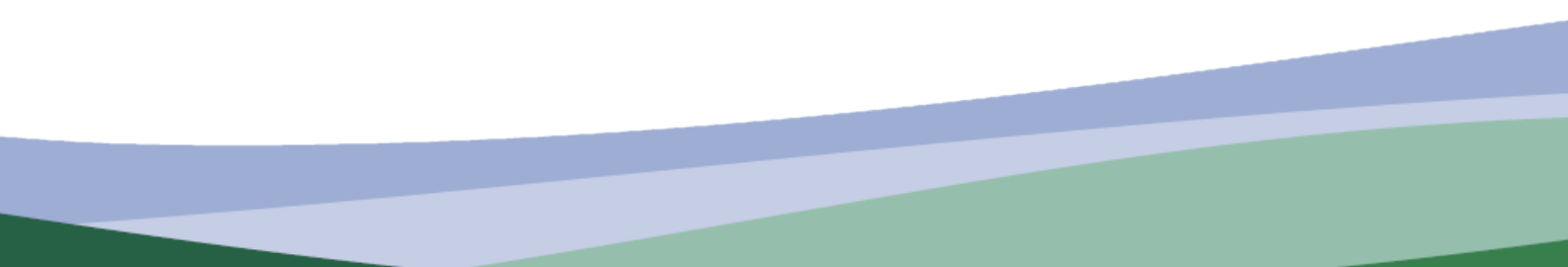
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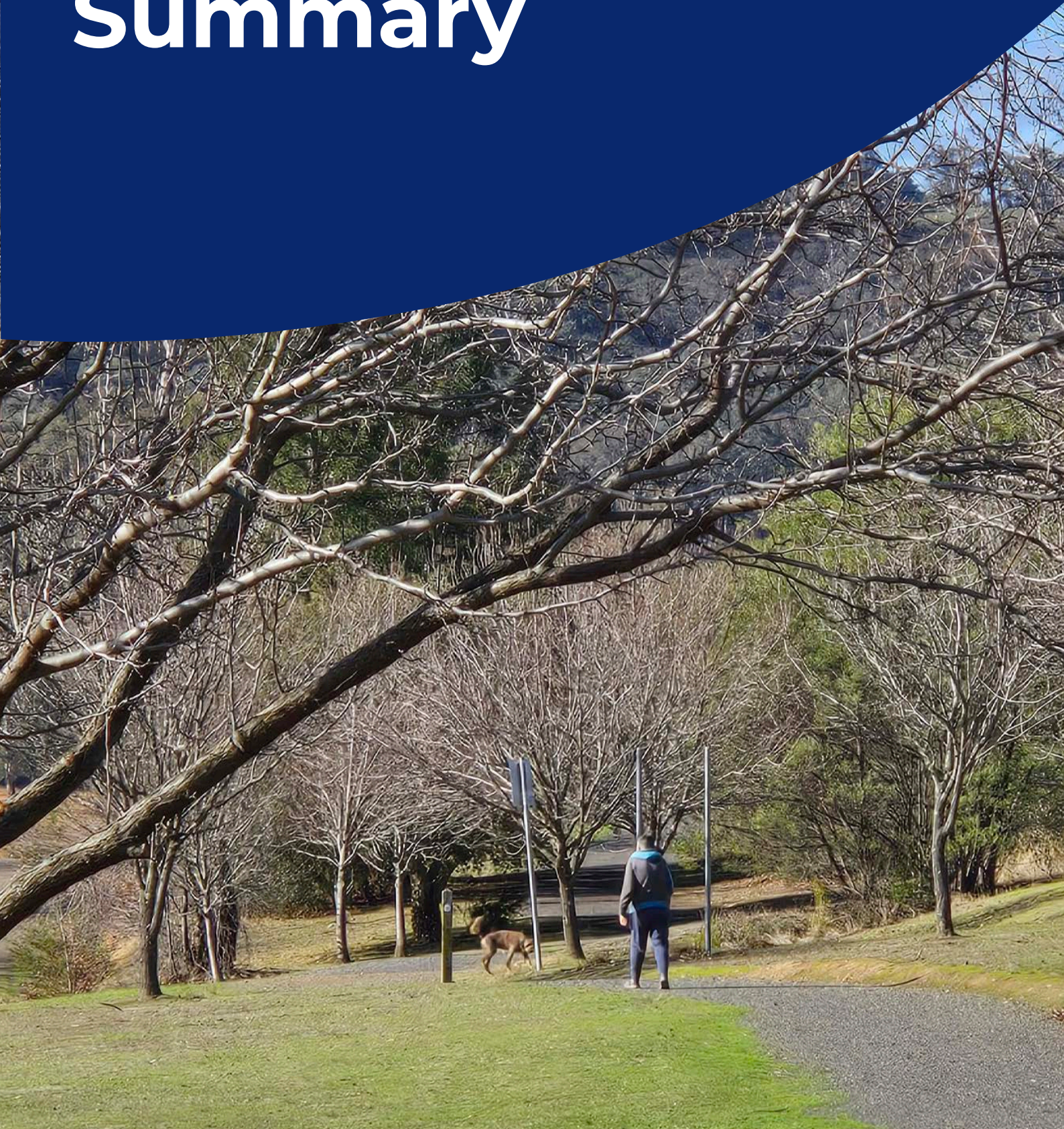
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# Executive Summary



## Executive Summary

The Mansfield Shire Tracks and Trails Strategy 2026–2046 provides a comprehensive 20-year framework to guide the planning, development, enhancement and management of the Shire’s extensive and highly valued tracks and trails network.

Mansfield Shire’s natural assets, including alpine peaks, rivers, lakes, national parks and signature trails such as the Great Victorian Rail Trail attract over 1.2 million visitors annually and support a strong visitor economy. Local participation in nature-based recreation continues to grow, reflecting community values, lifestyle expectations and increasing demand for high-quality outdoor experiences.

The Strategy identifies key issues such as resource constraints, inconsistent management frameworks, varied land tenures, gaps in connectivity, increasing standards and expectations and the impacts of natural disasters. Conversely, it recognises significant opportunities to elevate the region’s trail offer, improving promotion, strengthening partnerships, expanding trail experiences, encouraging active transport, embedding cultural interpretation and enhancing nature-based tourism.

The Implementation Plan outlines priority actions, including strategic feasibility studies, new shared-use connections between key destinations, township loop trails, mountain bike network upgrades, improved links to the Great Victorian Rail Trail and enhanced trailhead facilities.

Collectively, this Strategy provides a clear, evidence-based pathway for investment, delivering social, environmental and economic benefits while ensuring tracks and trails remain resilient, accessible, safe

and inspiring for residents and visitors well into the future.

This report is Volume 1 the Mansfield Tracks and Trails Strategy.

Volume 2 is the Situational, Issues and Opportunities Analysis Report and provides background information and research that informed the development of this strategy (Volume 1).

# 01

# Introduction and Background



## Project Overview

### Project Background

The Mansfield Shire Tracks and Trails Strategy 2026–2046 (Strategy) assesses the current recreational tracks and trails network and identifies opportunities for future development across Mansfield Shire and nearby areas including Mt Buller and Mt Stirling.

The Strategy includes a situational analysis, identification of issues and opportunities, an economic assessment, and an implementation plan. It aims to enhance connectivity, accessibility and community benefit.

A strong focus on stakeholder engagement has guided the Strategy's development, ensuring alignment with local needs and aspirations through consultation led by Council and its consultants.

### Project Scope

This project aims to create a 20 year strategic framework to guide the investment, improvement and sustainable management of Mansfield Shire's recreational tracks and trails.

It will support a wide range of users from local families to mountain bikers, hikers and horse riders with a focus on accessibility, inclusion and long-term use. The framework will enhance active recreation opportunities across the Shire, nearby communities and the Alpine Resorts.

This report is Volume 1 the Mansfield Tracks and Trails Strategy.

Volume 2 is the Situational, Issues and Opportunities Analysis Report and provides background information and research that informed the development of this strategy (Volume 1).

### Project Methodology/Approach

The approach to developing the Strategy is a five stage process.



### Definitions

Tracks and Trails - For the purposes of the Strategy, in general, tracks refer to well-maintained all-weather surfaces designed specifically for walking/ running and cycling, while trails are generally less developed routes intended for hiking, mountain biking and horse riding, requiring lower levels of design and maintenance. Noting some existing tracks and trails names may not meet this criteria.

- Alpine Resorts Victoria – includes the Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Resorts
- Strategy - Mansfield Shire Tracks and Trails Strategy 2026–2046
- Shire - Mansfield Shire

## Shire Profile

The Shire is located in North East Victoria, approximately two and a half hours' drive from Melbourne. Over 10,000 people call the Shire home, drawn to its scenic beauty, relaxed lifestyle and strong sense of community.

Set against a backdrop of alpine landscapes, rivers and lakes, the Shire presents a diverse nature-based environment. From snow-covered peaks in winter to vibrant bushland tracks and trails in summer, the region offers year round opportunities for outdoor recreation and relaxation.

The Shire is recognised for its strong outdoor lifestyle, offering accessible opportunities for activities such as walking, cycling, camping and horse riding. The extensive range of natural attractions and track and trail networks contributes to the Shire's appeal as a popular destination for both holidaymakers and individuals seeking a rural lifestyle change.

Mansfield township is the main centre, with a lively main street, strong visitor services and a welcoming country town atmosphere. Smaller communities such as Bonnie Doon, Merrijig, Goughs Bay and Jamieson offer peaceful getaways and are well-loved for their access to rivers, bushland and the mountains. The Shire covers a diverse landscape, with highlights including Lake Eildon, the Alpine National Park and access to Mount Buller and Mount Stirling. These natural assets support a wide range of activities from hiking and camping to skiing and mountain biking.

The Great Victorian Rail Trail (GVRT), which ends in Mansfield, is a key attraction for cyclists and walkers. Mount Buller also offers a world-class mountain biking park, making the region a top destination for trail-based recreation.

Picturesque rivers like the Delatite, Howqua and Jamieson meander through the Shire, offering popular spots for fishing, swimming and picnics. Wildlife such as platypus, fish and birdlife thrive in these natural habitats.

With over 1.2 million visitors annually (not including Mt Buller), the Shire plays a key role in Victoria's High Country tourism region. Its tracks, trails, parks and natural beauty not only drive the visitor economy, but also support an attractive lifestyle for residents.



## Visitor Economy

Tracks and trails play a crucial role in driving the Visitor Economy, especially in the Shire, which is a well-known tourism destination in regional Victoria. For domestic overnight visitors to the Shire, sightseeing; bushwalking and exploring national and state parks were the second, third and fourth most popular activities people cited for visiting the Shire in 2023/24, all of which are closely linked to tracks and trails and related experiences. Expanding and improving existing tracks and trails, along with creating new ones, will further boost the local, regional and state visitor economy. The table below outlines the Shire's Visitor Profile and the key implications for tracks and trails provision and management within the Shire.

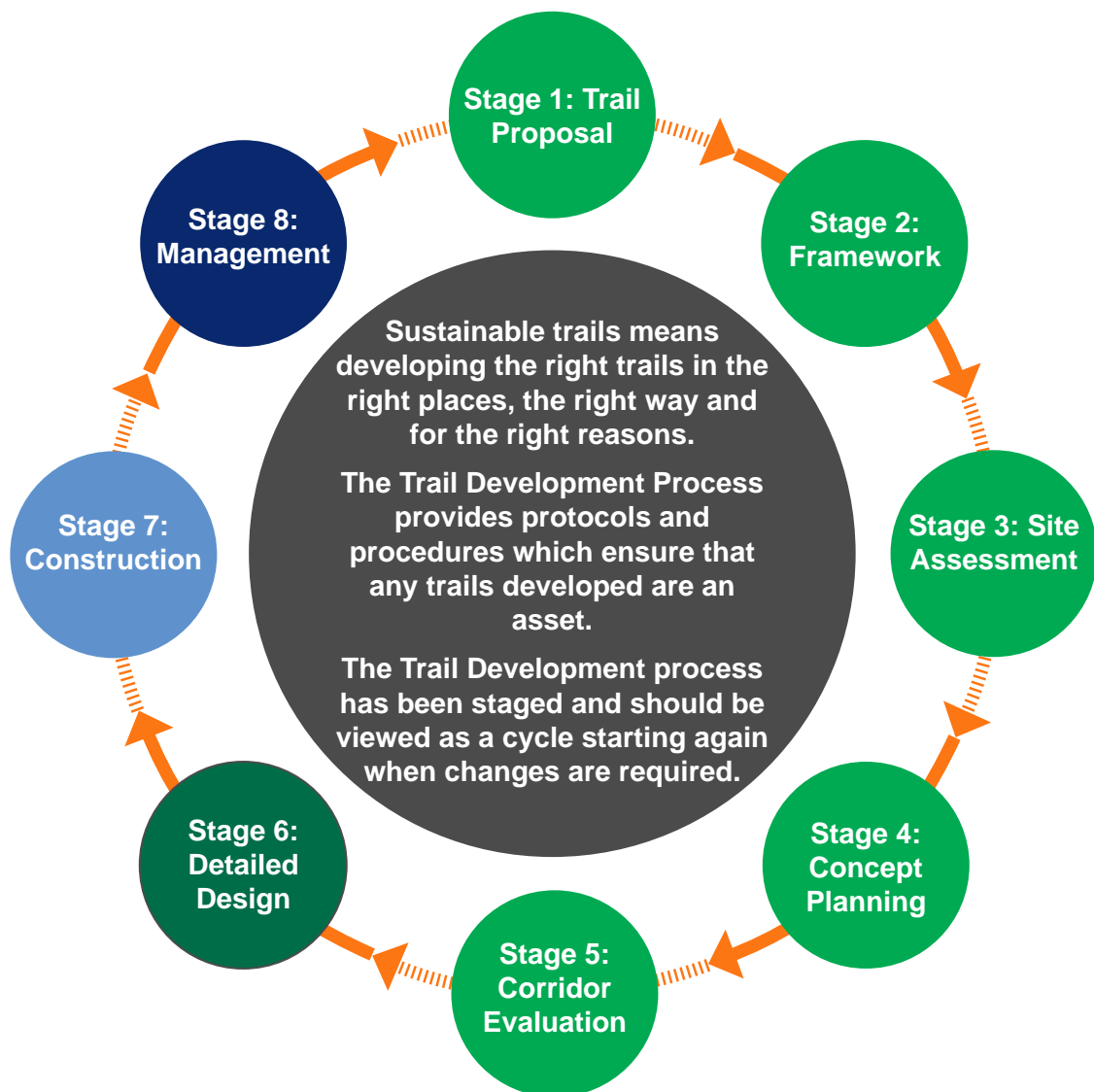
Indicator	The Shire Visitor Profile	Implications for Tracks and Trails
Domestic Visitors	250,328* – Domestic Day Trips 462,715* - Domestic Overnight Visitors (3.1% of regional Victoria) 1,359,379* – Domestic Visitor nights (3.4% of regional Victoria) 3.0 days* Average length of stay (3.1 for regional Victoria)	A significant portion of visitors are coming to the Shire to sight-see, bushwalk/walk and visit national/state parks. Indicating a high demand and need for the provision of high quality tracks and trails of various levels of difficulty and experiences.  Linkages to natural and cultural attractions along with food and beverage offerings (cafes, restaurants, pubs etc.) will be important as these are also key activities that visitors are taking part in while visiting and staying in the Shire.  Tourism is a major industry for the Shire employing nearly one fifth of the local workforce. Developing and growing the visitor economy through tracks and trails can occur through guided walks/rides, equipment sales and hire, accommodation bookings and food and beverage consumption.
International Visitors	23,392* – International Visitor Nights (1.7% of regional Victoria)	
Total Expenditure (2023/24)	Output/Sales \$190.74M (19.8% of Total Shire Industry) Value Added \$85.97M (20.2% of Total Shire Industry)	
Total Employment (2023/24)	Direct 515 jobs Indirect 363 jobs Total 878 jobs (18.6% of Total Shire Employment)	
Top Activities - (2023/24)	1 - Eat out, dine at a restaurant or cafe 2 - Sightseeing 3 - Bushwalking 4 - Visit National Parks or State Forest 5 – Fishing 6 – Water activities/sports 7 – Other outdoor activities	
Reasons for Visiting	79.1%* Holiday (53% in regional Victoria) 14.9%* Visiting friends and relatives (30.8% in regional Victoria) 6%* Other – e.g. business	

\* 5 Year Average

## Track and Trail Development

Tracks and trails are like any other asset or facility development and as such, are subject to a formal planning and approval process. A robust trail development process moves trail development away from a purely design and construction approach to a more considered and planned approach. Working within a standardised methodology is especially important for trails with numerous stakeholders and those in high conservation areas. Building rigour into the development process will ensure that project proposals are transformed into professionally built and sustainable assets.

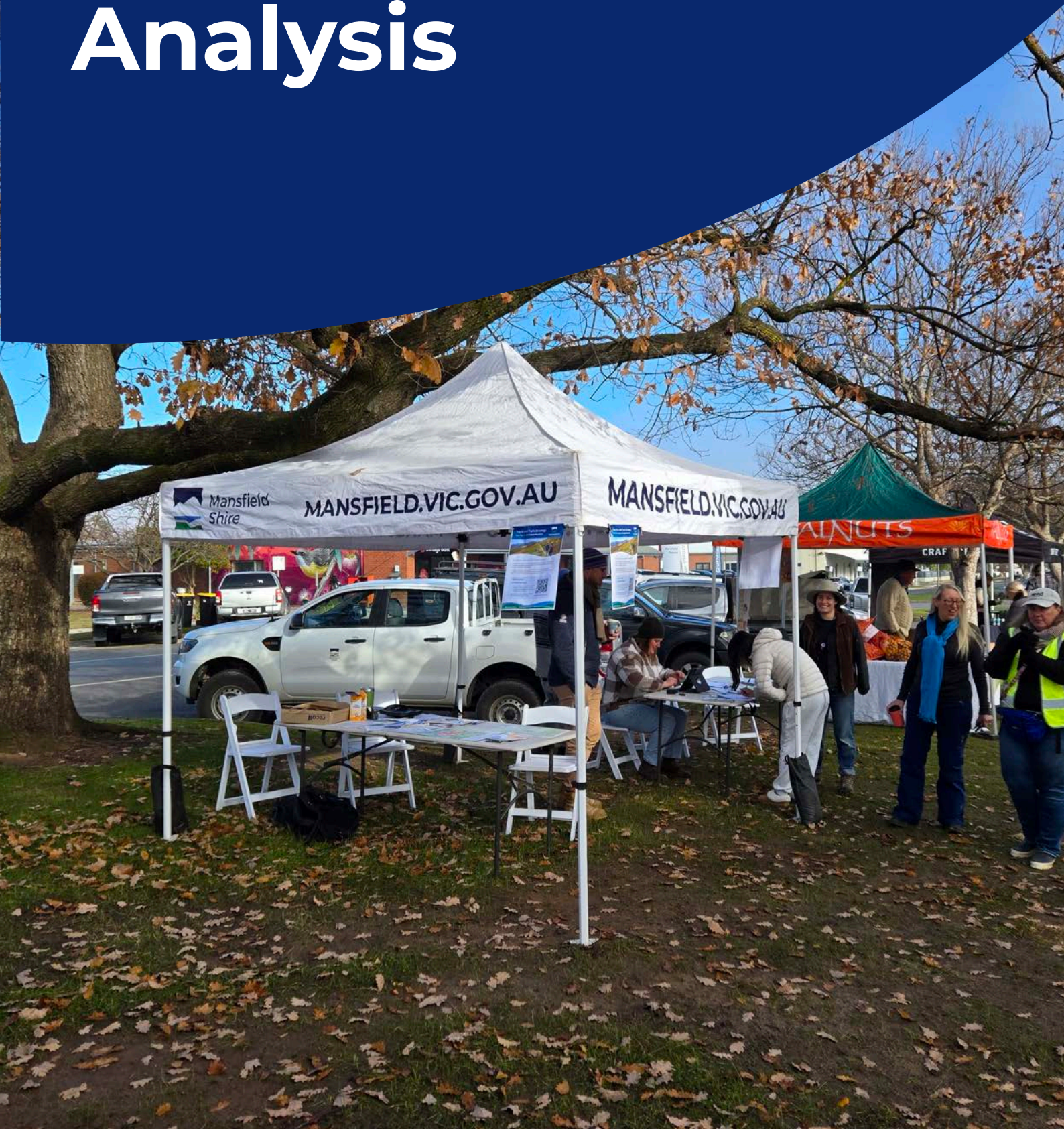
The Trail Development Process encompasses a constant evaluation, review and improvement process as trails are being developed, maintained, extended or renewed.



Source: *Trails Development Series* (WA Government, 2019)

# 02

# Situational Analysis



## Inventory of Existing Tracks & Trails

The audit classified the tracks and trails into three main categories walking/hiking; cycling and horse riding. It should be noted that many of the tracks and trails are suitable for a variety of disciplines and are shared-use in nature and as such the primary activity has been identified along with any secondary activities catered for. In addition the location of the trail head; management/land tenure; hierarchy and length is also detailed below. Details are provided in the inventory spreadsheet which is included as Appendix C in Volume 2.

The Shire owns, manages or maintains the following tracks or trails in many cases jointly with management committees/community associations:

### Rail Trail

- Great Victorian Rail Trail (Merton to Mansfield portion)

### Walk

- Jamieson Heritage Walk
- Jamieson Paw Prints Walk
- Jamieson Significant Trees Walk
- Mansfield Botanic Park Walk
- Mansfield Mullum Wetland Walk
- Goughs Bay Foreshore Walk
- The Island Walk (Jamieson)

### Footpath & Shared Paths

- GB1 - General Store to Mountain Bay Dr (Maze)
- MF1 - Kidston Pde to Apollo St
- MF2 - Maroondah Hwy to Malcolm St
- MF8 - Link St to The Farmhouse
- MF18 - Karen Ct to Maple Tree Blvd
- MF31 - Kidston Pde to Ultimo St
- MF38 - Highett St to Highton Ln

### Cycling

- Mountain Gully Road Trail
- Mount Battery, Coombesberg and Long Lane
- The Barwite Loop

### Existing Trails



**70**

Walking Trails



**42**

Cycling Trails



**9**

Horse Riding Trails



## Issues

The key issues which have been identified in the Shire include:



Finite resources and competing priorities



Inconsistent track and trail assessment and management framework



Various land tenures/management



Varied community priorities and requests



Limited connectivity across parts of the Shire



Management of risks to track and trail users and the broader community



Increasing demand for tracks and trails



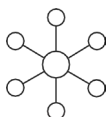
Increasing standards and expectations



Balancing conservation and recreation values



Impact of natural disasters on tracks and trails (e.g. bushfires, storms and flooding)



Strategic approach to track and trail provision and management



## Opportunities

The key opportunities which have been identified in the Shire include:



Enhance promotion of existing high quality tracks and trails



Improve connectivity particularly within smaller townships and communities



Manage risk while maintaining the opportunity for users to undertake challenging experiences in nature



Provide track and trail experiences that offer opportunities accessible to a diverse range of people and abilities



Showcase the spectacular beauty of the Shire through nature-based-tourism



Promote sustainable ways to explore the Shire for residents and visitors alike



Encourage and recognise volunteers that dedicate their own time and resources to maintaining and enhancing the local track and trail network.



Work collaboratively with other track and trail landowners and managers (i.e. Parks Victoria).



Work in close consultation with the Taungurung Land and Waters Council to identify cultural, storytelling, sites of significance and songlines relating to local tracks and trails.

# 03

## Strategy and Implementation



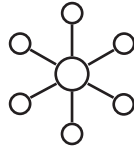
## Trail Planning Principles

The following trail planning principles have been tailored to guide trail planning in the Shire. These principles have been outlined below and underpin the Strategy.

- 1** Ensure socially, economically and environmentally sustainable trail development and management.
- 2** Provide trails which are readily accessible, provide links between key destinations and promote active lifestyles.
- 3** Provide a diverse range of trail opportunities and encourage the broadest possible community participation.
- 4** Optimise use of existing trails where they are appropriately located and have the capacity to sustain additional use.
- 5** Manage trails professionally, effectively and equitably.
- 6** Provide safe trails through adherence to relevant legislative and activity safety requirements.
- 7** Ensure that universal design principles are embedded into trail design and development.
- 8** Maximise the opportunity to attract trail-related programs and events.
- 9** Encourage community involvement in the planning and design of trails.
- 10** Involve local First Nations people in the planning, design and interpretation of trails.
- 11** Support, promote and advocate for trail users in relation to relevant issues within the region.
- 12** Develop and maintain partnerships to provide trails and associated facilities.

## Strategic Outcomes

The Strategy aims to achieve the following strategic outcomes:



### **Strategic Outcome A: Integrated Planning & Management**

Underpinning a sustainable, integrated and accessible trails network is a strategic framework and coordinated approach with prioritised investment and appropriate allocation of resources.



### **Strategic Outcome B: Quality, Safe and Sustainable Network of Tracks and Trails**

Tracks and trails are enhanced and developed to offer high-quality, safe and sustainable experiences for residents and visitors, catering to a variety of interests and abilities.



### **Strategic Outcome C: Information and Marketing**

Well promoted, consistent and reliable information encourages residents of and visitors to the Mansfield Shire to safely and sustainably explore the region's natural assets and attractions.



### **Strategic Outcome D: Community, Tourism & Economic Development**

Tracks and trails make a significant contribution to enhancing community life, strengthening the visitor experience and supporting the Mansfield Shire economy.

## Prioritisation

To assess the priority of tracks and trail improvements and developments assessment criteria have been established. This criteria has been informed by the relevant strategic planning documents and have been identified due to their relevance to track and trail planning and development.

For each specific criteria the track and trail development initiative will receive 2 points if it fully meets the specific criteria, 1 point if it partially meets the criteria and 0 if it doesn't meet the criteria. There are 10 criteria categories which have been weighted where they have been deemed to be more significant. These are outlined in the table below.

Actions have been identified with indicative timeframes acknowledging that it is not feasible to deliver all of the identified actions at the same time.

The priority of high, medium or low is based on the Initiatives weighted points score as follows:

High priority= 80+ points

Medium priority = 70-79 points

Lower priority = <70 points

For strategies that do not relate to specific track and trail developments or improvements. The priority has been assessed based on need/demand, Shire wide benefit, strategic alignment, feasibility and community support.

It will be important to consult with local Indigenous Traditional Owners early in the planning process i.e. feasibility study and concept planning stage to seek guidance, input, support and approvals for any future tracks and trails development.

No	Category	Points (Max)	Weighting %	Weighted Points (Max)
1	Physical Activity, Participation and Healthy Lifestyles	8	20%	20
2	Visitor Economy	4	20%	20
3	Equity and Growth	4	15%	15
4	Natural Environment	4	10%	10
5	Implementation	4	10%	10
6	Economic Development	2	5%	5
7	Accessibility	2	5%	5
8	Risk Management	2	5%	5
9	Project Cost and Affordability	2	5%	5
10	Ease of Implementation	2	5%	5
<b>Total</b>			<b>100%</b>	<b>100</b>

## Key Deliverables

The high priority tracks and trail developments are listed below. These were subject to community consultation to determine the priority ranking deliverables for each action type.

### Feasibility Study & Concept Plan Projects

Ranking	Map Ref No.	Action
1	2	A new off road shared track from Mansfield to Mirimbah/Mount Buller.
2	5	A loop trail linking Rifle Butts Reserve, Mansfield Ridge Walk, Delatite Bushland Reserve and Mansfield Zoo.
3	4	A shared use off-road track from Mansfield to Jamieson with an extension to Goughs Bay.
4	3	Completion of the missing link along Mansfield-Woods Point Rd (Western side) from Eildon Jamieson Rd to Duncans Rd and extension to the Jamieson Brewery & Grill (refer JS7 of Footpath & Shared Path Strategy).
5	6	Additional trails in the Jamieson, Kevington and surrounding area.
6	1	Howqua Inlet to Howqua River Bridge to Howqua Holiday Park Shared Use Track.

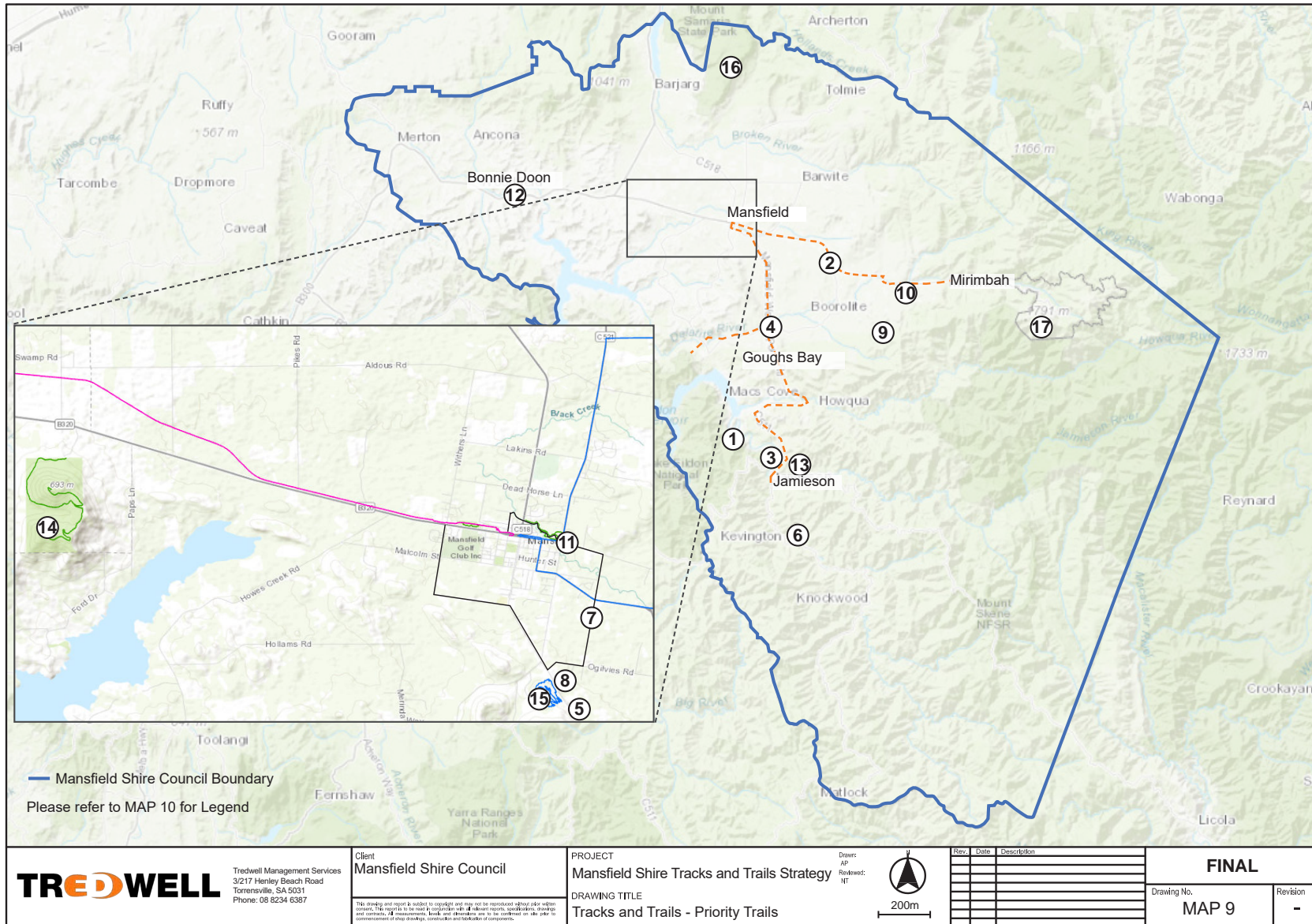
## Design & Delivery Projects

Ranking	Map Ref No.	Action
1	7	Mansfield Town Loop track for recreational use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
2	8	Improve the trail along Rifle Butts Road south of Monkey Gully Road including the drainage and width for primarily use by cyclists.
2	9	Upgrade trailhead facilities across the Shire including toilets and water point for the Mt Timbertop Walk.
5	10	A town walk and public toilets at Merrijig.
4	11	A 5km Parkrun loop within the Botanic Park upgrade.
6	13	Track from Jamieson Recreation Reserve to Jamieson Cemetery (refer JS8 of Footpath & Shared Path Strategy).
7	12	Improved connection from the Great Victorian Rail Trail to Bonnie Doon.

## Advocate & Support Projects

Ranking	Map Ref No.	Action
1	14	A walking trail loop at the Paps and improve access and signage/wayfinding to the site.
2	15	Upgrade and expansion of the trail network within Rifle Butts Reserve for mountain biking including provision of toilets and drinking water at the trail head.
3	16	Additional horse riding trails within Mount Samaria State Park.
4	17	Additional gravity mountain biking trails at Mt Buller.

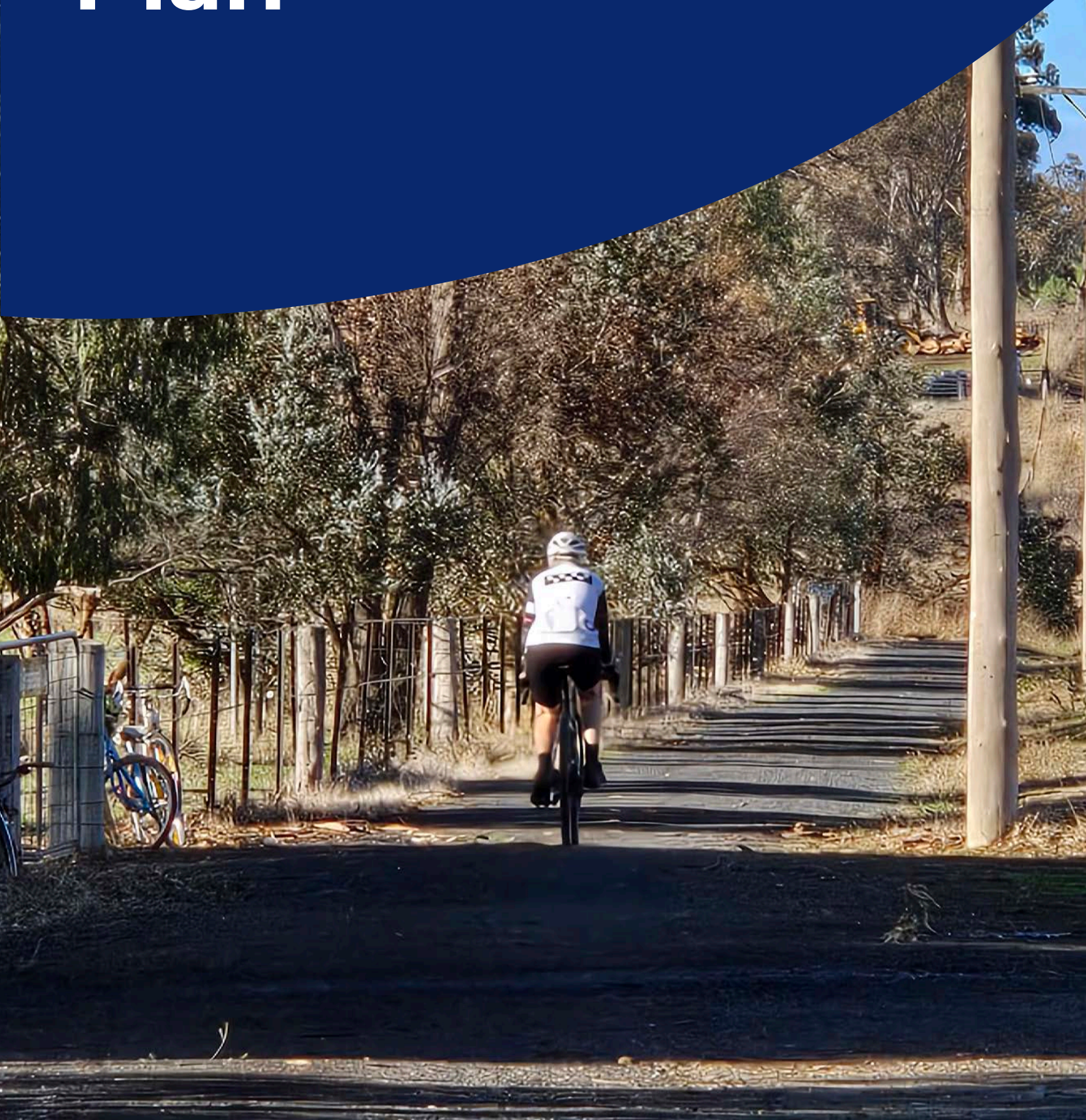
## Map of High Priority Tracks and Trails



## Map of High Priority Tracks and Trails

- ① Howqua Inlet to Howqua River Bridge to Howqua Holiday Park Shared Use Track.
- ② A new off road shared track from Mansfield to Mirimbah/Mount Buller.
- ③ Completion of the missing link along Mansfield-Woods Point Rd (Western side) from Eildon Jamieson Rd to Duncans Rd and extension to the Jamieson Brewery & Grill (refer JS7 of Footpath & Shared Path Strategy).
- ④ Shared use off-road track from Mansfield to Jamieson with an extension to Goughs Bay.
- ⑤ Loop trail linking Rifle Butts Reserve, Mansfield Ridge Walk, Delatite Bushland Reserve and Mansfield Zoo.
- ⑥ Additional trails in the Jamieson, Kevington and surrounding area.
- ⑦ Mansfield Town Loop track for recreational use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
- ⑧ Improve the trail along Rifle Butts Road south of Monkey Gully Road including the drainage and width for primarily use by cyclists.
- ⑨ Plan and upgrade trailhead facilities across the Shire including toilets and water point for the Mt Timbertop Walk.
- ⑩ Town walk and public toilets at Merrijig.
- ⑪ 5km Parkrun loop within the Botanic Park upgrade.
- ⑫ Improve connections from the GVRT to Bonnie Doon
- ⑬ Jamieson Recreation Reserve to Jamieson Cemetery (refer JS8 of Footpath & Shared Path Strategy).
- ⑭ Walking trail loop at the Paps and improve access and signage/wayfinding to the site.
- ⑮ Upgrade and expansion of the trail network within Rifle Butts Reserve for mountain biking including provision of toilets and drinking water at the trail head.
- ⑯ Creation of additional horse riding trails within Mount Samaria State Park.
- ⑰ Creation of additional gravity mountain biking trails at Mt Buller.

# Appendix A - Implementation Plan



## Implementation and Review

This Strategy will need to be adequately resourced for the successful implementation of the identified strategies and actions, ultimately delivering the overall vision for the Shire. Implementation has not been funded and will be subject to the Shire's usual business and budget planning processes.

An ongoing commitment of resources will be required to achieve the objectives of the Strategy. This will include the Shire's budget allocations as well as external funding sources. The Shire should seek opportunities to form partnerships with key stakeholders, including other land managers or commercial entities with interests in trail development.

Progress of the Strategy should be continually monitored and reported annually, with periodic updates to respond to the changing circumstances and requirements of the Shire.

Prior to the implementation of any of the tracks and trails development extensive consultation needs to occur with the broader community and key stakeholders including Traditional Owners, land owners, user groups and clubs.

## Partners

Implementation will require collaboration between various stakeholders. Key partners have been identified for each action. These following acronyms have been used for partners:

Name	Acronym
Mansfield Shire Council	MSC
Alpine Resorts Victoria	ARV
Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action	DEECA
Department of Transport and Planning	DTP
HVP Plantations	HVP
Parks Victoria	PV
Sport and Recreation Victoria	SRV
Tourism North East	TNE
Traditional Owners & First Nations Peoples	TO/FNP
User Groups/Clubs	UGC

This list of key partners may not be exhaustive and it is essential to integrate the identification of key partners and stakeholders into the implementation phase of every project.

## Indicative Timeframes

Timeframes are indicated as follows:

- Short: 2026/27 - 2030/2031
- Medium: 2031/32 - 2035/2036
- Longer: 2037+
- Ongoing.

These timeframes should be reviewed periodically acknowledging that the schedule of implementation will be influenced by funding priorities. The Strategy should be comprehensively reviewed and updated on a regular basis (i.e. every 2-3 years).

Major projects, such as those requiring initial feasibility studies, design development and/or cross-agency collaboration will likely take multiple years and will require a staged approach. Some actions will be reliant on the successful completion of other actions.

## Cost Estimates

An estimate of the resources required to implement each action has been identified to inform the Shire with its budget processes. These are broad estimates and should be reviewed prior to implementation or as part of annual business and budget planning.

The following indicative cost estimates have been used in the Plan:

- Low: <\$100,000
- Medium: \$100,000 - \$500,000
- High: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000
- Major Project: >\$1,000,000.

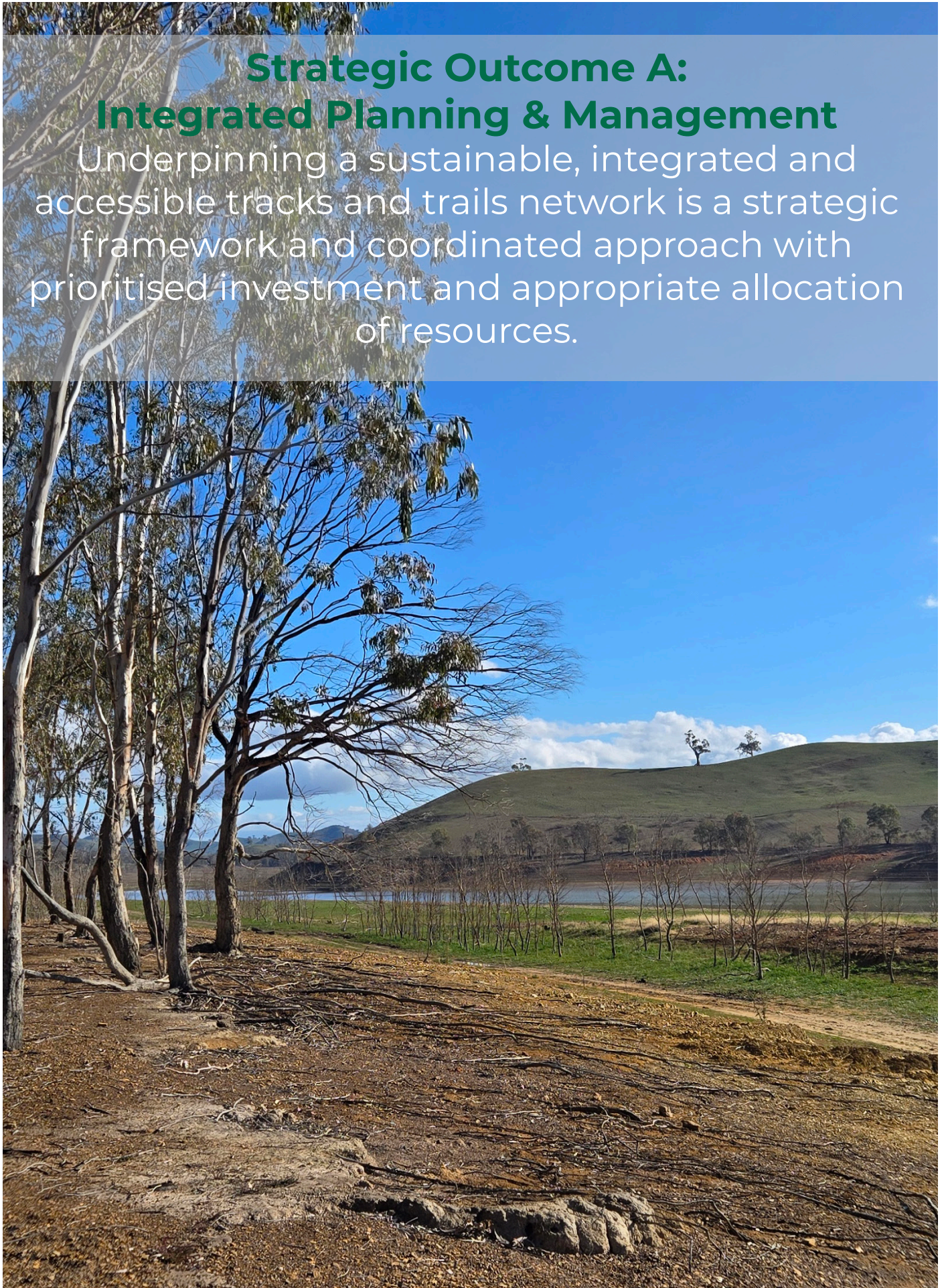
## Implementation Plan

The following table provides an overview of the Implementation Plan which includes a summary of the Strategic Outcomes A to D.

<p><b>Strategic Outcome A: Integrated Planning &amp; Management</b> Underpinning a sustainable, integrated and accessible tracks and trails network is a strategic framework and coordinated approach with prioritised investment and appropriate allocation of resources.</p>	
<b>A1</b>	Trail Planning, Management and Maintenance
<p><b>Strategic Outcome B: Quality, Safe and Sustainable Network of Tracks and Trails</b> Tracks and trails are enhanced and developed to offer high-quality, safe and sustainable experiences for residents and visitors, catering to a variety of interests and abilities.</p>	
<b>B1</b>	Shire-wide
<b>B2</b>	Mansfield and Surrounds
<b>B3</b>	Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resorts
<b>B4</b>	Goughs Bay and Surrounds
<b>B5</b>	Jamieson and Surrounds
<b>B6</b>	Additional Trails and Opportunities
<p><b>Strategic Outcome C: Information and Marketing</b> Well promoted, consistent and reliable information encourages residents of and visitors to the Mansfield Shire to safely and sustainably explore the region's natural assets and attractions.</p>	
<b>C1</b>	Trail Information
<b>C2</b>	Promotion and Marketing
<p><b>Strategic Outcome D: Community, Tourism &amp; Economic Development</b> Tracks and trails make a significant contribution to enhancing community life, strengthening the visitor experience and supporting the Mansfield Shire economy.</p>	
<b>D1</b>	Community, Tourism and Economic Development

## **Strategic Outcome A: Integrated Planning & Management**

Underpinning a sustainable, integrated and accessible tracks and trails network is a strategic framework and coordinated approach with prioritised investment and appropriate allocation of resources.



## Strategy A1 Planning, Management and Maintenance

Ensure that consistent, comprehensive and best practice processes are utilised in the planning, management and maintenance of the Mansfield Shire tracks and trails network.

### Rationale

The 8 Stage Trail Development Process builds rigour into the trail development process through a best practice, robust and standardised methodology for all tracks and trails developments and renewals. Council's endorsement and continual use of this process will ensure that due diligence and stakeholder engagement are embedded into the process of transforming proposals into quality and sustainable assets. The process encompasses constant evaluation, review and improvement as tracks and trails are being developed, maintained, extended or renewed. This allows stakeholders to meaningfully engage with a clear understanding of the current trail development stage and what the next steps will be.

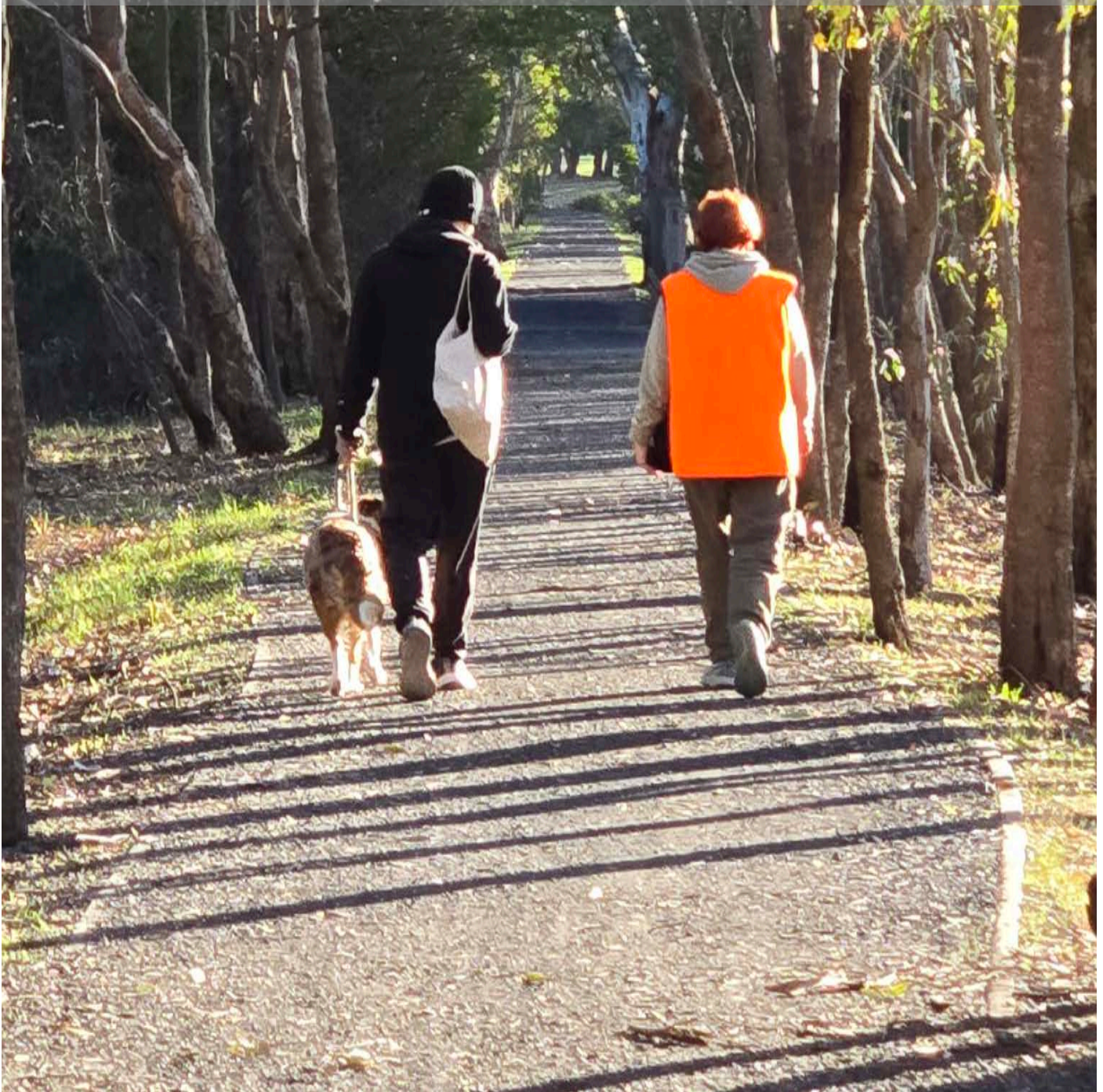
It is important that tracks and trails are reviewed and improved using industry standards, such as consistent, relevant and representative names, standardised inspections and risk management procedures and development of management plans to guide the specific requirements of Mansfield Shire trails.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
A1.1	Establish a standard procedure, manual and schedule for inspections, hazard reporting and maintenance works and integrate into regular asset management programs to be undertaken by staff and/or volunteers.	High Short	MSC, UGC	Low
A1.2	Use and promote the 8 Stage Trail Development Process as the standardised methodology for all trail developments and renewals in the Mansfield Shire. Raise awareness about the standardised process and ensure that key stakeholders are engaged at key points.	Ongoing	MSC, PV, DEECA, DTP, TNE, UGC	Low
A1.3	Ensure that each trail in the Mansfield Shire has a clearly defined name which is consistent, relevant and representative of the experience. This ensures that each track or trail can be clearly identified for management, maintenance, signage, safety and promotion. Where supported by Traditional Owners, identify and utilise the Indigenous names of key sites and features in the naming.	Ongoing	MSC, PV, DEECA, DTP, TNE, TO/FNP	Low
A1.4	Seek opportunities to enhance access for people of all abilities and where appropriate i.e. for Class 1 walking tracks, trails and shared use paths, undertake accessibility audits to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.	Ongoing	MSC, PV, DEECA	Medium

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
A1.5	Develop Management Plans for Mansfield Shire Council owned/managed trails to clearly define roles, responsibilities and service standards.	Ongoing	MSC	Medium
A1.6	Ensure that all new track and trail developments adhere to applicable standards and integrate sustain-able design principles (e.g. Australian Mountain Bike Trail Guidelines, AS2156 Walking Tracks Part 1 & 2).	Ongoing	MSC, PV, DEECA	Low
A1.7	Monitor and evaluate the success of the tracks and trails network through usage monitoring (i.e. observations, counters), user experience surveys and achievement of management objectives.	Ongoing	MSC, PV, DEECA, DTP, TNE, UGC	Low
A1.8	Seek opportunities to engage volunteer community members/users/friends of groups as stewards of the Shire's tracks and trails network. Consider delegation of appropriate tasks, such as undertaking basic maintenance and inspections at regular intervals.	Ongoing	MSC, PV, DEECA, UGC	Low
A1.9	Develop a program of upgrade projects across the Shire to improve amenities for existing trailheads, this could include toilets, parking, shelter, signage and information boards.	High Short	MSC, SRV, PV, DEECA, UGC	Medium

## **Strategic Outcome B: Quality, Safe and Sustainable Network of Tracks and Trails**

Tracks and trails are enhanced and developed to offer high-quality, safe and sustainable experiences for residents and visitors, catering to a variety of interests and abilities.



## Strategy B1 Shire-wide Tracks and Trails

Improve existing and develop additional Shire-wide tracks and trails that enhance the Mansfield Shire's position as a leading tracks and trail destination in Australia.

### Rationale

Mansfield Shire is recognised as one of Australia's leading tracks and trails destinations due to its exceptional natural setting at the gateway to the Victorian High Country, combined with a diverse, high-quality and well-connected tracks and trails network that supports hiking, mountain biking, road and gravel cycling, equestrian use and nature-based recreation. The Shire offers access to iconic alpine landscapes, national parks, rivers, forests and ridgelines, with standout experiences including the Great Victorian Rail Trail, Mount Buller and Mount Stirling and Lake Eildon trail networks and extensive backcountry adventures. Strong collaboration between MSC, land managers, tourism bodies and user groups has driven strategic investment, high standards of planning and sustainable management. This integrated approach delivers significant economic benefits through visitation and events, while enhancing liveability, community wellbeing and year-round recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

Through coordinated, Shire-wide tracks and trails development initiatives, this experience can be elevated by strengthening connections between destinations, improving accessibility and enhancing the overall visitor experience.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
B1.1	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan, a new off road shared track from Mansfield to Mirimbah/Mount Buller.	High Short	MSC, DTP, ARV, SRV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Major Project
B1.2	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan a shared use off-road track from Mansfield to Jamieson with an extension to Goughs Bay.	High Short	MSC, DTP, SRV, PV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Major Project

## Strategy B2 Mansfield and Surrounds Tracks and Trails

Improve existing and develop additional tracks and trails within Mansfield and surrounds that enhance the Mansfield Shire's position as a leading tracks and trail destination in Australia.

### Rationale

Collectively, these actions and recommendations position Mansfield to strengthen its role as a premier regional trails and outdoor recreation town by creating a highly connected, safe and diverse network of tracks and trails experiences that link the township with its surrounding natural assets. The proposed loop trails and upgrades respond directly to growing demand for accessible, family-friendly and adventure-based recreation, while also supporting key tourism drivers including nature-based experiences, mountain biking and event-based activation such as Parkrun. Enhancing trail connectivity between Rifle Butts Reserve, Delatite Bushland Reserve, Mansfield Ridge Walk, the Botanic Park and iconic destinations such as The Paps and Mansfield Zoo will deliver significant health, wellbeing, economic and visitation benefits, while dispersing use across the landscape to reduce pressure on single sites. Investment in trail safety, drainage, width, wayfinding and trailhead infrastructure will ensure the network is inclusive, resilient and capable of supporting increased year-round use by residents and visitors alike.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
B2.1	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan a loop trail linking Rifle Butts Reserve, Mansfield Ridge Walk, Delatite Bushland Reserve and Mansfield Zoo.	High Short	MSC, DTP, SRV, PV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Major Project
B2.2	Design and develop a Mansfield Town Loop track for recreational use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.	High Short	MSC, DTP, SRV, TNE, TO/ FNP, UGC	High
B2.3	Improve the trail along Rifle Butts Road south of Monkey Gully Road including the drainage and width for primarily use by cyclists.	High Short	MSC, DTP, TO/FNP, UGC	Medium
B2.4	Design and incorporate a 5km Parkrun loop within the Botanic Park upgrade.	High Short	MSC, SRV, TO/FNP, UGC	Low

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
B2.5	Advocate and provide support for the creation of a walking trail loop at the Paps and improve access and signage/wayfinding to the site.	High Short	MSC, DTP, SRV, PV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Low
B2.6	Advocate and provide support for the upgrade and expansion of the trail network within Rifle Butts Re-serve for mountain biking including provision of toilets and drinking water at the trail head.	High Short	MSC, DTP, SRV, PV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Medium
B2.7	Design and develop a track from McLeod Lane to Mansfield township along Mansfield - Whitfield Rd.	Medium Medium	MSC, DTP, TO/FNP, UGC	Low
B2.8	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan a trail north along Fords Creek to Withers Lane.	Medium Medium	MSC, DEECA, TO/FNP, UGC	Low
B2.9	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan for a new walking trail to the summit of Mt Battery from the Mansfield township.	Medium Medium	MSC, DTP, SRV, TNE, TO/ FNP, UGC	High
B2.10	Advocate and provide support for improvements to the Mansfield-Whitfield Rd to increase safety for road cyclists.	Lower Longer	MSC, DTP, TO/FNP, UGC	Medium
B2.11	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan an extension of the existing track south east along Fords Creek in Mansfield.	Lower Longer	MSC, DEECA, TO/FNP, UGC	Medium
B2.12	Advocate and provide support for the construction of sealed shoulders along busy sections of the Barwite Loop.	Lower Longer	MSC, DTP, TO/FNP, UGC	Medium

## Strategy B3 Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resorts Tracks and Trails

Improve existing and develop additional tracks and trails within Mount Buller and Mount Stirling Alpine Resorts that enhance the Mansfield Shire's position as a leading tracks and trail destination in Australia.

### Rationale

These actions and recommendations seek to consolidate and expand Mount Buller and Mount Stirling's role as nationally significant alpine trail destinations while strengthening their strategic contribution to the broader Mansfield Shire tracks and trails network and visitor economy. Investment in improved and additional tracks and trails will respond to strong growth in adventure tourism, mountain biking and nature-based recreation, extending visitation beyond the traditional snow season and supporting year-round economic sustainability. The proposed expansion of gravity mountain biking at Mt Buller will enhance the resort's competitive positioning within Australia's rapidly growing downhill market, while the investigation of the Mt Stirling Horse Trail will improve safety, connectivity and equitable access to key destinations including the summit, Craigs Hut, King River and Razorback. Resolving the future alignment of the Epic Trail is critical to providing long-term certainty for one of the region's flagship multi-day experiences, ensuring environmental protection, visitor safety and a seamless, high-quality trail experience.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Cost Estimate
B3.1	Advocate and provide support for the creation of additional gravity mountain biking trails at Mt Buller.	High Short	MSC, ARV, TNE, SRV, TO/ FNP, UGC	Major Project
B3.2	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan the proposed Mt Stirling Horse Trail which would provide improved and safer access to Mt Stirling Summit, Craigs Hut, King River and Razorback.	Lower Longer	MSC, ARV, TNE, SRV, TO/ FNP, UGC	High
B3.3	Advocate and provide support for the resolution of the future alignment of the Epic Trail.	Lower Longer	MSC, ARV, TNE, SRV, TO/ FNP, UGC	High

## Strategy B4 Goughs Bay and Surrounds Tracks and Trails

Improve existing and develop additional tracks and trails within Goughs Bay and surrounding area that enhance the Mansfield Shire's position as a leading tracks and trail destination in Australia.

### Rationale

These actions and recommendations for Goughs Bay and its surrounds are driven by the opportunity to strengthen the area's role as a key lakeside recreation hub while enhancing Mansfield Shire's position as a leading tracks and trails destination in Australia. Investment in shared-use and off-road trail connections between Goughs Bay, Howqua, Howe's Creek and Mansfield will improve regional connectivity for walking, cycling, horse riding and family-friendly recreation, providing safer alternatives to road travel and supporting active tourism. The proposed feasibility studies will ensure these strategic links are achievable, environmentally responsible and aligned with long-term growth and visitor demand. Formalising and upgrading existing mountain bike trails in Goughs Bay will respond to the growing popularity of mountain biking and trail-based adventure recreation, improve rider safety and asset durability and attract new user markets. Together, these initiatives will enhance access to Lake Eildon and surrounding natural assets, support local economic activity, encourage longer visitor stays and deliver lasting health, wellbeing and tourism benefits for the Goughs Bay community and wider Shire of Mansfield region.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
B4.1	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan the Howqua Inlet to Howqua River Bridge to Howqua Holiday Park Shared Use Track.	High Short	MSC, DEECA, DTP, TNE, TO/ FNP, UGC	Medium
B4.2	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan, a shared use trail from Goughs Bay to the Maroondah Hwy via Howe's Creek.	Medium Medium	MSC, DEECA, SRV, DTP, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Major Project
B4.3	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan an extension of the existing off road track in Goughs Bay through to Mansfield - Woods Point Rd.	Lower Longer	MSC, DEECA, DTP, TNE, TO/ FNP, UGC	High
B4.4	Advocate and provide support for the formalisation and upgrade of existing mountain biking trails in Goughs Bay.	Lower Longer	MSC, DEECA, PV, TNE, TO/ FNP, UGC	Medium

## Strategy B5 Jamieson and Surrounds Tracks and Trails

Improve existing and develop additional tracks and trails within Jamieson and surrounding area that enhance the Mansfield Shire's position as a leading tracks and trail destination in Australia.

### Rationale

Collectively, these actions and recommendations for Jamieson, Kevington and the surrounding area are driven by the need to improve local connectivity, safety and recreation opportunity while strengthening the township's role within the broader Mansfield Shire trail network and visitor economy. Completing missing shared path links along Mansfield–Woods Point Road and delivering new connections between key destinations such as the Jamieson Recreation Reserve, Jamieson Brewery, cemetery and town centre will provide safer walking and cycling options for residents and visitors, reducing reliance on the road network. Investment in signage and access improvements to School Hill Walk will enhance the visitor experience and better showcase Jamieson's natural landscape and viewpoints. The introduction of a pump track, alongside upgrades to bridle trails and the expansion of mountain biking opportunities, will diversify the recreation offer for all ages and abilities, support youth engagement and respond to growing demand for adventure-based activities. Together, these initiatives will encourage longer stays, stimulate local economic activity, support healthy and active lifestyles and reinforce Jamieson's role as a unique and highly valued recreation and tourism destination within the Mansfield Shire.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
B5.1	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plan the completion of the missing link along Mansfield-Woods Point Rd (Western side) from Eildon Jamieson Rd to Duncans Rd and extension to the Jamieson Brewery & Grill (refer JS7 of Footpath & Shared Path Strategy).	High Short	MSC, DEECA, DTP, TO/FNP, UGC	Medium
B5.2	Further investigate, through the preparation of a feasibility study and concept plans additional trails in the Jamieson, Kevington and surrounding area.	High Short	MSC, DEECA, DTP, PV, SRV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	High
B5.3	Design and develop the track from Jamieson Recreation Reserve to Jamieson Cemetery (refer JS8 of Footpath & Shared Path Strategy).	High Short	MSC, DTP, TO/FNP, UGC	Low
B5.4	Improve signage and access to School Hill Walk within Jamieson.	Lower Longer	MSC, DEECA, TO/FNP, UGC	Low

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
B5.5	Design and develop a pump track on the Jamieson Recreation Reserve.	Lower Longer	MSC, SRV, TO/FNP, UGC	Low
B5.6	Advocate and provide support for the upgrade existing bridle trail near Jamieson.	Lower Longer	MSC, DEECA, DTP, PV, SRV, TO/FNP, UGC	Low
B5.7	Advocate and provide support for additional mountain bike trail opportunities in Jamieson and surrounds.	Lower Longer	MSC, DEECA, PV, SRV, TO/ FNP, UGC	Medium

## Strategy B6 Additional Tracks and Trails and Opportunities

Improve existing and develop additional tracks and trails within additional areas throughout the Shire that enhance the Mansfield Shire's position as a leading tracks and trail destination in Australia.

### Rationale

These actions and recommendations across additional areas of the Shire are driven by the opportunity to strengthen Mansfield Shire's reputation as a premier, well-serviced and highly connected tracks and trails destination that caters for a diverse range of users and experiences. Expanding and enhancing trail networks beyond the core townships will improve equitable access to recreation for smaller communities such as Merrijig, Bonnie Doon and Tolmie, while creating stronger links to major assets such as the Great Victorian Rail Trail, Mount Samaria State Park and the Delatite Plantation. Investment in trailhead infrastructure, including toilets and water at key destinations such as the Mt Timbertop Walk and Merrijig, will improve visitor comfort, safety and dwell time, supporting increased year-round visitation. The development of additional walking and horse riding trails will diversify the Shire's recreation offer, respond to growing participation trends and better showcase the region's forest, alpine and plantation landscapes. Together, these initiatives will support community wellbeing, strengthen regional tourism and ensure trail use is sustainable, dispersed and supported by appropriate infrastructure across the wider Shire.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
B6.1	Plan and upgrade trailhead facilities across the Shire including toilets and water point for the Mt Timbertop Walk.	High Short	MSC, ARV, DEECA, DTP, PV, SRV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	High
B6.2	Design and develop a town walk and public toilets at Merrijig.	High Short	MSC, DTP, SRV, TNE, TO/ FNP, UGC	Medium
B6.3	Design and develop an improved connection from the Great Victorian Rail Trail to Bonnie Doon.	High Short	MSC, DTP, SRV, TNE, TO/ FNP, UGC	Medium
B6.4	Advocate and provide support for the creation of additional horse riding trails within Mount Samaria State Park.	High Short	MSC, DEECA, PV, SRV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Low

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
B6.5	Advocate and provide support for additional horse riding trails starting at the Tolmie Recreation Re-serve.	Lower Longer	MSC, SRV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Low
B6.6	Advocate and provide support for additional walking trails in the Delatite Plantation.	Lower Longer	MSC, DEECA, HPV, PV, SRV, TNE, TO/FNP, UGC	Low

## **Strategic Outcome C: Information and Marketing**

Well promoted, consistent and reliable information encourages residents of and visitors to the Mansfield Shire to safely and sustainably explore the region's natural assets and attractions.



## Strategy C1 Trail Information

Well promoted, consistent and reliable information encourages residents of and visitors to the Mansfield Shire to safely and sustainably explore the region's natural assets and attractions.

### Rationale

Tracks and trail signage and information provision have been identified as key issues on the existing tracks and trails through the community consultation and on-ground site visits. Installing effective trail signage is a key component to enhance trails for both enjoyment and safety. The Australian Standard AS2156.1 Walking Tracks Classification and Signage, Australian Walking Track Grading System and the Australian Mountain Bike Trail Guidelines provide guidance associated with the requirements for trail classification and signage.

A key opportunity for the MSC is to promote the existing range of tracks and trail experiences in a contemporary manner. The development of a coordinated approach to the marketing of the Shire's tracks and trail network would greatly assist the promotion of the Shire's trail network, clearly conveying information to the local community and visitors to the region. The development and implementation of a consistent branding strategy across the network is recommended, along with a website that showcases the trail offerings.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
C1.1	Consider the development or review of a Brand Strategy and Style Guide for Tracks and Trails within the Shire, consistent with Tourism North East's Brand and Style Guide.	High Short	MSC, TNE	Low
C1.2	Design a suite of trail signage templates (trailhead, wayfinding, interpretation signs) which aligns with AS2156.1, complements the natural environment and reflects the MSC and TNE brand and style.	High Short	MSC, TNE	Low
C1.3	Utilise Quick Response (QR) codes on signage to provide links to further information and resources such as maps and downloadable files. (Note: in areas of poor digital connectivity consider installation of remote Wi-Fi nodes).	High Short	MSC, TNE	Low
C1.4	Allocate sufficient resources for periodic reviews and updates of maps and information including sign-age and online and printed resources.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE	Low
C1.5	Undertake regular reviews of third-party websites and platforms (e.g. Trailforks, AllTrails etc.) to ensure accurate trail information is provided and advocate for the sharing of trail information so that these sources can reliably promote the region's trails.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE	Low
C1.6	Through an audit, ensure that all tracks and trails information sources use the correct Trail Classification System to inform prospective users about the level of difficulty and key features.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE	Low

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
C1.7	Update and enhance visitor information signage at key points across the MSC to include information about the region's trails and other recreational opportunities.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE	Medium
C1.8	Ensure Visitor Information Centre staff within the MSC are comprehensively informed and regularly updated to provide accurate tracks and trails information to visitors.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE	Low
C1.9	Investigate opportunities for the inclusion of First Nations people's language and history on tracks and trails signage with a focus on trailhead signage.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE	Medium

## Strategy C2 Promotion and Marketing

Increased promotion and marketing of tracks and trail opportunities within the Mansfield Shire.

### Rationale

Increased promotion and marketing of tracks and trails across the Mansfield Shire will help to showcase the wide range of nature-based offerings available. It is important that promotion is reflective of the experience provided on the ground to avoid creating a gap between the perceived and actual experience offered.

The development of a co-ordinated approach to marketing of the Mansfield Shire's tracks and trails network will greatly assist promotion and clearly convey information to the local community and visitors. This can be achieved through the development of a Tracks and Trails Marketing Plan or integration into a region wide tourism strategy. Consistent branding across the tracks and trails network is also recommended to reflect the experience offered in the Shire.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
C2.1	Develop a coordinated approach for marketing MSC trails through the development of a Tracks and Trails Marketing Plan.	High Short	MSC, TNE, PV, UGC	Low
C2.2	Develop a Primary Trailhead in key towns and villages to provide a comprehensive overview of all tracks and trails for the region (Visitor Information Point).	High Short	MSC, TNE, PV, UGC	Medium
C2.3	Develop and distribute promotional materials communicating key tracks and trails information and add new tracks and trails to promotional materials as they are developed. Progressively update promotional material as required.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE, PV, UGC	Low
C2.4	Ensure that appropriate promotional signage is placed at strategic locations across the MSC to ensure locals and visitors are aware of the tracks and trails experiences offered across the area.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE, PV, UGC	Medium
C2.5	Identify partnership, cooperative marketing and promotional opportunities for tracks and trails.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE, PV, UGC	Low

## **Strategic Outcome D: Community, Tourism & Economic Development**

Tracks and trails make a significant contribution to enhancing community life, strengthening the visitor experience and supporting the Mansfield Shire economy.



## Strategy D1 Community, Tourism and Economic Development

Tracks and trails make a significant contribution to enhancing community life, strengthening the visitor experience and supporting the Mansfield Shire economy.

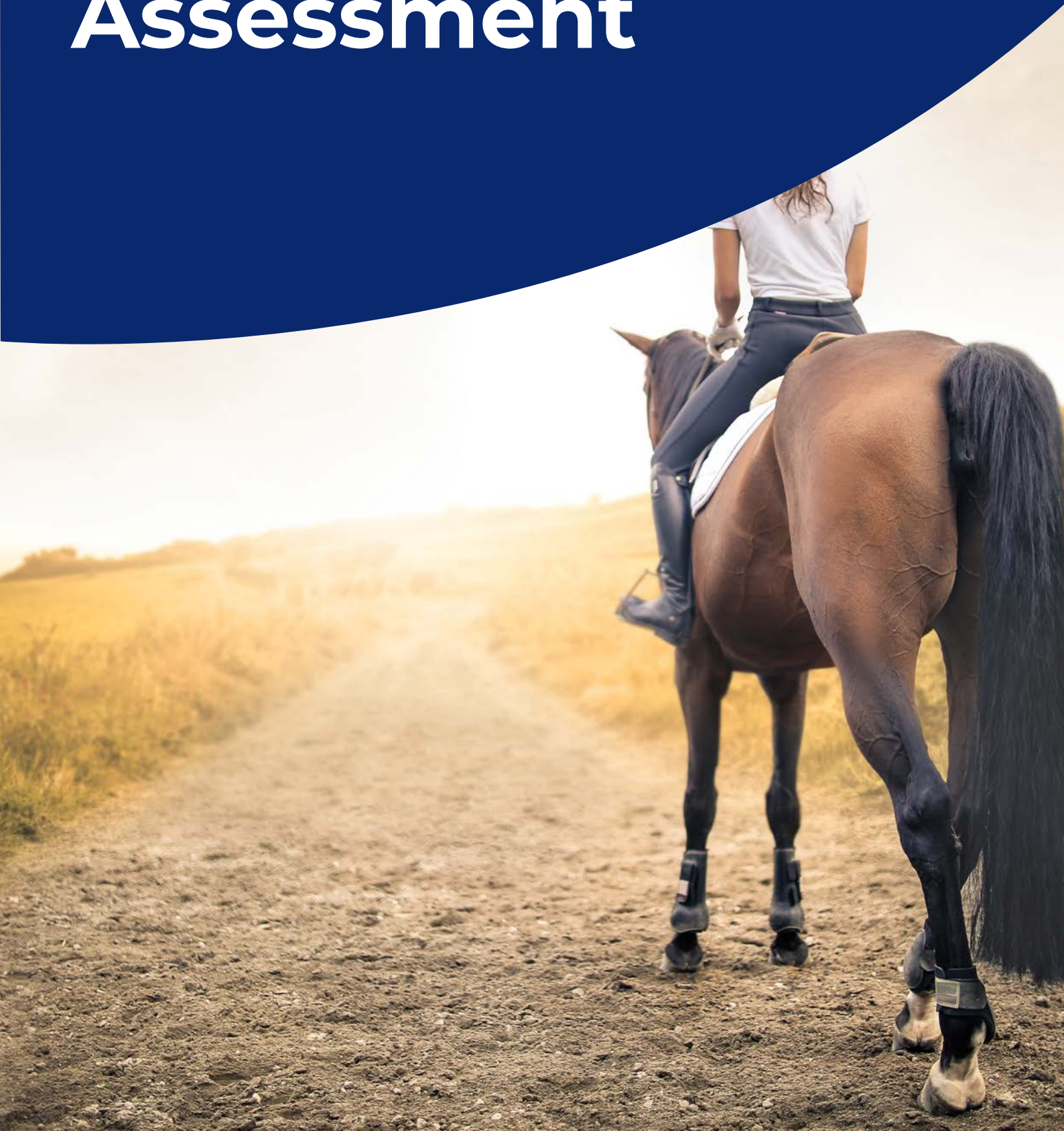
### Rationale

Established tracks and trails networks and their associated activities can provide significant benefits to businesses and local communities, particularly from an economic and tourism perspective. Hosting special events that utilise tracks and trail networks should be supported to assist in raising the profile of the existing and future trail networks and to provide sustained economic benefits for the Shire. There is opportunity to create vibrant tracks and trails precincts across the Shire, which over the long term could also provide significant benefits to businesses and local communities.

Implementation of this Strategy will contribute to the MSC tourism and event offerings. It will be important to collaborate with the private sector and local businesses to ensure that trail experiences are well supported through food and beverage, retail outlets, accommodation, transport, tours, events and equipment hire.

No.	Action	Priority / Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost Estimate
D1.1	Attract and retain tracks and trails related events and provide support to ensure ongoing sustainability.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE, PV, UGC	Medium
D1.2	Encourage businesses (e.g. tour operators, equipment hire, associated retail outlets, hospitality venues, accommodation providers etc.) to promote, utilise and enhance tracks and trails and associated visitor experiences and to capitalise on nature-based tourism initiatives.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE, PV, Local Businesses	Low
D1.3	Encourage agencies involved in tracks and trails development and/or management to collaborate and share trail information and resources (i.e. asset management resources, governance models, maintenance resources).	Ongoing	MSC, TNE, PV, DEECA, SRV, HVP	Low
D1.4	Develop the MSC trail network in a formalised and balanced manner to ensure the protection of the region's environmental and cultural heritage values.	Ongoing	MSC, TNE, PV, DEECA, SRV	Low

# Appendix B - Economic Assessment



## High Level Economic Assessment of Priority Tracks and Trails within Mansfield Shire

A high-level economic assessment is required to evaluate the nationally and regionally significant opportunities arising from the expansion of the tracks and trails network across the MSC. The assessment focuses on understanding the economic uplift associated with priority tracks and trails investments that have strong potential to attract visitation, stimulate private investment, support job creation and deliver sustained tourism growth.

The economic assessment examines the capacity of tracks and trails development to:

- Drive local and regional employment across construction, tourism, hospitality and land management sectors;
- Stimulate private sector investment, including accommodation, food and beverage, retail, guiding and bike/hire services;
- Support the attraction of local, regional and national events, including trail running, mountain biking, cycling and equestrian events;
- Strengthen the Shire's position within the nature-based and adventure tourism economy at a state and national level.

A key focus has been placed on tracks and trails projects that provide direct economic benefits to communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, as well as those affected by:

- Natural disasters (including bushfires, floods and drought);
- Rapid population growth and associated infrastructure pressure;
- Economic transition, including shifts away from traditional industries.

The assessment will prioritise tracks and trails investments that demonstrate:

- Strong visitor drawcard potential;
- High levels of year-round use;
- Clear linkages to existing tourism assets, town centres and accommodation nodes;
- Capacity to deliver long-term economic resilience for vulnerable communities.
- High levels of community support.

Findings from the assessment will provide Council with a framework to guide:

- Capital investment funding priorities;
- Grant and partnership attraction;
- Staged project delivery;
- Advocacy at State and Federal levels.

## Economic Benefits of Major Trail Projects within Australia

The following national comparison table includes a “Projected Economic Benefit Range”. The ranges are indicative and based on publicly reported outcomes from tourism and trail investment studies across Australia.

Trail Project	Location	Primary Trail Type	Documented Economic Benefits	Projected Economic Benefit Range (Annual)	Relevance to Economic Assessment
Great Victorian Rail Trail	Victoria	Shared-use rail trail (cycling & walking)	Strong growth in regional visitation, accommodation bookings, hospitality and bike hire services	\$10M – \$20M+	Demonstrates strong economic return from long-distance, town-to-town shared paths
Munda Biddi Trail	Western Australia	Long-distance off-road cycling trail	Significant regional visitor spend across multiple towns; domestic and international cycling tourism; tour guiding	\$15M – \$25M+	Benchmark for economic value of multi-day trails linking rural communities
Bibbulmun Track	Western Australia	Long-distance walking trail	Sustained eco-tourism economy across small towns; accommodation, guided walks, retail and food services	\$8M – \$15M+	Demonstrates long-term economic resilience through hiking tourism
Thredbo Mountain Bike Park	NSW Alpine Region	Gravity & cross-country MTB	Major uplift in summer visitation; national events; private investment in lift infrastructure and accommodation	\$20M – \$35M+	Demonstrates seasonal economic diversification beyond snow
Blue Derby MTB Trails	Tasmania	Gravity and trail network	Transformed post-forestry economy; job creation; international MTB tourism brand and events	\$30M – \$50M+	National benchmark for trails driving regional economic transition
Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail	South Australia	Multi-day walking trail	Tourism recovery following bushfires; overnight stays; guiding, transport and accommodation growth	\$4M – \$10M+	Shows trails as an effective economic recovery tool after natural disasters
You Yangs MTB Park	Victoria	Cross-country and gravity MTB	High day-trip visitation from metro markets; strong bike retail and café economy	\$5M – \$10M+	Demonstrates proximity-to-market trail economics and day-trip spend
Mount Lofty Summit Trails	South Australia	Walking & shared-use trails	High-volume visitation; cafes, retail, guiding and tour economy benefits	\$6M – \$12M+	Demonstrates value of iconic viewpoints and destination walking experiences

## Economic Assessment Approach

The high-level economic projections included in the table below are based on benchmarking against comparable Australian trail destinations (such as those detailed above), including long-distance shared-use trails, town loops, gravity mountain bike networks, alpine access routes and adventure walking destinations. Benefit ranges reflect estimated direct and indirect annual local economic uplift once facilities are fully operational (typically within 3–5 years of delivery).

Economic benefits have been assessed across three scenarios:

- Low Scenario: Local and regional day-trip visitation with modest overnight spend
- Medium Scenario: Strong regional visitation with consistent overnight stays and repeat visitation
- High Scenario: State-level visitation, major event attraction and strong private sector investment

## High Priority Tracks and Trails within Mansfield Shire

The following table lists the 17 high priority tracks and trails projects identified in the Strategy and provides:

- Benchmark evidence of **economic uplift generated by tracks and trails investment within the MSC;**
- Indicative **annual benefit ranges** for use in cost–benefit modelling;
- Justification for **tourism funding, disaster recovery funding and regional development grants;**
- Strong alignment with **the Strategy objectives** around job creation, private investment, event attraction and community resilience.

Priority Project	Primary Use	LOW Scenario	MEDIUM Scenario	HIGH Scenario	Primary Economic Drivers
Howqua Inlet → Howqua Bridge → Howqua Holiday Park Shared Track	Walking, Cycling	\$350k – \$700k	\$900k – \$1.5M	\$2.0M+	Holiday park users, lake visitation, family cycling, accommodation and food
Mansfield → Mirimbah / Mt Buller Off-Road Shared Track	Cycling, Walking, E-bikes, horse riding	\$750k – \$1.2M	\$1.8M – \$3.0M	\$4.5M+	Alpine access, summer tourism growth, bike hire, cafés, accommodation
Mansfield–Woods Point Rd Missing Link → Jamieson Brewery	Walking, Cycling Tourism	\$350k – \$600k	\$1.0M – \$1.8M	\$2.5M+	Cycle tourism, brewery visitation, overnight stays
Mansfield → Jamieson → Goughs Bay Shared Track	Walking, Touring Cycling, Horse riding	\$1.2M – \$2.0M	\$3.0M – \$4.5M	\$6.0M+	Multi-day cycling, lake tourism, accommodation, hospitality.
Rifle Butts–Mansfield Ridge–Delatite–Zoo Loop	Walking, Family Cycling	\$300k – \$600k	\$900k – \$1.5M	\$2.2M+	Day-trip visitation, families, events, café trade
Jamieson & Kevington Additional Trail Network	Multi-use Trails	\$250k – \$450k	\$750k – \$1.2M	\$1.8M+	Emerging tourism, camping, nature-based stays
Mansfield Town Loop Track	Walking, Horse riding, Cycling	\$450k – \$800k	\$1.2M – \$2.0M	\$3.0M+	Town traders, events, health walkers, festivals
Rifle Butts Rd Cycling Upgrade (Drainage + Width)	Cycling Safety	\$120k – \$250k	\$400k – \$700k	\$1.0M+	Safer cycling access, commuter + recreational spend

Priority Project	Primary Use	LOW Scenario	MEDIUM Scenario	HIGH Scenario	Primary Economic Drivers
Trailhead Facilities incl. Mt Timbertop (Toilets & Water)	All Users	\$180k – \$350k	\$600k – \$1.0M	\$1.5M+	Longer dwell time, guided walks, school camps
Merrijig Town Walk + Public Toilets	Walking, Tourism	\$150k – \$300k	\$500k – \$850k	\$1.3M+	Visitor amenity, coach tours, café spend
5km Parkrun – Botanic Park	Events, Health	\$90k – \$180k	\$250k – \$450k	\$800k+	Weekly visitation, café trade, event tourism
Great Victorian Rail Trail → Bonnie Doon Connection	Touring Cycling	\$750k – \$1.5M	\$2.5M – \$4.0M	\$6.0M+	Accommodation boom, bike hire, hospitality
Jamieson Recreation Reserve → Cemetery Track	Local Walking	\$60k – \$120k	\$180k – \$320k	\$550k+	Local tourism, heritage visitors
The Paps Walking Loop + Signage	Adventure Walking	\$120k – \$300k	\$500k – \$900k	\$1.6M+	Adventure tourism, photography, overnight stays
Rifle Butts MTB Network Upgrade + Amenities	MTB Tourism	\$650k – \$1.2M	\$2.0M – \$3.5M	\$5.5M+	Events, youth tourism, accommodation, bike retail
Mount Samaria Horse Riding Trails	Equestrian Tourism	\$250k – \$500k	\$750k – \$1.4M	\$2.2M+	Horse tourism, camping, feed stores, agistment
Mt Buller Gravity MTB Expansion	Gravity MTB	\$2.5M – \$4.0M	\$6.0M – \$10.0M	\$15M+ annually	National events, lift access, accommodation, retail

## Summary of Projected Economic Benefits

Across the full program of priority trail projects, the combined projected economic uplift potential is significant. Lower-tier shared paths, town loops and amenity upgrades typically generate between \$100,000 and \$1.5 million per annum in localised economic activity. Larger shared-use touring corridors, rail trail connections and multi-day cycling routes demonstrate uplift in the order of \$2 million to \$6 million+ per annum. Major destination mountain biking assets, including gravity trail expansions at Mt Buller and network upgrades at Rifle Butts Reserve, demonstrate annual economic return potential exceeding \$10 million in high-growth scenarios.

Collectively, the economic impacts support job creation across construction, tourism, hospitality, guiding services, retail, accommodation and bike services, while also increasing opportunity for private sector reinvestment in regional towns and visitor precincts.

## Social and Economic Resilience Outcomes

Tracks and trail investment also delivers strong socio-economic resilience outcomes for communities facing disadvantage, climate-related disruption and economic transition. Benefits include increased visitation for post-disaster recovery, diversification of tourism beyond winter visitation, improved health and wellbeing participation and increased youth engagement in outdoor recreation sectors.

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