



SNOWY MONARO
REGIONAL COUNCIL

BUSINESS PAPER

PUBLIC EXHIBITION COPY

Ordinary Council Meeting
19 November 2020

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest arises when the Mayor or Council staff are influenced, or are seen to be influenced, in carrying out their duties by personal interests. Conflicts of interest can be pecuniary or non-pecuniary in nature.

A pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of a financial gain or loss.

A non-pecuniary interest can arise as a result of a private or personal interest, which does not relate to money. Examples include friendship, membership of an association or involvement or interest in an activity.

The Mayor or staff member who considers they may have a conflict of interest should read Council Policy.

The responsibility of determining whether or not the Mayor or Council employee has a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in a matter, is the responsibility of that individual. It is not the role of the Mayor or General Manager, or another Council employee to determine whether or not a person may have a conflict of interest.

Should you be unsure as to whether or not you have a conflict of interest you should err on the side of caution and either declare a conflict of interest or, you should seek the advice of the Director General of Local Government.

The contact number for the Director General of Local Government is 4428 4100.

COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Council Code of Conduct is a requirement of Section 440 of the Local Government Act 1993, which requires all councils to have a code of conduct to be observed by the Mayor, members of staff and delegates of the Council attending a Council meeting or a meeting of a committee of Council.

The code of conduct sets out the responsibilities of the Mayor and Council employees attending a Council meeting or a meeting of a committee of Council. The code also sets out how complaints against a Council employee, the Mayor or General Manager are to be made.

COUNCIL CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

The Council Code of Meeting Practice is a requirement of Section 360(3) of the Local Government Act 1993, which requires all councils to have a code of meeting practice. The code of meeting practice is to be observed by the Administrator, members of staff, delegates of the Council and members of the public attending a Council or a meeting of a committee of Council.

Acknowledgement of Country

Council wishes to show our respect to the First Custodians of this land the Ngarigo, Walgalu, Ngunnawal and Bidhawal people and their Ancestors past and present.

Webcasting

Council meetings are recorded and live streamed to the internet for public viewing. By entering the Chambers during an open session of Council, you consent to your attendance and participation being recorded and streamed on Council's website www.snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
TO BE HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 81 COMMISSIONER STREET, COOMA NSW
2630**

**ON THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2020
COMMENCING AT 5:00PM**

BUSINESS PAPER

- 1. OPENING MEETING**
- 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**
- 3. APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS**
- 4. CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES**
- 5. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**
(Declarations also to be made prior to discussions on each item)
- 6. MATTERS DEALT WITH BY EXCEPTION**
- 7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
 - 7.1 Ordinary Council Meeting held on 15 October 2020
- 8. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION MATTERS**
Nil.
- 9. OTHER REPORTS TO COUNCIL**
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	<i>Item 13.1 is confidential in accordance with s10(A)(2)(e) of the Local Government Act because it contains information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law and discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.</i>	

9.1.1 MONTHLY FUNDS MANAGEMENT REPORT - OCTOBER 2020

Record No:

Responsible Officer: Chief Strategy Officer
Author: Finance Assistant
Key Direction: 7. Providing Effective Civic Leadership and Citizen Participation
Delivery Plan Strategy: DP7.6 Increase and improve Council's financial sustainability.
Operational Plan Action: OP7.18 Effective management of Council funds to ensure financial sustainability.

Attachments:

Cost Centre Financial Services
Project Funds Management
Further Operational Plan Actions: OP7.2 Completion of reporting requirements in accordance with legislation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report details the funds management position for the reporting period ending 31 October 2020.

Cash and Investments are \$73,602,870.

Certification

I, David Rawlings, Responsible Accounting Officer of Snowy Monaro Regional Council hereby certify, as required by Clause 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, that investments as detailed in this report have been invested in accordance with Section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- A. Receive the report indicating Council's cash and investments position as at 31 October 2020; and;
- B. Receive the Certificate of the Responsible Accounting Officer.

BACKGROUND

Council's Cash and Investments 31 October 2020:

Cash at Bank	\$191,744
Investments	\$73,411,126
Total	\$73,602,870

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

Total Cash and Investments are available to provide services and infrastructure to the community in accordance with the 2021 budget, Council resolutions and other external restrictions.

2. Environmental

It is considered the recommendations contained herein will not have any environmental impacts.

3. Economic

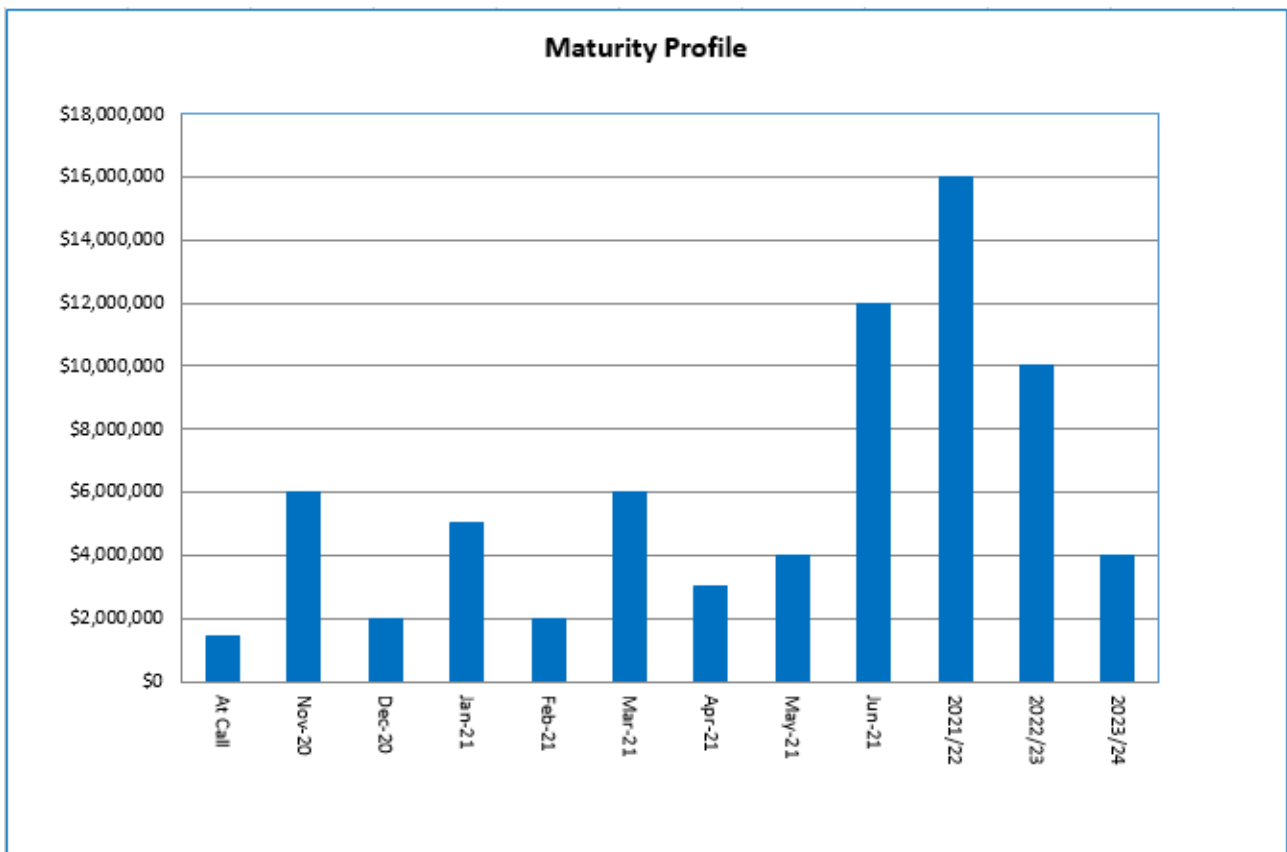
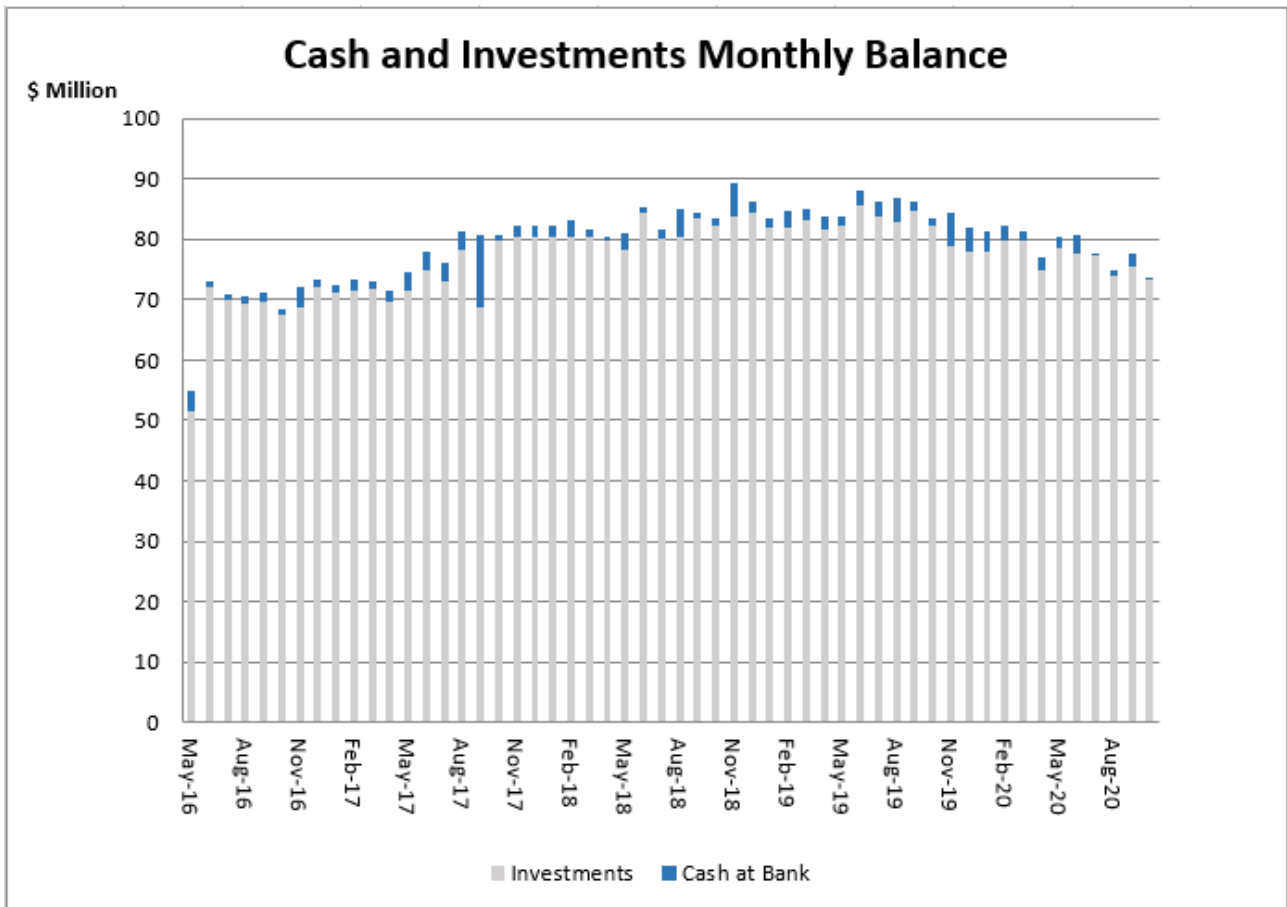
Total investments for Snowy Monaro Regional Council were \$73,411,126 on 31 October 2020.

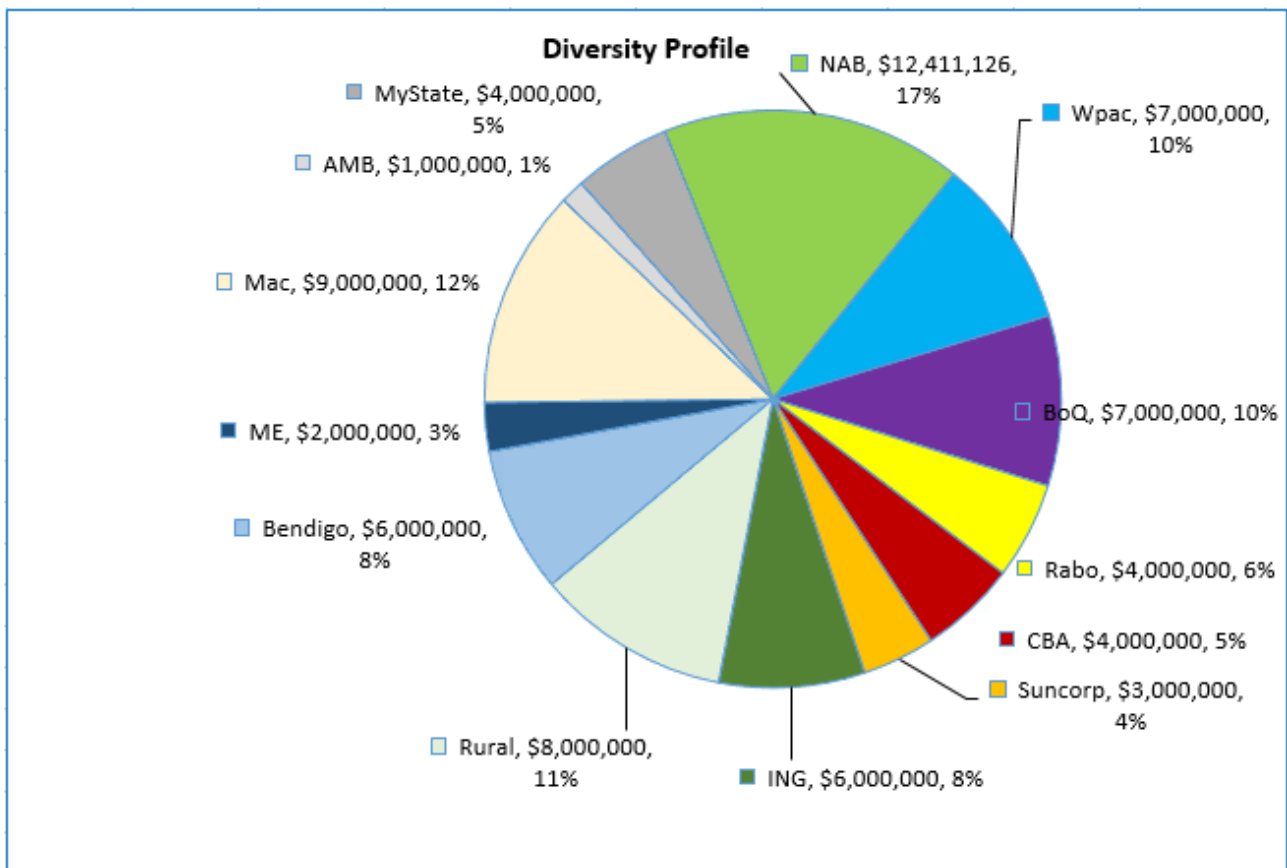
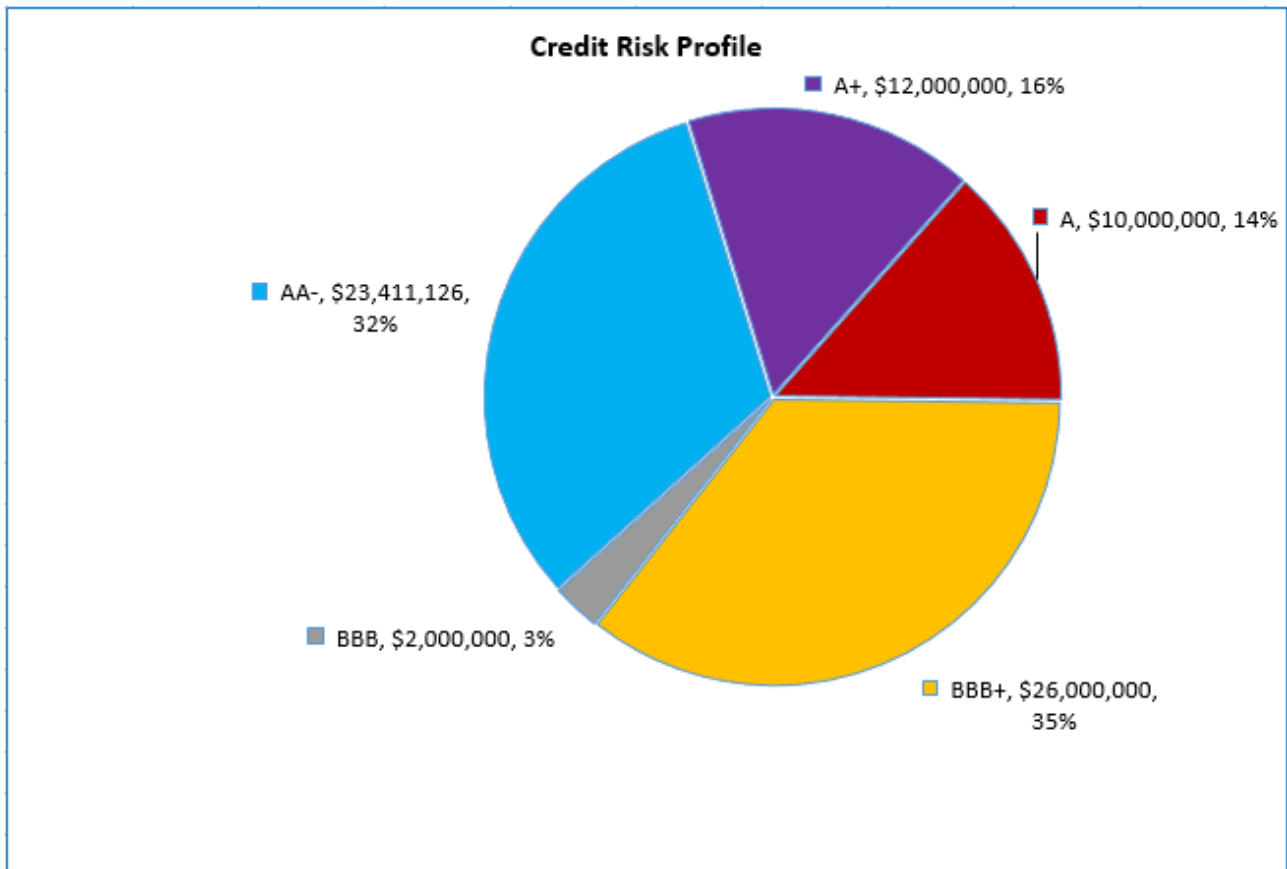
Investment Register – 31 October 2020:

DATE INVESTED	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION	Short-Term Rating	Long-Term Rating	TYPE	CURRENT INVESTMENT	INTEREST RATE	MATURITY
n/a	National Australia Bank - At Call*	A1+	AA-	At Call	1,411,126	0.65%	At Call
23-Mar-16	ING Bank	A1	A	TD	1,000,000	3.66%	22-Mar-21
23-Jun-16	Commonwealth Bank	A1+	AA-	TD	4,000,000	1.19%	23-Jun-21
26-Jun-17	Bank of Queensland	A2	BBB+	TD	4,000,000	3.30%	25-Jun-21
29-Aug-17	Westpac Bank	A1+	AA-	TD	4,000,000	1.04%	29-Aug-22
15-Sep-17	Westpac Bank	A1+	AA-	TD	1,000,000	0.99%	15-Sep-21
29-Jun-18	National Australia Bank	A1+	AA-	TD	4,000,000	0.99%	29-Jun-23
11-Sep-18	RaboDirect	A1	A	TD	2,000,000	3.33%	08-Sep-23
17-Dec-18	Rabobank Australia	A1	A	TD	2,000,000	3.15%	16-Dec-22
19-Dec-18	Bendigo and Adelaide Bank	A2	BBB+	TD	2,000,000	2.80%	17-Dec-20
27-Aug-19	ING Bank	A1	A	TD	3,000,000	1.44%	31-Aug-21
17-Sep-19	Bank of Queensland	A2	BBB+	TD	1,000,000	1.85%	19-Sep-23
23-Oct-19	Bank of Queensland	A2	BBB+	TD	1,000,000	1.80%	23-Oct-23
03-Dec-19	Australian Military Bank	A2	BBB+	TD	1,000,000	1.72%	02-Dec-21
26-Feb-20	Westpac Bank	A1+	AA-	TD	2,000,000	1.48%	24-Feb-21
27-Feb-20	MyState Bank Limited	A2	BBB+	TD	4,000,000	1.65%	23-Nov-20
05-Mar-20	Macquarie Bank Limited	A1	A+	TD	1,000,000	1.60%	30-Nov-20
06-Mar-20	ING Bank	A1	A	TD	1,000,000	1.45%	05-Mar-21
12-Mar-20	Rural Bank Limited	A2	BBB+	TD	4,000,000	1.20%	17-Mar-22
17-Mar-20	ING Bank	A1	A	TD	1,000,000	1.63%	17-Mar-25
19-Mar-20	ME Bank	A2	BBB	TD	2,000,000	1.25%	19-Mar-21
20-Mar-20	Bank of Queensland	A2	BBB+	TD	1,000,000	1.85%	19-Mar-25
28-Apr-20	Suncorp Bank	A1	A+	TD	1,000,000	1.20%	24-Nov-20
22-Jun-20	National Australia Bank	A1+	AA-	TD	4,000,000	0.95%	22-Jun-22
25-Jun-20	Bendigo and Adelaide Bank	A2	BBB+	TD	4,000,000	0.75%	29-Jun-21
31-Aug-20	Suncorp Bank	A1	A+	TD	2,000,000	0.70%	01-Mar-21
03-Sep-20	Macquarie Bank Limited	A1	A+	TD	3,000,000	0.35%	08-Apr-21
07-Sep-20	Rural Bank Limited	A2	BBB+	TD	4,000,000	0.60%	19-May-21
09-Sep-20	National Australia Bank	A1+	AA-	TD	3,000,000	0.75%	09-Sep-21
29-Oct-20	Macquarie Bank Limited	A1	A+	TD	5,000,000	0.25%	27-Jan-21
					73,411,126		

9.1.1 MONTHLY FUNDS MANAGEMENT REPORT - OCTOBER 2020

Cash and Investments Charts:





Investment Portfolio Return:

Benchmarking is used by Council as a gauge for the performance of its portfolio against its investing universe (*universe*: securities sharing a common feature – liquidity, return patterns, risks and ways to invest). A suitable benchmark to review the return on Council’s portfolio is the Bank Bill Swap Rate (BBSW), or Bank Bill Swap Reference Rate – a short-term interest rate used as a benchmark for the pricing of Australian dollar derivatives and securities – most notably floating rate bonds.

Month	YTD Annualised Return	Monthly Average Interest Return	90 Day Bank Bill*	Margin
October	1.44%	1.37%	0.06%	1.31%
September	1.46%	1.29%	0.09%	1.20%
August	1.55%	1.47%	0.09%	1.38%
July (2020)	1.62%	1.62%	0.10%	1.52%

**The Australian Financial Market Association (AFMA)*

Understanding Ratings:

Credit ratings are one tool used by Council when making decisions about purchasing fixed income investments. Credit ratings are opinions about credit risk.

Standard & Poor’s (‘S&P’) is considered one of the Big Three credit-rating agencies, which also include Moody’s Investors Service and Fitch Ratings. S&P publishes financial research and analysis on stocks, bonds and commodities. S&P is known for its stock market indices such as the U.S. based S&P 500, the Canadian S&P/TSX, and the Australian S&P/ASX 200. S&P ratings express their opinion about the ability and willingness of an issuer, such as a corporation, to meet its financial obligations in full and on time. Credit ratings are not absolute measure of default probability. Since there are future events and developments that cannot be foreseen, the assignment of credit ratings is not an exact science.

Credit ratings are not intended as guarantees of credit quality or as exact measures of the probability that a particular issuer will default. S&P issues both short-term and long-term credit ratings. Below is a partial list based, on Council’s Investment Register.

Short-term credit ratings (term less than 1 year)

S&P rates the issuer on a scale from A1 to D. Within the A1 category it can be designated with a plus sign (+). This indicates that the issuer’s commitment to meet its obligation is very strong.

A1: obligor’s (*a person or corporation who owes or undertakes an obligation to another by contract or other legal procedure*) capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is strong.

A2: is susceptible to adverse economic conditions however the obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitment on the obligation is satisfactory.

Long-term credit ratings (term greater than 1 year)

S&P rates the issuer on a scale from AAA to D. Intermediate ratings are offered at each level between AA and CCC (for example; BBB+, BBB).

AA: has very strong capacity to meet its financial commitments. It differs from the highest-rated obligors (rated AAA) only to small degree. Includes AA-.

A: has strong capacity to meet its financial commitments but is somewhat more susceptible to the adverse effects of changes in circumstances and economic conditions than obligors in higher-rated categories.

BBB: has adequate capacity to meet its financial commitments. However, adverse economic conditions or changing circumstances are more likely to lead to a weakened capacity of the obligor to meet its financial commitments.

Ratings from 'AA' to 'CCC' may be modified by the addition of a plus (+) or minus (-) sign to show relative standing within the major rating categories.

Source: S&P Global Ratings

4. Civic Leadership

In accordance with Regulation 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, a report setting out details of money invested must be presented to Council in the following month.

Council's Fund Management Reporting exceeds minimum regulatory requirements and demonstrates a commitment to accountability and transparent leadership. It provides the Council, Executive and Community with timely, accurate and relevant reports on which to base decisions.

9.1.2 SECTION 355 COMMITTEE MINUTES: BOMBALA EXHIBITION GROUND AND BREDBO HALL

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Strategy Officer
Author:	Governance Officer
Key Theme:	1. Community Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	1.3 Recreation, sporting and leisure facilities encourage all ages to live in an active and healthy lifestyle
Delivery Program Objectives:	1.3.3 Council's recreational facilities, parks and public open spaces are safe, well managed and accessible
Attachments:	1. Bombala Exhibition Ground s355 Management Committee Meeting Minutes held 9 September 2020 2. Bredbo Hall s355 Management Committee Meeting held 29 September 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has received minutes of the meetings from the following management committees:

- Bombala Exhibition Ground, meeting held on 9 September 2020
- Bredbo Hall, meetings held on 29 September 2020

These minutes are attached for Councils information.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the minutes of meetings of management committees for Bombala Exhibition Ground and Bredbo Hall.

Minutes Bombala Exhibition Ground Section 355 Management Committee Meeting

Address: CWA Room, Wellington Street, Bombala NSW 2632

Date: 9th September, 2020

Time: 8.05pm

Present:

Position	Member (Name)	Present/Apology
Chair	Neil Hennessy	Present
Secretary	Anne Caldwell	Present
Treasurer	Graham Hillyer	Present
Bookings Officer		
Committee Member	Clare Trevanion	Present
Committee Member	Richard Peadon	Present
Committee Member	Colin Ryan	Present
Committee Members	Bronwyn Podger	Present
Committee Members	George Power	Present
Committee Members	Marni Moreing	Present

1 Opening of the Meeting

The Chair, Neil Hennessy opened the meeting at 7.05pm.

2 Apologies

Apologies for the meeting were received from Coleen McCoy .

3 Adoption of Previous Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 11th March, 2020 are confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

Moved: Clare Trevanion **Seconded:** Colin Ryan **Carried**

4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

1. Grass okay, could be a little shorter.
2. Cricket fees – Monaro Cricket Association normally pays for all ground fees. George to follow up.
3. Meat safe completed by Mens’ Shed.

5. Correspondence

Nil.

6. Treasurer’s Report (Management Committee Bombala Exhibition Ground) 1/03/2020 – 31/03/2020

Income		Expenditure	
Bristle Brush Arts	\$378.00	Origin Energy, Gas	\$211.05
		Nutrien Ag Solutions, Lawn	\$188.38
Total =	\$378.00	Bombala Electrical, Broom, Bin	\$ 91.97
		Milestone Chemicals, Cleaning	\$144.10
Balances as at 1/03/20	\$31540.02		
Income	\$ 378.00		
Expenditure	\$ 635.50	Total	\$635.50
New Balance	\$31,282,52	Term Deposit	\$13959.73

Minutes – Bombala Exhibition Ground Section 355 Committee Meeting

Treasurer’s Report (Management Committee Bombala Exhibition Ground) 1/04/2020 – 30/04/2020

Income	Nil	Expenditure	
		Murphy’s Transport & Building, T handle	\$24.45
		Origin, Electricity	\$1438.19
Balance as at 1/4/20	\$31,282.52		
Income	Nil		
Expenditure	\$1462.94	Total	\$1462.94
New Balance	\$29819.58	Term Deposit	\$13959.73

Treasurer’s Report (Management Committee Bombala Exhibition Ground) 1/05/2020 – 31/05/2020

Income		Expenditure	
Purchase wood from raffle	\$380.00	IGA Bombala, Garbage Bags	\$7.80
Bombala RSL Club	\$302.10		
ANZAC Raffle			
Total	\$682.10		
Balance as at 1/5/20	\$29819.58		
Income	\$682.10		
Expenditure	\$7.80		
New Balance	\$30493.88	Term Deposit	\$13959.73

Treasurer’s Report (Management Committee Bombala Exhibition Ground) 1/06/2020 – 30/06/2020

Income		Expenditure	
A & A Kelland	\$535.00	Origin Energy	\$2162.80
Hire tables & chairs		Gas, Blaze Aid	
Total	\$535.00	Total	\$2162.80
Balance as at 1/6/20	\$30493.88		
Income	\$535.00		
Expenditure	\$2162.80		
New Balance	\$28866.08	Term Deposit Matured 10/6/20	
		Interest 2%	\$279.96
		New Amount	\$14239.69

Minutes – Bombala Exhibition Ground Section 355 Committee Meeting

Treasurer’s Report (Management Committee Bombala Exhibition Ground) 1/07/2020 – 31/07/2020

Income		Expenditure	
Nil		Nil	
Balance as at 1/7/20	\$28866.08		
New Balance	\$28866.08	Term Deposit	\$14239.69

Treasurer’s Report (Management Committee Bombala Exhibition Ground) 1/08/2020 – 31/08/2020

Income		Expenditure	
Nil		Origin Energy, Electricity	\$15805.28
		Blaze Aid	

Balance as at 1/8/20	\$28866.08		
Income	Nil		
Expenditure	\$15805.28		
New Balance	\$13060.80	Term Deposit	\$14239.69

Maintenance money from Council is coming but will be delayed.

Moved by Treasurer: Graham Hillyer

Seconded: *Marni Moreing*

Carried

6. General Business

1. Terry Perkins planning to start work on pitch on 10th October.
2. Under 9’s comp is running between here and Delegate, will finish either 24th October or 31st October.
3. School boys’ comp has three weeks left, one game here on 25th September.
4. Colin received a BOCO Grant for \$20,000 to replace three storage sheds with a three bay shed 10 x 6 x 8m from Best Sheds. They will be used by the junior and senior football clubs and the cricket club. The three old sheds will be removed.
5. The cricket club was successful in receiving a Boco Rock Grant for \$3500 for a mobile cricket net 10 x 3 x 2m.
6. Hall requires maintenance
7. Neil to contact Glen Hines concerning possible funds from Blaze Aid.

Moved by Colin Ryan

Seconded: Richard Peadon

7. Date of next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on 14th October, 2020 in the Youth Club Rooms.

8. Close of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 8.44pm.

[Redacted signature]

14th October, 2020

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

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Bredbo Hall Section 355 Management Committee



General Meeting

Held at the Bredbo Hall, Monaro Highway, Bredbo

29 September 2020]

Commencing at 7pm

Present:

Position	Member (Name)	Present/Apology
Chair	Karen Porter	Present
Secretary	Debra Menzies	Present
Treasurer	Karen Porter	
Bookings Officer	Louise Barron	Present
Committee Member	Michelle Henkel	Present
Committee Member	Louise Bowerman	Apology
Committee Member	Muriel Stockheim	Apology

1 Opening of the Meeting

The Chair, Karen Porter, opened the meeting at 7:04pm

2 Apologies

An apology for the meeting was received from Louise Bowerman, Committee Member and Muriel Stockheim, Committee Member

3 Adoption of Previous Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020 are confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

Moved: Karen Porter, Seconded: There is no seconded as there was no one at the previous meeting that was the meeting tonight, due to this being the new elected committee.

4 Reading Reports

4.1 Chairperson

Nil to report and this is the first meeting for the current committee, very happy to have all the current people involved in the meeting for the hall

4.2 Secretary

Nil to report

4.3 Treasurer

Current Bank Balance is \$4166.07, opening balance for the month was \$4456.28, the electricity bill took up the difference

Due to COVID19, if it were not for the use of the hall for the parcel Post by the Bredbo Progressive Committee the hall would be losing money, due to increasing electricity charges.

Suggestion was raised to look at the rates of other electricity suppliers, to ensure the hall is on the best rates.

A question was raised about the sensor light that is attached to the building and when was this installed? As current members were not aware of it being installed, it was suggestion to check with Council.

Previous holder of the bank account (Muriel Stockheim) is to be downgraded as Admin on the bank account to approver and replaced with current Treasurer (Michelle Henkel). We will appoint all members of the committee on the account as approvers.

5 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

5.1 Hall roof Painting

The roof requires inspection and investigation on cost and processes for painting so that it does not deteriorate. Annual inspections are recommended to monitor the integrity of the roof.

5.2 Hall Hire Cost

Current hall charges will be reviewed against the Council fees and charges on the website and will be tabled at next meeting.

5.3 Blaze Aid contribution for use of the Hall

In the extra ordinary meeting held on the 4 Mar 2020 it was agreed on that Blaze Aid/Council would pay a small contribution of \$50 per week for the use of the hall. Blaze Aid used the hall from 20 February 2020 to 20 April 2020 a total of 8 weeks. We seek Council's contribution of \$400 to assist the S355 Committee with outgoings.

5.4 Blaze Aid contribution for use of electricity for the Hall

In the extra ordinary meeting held on the 4 Mar 2020, Blaze Aid/Council would pay the additional electricity use at the end of their usage of the hall. Bills have been forward to Council for them to pay amount of \$421. We seek Council's payment please.

6 Other Business

6.1 Cleaning the Hall – since departure of Blaze Aid

Louise Barron will call Council and get assistance on the cleaning of the hall following Blaze Aid's departure.

6.2 Election of Treasurer and Deputy Chairperson

With the placement of two new member to the Section 355 Committee's it was suggested to have these two-position made available to them.

Treasurer

The election of Treasurer was made with Michelle Henkel. Proposed Karen Porter, Seconded Louise Barron.

Vice Chairperson

The election of Vice Chairperson has been placed on hold, to see if either Muriel Stockheim or Louise Bowerman would like to volunteer to fill this role.

6.3 Xero Adoption

Karen proposed that all our financial information is managed in the Xero application at \$19 per month. Karen advised that there was now 2019/20 data in the system and it was linked to the bank account which help with reconciling the account. Proposed Karen Porter, Seconded Debra Menzies

6.4 Management of Hall Bookings

The management of the hall bookings is now through Gmail and Calendar and most of the Committee has access to this account. We will be able to see bookings electronically. The form will need to be filled out by the person wanting to book the hall and they will be invoiced by the Treasurer for the hall hire fee before the booking takes place.

7 Items for Council Action

The following items are to remain on the Minutes and reviewed at each meeting, until they are completed. The Section 355 Committee's recommendations are submitted for Council's consideration.

7.1 High Priorities: (Health, Safety, Security, Environmental and Legal Requirements)

- a. SECURITY RISK - Side door on hall is coming off its hinges and the door frame is broken, **due to a break in, it was temporarily fixed.**

- b. SAFETY AND LEGAL RISK - The kitchen door needs repairing (suggest of an awning over the door) as rain is damaging the door and enters the kitchen – including the kitchen tiles as water is damaging this area. **This is a hazard if someone trips on these tiles that are lifting.**
- c. SAFETY RISK Step at Kitchen Door needs fixing. **Temporarily fixed and waiting on grant to replace door and add an awning to protect the door.**
- d. ENVIRONMENTAL RISK Downpipes need upgrading due to water **eroding the soil below the downpipes and the foundation of the hall. (Suggestion of a water tank).** Water is being wasted at a time when we should be conserving it. Recommend purchase of a slimline water tank either through a grant or through Council.
- e. SAFETY AND LEGAL RISK - Wheelchair access to back supper room – suggestion a ramp off existing ramp to back door of supper room, **to enable mobility access.**

7.2 Medium Priorities:

- a. ENVIRONMENTAL RISK - Internal Walls need repairing – gaps between boards, **we believe this makes the building unsafe to be used as an evacuation centre, in cases of fires.**
- b. ENVIRONMENTAL RISK - Concertina doors at back of stage have been damaged – a tradesman has suggested could be due to stumps moving under the stage. These doors have been damaged for a long time and mean that we can't heat the supper room adequately.

7.3 Low Priorities:

- a. ENVIRONMENTAL - The Hall is in need of painting – inside and out.
- b. ENVIRONMENTAL - Heat lamps / heating needs an upgrade, waiting for local electrician to come out and replace elements. The heating is diminished
- c. ENVIRONMENTAL - Suggestion for Solar Panels installed to assist with power consumption. The electricity bills dominate our expenses

All of the above items are what the Section 355 Committee's recommendation and would like Council to come out and review these items as soon as possible to provide us with a way ahead to ensure the health, safety and security of our community members in the use of our wonderful Bredbo Hall.

8 Date of next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7:00pm on 28 October 2020 at Bredbo Hall.

9 Close of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9:00pm



30 September 2020

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

(The minutes are to be signed and dated here by the Chairperson at the next meeting, certifying the above as a correct record.)

9.1.3 OCTOBER YOUTH COUNCIL MINUTES

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Operating Officer
Author:	Youth Officer
Key Theme:	1. Community Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	1.4 Youth in the region are supported to reach their maximum potential
Delivery Program Objectives:	1.4.1 Youth of the region are engaged, supported, mentored and trained to be the leaders of tomorrow
Attachments:	1. October Youth Council Minutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Youth Council met using Zoom on Monday 26 October 2020. The minutes of the meeting are attached for Council's consideration.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the minutes of the Youth Council meeting, held 26 October 2020.
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Committee Minutes

Address: Meeting held using Zoom

Date: 26 October 2020

Time: 10.00am

Position	Member (Name)	Present/Apology
Chair	Councillor James Ewart	Present
Youth Council Mayor	Will Wright	Apology
Youth Council Deputy Mayor	Josh McMahon	Present
Youth Council Secretary	Olivia Weston	Present
Public Relations Officer	Molly Brabham	Present
Youth Councillors	Lani Holfter Sam Pevere Lexi Cross Lucy Cross Leanne Adams Josh Abrokwah Cheyenne Nelson Harry Knowles Alex Elgey	Present
	Neeve Creely Aaron Penny Elsie Kember Jake Barnes Andrea Bosco Georgia Pond Charlie Paul	Apology
Council Staff (non-voting members)	Mel Sass, John Graham	Present

1. Opening of the Meeting

Deputy Mayor, Josh McMahon opened the meeting at 10:06am.

SNOWY MONARO REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

2. Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we meet and pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

3. Apologies

An apology for the meeting was received from Youth Councillors Aaron Penny, Neeve Creely, Elsie Kember, Andrea Bosco, Charlie Paul and Georgia Pond

4. Adoption of Previous Minutes

A quorum could not be established at the September meeting. Previous minutes not tabled.

5. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes

- Nil

6. Correspondence

In:

- Nil

Out:

- Meeting minutes and agenda

7. Reports

7.1. Deputy Youth Mayor – Tabled

7.2. Publicity Relations Officer – Tabled

- Interviewed by the Monaro Post about her upcoming participation in Children’s Parliament.

6.3 Secretary – None tabled.

6.4 Youth Development Officer – Tabled

- Mel Sass noted that grant funding was secured to deliver a weekend camp for young people who volunteered during the bushfires. The camp will go ahead locally at Coomba in 2021 when restrictions on outdoor gatherings are relaxed.
- John Graham noted that plans for a “RYDER Junior” are in motion and that he was waiting for the design to be finalised and approved by Councils communications team.

6.5 Chair – Tabled

Motion: That the Youth Council accept the reports as tabled. **Carried. All in favour.**

8. Presentations

- Nil

9. General Business

9.1. 2021 Youth Council

- Mel called for nominations for the 2021 Youth Council.

Action: Youth Councillors interested in remaining on the Committee for 2021 to email Mel an intention to nominate.

Action: Mel to commence advertising for remaining vacancies. Applications to close in December.

9.2. Youth Mental Health First Aid

- The Teen Youth Mental Health First Aid training has been confirmed. The program will be delivering 30 November, 1 and 3 December.
- Council to note the Youth Council's gratitude for supporting the initiative financially.

10. General Business not on notice

10.1. Lani Holfter – Children's Week

- Lani has been invited to sit on a discussion panel as part of Children's Week celebrations. The theme for the panel is "connection". Other panelists include Minister for Regional Youth, Bronnie Taylor.
- Lani extended an invite to the Youth Councillors to tune into the online stream.

10.2. Office of Regional Youth

- Director, Julia Ryan is visiting the region in November and hoped to meet with the Youth Council to hear about local issues.

Action: Mel will seek approval from Council's Communication team and then email Youth Councillors once details have been confirmed.

10.3. Alexi and Lucy Cross – Environmental Grant

- SMGS's environmental team was awarded grant funding to deliver an environmental protection project in the region.
- **Action:** Alexi to forward details to the Youth Council about how other schools can get involved in the initiative.

10.4. Josh Abrokwah – NSW Health Advisory Council

- Youth Councillors Josh Abrokwah and Alexi Cross were successful in their application to join the NSW Health Youth Advisory Council.

11. Project Updates

11.1. Youth Exchange Project – Youth Councillor, Lani Holfter

SNOWY MONARO REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

- The sub-committee was supported by Youth Development Officer, John Graham to apply for a State Government grant to deliver the project. No further update.

11.2. HUBGrade

- Funding has still not been issued by the State. The Hub is operating at a limited capacity upstairs in Vale Street.

11.3. RYDER

- Funding has still not been issued by the State.

11.4. Mosaic Project

- Waiting on the outcome of our funding application to FRRR.
- Noted that the Lions Club and the Historical Society have further information to the share with the Youth Council about the original Mosaic project, however they are waiting for access to the archives box which is being stored at the Library.

12. Date of next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 23 November 2020

13. Close of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11:47am.

CHAIRPERSON

DATE

9.1.4 PEAK VIEW HALL

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Key Theme:	1. Community Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	3.1 Develop, maintain and promote safe spaces and facilities that are enabling, accessible and inclusive for all
Delivery Program Objectives:	3.1.2 Preventative maintenance programs have been established across Council spaces and facilities that are compliant with current standards
Attachments:	Nil.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lions Club of Cooma has the opportunity to secure \$100,000 to upgrade the Peak View Hall, but the money, from Lions International, cannot be utilised on a Council owned or controlled asset. The Peak View hall is located on Crown Reserve 56109, as is the Peak View fire shed.

Without the fire shed, Council could simply relinquish the trusteeship of the Crown reserve, allowing the trusteeship to be assigned to an incorporated NFP. The community is proposing to establish the Peak View Community Association Inc to satisfy this requirement.

Council was made aware of the proposal on 28 October and the deadline for the allocation of the Lions International funds is early December, so the November Council meeting is the only opportunity to have the matter considered at a scheduled Council meeting.

The Lions Club is working directly with the community, and staff have been working with representatives of Lions, RFS and Lands to achieve an outcome that will allow the funds to be released, but at the time of writing there was no final decision on the best way forward. All parties acknowledge that the negotiations with relevant stakeholders will take some time, the proposal is intended to provide Lions International with sufficient confidence of Council's intent to enable the funds to be released.

It is hoped that additional information will be available prior to the Council meeting.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council, in order to facilitate the Peak View community's access to Lions International funding to upgrade the Peak View Community hall:

- A. Support the proposal to relinquish care and control of Crown Reserve 56109 with care and control being transferred to an appropriate community based incorporated association such as the proposed Peak View Progress Association Inc.;
 - B. Authorise the CEO to negotiate with relevant parties an outcome to satisfy the requirements of all parties including the Peak View Community, the Crown, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, Lions International and the Rural Fire Service.
-

BACKGROUND

The Crown Reserve in question, shown in Figure 1, is located at 1578 Peak View Rd Peak View (Lot 59 DP 750541). It is identified as Crown Reserve 56109 for the purpose of Public Recreation.



Figure 1: Peak View Hall and fire shed

The Crown has confirmed that there is a current Aboriginal Land Claim over this parcel, and has further advised that, for this proposal to be move forward, a letter from the NSW Aboriginal Land Council would need to be received stating that they relinquish their interest in this parcel of land.

The hall itself is in quite poor state, and is not often used. Nevertheless, like all such community halls, it is an important focus for local residents.

The following issues have been identified.

- RFS and the Peak View community are the main users of the hall
- The ceiling is falling apart
- There is no heating. The fireplace was removed, as it was falling down. The committee would prefer a wood heater to be reinstalled rather than the current gas heater;
- Broken windows;
- May also need to be 're stumped' and
- Significant electrical issues.

The hall is currently managed by a s.355 committee, which presumably will form the basis of the Peak View Progress Association Inc.



Figure 2: Peak View community hall

The Cooma Lions Club is aware of these issues having undertaken several inspections, including by an experienced builder. The Club is also aware that significant work may trigger additional work to meet the requirements of the Building Code of Australia, although it is noted that an all-ability toilet has recently been installed and the club believes there is suitable all-ability access.

The Club acknowledges that significant electrical work will need to be undertaken and that the building, at the very least, will need to be made weather tight. The Club believes that the re-stumping required is relatively minimal.

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

Community halls such as this are critical to social cohesion and even a sense of community identity, and provide a focus point during disasters and subsequent recovery.

2. Environmental

There should be no negative environmental impacts.

3. Economic

No budget has been prepared for this. Costs will include staff time and possibly some legal expenses to facilitate the transfer. Any expenditure that cannot be reasonably accommodated with Council's existing facilities budget will require endorsement by Council.

4. Civic Leadership

Council's limited community hall budget means that it is unlikely that the level of work proposed by the Lions Club while the hall remains in Council control. Council and the Club have recently successfully worked in partnership on a number of projects, and this should be no exception.

9.3.1 INVESTIGATE NON-CHEMICAL WEED MANAGEMENT PRACTICES'

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Operating Officer
Author:	Supervisor Civic Maintenance
Key Theme:	1. Community Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	3.1 Develop, maintain and promote safe spaces and facilities that are enabling, accessible and inclusive for all
Delivery Program Objectives:	3.1.1 Public and community spaces are regulated and managed to be safe and equitable for all abilities
Attachments:	Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research is being undertaken into methods for Snowy Monaro Regional Council to minimise the use of Glyphosate and other mainstream herbicides, especially in high traffic areas such as playgrounds, sporting fields and parks. The goal of reducing agrichemical use such as Glyphosate reflects local, national and international trends aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and protecting human health while still achieving effective, efficient and desired weed control outcomes. There are differences between high use recreational areas and rural road environments in terms of the needs and potential options for weed and vegetation control.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse continued investigation into non-chemical weed management practices.

BACKGROUND

Weeds can cause allergies and health problems in some people, invade areas of native vegetation, negatively impact agricultural assets and sports fields and playing surfaces. Weeds can reduce amenity values in public spaces and increase the cost of asset maintenance.

Weed management and vegetation control practices also have the potential to adversely affect people's health and that of wildlife and the environment. Therefore the process to reduce the adverse effects of repetitive use of agrichemicals needs to be approached in a sustainable manner.

Research into minimising Glyphosate usage within Snowy Monaro Regional Council was motivated by concerned residents following high profile court cases in the United States against Monsanto, (manufacturer of Glyphosate), and mounting evidence that agrichemicals are detrimental to the world's pollinators. Many concerned residents have expressed their desire to see Snowy Monaro Regional Council use alternative methods to Glyphosate.

The Biosecurity team began trials and an investigation into alternatives to agrichemicals that would be cost-effective and efficient at killing the desired weed species. The initial stages of trialling organic herbicides show promise, although more expensive than traditionally used chemicals.

Plant-based herbicide includes products such as 'Organic Interceptor' (derived from pine essence), 'Agpro Bio-Safe' (derived from coconut oil), Slasher (nonanoic acid derived from the geranium

plant) and Basta (Streptomyces bacteria). Most are non-selective, contact herbicides. A non-selective herbicide kills or injures all plants that come in contact with the solution, however is mostly only effective on the parts of the plant contacted by the herbicide. The root system may be unaffected. They are not systemic like Glyphosate and other synthetic chemicals apart from Basta, which has some systemic qualities. Plant-based herbicides tend to require more frequent application compared to synthetic herbicides.

Glyphosate-based herbicides are the preferred method of vegetation control in the road corridor and are widely used across the road network. Glyphosate-based herbicides are an effective tool for controlling annual broadleaf weeds, grasses and other monocots, effectively killing the entire plant including its root system. This control method requires less frequent follow ups than other methods.

Steam weeding has also been investigated and shown merit. The conclusion at this time is that steam weeding machines are best suited to high use public spaces and sensitive sites, such as parks and open spaces. This method is not such an advantage on roadsides as the labour component would be magnified and costs increased exponentially. Machines are easily adapted to cleaning and sanitisation of playgrounds and barbecue equipment, enabling for quicker, more effective cleaning and a heightened presentation of these public spaces. The only by-product being water, this option is very safe and poses no threat to people's health, wildlife or the environment.

Trials with alternative chemicals will continue this growing season.

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

Public health and safety can be maximised through the use of non- chemical methods of weed control, especially in high traffic areas. Presentation and maintenance of public spaces can be presented at higher standards by utilising steam machines for deep cleaning.

2. Environmental

Weeds can have adverse effects on both the natural and the built environment. Weed management and/or vegetation control is often necessary as part of routine asset maintenance to protect infrastructure from damage and to maintain the quality and functionality of parks and other open spaces. Organic methods of weed reduce negative impact to the natural environment.

3. Economic

Any economic impacts will be part of further investigation.

4. Civic Leadership

Advocating and leading the community with non-chemical weed control shows civic leadership, innovation and a commitment to find sustainable solutions.

9.3.2 ADAMINABY SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE AND AUGMENTATION DESIGN - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Operating Officer
Author:	Manager Water Wastewater Operations
Key Theme:	3. Environment Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	8.2 Improve and maintain our public owned infrastructure and assets and facilities to a high standard
Delivery Program Objectives:	8.2.1 Council maximises its Asset utilisation to deliver services today and into the future
Attachments:	1. Adaminaby STP Locality Map 2. Adaminaby STP 3-D image
Cost Centre	WO333-4560-410
Project	Adaminaby Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade and Augmentation
Further Operational Plan Actions:	N/A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information on the design of the Adaminaby Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade (STP) and Augmentation and the drivers for the project. The project forms part of the current Operational Plan (7.2.2.2. Detailed design of the new Adaminaby Sewage Treatment Plant and preparation for tendering). The report is presented for the endorsement by Council prior to commencing community engagement in order to inform the Adaminaby community on the status of the project and the design of the new Sewage Treatment Plant.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- A. Endorse the Adaminaby Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade for community engagement
- B. A public meeting be held for Adaminaby residents to be informed on the status of the project and the design of the new Sewage Treatment Plant.

BACKGROUND

The existing Adaminaby STP was constructed in 1961 as a trickling filter plant with a nominal capacity of 1600EP. The tertiary maturation ponds were augmented around 1990. There has been no further augmentation of the STP since that time. The catchment consists largely of earthenware pipes and there is evidence of considerable inflow/infiltration in the system. This inflow/infiltration results in relatively weak, long term sewage strength, high wet weather flows and a long term wet weather influence after rain has ceased (i.e. elevated flows persist for considerable time even once rainfall has stopped).

The plant is in very poor condition. In particular:

- The concrete walls of the trickling filters are in poor condition and there is a risk of collapse.
- The mechanical and electrical equipment are in very poor condition.
- Wombats have caused damage to the maturation ponds, threatening collapse. One pond is currently bypassed to prevent this.
- The effluent quality is generally poor, particularly with regard to coliforms.

The EPA has issued Pollution Reduction Program (PRP) conditions in the current licence for Adaminaby STP. These state:

- U1.1 The licensee must undertake a Concept Study for the Sewage Treatment Plant upgrades and provide a written report detailing the study ("The Adaminaby STP upgrades concept study") by 31 December 2017.
- U1.2 The licensee must commission the STP upgrades detailed in the Adaminaby STP upgrades concept study by 01 June 2019.
- U1.3 The licensee must provide a written report detailing how the actions/works as required by U1.2 have been implemented at the premises to the Manager, South East Region of the EPA by 30 June 2019

To address the issues observed at the STP and comply with the PRP conditions, SMRC have commenced a project to construct a new STP on the existing Adaminaby STP site and decommission the old STP.

Proposed design of new STP

The upgraded STP will include the following key infrastructure;

1. A concrete inlet works sized for greater than peak wet weather flow (PWWF). That consists of:

- Inlet flow measurement and duty only macerator
- Duty only screen, incorporating screen washing (reclaimed effluent) and dewatering.
- Manually raked bypass screen
- Duty only grit removal including dewatering.
- A feed splitter with actuated penstocks and bypass infrastructure (including a flow meter)

2. Two sequencing batch reactors (SBR) that can operate as continuous feed (IDEA – intermittently decanted extended aeration) as an option. These were sized for 4 x average dry weather flow (ADWF) plus foul water recycles and consist of the following.

- Provision of a storm cycle to accommodate 7.5 ADWF during wet weather.
 - Duty / duty anoxic zone mixers in each SBR to sustain mixing
 - Diffused aeration system including variable speed blowers in duty/assist/standby configuration. Including aeration grids, pipework, valving and new blower building.
 - A duty only variable speed decanter in each SBR complete with necessary instrumentation.
 - Two MLR pumps per SBR in duty/standby configuration, complete with flow element.
-

- A duty only waste activated sludge (WAS) pump per SBR with a combined WAS flow element.
- A single decant balance tank with level element and switches. Secondary treated flows above 4 x ADWF to overtop the decant balance tank directly to the effluent discharge point.
- Three filter feed pumps in duty/assist/standby configuration (note filters have been deferred and pumps discharge directly to ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system)
- A filter feed flow element and turbidity probe

3. Future continuous backwashing filter

4. A UV disinfection system consisting of:

- Three UV reactors in duty/assist/standby configuration (including internal instrumentation)
- Three inlet control valves, one for each UV unit.
- A UV bypass system to deliver filtered effluent to the discharge point if required

5. A reclaimed effluent system consisting of:

- A reclaimed effluent storage tank with a level element and switches.
- Proprietary pressure sustaining pump set.
- A discharge pipeline and structure complete with flow monitoring

6. Two sludge lagoons in duty/duty configuration.

7. A foul water pump station consisting of:

- One wet well complete with level element and switches.
- Two fixed speed foul water pumps in duty/standby configuration.
- Discharge pipework, incorporating flow measurement.

8. A chemical dosing system based on AlPhos (poly-aluminium chloride) or alum. This consists of:

- A bunded delivery area, bunded storage area and roof.
- A duty only storage tank complete with level detection.
- A duty only storage tank recirculation pump
- SBR dosing pumps in duty/standby configuration, dosing to the SBR feed splitter.
- A sump and locked valve draining to the foul water pump station.
- Chemical dosing pump pipework and secondary containment system
- Provision for future filter dosing

9. A second bund for the provision of an alkalinity dosing system if required in the future. The following items are required as this scope of works;

- Storage tank and bunding coating
- External dosing pipework and secondary containment system
- Truck fill station and hose reels

10. New electrical switchroom

11. New access roadways, relocation of existing amenities security fencing and a new storage shed

The scope of works will also include decommissioning (and demolition where required) of existing infrastructure. All works will be completed within the existing boundaries of the site.

A review of environmental factors has been prepared and concludes no significant negative environmental impacts. A further report will be presented to Council in December 2020 in relation to necessary acquisition of Crown Land to facilitate construction of the new STP.

A community engagement framework has been prepared for the project and it is recommended that a letterbox drop take place in November inviting the Adaminaby community to a public meeting where the plans for new STP can be presented and community members provided the opportunity to ask questions. A 3-dimensional image of the upgraded STP is attached for information. Further detail on the upgraded STP will be provided to the community at the public meeting.

It is recommended that Council endorse the Adaminaby STP design for community engagement and that a public meeting be held for Adaminaby residents to be informed of the new STP.

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

This community engagement is to make the Adaminaby community/residents aware of the project, the design that will be used for the new STP and anticipated timelines. It will allow for input from the community and any concerns raised can be addressed with prior to construction commencing.

2. Environmental

A review of environmental factors has been prepared and concludes no significant negative environmental impacts. A further report will be presented to Council in December 2020 in relation to necessary acquisition of Crown Land to facilitate construction of the new STP.

3. Economic

Funding for the STP is available through state funding as well as through Council funding. The project budget consists of \$3,351,078 from Restart NSW Funding Contribution (50%) and \$3,351,078 from SMRC Funding (50%).

4. Civic Leadership

Council is driving this initiative to deliver an efficient and sustainable Sewage Treatment Plant for the Adaminaby community.



Locality map showing Adaminaby STP

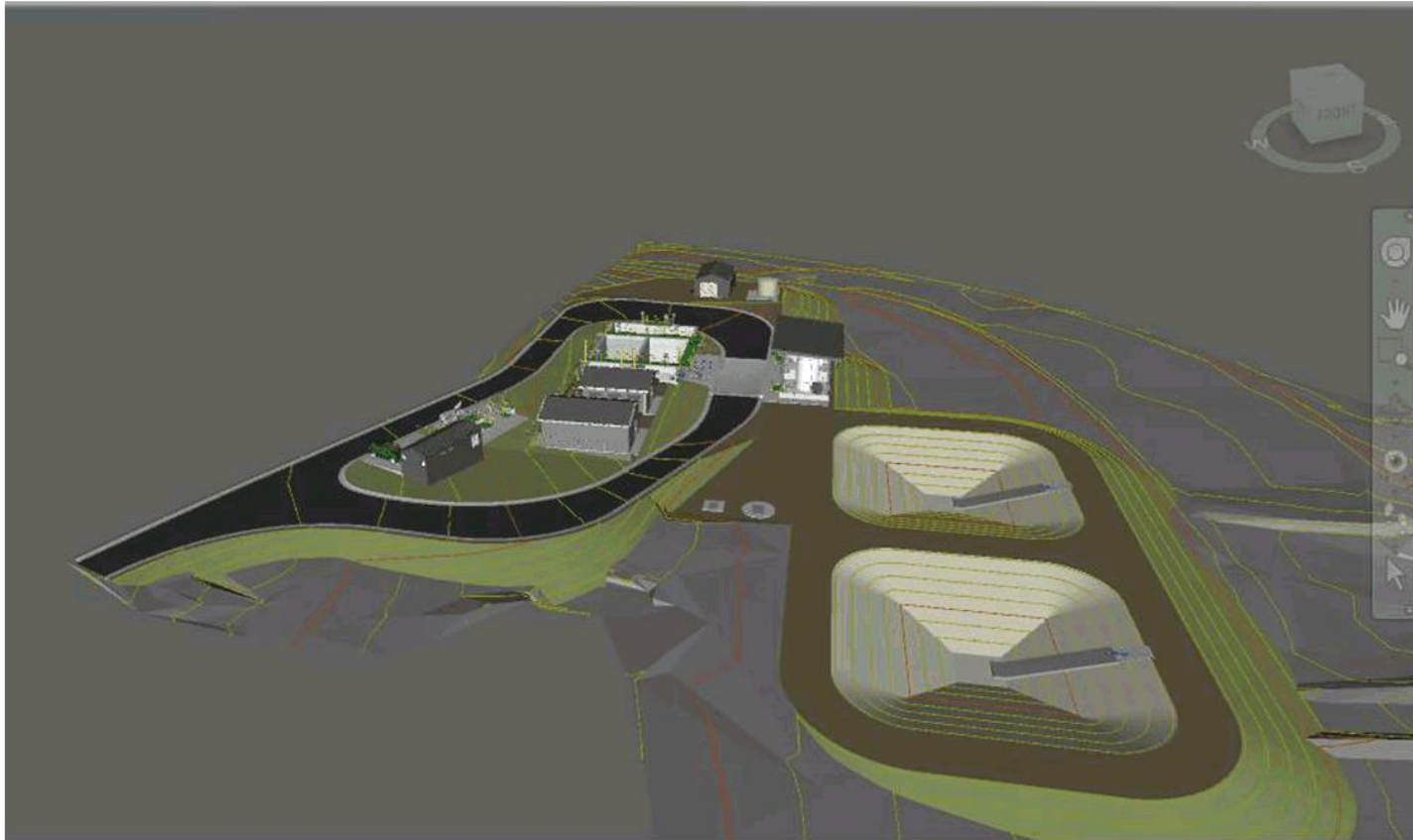


Figure 1: Proposed new Adaminaby STP 3-dimensional image – within existing site boundary

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9.4.1 STRATEGY REVIEW - VALE STREET LAND

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Strategy Officer
Key Theme:	4. Leadership Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	10.2 Sound governance practices direct Council business and decision making
Delivery Program Objectives:	10.2.2 Councillors are supported to make informed decisions in the best interest of the community and to advocate on behalf of the community
Attachments:	Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The land in Vale Street was purchased to develop offices and a civic centre. If the Council wishes to retain a presence in the CBD it should retain the land, as this is a better solution than remaining at the current site, due to the size of the current site, or selling that land and buying other land. Based on the land bought, and the heritage building on the site, sale of one parcel of land is likely to increase the overall cost of construction, due to the need to fit the facilities on the existing library and/or carpark site. It would also mean there is limited future options to the civic facilities envisaged.

The Council has historically followed a path of minimising the cost to ratepayers. To continue to follow this strategy would see the Council move its office to lower cost land outside the CBD, where the Council would build a lower quality building on a larger site, reducing the cost per annum to the ratepayers by an estimated \$2.34 per ratepayer per annum. This would not involve the development of civic space, but the cost of land would mean that future facilities could be allowed for.

Should the Council take the option to relocate outside the CBD, the land in Vale Street should be held. As there are limited large parcels of land, this will in future (as demand grows) give the Council a property with a difference in the market, which is likely to gain a better return than selling the existing blocks piece-meal. Such a landholding would also be an incentive for a large footprint retail/office/accommodation complex to come to the area at the appropriate time.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- A. Adopt a strategy to relocate the Cooma offices to a location on the periphery of Cooma and not located within the CBD.
 - B. Hold the land in Vale Street to attract a large volume retail investment into the area once the region's growth creates sufficient demand.
-

BACKGROUND

A recent Council resolution called for a strategy to be developed on the land previously acquired in Vale Street, Cooma. This land was acquired to allow for the future office needs and for a community civic centre to be developed. As such, the strategy on provision of these services needs to be reviewed to determine the approach to be taken to the land.

Current Strategy

This current strategy was based around the need to find an alternative location to the current office building, due to:

- The current building reaching the end of its effective life,
- Creating a workplace that allows for disabled access,
- Developing more activity in the Cooma CBD of an evening through events held in a civic complex.

At the time two blocks were available and the Council then sought and acquired a third block, which allowed for the new land to adjoin both the current library site and the nearby public car parking area.



Concept designs were developed for both the development of an administrative building and a second future stage with a new library, innovation hub and cultural centre on the site. The development also included underground parking to meet the development requirements, provide a significant amount of outdoor civic space within the location and retain the heritage value of one building on the site.

Background

As with all aspects of the Council's operations there should be in place a strategy for how administrative services will be efficiently and effectively provided. A significant aspect of this is the provision of office space.

The current building is technically at the end of its effective life, with the last building valuation indicating a 10 year remaining life for the structure and lower remaining life for aspects such as

fixtures, etc. There are some known structural issues existing with the building, but none that are fatal to continuing use of the building. As with any old building, there are a lot of issues that cannot be clearly identified without significant invasive investigations. Council is in the position that it will be extending the life of the building into a period where there is an increasing risk of a major structural issue occurring, which if they occur would expose the Council to a higher risk of significant cost, as the lead time to having another building in place is significant and alternative premise options are limited.

There are also a number of significant non-compliance issues relating to fire safety and access that have been identified. It has been identified that the building does not have proper fire proofing between levels and if a fire started on a lower level it is highly likely that people in the upper levels would not be able to escape. Works are being planned to reduce this risk, but without significantly more expenditure the risk cannot be reduced to the optimal level. It is expected that the cost of works to bring the building fully into compliance are uneconomic.

This risk is outside of the acceptable risk tolerances of Council, as set out in its Enterprise Risk Management Framework. The risk is assessed as 'High' and the acceptable level of risk for the safety of employees is 'Low'.

The current facility does not provide all ability access either for public areas, such as the council chambers, or to allow employment opportunities. This issue has been raised previously and work is underway to look at providing access to the council chambers, but it will not be possible to provide access to the full building.

Options

Three main options have been considered for the strategic approach to be taken.

- 1) Continue with the existing facility
- 2) Relocate to another CBD site
- 3) Relocate to a site external to the CBD

Within these options are alternative ways of achieving the outcome, such as the potential for owning or leasing premises. This will be determined by what is the most efficient option available at the time and based on negotiations. It is not possible to determine this aspect at this stage of the project.

- 1) Continue with the existing site

As noted the existing building has reached the end of its effective life. Remaining at the existing site means that the Council will continue to invest until such time as it is no longer economically viable to do so. This will occur at the stage when works required to keep the building safe, let alone a reasonably attractive workplace, require development approval. Development approval will require the Council to bring the building up to current standards. While possible, it will be extremely costly and most likely a rebuild would be more efficient, giving a much longer useful life from what will be a relatively smaller additional investment. The major issue is parking. The requirements in the Development Control Plan would require the Council to provide onsite parking, which is currently not provided. At least 1 ½ stories of the current building would be needed for this purpose. It is expected that this would not provide sufficient office floor space to include the council meeting facilities and existing staff.

The only ways to remain at the site would be to:

- split the workforce and either acquire or rent additional floor space at a separate location,
- Enforce permanent working from home arrangements for a number of staff, or
- Purchase adjacent buildings to expand the building footprint as part of the new build.

To continue to use the existing site will have similar costs to the existing strategy. The construction costs would be slightly lower, as it would not be possible to incorporate the public areas into the existing site that were planned for the new civic centre. This would save around \$400,000. However this would be offset by the need to rent alternative accommodation and relocate the offices during the demolition and reconstruction phase.

2) Relocate to another CBD site

A review of sites within the CBD area indicates that there are limited opportunities to move to a location that will be less costly than the site currently owned by the Council. Council targeted and acquired land which was vacant and had low value buildings on them, which were at the end of their lives. The site is not on the main traffic route, thus being at a lower cost and not taking out land that provides a better community **outcome** by being available for retail use. The land also links into existing Council landholdings, allowing for further development of the site into the future. A more favourable site has not been identified and even moving to a site that will only meet the minimal needs of office accommodation is unlikely to result in more than minimal savings, as you would be buying different run-down buildings to replace the run-down buildings and land currently held.

As the current strategy is to relocate to a new site in the CBD, this strategy has been further developed with concept level costings identified for this option. There are two outcomes planned within this strategy. The first is the development of administrative facilities, being office and council meeting facilities, and the second being the development of a civic precinct, at this stage incorporating the library, innovation hub and cultural centre.

The estimated costs developed in 2019 to build the designed civic centre (excluding the potential commercial development) was as follows:

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| • Council offices and meeting facilities: | \$19,430,000 |
| • Library, innovation hub and cultural centre: | \$19,400,000 |

Total estimated cost:	\$38,830,000
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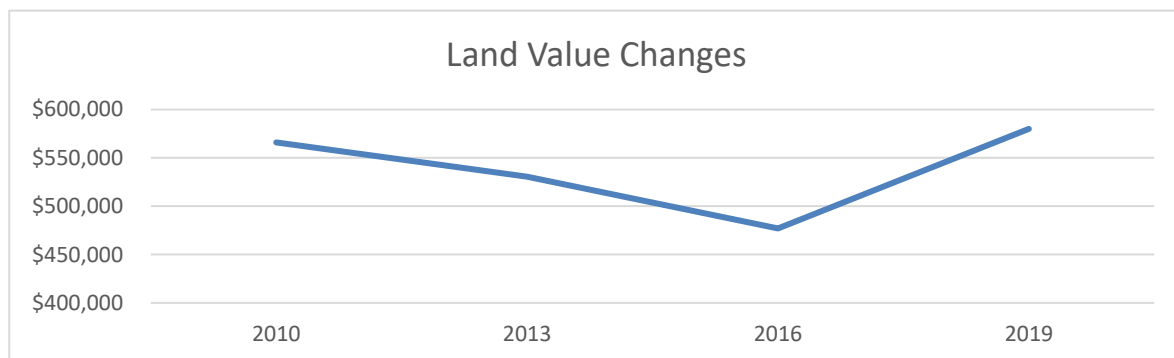
Discussion commenced on the option to sell one of the blocks, the vacant land. If Council wishes to remain with this strategy the land should not be sold. One of the three blocks contains a building currently considered to have heritage value. If the vacant block is sold the Council will be limited to either demolishing the heritage building, demolishing the current library or building over the current car parking area. These options are considered likely to be more expensive than the sale price of the vacant land.

Should Council determine to follow an alternative strategy the land would not have a strategic value to the Council for the purpose it was acquired. This means that the future of the land needs to be reassessed. A review of the CDB area indicates that there are other options where

sites with old buildings could be acquired for people looking to demolish and rebuild. There are also buildings for those wanting to move into an old building.

What Council has, which is difficult to duplicate, is a large contiguous parcel of land. While the number of people wanting to come into the Cooma CBD and looking to develop a large complex is low, the large holding of Council would provide a significant attraction for an organisation looking to invest in the CBD. This is likely to allow Council to gain greater value as there would be lower costs than trying to negotiate multiple purchases with owners of differing desire to sell. Similar to how the Council is now using its land holdings at Polo Flat to create opportunities for new businesses to establish, there is the potential for Council to use this holding to allow a large tenancy to come into the area in the future.

The holding costs of the land and buildings is estimated at \$30,000 per annum. Council is not incurring that level of cost, as it is not fully funding maintenance of the buildings and land. This means that the Council needs to have the land value increase by around 3% per annum to not be making a loss on the properties. Whether this will be achieved is difficult to accurately assess. Land values within the Cooma CBD have until recently been reducing. The last land values showed an upturn in values. Whether this will be sustained as a result of increased growth driven by Snowy 2.0 and the growth of the region generally remains to be seen.



The recent economic turmoil of bushfires and COVID-19 are likely to have a negative impact on property prices in the short to medium term. Selling into such a market is considered to be unlikely to gain the best return for the community on the assets held. Most likely the impact would be for the properties to be purchased as investments, leading to little development of the sites and eventual capital increases being transferred to the private purchasers as opposed to the community.

Considering:

- the limited available properties that come onto the market,
- the limited capacity to readily create a large parcel of land in the CBD,
- that while slowly growing, the economy has continued to grow steadily,
- the current market conditions,
- that the only sector of growth in business numbers from 2017 to 2019 was in retail business employing between 20 and 199 employees, and
- the minimal holding costs.

It is considered that the appropriate strategy for the land, should it not be needed for a civic centre, is to hold the land to take the long term opportunity available from a large parcel

ownership in the CBD, with the land only being sold to an active investor in a new complex, not a buyer looking to undertake land banking themselves. While holding the land the Council should look to minimise its holding costs where possible.

This would have to be seen as a long term strategy, as considerable population growth will be required to trigger this expansion. The statistics show that this will occur, it is only the length of time it will take that is unknown.

3) Relocate to a site outside the CBD

While there are no constraints on the current CBD, it is envisaged that at some time this will start to occur. As the service hub for the region, growth in the CBD should be anticipated. Council offices in the CBD are likely not the highest value use of the land to the community over the longer term. Relocation of the staff to a non-CBD building is unlikely to impact on the overall retail value those staff add to the economy. The distance between urban centres means such a small relocation will not change the location staff choose to shop. There may be some impact on retail through changing patterns of lunch purchases, but that would be partially offset by increased activity from the alternative use of the land.

Relocating outside the CBD would allow the Council to move to lower cost land and undertake a lower cost construction. The difference in land values is expected to equate to around \$500,000. Land values well outside the CBD and 1/10th the value of those in Vale Street.

The costs of constructing at a single level on a site compared to the current model of a multi-story building with underground car parking is difficult to determine without a full concept design being undertaken. It can be anticipated that the savings would be at least in the order of \$1million to \$2million. This would primarily come from:

- Not needing to excavate for a basement carpark,
- Able to construct to a lower standard than would be required for a CBD location,
- Establishing a building without an active **or** large public space, and
- The variation between the likely cost of acquiring land outside the CBD to the value of land within the CBD.

Offsetting the reduced costs would be an increased difficulty for people to access the offices. The area has a high reliance on private vehicles and there are only a low level of public transport options. The bus service runs three times daily. This is not a practical option for people wanting to access the Council offices.

A number of the transactional interactions (e.g. rate payments or lodgement of applications) could be provided in the CBD through use of other existing premises that the Council has.

This strategy is consistent with the historical approach of the Council, which is to minimise rates. Despite having a Socio-Economic Index for the area above average, the Council has the lowest average residential rates in its category (28% below average), fourth lowest average business rate (38% below average) and eighth lowest farmland rate (33% below average). While some of this can be attributed to the lower average incomes (2% below the group average), clearly the historical financial strategy has been to minimise the level of costs passed onto ratepayers.

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

The recommended option will have a negative social impact on the portion of the community who are unable to rely on private transport when they want to physically attend the council offices. These people will have to rely on either community transport, hire vehicles or infrequent bus services.

2. Environmental

The recommended option will have a slight negative impact in that those attending the council offices will potentially drive further than under the other strategies and this will increase use of fossil fuels and pollutions from this travel.

3. Economic

The overall costs of the project will be reduced by an estimated \$2million, or \$141 per ratepayer. Annualised this would equate to \$34,000, or \$2.34 per ratepayer.

4. Civic Leadership

Council has previously considered the matter and resolved to follow a strategy of developing a civic centre within the Cooma CBD. There are no policies that relate to this issue.

The report was not in the approved program of works adopted in the Operational Plan. While this report was being developed work was not being done on development of financial strategies for the Council, which will be carried out, but have been delayed.

9.4.2 PROPOSED USE OF 57 VALE STREET COOMA - SNOWY MONARO BUSINESS AND RECOVERY HUB

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Communications Officer
Author:	Economic Development Officer
Key Theme:	4. Leadership Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	10.2 Sound governance practices direct Council business and decision making
Delivery Program Objectives:	10.2.2 Councillors are supported to make informed decisions in the best interest of the community and to advocate on behalf of the community
Attachments:	Nil
Project	Bushfire Recovery

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Snowy Monaro Regional Council is one of the only Black Summer Bushfire affected Local Government Areas without an accessible, central recovery centre for residents.

On 5 March 2020 Council allocated \$310,000 of the \$1,255,000 of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement (DRFA) funds to recovery coordination and community support, including delivery of regular community meetings and mobile recovery centre days. COVID-19 has seen many planned community meetings and recovery days cancelled due to gathering restrictions, leaving \$205,000 of this budget as unspent.

It is recommended that up to \$35,600 of the unspent funds are utilised on opening 57 Vale Street Cooma as the *Snowy Monaro Business and Recovery Hub* for 12 months, until recovery from the 2020 bushfires transitions to business as usual for Council and funding for recovery staff ends.

An Assistant Recovery Officer, as well as Business Support Officer will be based at the hub to triage community and business, whilst the Community Recovery Officer, Economic Development Officer, and external recovery services will work from the hub on a rotational basis.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council open 57 Vale Street Cooma as the *Snowy Monaro Business and Recovery Hub* for 12 months.

BACKGROUND

1. Bushfire Recovery Centres

Due to the impact of COVID-19, Council has been unable to undertake all of the planned, in-person bushfire recovery community engagement, nor has Council been able to open an accessible, central Bushfire Recovery Centre. Various other bushfire affected Councils are utilising some of their Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement (DRFA) funding to cover the costs of operating their recovery centres that have been setup within Council Chambers, Civic Centres, local halls or Service Clubs. Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council has recently opened their Recovery Centre and has reported an increase in engagement with the community.

Whilst Council's southern Assistant Recovery Officer (ARO) has been based at the Bombala Community Centre for the duration of the year (due to the Community Centre being accessible to the public and with vacant space for the ARO), there has not been an accessible office space for Council's northern region ARO, which has restricted their ability to interact and engage with bushfire impacted community members in the north of the Snowy Monaro Region. Whilst it is preferable to go out into the community for all engagement, COVID-19 has affected the ability to do this as has budget limitations. When an ARO goes out into the community, they can't take all the other services with them and in the recovery phase we are in, we need to give the community the ability to be more self-sufficient for the transition out of this phase over the next 12 months.

The proposed solution to the above is for Council to open 57 Vale St Cooma as the *Snowy Monaro Business and Recovery Hub* for a period of 12 months, until recovery from the 2020 bushfires transitions to business as usual for Council and funding for the Recovery staff ends (31 July 2021).

2. Community Recovery Officer Deliverables

Resilience NSW has outlined a specific range of deliverables for and expectations of the Community Recovery Officer (CRO) to deliver in the 12 months they are with Council, including:

- Establishing a Community Resilience Network
- Facilitating community recovery events
- Developing a Local Recovery Action Plan incorporating community needs and activities
- Provide access to relevant and timely recovery information
- Develop a Local Recovery Plan (for future events)
- Develop a Transition Plan (to ensure recovery actions become BAU)
- Other deliverables, activities or initiatives as identified by Council to create and support a resilient community through community led recovery programs

Opening the *Snowy Monaro Business and Recovery Hub* will:

- Form a key part of the local area recovery plan
 - Make up part of the Local Recovery Action Plan
 - Provide access to relevant and timely recovery information
 - Tick three out of the four pillars of recovery - Social, Economic and Built
-

9.4.2 PROPOSED USE OF 57 VALE STREET COOMA - SNOWY MONARO BUSINESS AND RECOVERY HUB

- Engage across recovery services to inform Council and the State Government of any emerging challenges that are yet to be addressed
-

3. Community Recovery Agencies

There are a range of agencies operating in the community recovery space who will be able to utilise the Business and Recovery Hub on a drop-in basis to service the community including:

- Regional Investment Corporation
- National Bushfire Recovery Agency
- Red Cross
- Rural Adversity Mental Health Program
- National Drought and North Queensland Flood Response and Recovery Agency
- Resilience NSW
- Rural Aid

4. Support for Business

On top of drought, bushfires and resulting tourist exclusion zones, and COVID-19, the EY Report; *Delivering economic stimulus through the conservation and land management sector Economic impact assessment 25 June 2020*, found Snowy Monaro Regional LGA was the most heavily impacted LGA in NSW due to COVID-19. Uncertainty amongst business owners remains high, with the reduction to Job Keeper and no short-term assurance that a COVID-19 vaccine will be effective and available for everyone.

In what was considered to already be a resource “crowded” space, there are now multiple business advisory services supporting businesses in the Snowy Monaro through drought, bushfire recovery and COVID-19, all of whom may use the Business and Recovery Hub, on a drop-in basis:

- Entrepreneurs’ Programme – Strengthening Business– Ben Vering (24 months)
- Service NSW Business Concierge – Evan Goozeff (12 months)
- Rewire Small Business Program – Rhys Treloar and Simone Eyles (12 months)
- Business Connect – Kris Laird (12 months)
- ASBAS Digital – Kaye Keogh (12 months)
- Apprenticeship Careers Australia – Chris Fox (24 months)
- Snowy Drop-In - (3 months)

Council’s Economic Development team has been facilitating meetings to introduce new services to the existing ones, as well as determine how to get the most out of their limited time in the region as services are only funded to deliver services for up to 24 months. With no access to a shared office space or Recovery Centre where these services can operate from on a rotating basis, has been identified by the team as a limitation to success. Multiple services do not have access to their own commercial office and for some it was initially suggested that our Recovery Centre was available for their use which was incorrect as it did not and does not currently exist.

To date, the Snowy Drop-in, an initiative of EY and the State Government, has engaged with 50 local businesses who had fallen through the cracks of recovery. Strengthening Business has engaged with over 67 businesses after being on the ground for only three months. Having access

to a central, Council promoted and managed Business and Recovery Hub will only improve business engagement with these services and improve small business recovery.

It is important to note that:

- The hub is not a permanent office for the services, rather a place they can advertise their presence at on a particular day for meeting with new customers. It is a drop-in centre.
- 60% of Snowy Monaro businesses are non-employing and 55% turn over less than \$200,000. Opening the hub will provide a central place for businesses to engage with business support services and will help to improve our small business resilience and improve their capacity to create jobs in the region.

5. Community Access

Due to the geography of the Snowy Monaro Region, it is physically impossible for Council's Recovery team, Economic Development Officer and other recovery services to be undertaking all needed engagement on an outreach basis.

Opening the Business and Recovery Hub in Cooma will make accessing relevant support easier for community members and business representatives than if it were opened elsewhere in the region, as Cooma is central in the Snowy Monaro Region context and its service provision infers that most of the community already readily travels there for everyday goods and services.

There is no expectation from Council staff for community and business owners to always attend the hub to receive support. A range of outreach days or events will be planned in support for recovery, and routine outreach based economic development efforts will continue as usual. Combining outreach in place along with a Cooma hub provides more access and engagement.

6. Building Compliance

In 2017, Council's Group Manager of Development and Building Certification undertook a building inspection of 57 Vale Street Cooma, finding that the below will need to be upgraded to meet requirements of the National Construction Code 2016.

1. Exit signage and emergency lighting
2. Fire extinguishers
3. Tactile indicators to the disabled access point
4. Exit door hardware

For the temporary 12 month use of 57 Vale Street, addressing the above will make the building satisfactory for use. Other issues identified in a 2017 report by Council's Building Surveyor on the building (report attached) may also need to be looked at. As long as a development application is not required for this, Council would not be compelled to address all outstanding matters. It would remain a discretionary issue of 'best practice' in the interests of the users of the building. The building was recently vacated by the Cooma Visitor Centre, a temporary location used during refurbishment of the existing and now re-established Visitor Centre at Centennial Park, Cooma.

7. Timeframes

9.4.2 PROPOSED USE OF 57 VALE STREET COOMA - SNOWY MONARO BUSINESS AND RECOVERY HUB

The Snowy Monaro Business and Business and Recovery Hub at 57 Vale Street Cooma, needs to be opened as soon as possible so that the mentioned organisations can begin engaging with the community. The need is immediate.

The hub will be open for 12 months, using the underspent funds from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements for Bushfire Recovery and Renewal.

Note: This resolution would not prevent the consideration of the sale of all or part of land in Vale Street being considered in another report within the business paper, but may affect the timeframes of the sale of this particular block.

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

Opening the Business and Recovery Hub at 57 Vale Street Cooma for a period of 12 months will provide a positive environment for Council to foster relationships with the community and nurture business during these challenging times.

It will also provide Council with:

- An accessible shop-front for Bushfire Recovery and Economic Development with rotating community access to Council's Community Recovery Officer, Recovery Support Officer, Assistant Recovery Officers and Economic Development Officer, as well as business support services including Business Connect, Strengthening Business, Rewire Small Business Program, and the Snowy Drop-in
- The ability to better engage with people in the community who were impacted by the 2020 bushfires, as well as people operating or seeking to open a new business in the region, thereby supporting regional growth, economic development and tourism
- The ability to better collaborate across government, relevant agencies and not-for-profit bushfire recovery services with resource sharing in place
- Opportunity (with phase 2 of the Bushfire Community Resilience & Economic Recovery Fund) to engage a Business Support Officer, to provide a concierge or triage service, becoming the face of Council to local businesses
- Improved working relationships and information sharing across people working in the recovery space, including the Community Recovery Officer's ability to deliver the outcomes that are expected by Resilience NSW who have funded the position for 12 months only
- Access to Development Planners on scheduled days
- Access to health and wellbeing services with a "no wrong door" attitude
- Opportunity to personalise support and humanise Council and recovery, in line with Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework)
- Improved community attitude and public perception of Council, with enhanced engagement opportunities and access to services
- Visible role in recovery space

2. Environmental

Nil.

3. Economic

Of the \$310,000 allocated for recovery coordination and community support, including delivery of regular community meetings and mobile recovery centre days from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) for Bushfire Recovery and Renewal, \$205,000 remains unspent as planned events and activities have been interrupted by COVID-19.

It is proposed that up to \$35,600 of the remaining budget is utilised to fund the *Snowy Monaro Business and Recovery Hub* for 12 months, with no expectation of ongoing service provision.

9.4.2 PROPOSED USE OF 57 VALE STREET COOMA - SNOWY MONARO BUSINESS AND RECOVERY HUB

Estimated Expenditure	Amount	Financial year	Ledger
Upgrades & fit out (with contingency)	20,000	2020-21	WO 1768
New signage	2,000	2020-21	WO 1768
Operating costs*			
Cleaning	5,200	2020-21	WO 1768
Electricity	2,400	2020-21	WO 1768
Water	600	2020-21	WO 1768
Data	2,400	2020-21	WO 1768
Landline	1,800	2020-21	WO 1768
Office Supplies	1,200	2020-21	WO 1768
TOTAL	35,600		

**Assuming usage is similar to that of the Cooma Visitors Centre when located at 57 Vale Street in 2020.*

4. Civic Leadership

Resolution (18/20) for the allocation of DFRA funding was made at the 20 February 2020 Council meeting and was rescinded by Council at an Extraordinary Council meeting on 5 March 2020 and replaced with Resolution 32/20.

Opening of the Snowy Monaro Business and Business and Recovery Hub is the best opportunity to lead the community through the recovery and building resilience phase. This will result in improved engagement and relationships between Council, the community, and other government funded drought and bushfire recovery services.

This initiative will highlight Council's commitment in this space to supporting our community to not only build back but to do that with resilience to combat any further adversities.

Resilience NSW and the National Bushfire Recovery Agency fully support the initiative of the one stop shop being the Snowy Monaro Business and Recovery Hub in Cooma.

9.4.3 ANNUAL CLOSE DOWN 2020 2021

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Strategy Officer
Author:	Coordinator Workforce Management
Key Theme:	4. Leadership Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	10.4 Council will manage service delivery in an efficient and sustainable way as an employer of choice
Delivery Program Objectives:	10.4.2 Council provides a workplace that ensures the health, safety and wellbeing is maintained through the management of potential risk
Attachments:	Nil.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information and recommendations about annual closure of operations at the end of 2020

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve:

- A. concessional leave of one 1/2 day from midday, Thursday 24 December 2020, for all employees ordinarily rostered to work and who attend work on the designated day;
- B. the close down of Council offices, facilities and worksites, other than essential services, from Friday 25 December 2020 up to and including, Sunday 3 January 2021;

BACKGROUND

Since 2016, Council has closed down its operations, excluding essential services, for the Christmas/New Year period. Further, it has been Council's practice to provide the workforce with concessional leave (1/2 day) on the day immediately preceding the close down period to accommodate a whole-of-workforce end of year function. This year, due to COVID restrictions the end of year function will need to be undertaken differently from how it has occurred in the past. Further details will be provided to councillors in the near future.

The concessional leave is an opportunity for the Council to acknowledge its appreciation of the work, effort and contribution of the workforce over the year.

Typically, the concessional leave is provided to employees who physically attend work on the day. Where an employee takes leave that includes the nominated day, concessional leave does not apply.

During the close down period the workforce is required to use accrued leave for the days they would ordinarily work, excluding those designated as public holidays. Clause 22D (vii) (b) of the Local Government (State) Award 2020 governs situations where an employee has insufficient leave. The annual close down is an opportunity to reduce the organisation's leave liability.

Table 1: Proposed Shutdown arrangements for December 2020/January 2021

Date	Closure Status
Wednesday 23 December	Open
Thursday 24 December	Close ½ day
Friday 25 December	Public Holiday
Saturday 26 December/Sunday 27 December	
Monday 28 December	Public Holiday
Tuesday 29 December	Close
Wednesday 30 December	Close
Thursday 31 December	Close
Friday 1 January	Public Holiday
Saturday 2 January / Sunday 3 January	
Monday 4 January	Open
Ordinary workdays closed	3.5

A service schedule , detailing Council’s hours of operation during the shutdown period is jointly prepared by the relevant service units and used to manage resourcing and rostering, as well as forming the basis for planned communications with customers and stakeholders. Preparation of the schedule is coordinated by the Workforce Management unit.

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

The closure of a number of Council’s offices and depots over the end of year period gives staff a chance to take a well-deserved break to spend time with their families to promote a positive work life balance. A positive approach to work life balance will promote Council as an employer of choice.

2. Environmental

It is not considered that the recommendations contained herein will have any negative environmental impact

3. Economic

Additional period of time off taken by staff is covered by the taking of accrued leave.

The use of accrued leave by employees will have a positive impact by reducing Council’s Excessive leave liability. Further savings may be realised by the operational shutdown due to savings in electricity, water and communications costs.

4. Civic Leadership

By planning an operational closure period, council may retain public confidence through a commitment to maintaining services and assets at an appropriate standard to cover a period of shutdown.

Formal notice is required so that the general public are aware of Council's hours of operation over the holiday period and are able to plan their requirements around availability. It is recommended that Council advertise the closure through its various communications channels in advance.

9.4.4 ROAD NAMING PROPOSALS

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	GIS Supervisor
Author:	Land, Property & GIS Admin Officer
Key Theme:	4. Leadership Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	12.2 Residents have access to timely, relevant and accurate information on issues that affect them
Delivery Program Objectives:	12.2.2 Council provide convenient ways for customers to engage with us and we respond appropriately
Attachments:	1. Map Proposed Road Names

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposals are made for two more roads in the Silver Brumby Estate: Mulleun Place and Murrumbidgee Drive. Both names have received pre-approval from the Geographical Names Board meaning they meet the criteria for road naming.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the road names Mulleun Place and Murrumbidgee Drive for advertising and if no objections are received proceed to gazettal.

BACKGROUND

The name Mulleun was chosen for the presence of many eagles seen in the area which is just north of Bredbo Village. There are a number of recorded spellings for the Ngarigo word for eagle/wedge tail/eagle hawk including "Mulleun". Ron Mason of the Wagonga Land Council has provided the Ngarigo translation for this proposal.

The proposal for a second loop road accessed from Silver Brumby Boulevard is Murrumbidgee Drive. It will provide access to the Murrumbidgee River reserve and many lots addressed on this road will be overlooking the Murrumbidgee River. While Snowy Monaro has a Bidgee Road there is no other use of Murrumbidgee for road naming in our LGA or the vicinity.

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

The road names proposed for the Bredbo development have significance to the locality and the community that will live there.

2. Environmental

Nil.

3. Economic

The costs associated with road naming proposal are covered with the development.

4. Civic Leadership

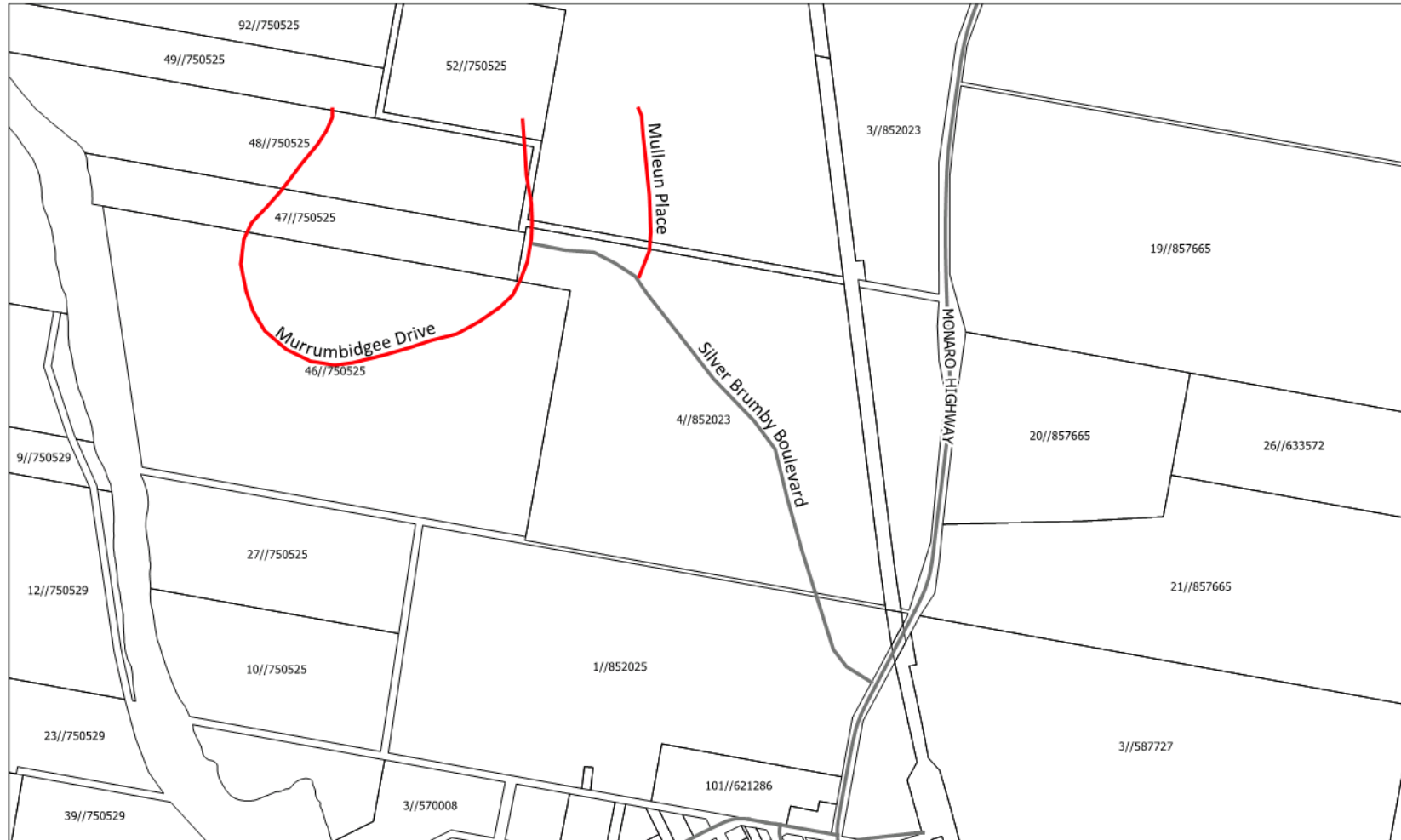
Council is the Authority for naming all Roads, Paths, Right of Ways and tracks in its Local Government Area and as such is able to propose and approve names within that area.

Road naming is undertaken according to the Council Road Naming Procedure and the NSW Addressing User Manual which sets out the policy and procedures for addressing and road naming.

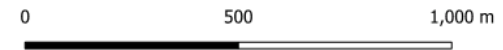
Council will provide the wider community with the opportunity to comment on the name proposal as part of the consultation process.



Proposed Murrumbidgee Drive, Mulleun Place



Cadastre supplied by Department of Customer Service, Spatial Services October 2020
Scale 1:15000 @A4 (Prepared by J. Clarke 09 Oct 2020)



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9.4.5 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Strategy Officer
Author:	Secretary Council and Committees
Key Theme:	4. Leadership Outcomes
CSP Community Strategy:	10.2 Sound governance practices direct Council business and decision making
Delivery Program Objectives:	10.2.2 Councillors are supported to make informed decisions in the best interest of the community and to advocate on behalf of the community
Attachments:	1. Answers to questions with notice for the period ending October 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As per clause 3.13 of Code of Meeting Practice a councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.9, ask a question for response by the Chief Executive Officer about the performance or operations of the Council.

In order to provide answers to questions asked by Councillors, a report has been generated with responses for the period ending October 2020. Refer the answers in the attachment of the report.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the answers to questions with notice for the period ending October 2020.

9.4.5 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

ATTACHMENT 1 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Date rec'd	Item No.	Question/Request	Responsible Officer	Response	Compl Y/N
171	17 Sep 2020	12.3	<p>NSW Farmers and Monaro Farming Systems Councillor Anne Maslin</p> <p>Question: Given community concerns over the proposed Koala Sepp and KPOM, can Council invite local peak farming groups that is NSW Farmers and Monaro Farming Systems, to present their views at the next Council briefing session in two weeks' time.</p>	Coordinator Strategy Development	<p>30/10/2020 – GM: On 7 October 2020, the NSW Government announced amendments to the Koala SEPP in order to balance stopping the decline of the koala in NSW with the rights of farmers and landholders.</p> <p>The Koala SEPP does not apply to activities, which do not require development consent from Council, for instance, erecting fences, building sheds, and other usual farming practices.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – GM: Groups looking to present on topics to provide their views on topics are encouraged to contact Council to arrange to present to the Public Forum. This allows the wider community to see what views are being put before the councillors from community groups.</p>	Y
180	17 Sep 2020	12.12	<p>Process of Emergency Services for pending Bushfire Season Councillor Bob Stewart</p> <p>Question: Can we get a report on evacuation centres across the region for the pending bushfire season?</p>	Manager Corporate Projects	<p>02/11/2020 – GH: Cooma MFC will be unavailable until January due to upgrade works. Cooma Basketball stadium, which is flagged as an alternative evacuation centre will require the hire-in of kitchen amenities in the event we need to activate the facility. The Bombala Community Centre is available. Jindabyne, Berridale and Adaminaby Halls are also available.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – GH: RFS will be contacted to provide details of the Evacuation Centre details for the coming fire season.</p>	Y
181	15	12.1	Four Lantern Lamp Post in Bombala	Project Manager	02/11/2020 – GH:	Y

9.4.5 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

ATTACHMENT 1 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Date rec'd	Item No.	Question/Request	Responsible Officer	Response	Compl Y/N
	October 2020		Councillor Maslin Question: The new four lantern lamppost in Bombala's roundabout, is there a reason why this landscape feature is still not working after so many months? When will the lamppost be made operational?		Complete and operational.	
182	15 October 2020	12.2	Bobeyan Road Upgrade Councillor Anne Maslin Question: Can Council be presented with a starting date for the work on the \$20M Bobeyan Road Upgrade?	Manager Corporate Projects	05/11/2020 – GH: Pre-construction work is already underway. The Review of Environmental Factors is in draft state for comment before being finalised. Snowy Valley Council has been engaged to undertake the design and this work is in progress. Public Works NSW has been engaged to undertake the land acquisitions, work on which will start after the centre-line has been designed. Discussions are proceeding on entering into a contract to undertake the construction. The starting date for construction will depend on these negotiations. Construction is planned to commence in early 2021.	Y
183	15 October 2020	12.3	Canberra to Eden Railway Feasibility Study Councillor John Rooney Question: How many members of the public have taken advantage of the State Governments offer to read the full report of the Canberra to Eden Railway Feasibility Study available in the Council office?	Chief Communications Officer	05/11/2020 – JM: Seven members of the public have come in the Council office, to read the Canberra to Eden Railway Feasibility Study.	Y
184	15 October	12.4	Update on Heavy Vehicles through Bombala Town Centre	Manager Corporate	02/11/2020 – GH: The information will be collated and reported back to	N

9.4.5 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

ATTACHMENT 1 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Date rec'd	Item No.	Question/Request	Responsible Officer	Response	Compl Y/N
	2020		Councillor Sue Haslingden Question: Can Council receive a report outlining community feedback on item 553 resolution action sheet Managing Heavy Vehicles in Bombala Town Centre?	Projects	Council.	
185	15 October 2020	12.5	CBD Cooma Councillor Rogan Corbett Question: When is the Cooma CBD upgrade on pavers going to commence/ finish?	Manager Infrastructure	23/10/2020 – GS: The funding deed agreement that allocated \$1M for upgrades to Cooma CBD was signed by SMRC in April 2020. Completion date for this project is 31/03/2023. Milestone 2 of the agreement requires completion of footpath paving for 2 of the agreed 5 segments listed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp Street East (Bombala to Vale) • Sharp Street East (Vale to Soho) • Sharp Street East (Bombala to bridge) • Sharp Street West (Vale to Soho) • Sharp Street West (Bombala to bridge) Milestone 2 is allocated \$350,000 with a completion date of 31/10/2021; Milestone 3 is allocated \$300,000 with a completion date of 31/08/2022; and Milestone 4 is allocated \$150,000 with a completion date of 31/03/2023.	Y
186	15 October 2020	12.6	Footpaths in the Region Councillor Rogan Corbett Question: Can Council put together a plan for the Federal Government program for Community Infrastructure that will employ people and be a benefit for the whole community, in particular footpaths throughout	Manager Corporate Projects	02/11/2020 – GH: Initial discussions have been held to develop a planned approach to this request that will allow staff to determine whether we have sufficient information to develop a proposal or whether a larger investment of resources is required which will require a report to Council.	Y

9.4.5 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

ATTACHMENT 1 ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Date rec'd	Item No.	Question/Request	Responsible Officer	Response	Compl Y/N
			the region are in need of attention?			
187	15 October 2020	12.7	Cooma North Service Station Councillor Lynley Miners Question: What is the anticipated date of demolition of the old service station at Cooma North?	Manager Corporate Projects	26/10/2020 – BP: Council will install security barriers around the former service station site, incorporating materials to mask the building appearance. Council is currently assessing if, due to its current condition, demolition of the existing building can be undertaken earlier and separately from the construction of the new extension. Costs of these options are being carefully considered as earlier timing of this demolition process may significantly increase the overall project cost. The current project plan has construction commencing in July 2021.	Y
188	15 October 2020	12.8	Yaouk Road Councillor Lynley Miners Question: Can Council receive a report, including a breakdown, on the \$49,000 works on Yaouk Road?	Manager Infrastructure	23/10/2020 – GS: A report will be submitted to Council at the December 2020 meeting.	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Strategy Officer
Author:	Secretary Council and Committees
Key Direction:	7. Providing Effective Civic Leadership and Citizen Participation
Delivery Plan Strategy:	DP7.1.1.2 Council's leadership is based on ethics and integrity to enable informed and appropriate decisions in the community's best interest.
Operational Plan Action:	OP7.7 Provide timely, accurate and relevant information to Council to enable informed decision making.
Attachments:	1. In progress action sheet for the period ending October 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to provide Councillors with updates on the progress of Council resolutions, a report is generated with a summary of action that is current, for the period ending October 2020.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the progress on Resolution Action Sheet for the period ending October 2020.

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
16	05 April 2018	118/18	<p>Proposed Road Closure & Sale of old Lions Park at Bombala That Council;</p> <p>A. Approve the partial road closure on the corner of High Street and Stephen Street Bombala so that the fence line becomes the boundary of lot 9 DP 995614;</p> <p>B. Engage the services of a land surveyor to provide a plan for the boundary adjustment;</p> <p>C. Authorise the General Manager to execute any documents necessary to complete the boundary adjustment and sale of the property;</p> <p>D. Readvertise the property on the open market for auction with an appropriate reserve; and</p> <p>E. Make the Report public once the matter is settled.</p>	Property Officer	<p>20/10/2020 - JH:</p> <p>A. Finalised.</p> <p>B. Finalised.</p> <p>C. Solicitor is preparing documents to have a CT created so consolidation can take place.</p> <p>D. Once notified of completed registration the property can be placed on the open market.</p> <p>23/09/2020 - JH:</p> <p>C Consolidation Plans lodged, surveyor has advised that a CT was not created and the solicitor is now preparing this so that registration can take place.</p> <p>26/08/2020 JH:</p> <p>C. Finalised.</p> <p>D. Finalised.</p> <p>C. Consolidation Plans lodged, Surveyor is following up on progress of same.</p> <p>D. Once notified of completed registration the property can be placed on the open market.</p> <p>E. To take place at completion of D</p> <p>22/07/2020 – JH:</p> <p>C. Consolidation Plans received from Surveyor and signed by CEO, returned to Surveyor for lodging for registration of same.</p> <p>D. Once notified of completed registration the property can be placed on the open market.</p> <p>E. To take place at completion of D.</p>	20/12/2020	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>24/06/2020 – JH: E. Finalised. F. Finalised. C D and E: Still waiting finalised consolidation plans from surveyor for this item to be completed. Have sent numerous email requests to Surveyor.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – JH: Surveyor again requested to provide the final plan, no response and will continue to follow up. This plan is in draft form with the Surveyor and would not be cost effective to engage another surveyor to finalise the plan.</p> <p>27/04/2020 - JH: Email sent to Surveyor requesting a definite date for plan to be registered. Surveyor advised he will review the current draft of this consolidation plan this week and submit for Registration.</p> <p>26/03/2020 - JH: Followed up with Surveyor and was advised this item is going to be delayed due to the large scale workload he has in place.</p> <p>27/02/2020 - JH: Followed up with Surveyor and was advised this item is going to be delayed due to the large scale workload he has in place.</p> <p>15/01/2020 - JH: The Surveyor has advised that he is hoping to have</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					the consolidation plan ready for the end of January 2020.		
20	07 May 2018	162/18	<p>Proposal to Realign the Barry Way Jindabyne and to Address Issues with the Intersections of Barry Way with Eagle View Lane and Bungarra Lane That Council</p> <p>A. Approve the proposal to realign The Barry Way over the constructed road from the intersection with MR286 to the boundary of the national park.</p> <p>B. Approve the proposal to apply to the Crown to transfer those sections of The Barry Way which are Crown reserve road to Council.</p> <p>C. Authorise staff to negotiate with landowners for acquisition of the constructed Barry Way and, where possible, to offer to close corresponding sections of paper road and to dedicate the land to the landowner in compensation.</p> <p>D. To engage the services of a surveyor to identify those sections of the Barry Way which are not on line with the constructed road.</p> <p>E. To acquire any Crown land upon which the Barry Way has been constructed through the process of the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 through the authority of the Roads Act 1993.</p> <p>F. Authorise the General Manager to execute any documents necessary to complete the project.</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>03/11/2020 – LB: A&B Surveyor has provided all of the necessary information, which has now been provided to the land owner.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: A&B. Surveyor has addressed questions relating to the plan at the intersection of Eagle View Lane. The landowner was notified and again posed a number of questions. Most of these have been answered and the answer to the last question will be provided this week.</p> <p>C. Negotiation will commence next week with landowners adjacent to Cobbon Hill. This section of realignment of the Barry Way will involve compulsory acquisition from the Crown.</p> <p>D. This project has been divided into sections so that the surveyor completes the survey work as Council is ready to address each section.</p> <p>E. The section of the Barry Way which passes through Crown land without a road reserve is at the southern end and will be addressed as that stage is reached.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – LB: A&B Surveyor has notified Council that due to workload this plan may take a little longer.</p> <p>C Landowner has been notified that there is a</p>	31/08/2021	N

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p>G. Authorise the expenditure and allocate an amount of \$135,000 in the 2018/19 year Budget with funding to be provided from Stronger Communities Project PP-219 (Undertake project to align the road with road reserves).</p>		<p>delay involved in obtaining the information that they have requested. E-G Ongoing.</p> <p>29/07/2020 – LB: A & B Surveyor has been requested to provide the plan for the second section which will involve Eagle View Lane. C. Landowners have been notified that Council is waiting on plan. E-G. Ongoing.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: The draft plan may be expected. The landowner is waiting on this information before proceeding. A. Survey is being done in sections B. Request for sections of Crown road to be transferred to Council will be carried out at the end of the project. C. Negotiations with landowners are ongoing. D. See A. above. E. Acquisition will be carried out as necessary when the plan for individual sections is finalised. F-G Ongoing.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: The surveyor has promised to have the draft plan with the area of road to be closed and the area of the area to be acquired marked on the plan sent to Council within the next week. This plan will then be sent to the landowner.</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>24/04/2020 – LB: Contacted the landowner on Eagle View Lane who has requested information. He wants to know how much land Council will require for the road and how much land he will receive in compensation. Will there be sufficient space for him to construct an eco-hut. The surveyor has been requested to calculate the area of both areas so that an accurate answer can be provided.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: In view of the fact that the landowner has not contacted the Land and Property Officer to date a letter has been sent asking him to contact the Land and Property Officer to discuss his consent to the creation of the road reserve over the road in its current location through his property.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: The Land and Property Officer met with the landowner and he said he will respond after consultation with his wife.</p> <p>20/01/2020 – LB: Waiting on response from landowner on Eagle View Road. He resides in Tasmania.</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
29	21 June 2018	253/18	<p>Council Property - Town View, Waterworks Hill, Bombala</p> <p>That Council</p> <p>A. Approve the proposal to demolish the residence located on lot 1 DP 1216130</p> <p>B. Serve notice on the tenant to vacate the premises in accordance with the Residential Tenancy Act.</p> <p>C. Engage the services of a suitably qualified contractor to demolish the residence, clear the site and dispose of any asbestos in accordance with the EPA Act; and</p> <p>D. Authorise the expenditure and allocate an amount in the 2018 Financial Year Budget with funding to be provided from the Former Bombala LGA Reserve.</p>	<p>Manager Water & Wastewater Operations</p>	<p>03/11/2020 – JM: DPIE Water comments received for Bombala. Currently being reviewed prior to community consultation commencing.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – JD: Both Bombala and Delegate option reports complete and with DPIE for comment. Both now endorsed by Council. Community consultation with both communities will be held once comment from DPIE received.</p> <p>27/08/2020 – BC: A-D Option Study Report for Bombala sent to DPI Water for comment. Email sent to DPI on 11 August 2020 attaching Delegate Option Study Report and also sought comments from DPI on Bombala Options Study Report.</p> <p>28/07/2020 – MR: A. Under the provision of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007, development for the purpose of water treatment facilities may be carried out by or on behalf of a public authority without consent on land in a prescribed zone. No DA would be required to rebuild the water treatment works in Bombala, however it will need an REF. The demolition of the existing building will be included as part of the REF for the rebuild. B. The tenant has vacated the dwelling and all</p>	31/12/2020	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>utility services have been disconnected.</p> <p>C. Demolition will be a component of the WTP rebuild in accordance with the Options Study and REF.</p> <p>D. Expenditure is expected to be incorporated in the \$10M options funding grant.</p> <p>25/06/2020 – GS: Options study is complete covering Security of supply, alternate water sources and quality issues driving a new water treatment plant with presentation by designer to Councillors scheduled for 2 July 2020.</p> <p>01/06/2020 – MR: No further update until adoption of final options study.</p> <p>22/04/2020 – GS: Demolition of BWTP Cottage on hold pending Bombala/Delegate Water Supply Options Study recommendations.</p> <p>23/03/2020 – MR: Demolition of BWTP Cottage to coincide with Bombala WTP refurb or rebuild in accordance with Bombala/Delegate Water Supply Options Study recommendations.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – MR: Demolishment of the residence will depend on the outcome of the Options Study and</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>recommendations. Options Study will be provided to Council when received.</p> <p>14/01/2020 – AS: Still waiting on the Bombala/Delegate Water Options Study Report – expected finalisation April 2020.</p>		
57	6 September 2018	314/18	<p>Proposed Acquisition of Land in Cooma That Council</p> <p>A. Acquire Lots 400 and 434 DP 750535 and lot 461 DP 41999 by compulsory process under the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991 by authority contained in the Local Government Act 1993 for the purpose of saleyards.</p> <p>B. That the land be dedicated as Operational land in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993</p> <p>C. That minerals be included in this acquisition</p> <p>D. That this acquisition is not for the purpose of resale</p> <p>E. That the necessary applications be made to the Minister for Local Government and the Governor.</p> <p>F. That the Common Seal be affixed to all documentation required to be sealed to give effect to this resolution.</p> <p>G. That following the acquisition of the three</p>	Property Officer	<p>20/10/2020 - JH: A to F: After proposed notification date of 13 November has passed OLG will send the relevant paperwork to both the Minister and Governor for approval. Once documents are approved OLG will send notice and then gazettal will occur 120 days after that notice is given.</p> <p>23/09/2020 JH: A to F: Proposed acquisition notice (PAN) lodged now waiting for Acquisition Number to prepare Gazette Notice. Compensation monies deposited to Crown as per PAN.</p> <p>26/08/2020 - JH: A to F: Notice from OLG to lodge PAN (proposed acquisition notice) and PAN lodgement was completed and lodged with Crown, NTSCORP and NSWALC. There is a 90 day period that OLG has now to complete the notice and gazette the acquisition, subject to no submissions are received</p>	30/12/2020	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p>Crown allotments, the eleven lots comprising the Cooma saleyards be consolidated into a single allotment.</p> <p>H. That this project be funded from the former Cooma Monaro Shire Council reserve fund.</p>		<p>from NTSCORP and NSWALC. Submissions from NTSCORP and NSWALC are not expected as this was reviewed prior to the PAN being sent during the original application, but is a requirement of the PAN.</p> <p>G: This will take place once the acquisition has been approved and finalised by OLG and Crown.</p> <p>H: All costs will be funded from the former Cooma Monaro Shire Council reserve fund.</p> <p>22/07/2020 – JH: A to f: Updated Valuation report submitted to Crown to enable a faster completion of this acquisition once approval received from OLG. Latest email received from OLG is that they are following up on our application and have not forgotten about it. No further response from Crown as to permission to begin project whilst waiting for OLG to send documentation of approval. None of these items can be finalised until a response from OLG is received.</p> <p>G: This will take place once the acquisition has been approved and finalised by OLG and Crown.</p> <p>H: All costs will be funded from the former Cooma Monaro Shire Council reserve fund.</p> <p>24/06/2020 – JH: A to H: Latest email received from OLG is that they are following up on our application and have not</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>forgotten about it. No response from Crown as to permission to begin project whilst waiting for OLG to send documentation of approval. None of these items can be finalised until a response from OLG is received.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – JH: Email received from OLG on 20/5/2020 advising they can confirm that it has been processed, unfortunately they are unable to advise as to when/if it will be approved. Following up with Crown as to the option to gain approval for works to begin prior to acquisition taking place. Unfortunately with most staff working remotely responses are slower than usual.</p> <p>27/04/2020 - JH: Numerous requests have been sent to Office of Local Government asking for this matter to be finalised. Council does not have the option to gain approval for acquisitions from anyone other than OLG.</p> <p>26/03/2020 - JH: Waiting on response from OLG.</p> <p>27/02/2020 - JH: All information is with OLG and waiting for approval to come through.</p> <p>15/01/2020 - JH: Waiting on response from Crown to advise that the</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					Special Lease will be extinguished after acquisition has been completed to finalise documents required by OLG.		
74	4 October 2018	353/18	<p>Clr Castellari Notice of Motion - Rooftop Solar That Council</p> <p>A. Support the Albury City Council motion regarding legislative changes to enable the implementation of a program similar to that implemented by Darebin City Council in Victoria;</p> <p>B. Advocate for the legislative changes to local members and relevant Ministers;</p> <p>C. Carry out due diligence with a business case which includes funding options, power under current legislation that would provide solar subsidy schemes for residence and businesses within the SMRC council area; and</p> <p>D. Provide for public consultation process once the above has been carried out.</p>	Chief Executive Officer / Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer, Mayor and Councillors	<p>23/10/2020 – JT: No further update.</p> <p>28/09/2020 – JT: No further update.</p> <p>03/08/2020 – JT: No further update</p> <p>29/06/2020 – SC: A. Motion supported at LGNSW Annual Conference. B. Raised in conversation with Local Member and LGNSW. C & D – No action.</p> <p>29/05/2020 – SC: No further update.</p> <p>29/04/2020 – SC: No further update.</p> <p>04/03/2020 – SC: No further update.</p> <p>06/02/2020 – SC: No further update.</p>	Ongoing	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>03/12/2019 – SC: B – The CEO requested an update from LGNSW in regarding to their advocacy of behalf of the local government sector (as per resolution 100 – Solar Buy Back - from the 2018 LGNSW Conference).</p> <p>LGNSW has made representations to the previous Minister for the Environment and Minister for Local Government prior to the latest cabinet reshuffle.</p> <p>The matter was also raised in LGNSW’s submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications Inquiry into Treasury Laws Amendment (Improving the Energy Efficiency of Rental Properties) Bill 2108.</p> <p>Further to this, LGNSW also raised this matter at their liaison meeting with the Office of Environment and Heritage and will continue to advocate on the issue as opportunities arise.</p>		
88	1 November 2018	394/18	<p>Planning Proposal 461 Barry Way, Moonbah to Amend Snowy River Local Environmental Plan 2013</p> <p>That:</p> <p>A. The report from the Senior Strategic Land Use Planner on the Planning Proposal 461 Barry Way (Lot 101 DP 817374) be received.</p> <p>B. The Planning Proposal be submitted to the Minister of NSW Planning & Environment for a Gateway Determination in accordance with Section 3.34 of the <i>Environmental Planning</i></p>	Senior Strategic Land Use Planner	<p>30/10/2020 – AA: No further update.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – AA: No further update.</p> <p>28/08/2020 – AA: No further update. Proposal is waiting for proponent to respond to agency concerns and is on hold to the conclusion of the SAP Masterplan. The following sections of the Council resolution have been completed.</p>	Ongoing	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p><i>and Assessment Act 1979.</i></p> <p>C. The Department of Planning and Environment be advised that Council wishes to be issued with an authorisation to use delegation for the Planning Proposal.</p> <p>D. In the event NSW Department of Planning & Environment issues a Gateway Determination to proceed with the Planning Proposal, consultation be undertaken with the community and government agencies in accordance with Schedule 1, Division 1, Clause 4 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> and any directions of the Gateway Determination.</p>		<p>A. No action required.</p> <p>B. Completed.</p> <p>C. Completed.</p> <p>D. Referred to relevant Government Agencies. A objection was received from OEH. Further information was requested from proponent. Awaiting response.</p> <p>30/07/2020 – AA: No further update.</p> <p>22/06/2020 – AA: No further update.</p> <p>03/06/2020 – MA: No further update and not expected to be any significant progress until the SAP masterplan is more fully developed.</p> <p>05/05/2020 – AA: An altered Gateway determination was issued by the Department of Planning Industry and Environment extending the timeframe for completion by 24 months to 7 June 2022. This allows the proposal adequate time to be considered and finalised after the Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct Masterplan is completed.</p> <p>19/03/2020 – MA: No response received from DPIE regarding request for extension of time due to SAP Masterplan. In</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>process of following up with DPIE.</p> <p>31/03/2020 – AS: No further update.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – BD: No further update.</p> <p>20/01/2020 – AA: A letter has been forwarded to State Government requesting the Gateway Determination date be extended to coincide with the conclusion of the Go Jindabyne masterplan.</p> <p>06/12/2018 – MA: B. Planning proposal has been submitted to the Minister of NSW Planning and Environment for a Gateway Determination. C. Council has advised Department of Planning and Environment that Council wishes to be issued with an authorisation to use Delegation for the Planning Proposal Cannot be actioned until a determination is given.</p>		
89	1 November 2018	395/18	<p>DA Best Practice Guideline and Processing Times That Council endorse the following recommendations;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council staff develop a Snowy Monaro Region Development Guide that also includes a rural and regional context; 2. Increased promotion of pre-lodgement meetings with applicants and a media 	Manager Built and Natural Environment	<p>25/10/2020 – JG: Completed. Guide adopted for public use at October 2020 Council meeting.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – JG: The Draft DA Best Practice Guideline will be presented to the October 2020 Council meeting.</p>		Y

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p>campaign be undertaken;</p> <p>3. Creation of a user friendly information portal on Council’s website;</p> <p>4. Development assessment staff actively participate in the review of the consolidated LEP and DCP with the Strategic Planning Group to achieve practical workable provisions;</p> <p>5. A review and report be presented to the General Manager on resourcing requirements for Building Surveying and Development Engineering staff in order to reduce development application referral times, assist with approvals relating to the issuance with Complying Development Certificates and provide efficient and timely advice to applicants;</p> <p>6. Councillors continue to be provided with a list of applications lodged with Council on a monthly basis and a list of determined development applications on a monthly basis;</p> <p>7. Ensure that when the corporate IT platform is implemented it includes online tracking of applications and use of mobile IT platforms, to improve efficiencies in administration of development assessment and building certification processes;</p> <p>8. That checklists and guidelines are updated and expanded to ensure applicants have detailed information to ensure applications are submitted with all relevant information as required by Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the EP&A Regulation (in accordance with Clause 51 of the</p>		<p>28/08/2020 – JG: The Draft DA Best Practice Guideline was presented to the August 2020 Council meeting. The item was deferred to the September 2020 meeting so that amendments could be made as requested by Councillors.</p> <p>24/07/2020 – JG: The Draft DA Best Practice Guideline will be presented to the August 2020 Council meeting.</p> <p>03/06/2019 – JG: 1 – Being developed. 3 – Portal being created as part of IT platform development. Completed. 5 – Review being undertaken as part of organisational redesign review. Completed. 9 – Completed.</p> <p>03/05/2019 – JG: 1 - Being developed 3 - Being developed 5 - Waiting for structure 6 - Report going to June meeting</p> <p>6. Lists have been and will be continued to be provided 7. Ongoing 8. Completed 9. To be undertaken 10. Ongoing 11. Ongoing 20/10/2018– JG:</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p>EP&A Regulation);</p> <p>9. A review be undertaken and report be put forward to Council proposing amendments to the Bombala, Snowy and Cooma DCP's to align notification requirements as being commensurate with impacts and to reduce the number of development applications being notified;</p> <p>10. That development applications be determined based on the information held at the time where an applicant has been requested to provide additional information (under Clause 54 of the EP&A Regulation) but has failed to respond within 21 days; and</p> <p>11. Additional information requests be provided to applicants in a timely manner. The response time on these requests be increased from 14 days to 21 days.</p>		<p>No further update at this time</p> <p>06/12/2018 – DA: Best Practice Guideline and Processing Times is to be developed.</p>		
165	21 February 2019	68/19	<p>Parking in the laneway at the rear of the Jindabyne Town Centre That Council</p> <p>A. Approve the proposal to enter into public consultation with the shopkeepers and owners in Jindabyne Town Centre regarding changes to the laneway at the rear of the shops.</p> <p>B. Receive a further report regarding the results of the public consultation and the proposed way forward together with detailed costings.</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB: A. This project has temporarily been place on hold. B. Further report will be presented to Council at the appropriate time.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: A. Amended plan still to be received by Council.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – LB: A. Council has requested a minor adjustment to the concept plan. When the concept plan is amended it is proposed to form a Steering</p>	31/08/2021	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>Committee to guide the project to completion.</p> <p>B. further report will be submitted for Council's consideration when the public consultation has taken place.</p> <p>29/07/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. Council is in receipt of the draft survey plan and is currently waiting on the design plan. When both plans are to hand Council will undertake public consultation.</p> <p>B. Following public consultation a further report will be prepared for Council with detailed costings.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB:</p> <p>The Road Safety Officer advised that the surveyor has been selected and the project is progressing.</p> <p>A. Public consultation will take place when the survey and design is completed.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB:</p> <p>RFQ sent out to four surveyors for quotation for survey and design. This is to be funded by RMS.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB:</p> <p>RFQ sent out to four surveyors for quotation for survey and design. This is to be funded by RMS.</p> <p>24/04/2020 – LB:</p> <p>Specification for the tender is currently underway. Collaboration between the Special Projects Officer</p>		

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					<p>and the Road Safety Officer is being undertaken in view of the issues encountered with the proposed construction of the public toilets in Jindabyne.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: Tenders will need to be called for the survey and design work. When the survey and design is completed, staff will arrange for public consultation.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: Waiting on survey and design so that public consultation can be arranged.</p> <p>03/02/2020 – LB: Shopkeepers and shop owners in the Jindabyne Town Centre have been notified by letter that Council has been successful in securing grant funding for survey and design of the back lane.</p>		
211	21 March 2019	127/19	Delegate Disadvantaged Housing That Council continue with the current arrangement of Facilities staff managing the tenants and maintenance on the properties pending community consultation, and bring a report back to Council.	Coordinator Land & Property	<p>26/10/2020 – TP: Design of consultation mechanics pending.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – TP: It is anticipated that community consultation will be initiated in first quarter of 2021 calendar year.</p> <p>27/08/2020 – TP: Council continuing to manage properties. Review of the background and full context relating to this item required by Land & Property unit.</p> <p>24/07/2020 – KH:</p>	30/06/2021	N

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					<p>This area is now under the Land & Property Portfolio. An initial handover has been conducted with a more detailed one to follow explaining what steps have been taken so far and why, and to work together moving forward on this.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – KH: There is no further update as there has been too much occurring with bushfires and COVID.</p> <p>01/06/2020 – KH: No further update.</p> <p>28/04/2020 – KH: No further update.</p> <p>27/03/2020 – KH: No further update.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – KH: Mail out to the community at Delegate seeking their feedback to be arranged asap to gauge thoughts. Ongoing.</p>		
227	17 April 2019	151/19	<p>Consolidation of Reserve no. 530002 Centennial Park and Lot 6 DP 758280 Cooma Visitors Centre as one Crown Reserve for General Community Use That Council</p> <p>A. Request that the Crown add lot 6 DP 758280 to Reserve 530002 comprising Centennial Park and add an additional purpose of</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>26/10/2020 – LB: A. A further email has been sent to Crown Lands requesting an update. B. The licence will be relinquished when Crown Lands has completed their processes.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: A. An email has been sent to Crown Lands asking</p>	31/12/2020	N

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			<p>“General Community Use” to the Reserve. B. Relinquish Licence LI 453017 for the use of the Cooma Visitors Centre when Lot 6 DP 758280 is added to Reserve 530002.</p>		<p>for an update on the progress of this matter.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – LB: A. Crown Lands has assured the Land and Property Officer that the documentation recommending the amendment to both reserves has gone before the Minister. B. The licence will be relinquished when Crown Lands has completed their processes.</p> <p>29/07/2020 – LB: This matter needs to be signed off by the Minister and then must be advertised in the Government Gazette as a part of the process. It is anticipated that it may take some months to finalise.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: Communication with NSW ALC confirmed that the claim over the Visitors Centre has been rescinded. This information will be relayed to Crown Lands with a request to expedite the matter. A. Crown Lands is presently preparing the documentation for transfer to Council as Crown Land Manager B. The licence will be relinquished in conjunction with transfer to Council Management.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: Reminder was sent to Crown Lands last week. This matter will take some time to resolve at the Crown Lands level.</p>		

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					<p>24/04/2020 – LB: Crown Lands has advised that due to the COVID-19 Pandemic this process may suffer some delays.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: Crown was sent a second reminder today. It is an involved process, and will take a while to review, given the current COVID-19 pandemic and the recent bushfires.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: Negotiations with the Crown are ongoing. It is likely that the Crown would prefer lot 6 to be placed under Council management and that the lease be rescinded. We are currently waiting on a reply.</p> <p>20/01/2020 – LB: This matter has been escalated at Crown Lands to achieve a decision on the way forward.</p>		
251	16 May 2019	185/19	CMCA RV Park – Cooma That Council support in principle the development of a CMCA RV park at the Hawkins St site and provide in-kind assistance through internal plant rates.	Manager Corporate Projects	<p>02/11/2020 – GH: DA still under consideration. CMCA requesting to be able to respond to concerns raised through the DA process and the Public Forum presentation.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – GH: Development application notification period and extent of notification area has been increased in response to concerns raised on the development.</p> <p>28/08/2020 – GH: Pending DA outcome.</p>	30/11/2020	N

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					<p>31/07/2020 – GH: DA Processing is continuing.</p> <p>30/06/2020 – GH: CMCA are in the process of submitting the DA for Hawkins Street RV park site and are working with consultant on the bushfire and flood elements of the DA.</p> <p>01/06/2020 – GH: CMCA has now commenced on a Development Application.</p> <p>23/04/2020 – GH: Report with Draft MOU being prepared for May Council meeting.</p> <p>27/03/2020 – GH: Report to Council planned for April meeting.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – GH: Final plans and estimates received by CMCA. CMCA has provided a draft MOU and a sample lease documents which will be included in a report to Council. Pending support from Council to proceed a DA will be lodged.</p> <p>31/01/2020 – GH: Local surveyor is finalising plan for CMCA and is expected by end of January.</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
260	16 May 2019	194/19	<p>Classification and Categorisation of Crown Land in Council's Care and Control</p> <p>That Council approve the proposed categorisation of Crown land as per attachment 1 to report Classification and Categorisation of Crown Land in Council's Care and Control</p>	<p>Property Officer</p> <p>Land & Property Officer</p>	<p>03/11/2020 - JM: Community consultation has commenced via the Yoursay website from mid-October and face-to-face drop in sessions in Bombala, Cooma and Jindabyne for mid-November. Community engagement framework continually being reviewed throughout the consultation to ensure we are reaching all those in the community who may have an interest.</p> <p>23/09/2020 - JH: Council has received the notice from Crown on the categories applied to the Reserves. These have been passed on to the Contractor and the plan is for the Draft PoM to go to public consultation mid-October via council's website and then face to face consultation to take place.</p> <p>26/08/2020 - JH: Crown have not returned the approval of the application after updates were provided to Crown as per their request. This has been brought up by many other councils as most have not received any notifications. This has been raised with Crown and the Consultants preparing the Plan of Management are also following up with Crown on Council's behalf.</p> <p>22/07/2020 – JH: Still waiting for approval of Council application from Crown. Draft Plans of Management in preparation stage.</p>	30/01/2021	N

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					<p>24/06/2020 - JH: Updated changes completed and lodged with Crown, awaiting their approval of the application.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – JH: Crown advised they would like some changes made to the application for some of the categories. Changes made as per request and submitted Friday 29 May following review by consultant. Community consultation process is being put in place by Consultant and hope to have a final plan for process.</p> <p>27/04/2020 - JH: This application is with DPIE Crown Lands. There is a large backlog of applications and the implications of COVID-19 have added more time constraints on these applications. The contractors are also in contact with Crown to try and get this process expedited.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: The consultants engaged by Council to do the Plan of Management for Crown Land have checked with Crown Lands about approval of the categorisation for Crown Land in SMRC and have advised that the Crown is still working through the many submissions it has received.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: Council is waiting on confirmation of approval of categorisations. The Plans of Management are currently underway.</p>		

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					<p>20/1/2020 – LB: Requests for classification and categorisation have been submitted for approval by CL. A copy of the submission has been sent to Council’s Contractors to enable them to commence work on the Plan of Management for Crown Land to be managed as community land under the Local Government Act.</p>		
290	20 June 2019	227/19	<p>Application to Crown Land to be appointed as Land Manager to Various Waste Management Sites That Council requests to be appointed as Land Manager of the following Reserves:</p> <p>A. Dalgety Landfill Lot 2 DP 837128, Reserve 88070 for Rubbish Depot under Crown control;</p> <p>B. Bombala Landfill Lot 123 DP 756819, Reserve 15472 for Night Soil Depot under Crown control;</p> <p>C. Bombala Landfill Lot 300 DP 756819, Reserve 49491 for Night Soil Depot under Crown control;</p> <p>D. Berridale Transfer Station Lot 178 DP 756837, Reserve 73609 for Sanitary Purpose under Crown control;</p> <p>E. Berridale Landfill Lot 153 DP 756694, Reserve 47391 for Rubbish Depot under Crown control; and</p> <p>Request the purpose of land be changed to Urban</p>	<p>Property Officer</p> <p>Resource & Waste - Project Manager</p>	<p>20/10/2020 - JH: No further update.</p> <p>23/09/2020 - JH: A, B, C & D – Complete. E. NSW ALC are following up on this item they referred to the Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) with the recommendation that the CEO of the LALC refer it to the LALC Board for consideration of claim withdrawal. NSWALC will advise of the outcome when received, they have advised that the LALC are not meeting regularly during this COVID pandemic.</p> <p>26/08/2020 -JH: A, B, C & D – Complete. E. NSW ALC are following up on this item they referred to the Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) with the recommendation that the CEO of the LALC refer it to the LALC Board for consideration of claim withdrawal. NSWALC will advise of the outcome when received,</p>	Ongoing	N

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			Services for Reserves 15472 & 49491		<p>they have advised that the LALC are not meeting regularly during this COVID pandemic.</p> <p>24/06/2020 – JH: A, B, C & D – Complete. E. This item has been referred by NSWALC to the Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) with the recommendation that the CEO of the LALC refer it to the LALC Board for consideration of claim withdrawal. NSWALC will advise of the outcome when received.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – JH: Item E: Email received from NSWALC requesting further information on this Reserve. Gazette notices were researched and supplied to NSWALC. They still require any information that Council may have on the lawful use and occupation of this land and/or need for this land for an essential public purpose, as at 8 June 2010. Following up on this request with Waste Team. Spoke again to NSWALC 27/5/2020 advice they are also now discussing with LALC with regard to their interest in the land due to it not being used for many years, as such they may wish to keep the land claim active.</p> <p>30/03/2020 – JH: No further update. 22/01/2020 – JH: E. Property officer has written to the NSW Aboriginal Land Council to see if they wish to</p>		

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					revoke their interest as ALC 25795 is current on this reserve. 09/01/2020 – MD: A. Confirmation has been received Council is the Land Manager of Dalgety Landfill Lot 2 DP 837128, Reserve 88070 for Rubbish Depot; B. Confirmation has been received Council is the Land Manager of Bombala Landfill Lot 123 DP 756819, Reserve 15472 for Night Soil Depot; C. Confirmation has been received Council is the Land Manager of Bombala Landfill Lot 300 DP 756819, Reserve 49491 for Night Soil Depot; D. Confirmation has been received Council is the Land Manager of Lot 178 DP 756837, Reserve 73609 for Sanitary Purpose under Crown control; E. Awaiting confirmation.		
333	18 July 2019	277/19	Australian Tourist Park Management - NRMA - Caravan Park Jindabyne That Council consider the approval for the Lessee to execute the 2 x 5 terms on the Lease Agreement when the first option to renew is due in October 2019 which will take the Lease Agreement through until October 2029.	Commercial Land Officer	26/10/2020 – KH: BMR is finalising the registration. 24/09/2020 – KH: BMR is actioning the registration of the lease 25/08/2020- KH: Documents with BMR for action. 24/07/2020 – KH: CEO has signed, awaiting a cheque to be drawn to go with signed lease back to BMR for action 26/06/2020 – KH:	30/11/2020	N

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					<p>Signed lease has been received and forwarded onto the CEO Office for signing.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – JH: Solicitors have advised the signed lease agreement should be returned to Council next week.</p> <p>27/04/2020 - JH: Correspondence has been received by Council’s Solicitor advising the Lease Agreement has had a few minor amendments and is with NRMA for exaction of same.</p> <p>26/03/2020 - JH: Council is liaising with NRMA in regard to this item.</p> <p>27/02/2020 -JH: Council Solicitor and NRMA Solicitor are reviewing Agreement and making some minor amendments.</p> <p>15/01/2020 - JH: Solicitor has sent through an updated Agreement with some changes that were required to be made for further review. This is now back with the Solicitor.</p>		
347	15 August 2019	296/19	<p>Road Closure and Creation of Road Reserve - Badja Road That Council</p> <p>A. Approve to formally close the Council public road that traverses lot 1 DP 124507, Lot 2 DP 1195991 and Lots 15,16 & 81 of DP 752146;</p>	Land and Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB: A. Subject of resolution 296/19 B. Survey plan has been received.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: B The plan has been received and letters</p>	30/03/2021	N

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			<p>B. Engage the services of a Surveyor to prepare a plan of subdivision for the creation of a road reserve over Badja Road;</p> <p>C. Agree to exchange the former closed road through the affected properties in compensation of the area required of the privately owned properties for the road reserve to be created over Badja Road; and</p> <p>D. Authorise the General Manager to execute the documents to give effect to the above</p>		<p>regarding road closure in accordance with legislative requirements are being prepared.</p> <p>27/07/2020 – LB: A – B Council is in receipt of a draft plan which has been checked and the surveyor has been requested to provide the final plan with Administration Sheet. When the final plan is received an application will be submitted for Subdivision Certificate.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: A. Surveyor has given assurance that the plan will be sent to Council in the next two weeks. B. This will be done in consultation with landowners after plan of subdivision is received.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: Contractor has been asked to forward plan and it is anticipated that it will be available very shortly.</p> <p>24/04/2020 – LB: Discussion with the contractor revealed that due to COVID-19 there would be some delay but the plan is now expected any day.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: Council is waiting on survey plan before proceeding.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: Survey work is currently being carried out.</p>		

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					<p>20/01/2020 – LB: Landmark Surveys have been engaged to carry out the survey and produce a plan.</p>		
352	15 August 2019	301/19	<p>Proposed Closure and Sale of Public Pathway in Kalkite That Council</p> <p>A. Agree to close the pathway and sell the land 50% to each adjoining landowner for \$10,000 including GST each with each party to pay their own legal fees;</p> <p>B. Notify the owners of lots 38 and 39 that Council approves the payment for 50% of the pathway as a “repayment schedule” to be paid in conjunction with the land rates to be fully paid prior to 30 June 2020;</p> <p>C. Apply to the Crown to close the public pathway;</p> <p>D. Engage the services of a surveyor to create a plan of subdivision with the pathway to be divided along its length (front to back);</p> <p>E. Engage the services of a solicitor to draw up contracts for the sale of the land; and</p> <p>F. Authorise the General Manager to execute the documents for the sale of the property</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB: A –B Advertising period has ended and one objection was received. The objection was a general one, which objected to any pathway in Kalkite being closed.</p> <p>C. Process has changed and new application to Crown Lands has been submitted</p> <p>D. Surveyor has been asked for an anticipated date for the plan of subdivision</p> <p>E. Contracts will be drawn up based on the plan of subdivision when the plan is available.</p> <p>F. Documents will be executed at the appropriate time.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: A-B. Advertising period has ended and one objection was received. The objection was a general one, which objected to any pathway in Kalkite being closed.</p> <p>C. Waiting on response from Department of Industry - Crown Lands then the plan for road closing will be lodged and gazetted.</p> <p>D. The plan of subdivision will be available in approximately two weeks.</p> <p>E. The solicitor has been requested to get the contracts for the sale of the land ready for when the plan of subdivision is received.</p>	30/06/2021	N

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					<p>26/08/2020 – LB: A-B Letters to landholders and notifiable authorities have been sent. At this time all responses have been positive. Waiting on response from Crown Lands for consent to proceed and for public pathway to vest in Council following closure. G. This is no longer a requirement under the Act. H. The plan of subdivision will be available in approx.. 6 weeks. In the meantime, the road closure is progressing. E-F This will take place at the appropriate time.</p> <p>27/07/2020 – LB: Follow-up with Council’s surveyor determined that the plan to close the pathway will be received at Council by the end of July. Letters have been prepared to notify the local community of the proposal to close the pathway. The letters will be posted.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: I. Landowners have been notified of Council resolution. Resolution /19 reviews the payment period until 30/6/2023. J. Application cannot be made until plan of subdivision is to hand. K. Plan of subdivision to divide the pathway lengthwise cannot be done until the pathway is closed. L. Contracts will be drawn up as soon as closure</p>		

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					<p>of the pathway is registered and the plan of subdivision is ready.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: Council’s Finance Dept. are unable to set up a Special Rate in the rating system and they have suggested that Sundry Debtor accounts be set up with regular quarterly payments to be fully paid prior to March 2023. This will enable the sale of the land to proceed prior to 30/06/2020.</p> <p>24/04/2020 – LB: Arrangements are currently underway to set up a payment plan and a surveyor has been engaged.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: All parties have been notified of the Council resolution and quotes for the survey of the pathway have been sought. This resolution is now superseded by resolution 57/20.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: Purchasers were not happy with the timeline for completion set by the Council resolution and a further report has been submitted to the March Council meeting.</p> <p>20/01/2020 – LB: Landowners were notified of Council resolution via mail but are intending to write to Council requesting more time to pay.</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
379	19 September 2019	333/19	<p>Finalisation of Draft Bush Fire Prone Lands Map 2019</p> <p>That Council</p> <p>A. Receive and note the report of the Senior Strategic Land Use Planner on the finalisation of the draft Bushfire Prone Land Map;</p> <p>B. Submit the draft Bush Fire Prone Land Map and associated supporting documentation to the NSW Rural Fire Service for certification and provide a letter (attachment 3) to the NSW RFS Commissioner;</p> <p>C. Consent to a public notice (attachment 4) being attached to Section 10.7 (formerly Section 149) Planning Certificates advising of the bushfire prone lands changes until such time as the draft map is certified; and</p> <p>D. Advise the community and stakeholders via its website and the local newspaper once the Bush Fire Prone Land Map has come into effect.</p>	Senior Strategic Land Use Planner	<p>04/11/2020 – AA: No further update.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – AA: RFS have advised that draft map is with a commissioner to be signed.</p> <p>30/07/20250 – AA: Council staff have sought update from NSW RFS on this topic, awaiting response.</p> <p>22/06/2020 – AA: Letter sent to RFS in October 2019 requesting the Commissioner of the RFS to certify the draft map. Council Staff awaiting update from RFS on this certification process.</p> <p>03/06/2020 – MA: No further update. Waiting for RFS to finalise.</p> <p>30/09/2019 – AA: A. Noted. B. Letter will be forwarded the Rural Fire Service on 1 October 2019. C. Information has been circulated to all relevant planning administration officers to be distributed with all 10.7 certificates Will be actioned once the Rural Fire Service have advised that the map will be certified by the commissioner.</p>	Ongoing	N

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388	19 September 2019	343/19	<p>Proposed Compulsory Acquisition of Part Lot 7002 DP 1028529 Crown Land Travelling Stock Reserve</p> <p>That Council</p> <p>A. Approves the acquisition of the constructed section of Dalgety Road 20m wide which traverses lot 7002 DP 1028529 for the purpose of public road through the process of <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i> for the purposes of s.178 of the Roads Act 1993;</p> <p>B. Seek approval from the Minister for Local Government and/or the Governor in accordance with section 187 of the Local Government Act 1993 to give all necessary Proposed Acquisition Notices in accordance with the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991;</p> <p>C. Upon receipt of the Minister's/Governor's approval, Council serve each PAN and take each other action necessary to carry out the acquisition;</p> <p>D. Upon receipt of the Minister's/Governor's approval Council give effect to the acquisition by publication of an Acquisition Notice in the NSW Government Gazette and such other publication as may be required by law;</p> <p>E. Pay compensation to all interest holders entitled to compensation by virtue of the compulsory acquisition on the terms set out in the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991;</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>03/11/2020 – LB: A-G Quotation has been received from Public Works Advisory to carry out the compulsory acquisition process. Currently finalising approval. Also waiting on reply from the NSW Aboriginal Land Council.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: A-G Currently waiting on a reply from the NSW Aboriginal Land Council.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – LB: A-G This acquisition has been placed on hold while further investigations through Local Land Services and Aboriginal Land Council are carried out.</p> <p>29/07/2020 – LB: A. Council is waiting on the survey to be completed. B. When the survey plan is received the application to the Minister and the Governor will be made. C. PANs will be served after the Minister and Governor's consent is received D. Gazettal will take place after consent of the Minister and the Governor is received E. Valuation has been requested from the Dept of the Valuer General for land to be acquired without consent. F. Documents will be sent to the CEO for execution when appropriate. G. Upon acquisition the acquired property will be</p>	28/12/2020	N

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			<p>F. That Council authorise the General Manager and the Administrator to complete and execute all documentation necessary to finalise and bring into force Council's acquisition of the land and if necessary to affix the Council seal to any documents related to the acquisition; and</p> <p>G. That upon acquisition the acquired Property is dedicated as road following gazettal of the acquisition;</p>		<p>dedicated as road.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: Surveyor is presently carrying out the work.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: Surveyor advised that he will commence the survey in the next week.</p> <p>24/04/2020 – LB: Surveyor has been engaged and expects to commence the survey in the immediate future.</p> <p>26/03/2020 - LB: The NSW ALC has requested a survey plan be provided prior to proceeding. Quotations are currently being sought for the survey.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: The NSW Aboriginal Land Council has given consent in principal and is waiting on a survey plan.</p> <p>20/01/2020 – LB: Currently waiting on survey plan.</p>		
408	17 October 2019	369/19	<p>Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Meeting held 11 September 2019 That Council</p> <p>A. Receive and note the minutes of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee meeting held 11 September 2019;</p> <p>B. Support the Committee recommendations relating to Item 5.3 – Community Arts and</p>	Coordinator Economic Development	<p>30/10/2020 – KH: A facilitated workshop has been held by the Community Arts and Culture group during October 2020 to develop a plan forward for the facility.</p> <p>28/09/2020 – MA: No further update.</p>	30/11/2020	N

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			<p>Culture facility in Cooma;</p> <p>C. Support the Committee recommendation relating to Item 5.5 – Communication / Promotion of Committee; and</p> <p>D. Supports the Committee recommendation relating to Item 5.6 – Bombala Arts and Innovation Hub.</p>		<p>02/09/2020 – MA:</p> <p>A. No action required.</p> <p>B. No further update.</p> <p>C. No further update.</p> <p>D. The Bombala Arts and Innovation Hub working group has been formed and had its first meeting, attended by Clr Haslingden.</p> <p>02/07/2020 – MA:</p> <p>Nothing further to update over June.</p> <p>03/06/2020 – MA:</p> <p>Bombala Arts and Innovation Hub committee has been advertising for members and is in progress of beginning.</p> <p>Continuing to investigate opportunities and options for the Arts and Culture Facility in Cooma that are compatible with the funding available in grant.</p> <p>29/04/2020 – MA:</p> <p>The Arts and Culture Committee minutes 25/03/2020 will recommend a request for extension of time for the funding programme.</p> <p>03/03/2020 – KH:</p> <p>B. Relevant stakeholder meetings will soon recommence.</p> <p>C. No update.</p> <p>D. Committee positions have been advertised and recruitment will commence shortly.</p>		

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>04/02/2020 – KH: No further updates.</p> <p>02/12/2019 – KH: B. A small working group continues to meet to work towards the goal of establishing a community arts and culture facility in Cooma. C. A media release will be released early January 2020. Updates to the website have been drafted and are expected to go live in the next 2 weeks. D. To be actioned after December Arts and Culture 355 meeting.</p> <p>4/11/2019 – KH: A. Noted. B. The GM is to negotiate with Land and Property NSW to transmit the property at 5 Dawson St Cooma to SMRC for the nominal fee of \$1, inclusive of related fees and charges such as stamp duty. C. The communications team are to prepare a media release and additional website to be included on the website. D. Community Development Planner & Support to form working group.</p>		
429	17 October 2019	389/19	Proposed Acquisition of Part Lot 6 DP 218752 for the Purpose of Road That Council, consistent with the guidelines contained within with the body of report: A. Authorise the General Manager to negotiate	Land & Property Officer	23/10/2020 – LB: A-C Application for discharge of mortgage completed by landowner and sent to the bank for processing. Signed application for subdivision certificate	30/11/2020	N

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p>the purchase of 0.2542ha of lot 6 DP 218752;</p> <p>B. That Council be responsible for any additional costs including survey, legal fees, fencing;</p> <p>C. Authorise the General Manager to execute all necessary documents and affix Council’s Seal if required; and</p> <p>D. Approach the plantation owners for a contribution towards the works prior to commencing the project.</p>		<p>and the Administration Sheet received from landowner.</p> <p>As soon as the landowner receives his Certificate of Title from the bank the plan of subdivision will be registered and contracts will be exchanged.</p> <p>D Letter is being prepared for the plantation owners requesting that they contribute to the works.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A-C. The Title to lot 6 has a mortgage noted in the second schedule. The landowner has verified that the loan has been paid out. A discharge of mortgage application was forwarded to the landowner to complete and return to Council so that the mortgage can be removed from the title.</p> <p>Council is also waiting on the application for a subdivision certificate to be signed by the owner of the property.</p> <p>D. Nearby plantation owners to be approached in writing seeking contribution to the purchase.</p> <p>26/08/2020 –LB:</p> <p>A-C When Land and Property receives the subdivision certificate the landowner can sign off on the plan and arrange for his bank to sign off after which the plan can be submitted to the LRS for registration.</p> <p>Waiting on landowner to sign the application for the subdivision certificate or send an email giving</p>		

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					<p>consent for the application to be lodged. The subdivision certificate has been done but can't be released until consent is received from the landowner.</p> <p>B. Council has paid for survey and legal fees will be paid upon receipt of invoice</p> <p>C. Documents will be signed by the CEO when appropriate.</p> <p>D. Plantation owners are not affected and therefore will not be asked for a contribution.</p> <p>27/07/2020 – LB: Council is currently waiting on the subdivision certificate so that the plan can be registered prior to settlement.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: Council's solicitor has been asked to produce the contracts. Application for subdivision certificate has been submitted.</p> <p>A. Purchase price has been negotiated and agreed by both parties.</p> <p>C. This acquisition does not affect the plantation owners.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: An email has been sent to the surveyor each week asking for the plan of subdivision so that contracts for the purchase of the land can be exchanged. The plan has not been registered so the plan will need to be attached to the contract.</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>24/04/2020 – LB: Council’s solicitor is organising the contract and it is anticipated that exchange will take effect within the next month.</p> <p>27/03/2020 – LB: MOU has been returned to Council and Council’s solicitor has been asked to arrange a contract.</p> <p>27/02/2020- JH: MOU with property owner, waiting return of same.</p> <p>15/01/2020 - JH: Staff have spoken to land owner and are waiting for a written response.</p>		
439	21 November 2019	408/19	<p>Closure of Part of the Road Reserve in Barrack Street Cooma That Council</p> <p>A. Approve the proposal to close part of the Barrack Street Cooma road reserve in accordance with the plan in this report;</p> <p>B. Classify this new lot as operational land;</p> <p>C. Approve the consolidation of lot 4 DP 32321 with the new lot to be created by the road closure; and</p> <p>D. Classify the new consolidated lot as operational land.</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB: A. Awaiting information from Crown Lands. Email sent to Crown Lands requesting that this matter be expedited.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: A-B. Crown Lands responded to Council’s email to say that the Old Title search is currently underway and we should receive the results shortly. C. A plan of consolidation will be prepared as soon as the road closing is registered. D. The consolidated lot will be classified as operational land upon registration of the plan.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – LB: Crown Lands have been reminded via email that</p>	30/01/2021	N

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>we are still waiting on the results of the search to fulfil the requirements of the requisition.</p> <p>This action cannot proceed until plan is Registered.</p> <p>29/07/2020 – LB: Application has been sent to Crown Lands for an Old Title Search in accordance with the requisition from the LRS.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: When the plan of subdivision was lodged, Council received requisitions on Title. A request has been sent to Crown Lands for evidence of gazettal of Barrack Street as a Council public road. Despite extensive research by Council staff and Council’s solicitor definitive evidence was not found. B. Plan of consolidation will be sought after the road closing is complete through lodgement of the plan.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: Council’s solicitor is currently carrying out investigations to provide information to the LRS.</p> <p>24/04/2020 – LB: The plan was lodged at the LRS and the surveyor is presently addressing a requisition from the LRS regarding the date of gazettal of Barrack Street Cooma as a Council public road.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: The subdivision certificate has been released and</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>the documents executed by Council. The documents have been delivered to the surveyor for lodgement at the LRS.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: The plan will be lodged as soon as the subdivision certificate is to hand.</p> <p>20/01/2020 – LB: Registration of the plan should be gazetted soon.</p>		
449	21 November 2019	418/19	<p>Minutes of the Water and Sewer Committee held on 29 October 2019 and adoption of recommendations</p> <p>That the recommendations of the meeting of the Water and Sewer Committee held on 29 October 2019 be adopted.</p>	Engineer Capital Projects	<p>23/10/2020 – JD: No further update.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – JD: Proposed charges presented to Councillors. There were concerns that Bombala and Delegate would get an increase in charges while all other areas were decreasing. Considering options to include a discount for the first year of 30% for Bombala and Delegate so all areas would see a decrease.</p> <p>03/09/2020 – JD: Proposed charges presented to Councillors. There were concerns that Bombala and Delegate would get an increase in charges while all other areas were decreasing. I have proposed to DR that we offer Bombala and Delegate a discount for the first year of 30% so then all areas would see a decrease. Awaiting feedback from DR on this proposal.</p>	30/12/2020	N

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					<p>24/06/2020 – JD: Proposed charges presented at ELT meeting on 3 June 2020. DSP values accepted by ELT and will be presented at the next council meeting on 2 July 2020 for acceptance by the Councillors.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – JD: Proposed charges agreed on with Chief Strategy Officer. A report is being prepared to ELT recommending these charges and the way forward.</p> <p>30/04/2020 – DR: Matter deferred due to impacts of COVID-19.</p> <p>24/03/2020 – JD: Awaiting further Advice on charges from Acting Director Corporate and Community Services following meetings and discussions. A meeting will then be scheduled with Councillors.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – JD: A. Discussions were held with DPIE Water and they indicated that all towns/villages must have charges. B. DPIE Water indicated we can look at only future assets when determining the charges which could bring the charge amount down. They also indicated we can set the charges ourselves for the smaller villages and present these to Council for approval. C. Charges have been proposed and a meeting</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>will be set up with the councillors to discuss these proposed charges.</p> <p>24/01/2020 – GA:</p> <p>A. S64 Workshop was held with ELT and the Consultant on 16 January 2020. As the charges were very high for the villages, advice is being sought from DPIE Water if the villages can be exempt from charges and any other changes that will meet the guidelines.</p> <p>B. Awaiting advice from DPIE Water prior to Councillor workshop and date for workshop to be determined after receipt of advice.</p> <p>27/11/2019 – GA:</p> <p>Noted and the following actions will be taken:</p> <p>A. The draft minutes will be adopted at the next water and sewer committee meeting.</p> <p>B. Adopted Terms of Reference will be sent to document control for finalising.</p> <p>C. Amendments to sewer pricing and billing was reported to Council on 21 Nov 2019.</p> <p>S64 DSP Councillor workshop has been proposed to be held on 19 Dec 2019.</p>		
553	21 November 2019	422/19	Managing Heavy Vehicles in Bombala Town Centre - Community Consultation That the matter be deferred for further consultation with the public including correspondence from the Bombala Chamber of Commerce.	Manager Corporate Projects	<p>05/11/2020 – JM: The consultation has taken place. A report will be presented to the December 2020 Council Meeting.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – GH: No further update.</p>	30/12/2020	N

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					<p>03/09/2020 – GH: No further update.</p> <p>01/07/2020 – AS: No further update. Consultation occurred from September 2019 to October 2019.</p> <p>01/06/2020 – GH: Communication distribution proposed re Bombala Town Centre Community Consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticeboards – IGA and Newsagency • Bombala Times and Monaro Post • Facebook – Bombala Noticeboard • Facebook – SMRC page • Facebook – SMRC Business Forum Group • Radio – capital network and 2MNO • Notice at SMRC office • Info sent to SMRC customer service for any enquiries • SMRC website <p>27/04/2020 – LN: Working with Chief Communications Officer to establish a strategy for community consultation during the COVID-19 restrictions.</p> <p>24/03/2020 – LN: No further update.</p> <p>28/02/2020 – LN: Ongoing.</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					03/02/2020 – LN: Ongoing.		
573	21 November 2019	443/19	<p>Werralong Road - Proposed Acquisition With and Without Consent That Council</p> <p>A. Approves the acquisition without consent of proposed lots 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10 in the plan of acquisition for the purpose of public road under the provisions of the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i> in accordance with Division 1 Section 177 of the Roads Act 1993 and the making of the necessary application to the Minister and/or Governor.</p> <p>B. Approves the acquisition of proposed lots 1, 2, 3, 6 and 9 with consent for the purpose of public road under the provisions of the <i>Land Acquisition (just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i> in accordance with Division 1 Section 177 of the Roads Act 1993 and the making of the necessary application to the Minister and/or Governor.</p> <p>C. To authorise the General Manager to execute all documents relevant to the acquisitions both without consent and with consent on behalf of Council.</p> <p>D. Agrees to bear all costs for the acquisition of the proposed lots.</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB: A&B An email was received from one of the landowners on Werralong Road attaching an email from John Barilaro’s office dated 23 October. The email from John Barilaro referred to a reply from the Minister for Local Government responding to correspondence from the landowner. The email inferred that the OLG has made a recommendation to the Minister to be considered in the near future.</p> <p>B The consent of the landowners to the gifting of land for Werralong Road through their properties was conditional upon Council receiving approval from the OLG to the acquisition without consent.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: No further update.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – LB: A&B. OLG has not released consent for acquisition without consent. Currently Council is unable to proceed until consent for acquisition without consent is received from OLG C&D. Documents will be executed at the appropriate time. Costs are being paid on invoice.</p> <p>27/07/2020 – LB: A. Application was sent to OLG for consent to the acquisition. Email reply from OLG received</p>	30/12/2020	N

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					<p>27/7/2020 consenting to the acquisition with consent.</p> <p>B. Application for acquisition of lots 4, 8 and 10 without consent is currently being assessed separately.</p> <p>C. The necessary documents will be sent to the CEO when necessary for execution.</p> <p>D. All costs are being paid by Council.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: Council received a letter from the OLG to say that the process for requesting a shorter timeframe would result in the process taking longer due to their process. Therefore Council has withdrawn its application to reduce the notification time. The legislated timeframe for notification is 90 days and Council should not anticipate a decision from the OLG for at least 3 months. Recent experience has demonstrated that the OLG is not providing decisions on applications for 6 months or more.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: There has been no response from the OLG with respect to the application to reduce the notification time. The application is with the OLG.</p> <p>24/04/2020 – LB: The application for acquisition of Werralong Road has been lodged with the OLG. At the same time an application to reduce the notification time to 30 days has been lodged with the OLG.</p>		

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					<p>26/03/2020 – LB: The OLG returned the application. A new application is currently being prepared by Council’s solicitors for submission to the OLG.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – LB: When consent is received from the OLG Werralong Road will be gazetted to Council.</p> <p>28/01/2020 – LB: Council’s solicitor is presently preparing Section 30 Agreements for execution by landowners who are gifting their land to Council. The solicitors are also preparing the application to the OLG for consent to acquire a portion of the land for road through the process of acquisition without consent.</p> <p>02/12/2019 – LB: Resolution of Council has been sent to Council’s solicitor to lodge with OLG for consent of the Minister and the Governor.</p>		
600	19 December 2019	483/19	<p>Sale of Council Land - Percy Harris Street Leesville by Auction off the Plan That Council</p> <p>A. Approve for Lots 14, 15 and 16 at Leesville Industrial Estate to be sold off the plan via Public Auction;</p> <p>B. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to establish the reserve price for Lots 14, 15 and 16 at Leesville Industrial Estate ahead of the auction, and to negotiate with the highest</p>	Property Officer	<p>03/11/2020 - JH: B: Completed D & E: CC has been lodged and now waiting for confirmation/ approval from Council Planning Department.</p> <p>23/09/2020 JH: D & E: Construction certificate has been lodged and now waiting for approval.</p> <p>26/08/2020 - JH:</p>	31/12/2020	N

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			<p>bidder should the property fail to meet the Reserve;</p> <p>C. Authorise for the Chief Executive Officer to select the Agent to carry the sale;</p> <p>D. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake all negotiations for the sale of Lots 14, 15 and 16 at Leesville Industrial Estate; and</p> <p>E. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute all legal documents and contracts for the Sale of Lots 14, 15 and 16 at Leesville Industrial Estate.</p>		<p>A: Completed</p> <p>B: Part Completed – Negotiations to take place if required should property fail to meet Reserve price.</p> <p>C: Completed.</p> <p>D & E: Due to easement restrictions requiring changes to enable sale, plans have been update, and the new the DA modification lodged. CT sent to Solicitor for updating to SMRC name for sale contract. Waiting on auction date to be set.</p> <p>22/07/2020 – JH:</p> <p>A: Completed</p> <p>B: Part Completed – Negotiations to take place if required should property fail to meet Reserve price.</p> <p>C: Completed.</p> <p>D & E: Due to easement requiring change the requested, the updated plans have now been received and the Mod for DA lodged. CT sent to Solicitor for updating to SMRC name for sale contract.</p> <p>24/06/2020 – JH:</p> <p>A & C. Reviewing sunset clause in contract to ensure the works can be completed in time once sale takes place. Reviewing the requirements of the development to ensure all conditions of the CC are met for the sale to be finalised. Agent has been selected.</p> <p>B.CEO to establish the reserve price.</p>		

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					<p>D & E. To be undertaken as the process progresses.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – JH: Reviewing sunset clause in contract to ensure the works can be completed in time once sale takes place. Reviewing the requirements of the development to ensure all conditions of the CC are met for the sale to be finalised.</p> <p>27/04/2020 - JH: Design plan received today from Surveyor, CC application will be completed and lodged. Preparation will commence for the Auction to take place.</p> <p>26/03/2020 - JH: Still no response from surveyor with design plan. Multiple emails sent requesting update on expected completion of design plan.</p> <p>27/02/2020 - JH: Met with Surveyor 27/2/2020 and was advised he will be visiting the site the week of 2 March 2020 to begin the design plan.</p> <p>15/11/2020 - JH: A Real Estate Agent has been approved to carry out the sale by auction. The design plan should be received by end of January from Surveyor. The draft contract has been prepared by Solicitor and the process for sale is taking place.</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
607	19 December 2019	490/19	<p>Chief Executive Officer's Annual Review That Council:</p> <p>Approve the variation of the Chief Executive Officer's contract by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Extending the term from three years to five years; b) Increasing the total remuneration package from \$300,000 pa to \$320,000; c) Permitting the CEO to participate in Council's leaseback vehicle arrangements in a manner consistent with other senior staff. <p>B. Authorise the Mayor to develop an appropriate Deed of Variation to give effect to the above;</p> <p>C. Authorise the Performance Review Panel to determine a new performance agreement with the Chief Executive Officer's.</p>	<p>Chief Executive Officer / Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer, Mayor and Councillors</p>	<p>23/10/2020 – JT: No further update.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – JT: No further update.</p> <p>28/08/2020 – JT: A. Complete. B. Complete. C. Drafted performance agreement still in progress.</p> <p>03/08/2020 – JT: C. Updated performance agreement is being drafted by the panel.</p> <p>24/06/2020 – SC: A. Complete. B. Complete. C. Panel scheduled to meet 7 July 2020</p> <p>29/05/2020 – SC: A. Complete. B. Complete. C. Not yet finalised.</p> <p>29/4/2020 – SC: A. Complete. B. Deed under review. C. Not yet finalised.</p> <p>30/03/2020 – SC:</p>	Ongoing	N

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					<p>No further update.</p> <p>04/03/2020 – SC: A. In progress B. Deed under review. C. Completed. D. Not yet Finalised</p> <p>04/02/2020 – SC: A. In progress. B. Not yet finalised.</p>		
615	20 February 2020	9.3.1	<p>Request to Acquire and Repair/Replace Bairds Crossing Bridge over Snowy River</p> <p>That Council:</p> <p>A. Receive and note the report on the request to acquire, repair/replace Bairds Crossing Bridge over the Snowy River;</p> <p>B. Reject the proposal for Bairds Crossing Bridge to become a Council Asset and be subject to Council’s asset maintenance/replacement program; and</p> <p>C. After the Proponent receives the advice from the minister with that advice, he consults with the council staff with a view of preparing a report to the council.</p>	Manager Infrastructure	<p>23/10/2020 – GS: The Minutes of the LEMC meeting held on 23 September 2020 contained actions relating to Bairds Crossing Bridge. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEMC to approach Council to explore options for Bairds Crossing and repairs. • Assess choke points and fire load – Bairds Crossing road. • Contact Manager Infrastructure re: over hanging trees and road edges – Bairds Crossing road. <p>A copy of the meeting minutes were provided to the Manager Infrastructure on 13 October. At the time of this update, no further information has been received from the LEMC.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – GS: LEMC meeting was held after this update was provided. Therefore any recommendations from the LEMC that might influence Council deliberation</p>	30/11/2020	N

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					<p>on this issue are not yet known.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – GS: No change from previous update other than conversations with Mr Makhoul and other residents of Bairds Crossing Road and Punt Hill Road have been informed of the intention to have this matter discussed at the LEMC in September 2020.</p> <p>24/07/2020 – GS: C. As per previous update, the issue of Bairds Crossing Bridge is to be discussed at the next LEMC meeting in September 2020.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – GS There is no action for A and B. A. The latest update from Mr Makhoul dated 15 June was as follows: <i>“we have received a recommendation letter from our local fire brigade for the need of a access bridge at Bairds Crossing, this has been sent to the RFS and meet with open arms. Please see attached for your perusal, the bridge will be a topic at the next Local Emergency Management Committee meeting for recommendation to be replaced with an adequate structure”</i></p> <p>Councils response to that update was as follows: Thank you for your email and update on</p>		

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					<p>discussions relating to Bairds Crossing Bridge. I think a discussion at the Local Emergency Management Committee is excellent progress.</p> <p>Without being a pain, could I please ask for an update on the part of Council's resolution that stated: C. After the Proponent receives the advice from the minister with that advice, he consults with the council staff with a view of preparing a report to the council</p> <p>Has anything from the Ministers Office been received? This would allow a further report to be prepared for Council consideration.</p> <p>29/05/2020 – GS: The latest update was an email from Mr Makhoul to John Barilaro MP on 30 April 2020 that stated:</p> <p>In reply to your below email, we would like to advise that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are expecting documentation in support of our request for retention and upgrade of the Bairds Crossing Bridge from local Fire Brigade at Numbla Vale and in turn the RFS NSW. • We are expecting that funding can come from the recently advised increase in Safety/Fire expenditure budget • Our understanding is that ownership of the land upon which the bridge stands is passed onto Council 		

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After ownership of the land is finalised, the State funding is allocated to Council, for the bridge works. <p>As soon as these documents are to hand we will forward them to you.</p> <p><i>Note:- No documentation has yet been received from any agency supporting the proposal for a retention and upgrade of Bairds Crossing Bridge.</i></p> <p>29/04/2020 – GS: On 6 April 2020 A letter was drafted for CEO approval in response to questions raised by John Barilaro MP on behalf of Mr Joseph Makhoul and in relation to Council’s decision on Bairds Crossing Bridge.</p> <p>On 23 April 2020, Council staff wrote to Mr Makhoul and other residents seeking any information “the proponent” may have received from the relevant minister in relation to safety concerns should Bairds Crossing Bridge not be repaired or replaced. This correspondence reiterated the decision of Council from the February 2020 meeting, suggesting this information would assist in preparing a further report on Bairds Crossing Bridge for Council consideration. Unfortunately no reply has been forthcoming.</p> <p>27/03/2020 – GS: There has been no confirmation of any advice from</p>		

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					<p>the Minister to the proponent and therefore this action has not been progressed.</p> <p>28/02/2020 – GS Residents near Bairds Crossing Bridge were informed of Councils decision and amendment to the report recommendations; especially the inclusion of recommendation. A. Staff now await the advice from the minister, through the proponent in order to provide a further report for Council consideration.</p>		
628	20 February 2020	10.3	Bombala Library Sign That Council put up a sign at the street frontage entrance to the Bombala Library, indicating the opening hours for the Library and CTC before the end of May 2020.	Commercial Land Officer Manager Corporate Projects	<p>26/10/2020 – KH: Supplier has been contacted to get a second proof with the correct font. Proof will be circulated to appropriate stakeholders once received.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – KH: Proof being reviewed to confirm correct font.</p> <p>25/08/2020 – KH: Proof has been received from a supplier. Reviewing before finalising.</p> <p>24/07/2020 – KH: Quotes have been received this week. They will be assessed and forwarded onto the appropriate stakeholders for comment.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – KH: Providers have been contacted still trying to put together quotes.</p>	30/11/2020	N

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					<p>01/06/2020 – KH: We are still waiting on quotes from sign providers.</p> <p>28/04/2020 – KH: Suggestions from Bombala based Councillors – Manager Community Services to provide feedback.</p> <p>27/03/2020 – KH: Still waiting on Bombala based Councillors for design and placement.</p> <p>02/03/2020 – GH: Acting Land and Property Manager consulting with Bombala based Councillors and library staff for sign design and placement location.</p>		
636	19 March 2020	9.1.1	<p>No Stopping Zones along the Lake Jindabyne foreshore - review of the 2019 winter traffic / camping management campaign. That Council:</p> <p>A. Note the successful outcomes of the 2019 “No Stopping Zone” campaign;</p> <p>B. Note that the demand for budget camping / parking, both in summer and winter, is increasing as tourist and visitor numbers coming to Jindabyne and the Snowy Monaro Region continue to grow;</p> <p>C. Allocates an annual budget to maintain this campaign during the 2020 winter ski season and subsequent seasons;</p> <p>D. Notes a feasibility study will be undertaken</p>	Coordinator Public Health & Environment	<p>23/10/2020 – MR: F Collating evidence and preparing a preliminary briefing for Council’s November 2020 briefing.</p> <p>28/09/2020 – JG: F. Evidence is being gathered looking at long term solutions.</p> <p>28/08/2020 – MR: A. No further action required on this one. It is for Council to note. B. No further action required on this one. It is for Council to note the additional operational costs of enforcement. C. Budget was allocated for the program. No</p>	31/12/2020	N

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			<p>during the 2020 winter ski season to investigate the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats associated with the introduction of a paid parking permit for the Claypits carpark;</p> <p>E. Approves the installation of “No Stopping Zone” signs in the following designated areas restricting parking from 6pm until midnight and from midnight until 7am between 01 June and 31 October annually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Wollondibby Inlet (6 sites) ii. Claypits (8 sites) iii. Town Centre (2 sites) iv. Townsend Street / Cobbon Crescent (5 sites) v. Other areas identified throughout the course of the campaign; and <p>F. Embark on a campaign for a permanent solution to control and regulate camping around Lake Jindabyne.</p>		<p>further action required.</p> <p>D. Evidence is presently being gather to prepare a feasibility study.</p> <p>E. No Stopping Signage zone signage installed. No further action required</p> <p>Evidence is being gathered looking at long term solutions.</p> <p>22/07/2020 – MR:</p> <p>F. No further action required on this one. It is for Council to note.</p> <p>G. No further action required on this one. It is for Council to note the additional operational costs of enforcement.</p> <p>H. Budget was allocated for the program. No further action required.</p> <p>I. Evidence is presently being gather to prepare a feasibility study.</p> <p>J. No Stopping Signage zone signage installed. No further action required</p> <p>Evidence is being gathered looking at long term solutions.</p> <p>24/06/2020 – MR:</p> <p>The winter Lake Jindabyne Foreshore Parking program has commenced. Council Rangers are undertaking morning and evening patrols of the area. The number of campers are presently low. This is due to the Covid-19 restrictions and associated ski field access limitations. The patrols will continue throughout the ski season, with the initial focus on education moving to enforcement</p>		

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					<p>in early July 2020.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – MR: Everything is ready to go for the 2020 ski season winter parking and camping campaign. This includes the collection of intelligence to undertake a feasibility study for the introduction of paid parking.</p> <p>05/05/2020 – MR: The no stopping signage has been installed at the areas noted. I have confirmed that Council’s Ranger working in collaboration with the Ranger for the area are ready for the winter ski season. Meeting held last week at the Clay Pits to discuss future works on the foreshore. These works will include the potential of charging a parking fee for long term parkers at the Clay Pits. This concepts discussed are going to be included in the community consultation for the proposed works and will form part of the feasibility study and long term strategies mentioned in the resolution.</p> <p>23/03/2020 – BJ: “No stopping zone” signs have been ordered. Feasibility study to be undertaken throughout Winter 2020 season. Snowy Hydro, NSW Police and other key stakeholders to be consulted in identifying a permanent solution to camping arrangements around Lake Jindabyne.</p> <p>03/08/2020 – MR:</p>		

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					K. No action required. L. No action required. M. Budget was allocated for the program. No further action required. N. Evidence is presently being gather to prepare a feasibility study. O. No Stopping Signage zone signage installed. No further action required P. Evidence is being gathered looking at long term solutions.		
643	19 March 2020	9.3.2	Acquisition by Possessory Title - Lot 16 Section 1 DP 1242 - Berridale Memorial Park That Council A. Apply for possessory title over lot 16 Section 1 DP 1242 (Berridale Memorial Park) B. Classify lot 16 Section 1 DP 1242 as community land upon acquisition.	Land & Property Officer	23/10/2020 – LB: A. An email was sent to the local branch of the RSL asking for an update. B. To be completed upon acquisition of the land. 24/09/2020 – LB: A. The Snowy River branch of the RSL was notified of Council’s intention to apply for possessory title and the branch has sent the notification to The RSL’s head office for a response. 26/08/2020 – LB: Requisition on Title has requested an Old Title search which is currently being carried out by Crown Lands. 26/8/2020 – LB A. Requisition on Title has requested an Old Title search which is currently being carried out by Crown Lands. B. Lot 16 will be classified upon acquisition	30/01/2020	N

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					<p>through the resolution of Council.</p> <p>29/07/2020 – LB: The CEO has executed the documents.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: Application is proceeding.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: Documentation is being prepared to lodge an application for Possessory Title.</p> <p>24/04/2020 – LB: Council’s solicitor is presently gathering all the evidence to lodge with the application for possessory title. A surveyor has been engaged to do a survey plan for identification purposes.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: Council’s solicitor has been requested to prepare the documentation.</p>		
660	19 March 2020	13.3	<p>Proposed Acquisition of Easement for Access to Middlingbank Quarry That Council</p> <p>A. Enter into negotiations with the owner of lot 1 DP 1022898 for a right of way for access across his land.</p> <p>B. Engage the services of a surveyor to create a plan for registration of a right of way across lot 1 DP 1022898.</p> <p>C. Council to be responsible for all costs for</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/20/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. The temporary agreement between SMRC and Mr Thomas for access to Middlingbank Quarry has been signed and is active from 2 November 2020 through to 30 April 2021. Notice has been provided to Mr Thomas, in accordance with the agreement that Council intend to access Middlingbank Quarry to extract material in November 2020. Work to ensure the access road is suitable for heavy traffic will commence</p>	30/03/2021	N

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			<p>creation and registration of the plan for the right of way.</p> <p>D. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate the compensation for the easement.</p> <p>E. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign all necessary documents to give effect to the above.</p>		<p>on Monday 2 November.</p> <p>B. The process to secure permanent access will commence shortly</p> <p>C. These actions will take place at the appropriate time.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. The agreement has been executed by both parties and Council is planning dates for access to the quarry to extract material.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. Council is currently negotiating an agreement with the landowner that will create a temporary access agreement for a 6 month period between November 2020 and April 2021.</p> <p>B. The surveyor has completed the survey for the easement for access subject to negotiation with the landowner.</p> <p>C. Council has engaged the surveyor and will be responsible for all costs.</p> <p>D. Further negotiations are required to understand if a permanent agreement for access to Middlingbank Quarry, through Mr Thomas’s property is possible.</p> <p>28/07/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. No update.</p> <p>B. Quotations for the survey were received. Despite numerous emails being sent to the surveyors only one surveyor responded and he</p>		

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					<p>has been requested to proceed as soon as possible.</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB: A. Negotiations with landowners are ongoing. B. Requests for quotations for survey have been advertised.</p> <p>28/05/2020 – LB: A meeting took place with the landowner, his father, Manager of Infrastructure, Land and Property Officer and Council’s solicitor, Mark Herbert. Negotiations are ongoing.</p> <p>24/4/2020 – LB: An email was sent to the landowner but there has been no response. A second email will be sent this week to be followed up with a phone call.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB Negotiations have commenced with the landowner.</p>		
662	19 March 2020	13.5	<p>Proposed closure and sale of public pathway in Kalkite Council</p> <p>A. Extend the maximum term for repayment of the purchase of the land, being the closed public pathway, to 30 June 2023 for both purchasers.</p> <p>B. Place a caveat on the subject land requiring payment for the outstanding amount before sale.</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB: A. Landowners have been notified of the extension of the maximum time to repay the purchase price B. Caveat will be placed on the land after the road closure is completed and before any subdivision takes place.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB: A Landowners have been notified of the extension</p>	31/12/2020	N

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					<p>of the maximum time to repay the purchase price.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. Letters to landholders and notifiable authorities have been sent. At this time all responses have been positive. Waiting on response from Crown Lands for consent to proceed and for public pathway to vest in Council following closure.</p> <p>B. Caveat will be placed on the land after the road closure is completed and before any subdivision takes place.</p> <p>28/07/2020 – LB:</p> <p>Request for quotations were sent to three surveyors but only one responded. Surveyors were sent a follow up email inviting quotations but only the one response remained. The surveyor has been asked to proceed with the survey</p> <p>26/06/2020 – LB:</p> <p>Application forms for Sundry Debtor accounts have been sent to both landowners. Solicitor has been requested to arrange for caveat on title of both properties.</p> <p>28/5/2020 – LB:</p> <p>Sundry Debtor accounts are being arranged with a repayment schedule to be agreed with the landowners.</p> <p>As the public pathway does not have a registered</p>		

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					<p>title it is not possible to place a caveat on the land until the pathway is closed. It is intended to address the issue that payment for the land must be finalised by both parties prior to June 2023.</p> <p>24/04/2020 – LB: Arrangements are currently underway to set up a payment plan and a surveyor has been engaged.</p> <p>26/03/2020 – LB: The landowners have been notified of Council’s resolution and quotations are currently being sought for the survey work.</p>		
669	16 April 2020	69/20	<p>Bombala Commercial Precinct Painting That Council</p> <p>A. Note the previous resolution ADA96/16 adopted by the Administrator;</p> <p>B. Note the previous resolution 297/17 adopted by Council;</p> <p>C. Rescind Part C of resolution 297/17 and replace it with: Authorise expenditure of \$10,000 directly to the Bombala and District Chamber of Commerce to assist with the current street upgrade project. The Chamber must agree to use the money on paint and provide supporting documentation to Council once the project is completed.</p>	Coordinator Economic Development	<p>04/11/2020 – MA: Still in progress by Bombala Chamber.</p> <p>28/09/2020 – MA: No further update.</p> <p>02/09/2020 – MA: Still in process of being implemented by Bombala Chamber.</p> <p>02/07/2020 – MA: Project in progress and resting with Bombala Chamber – no further update from below.</p> <p>03/06/2020 – MA: Arrangements for payment finalised. Awaiting reports from the chamber on execution of the project in due course.</p>	30/10/2020	N

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					<p>05/05/2020 – SB: A purchase order will be issued to the Chamber of Commerce this week so that they can send us an invoice and be paid.</p>		
690	21 May 2020	96/20	<p>Proposed East Jindabyne water tank mural project That Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Receive and note the information in the report on Ben Eyles’ proposal to install a mural on the East Jindabyne water tank as identified; B. Approve this particular artwork and endorse Mr Eyles to commence work on mural installation; C. Support Mr Eyles to secure additional grant funding if required to expand the project; and D. Request Arts and Culture committee to investigate opportunities to create arts for SMRC region. 	Community Development Planner, Tourism & Economic Development	<p>30/10/2020 –KH: Mural has been repainted and now completed.</p> <p>23/09/2020 – KH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Completed B. The mural was installed and unfortunately was vandalised within a few days of completion. A Go Fund Me page was created by the community and raised enough money for the artist to reinstall the mural. This is likely to take place in the September school holidays (weather permitting). C. Ongoing D. Ongoing <p>01/07/2020 – KH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Completed B. Artist is working through risk assessment processes and hopes to complete the installation during July School Holidays (weather permitting). C. Ongoing D. The Arts and Culture Committee continues to work towards a strategic position which would support further arts initiatives in the region. <p>30/06/2020 – KH:</p>		Y

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					<p>Artist is working through risk assessment processes and hopes to complete the installation during July School Holidays (weather permitting).</p> <p>03/06/2020 – MA: Mr Eyles has been connected with the Water and Wastewater team at Council to discuss installation. Mr Eyles will wait for the grant funding to come through to him before proceeding with the mural.</p>		
696	21 May 2020	102/20	<p>Design for truck Parking Area at Adaminaby That Council</p> <p>A. Agrees to proceed with further investigative works and to seek endorsement from Transport for New South Wales for the proposed design;</p> <p>B. Allocates \$50,000 for investigation and assessment from internal reserves for the 2020/2021 financial year;</p> <p>C. That the project be included in the listing of projects for consideration for grant applications; and</p> <p>D. Approach Snowy hydro or Future Gen for funding towards the project</p>	Manager Corporate Projects	<p>02/11/2020 – GH: A review of the requirements for intersections and heavy vehicle movements indicates that it will not be possible to locate a heavy vehicle stop close to the Adaminaby town centre without extensive roadworks.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – GH: TfNSW requirements will require a significant change to the proposal and it may not be possible to establish the location as a truck stop an meet the required specifications for the intersections.</p> <p>28/08/2020 – GH: TfNSW have provided feedback on the concept design. Staff are reviewing this feedback to factor into the detailed design and funding solutions.</p> <p>31/07/2020 – GH: Infrastructure Engineer seeking feedback from RMS on proposal assessment prior to proceeding to scoping and subsequent full design.</p>	30/11/2020	N

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					<p>30/06/2020 – GH: Project preliminary investigations underway.</p> <p>04/06/2020 – DR: The project has been included within the work schedule to be actioned.</p>		
715	21 May 2020	119/20	<p>Judgment of Court of Criminal Appeal on Tropic Asphalts case That Council</p> <p>A. Get report on the costing;</p> <p>B. Report from staff on the progress of the case;</p> <p>C. Proceed with the case; and</p> <p>D. Receive and note the information in the report on the Court of Criminal Appeal’s judgment in the Tropic case.</p>	Coordinator Economic Development	<p>04/11/2020 – MA: C. Tropic have appealed against the subpoena judgment which will result in a delay to the trial. Appeal listed for hearing in CCA in early February.</p> <p>28/09/2020 – MA: C. Trial preparation continues. Council successful in subpoena matter judgment.</p> <p>02/09/2020 - MA: A. Complete – report provided to August Council meeting B. Complete – report provided to August Council meeting C. In progress – preparing for trial in November. D. Complete.</p> <p>02/07/2020 – MA: Expecting the outcome of a hearing into a subpoena issued by Council in the early days of the original investigation within the next fortnight or so. A further report will be provided to Council once the outcomes of the hearing are known.</p>	Ongoing	N

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					<p>03/06/2020 – MA: Proceeding with the case and further report(s) with requested details will be provided to future Council meeting(s).</p>		
718	18 June 2020	80/20	<p>Acquisition of Land - RFS Shed Michelago That Council</p> <p>A. Proceed with the compulsory acquisition of the Land described as part Lot 5405 DP 1244970 Land fronting Ryrie Street, Michelago between 369.945 Km and 370.000 Km and having an area of approximately 1,162.6m² for the purpose of Rural Fire Shed in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i>;</p> <p>B. Make an application to the Minister and the Governor for approval to acquire part Lot 5405 DP 1244970 Land fronting Ryrie Street, Michelago between 369.945 Km and 370.000 Km and having an area of approximately 1,162.6m² by compulsory process under section 186(1) of the Local Government Act 1993;</p> <p>C. Classify the land as operational land in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993;</p> <p>D. Note that this acquisition is not for the purpose of resale; and</p> <p>E. Authorise CEO to sign any documentation required for this Acquisition process.</p>	Property Officer	<p>20/10/2020 - JH: A to C: Acquisition process underway. D & E: Will be adhered to throughout this process.</p> <p>23/09/2020 - JH: A to C: Survey Plan Quote to be received shortly.</p> <p>26/08/2020 - JH: A to C: Acquisition process underway. Research has to take place to find gazette notices, survey plans to be prepared etc. D & E: Will be adhered to throughout this process.</p> <p>22/07/2020 – JH: A to C: Acquisition process underway. D & E: Will be adhered to throughout this process.</p> <p>24/06/2020 – JH: A to C: The Acquisition process will begin, this is a lengthy process as all items take place under strict timelines. De & E Complete.</p>	30/01/2021	N

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723	18 June 2020	85/20	<p>Cooma Regional Sports Hub Funding Agreement That Council receive and note this update on the Cooma Sports Hub project and agree to:</p> <p>A. Proceed with signing the funding agreement of \$15M to design and construct a 3 court indoor sports facility and synthetic athletics track at the Snowy Oval and Monaro High School Precinct;</p> <p>B. Continue negotiations with Department of Education and Monaro High School for a Joint Use arrangement of the indoor sports facility while maintaining Council's right to withdraw if the long term business case places too much stress on Council's financial viability; and</p> <p>C. Undertake consultation with the community sporting clubs on the concept design phase.</p>	Recreation Planner, Environmental Services	<p>30/10/2020 –AD: No further update.</p> <p>23/09/2020 - AD: The draft concept design has progressed and consultation with the project and community working groups has been ongoing throughout the design process. Council will be updated following the completion of the draft concept plan.</p> <p>23/06/2020 - AD: A. Completed. The Funding Agreement was signed by the CEO 22/06/2020. No Further action is required. B. Negotiation with the Project Working Group will be ongoing throughout the design and construction phase. Council will be updated on the Joint Use Planning arrangements at the September Council meeting</p> <p>Consultation with the Community Sporting Groups has commenced and will be ongoing throughout the design process. Council will be updated on the Sports Hub design at the September Council meeting.</p>	January 2023	N
746	16 July 2020	107/20	<p>Health One Facility, Jindabyne That Council</p> <p>A. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to</p>	Facilities Officer Snowy River Health	<p>27/10/2020 – NW: A. Awaiting surveyor to provide further information to enable registration of</p>	31/10/2020	N

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			<p>execute the Building Management Statement and take steps to finalise and sign the land sale agreement; and</p> <p>B. Approve the establishment of a Building Management Committee to oversee obligations of the Building Management Statement.</p>	Centre	<p>subdivision. Other party (HealthOne) still to sign the Land Sale Agreement.</p> <p>B. Building Management Committee to be formed with HealthOne once above items have been finalised.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – NW:</p> <p>C. Status remains unchanged. Building Management Statement signed by Chief Executive officer. Information has been returned to surveyor for creation of subdivision. Waiting on lawyers for other party regarding the Land Sale Agreement.</p> <p>D. Building Management Committee to be formed with HealthOne.</p> <p>26/08/2020 – NW:</p> <p>E. Building Management Statement signed by Chief Executive officer. Information has been returned to surveyor for creation of subdivision. Waiting on lawyers for other party regarding the Land Sale Agreement.</p> <p>F. Building Management Committee to be formed with HealthOne.</p> <p>22/7/2020 – NW</p> <p>A. Building Management Statement sent to Chief Executive Office for signing.</p> <p>B. Will work on creation of Building Management Committee once BMS signed.</p>		

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748	16 July 2020	109/20	Lake Jindabyne Shared Trail Project Funding That Council agree to proceed with the Lake Jindabyne Shared Trail project.	Recreation Planner	<p>30/10/2020 – AD: External communication and engagement is due to commence in updating our community in providing an overall scope of the project. Treasury has now signed the agreement.</p> <p>03/09/2020 - AD: The funding deed has been finalised and signed by the CEO and sent to NSW Treasury. NSW Infrastructure are uncertain on the timeframe for approval by Treasury.</p> <p>31/07/2020 - AD The funding deed is currently being finalised. The document is scheduled to be submitted to NSW Treasury for approval by 16 August.</p>	Ongoing	N
749	16 July 2020	110/20	Minutes of the Youth Council Meeting held on 22 June 2020 That Council A. Receive and note the minutes from the Youth Council meeting held 22 June 2020; and B. Endorse the motion as listed in the Youth Council Minutes under 9.2 to 'develop a shovel ready project plan for minor upgrades at the Bombala, Cooma, Jindabyne and Berridale Skate Parks'.	<p>Manager Corporate Projects</p> <p>Youth Development Officer</p>	<p>02/11/2020 – GH: Work has commenced to develop the projects to a 'shovel ready' state using the draft project management framework that is being developed.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – GH: Project will be added to prioritisation list of existing and backlogged projects that need completion.</p> <p>03/09/2020 – GH: No further update.</p> <p>04/08/2020 – BP: A. No action required</p>	30/11/2020	N

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					Assigned to corporate projects to prepare shovel ready project plan and pursue funding opportunities.		
750	16 July 2020	111/20	Arts and Culture Design Discussion Paper That Council approve the Arts and Culture Discussion Paper being put out for consultation.	Community Development Planner	30/10/2020 – KH: Consultation has now closed. Feedback is currently being collated for the further development of an Arts and Culture Strategy. 03/09/2020 – KH: The Arts and Culture Discussion Paper is currently out for consultation on Your Say Snowy Monaro. Media coverage has been completed. 04/08/2020 – KH: The Discussion Paper survey is now live on Your Say Snowy Monaro. Feedback closes 30 September 2020. Print and social media coverage is expected this week.	30/11/2020	N
755	16 July 2020	114/20	Proposed Memorandum of Understanding to Maintain Crown Roads That Council A. Receive and note this report; and B. Write to the Minister for Primary Industries expressing Council's concern that amendments to the Policy for Minor Maintenance of Crown Roads were adopted without providing this Council an opportunity to comment.	Land & Property Officer	23/10/2020 – LB: A-B Letter has been sent and acknowledgement has been received. 24/09/2020 – LB: A-B Letter has been sent and acknowledgement has been received. 26/08/2020 – LB: A-B Letter is waiting approval before sending. 27/07/2020 – LB		Y

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					A letter is currently being prepared expressing Council's concern in accordance with the resolution.		
756	16 July 2020	115/20	<p>Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan That Council</p> <p>A. Adopt the SMRC Flood and Floodplain Risk Management Studies – Flood Studies (April 2019);</p> <p>B. Notify the property owners identified at significant flood risk, prior to the March 2020 Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans being placed on Public Exhibition;</p> <p>C. Agrees to the public exhibition of SMRC Flood and Floodplain Risk Management Studies – Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans (DRAFT) report (March 2020);</p> <p>D. Liaise with the NSW SES and landowners at risk to develop an Evacuation Plan for a significant rain event; and</p> <p>E. Submit a Variation Request to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) Floodplain grant program seeking funding and an amended scope of works to investigate mitigation options for Cooma Back Creek.</p>	Environmental Technical Officer	<p>23/10/2020 - PV:</p> <p>A. Completed.</p> <p>B. Letters were sent out to identified landholders at risk advising of Public Exhibition of FRMP & S. Two residents called me as a result of letters. Concerns over the level of non-native vegetation in that stretch of Cooma Back Creek. Nil comments on the actual study.</p> <p>C. Public exhibition period closed. A total of 4 submissions received. Submissions forwarded to GRChydro to incorporate into final study document.</p> <p>D. No further discussion until Cooma Back Creek study variation report completed (delays due to modelling, now expected to be finalised early 2021).</p> <p>E. Variation approved, works have commenced on the study, as per previous comment report expected early 2021.</p> <p>24/09/2020 - PV:</p> <p>A. Completed.</p> <p>B. Discussions with GRChydro (contractor) SES, DPIE and SMRC staff now decided to hold off contacting landholders until the Cooma Back Creek study finalised. SES aware of properties</p>	31/10/2020	N

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>at risk.</p> <p>Letters have been sent out to residents in high risk areas (entire streets not just the identified 11 properties at significant risk) to advise of the FRMS & P being on public exhibition and how to access copies.</p> <p>C. Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans (DRAFT) report on public display – Now extended to 7 October.</p> <p>D. Discussions have taken place with SES and SES keen to support SMRC. Decided to hold off actioning EP until end of consultation process – see what comes back from the community. SES happy to support liaison with relevant landholders.</p> <p>E. Variation request approved by relevant DPIE staff.</p> <p>25/08/2020-PV:</p> <p>F. Request sent to Communications to upload document.</p> <p>G. Discussions with GRChydro (contractor) SES, DPIE and SMRC staff now decided to hold off contacting landholders until the Cooma Back Creek study finalised. SES aware of properties at risk.</p> <p>H. Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans (DRAFT) report on public display – closes 23rd September.</p> <p>I. PV to liaise with SES – discussions have taken place. SES keen to support SMRC. Decided to hold off actioning EP until end of consultation</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>process – see what comes back from the community. SES happy to support liaison with relevant landholders.</p> <p>J. Variation request approved by relevant DPIE staff. Expect ‘official’ approval to come through in the next few days.</p> <p>31/07/2020-PV:</p> <p>A. Adopted. Environmental Technical Officer organising to have documents uploaded onto the Council website.</p> <p>B. Discussions have taken place. Agreed managers will send a letter to high risk landowners and invite them in to inform them of their level or risk, plans to develop an Evacuation Plan and undertake further studies to try to mediate risks.</p> <p>C. Hard copies printed, need to be bound and Appendices with maps printed and bound ready for display once Action B addressed.</p> <p>D. Relevant managers aware and need to decide who will liaise with SES to commence this process.</p> <p>Variation documentation 75% complete, should be submitted to DPIE by the end of this week (31 July)</p>		

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
768	20 August 2020	139/20	Road Naming Proposals That Council approve the road name Silver Brumby Boulevard for the public road that will provide access to Silver Brumby Estate, Bredbo, and that subject to required advertising the name proceed to gazettal.	GIS Administrator	23/10/2020 – JC: Proposal is ongoing. Gazette Notice is under review, waiting on advice from Geographical Names Board on process for finalisation. 24/09/2020 – JC: No submissions received. Road Naming will proceed to gazettal. 28/08/2020 – JC: Advertising period will commence 2 September 2020. The Communications Team have been notified.	Ongoing	N
771	20 August 2020	142/20	Harmonisation of Commercial Waste - Method of Charging That Council; A. Harmonise commercial waste charging methods from 1 January 2021, and B. Inform the commercial/business community regarding the proposed harmonisation of commercial waste charging methods.	Manager Resource and Waste Services, Resource and Waste Services	23/10/2020 – MT: Final letter ready to be distributed to commercial customers as first form of consultation towards harmonising commercial charging methods. 24/09/2020 – MT: Final draft letter out for comment. 25/8/2020 – MT: A. Commercial/business consultation will take place prior to the introduction to the changes in charging methods from 1 January 2021 First commercial/business consultation letter has been drafted and sent to finance for final input and comment. Once comments have been received the letter will be amended and then posted to the commercial property owners.	01/01/2021	N

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
775	20 August 2020	146/20	Endorsement of SMRC Section 355 Manual That Council send out a draft s355 manual to Committees for review and defer item until a Council workshop can be held.	Governance Officer	<p>02/11/2020 – JM: A webinar was held on 29 October 2020 with all section 355 committees. A workshop will be conducted with councillors on 3 December 2020.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – JM: Documentation has been subjected to a final review and proof read prior to being sent out.</p> <p>31/08/2020 – JM: The Chief Communications Officer is currently reviewing the manual, after which it will be circulated to all committees to review for one month. A webinar will be conducted with all committees to explain the changes and answer questions. A Council workshop will be conducted on 5 November 2020.</p>	17/12/2020	N
777	20 August 2020	148/20	Land in Vale Street Cooma That Council receive a report on options for the use of its properties in Vale Street.	Chief Strategy Officer	<p>30/10/2020 – DR: Council will receive a report at the council meeting on 19 November 2020.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – DR: Options are being developed. The need to focus staff on completion of the financial statements will delay this report until next month.</p> <p>28/08/2020 – DR: Work on assessment of options has not yet been scheduled within the existing programmed work.</p>	Ongoing	N

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
786	20 August 2020	157/20	<p>Sale of part of Land in Polo Flat That Council:</p> <p>A. Authorise the sale of part Lot 1 DP 077 – Polo Flat Road, and</p> <p>B. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, to determine the method of sale and sale price.</p>	Chief Strategy Officer	<p>31/10/2020 – TP: Contracts drafted, with Section 14 dealing with contamination aspect. Auction is scheduled for Monday 19th November 2020.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – DR: The revised plans have been lodged for registration.</p> <p>28/08/2020 – DR: The process of changing the lot boundaries to suit Council's needs has commenced.</p>	Ongoing	N
787	20 August 2020	158/20	<p>Acquisition of Property That Council:</p> <p>A. Purchase Lot 2 DP 860886 Parish of Clyde as outlined in the report as a long-term investment for the Water and Wastewater Fund;</p> <p>B. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to finalise the purchase according to the terms and conditions outlined in the report, including signing all relevant documentation.</p> <p>C. Authorise the use of the Council Seal if required to execute any relevant documentation.</p>	Coordinator Land & Property	<p>26/9/2020 – TP: Issue of contract pending receipt by Council's solicitor. Coordination ongoing.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – TP: NSW Housing & Property have confirmed the following on 15/9/20: Property sale is conditional to a Restriction on Title for community use purposes (for 15 years). The restriction will be sent to LRS with the Certificate of Title for registration after Property New South Wales as the Proscribed Authority has its authorised Delegate sign. Once the restriction is registered upon the title a contract will be issued to Council's solicitor for acquisition of the property.</p> <p>03/09/2020 – TP: NSW Housing and Property advised of decision, with Council's solicitor details also provided. Land</p>	11/12/2020	N

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
					<p>& Property team coordinating arrangements to progress acquisition.</p>		
788	17 September 2020	166/20	<p>Amendment Snowy River Local Environmental Plan 2013 Modification to Highview Planning Proposal</p> <p>That:</p> <p>A. The report from the Senior Strategic Land Use Planner on the Planning Proposal Pt Lot 25 & 26 DP 1253407 and Lot 12 DP 1035279 Barry Way be received;</p> <p>B. The amended Planning Proposal be submitted to the Minister of NSW Planning & Environment for a (altered) Gateway Determination in accordance with Section 3.34 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>;</p> <p>C. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment be advised that Council wishes to be issued with an authorisation to use delegation for the Planning Proposal; and</p> <p>D. In the event NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment issues an (altered) Gateway Determination to proceed with the Planning Proposal, consultation be undertaken with the community and government agencies in accordance with Schedule 1, Division 1, Clause 4 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> and any directions of the Gateway Determination.</p>	Senior Strategic Land Use Planner	<p>30/10/2020 – AA: Department of Planning have responded to Council’s letter from 25/09/2020. Request to amend proposal is unsuccessful until such time as the Snowy SAP Master Plan has been finalised. Proponent has been advised.</p> <p>25/09/2020 – AA: B. Letter to the department requesting altered Gateway determination is being drafted.</p>		Y

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
789	17 September 2020	167/20	<p>Acquisition - Easement for Access Adaminaby Sewage Treatment Plant and Town Water Supply That Council:</p> <p>A. Proceed with the compulsory acquisition of the interest in the land described as part Lot 287 DP 729870 Land fronting Snowy Mountains Highway, Adaminaby and having an area of approximately 22m for the purpose of easement for access to essential services being the Sewage Treatment Plant in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i>;</p> <p>B. Proceed with the compulsory acquisition of the interest in the land described as part Lot 292 DP 729876 having an area of approximately 200m and part Lot 292 DP 729876 Land fronting Chalker Street, Adaminaby and having an area of approximately 344m for the purpose of easement for access to essential services being Town Water Supply in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i>;</p> <p>C. Make an application to the Minister and the Governor for approval to acquire part Lot 287 DP 729870 Land fronting Snowy Mountains Highway, Adaminaby and having an area of approximately 22m and Part Lot 292 DP 729876 having an area of approximately 200m and part Lot 292 DP 729876 Land fronting Chalker Street, Adaminaby and</p>	Property Officer	<p>23/09/2020 - JH: A, B, C, D Acquisition process underway. E: This will take place when required.</p> <p>23/09/2020 - JH: A, B, C, D Public Works Advisory (PWA) is being engaged to action this process so that Council secures permanent legal access swiftly. E: This will take place when required.</p>	30/04/2022	N

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			<p>having an area of approximately 344m for the purpose of easement for access to essential services by compulsory process under section 187(1) of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>;</p> <p>D. Classify the land as easement for access in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>;</p> <p>E. Authorise the CEO to sign any documentation required for this Acquisition process.</p>				
791	17 September 2020	169/20	<p>Shannons Flat Hall That Council:</p> <p>A. Rescind resolution 575/18;</p> <p>B. Approve the request for Council to lease the hall for \$200 per annum; and</p> <p>C. If B is agreed to that the following actions occur:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. The Shannons Flat Hall be added to Council's insurance schedule.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. The lease conditions be approved by Council's CEO.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">iii. Authorise the CEO to execute the Lease on behalf of Council.</p> <p>A. Notify the landowner of Shannons Flat Hall of Council's decision.</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. Completed</p> <p>B. Lease has been prepared</p> <p>C. When the lease is ready an inspection of the hall will be carried out in order to complete the insurance schedule.</p> <p>D. The landowner has been notified.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB:</p> <p>B. Lease currently being prepared for execution by the lessee.</p> <p>C. The insurance schedule will be completed and an inspection of the building, incl. photos to be sent to Council's insurers. Documents will be sent to the CEO for execution when they are ready.</p> <p>D. The landowner of Shannons Flat Hall has been notified of Council's decision.</p>	30/11/2020	N

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
794	17 September 2020	172/20	<p>Proposal to Close Part Mittagang Road - Yallambee Lodge That Council;</p> <p>A. Approve the road closing of part of Mittagang Road in accordance with the <i>Roads Act 1993</i>;</p> <p>B. Consolidate the new lot with lot 1 DP 841447 (Yallambee Lodge); and</p> <p>C. Authorise Council's CEO to execute all necessary documents to complete the road closing and lodgement of the plan of consolidation.</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. Letters have been prepared and are ready to be posted.</p> <p>B. After the road is closed a plan of consolidation will be prepared by a surveyor and the plan will subsequently be lodged.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. Letters will be sent in the next two weeks to the notifiable authorities and to properties surrounding Yallambee notifying them of the proposal to close the road.</p> <p>B. After the road is closed a plan of consolidation will be prepared by a surveyor and the plan will subsequently be lodged.</p>	30/11/2020	N
795	17 September 2020	173/20	<p>Delegate Water Supply Options Report – Update That Council endorse the Options Assessment Report–Delegate Water Supply for public exhibition.</p>	Manager Water & Wastewater	<p>05/11/2020 – JD:</p> <p>Awaiting comments on the Options Report from DPIE. Community consultation to take place once comments received.</p>	30/12/2020	N
798	17 September 2020	176/20	<p>Request for Easement Over Council Land in Cooma That Council</p> <p>A. Approve the request to create an easement for water supply over Lot 2 DP 224408 subject to:</p> <p>i. All costs being borne by the owner of Lot 1 DP 224408.</p> <p>ii. Any disturbance to Lot 2 DP 224408 to be remediated by the applicant, as soon as</p>	Land & Property Officer	<p>23/10/2020 – LB</p> <p>A. Landowner has been notified and is proceeding with the plan.</p> <p>B. Landowner is aware that he needs a licence to pump water from Cooma Creek prior to Council signing off on the plan for easement.</p> <p>24/09/2020 – LB:</p> <p>A. The landowner will be notified of the Council resolution including the conditions of approval so that he can arrange for a surveyor</p>	30/12/2020	N

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			<p>possible, to the same condition as prior to disturbance.</p> <p>iii. The owner of Lot 1 DP 224408 obtaining a licence to pump water from Cooma Creek prior to installing the pipeline for water supply; and</p> <p>B. Authorise Council's CEO to execute any documents necessary to register the easement.</p>		<p>to do a plan for the easement and an 88B for the terms of the easement.</p> <p>B. The owner of lot 1 will be notified that Council will not permit registration of the plan until he has obtained a licence to pump water from NSW Water. Documents will be sent to the CEO for execution when they are ready.</p>		
804	17 September 2020	182/20	<p>Membership of Granite Hills Windfarm Community Consultative Committee That Council:</p> <p>A. Nominate Councillor <i>Stewart</i> to attend the proposed Granite Hills Wind Farm Community Consultative Committee meetings in addition to the existing staff member that attends; and</p> <p>B. Write to the Chairperson of the Committee, Mr Peter Gordon, and requesting acceptance of the nominated Councillor on the Committee.</p>	Economic Development Officer	<p>04/11/2020 – MA: A & B – Complete. The chairperson has been informed of Council's resolution and does not object. As per required procedures he is seeking DPIE endorsement prior to confirming membership to Clr Stewart. Note Granite Hills project currently on hold due to Covid issues impacting the proponent company in France.</p> <p>06/10/2020 – JM: No further update.</p>	30/11/2020	N
814	15 October 2020	196/20	<p>10.2020.45.1 New recreation facility (outdoor) Dry slope airbag facility That:</p> <p>A Pursuant to clause 4.6 of the Snowy River Local Environmental Plan 2013, a variation to clause 4.3 – Building Height be approved to allow for a structure which has a combined height of 16.9 metres above existing ground level;</p>	Town Planner	<p>25/10/2020 – JG: DA issued in line with resolution.</p>		Y

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			<p>B Pursuant to section 4.516(1)(a) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (as amended) it is recommended that consent be granted for DA 10.2020.45.1 as submitted to Council for Recreation Facilities- Outdoor (Dry Slope Ski Jump) on Lot 101 DP 1019527 207 Barry Way Jindabyne subject to the draft conditions attached; and</p> <p>C Council delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to make changes to the draft conditions of consent as requested by the applicant in accordance with the provisions of section 4.33(1)(b) for Crown development applications.</p>				
815	15 October 2020	197/20	<p>Recreation Facilities Committee Minutes - 20 July 2020</p> <p>That Council receive the minutes of the Recreation Facilities Committee meeting held on 20 July 2020.</p>	Supervisor Civic Maintenance	22/10/2020 – ED: No action required.		Y
816	15 October 2020	198/20	<p>Monthly Funds Management Report - September 2020</p> <p>That Council:</p> <p>A. Receive the report indicating Council’s cash and investments position as at 30 September 2020; and</p> <p>B. Receive the Certificate of the Responsible Accounting Officer.</p>	Manager Finance	22/10/2020 – ED: No action required.		Y

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
817	15 October 2020	199/20	<p>Snowy River Holiday Park Lease</p> <p>That Council:</p> <p>C. Approve the Assignment of Lease over Crown Reserve 97831 being Lot 7003 DP1057226 – Snowy River Holiday Park; and</p> <p>D. Authorise Council's Chief Executive Officer to execute the Assignment of Lease to Mr Christopher Lloyd May.</p>	Coordinator Community Facilities	26/10/2020 – KH: Completed. Mr Lloyd May has taken over as lessee of the park.		Y
818	15 October 2020	200/20	<p>Minutes - Community Services Advisory Committee 7 September 2020</p> <p>That Council receive the Minutes of the Community Services Advisory Committee meeting held on 7 September 2020.</p>	Executive Assistant (Strategy)	22/10/2020 – ED: No action required.		Y
819	15 October 2020	201/20	<p>Minutes of the Cemetery Advisory Committee Meeting held on 18 August 2020</p> <p>That Council:</p> <p>A. Adopt the Minutes of the section 355 Cemetery Advisory Committee Meeting held on 18 August 2020; and</p> <p>B. Is presented with a further report on the proposed SMRC Cemetery Reservation Fees Policy and SMRC Cemetery Operations Policy.</p>	Environmental Management Administration	22/10/2020 – ED: No action required.		Y
820	15 October 2020	202/20	<p>Snowy Monaro REDS Bushfire Impact Review</p> <p>That Council receive the information in the report on the Snowy Monaro REDS Impact Review.</p>	Economic Development Officer	22/10/2020 – ED: No action required.		Y

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
821	15 October 2020	203/20	<p>Bushfire and COVID-19 Impacts on Snowy Monaro Economy That Council</p> <p>A. Note the information in the report detailing the economic impact of the bushfires and COVID-19 on the local economy; and</p> <p>B. Authorise the CEO to respond to any funding opportunities that may become available in the future.</p>	Coordinator Economic Development	22/10/2020 – ED: No action required.		Y
822	15 October 2020	204/20	<p>Investigation of a Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route – Cooma That Council receive the update on the Snowy Monaro Local Strategic Planning Statement Action.</p>	Senior Strategic Land Use Planner	22/10/2020 – ED: No action required.		Y
823	15 October 2020	205/20	<p>Adoption of the Snowy Monaro Region Biosecurity (Weeds) Advisory Committee meeting of 20 August 2020 That Council adopt the Recommendations of the Snowy Monaro Region Biosecurity (Weeds) Advisory Committee held on 20 August 2020 to write to the Corrowong, Wallendibby, Tombong Landcare group commending the group on their initiative and committing staff resources to the successful implementation of the weed plan.</p>	Coordinator Biosecurity	27/10/2020 – BJ: Completed. Minutes adopted and letter sent to Corrowong, Wallendibby and Tombong Landcare Groups.		Y
824	15 October 2020	206/20	<p>Award of Contract - 2020-21 Weed Control Services - Southern Region That Council note the award of the 2020-21 Weed Control Services – Southern Region Contract to Stone’s Forestry Contracting Pty Ltd.</p>	Manager Built & Natural Environment	22/10/2020 – ED: No action required.		Y

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
825	15 October 2020	207/20	<p>Draft Rural Land Use Strategy That Council:</p> <p>A. Endorse the following for public exhibition;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Appendix A – Draft Snowy Monaro Rural Land Use Strategy (provided separately) ii. Appendix B – Snowy Monaro Employment Lands and Rural Lands Analysis iii. Appendix C – Snowy Monaro Biodiversity Study iv. Appendix D – Bombala Shire Area Heritage Study Inventory v. Appendix E – Bombala Shire Area Heritage Study Report; and <p>B. Endorse a 40 day public exhibition period.</p>	Strategic Land Use Planner	30/10/2020 – BD: Draft Rural Land use Strategy is currently on public exhibition.	Ongoing	N
826	15 October 2020	208/20	<p>Minutes of the Snowy Monaro Regional Council Traffic Committee Meeting - Held Electronically 24 September 2020</p> <p>That Council adopt the Recommendations of the Local Traffic Committee meeting held on 24 September 2020:</p> <p>A. LTC166/20 – Bombala Sub Branch RSL 11 November Commemoration</p> <p>That Council approve the request from</p>	Roads Safety Officer	26/10/2020 – GH: Completed.		Y

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p>Bombala Sub Branch RSL for the temporary road closures associated with the commemoration of Remembrance Day – 11 November 2020. The roads involved are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Maybe Street from Forbes Street to Caveat Street, and ii. Forbes Street from Therry Street to Maybe Street. <p>Approval dependant on submission of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance of at least \$20 million and names Snowy Monaro Regional Council as a named party; and ii. An up-dated Traffic Control Plan. <p>B. LTC167/20 - Bombala Late Night Shopping That Council approve the request from Bombala and District Chamber of Commerce for the temporary road closure associated with a Late Night Shopping Event on Thursday 10 December 2020. This involves the closure of Maybe Street from Caveat Street to Forbes Street with the following documents are provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. That an up-dated Traffic Control Plan, and ii. A Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance for a minimum of \$20 million and naming Snowy Monaro Regional Council as an interested party; <p>C. LTC168/20 - Berridale War Memorial 85th Anniversary</p>				

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p>That Council approve the road closure associated with the commemoration of the dedication of Berridale War Memorial, with the condition that the following documentation is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. An up-dated Traffic Control Plan, and ii. Certificate of Currency for Public Liability Insurance for a minimum of \$20 million and naming Snowy Monaro Regional Council as an interested party. 				
827	15 October 2020	209/20	<p>Draft Settlements Strategy for Public Exhibition That Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Endorse the public exhibition of the draft Settlements Strategy (provided separately) and all relevant supporting information; B. Endorse a 40 day public exhibition period of the Draft Settlements Strategy; and C. Include discussion on a Cooma Bypass for public consultation. 	Senior Strategic Land Use Planner	<p>30/10/2020 – AA: Draft Settlements Strategy is currently on public exhibition.</p> <p>A quick poll has been set up on Council's 'your say' page to open discussion on a heavy vehicle by-pass for Cooma.</p>	Ongoing	N
828	15 October 2020	210/20	<p>DA Best Practice Guide and Processing Times That Council endorse the Snowy Monaro Regional Council Guide to the Development Assessment Process for public use.</p>	Manager Built & Natural Environment	<p>25/10/2020 – JG: Completed and process for public use in place.</p>		Y
829	15 October 2020	211/20	<p>Answers to Questions With Notice That Council receive and note the answers to questions with notice.</p>	Secretary Council and Committees	<p>22/10/2020 - ED: No action required.</p>		Y

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No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
830	15 October 2020	212/20	Resolution Action Sheet Update That Council receive the progress on Resolution Action Sheet for the period ending September 2020.	Secretary Council and Committees	22/10/2020 - ED: No action required.		Y
831	15 October 2020	213/20	Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest Returns 2020 That Council note the disclosure of pecuniary Interest returns completed by Councillors and designated staff by 30 September 2020.	Governance Administration Support	22/10/2020 - ED: No action required.		Y
832	15 October 2020	214/20	Vacancy of Councillor Representative For Committees That Council A. Appoint representatives to the following committees: Advisory Committee; Committee: Recreational Facilities Councillor Representative: Clr Corbett Alternate Councillor: Clr Haslingden Clr Ewart B. Appoint the Mayor to fill the vacant Community Services Advisory Committee position; C. Request the CEO, given the apparent overlap in client base and issues, provide a report to Council on the appropriateness of widening the charter of the Community Services Advisory Committee to encompass the Inclusion Action Committee matters; D. Defer a decisions regarding the Aboriginal Liaison Committee, pending any recommendations that might ensue from, the	Coordinator Governance	02/11/2020 – JM: A-D: The representatives have been notified. C: The report on the consideration of widening the charter of the Community Services Advisory Committee will be put to the December 2020 meeting.	Ongoing	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			<p>Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group concerning best practice ways to provide representation for the indigenous peoples through our LGA; and</p> <p>E. Endorse the Green Team, given its largely internal and operational focus, be the purview of the CEO or their delegate.</p>				
834	15 October 2020	215/20	<p>Introduce Electoral Wards to ensure fair representation for all Communities in SMRC region</p> <p>That Council request a report on the possible implementation of wards, including example ward boundaries.</p>	EA to CEO and Councillors	22/10/2020 – ED: Motion Lost, no action required		Y
835	15 October 2020	216/20	<p>Prosecution be discontinued</p> <p>That the prosecution against Carl Lloyd in relation to his dog Misty to be discontinued.</p>	Manger Built and Natural Environment	25/10/2020 – JG: Courts to be advised of Council position at mention of matter on 18 November 2020.		N
836	15 October 2020	217/20	<p>Zoom attendance at meetings</p> <p>That Council:</p> <p>A. Support the continuation of the option for Councillors to attend Council meetings via remote teleconference technology, e.g. Zoom or Team Viewer, to ensure equal opportunity for all;</p> <p>B. Support the Motion to the LGNSW Conference 2020 put by Orange Council, to continue teleconference attendance at Council meetings; and</p> <p>C. Makes webinar facilities available for a 6</p>	Coordinator Governance	<p>02/11/2020 – JM:</p> <p>A. No action required.</p> <p>B. Email send to LGNSW advising of intention of council to support motion.</p> <p>C. No action required.</p> <p>Note: A risk assessment will be shortly undertaken and the IT requirements will be determined after that for the trial to commence from the December Council meeting.</p>	02/11/2020	N

9.4.6 RESOLUTION ACTION SHEET UPDATE

ATTACHMENT 1 IN PROGRESS ACTION SHEET FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 2020

No.	Meeting Date	Res. No	Action	R/Officer	Progress	Estimated Comp Date	Comp Y/N
			month trial at the Cooma Council Offices so that all members of the public, including those in wheelchairs and anyone unable to negotiate the stairs, can attend Council Meetings.				

9.4.7 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT (QBR) TO SEPTEMBER 2020

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Strategy Officer
Author:	Management Accountant
Key Direction:	4. Leadership Outcomes
Delivery Plan Strategy:	11.2 Council utilises sound fiscal management practices, pursues and attracts other sources of income
Operational Plan Action:	11.2.2 Provision of statutory reporting enables our leaders to make decisions on Council's financial sustainability
Attachments:	1. QBR September 2020
Cost Centre	4010 Financial Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the adoption of the Operational Plan in June 2020, the first Quarterly Budget Review Statement (QBR) is presented to Council. Changes resulting from carry forward projects and adjustments are included in the attached report, along with the September YTD actuals.

The report shows that the cash position of the general funded activities of the Council continue to decline, to the point where most internal reserves will be used in the net cash spend this financial year. The focus has been retaining reserves within the employee leave entitlements and bonds held. As previously discussed, the finances of the Council are being reviewed to push back the need for rate increases as far as possible due to impacts of bushfires and COVID-19 on the economy. Council is not in a position to commit any additional net cash expenditure.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- A. Receive the quarterly budget review statement (QBR) for the period ended 30 September 2020.
- B. Authorise the adjustments to the Council's budgeted Income & Expenditure, Capital Expenditure and Cash & Investments as shown in the QBR.

BACKGROUND

The attached report covers proposed variations to the original budget and includes a review of Council's;

- Operating income and expenses,
- Capital budget, and,
- Cash and investments

The report also includes a statement by the responsible accounting officer regarding the unsatisfactory projected net operating result and recommended remedial action.

Overall, there is a negative impact of \$333k to the Net Operating Result before capital items from \$6.385 mil revised budget to \$6.721 mil (Project Year end Result)). Notable changes in the budget are included in the attachment.

The timing of the completion of capital projects is still an area that requires further review. Implementation of the new organisational structure, which will combine a number of the major capital projects into one area, is underway. A full review of the capital works program is planned and this may affect the budget for the remaining part of the year. This will be a timing impact, as the projects still need to be undertaken.

The general activities of the Council continue to utilise more cash than is being brought into the Council. This has driven down the level of cash held within this area and the remaining cash is at a critical level. This is in alignment with projections from two year's ago, but the situation has been worsened by a number of factors, two large ones are the loss of revenue on investments and the increased costs in providing aged care, each both contributing around \$1million extra to the overall cash drain.

With the bushfires and COVID-19 impacts on the economy Council is looking to stretch its financial position as long as possible to avoid the impact of additional rates on the community. This will require severe restraint on spending and looking at options to maintain cash. This will not be done by slowing payments to suppliers, but may require a review of the phasing of projects to delay the use of Council's cash and prioritise the spending of grants.

As tight constraints on cash exist it imperative that the Council live within it current means. There is no capacity to absorb extra costs or further financial shocks.

QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE REPORTING

1. Social

This report provides a summary of Council's financial performance to aid decision making for Council's financial sustainability and ability to deliver services to the community.

2. Environmental

It is not considered that the recommendations will have any environmental impacts.

3. Economic

Refer to the attached report for the details of the revised budget estimates for operating income and expenditure, capital expenditure and cash and investments / reserve balances.

4. Civic Leadership

Council's operational plan sets out its achievements, goals and revenue policy, including estimated income and expenditure. The QBR plays an important role in monitoring council's progress against the plan and the ongoing management of Council's annual budget.

Clause 203 (1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (the Regulations) requires a council's responsible accounting officer to prepare and submit a QBR to the governing body of council.

The 2021 budget was adopted under Council Resolution 96/20 (on 18 June 2020).

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

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Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Report by Responsible Accounting Officer

The following statement is made in accordance with Clause 203(2) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005:

30 September 2020

It is my opinion that the Quarterly Budget Review Statement for Snowy Monaro Regional Council for the quarter ended 30 September 2020 indicates that Council's projected financial position at 30 June 2021 remains unsatisfactory at year end, having regard to the projected estimates of income and expenditure and the original budgeted income and expenditure.

This opinion is based on the following factors;

1. The estimated net operating deficit before capital grants and contributions is increased by \$330k to a total of \$6.72 million.
2. Net operating deficits continue to impact council's ability to fund asset renewals to the same level that they are depreciating. As with the former shire council's prior to merger, this impacts the ability of council to meet the 100% asset renewals benchmark with the negative impact of operating losses to cash reserves.

Proposed remedial action to deal with this position include;

Continue to focus on improving the profitability of business units that are currently being subsidised.

Cost and efficiency saving opportunities are currently being implemented including;
Corporate Information System implementation
Organisational redesign
Infrastructure revaluations resulting in depreciation savings

Review of internal resource allocation to grant funded and capital works projects.

A focus on staff leave management plans to reduce employee leave liability provisions and prevent a net operating cost of climbing leave balances.

Continue to review and set realistic goals with priority projects. The impact of carrying forward large amounts from previous years affects both short and long term forecasting.

Signed: _____

Date: 5/11/2020

David Rawlings
Responsible Accounting Officer

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Income & Expenses Budget Review Statement

Budget review for the quarter ended 30 September 2020

Income & Expenses - Council Consolidated

(\$000's)	Original Budget 2020/21	Approved Changes				Revised Budget 2020/21	Variations for this Sep Qtr	Notes	Projected Year End Result	Actual YTD figures
		Carry Forwards	Sept QBR	Dec QBR	March QBR					
Income										
Rates and Annual Charges	33,318					33,318			33,318	21,860
User Charges and Fees	15,418					15,418			15,418	2,145
Interest and Investment Revenues	1,385					1,385			1,385	636
Other Revenues	967					967			967	303
Grants & Contributions - Operating	21,010	1,193				22,203	384	1	22,587	1,209
Grants & Contributions - Capital	17,949	11,735				29,684	1,449	2	31,133	1,060
Net gain from disposal of assets	1,002					1,002	370	3	1,372	224
Total Income from Continuing Operations	91,049	12,928	-	-	-	103,977	2,203		106,180	27,437
Expenses										
Employee Costs	32,616					32,616			32,616	7,536
Borrowing Costs	167					167			167	12
Materials & Contracts	18,130	1,632				19,762	(40)	4	19,722	3,936
Depreciation	19,123					19,123			19,123	
Other Expenses	9,449	229				9,678	461	5	10,139	2,668
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations	79,485	1,861	-	-	-	81,346	421		81,767	14,152
Net Operating Result from Continuing Operation	11,564	11,067	-	-	-	22,631	1,782		24,413	13,285
Discontinued Operations - Surplus/(Deficit)						-			-	
Net Operating Result from All Operations	11,564	11,067	-	-	-	22,631	1,782		24,413	13,285
Net Operating Result before Capital Items	(6,385)	(668)	-	-	-	(7,053)	333		(6,720)	12,225

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
 for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Income & Expenses Budget Review Statement
Recommended changes to revised budget

Budget Variations being recommended include the following material items:

Notes	Details	
1	Grants & Contributions - Operating	
	Rural Fire Services M&R Reimbursable	(42,162)
	Emergency Management Operations (ESL Grant from OLG)	426,156
		383,994
2	Grants & Contributions - Capital	
	Local Priority Grant (LPG) Library Resources	19,000
	Cooma Sports Hub	1,430,000
		1,449,000
3	Net gain from disposal of assets	
	Percy Harris Subdivision Land Sale	350,000
	Kalkite Pathway Close Survey and Sale	20,000
		370,000
4	Materials & Contracts	
	Rural Fire Services M&R Reimbursable	(11,671)
	Water Supply Operation Management (transfer to Capital)	(28,000)
		(39,671)
5	Other Expenses	
	Emergency Services Levy increase (offset in part by ESL Grant)	473,483
	Financial Services Administration (Valuation Services)	(4,000)
	Elected Members Administration	(8,760)
		460,723

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Capital Budget Review Statement

Budget review for the quarter ended 30 September 2020

Capital Budget - Council Consolidated

(\$000's)	Original Budget 2020/21	Approved Changes				Revised Budget 2020/21	Variations for this Sep Qtr	Notes	Projected Year End Result	Actual YTD figures
		Carry Forwards	Sept QBR	Dec QBR	March QBR					
Capital Expenditure										
New Assets										
- Plant & Equipment	500				500			500	87	
- Land & Buildings	4,895	2,306			7,201			7,201	255	
- Water & Sewer	1,250	66			1,316			1,316	21	
- Transport	6,000	802			6,802	50	1	6,852	17	
- Other	720	52			772	40	2	812	19	
Renewal Assets (Replacement)										
- Plant & Equipment	3,871	2,432			6,303			6,303	1,072	
- Land & Buildings	4,129	4,268			8,397	162	3	8,559	796	
- Water & Sewer	15,079	2,809			17,888	1,628	4	19,516	2,324	
- Transport	5,793	2,376			8,169			8,169	754	
- Other	6,688				6,688	(1,674)	5	5,014	315	
Total Capital Expenditure	48,925	15,111	-	-	64,036	206		64,242	5,660	
Capital Funding										
Grants & Contributions	20,397	1,551			21,948	(1,449)		20,499	885	
Restricted Cash Reserves	27,526	13,560			41,086	2,025		43,111	4,551	
Receipts from Sale of Assets	1,002				1,002	(370)		632	224	
Total Capital Funding	48,925	15,111	-	-	64,036	206		64,242	5,660	
Net Capital Funding - Surplus/(Deficit)	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
 for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Capital Budget Review Statement
Recommended changes to revised budget

Budget Variations being recommended include the following material items:

Notes	Details	
1	Capital Expenditure - Transport (New)	
	Adaminaby Truck Parking Area Design and Review	50,000
2	Capital Expenditure - Other (New)	
	Local Priority Grant (LPG) Library Resources	19,000
	Bombala Cemetery Works	21,000
		40,000
3	Capital Expenditure - Land & Buildings (Replacement)	
	SCCF Bombala Platypus Reserve Upgrade - WIP from T1 PJ150379	35,000
	Cathcart Hall New Kitchen (Electical Lighting Roof) PJ150335	26,800
	Cooma Multifunction Centre Upgrade - WIP from T1 PJ150525	100,000
		161,800

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Cash & Investments Budget Review Statement

Cash & Investments - Council Consolidated

(\$000's)	2020 Actual figures	Original Budget 2020/21	Approved Changes				Revised Budget 2020/21	Variations for this Sep Qtr	Notes	Projected Year End Result
			Carry Forwards	Sept QBR	Dec QBR	March QBR				
Externally Restricted ⁽¹⁾										
Section 7.11 Developer Contributions Combined	2,421	2,421	-				2,421	(21)	1	2,400
Section 64 Developers Contributions Water Combined	2,816	2,816	-				2,816			2,816
Section 64 Developers Contributions Sewer Combined	2,298	2,298	-				2,298			2,298
Hostel Entry Contributions- Snowy	1,169	1,169	-				1,169			1,169
Hostel bonds - Yallambee	2,392	2,392	-				2,392			2,392
Crown Land	1,399	1,399	(296)				1,103			1,103
Unexpended Grants Reserve	11,435	11,435	(9,820)				1,615			1,615
Other Contributions	153	153	(130)				23			23
HACC Vehicle Replacement - combined	301	191	-				191			191
Kamoto-Cooma Friendship Scholarship Fund	45	45	-				45			45
Boco Rock Contributions	229	229	(229)				-			-
Combined Water Supply Works Reserve	19,733	16,068	(704)				15,364			15,364
Combined Sewerage Works Reserve	18,635	15,889	(693)				15,196	(1,600)	2	13,596
Domestic Waste Management Reserve	-	2,273	-				2,273			2,273
Total Externally Restricted	63,026	58,778	(11,872)	-	-	-	46,906	(1,621)		45,285
<small>(1) Funds that must be spent for a specific purpose</small>										
Internally Restricted ⁽²⁾										
Employee Leave Entitlement	1,383	1,383	-				1,383			1,383
Plant Replacement	1,294	716	(593)				123	(123)	7	-
Quarry Operations	-	300	-				300	(300)	7	-
Uncompleted Works & Projects	66	66	-				66	(66)	7	-
Waste Services (Non Domestic)	7,274	3,911	(310)				3,601	(2,930)	7	671
Deposits, Retentions & Bonds	682	682	-				682			682
Yallambee Lodge Building & Equipment	700	(1,471)	(139)				(1,610)	1,610	6	-
New Council Implementation Interest	378	378	(378)				-			-
Stronger Communities Fund Interest	1,326	1,326	(1,326)				-			-
Former Bombala LGA	1,718	173	(221)				(48)	48	3, 7	-
Former Snowy LGA	699	699	(14)				685	(685)	4, 7	-
Total Internally Restricted	15,520	8,163	(2,981)	-	-	-	5,182	(2,446)		2,736
<small>(2) Funds that Council has earmarked for a specific purpose</small>										
Unrestricted (ie. available after the above Restrictions)	(960)	(6,633)	990				(5,643)	5,643	5,6,7	-
Total Cash & Investments	77,586	60,308	(13,863)	-	-	-	46,445	1,576		48,021

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Cash & Investments Budget Review Statement

Investments

Investments have been invested in accordance with Council's Investment Policy.

Cash

The Cash at Bank figure included in the Cash & Investment Statement totals \$77,586,455

This Cash at Bank amount has been reconciled to Council's physical Bank Statements.
The date of completion of this bank reconciliation is 30/09/20

Reconciliation Status

The YTD Cash & Investment figure reconciles to the actual balances held as follows:

	\$ 000's
Cash at Bank (as per bank statements)	2,077
Investments on Hand	75,509
Reconciled Cash at Bank & Investments	<u>77,586</u>
Balance as per Review Statement:	<u>77,586</u>
Difference:	-

Budget Variations being recommended include the following material items:

Notes	Details	
1	Developer Contributions Combined	
	Bombala Cemetery Works	(21,000)
2	Combined Sewerage Works Reserve	
	Bombala Timor Street Pump Station Upgrade	(1,600,000)
3	Former Bombala LGA	
	SCCF Bombala Platypus Reserve Upgrade - WIP from T1 PJ150379	(35,000)
	Cathcart Hall New Kitchen (Electical Lighting Roof) PJ150335	(26,800)
		<u>(61,800)</u>
4	Former Snowy River LGA	
	Adaminaby Truck Parking Area Design and Review	(50,000)
5	Unrestricted	
	Cooma Multifunction Centre Upgrade - WIP from T1 PJ150525	(100,000)
	Corporate Information System	1,673,869
	Cooma Sports Hub	1,430,000
	Financial Sevices Administration (Valuation Services)	4,000
	Elected Members Administration	8,670
	Rural Fire Services M&R Reimbursable	(30,491)
	Emergency Services Levy	(47,327)
	Percy Harris Subdivision Land Sale	350,000
	Kalkite Pathway Close Survey and Sale	20,000
	Historial expenditure has exceeded amount of internal cash held as restricted	(1,610,000)
	Reduced restricted cash due to lack of available cash to fund reserves	3,944,000
		<u>5,642,721</u>
6	Yallambee Lodge Building & Equipment Reserve	
	Historial expenditure has exceeded amount of internal cash held as restricted	1,610,000
7	Various	
	Reduced restricted cash due to lack of available cash to fund reserves	
	Plant Replacement Reserve	(123,000)
	Quarry Operations Reserve	(300,000)
	Uncompleted Works and Projects	(66,000)
	Waste Services (Non-Domestic)	(2,930,000)
	Former Bombala LGA Reserve	110,000
	Former Snowy River LGA Reserve	(635,000)
		<u>(3,944,000)</u>

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement

for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Contracts Budget Review Statement

Budget review for the quarter ended 30 September 2020

Part A - Contracts Listing - contracts entered into during the quarter;

Contractor	Contract detail & purpose	Contract Value	Start Date	Duration of Contract	Budgeted (Y/N)
City Water Technology	Preparation of Jindabyne Filtrations Plants Study	39,452	3/8/2020	4 months	Y
RangeDale	Bombala & Delegate Sewer Main Projects	208,410	8/8/2020	12 weeks	Y
Davone Contruction	Cooma Multi-Funciton Centre - Refit	528,108	13/7/2020	16 weeks	Y
Fewster Bros Contracting	Bombala STP - Gravity/Rising Mains and pump stations	3,609,884	1/9/2020	5 months	Y
Rural Riparian Weed Control	2020-21 Weed Control Services (Eastern Region)	75,000	1/9/2020	2020/21 FY	Y
Byrne Rural Contracting	2020-21 Weed Control Services (North West Region)	150,000	1/9/2020	2020/21 FY	Y
Buckleys Weedspraying & Contract Fen	2020-21 Weed Control Services (Northern Region)	185,000	1/9/2020	2020/21 FY	Y
Rippers Rural Services	2020-21 Weed Control Services (South East Region)	100,000	1/9/2020	2020/21 FY	Y
Buckleys Rural Services	2020-21 Weed Control Services (South West Region)	240,000	1/9/2020	2020/21 FY	Y
Stone's Forestry Contracting	2020-21 Weed Control Services (Southern Region)	110,000	1/9/2020	2020/21 FY	Y
EEA-Earthmoving Equipment Australia	Supply and Delivery of one CCF class 4.5 4WD backhoe	168,278	18/9/2020	Until delivery	Y

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Quarterly Budget Review Statement
for the period 01/07/20 to 30/09/20

Consultancy & Legal Expenses Budget Review Statement

Consultancy & Legal Expenses Overview

Expense	YTD Expenditure (Actual Dollars)	Budgeted (Y/N)
Consultancies	434,110	Y
Legal Fees	45,929	Y

Definition of a consultant:

A consultant is a person or organisation engaged under contract on a temporary basis to provide recommendations or high level specialist or professional advice to assist decision making by management. Generally it is the advisory nature of the work that differentiates a consultant from other contractors.

10.1 MATURE TREE RE-LOCATION POLICY

Record No:

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
Author: Councillor John Castellari
Attachments: Nil

Councillor John Castellari has given notice that at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 19 November 2020, he will move the following motion.

MOTION

That Council:

- A. Where the removal of mature trees is deemed necessary for Council works of any kind within any urban, village, park or reserve area, the targeted trees are first assessed by a qualified arborist or like expert, for suitability for relocation;
- B. Where trees are found suitable for relocation Council takes every necessary step to safely relocate the trees;
- C. As part of its BAU practices, Council identify and maintain a register of relocation sites for mature trees, such as public parks, playgrounds, sporting venues or other appropriate locations;
- D. Contractors are advised of the relocation policy and where practicable, the costs of relocation are negotiated when contracts are let; and
- E. Council affirms the value of mature trees for their social and economic benefits to the community.

BACKGROUND

This motion is intended to prevent the loss of mature trees, as occurred recently in Bombala, where eight old and valued trees were cut down during preparation for the Bombala Sewerage augmentation works. The recreational and well-being benefits of trees are well known, and the outcry from the residents of Bombala are an indication of how clearly the public understands the true value to our community of mature shade trees.

Western Sydney University researchers, using heat detecting technology, recently found that exposed surface areas without trees (such as school playgrounds) can be twenty degrees Celsius hotter than similar tree shaded areas¹.

Other research has shown that road surfaces on streets with tree shading last significantly longer. Shaded buildings use less artificial cooling energy in summer. Heat stroke is a major killer in Australia and is predicted to rise ².

Meteorologists have predicted a warming trend for South East Australia of at least 2 degrees into the foreseeable future, making the presence of shade trees ever more important to human health³.

- 1) <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-19/western-sydney-schools-at-risk-of-heat-danger-this-summer/12779666?nw=0&fbclid=IwAR2-BlcHqiSGpoecykBhdaCuORDqQt8Qm1lbME6YLvp6vTMo14YNWuSOCQ>
- 2) <https://soe.environment.gov.au/file/46096>
- 3) <http://www.bom.gov.au/state-of-the-climate/australias-changing-climate.shtml>

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S RESPONSE

Clause 9. 1 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides as follows:

9.1 Notices of Motion

- (1) *The deadline for lodging notices of motion in writing for inclusion on the business paper for consideration at any meeting of the Council, shall be eleven (11) days prior to the meeting.*
- (2) *A councillor must give notice of business in writing no later than 4.00pm on the Tuesday that follows the ordinary meeting of council.*
- (3) *At an Ordinary meeting Councillors may give notice of motions in writing to be listed as matters on the business paper for the next Ordinary meeting of Council.*
- (4) *The rules applying to the content of Questions also apply to the content of Notices of Motion.*
- (5) *Councillors are to ensure, where it is intended that staff be asked to carry out some specific defined action, that a Notice of Motion is written in such a way that, if carried, the motion carries such clear and unambiguous direction.*

This motion has financial implications as the transplanting of mature trees can involve substantial costs. It is difficult to determine the extent of the impact as this will vary based on each situation and the number of trees that the Council needs to relocate within any year. It is not possible to accurately estimate the financial cost due to the uncertainty.

The actions arising from the motion are not specifically provided for in the current Operational Plan. Funds are currently not available to increase the expenditure where this impacts on BAU within general funded areas. As such the cost of doing this will need to be absorbed within the current budget and less other maintenance works will need to be undertaken across the infrastructure. Where the works relates to identified projects, the scope of identified projects will be reduced for existing project and future projects the costs will be included in the project budgets.

10.2 COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION

Record No:

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
Author: Councillor Anne Maslin
Attachments: Nil

Councillor Anne Maslin has given notice that at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 19 November 2020, she will move the following motion.

MOTION

That Council resolve that:

- A. It be recognised that Council has not met the expectations of the community in informing and engaging community around council projects and activities.
- B. Immediate change is needed to ensure that community expectations are met on how Council communicates with community and recognises their contribution when working in collaboration with Council.
- C. That Council's Communications Policy (SMRC 4) be updated to include the following:
 - I. Where council plans to change community infrastructure that will result in the removal or reduction of facilities or community assets, including trees of significance:
 - i. a risk assessment of the project be undertaken (with a focus on reputational risk) and actions be identified to minimise any unacceptable risks,
 - ii. the communications plan identifies the stakeholders likely to be impacted, the level of impacts expected, and transparent communication to be undertaken, and
 - iii. that the issue be communicated to councillors prior to proceeding.
 - II. Where community members have contributed to the development of council and community collaborative projects that:
 - i. the community members be invited to any opening events, with at least one week notice. (Where possible by email, letter or suitably respectful means.)
 - ii. That where projects are developed an adequate amount of funds be included in the budget for the project to cater for any community events related to the project, such as openings or recognition of contribution.
 - iii. Those Community members be recognised as part of the event.
 - III. For all projects or initiatives a clear statement as to which staff member is responsible for community liaison be made available to the public.
- D. That the updated communications policy be brought back no later than the February 2021 Council meeting for adoption.

BACKGROUND

The recent removal of trees in Bicentennial Park at Bombala has highlighted that Council is still failing to meet the standards the community expects. This is just one example of Council actions which have caused offence to communities in SMRC region.

Lack of communication and failure to adhere to the SMRC Communication Policy, is causing significant damage to Council's reputation.

The community expects to be consulted and informed on changes that impact them. Council must prioritise communication as part of council projects and activities, in order that Council be seen as a trusted community partner. The effort to restore the reputational damage created is much greater than the effort to properly communicate with our community.

SMRC 4 – Communications Policy of Snowy Monaro Regional Council, states in its overarching aim, that council is “ responsible and accountable to its local community. Snowy Monaro Regional Council has an **obligation to ensure information** about its programs and services **is conveyed to the public in a professional manner**. It is also important that Council's public image reflects Council's commitment to customer service. **Effective communication between the Council and the community is vital**. This policy aims to ensure that the **flow of information to residents and ratepayers is accurate, timely and informative**. This will help **improve Council's public image** by keeping the community up to date on its decisions, activities and achievements, with an emphasis on **promoting a positive, progressive and professional image of Council and staff.**”

Section 1.1 of the SMRC Communications Policy, states,

“The objectives of this policy are to: a) **Create a positive public image about Council**, its services and staff;

b) Create and maintain **Council's corporate image as a professional and efficient organisation committed to working in partnership with its community;**

c) Develop positive working relationships with the local media;

d) Ensure provision of accurate and timely information on Snowy Monaro Regional Council services, facilities and policies to the community on a regular basis; and

e) **Management of difficult/controversial issues.**”

This Motion is intended to update the **Communications Policy** to ensure that the public are included at all stages of council projects and initiatives. It is also intended to ensure that volunteers are given due credit for their unpaid volunteer contribution to council and community collaborative initiatives. Council is there to serve the community, and our community is our best resource to initiate forward-thinking improvements within the region.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S RESPONSE

Clause 9. 1 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides as follows:

9.1 Notices of Motion

- (1) *The deadline for lodging notices of motion in writing for inclusion on the business paper for consideration at any meeting of the Council, shall be eleven (11) days prior to the meeting.*
 - (2) *A councillor must give notice of business in writing no later than 4.00pm on the Tuesday that follows the ordinary meeting of council.*
 - (3) *At an Ordinary meeting Councillors may give notice of motions in writing to be listed as matters on the business paper for the next Ordinary meeting of Council.*
 - (4) *The rules applying to the content of Questions also apply to the content of Notices of Motion.*
-

10.2 COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION

- (5) *Councillors are to ensure, where it is intended that staff be asked to carry out some specific defined action, that a Notice of Motion is written in such a way that, if carried, the motion carries such clear and unambiguous direction.*
-

10.3 COUNCILLOR DISCUSSIONS

Record No:

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
Author: Councillor Anne Maslin
Attachments: Nil

Councillor Anne Maslin has given notice that at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 19 November 2020, she will move the following motion.

MOTION

That Council allocate 30 minutes of scheduled informal discussion time at the Council workshop briefing sessions which happen two weeks before the monthly meetings of Council.

BACKGROUND

Councillors have highlighted the importance of having discussion as a group, given the urgency of many issues which come up daily and weekly. As a cohesive council, the councillors require time to discuss issues in order to be on target for the months leading up to local government elections in September 2021.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S RESPONSE

Clause 9. 1 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides as follows:

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 - (5) *Councillors are to ensure, where it is intended that staff be asked to carry out some specific defined action, that a Notice of Motion is written in such a way that, if carried, the motion carries such clear and unambiguous direction.*
-

10.4 TRANSITION TO AN ELECTRIC AND OTHER LOW GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS VEHICLE FLEET

Record No:

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
Author: Councillor John Castellari
Attachments: Nil

Councillor John Castellari has given notice that at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 19 November 2020, he will move the following motion.

MOTION

That Council commence the transition to an electric and other low GHG emissions vehicle fleet by:

- A. Engaging with other councils such as Newcastle, operating EVs/low emissions vehicles, and the NSW and ACT Governments, as a first step towards determining how Snowy Monaro can transition to an EV and other low GHG emissions fleet, and the practicable extent and timing of the transition.
- B. Provide a comprehensive report to Council no later than the March 2021 Councillor briefing, outlining an initial transition plan which provides the stages and extent of the transition, based on current and reasonably expected future developments in the EV industry.

BACKGROUND

- NSW government Department of Planning and Infrastructure's Net Zero Plan Stage 1 2020-2030, (pages 17,18) has included EV infrastructure and EV fleets in its list of first priority strategies to reduce GHG emissions, and has supported this by developing an Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Model Availability program to fast track the EV market in NSW, the benefits of which Council can access to reduce the cost of EV transition via a bilateral funding program.
 - Council can save significant money through transition to EVs when and where practicable – average fuel savings of approximately \$1500 per vehicle per year to private citizens.
 - Additional saving through fewer maintenance requirements; fleet purchase presumably will garner greater savings over the life of a vehicle than for a private user.
 - Combining plug in EV fleet with a rooftop or small-scale solar arrays in Council depots has potential to reduce costs further.
 - Potential use of vehicle to grid (V2G) technology allowing Council to be paid for the electricity sent to the grid by idle vehicles.
 - Now is a good time to begin the transition; Europe has almost abandoned ICE vehicle manufacture, with a 2040 date to ban sale of new ICE vehicles in Europe.
 - All the major car makers are currently releasing or about to release a variety of EV models onto the market. The global lead sales for any car (EV, Hybrid or ICE) is the fully electric Tesla Model
-

3, however there are many cheaper and more practical EVs for council use or soon to become available, including all wheel drive and light trucks.

- Battery technology is improving exponentially with most <\$50,000 EVs capable of a real-world range of 450 kms; note the average daily journey for Australians is 37km
- There are over twenty EV models currently available in Australia and this will grow swiftly as Europe, Japan China and the USA expand their production.
- ACT government has committed to EVs for its government fleet and has provided financial incentives to its residents to buy EVs; Newcastle is trialling electric buses; some councils are using hydrogen fuelled garbage trucks.
- In Snowy Monaro transport accounts for 20% of our GHG emissions; Council can show leadership by transitioning to EVs.
- They are modern, safe and seriously fun to drive!

- <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/climate-change/net-zero-plan>
- <https://lgiu.org/briefing/electric-council-fleets/>
- <https://electricvehiclecouncil.com.au/about-ev/myth-busting/>
- https://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/1188498/2018-21-ACTs-transition-to-zero-emissions-vehicles-Action-Plan-ACCESS.pdf
- <https://www.caradvice.com.au/639871/act-government-electric-cars/>
- <https://www.governmentnews.com.au/act-government-ev-fleet-in-grid-support-trial/>
- <https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/electric-vehicles-an-opportunity-for-local-government-20190405-p51bcs.html>
- <https://reneweconomy.com.au/moreland-council-launches-hydrogen-powered-garbage-truck-scheme-35203/>
- <https://www.sea-electric.com/sas-first-electric-garbage-truck-doing-the-rounds/>

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S RESPONSE

Clause 9. 1 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides as follows:

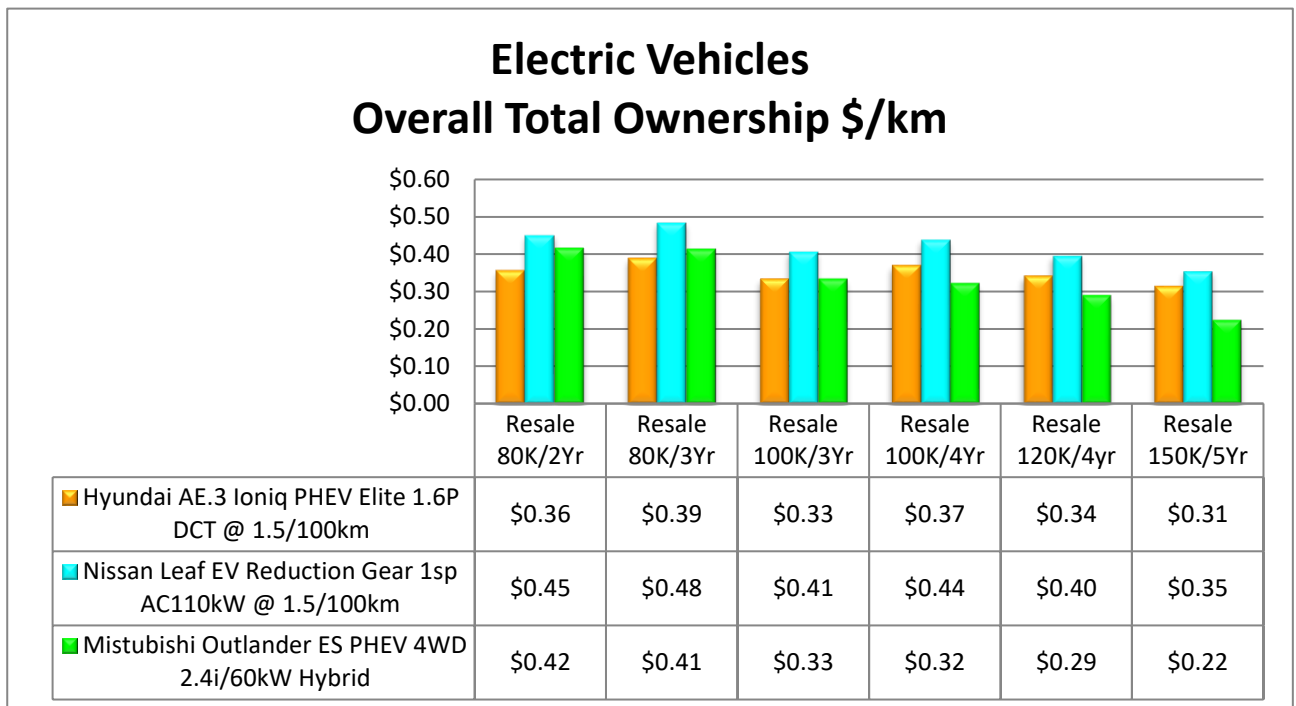
9.1 Notices of Motion

- (1) *The deadline for lodging notices of motion in writing for inclusion on the business paper for consideration at any meeting of the Council, shall be eleven (11) days prior to the meeting.*
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-

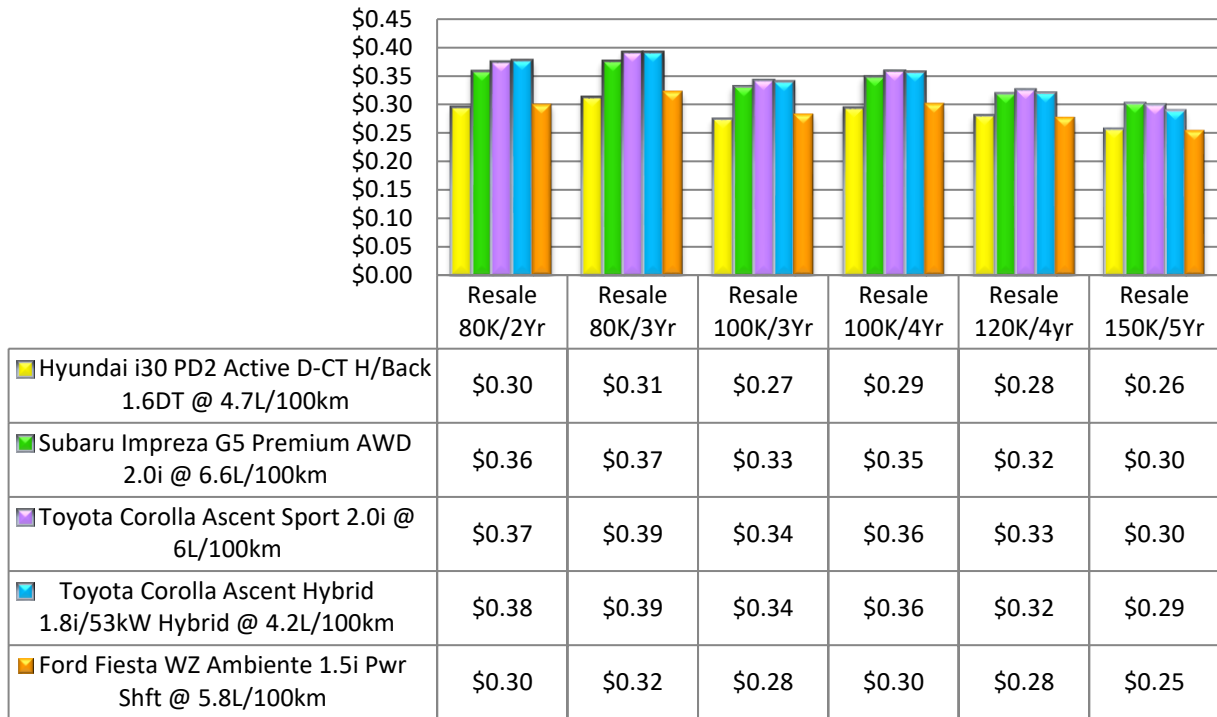
10.4 TRANSITION TO AN ELECTRIC AND OTHER LOW GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS VEHICLE FLEET

- (3) *At an Ordinary meeting Councillors may give notice of motions in writing to be listed as matters on the business paper for the next Ordinary meeting of Council.*
- (4) *The rules applying to the content of Questions also apply to the content of Notices of Motion.*
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Council regularly monitors the lifetime cost of a range of vehicles to determine the best mix of fleet and plant to support service delivery. This has included assessing electric and hybrid vehicles. Council currently has 5 hybrid vehicles in its fleet, two Camry and three Corolla. The estimated costs of various vehicle from vehicles currently being tracked is listed below.



Passenger Vehicles Micro & Small < 2Ltr Engines Overall Total Ownership \$/km



The calculations indicate that the electric vehicles still have a comparative price cost when looking at the whole of life costing of the vehicles. This situation holds true for the equivalent SUV vehicles that compare with the Mitsubishi Outlander hybrid, which has an approximately \$10,000 additional up front cost. The hybrid has a long payback period, with the vehicle not being a lower cost option until the vehicle is owned for 120,000km. When added to the need to put into place charging facilities, pure electric vehicle ownership does not yet provide cost savings, which is why there has been more of a focus on hybrid technology at this stage. The costs will continue to be monitored as the development of electric vehicles continues change the market.

As noted, there are planned releases of electric commercial vehicles and this is an area that will be closely monitored. The light commercial vehicle fleet may be well suited to electric vehicle use due to their general maximum range of use and type of use and in many cases that they are garaged in enclosed depot spaces overnight, making provision of charging facilities easier.

The use of electric garbage trucks has also recently been reviewed, as this is currently the subject of considerable promotion. The investigations have identified that vehicle range remains the barrier to adoption.

Overall the feedback on the current vehicles is that they are only suited to low kilometre round trips. While the range is noted at 12km, this is noted as being primarily collection activity with minimal commute. Open wheeling is identified as having a much larger drain on the battery pack than the collection runs. For example, based on the current vehicle specifications a vehicle doing the trip to collect the waste at Michelago would need to be need to stop and recharge before it returned. With a charge rate of 10% per hour, this would indicate the vehicle and operator is likely to be required to wait at least 3-4 hours during the charging process before returning.

They are operating within dense urban areas collecting between 1,100 and 1,200 bins with some residual charge. The 100% charging time of 17.6 hours may also cause issues as that would only allow the vehicle to operate for 6.4 hours per day.

The electric garbage trucks have a price premium of between \$200,000 - \$250,000. The calculated cost of fuel is \$1.08 per kilometre, with the electricity having a cost less than half that, at \$0.42 per kilometre. All else being equal, this would lead to a break even point being around 260,000km. Based on the current lifetime of the vehicles (8 years/240,000km) there would only be a low additional cost per vehicle. This does rely on the bulk of charging occurring during non-peak periods, which would not be possible with the current range constraints, and electricity companies not changing their pricing structure to reflect increased overnight vehicle charging increasing demand outside traditional peak periods.

Another current barrier to adoption of electric vehicles in this area is the lack of a maintenance support network. At this stage servicing would need to be undertaken in Canberra. To achieve this the truck would need to be freighted to the service location, increasing servicing costs.

In addition, the Council currently has very low cash reserves and is not in a position to undertake additional capital investment or increase the net cash outflow. Investment into charging infrastructure and higher cost vehicles will need to be offset with the transfer of funds from other service provision.

The use of electric vehicles will continue to be monitored as an option to be taken up by the Council and will be utilised where they can meet operational requirements. The current barrier remains range and charging infrastructure, particularly for larger vehicles.

10.5 MONARO RAIL TRAIL DRAFT FEASIBILITY REPORT

Record No:

Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Councillor Sue Haslingden
Attachments:	1. Monaro Rail Trail Council Briefing - Vision Statement
	2. Monaro Rail Trail Establishment Guidelines
	3. Monaro Rail Trail Pre Feasibility Report
	4. Monaro Rail Trail Draft Technical Specification
	5. Recommendations to the Snowy Monaro Regional Council - November 19 2020
	6. Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Draft Report - Volume 1
	7. Monaro Rail Trail briefing to SMRC - 5 November 2020

Councillor Suzanne Haslingden has given notice that at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 19 November 2020, she will move the following motion.

MOTION

That the Council action Resolution Number 68/20 Monaro Rail Trail Draft Feasibility Report 16 April 2020 to:

- A. Receive and note that the reinstatement of the Queanbeyan to Bombala rail line and extension to Eden has been intensely investigated through the Canberra to Port of Eden Feasibility Study. The publically available Executive Summary states on page 10 that “None of the options are shown to be economically viable. All have BCRs that are much less than 1. The present value of benefits is far outweighed by the present value of costs in all options considered.”;
- B. That Council now receive a report at the February 2021 meeting examining the specific conditions highlighted in the final Monaro Rail (shared) Trail feasibility report in detail, including the likely implications of these conditions for Council including the capital and ongoing costs likely to be involved and the potential funding source(s) for the costs;
- C. Receive within the above report information and statistics that identify any benefits to tourism and the region’s economy by developing the rail trail; and
- D. Receive, note and support in principle the Monaro Rail Trail Submission presented to Council on 5 November 2020.

That Council:

- A. Note that the reinstatement of the Queanbeyan to Bombala rail line and extension to Eden has been intensely investigated through the Canberra to Port of Eden Feasibility Study.
 - B. In accordance with resolution number 68/20, Monaro Rail Trail Draft Feasibility Report 16 April 2020:
 - (a) A report be brought to the February 2021 meeting examining the specific conditions highlighted in the final Monaro Rail (shared) Trail feasibility report in detail, including the likely implications of these conditions for Council including the capital and ongoing costs likely to be involved and the potential funding source(s) for the costs; and
-

- (b) The above report information and statistics that identify any benefits to tourism and the region's economy by developing the rail trail.

C. Receive, note and support in principle the Monaro Rail Trail Submission presented to Council on 5 November 2020.

BACKGROUND

This motion is to action Council's resolution from the 16 April 2020 meeting now that the State Government has released the Canberra to Port of Eden Feasibility Study that highlights it is not feasible to develop the train line from Queanbeyan to Bombala and Eden as it is economically unviable.

The publically available Executive Summary states on page 10 that "None of the options are shown to be economically viable. All have BCRs that are much less than 1. The present value of benefits is far outweighed by the present value of costs in all options considered."

Consistent with the intent of the motion in April, this motion is to move forward in continuing to investigate the potential rail trail eventually connecting Bombala with Queanbeyan, although to begin with in stages.

Please find attached the Canberra to Port of Eden Feasibility Study, the Monaro Rail Trail Final Feasibility Report and Community Feedback, Monaro Rail Trail Submission, and a document on Rail Trail Establishment Guidelines.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S RESPONSE

Clause 9. 1 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides as follows:

9.1 Notices of Motion

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-

Monaro Rail Trail

Snowy Monaro Regional Council Briefing

5 November 2020

Our Vision

The Monaro Rail Trail is Australia's Greatest

Our Purpose

To contribute to local and regional communities sustainable economic growth, health and wellbeing, while enhancing our environment and preserving our rail heritage



Executive Summary

The 213km Monaro Rail Trail, will use the disused Queanbeyan to Bombala Railway line, and has the potential to become one of the Iconic Rail Trails of the World, similar to the Otago Rail Trail in New Zealand. The Rail Trail will cater for cyclists, walkers, fund-raisers, mobility scooters and family groups.

The route will connect and unite the towns and villages of Queanbeyan, Michelago, Royalla, Bredbo, Cooma, Nimmitabel and Bombala. It will be easily integrated into the Canberra cycle network, as indicated on the Attachment #1. It would be one of the few Rail Trails with immediate access from a major city and or from an international airport which adds to its attractiveness for both Australian and international tourists.

To establish the Monaro Rail Trail (MRT) as Australia’s Greatest, MRT Inc. has sought Federal and State Government support with Capital Grants for a total of \$62.82 Million over 2 years. The first step is to finalise Planning and Design which will take 4-6 months and cost \$400,000. The objective is to have a “shovel-ready” project by July 2021 as suggested by Senator Molan.

Capital Expenditure

STAGE (refer Attachment #5)	COST	SOURCE
Planning and Design	\$400,000	State & Australian Government’s each contributing \$200,000
Stage 1 Construction	\$23.57 M	50/50 Federal and NSW State Governments
	\$1.0 M	100% ACT Government not included in \$62.82 above
Stage 2 Construction	\$25.96 M	50/50 Federal and NSW State Governments
Stage 3 Construction	\$13.29 M	50/50 Federal and NSW State Governments

Annual Economic Benefits

Stage 1	\$10.72M
Stage 2	\$7.05M
Stage 3	\$6,65M
Total	\$24.42M

Other Benefits

- Financial stimulus to numerous small businesses
- Regional jobs totalling an estimated 60 FTE small contractor employees during construction
- Ongoing local jobs estimated to be 150 FTE generated by small business operators along the route
- Promotes physical health & mental wellbeing in a region affected in recent years by drought, bushfires, and loss of visitors due to COVID-19
- Ongoing tourism attraction ranking with NZ's Iconic Otago Rail Trail
- Preservation of our Heritage (Indigenous, historical, rail, and agriculture)

Community Support

There is strong community support evidenced by:

- over 600 supportive submissions to the Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study 2019 (96% in favour)
 - raising of \$12,500 in Crowd Funding from the regional/local community for the initial study – the Monaro Rail Trail Pre-Feasibility Study 2018.
-

Recommendations for Council.

Monaro Rail Trail Inc. seeks Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) support as outlined in the following recommendations:

- 1) SMRC accepts this Submission, re-affirms support and strongly advocates for the development of the Monaro Rail Trail, recognising it will be a major economic driver for the Snowy Monaro Community.**
- 2) SMRC formally advises the following bodies of Councils strong support and desire to expedite the Monaro Rail Trail;**
 - a) Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council and the ACT Government**
 - b) NSW Government elected representatives (including Deputy Premier Hon John Barilaro MLA, Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC and Minister for Regional Transport & Roads Paul Toole MLA) as well as Officials of relevant Departments (including Regional Transport, Crown Lands and Local Land Services)**
 - c) Commonwealth Government elected representatives (including Senator Jim Molan AO DSC, Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack and Member for Eden-Monaro Hon Kristy McBain)**
- 3) SMRC initiates consultation with the NSW State Government to facilitate the License/Lease of the Queanbeyan to Bombala Rail corridor for the purposes of developing the Monaro Rail Trail. The Licence/Lease should commence from 1st May 2021 to allow construction to be commenced on 1 July 2021.**
- 4) SMRC establishes a MRT Section 355 Management Committee to oversight development of the Monaro Rail Trail and invites representatives from MRT Inc. and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council to participate.**
- 5) SMRC seeks Grant funding for a reputable Consultant to undertake a Study into Maintenance Cost and Funding opportunities for Rail Trails in line with the Scoping Study brief prepared by MRT Inc.**
- 6) SMRC provides funding of up to \$4000 to allow the Monaro Rail Trail Inc. to Trademark the Logo and wording 'Monaro Rail Trail AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST' to facilitate the beginning of a remarkable Rail Trail and protect an Iconic branding opportunity.**
- 7) SMRC support funding applications submitted by Monaro Rail Trail Inc. to both the NSW State Government and Federal Government for funding totalling \$400,000 to allow for the development of a Trail Master Plan (incorporating trail design), a detailed Business Case for the**

Monaro Rail Trail, Scoping Studies for the MRT Heritage Plan and Environmental Plan, Review of Environmental Factors and Risk Management Plan.

- 8) SMRC Grants Officer works with MRT Inc. to investigate opportunities for potential grants relevant to the planning, construction and maintenance of the Monaro Rail Trail and identify, the most appropriate of the two organisations, to lodge applications consistent with SMRC Policy.***
 - 9) Ensure that the Monaro Rail Trail is featured prominently as a Game Changer in all Council and Regional Planning documents to support funding priorities.***
-

Achievements to Date

- Formation of MRT Inc. in 2015
 - Extensive Community consultation since 2015
 - Creation of MRT website
 - Pre-Feasibility Study 2018 funded by MRT Inc. through Crowd Funding of \$12,500
 - MRT Feasibility Study 2019 funded by SMRC
 - Production of MRT Fly-over promotional video, merchandise and promotional material
 - Formation of MRT Steering Group in 2020 and planning workshop
 - Consultations with key Stakeholders (last 6 months);
 - Hon J Barilaro MLA
 - Sen J Molan AO DSC
 - Snowy Monaro Regional Council Officers
 - Local Land Services
 - Cooma Monaro Progress Association
 - Nimmitabel Advancement Group
 - Bombala community representatives
 - Consultation with key Rail Trail associations including;
 - Tumbarumba Rail Trail
 - Northern Rivers Rail Trail
 - Otago Rail Trail (NZ)
 - Riesling Rail Trail (SA)
 - MRT Organisation, Structure & processes
 - Revised MRT Inc. Constitution to achieve ACNC registration (& possible charitable status)
 - Developed the Vision, Purpose, Aims & Values Statement of MRT Inc.
 - Agreed upon a Rail Trail Concept Development Plan including a 3 stage approach
-

- Implemented a Steering Group organisation structure
- Secured pro-bono professional resources including planning, legal, engineering, project management, financial, environmental and business competencies
- Lodged MRT Project Submissions with Commonwealth & State Governments (Inc \$400K for Planning work involving Trail Development Plan, Business Case, Staged approach.
- Developed a Capital Expenditure & Economic Benefit Schedule based on the MRT Feasibility Study 2019
- Developed a Quality management system for the organisation
- Prepared a Maintenance Cost Recovery Brief
- Developed the MRT Maintenance Discussion Paper
- Produced a Project Development & Construction Implementation Plan (GANTT Chart)
- Created a Project Resource Plan
- Created Geospatial map of the proposed staged development and village precinct trails
- Distributed Ambassador Taking Points for local promotion

Work Underway

- Seeking SMRC support
 - Lobbying Commonwealth & State Governments for support
 - Developing a Sponsorship Policy
 - Developing a Strategic Plan
 - Finalising Village Precinct Trail and Gravel Grinder map concepts
 - Endeavouring to secure and trademark “Australia’s Greatest Rail Trail”, marketing concept
 - Investigating Rail Trail lease arrangements
 - Proposing a consultancy to understand actual Rail Trail Maintenance Costs & Funding Opportunities
 - Developing the Australia Rail Trail Concept (based on NZ experience) marketing concept
 - Updating Banners, merchandise, and promotional material
 - Seeking a prominent Australian as a Patron
-

- Commencing Trail Development Plan scoping document /brief for a consultant
 - Considering options for use of existing rail tracks for tourism opportunities
 - Understanding Rail Heritage values
 - Invitation to Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC to engage
 - On-going programme of Community consultation.
-

Background Information

The vision of utilising the disused corridor has been discussed since 1989 after the last train to Cooma.

MRT Inc. was formed in 2015 to investigate developing a Rail Trail similar to other successful trails in North East Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland and New Zealand. Substantial community consultation was undertaken including stalls at markets, promotions by retailers and meetings in towns and villages.

MRT Inc. raised over \$12,500 through Crowd Funding in a matter of weeks for a pre-Feasibility Study in 2018. The Snowy Monaro Regional Council subsequently funded the Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study 2019 which is on the Council Website.

The MRT development is unique in that it will bring benefits to each town and village immediately by creating segments of the trail along its entire length in Stage 1 which is completely within NSW.

Consultation has also occurred with Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (approx. 30km of rail trail in this LGA) as well as ACT Government (for links from Canberra).

Vision Mission

Attachment #2 indicates the Vision, Purpose, Aims and Values of Monaro Rail Trail Inc.

Benefits

It is apparent that every rail trail throughout Australia and elsewhere in the World provides considerable benefits. A summary is provided as Attachment #3.

Economic

It is projected that the complete Monaro Rail Trail will deliver annual economic benefits of \$24.42 M pa, primarily to small business in towns and villages struggling after recent adversities of drought, bushfire, and reduced tourism due COVID-19 . These benefits will continue long after Snowy 2.0 construction is completed. A summary of Expenditure and Economic Benefits is included as Attachment #4.

Employment

It is conservatively estimated that 60 FTE local jobs will be created over the 2 years of construction. The work packages will be structured to enable small contractors to participate.

Additional, experience on other Rail Trail Trails indicates that perhaps 150 FTE additional jobs will be created by small businesses engaged in hospitality, accommodation, transport, retail and tourism.

Health & Wellbeing

There are numerous articles indicating the enormous benefit derived by people who exercise outdoors, both physically and mentally. These benefits are included in the MRT Feasibility Study 2019 (Ref #1.)

Heritage

The project aims to work with other organisations to enhance the preservation of railway assets. This will include sections of track left intact for Tourist Rail use, preservation of NSW Heritage listed bridges at Ingelara Creek and Bredbo, maintenance of the Colinton Tunnel and rail sidings.

Signage will explain the Indigenous and European heritage at particular locations including to designated locations off the route.

Particularly for international visitors, the MRT also provides an opportunity to explain the varied agricultural features and local industries e.g. shearing sheds.

Link to Local Precincts, Attractions and Businesses

The MRT will facilitate links to local cycle/walking precincts in each town and village which will encourage visits to such attractions as Lake Wallace in Nimmitabel, Murrumbidgee River at Bredbo and Cooma, Platypus viewing at Bombala.

Importantly, links will provide access to businesses and services such as accommodation, cafes, general stores, bike shops, transport points, clothing/retail providers and tourist attractions. Each town and village will have **Town Precinct Trails** developed to take users on a tour of the Town. Each town and village will have links to **Gravel Grinder Trails** developed to take users into the quiet rural roads adjacent each town. Each town and village will have links to **Mountain Bike Trails**. ***The MRT will be the Monaro Spine to link a truly amazing bike/walking experience.***

MRT Inc is engaging with local Communities for their input into local attractions, possible trails and services available.

Evidence of Benefits from recently completed Tumbarumba- Rosewood Rail Trail

As an indication of success, the 21km Tumbarumba – Rosewood Rail Trail was completed in early March 2020 and has had typically 1600 persons per month, even with COVID-19 travel restrictions. Several stores have increased business substantially (30-50% at Rosewood stores and Tumba Bike & Blooms) and many have diversified to cater for rail trail cyclists and walkers. There are many and varied stories of growth and success arising from these Communities.

Therefore, with more than 6,000 people over 4 months during a “low period”, they confidently expect to exceed the Economic Benefit of \$1.5 M in the Business Case.

The MRT Feasibility Study 2019 (Ref #1) estimated 65,000 people would use the completed Monaro Rail Trail.

Risk Management

There are a number of Risks to be considered and managed including;

- Biosecurity managed through Local Land Services and Farmers
- Financial probity managed through SMRC
- Project management through appointment of competent contractors and processes.

Construction

Construction is proposed over 2-3 years with Stage 1 (99 km) involving 10km around each of the 4 Town/Villages of Michelago, Bredbo, Cooma, Nimmitabel and 20km at Bombala with a completed trail from Queanbeyan/Canberra to Michelago of 49 km. There is significant community support for the MRT in each of these towns & villages and commencing various sections will provide a project of common interest in which they each have a part, reduce jealousy/rivalry and enable work packages suitable for local contractors. The section between Queanbeyan and Canberra will be the most popular by users, particularly since it is envisaged there will be links from the Canberra Airport, Hume and ACT.

Stages 1, 2 & 3 will progressively link the towns & villages as well as establish toilets, refurbish railway shelter sheds, provide signage and small power supplies for re-charging of mobility scooters and e-bikes.

The project schedule is shown in a Gantt Chart as Attachment #5.

The scope of the work will involve fencing and bridge repair where necessary, replacement of some timber bridges with concrete culverts, removal of steel rails (with sale proceeds establishing a Maintenance Fund to support on-going maintenance costs), levelling ballast and providing 2.5m wide sealed (or gravel in certain locations) surface, gates, farm management structures and trailhead parking.

Like the recently completed and highly successful Tumbarumba-Rosewood Rail Trail, a competent experienced Project Manager would be engaged reporting to the MRT Trail Management Committee of Council.

Transfer of Rail Easement Responsibility

The entire 213km x 40m rail easement is currently owned by NSW Government. For the rail trail to be established, responsibility for the easement would need to be transferred to the Snowy Monaro Regional Council (183km) and Queanbeyan Palerang Council (30km).

The easement including the rail trail and associated facilities could be managed by Council Sub-Committees as is done with many other rail trails in Victoria, South Australia and Queensland or Community Trust.

Transfer of responsibility would need to occur prior to start of construction and may be achieved through issue of Lease/Licence (to allow immediate construction to commence) and eventually title transfer. Issue of a Lease or License would also enable other future options (such as a proposed Canberra-Eden Railway) to be considered if NSW Transport as is usually the case maintains its rights to the corridor.

Maintenance

The cost of maintaining the 213km rail trail varies depending on surface. A sealed trail has reduced maintenance cost compared to a gravel surface. However, there are other costs including weed control, fencing repairs, and drainage and asset maintenance which are common irrespective of Trail surface.

Based on experience of other Australian rail trails, it is anticipated that maintenance costs of the Monaro Rail Trail could be in the order of \$400,000 per annum as indicated in Attachment 4 and based on Australian and Otago Rail Trail annual expenditure. This is considerably less than the estimate based on US data included in the 2019 Feasibility Study. A comprehensive Discussion Paper (Reference #2) has been developed to analyse Australian maintenance costs and funding, however reliable information is difficult to source. Confidence would be enhanced by a Consultant formally approaching many Local Governments with Rail Trail experience.

Councils will obviously have concern regarding the impact on ratepayers. Such impact can be minimised by the sale of the steel rails, which are estimated to be valued at over \$1M, based on Tumbarumba Rail Trail experience, to create a Maintenance Fund. This will supplement other sources of income including the sale of "Rail Passports" to be stamped at small businesses, sponsorships, commercial franchises, merchandise sales and work by volunteers.

Consequently MRT Inc. estimates that the annual residual Maintenance cost to SMRC after sharing with Queanbeyan-Palerang Council, would be approximately \$150 thousand per annum. This could be further reduced if some of the funding the NSW Government pays John Holland to maintain the corridor was transferred to Council. To increase confidence in both maintenance costs, methods of delivery and opportunities for raising revenue to offset costs, consideration should be given to seeking a NSW Government Grant for a reputable consultant to undertake a review of Rail Trail Maintenance strategies (scope, costs, revenue) across Australia and NZ and make recommendations of "best practices". Such information would be valuable to all Councils who have or are considering Rail Trails.

Next Steps

- 1) Support of Snowy Monaro Regional Council and consideration of MRT Inc. recommendations.
 - 2) Funding for the MRT planning of \$400,000 shared 50:50 between Federal and State Governments
-

References

- #1 MRT Feasibility Study 2019 for Snowy Monaro Regional Council on SMRC Website
- #2 Maintenance and Recovery Costs for the Monaro Rail Trail Discussion Paper 11 October 2020

Attachments

- #1 MRT Map
- #2 MRT Inc. Vision Purpose, Aims and Values
- #3 Benefits of Established Rail Trails
- #4 Expenditure and Economic Benefit Table
- #5 Works Schedule Gantt chart
- #6 MRT Talking Points
- #7 MRT Maintenance Discussion Paper
- #7 NSW Minister Toole's Speech to Parliament
- #8 Sen Molan Newsletter of 23 October 2020 extract "Shout Out - Monaro Rail Trail"

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REV	DATE	COMMENTS
1	26 th June 2005	First issue for comments - Damian McCrohan
15	July 2010	General update and numerous appendices added– D.McC
16	February 2011	General update and numerous appendices added– D.McC

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. General

This guide provides an overview to what may be required in order to establish and maintain a rail trail. More detail is contained in the reference documents from established rail trails and other associated organisations. Appendix G1 contains a more detailed manual from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in the USA that contains a lot of useful generic information.

There has been a proliferation of rail trails developed throughout Australia in recent years but remarkably there are virtually no two with the same set of circumstances. There is always something different in the way each rail trail is managed so there is no exact prescription for success. You have to apply the information that suits your situation best.

This is a work in progress document and any suggestions for its improvement are welcome. Please check regularly for updates.

1.2. What Are Rail Trails

Railtrails Australia (RA) defines a rail trail as a trail that closely follows (preferably on) the formation of a former railway line or runs beside an active railway for the majority of its length. What sets rail trails apart from other trails are that they are gently graded and have a history

All should at least be suitable for walking and depending on the surface can also be used by mountain bikes, hybrid bikes, prams and wheel chairs, and even four wheel "gophers". Some committees allow horses while others don't.

It has been found that the rails and sleepers should all be removed from former railways and a surface of gravel or bitumen applied for best results. Ideally a separate dirt path besides the main trail should be provided for horses.

As a matter of note in the early days there was much discussion on whether the term "trail" or "track" should be used, some people regarding "track" an Australian term and "trail" an American term. Trail won out as it was already used extensively overseas and rail track sounding very much like a train could still use it. There was also discussion whether it should be one word (like railway) or two words. Two words won out but our organisation still uses the one word for its corporate name.

1.3. Why Are They Popular

Rail trails are popular because they are:

- A wonderful car free facility for people to walk or ride bicycles (horses on some trails) in safety to school and the shops, or just to enjoy the scenery, providing health benefits. Ideal for families.
- A great asset for visitors to come and enjoy touring the area away from cars.
- a pleasant experience even in hilly country because trains, like walkers and cyclists, don't like steep gradients
- A long continuous natural heritage corridor (native vegetation rehabilitation and weed control is a major activity of committees of management).



- A lasting and usable monument to the pioneers of the 19th and 20th centuries
- Research indicates that the money spent by visitors to rail trails is of significant financial benefit to the local community as well.
- free to use!

There are numerous ways to enjoy rail trails ranging from a short walk or a several day bike tour or basing yourself at one location and exploring a different section each day. Numerous towns are seeing an increase in demand for accommodation with trail visitors wanting accommodation ranging from camping to luxury B&Bs. Some businesses in towns are also beginning to cater in other ways such as offering bicycle hire and even pick-up services for those that only want to go one way. One of the most established and promotion oriented trails, the Murray to the Mountains connecting Wangaratta, Beechworth and Bright, is even offering visitor packages.

1.4. Where Are They

As of February 2010

	OPEN	PROSPECTIVE	
New South Wales	54 km	1323 km	Open trails mostly in Newcastle and Blue Mountains
Northern Territory	23 km	25 km	Darwin and Katherine
Queensland	168 km	929 km	Open trails mostly in south east
South Australia	116 km	1876 km	Open trails of high standard. 1300km of prospective is Old Ghan line
Tasmania	129 km	163 km	All over state but most only for walking or mountain bikes.
Victoria	663 km	1819 km	All over state, many of high standard
West Australia	753 km	1580 km	A lot of this is the Munda Biddi trail. Most trails only for walking and mountain bikes
TOTAL	1437 km	6274 km	

Other countries have a lot of high standard rail trails

For the most up to date information and details of each trail visit www.railtrails.org.au or contact Railtrails Australia.

1.5. What about Rails-with-Trails!

Rails-with-Trails or rail-side trails offer the chance to extend the rail trail experience by having trails besides an operating railway where the right-of-way permits this.

Many suburban railway lines have rail side trails besides them in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, which we understand are on railway land though managed by councils. As far as we are aware there are no rail side trails running besides operating government railways outside urban areas. A bit of a waste considering the examples in the USA in Appendix G2.



The Bellarine Peninsula Rail Trail, near Geelong, is a popular rail trail and it runs besides the operating steam tourist railway for half its length.

This rail side trail concept is becoming increasingly important in Victoria as rail corridors are now regarded as transport corridors that should be used for other forms of transport including walking and riding. Railtrails Australia is on a committee with the Victorian Department of Transport to develop standards for rail side trails besides tourist railways.

This is also relevant to NSW where some of the proposed rail trails still have the rails in place and have railway heritage groups wanting to run trolleys for some of the length. Most lines have rights-of-way conducive to rail side trails which should allow both to exist and to the benefit of each. The NSW Cycleways report in Appendix B also goes into considerable detail on rail side trails.

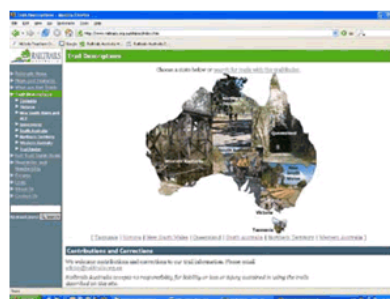
Obviously safety and liability must be considered but precedents have been set, even besides busy suburban railways.

1.6. Railtrails Australia's Role

We assist in the development and maintenance of rail trails by

1/ Promoting the use of open rail trails through: -

- a) our guidebooks (As of March 2009 over 22,000 copies of Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania guidebooks have been sold).
- b) our website that has a description and map for every open and prospective rail trail throughout Australia and a news section with a weekly mail out for special events or requests. There are also forums to discuss various aspects of rail trails.
- c) our quarterly newsletter
- d) our calendars
- e) distributing trail brochures with our quarterly newsletter mail out
- f) work with other organisations and media outlets to promote rail trails in newspapers, magazines, television shows and bicycle shows.
- g) attendance at relevant conventions to keep other organisations informed of rail trail developments.



2/ Providing direct assistance to groups wishing to establish a rail trail or improve an existing rail trail through: -

- a) provision of this manual
- b) provision of a DVD with videos of rail trails that give examples of how they are developed, the views of local residents and how rail trails are promoted on television.
- c) our website that can have a description and map of the proposed rail trail and a news section with a weekly mail out for special events or requests.
- d) writing letters of support
- e) meetings with committees of management, community groups and other related parties.
- f) and when we cannot help you on an issue we can put you in contact with a committee who has had the experience you are after.

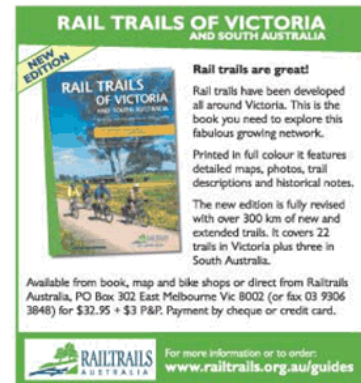
1.7. About Railtrails Australia

Railtrails Australia Inc is a not-for-profit, non government organisation. We are dedicated to keeping closed railway lines in public hands and where appropriate their conversion into rail trails. We also support the development of rail-side trails.

Until recently we have been totally volunteer based, keeping very busy with the activities described in the section above. We have also assisted committees with production of trail promotion brochures and are considering producing post cards for rail trails.

In addition to this we produce a quarterly newsletter that is distributed to all our members and rail trail committees.

We welcome new members and rely on their support to encourage our work.



2. ESTABLISHING A COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

2.1. Initial Concepts

Develop a basic proposal statement to gather support for a more detailed study. Refer Appendix B for examples. It is unlikely that a rail trail will succeed unless it appears there will be a majority of the local community that will support it. In line with this the greater the local government support the better the result will be.

The Murray to Mountains Rail Trail is an example of the three councils involved fully committing to a major high class facility, building it and actively promoting it. It is one of the best managed trails in Australia. The Munda Biddi Trail in WA is another example though strictly speaking not a rail trail for the majority of its length. At the other end of the scale we are always amazed at the commitment and enthusiasm of the mostly voluntary based committees and the excellent results they can produce.

Include the data in Appendix A that includes economic analysis. Dr Beeton's research, which was based on surveys of the Murray to Mountains, the Warburton (Lilydale - Warburton) and the East Gippsland (Bairnsdale – Nowa Nowa) rail trails. While the figures varied depending on the trail, Dr Beeton determined that on average a visitor injected more than \$51 per day into the local economy. The Murray to the Mountains rail trail attracts well in excess of 20000 people per year bringing in over \$1,000,000 per year to the area.

2.2. Feasibility Studies

If it appears that there will be widespread community support for the rail trail a feasibility study should be constructed to get a more accurate idea of the scope and cost of the trail, and perhaps the staging of its construction. Look at sections that will get the most people using the trail for the least cost to prove its value to sceptical locals. Feasibility studies come in all shape and size depending on the groups involved and the possible planned expenditure. Examples in Appendix C.

Feasibility studies can be very time consuming and are best done by specialists who have experience and credibility in this area. This can obviously be expensive and grants should be sought to cover this cost.

2.3. Management Models

This varies from state to state and even between rail trails in the same state. The biggest factor is usually the interest of the councils(s). Even with full council involvement in the management consider establishing a "Friends of the Rail Trail" group. Victoria has the most advanced rail trail network in Australia and many of these trails now have local volunteer friends groups to assist with maintenance and events. It helps give a sense of community ownership of the trail, which amongst other things may deter vandalism and provides good local promotion. Any group should be incorporated, which is generally a prerequisite for receiving any grants and some donations.

It has been our observation that totally volunteer groups developing a rail trail of more than a few kilometres in length make very slow progress without a paid position to source funding, manage donations of labour and materials etc. this goes back to our comment that generally the greater the local (and sometimes state) government involvement the better the result.

The trend these days is for the state transport department to retain ownership of the land and lease it to a council or similar body for purposes of a rail trail, again reasons why full support of council(s) is needed

Victoria

With lobbying from Railtrails Australia (then known as Australian Rails to Trails) various Victorian governments in the 1990s provided the basis for Victoria's extensive rail trail network.

A Rail Trail Project was setup to investigate which lines would be feasible and legislation was passed to allow Crown Land to be reserved as a Community Reserve for rail trail purposes and provide public liability insurance for the committees of management. The project also provided the personnel to do all this work including the surrendering of unused railway land from VicTrack. Refer Appendix B.

While some trails in state and national parks are managed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment most trails are managed by a local committee of management. The committee of management for a community reserve is appointed by the Minister.

All railway land in Victoria is owned by the government corporation Victrack. Victrack no longer surrender unused railway land back to the Crown so all new rail trails will be on land leased from Victrack. All examples to date have been leased to councils including Rutherglen to Wahgunyah and Murchison to Rushworth. Contact (03) 9619-8850 victrack@victrack.com.au

Most lines had their rails and sleepers removed shortly after they were closed.

Bicycle Victoria is actively promoting rail trails in Victoria, has run two rail trail conferences and is a good source of knowledge for what funding grants may be available.

NSW

NSW is lagging far behind all the other states, not from lack of opportunities or interest by local groups. The few short open trails are managed by councils or the National Parks and Wildlife Service on corridors acquired from private companies.

Most unused branch lines are not officially closed as this requires an Act of Parliament, so the rails are generally still in place, as is the complete right of way.

Refer to Appendix B for more detail. As an update, prospective rail trails are on Rail Infrastructure Corporation land that is managed for them by the Australian Rail Track Corporation Ltd (ARTC). Railtrails Australia and local groups have been lobbying the government for many years to come up with a system that will allow the rails to be removed and rail trails constructed on long disused rail way corridors. Options include transferring or leasing the land to another statutory body such as a council or the Lands Department. It is not clear at this stage who would have salvage rights to rails, sleepers etc.

In the second half of 2009 the NSW government introduced legislation to allow the construction of rail trails on disused rail corridors but some aspects of it were reasons for the opposition parties to oppose it and it failed to be passed.

As of February 2011 no further progress has been made on establishing even a trial rail trail on a long disused corridor despite repeated requests and this legislation is still a convenient excuse for the government to do nothing.

SA

Open trails are managed by councils or the Department of Recreation and Sport. Railway land is under the control of Transport SA. To be confirmed.

Most closed lines have had their rails and sleepers removed.

Queensland

After a slow start Queensland is looking at getting some major rail trails, with significant government support for the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail.

When Queensland Rail closes a railway line they return the land to Queensland Transport. Queensland Rail is apparently required to remove all its infrastructure such as rails and bridges, which in earlier days resulted in a bit of a scorched earth policy. The loss of bridges is quite unfortunate especially for the northern half of the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail. However with

greater awareness of rail trails now, more consideration is now been taken, the Mareeba to Atherton line being a good example of cooperation. Obviously the earlier proposals are developed after Queensland Rail indicates closure of a line the better. Councils or other statutory bodies would lease rail trail land from Queensland Transport and of course take responsibility for the bridges.

WA

A Rails to Trails group was set up in the mid 1990s under Trailswest to promote the development of rail trails and got some off the ground.

All development has been by councils. Not sure who owns rail trail land or unused railway land. The exception is the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation which is using many rail trails in its very long trail from Mundaring to Albany.

Most closed lines have had their rails and sleepers removed.

2.4. Funding

Almost all funding for rail trails has come from local, state and federal governments. And most of this funding is in the form of grants from many different sources and quite often requires "in-kind" contribution. Refer to some of the feasibility reports for possible sources of funding.

Don't forget grants and sponsorship from private business and organisations. Sponsorship of rail trails has been fairly limited, the exception being the Munda Biddi Trail in WA. The High Country rail trail co-ordinator has been effective in getting numerous donations from local businesses and organisations to stretch grant funding. This funding has generally been in the provision of materials and labour rather than cash.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1. Trail Surfaces

One of the most important decisions as generally trail surfacing is the biggest cost in construction of a rail trail apart from bridges. Many factors to consider including the amount and type of users to be attracted, available construction budget and maintenance budget. If used by cyclists the trail surface should be a minimum of 2.5m and preferably 3m wide if practical. The bitumen surface in the photo to the right is 2.5m wide and the gravel surface in the bottom right photo is 3m wide.



Refer Appendix D for more detail.

As mentioned earlier, ideally a separate dirt path besides the main trail should be provided for horses where the corridor permits this. Horses and riders prefer the separate path, especially if the main trail is very hard, it reduces maintenance on the main trail and separates bikes and horses. With long distance horse trails watering facilities must also be considered and some trails even have holding yards.

3.2. Bridges

Bridges add greatly to the interest of a rail trail but are potentially the most costly pieces of infrastructure. Ideally your trail has a few bridges that have concrete supports, steel or concrete girders and a concrete deck requiring only some handrails to be fitted. However the odds are that the bridges will be any combination of wood, steel and concrete, in various stages of deterioration or have been removed altogether.



A report on the state of all bridges, works required to make them safe and/or trafficable and this cost should be obtained. All bridges should be checked by qualified people and costs obtained to bring them up to standard required by regulations. If the cost of these works is beyond available funding the options of diversions or low level crossings has to be investigated. These are generally undesirable as they detract from the rail trail experience particularly long diversions or short and steep low level crossings. Though sometimes a long low level crossing provides an opportunity to really appreciate the bridge, especially the old wooden trestle bridges. One example is the Nowa Nowa trestle bridge on the East Gippsland Rail Trail in Victoria.



3.3. Signage

Regulatory signs are essential for safety reasons. Directional and interpretive signs add to the experience for trail users. Signage can also be used to promote the trail to motorists when in proximity to major roads. Refer Appendix D, which includes Railtrails Australia's guide for signage development.

3.4. Fencing and Access Control

Fencing along rail trails appears to be a case by case nature. Most trails in Victoria are fenced when abutting private land which keeps stock in the right place and discourages trespassing. This also gives the options of temporary agistment of stock in some sections to keep vegetation under control and to assist adjacent farmers. Many trails or some sections of them are regarded as natural heritage areas so livestock are not permitted at all. The rail trail usually pays for fencing alongside crown land if required and some rail trails have also assisted adjacent private landholders with fencing, typically by providing materials.

Refer to Appendix D for general information on fencing.

There are many different methods of limiting unauthorised access to rail trails and we hope to provide examples soon. Cars are relatively simple to exclude with little inconvenience to trail users as they can only usually get on at road crossings and are wide vehicles. Keeping out trail bikes at road require more elaborate and expensive devices that often inconvenience trail users. And if trail bikes can enter along other parts of the trail they are relatively useless. It may be more effective to actively police the trail when problems occur as usually the offenders are locals.

3.5. Code of Conduct for Trail Users

Rail trails have a code on conduct, usually displayed at major points. Typically they would include:

- Observe local signs and restrictions.
- Do Not disturb plants and animals (including any livestock).
- Respect adjacent landholder's property and livestock.
- Take rubbish home with you or place it in bins if provided.
- Keep dogs on a leash
- Cyclists alert other users of your approach and pass at reduce speed.



3.6. Logo

Many rail trails have developed their own logo.

Developing a logo does not have to be an expensive task; several rail trails have used this to get community involvement by running a public competition for the best logo. One example of a competition is the High Country rail trail logo.



4. PROMOTION

Many people now know rail trails are different from other types of trails, i.e. an easily graded trail generally away from cars that is an enjoyable ride or walk by yourself or with friends or family. People are now looking out for rail trails or even planning holidays around them. However there are also established rail trails actively promoting themselves to attract these people, i.e. competition. So after all the hard work of constructing a trail it has to be promoted to attract those that know about rail trails and those that don't. Ideally it should be considered before construction starts!

The bare essentials include a name, logo and signage mentioned above along with a trail brochure. Railtrails Australia may be able to assist with the map in some instances.

Refer to Appendix E for examples.

Obviously consider keeping Railtrails Australia informed of your developments and activities. We can let others know about them as described in Section 1.

Establishing a good relationship with the local media is very important to keep getting coverage of your work. It reminds people that the trail is (or will be) there and all the benefits it is bringing. The local newspaper and tourist guides are probably the most important but use radio and television where possible.

Refer to Appendix E for examples.

Larger trails have succeeded in getting coverage in state and national media to promote their open trails. Railtrails Australia also assists these media when they do generic features on rail trails.

It is essential that a rail trail be promoted in conjunction with local business that offer services that visitors would want, such as accommodation, food & drink and transportation. Part of a rail trail's management plan would be encourage local business to develop these services to make the trail accessible to a greater sector of the community. Particularly successful examples are the Murray to Mountains and Otago Central rail trails.



(Photo courtesy Peter McManus)

5. APPENDICES (From Australia)

NOTE: Under Acrobat menu **Edit – Preferences – Documents (General** in version 8 or earlier) **de-select** option **Open cross-document links in same window** so that appendices are opened in a different window and you can easily return to this main document.

	TITLE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
A	STUDIES ON THE BENEFITS OF RAIL TRAILS AND USERS		
	Rail Trails Economic Report - 2003	Sue Beeton – Latrobe University	Economic contribution of rail trail users.
	Regional Communities and Cycling MtoM - 2006	Sue Beeton – Latrobe University	Update of 2003 study concentrating on Murray to Mountains rail trail. High average is due to purchase of local products.
	Rail Trails Economic Report MtoM - 2009	Sue Beeton – Latrobe University	The latest study on the Murray to Mountains rail trail.
	Regional Communities and Cycling MtoM - Fact Sheet- 2006	Sue Beeton – Latrobe University	Summary of above 2006 report.
	Rail Trail Rider Expectations - 2009	Paul Willard – Latrobe University	Thesis on the expectations of bike riders on long distance rail trails
	Otago Central Economic Impact and Trends Survey - 2008	Carla Jellum & Arianne Reis, Otago Central Rail Trail Trust	Report on a survey of business affected by this very popular NZ rail trail.
	Rural Restructuring Along the Otago Central - 2008	O.Dowsett – Lincoln University	A thesis on the five levels of rural restructuring in NZ, the lowest level being case studies along the rail trail.
	Estimating Rail Trail Demand - 2003	Betz, Bergstrom & Bowker – USA Journal of Environmental Planning and Management	Similar aims to above but based on USA state and a lot of detail on theory of modelling.
	Rail Trails & Cycle Tourism Thesis 2004	Paul Willard – Latrobe University	Economic implications for regional business operators and influence of stakeholder relationships, on Murray to Mountains rail trail
	Otago Central Rail Trail Economic Impact Studies - 2005	OCRT Trust, NZ	Two studies that provide good indication of types of users and their economic impact on this area of NZ.
	MtoM Data overview 2001-2005	Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, Victoria	Comparison of amount of uses of very popular rail trail
	National Cycling Strategy 2005-2010 Draft	Austroroads	Good summary of cycling statistics
	Queensland Outdoor Recreation Fact Sheet - 2001	Qld Outdoor Recreation Federation	Statistics on participation in outdoor activities in SE Queensland
	Pedalling Health-Health Benefits of a Modal Transport Shift.pdf	Roberts, Owen, Lumb & MacDougal	South Australian study on affect of bike riding on health
	Guide Book Survey Results - 2001	Railtrails Australia	A brief look at users of our first guide book
	Sport and Recreation - Statistical Overview - 2003	Australian Bureau of Statistics	Some statistics may be of interest

	TITLE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
B	INITIAL PROPOSALS		
	Rail Trail Introduction Presentation-2006	Andrew Graham	Good summary of rail trails
	Cycle Tourism Briefing paper -2010	Mount Remarkable and Northern Areas Council	Proposal for 125km rail trail in Southern Flinders Ranges
	Implementing Active Trails - Challenge For Collaboration -2007	Darryl Low Choy and Steve MacDonald	Background to implementing Queensland's Active Trails.
	Bungendore - Captains Flat (NSW) Proposal -2004	Pedal Power ACT	Good two page example
	Queanbeyan - Williamsdale Proposal - 2004	Pedal Power ACT	Good two page example with maps
	Cycleways Along Railway Corridors in NSW -1997	Bruce Ashley	Comprehensive report prepared for NSW Dept. of Transport. Almost a manual in itself. Also covers Rails-with-Trails.
	Victorian Rail Trails Project - 1998	Vic. Natural Resources & Environment	Details and map of the project that got Victoria off to a great start. Useful hints as well.
	NSW Re-use of disused railway lines - 1998	Rail Access Corporation NSW and Railway Digest	Outline of condition of closed lines and refurbishment costs.
C	FEASIBILITY STUDIES		
	Atherton Tablelands (Qld) Feasibility Study - 2008	Transplan and Mike Haliburton Associates	Detailed feasibility study for the Queensland Government and Tablelands Council
	Brisbane Valley (Qld) Draft Plan - 2008	Queensland Dept. of Infrastructure & Planning	Draft of plan to construct 148km rail trail
	Brisbane Valley (Qld) Draft Plan - Plans - 2008	Queensland Dept. of Infrastructure & Planning	Detailed plans of route for above report
	Riverina Highlands (NSW) Feasibility Study - 2006	Transplan and Mike Haliburton Associates	Detailed feasibility study for the NSW Riverina Regional Development Board
	Goulburn River (Vic) Final Draft Concept-Business plan - 2006	Urban Enterprises	Detailed feasibility study for the Mitchell, Murrindindi and Mansfield Shires
	Feasibility Study Brief - 2001	Mitchell Shire, Vic	Example of short brief for consultants
	Detailed Feasibility Study - 2001	Mitchell Shire, Vic	For Tallarook to Alexandra
	Concept Design Brief - 2004	Mitchell Shire, Vic	Example of comprehensive brief for consultants
	Busselton - Flinders Bay (WA) management plan - 2004	Shire of Augusta Margaret River, WA	Includes addressing concerns of adjacent land holders.
	Response to Community Concerns - 2004	High Country Rail Trail/ Parklands Albury Wodonga	Example of responding to the concerns of local residents, mostly adjacent landholders.
	Goulburn Valley Rail Trail Proposal (Vic) Meeting Notes 2005	Urban Enterprises	Information presentation to public meetings on behalf of the Mitchell, Murrindindi and Mansfield Shires
	Goulburn Valley Rail Trail (Vic) Consultant	Urban Enterprises	Example of public update

	TITLE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
	Update 2005		newsletter during consultation and design stage for above Shires
	Rail Trail "Green Paper"	High Country Rail Trail/ Parklands Albury Wodonga	Moderately detailed proposal that has been worded in a form that could be used as government policy.
	Riesling Trail Extension Report (SA) - 2005	Transplan and Mike Haliburton Associates	Executive summary of the feasibility study for the Riesling Trail CoM
	Port Fairy - Dennington Report (Vic) - 2004	Transplan and Mike Haliburton Associates	Detailed feasibility study for Moyne Shire
	Oakbank - Mt Pleasant Report (SA) - 2003	Maher Brampton Associates	Detailed feasibility study for Adelaide Hills Council
D	TECHNICAL REFERENCES		
	Rail Trail Construction Costs	Railtrails Australia	Summary of funding sources and overall costs for many of the rail trails.
	Bridge deck standard design - 2010	Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail	Modular deck with handrails for steel girder bridge
	Bridge drawings - existing condition - 2010	Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail	Documentation of existing bridge condition
	Bridge work scope - 2010	Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail	Example of documentation of bridge works required.
	NSW Bicycle Guidelines - 2005	NSW Roads and Traffic Authority	Comprehensive guidelines to bicycle path construction on and off road.
	Usage and Maintenance Summary - 2006	Bass Coast Shire Council	Good short overview on usage of trail and future works. Also setting up a friends of the rail trail group
	Trail Surface and Maintenance - 2004.ppt	High Country Rail Trail/ Parklands Albury Wodonga	Good overview on selection of trail surfaces. Microsoft Powerpoint file included on disk as well.
	Trail Surface Experience - 2004	Warburton Rail Trail, Vic	Presentation on trail development. Microsoft Powerpoint file included on disk as well.
	Trail Construction Cost Estimate Map - 2001	Mitchell Shire, Vic	For Tallarook to Alexandra feasibility study
	High Standard Trail Construction Cost Estimate - 2001	Lake Macquarie Council, NSW	Based on actual construction costs for Fernleigh Track
	Trail Implementation Guidelines - 2010	Queensland Dept of Infrastructure and Planning	A more detailed version of this document
	Trail Maintenance Program - 2005	High Country Rail Trail/ Parklands Albury Wodonga	Annual maintenance program and budget
	Trail Facilities Plan - 2005	City of Onkaparinga, SA Habitable Places Arch. Sustainable Solutions John Nowland Design	Draft of comprehensive study into facilities needed along Coast to Vines Rail Trail, SA.
	Trail Signage Plan - 2005	As above	Draft of comprehensive study into signage needed along a rail trail

	TITLE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
	A Guide to Signing Cycle Networks - 2009	Queensland Transport	Guide to developing signage systems on bicycle routes.
	Cycle Network Directional Signage Guidelines - 2009	Queensland Transport	
	Producing Bicycle Network Maps- 2009	Queensland Transport	
	Trail Signage on East Gippsland RT - 2004	East Gippsland Rail Trail	Full example of signage on a major rail trail
	Signage Development - 2003	Railtrails Australia	Guide for developing a signage policy on trails
	Horse Trail Design - 2005	Australian Trail Horse Riders Association	Needs, Specifications and Infrastructure Requirements for recreational horse riding trails
	Cycle Notes - Design Standards 2002	Vic Roads	General guide for on-road sections
	Cycle Notes - Behavioural Signs 2001	Vic Roads	For shared path signage
	Cycle Notes - Directional Signs 2002	Vic Roads	For off-road trails
	Cycle Notes - Road Crossings 2005	Vic Roads	For road crossings and covers rail trails.
	VicTrack Shared Pathways Guidelines - 2009	VicTrack	Guidelines to trails with rails in Victoria
	Solar Powered Bike Path Lighting - 2010	SolarOne	
	Fencing of Seedlings - 2003	S.M. Jennings – Forestry Tasmania	Comparison of methods of fencing large scale plantings, including costs.
	Fencing Wildlife Habitat - 1999	Victorian Dept. of Sustainability & Environment	General guide to fencing and costs.
	Victorian Rail Trails Program - 1994	Victorian Dept. of Sustainability & Environment	The program that got rail trails really underway in Australia
E	Rail Trail Promotion		
	Warburton Rail Trail (Vic) Package - 2008	Businesses along Warburton Rail Trail	Example of packaging services for a rail trail
	Brochure Marketing Prospectus - 2009	Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, Vic	Getting local businesses involved with marketing the trail through a brochure
	Rail Trail Marketing Plan - 2005	City of Onkaparinga, SA Habitable Places Arch. Sustainable Solutions John Nowland Design	Draft of Coast to Vines Rail Trail, SA marketing plan.
	Rail Trail Brochure - 2010	Shire of Mundaring	Railway Reserves Trail (WA)
	Rail Trail Brochure - 2008	The Oberon Council	Pioneer Rail Trail (NSW)
	Rail Trail Brochure - 2008	Brisbane Valley Rail Trail (Qld)	Linville to Blackbutt section
	Rail Trail Brochure - 2006	Colac-Otway Shire, Vic	Old Beechy Rail Trail
	Rail Trail Brochure - 2002	City of Glen Eira, Vic	Rosstown Rail Trail
	Rail Trail Brochure - 2003	Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, Vic	
	Abashiri Tokoro Brochure - 1995	Hokkaido Prefecture	Ohotsk Cycling Road Rail Trail, Japan
	Tsukuba Brochure - 1995	Tochigi Prefecture	Tsukuba Rail Trail, Japan
	Rail Trail Event Promotion - 2006	Otago Central Rail Trail	Penny Farthing Tour Flyer

	TITLE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
	East Gippsland Rail Trail (Vic) opening - 2006	ABC Local Radio	Good example of a radio interview. MP3 file.
	High Country Rail Trail media coverage	Railtrails Australia	Collection of clippings with good and bad coverage.
	Rail Trail Feature in The Age	The Age newspaper	Leading Victorian newspaper
	Rail Trail Operator Brochure	RailtrailsRus	Organise tours on rail trails
	Rail Trail User Testimonials	Various people	Letters from rail trail users
F	Rail Trail Management		
	Design Guidelines - 2010	Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail	
	Construction Environment Management Plan - 2010	Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail	
	Management Plan Brief - 2011	Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail	Example brief for development of a management plan
	Management Plan Interim - 2010	Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail	Example interim management plan
	VicTrack Environmental Management Plan - 2010	Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail	
	Rail Trail Management Plan - 2008	Railtrails Australia	Preliminary draft of a generic rail trail management plan
H	Suppliers		Railtrails Australia Inc has no connection to any of these companies.
	Trail User Counters	Eco Counter	
	Trail User Counters	TRAFx	
	Trail User Counters	Traker	
	Recycled Plastic Supplier news	Replas	Various materials and signs, even bridges
	Outdoor facilities Design - 2010	GR Design & Construct	shelters, footbridges and street furniture.
	Composite Panels for Bridges - 2010	LOC	
	Examples from Signage Supplier - 2006	Repeat Signs	
	Lanotec Wood Treatment - 2006	Lanotec	May have benefits for bridges.

6. APPENDICES (From Overseas)

Many of these are from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), the peak rail trail body in the United States of America. <http://www.railtrails.org>

	TITLE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
G1	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Reports		
	Successful Rail Trails Manual	RTC and National Parks Service	USA focussed but some very useful generic information.
	Rail Trail Opposition Questions - 1996	RTC	The 12 most frequently asked questions by opponents of rail trails.
	Community Sentiment - 1998	RTC	A study of opposition to rail trails and strategies for success
	Work With the Opposition - 1997	RTC	Summary of above
	Rail-Trails and Safe Communities -1998	RTC	Crime on rail trails
	Rail Trails and Liability - 2000	RTC	Trail-Related Liability Issues & Risk Management Techniques
	Smart Growth - 2002	RTC	Advancing Smart Growth
	Tunnels on Trails - 2001	RTC	Study of 78 Tunnels on 36 Trails
	Sharing With Utilities - 1997	RTC	Brief look on shared use of rail trail corridors
	Maintenance and Operations - 2005	RTC	Maintenance and operation of open rail trails.
	Railbanking History - 2005	RTC	Details of preserving rail corridors for future use.
G2	Rails-with-Trails		
	Chelatchie Prarie Rail Trail Study - 2008	Alta Planning and Design	Study on a rail trail beside a railway line in Vancouver Canada.
	Trains Magazine Article - 2005	Kalmbach Publishing Co	"The Truth About Rails^with-Trails"
	Lessons Learned - 2002	U.S. Department of Transportation	Literature Review, Current Practices, Conclusions Management Techniques
	Report - 2000	RTC	Design, Management, and Operating Characteristics of trails besides railway lines
	Report: Appendix - 2000	RTC	A. Individual Survey Responses B. Trail Manager Contact Information for above report
	Trails to Rails - 2010	Kalmbach Publishing Co	Article on rail trails being converted back to railways
G3	Economic Benefits		
	Little Miami Rail Trail Property Values - 2008	Duygu Karadeniz, University of Cincinnati	Thesis on the effect of this Ohio rail trail on property values
	Bicycling & Walking in Colorado -2000	The Colorado Department of Transportation	Economic Impact and Household Survey Results
	Fox River Trail Study - 2001	Brown County Planning Commission	Economic and usage study

	TITLE	AUTHOR	COMMENTS
	Property Values - 1999	John L. Crompton	The impact of parks and open space on property values and the property tax base in the USA
	Protecting Rivers, Trails and Greenways - 1995	U.S. National Parks Service	Economic impacts of protecting rivers, trails, and greenway corridors
	Thinking Green - 1998	Florida Department of Environmental Protection	Guide to the Benefits and Costs of Greenways and Trails.
	Vermont Tourism - 2000.pdf	Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing	Various facts and figures from a U.S. state
	Economic Spin-offs - 1998.pdf	La Route verte, Canada	
G4	Trail Usage Studies in Indiana, USA		
	Monon Trail - 2001	Indiana Department of Transportation Indiana Department of Natural Resources National Park Service	Detailed analysis of a study on an urban rail trail
	Cardinal Greenway Trail - 2001	As above	Detailed analysis of a study on a rural rail trail
	Summary Report - 2001	As above	Summary of all the trails studied
			More studies in the "G4 Indiana" folder on the CD
G5	Health Issues		
	Best Practices for Health - 2004	RTC	Ten case studies of programs and partnerships to create active communities
	Transport, Environment and Health - 2000	World health Organisation	Study focusing on Europe
	Bicycling & Walking to Healthy Communities	Andy Clarke	Presentation on benefits of riding and walking.
			More reports in the "G5 Physical Activity" folder on the CD
G6	Others		
	British Columbia Trail Strategy Background - 2007	British Columbia Ministry of Tourism, Sports and Arts	Guide to future developments in this Canadian province.
	Women and Cycling -2010	Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals	Survey of 7000 women bike riders

7. APPENDIX H – Rail Trail Consultants

The businesses listed below have prepared reports contained in other appendices and are summarised below for convenience. Railtrails Australia has no connection with these businesses.

Transplan Pty Ltd

Mike Maher
78 Gardner St
Como WA 6152
(08) 9474-4655
0419 744 655

mmaher@westnet.com.au

“Recreation and Heritage Trail Specialists”

In conjunction with Mike Haliburton in Brisbane they have done studies for numerous rail trails around Australia; recent examples include Warrnambool - Port Fairy in Victoria, Riverina Highlands in NSW, Riesling Trail extension in South Australia and Atherton Tablelands in Queensland.

Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd

Matt Ainsaar
PO Box 157
North Fitzroy 3068
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<http://www.urbanenterprise.com.au>

Have done the Feasibility Study and now the Concept Design and Business Plan for the Tallarook-Alexandra-Mansfield rail trail proposal.

Bruce Ashley

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Summer Hill NSW 2130
AUSTRALIA
phone 02 9560 9281

bruce@bike-it.com.au

www.bike-it.com.au

“Consultant for environmental planning, strategic cycling studies and also as author/publisher of cycling information and cycling maps (currently working on Bike-it 2)”

Prepared report into Cycleways in NSW

Habitable Places Architects

Richard Woods
169 Cross Rd Westbourne Park 5041
Ph (08) 8271 1711
Fax (08) 8271 1713

Sustainable Solutions

Terry Bruun
PO Box 6633
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General Project management

John Nowland Design

John Nowland
122 Sturt St Adelaide 5000
(08) 8212 2037

The above three consultants prepared the Coast to Vines Rail Trail reports.



Monaro Rail Trail

Pre-feasibility Assessment

| Final report October 12 2018



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Acknowledgements

The Monaro Rail Trail Pre-feasibility Assessment was prepared by TRC Tourism Pty Ltd for the Monaro Rail Trail Inc.

Disclaimer

This is a high level prefeasibility study and more rigorous assessment will be required to underpin future planning and decisions.

Any representation, statement, opinion or advice, expressed or implied in this document is made in good faith but on the basis that TRC Tourism is not liable to any person for any damage or loss whatsoever which has occurred or may occur in relation to that person taking or not taking action in respect of any representation, statement or advice referred to in this document.

1 Introduction

For several years the concept has been mooted of a recreational cycle trail being developed on the disused railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala. In August 2015 the Monaro Rail Trail Inc was established to pursue the feasibility of the trail.

TRC Tourism was commissioned in 2018 to undertake a high-level pre-feasibility report to determine whether the concept warrants further research and assessment. This document is this report.

As per the brief between TRC and the Monaro Rail Trail committee, this report is intended to provide a high-level only overview of the likely experience, potential markets and economic benefits of a rail trail. It has involved two days of field assessments by the TRC team, and desktop assessment of likely market demand and benefits. An exhaustive feasibility assessment and market demand modelling will still be required before the project proceeds.

The Route



Elevation Profile



2 The potential of Rail Trails

Cycle tourism is a growing market within the Australian tourism sector, particularly within the nature-based tourism segment. It includes both domestic and international visitors, mostly staying overnight but can include day trippers. It includes cycle tourers, mountain bikers and road cyclists.

Rail trails appeal to a broad range of markets including families with children. A key advantage of rail trail construction is the gradient – given most rail lines have a gradient of less than three degrees, this allows and encourages use by almost all population groups, regardless of age. As well as cyclists, rail trails also provide excellent opportunities for people with mobility disabilities, e.g. wheelchair users, special cycles, walking with support, or sight/ hearing impediments as well as for runners, walkers.

Research indicates that rail trail infrastructure appeals predominantly to couples aged fifty plus and families with children, who seek an experience that allows them to spend quality time with friends and family¹.

Rail trails present opportunities for businesses to develop products and services to meet the needs of visiting cyclists and walkers. This includes transport, merchandise, accommodation or provisioning and guiding services. Cyclists do more while on holiday when compared with other tourists, making them a stronger source of income for regional economies. This pattern of use has resulted in the diversification of the tourism product mix in some regional areas².

Available research including the case studies presented in the appendix to this report, demonstrates rail trails have been highly successful in developing cycle tourism product and delivering significant economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits to regional Australia. Quality rail trails and riding experiences bring cyclists and walkers to regions and small communities. We have seen from other destinations that riders will travel, sometimes to previously unknown destinations, if the rail trail is appealing.

The development of rail trails has resulted in revitalization of villages and businesses, the creation of new businesses and adaptation of farms and other buildings as character accommodation. Rail trails also result in the preservation of heritage items along the route such as bridges, sidings and stations.

Small communities such as those between Queanbeyan and Bombala have the potential to offer these services and become vibrant centres along the trail.

Creating great cycling experiences

In general, cycle tourists want easy multi-day trips with good supporting services or events. The holidays can also be location-based and use nearby trail networks. They require trips that take in the region's landscape, natural environment and culture. Cycle tourists and recreational riders are not primarily focused on cycling but on the broader experience. This group is likely to be older or consist

¹ Victorian Government, Victorian Cycling Strategy 2012

² New Zealand Cycleway Market Research TRC Tourism 2008

of families rather than single visitors or couples. Both markets are looking for easy access to safe and traffic-free trails.

The case studies below and those in the appendix to this report show that the entire visitor experience is important, not just the cycling aspect. This is particularly true for those markets whose primary motivation is not cycling. Accommodation, services, information, scenic values and other activities combine to make the experience more appealing to a broader range of visitors.

Trail	Annual Usage 2012/13	Total Regional Visitation
<p>Murray to the Mountains, Victoria – Established 2009</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market is a good example of dual use with 45,000 users per annum including walkers • For the majority (59%, 26,550) cycling is the main reason for undertaking the trip • 85% come from within the State of Victoria • 63% are male and travel with partner or family groups • Most are aged between 31 and 60 • Most cyclists spend 2 or 3 days on the trail 	<p>2.5 million visitors to High Country Region (2012/2013)</p>
<p>Hauraki Rail Trail New Zealand Established 2012</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21,000 visitors per annum • One third day visitors • Domestic visitors (local within 2 hours) prominent market • Families and younger people are main users • 67% indicated that the rail trail was their main purpose of visit • Average length of stay 1 night 	<p>3 million visitors to Coromandel Peninsula NZ (2012/2013)</p>
<p>Otago Central Rail Trail, NZ Established in 2000</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017/18 - 14,392 completed the trail this figure does not include at least 80,000pa users on the trail either community or using the trail for short ride recreation • The majority of Rail Trail users are over 50 years old, are an average age of 44 years, slightly more likely to be female • Majority of visitors from Auckland, Canterbury or somewhere else in the North Island; and a first time visitor to the rail trail travel • The largest international visitor market is Australia • 9% guided tour customers, 50% independent travellers (renting a bicycle) and 41% New Zealanders bringing their own bicycles • 1,000 full and part-time jobs and having created 200 additional or part-time jobs³ 	<p>932,000 visitors to Otago (2012/2013)</p>

³ "Cycleway the only way" Hueber, Andre (19 June 2011. [The New Zealand Herald](#))

3 Evaluating the Monaro Rail Trail experience

The proposed rail trail follows the disused rail line from Queanbeyan to Bombala, a distance of 208 km. This is a good distance for a cycle tourism experience enabling a 3-5 day journey by the family and leisure market who might ride up to 50 kms /day.

Trail gradient is a critical factor in successfully designing a trail for a specific market or type of rider. For a large portion of the location-based cycling and cycling holiday market average trail gradients of 2-3% are required. The strength of the Monaro Rail Trail alignment is the gentle gradient that will appeal to a broad market.

The following is a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (before development) when compared to other rail trails around Australia:

- **Strengths**
 - Proximity to Canberra, a population that has a high propensity for cycling
 - Within reasonable travel from other strong markets
 - It can leverage off the Snowy Mountains established reputation as a nature-based and adventure tourism destination
 - Mountain bike product existing and being further developed in the region will raise the profile of the region as a cycling destination generally
 - It has the potential to leverage off the profile of events such as L'Etape that has put the region on the cycling map
 - Committed and supportive community group as proponents
 - Existing fenced railway easement from Cooma to Queanbeyan
- **Opportunities**
 - Small attractive communities (such as Michelago, Bredbo, Nimmitabel) that could be further developed to become experiences in themselves
 - Business development along the trail to support the experience
 - Pastoral properties as accommodation and experiences
 - Some residual stations and sidings as part of the experience
 - Potential to bundle rail trail activities with other tourism products, including food, wine and historic heritage in the region
 - Use of pop up catering etc as interim measure
 - Typical Monaro landscape and terrain with potential to explore the villages along the way
 - Linking rail trail to Canberra commuter network
 - Heritage train from Cooma to Rock Flat supporting the experience if appropriate co sharing of railway easement can be achieved

- **Weaknesses**
 - Distance between settlements and experiences
 - Limited accommodation/ infrastructure/ hospitality along the journey (note the clustering of product and overnight stays in case studies in appendix)
 - Road crossings on major highway
 - Some extended trail sections with limited diversity of scenery
 - Some landholders not supportive of the proposal
 - Need for extensive fencing for easement from Cooma to Bombala
 - Poor condition of some of the redundant infrastructure
 - Asbestos issues with some railway infrastructure as well as some railway buildings near trail
- **Threats**
 - Lack of funding to progress
 - Downturn in tourism sector
 - Communities failing to develop new product and/or support the experience
 - Legislation to enable the easement to be used not being supported
 - Re opening of the rail line as a freight and/or passenger service would make the rail trail non-viable

The overall visitor experience

The alignment travels through typical Monaro and country NSW country with broad expanses of open space and rural landscapes plus some areas featuring the local granite. There are many interesting rail features including heritage listed bridges, sidings, sheds and stations all of which add to the experience and the story that can be told.

The pastoral story and heritage of the region is also visible through properties and remnants of the earlier role of the railway to transport wool and other produce.

Whilst there are many strong aspects of the potential experience, there are also a number of issues that will need to be resolved if the product is to be successful.

Importantly, whilst villages/towns are well situated for overnight accommodation, the distance between them is too long for the target market without good stopping places and interesting experiences during the day. Cycle tourists and recreational riders are not primarily focused on cycling but on the broader experience and, as such, there needs to be places to stop, shelter and enjoy a break and refreshments or similar every 20-25kilometres as a minimum (as per other successful rail trail experiences show in appendix). For the Monaro Rail Trail there will need to be engagement with landholders and/or travelling support services (such as commercial bike operators supplying their client and popup coffee carts for example) to enable this to occur. The trail would also benefit from things to do (such as farm visits/stays, interpretation history of Monaro pastoral properties/wool industry, train station setup as museums, art exhibits or mural installations etc).

The trail passes through a number of villages/ towns that offer opportunities for accommodation and servicing. Each of them could also offer visitor experiences of different types depending on the vision and initiative of the community and businesses. This will be a critical requirement to underpin the tourism experience. There will need to be considerable additional accommodation and a diversity of experiences in each of the villages along the route as well as new businesses along the way such as farm stays or farm-based experiences.

The bridges that carried the railway are one of the best features of this trail and with appropriate investment and planning they would be a significant feature of the experience. The preference would be to have the riders on the bridges. If there are significant infrastructure constraints the trail could go alongside on purpose-built cycle trail bridges that afford good views of the older bridges.

Observations on the alignment and experience

The Urban Setting

The existing active rail at the Queanbeyan Station will preclude the Monaro Rail Trail from commencing directly from this location. However, an alternative exists in the shared path from the station to Railway Park affording access to the disused rail line off Henderson Road.

From there the rail trail will pass through the Queanbeyan suburb of Crestwood at the rear of the industrial area. This is not ideal given the industrial nature of the experience, but it is a short stretch until open country is reached, and ideally there will be other options for accessing the rail trail from Canberra commuter networks. There will also need to be consideration of management of real and perceived risks associated with rubbish dumping, graffiti and other antisocial activities (e.g. Norse Bridge).

Landscape

A high-level assessment of the landscape from a visitor experience viewpoint suggests that Nimmitabel to Bombala offers considerable diversity in the experience with changing landscape, topography and features making it an excellent environment for the rider. Cooma to Queanbeyan, whilst having some extended sections that parallel close to the Monaro Highway, also has some good landscape diversity and the backdrop of the Tinderry Ranges and Namadgi National Park. The greatest landscape challenge is from Cooma to Nimmitabel which includes some long sections with limited scenic diversity. This is exacerbated by the location of this section in the middle of the trail where you have come from (or are going to) sections of more exciting landscape.

Long sections of what might be considered boring country for some riders do not preclude the trail. However, greater efforts need to be made in these sections to enhance the experience through new product such as farm stops, artworks, really good story telling etc. It will be critical to have good stopping points as the market that will be interested in the rail trail is not one that will enjoy riding 50 kilometres without stopping for points of interest or refreshments. They want to enjoy the experience and their resting and social opportunities.

Stations and Sidings

Stations and sidings are well located to create interesting experiences and potentially shelter points. Michelago and Cooma are well maintained and have committed volunteer groups that should be supportive of the opportunity presented. Other stations and sidings will need redevelopment and, potentially, purpose-built shelters to add to the experience and enable stopping/ resting points along the way.

Disused railway stations, sidings and ageing rail infrastructure provide the link to the past particularly the remote sidings that provide a glimpse of the pastoral history between Cooma and Bombala. Station yards offer an interesting view into the past with abandoned yards with rolling stock and turntables apparently as the rail workers left them. Great opportunities exist for interpretation of the history of the Monaro including the railway and its past purpose, pastoral settlement and pre-occupation stories.



Hazardous materials

Asbestos was traditionally used in rail stock brake pads and is also found on some of the railway buildings as well as farm infrastructure. Clean up and rectifying of safety hazards will need to be carried out by a professional and expert organisation and undertaken to appropriate standards.

Clean up and construction will need to be done to protect the integrity and sustainability of the sites and placement of the trail will also need to be considered carefully to protect the sites integrity. In most cases the sidings and station track should be left in situ with the future trail placed on an alignment that does not interfere with the historical look and feel of the site before joining the rail corridor at the end of the site.

Bridges and tunnels

There are spectacular bridges on the proposed rail trail including the Ingelara and Bredbo bridges that are heritage listed. The long Chakola Bridge over the Numeralla River and flood plain would be a remarkable rail trail experience. Significant work would however be required on sections of the bridge. Likewise, the Michelago Creek Bridge located just south of the station could become an important feature of the rail trail experience if safety and infrastructure issues can be resolved. Many other bridges including several between Nimmitabel and Bombala would add real value to the experience.

Whilst the development of the rail trail may afford the opportunity to restore and ensure long term survival of bridges, it may not be feasible or financially effective to restore all the bridges to a usable state. It would be reasonable to have purpose-built trails or structures built alongside some bridges that will still enable the rider to view the historic structures.

All bridges will require detailed assessment from an engineering, safety and rail trail experience perspective. The assessment will need to be complemented by an assessment of the investment required for a sustainable future. Appropriate funding needs to be sought for real and long-lasting infrastructure upgrades that reduce future maintenance and costly upgrades. The future is about a relationship between these remarkable bridges and the rail trail experience.

The 161-metre-long single tracked Colinton tunnel cuts through rock and is lined with half a million bricks that were made at Bredbo. The tunnel provides a unique rail trail experience.⁴ There appears to be minimal infrastructure issues with the tunnel.



⁴ By [Tim the Yowie Man](#) Canberra November 2017

The Trail Build

The intact status of the majority of the rail line provides a challenge for construction and potentially the experience. Standard gauge rail lines are 1435 mm from rail to rail which does not correspond with the best 2.5 to 3.0 metre width for rail trails.

The simple solution would be using the rails as formwork for the compacted crushed rock fill and asphalt seal if deemed necessary. However, the average bicycle handle bar length is 700 mm which does not allow for safe passing or comfortable side by side riding which are important attractions of rail trail riding where you can comfortably have a conversation whilst riding.

The options to achieve the best riding experience would involve either removal of the rail and sleepers or providing additional treatment to extend the crushed rock base 700 mm either side of the sleepers.

The embankments evident closer to Queanbeyan are steep and can be intimidating and uncomfortable for riders particularly if the trail is on an elevated surface using the rail formwork approach. Both approaches on these embankments would require safety fencing.

Rail trails generally are constructed from a crushed rock base with or without asphalt seal. The asphalt seal encourages a wider cycling market including fast road cycling on lightweight bikes. The faster speeds provide design and maintenance challenges such as requiring greater width, good sight lines and attention to hazards on the trail such as rocks, branches and even tree fruits and nuts. The compacted gravel approach better attracts the target market for trails such as this including back packers, casual rider, families and those seeking the rail trail experience of linking to the landscape and heritage.

The use of the asphalt seal should be considered for the trail closer to Queanbeyan as it can provide a useful commuting trail as well as link in with Canberra's bicycle trails network.





Highway Interaction

Rail trail users seek experiences remote from the urban environment with roads and traffic being avoided. The beginning of the trail at Queanbeyan is very urban although this transitions to a semi-rural landscape after 2.5 km.

A major issue is the crossing of the Monaro Highway six times. Crossings on minor roads and in built up areas with lower speed limits can be effectively managed, but highway crossings will require underpasses or similar. As an example, there is a road crossing to the north of Bredbo (in the 100 km/hour zone) near the Colinton rest area. A few hundred metres beyond the crossing is a stock underpass/culvert. This may be able to be adapted for cyclists and a safe roadside cycle path created to link with the trail.

All crossings will require assessment by qualified experts as part of feasibility planning including assessment of approach site distances⁵. On an extremely busy highway it is unlikely traffic slowing, lights or other cross road management would be feasible or acceptable.

The minor road crossings such as between Nimmitabel and Bombala come with their own infrastructure challenges including a range of stock grids that are generally unsuitable for a rail trail. Standard designs for stock grids that have been developed on other rail trails would however be applicable.

⁵ in Austroads Guide to Road Design

Other Trail Side Infrastructure

The three-story concrete and corrugated iron ruin of the Maclaughlin Meat Works is a dominant feature on a remote section of the track near the Maclaughlin River. It opened in 1939 and employed 90 people processing pigs, cattle and sheep but was plagued by problems including drought and militant workers and operated for only three years. This is an interesting attraction for the rail trail however it is a ruin and would pose significant risk to people entering the building. The risks associated with the building should not constrain the rail trail proposal, but consideration will be needed to ensure trail users do not enter the building in its present condition.

Stock management on the whole trail is an important consideration to ensure neighbours are comfortable with the change in use. Much of the rail is fenced between Cooma and Queanbeyan but this is not the case between Cooma and Bombala. Agreements will be required regarding future stock fencing arrangements.

A pallet of infrastructure standard designs applicable to the rail trail should be included in the future development of the rail trail. The designs should reflect the importance of the rail to the history and culture of the area following the themes of rail, Snowy Mountains Scheme and the pastoral industry.



4 Indicative costs of construction

The following indicative high-level costs are provided for construction of the rail trail. These must be treated with caution until such time as a detailed feasibility study including engineering assessments has been undertaken.

Bridge repair and or alternative new low-level bridging	3,000,000
Trail clearance and construction plus bitumen costs for town approaches - does not include any credits for salvage of rail lines	\$21,000,000
Hazardous substance assessments and potential mitigation	\$140,000
Road crossings - includes road reserve path under existing culvert and to back road access to the rail north of Colington and allowance for one additional underpass at \$500,000	\$1,000,000
Signs	\$20,000
Grids and gates	\$60,000
Revegetation	\$100,000
Trailheads	\$80,000
Fencing	\$2,000,000
Sub total	\$27,400,000
25% contingency	\$4,975,000
Sub total	\$32,375,000
Engineering assessments 10% of project costs	\$2,487,500
Total	\$34,862,500
Project management costs are likely to be 10% of development costs	\$3,000,000
	\$37,862,500
Maintenance costs at 2% of development costs approximately	\$700,000



5 Market demand and economic benefits

Economic benefits from trail use are generally accrued from visitors to a region rather than local populations. For this high level pre-feasibility, we have estimated demand from both current and new tourists. There will also be significant use from local residents but this has not been included in this assessment.

The other rail trails referenced in this report are well established and supported by tourism product, so a conservative approach to potential use has been taken for this assessment, recognising that it will take some time for this trail to mature and reach its full potential.

Regional Visitors

Tourism Research Australia data indicates that the Cooma and Cooma SA2 region (which includes all of the towns along the route excluding Queanbeyan and Michelago) received 3,000 international visitors, 137,000 domestic overnight visitors and 170,000 domestic day visitors per year on a four year average between 2014 and 2017⁶. Visitors to the region spent \$69 million annually.

TABLE 1 COOMA REGION VISITORS AND EXPENDITURE

Cooma Region Visitation - 4 Year Average 2014-2017				
	International	Domestic overnight	Domestic day	Total
Visitors (000)	3,000	137,000	170,000	309,000
Nights (000)	19,000	340,000	0	359,000
Expenditure	1,000,000	51,000,000	17,000,000	69,000,000

Current Proportion of visitors who cycle

Tourism Research Australia advises that in 2017, 6% of international visitors to Australia and 2% of domestic overnight visitors included a cycling activity on their trip⁷.

TABLE 2 TRA CYCLING ACTIVITY

Visitors to Cooma and Cooma Region		Number likely to include cycling activity on their trip	
3,000	International visitors	6%	170
137,000	Overnight visitors	2%	2,480
TOTAL			5,727

Source TRA Markets

Given the proximity of the rail trail to Canberra, and the propensity of the Canberra market to cycle (the ACT has the highest participation rate for cycling in Australia with 46.5% of the population

⁶ Tourism Research Australia, REC extra data, September 2018.

⁷ Tourism Research Australia, provided by email, September 2018

having cycled in the last year compared to 34.2% of all Australians⁸) it is reasonable to assume that the Canberra market will be a significant market for the trail. It is considered that this visitation will be in **addition** to that already occurring out of Canberra to the region as the new product will appeal to a new market in Canberra.

The table below shows the impact if 1, 3 or 5% of the Canberra population ride the trail, based on population of Canberra 403,500.

TABLE 3 IMPACT IF 1, 2 OR 3% OF THE CANBERRA POPULATION RIDE THE TRAIL

Canberra Population 2017/18	403,500	%
Low	1%	4,035
Medium	3%	12,105
High	5%	20,175

Average spend

Spend figures for regional NSW have been used. In the year ending March 2018, on average, domestic overnight visitors spent \$159 per night, daytrip visitors spent \$107 per trip and international visitors spent \$71 per night. The lower daily spend by international visitors is a result of the longer stays of many international visitors, eg backpackers and those on working holidays, whose daily spend is low.

The rail trail has the potential to convert day trippers to overnight visitors, to add to the number of day trippers, and increase the stay of overnight visitors. In addition to this, the rail trail has the potential to attract new visitors to the region. Daily spending on the rail trail will increase over time as the trail develops and provides increased opportunities for visitors to spend money. The type of daily spend that can be achieved is demonstrated in the case studies in Appendix 1

If the trail is developed with the right supporting product and marketed effectively, it is reasonable to expect that, within three years from completion, it might result in an expansion of existing visitors (both number of visitors and length of stay) to Cooma of 10%, plus an additional impact from visitors out of Canberra, as shown in the table below.

TABLE 4 SCENARIO 1. POTENTIAL TO CONVERT DAY VISITORS TO OVERNIGHT

	Existing Visitors likely to cycle currently	10% expansion of existing market after three years	Canberra market (medium 3% take-up scenario)	Total
International	170	17		187
Overnight	2,480	248	6053	8,781
Domestic Day Trips	3,077	308	6052	9,437
Total	5,727	573	12,105	18,405

⁸ Australian Cycling Participation, Austroads, June 2017

TABLE 5 SCENARIO 2. INCREASED SPEND IN COOMA REGION

	Total projected new visitors	Average stay	Average additional nights stay	Canberra market (medium scenario)	Total new nights/trips	New Canberra market average nights stay	Average Spend per night/trip	Annual Spend
International	17	7	1		136		\$71	\$9,566
Domestic Overnight	248	2	2	6053	19,151	3	\$159	\$3,045,009
Domestic Day Trips	308			6052	6,360		\$107	\$680,520
Total	573							\$3,735,185

The longer stay for new rail trail visitors is an average which is at the low end of the likely increase and would be expected to increase over time as the trail matures and accommodation offerings along the trail develop.

This scenario would result in an increased spend in the region of \$3,735,185 per annum in the third year after the trail is completed. If continued growth of 5%⁹ in both markets occurs in the following 5 years (years 4-8) this increases to \$4.76 million. This spending would be spread across the region as product increases.



⁹ It is estimated that 3 years after the trail is finished visitation will increase 10%, then the markets will grow at 5% annually for the five years following.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

Consistent with the brief to TRC, we offer a high-level assessment of the potential of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail.

We do believe that the proposal has merit and that a well-planned and constructed trail along the alignment of the redundant rail way line would offer a great cycle tourism opportunity if the following significant criteria can be met:

Legislation is created to enable use of the railway easement for the long term.

Appropriate funding is provided for a high-quality gravel trail to be constructed with ongoing funding mechanisms identified for maintenance.

There is commitment from landholders and communities along the alignment to establish and deliver appropriate services to riders (accommodation, hospitality, experiences/ attractions).

Where there are significant gaps in the distance between likely services, appropriate infrastructure and services are planned and delivered (e.g. shelter huts).

An active railway line does not proceed between Canberra and Eden on the same redundant railway line.

Recommendations

It is recommended that a detailed feasibility study is completed that addresses the following areas:

- Overview of the overall experience
 - including alignment, stopping points, features of interest, accommodation options
 - detailed assessment and modelling of **market demand**
- Community consultation on concept
- Rail Trail Alignment
 - **identification of all issues** associated with tenure, ownership and access.
- Trail experience development
 - identify **experience development priorities** such as accommodation, supporting transport, food, points of interest and interpretive experience planning.
- Trail construction planning **assessment** (not detailed design/specification) **of all works** required to develop the rail trail including:
 - Clearing
 - Trail surfacing
 - Drainage
 - Fencing
 - Gates
 - Trail furniture
 - Rubbish receptacles
 - Water points
 - Access points
 - Bridges
 - Road crossings
 - Trail surfacing and infrastructure standards
 - Appropriate signage and placement to promote safe use of the rail trail
 - Schematic design for all works necessary in the construction of the rail trail
- Calculation of **probable cost** of rail trail construction and maintenance
- Assessment of **social and economic benefits** and return on investment
- **Timeframe** for rail trail construction incorporating appropriate staging requirements
- **Future governance model** including long term approach to maintenance and funding.

Appendix 1. – Case Studies

Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail (MMRT)	
Use types	Cycling and walking.
Location	Northern Victoria between Wangaratta, Beechworth, Myrtleford and Bright in northern Victoria.
Description	Relaxed cycle through the Ovens and King Valleys at the northern foothills of the Victorian Alps passing historic towns, wineries and background mountain views
Distance	98 km
Duration	2-3 days easy cycling. Time taken depends on side trips and attractions visited. Numerous options to cycle shorter sections
Best time	Autumn and Spring
Grading	Easy. Sealed surface, gentle gradient
Infrastructure	Marked trail following old rail lines. Directional and information signs (interpretative signs are planned). Some toilets and limited water supplies are provided on the trail and are also available in local towns.
Access	Road access at numerous points. Wangaratta is serviced by train and bus, and bus services (which transport bikes) run to the towns on the route. Transport also provided by local businesses and accommodation providers. Local bike hire available.
Management	MMRT Management Committee in conjunction with local Councils. No permits required to use the trail.
Fees	No fees to use the trail.
Visitor use	Primarily a cycle trail. Use believed to be increasing (only limited published visitor data available). Beeton (2007) Easter 2006 study (see below) indicated about 8,328 people were on the trail over a 3-day period. A survey of cyclists indicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ most aged 31 to 60, though relatively high numbers of people aged 1-20; ▶ most cycled in groups (with partners or family, also friends); ▶ most were employed, just under half being in the 'professional' category; ▶ 85% came from Victoria (mostly Melbourne), and the remainder from NSW, Canberra and SA. The study also showed increase in average expenditure by trail cyclists per trip from \$202.74 per person in 2003 to \$482.94 in 2006, partly due to increased services provided by local businesses. In 2009 the average spend per visitor is \$244 per day.
Product options & tourism operators	Independent users. Numerous additional tourism opportunities for independent users related to historic heritage, food and wine, mountain biking, bushwalking. 1 overseas commercial operator (Adventure South, a NZ company) offers guided cycling trips on trail (aimed at international market, incorporating cycling near Melbourne). Some self-guided packages (accommodation, food, transport, bike storage) for cycling in general area
Information availability	Detailed information and maps available on the Management Committee's website, www.murraytomountains.com.au . Also maps and information in <i>Railtrails of Victoria and South Australia</i> , available from Railtrails Australia, www.railtrails.org.au .
Research	Beeton, S (2003) <i>The Economic Benefits of Rail Trails</i> , Faculty for Regional Development, La Trobe University, Research Report. Beeton, S (2007), <i>Regional Communities and cycling: the case of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail, Victoria, Australia</i> . School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management, La Trobe University.

Riesling Trail, South Australia	
Use types	Cycling, walking. Also suitable for wheelchairs and pushers.
Location	Runs between the towns of Auburn and Clare in the Clare Valley wine region of SA, about 130 km north of Adelaide.
Description	Tranquil, safe tour of the scenic countryside and vineyards, wineries, historic buildings and towns of the Clare Valley with a wide choice of accommodation.
Distance	25 km on the main trail. There is another 35 km of side loop trails links to the mail trail. Construction of an 8 km extension north from the Clare trailhead was announced in mid-2008.
Duration	Normally done in sections of a few hours each. Distances between towns is 7 to 9 km. Cycling the entire main trail takes about 2 hours.
Best time	Year-round, though summer can be hot and dry.
Grading	Easy, with gentle gradients. Built on disused railway lines.
Infrastructure	The trail is fully marked and easy to follow, and has information and interpretative signs. Wide range of services, facilities and accommodation in the towns along the trail.
Access	Daily bus services run between Adelaide and towns in the Clare Valley Road access and designated parking areas located in the towns along the trail. Taxi services are also available in these towns.
Management	Riesling Trail Incorporated in partnership with SA Office for Recreation & Sport. No permits required to use the trail.
Fees	No fees required.
Product options & tourism operators	Independent cyclists and walkers. Extensively promoted and marketed by Trails SA and Tourism SA as part of the Clare Valley experience. Range of commercial product options, including: guided cycling tours of the trail (incorporating winery and historic area visits and accommodation). Many are part of wider tours incorporating other areas of SA (e.g. Flinders Ranges) self-guided cycling or walking packages, including accommodation, wine and food experiences. The Riesling Trail is part of the long distance Mawson Trail.
Information availability	A recent detailed trail guidebook incorporating maps, information on the area's history, and details of transport, accommodation and services can be downloaded free from the internet at www.southaustraliantrails.com/top_trails.asp?riesling . Detailed information about the Clare Valley and the trail is available at the Clare Valley tourist information centre and on www.southaustralia.com/ClareValleyRieslingTrail.aspx .
Research	Riesling Trail included in Recreational Trails Research Project conducted by ORS in 2004. Only limited published information available. Economic modelling estimated direct economic impact of the trail on the Clare Valley at about \$1 million a year (based on expenditure of \$216 per person). Faulks P et al (2008) <i>Cycle tourism and South Australia destination marketing</i> . CRC for Sustainable Tourism Pty Ltd. Results of online surveys of cycle club members (564 usable responses) and cycle tourists at destinations in NSW, Vic and SA (only 48 usable responses). Most important cycle holiday destination attributes - scenery, safe drinking water, bike-friendly accommodation, safety, quality of roads and trails. Preferences differed between market segments, but overall over half respondents had preference for independently organised trips using sealed roads. Europe ranked most highly as a cycle destination. <u>In SA, the Riesling Trail ranked highly for safety</u> , the Flinders Ranges for weather/climate, natural environment and off-road trails; Barossa Valley for accommodation.

Otago Central Rail Trail (OCRT), New Zealand	
Use types	Cycling and walking. Horse riding permitted (but no facilities for overnighing horses). Mountain bikes are recommended.
Location	Inland from Dunedin on the south east coast of New Zealand's South Island.
Description	Trail running from Clyde and Middlemarch along the route of a railway originally built to the Otago Goldfields, through the vast open landscapes, quiet rural areas, picturesque towns and historic sites of Central Otago.
Distance	150 km.
Duration	4 days cycling, 6 days walking recommended for entire trail. Numerous shorter trips feasible.
Best time	Year-round.
Grading	Easy.
Infrastructure	Graded gravel surfaces. Directional signs. Interpretative signs. 14 shelters and 12 toilets along the trail. No camping areas provided on the trail. Camping is not prohibited, but trail is basically designed for use of the range of accommodation available in nearby towns (which includes backpacker accommodation). Open fires prohibited. No water supplies on trail, due to dry Otago climate and water scarcity. Use of bottled water (available in towns along the trail) is advised.
Access	Trail accessible from Dunedin, Queenstown and Wanaka. Road access and bus services to towns and other locations on the trail. Accommodation and tourism operators provide pick up and drop off services, luggage and bike transport and car parking. Light plane charters fly to locations along the trail.
Management	Department of Conservation (DOC) in partnership with the Otago Central Rail Trail Charitable Trust. An Operators Group represents businesses which derive income directly or indirectly from the trail. No permits for using the trail. Purchase of \$NZ10 Otago Central Rail Passport (containing maps and trail notes) is encouraged, and proceeds re used for trail management. Booking of accommodation in advance is advised.
Fees	No fees required.
Visitor use	Predominantly used for cycling; most walkers take short walks and few walk the whole trail. Jellum and Reis 2008 survey (see below – survey of businesses, not trail users) suggested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – most trail cyclists aged 36-50, wit significant % aged 51-65; – most from NZ North Island; – slight decrease in cyclists from Europe and the UK and increase in cyclists from Australia.
Product options	Well packaged product including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – independent cyclists and walkers; – self-guided tour packages providing transport, accommodation, catering and other services and information; – several commercial guided cycling tours (various lengths) including accommodation of various types (inns, character accommodation, heritage buildings, boutique lodges) and side trips to local attractions. One company specialises in tours for the senior age group. Trail trips can be linked to numerous historic, food and wine and outdoor attractions, including a ride on the Taieri Gorge Railway Excursion Train, at the Middlemarch end of the trail. A large number of accommodation, food and tourism operators in the area support rail trail visitors.
Information availability	OCRT website, www.centralotagorailtail.co.nz , provides comprehensive information on transport, infrastructure, facilities and services, attractions and tours. Detailed information also on an 'unofficial' website, www.otagorailtrail.co.nz .
Research	Jellum C & Reis A (2008) <i>Otago Central Rail Trail Economic Impact and Trends Survey 2008</i> . Survey of local businesses found that, as in previous surveys, the trail is having a significant impact on local businesses. A high number of respondents reported business growth, though some reported slowing related to factors such as petrol prices, more competition, large operators monopolising accommodation, fewer overseas visitors, direct flights into Queenstown, and the national economy.

Appendix 2. Rail Trail Specifications

Murray to the Mountains – Northern Victoria	
Location	North East Victoria, 250km from Melbourne
Distance	116kms
Start - End	<p>Start Points</p> <p>Wangaratta (popn 28310) Accom, VIC, café, toilets, water to Bowser (8km)</p> <p>Bowser (popn 1729) Accom, toilets to Everton (18km)</p> <p>Everton (popn 203) caravan park, toilets, water to Beechworth (popn 2789) (16km) Accom, food, water, toilets</p> <p>Everton to Myrtleford (26km) Accom, food, water, toilets</p> <p>Myrtleford (popn 3181) to Bright (popn 2165) (30km) Accom, food, water, toilets</p> <p>Rutherglen (popn 2109) Accom toilets, water, vineyards to Wahgunyah (popn 891) (8 km) toilets</p> <p>Wangaratta to Oxley (popn 594) (9 km) Toilets, water</p>
Grading / Surface	Sealed. Mostly flat but a steady climb to Beechworth
Features	<p>One of the most developed of rail trails. It consists of three separate trails, all with a sealed surface for their entire length.</p> <p>The main "Mountain" section from Wangaratta to Bright and Beechworth is 97 km in length. It has moderate grades between Wangaratta and Bright and a significant grade from Everton up to historic Beechworth.</p> <p>The "Murray" section from Rutherglen to Wahgunyah is 9 km in length. The trail traverses this famous wine producing area and is basically flat, ending on the Murray River.</p> <p>The "Heritage" section from Wangaratta to Oxley is 9 km in length. The trail traverses farmland and is basically flat as it heads towards the gourmet region of Milawa.</p> <p>All towns have plenty of great places to stay and eat.</p> <p>Short side trips from the main trail include: Eldorado, Milawa, Lake Buffalo, Mt Buffalo, Stanley and Wandiligong.</p> <p>There are wineries in the Rutherglen region.</p> <p>Marked trail following old rail lines. Has directional and information signs (interpretative signs are planned).</p> <p>Some toilets and limited water supplies are provided on the trail and are also available in local towns.</p>
Services	<p>Tour de Vines - Self guided & small group guided tours from 1 to 5 days</p> <p>Goodtime Tours - Small group gourmet tours</p> <p>Outbike - Ride 500 kms on Vic rail trails over 12 days, start 31 Oct & 21 Nov. Transfers, camp/cabins, breakfast and support where needed. From \$800</p> <p>Mulga - Run two fully supported 8-day cycling holidays in spring and autumn that include AllTrails - The AllTrails Autumn Rail Trails Tour combines the Great Vic Rail Trail and The Murray to Mountains Trail into one 5 day, fully-supported experience.</p> <p>Public transport options on the rail trail are:</p> <p>The VLine train (refer Melbourne <> Albury) service that stops at Wangaratta station; refer to VLine's policy on carrying bikes.</p> <p>The VLine Bus; Services Wangaratta to Bright and Beechworth sections of the rail trail. The bus to Rutherglen is via the Albury Bendigo route. The official policy is not to carry bicycles on buses.</p>
Management	The trail is managed by the Rural City of Wangaratta, Alpine Shire Council and Indigo Shire Council.

Murray to the Mountains – Northern Victoria	
Visitor Usage	<p>NOTE: Old figures below. Waiting to receive new info. Use believed to be increasing (only limited published visitor data available). Beeton (2007) Easter 2006 study (see below) indicated about 8,328 people were on the trail over a 3-day period. A survey of cyclists indicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most aged 31 to 60, though relatively high numbers of people aged 1-20; • most cycled in groups (with partners or family, also friends); • most were employed, just under half being in the 'professional' category; • 85% came from Victoria (mostly Melbourne), and the remainder from NSW, Canberra and SA. <p>The study also showed increase in average expenditure by trail cyclists per trip from \$202.74 per person in 2003 to \$482.94 in 2006, partly due to increased services provided by local businesses. In 2009 the average spend per visitor is \$244 per day.</p>
Media / TripAdvisor	<p>In May2017 the Victorian state government has announced that the popular Murray to Mountains Rail Trail in north east Victoria will soon be extending a further 21km from Beechworth to Yackandandah.</p> <p>The \$6million funding announcement also includes allowance for an on-road connection further east to Osbornes Flat, which could be part of a future on-road link to the High Country Rail Trail at Huon.</p> <p>Trip advisor, 127 reviews, 4.5 stars</p>

Great Victorian Rail Trail – North East Victoria	
Location	North East Victoria
Distance	134km
Start – End	<p>Tallarook (popn 789) to Yea (38km) Accom, toilets, skatepark, picnic, bbq</p> <p>Yea (popn 1595) to Cathkin (21km), includes 200m long Cheviot tunnel. Toilets picnic, includes facilities for horse</p> <p>Cathkin to Bonnie Doon (40km) Accom, food, bbq, toilets</p> <p>Bonnie Doon (popn 570) to Mansfield (popn 4786) (22km), includes 385m long bridge. Accom, VIC, cafes, toilets</p> <p>Cathkin to Alexandra (popn 2656) (13km). Accom, toilets food cafes</p>
Grading / Surface	The surface is either a bitumised granite, which is suitable for wheel chairs and prams, and compacted gravel which may not be suitable for wheel chairs and prams in sections. Where possible a separate bridle path is provided for horses.
Features	<p>Formerly known as the Goulburn River High Country Rail Trail, this is a high standard rail trail traversing undulating farmland.</p> <p>Features the only tunnel on a rail trail in Victoria and a long bridge across Lake Eildon.</p> <p>Almost all of the bridges have been made trafficable and the few low level crossings are easily graded.</p> <p>There are several crossings of major rural highways.</p> <p>Yea station also has a great playground, picnic facilities and a skate park.</p>
Services	<p>All Terrain Cycles - (Mansfield)</p> <p>Yarck Cottage - Quirky, cheerful & catering to groups up to 14 people, adjacent to the trail and great eateries and will supply everything you need for a perfect cycling adventure</p> <p>OutBike – Ride 500 kms on Vic rail trails over 12 days, start 31 Oct & 21 Nov. Transfers, camp/cabins, breakfast and support where needed. From \$800.</p> <p>AllTrails Bike Tours - The Autumn Rail Trails Tour combines the Great Vic Rail Trail and The Murray to Mountains Trail into one 5 day, fully-supported experience. Logistics, luggage</p>

Great Victorian Rail Trail – North East Victoria	
	<p>transfers, maps, guidance, breakfasts, dinners, vehicle support, mechanical help, and transport.</p> <p>The VLine train (refer Melbourne <> Seymour) service that stops at Tallarook station.</p> <p>The VLine Bus, that services Melbourne to the Yea to Mansfield section of the rail trail; the official policy is not to carry bicycles.</p> <p>The McKenzies Buses service direct between Melbourne and Alexandra</p> <p>There is no public transport between Tallarook and Yea, nor between Cathkin and Alexandra.</p>
Management	The trail is managed by the Shires of Mitchell, Murrindindi and Mansfield.
Visitor Usage	Waiting on reply calls / emails
Media / TripAdvisor	Trip advisor, 81 reviews, 4.5 stars

High Country Rail Trail – Northern Victoria	
Location	North East Victoria, 300kms from Melbourne
Distance	65kms
Start - End	<p>Albury/Wodonga (popn 90281) Accom, café, camping, bbq, phone to Bandiana (6km)</p> <p>Bandiana (popn 615) to Huon (17km) Toilets, parks, BBQs (along route multiple toilet and picnic stops available with water)</p> <p>Huon (popn 219) to Old Tallangatta (popn 35) (21km) parks, accom, water (also accom, café, ph, toilets available along route in Tallangatta popn 1082)</p> <p>Darbyshire to Shelley (21km) toilets, water (also café, accom halfway along route Koetong)</p>
Grading / Surface	Varying, mainly fine gravel. Undulating
Features	<p>The High Country Rail Trail traverses farmland near the shores of Lake Hume and forest further up at Shelley.</p> <p>The trail is undulating to Tallangatta with some moderate gradients. The Derbyshire to Shelley section is all uphill at the steepest gradient trains could manage.</p> <p>Military history interpretive signs out towards the Bandiana Military Museum</p> <p>There are good views from lookouts and mountaintops (including the Main Range of the Kosciuszko National Park) and plenty of picnic areas and camping opportunities</p>
Services	Red Gum B&B – bike transfers available
Management	Parklands Albury/Wodonga in conjunction with three local voluntary advisory groups.
Visitor Usage	Waiting on reply calls / emails
Media / TripAdvisor	<p>There are numerous developments, underway and planned, to further improve this trail. Currently working on the Old Tallangatta to Koetong section. With the rail bypass of Wodonga now complete, Rail Trails Australia is supporting local organisations to have the rail trail extended from Bandiana all the way into Wodonga and across the Murray River flood plains towards Albury.</p> <p>Trip advisor, 26 reviews, 4.5 stars</p>

Great Southern Rail Trail & Tarra Trail – Southern Gippsland Victoria	
Location	South Gippsland, 130km from Melbourne All seasons
Distance	74kms
Start - End	Leongatha (popn 5119) Café, accom, toilets, parks, Dr to Meeniyan (16km) Café, accom, toilets, parks, water Meeniyan (popn 1040) to Foster (32km) Café, accom, toilets, parks, Dr Foster (popn 1164) to Toora (popn 887) Café, accom, toilets, parks to Welshpool (19km) , Café, accom, toilets, parks, water Welshpool (popn 331) to Port Welshpool (popn 191) Café, accom, toilets, parks (5km) - connecting trail. Café, accom, toilets, park Alberton (popn 162) to Yarram (popn 2168) Accom, café, park, water "The Tarra Trail" (6km) Not connected with the Great Southern Rail Trail in marketing material but located very close by.
Grading / Surface	hard packed gravel surface
Features	Re-launched in Nov 2016 - cycle, walk or horse ride from Leongatha to Port Welshpool, or from Port Welshpool to Leongatha. Close to Melbourne, Phillip Island and Wilsons Promontory. This rail trail has seen many major improvements in recent years including the opening of the Black Spur bridges near Koonwarra in March 2016.
Services	Meeniyan Hotel – Situated directly across from the Great Southern Rail Trail, Meeniyan Motel & Bike Hire Snowy River Cycling - Fully supported rail trail tours Australian Cycling Holidays - offer self guided cycle tours with cycling equipment, accommodation, breakfast, luggage transfers & trail assist. Cycle and Stay packages to explore the rail trails as day rides. Multiday bike hire incl panniers and pick up.
Management	Managed by a Management Committee of volunteers with great support from the South Gippsland Shire Council.
Visitor Usage	Waiting on reply calls / emails
Media / TripAdvisor	Trip advisor, 39 reviews, 4.5 stars

Ballarat – Skipton – Western Victoria	
Location	110kms North West of Melbourne Best in dry seasons
Distance	• 57kms
Start - End	Ballarat (popn 101588) accom, bike hire, food, parks to Smythesdale (20km) accom, food, park Smythesdale (popn 1031) to Linton (17km) accom, cafe Linton (popn 580) to Skipton (popn 460) (20km), accom, cafe
Grading / Surface	Fine gravel. Hilly
Features	This trail goes through significant remnant native grasslands. The area is well known for its historical gold mining sites.

Ballarat – Skipton – Western Victoria	
	An impressive trestle bridge near Newtown is open for trail users. History boards with trail information are sited at various points along the trail.
Services	Linton Bike Hire - Bike hire, spare parts, transport and great food for all users Goldfields Bike Tours and Hire - experience hybrid or E-bike riding to explore the rail trails and in conjunction with our air conditioned bus and 15-bike trailer Welcome Nuggets Bike Hire Cycle City - Bike sales, service and hire
Management	Mngt Committee with reps from Councils - Golden Plains Shire, City of Ballarat and Corangamite Shire
Visitor Usage	Waiting on reply calls / emails
Media / TripAdvisor	Trip advisor, 3 reviews, 5 stars

East Gippsland - Victoria	
Location	East Gippsland, 280km from Melbourne
Distance	94kms
Start-End	Bairnsdale (popn 14887) toilets, phone, water, cafes, camping, parks, accom, Dr to Nicholson (8km) toilets, phone, water, cafes, camping, parks, accom Nicholson (popn 1504) to Bruthen (20km) toilets, phone, water, cafes, camping, parks, accom Bruthen (popn 814) to Nowa Nowa (30km) toilets, phone, water, cafes, camping, parks, accom Nowa Nowa (popn 194) to Orbost (popn 2230) (38km) toilets, phone, water, cafes, camping, parks, accom, Dr
Grading / Surface	Quality formed surface Easy, with gentle gradients
Features	A long rail trail, which passes through a variety of forest and farmland Ideal for multi-day tour or shorter day trips Lots of huge old timber bridges, railway cuttings and embankments Some low level diversions around bridges from Bruthen on are quite steep. Occasional views of the Gippsland Lakes Rich variety of birds and other wildlife Small towns and villages providing meals and accommodation options Option to divert onto the Mississippi Tramway to Lakes Entrance Kilometre marker posts have been installed within 5 Kms of towns and at some other points
Services	Snowy River Cycling - bike hire, return transport, luggage transfers and accommodation
Management	East Gippsland Rail Trail Association
Visitor Usage	Waiting on reply calls / emails
Media /Trip advisor	Trip advisor, 45 reviews, 4.5 stars

The Riesling & Rattler – South Australia	
Location	130kms north of Adelaide
Distance	54kms
Start-End	Auburn (popn 661) Café, accom, gallery, camping, toilets, vineyards to Clare (popn 3278) (25km) Toilets, picnic tables, vineyards, phone, parks, accom, bike hire Clare to Barinia Rd, White Hut (popn 19) (10km) (one-way off shoot track) Auburn to Riverton (popn 1042) (19km) Accom, café, camping, toilets, gallery (This section known as the Rattler) Other smaller loops available that take in specific vineyards.
Grading / Surface	Fine gravel. Gentle gradient
Features	This trail traverses two beautiful areas of SA countryside just a couple of hours drive north of Adelaide. It is a long high quality trail traversing a variety of rural landscapes and small rural villages. There are many options available to enjoy the whole trail or just short sections. All road crossings have facilities to cross safely. Explore vineyards and historic features Many quality interpretive signs at regular intervals
Services	Tour de Vines – cycle tours
Management	The trail is managed by a voluntary committee of management with assistance from the Department of Recreation and Sport (Trails SA).
Visitor Usage	Waiting on reply calls / emails
Media /Trip advisor	Trip advisor, 0 reviews

The Coast to Vines – South Australia	
Location	Southern Adelaide Suburbs
Distance	37kms
Start-End	Marino (popn 2001) Toilets, picnic tables, vineyard, phone. Links to coastal walk, parks, skatepark, and geological site, accom to Old Reynella (9.4km). ph, vineyards, café, picnic (toilets along route) Old Reynella (popn 3301) to McLaren Vale (20km). Toilets, picnic tables, vineyards, phone, parks, accom McLaren Vale (popn 3861) to Willunga (popn 2416) (8km) Toilets, picnic tables, lots of vineyards, phone, parks, accom
Grading / Surface	Quality formed sealed surface Easy, with gentle gradients, except where some bypasses go around old bridge sites
Features	The Coast to Vines trail is a great day or weekend destination on the Fleurieu Peninsula The landscape is varied from sea views to rural and farming land The wineries of McLaren Vale are nearby, and there are plenty of places to eat and stay
Services	
Management	The cities of Marion and Onkaparinga
Visitor Use	Waiting on reply calls / emails
Media /Trip advisor	Trip advisor, 0 reviews

Hauraki – New Zealand	
Location	2 hours from Auckland All year riding
Distance	160kms
Start-End	Pukorokoro-Miranda Accom to Thames (55kms) Accom, café, toilets, VIC Thames to Paeroa (34km) Accom, café, toilets Paeroa to Waihi (24kms) Accom, café, toilets, VIC Paeroa to Te Aroha (23kms) Accom, café, toilets, VIC Te Aroha to Matamata (37kms) (under construction)
Grading / Surface	Easy, mainly gravel
Features	Highlights include: stunning Karangahake Gorge, one of the “14 wonders of New Zealand”, historic gold mining towns, shorebirds, RAMSAR Wetlands of international significance, and luxurious mineral spas.
Services	There are a number of companies that offer bike hire, luggage transfers, shuttle bus service and accommodation. Including nearby hot springs, camping, water falls, toilets, cafes, accommodation, walkways, heritage sites, wineries, linked events
Management	Hauraki Rail Trail Charitable Trust – looks after maintenance costs via business sponsorship/ commission program
Visitor Usage	Trip counters along the trail show 18,693 trips in Thames in a year; Kopu logged 12,178; Hikutaia, 8487; Paeroa, 29,079; and Waterfall Bridge, between Waikino and Waihi, 34,049. The Karangahake Bridge counter logged 92,250 trips. Visitors were spending an average of \$172 per trip, up from \$105 in 2012, and 50 full time positions had been created because of the trail. Figures also show that local businesses were growing in response to the increase in visitors using the trail. "One in seven businesses along the trail have adjusted their offerings to meet the needs of cycle trail user Source: https://www.stuff.co.nz/travel/destinations/nz/94123407/hauraki-rail-trail-contributes-millions-to-local-economy June 2017
Media /Trip advisor	Trip advisor, 222 reviews, 4.5 stars

Otago Central Rail Trail – New Zealand	
Location	Inland from Dunedin on the south east coast of New Zealand’s South Island. Year round
Distance	152kms
Start-End	Clyde Railhead Accom, cafes, camp to Alexandra (8km) Accom, cafes, camp, toilets, VIC Alexandra to Chatto Creek (17km) Accom, cafes, toilets, VIC Chatto Creek to Omakau (12km) Accom, cafes, toilets Omakau to Lauder (7km) Accom, cafes, VIC Lauder to Auripo (10.5km) Toilets along route Auripo to Oturehua (12km) Accom, cafes, toilets, VIC

	<p>Oturehua to Wedderburn (12km) Accom, cafes, toilets, VIC Wedderburn to Ranfurly (13.5km) Accom, cafes, toilets, VIC Ranfurly to Kokonga (18km) Accom, VIC Kokonga to Hyde (14.5km) Accom, cafes, toilets, VIC Hyde to Rock and Pillar (14km) Toilets, VIC Rock and Pillar to Middlemarch (13.5km) Accom, cafes, camp, toilets, VIC Additional side trips available 4 days cycling, 6 days walking recommended for entire trail</p>
Grading / Surface	Compacted gravel. No hills, easy riding
Features	<p>Directional signs. Interpretative signs. 14 shelters and 12 toilets along the trail. No camping areas provided on the trail. Camping is not prohibited, but trail is basically designed for use of the range of accommodation available in nearby towns (which includes backpacker accommodation). No water supplies on trail, due to dry Otago climate and water scarcity. Use of bottled water (available in towns along the trail) is advised.</p>
Services	<p>Trail accessible from Dunedin, Queenstown and Wanaka. Road access and bus services to towns and other locations on the trail. Accommodation and tourism operators provide pick up and drop off services, luggage and bike transport and car parking. Light plane charters fly to locations along the trail.</p>
Management	<p>Department of Conservation (DOC) in partnership with the Otago Central Rail Trail Charitable Trust. An Operators Group represents businesses which derive income directly or indirectly from the trail. Purchase of \$NZ10 Otago Central Rail Passport (containing maps and trail notes) is encouraged, and proceeds re used for trail management.</p>
Visitor Usage	<p>Trail users comprise of those who complete the entire trail together with those who use specific sections for commuting and short ride recreation and this data is collected from 7 counters strategically located on the Trail. It is important to note however, that the annual total and the graph (above) derives its data from the counters that best reflect most accurately only those who complete the Trail from start to finish. 2015/16 - 13,406 2016/17 - 14,089 2017/18 - 14,392 Annual total is conservative figure and does not include at least 80,000 users on the trail commuting or short recreational rides. Source: http://www.otagocentrailtrail.co.nz/about-our-trail/</p>
Media /Trip advisor	Trip advisor. 0 reviews



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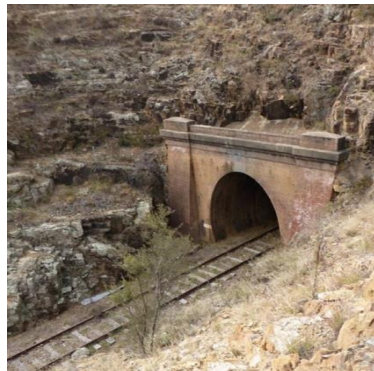
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**INSPIRING SOLUTIONS
FOR PEOPLE AND PLACES**

MONARO RAIL TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY

Request for Quotation- Draft Technical Specification



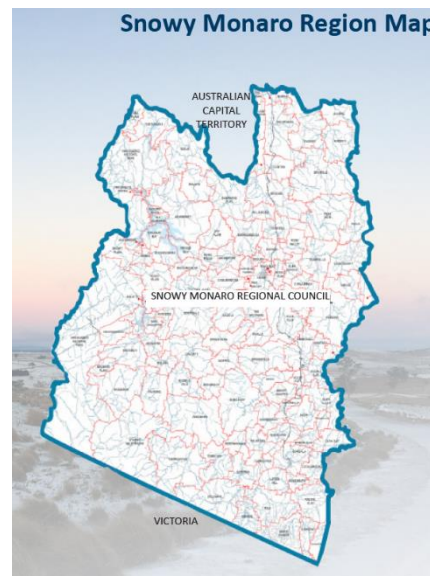
1 Technical Specification

1.2 Introduction

Our Snowy Monaro region is proud and diverse. Its eclectic mix of people contributes to the growing and vibrant that almost 21,000 people love and call home. With roots in agriculture, timber, snowsports and the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme, our region boasts an indelible diversity.

The region covers 15,162 square kilometres, surrounded by rolling plains country and mountain ranges. With 28% of our region consisting of national parks or reserves. The remaining area is largely privately owned rural land.

The Snowy Monaro Regional Council was formed via proclamation on 12 May 2016 as a result of the merging of Bombala Council, Cooma-Monaro Shire Council and Snowy River Shire Council.



1.2 Vision and Values

Council’s vision is “A trusted community partner” and this is achieved by ensuring we strive to achieve our 5 key values at all times.

Value	Description
Solutionary	Someone who finds revolutionary answers to life’s problems.
Together	Harmony, cooperation, united action, mutual action, stable and well organise.
Accountable	Required or expected to justify actions or decisions, responsible, able to be explained or understood
Innovative	Original and creative thinking, introducing new and advanced and original ideas, products, methods
Caring	Displaying kindness and concerns for others.



1.3 Background Information

Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC), in collaboration with the Monaro Rail Trail Association, have decided to pursue the development of a detailed feasibility study for the Monaro Rail Trail proposal.

The proposed rail trail is envisioned to follow the disused rail line from Queanbeyan to Bombala, a distance of 208 km. This is a good distance for a cycle tourism experience enabling a 3-5 day journey by the family and leisure market who might ride up to 50 kms /day. Figure 1 below shows the proposed trail vision.

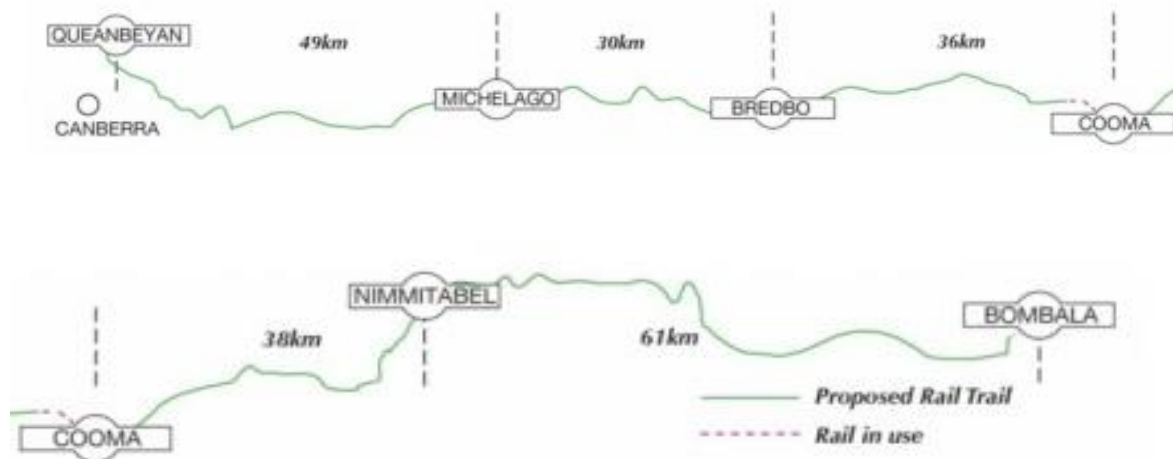


Figure 1. Proposed rail trail vision

The proposed ride would traverse through a combination of timbered and open country between Canberra Valley, Cooma, the Great Dividing Range near Nimmitabel and ending in the township of Bombala. There are many interesting rail features including heritage listed bridges, sidings, sheds and stations all of which add to the experience and the story that can be told. The pastoral story and heritage of the region is also visible through properties and remnants of the earlier role of the railway to transport wool and other produce.

There is strong support for the project and its goals; however with any project of this type and scope some level of opposition is anticipated, in particular with landowners directly impacted by the proposed alignment.

In 2018 the Premier announced \$1 million would be allocated by the NSW government to conduct a feasibility study into re-opening the railway line and extending it to Canberra airport in the north and Eden Port in the south.

1.4 Previous Studies

A pre-feasibility assessment was completed by TRC Tourism in October 2018. [Monaro Rail Trail Pre-feasibility Assessment Report Link](#). The report provides a high level overview of the likely experience, potential markets and economic benefits. The pre-feasibility assessment concluded that the proposal has merit and would offer a great cycle tourism opportunity providing certain criteria could be met. The significant criteria identified includes:

- Legislation is created to enable use of the railway easement for the long term
- Appropriate funding is provided for a high-quality gravel trail to be constructed with ongoing funding mechanisms identified for maintenance
- There is commitment from landholders and communities along the alignment to establish and deliver appropriate services to riders (accommodation, hospitality, experience/attractions).
- Where there are significant gaps in the distance between likely services, appropriate infrastructure and services are planned and delivered
- An active rail line does not proceed between Canberra and Eden on the same redundant railway line.

In contrast to the rail trail proposal there has also been support for the re-establishment of the rail link between Canberra and Bombala. The Cooma-Monaro Progress Association has commissioned some preliminary reports on the feasibility of re-opening and extending the existing railway line. These reports can be found at [Cooma and Monaro Progress Association](#). During the preparation of the rail trail feasibility study consideration will need to be given to the possibility of accommodating both rail line and trail.

2. Scope of Work

The feasibility study report will need to address the following areas:

2.1 Overview of Overall Experience

Including alignment, stopping points, features of interest, accommodation options, detailed assessment and modelling of market demand.

2.2 Community Consultation on Concept

Establish a well-rounded and representative working group and discuss its involvement in the report. Facilitate up to 5 public meetings during the study.

Conduct other public participation techniques such as interviews with adjacent property owners, local business leaders, neighbourhood and community groups as needed.

Consultation should occur along the entire route of the proposed rail trail and in each town or village through which it passes.

2.3 Rail Trail Alignment

Identification of all issues associated with tenure, ownership and access. This should include possible alternative alignments or arrangements that would allow compatibility with a re-opened active railway line, or alternatively state why compatibility was not possible either overall or for any particular section of the route.

2.4 Trail Experience Development

Identify experience development priorities such as accommodation, supporting transport, food, points of interest and interpretive experience planning.

2.5 Trail Construction Planning Assessment

This does not include detailed design/specification.

Included all works required to develop the rail trail such as clearing, trail surfacing, drainage, fencing, gates, trail furniture, rubbish receptacles, water points, bridges, road crossings, trail infrastructure standards, appropriate signage and replacement to promote safe use of the trail, schematic design for all works necessary in the construction of the rail trail.

2.6 Calculation of Probable Cost of Trail construction and Maintenance

Cost estimates should include land acquisition or purchase of easements, development of the trail and proposed facilities. Where alternative routes are proposed a cost estimate should also be provided for each alternative route.

Provide typical management and maintenance budgets from similar trails. Develop a sample budget for staffing and maintenance including all anticipated cost categories with projections of operating expenses

2.7 Assessment of Social and Economic Benefits and Return on Investment

Provide an overview of the social and economic benefits. Provide a summary of projected user scenarios and potential economic return.

2.8 Timeframe for Rail Trail Construction

Incorporating appropriate staging requirements

2.9 Future Governance Model

This includes long term approach to maintenance and funding

3. Deliverables

Item	Deliverable Item	Deliverable
1	Draft Trail Concept Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft documents
2	Draft Feasibility Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present draft electronic document for comment
3	Final Feasibility Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise report and submit electronic copy to relevant Staff.

3.1 Implementation Timetable

Milestone	Completion Date
Draft Trail Concept Plan- community consultation sessions	6 May 2019
Draft Feasibility report	28 June 2019
Community and stakeholder feedback	31 July 2019
Final Feasibility Report	6 September 2019

4.0 Special Conditions Requirements of Contract

4.1 Site Conditions and Requirements

Subject to the requirements of the Contract and any restrictions on working hours imposed by law, the Site will be available to the Consultant to carry out the Works between the hours of 7am and 5pm, Mondays to Fridays inclusive, on the Business Days defined in the General Conditions of Contract. Work outside these times may only be undertaken if approved in writing by the Principal and will be subject to any conditions the Principal may require.

4.2 Worksite WHS Requirements

If the Consultant and/or subconsultants are required to visit, work, or control work on a worksite, the Consultant must:

- (i) give the Principal 3 business days' notice prior to attending site
- (ii) ensure key staff (including subconsultants and/or subcontractors) undertake a site induction by the Principal prior to entering the site

- (iii) ensure all staff (including subconsultants) have the appropriate personal protective equipment in accordance with the relevant Council policies and procedures.
- (iv) comply with all authorised directions, procedures and policies pertaining to visiting the work site
- (v) Implement a system for hazard identification and implementation of appropriate controls.

4.3 Reference Documents

The Contractor is required to ensure compliance with the following documents. A copy of these documents can be found on Council's website (<https://www.snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au/180/Council-Policies>).

Document Number	Document Title	Date Issued
250.2016.61.1	Health and Safety Policy	31 August 2016
250.2016.62.1	Smoke Free Work Environment Procedure	10 August 2016
250.2016.63.1	Work Wear Clothing and Personal Protective Equipment Procedure	7 September 2016
250.2016.64.1	Alcohol and Other Drug Procedure	10 August 2016
250.2016.1.2	Code of Conduct (including the model Code of Conduct)	27 September 2016

4.4 Schedule of Price

Item No	Description	Quantity	Unit	Price Tendered (Excl GST)	GST Component	Price Tendered (incl GST)	Payment due date
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Item No	Description	Quantity	Unit	Price Tendered (Excl GST)	GST Component	Price Tendered (incl GST)	Payment due date
1	Draft Report	1	Lump Sum				
2	Final Report	1	Lump Sum				
PROJECT TOTAL (Including GST)							

Recommendations to the Snowy Monaro Regional Council - 5 November 2020

Monaro Rail Trail Inc. seeks Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) support as outlined in the following recommendations:

- 1) *SMRC accepts this Submission, re-affirms support and strongly advocates for the development of the Monaro Rail Trail, recognising it will be a major economic driver for the Snowy Monaro Community.*
 - 2) *SMRC formally advises the following bodies of Councils strong support and desire to expedite the Monaro Rail Trail;*
 - a) *Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council and the ACT Government*
 - b) *NSW Government elected representatives (including Deputy Premier Hon John Barilaro MLA, Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC and Minister for Regional Transport & Roads Paul Toole MLA) as well as Officials of relevant Departments (including Regional Transport, Crown Lands and Local Land Services)*
 - c) *Commonwealth Government elected representatives (including Senator Jim Molan AO DSC, Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack and Member for Eden-Monaro Hon Kristy McBain)*
 - 3) *SMRC initiates consultation with the NSW State Government to facilitate the License/Lease of the Queanbeyan to Bombala Rail corridor for the purposes of developing the Monaro Rail Trail. The Licence/Lease should commence from 1st May 2021 to allow construction to be commenced on 1 July 2021.*
 - 4) *SMRC establishes a MRT Section 355 Management Committee to oversight development of the Monaro Rail Trail and invites representatives from MRT Inc. and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council to participate.*
 - 5) *SMRC seeks Grant funding for a reputable Consultant to undertake a Study into Maintenance Cost and Funding opportunities for Rail Trails in line with the Scoping Study brief prepared by MRT Inc.*
 - 6) *SMRC provides funding of up to \$4000 to allow the Monaro Rail Trail Inc. to Trademark the Logo and wording 'Monaro Rail Trail AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST' to facilitate the beginning of a remarkable Rail Trail and protect an Iconic branding opportunity.*
 - 7) *SMRC support funding applications submitted by Monaro Rail Trail Inc. to both the NSW State Government and Federal Government for funding totalling \$400,000 to allow for the development of a Trail Master Plan (incorporating trail design), a detailed Business Case for the Monaro Rail Trail, Scoping Studies for the MRT Heritage Plan and Environmental Plan, Review of Environmental Factors and Risk Management Plan.*
 - 8) *SMRC Grants Officer works with MRT Inc. to investigate opportunities for potential grants relevant to the planning, construction and maintenance of the Monaro Rail Trail and identify, the most appropriate of the two organisations, to lodge applications consistent with SMRC Policy.*
-

9) *Ensure that the Monaro Rail Trail is featured prominently as a "Game Changer" in all Council and Regional Planning documents to support funding priorities.*

10) *With the support of MRT Inc., SMRC sponsor an Application to the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLER) by 11 December 2020 to enable the construction of the Monaro Rail Trail Stage 1.*



Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study

Draft Report
Volume 1

Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study

Draft Report

MONARO RAIL TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY DRAFT REPORT

VOLUME 1

Prepared for



Prepared by



October 2019

Transplan Pty Ltd and Mike Halliburton Associates

Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study

Draft Report

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Volume 2

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Appendix 6: Plans of Proposed Monaro Rail Trail

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Monaro region is spectacularly beautiful and rich in Aboriginal and European history. It is steeped in Australian history and many of its towns appear in famous verse and books. The Snowy Mountains are a major tourist drawcard, but mainly during winter months when the ski fields host thousands of visitors. To sustain all year-round tourism in order to capitalise on the economic benefits that tourists bring, the Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) is keen to develop all-year round activities that complement the 'snow season'. A rail trail between Queanbeyan and Bombala could be one such activity.

This Feasibility Study addresses the development of a shared pathway (a rail trail) from Queanbeyan to Bombala utilising the now-disused NSW Government railway corridor. The disused railway corridor lies mainly in the Snowy Monaro Regional Council local government area but also traverses a section of the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council area.

The 213km railway corridor between Queanbeyan in the north and Bombala in the south has been disused for many years, apart from occasional and infrequent usage by tourist trains. These have now ceased operations for a variety of reasons including the cost of running such operations, declining revenue, damage to track and bridges and, presumably, increasing levels of accreditation and insurances required to run these types of services.

The Snowy Monaro Regional Council commissioned Transplan Pty Ltd to prepare a Feasibility Study for a possible rail trail from Michelago to Bombala (and a possible northern extension to Queanbeyan in the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council area). The Snowy Monaro Regional Council funded the project.



The bridge over the Bredbo River is very attractive, historic and a prominent feature of the proposed rail trail.

A rail trail is a multi-use recreation trail constructed on a disused railway corridor (public land) for non-motorised users. There are over 100 established rail trails in Australia, many of which are in Victoria and they attract thousands of visitors from all over Australia including from NSW (where there are none at present on Government owned railway corridors). Although rail trails are extremely popular with all types of recreational cyclists, they are also very well used by walkers/hikers, horse riders (where permitted), joggers, trail runners, people in wheelchairs, people in mobility scooters (gophers), parents pushing prams, school groups, clubs and families. They are not simply for lycra-clad cyclists as claimed by many opponents.

The former railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala provides views of forested areas, bushland reserves, snow-capped mountains, wide treeless plains, sheep and cattle grazing in paddocks, and access to several pretty and interesting small villages and towns.

The corridor itself is completely intact, with no section of it having been sold off. Should it be converted into a rail trail, the benefits to the communities along it will be significant. As a rail trail, the corridor encapsulates the best of what rail trail users are seeking: attractive scenery, intact railway artefacts including embankments, cuttings, bridges, a tunnel, railway signage, signals and switches, turntables and beautiful station buildings and railway sheds. These are just some of the ingredients that are highly sought after by rail trail users. The fact that small towns and villages are evenly spread and well-spaced is an added bonus.



Although in poor condition, the 390m bridge over the Numeralla River is spectacular and would be a major attraction along the proposed rail trail.

This Feasibility Study was commissioned to ascertain whether it is a worthwhile project, and whether the trail will deliver the anticipated and desired benefits.

The brief for this Feasibility Study required that consideration be given to the prospect of a train service being re-established on the corridor and the possible need for the sharing of the corridor (i.e. a 'rail-with-trail'). It is acknowledged that the NSW State Government has invested funds into a comprehensive study for the use of the Queanbeyan to Bombala railway corridor for trains.

It is very evident that, should it be proven feasible that a train could be re-established on the corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala, a trail could *not* share the same corridor as that train service. It is assumed (in the absence of any other information about the train proposal) that the train may utilise not just the same corridor as the disused railway line, but all of the bridges, the tunnel and all of the high embankments and deep cuttings. To have a trail alongside an operating railway in the same corridor would necessitate replicating all of those original bridges, replicating most of the embankments and probably many of the cuttings, and circumnavigating the tunnel. Nothing of the original railway formation could be used – and therefore all that infrastructure that rail trail users come to see and appreciate would not be experienced.

Instead, they would encounter merely a trail alongside a railway line, and cyclists and other potential users would have to deal with all the hills that such an alignment would have (instead of a reasonably flat formation that a former railway provides). As well as needing to replicate the railway formation and bridges, a trail beside an operating railway would necessitate the establishment of approximately 213km of 1.8m – 2.4m high chain link fencing – as that would likely be the minimum requirement imposed by the relevant authorities. Such a fence would cost many millions of dollars – on top of the costs of building bridges and the embankments that would be needed to cross low-lying areas and all the other costs of trail building. In addition, the installation of a 1.8m – 2.4m high fence between the trail and the railway would detract substantially from users' experience.

This Feasibility Study sought to answer a number of critical questions:

- *Is there a viable trail route (i.e. is a trail route physically possible)?*
- *Are there alternative uses for the corridor that will provide more value to the community? Are these alternative uses viable?*
- *Will the rail trail provide a quality user experience (terrain / landscape / history)?*
- *Is there a market for the proposed trail (i.e. local people and visitors who will be attracted to use it)?*
- *Will the rail trail create any unmanageable or unmitigated impacts on adjoining landholders' farming practices and lifestyles?*
- *Are the local governments and key stakeholders supportive of the concept?*
- *Are there supportive/strong advocates (in the community)?*
- *Is there a supportive community?*
- *Would the trail be value for money?*
- *Is there a commitment to the ongoing maintenance of the trail ("friends of ..." group or support network)?*
- *Will the trail provide a unique experience?*
- *Is there a demonstrated benefit to trail users and, especially, the host communities?*

The Feasibility Statement set out in Section 11 answers these questions. Generally, the answer to most of these questions is "Yes", except bullet points 2 and 5.

Rail trails are not a new idea. They've been around for over 60 years in America where there are now 2,130 rail trails totalling 24,075 miles (38,000 kilometres). There are another 812 rail trail projects being planned and/or developed in the USA totalling 8,684 miles (almost 14,000 kms).

There are many more in numerous other countries including Canada, England, Spain and New Zealand. Rail trails have become very popular throughout Australia over the last 30 years with numerous communities gaining benefit from the visitors they attract, and the money spent in local communities. The experience gained from the 100+ rail trails throughout Australia enables reliable forecasts to be made of the visitors that can be expected in the Monaro, the types of users the proposed rail trail will attract and the patterns of expenditure they make.

Numerous costs are involved in the conversion of a disused railway into a trail. These include fencing (especially where the corridor was not originally fenced), the provision of a good trail surface, the provision of safe road crossings (both at-grade and grade-separated), trailhead facilities (including parking, picnic facilities, information signage), stock crossings (where the trail divides paddocks), signage, toilets and shelters and the refurbishment of old and installation of new bridges.

The cost of bridges on this proposed rail trail is particularly high in comparison with other proposed rail trails elsewhere in Australia. There is approximately 1900 lineal metres of existing bridges, with several long structures including the 390 metre long bridge over the Numeralla River. The cost to transform these bridges to make them safe and suitable for cyclists, walkers and other users adds considerably to the overall cost of the trail – but these bridges are the quintessential features that make rail trails as popular as they are. (See Appendix 5).

Although rail trails are extremely popular with all types of cyclists, they are also very well used by walkers/hikers, horse riders (where permitted), joggers, trail runners, people in wheelchairs, people in mobility scooters (gophers), parents pushing prams, school groups, clubs and families. Rail trails also provide excellent venues for various events such as half-marathons, fun runs, park runs etc. Given the development of residential areas such as South Jerrabomberra, the proposed rail trail can also be used as a commuter facility for residents wishing to commute into Canberra or Queanbeyan (by bicycle). The ever-increasing sales of electric bikes, and their growing use on recreation trails, needs also to be factored into future use of the proposed trail.

Should it be developed, the Monaro Rail Trail will be a world-class rail trail. It is likely to attract users from not only from all over Australia, but from all around the world – just as the equally spectacular Otago Central Rail Trail (OCRT) on the South Island of New Zealand does. In fact, there is an inevitable comparison between the OCRT and the proposed Monaro Rail Trail. The OCRT is a multi-day adventure in the high country of New Zealand (a 3-day bike ride for most cyclists). It passes through sheep stations and numerous towns and small villages. It provides views of distant snow-capped mountains for most of the year. It has brought prosperity to small towns and businesses (including farms) that were in decline.

This Feasibility Study has included an extensive community consultation programme and the results of that consultation are presented in this report. It is significant that, of the 507 responses received by Council through an on-line survey, 95.9% supported the proposed rail trail (while 3% were opposed). However, the origin of these respondents is unclear.

It should be noted that this report is not a detailed Trail Development Plan. That would be the next logical step should a decision be made to pursue the development of the proposed rail trail. A Trail Development Plan is the equivalent of a construction blueprint. It would accurately locate the alignment of new fences, stock and machinery crossing points, trailside furniture, toilets and shelters, water points, interpretive panels, connecting tracks into each town, precise location of underpasses, and provide road crossing and trailhead designs. This Feasibility Study makes an allowance for all these costs of trail development in addition to the more general costs of trail preparation and trail surfacing, bridge repairs, fencing etc.

An extensive programme of one-on-one consultation with each adjoining landowner would also be undertaken during the preparation of the Trail Development Plan to ascertain the need for security and privacy screening, the precise location of stock and machinery crossings, fencing alignments and other matters of concern to the adjoining landowners.

Issues

In determining whether the proposed Monaro Rail Trail is worthwhile and viable an assessment was made of a number of issues and opportunities. None of the issues that follow are insurmountable with the exception of the possible future railway:

- ✚ **Possible future railway.** Consideration was given to the possibility of accommodating both the proposed rail link between Canberra and Bombala and the proposed rail trail. At the time of preparation of this 'rail trail' Feasibility Study, the results of the 'train' Feasibility Study was still months away. As stated earlier, should it be proven feasible that a train could be re-established on the corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala, a trail could *not* share the same corridor as that train service.
- ✚ **Potential other uses of the corridor.** A number of 'tourist railway' operations have been conducted on parts of this disused railway corridor and a new one is proposed.
- ✚ **Tenure and land ownership.** Though the railway corridor is still entirely in public ownership much of the corridor is grazed by cattle and sheep.
- ✚ **Landholder concerns.** Issues tend to centre around ongoing farm management (disruption to farming practices and biosecurity concerns); non-farm management issues (safety, security privacy, theft, trespass, noise, disturbance and a range of related issues); and ongoing trail management and maintenance.
- ✚ **Bridges: river and creek crossings (and overhead bridges).** There are approximately 90 bridges along the corridor, ranging in length from 3 or 4 metres through to the longest being 390 metres. These will be costly to repair/replace.
- ✚ **Unfenced railways and the need for fencing.** The railway between Cooma and Bombala was built as an unfenced railway. Should a rail trail be developed, there will be a need for new boundary fencing for insurance purposes, to minimise interactions between stock and trail users, and to reduce maintenance costs by allowing grazing of the "excess" corridor.
- ✚ **Unauthorised and informal use of the corridor.** Adjoining landowners have unrestricted access to the disused corridor, using it for general farming practices (including storage of equipment and sheep/cattle grazing). If the trail proceeds, the trail manager is likely to be given an overall lease for the corridor and will be required to deal with these unauthorised and informal activities.
- ✚ **Removal of rail.** The steel railway track is (mostly) still intact and will need to be removed to allow the trail to be constructed, though some of it may be left intact within the Michelago, Cooma, Nimmitabel and Bombala Station areas.
- ✚ **Clearing.** As the majority of the corridor has been disused for many years, there has been some regrowth of vegetation. While most of it is light regrowth, some significant regrowth has occurred. This will influence the cost of developing the trail.
- ✚ **Costs – construction and maintenance.** Costs – both capital and maintenance – are a major consideration in any public infrastructure project. These need to be offset against a range of benefits – both economic and non-economic.

- ✦ **Trail surface.** There is mixed opinion on whether the surface of the trail should be sealed (i.e. bitumen or asphalt) or left unsealed (i.e. compacted gravel or limestone). Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Notably, a sealed surface will cost more to construct but would attract a wider range of users and therefore more users. A sealed surface would be cheaper to construct but may result in fewer users (as 'road' cyclists may not use it).
- ✦ **Ongoing legislative issues.** There is currently no clear direction from the NSW Government that it will provide funding and support for additional rail trail projects in NSW, despite legislative and administrative processes being developed to enable the Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail. Closure of the railway by an Act of Parliament will be required prior to development of the rail trail.
- ✦ **Stakeholder positions.** The Snowy Monaro Regional Council's support for the rail trail is partially dependent on the outcomes of this study and a clear articulation of costs and benefits. The Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council is not a participant in this Feasibility Study. Although it has given the SMRC in-principle support to undertake the study there may not be the support for the trail construction. The community groups that have come forward during the course of the study have indicated a very strong support for the proposal. There is an active Friends of Monaro Rail Trail which raises funds, commissions reports, prepares newsletters, attends meetings and a host of other activities. Some landowners have expressed their opposition and concerns.
- ✦ . The Monaro region climate is characterised by extremes of weather (compared to other places in Australia). Sudden changes in weather can occur and can impact severely on the safety and well-being of trail users (and others engaging in outdoor activities), though outdoor recreational activities are common in the region across the four seasons.



Brickwork within the Colinton Tunnel appears to be in excellent condition, although its structural integrity should be assessed prior to development of the proposed rail trail.

Opportunities

Rail trails also provide many notable opportunities. There are a number of specific elements within the area encompassed by the proposed trail route that provide opportunities and reasons for why a trail should be built:

- ✚ **Distances and services on the corridor.** The proposed 213km rail trail has natural terminuses in major centres or towns or passes through major towns. Distances between towns/villages along the disused railway corridor are very good for enabling easy one-day bike rides for most cyclists (but long days for those walking). Trail segments are likely to be between 30km and 49km.
- ✚ **Appealing landscapes and infrastructure.** The proposed Monaro Rail Trail would pass through extremely attractive scenery. Magnificent views to the nearby Tinderry Range and Snowy Mountains are ever-present, and undulating topography is constant along the corridor. Even the wide, open treeless plains are a feature uncommon on other rail trails, but equally stunning to potential visitors to this region. The landscape through which this disused railway corridor passes would have to be amongst the most attractive in Australia, and certainly one of the most picturesque landscapes for a trail. Infrastructure along the railway corridor is almost complete. Railway station buildings and even siding sheds and platforms remain; most bridges remain; distance pegs, signals and switches remain in most places. Turntables exist at the Michelago, Cooma and Bombala station grounds. Embankments and cuttings are a common feature.
- ✚ **Aesthetics on the corridor.** Despite the fact that much of the disused railway corridor runs near to the Monaro Highway, this does not diminish the attractiveness of the corridor. Often the railway corridor (or adjoining road corridor) is still well vegetated, especially in the hillier, northern parts.
- ✚ **Topography of the route.** One of the major appeals of rail trails is the gentle gradient, suitable for all types of cyclists, walkers and other users. This is the market that would be attracted to a rail trail.
- ✚ **Connections between towns.** Taking trail users through towns will provide new business opportunities for service providers. Presently, there are generally good opportunities for potential trail users to get accommodation, food and drink, and other services at the towns and villages through which the proposed rail trail will pass. Development of the rail trail may provide a range of new business opportunities.
- ✚ **Connection to Queanbeyan.** It would make good sense to make Queanbeyan (most likely the Queanbeyan Railway Station precinct) the northern terminus for the proposed rail trail, given the population of Queanbeyan and the existing connections into the ACT cycle and pedestrian networks. Development of the rail trail would also enable cycle commuting from, for example, the newly developing South Jerrabomberra residential estate.
- ✚ **Broadening the recreation offerings.** The *Snowy Monaro Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2022* includes a vision that the region develops as a year-round tourism destination. Provision of an additional off-road trail adds to the suite of tourist offerings in the region and encourages visitors to stay longer. A rail trail will add

to the stock of “off-season” (i.e. non-snow related) recreation offerings in the same way that mountain bike trails in the Snowy Mountains currently do.

- ✚ **Community support.** There appears to significant support from groups and individuals within the surrounding communities. It is also evident that there are strong advocates within the communities who have expressed a desire to get more involved in ensuring the proposed rail trail gets developed.
- ✚ **Friends of Monaro Rail Trail.** A committed community-based group is an important element in a rail trail’s success. The existing ‘Friends of’ group has been around for a number of years and has undertaken numerous activities and fundraising to help promote the development of the trail. Numerous other ‘Friends of’ groups on other rail trails volunteer to undertake a wide range of routine maintenance tasks – saving the trail manager time and expense
- ✚ **Attracting new visitors who spend money.** A trail such as the proposed Monaro Rail Trail will provide a number of opportunities. A trail will bring additional tourists and assist in keeping them longer in the area. A trail will create opportunities to build on existing industries and enterprises of the area.
- ✚ **Promoting the existing railway museums.** Of particular interest to many future rail trail users would be the outstanding collection of intact railway infrastructure (and museums) at Michelago, Cooma and at Bombala. The efforts of local volunteers to preserve, maintain and promote these station precincts (complete with station buildings, sheds, multiple tracks, signals, switches and turntables) is highly commendable. Should a rail trail be developed, these museum precincts will be of great interest to visitors to these towns.
- ✚ **Providing a momentum for station project upgrades.** Development of a rail trail will provide a stimulus for continued upgrading of railway station buildings and their adaptive re-use. The opportunity to run commercial enterprises (such as a bike hire business or a café) from within an existing station building could supplement the income for the relevant organisations that run these buildings and station grounds.
- ✚ **Revenue from sale of steel tracks.** The recent experience from the Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail (currently being constructed) is that, following the passing of the Bill in the NSW Parliament to close the railway line and the subsequent transfer of the corridor to the local government, ownership of the assets within the closed railway corridor passed to the local government.
- ✚ **Business development.** There is a range of business opportunities for private sector investors arising from the potential development of a rail trail. Providing accommodation, food and beverages, supported and guided tours, and equipment, are some of the businesses that have arisen along other trails.
- ✚ **Non-monetary benefits.** Trails can improve community connectivity and provide increasing recreational options for local people thus contributing to both physical and mental health of communities through which they pass.

Costs

The costs of construction of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail are an estimate of probable costs only. Accurate costs can only be determined, firstly, by the compilation of more detailed works lists accomplished through individual, detailed trail development plans for each section of the proposed rail trail and, secondly, via a tendering process.

The indicative costs for each section are as follows:

Table 1 - Costs Per Section - Summary

Section	Cost
<i>Section 1: Queanbeyan to Michelago (49km)</i>	<i>\$6,846,580</i>
<i>Section 2: Michelago to Bredbo (30km) – excluding major bridges</i>	<i>\$5,525,980</i>
<i>Major Bridges between Michelago and Bredbo</i>	<i>\$3,037,500</i>
<i>Section 3: Bredbo to Cooma (36km) – excluding major bridges</i>	<i>\$6,932,610</i>
<i>Major Bridges between Bredbo and Cooma</i>	<i>\$8,750,000</i>
<i>Section 4: Cooma to Nimmitabel (38km)</i>	<i>\$6,956,290</i>
<i>Section 5: Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly (37km)</i>	<i>\$6,616,740</i>
<i>Section 6: Jincumbilly to Bombala (24km)</i>	<i>\$3,152,680</i>
Total (excluding GST)	\$47,818,380

As indicated in the table, the estimated cost of construction is in the order of **\$48 million**. This is for an unsealed trail (i.e. crushed and compacted gravel or limestone or similar).

An extra \$10-15 million would be required to seal the trail (with bitumen/asphalt).

Business Case

It is always difficult to predict the economic impact of a new trail. Visitor numbers on the 1,000km Bibbulmun Track in WA (a long-distance walk trail) grew from 10,000 when the new alignment was first opened in 1997 to 137,000 in 2004 (*Colmar Brunton 2004*) to over 167,000 in 2008 (*Colmar Brunton 2009*) to over 300,00 in 2015 (*Hughes et al 2015*). This was on a trail that had existed in its entirety for many years but was substantially realigned and reopened in 1997 (although new sections of it had been opened prior to its 'grand opening'). Visitors included those on 'local trips', day trips and overnight or longer stays (including those who travelled from end to end).

A dramatic increase in visitor numbers such as experienced by the Bibbulmun Track can be attributed to very good marketing of the track. The economic impact of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail is primarily dependent on the extent to which the trail is marketed and promoted. The Bibbulmun Track Foundation markets the track, organises events and organises guided experiences of the track – its role in marketing and promotion has been critical to the track's success.

There is little doubt that the Monaro Rail Trail will bring additional tourists and keep them longer in the area. Other possible benefits from developing the trail include:

- ✚ Improvements to community connectivity;
- ✚ Increasing recreational options for local people; and
- ✚ Creating opportunities to build on existing industries and enterprises of the area.

A trail such as proposed Monaro Rail Trail will have attraction to visitors – day trippers and overnight visitors. However, it will also add to the stock of existing trails for local people – people who live in towns and villages within easy reach of the trail. Some of these people will use the trail for exercise – these 'back gate' users may not be significant in terms of expenditure, but they are significant in terms of numbers as they would use the trail many times a year.

One of the key attractions of developing this rail trail is the opportunity to provide a rail trail experience for residents of NSW in NSW. The NSW State Government has previously indicated that one of the key outcomes it is seeking from tourism projects is to reduce the "leakage" of expenditure i.e. money being spent by NSW residents in other states (and countries) on holidays. This is in addition to attracting holiday makers from other States and countries. Another key element is interstate and international visitation to the region. A trail such as the Monaro Rail Trail will also attract interstate visitors particularly from the ACT which is already providing a significant number of visitors to the region (some 22.5% of summer visitors and 12% of winter visitors).

A (165km) trail from Michelago to Bombala (wholly within the Snowy Monaro Regional Council area) has the potential to add extensively to the number of existing visitors. Many new users will be attracted to the region simply due to the trail's length and the landscapes through which it passes. Extending the trail 48km north to Queanbeyan (in the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council) has the potential to attract more users and may also change the make-up of users (with many more people close to the trail).

The length of the shorter trail (at 165 kms) provides for a perfect 3-day bike ride (with an attractiveness for riding sections of it in 2 days), while the longer trail (at 213 kms) provides for a perfect 3 - 5-day ride. As a rail trail, the corridor is reasonably flat and will therefore accommodate the full range of cyclists, as well as walkers.

With the right marketing, the trail will attract local users, day trippers and visitors. Under a relatively conservative scenario, the following outcomes are achievable.

Monaro Rail Trail (Michelago to Bombala – 165km)

- ✚ Local use – 2,325 local users/year is a reasonable expectation. This will result in an economic injection of \$5,090/year.
- ✚ Expansion of the existing day tripper market to the region. 25,000 new day trippers/year would inject \$3,696,750/year into the regional economy.
- ✚ With a new significant recreation attraction, some day-trippers may stay overnight, generating a new income stream. If the trail converted 2,000 day trippers into overnight visitors, this would inject an additional \$426,060/year into the regional economy.
- ✚ If 2,000 visitors stay an extra day to use the trail, an additional \$426,060/year would be injected into the regional economy.
- ✚ If 20,000 new visitors come to the region solely (or primarily) to do the trail, an additional \$14,912,100/year would be injected into the regional economy.

The total injection of dollars into the local economies from local, day trip and overnight visitors may be of the order of **\$19,466,060/ year** (under a range of conservative scenarios) from **51,325** users. Complex economic analysis (beyond the scope of this project) is needed to determine how many jobs are likely to be created by such expenditure.

Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala – 213km)

- ✚ Local use – 13,820 local users/year is a reasonable expectation. This will result in an economic injection of \$30,265/year.
- ✚ Expansion of the existing day tripper market to the region. 26,000 new day trippers/year would inject \$3,844,620/year into the regional economy.
- ✚ With a new significant recreation attraction, some day-trippers may stay overnight, generating a new income stream. If the trail converted 2,500 day trippers into overnight visitors, this would inject an additional \$432,325/year into the regional economy.
- ✚ If 2,500 visitors stay an extra day to use the trail, an additional \$432,325/year would be injected into the regional economy.
- ✚ If 25,000 new visitors come to the region solely (or primarily) to do the trail, an additional \$19,705,275/year would be injected into the regional economy.

The total injection of dollars into the local economies from local, day trip and overnight visitors may be of the order of **\$24,444,810/ year** (under a range of conservative scenarios) from **69,820** users. Complex economic analysis (beyond the scope of this project) is needed to determine how many jobs are likely to be created by such expenditure.

The Monaro Rail Trail (whichever of the two options is developed) will be the longest rail trail in Australia in one of the most scenic regions. It has the potential to become an iconic trail and those advocating for it are not mistaken in arguing that it could be similar to New Zealand's Otago Central Rail Trail which attracts people to the South Island of New Zealand primarily (and sometimes only) to undertake a 3 - 5 day journey along it. Across 3 surveys (2008, 2011, 2014/15), the number of users traversing the complete Otago Central Rail Trail (150 kms) has varied between 12,000 and 14,000. In addition, 24,000 users have used sections of the trail. This is the likely use pattern of the Monaro Rail Trail (the shorter or longer version). The Otago Central Rail Trail attracts 61% of its users from within New Zealand, which has a total population of just under 5 million people. Accessing the trail is not simple but flights from New Zealand's two major centres of Auckland and Wellington (the North Island is the source of 40% of trail users) to Christchurch (the trail's major city access point) are 1 hour 25 mins and 1 hour respectively. Driving is more difficult from either of these centres. By comparison, Sydney and Melbourne have a combined population of over 10 million people and are within a 1-hour flight of Canberra – the proposed trail's major access point. In addition, driving from either of these cities is relatively simple. Sydney to Canberra is a 3-hour drive (and an additional 1 hour to Michelago) while Melbourne is a 6.5 hour drive to Bombala (passing several rail trails along the way which could be packaged together as a long holiday experience). In addition, Canberra with a population of over 410,000 is on the trail's doorstep.

The Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail in Victoria presents similar logistics – Beechworth (one of the key starting points) is 3 hours from Melbourne, 4 hours from Canberra and 6 hours from Sydney. This trail attracts 60,000 users per year.

Given the numbers of people using these two similar trails in particular, the visitor estimates for visitors coming to do the whole (or large sections of the) Monaro Rail Trail are reasonable and supported by other similar existing trails.

It should be emphasised that user numbers will not necessarily be realised in the first years of operation if the trail proceeds. It also should be noted that these numbers may grow as the overall visitor numbers grow.

Trail development offers a range of new business opportunities and the opportunity for existing businesses to extend their offerings. The trail has the potential to improve the sustainability of businesses reliant on tourism.

The completion of a trail would not simply provide an injection of funds to stabilise and grow existing and new businesses. The psychological impact on businesses can also be very important; businesses operating around other rail trails believe the trails have contributed to their businesses as well as helping to position their area as an authentic leisure holiday destination.

The trail construction process itself will provide an economic input to the region.

The trail will provide a number of less quantifiable benefits. These include:

- ✚ Health-related benefits to the wider community. Data from the USA indicates that every \$1 of funds spent on recreational trails yield direct medical benefits of \$2.94. The trail will encourage people to exercise – the economic benefit to society of getting an inactive person to walk or cycle is between \$5,000 and \$7,000/year. Medical research has shown that 1 hour of moderate exercise can add more than 1

extra hour of high-quality life to an individual. The trail can also provide a facility for “green scripts”. The ACT Government is currently working with the medical profession to determine the outcomes of a doctor “ordering” a patient to spend time outdoors with an ACT park ranger. So-called “green scripts” could be a new way to treat heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and mental health issues.

- ✚ Rail trails are an accessible form of recreation. Trail-based recreation is generally free, self-directed and available to all people, all day, every day. Good quality, accessible trails encourage physical activity and improved health. Increasing recreational options for local communities will aid overall community wellbeing. The psychological benefits of trails remain under-estimated.
- ✚ Quality recreational facilities, such as trail networks, can help create attractive places to live and visit. Walking and cycling are relatively cheap modes of transport. Trails also provide a low impact means of travelling through the landscapes and play an important role in connecting people with nature. Extending the trail to Queanbeyan also offers the opportunity to make the rail trail part of the active transport network within Queanbeyan. The rail trail would offer off-road opportunities for residents of Jerrabomberra, the new subdivision at Tralee and in Queanbeyan West to get to work and undertake other activities in Queanbeyan (or heading the other way to Hume). It also provides an off-road opportunity for these users to access the Canberra bike network to travel to Fyshwick and other eastern Canberra workplaces.
- ✚ Trails present a unique opportunity for education. People of all ages can learn more about nature, culture or history along trails. Trails have the power to connect users to their heritage by preserving historic places and by providing access to them. They can give people a sense of place and an understanding of the enormity of past events. An added advantage of a rail trail is that it provides an opportunity for city to connect to country, in a way “bush” trails do not.
- ✚ Trails provide a number of environmental and cultural benefits including opportunities for the community to experience natural and cultural environments, increased community ownership which helps to preserve natural and cultural values, and opportunities for community participation in conservation and revegetation work.

FEASIBILITY STATEMENT

Following consideration of the major issues pertaining to the development of a trail on the disused Government railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala and taking into account the views of key stakeholders, groups and individuals consulted (and background information obtained during the course of the project), this Study recommends that the proposed rail trail proceed, *subject to a number of conditions being met*.

The conditions upon which the rail trail should proceed are:

1. The NSW Government does not proceed with the reinstatement of a train service on the current-disused railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala;
2. The Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) resolving to actively support the development of a trail on the disused railway corridor within its area (generally Queanbeyan Railway Station to its southern boundary just north of Michelago) in order to create the best possible rail trail. No commitment from QPRC does not mean the trail should not proceed. A rail trail between Michelago and Bombala would be successful.
3. The NSW Government enacting legislation that allows conversion of this rail corridor to a rail trail, and the resolution of legislative and administrative processes that enables the corridor to be vested in another entity;
4. Both Councils (or a Committee of Management) being prepared to accept vesting of the entire former railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala, with an acknowledgement that sub-leases may be required to permit other activities (if appropriate) such the possible future activities of the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc and the Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc;
5. A cooperative approach with the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc. and the Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc. be forged with regard to the shared use of the former railway station precincts at Cooma and Bombala;
6. The project proponents pursue discussions with the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc. and the Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc. to foster the development of complementary activities at the Cooma and Bombala Railway Stations, including the refurbishment of the infrastructure at the railway yards and the establishment of short tourist rail services (if they can be proven feasible and are approved by the relevant authorities) on track that will be retained within the station grounds;
7. Detailed Trail Development Plans for the rail trail being prepared, which will involve a thorough and comprehensive examination of the entire corridor, the preparation of detailed works lists and cost estimates;
8. A comprehensive programme of one-on-one discussions on-site with affected adjoining landowners be undertaken to ascertain their individual concerns and to work out together solutions to each issue raised;
9. The project proponents (the two Councils) seek funding from external sources (notably the NSW Government and Commonwealth Government) for the construction of the proposed rail trail (and the detailed trail development plan that will need to be prepared prior to construction);

10. A Committee of Management, comprising (at least) representatives of both Councils, the Friends of the Monaro Rail Trail Inc., the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc. and the Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc, the NSW Rural Fire Service, residents of the communities, local landcare groups, local business proprietors and adjoining landowners, be formed to guide the ongoing planning, design and construction, management and maintenance of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail and the former railway corridor. (The Committee of Management could be modelled on successful Victorian examples);
11. The preparation of a Corridor Management Plan before construction, including a comprehensive maintenance programme (detailing the ongoing maintenance) for the trail and corridor;
12. The preparation of a Bush Fire Risk Management Plan for the corridor;
13. Grazing and various other existing uses of the corridor to be considered on their merits, and suitable solutions found to enable the activity to continue where reasonably achievable;
14. The Trail Manager to assume liability responsibility for trail users and are to take all actions possible to mitigate potential claims against landowners and neighbours;
15. A commitment to ongoing maintenance of the trail being given by both Councils, a Committee of Management and volunteers; and
16. The proposed Committee of Management give consideration to the appointment of a trail manager so that landowners have a direct point of contact for issue resolution.

There are a number of stages for trail development if and when a decision is made to proceed with the development of the Monaro Rail Trail as recommended in this report.

1. Undertake a series of more detailed investigations, notably detailed bridge testing.
2. Undertake consultation and negotiation with a range of stakeholders as noted in the Feasibility Statement.
3. Actively seek funding for the trail planning and development.
4. Prepare a detailed design development plan for the rail trail, which will involve a thorough examination of the entire corridor, the preparation of detailed works lists and cost estimates.
5. Proceed with a staged development of the rail trail. The recommended stages are:
 - o Stage 1 of construction: Queanbeyan to Michelago (49kms).
 - o Stage 2 of construction: Michelago to Bredbo (30kms).
 - o Stage 3 of construction: Bredbo to Cooma (36kms).
 - o Stage 4 of construction: Cooma to Nimmitabel (38kms).
 - o Stage 5 of construction: Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly (37kms).
 - o Stage 6 of construction: Jincumbilly to Bombala (24kms).

Factors Supporting the Decision

In formulating a decision about whether the proposed Monaro Rail Trail is feasible or not, due consideration has been given to a range of factors.

From a trail users' perspective, the former railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala is extremely attractive. It offers a range of positive factors. When compared to numerous other disused railway lines elsewhere in Australia (both those which have been converted and those which have not), this is an excellent opportunity.

- ✚ The entire railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala remains in public ownership with few constraints to the development of a trail along its entire length (other than the prospect of a train service being returned).
- ✚ The railway corridor is situated in one of the most scenic landscapes in Australia, with a great diversity of landforms, vegetation and existing historic railway infrastructure (including the numerous and sometimes long timber bridges, a tunnel, embankments and cuttings, the original railway station buildings and outbuildings, sidings, several turntables, switches and signals).
- ✚ The railway corridor offers the potential for a wonderful multi-day trail experience and, coupled with the ideal distance between towns/villages, could become a significant trail destination in NSW, especially when bundled with other attractions and trails of the Snowy Monaro region.
- ✚ The corridor is easily accessible and is within a short distance of Canberra and Sydney (and numerous smaller towns) and is in an established tourism region with high visitation rates both for day-trippers and overnight visitors (especially to the snowfields). Melbourne is also relatively close (at least by air). Adding another attraction will potentially bring additional visitors and keep visitors longer in the area.
- ✚ The development of several trailheads at towns/villages along the trail (as well as the two anchors of Queanbeyan and Bombala) provides for a variety of rides/walks of different lengths.
- ✚ The trail does not have a complicated route through and getting out of Queanbeyan or Bombala (unlike some existing rail trails in Australia and overseas). The proposed crossings of the Monaro Highway that runs through the region could be dealt with comfortably via underpasses or, where the speed limits are low in town areas, via at-grade crossings.
- ✚ Just about all of the major elements of the railway infrastructure remain (the formation, cuttings, embankments and most of the bridges and culverts). Two bridges over minor roads have been removed.
- ✚ Being in an established tourism region means that there is a good supply of accommodation options for visitors coming to use the rail trail, though more may be developed in response to the opportunity provided by the rail trail.
- ✚ The aboriginal history of the Monaro, the surrounding farming properties and various other land uses, the natural qualities of the region, the history of construction of the railway and a host of other interesting subjects results in a huge potential for interpretation along the rail trail – adding to and enriching the experience of trail users.

- ✚ As a rail trail, the 213km corridor is reasonably flat (as it was built with low grades for steam locomotives) and will therefore accommodate the full range of cyclists, as well as walkers, joggers, runners, wheelchair and gopher users etc. The entire trail route would enable a 4 - 5 day cycle ride and perhaps an 8 day walk but there are opportunities to 'hop' on and off the rail trail and ride/walk shorter sections.
- ✚ The trail will improve non-motorised transport connections between the newly developing areas at South Jerrabomberra and Queanbeyan and Canberra, promoting walking and bicycle commuting options among local people.
- ✚ As has happened on lengthy rail trails in other locations around Australia, the rail trail will provide local people with a new opportunity for walking, cycling, fun runs, triathlons, half marathons (or full marathons), wheelchair use and educational opportunities for school children.

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 The Purpose of this Feasibility Study Report

The primary purpose of this Feasibility Study report is to provide to the Snowy Monaro Regional Council an opinion on whether the development of a trail (the proposed Monaro Rail Trail) on the (currently) disused railway between Queanbeyan and Bombala is viable or not.

1.2 The Scope of Works

The Request for Quotation specified that the Feasibility Study address the following areas:

- ✚ Overview of Overall Experience
- ✚ Community Consultation on Concept
- ✚ Rail Trail Alignment
- ✚ Trail Experience Development
- ✚ Trail Construction Planning Assessment
- ✚ Calculation of Probable Cost of Trail Construction and Maintenance
- ✚ Assessment of Social and Economic Benefits
- ✚ Timeframe for Rail Trail Construction
- ✚ Future Governance Model

1.3 The Feasibility Study Process

One of the first phases in determining feasibility is examining the various factors that influence the practicality of building a trail along a disused railway. Some of these factors will make construction difficult, expensive and in one case impossible, while many of these factors will facilitate development of a rail trail. These factors can be grouped under “Issues” or “Opportunities”. Some issues that may impact negatively on the proposal can of course be resolved through design, negotiation or by the spending of funds to mitigate the problem.

This Feasibility Study sought to answer a number of critical questions:

- ✚ Is there a viable trail route (i.e. is a trail route physically possible)?
- ✚ Are there alternative uses for the corridor that will provide more value to the community? Are these alternative uses viable?
- ✚ Will the rail trail provide a quality user experience (terrain / landscape / history)?
- ✚ Is there a market for the proposed trail (i.e. local people and visitors who will be attracted to use it)?
- ✚ Will the rail trail create any unmanageable or unmitigated impacts on adjoining landholders’ farming practices and lifestyles?
- ✚ Is the local government and key stakeholders supportive of the concept?
- ✚ Are there supportive/strong advocates (in the community)?
- ✚ Is there a supportive community?

- ✚ Would the trail be value for money?
- ✚ Is there a commitment to the ongoing maintenance of the trail (“friends of ...” group or support network)?
- ✚ Will the trail provide a unique experience?
- ✚ Is there a demonstrated benefit to trail users and, especially, the host communities?

In progressing this study, the following tasks were undertaken:

- ✚ An inception meeting, involving staff from the Snowy Monaro Regional Council, members of the Friends of Monaro Rail Trail and the consulting team.
- ✚ Field work to assess the entire disused railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Cooma, and between Cooma and Bombala. This fieldwork included an examination of all road crossings, the condition of the former railway corridor and many of the bridges along the corridor (including the most significant and lengthy bridges).
- ✚ Conversations with several businesses in towns/villages along the proposed rail trail route, as well as with a number of adjoining landowners.
- ✚ Community consultation sessions (“Open Houses”) in each of the towns/villages through which the railway corridor passes.
- ✚ An on-line survey on Council’s Your Say webpage.
- ✚ General observations made of the terrain and topography through which the railway corridor passes, an assessment made of the scenic qualities of the region, observations made of the services available to potential trail users in the towns/villages, and an assessment made of the viability of each component of the route to become a stand-alone rail trail (should the entire route be deemed as not feasible).
- ✚ Field observations to determine (a subjective view of) the likelihood of a train service resuming on the corridor (based on a visual assessment of the condition of the track and sleepers, the condition of bridges, the directness or otherwise of the railway corridor, the number and locations of road crossings and other features and factors that may influence whether a rail service is practical and feasible).
- ✚ Fieldwork to enable observations and conclusions to be made of a range of factors that will assist in the determination of whether the rail trail is feasible.
- ✚ Structural testing of a number of the more significant bridges by a qualified civil engineer; with resultant cost estimates for remedial work to sustain rail trail usage.
- ✚ An examination of the expected construction and infrastructure works required along the corridor and the likely costs.
- ✚ An assessment of the likely visitor numbers, where they might come from, what they might spend and consequently an indication of the likely economic benefits of developing the trail.

1.4 What Is A Rail Trail?

A rail trail is a multi-use recreation trail constructed on a disused railway corridor (public land) for non-motorised recreation. There are over 100 established rail trails in Australia, the majority of which are in Victoria. South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, Tasmania and the Northern Territory also have rail trails. Approximately 15 -20 are under consideration in NSW. The state's first rail trail on a Government owned corridor is currently being constructed between Tumberumba and Rosewood (21km). It is regarded as a 'pilot' project to enable the NSW Government to assess the legislative and administrative processes and procedures to enable further rail trail conversions to occur. The process for converting a rail corridor to a recreation trail in NSW has until recently been extremely difficult, requiring an Act of Parliament to close a railway line. The NSW rail trails that exist (such as the Fernleigh Track in Newcastle) have all been developed on privately owned rail lines.



The Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail in Victoria offers peaceful riding through rural landscapes with outstanding views to the coast and to an extinct volcano (Tower Hill).

1.5 Requirements for Successful Rail Trail Development

Rail trails are different from each other, but a number of characteristics often distinguish the good ones. These features are drawn from a number of published sources and the consultants' own extensive experience with rail trails.

- ✦ Many successful rail trails have accessibility to large population centres both for visitors and as a stimulus for local demand. The Monaro Rail Trail's proximity to the Canberra population (known for its high levels of cycling) augurs well for the popularity of the proposed trail.
- ✦ There are existing or easily developed tourism infrastructure in or near townships along the rail trail - places to eat and drink, explore and stay.
- ✦ Good rail trails have some heritage infrastructure in place such as historic stations, bridges, tunnels, goods sheds, sidings, platforms, turntables, switches, signals, and distance posts. Rail trails elsewhere have utilised their railway history as part of their attraction. Remaining major elements of the railway infrastructure (formations, deep cuttings, high embankments, bridges, culverts) add significantly to the user's experience. Built and social heritage values are a critical part of the rail trail experience not often experienced on other types of recreational trails.

- ✚ A common feature is community and adjacent landholders' level of support for the project to move ahead. Many (though not all) adjacent landholders are initially suspicious of rail trails; they often become converts once a trail is built.
- ✚ A uniqueness of experience is often important – be it a stunning landscape with views to distant snow-capped mountains, adjoining land uses or special attractions (such as long timber bridges, railway tunnels or railway museums).
- ✚ Many of the good rail trails have a regional or state tourism significance (some have national and international significance). Significance is elevated where extensions are made to connect to services in towns. The best rail trails have natural terminuses in major centres or towns. Intermediate towns easily accessible along the trail are critical when a trail is long and an added bonus when the trail is short.
- ✚ The best rail trails are located in highly scenic surrounds, with spectacular views of the surrounding landscapes. These trails are often full of variety and interest. The best rail trails traverse places of cultural and natural history and conservation and provide opportunities to view birds, other wildlife and remnant vegetation.
- ✚ The good rail trails often provide opportunities for short, medium and long length rides and walks on the main trail. Having options is a bonus.
- ✚ Railway corridors can provide a great insight into the history of the region – both European settlement and Aboriginal use. Good interpretation will mark out an excellent trail. There are many good recreation trails (including rail trails) in Australia – few have good interpretation. Interpretation adds significantly to the user's experience.
- ✚ In a similar vein, trails that emphasise local conditions – flora, fauna, history, construction materials, etc. - are very popular. Good interpretation will bring out this local flavour.
- ✚ Well-signed and mapped trails - both on the trail and easily available elsewhere - are more successful than those that are not.
- ✚ Informed, friendly and supportive locals make a user's experience more pleasurable.



Rail trails often are routed along river valleys, where it was easy to build railways. This is the case for the Row River Rail Trail in Oregon USA, above. Similarly, the proposed Monaro Rail Trail will follow the flat grades along several creeks in the region.

- ✚ The best rail trails offer a challenge, and they offer peace and solitude.
- ✚ A well-maintained trail and a strong community support network add to the user's experience, primarily because the trail remains in good condition. Such a community network could include a committed and purpose-dedicated management committee, a strong "Friends of the Trail" group or even a full-time trail manager. Various rail trails in Australia feature at least some of these elements.

In addition, all rail trails have a number of positive features which mark them out as uniquely rail trails (as opposed to other recreational trails):

- ✚ Rail trails are trails for people of all abilities and all types of bicycles. Good trails provide equity for people of many levels of fitness and equipment to gain access to the types of experience within the region.
 - ✚ All rail trails are motor vehicle free i.e. safe for all types of trail users. Minimising the number of major road (at-grade) crossings adds to the experience. Trails rarely interrupted by road crossings appeal more than those which constantly cross roads – well marked and safe crossings where necessary add to the success.
 - ✚ All railway formations (through cuttings and along embankments) provide a gentle gradient and sweeping bends, suitable for all types of cyclists, walkers, wheelchair and gopher users, and where appropriate, horse riders.
 - ✚ All rail trails offer safety for users compared with urban shared pathways which have driveways, light poles, blind corners, poor sightlines, and are often 'congested' as users cannot see other users approaching due to poor sightlines.
- ✚ Rail trails are not something new.
 - ✚ There are over 2,100 rail trails in the USA - totalling over 24,000 miles (that's 38,000 kilometres!). First one developed in the 1960s.
 - ✚ There are rail trails in the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Spain, France, Germany, numerous other European countries (eg. Latvia, Estonia) and other countries around the world.
 - ✚ There are already 100 rail trails in Australia (30 in Victoria, 20 in WA, 20 in Tasmania, 15 in Queensland, 8 in SA, 3 in NSW and 2 in NT).
 - ✚ First rail trail in Australia? Railway Reserves Heritage Trail in Mundaring, Western Australia. It was developed over 30 years ago.
 - ✚ Rail trails are built along **publicly** owned disused railway corridors.
 - ✚ Rail trails are for "non-motorised" users - cyclists, walkers, runners, parents pushing prams, horse riders (sometimes), people in wheelchairs, fun runs and triathlons.
 - ✚ Rail trails offer safe, flat routes away from dangerous roads and provide access into rural areas for people of all abilities.
 - ✚ They traverse a variety of urban and rural landscapes including farms and paddocks, vineyards, forests and wetlands.

Some Facts About Rail Trails

Indeed, it is the comparative flatness and good sight lines offered by rail trails, coupled with a motor-vehicle-free walking and cycling environment, that rail trail users seek out. This type of

experience cannot be provided in a road-side trail, as numerous opponents of rail trails often suggest. In the case of the Monaro Rail Trail, enabling cyclists to get off the Monaro Highway is highly desirable. Cycling alongside the Monaro Highway, as suggested by several people, is not a substitute for developing the proposed rail trail.

Rail trails are not new – they have been established in America for nearly 60 years. These provide successful models for Australian rail trails.

1.6 Who Uses Rail Trails and Why?

Observation of many operating rails trails throughout Australia, New Zealand and North America indicates that there is a very wide diversity of people (and groups) that use rail trails.

The predominant user group for rail trails is cyclists, ranging from elderly people, to baby boomers, young couples, family groups with children, teenagers and young children. Walkers and horse riders are also attracted to rail trails, but in far lesser numbers. Wheelchair and gopher users can also use rail trails. They all are using rail trails for a reason: they enjoy flat, motor vehicle traffic-free routes, away from the noise and smell of roads, in scenic and often forested areas, away from trucks and speeding cars.

Rail trails appeal to individuals, to couples, to groups. In fact, a significant proportion of trail users on the Otago Central Rail Trail on the South Island of New Zealand are groups. These groups consist of school groups, sporting clubs, work groups, social clubs, Over 50's groups and organised tour groups. Some use the rail trail for team-building, some use it for fitness training, others for a social club outing. Others use the Otago Central Rail Trail simply for the outstanding beauty and scenery that it provides.

A study of the impact of rail trails on the communities through which they pass was undertaken by Professor Sue Beeton of La Trobe University. The study involved interviews and survey of users of the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail in NE Victoria over the 2009 Easter weekend. It found:

- ✚ Of the 128, only 22 identified themselves as living close to the Rail Trail but were all travelling with visitors. Travel companions were evenly spread between travelling with a partner, family or friends, while only a small number of respondents (5 percent) travelled alone.
- ✚ The respondents were predominantly employed in professional and administrative positions (47 and 25 percent respectively) with 14 percent retired; however, no respondents identified themselves as unemployed.
- ✚ Ages were varied, ranging from one year old to 79, with a slight majority of men (53%). The largest group was aged between 41 and 60 years old, however the high representation of riders in the 0-10 age groups illustrates the significance of mixed family groups and the suitability of the Rail Trail for all ages.
- ✚ Half of the respondents had past experience in using rail trails and identified the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail as one they had visited previously. Over half (53%) considered themselves to be frequent riders, cycling more than once a week, but not daily. The next largest group (23%) were regular weekly riders, suggesting that while the trail is being used by people who cycle often, they are primarily recreational cyclists with a quarter who do not cycle regularly.

The Hauraki Rail Trail in New Zealand is particularly popular with the "baby boomer" and family clientele from Auckland and the wider Waikato, with 24% of users coming from Auckland, 15% from Hamilton, and a large proportion of users being older riders (*New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment 2013*).

1.7 The Monaro Rail Trail Proposal

The proposed Monaro Rail Trail is envisioned to follow the disused rail line from Queanbeyan to Bombala, a distance of 213 km. This is considered a good distance for a cycle tourism experience enabling (for most potential users) a 4 - 5 day journey - by family groups and leisure cyclists who might ride up to 50 kms /day. The corridor has been (rightly) compared with the world-renowned Otago Central Rail Trail on the South Island of New Zealand. That trail is 150km long, takes 3 - 4 days to complete by bicycle, and is used by over 14,000 people each year. It passes through very similar landscapes and adjoining land uses.

The proposed Monaro Rail Trail would traverse through a combination of timbered and open country between the Canberra Valley, Cooma, the Great Dividing Range near Nimmitabel and ending in the township of Bombala. There are many interesting rail features including heritage listed bridges, sidings, sheds and stations all of which add to the experience and the story that can be told. The pastoral story and heritage of the region is also visible through properties and remnants of the earlier role of the railway to transport wool and other produce.

Following several years of discussion in the community, a pre-feasibility assessment was completed in October 2018 (*TRC Monaro Rail Trail Pre-feasibility Assessment October 2018*). That study report provided a high-level overview of the likely experience, potential markets and economic benefits. The pre-feasibility assessment concluded that the proposal has merit and would offer a great cycle tourism opportunity providing certain criteria could be met.

The significant criteria identified were:

- ✚ Legislation is created to enable use of the railway easement for the long term;
- ✚ Appropriate funding is provided for a high-quality gravel trail to be constructed with ongoing funding mechanisms identified for maintenance;
- ✚ There is commitment from landholders and communities along the alignment to establish and deliver appropriate services to riders (accommodation, hospitality, experience/attractions);
- ✚ Where there are significant gaps in the distance between likely services, appropriate infrastructure and services are planned and delivered; and
- ✚ An active rail line does not proceed between Canberra and Eden on the same redundant railway line.

1.8 History of Rail Trails in America

The rails-to-trails movement began in the USA in the mid-1960s. Local people came up with the idea to convert abandoned or unused rail corridors into public trails. Once the rail tracks were removed, people naturally walked along the old grades, socialising, exploring, discovering railroad relics, marvelling at the industrial facilities such as bridges, tunnels, abandoned mills, sidings, switches and whatever else they could find. In the snow of winter the unconventional outdoor enthusiast skied or snowshoed on the corridor, but these were days before even

running and all-terrain bicycles were common, so the predominant activity was walking. None of the corridors were paved or even graded — they were simply abandoned stretches of land.

"Rails-to-Trails" is what people called the phenomenon. The name was catchy and descriptive enough to give the concept a tiny niche in the fledgling environmental movement that was gathering momentum. However, it was destined to move into the mainstream of the conservation and environmental movements. It had all the ingredients: recycling, land conservation, wildlife habitat preservation and non-automobile transportation — as well as historical preservation, physical fitness, recreation access for wheelchair users and numerous other benefits.

Today, nearly 60 years later, rail trails have made a significant mark in America, with around 100 million users per year travelling on 24,075 miles (over 38,000 kms) of trail on 2,131 rail trails. There is another 812 rail trail projects being planned and/or developed for a total of 8,684 miles (almost 14,000 kms) (Rails-to-Trails Conservancy website):



The Burke-Gilman Rail Trail in Seattle (Washington, USA) is one of that country's oldest and most popular rail trails. Studies along that trail corridor have demonstrated that property values have risen as a result of the development of the trail and are higher with close proximity to the trail.

<http://www.railstotrails.org/our-work/research-and-information/national-and-state-trail-stats/>). The longest trail is the Katy Trail State Park in Missouri (240 miles) while 13 other trails are longer than 100 miles. All American states have a rail trail network. Missouri has the most rail trail miles (2,320 miles on 113 trails), while Pennsylvania has the most trails (169 rail trails covering 1,753 miles). Wisconsin is the home of the first rail trail in America — the Elroy Sparta State Trail opened in 1965.

In Seattle, more than 1,200 people a day cycle along the 16 mile Burke-Gilman Trail, near Lake Washington, while in Florida over 100,000 people stroll, skate and cycle along the 22 mile Pinellas Trail every month. In Washington D.C. the easy grades and varied topography of the 45 mile Washington and Old Dominion Railroad attract nearly two million users annually, including cyclists, runners, equestrians, people with disabilities, skaters and cross-country skiers.

1.9 Rail Trails in the UK

In the UK, a number of disused rail corridors form part of the Sustrans long trail cycle network across mainland Britain — the rail trail movement is not as clearly articulated in the UK as it is in the USA or Australia. The Bristol to Bath rail trail is one of Sustrans' first dismantled railway paths and now carries over a million visits a year. It runs 13 miles from the heart of Bristol to the outskirts of Bath, passing old steam trains at Bitton Station. The High Peak Trail and the Tissington Trail in the Peak District are two of the best known and most popular routes in the

country offering a superb challenge in the heart of the Peak District. The High Peak Trail runs for 17.5 miles (with a flat section of 12 miles) while the Tissington Trail is shorter, running for 13 miles. The Camel Trail in Cornwall is the most popular recreational ride in the country, running 16 miles from Poley's Bridge and the wooded countryside of the upper Camel Valley down to Wadebridge and alongside the picturesque Camel Estuary as far as Padstow.

1.10 History of Rail Trails in Australia

In Australia, conversion of corridors to rail trails is a relatively recent phenomenon driven by the closure of many railways in the 1980s and 1990s (although rail closures have been occurring continuously since the end of the Second World War).

Rail trail conversions have proven most popular in Victoria. The Victorian Trails Strategy 2014-2024 reports that there are currently over 800 kilometres of rail trail in Victoria, while the Rail Trails Australia website lists over 30 rail trails throughout Victoria. Some listed are still under construction or require signage and/or publicity materials, though they are in use.

One of the best known of Victoria's rail trails is the Lilydale Warburton Rail Trail which is situated some 40km east of Melbourne (at the end of the suburban train line). This trail caters for all types of bikes, walking, horse riding and wheelchairs (for some segments) due to the outstanding surface material used. The trail passes wineries, cafes, pubs and restaurants along the Yarra River valley.



Various styles of interpretation have been used on the Old Beechy Rail Trail in Victoria to highlight the farming history, indigenous history, railway history and natural history of the region. An innovative feature is the use of rusty steel cut-outs. The steel structure pictorially illustrates timber cutting, farming history and other agricultural practices over the years.

The Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail, in northern Victoria, is the most developed of all Victorian rail trails with a sealed surface for its entire distance (97 kilometres). The trail follows the picturesque Ovens Valley and has views of Mt Buffalo and a good climb to historic Beechworth.

In South Australia, the Riesling Trail is perhaps the best-known rail trail. This trail is located in the Clare Valley, 130 km north-east of Adelaide. The trail passes numerous wineries and offers spectacular views from several points along the trail. The 35-kilometre-long trail allows visitors to experience the Clare Valley from end to end by foot or from the saddle of a bicycle. The idea for the trail is attributed to local business people (winemakers) who saw the potential for the disused railway line from Riverton to Spalding that ran through their region. While the closure of the railway in the 1980's was regarded as a major loss to the area, the conversion of the former railway corridor into one of Australia's best-known trails has benefited local businesses,

as well as users. Local people named the trail after the grape that is so celebrated in the Clare Valley. Several wineries have created picnic locations along the trail. There are more than 30 bed and breakfast cottages, several hotel/motels and caravan parks close to the rail trail, enabling users to turn a comfortable one-day bicycle ride into several days. In November 2009, this already popular trail was extended another 8 kilometres north to Barinia Siding, the “geographic” northern end of the Clare Valley.

The Coast to Vines Rail Trail (34 kms) continues this very popular South Australian theme, connecting many of the vineyards of McLaren Vale. The trail offers scenic coast to hinterland views with spectacular vineyard vistas and changing landscapes.

Queensland currently offers Australia’s longest rail trail. The 161 km Brisbane Valley Rail Trail (BVRT) follows the disused Brisbane Valley rail line. The BVRT winds its way up the Brisbane Valley, traversing farmland, forests, picturesque rural settings and country towns. Being on the old railway line, the BVRT provides an off-road climb up the valley for day trippers, overnight camping or longer-term adventurers, but some sections can be more challenging. The final section of the trail was opened in 2018. There are also rail trails linking Kingaroy and Kilkivan, and Atherton and Walkamin. The Imbil Brooloo Rail Trail in the Mary Valley of the Gympie Region was recently opened. There is a short rail trail in Yeppoon. Current investigations looking at 7 rail trail proposals are being driven in part by the Queensland Government’s commitment of \$14 million over 4 years in the Queensland Cycling Action Programme.

The success of rail trails elsewhere in Australia can best be summed up by a recent quote about the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail in SE Queensland (which at 161km is currently the longest in Australia). Plans are afoot to spend \$2.2 million on its upgrading. Somerset Mayor Graeme Lehmann recently said *"The Brisbane Valley Rail Trail is a tremendous asset for the Somerset region. The trail is a significant economic driver for Somerset, boosting businesses, accommodation providers and tourism operators and building on the region's reputation as a destination for adventure-based outdoor experiences."*

The Brisbane Valley Rail Trail has been named Public Works Project of the Year (2019). Somerset Regional Council were recognised for its efforts in upgrading and maintaining the trail, receiving top award of Best Public Works Project (\$2 to \$5 million) for the 161km trail. The accolades were delivered at this year's Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia Awards for Excellence. "It's our biggest tourism driver and a really significant part of the Somerset economy," Cr Lehmann said.

Who Uses Rail Trails and Why?

- ✚ Predominant user group is cyclists, ranging from elderly people, to baby boomers, young couples, family groups with children, teenagers and young children.
- ✚ Walkers and horse riders are also attracted to rail trails, but in far lesser numbers.
- ✚ Rail trails appeal to individuals, to couples, and to groups. A significant proportion of trail users on the Otago Central Rail Trail (South Island, New Zealand) are groups (school groups, sporting clubs, work groups, service clubs, social clubs, Over 50's clubs and organised tour groups).
- ✚ Some use rail trails for team-building, some use it for fitness training, others for a social club outing. Others cycle and walk a rail trail simply for the outstanding beauty and scenery that it provides.
- ✚ Users enjoy routes free from motor vehicles, routes that are away from the noise and smell of roads, and away from trucks and cars.
- ✚ All railway formations (through cuttings and along embankments) provide a gentle gradient and sweeping bends, suitable for all types of cyclists, walkers and horse riders.
- ✚ All rail trails offer safety for users compared with urban shared pathways which have driveways, light poles, blind corners and poor sightlines.
- ✚ Many users are attracted because of the railway heritage artifacts that remain (such as station buildings, bridges, turntables, signals and other signage, cuttings and embankments).

Survey of Rail Trail Users

A 1999 survey of users of the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail in NE Victoria (by Professor Sue Beeton of La Trobe University) revealed that:

- ✚ Of the 128 respondents, only 22 identified themselves as living close to the Rail Trail but were all travelling with visitors. Travel companions were evenly spread between travelling with a partner, family or friends, while only a small number of respondents (5%) travelled alone.
- ✚ The respondents were predominantly employed in professional and administrative positions (47% and 25% respectively) with 14% retired; however no respondents identified themselves as unemployed.
- ✚ Ages were varied, ranging from one year old to 79, with a slight majority of men (53%). The largest group was aged between 41 and 60 years old, however the high representation of riders in the 0-10 age groups illustrates the significance of mixed family groups and the suitability of the Rail Trail for all ages.
- ✚ Half of the respondents had past experience in using rail trails and identified the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail as one they had visited previously. Over half (53%) considered themselves to be frequent riders, cycling more than once a week, but not daily. The next largest group (23%) were regular weekly riders, suggesting that while the trail is being used by people who cycle often, they are primarily recreational cyclists with a quarter who do not cycle regularly.



Above: The Lilydale Warburton Rail Trail (Victoria) is about an hour from the Melbourne CBD. This proximity helps attract over 100,000 users per year.



Above: The Riesling Trail is South Australia's premier rail trail, travelling through the very attractive wine-growing country of the Clare Valley.



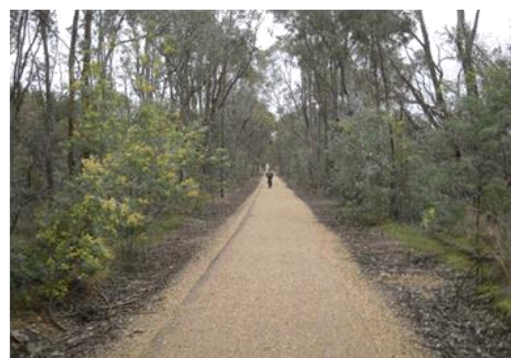
Above: The Sidings Rail Trail (WA) makes the most of existing historic rail infrastructure. This trail has two elements – as well as being a rail trail in itself, it is part of the Munda Biddi Trail – the long distance mountain bike trail between Perth and Albany.



Above: The Brisbane Valley Rail Trail (Qld) is being progressively developed. It attracts users from South East Qld, one of Australia's fastest growing regions.



Above: The Fernleigh Track in Newcastle is exceedingly popular with a range of users. One of its key attractions is the Fernleigh Tunnel.



Above: The Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail is one of Australia's highest profile rail trails; users are spending around \$250/day while using the trail.

SECTION 2 – THE CURRENT SITUATION

2.1 History of the Railway

One factor in determining whether a rail trail is feasible is knowing how/why the railway was originally established, why services stopped and the likelihood of a train service (or even tourist trains) being returned to the corridor.

The railway was originally designed for the area's farmers to move their cattle, sheep and produce. Like many railways throughout NSW, the actual route was determined by a combination of factors; namely the ease of construction (railways generally follow river valleys and avoid steep topography), the demand from farmers (who want ease of access to the railway for movement of goods and produce), and the location of towns (and the need for intervening sidings). Consequently, many railway corridors follow circuitous routes to avoid mountainous terrain and in order to service as many farmers as possible. As they were built in the era of steam locomotives the trains were usually relatively slow (as compared with modern day trains). Construction techniques of that era were relatively primitive, and tunnels and bridges were the result of hard manual labour. It is highly doubtful that any new train service, with fast trains, would follow much of the original corridor.

The first stage of this railway (between Queanbeyan and Michelago) was completed in December 1887. The extension to Cooma was completed in May 1889, to Nimmitabel by April 1912 and Bombala in November 1921.

Wikipedia provides an outline of railway services on the "Bombala" line (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombala_railway_line):

"The Bombala railway line is a partially closed branch railway line in the south of New South Wales, Australia. It branches off the Main South line at Joppa Junction, south of Goulburn, and was opened in stages to Tarago (January 1884), Bungendore (March 1885), Queanbeyan (September 1887), Michelago (December 1887), Cooma (May 1889), Nimmitabel (April 1912) and Bombala (November 1921).

On 26 March 1986, the line south of Cooma was closed.

Passenger services south of Queanbeyan ceased in September 1988. A bridge carrying the line over the Numeralla River at Chakola was declared unsafe so freight services south of Queanbeyan ceased in May 1989. However a special steam train service did operate through to Cooma a few weeks later, albeit without passengers over the bridge in question.

The 49 kilometre section between Queanbeyan and Michelago was also re-opened in April 1993 for heritage tourist operation by the ACT Division of the Australian Railway Historical Society. The line available for traffic was truncated to Royalla as it deteriorated, until finally being suspended at the beginning of 2007 as a result of storm damage.

The ARHS formally relinquished its lease on the Queanbeyan to Michelago section of track in 2011, and has subsequently concentrated its activities to boutique novelty trips for Canberra's population on the Canberra to Bungendore section of the line.

In October 1999 Freight Australia commenced operating log trains a couple of kilometres south of Queanbeyan to Hume. This freight though has now ceased also signifying the current operational end of the Bombala line.

At the Cooma end of the line, there is another heritage railway, the Cooma Monaro Railway, that was formed in 1992, when a group of local Cooma people decided to restore Cooma Railway Station. After the group had restored the station, efforts were then made by the group to acquire some rolling stock and re-open a section of track. This came to fruition starting in 1998, with over 17 kilometres of railway track reopened and restored CPH railmotors operating between Cooma and Chakola. Train movements though are currently suspended on this section of track, while the CMR tends to various new requirements of the Office of National Rail Safety Regulator.

At the Bombala terminus, a railway museum has been created, with a view to increasing local tourism. It is highly unlikely that a tourist train service will be instituted though, with vast tracts of rail missing between Bombala and the preceding station at Bukalong siding."

It is understood that the intention of a local Bombala group (Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc.) is to establish a 'pedal cart' operation between Bombala and Bukalong siding – a distance of 15km (involving several road crossings). Re-establishing any sort of train service on the track between Bombala and Bukalong will be extremely difficult due to the cost of acquiring rolling stock (and ongoing operations and maintenance), replacing the hundreds of metres of missing railway track between Bombala and Bukalong siding and the regulations in place governing tourist train operations and in particular the crossing of roads.

It is also understood a group is undertaking a feasibility study into running a 15km 'picnic train' between Cooma and Rock Flat.

Other local people have suggested other options for the corridor such as battery-powered golf carts on steel wheels (utilising the existing steel tracks).

Throughout Australia more and more tourist trains operations are failing or not commencing after initial enthusiasm due to a number of factors including the imposition of more restricted rules and regulations, the ever-increasing cost of operations, the diminishing revenues from users, the dwindling number of experienced and accredited operators and the problem of retaining volunteers so important to the running of these ventures. One local example of the high costs of heritage railways is the Canberra Railway Museum which ran heritage train services (the "City of Canberra" steam locomotive) until 2016. The ABC reported that the train consumes 18 tonnes of coal and some 40,000 litres of water on average each day, costing around \$10,000 a day to operate (<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-11-18/canberra-railway-museum-closes-doors/8037072>). A spokesman for the operation summed up the challenge succinctly "There is a reason railways don't operate steam locomotives — they are very expensive," he said. That service no longer operates.

2.2 Corridor Assessment

For the purpose of determining whether the entire corridor was suitable for a rail trail, or just some sections of it, the corridor was divided into 6 sections for assessment. These sections roughly equated to a one-day bike ride (for the novice or inexperienced cyclist or family group). These sections were based on the locations of existing towns or villages along the corridor, and

in the case of the lengthy distance between towns in the southern half, a siding (Jincumbilly) alongside a main road was chosen as a potential trailhead. The six sections are:

- ✚ Queanbeyan to Michelago – a distance of 49km
- ✚ Michelago to Bredbo – a distance of 30km
- ✚ Bredbo to Cooma – a distance of 36km
- ✚ Cooma to Nimmitabel – a distance of 38km
- ✚ Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly – a distance of 37km
- ✚ Jincumbilly to Bombala – a distance of 24km

Each section was assessed according to a set of criteria developed by the consultants (and used in several other rail trail projects). The perfect score would be 100/100. These criteria are:

- ✚ Towns/villages (trailheads) at each end (incl. availability of accommodation, food/drink (and other services) – towns provide an essential service for users of trails to rest, replenish supplies or to be accommodated. (Score out of 10)
- ✚ Potential landholder issues – many adjoining landowners are not favourably disposed towards the prospect of a rail trail, citing a range of factors that they imagine might inconvenience their farming practices or lifestyle. (Score out of 10)
- ✚ Estimate of costs of construction (including difficulty of construction – terrain, access, type) – the higher the cost of constructing a trail, the harder it will be for the trail to provide a positive return on investment. Some sections of trail may be much more difficult to construct than others. (Score out of 15)
- ✚ Scenery - the scenery as seen from the trail will greatly determine whether people come to experience the trail. Put simply, if it is boring, they won't come. (Score out of 10)
- ✚ Railway remnants - rail trail users are excited by the prospect of re-discovering relics and remnants of the railway era. Items such as bridges, tunnels, railway stations and sidings, railway signage, embankments and cuttings are what rail trail users expect to find and are the reason why rail trails are a unique attraction (Score out of 10)
- ✚ Bridges - one of the most common and desirable features along any disused railway corridor is the number of remaining bridges, usually timber trestle bridges. In the case of this railway corridor, apart from the numerous timber bridges, it has a number of heritage listed bridges. However, some of the old timber bridges been removed. (Score out of 15)
- ✚ Tunnels - this particular railway corridor has only one tunnel – many other disused railway corridors have none (Score out of 5)
- ✚ Overall impression including user experience (suitability for development as a standalone rail trail) - we are in a favourable position to assess whether a disused railway corridor, or portions of it, are good enough to be converted into a trail for recreational use. Many factors influence our opinion, including all the factors noted above. In particular, we are very interested in whether an individual segment of the corridor has enough going for it to be worthy of becoming a stand-alone rail trail (Score out of 25)

In order from north to south, the sections were ‘scored’ as follows:

- ✚ Queanbeyan to Michelago- score 79/100
- ✚ Michelago to Bredbo – score 74/100
- ✚ Bredbo to Cooma – score 72/100
- ✚ Cooma to Nimmitabel – score 73/100
- ✚ Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly – score 68/100
- ✚ Jincumbilly to Bombala – score 60/100

The assessment sheets are included in this report at Appendix 1.

2.3 Feasibility Study of Possible Return of Rail Services

At the time of the preparation of this Feasibility Study into the viability of a trail being developed on the (currently) disused railway corridor, a Government-sponsored Feasibility Study into the possibility of a train service on the Queanbeyan Bombala railway corridor (and beyond to Eden on the coast) was being undertaken. At the time of this report being prepared no details about that train Feasibility Study have been released to the public.

As stated elsewhere, it is very evident that, should it be proven feasible that a train could be re-established on the corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala, a trail could *not* share the same corridor as that train service. It is assumed (in the absence of any other information about the train proposal) that the train may utilise not just the same corridor as the disused railway line, but all of the bridges, the tunnel and all of the high embankments and deep cuttings.



Above left: An Emergency Marker sign on the Lilydale Warburton Rail Trail in Victoria. Above right: An Emergency Marker on the Kilkivan Kingaroy Rail Trail in Queensland. The post also has distance plates. These safety measures would be a component of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail – should it proceed.

SECTION 3 – COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

3.1 Inception Meeting

An inception meeting was held on 28 May 2019 involving staff of the Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) and representatives of the Friends of Monaro Rail Trail (FoMRT).

The following matters were discussed:

- ✚ The consultants enquired about Snowy Monaro Regional Council's established / committed position on the rail trail proposal. SMRC staff indicated that while the rail trail proposal had been around for some time, it had come to the fore of Council's consideration after the Councils merger in 2016. One of the merged Council's early resolutions (October 2017) was to set aside money to look into the proposal in more detail. There is no formal resolution beyond committing funding to the study. Council's position on the rail trail is neutral; it wants to look at the proposal in detail hence the study. It was noted that Councillors from the southern part of the region were passionate about the proposal. It was also noted that many in the southern communities (Bombala and Nimmitabel) were passionate about the rail trail – businesses, other community members, some adjoining landholders – while other landholders were passionately opposed to the project. At the northern end, Councillors, and the community were less passionate about the project (for or against) although some businesses were strongly in favour.
- ✚ There was some discussion on the proposed new railway line between Canberra and Eden and the Feasibility Study which was underway. The consultants re-iterated their position that it would be impossible to run rail-with-trail along the whole corridor if the train proved feasible and would be built on the same alignment (i.e. the old corridor). There was some discussion as to when the results of the Feasibility Study for the rail proposal would be available. June 30 was nominated as the deadline for the study but no one at the meeting was sure whether a report would be available at that time. (Subsequently no report has been made available as at September 30).
- ✚ Council's position on the proposed railway line is that if the train proposal does not stack up financially, the rail corridor should be put to another good use.
- ✚ Road crossings were discussed. It was indicated there are 6 major crossings (of the Monaro Highway); it was suggested that some of these could be avoided by taking the trail into towns and crossing in lower speed zones or by other means (such as culverts or underpasses).
- ✚ SMRC staff confirmed that there had been no formal community consultation to date on the rail trail proposal. FoMRT have consulted informally with local businesses, chambers of commerce and positive landholders. The most common complaint to date had been the lack of communication – “no one has been to speak to us about the proposal” (landholders).
- ✚ It was suggested that African Love Grass will emerge as a critical issue. It has so far been kept north of Cooma. Some landholders south of Cooma are concerned that the trail will spread the weed south of Cooma.

- ✚ There was discussion on various tourist train proposals. It was acknowledged that it is highly unlikely the previous tourist train which ran from Cooma to Chakola will return to service, although some people in Michelago are very passionate about the return of a tourist train. A group has secured funding to look at the feasibility of running a tourist train from Cooma south to Rock Flat siding (a distance of 11 kms). One of the reasons this appeals to the group is that this section of the railway corridor was originally established as a “pioneer” railway meaning the corridor was unfenced and the rail line had no ballast – these two facts make it easier and cheaper to run a tourist train. There is a possibility this section could be a shared rail with trail experience.
- ✚ FoMRT reported that feedback from its Facebook page is that people would want to ride the entire (213km) rail trail rather than sections of it. There was also a suggestion that packaging this rail trail with the East Gippsland Rail Trail and the South Gippsland Rail Trail (given their geographic proximity to the southern end of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail) would be a significant advantage. The view was expressed that the preliminary rail trail Feasibility Study had neglected the potential of the trail to attract users from Victoria.

3.2 Community Consultation Events

A series of Open Houses were arranged to discuss the proposed rail trail project with members of the community.

A Press Release and a ‘letter to adjoining landowners’ was prepared for the purpose of alerting the community to these consultation events. Approximately 500 letters were sent by the Snowy Monaro Regional Council to landowners within 100 metres of the railway corridor.

The dates and times of these sessions were:

- ✚ Tuesday 23 July - 5.00pm – 7.00pm - Bombala (at Bombala Community Centre)
- ✚ Wednesday 24 July - 5.00pm – 7.00pm - Nimmitabel (at Nimmitabel Community Centre)
- ✚ Thursday 25 July 5.00pm – 7.00pm - Cooma (at Cooma Library)
- ✚ Friday 26 July 5.00pm – 7.00pm - Bredbo (at Bredbo Community Hall)
- ✚ Saturday 27 July 9.00am – 12.00 noon - Michelago (at Michelago General Store)

The Open Houses (or ‘drop in’ sessions) were designed to show the community what the rail trail might look like should it be built (see Appendices 2 and 3). The Open Houses were very “visual” – they included a display of the proposed rail trail using photos of the corridor as it currently is, together with artist’s impressions of what it may look like after construction of the rail trail. The display also included photographs from other rail trails showing various types of surfacing, fencing, businesses servicing rail trail users, types of trail users and a range of infrastructure elements commonly seen along rail trails. The Open Houses were also designed to show (and discuss) solutions for perceived problems, drawing on successful rail trails elsewhere in Australia and New Zealand. These images helped to explain what a rail trail is, what it may look like, the potential impact on adjoining farms, and the solutions to commonly held issues.

Six images were prepared. These were:

- ✚ Colinton Tunnel – with a trail developed through the tunnel
- ✚ Bridge over Bredbo River (south of Bredbo) – with re-furbished bridge and decking
- ✚ Typical scenery south of The Peak Rd, Coonerang - with new double fencing and double gating
- ✚ Typical scenery north of Mount Cooper Rd (south of Holts Flat)
- ✚ Typical scenery north of Bukalong siding - with double fencing and interpretation
- ✚ Michelago Station - showing new uses

Appendix 3 contains the “before” and “after” that were part of the visual display at the community consultation events.

As with all rail trail proposals, there was a mix of opinions within each community with many being totally supportive of the project and a few who were opposed to the proposal.

Attendance figures were as follows:

- ✚ Bombala – approximately 10 - 12
- ✚ Nimmitabel - approximately 12 - 15
- ✚ Cooma - approximately 20 - 30
- ✚ Bredbo - approximately 12 - 15
- ✚ Michelago - approximately 30 - 40

Note: numbers are only approximate as not all attendees signed the attendance register.

The vast majority of those attending these community consultation sessions were supportive of the proposed rail trail, with many having experienced similar trails in other states of Australia or overseas (such as New Zealand).

Of those who did not support the proposal, it is fair to say that strong opposition came from only a few. It was surprising that there were more supportive adjoining landowners than those who were opposed. Of those adjoining landowners who stated they were opposed, it became clear that most wanted more information about the project and how it might impact on their farming operations or security. When shown solutions from other rail trails (via images displayed at the sessions) or when answers were clearly given to their questions, many landowners appeared to accept that their perceived issues could satisfactorily be dealt with.

There are adjoining landowners who have experienced rail trails elsewhere and therefore are well aware of the many benefits that a rail trail will bring to communities along the trail.

There were a few attendees who would prefer tourist trains to be returned or want the re-establishment of a passenger and freight train service (without appearing to fully comprehend the huge costs of such an undertaking).

Feedback forms were available for attendees to fill in before they left the consultation sessions, or to be taken away and returned at a later date. These have been summarised and comments appear in Appendix 4.

3.3 Snowy Monaro Council "Your Say"

Following the community consultation "Open House" events, there was a further opportunity for the community to contribute their opinions about the proposed rail trail. Between September 11th and October 2nd the questionnaire survey available at the Open Houses was made available on-line via the Council's "Your Say" web pages.

509 responses were received, of which 95.9% supported the development of the rail trail, 3.0% were opposed and 1.2% were undecided.

The questions asked were:

Q1. Do you support the proposed Monaro Rail Trail?

Q2 and 3. Please provide an explanation for your response.

Q4. What issues should be considered in planning this rail trail?

Q5. If the trail was to proceed, should any of the surface be sealed?

Q6 and 7. Please provide an explanation for your response.

Q8. If the trail proceeds, what are your suggested topics or stories for interpretive signage, including suggested locations?

Q9. Is there anything else you would like to add?

The results of the survey were collated by the Snowy Monaro Regional Council and the results have been compiled into a 140 page document (which is included as Appendix 4 of Volume 2).

A cross-representation of **favourable** comments (i.e. an explanation for supporting the proposed rail trail) is as follows:

- ✚ Great for tourism, fitness and development of the Snowy Region.
- ✚ If the rail connection is not going ahead to Eden then the rail trail is a good option.
- ✚ A very good use for an unused resource.
- ✚ From my research and extensive travels and riding on many trails, they work economically for towns and villages. They also provide a vibrant place to socialise and enhance social wellbeing. Long term abandoned corridors provide nothing.
- ✚ Rail trails are an excellent way of providing relatively safe cycling environments and are also a bonus to local tourism and business.
- ✚ It is state owned infrastructure that should continue to serve the interests of the public: in this case their health and wellbeing.
- ✚ Rail trails bring in tourists and money to the local community. They are lots of fun to ride.
- ✚ Rail trails are a safe family friendly and interesting re-use of the old rail network/alignments.
- ✚ Rail trails are a wonderful way for people of all ages to enjoy the outdoors and exercise.

- ✚ I have experienced other rail trails in Australia and around the world and appreciate the experience and the benefits they can bring to communities.
- ✚ It would provide an opportunity for long rides to small towns via a well mapped and relatively safe route.
- ✚ Rail trails are an awesome way to see the countryside. They are safe from traffic hazards, have a manageable gradient for beginners and are a family friendly cycling route.
- ✚ This is a highly scenic region for which current cycling option (Monaro Hwy) is incredibly dangerous. This would create significant cycle tourism in the region.
- ✚ This proposal will revitalise the region, provide active holiday options for families and those with disabilities, and turn a public asset from an idle liability in to useful and cost-effective public amenity.
- ✚ It is a win win. A great trail for walkers, runners and cyclists. Which at the same time will bring in much needed tourist dollars to local communities particularly during the traditional off- season.

A cross-representation of comments from those opposed to the rail trail (i.e. an explanation for not supporting the proposed rail trail) is as follows:

- ✚ I don't want the rail corridor to be decommissioned for a bike trail. Once lost as a rail corridor, it would be next to impossible to reinstate it for rail transport.
- ✚ It would be unwise for Council to spend ratepayers' money on 1) destroying what rail infrastructure remains, and 2) building new infrastructure that would need to be demolished should the freight and passenger rail proposal be approved.
- ✚ I live along the proposed trail and I'm concerned about privacy.
- ✚ I consider the route is too exposed to wind and extreme temperatures to be a viable recreational cycle route.
- ✚ Due to the mess that some riders and hikers leave. Because of no fences a lot believe your property is theirs and do what they like.
- ✚ I think the money spent on the trail could be better spent elsewhere. Only a small percentage of the population ride bikes so it won't benefit the majority.
- ✚ It's a waste of Council money, which could be better used for other local projects or community funding.
- ✚ Too many properties involved with many livestock issues.
- ✚ The section of rail line that has been used by the Heritage Rail Society needs to be retained for the line to reopen again for the community and tourists.
- ✚ This will be another way to access private properties and have the opportunity to steal! More rubbish will be left behind by users.
- ✚ Once the novelty wears off rate payers will be left paying for the up keep of something that will rarely get used.

On the matter of issues that should be considered in planning the rail trail, the wide range of comments made have all been taken into account in the preparation of this Feasibility Study – or will be considered further in the preparation of a detailed Trail Development Plan (should the decision be made to progress with the development of the proposed rail trail).

The issue of whether the trail should be sealed or unsealed has been described elsewhere in this report. (In summary, 36.7% stated that it should be sealed; 23.6% stated it should not be sealed; while 39.7% are undecided). The reasons for and against sealing are set out elsewhere in this report.

Respondents stated a vast number of potential topics for interpretation (should the trail proceed). Many would like to see attention focussed on the indigenous history of the Monaro, railway history, local flora and fauna, settlement history, geography and geology. Many more topics are mentioned and these will require greater attention at the time the trail is being constructed (should a decision be made to develop the trail). The matters highlighted in the community consultation will be a great foundation for those tasked with researching and writing the interpretive material at that time.

3.4 Landowner Concerns and Solutions

A number of what might be called generic issues and concerns were raised in both written feedback and in conversations at the 'Open Houses'. It is likely that there are a number of other specific issues and concerns adjoining landholders in particular have that were not raised.

Table 2 presents a range of problems generally raised (most were raised in the five Open Houses) and some generic solutions (a photographic essay follows showing some of these solutions on other rail trails). The table and photos are provided as guidance; they do not substitute for detailed discussions with adjoining landholders over problems and specific tailored solutions – this should be part of the next phase of work (preparation of a detailed development plan) if the project proceeds.

In addition to this table of 'issues' and 'solutions', the Murray Local Land Service prepared a *Strategic Risk Assessment – Biosecurity Risk Associated with Rail Trails* for the 21km Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail - which is currently under construction.

This report is available from various sources, including the Murray Local Land Services. On its web site (<https://murray.lls.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/disease-control/rail-trail-biosecurity-risk-assessment>), the Murray Local Land Services states:

Murray Local Land Services staff were engaged to carry out this risk assessment as independent experts, and this is their independent view.

In completing this risk assessment, Local Land Services is not making a judgment on whether or not the proposal in question should proceed. The risk assessment is used by the proponent to engage with landholders as part of the development proposal.

This document can be used as a generic template when considering risks for rail trails or other similar developments. However, it has been specifically designed with the Tumbarumba-Rosewood Rail Trail in mind, and some of the risks and treatments may need to be modified accordingly.

This report is also available from the web site of the Monaro Rail Trail Inc (<https://www.monarorailtrail.com.au/reports>)



Above and below: two styles of crossings on the Otago Central Rail Trail in New Zealand.



Below: the farmer alongside Port Fairy Warrnambool Rail Trail (in Victoria) has complete control over gates and opens them when he needs to move stock and machinery across the corridor.





Above: Boot and tyre cleaning brushes on Denmark Nornalup Rail Trail in WA. Above right: boot scrubbers at campsite on Bibbulmun Track. Right: boot scrubbers are located at sensitive locations along Bibbulmun Track.

Table 2: Landowner Concerns and Solutions	
IMPACT / ISSUE / PROBLEM	SOLUTIONS SUCCESSFULLY USED ELSEWHERE / COMMENTS FROM EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE
Impacts on adjoining land owners' lifestyles	
<p>Crime - Trespassing, vandalism and theft.</p> <p>Landholders often express a range of concerns in regard to the issue of trespassing on to farmland, especially where the railway corridor is remote from farm buildings and public roads.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <p><i>Crime</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Numerous studies have concluded rail trails do not generate crime. Research and anecdotal evidence suggest conversion of rail trails tends to reduce crime by cleaning up the landscape and attracting people who use the trail for legitimate reasons such as recreation and transport. ○ There have been no reports of trespassing, theft or vandalism on the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail (Victoria) since the establishment of the trail. ○ The Clare Valley (South Australia) Riesling Trail has had 2 incidents along the trail in over 20 years of operation. One of these, a burglary, would have occurred regardless of whether the trail existed at the rear of the property. The other, an incident involving an unrestrained dog attacking stock in an adjoining paddock, is one that can be avoided by trail users following trail rules. ○ The Linville-Blackbutt Rail Trail (part of the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail in South East Queensland) had 2 incidents with trail bike access in almost 10 years, but these were easily dealt with by the local police. ○ The Rails to Trails Conservancy work in the USA includes dozens of testimonials from law enforcement officers in a number of jurisdictions confirming that the expected/perceived crimes simply do not occur. <p>Possible solutions</p> <p><i>Crime prevention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Right to Farm Bill, which will be put to NSW Parliament in coming weeks, will include new offences that could lead to trespassers being punished with up to three years' jail and fines of up to \$22,000. ○ Design solutions to minimise theft include installation of security (and additional) fencing and planting. ○ Trail design can eliminate overgrown vegetation and tall shrubs that minimises hiding places and creates long sight lines.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Security lighting at trail heads and parking areas adds security. ○ Emergency phone boxes and emergency vehicle access helps increase user security. ○ Keeping trail corridors clean and well-maintained increases sense of community ownership and ‘passive surveillance’ reducing minor crime such as litter, graffiti and vandalism. ○ Plantings of tree-lined corridors along parts deemed ‘vulnerable’ by adjoining landowners could also provide a way of reminding trail users to stay on the trail – these provide a form of visual fence. ○ Many trails have a signposted Code of Conduct as a means of reinforcing what is expected of trail users and highlighting inappropriate behaviour. ○ Prohibiting motor vehicle use (by regulation and design) reduces property crime. Locked management access gates are a proven method of restricting access on to a trail. ○ Volunteer or professional trail patrols ranging from informal monthly clean-ups and maintenance crews to daily patrols.
<p>Loss of privacy for adjoining landowners</p> <p>Often residences have been constructed in close proximity to the railway corridor. Landowners living near to or alongside the proposed rail trail anticipate that noise and reduction of privacy will occur.</p>	<p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some effective design solutions are possible and have been used to good effect on other rail trail projects. Fencing and security screening are the obvious methods. ○ Re-routing the trail off the formation away from the affected residence onto an adjacent road reserve or elsewhere in the rail corridor. ○ Substantial additional vegetation planting to provide a visual barrier between the trail and the residence (while minimising ‘hiding’ places). ○ Installation of screen fencing to obscure views of houses from the trail.
<p>Land value devaluation</p>	<p>Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What empirical evidence exists comes from the USA (<i>American Trails website</i>). The evidence is that rail trails positively add value to properties along their route. Research and anecdotal evidence suggest conversion of rail trails tends to either have a positive impact or a

	<p>neutral impact on land values. It is positive where land use is changing to more intensive uses (such as from rural production to rural living/rural residential). Single family residential property values along the Little Miami Scenic Trail (Ohio) were positively impacted by proximity to the trail (<i>Karadeniz 2008</i>). Properties along the Minuteman Bikeway and Nashua River Rail Trail (Massachusetts) sell for a higher proportion of the asking price and in about half the time that it took for houses in the general inventory (<i>Della Penna</i>). Properties near, but not immediately adjacent to the Burke Gilman Trail (Seattle) sold for an average premium of 6% while those immediately next to the trail sold for a minimal premium (around 0.5%). Neutral-to-positive expectations for property values were held by 87% of adjacent neighbours to the Luce Line Trail (Minnesota). In the same 1988 study, 56% of farm neighbours held that same view, as did 61% of suburban neighbours (<i>American Trails website</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The consultants are not aware of any documented evidence to suggest property values decrease.
<p>Stress and concerns about the impacts of trails on farmers lifestyles and incomes</p> <p>An element of uncertainty in both the short-term (until a decision is made) or the long-term (from rail trail operations)</p>	<p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any change is difficult and causes stress for many people, especially where it is a change to the way people have operated their businesses and lifestyles for many years. ○ All public infrastructure projects create stress and concerns for those who will be negatively affected (or perceive they will be negatively affected). The experience in rail trail projects elsewhere is that the problems that adjoining landholders believe will occur do not occur. They are managed primarily by ongoing consultation and good design. <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staging of the project so that landholders and the responsible committee can see how sections work and what problems and issues arise and then react accordingly in subsequent stages is one possible way to minimise the concerns of landholders (given that these concerns may be felt differently by different people in different parts of the corridor).

Impacts on farming practices	
<p>Threat of fire</p> <p>Landowners are often concerned about the possibility of increased fire risk along a rail trail with fires spreading unimpeded along the corridor and consider that additional fire protection will be required if the reserve is used for a rail trail.</p>	<p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of an effective fire management plan in close consultation with the local Rural Fire Service. ○ Areas of the trail deemed high fire risk can have more active management controls. ○ Trail closure during periods of fire bans – as occurs on other tracks in high fire areas. The Hume and Hovell Track (in southern NSW) is one example of the use of specific closures. Trails in fire-prone areas can be closed for the duration of the high fire risk season. ○ Smoking can be prohibited on the trail. Councils can declare the public area a smoke-free zone, just as it can with other public areas. (Note: trail users are usually people interested in healthy pursuits and are therefore predominantly non-smokers).
<p>Weeds</p> <p>There are weeds on the corridor at present and throughout the region – who will remove them and who will keep them under control.</p>	<p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preparation of a regularly reviewed Trail Management Plan covering all maintenance issues prepared in advance of construction. ○ Focus of maintenance – erosion, vegetation regrowth, weed control and signage damage. ○ Division of maintenance into regular inspections and simple repairs and once/twice yearly programmes undertaking larger jobs such as vegetation control.
<p>Interactions between nervous livestock and trail users with dogs</p> <p>Farmers whose properties adjoin the corridor are often concerned at unrestrained dogs being allowed along the proposed rail trail and causing difficulties for their livestock.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is well recognised that people walking dogs is a pastime with considerable physical and mental health benefits. On other rail trails, some sections of the trail (notably within the urban areas) permit this activity. <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On other trails, dogs are usually either banned altogether, or trail users are required by regulation to keep their dogs on a lead at all times. The Trail Manager may ultimately decide to allow dogs (on leads) within the ‘town’ area of the trail ○ If the rail trail is declared ‘dog free’, Council’s rangers could issue infringement notices and the offender can be fined.

<p>Interactions between nervous livestock and trail users on horseback</p> <p>Farmers whose properties adjoin the corridor are often concerned at horses being allowed along the proposed rail trail, potentially bringing in weeds via faecal matter and a range of bacterial diseases and causing difficulties for their livestock.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rail trails around Australia vary on whether they permit horses. Of the trails listed as open on the Rail Trails Australia website, some 75% do not allow horses (for a range of reasons). ○ The debate about whether horses carry weeds in faecal matter has been around for a number of years and is particularly topical in discussions about whether horses are allowed into national parks. There appears to be no agreed consensus (though some national parks managers are permitting horses). <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This draft Feasibility Study makes no recommendations as to whether horses should be allowed on the trail. The impact on feasibility will be relatively low and it is more properly a decision for the community to make.
<p>General biosecurity</p> <p>There are concerns that the use of rail reserve by trail users will increase the risk of contamination of livestock.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advice obtained by the proponents of the Great Victorian Rail Trail (in central Victoria) from the Department of Primary Industries (Victoria) was that a trail should not jeopardise the landowner’s ability to sign the National Vendors Declaration. The rail trail would be considered in the same way as any public thoroughfare would be. Farmers have no control over who uses and what is done on adjoining roads so they have ‘no knowledge’ unless they are notified (the Declaration specifies that “to the best of a farmers knowledge and from information they have control over that their livestock comply with the conditions on the declaration”). Trail users are no different to road users in that people may trespass onto private land but most are unlikely to cause significant damage, unless there is some malicious intent. Again, the farmer has to have some knowledge of this before the declaration is declared false. Cars and particularly tractors moving at high speed would disperse more dirt from roads and tracks than collective effort of numerous bikes (in particular). ○ The <i>Strategic Risk Assessment – Biosecurity Risk Associated with Rail Trails</i> is to be used as a generic template when considering risks for rail trails or other similar developments. However, it has been specifically designed with the Tumbarumba-Rosewood Rail Trail in mind, and some of the risks and treatments may need to be modified accordingly.

<p>Fencing of the corridor</p> <p>Farmers often believe that the rail trail project will result in them needing to pay for additional fencing.</p> <p>As much of the railway line (Cooma to Bombala) was built as an unfenced corridor, the railway reserve is generally still unfenced. Farmers have adopted their practices to suit – moving livestock and machinery across, moving vehicles across, developing watering points on both sides etc. Farmers often believe fencing will cause problems with farming practices and not fencing will create havoc with livestock / trail user interactions & liability.</p>	<p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There will be sections that ‘dissect’ properties or are used by the adjoining landholder. This was raised by landholders in the Open Houses. <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fencing may be appropriate along railway corridor boundaries in some places and not in other places – this depends on a number of factors. Consultation with each adjoining landowner will be required. ○ The cost of fencing, where required, should be a project cost. Adjoining landowners may wish to be receive remuneration should they wish to erect the fencing to their standards (rather than contractors). ○ Vegetation lines may also act as “visual” fences if appropriate. ○ Replacement of fencing over time (as it wears out or gets damaged) would need to be part of the original agreement with adjoining landowners. Landowners in other projects have stated that they would not want to replace a fence that fell down (over time) as they would not originally want the fence and would not need the fence if the rail trail did not proceed.
<p>Splitting of farm paddocks</p> <p>Splitting properties and the resultant impact on farm practices (particularly getting stock to watering points).</p>	<p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There will be sections that ‘dissect’ properties or are used by the adjoining landholder. This was raised by landholders in the ‘Open Houses’. <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are several options for dealing with “paddock splitting”. They involve providing fenced and gated crossing points for stock and machinery at appropriate locations as determined by the landholder and trail manager. ○ Another option to deal with watering points issue is to provide watering points (new water tanks or similar) on both sides of the corridor for stock (these could be provided by the project construction budget).
<p>Impacts of trail users</p>	
<p>Management of litter and toilet waste</p>	<p>Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some landowners whose properties adjoin a former railway corridor expect high levels of litter.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It has not been a problem elsewhere. The Lilydale Warburton Rail Trail (Victoria) is kept spotless, with little or no visible signs of litter. The Gippsland Plains Rail Trail was involved with Clean Up Australia Day, but their involvement was curtailed because they effectively had nothing to do. There was no litter to clean up. The Clare Valley Riesling Trail (in SA) is also litter-free. <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thoughtful placement of rubbish bins at trailheads on the trail. ○ Regular maintenance patrols by council staff or volunteers, or the trail manager. ○ While installation of composting toilets is one appropriate solution, these are costly and are generally recommended only where there are long stretches between towns. The costings for this project include placement of composting toilets along the trail route between towns.
<p>Farm safety</p> <p>Adjoining landholders can be concerned that farms are unsafe work places and people are being invited into such unsafe workplaces.</p>	<p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Good design and appropriate information (as discussed above) will discourage people from going off the trail onto farm property and thus placing themselves in dangerous work environments or in close proximity to unpredictable livestock. ○ Particular attention to the trail design issues around sites where agricultural buildings are close to the rail trail (some of these solutions are discussed above in the section on crime prevention).
<p>Trail Management issues</p>	
<p>Funding for construction</p> <p>A major concern for opponents to rail trails is “Who is going to pay for trail project?” How will it affect rates?</p>	<p>Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Many Federal and State Government funding programmes are available for tourism/recreation projects such as trails. Numerous trails around Australia have been funded by major grants worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. ○ Major companies, such as mining companies, have contributed to trail projects. For example, BHP Billiton has contributed \$200,000 towards the Camperdown-Timboon Rail Trail in Victoria. ○ Volunteers and other low cost resources, including low risk prison crews, can be brought into trail construction and maintenance projects.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Entire construction costs for trails are rarely borne by local government, therefore there is minimal impact on ratepayers for construction (even though ratepayers do benefit directly from trails, and indirectly by visitors spending in the community).
<p>Liability – who is liable for the safety of users both on-trail and when they stray off-trail</p>	<p>Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In recent years public liability has become a major issue right across the community. Trails are not immune from concerns related to liability, or from the resulting issues. Indeed, liability – who is liable and who will pay – is often raised as a potential ‘problem’ with rail trail projects. <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary project partners must take responsibility and ensure that their role is clear and unambiguous. ○ Management body takes liability responsibility along the full length of the trail regardless of ownership. Farmers do not carry any additional liability. ○ Effective signposting at trailheads and access points indicating trail regulations and trail use rules and user responsibilities. ○ In respect of farmers’ general insurance, this has not been an issue in other rail trails. Fire management plans address the possible fire risk increase, while reports of theft of property have been virtually non-existent (as noted above). ○ Courts are increasingly ruling that people are responsible for their own actions, marking a different emphasis to that which occurred in the late 1990s/early 2000s when managing authorities were held responsible for inappropriate behaviour.
<p>Unauthorised trail users There are often concerns over whether motor bikes would use the trail</p>	<p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unauthorised access to the trail by users of cars, motor bikes, etc, is often stated as one the major concerns of adjoining landowners (it is also a concern of potential trail users). <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prohibit motor vehicle and motor bike use through motor vehicle exclusion barriers and effective signage at each road crossing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On the Lilydale Warburton Rail Trail, as with other rail trails in Victoria, a standard gate configuration has been designed for use at all road crossings and trailheads. The design allows unimpeded access by walkers, cyclists, people in wheelchairs, etc. The design is such that motorbikes cannot squeeze past the gate posts of the narrow maze. Access by authorised vehicles, such as management vehicles, adjoining landowners (where needed) and emergency vehicles is gained through an adjoining (locked) management gate. ○ Encourage reporting of vehicle/bike registration numbers of illegal users. Experience on the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail was that motorbikes tended to use the same sections at the same time – enforcement was therefore relatively easy.
<p>Ongoing maintenance costs Who is responsible, who will pay, what effect will it have on rates?</p>	<p>Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are often concerns about the capacity of Council to maintain the trail. <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preparation of a regularly reviewed Trail Management Plan covering all maintenance issues (including fencing) prepared in advance of construction is critical. The plan will provide a clear definition of who is responsible for what. ○ Proper design and construction will minimise ongoing maintenance costs. ○ Focus of maintenance – erosion, vegetation regrowth, weed control and signage damage. ○ A clear definition of who is responsible for what. ○ Division of maintenance into regular inspections and simple repairs and once/twice yearly programmes undertaking larger jobs such as signage repairs, culvert cleaning or vegetation control. ○ Hazard inspection programme (to limit liability and to define maintenance activities).
<p>Environmental issues Who is responsible for environmental effects of rail corridor? Environmental issues include construction concerns – noise impacts on wildlife and vegetation destruction on rail formation.</p>	<p>Comment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With respect to construction concerns, good trail design and appropriate construction techniques on a site-by-site basis can mitigate environmental concerns. Significant vegetation stands on the boundaries of the formation should be untouched – vegetation growing between the rails is likely to be removed during construction.

Responsibility for policing trail	Comment
Adjoining landowners are often concerned about undesirable people using the trail and causing a nuisance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Rail trails do not attract undesirable people. Adjoining landowners need not be concerned about the typical trail users as they do not cause trouble. They are using the trail for a relaxing and enjoyable outing in an attractive environment, free of motor vehicles. <p>Possible solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Volunteer or professional trail patrols ranging from informal monthly clean-ups and maintenance crews to daily patrols.○ Preparation of a regularly reviewed Trail Management Plan contains a clear definition of who is responsible for what.○ Police and/or Council ranger patrols (including on bikes); or by trail manager on regular patrols.

SECTION 4 – DELIVERING ON AGREED COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

4.1 introduction

The Commonwealth Government, the NSW Government, and the Snowy Monaro Regional Council have prepared a number of community, planning and economic documents in recent times. Developing a rail trail on the corridor delivers on a number of the goals, objectives and actions of these documents. How a rail trail aligns with these broad outcomes is best shown under each broad goal (which are similar in a range of documents).

4.2 Economic Development

Rail trails provide an additional tourism asset to the communities through which they pass. This in turn creates a number of economic opportunities both for existing businesses and new businesses. Various planning and community documents prepared for the Council and the wider region include goals and actions around supporting and diversifying the existing economic base.

The NSW Government's *A 20-year Economic Vision for Regional NSW (July 2018)* identifies that tourism and hospitality is one of the industries driving the economic future of Regional NSW. It identifies that, in the future, Regional NSW's diverse and natural beauty will continue to draw domestic and overseas visitors, with opportunities growing for niche and personalised travel experiences championed by small and medium-sized businesses. It states that sustainable jobs growth will be supported by regions' endowments, created or natural. A rail trail is one asset which can provide more employment opportunities in tourism and hospitality by offering niche tourism experiences. The Vision specifically identifies investigating opportunities for converting underutilised public land and infrastructure to play a bigger role in attracting more domestic and international tourists as an action.

The *NSW Government's Tourism and Transport Plan 2056* highlights the need to expand the tourism fund to provide for cycling infrastructure including rail trails in recognition of the economic benefits of cycling tourism.

The *NSW Government's Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan 2030* was released in August 2018 and supports the Commonwealth Government's ambition to develop Australia's visitor economy industry. The Action Plan identified six focus areas – the two most relevant for a rail trail are "putting the visitor first" and "making opportunities to support growth". Putting the visitor first involves ensuring that every visit encourages visitors to keep exploring and returning to NSW. A rail trail certainly provides an opportunity for existing visitors to extend their stay to traverse some or all of the rail trail and provides an opportunity for visitors who come specifically to do the rail trail to extend their stay in a region, inspired by their experiences on the rail trail. Making opportunities to support growth includes the development of a nature-based tourism strategy (identified in the VEIAP) – a rail trail is a nature-based activity open to a wide range of visitors.

The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* focusses on a number of priority growth sectors to diversify the economy and identifies tourism as one of these key sectors. One of the

Plan's goals is to ensure that the region's nature-based tourism attracts increasing numbers of domestic and international visitors.

The *Snowy Monaro Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2022* includes a vision that the region develops as a year-round tourism destination. The Snowy Monaro 2040 Community Strategic Plan expresses a similar sentiment as a key strategy to achieve a vibrant and prosperous economy for providing opportunities for growth. The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* also identifies the need and desire to make the region a year-round recreation destination.

The *Economic Development Strategy* identifies that the region offers only a limited number of activities outside the ski season and specifically identifies rail trails on the disused rail corridor as an early stage action to move the region towards providing all-year attractiveness. One of the other early stage actions is to investigate the opportunities to grow the day trip/short-stay market of Canberra and the NSW South Coast. The Community Plan also includes a strategy to capitalise on the region's proximity to Canberra (as well as Victoria and neighbouring NSW regions). The potential of the Canberra market in particular is further explored in Sections 7 and 10; development of a rail trail as recommended in the Economic Development Strategy as an early stage action will provide an opportunity to grow the Canberra market in particular, given the pre-disposition of the residents of Canberra to participate in outdoor recreation of the sort provided by a rail trail. The Strategy identifies the three key sectors of accommodation, cafes, restaurants and take-way food, and sports and recreation activities as "engines of growth" for the regional economy. It also identifies the sector of rental hiring, travel agency and tour arrangement services as being an "enabling industry" which provides key support to the engines of growth. A rail trail will provide opportunities in all of these sectors as has been the case with rail trails elsewhere in Australia and New Zealand (and the USA).

The *Snowy Monaro Destination Management Plan 2019* identifies that cycling and mountain biking continues to grow in popularity amongst travellers looking for outdoor adventures, noting that there has been a 22% increase in the number of domestic overnight visitors including a cycling experience in their itinerary in the last 5 years. The DMP identifies the rail trail as a way of adding product to the summer appeal of the region and recognises the benefits for each of the towns and villages along the proposed route. The DMP identifies the Monaro Rail Trail as a "game changer" (Game Changer 10), as does the *Destination Southern NSW Destination Management Plan 2018-2020* (as a Game Changer in projects associated with the theme of Riding the Southern Region).

A rail trail can undoubtedly deliver on the vision of making the region a year-round attraction with consequent positive flow-on effects to employment in a number of sectors already established to serve the winter market.

4.3 Attractive Communities

Quality recreational facilities, such as trail networks, can help create attractive places to live and visit. Walking and cycling are relatively cheap modes of transport. Trails also provide a low impact means of travelling through the landscapes and play an important role in connecting people with nature. Various planning and community documents include goals and actions around improving the attractiveness of local communities as places to live.

The NSW Government's *A 20-year Economic Vision for Regional NSW* expresses an approach which envisages more employment opportunities in regional NSW, which in turn retains and attracts younger generations and creates sustainable, thriving regional cities and towns. A rail trail is one asset which can provide both more employment opportunities in and create attractive cities and towns.

The *Snowy Monaro Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2022* identifies a number of economic risks of relevance particularly around population decline and the ability to attract new workers, in particular to Bombala. The strategy identifies both a lack of "spousal" job opportunities and a potential lack of cultural, sporting and other social activities to attract new families. One of the strategies identified to rectify these situations is the provision of cultural, sporting and recreational activities to attract and retain families and workers to the region.

According to the Regional Australia Institute, one of the key population shifts back to regional cities in recent years are 'regional returners'. These are people aged between 25-44 who left Australia's regions as young adults, but are choosing to return home later in life, and a number are professionals with a mix of specialist skills. Lifestyle is one factor that makes regional areas like the Snowy Monaro region an attractive alternative to capital cities. A rail trail is part of this mix of lifestyle opportunities. A rail trail is one piece of infrastructure that promotes pedestrian and cycle connectivity and improves opportunities for passive recreation around existing natural and heritage assets. Various documents identify an aging population across the region particularly in towns traversed by the railway corridor. Combined with job opportunities, a rail trail will assist in attracting returning or new residents.

4.4 Healthy Communities

Rail trails are an accessible form of recreation. Trail-based recreation is generally free, self-directed and available to all people, all day, every day. Good quality, accessible trails encourage physical activity and improved health. Increasing recreational options for local communities will aid overall community wellbeing. The trail will encourage people to exercise. Participation in trail activities can improve physical and mental health, assisting with disease prevention particularly cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, respiratory, nervous and endocrine systems as well as reducing obesity, hypertension, depression and anxiety. Various planning and community documents prepared for all three levels of Government include goals and actions around improving the health of local communities.

The *National Disability Strategy 2010-2020* outlines a 10-year plan for improving life for people with a disability. The Strategy covers a number of areas; of most relevance is the provision of inclusive and accessible communities and the provision of opportunities to participate in what the strategy calls "civic life" including social and recreational life. A rail trail will cater for some with a disability – low gradients and smooth surfaces provide opportunities for those who have mobility issues in particular allowing free access to a recreation asset which provides experiences in the natural environment, and the cultural and historical heritage of the region.

The *NSW Government's State Health Plan 2018-2019* has, as one of its strategic directions, the very simple aim of keeping people healthy. As noted above, good quality, accessible trails encourage physical activity and improved health. Increasing recreational options for local communities will aid overall community wellbeing. A rail trail also provides an opportunity for

health providers such as local health groups, schools and other organisations to provide group-related activities promoting better health.

The *Snowy Monaro 2040 Community Strategic Plan* includes a key strategy to ensure that recreation, sporting and leisure facilities encourage all ages to live an active and healthy lifestyle. The *Cooma Monaro Shire Recreation Facilities Strategy Review (2014)* includes objectives of maximising recreation opportunities and providing access to recreation facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. A rail trail is a relatively low-cost option for providing a recreation (and sporting) facility accessible to a wide range of people.

SECTION 5 - ISSUES

A project of this magnitude is not without a number of issues. None of these are insurmountable, but consideration has been given to the following:

- ✚ Possible future railway;
- ✚ Potential other uses of the corridor;
- ✚ The merits of a long trail versus a series of shorter rail trails;
- ✚ Landholder concerns and issues;
- ✚ Bridges: river and creek crossings (and overhead bridges);
- ✚ Fencing;
- ✚ Distances and services on the corridor;
- ✚ Aesthetics on the corridor;
- ✚ Costs – construction and maintenance; and
- ✚ Stakeholder positions.

The following issues have been considered in determining the feasibility of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail:

- ✚ **Possible future railway.** The RFQ states that during the preparation of the rail trail Feasibility Study consideration will need to be given to the possibility of accommodating both the proposed rail link between Canberra and Bombala and the proposed rail trail.

Currently, consultants are engaged in determining the feasibility of re-opening the Queanbeyan to Bombala railway line to trains and extending it to Canberra Airport in the north and the Port of Eden in the south.

An earlier Feasibility Study estimated the cost of redeveloping the infrastructure, including new bridges, refurbishment of other infrastructure (including rail line and sleepers etc), acquisition of land for a new railway corridor (where required) would be in the order of \$2.9 billion. The expected date of the current Government-funded Feasibility Study is not known but is expected to be during the timeframe of this Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study. It is not yet known whether a completely new corridor is being investigated (to replace the old and circuitous route designed for trains of the early 20th Century), or whether some sections of the current railway corridor alignment can be utilised.

A "rail with trail" is sometimes achievable along some sections of any railway corridor if the corridor is wide and generally flat though it is likely to reduce the enjoyment of some trail users. As a minimum, a 1.8 - 2.4m high barrier fence would be required to separate trail users from the active train line. This is a very expensive option when considering a 200+ km rail trail.

More importantly, the sharing of infrastructure such as bridges and tunnels is simply not practical. New bridges would need to be built to accommodate either the train or the trail as the two uses cannot utilise the same bridge (the existing bridges may not be in good enough condition to carry a train so they may need replacing for a train line).

The Colinton tunnel (which exists on the rail corridor) would need to be bypassed by the rail trail in some way. Duplicating these major infrastructure items will be a very high cost for the project and most certainly undermine the attractiveness of the corridor as a possible rail trail. The trail proponents will need to consider this likely expense. Cuttings and embankments also present significant design challenges to allow both uses of the rail corridor. In summary, an operating railway line along the corridor would significantly detract from the user experience without significant expenditure to replicate the very experiences rail trail users seek - bridges, tunnels, embankments and cuttings.



The old siding building at Bukalong would be the destination for pedal cars, should the plans of the Friends of Bombala Railway Inc. ever come to fruition. The building would need renovation if a rail trail was to be developed (and could be useful as a toilet and/shelter).

- ✚ **Potential other uses of the corridor.** As noted earlier, a number of ‘tourist train’ operations have been conducted on parts of this disused railway corridor. They have been discontinued for a variety of reasons, presumably the cost of operations, limited revenue, insurance costs, and the requirements of the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator have been amongst them. There is talk of a Cooma to Rock Flat train service, and the Friends of the Bombala Railway hope to run a ‘pedal cart’ operation to Bukalong siding. The Friends of the Bombala Railway currently runs an informal museum at the Bombala Railway Station and the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc also operates an informal rail museum at the Cooma Railway Station precinct. Both groups have an enviable collection of railway artifacts within the station grounds, have intact Station Buildings and have assembled various historic railway-related artifacts. Of crucial importance to the establishment of the proposed rail trail is the ambition of each group to operate some sort of ‘train’ service (even though it may be limited in extent and confined to within the station grounds).

Given the considerable costs in refurbishing railway track (including replacing steel track and sleepers, repairing/replacing bridges, etc), the cost of acquiring and restoring suitable railcars, the considerable cost in operating a train service and the cost of maintaining the train and the track, it is unlikely that these group’s ambitions of running train services over lengthy sections of the former railway will be realised.

- ✚ **Tenure and land ownership.** The railway corridor remains in public ownership. However, field investigations reveal that much of the corridor – especially that section between

Cooma and Bombala which was never fenced – is grazed by cattle and sheep. Consequently, a change to the status quo will have considerable consequences for neighbouring farms along the corridor. However, the design of the trail (utilising specially designed gating systems and/or underpasses) can avoid these concerns. In addition, the fenced rail trail need not take up the entire 30 or 40 metre wide reserve – it can be fenced to a narrower width enabling the adjoining landowner to continue grazing the remainder (i.e. un-needed portion) of the railway corridor.

Landholder concerns. As is the case with virtually all rail trail projects, adjacent landowners are, understandably, apprehensive about trails close to their properties. It is important that these concerns are seriously addressed before any trail conversion takes place. Many landholders resent having things imposed on them or feeling as if they have no say in what is happening around them. Many landholders are resistant to change of any sort, let alone one they perceive will have detrimental impacts on their lifestyle as well as on their farming operations. It needs to be appreciated that opposition will never completely cease – some people will never be convinced, despite a plethora of testimonials from people in very similar situations. Issues that have been raised already during this project and others that may be raised in the future are included throughout this report. Conversely, adjacent landholders who understand and support the reasons behind a trail, and who see that the trail is going to be well organised and efficiently managed, will prove to be extremely valuable partners in years to come. Indeed, some of them will take advantage of business opportunities offered by the rail trail project. It is important to note that virtually all issues raised by adjoining landowners have been raised many times elsewhere (in the 2,100+ rail trails operating in the USA and the 100+ rail trails in Australia) and appropriate and successful solutions have been devised. Landholder consultation always raises a number of issues, all of which have been satisfactorily addressed in other rail trail projects in Australia, New Zealand and America. Issues tend to centre around a number of key elements within three major headings:

- Farm management, disruption to farming practices and biosecurity concerns;
- Non-farm management issues. These are generally concerns around safety, security privacy, theft, trespass, noise, disturbance and a range of related issues; and
- Trail management. These are generally concerns around maintenance, and the behaviour of trail users in regard to littering, toileting and other issues.

Bridges: river and creek crossings (and overhead bridges). Bridges can be regarded as both an “issue” and an “opportunity”. Bridges are one of the most obvious reminders of the heritage value of disused railways, one of the most significant attractions of trails along disused railways and also one of the costliest items in the development of trails on former railways. When operating as a railway there were over 90 bridges along the corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala, and hundreds of culverts (including timber, brick and pipe culverts). The length of these bridges ranges from 3 and 4 metres up to 390 metres. In total, the length of these bridges is in excess of 1,900 metres. Bridges on this corridor cross rivers and creeks, standing water, waterways that have water in them at certain times and roads and stock access points. While a quick visual inspection of those that can easily be seen (or reached via a short walk along the

corridor) revealed that most appear in a satisfactory condition for future use as a rail trail, many were not. Several bridges are now missing (including the bridge across Burra Road in Michelago and across Arnott Street in South Jerrabomberra (in the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council area).

The 390m long bridge over the Numeralla River (north of Chakola) is in a particularly dilapidated state, with many of the timber piles having sunk into the sandy floodplain, causing the railbed to twist and bend. The cost of repairs to this bridge alone will be substantial.

Replacement and re-purposing costs are one of the considerations for rail trail bridges. Work on other timber rail trail bridges across Australia have returned costs of between \$6,000/lineal metre up to \$13,000/lineal metre.




The 390m bridge over the Numeralla River is seriously deteriorated and will require complete refurbishment, even for use for cyclists and hikers. Use by trains is impossible without replacement.


- ✚ **Unfenced railways and the need for fencing.** As noted earlier, the railway between Queanbeyan and Bombala was built in several stages. The earliest stages, between Queanbeyan and Cooma, were built as a fenced railway, with ballast. The last phase, between Cooma and Bombala, was built as an unfenced railway, and without ballast. Farmers have adopted their practices to suit, utilising unlimited access to and across Crown land. They regularly move livestock, machinery and vehicles across the corridor. They have developed watering points on one or both sides of the corridor. Farmers often believe fencing will cause problems with farming practices and not fencing will create havoc with livestock/trail user interactions, liability etc. They also express a concern that a rail trail project will result in them needing to pay for the new fencing. Fencing of the corridor is one of the most important, and expensive, components to the future success of any rail trail. As a general rule, rail trails pass through a considerable amount of farmland, and it is critical that the entire rail trail corridor be fenced on both sides where it passes through farms. Fencing along a rail trail is required for several reasons:
 - To prevent unauthorised access onto the rail trail;

- To prevent authorised trail users (cyclists, walkers, horse riders) from attaining access onto adjoining properties, and to prevent unauthorised trail users (trail bikes, etc.) from illegally trespassing onto private property;
- To minimise disturbance of stock by trail users;
- To prevent encroachments by adjoining landholders;
- To delineate freehold (private property) from Crown land and to minimise encroachments and trespassing, unintended or otherwise;
- To prevent stock from straying (recognising that it is the land owner's responsibility to ensure stock does not stray); and
- To keep stock off the rail trail and away from trail users.

Consultation with each adjoining landowner will be required to tailor specific solutions. The cost of fencing, where required, should be negotiated with each individual landowner during the one-on-one consultation process. One of the options to maintain the corridor (as opposed to maintaining the actual trail) is to allow adjoining or adjacent landholders grazing permits over those parts of the corridor not required for a trail (a 6 - 8 metre envelope incorporating the trail on the railway formation). As the original railway corridor is generally 30 – 40 metres wide, the excess corridor can be leased to adjoining landholders. This approach will minimise the reduction in land that they currently farm and enable stock to 'maintain' the corridor outside of the fenced trail corridor (noting that some landholders already have stock on the corridor). While this creates a capital cost, it has the potential to significantly reduce maintenance costs.

 **Unauthorised and informal use of the corridor.** The railway corridor is currently managed by the John Holland Group (a subsidiary of The China Communications Construction Company) and owned by the NSW Government. The John Holland Group has the responsibility for access to the disused railway corridors of NSW. Any person or entity wanting to access the corridor needs to go through an administrative process (including rather onerous workplace health and safety processes) before permission is granted. John Holland receives from the NSW Government a per kilometre rate to maintain the corridor.

During fieldwork associated with this Feasibility Study, it was noted that adjoining landowners have unrestricted access to the disused corridor, using it for general farming practices (including storage of equipment and sheep/cattle grazing). If the trail proceeds, the trail manager (whichever entity is enacted) is likely to be given an overall lease for the corridor and will be required to deal with these unauthorised and informal activities. There is scope within the rail corridor to provide access for landholders so negotiated solutions are possible.

 **Removal of rail.** The steel railway track is (mostly) still intact and will need to be removed to allow the trail to be constructed, though some of it should be left intact within the Michelago, Cooma, Nimmitabel and Bombala Station areas and perhaps some distance within each station ground (a distance to be determined) to allow for the possible future establishment of heritage rail services should the relevant organisations find the necessary resources and obtain the necessary permits and accreditation.

Depending on the timing of construction of the proposed rail trail, removal of the steel track and sleepers could be a project cost (the cost of which will be influenced by the

price of steel at the time of removal). The trail proponent/manager will need to, at the time of trail development, seek tenders for the removal of the steel track and sleepers. It should be noted that the Snowy Valleys Regional Council has successfully negotiated a fee for the removal of the track between Tumbarumba and Rosewood, NSW's 'pilot' rail trail project which is currently being constructed.

- ✦ **Clearing.** As the majority of the corridor has been disused for many years, there has been some regrowth of vegetation – especially where the corridor has not been grazed by stock from adjoining farms. While most of it is light regrowth, some significant regrowth has occurred. This will influence the cost of developing the trail.



Clearing of the rail trail corridor, although minimal in most locations, is one of numerous items to be factored into the overall cost estimates.

- ✦ **Drainage.** Construction of the railway involved the cutting and filling of the landscape to create a surface that was relatively flat to enable the passage of steam trains. The result was a series of cuttings and embankments along the entire length of the rail corridor. Effective drainage will be required, especially within cuttings to ensure stormwater is quickly and effectively removed from the sides of the trail (as it was when the trains were running). Particular care must therefore be given to reinstating the side drains through any cuttings. Regular cleaning of culverts under the railway formation is also essential. Additional pipe culverts may be advantageous in some locations.

- ✦ **Costs – construction and maintenance.** Costs – both capital and maintenance – are a major consideration in any public infrastructure project. These need to be offset against a range of benefits – both economic and non-economic. Broad cost estimates are a part of this project, but reliable and detailed cost estimates would be prepared as part of any future trail development plan (which would involve a complete traverse of the entire corridor by foot or vehicle). However, the Council needs to have some understanding of the possible construction and maintenance costs.

Ongoing trail maintenance is a crucial component of an effective management programme – yet it is often neglected until too late. Ongoing maintenance can be minimised by building a trail well in the first place. A well-constructed trail surface will

last considerably longer than a poorly built trail. Evidence of actual trail maintenance costs for individual items along a rail trail, or any trail for that matter, are scarce. It is difficult estimating the costs involved in maintaining a trail until every last bridge and other infrastructure items have been installed.

- ✚ **Trail surface.** The survey undertaken during the preparation of this Feasibility Study revealed that there is mixed opinion on whether the surface of the trail should be sealed (i.e. bitumen or asphalt) or left unsealed (i.e. compacted gravel or limestone). 36.7% of the 504 respondents stated that it should be sealed; 23.6% stated it should not be sealed; 39.7% were undecided. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Notably, a sealed surface will cost more to construct but would attract a wider range of users and therefore more users. A sealed surface would be cheaper to construct but may result in fewer users (as 'road' cyclists may not use it).

Most rail trails developed in Australia use a locally available earth surface (gravel, decomposed granite, crushed limestone, etc.) to produce a firm surface easily capable of accommodating walkers and cyclists. Use of such material provides a high-quality natural surface without the expense of a hardened (i.e. sealed) surface.

There are some good arguments for sealing the surface of rail trails – users on road bikes are able to use such a trail and they are more accessible for people in wheelchairs and other small wheeled 'vehicles'. The very successful Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail (Victoria) is a sealed trail as is the Amy Gillett Rail Trail, the Coast to Vines Rail Trail (both in South Australia) and the Fernleigh Track in NSW. Usually, the costs of putting down a hard surface and the aesthetics of a hard surface are arguments against a hard surface though there are some proponents who claim that the capital and maintenance costs of a sealed surface are compatible with the costs for an unsealed surface.

Alternative surface treatments may also be worth exploring. A number of liquid polymer modified bitumen composition products are currently available and the proponents have indicated that this surfacing treatment can be delivered at a similar cost to a compacted natural surface. Proponents have argued that the two key advantages are that the products reuse the ballast and therefore it does not need to be removed from site and that as a harder wearing surface it has a longer life.

The Rails to Trails Conservancy Service (the American rail trails advocacy group) offers some general guidance. Non-asphalt trails require significant re-grading or resurfacing twice as often as asphalt trails (9 years vs. 17 years). A simplistic cost approach would then say, if asphalt is less than twice the cost, it is a more cost-effective, long-term choice. At least one other area of consideration should be suitability to purpose. In this regard, there are three factors that come into play:

- Volume of use — high volumes of use will arguably have a greater impact on non-asphalt trails, although there are numerous examples of well-constructed non-asphalt trails that hold up well under relatively high use.
- Types of use—different trail surfaces will be better or worse for different activities. How do you expect the trail to be used? Are there any uses you specifically want to include or exclude?

- Setting — asphalt may be more fitting for an urban setting than a rural setting. There is also the need to consider environmental and aesthetic factors such as the need to be consistent with a natural or historic setting.

Unfortunately, there is no research that indicates how much extra use a sealed trail attracts (as opposed to a natural surface).

Road Crossings. By necessity the original railway route twisted its way across the landscape and crossed numerous roads, often at grade. It is interesting to note that several roads were built subsequent to the development of the railway, or existing roads upgraded to take account of the new railway. Grade separation of the railway/road occurs at several locations. Where the railway crossed the road (such as the several locations along the Monaro Highway) all traces of the at-grade railway crossing have been removed.

Should the entire rail trail proceed, there will be approximately 40 - 45 road crossings between Queanbeyan and Bombala, ranging from at-grade crossings of the Monaro Highway to numerous smaller gravel roads and minor tracks that provide access to businesses, houses and homesteads.

As is the case for other existing rail trails in Australia, underpasses could be constructed to avoid any conflicts between motor vehicles on the Monaro Highway and users of the rail trail. Locations of at-grade crossings, and underpasses where appropriate, would need to be carefully chosen.

Despite the fact that numerous rail trails throughout Australia cross busy roads at-grade, bringing the road crossings into lower speed zones, and closer into towns/villages, will make these crossings even safer.



Approximately 40-45 roads cross the disused railway, including this crossing at Williamsdale.

Ongoing legislative issues. There is currently no clear direction from the NSW Government that it will provide funding and support for additional rail trail projects in NSW, despite legislative and administrative processes being developed to enable the Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail (part of the former Wagga Wagga to Tumbarumba

railway line) to proceed as a 'pilot' project. As stated elsewhere, closure of the railway by an Act of Parliament will be required prior to development of the Monaro Rail Trail.

- ✚ **Stakeholder positions.** While management arrangements for NSW rail trails will likely be based on the model established for the 'pilot' rail trail project (the Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail), there is no doubt that Local Governments are and will be a key player in ongoing management. The Snowy Monaro Regional Council's support for a rail trail is partially dependent on the outcomes of this study and a clear articulation of costs and benefits, as well as the outcome of the Queanbeyan-Bombala-Eden railway Feasibility Study. The community groups that have come forward prior to this study and in the course of the study have indicated a very strong support for the proposal. There is an active Friends of Monaro Rail Trail group which raises funds, commissions reports, prepares newsletters, attends meetings and a host of other activities.
- ✚ **Extremes of temperature.** The Monaro region climate is characterised by extremes of weather (compared to other places in Australia). Temperatures can soar above 40 degrees in summer and fall well below freezing in winter. Sudden changes in weather can occur and potentially can impact on the safety and well-being of trail users (and others engaging in outdoor activities) though outdoor recreational activities are common in the region across the seasons. There are mechanisms whereby trail users can be advised not to undertake a trail journey if weather conditions are unfavourable. Publicity information (on web sites, in trail brochures, on trailhead signs and information at visitor centres) can be disseminated to potential trail users advising/warning of adverse weather conditions. Trails can be closed at times, when deemed necessary by the trail manager. However, it would be prudent to plan for hazardous conditions by the building of trail shelters (and water supply) at key locations and at regular intervals, and by emergency warning signage (indicating road name, location, distance to shelter, and GPS coordinates).
- ✚ **Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council.** The Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) is not a participant in this Feasibility Study. It is understood that although the QPRC has given the SMRC in-principle support to undertake the study there may not be the support for the trail construction.

SECTION 6 - OPPORTUNITIES

Rail trails also provide several notable opportunities. There are a number of specific elements within the area encompassed by the proposed trail route that provide opportunities and reasons for why a trail should be built.

6.1 The Opportunities

- ✦ **Distances and services on the corridor.** One-way trails (or out-and-back trails) need an anchor at both ends to be attractive to users. The best one-way trails (including many rail trails) have natural terminuses in major centres or towns or pass through major towns. The proposed 213km rail trail does offer this opportunity. Distances between towns/villages along the disused railway corridor are very good for enabling easy one-day bike rides for most cyclists (but long days for those walking). Trail segments are likely to be between 30km and 49km. The only exception is at the southern end, where there is a distance of 61km between Nimmitabel and Bombala (although this situation could be improved by the establishment of a trailhead at the Jincumbilly siding, by enterprising nearby landowners setting up accommodation options, or by others setting up a shuttle service to transport people and bikes to Bombala or back to Nimmitabel).



Elements of the remaining infrastructure include bridges, sidings, switches and, in some locations, the original stations, signals and distance pegs.

- ✦ **Appealing landscapes and infrastructure.** The proposed Monaro Rail Trail would pass through extremely attractive scenery. Magnificent views to the nearby Tinderry Range or Snowy Mountains are ever-present, and undulating topography is constant along the corridor. Even the wide, open treeless plains are a feature uncommon on other rail trails, but equally stunning to potential visitors to this region. Views of sheep or cattle grazing in adjoining paddocks adds to the interest. The landscape through which this disused railway corridor passes would have to be amongst the most attractive in Australia, and certainly one of the most picturesque landscapes for a trail. Infrastructure along the railway corridor is almost complete. Railway station buildings and even siding sheds and platforms remain; most bridges remain; distance pegs,

signals and switches remain in most places. Turntables exist at the Michelago, Cooma and Bombala station grounds. Embankments and cuttings are a common feature. What seems to be missing are various railway signs including speed limit signs and “whistle” signs. Few were observed. All these elements of the original railway would add to the enjoyment of trail users, should the trail be developed.

- ✦ **Aesthetics on the corridor.** Despite the fact that some of the disused railway corridor runs alongside sections of the Monaro Highway, this does not diminish the attractiveness of the corridor. The railway is often set below the level of the nearby road, and traffic on the Highway is barely noticeable. Often the railway corridor (or adjoining road corridor) is still well vegetated, especially in the hillier, northern parts. This proximity however does have its benefits, enabling easier access to the proposed rail trail (for construction purposes, and for ease of access on to and off the proposed trail, especially in an emergency situation).
- ✦ **Topography of the route.** One of the major appeals of rail trails is the gentle gradient, suitable for all types of cyclists and walkers. This is the market that would be attracted to a rail trail. Although the Monaro region is typically undulating, with several ranges of hills near to the railway corridor, the corridor itself is reasonably flat (having been constructed originally for steam locomotives mostly along river and creek valleys).



The Michelago Railway Station would make an excellent trailhead, although it is preferable to have the northern terminus of the proposed rail trail at Queanbeyan Railway Station.

- ✦ **Connections between towns.** Taking trail users through towns will provide new business opportunities for service providers. Presently, there are good opportunities for potential trail users to get accommodation, food and drink, and other services at the towns through which the proposed rail trail will pass. Development of the rail trail may provide a range of new business opportunities (or allow existing businesses to expand). The trail will make an actual connection between the towns and villages en route – one that reinforces historic connections.

- ✦ **Connection to Queanbeyan.** The fieldwork undertaken during the course of the project has revealed the large amount of urban development occurring within the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council area, especially immediately alongside the disused railway corridor at South Jerrabomberra. This development alone would benefit enormously from construction of a trail/path into Queanbeyan, and beyond into Canberra via the existing shared path and on-road cycle routes of the ACT. It would make good sense to make Queanbeyan (most likely the Queanbeyan Railway Station precinct) as the northern terminus for the proposed rail trail, given the population of Queanbeyan and the connections into the ACT cycle and pedestrian networks.



The Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc have done an outstanding job of preserving infrastructure at the Bombala Station. They should be encouraged to continue this work, even if their plans to have pedal carts to Bukalong siding never eventuates.

- ✦ **Broadening the recreation offerings.** Provision of an additional off-road trail adds to the list of tourist offerings in the region and encourages visitors to stay a little longer to go for a pleasant walk or ride. A new nature-based attraction has the power to retain those visitors for longer, spending money and generating business opportunities. *The 2013 Snowy Mountains Experience Implementation Plan (TRC Tourism)* recognises that there is a great opportunity in attracting the 39% of visitors who only come in the snow season to return at other times. The Plan notes that a high proportion of winter visitors have an interest in active recreation, outdoor activities and new adventure experiences. The Plan identifies that this market often has a reasonable level of disposable income and is prepared to pay for good product. *The Snowy Monaro Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2022* builds on this recognition, including a vision that the region develops as a year-round tourism destination. A rail trail will add to the stock of “off-season” recreation offerings in the same way that mountain bike trails in the Snowy Mountains currently do. Other recent studies in the region have also identified specific projects to expand the all-year round offerings for outdoor recreation. The 2016 *Cooma Trails Master Plan* (by Dirt Art) and two reports on the Lake Jindabyne Shared Trail Project both are premised on developing recreation trails to broaden the attraction

of the region (both of the Cooma sub-region and the Jindabyne sub-region). A rail trail would add yet another outdoor recreation activity for cyclists (albeit attracting slightly different markets).

- ✦ **Community support.** The consultants have met with several business owners and adjoining landowners and have conducted five community consultation sessions (“Open Houses” – see Section 3.2). Judging from those conversations and the number of orange bikes displayed in shop windows (and in one location actually on the disused railway), and stickers expressing support (also displayed in shop windows) there does appear to be a ground swell of support from groups and individuals within the surrounding communities. It is also evident that there are strong advocates within the communities who have expressed a desire to get more involved in ensuring the proposed rail trail gets developed.
- ✦ **Friends of Monaro Rail Trail.** A committed community-based group is an important element in a rail trail’s success. The existing ‘Friends of’ group has been around for a number of years and has undertaken numerous activities and fundraising to help promote the development of the trail. It funded the previous Pre-feasibility Assessment and has provided input to this study. This commitment can be tapped into to ensure the rail trail succeeds (should it proceed) in regard to ongoing maintenance and promotion. Numerous other ‘Friends of’ groups on other rail trails volunteer to undertake a wide range of routine maintenance tasks – saving the trail manager time and expense.



The Colinton Tunnel is one of the unique features of this disused railway line and will be a major attraction to users if the trail is developed.

- ✦ **Attracting new visitors who spend money.** A trail such as the proposed Monaro Rail Trail will provide a number of opportunities. A trail will bring additional tourists and assist in keeping them longer in the area. A trail will create opportunities to build on existing industries and enterprises of the area. Australians are increasingly looking for passive, non-organised recreation opportunities, often in natural or near-natural settings. Demand for this type of opportunity will only increase as the population ages. While walking remains the most popular of these activities (and is likely to remain so as the population ages), off-road cycling shows a growing and often unmet demand within the trails market. The advent of e-bikes will only accelerate the popularity of cycling on

trails. The proposed Monaro Rail Trail would provide experiences for a range of user groups in a series of markets that have been consistent over time – walking, bushwalking and cycling – or growing significantly – off road cycle touring. The rail trail would provide for both visitors and local people who participate in a range of activities. A number of high-profile trails in Australia and New Zealand provide examples of user numbers that can be achieved on tracks and trails (a product within nature-based tourism). Users are attracted to trails that are both ‘known’ or advertised in some way and offer a range of facilities such as signage and interpretation, parking, toilets and water.

- ✦ **Promoting the existing railway museums.** Of particular interest to many future rail trail users would be the outstanding collection of intact railway infrastructure (and museums) at Michelago, Cooma and at Bombala. Although the tourist trains are no longer operating (and perhaps may never operate again) the efforts of local volunteers to preserve, maintain and promote these station precincts (complete with station buildings, sheds, multiple tracks, signals, switches and turntables) is highly commendable. Should a rail trail be developed, these museum precincts will be of great interest to visitors to these towns.



The Cooma Monaro Railway group ran restored tourist trains between Cooma and Chakola siding (pictured above). Since ceasing operations, the area has become unkempt. Upgrading this building and the surrounding area and building on the interpretation that already exists within the building will provide an enhanced level of amenity for future trail users.

- ✦ **Providing a momentum for station project upgrades.** Development of a rail trail will provide a stimulus for continued upgrading of railway station buildings and their adaptive re-use. For example, the Michelago Railway Station building has been refurbished/re-painted on the inside but is in need of a paint job of its exterior (according to local sources). Construction funds for the rail trail (should it proceed) may include provision for upgrading the station grounds. The opportunity to run commercial enterprises (such as a bike hire business or a café) from within an existing station building could supplement the income for the relevant organisations that run these buildings and station grounds.

- ✚ **Revenue from sale of steel tracks.** The recent experience from the Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail (currently being constructed) is that, following the passing of the Bill in the NSW Parliament to close the railway line and the subsequent transfer of the corridor to the local government, ownership of the assets within the closed railway corridor passed to the local government. In the case of the Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail the removal and sale of the steel railway tracks resulted in a financial gain for the Snowy Valleys Council and therefore the rail trail project.
- ✚ **Business development.** There is a range of business opportunities for private sector investors arising from the potential development of a rail trail. Providing accommodation, food and beverages, supported and guided tours and equipment, are some of the businesses that have arisen along other trails. Such services add significantly to the user's enjoyment if done properly. A 2015 user survey of the Otago Central Rail Trail reported that ratings for package operators have consistently improved over time and were rated 9.5 out of a possible 10 in 2015. There is no doubt that this contributed to visitors rating their overall rail trail experience at 9.0 out of a possible 10. The Otago Central Rail Trail website (see <http://www.otagocentralrailtrail.co.nz/tour-operators/>) currently lists 15 'tour planners' who can provide all your transport, bike hire and accommodation booking needs.
- ✚ **Non-monetary benefits.** Trails can improve community connectivity and provide increasing recreational options for local people thus contributing to both physical and mental health of communities through which they pass.

6.2 Consideration of Other Potential Uses of the Corridor

As well the Feasibility Study that is currently examining whether a train service can be re-established between Canberra and Bombala, and onwards to Eden, there are other groups with aspirations to utilise the disused railway corridor for tourist train or pedal cart operations.

These are:

1. Cooma Monaro Railway Inc (which formerly ran tourist trains from Cooma to Chakola Siding, and which now maintains a museum at Cooma Railway Station);
2. Friends of Bombala Railway Inc. (which has aspirations of running pedal carts between Bombala Station and Bukalong Siding and which currently maintains the Bombala Railway Station precinct); and
3. Cooma to Rock Flat Railway Group (which has aspirations of running trains between Cooma and Rock Flat).

When evaluating the aspirations of heritage rail organisations, it is assumed that the relevant authorities would take the following factors into consideration when determining the viability of alternative uses and bona fides of the applicant:

- ✚ *Is there a recently completed Feasibility Study, Strategic Plan or Business Plan for the proposed use?*
- ✚ *Does the proponent have a Licence to Operate?*
- ✚ *Does the proponent have a Management Plan for the Station (or railway corridor)?*
- ✚ *Does the proponent have a current SWMS (Safe Work Method Statement)?*
- ✚ *Does the proponent have a current Safety Plan (assessing the risks) for the corridor?*

- ✚ What are the membership levels, skills sets and available resources?
- ✚ Does the proponent have a clear understanding of the financial resources required to run and maintain an operating heritage railway, based clearly on examination of other such operations?
- ✚ What financial resources does the proponent have for repairs to (or reinstatement of) bridges, track and sleepers, culverts and other drainage devices, earthworks and signalling etc?
- ✚ What financial resources does the proponent have for ongoing running and maintenance of rolling stock and track?
- ✚ Does the proponent have sufficient skills and accreditation?
- ✚ Is the current (or proposed) operation licensed by the National Rail Safety Regulator? If so, what conditions for use of the line have been imposed?
- ✚ Does the proponent have a lease, licence, permit or Local Government approval to occupy station sites and/or the railway corridor?
- ✚ Does the proponent have any other relevant plans such as landscaping plans for station ground improvements?

It is assumed the relevant authorities (especially the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator) will consider all these matters when determining whether to support any rail operation in its plans to make use of any segment of this corridor.

Heritage railway operations are not identified in the *The Snowy Monaro Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2022* as a potential growth activity – unlike a rail trail which is identified as an early stage action.

Regardless of whether a trail is developed or not, or whether a train service is returned on some or all of the corridor, the railway corridor will likely always remain in Government ownership.

6.3 Trail Experience Development

The *Monaro Rail Trail Pre-feasibility Assessment* (TRC) stated that, “*whilst villages/towns are well situated for overnight accommodation, the distance between them is too long for the target market without good stopping places and interesting experiences during the day. Cycle tourists and recreational riders are not primarily focused on cycling but on the broader experience and, as such, there needs to be places to stop, shelter and enjoy a break and refreshments or similar every 20-25kilometres as a minimum (as per other successful rail trail experiences show in appendix). For the Monaro Rail Trail there will need to be engagement with landholders and/or travelling support services (such as commercial bike operators supplying their client and popup coffee carts for example) to enable this to occur. The trail would also benefit from things to do (such as farm visits/stays, interpretation history of Monaro pastoral properties/wool industry, train station setup as museums, art exhibits or mural installations etc).*”

Recognising that future trail users will require regular breaks during their use of the trail, the costs tables make allowance for the upgrading of existing siding buildings, the installation of additional mid-section shelters and toilets, the installation of interpretation and sculptures at regular intervals and the installation of trailside furniture (at scenic viewpoints).

The spectacular (and numerous) bridges will be one of the key reasons why this rail trail will attract significant usage. The Colinton Tunnel is another. Re-building the majority of the bridges for trail use is considered essential as cycling and walking across these historic structures is what people will come to experience. Opportunities to get underneath and/or alongside these structures to observe the work that went into their construction will be a big selling point.

As has happened with other significant rail trail projects elsewhere in the world (and the Otago Central Rail Trail is a prime example), the presence of large numbers of trail users has spawned the rejuvenation and adaptive-reuse of dilapidated buildings, the provision of new accommodation options (such as BnB's and chalets) and refurbishment of older accommodations, the offering of side-trips (such as local tours to abandoned gold mines), the re-opening of closed businesses (such as taverns) and the start-up of over 15 businesses providing touring and logistical support to trail users.

Savvy local people in the Monaro region will see opportunities to provide services to Monaro Rail Trail users. Already several adjoining landowners who attended the Open Houses are thinking of ways in which they can interact with trail users. For example, an adjoining landowner in the Jincumbilly/Ando locality is looking into setting up accommodation units to service trail users. An adjoining landowner in the Bredbo locality is keen to sell locally produced foodstuffs to passers-by.



The installation of sculptures along the Barossa Rail Trail in South Australia adds considerably to the experience enjoyed by users of this rail trail. A similar approach could be undertaken for the proposed Monaro Rail Trail and the cost tables make an allowance for some sort of artistic installation at various intervals along the proposed trail.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, the operators of the railway museums and collections at Michelago, Cooma and Bombala could benefit from trail users and therefore it is recommended they take steps to promote their operations to take advantage of the influx of visitors using the trail (should it proceed).

The landscape and scenery of the region is without question one of the greatest features of the proposed rail trail, and this alone will attract thousands of rail trail visitors. The addition and promotion of other experiences, and a carefully targeted marketing campaign, will help ensure the proposed rail trail continues to build in popularity and that users return.

As stated in the Pre-feasibility Assessment (TRC), the vision and initiative of the community and businesses is critical to underpin the tourism experience and the initial and ongoing success of the trail.

SECTION 7 - VISITOR MARKET AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

7.1 Introduction

A trail such as the proposed Monaro Rail Trail will provide a number of opportunities generally associated with recreation trails. These opportunities will be provided in general whether the trail runs from Michelago to Bombala, or from Queanbeyan to Bombala. It is reasonable to argue that the magnitude of the opportunities will be different if the longer rail trail is developed. A longer rail trail may also provide additional opportunities, particularly in the visitor market.

A trail will bring additional tourists and assist in keeping them longer in the area. A trail will create opportunities to build on existing industries and enterprises of the area. Australians are increasingly looking for passive, non-organised recreation opportunities, often in natural or near-natural settings. Demand for this type of opportunity will only increase as the population ages. While walking remains the most popular of these activities (and is likely to remain so as the population ages), off-road cycling shows a growing and often unmet demand within the trails market. The proposed Monaro Rail Trail would provide experiences for a range of user groups in a series of markets that have been consistent over time – walking and bushwalking and cycling – or growing significantly – off road cycle touring. The trail would provide for both visitors and local people who participate in a range of activities. A number of high-profile trails in Australia and New Zealand provide examples of user numbers that can be achieved on tracks and trails (a product within nature-based tourism). Users are attracted to developed trails that are both 'known' or advertised in some way and offer a range of facilities such as signage and interpretation, parking, toilets and water.

7.2 General Visitor Trends

Regional destinations offer key experiences for what Australians are seeking from their holidays. While Australian travellers do not have one typical destination in mind when they think about regional travel, there are some experiences common to everybody's idea of what is on offer in regional Australia.

- ✚ The millennials age group seeks authentic and genuine travel experiences, together with a variety of active and passive ways to enjoy them. For older millennials, in the 25-34 age group, travel is about rejuvenation and search for self. Through travel, this group seeks to recover from work and is a way of getting away from responsibilities of everyday life. They feel the need for regular breaks to sustain and keep themselves going and seek out relaxing experiences that they can't have at home. For regional destinations to attract millennials, they need to offer something unique and have basic, yet sophisticated experiences. This could include nature-based experiences, as well as country food and wine. Short breaks in regional NSW currently offer millennials an opportunity to relax and reflect, often with friends. Importantly, in this context, rest and relaxation does not mean just passive experiences, but rather experiences that promote discovery, rejuvenation and an opportunity to forget about routine life, and these can include very active pursuits. (*Attracting millennials to Regional NSW Tourism Research Australia, 2017*)

- ✚ At the opposite end of the age range, the over 55s is one of most powerful age groups in Australia in terms of financial capability and life expectancy is increasing. In a recent survey of Australians aged over 55 years, 96% of respondents took at least one leisure trip within Australia in the past 12 months, and the percentage of respondents who took two and three leisure trips was 26% and 23% respectively. This age group preferred domestic travel to international travel. According to the survey, the most important reasons for over 55s taking overnight leisure trips are spending time with family and friends, getting away from daily routine, having fun, spending time with partner and to relax mentally. (*Over 55s travel to NSW Destination NSW, May 2015*).
- ✚ The fifties are the new demographic for travel brands – more people are choosing to travel earlier than retirement to enjoy the more active or immersive experiences that destinations have to offer. This is one of the key demographics for rail trails.
- ✚ For families, domestic travel offers an opportunity to have a break from normal routine, to reconnect and open the lines of communication between adults and children without time pressures. Ease and convenience are the key drivers for domestic travel by families in Australia, and they are looking for destinations that are relaxed and easy with beautiful surroundings, preferably only a few hours' drive from home. (*NSW Family Travel Market Destination NSW, June 2015*). Destinations that offer relaxation, novelty, outdoor activities, arts and heritage sites are appealing to families. However, family travellers seek destinations for relaxation more than non-family travellers. Family travellers seek holidays offering experiences that are authentic, different to normal and which create positive memories. The future of family tourism lies in catering for the increasing diversity of the family market. It includes offering opportunities for relaxation as well as activities that help create happy memories that appeal to the different ages of travellers in diverse family group structures. (*Schänzel and Yeoman, 2015*). This market (particularly the 35-54 age group) is higher yield and is continuing to show positive growth.

7.3 General Visitor Numbers

Available figures for the Snowy Mountains Tourism Region for the last 8 years are shown in Table 3. Visitation has fluctuated in the 8-year period.

Table 3: Visitor numbers to the Snowy Mountains Region 2010 – 2018

Year ending	Domestic overnight visitors	Day trip visitors	International visitors
Dec 2010	695 000	507 000	20 000
Dec 2011	715 000	607 000	18 000
Dec 2012	690 000	454 000	18 000
Dec 2013	700 000	683 000	20 000
Dec 2014	722 000	561 000	17 000
Dec 2015	788 000	586 000	22 000
Dec 2016	800 000	685 000	16 000
Dec 2017	930 000	498 000	23 000
Dec 2018	1 003 000	603 000	23 000

Source: Destination NSW 2018

- ✚ The number of domestic overnight visitors has increased in the last 8 years. The December 2018 figure represents a 7.8% increase over the corresponding period in 2017 and a 44.3% increase over the corresponding period in 2010.
- ✚ The number of international visitors has jumped around since 2010 and the 2018 data represents the equal highest number in that period.
- ✚ In the period ending December 2018, day trippers numbered 603,000. This represents a 21% increase over the corresponding period in 2017 and a 18.9% increase over the corresponding period in 2010. Again, these figures are quite volatile. The 2018 data represents the 4th highest number in that period. No data is available on the source of these day trippers.

There are a number of features of general visitor numbers to the region demonstrated in a number of studies in recent years:

- ✚ The *Snowy Monaro Region Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 supporting analysis* notes that overnight visitors to the region are spending in the order of \$521 million.
- ✚ The *Lake Jindabyne Shared Trail Project Business Case (2018)* notes that tourism contributes 2,219 direct full-time employees and 1,440 indirect full-time employees to the region’s economy.
- ✚ The *Snowy Rivers Shire Council Strategic Tourism Development Plan (2016)* (which focussed on the previous Snowy Rivers Shire) included a visitor survey in its work and found that more than 50% of summer visitors to the Shire stayed 4 nights or more; within that number, 25% stayed between 5 and 7 nights. Existing summer visitors are used to staying for long periods in the region – a receptive market for undertaking a trip on the entire rail trail (which could take between 3 and 7 days).

- ✚ The same work identified that 62% of summer visitors came from NSW and 22.5% came from the ACT. 9.5% of visitors came from Victoria. The trend of winter visitors was slightly different with more from NSW (73%) and less from the ACT (12%) and Victoria (4%). Winter visitors also tended to long-term stays – 31.2% stayed between 5 and 7 nights while 22.5% stayed more than 7 nights.

7.4 Trail User Numbers

7.4.1 Visitors

Recreation trails provide an important piece of tourism infrastructure and provide experiences in the nature-based tourism market and particularly the adventure tourism market. Nature-based tourism is estimated to be growing at 10-30% per annum – a significant growth market to target (*Victorian Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2008-2012*).

Visitors most likely to participate in cycling or walking activities are ‘nature visitors’. According to Tourism Research Australia (TRA), the majority of nature visitors in Australia are domestic visitors rather than international visitors.

Research shows that nature-based activities are important for tourism in the region (*Destination Country and Outback NSW’s Destination Management Plan 2018-2020*). The number for trips that include nature-related experiences is growing in real numbers and as a percentage of total trips.

The Destination Management Plan reports that Australians have participated in a broad range of nature-based activities as part of their overnight travel over the last year (2017). This includes:

- ✚ An increase of 12% to 10.8 million visitors to national parks;
- ✚ More people undertaking bushwalking, which grew by 9% to 11.3 million; and
- ✚ Growth of 12% in water-based activities and sports, up to 3.4 million visitors.

There has also been an increase in the number of domestic overnight travellers who connect with local communities, in particular through attending festivals, events and fairs, which grew by 14% to around 3.4 million.

Not all nature visitors are interested in the types of activities undertaken on tracks and trails, however Tourism Research Australia estimates that 51% of domestic overnight nature visitors take part in bushwalking / rainforest walks, whilst 39% of domestic day visitors and 37% of international visitors enjoy this type of activity (*TRA Snapshots 2009*).

A number of high-profile trails in Australia and New Zealand provide examples of user numbers that can be achieved on tracks and trails (a product within nature-based tourism). Users are attracted to developed trails that are both ‘known’ or advertised in some way and offer a range of facilities such as signage and interpretation, parking, toilets and water.

- ✚ Use of the Bibbulmun Track (WA’s long-distance walking track linking Perth and Albany) increased from 10,000 in 1998 to 35,000 in 1999-2000 to 137,500 in 2003 (*Colmar Brunton 2004*) to over 167,000 in 2008 (*Colmar Brunton 2009*). In 2015, it was used by over 300,000 people (*Hughes et al 2015*). 79% of 2007/08 users came to the track specifically to use the track. The Bibbulmun Track offers a wide range of experiences,

from a gentle stroll to enjoy the peace and beauty of the natural environment, to an epic eight-week adventure. The trail offers a diversity of accommodation – users can enjoy a wilderness experience by camping out, they can join a guided group, a tour, or they can do it in comfort by staying in the towns along the Track and enjoying day walks in the area (*Bibbulmun Track Foundation website*).

- ✚ The Munda Biddi Trail is WA’s off-road cycle touring equivalent of the Bibbulmun Track. Running from Perth to Albany (a distance of 1,088 km), it attracts 21,000 users per year (*Munda Biddi Website*).
- ✚ The Great Ocean Walk in Victoria attracts 100,000 visitors per year (*pers com Parks Victoria*).
- ✚ The Wilsons Promontory Walk (Victoria) attracts some 60,000 visitors/year (*pers com Parks Victoria*).
- ✚ The Murray to the Mountain Rail Trail (Victoria) attracts almost 60,000 annual visitor days in 2010 (*SGS Economics and Planning 2011*)
- ✚ The Otago Central Rail Trail (NZ) offers a 3-day cycle or 5 day walk experience covering 150 kms. In 2011, over 14,000 users traverse the entire length each year, with the most popular section attracting over 20,000 users. In 2015, almost 15,000 users rode the trail from end to end. Cyclists undertaking the complete journey often do so in 3 days, while walkers take 5 days. A number of tour operators offer a “guided” service for cyclists in particular, allowing users to spend all day riding between accommodation options carrying only what they need for a day and their gear is transported from accommodation place to accommodation place.
- ✚ In the first 6 months of 2019, 17,000 people used the most popular section of the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail, Australia’s longest rail trail (*Gatton, Lockyer and Brisbane Valley Star 29/7/19*).
- ✚ Data from Colac Otway Shire (Victoria) shows that the total usage on monitored sections of the Old Beechy Rail Trail for 2013 (excluding Beech Forest) was 23,368. This does not include data for the Colac section of the trail, as monitors were not installed at that location.
- ✚ In the first quarter of 2014, the Great Victorian Rail Trail (a 134 km rail trail between Tallarook and Mansfield) had 27,500 users pass through trail counters. This figure is unlikely to represent total numbers of users as some users would have travelled past more than one counter, but it does represent significant trail usage.
- ✚ Recent counts (2011-2013) for South Australia’s Riesling Trail (a 34 km rail trail in the Clare Valley) show 40,000 people passing through 4 trail counters each year.

7.4.2 Local Users

Tourism numbers are important. However, it is important not to overlook the contribution of local residents to the success of a trail. In 2001, the Mundaring Shire (in Western Australia) trail network was used by over 200,000 people (*Jessop and Bruce 2001*), having grown from a low base when the network was first fully opened. Only 10% of these users were locals (residents of Mundaring Shire) with many other users drawn from the Perth metropolitan area. The total annual visits (people generally use trails more than once a year) were a staggering 2.454 million

visits annually, with local residents accounting for 63% of these visits. Their expenditure on the trail was also significant. While the individual value was low (i.e. expenditure per person per visit), the cumulative economic impact was significant. Local trail users spent an average of \$1.44 per visit to the trails in the Shire. This injected a further \$2.23 million into the local economy annually. The same local trail users spent an additional \$2.62 per visit outside the Shire, adding a further \$4.05 million to the total State economic benefit.

Along the proposed route, Cooma's population is 6,683, Bombala's population is 1,383, Nimmitabel is home to 320 people, Bredbo has 352 residents and Michelago houses 562 people. Queanbeyan is home to 36,348 people.

7.5 Trail User Characteristics

7.5.1 Broad Trends

A number of broad trends are influencing the way people participate in outdoor recreation:

- ✚ Increased demand for informal recreation (as opposed to formally organised sport);
- ✚ Increased demand for access and contact with the natural environment associated with urban to rural residential shift;
- ✚ Increased visitation to natural areas as an escape from modern lifestyles;
- ✚ Increased awareness and concern for health, with obesity and stress on the rise;
- ✚ Increased use of technology to support outdoor recreation (e.g. geocaching, Strava, EveryTrail, Trailforks); and
- ✚ Increased computer-based leisure including the internet.

In general, the population are making increased 'lifestyle' choices that associate with greater access and contact with the natural environment. This includes aspects of urban to rural residential drift ('sea change' and 'tree change'), increased demand for open space (parks, recreation trails etc.) in urban developments, and increasing demands for recreational time in the outdoors (changing work patterns and day trips from home).

Two other trends have also driven higher outdoor recreation participation - increasing health and environmental awareness and increasing affluence and expectations of recreation.

People are becoming increasingly concerned about their health, with conditions such as obesity and stress on the rise. This, combined with society's growing environmental awareness, has facilitated a growth in visitation to natural areas. A term referred to as 'returning to nature', where people feel the desire to become reconnected to their natural environments from which they can escape their modern lifestyles.

As individuals become more affluent, the proportion of income spent on goods and leisure increases. As people spend more money on outdoor recreation and associated equipment, an increase in outdoor recreation activities, previously offered by commercial operators, has been observed. As such, a diversification for natural areas offering unique experiences and higher levels of infrastructure are often in demand.

7.5.2 What Do People Do on a Trail?

7.5.2.1 An Overall View

Unfortunately, the most recent Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey was done in 2010 and has not been updated since that time (though Queensland undertook its own research in 2016). The 2010 study reports on the propensity of Australians to participate in trail-related activities at a general level (note that these figures show the number of people who have participated in the activity at least once in the last year):

- ✚ 34% of survey respondents across NSW participated in walking, making it the most popular form of activity. This percentage has been consistent since 2001, and walking has been the most popular exercise activity since 2001.
- ✚ 10.6% of survey respondents across NSW participated in cycling, making it the fourth most popular form of activity. Again, cycling has been amongst the top 5 activities since the ERASS began in 2001.
- ✚ 4.8% of survey respondents across NSW participated in bushwalking, making it the seventh most popular form of activity. Bushwalking’s percentage share of exercise has moved up and down since 2001, but it consistently appears in the Top 10 activities.
- ✚ An estimated 6.7 million persons aged 15 years and over participated at least three times per week in non-organised physical activity (which includes walking, cycling and bushwalking), a regular participation rate of 38.5%.

A number of survey-based studies are available which together give a consistent indication of participation levels relevant to trails-related outdoor recreation activities. These studies come from South East Queensland (1998, 2001 and 2007), South Australia (Adelaide and Adelaide Hills, and *Market Equity 2004*), and the ACT. Table 4 provides a summary of the relevant participation rates.

Table 4: Participation Rates in Outdoor Recreation Activities

Study	Walking	Cycling	Horse riding
SE Qld (1998)	60%	25%	7%
SE Qld (2001)	50%	26%	7%
SE Qld (2007)	35%	29%	7%
South Australia	59%	26%	*
SA – Market Equity	69%	29%	*
ACT	73%	58%	*

* no horse riding trails were considered in these surveys

The figures for participation show the percentage of the population for the town or region who had participated at least once in walking, cycling or horse riding in the previous 12 months. All studies used large samples. (A number of other outdoor-related activities such as bird watching, canoeing and scuba diving were included as possible responses – this is why the figures do not add up to 100%). The ACT study included a large number of school-aged children, which may explain the higher participation rates, particularly for cycling. The very

extensive Canberra bike path network may also have contributed to the high participation in cycling. The point of most significance in these figures is the relative proportion or level of participation for each of the three activities.

7.5.2.2 Walking

Clearly walking is the most popular trail related activity and is in fact one of the most popular outdoor activities amongst all Australians. It is likely to remain so as the population ages. Walking continues to be the most popular activity for people aged over 34 (*ERASS 2010*). Bushwalking continues to be a relatively popular activity.

7.5.2.3 Off-Road Cycling

Unfortunately, none of the surveys distinguish between cycling generally and off-road cycling (both off-road cycle touring and traditional mountain biking). Off-road cycle touring and mountain biking is a rapidly growing recreational pursuit around Australia, and there is growing usage of non-urban areas for this activity. Cycle tourism is a growing market within the Australian tourism sector, particularly within the nature-based tourism segment. Available research demonstrates that cycle tourism has the potential to make an active contribution towards the economic revitalisation of regional Australia as well as improve quality of life for its residents (*Victoria's Cycle Tourism Action Plan 2011-2015*). Cycle tourism is a growing market. NSW received 520,000 cycling visitors in 2007 who stayed an average of 5.1 nights (*New Zealand Cycleway Market Research 2009*). In 2010, Australia recorded approximately 258,000 international overnight visitors who participated in cycling (*Victoria's Cycle Tourism Action Plan 2011-2015*). Domestic overnight visitors who participate in cycling on their trip stay longer and do more while on holiday when compared with other tourists, making them a stronger source of income for regional communities. The *Pre-Feasibility Assessment for the Monaro Rail Trail* (2018) noted that some 6% of international visitors and 2% of domestic overnight visitors include a cycling activity on their trip.

Mountain biking underwent a tremendous increase through the 1990's. It has been one of the 'boom' recreational pastimes of the last two decades. Cross-country mountain biking (the oldest type of mountain biking) remains the most popular type of mountain biking activity. It can be undertaken in a variety of places and terrains, from management trails to shared trails to purpose-built single track.

The *Kosciuszko National Park Cycling Strategy (draft version 2016)* identified that mountain bike riders can be broadly divided into core and non-core riders:

- Core mountain bikers tend to be more experienced riders who may differentiate into one or more different genres. They tend to have high levels of mountain bike participation, are high spenders on gear and equipment, are willing to travel to mountain biking destinations and have a high likelihood of participating in competitive events.
- Non-core mountain bikers include novices, families seeking safe enjoyable places to ride away from cars, school groups (often guided by tour operators), off-road bike tourers (from rail trails to trails in steeper and more difficult terrain) and people seeking a different outdoor experience or adventure (such as undertaking a guided experience or hiring a bike while on holiday).

The Mawson Trail in South Australia was primarily designed for off-road cycle touring, and the 1,000km Munda Biddi Trail in WA is designed exclusively for off-road cycle touring. These projects indicate a growing demand for cycle trails, as does the popularity of rail trails in Victoria. Over the last eight years, much of the trail planning and building activity across Australia has focussed on mountain bike trails, either within reserves or in specifically prepared mountain bike parks (such as the Forrest Mountain Bike Trails in Victoria's Otway Region). The SEQ Regional Trails Strategy (*Qld Outdoor Recreation Federation 2007*) also noted a strong demand for cycling in younger age groups (less than 30 years old). Work by Market Equity (2004) for the South Australian Office of Recreation and Sport adds to the body of evidence on the popularity of cycling, particularly on rail trails. Market Equity's survey of five trails in South Australia (interviewing 933 trail users) included the Riesling Trail (a rail trail); the percentage of trail users that were cyclists was quite high at 65% (compared to an average of 29% of cyclists across the five trails).

Many of the cycle touring trips would be confined to bitumen (quiet back country roads etc.) but a significant portion may be interested in an off-road cycling experience. The *New Zealand Cycleway Market Research (2009)* found that, in general, international cycle tourists want easy multi-day trips with good supporting services or events. The holidays can also be location-based and utilise nearby trail networks. Domestic cycle tourists and recreational riders are not primarily focused on cycling but on the broader experience. This group is likely to be older or consist of families rather than single visitors or couples. Both markets are looking for easy access to safe and traffic-free trails. Trail gradient is a critical factor in successfully designing a trail for a specific market or type of rider. For a large portion of the location-based cycling and cycling holiday market, average trail gradients of 2-3 degrees are required (this explains the popularity of rail trails for this market). The proposed rail trail provides gradients of this small magnitude and thus has the potential to be a successful trail product in this market.

7.5.2.4 Horse Riding

Horse riding is an activity by a relatively small number of participants (around 7% of outdoor recreation activities). Horse riding demand can also be highly localised – certain localities attract residents who are horse riders. A rail trail could offer this opportunity (as it does in some other locations – some 25% of rail trails in Australia allow horse riding).

In summary, the proposed Monaro Rail Trail would provide experiences for a range of user groups in a series of markets that have been consistent over time – walking and bushwalking and cycling – or growing significantly – off road cycle touring. The trail would provide for both visitors and local people who participate in a range of activities.

7.5.3 How Long Do People Spend on a Trail?

If fully developed the proposed Monaro Rail Trail would be a rail trail of 213 kilometres (Queanbeyan to Bombala) which would make it the longest rail trail in Australia. Simply being the longest trail may attract some particular usage.

Long rail trails are relatively rare in Australia and New Zealand:

- ✚ The Brisbane Valley Rail Trail is the longest at 161 kilometres.
- ✚ New Zealand's Otago Central Rail Trail, which is very popular with both New Zealanders and Australians, is around 150 kilometres long.
- ✚ The Great Victorian Rail Trail in Victoria's north east is 134 kilometres long.
- ✚ The well-known Murray to the Mountains Trail, also in north east Victoria, is 116 kilometres long.

A few rail trails in Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia are in the 80-100 kilometres range, while most rail trails across Australia are less than 50 kilometres and can be cycled (at least) in a day or less.

Long trails are more common in bushwalking, where several bushwalks in Australia and New Zealand take more than one day to complete (i.e. at least one overnight stay is required to traverse from end to end).

The nature of the long walk trail (as actively marketed to bushwalkers) has changed over the years. Such trails have always been aspirational but often primarily for the serious dedicated bushwalker – the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail (on the east and west coast of America respectively) are two long walk trails that are well known to many users. Both trails extend for over 3,000 kilometres and require very dedicated users to walk from end to end. Of course, many users do not walk from end to end but do the trail in sections “ticking off” sections until they have “completed” the trail. In the 4 years from 2010 to 2013, some 2,600 users walked from one end of the Appalachian Trail to the other. Every year, some 3 million people use part of it. Both trails primarily offer a bushwalking experience though they do have constructed shelters (rather than relying on people camping out in tents) and often wander in and out of small towns and villages thus providing an economic boost to these small communities en route.

The Bibbulmun Track (in south-west Western Australia) is modelled on the Appalachian Trail and connects Perth to Albany – an 6-8 week bushwalk for keen walkers (a distance of 1,000 kilometres). Again, many users do sections. The most recent research shows over 300,000 users walk some section of the trail each year (growing from 10,000/year in its first year of operation in 1997 on a radically altered alignment) whilst some 300 users go from end to end each year (*Hughes et al 2015*). The Munda Biddi Trail parallels the Bibbulmun Track and has been developed for off-road mountain bike riding (i.e. cycle touring). It attracts 21,000 users per year (unfortunately there is no data on how many users go end to end compared to how many cycle sections of it).

Australia has a large number of wilderness long walks – different from those mentioned above in that users are very isolated. These trails are much shorter than the three mentioned above. Many of the Tasmanian walks (such as the Overland Track), the Larapinta Track in the Northern Territory, and the Great Ocean Walk (Victoria) are some of the better known Australian long walks of this nature. The Great Walks of Queensland programme has been another development along similar lines (though it has not been as successful as the Tasmanian walks). The Queensland Great Walks programme is designed to offer world class walking tracks with a variety of experiences from mid to long-distance as well as short walk sections that can be completed in less than one day.

The long New Zealand walks, such as the Routeburn Track and the Milford Track, have existed for a long time but have taken new steps in popularity using guided walks and “luxury” huts (limiting user numbers adds to the appeal).

The “pilgrimage style” walk has grown in popularity over the years – the Camino de Santiago (Pilgrim’s Way) in Spain is the best example. Closer to Australia, the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea is also marketed as a pilgrimage style walk. The Camino offers a rural countryside experience whereas the Kokoda Track offers a much different bushwalking experience. The distances also vary greatly.

In recent times, there has been a significant rise in the commercialisation of long walks – people using guided and assisted tours and staying in more “glamorous” accommodation (glamping). Rail trails across Australia and New Zealand have also begun to offer this option.

Many commercial operators now provide a range of services on these walks and rides. Commercial opportunities have played a major part in increasing the popularity of these long walks. This applies to many of the long walks listed above and a range of other long walks across Australia (the recently opened Three Capes Walk in Tasmania has been clearly geared towards a commercial market). The “ultimate” expression of the commercialisation of long walks has been the development of long trails on private land (in some case, these have used part of the public estate). The Scenic Rim Trail in Spicers Gap is a good example of this development offering guided walks, luxurious accommodation and provisions.

Event walks (of significant distances) have also developed in recent years. The Oxfam 100 hour walk which uses Mt Coot-tha and the adjoining D’Aguilar National Park in the Greater Brisbane is one good example. Training for such events also leads to a demand for long walk trails.

On a rail trail, many users can average 40-50 kilometres per day. Under this scenario, users would probably take 4-6 days to complete the trail if cycling.



Above: a variety of users are encountered on the Otago Central Rail Trail, including many from NSW and elsewhere in Australia.

7.6 How Much Do Trail Users Spend?

Successful trails are already attracting large numbers of visitors and they are spending reasonable amounts of money both in the local economies and in the broader economy. The following figures provide a snapshot of expenditures from a range of trails to demonstrate user expenditures.

- ✚ The Mundaring Trails Network, 1 hour from the Perth CBD, injected some **\$12.62 million** into the local economy and a **further \$15.21 million** into the State economy annually. Local residents spent \$4.06/visit to the network and visitors (primarily day users) spent \$23.71/visit. The key is that the total number of trips on the trails studied was a staggering 2.454 million visits annually (*Jessop and Bruce 2001*).

Users of South Australia's Riesling Trail (a 35 km rail trail in the Clare Valley) who come primarily to use the trail are estimated to spend **\$1.08 million/year** (\$215/person/visit with daily expenditure of around \$100). This does not count the other 50% of trail users who use the trail as a secondary purpose for their visit (*Market Equity 2004*).

The economic impacts of the Bibbulmun Track (WA's long-distance walking track) have been studied over two periods (in 2003 and 2007/08). In 2003, the track was shown to have generated **\$21 million** of expenditure **annually** by track users, well in excess of its one-off construction costs of \$5 million (*Colmar Brunton 2004*). More recent figures show an increase in this amount (due to an increase in both users and how much time they spend on the track). The estimated expenditure in 2008 is around **\$39 million annually** (*Colmar Brunton 2009*). The 2007/08 study shows that the average day walker (some 70% of all users) is spending \$50-\$60/day, while those walking the track for 2-3 days are spending around \$200/visit. Those using the trail for 6 weeks or more, while small in number, are spending \$1,400/visit.

The Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail in North East Victoria is one of the better-known rail trails in Australia. Research work undertaken over Easter 2006 (*Beeton 2006*) found that average daily expenditure was **\$258/user/day**. The bulk of this expenditure was on food and beverage (57% of daily expenditure which equates to \$147/user/day). Beeton applied accepted economic multipliers to these figures and calculated that the direct contribution to the local economy per user per day was in excess of \$480. (Recent follow-up work by Beeton (2009) made similar findings).

Users of New Zealand's Otago Central Rail Trail are spending **\$NZ 177/day** with the average length of stay in the region of 3.8 days. There is a range of expenditures – users doing the whole trail spend \$NZ 166/day while those doing part of the trail spend \$NZ 247/day. The trail created 81 direct jobs and a total of 102 jobs. Accommodation derives 41-48% of the benefit, followed by food and consumables. The trail is contributing some \$3.55 million directly to New Zealand Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and \$5.2 million in total (*Otago Central Rail Trail User Survey 2014/2015*).

Users of New Zealand's Hauraki Rail Trail are spending around \$5 million/year using the trail. Visitors are spending an average of \$172 per trip, and 50 full time positions had been created because of the trail.
(<https://www.stuff.co.nz/travel/destinations/nz/94123407/hauraki-rail-trail-contributes-millions-to-local-economy>)



The Otago Central Rail Trail on the South Island of New Zealand is an outstanding success, stimulating the establishment of 15 - 20 tour operators that provide logistical support. The rail trail has also stimulated private developments including chalet accommodation at Wedderburn, developed by the owners of an adjoining farming property.

There is a range of business opportunities for private sector investors arising from the potential development of a rail trail. Providing accommodation, food and beverages, supported and guided tours, and equipment, are some of the businesses that have arisen along other trails.

It is important to understand how trail users spend their money. Trail users spend money before coming to a trail and in towns and villages along the way. The expenditure data shown below represents an amalgam of existing research data on visitor expenditure related to rail trail. There are a number of specifically rail and cycle trails-related research projects on user expenditures. These are:

- ✚ An Economic Analysis of Rail Trails in Victoria, Australia (*Beeton 2003*);
- ✚ Regional Communities and Cycling: The Case of The Murray To the Mountains Rail Trail, Victoria, Australia (*Beeton 2006*);
- ✚ Cycling in Regional Communities: A Longitudinal Study of the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail, Victoria, Australia (*Beeton 2009*);
- ✚ Trails Research Project (South Australia) (*Market Equity 2004*);
- ✚ Nga Haeranga – The New Zealand Cycle Trail Evaluation Report (*NZ Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment 2013*); and
- ✚ Otago Central Rail Trail User Survey 2010/11 (*Central Otago District Council 2011*).

Reviewing the expenditure data from these 6 studies allows an understanding of average expenditure patterns of trail users for overnight trail users. Table 5 shows average amount spent by trail users and the broad sectors in which they spend their money (average expenditure per sector is drawn from most of the studies listed above – not all provided detailed data. The data was collected at different times and noted in different currencies. The figures below represent averages converted to 2018 Australian dollars).

Table 5: Trail user expenditure by category for overnight visitors (rail and cycle trails)

(Overnight users include those staying 1 night or more in the region to use a specific trail)

Sector	Average expenditure/day
Accommodation	\$52.99
Food and beverage	\$82.10
Transport	\$23.37
Retail	\$34.38
Other (including cycle maintenance)	\$20.19
TOTAL	\$213.03

Accommodation expenses range from \$37/day to \$145/day (in 2018 dollars). Data on trail expenditure from the Otago Central Rail Trail (2011) shows that total expenditure was just over NZ\$580 per person per trip covering people doing both part of the trail and the whole trail), with the largest component of expenditure for package expenses (including accommodation). Separate information on accommodation was provided by only a few users who spent an

average of NZ\$60/day. A New Zealand study found that users spent an average of NZ\$43/person/night across four trails on off-trail accommodation options only (NZ Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment 2013).

The most recent research data from the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail (Beeton 2009) shows 45% of users spent between \$51 and \$150/night on accommodation. It is worth noting that almost half of the trail users of the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail listed their employment status as professional (e.g. doctors, lawyers, managers); trail users come from across the economic spectrum but there are many who are potentially high yield visitors.

Table 6 shows average amount spent by trail users on day trips and the broad sectors in which they spend their money. The research is drawn from the above 6 studies as well as:

- ✚ Use and Users of the Appalachian Trail: A Source Book (Manning et al 2000);
- ✚ Bibbulmun Track User Research Report (Colmar Brunton 2009); and
- ✚ Bibbulmun Track User Survey Report 2014-15 (Hughes et al 2015).

The data was collected at different times and noted in different currencies. Average expenditure per sector is drawn from most of the studies listed above – not all provided detailed data. The figures below represent averages converted to 2018 Australian dollars.

Table 6: Trail user expenditure by category for day-trippers (day tripper expenditure was only available for some of the studies)

Sector	Average expenditure/day
Accommodation	\$0
Food and beverage	\$56.48
Transport	\$27.41
Retail	\$38.76
Other (including cycle maintenance)	\$25.22
TOTAL	\$147.87

7.7 What Types of Businesses Serve Rail Trail Users?

The *Snowy Monaro Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018 -2022* identifies that the leading employment sector in the region is accommodation and food services which employs some 13.6% of the workforce. A rail trail offers the opportunity for existing businesses to expand and new businesses in this sector (and other sectors) to develop, employing more people in the region. Identifying specific business opportunities along a trail that may take years to develop is not a simple task. Some success stories from other trails are worth considering.

7.7.1 Equipment Hire

While many visitors will bring bikes, some will not and a business opportunity presents itself to address this market. A number of cycle hire, cycle repair and guided cycle tour businesses are

accredited businesses under the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation's *Cycle Friendly Business* programme. These businesses offer a range of services along the length of the trail and pay an annual subscription fee to remain in the accredited programme.

7.7.2 Supported Tour Opportunities

Cycle tourism is a growing market. Domestic overnight visitors who participate in cycling on their trip stay longer and do more while on holiday when compared with other tourists, making them a stronger source of income for regional communities. Many of the cycle touring trips would be confined to bitumen (quiet back country roads etc.) but a significant portion may be interested in an off-road cycling experience. International visitors participating in cycling spend \$NZ3,800/person/visit while in New Zealand compared with the average of \$NZ2,500/person/visit for all other categories of international visitor. 22% of cycle tourists spend more than \$NZ5,000/person/visit (*Nga Haeranga – The New Zealand Cycle Trail Evaluation Report 2013*).

Supported tour opportunities are offered on Otago Central Rail Trail where some 10% of visitors take advantage of this service. A recent survey by the Otago Central Rail Trail Trust showed that total expenditure was \$NZ472.61 per person per trip along the rail trail. The largest component of expenditure is on package expenses (as it was in 2008/2009 when a previous survey was carried out). 'Off the Rails' is one such bicycle tour company that offers premium, eco-friendly and fully supported bike tours. The company offers various tours including accommodation, bike hire and guided sightseeing activities. All tours include transfers, care of all luggage during the tour and meals, providing a fully inclusive cycling experience. A key to its success is its ease of planning/organising for visitors – once the tour is booked in they do not have to think about anything else. (*SGS Economics and Planning and Quantum 2012*)

Such services are not confined to cycling tours. These services are also offered on the Bibbulmun Track. The Bibbulmun Walking Breaks (run by the Bibbulmun Track Foundation) provide packages for those who enjoy walking but do not want to carry a heavy pack or camp overnight. In 2002, the Walking Breaks programme won a national award for innovation in travel in the Jaguar Awards for Excellence. The Foundation also organises "best of the Bibbulmun 8-day tours". Both of these tours are carefully compiled to combine a variety of day walks with off-Track accommodation. A bus service transports users to the Track each day and returns them to accommodation in rural towns and villages at the end of the day. On the walks, users carry only a small daypack carrying food and other items.

A number of private providers offer similar supported activities on a number of trails – both walking and cycling. Tour de Vines – a cycling company – offers various cycling tours on Australian rail trails (as well as other cycle touring opportunities in Australia and overseas) (see <http://tourdevines.com.au/cycling-tours/cycling-tours-australia>). Out There Cycling offers supported cycling packages on the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail. The BVRT 3 Day cycle tour allows the rider enough time to explore the local towns and to enjoy the countryside at a relaxed pace. The tour can be experienced in a tent at selected camping areas or in a Hotel/Motel along the way. Users can choose to carry their own gear on the bikes or chose to have the gear transferred to the next stop. This company also offers a bus shuttle service encompassing both the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail and the Kilkivan Kingaroy Rail Trail (see <http://www.outtherecycling.com.au>).

Qualitative research done by SGS Economics and Planning and Quantum (2012) (focusing on Victoria’s north east) indicates respondents wanting activities and experiences that are easy to organise – the ‘facilitated’ experience, which would complement the existing scenic and safe trails through iconic rural villages. Facilitated itineraries would seek to emulate the best facilitated road cycling experiences in Europe, including the provision of regional interpretation, food and wine. The report noted that the North East’s Rail Trail is a key asset for the region, providing infrastructure from which a cycling experience could be leveraged.

The *Destination Country and Outback NSW’s Destination Management Plan 2018* notes a global trend that tourism activities such as tours are finally coming into their own. However, the focus is on small-scale, immersive and locally curated activities. This is particularly important in relation to Indigenous and nature-based tourism.

The length of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail (with or without an extension to Queanbeyan) would warrant the development of businesses offering supported tours. Alternatively, the rail trail (or sections of it) could be packaged with other walk and mountain bike trails and other outdoor recreation experiences in the region to provide opportunities for supported tours.

7.7.3 Guided Walking/Cycle Touring

This facility provides an even greater level of support for trail users; all “traversing” is done with the accompaniment of a knowledgeable guide (as well as the provision of all necessary equipment).

This type of service is offered on the Great Ocean Walk (e.g. Bothfeet Walking Lodge and Tours). Internationally renowned adventure company World Expeditions offer a 7-day guided and supported hike along the Bibbulmun Track. One of the key features of these packages is that users simply pay just one flat fee for their entire holiday.



Several accommodation establishments are clearly benefiting for locating close to the Riesling Trail, resulting in economic benefits to the businesses and a bigger range of accommodation options cyclists and walkers using the trail.

7.7.4 Off-trail Accommodation

There is some opportunity to provide users with off-trail accommodation of varying qualities (adding to the existing stock of options) as the trail passes private property. Riesling Trail Cottages and Riesling Trail Bush Cottages provide self-contained accommodation adjacent to South Australia’s famous Riesling Trail through the Clare Valley. When these were first constructed, the owner was often asked “How close are your cottages to the wineries”; over time, the more common enquiry became “how close are the cottages to the rail trail”.

7.7.5 Food and Beverages

As noted above, food and beverages are one of the key business sectors that benefit from trail user’s expenditure. Available research does not indicate the types of food and beverages trail users consume; anecdotal evidence would suggest that most bike riders drink coffee – a high

profit item. But the research cited above does indicate the levels of expenditure on this type of item. Some of the best evidence is anecdotal. For example, one cafe on New Zealand's Hauraki Rail Trail was told to expect 35,000 patrons in the first year but actually got about 120,000 patrons through the door. The cafe had to increase staff from two to a summer staffing of 15 (<https://www.stuff.co.nz/travel/destinations/nz/94123407/hauraki-rail-trail-contributes-millions-to-local-economy>)

7.7.6 Supporting Existing Businesses

A trail increases the opportunities offered to existing businesses that currently provide relevant services to provide such services on a more regular basis. These types of examples are critical economic opportunities to diversify and solidify the sub-region's economic base. In New Zealand across four recreation trails subject to detailed research (*New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment 2013*), 1 in 5 businesses surveyed reported that they had either expanded their services (e.g. added capacity) or added new services since the trail opened in their region. These ranged from provision of cycle tours to cellar door tasting sessions, but were commonly in the provision of accommodation, transport or shuttles, or cycle hire. There was anecdotal evidence that trails have been beneficial for existing businesses either by absorption of existing excess capacity or by spreading the risk through the diversification of product.

On the Hauraki Rail Trail in New Zealand, one in seven businesses along the trail have adjusted their offerings to meet the needs of cycle trail users (<https://www.stuff.co.nz/travel/destinations/nz/94123407/hauraki-rail-trail-contributes-millions-to-local-economy>).

7.8 Conclusion

Australians are increasingly looking for passive, non-organised recreation opportunities, often in natural or near-natural settings. Demand for this type of opportunity will only increase as the population ages. While walking remains the most popular of these activities (and is likely to remain so as the population ages), off-road cycling shows a growing and often unmet demand within the trails market.

The Monaro Rail Trail would provide experiences for a range of user groups in a series of markets that have been consistent over time – walking and bushwalking and cycling – or growing significantly – off road cycle touring. The trail would provide for both visitors and local people who participate in a range of activities. The potential expenditures may be quite significant based on trail user expenditures elsewhere.

SECTION 8 – GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 General Observations

On the basis of the corridor assessments undertaken and having given due consideration to the issues and opportunities, and with the comments received during consultation with the community, some observations and conclusions can be made:

- ✚ The corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala contains one of the best collections of railway infrastructure and remnants of any railway that is the subject of a rail trail proposal in NSW. The corridor has over 90 bridges (of varying lengths) with several outstanding examples – one being 390 metres long. The corridor also features a number of railway stations (including Michelago, Cooma, Nimmitabel and Bombala) and several remaining siding buildings. Although there is only one tunnel, this is reasonably unique and at 161 metres long presents a wonderful reminder of the hard work that went into building railways. It will be a major feature of the trail should it proceed. The corridor also features signals and switches, distance signs and other railway paraphernalia. There are also turntables at some stations (Michelago, Cooma and Bombala). The short-lived meat works building at MacLaughlin Station is another unique aspect of this disused railway corridor – and well worthy of being interpreted (and made safe). In common with all other railway corridors, this disused corridor also features innumerable cuttings and embankments – all of which add considerably to what future rail trail users will come to admire and enjoy.



The scenery along the disused railway between Queanbeyan and Bombala is amongst the most spectacular in Australia and is likely to attract trail users from all over Australia.

- ✚ The scenery in the Monaro region is simply spectacular. People have said a rail trail in the Monaro region will rival the Otago Central Rail Trail (on the South Island of New Zealand). An inevitable comparison are the views of snowcapped mountains, wide treeless plains, sheep grazing in paddocks, pretty and interesting small villages and towns and the fact that the former railway corridor dissects paddocks and properties. The communities and the adjoining farmers alongside the Otago Central Rail Trail now regard that trail as an outstanding success, with little or no resultant problems. Many of the adjoining farmers, as well as numerous businesses in the towns through which that

trail passes, obtain financial gain servicing rail trail users. It is expected that a similar result will occur should the Monaro Rail Trail be developed.

- ✦ The regular spacing – and almost ideal distances – between towns and villages will provide for easy cycling (and walking) of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail over multiple days (similar to the Otago Central Rail Trail). The availability of food, drink, accommodation and other services in these small towns and villages, and the comparatively short cycling distances, would enable trail users to easily cycle between each town in the course of a day. More energetic and capable cyclists could ride more than one segment in a day. The only sector that most recreational cyclists may not achieve in a day is that between Nimmitabel and Bombala (at 61km). However, the development of a trailhead (parking area) at the Jincumbilly siding (or nearby accommodation) would facilitate the division of that sector into two easy day rides (Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly and Jincumbilly to Bombala).
- ✦ The corridor lends itself to being developed as a rail trail either in sections, or in its entirety. There are no sections that could be described as boring or not warranting development. It is evident, however, that the biggest benefit would come from development of the entire 213km rail trail – as that multi-day experience is most likely to attract visitors for a longer period (long weekends for example). In terms of staging, it would make sense to commence development of the proposed trail from the northern end at that is closest to the main markets (i.e. Canberra and Sydney).



Much of the disused railway corridor would need new fencing. Some parts have fencing one side; much of the corridor has no fencing. This would be a major cost component of developing the trail.

- ✦ Of the approximate 90 bridges, the most spectacular is the 390 metre bridge over the Numeralla River (just north of Chakola siding). However, it is the most dilapidated and will be the most expensive to refurbish for trail use. Given that there are many bridges, the cost to construct the rail trail will be comparatively high. However, many of the bridges are short in length and can be replaced at low cost. The fact that two of the bridges along the corridor are long (at 390m and 146m) is a very positive, and unique, feature. Long bridges and tunnels, high embankments and deep cuttings are amongst the most popular features of a rail trail and, together with the flat grades, the main reasons why rail trails are so popular.
- ✦ When compared with other sections of other proposed rail trails assessed in NSW and Queensland, each individual section of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail rates highly (in the assessments undertaken during the preparation of this Feasibility Study). For

example, the lowest rated section of the six sections along the proposed Monaro Rail Trail (Bombala to Jincumbilly at 60/100) compares very favourably with sections of the proposed Boyne Burnett Inland Rail Trail in Queensland (some as low as 24/100; 28/100; 34/100; and 35/100). This is mainly due to the presence of a town (with services) at both ends, wonderful scenery along the way and proximity to potential users/markets.



A typical scene along the corridor south of Cooma (north of Bukalong siding). The railway south of Cooma was developed without fencing and without ballast.

- ✦ It is very evident that, should it be proven feasible that a train could be re-established on the corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala, a trail could not share the same corridor as that train service. It is assumed (in the absence of any other information about the proposal) that the train may utilise not just the same corridor as the disused railway line, but all of the bridges, the tunnel and all of the high embankments and deep cuttings. To have a trail alongside an operating railway in the same corridor would necessitate replicating all of those original bridges, replicating most of the embankments and probably many of the cuttings, and circumnavigating the tunnel. Nothing of the original railway formation could be used – and therefore all that infrastructure that rail trail users come to see and appreciate would not be experienced. Instead, they would encounter merely a trail alongside a railway line, and cyclists and other potential users would have to deal with all the hills that such an alignment would have (instead of a reasonably flat formation that a former railway provides). As well as needing to replicate the railway formation and bridges, a trail beside an operating (probably electrified) railway would necessitate the establishment of approximately 213km of 1.8m – 2.4m high chain link fencing – as that would likely be the requirement imposed by the authorities. Such a fence would cost approximately \$12 million – on top of the costs of building bridges and the embankments that would be needed to cross low-lying areas and all the other costs of trail building. In addition, the installation of a 1.8m – 2.4m high fence between the trail and the railway would detract substantially from users' experience.
- ✦ The proposed Monaro Rail Trail is well situated to take advantage of the nearby ACT market. Canberra is known for its cycle network and above average bicycle usage. Having such a large market close to the proposed trail augurs well for the usage of the trail, should it be built. In addition, by using Queanbeyan Railway Station as the northern terminus also enables trail users from Sydney catching a train to the trailhead.

- ✦ The issues raised during consultation by those opposed to the proposed rail trail are similar to those raised in almost all other rail trail projects. Discussions in the community have identified the following key issues:
 - The need for numerous stock crossings (to enable stock and machinery to pass from one side of the corridor to the other after it is fenced).
 - The need for fencing of the corridor.
 - Biosecurity issues, especially the potential for the spread of weeds (and in particular African Love Grass).
 - Trail users witnessing (unfortunate) farm management practices such as the shooting of kangaroos and wombats, and cattle in poor health due to drought.
 - The need for toilets at regular intervals.
 - A preference (by a few) for the return of a regular commuter train on the line.
 - The dangers involved at times of extreme weather (such as heat in summer, and freezing temperatures and snow/sleet in winter) and the need for measures to keep trail users safe.



The siding shed at Jincumbilly would provide an excellent shelter in times of inclement weather. It would also provide a suitable framework for a toilet within the trailhead development.

- ✦ Climatic conditions in this southern part of NSW are different to most other areas of NSW where rail trails are proposed, and different/additional infrastructure, maintenance regimes and management may be required.
- ✦ The corridor once hosted small 'tourist trains' operations which, had they continued to operate, would have caused a number of issues for the development of the rail trail. It is not known when, if ever, these tourist trains may return. There is likely to be a number of issues preventing anyone from establishing a viable tourist train, including funding for establishment of the operation (such as rolling stock and track upgrades and repairs), accreditation and safety issues, experienced and accredited drivers, ongoing maintenance and volunteers. As with the development of a rail trail, a business case would need to clearly demonstrate the worth of proceeding with any form of tourist train.

- ✦ Unlike the majority of disused railway corridors throughout Australia, this corridor is almost devoid of discontinuities and encroachments. Often sheds and stock yards are located on the corridor, roads are built, machines and produce are stored. None of this activity appears to have occurred in the corridor sections viewed. This will be beneficial when it comes to commencing development of the trail, should it proceed, as it means that there are no adjoining landowners (responsible for the encroachments) will be 'disadvantaged' and be made to cease these activities. However, as the southern half was constructed without fencing, stock have always been allowed to freely wander on and across the corridor. This will require careful management in the detailed design of the proposed trail.
- ✦ There appears a higher level of support from the business community than observed in other rail trail proposals in NSW. This overt support is evidenced by the prominent display of orange bicycles in shop/business windows, stickers prominently displayed on shop windows in cafes, bakeries, general stores, hotels and other businesses.



There is evidence of support for the proposed rail trail within the communities through which this proposed rail trail would pass such as orange bicycles in shop windows, signs on shop windows and this display of orange bicycles on the actual railway corridor.

8.2 Potential Topics for Interpretation

Field work, research, discussions with people in the community and general observations of the railway corridor and the region in general has enabled a list of possible topics for interpretation. These include:

- ✦ Indigenous heritage on the Monaro
- ✦ History of the Maneroo District
- ✦ Exploration and discovery of the Monaro
- ✦ The treeless plains
- ✦ The Great Dividing Range
- ✦ The topography and soils
- ✦ Pioneers and settlement

- ✚ Surveyor Charles Scrivener
- ✚ Bushrangers
- ✚ Sheep and wool farming
- ✚ The railway history
- ✚ Use of the railway (wood, timber, meat, etc)
- ✚ Railways workers along the line
- ✚ Transporting timber, cattle and sheep
- ✚ MacLaughlin meat works
- ✚ The lost locomotive and the search by Spitfire
- ✚ Floods
- ✚ Fishing in the Murrumbidgee catchment
- ✚ The Petrov Affair

This is just a starting list. Should the proposed rail trail proceed to the next stage (i.e. the preparation of a detailed trail development plan) a complete traverse of the former railway corridor, together with additional consultation with the adjoining landowners and the community in general, will elicit many more topics for interpretation and stories that could be told along the trail.

The publication *Cooma-Monaro Shire – Thematic History 1823 – 1945 – September 2007* (commissioned by the former Cooma-Monaro Shire Council and prepared by Suzannah Plowman, Victoria Design & Management Pty Ltd) provides additional information and likely interpretive topics.

In addition, respondents to the on-line survey conducted during the preparation of this Feasibility Study (via Council's Your Say web page) contributed ideas for interpretive topics.



The old MacLaughlin Meatworks (south of Nimmitabel on the disused railway) is a fascinating story and one that should be told should the rail trail be developed.

SECTION 9 – ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE COSTS

9.1 Condition of Bridges and Costs Associated with Conversion for Trail Use

Transplan Pty Ltd commissioned Wood Research and Development (WRD) (engineers specialising in timber bridges) to carry out inspections and assessments of the most significant bridges along the corridor.

Although preliminary bridge assessments have been carried out on a number of the most significant bridges, further detailed assessments will be required on all bridges prior to construction of the trail to accurately establish the condition of timber bridge components.

As noted in the report by WRD (see Appendix 5), an essential step in evaluating the condition of a structure is undertaking a visual inspection. The visual aspect of the investigation is used to pick up missing or failed elements, cracks and splits, cavitation, connection details, abutment condition, undermining and debris build-up, among other important information. Gathering this information is essential for completing a comprehensive investigation and taking into account the surroundings in addition to the main structural elements. The photographs (called Figures in the engineering report) provide a summary of findings as well as the description of each bridge.

The Condition State Rating system set out below in Table 7 has been developed by Wood Research and Development, through timber inspection experience, to clearly describe the condition of the elements inspected.

Table 7 - Condition State Ratings

Condition State	Subjective Rating	Estimated Remaining Life Span		Description
1	Good	100%	80 years	Like new condition and free of defects.
2	Fair	80%	64 years	Free of defects affecting structural performance, integrity and durability. Deterioration of a minor nature in the protective coating and/or parent material is evident.
3	Poor	30%	24 years	Defects affecting the durability/serviceability which may require monitoring and/or remedial action or inspection by a structural engineer. Component or element shows marked and advancing deterioration including loss of protective coating and minor loss of section from the parent material is evident. Intervention is normally required. Defects affecting the durability/serviceability which may require monitoring and/or remedial action or inspection by a structural engineer. Component or element shows marked and advancing deterioration including loss of protective coating and minor loss of section from the parent material is evident. Intervention is normally required.
4	Very Poor	5%	4 years	Defects affecting the performance and structural integrity of the structure which require urgent action as determined by a detailed structural engineering inspection. Component or element shows advanced deterioration, loss of section from the parent material, signs of overstressing or evidence that it is acting differently to its intended design mode or function.
5	Unsafe	1%	Less than 2 years	Bridge should be closed. Structural integrity is severely compromised, and the structure must be taken out of service until a structural engineer has inspected the structure and recommended the required remedial action.

Michelago Creek Bridge

Overall Michelago Creek Bridge is in poor condition (CSR of 3) with significant works required to repurpose the bridge for pedestrian and cycle use. This rating does not speak to the load rating. A load rating of the structure was not completed for this report. This condition rating was based from a small sample size of data collected and it is highly recommended to conduct a detailed Level 2/3 inspection of the entire bridge. This will gain a higher level of accuracy for the recommended repair options.

Ingalara Creek Bridge

Overall Ingalara Creek Bridge is in poor condition (CSR of 3) with significant works required to repurpose the bridge for pedestrian and cycle use. This rating does not speak to the load rating. A load rating of the structure was not completed for this report. This condition rating was based from a small sample size of data collected and it is highly recommended to conduct a detailed Level 2/3 inspection of the entire bridge. This will gain a higher level of accuracy for the recommended repair options.

Colyer Creek Bridge

Overall Colyer Creek Bridge is in similar condition to Michelago Creek Bridge which is poor condition (CSR of 3) with significant works required to repurpose the bridge for pedestrian and cycle use. This rating does not speak to the load rating. A load rating of the structure was not completed for this report. This condition rating was based from a very small sample size of data collected and it is highly recommended to conduct a detailed Level 2/3 inspection of the entire bridge.

Bredbo River Bridge

Overall Bredbo River Bridge is in poor condition (CSR of 3) with significant works required to repurpose the bridge for pedestrian and cycle use. This rating does not speak to the load rating. A load rating of the structure was not completed for this report. This condition rating was based from a small sample size of data collected and it is highly recommended to conduct a detailed Level 2/3 inspection of the entire bridge.

Chakola Bridge (Numeralla River)

Overall Chakola Bridge is in poor condition (CSR of 3) with significant works required to repurpose the bridge for pedestrian and cycle use. This rating does not speak to the load rating. A load rating of the structure was not completed for this report. This condition rating was based from a small sample size of data collected and it is highly recommended to conduct a detailed Level 2/3 inspection of the entire bridge.

The following is a summary of the Condition State Rating (CSR) for each bridge:

1. Michelago Creek Bridge

a. Substructure	CSR 3
b. Superstructure	CSR 3
c. Deck	CSR 3
d. Overall	CSR 3

2. Ingalara Creek Bridge	
a. Substructure	CSR 3
b. Superstructure	CSR 3
c. Deck	CSR 3
d. Overall	CSR 3
3. Colyer Creek Bridge	
a. Substructure	CSR 3
b. Superstructure	CSR 3
c. Deck	CSR 3
d. Overall	CSR 3
4. Bredbo River Bridge	
a. Substructure	CSR 4
b. Superstructure	CSR 3
c. Deck	CSR 3
d. Overall	CSR 3
5. Chakola Bridge (Numeralla River)	
a. Substructure	CSR 4
b. Superstructure	CSR 4
c. Deck	CSR 3
d. Overall	CSR 4

As a result of these assessments the appropriate costs to repair have been included in the tables that follow

9.2 Basis of Cost Estimates

The investigations undertaken during the fieldwork associated with this project and the consultation carried out enable a reasonable indication of the work required to bring about the development of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail project.

The costs of construction of the proposed rail trail is an estimate of probable costs only. Accurate costs can only be determined, firstly, by the compilation of more detailed works lists accomplished through individual, detailed trail development plans for each section of the proposed rail trail and, secondly, via a tendering process.

The costs for development of the trail (bridges, trail construction, etc) are based on conditions likely to be encountered during construction. As accurate measurements have not been made, it is not possible to be precise in quantifying costs. It is only after detailed trail development plans are prepared (including a full traverse of the corridor) that more definite quantities and costs can be provided.

For the purposes of determining costs for this Feasibility Study, the per unit construction rates have been included in the tables, along with an estimate of the total length or quantity.

For ease of calculating costs, and as a possible future guide to development of the rail trail in stages, the corridor was divided into 6 segments. (See Plans 1 – 6 of Appendix 6).

Table 8 – Section 1 – Queanbeyan to Michelago (49km)

Activity	Unit	Qty	Rate	\$
Allowance for minimal to moderate clearing of corridor between Queanbeyan and Michelago (49km)	metres	49,000	\$3	\$147,000
Erection of fencing along corridor:				
• double fencing (allowance)	metres	24,530	\$20	\$490,600
• single fencing (allowance)	metres	9,970	\$10	\$99,700
• no fencing	metres	14,500	\$0	\$0
Allowance for cleaning of, and earthworks around, pipe and box culverts under railway embankment	units	60	\$400 (average)	\$24,000
Allowance for minor repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc) (or installation of new pre-fabricated bridges).	metres	185 (16 bridges)	\$6,000	\$1,110,000
Allowance for delineator posts, guard rails or barrier fencing on high embankments				\$30,000
Allowance for gravelling of trail to 2.5m wide, compacted to 150mm thickness [#]	Lineal metres	49,000	\$60	\$2,940,000
Allowance for purchase and installation of miscellaneous signage (directional / distance, warning, etiquette, private property, no trespassing, emergency etc)	metre	49,000	\$2	\$98,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings at major roads (other than Monaro Highway 100kph zone)		4	\$11,500	\$46,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings (i.e. underpasses) of Monaro Highway in 100kph zone		0	\$350,000	\$0

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Allowance for construction of road crossings at minor roads and driveways		2	\$2,820	\$5,640
Allowance for retain/renovate/repaint railway signage and significant railway heritage infrastructure (signs, signals, switches)		-	-	\$5,000
Allowance for rehabilitation of drainage through cuttings	metre	2,000	\$25	\$50,000
Allowance for trailside bench seats and trailside shelters		3	\$3,000	\$9,000
Allowance for removal of cross fences	unit	10	\$300	\$3,000
Allowance for installation of new structures at property boundaries to replace existing cattle stops	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of stock crossings (grids, gates, etc) to permit stock/machinery to cross from one side of corridor to the other	unit	20	\$4,000	\$80,000
Allowance for construction of 1 shelter between Hume and Royalla		1	\$10,000	\$10,000
Allowance for installation of toilets (system and shed)	unit	2	\$20,000	\$40,000
Allowance for slashing bridle trail alongside main trail (if horses are to be permitted)	metres	49,000	\$0.50	\$24,500
Allowance for preparation and installation of interpretive signage	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for sculpture/artwork	unit	1	\$10,000	\$10,000
Allowance for Trail Directional Markers (incorporating emergency markers) to be placed along trail every 1 km.	Ea.	49	\$600	\$29,400
Allowance for landowner requests (e.g. fencing and vegetation screening)				\$10,000

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Allowance for cable locators and traffic management				\$20,000
Allowance for adjoining landholder consultation				\$5,000
Allowance for boot and bike tyre cleaning stations	units	2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for weed spraying before/during construction				\$10,000
Allowance for surveying of property boundaries/fencing alignment	Per/km	49km	\$3,000	\$147,000
Queanbeyan trailhead facilities:				
• Install map panel	units	1	\$5,500	\$5,000
• Directional signage to trailhead from regional and local roads	units	4	\$600	\$2,400
• Install roadside "Trailhead" signage on local roads	units	2	\$1,600	\$3,200
• Install picnic shelter and table		1	\$8,000	\$8,000
• Install bike parking rails	set	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
• Allowance for trailhead sculptures / artwork		2	\$15,000	\$30,000
Michelago trailhead facilities:				
• Install map panel	units	1	\$5,500	\$5,000
• Directional signage to trailhead from regional and local roads	units	4	\$600	\$2,400
• Install roadside "Trailhead" signage on local roads	units	2	\$1,600	\$3,200
• Install picnic shelter and table		1	\$8,000	\$8,000
• Install bike parking rails	set	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
• Allowance for trailhead sculptures / artwork		2	\$15,000	\$30,000
<i>Sub-total</i>				\$5,589,040

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Approvals, permits, applications, designs, specifications, engineering assessment of timber bridges (2.5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,589,040).	%		2.5	\$139,730
Contingency amount (15% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,589,040).	%		15.0	\$838,360
Project management (5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,589,040).	%		5.0	\$279,450
Total (not incl GST)				\$6,846,580

Table 9 - Section 2 – Michelago to Bredbo (30km)

Activity	Unit	Qty	Rate	\$
Allowance for minimal to moderate clearing of corridor between Michelago and Bredbo (30km)	metres	30,000	\$3	\$90,000
Erection of fencing along corridor:				
• double fencing (allowance)	metres	22,800	\$20	\$456,000
• single fencing (allowance)	metres	1,800	\$10	\$18,000
• no fencing	metres	5,400	\$0	\$0
Allowance for cleaning of, and earthworks around, pipe and box culverts under railway embankment	units	30	\$400 (average)	\$12,000
Allowance for minor repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc) (or installation of new pre-fabricated bridges).	metres	148 (19 bridges)	\$6,000	\$888,000
Allowance for major repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc) on Michelago, Ingalara and Colyer bridges.				See separate table below

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Colinton Tunnel – allowance for installation of solar lighting				\$30,000
Allowance for gravelling of trail to 2.5m wide, compacted to 150mm thickness#	Lineal metres	30,000	\$60	\$1,800,000
Allowance for purchase and installation of miscellaneous signage (directional / distance, warning, etiquette, private property, no trespassing, emergency etc)	metre	30,000	\$2	\$60,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings at major roads (other than Monaro Highway 100kph zone)	0		\$11,500	\$0
Allowance for construction of road crossings (i.e. underpasses) of Monaro Highway in 100kph zone	2		\$350,000	\$700,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings at minor roads and driveways		5	\$2,820	\$14,100
Allowance for retain/renovate/repaint railway signage and significant railway heritage infrastructure (signs, signals, switches)		-	-	\$5,000
Allowance for rehabilitation of drainage through cuttings	metre	2,000	\$25	\$50,000
Allowance for trailside bench seats and trailside shelters		2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for removal of cross fences	unit	10	\$300	\$3,000
Allowance for installation of new structures at property boundaries to replace existing cattle stops	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of stock crossings (grids, gates, etc) to permit stock/machinery to cross from one side of corridor to the other	unit	20	\$4,000	\$80,000
Allowance for construction of 2 shelters (one between Michelago and road crossing		2	\$10,000	\$20,000

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of Monaro Hwy south of Michelago; and one between Colinton and Scottsdale)				
Allowance for installation of toilets (system and shed)	unit	2	\$20,000	\$40,000
Allowance for slashing bridle trail alongside main trail (if horses are to be permitted)	metres	30,000	\$0.50	\$15,000
Allowance for preparation and installation of interpretive signage	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for sculpture/artwork	unit	1	\$10,000	\$10,000
Allowance for Trail Directional Markers (incorporating emergency markers) to be placed along trail every 1 km.	Ea.	30	\$600	\$18,000
Allowance for landowner requests (e.g. fencing and vegetation screening)				\$10,000
Allowance for cable locators and traffic management				\$20,000
Allowance for adjoining landholder consultation				\$5,000
Allowance for boot and bike tyre cleaning stations	units	2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for weed spraying before/during construction				\$10,000
Allowance for surveying of property boundaries/fencing alignment	Per/km	30km	\$3,000	\$90,000
Michelago trailhead facilities:				
• costed in table above				\$0
Bredbo trailhead facilities:				
• Install map panel	units	1	\$5,500	\$5,500
• Install directional signage to trailhead from regional and local roads	units	2	\$600	\$1,200

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• Install roadside “Trailhead” signage on local roads	units	2	\$1,600	\$3,200
• Install picnic shelter and table		1	\$4,000	\$4,000
• Install bike parking rails	set	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
<i>Sub-total</i>				\$4,511,000
Approvals, permits, applications, designs, specifications, engineering assessment of timber bridges (2.5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$4,511,000)	%		2.5	\$112,780
Contingency amount (15% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$4,511,000).	%		15.0	\$676,650
Project management (5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$4,511,000).	%		5.0	\$225,550
Total (not incl GST)				\$5,525,980

Table 10 - Major Bridges between Michelago and Bredbo

Activity	Unit	Qty	Rate	\$
Allowance for major refurbishment of Michelago Bridge.	metres	74m		\$850,000
Allowance for major refurbishment of Ingalara Bridge.	metres	75m		\$1,000,000
Allowance for major refurbishment of Colyer Bridge.	metres	50m		\$580,000
<i>Sub-total</i>				\$2,430,000
Contingency amount (25%)	%		25.0	\$607,500
Total (not incl GST)				\$3,037,500

Table 11 - Section 3 – Bredbo to Cooma (36km)

Activity	Unit	Qty	Rate	\$
Allowance for minimal to moderate clearing of corridor between Bredbo and Cooma (36km)	metres	36,000	\$3	\$108,000
Erection of fencing along corridor:				
• double fencing (allowance)	metres	30,900	\$20	\$618,000
• single fencing (allowance)	metres	2,500	\$10	\$25,000
• no fencing	metres	2,600	\$0	\$0
Allowance for cleaning of, and earthworks around, pipe and box culverts under railway embankment	units	60	\$400 (average)	\$24,000
Allowance for minor repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc) (or installation of new pre-fabricated bridges).	metres	354 (19 bridges)	\$6,000	\$2,124,000
Allowance for major repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc) on Bredbo and Chakola (Numeralla) bridges.				See separate table below
Allowance for gravelling of trail to 2.5m wide, compacted to 150mm thickness [#]	Lineal metres	36,000	\$60	\$2,160,000
Allowance for purchase and installation of miscellaneous signage (directional / distance, warning, etiquette, private property, no trespassing, emergency etc)	metre	36,000	\$2	\$72,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings at major roads (other than Monaro Highway 100kph zone)		3	\$11,500	\$34,500

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Allowance for construction of road crossings (i.e. underpasses) of Monaro Highway in 100kph zone		0	\$350,000	\$0
Allowance for construction of road crossings at minor roads and driveways		4	\$2,820	\$11,280
Allowance for retain/renovate/repaint railway signage and significant railway heritage infrastructure (signs, signals, switches)			-	\$5,000
Allowance for rehabilitation of drainage through cuttings	metre	1,000	\$25	\$25,000
Allowance for trailside bench seats and trailside shelters		2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for removal of cross fences	unit	10	\$300	\$3,000
Allowance for installation of new structures at property boundaries to replace existing cattle stops	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of stock crossings (grids, gates, etc) to permit stock/machinery to cross from one side of corridor to the other	unit	30	\$4,000	\$120,000
Allowance for construction of 2 shelters (one between Bredbo and Chakola, and one between Chakola and Bunyan)		2	\$10,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of toilets (system and shed)	unit	2	\$20,000	\$40,000
Allowance for slashing bridle trail alongside main trail (if horses are to be permitted)	metres	36,000	\$0.50	\$18,000
Allowance for preparation and installation of interpretive signage	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for sculpture/artwork	unit	1	\$10,000	\$10,000

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Allowance for Trail Directional Markers (incorporating emergency markers) to be placed along trail every 1 km.	Ea.	36	\$600	\$21,600
Allowance for landowner requests (e.g. fencing and vegetation screening)				\$10,000
Allowance for cable locators and traffic management				\$20,000
Allowance for adjoining landholder consultation				\$5,000
Allowance for boot and bike tyre cleaning stations	units	2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for weed spraying before/during construction				\$10,000
Allowance for surveying of property boundaries/fencing alignment	Per/km	36km	\$3,000	\$108,000
Bredbo trailhead facilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> costed in table above 				\$0
Cooma trailhead facilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install map panel 	units	1	\$5,500	\$5,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install directional signage to trailhead from regional and local roads 	units	2	\$600	\$1,200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install roadside "Trailhead" signage on local roads 	units	2	\$1,600	\$3,200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install picnic shelter and table 		1	\$4,000	\$4,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install bike parking rails 	set	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
<i>Sub-total</i>				\$5,659,280
Approvals, permits, applications, designs, specifications, engineering assessment of timber bridges (2.5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,659,280).	%		2.5	\$141,480

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Contingency amount (15% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,659,280).	%		15.0	\$848,890
Project management (5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,659,280).	%		5.0	\$282,960
Total (not incl GST)				\$6,932,610

Table 12 - Major Bridges between Bredbo and Cooma

Activity	Unit	Qty	Rate	\$
Allowance for major refurbishment of Bredbo Bridge.	metres	130m		\$1,750,000
Allowance for major refurbishment of Chakola (Numeralla) Bridge.	metres	390m		\$5,250,000
<i>Sub-total</i>				<i>\$7,000,000</i>
Contingency amount (25%)	%		25.0	\$1,750,000
Total (not incl GST)				\$8,750,000

Table 13 - Section 4 – Cooma to Nimmitabel (38km)

Activity	Unit	Qty	Rate	\$
Allowance for minimal to moderate clearing of corridor between Cooma and Nimmitabel (38km)	metres	38,000	\$3	\$114,000
Erection of fencing along corridor:				
• double fencing (allowance)	metres	32,190	\$20	\$643,800
• single fencing (allowance)	metres	5,010	\$10	\$50,100
• no fencing	metres	800	\$0	\$0
Allowance for cleaning of, and earthworks around, pipe and box culverts under railway embankment	units	40	\$400	\$16,000
Allowance for minor repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc) (or installation of new pre-fabricated bridges).	metres	207m (21 bridges)	\$6,000	\$1,242,000
Allowance for major repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc)	metres	0	\$11,000	\$0
Allowance for gravelling of trail to 2.5m wide, compacted to 150mm thickness [#]	Lineal metres	38,000	\$60	\$2,280,000
Allowance for purchase and installation of miscellaneous signage (directional / distance, warning, etiquette, private property, no trespassing, emergency etc)	metre	38,000	\$2	\$76,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings at major roads (other than Monaro Highway 100kph zone)		1	\$11,500	\$11,500
Allowance for construction of road crossings (i.e. underpasses) of Monaro Highway in 100kph zone		2	\$350,000	\$700,000

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Allowance for construction of road crossings at minor roads and driveways		10	\$2,820	\$28,200
Allowance for retain/renovate/repaint railway signage and significant railway heritage infrastructure (signs, signals, switches)			-	\$5,000
Allowance for rehabilitation of drainage through cuttings	metre	1,000	\$25	\$25,000
Allowance for trailside bench seats and trailside shelters		2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for removal of cross fences	unit	10	\$300	\$3,000
Allowance for installation of new structures at property boundaries to replace existing cattle stops	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of stock crossings (grids, gates, etc) to permit stock/machinery to cross from one side of corridor to the other	unit	30	\$4,000	\$120,000
Allowance for construction of 2 shelters (one between Rock Flat and Coonerang, and one between Coonerang and Bobingah)		2	\$10,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of toilets (system and shed)	unit	2	\$20,000	\$40,000
Allowance for slashing bridle trail alongside main trail (if horses are to be permitted)	metres	38,000	\$0.50	\$19,000
Allowance for refurbishment of Coonerang siding and removal of asbestos		1	\$20,000	\$20,000
Allowance for preparation and installation of interpretive signage	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for sculpture/artwork	unit	1	\$10,000	\$10,000

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Allowance for Trail Directional Markers (incorporating emergency markers) to be placed along trail every 1 km.	Ea.	38	\$600	\$22,800
Allowance for landowner requests (e.g. fencing and vegetation screening)				\$10,000
Allowance for cable locators and traffic management				\$20,000
Allowance for adjoining landholder consultation				\$5,000
Allowance for boot and bike tyre cleaning stations	units	2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for weed spraying before/during construction				\$10,000
Allowance for surveying of property boundaries/fencing alignment	Per/km	38km	\$3,000	\$114,000
Cooma trailhead facilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> costed in table above 				\$0
Nimmitabel trailhead facilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install map panel 	units	1	\$5,500	\$5,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct parking area – including horse float parking (100m²) 	m ²	100	\$75	\$7,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install roadside “Trailhead” signage on access road 	units	2	\$1,600	\$3,200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install picnic shelter/table 		1	\$4,000	\$4,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install bike parking rails 	set	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
<i>Sub-total</i>				\$5,678,600
Approvals, permits, applications, designs, specifications, engineering assessment of timber bridges (2.5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,678,600).	%		2.5	\$141,970

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Contingency amount (15% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,678,600).	%		15.0	\$851,790
Project management (5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,678,600).	%		5.0	\$283,930
Total (not incl GST)				\$6,956,290

Table 14 - Section 5 – Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly (37km)

Activity	Unit	Qty	Rate	\$
Allowance for minimal to moderate clearing of corridor between Nimmitabel and Jincumbilly (37km)	metres	37,000	\$3	\$111,000
Erection of fencing along corridor:				
• double fencing (allowance)	metres	36,600	\$20	\$732,000
• single fencing (allowance)	metres	400	\$10	\$4,000
• no fencing	metres	0	\$0	\$0
Allowance for cleaning of, and earthworks around, pipe and box culverts under railway embankment	units	60	\$400 (average)	\$24,000
Allowance for minor repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc) (or installation of new pre-fabricated bridges).	metres	262 (14 bridges)	\$6,000	\$1,572,000
Allowance for major repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc)	metres	0	\$11,000	\$0
Allowance for gravelling of trail to 2.5m wide, compacted to 150mm thickness [#]	Lineal metres	37,000	\$60	\$2,220,000

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Allowance for purchase and installation of miscellaneous signage (directional / distance, warning, etiquette, private property, no trespassing, emergency etc)	metre	37,000	\$2	\$74,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings at major roads (other than Monaro Highway 100kph zone)		3	\$11,500	\$34,500
Allowance for construction of road crossings (i.e. underpasses) of Monaro Highway in 100kph zone		0	\$350,000	\$0
Allowance for construction of road crossings at minor roads and driveways		6	\$2,820	\$16,920
Allowance for retain/renovate/repaint railway signage and significant railway heritage infrastructure (signs, signals, switches)		-	-	\$5,000
Allowance for rehabilitation of drainage through cuttings	metre	1,000	\$25	\$25,000
Allowance for trailside bench seats and trailside shelters		3	\$3,000	\$9,000
Allowance for removal of cross fences	unit	10	\$300	\$3,000
Allowance for installation of new structures at property boundaries to replace existing cattle stops	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of stock crossings (grids, gates, etc) to permit stock/machinery to cross from one side of corridor to the other	unit	35	\$4,000	\$140,000
Allowance for construction of 2 shelters (one between Maclaughlin Station and Holts Flat, and one between Holts Flat and Jincumbilly)		2	\$10,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of toilets (system and shed)	unit	2	\$20,000	\$40,000

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Allowance for slashing bridle trail alongside main trail (if horses are to be permitted)	metres	37,000	\$0.50	\$18,500
Allowance for refurbishment of Holts Flat siding shed and removal of asbestos		1	\$20,000	\$20,000
Allowance for making safe Maclaughlin Station meat works building				\$50,000
Allowance for preparation and installation of interpretive signage	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for sculpture/artwork	unit	1	\$10,000	\$10,000
Allowance for Trail Directional Markers (incorporating emergency markers) to be placed along trail every 1 km.	Ea.	37	\$600	\$22,200
Allowance for landowner requests (e.g. fencing and vegetation screening)				\$10,000
Allowance for cable locators and traffic management				\$20,000
Allowance for adjoining landholder consultation				\$5,000
Allowance for boot and bike tyre cleaning stations	units	2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for weed spraying before/during construction				\$10,000
Allowance for surveying of property boundaries/fencing alignment	Per/km	37km	\$3,000	\$111,000
Nimmitabel trailhead facilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> costed in table above 				\$0
Jincumbilly trailhead facilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct parking area (200m²) 	m ²	200	\$75	\$15,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install map panel 	units	1	\$5,500	\$5,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install directional signage to trailhead on regional roads 	units	2	\$600	\$1,200

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• Install roadside “Trailhead” signage on access road	units	1	\$1,600	\$1,600
• Install picnic shelter and table		1	\$4,000	\$4,000
• Install bike parking rails	set	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
• Allowance for refurbishment of Jincumbilly siding and shed and removal of asbestos			\$20,000	\$20,000
<i>Sub-total</i>				<i>\$5,401,420</i>
Approvals, permits, applications, designs, specifications, engineering assessment of timber bridges (2.5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,401,420).	%		2.5	\$135,040
Contingency amount (15% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,401,420).	%		15.0	\$810,210
Project management (5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$5,401,420).	%		5.0	\$270,070
Total (not incl GST)				\$6,616,740

Table 15 - Section 6 – Jincumbilly to Bombala (24km)

Activity	Unit	Qty	Rate	\$
Allowance for minimal to moderate clearing of corridor between Jincumbilly and Bombala (24km)	metres	24,000	\$3	\$72,000
Erection of fencing along corridor:				
• double fencing (allowance)	metres	21,400	\$20	\$428,000
• single fencing (allowance)	metres	2,100	\$10	\$21,000
• no fencing	metres	500	\$0	\$0
Allowance for cleaning of, and earthworks around, pipe and box culverts under railway embankment	units	50	\$400 (average)	\$20,000

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Allowance for minor repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc) (or installation of new pre-fabricated bridges).	metres	0	\$6,000	\$0
Allowance for major repairs and/or refurbishment of bridge structures (abutments, new decking, handrails etc)	metres	0	\$11,000	\$0
Allowance for gravelling of trail to 2.5m wide, compacted to 150mm thickness#	Lineal metres	24,000	\$60	\$1,440,000
Allowance for purchase and installation of miscellaneous signage (directional / distance, warning, etiquette, private property, no trespassing, emergency etc)	metre	24,000	\$2	\$48,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings at major roads (other than Monaro Highway 100kph zone)		4	\$11,500	\$46,000
Allowance for construction of road crossings (i.e. underpasses) of Monaro Highway in 100kph zone		0	\$350,000	\$0
Allowance for construction of road crossings at minor roads and driveways		6	\$2,820	\$16,920
Allowance for retain/renovate/repaint railway signage and significant railway heritage infrastructure (signs, signals, switches)		-	-	\$5,000
Allowance for rehabilitation of drainage through cuttings	metre	1,000	\$25	\$25,000
Allowance for trailside bench seats and trailside shelters		3	\$3,000	\$9,000
Allowance for removal of cross fences	unit	10	\$300	\$3,000
Allowance for installation of new structures at property boundaries to replace existing cattle stops	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000

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Allowance for installation of stock crossings (grids, gates, etc) to permit stock/machinery to cross from one side of corridor to the other	unit	33	\$4,000	\$132,000
Allowance for construction of 2 shelters (one between Jincumbilly and Bukalong, and between Bukalong and Bombala)		2	\$10,000	\$20,000
Allowance for installation of toilets (system and shed)	unit	2	\$20,000	\$40,000
Allowance for slashing bridle trail alongside main trail (if horses are to be permitted)	metres	24,000	\$0.50	\$12,000
Allowance for refurbishment of Bukalong siding and shed and removal of asbestos			\$20,000	\$20,000
Allowance for preparation and installation of interpretive signage	unit	5	\$4,000	\$20,000
Allowance for sculpture/artwork	unit	1	\$10,000	\$10,000
Allowance for Trail Directional Markers (incorporating emergency markers) to be placed along trail every 1 km.	Ea.	24	\$600	\$14,400
Allowance for landowner requests (e.g. fencing and vegetation screening)				\$10,000
Allowance for cable locators and traffic management				\$20,000
Allowance for adjoining landholder consultation				\$5,000
Allowance for boot and bike tyre cleaning stations	units	2	\$3,000	\$6,000
Allowance for weed spraying before/during construction				\$10,000
Allowance for surveying of property boundaries/fencing alignment	Per/km	24km	\$3,000	\$72,000

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Jincumbilly trailhead facilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> costed in table above 				\$0
Bombala trailhead facilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct parking area (200m²) 	m ²	200	\$75	\$15,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install map panel 	units	1	\$5,500	\$5,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install directional signage to trailhead on regional roads 	units	2	\$600	\$1,200
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install roadside "Trailhead" signage on access road 	units	1	\$1,600	\$1,600
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install picnic shelter and table 		1	\$4,000	\$4,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install bike parking rails 	set	1	\$1,000	\$1,000
<i>Sub-total</i>				\$2,573,620
Approvals, permits, applications, designs, specifications, engineering assessment of timber bridges (2.5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$2,573,620).	%		2.5	\$64,340
Contingency amount (15% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$2,573,620).	%		15.0	\$386,040
Project management (5% of maximum estimated expenditure - \$2,573,620).	%		5.0	\$128,680
Total (not incl GST)				\$3,152,680

Note #: The trail construction costs noted in each of the tables above include an allowance for gravelling of the trail surface. An extra \$10-15 million would be required to seal the 213km trail (with bitumen/asphalt). (This is the equivalent of approximately \$18 - \$25/m². Actual rates will vary depending on competitiveness of contractors).

Table 16: Total Costs

Section	Cost
Section 1: Queanbeyan to Michelago (49km)	\$6,846,580
Section 2: Michelago to Bredbo (30km)	\$5,525,980
Major Bridges between Michelago and Bredbo	\$3,037,500
Section 3: Bredbo to Cooma (36km)	\$6,932,610
Major Bridges between Bredbo and Cooma	\$8,750,000
Section 4: Cooma to Nimmitabel (38km)	\$6,956,290
Section 5: Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly (37km)	\$6,616,740
Section 6: Jincumbilly to Bombala (24km)	\$3,152,680
Total (excluding GST)	\$47,818,380

Note: It is assumed that removal of steel track and sleepers and shaping of basic track by contractor will be at no cost to project (allowing for steel and sleepers to be salvageable commodities).

Fencing

It is assumed that fencing will be mandatory along those sections of the corridor that are not already fenced. As noted elsewhere, the railway south of Cooma to Bombala was originally built as a 'pioneer' line – i.e. without fencing or ballast.

It is acknowledged that fencing does now exist along some sections of the corridor south of Cooma (despite it being a railway developed without fencing). This fencing is not complete and those sections of fencing that do exist will have been erected along parts of the corridor boundary. Fencing will have been erected by adjoining landowners to either differentiate between land ownership parcels, to contain stock within boundaries or paddocks and to prevent stock from straying onto the railway tracks when trains were running.

New fencing has been costed along much of the corridor. The new fencing will be required in accordance with the proposition that the rail trail requires a narrower corridor (perhaps 6 – 8 metres wide) than the original 30 - 40 metre wide railway corridor. This new fencing along the narrower corridor allows the adjoining landowners to graze their stock within the 'unneeded' section of the publicly owned (former) railway corridor. Although the corridor is proposed to be fenced, these cost estimates allow for ample stock and machinery crossing points of the corridor to enable farmers and their stock to cross the (former and to-be-fenced) rail trail corridor without the necessity of opening and closing gates. The stock crossings will be open 24/7.

Notes

1. *Much of the corridor has only light regrowth and grasses have been controlled by stock grazing on the corridor.*
2. *Trail construction. Construction includes light rolling, covering with road base, levelling, trimming, shaping and compacting: \$60/lineal metre (for 2.5m trail width). Building lesser quality trails leads to significant maintenance bills in the future and also has the potential to deter users.*
3. *The trail construction costs noted in each of the tables above include an allowance for gravelling of the trail surface. An extra \$10-15 million would be required to seal the 213km trail (with bitumen/asphalt). (This is the equivalent of approximately \$18 - \$25/m². Actual rates will vary depending on competitiveness of contractors).*
4. *The recommendation is that fencing on the corridor will be built to allow for a 6 – 8 metre wide trail corridor and the remaining corridor (usually 22 metres on a 30 metre wide corridor and 32 metres on a 40 metre wide corridor) will be made available to adjoining landholders for grazing livestock. While this contributes to a high construction cost, it significantly reduces the maintenance burden meaning only a 6 – 8 metre corridor needs to be slashed by the trail manager. In most cases, new fencing will therefore be required. The costings reflect this.*
5. *An allowance has been made for slashing a bridle trail alongside main trail (if horses are to be permitted).*
6. *The estimates set out in the tables above are an indication only and have been based on conditions observed from many areas along the railway corridor and at a number of the most significant bridges. A more reliable estimate of costs can only be provided following a complete traverse of the corridor, as would be done in the preparation of a detailed trail development plan.*
7. *These broad estimates of probable costs are based on contractors' rates. Costs can be considerably reduced through use of in-kind contributions from the Council, use of volunteers for various tasks, use of prison crews (for construction tasks), etc.*
8. *The estimates of probable costs above are based on recent relevant construction costs from other trail projects. Real-life costs will depend on a number of factors, including the state of the economy, the extent of 'advertising' of construction tenders, the availability and competitiveness of contractors, the rise and fall in materials costs, the choice of materials used in construction and final design details. Tenders submitted by construction contractors may vary significantly from the estimated costs in the tables contained within this report.*
9. *Estimated costs are as at October 2019. An additional 3.5% should be added to each individual total per year compounded.*

SECTION 10 – THE BUSINESS CASE

10.1 Introduction

It is always difficult to predict the economic impact of a new trail. Visitor numbers on the Bibbulmun Track (in WA) grew from 10,000 when the new alignment was first opened in 1997 to 137,000 in 2004 (*Colmar Brunton 2004*) to over 167,000 in 2008 (*Colmar Brunton 2009*) to over 300,00 in 2015 (*Hughes et al 2015*). This was on a trail that had existed in its entirety for many years but was substantially altered and reopened in 1997 (although new sections of it had been opened prior to its grand opening). Visitors included those on ‘local trips’, day trips and overnight or longer stays (including those who travelled from end to end).

A dramatic increase in visitor numbers such as experienced by the Bibbulmun Track can be attributed to very good marketing of the track. The economic impact of the proposed trail is primarily dependent on the extent to which the trail is marketed and promoted. The Bibbulmun Track Foundation markets the trail, organises events and organises guided experiences of the track – its role in marketing and promotion has been critical to the track’s success.

A trail will bring additional tourists and keep them longer in the area. Other possible benefits from developing the trail include:

- ✚ Improvements to community connectivity;
- ✚ Increasing recreational options for local people; and
- ✚ Creating opportunities to build on existing industries and enterprises of the area.

A trail such as proposed Monaro Rail Trail will have attraction to visitors – day trippers and overnight visitors. However, it will also add to the stock of existing trails for local people – people who live in towns and villages within easy reach of the trail. Some of these people will use the trail for exercise – these ‘back gate’ users may not be significant in terms of expenditure, but they are significant in terms of numbers as they would use the trail many times a year.

One of the key attractions of developing this rail trail is the opportunity to provide a rail trail experience for residents of NSW in NSW. The NSW State Government has previously indicated that one of the key outcomes it is seeking from tourism projects is to reduce the “leakage” of expenditure i.e. money being spent by NSW residents in other states (and countries) on holidays. This is in addition to attracting holiday makers from other States and countries. There is limited research data on this issue associated with rail trails. Beeton’s 2009 study of the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail in North East Victoria showed that, of the 60,000 trail users/year, around 14% of them (8,400) were from NSW with a roughly even split between Sydney and Regional NSW (this was consistent with an earlier study of the same rail trail). These visitors were expending an average of \$332/day (in 2017 dollars). This is quite significant. The Queensland Government has committed to spending \$14 million developing rail trails over the next 3 years. The recently finished Brisbane Valley Rail Trail in Queensland is now the longest rail trail in Australia. Both of these developments have the potential to attract interstate visitors. Research for the New Zealand Government showed Australia is the biggest international market for cycle tourism in New Zealand, accounting for some 23% of

international cycle tourists. 15% of users on the Otago Central Rail Trail came from Australia (*Central Otago District Council 2015*). Anecdotal evidence suggests that many NSW residents interested in rail trails are heading to Victoria and New Zealand to have these experiences not currently on offer in NSW.

Many of these trail users will be interested in using a rail trail developed in NSW thus reducing the expenditure leakage.

Another key element is interstate and international visitation to the region. A trail such as the Monaro Rail Trail will also attract interstate visitors particularly from the ACT which is already providing a significant number of visitors to the region (some 22.5% of summer visitors and 12% of winter visitors).

10.2 Visitor Markets

Visitor trends and markets were discussed in detail in Section 7. Key trends and markets to be considered bear re-iteration.

10.2.1 General Visitor Trends

Tourism Research Australia and Destination NSW have undertaken research on a number of visitor markets relevant to rail trails. The most relevant general observation was that regional destinations offer key experiences for what Australians are seeking from their holidays.

- ✚ The millennials age group seeks authentic and genuine travel experiences, together with a variety of active and passive ways to enjoy them. This could include nature-based experiences, as well as country food and wine (*Tourism Research Australia, 2017(a)*).
- ✚ The over 55s is one of most powerful age groups in Australia in terms of financial capability and life expectancy is increasing. This group travels and prefers domestic travel to international travel. (*Destination NSW, May 2015*).
- ✚ More people (over 55) are choosing to travel earlier than retirement to enjoy the more active or immersive experiences that destinations have to offer. This is one of the key demographics for rail trails.
- ✚ Ease and convenience are the key drivers for domestic travel by families in Australia, and they are looking for destinations that are relaxed and easy with beautiful surroundings, preferably only a few hours' drive from home. (*Destination NSW, June 2015*).

10.2.2 General Visitor Numbers

The Snowy Mountains Tourist Region hosted 1,003,000 domestic overnight visitors and 603,000 domestic day trippers in 2018. 23,000 international visitors also came to the region (for a total of 1.629 million visitors).

10.3 Visiting Trail Users

There is no doubt from available evidence that recreation trails attract visitors who may come to a region specifically to do a trail. For example, in 2004, 50% of visitors to South Australia's

Riesling Trail came to the Clare Valley specifically to walk or ride the trail – the other 50% used the trail as a secondary activity to their trip to the Clare Valley.

A trail from Michelago to Bombala (wholly within the Snowy Mountains Region) has the potential to add extensively to the number of existing visitors. Many new users will be attracted to the region simply due to the trail's length and the landscapes through which it passes. Extending the trail north to Queanbeyan has the potential to attract more users and may also change the make-up of users (with many more people close to the trail).

The length of the shorter trail (at 165 kms) provides for a perfect 3 day bike ride (with an attractiveness for riding sections of it in 2 days), while the longer trail (at 213 kms) provides for a perfect 3-5 day ride. As a rail trail, the corridor is reasonably flat and will therefore accommodate the full range of cyclists, as well as walkers and other users.

10.3.1 Visiting Trail Users – Predicting User Numbers

What is a reasonable forecast for trail user numbers given some existing visitors will stay longer to experience the trail, and some will come to the region as new visitors simply to use the trail? Nature visitors who participate in the types of activities undertaken on tracks and trails provide a pointer to the market potential for a trail such as the proposed Monaro Rail Trail. Tourism Research Australia estimates that 51% of domestic overnight nature visitors take part in bushwalking / rainforest walks, whilst 39% of domestic day visitors and 37% of international visitors enjoy this type of activity. While the proposed trail does not necessarily provide a bushwalking experience, it does provide an opportunity for nature visitors.

Victoria attracted 320,000 cycle tourists (domestic and international) in 2010 (*Victoria's Cycle Tourism Action Plan 2011-2015*). A proportion of these would be interested in off-road cycle touring on a trail such as the Monaro Rail Trail.

10.3.1.1 Projected User Scenarios - Day Trip Usage

General Comments

Any trail has the potential to add to the number of day trippers – a significant market for a rail trail.

The Mundaring Shire trail network (in WA) is just under 1 hour from the Perth CBD. In the Mundaring case, 180,000 visitors (from outside the Shire) make over 900,000 visits/year (an average of 5 visits/person). The majority of these visitors come from Greater Perth (a population of 1.5 million at that time) and are day trippers. Some 12% of Perth residents visit the trail network.

Market Equity's research in South Australia shows that a significant percentage of cyclists on surveyed trails are more prepared than walkers to travel to use a trail (36% of cyclists interviewed on the five trails were non-locals) (*Market Equity 2004*).

The Lilydale Warburton Rail Trail provides a reasonable 'shadow' market for making some estimates. The trail attracts a large number of day trippers, with 100,000 of the 105,000 annual visitors being day trippers (some 3% of the day tripper market to the Yarra Valley and Ranges). The trailhead at Lilydale is 40 minutes by car from Central Melbourne and an hour by train. It is very well positioned for day trippers. The Trail is in an established tourism area – the Yarra Valley and Ranges – with a wide range of tourist infrastructure and attractions. In 2013, the Yarra Valley and Ranges region attracted 663,000 domestic overnight visitors and 3.1 million

day trippers. The Yarra Valley and Ranges are very attractive natural environments, another positive factor attracting trail users.

Expenditure is also quite significant. Day tripper expenditure (based on a number of studies) is \$147.87/day with \$47.32 (or 32%) of this spent on food and beverage – most of which is likely to be spent in the region.

The calculations below assume that 2 hours is a reasonable distance for people to travel (each way) to undertake a day trip. Cyclists in particular (likely to be the major user group) would take 2-3 hours to traverse any of the 6 sections (including Queanbeyan-Michelago) travelling at a modest 15km/hr. Allowing time for a car shuffle, any one section of the rail trail is a good day trip if the user is within 2 hrs of any part of the trail.

Monaro Rail Trail (Michelago to Bombala)

The trail end points (Michelago and Bombala) are within 2 hrs of the Canberra-Queanbeyan metropolitan area (with a population of almost 460,000). Other major towns in the Capital Country region (such as Goulburn and Yass - a combined population of almost 40,000) are also within 2 hours of the northern end of the trail. As noted in Section 7, Canberra's population has a much higher propensity for cycling than other Australian states, so Canberra is likely to be a major day trip market for the trail.

A trail developed along the old railway corridor between Michelago and Bombala may attract in the order of 25,000 additional day trippers/year (specifically to use the trail). This number represents:

- ✚ Around 4% of the existing day tripper market to the Snowy Mountains region; and
- ✚ Around 5% of the population within 2 hours of the trail.

Increasing day trippers to the region by 25,000/year will result in an injection of some \$3,696,750 into the local economies per year (based on the average figures of \$147.87).

It is reasonable to assume – given the proximity of Canberra and the popularity of cycling (and outdoor recreation more generally) for its residents – that over 50% of day trippers are likely to come from the ACT.

Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala)

Extending the trail to Queanbeyan adds marginally more people to the 2-hour catchment (mostly from further north towards Sydney and to the NSW South Coast) but is unlikely to add significant additional trail users.

The extension may change use patterns. Residents of the Tuggeranong sub-region would be within 20 minutes of Royalla siding and residents of Canberra's eastern suburbs are within 20 minutes of Queanbeyan – both logical starting points (local users are discussed in Section 10.4). Consequently, there may be a loss in day trip numbers as some people in the ACT may in fact become "local users" rather than day trippers. However, given the extensive cycling network in Canberra, many rail trail users within close proximity are more likely to go for a short "exercise" ride on the existing network rather than put a bicycle in the back of their car and head out to Royalla or Queanbeyan after work.

It is reasonable to conclude that the longer rail trail would increase the number of people converting a day trip to an overnight trip by only a small margin compared to the shorter trail. Adding 1,000 day trippers would mean the entire rail trail would attract 26,000 visitors

injecting \$3,844,620 /year into the economy (note that the longer rail trail would only attract an additional 1,000 people in this category).

10.3.1.2 Projected User Scenarios - Converting Day Trips to Overnight Trips

General Comments

Trail development may also turn day trippers into overnight trippers with consequent rise in economic benefits. The trail provides an additional activity for visitors – an overnight stay will give visitors time to walk or ride the trail in addition to their other activities. Overnight visitors to trails are spending an average of \$213.03/person/day (as discussed in Section 7.12).

Monaro Rail Trail (Michelago to Bombala)

The likely scenario would be that some visitors to the region will turn day trips into overnight stays if a trail is provided as an additional activity.

If the trail converted 2,000 day trippers into overnight visitors, this would inject an additional \$426,060/year into the economy based on overnight visitor expenditure of \$213.03/day. If they stay overnight to undertake the trail journey, they would undertake other activities as well over the course of their stay. The benefit of the 2nd or subsequent day's stay cannot be attributed to the trail.

This number represents around 0.2% of the existing overnight visitor market to the entire region. Given the nature of this trail, the key market will be those who come specifically for the trail rather than those who add it to an existing stay in the region (other shorter rail trails tend to be an "add-on" to existing activities).

Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala)

People may stay longer to do more of the rail trail though given they are unlikely to ride all of it in the extra day, this effect may be quite small. It is reasonable to conclude that the longer rail trail would increase the number of people converting a day trip to an overnight trip by only a small margin compared to the shorter trail i.e. an additional 2,500 visitors injecting \$532,575/year into the economy (note that the longer rail trail would only attract an additional 500 people in this category).

This number represents around 0.25% of the existing overnight visitor market to the region. Some of these visitors are likely to be people who are not traditional rail trail users but who would be interested in using the trail simply to visit the key attractive bridges over the Numeralla River and the Bredbo River.

10.3.1.3 Projected User Scenarios - Encouraging Existing Overnight Visitors to Stay Longer

General Comments

An additional facility will encourage visitors to extend their stay to allow an extra day to use the trail. The trail could be included in a package of outdoor recreation opportunities and this is likely to attract users. A trail would be a good inclusion in a package with other tourist attractions. Such a package makes an appealing weekend away or an incentive to stay a day or two longer.

Good marketing of such a package would mean that overnight stays in the region would increase accordingly. This has a significant impact on economic benefits, as people who stay overnight spend considerably more than those who come for a day only.

Monaro Rail Trail (Michelago to Bombala)

If 2,000 visitors stay an extra day to use the trail, this would inject an additional \$426,060/year into the economy based on overnight visitor expenditure of \$213.03/day. Additional expenditure as a result of their overnight stay – primarily but not only accommodation – can be attributed to the trail. This number represents around 0.2% of the existing overnight visitor market to the region. As with “converted” day trippers, some of these visitors are likely to be people who are not traditional rail trail users but who would be interested in using the trail simply to visit the significant rail trail bridges.

Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala)

It is reasonable to conclude that the longer rail trail would increase the number of people converting a day trip to an overnight trip by only a small margin compared to the shorter trail i.e. an additional 2,500 visitors injecting \$532,575/year into the economy (note that the longer rail trail only attracts an additional 500 people in this category).

This number represents around 0.25% of the existing overnight visitor market to the region. Some of these visitors are likely to be people who are not traditional rail trail users but who would be interested in using the trail simply to visit the key attractive bridges over the Numeralla River and the Bredbo River.

10.3.1.4 Projected User Scenarios - Attracting New Overnight Visitors

General Comments

The Monaro Rail Trail (whichever of the two options is developed) will be the longest rail trail in Australia in one of the most scenic regions. It has the potential to become an iconic trail and those advocating for it are not mistaken in arguing that it could be similar to New Zealand’s Otago Central Rail Trail which attracts people to the South Island of New Zealand primarily (and sometimes only) to undertake a 3-5 day journey along it.

This is a growing area of trails marketing, where regions are looking to have either a longer trail (a trail that can be traversed in 2-3 days such as the Otago Central Rail Trail) or a cluster of shorter trails that make an overnight or longer visit to a region very attractive. The Monaro Rail Trail falls into the former category, providing an attraction that will motivate visitors to come to the region primarily for the trail (they may undertake other activities while in the region). It is unlikely that someone would drive or fly from Sydney or Melbourne (or elsewhere) primarily to undertake a short 1 day trail journey.

There are a limited number of “long” rail trails currently in Australia. The recently completed Brisbane Valley Rail Trail (Queensland) is the longest rail trail at 161 kilometres long. The Great Victorian Rail Trail is 134 kms long. The Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail (Victoria) is 116 kilometres. Victoria has another 6 rail trails between 50 and 100 kilometres long. The Murray to the Mountains is probably the most successful of the long trails with 60,000 users/year. Trail users make a weekend (or longer) trip on the trail.

The success of the Otago Central Rail Trail (a distance of 150 kilometres) in attracting between 12,000 and 14,000 users per year to traverse its entire length (a larger number traverse shorter lengths of the trail) further highlights the appeal of the long rail trail. The rise in use of other long trails (not rail trails) in recent years points to an increasing demand for this type of trail experience. User numbers on the Bibbulmun Track (WA), the Munda Biddi Trail (WA), the Pilgrims Way or Camino de Santiago (Spain and France), and the Kokoda Track (PNG) have

increased quite markedly in recent years. They offer different sorts of experiences, but they are all long trails (with options to do short sections – with the exception of the Kokoda Track). Many of the longer trails offer supported and guided experiences opening up trails to people who may previously have not considered doing a trail activity. The advent of e-bikes with their capacity to travel much further in a day is likely to increase the demand for long trails.

The trail is likely to attract users for the primary purpose of riding (or walking) the trail offering a 3 - 5 day ride depending on the pace of the journey and the length of the trail and a longer walk of 8 – 10 days – whether its northern terminus is Queanbeyan or Michelago.

Monaro Rail Trail (Michelago to Bombala)

Given the numbers of users on other trails, it is reasonable to estimate that a new long rail trail highlighting the Monaro region is likely to attract 20,000 new overnight visitors for the sole (or primary) purpose of cycling or walking the trail from Michelago to Bombala. The rail trail's proximity to the major population centres of Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra will be a major attraction. This number (20,000) represents 2% of the existing overnight visitor market to the region.

The length of time taken to traverse the trail will vary between user groups and the choice of journey length. All the expenditure of these trail users can be attributed to the trail; if there was no trail these users would not come.

For the purposes of this analysis, the simplest way to calculate likely expenditures is to provide an average use time, noting that some users will take a shorter time and some will take a longer time. The best comparative data available is survey work done on the Otago Central Rail Trail over 3 time periods – 2008, 2011 and 2014/15. The trail is 150 km long so is very similar to the length that the Monaro (Michelago to Bombala) Rail Trail would be. In the 2014/15 survey and the 2011 survey, the average time spent on the rail trail was 3.5 days (the 2008 survey showed users spending 3.8 days on the rail trail).

Attracting 20,000 new visitors to a rail trail connecting Michelago to Bombala using the trail for an average of 3.5 days would be an injection of \$14,912,100 into the regional economy (at an average daily expenditure of \$213.03).

Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala)

To calculate the additional economic activity of extending the trail to Queanbeyan is not a simple task. The trail terminus would be marginally closer to Sydney which may increase its attractiveness and could easily be accessed by train which may add to its attractiveness. Constructing the trail to Queanbeyan would add 49 km to the trail length. Extending the trail to Queanbeyan could result in an additional 5,000 people using the trail (meaning a total of 25,000 would use a trail from Queanbeyan to Michelago). Extending the trail would mean 5,000 additional users taking an extra day on the trail – it is assumed users would spend on average 4.5 days on the longer trail. The resulting injection of money into the regional economy is estimated to be \$4,793,175 (5,000 users x \$213.03/day x 4.5 days).

It is possible that the extension of the trail to Queanbeyan will result in the 25,000 users all taking an average of 4.5 days to do the entire trail – for the purposes of this analysis, a more conservative forecast is adopted with only the additional 5,000 users taking 4.5 days (to do more of the trail).

In summary, possible visitor numbers are shown in Tables 17 and 18. The tables are not mutually exclusive i.e. the numbers in Table 18 include the numbers in Table 17 plus additional users attracted by the extended trail.

**Table 17: Monaro (Michelago to Bombala) Rail Trail
 Possible Visitor Numbers and Associated Expenditure: A Summary**

Category	Predicted visitor numbers/year	Predicted expenditure/year
New day trippers	25,000	\$3,696,750
Day trippers converting to overnight stays	2,000	\$426,060
Overnight stays being extended by a day to use the trail	2,000	\$426,060
Attracting new overnight visitors	20,000	\$14,912,100 (assumes an average time on the trail of 3.5 days)
Total visitor numbers	49,000	\$19,460,970

**Table 18: Monaro (Queanbeyan to Bombala) Rail Trail
 Possible Visitor Numbers and Associated Expenditure: A Summary**

Category	Predicted visitor numbers/year	Predicted expenditure/year
New day trippers	26,000	\$3,844,620
Day trippers converting to overnight stays	2,500	\$432,325
Overnight stays being extended by a day to use the trail	2,500	\$432,325
Attracting new overnight visitors	25,000	\$19,705,275 (assumes an average time on trail of 3.5 days as above and 4.5 days for the additional 5,000 users attracted by the extension)
Total visitor numbers	56,000	\$24,414,545

How do these figures compare to what is happening on other trails in Australia? Research figures are limited and tend to focus on iconic trails – the Bibbulmun Track (300,000/yr) and the Munda Biddi Trail (21,000/yr) in Western Australia, and the Great Ocean Walk (100,000/yr) and the Wilsons Promontory Walk (60,000/yr) in Victoria.

Other less iconic trails also provide available research:

- ✚ Recent trail counters on South Australia's Riesling Trail show that over 40,000 people passed through 4 trail counters each year. While this does not necessarily translate to 40,000 users (as many would pass more than one counter), it suggests significant number of users. This trail is 2 hrs from Adelaide in the renowned tourist area of the Clare Valley (with very limited local population).
- ✚ Over 23,000 users passed through counters on the Old Beechy Rail Trail (Victoria) in 2013. Again, this does not necessarily translate as over 23,000 users, but it gives an indication of use rates.
- ✚ Around 27,500 users passed through counters on the Great Victorian Rail Trail in the first quarter (January-March) of 2014. Again, this does not necessarily translate as 27,500 users, but it gives an indication of use rates.

The principal comparison can however be made with the Otago Central Rail Trail given similarities in length and landscapes. Across 3 surveys (2008, 2011, 2014/15), the number of users traversing the complete rail trail (150 kms) has varied between 12,000 and 14,000. In addition, 24,000 users have used sections of the trail. This is the likely use pattern of the Monaro Rail Trail (the shorter or longer version). The Otago Central Rail Trail attracts 61% of its users from within New Zealand, which has a total population of just under 5 million people. Accessing the trail is not simple but flights from New Zealand's two major centres of Auckland and Wellington (the North Island is the source of 40% of trail users) to Christchurch (the trail's major city access point) are 1 hr 25 mins and 1 hour respectively. Driving is more difficult from either of these centres. By comparison, Sydney and Melbourne have a combined population of over 10 million people and are within a 1 hr flight of Canberra – the proposed trail's major access point. In addition, driving from either of these cities is relatively simple. Sydney to Canberra is a 3 hour drive (and an additional 1 hr to Michelago) while Melbourne is a 6.5 hr drive to Bombala (passing several rail trails along the way which could be packaged together as a long holiday experience). In addition, Canberra/Queanbeyan with a population of almost 460,000 is on the trail's doorstep.

The Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail in Victoria presents similar logistics – Beechworth (one of the key starting points) is 3 hours from Melbourne, 4 hours from Canberra and 6 hours from Sydney. This trail attracts 60,000 users per year – around 10% of whom are assumed to be local residents.

Given the numbers of people using these two similar trails in particular, estimates as outlined in Tables 15 and 16 are reasonable and supported by other similar existing trails.

There may be additional people who use the trail as part of their visit to the region. While they add to the total number of trail users, their expenditure cannot be counted in any economic analysis of the trail's benefit as the presence of the trail is not the primary attraction for these visitors. As noted above, 50% of visitors to South Australia's Riesling Trail came to the Clare Valley specifically to walk or ride the trail – the other 50% used the trail as a secondary activity to their trip to the Clare Valley. The economic contribution of the latter 50% is not counted as an economic benefit of the trail.

The predicted user numbers represent a likely outcome once the trail is established. As noted above, marketing and promotion of the trail will be a key element in realising these numbers – users just don't magically appear once a trail is built. Such marketing and promotion require the commitment of resources – human and financial. Use will build over time – even with good

marketing and promotion. The available evidence is limited and tends to show that trail use starts slowly but grows very quickly at some point - the Bibbulmun Track for example grew from 10,000 in 1997 to 137,000 in 2003 to 167,000 in 2007 to over 300,000 in 2015.

10.4 Local Trail Users

Every regional trail is a local trail. Therefore, it is important not to overlook the contribution of local residents to the success of a trail. In 2001, the Mundaring Shire trail network was used by over 200,000 people (*Jessop and Bruce 2001*), having grown from a low base when the network was first fully opened. Only 10% of these users were locals (residents of Mundaring Shire) with many other users drawn from the Perth metropolitan area. The total annual visits (people generally use trails more than once a year) were a staggering 2.454 million visits annually, with local residents accounting for 63% of these visits. The average number of trips per year per local resident was 75 (compared to the 5-20 trips used in the following forecasts). It is difficult to know how far people will travel to take advantage of a local recreation facility. 20 minutes travel is a reasonable figure to estimate the "local catchment" of a trail.

10.4.1 Local Trail Users – Predicting User Numbers

10.4.1.1 Monaro Rail Trail (Michelago to Bombala)

There are five towns and villages within 20 minutes of the Rail Trail if it finishes at Michelago. These are Michelago, Bredbo, Cooma, Nimmitabel and Bombala. The combined population of these areas is of the order of 9,300.

Three possible scenarios can be used in calculating likely local user numbers. These are:

- ✚ A low/low scenario - 5% of the combined population within 20 minutes of the trail making 5 visits/year to the trail.
- ✚ A medium/medium scenario - 10% of the combined population making 10 visits/year to the trail.
- ✚ A high/high scenario - 20% of the combined population making 20 visits/year to the trail.

The next step is to estimate total trip numbers. In the Mundaring study, the average number of trips per year per local resident was 75. Table 19 provides three visitation scenarios taking a far more conservative approach compared to the actual visitation rate coming from the Mundaring study.

Table 19: Monaro (Michelago to Bombala) Rail Trail Potential Annual Visits by residents
 (Population of the five towns and villages within close proximity to the trail – 9,300)

Category	Low trail usage: 5% of residents	Medium trail usage: 10% of residents	High trail usage: 20% of residents
Low (5 visits/yr)	2,325	4,650	9,300
Medium (10 visits/yr)	4,650	9,300	18,600
High (20 visits/yr)	9,300	18,600	37,200

Local users also spend money while using trails. Expenditure per trip by local residents is always lower than for visitors, as locals are closer to home and more likely to either take all that they need or come home to eat and drink following a trail visit. The expenditure figures from the Mundaring study (\$1.44/person/trip in the Shire – mainly food and drink) are a legitimate base to work from (and have been converted to 2018 dollars - \$2.19/person/trip).

Using this figure in combination with visitation scenarios generated in Table 19 gives a range of expenditure estimates. Table 20 shows a simplified set of three scenarios: low usage / low number of trips, medium usage / medium number of trips, and high usage / high number of trips.

Table 20: Potential Total annual expenditure in the vicinity of the trail by residents
 (low, medium and high refer to the use rates developed in Table 19 above)

Use Scenario	# of person visits	Total spent (\$)
Low/low	2,325	\$5,090
Medium/medium	9,300	\$20,365
High/high	37,200	\$81,470

What is the likely scenario for local trail users? The Mundaring figures show 63% of the local population making an average of 75 trips/year.

Given these figures, it would seem the low/low scenario of 2,325 person visits/year (i.e. 5% of the ‘local’ population using the trail for 5 visits per year) is a reasonable, if very conservative, scenario to adopt (conservative when compared with the Mundaring data). Such visitor numbers would inject **\$5,090/year** into the local economy. Due to the small local population, direct economic benefits flowing from local trail use will be relatively low.

10.4.1.2 Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala)

Extending the trail to Queanbeyan will significantly change the number of potential “back gate” or local users. Residents of the Tuggeranong sub-region would be within 20 minutes of Royalla siding and residents of Canberra’s eastern suburbs are within 20 minutes of Queanbeyan – both logical starting points. According to the 2018 ABS Region data summary, these two

regions are home to over 115,000 people. Within 20 minutes of Queanbeyan station (within Queanbeyan), there are almost 46,000 people. Queanbeyan West, Jerrabomberra and the new subdivision of Jerrabomberra West/Tralee would be right on the rail trail.

What are reasonable numbers for local users given the catchment within 20 minutes is 161,000. As noted above (Section 10.3.1.1), there may be a loss in day trip numbers as people in the ACT may in fact become “local users” rather than day trippers. However, given the extensive cycling network in Canberra, many Canberra -based rail trail users within close proximity are more likely to go for a short “exercise” ride on the existing network rather than put a bicycle in the back of their car and head out to Royalla or Queanbeyan after work or school. They are more likely to make this a day trip. The absence of an extensive bike network in Queanbeyan may attract users on to the rail trail for short rides. The following analysis is based on only attracting people from the Queanbeyan area as local users.

Table 21 provides three visitation scenarios taking a far more conservative approach compared to the actual visitation rate coming from the Mundaring study.

Table 21: Monaro (Queanbeyan to Bombala) Rail Trail Potential Annual Visits by residents
 (Population of the towns and villages within close proximity to the trail (excluding Canberra) – 55,290)

Category	Low trail usage: 5% of residents	Medium trail usage: 10% of residents	High trail usage: 20% of residents
Low (5 visits/yr)	13,820	27,645	55,290
Medium (10 visits/yr)	27,645	55,290	110,580
High (20 visits/yr)	55,290	110,580	221,160

Using the relevant expenditure figure in combination with visitation scenarios generated in Table 21 gives a range of expenditure estimates. Table 22 shows a simplified set of three scenarios: low usage / low number of trips, medium usage / medium number of trips, and high usage / high number of trips.

Table 22: Potential Total annual expenditure in the vicinity of the trail by residents
 (low, medium and high refer to the use rates developed in Table 21 above)

Use Scenario	# of person visits	Total spent (\$)
Low/low	13,820	\$30,265
Medium/medium	55,290	\$121,085
High/high	221,160	\$484,340

What is the likely scenario for local trail users? The low/low scenario (5% of the population within the 20-minute catchment visiting 5 times/year) would yield 13,820 local users. Such a

scenario would mean that local users would constitute almost 20% of trail use – a realistic scenario.

Such a scenario (i.e. 5% of the 'local' population using the trail for 5 visits per year) is a reasonable, if very conservative, scenario to adopt (conservative when compared with the Mundaring data). Such visitor numbers would inject **\$30,265/year** into the local economy. Local user numbers will grow as the population grows – Tralee had 15 people at the 2016 Census but is forecast to have almost 6,000 people by 2036.

10.4.2 Local Trail Users – How Long Will They Spend on a Trail

The evidence is that most trail users spend up to 4 hours on a trail (walking or cycling). However, local people using the trail as part of an exercise regime are likely to have different time use patterns. The most recent national *Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (2010)* shows that those who regularly exercise do so for between 2 and 5 hours/week and the median number of exercise "events" was 1.6 times/week. It is reasonable to assume (for the purposes of calculating potential hours of exercise on the trail) that each use will be for 1 hour.

Using this assumption and combining it with the forecast user numbers, it is likely that there will be between 2,325 and 13,820 additional hours of additional physical activity in the local communities who can access the Monaro Rail Trail.

10.5 Projected User Scenarios - Summary

With the right marketing, the trail will attract local users, day trippers and visitors. Under a relatively conservative scenario, the following outcomes are achievable.

Monaro Rail Trail (Michelago to Bombala)

- ✚ Local use – 2,325 local users/year is a reasonable expectation. This will result in an economic injection of \$5,090/year;
- ✚ Expansion of the existing day tripper market to the region. 25,000 new day trippers/year would inject \$3,696,750/year into the regional economy.
- ✚ With a new significant recreation attraction, some day-trippers may stay overnight, generating a new income stream. If the trail converted 2,000 day trippers into overnight visitors, this would inject an additional \$426,060/year into the regional economy.
- ✚ If 2,000 visitors stay an extra day to use the trail, an additional \$426,060/year would be injected into the regional economy.
- ✚ If 20,000 new visitors come to the region solely (or primarily) to do the trail, an additional \$14,912,100/year would be injected into the regional economy.

The total injection of dollars into the local economies from local, day trip and overnight visitors may be of the order of **\$19,466,060/ year** (under a range of conservative scenarios) from **51,325** users.

Complex economic analysis (beyond the scope of this project) is needed to determine how many jobs are likely to be created by such expenditure.

Monaro Rail Trail (Queanbeyan to Bombala)

- ✚ Local use – 13,820 local users/year is a reasonable expectation. This will result in an economic injection of \$30,265/year;
- ✚ Expansion of the existing day tripper market to the region. 26,000 new day trippers/year would inject \$3,844,620/year into the regional economy.
- ✚ With a new significant recreation attraction, some day-trippers may stay overnight, generating a new income stream. If the trail converted 2,500 day trippers into overnight visitors, this would inject an additional \$432,325/year into the regional economy.
- ✚ If 2,500 visitors stay an extra day to use the trail, an additional \$432,325/year would be injected into the regional economy.
- ✚ If 25,000 new visitors come to the region solely (or primarily) to do the trail, an additional \$19,705,275/year would be injected into the regional economy.

The total injection of dollars into the local economies from local, day trip and overnight visitors may be of the order of **\$24,444,810/ year** (under a range of conservative scenarios) from **69,820** users.

Complex economic analysis (beyond the scope of this project) is needed to determine how many jobs are likely to be created by such expenditure.

It should be emphasised that user and visitor numbers will not necessarily be realised in the first years of operation if the trail proceeds. It also should be noted that these numbers may grow as the overall visitor numbers grow.

10.6 Business Benefits

The completion of a trail would not simply provide an injection of funds to stabilise and grow existing and new businesses (as discussed in Section 7). The psychological impact on businesses can also be very important. Work done for the Riesling Trail included some qualitative research using focus groups consisting of business operators (*Market Equity 2004*). The key responses included:

- ✚ A belief amongst business providers that the trail contributes to economic activity in the region.
- ✚ The trail is seen to attract a variety of visitor types to the region, with wine as well as non-wine interests.
- ✚ The trail is seen as highly important to businesses in the area. Businesses were passionate about the trail and believed it contributed to their businesses as well as helping to position the area as an authentic leisure holiday destination. The exact impact in measurable terms could not be clearly ascertained, as it is so intrinsically linked to businesses in the region, but there was a definite opinion that the Clare Valley would not be the same without the trail and that it had contributed to business formation as well as business growth.

Trail development offers a range of new business opportunities and the opportunity for existing businesses to extend their offerings.

It should also be noted that the trail construction process itself will provide an economic input to the region. The size of this benefit is beyond the scope of this report, but it can be quite significant.

10.7 Non-economic Benefits

There are a range of non-economic benefits accruing to local and wider communities from trail construction and use.

10.7.1 Health Related Economic Benefits to the Wider Economy

- ✚ Data from the USA indicates that every \$1 of funds spent on recreational trails yield direct medical benefits of \$2.94 (*Wang et al 2005*).
- ✚ The trail will encourage people to exercise – the economic benefit to society of getting an inactive person to walk or cycle is between \$5,000 and \$7,000/year. The economic benefit to society of getting an active person to walk or cycle is between \$850 and \$2,550/year (*Institute of Transport Economics 2002*). Increasing recreational options for local communities will aid overall community wellbeing.
- ✚ Participation in trail activities can improve physical and mental health, assisting with disease prevention particularly cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, respiratory, nervous and endocrine systems as well as reducing obesity, hypertension, depression and anxiety. The obesity epidemic alone is now estimated to cost Australia \$1.3 billion/year (*Australian Bicycle Council*). One heart attack is estimated to cost in the vicinity of \$400,000 in direct and indirect costs.

10.7.2 Quantifiable Benefits to Individual Residents

There are a number of benefits that accrue to residents of the region from a trail development over and above those that accrue to the regional economy (and therefore a select number of people) and to the wider economy (health benefits in particular).

- ✚ Medical research has shown that 1 hour of moderate exercise can add more than 1 extra hour of high-quality life to an individual.
- ✚ Cycling and walking as recreation activities can be cheaper than alternative forms of exercise such as gym classes. Yearly memberships to gyms are around \$600 in many instances – the cost of a good hybrid bike, which has a life of more than one year.

10.7.3 Non-quantifiable Benefits to the Community and to Individuals

There are a number of unquantifiable benefits to individuals and the community. These are listed here so that a complete picture of benefits can be considered when weighed up against project costs. It is difficult to cost them for a range of reasons.

10.7.3.1 Health and Wellbeing

Rail trails are an accessible form of recreation. Trail-based recreation is generally free, self-directed and available to all people, all day, every day. Good quality, accessible trails encourage physical activity and improved health. Increasing recreational options for local communities will aid overall community wellbeing.

Physical activity has also been shown to improve mental health and help relieve stress. The economic cost of mental illness is high in Australia - estimated to be approximately \$20 billion per year.

People can use trails in a variety of ways, depending on their abilities and preferences. Physical health benefits are discussed above. Social health benefits include:

- ✚ Trail activities facilitate participation and social interaction between a diversity of community members, age groups, individuals and families e.g. community walking groups, voluntary trail maintenance and conservation work;
- ✚ Market Equity (2004), in its report on trails in South Australia, found that using trails to get a sense of well-being (95% of survey respondents) and using trails as a means to unwind and relax (91% of respondents) were the two main drivers getting people out on recreation trails. The psychological health benefits of trails remain under-estimated;
- ✚ Trails can offer a wide range of opportunities to a diverse group of people. Depending upon design, trails can accommodate the elderly, people with disabilities or satisfy those seeking challenging adventures and a sense of achievement;
- ✚ Participation in trail activities has a relatively low cost to participants;
- ✚ Trails can introduce participants to other recreational and participation offerings in the community; and
- ✚ Trails help to connect people and places and to develop community pride.

A recent media report (<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6192225/canberra-doctors-could-prescribe-patients-time-outside/>) promoted the idea of "green scripts". The article suggests that, the ACT Government is working with the medical profession to determine the outcomes of a doctor "ordering" a patient to spend time outdoors with an ACT park ranger. So-called "green scripts" could be a new way to treat heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and mental health issues. A representative of the ACT Government is quoted as saying that green scripts had been a hit in New Zealand. He also noted that, in the United States, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy in San Francisco had been running its similar "Park Rx" programme for 10 years.

10.7.3.2 Liveability

Quality recreational facilities, such as trail networks, can help create attractive places to live and visit. This was identified by a number of planning documents as a goal for the region (as discussed in section 4) and as a way of attracting new industries particularly to towns such as Bombala. Walking and cycling are relatively cheap modes of transport. Trails also provide a low impact means of travelling through the landscapes and play an important role in connecting people with nature.

Extending the trail to Queanbeyan also offers the opportunity to make the rail trail part of the active transport network within Queanbeyan. The rail trail would offer off-road opportunities for residents of Jerrabomberra, the new subdivision at Tralee and in Queanbeyan West to get to work and undertake other activities in Queanbeyan (or heading the other way to Hume). It also provides an off-road opportunity for these users to access the Canberra bike network to travel to Fyshwick and other eastern Canberra workplaces.

Local users of the trail will enjoy social interaction within the community and with greater social interaction, the social capital of the area may be boosted. There are a number of benefits

of enhanced social capital. It improves the capacity for people to trust others (*ABS 2012 cited in SGS 2013*). This strengthens the social cohesion in a community as it provides the opportunity for socially isolated individuals to integrate into the community. Greater social capital also facilitates networking, thus creating more efficient economic networks.

Trail projects help build partnerships among private companies, landowners, and local government. Each trail contains elements of local character and regional influence, and reflects the hard work, enthusiasm, and commitment of individuals, organisations and elected officials. In addition, when residents are encouraged to become involved in a trail project, they feel more connected to the community (*Warren 1998 cited in SGS 2013*).

10.7.3.3 Education

Trails present a unique opportunity for education. People of all ages can learn more about nature, culture or history along trails. Of particular importance, trails provide firsthand experience that educate users about the importance of the natural environment and respect for nature by leading users into a natural classroom. An added advantage of a rail trail is that it provides an opportunity for city to connect to country, in a way “bush” trails do not. Education of users about railway history is also a paramount consideration in trail development.

Enhanced, active education along trails is achieved through the use of comprehensive trail guides and signage to encourage awareness of the natural, cultural and historical attributes of the trail.

Trails have the power to connect users to their heritage by preserving historic places and by providing access to them. They can give people a sense of place and an understanding of the enormity of past events.

10.7.3.4 Environmental and Cultural Benefits

Trails provide a number of environmental and cultural benefits. These include:

- ✚ Opportunities for the community to experience natural and cultural environments;
- ✚ Protection of the adjacent environments by localising impacts and facilitating management of visitation effects;
- ✚ Educational and interpretive opportunities and increased environmental and cultural awareness and appreciation;
- ✚ Increased community ownership which helps to preserve natural and cultural values; and
- ✚ Opportunities for community participation in conservation and revegetation work.

10.8 Summary

The Monaro Rail Trail will provide a number of benefits to residents and businesses of the region. Some of these are quantifiable.

Increased visitor numbers in the order of 49,000 to 56,000 visitors will inject between \$14,907,000 million and \$19,675,000/year into the region’s economy. Local use rates of between 2,325 and 13,820 people/year will see the injection of between \$5,090 and \$30,625/year. These figures represent an injection of money into the local economy, which will

ensure that the construction investment and ongoing maintenance costs are “paid off” over time.

The proposed trail offers a range of other significant benefits to these communities that cannot be quantified but are equally important to consider when assessing the project’s merits. These are:

- ✚ The trail offers the opportunity for existing businesses to extend their offerings. The trail has the potential to improve the sustainability of businesses reliant on tourism.
- ✚ The trail will encourage visitors to stay a little longer when visiting the region by offering another activity.
- ✚ Increasing recreational options for local communities will aid overall community wellbeing, and in the long-term reduce health costs (a saving to the State Government).
- ✚ A trail will provide firsthand experience that educate users about the importance of the natural environment and respect for nature by leading users into a natural classroom and connect the city to the bush.

In economic analysis, it is important to consider the opportunity cost of investment – the cost (foregone opportunity) of money invested in one project rather than in another. Much of the money that will be spent on this project, should it proceed, is likely to be sourced from specific grants for tourism and/or recreation projects. It will not be available for other types of projects – there is, in a sense, limited opportunity cost for funds, though funds for this project could be spent on similar projects elsewhere with a different set of costs and benefits.

SECTION 11 - FEASIBILITY STATEMENT

11.1 The Statement

In order to establish whether the proposed rail trail between Queanbeyan and Bombala (or Michelago and Bombala) is a feasible proposition, this Feasibility Study sought to answer several questions:

Is there a viable trail route? Yes. As is the case for the vast majority of disused railways in NSW, the entire corridor is still in public ownership. Although the southern section (between Cooma and Bombala) was developed as an unfenced railway, and many adjoining landowners have had unrestricted access to the public land within the corridor for many decades, the land remains in public ownership. It is also highly unlikely that the publicly owned land will be sold for an alternative use.

Some adjoining landowners have erected fences alongside, and across, the corridor over the years and stock have had unlimited access to much of the corridor for grazing purposes. There will inevitably be disruptions to long established farming practices should the proposed rail trail be constructed.

However, as is the case with many other successful rail trails developed in similar broadacre farming areas in Australia and overseas, there is a range of practical and viable solutions to each and every issue that adjoining landowners raise. The fact that some farms straddle the railway corridor should therefore not be considered as a reason for not proceeding with the development of a trail.

Although some bridges over roads have been dismantled, and at-grade crossings of the Monaro Highway have been removed, these minor discontinuities can easily be overcome through design solutions.

Are there alternative uses for the corridor that will provide more value to the community? Are these alternative uses viable? The realistic answer is **No**.

At the time of writing this rail trail Feasibility Study, other consultants have been preparing a Feasibility Study into the possibility of a freight/passenger railway being returned between Queanbeyan and Bombala (with an extension to Eden on the coast). Few people who attended the Open Communities believe it to be feasible and suggested the projected billions of dollars it would cost in rebuilding the line (including bridges, grade-separated road crossings and possible land resumption) would deem it uneconomic and a negative return on investment.

The Friends of Bombala Railway Inc., the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc. and the group pushing for a Cooma to Rock Flat 'picnic train' have aspirations of one day operating some sort of heritage or tourist train services.

This Feasibility Study is not tasked with providing a detailed assessment of the feasibility of any of these other proposals, nor in assessing community benefits of these proposals. The costs of running such operations are starkly illustrated by the Canberra and Dandenong examples (these figures do not include start-up costs which are likely to be quite expensive). In the absence of any detailed information or plans from any of these groups as to how and when they might be able to operate a heritage train service, it is difficult to see that a functional service will operate on the rail corridor in the future given the state of the track and bridges.

The proposed Monaro Rail Trail could be developed in such a way as to allow the Friends of Bombala Railway Inc. and the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc. access to railway tracks, switches and turntables in each of the railway station grounds.

Will the trail provide a quality user experience (terrain/landscape/history)? Yes. The attractiveness of the area and the topography through which the disused railway corridor passes is without doubt highly scenic.

The 213km corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala passes through one of the most attractive landscapes in Australia. The route provides views of forested areas, bushland reserves, snowcapped mountains, wide treeless plains, sheep and cattle grazing in paddocks, and passes through pretty and interesting small villages and towns. It would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find a landscape anywhere in Australia encompassing a disused railway corridor that would rival that found in the Monaro region.

As with all disused railway corridors, the route passes through cuttings, along embankments, across bridges (short and long) and over numerous culverts and creeks and through a tunnel. In addition to the cuttings and embankments of the railway formation, other reminders of the former railway exist all along the corridor including distance pegs (and other railway signs), signals and switches, cattle grids and the remains of sidings and platforms.

The Michelago, Cooma, Nimmitabel and Bombala railway station buildings have been retained and appear to be in very good condition. Other major items of railway infrastructure also have been retained at these stations and within the at rail yards (such as the station platforms, turntables, goods sheds, signals, switches and multiple tracks).

This varied collection of historic artefacts and the variety of scenic attractions and landscapes augurs well for the future enjoyment of the rail trail by a range of users.

The quality experience to be gained by users on the proposed Monaro Rail Trail would be of very high order. The Monaro Rail Trail would pass through some of the most attractive scenery that would differentiate it from other rail trails elsewhere in Australia.

Interpretation of the cultural and natural values of the area will add to the user's experience.

Is there a market for the proposed trail? Yes. Existing rail trails in other states, notably Victoria (including the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail and the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail) are extremely well used and very popular recreational assets of the communities in which they are situated. The existing visitor market (both day trips and overnight trips) is very well established with significant numbers of visitors already coming to the Monaro region and the Snowy Mountains for other high value tourism attractions such as skiing and snowboarding.

This Feasibility Study has examined the potential for users to travel to the Monaro Rail Trail from places such as Canberra (less than 30 minutes from the northern terminus), Sydney, and parts of Victoria specifically for the rail trail and as an added component to their leisure time activities. It is also likely to attract international visitors, like the Otago Central Rail Trail does.

It is highly likely that the proposed rail trail between Queanbeyan and Bombala will become a popular addition to the suite of rail trails available to those who actively seek out these recreational opportunities. The situation in NSW at present (given the legislative impediments to the development of rail trails on former Government railways) has meant that potential rail trail users have to travel to other Australian states (or overseas) to enjoy these recreational

cycling and walking experiences. The future development of additional rail trails in NSW will stimulate interest in, and use of, rail trails in a state largely unaware of rail trails.

Will the rail trail create any unmanageable or unmitigated impacts on adjoining landholders' farming practices and lifestyles? **No.** It is true that a rail trail is a different use to the historic use of the corridor (for trains) and adjoining landholders may have expectations of how the corridor will be used in the future. A rail trail probably was not one of their expectations and they have concerns (and in some cases outright opposition). However, the corridor remains publicly owned land and the issues and concerns raised by adjoining landholders have been satisfactorily addressed in the other rail trails round Australia (of which there are over 100). Evidence shows no long-term negative impacts on farming practices and lifestyles. In consultation, adjoining landholders raised specific local issues (in addition to the range of usual concerns) – notably managing the potential spread of weeds such as African Love Grass and serrated tussock, managing usage in times of extreme weather conditions, installation of fencing in areas where traditionally there was none and the impacts on the biosecurity plans of individual farms. All of these issues can be satisfactorily addressed, managed or mitigated if the trail proceeds. It is important to recognise landholder concerns and, if the trail proceeds, to work closely with them to address individual concerns and arrive at mutually agreed solutions.

Are the local governments and key stakeholders supportive of the concept? The answer is unclear. The Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) is supportive on the assumption that a train service on the corridor is not reinstated. The Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) has given its 'in-principle' support to the preparation of this Feasibility Study. However, the QPRC is on record as stating it supports the return of a train service along the corridor.

Funding for this Feasibility Study was provided by the Snowy Monaro Regional Council. Although this does not imply unconditional support, it does indicate a willingness to investigate the benefits of such a trail and the opportunities it might provide.

For the proposed rail trail to be fully effective, the northern terminus should be at the Queanbeyan Railway Station and thereby connected to the cycle network of the ACT and the state's train services. This necessarily implies that the QPRC needs to be supportive of the proposed trail. Without its support, and assuming the SMRC does support the development of the rail trail, the northern terminus would have to be at Michelago which is within the boundaries of the SMRC.

Are there supportive/strong advocates in the community? **Yes.** There does appear to be a ground swell of support from groups and individuals within each of the five communities, as evidenced by the numerous supportive comments obtained during the series of "Open Houses" conducted during the course of this study. It is also evident that there are strong advocates within the communities who have expressed a desire to get more involved in ensuring the proposed rail trail gets developed.

Evidence of business support is plain to see by the display of orange bicycles and signs in shop windows in each of the communities through which the rail trail would pass.

Verbal confirmation of their support was obtained from some of the business proprietors. The Friends of the Monaro Rail Trail Inc. website lists over 30 businesses and 9 community groups that have signed up as supporters.

The Friends of the Monaro Rail Trail Inc. group is very strong and passionate. Its website boasts over 2,000 followers. This commitment is important for the future operations and maintenance of the proposed trail. The NSW Government is particularly keen to see strong community support and a commitment to maintenance by volunteers and community groups.

Is there a supportive community? Yes. Attendance at the “Open House’ sessions, and comments made directly to the consultants or via the comment/feedback forms, indicates a strong level of community support. As outlined elsewhere in this Feasibility Study report, 95.9% of respondents to the on-line survey (via Council’s Your Say web page) stated they supported the proposed Monaro Rail Trail. The origin of the respondents is not known but if they are Canberra-based, or even from elsewhere in NSW, that indeed is good news as they are part of the target market.

However, community opinion is not unanimously favourable to the rail trail, as is the case for any infrastructure project. Based on verbal and written feedback at the Open Houses, the following statements summarise the community views that were presented in these forums:

- ✚ Some adjoining landholders had concerns with the proposal and raised a number of issues. Only a few attendees were vehemently opposed to the proposal, whereas most could see that, if it were to proceed, acceptable solutions could be found to their issues.
- ✚ Some adjoining landowners were very supportive of the project, having either seen and used rail trails in other states/countries or could see benefits occurring to their local communities due to additional visitors spending money. Some could see business opportunities arising.
- ✚ A few people who attended stated that the train proposals should take precedence along the corridor.
- ✚ The vast majority of those who attended were very supportive of the project and said they would use the trail if it were developed. Some had travelled from as far as Canberra and Sydney simply to register their support.

It is reasonable to state that the vast majority of those attendees who were not adjoining landholders were in favour of the proposal. It is also reasonable to state that, of the adjoining land owners who attended, the majority were supportive. This situation is uncommon.

The mix of opinions is typical of most rail trail proposals (and in fact most infrastructure projects). There are some within the community who fear that problems may arise and are somewhat opposed to the prospect of a change to the norm. There are also some who have genuine concerns about a project but are open to potential solutions if engaged correctly – for example, by one on one consultation as part of a trail development (or construction) plan.

The NSW Government recognises that a rail trail, just like all other infrastructure projects, will not receive 100% support. However, it is on the record that it views proposals that have strong community support as an important consideration in its determination of whether to fund a rail trail project.

If the project is to proceed, proponents of the Monaro Rail Trail will need to continue to raise the community’s awareness of the benefits of the project in order to meet the NSW Government’s stipulation of strong community support

Would the trail be value for money? Yes. Trails repeatedly demonstrate that there are numerous benefits to be gained through their construction: economic benefits to the towns where they start and finish and those they pass through – particularly on a multi-day experience as would be the Monaro Rail Trail; a boost to businesses associated with the trail; social and physical health benefits; and a range of environmental and cultural benefits. The business case for the trail is set out in Section 10. In summary, it can be reliably anticipated that development of the proposed rail trail will result in increased annual visitor numbers between 49,000 (if the trail is developed between Michelago and Bombala) and 56,000 (if the trail is developed between Queanbeyan and Bombala) who will inject between \$19 million and \$24 million/year into the region’s economy (depending on which of the two trails is built). Local use rates of between 2,325 people/year and 13,820 people/year will see the injection of between \$5,090 and \$30,265/year into the region’s economy (depending on which of the two trails is built).

Is there a commitment to maintenance (“friends of ...” group or support network)? This has not been explored in any detail. This Feasibility Study identifies likely maintenance costs. The experience of other rail trails (and long distance trails in general) indicates that individuals and community groups (such as Landcare groups, school groups, service clubs, etc) will help to maintain sections of the trail, or areas through which the trail would pass. The Friends of the Monaro Rail Trail is likely to take on board many of the routine maintenance requirements, with many people in the community stating they would like to get involved. The positivity and commitment of the ‘Friends of’ group suggests that it will take a leading role in the ongoing management and maintenance.

Will the trail provide a unique experience? Yes. The landscape associated with this proposed rail trail is extremely attractive, more so than any other disused railway corridor in Australia. This proposed rail trail would add significantly to the range of trail opportunities available to walkers and cyclists in this region and complement other trails already established and proposed in the Snowy Monaro Regional Council area. The highly attractive vistas available all along the proposed rail trail route (in particular the views of the Tinderries and snowcapped Snowy Mountains), the variety of existing rail infrastructure (notably station buildings, cuttings, embankments, historic bridges and the tunnel), and the relative uniqueness of the varied landscapes (farming country, creek valleys, heavily vegetated and relatively undisturbed bushland and the vast open grasslands and treeless plains) add considerable interest.

Is there a demonstrated benefit to trail users and, especially, the host communities? Yes. This question has been answered partially in answers to other questions posed. The demonstrated benefits come in the form of economic and non-economic benefits that will accrue to both users and host communities (with the creation of a range of economic opportunities arising from the development of the rail trail).

11.2 The Recommendation

Following consideration of the major issues pertaining to the development of a trail on the disused railway corridor between Michelago and Bombala (and a northern extension to Queanbeyan in the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council) and taking into account the views of key stakeholders, groups and individuals consulted (and background information obtained during the course of the project), this Study recommends that the proposed rail trail proceed, *subject to a number of conditions being met.*

The conditions upon which the rail trail should proceed are:

1. The NSW Government does not proceed with the reinstatement of a train service on the current-disused railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala;
2. The Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) resolving to actively support the development of a trail on the disused railway corridor within its area (generally Queanbeyan Railway Station to its southern boundary just north of Michelago) in order to create the best possible rail trail. No commitment from QPRC does not mean the trail should not proceed. A rail trail between Michelago and Bombala would be successful.
3. The NSW Government enacting legislation that allows conversion of this rail corridor to a rail trail, and the resolution of legislative and administrative processes that enables the corridor to be vested in another entity;
4. Both Councils (or a Committee of Management) being prepared to accept vesting of the entire former railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala, with an acknowledgement that sub-leases may be required to permit other activities (if appropriate) such the possible future activities of the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc and the Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc;
5. A cooperative approach with the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc. and the Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc. be forged with regard to the shared use of the former railway station precincts at Cooma and Bombala;
6. The project proponents pursue discussions with the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc. and the Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc. to foster the development of complementary activities at the Cooma and Bombala railway stations, including the refurbishment of the infrastructure at the railway yards and the establishment of short tourist rail services (if they can be proven feasible and are approved by the relevant authorities) on track that will be retained within the station grounds;
7. Detailed Trail Development Plans for the rail trail being prepared, which will involve a thorough and comprehensive examination of the entire corridor, the preparation of detailed works lists and cost estimates;
8. A comprehensive programme of one-on-one discussions on-site with affected adjoining landowners be undertaken to ascertain their individual concerns and to work out together solutions to each issue raised;
9. The project proponents (the two Councils) seek funding from external sources (notably the NSW Government and Commonwealth Government) for the construction of the proposed rail trail (and the detailed trail development plan that will need to be prepared prior to construction);
10. A Committee of Management, comprising (at least) representatives of both Councils, the Friends of the Monaro Rail Trail Inc., the Cooma Monaro Railway Inc. and the Friends of the Bombala Railway Inc, the NSW Rural Fire Service, residents of the communities, local landcare groups, local business proprietors and adjoining landowners, be formed to guide the ongoing planning, design and construction, management and maintenance of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail and the former railway corridor. (The Committee of Management could be modelled on successful Victorian examples);

11. The preparation of a Corridor Management Plan before construction, including a comprehensive maintenance programme (detailing the ongoing maintenance) for the trail and corridor;
12. The preparation of a Bush Fire Risk Management Plan for the corridor;
13. Grazing and various other existing uses of the corridor to be considered on their merits, and suitable solutions found to enable the activity to continue where reasonably achievable;
14. The Trail Manager to assume liability responsibility for trail users and are to take all actions possible to mitigate potential claims against landowners and neighbours;
15. A commitment to ongoing maintenance of the trail being given by both Councils, a Committee of Management and volunteers; and
16. The proposed Committee of Management give consideration to the appointment of a trail manager so that landowners have a direct point of contact for issue resolution.

11.3 Factors Supporting the Decision

In formulating a decision about whether the proposed Monaro Rail Trail is feasible or not, due consideration has been given to a range of factors.

From a trail users' perspective, the former railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala is extremely attractive. It offers a range of positive factors. When compared to numerous other disused railway lines elsewhere in Australia (both those which have been converted and those which have not), this is an excellent opportunity.

- ✚ The entire railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala remains in public ownership with few constraints to the development of a trail along its entire length (other than the prospect of a train service being returned).
- ✚ The railway corridor is situated in one of the most scenic landscapes in Australia, with a great diversity of landforms, vegetation and existing historic railway infrastructure (including the numerous and sometimes long timber bridges, a tunnel, embankments and cuttings, the original railway station buildings and outbuildings, sidings, several turntables, switches and signals).
- ✚ The railway corridor offers the potential for a wonderful multi-day trail experience and, coupled with the ideal distance between towns/villages, could become a significant trail destination in NSW, especially when bundled with other attractions and trails of the Snowy Monaro region.
- ✚ The corridor is easily accessible and is within a short distance of Canberra and Sydney (and numerous smaller towns) and is in an established tourism region with high visitation rates both for day-trippers and overnight visitors (especially to the snowfields). Melbourne is also relatively close (at least by air). Adding another attraction will potentially bring additional visitors and keep visitors longer in the area.
- ✚ The development of several trailheads at towns/villages along the trail (as well as the two anchors of Queanbeyan and Bombala) provides for a variety of rides/walks of different lengths.

- ✚ The trail does not have a complicated route through and getting out of Queanbeyan or Bombala (unlike some existing rail trails in Australia and overseas). The proposed crossings of the Monaro Highway that runs through the region could be dealt with comfortably via underpasses or, where the speed limits are low in town areas, via at-grade crossings.
- ✚ Just about all of the major elements of the railway infrastructure remain (the formation, cuttings, embankments and most of the bridges and culverts). Two bridges over minor roads have been removed.
- ✚ Being in an established tourism region means that there is a good supply of accommodation options for visitors coming to use the rail trail, though more may be developed in response to the opportunity provided by the rail trail.
- ✚ The aboriginal history of the Monaro, the surrounding farming properties and various other land uses, the natural qualities of the region, the history of construction of the railway and a host of other interesting subjects results in a huge potential for interpretation along the rail trail – adding to and enriching the experience of trail users.
- ✚ As a rail trail, the 213km corridor is reasonably flat (as it was built with low grades for steam locomotives) and will therefore accommodate the full range of cyclists, as well as walkers, joggers, runners, wheelchair and gopher users etc. The entire trail route would enable a 4 - 5 day cycle ride and perhaps an 8 day walk but there are opportunities to ‘hop’ on and off the rail trail and ride/walk shorter sections.
- ✚ The trail will improve non-motorised transport connections between the newly developing areas at South Jerrabomberra and Queanbeyan and Canberra, promoting walking and bicycle commuting options among local people.
- ✚ As has happened on lengthy rail trails in other locations around Australia, the rail trail will provide local people with a new opportunity for walking, cycling, fun runs, triathlons, half marathons (or full marathons), wheelchair use and educational opportunities for school children.

SECTION 12 – PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

This Feasibility Study is one of the initial steps in the development of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail. The fieldwork and other investigations carried out in the study have revealed a number of tasks that will need to be undertaken to progress the proposed trail through to fruition.

12.1 Who Should Drive the Project?

The rail trail development programme is a substantial – and complex – project. There are many stakeholders, both private and public, all with a strong interest in this project – some are already involved while some will need to be involved in the future.

The Snowy Monaro Regional Council has been the primary drivers of this phase of work. The Council has taken a pro-active role in facilitating this Feasibility Study and should be commended for being prepared to carry primary responsibility through this process. The role of the Friends of the Monaro Rail Trail Inc. has also been critical in getting the project to this stage.

There are a number of tasks that need completion at this early stage to ensure the project's success. These include:

- ✚ Adoption of this Feasibility Study report by the Snowy Monaro Regional Council;
- ✚ The Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council resolving to support the project and becoming actively involved;
- ✚ Preparation of a detailed trail development plan (a construction blueprint) for the entire corridor;
- ✚ Seeking NSW Government support for the Monaro Rail Trail; and
- ✚ Sourcing funds for future development of the rail trail.

These primary tasks are critical to the project's eventual success and will require human and financial resources.

It is therefore recommended that the two Councils take the lead role in the next phases of the project, working in conjunction with relevant State Government agencies to implement the development of the rail trail. Following consideration of this Feasibility Study, the Councils will have developed a more detailed understanding of many of the issues and opportunities and are ideally placed to continue to facilitate future stages.

12.2 Further Investigations Required

A number of further investigations are needed before further work on constructing any or all of the trails is undertaken.

Detailed Trail Design (Trail Development Plan)

This project is a Feasibility Study examining the merit and physical constraints of establishing a trail on the disused railway corridor between Queanbeyan and Bombala. By necessity, indicative costs and possible solutions are included. It does not provide detailed trail

development planning that seeks out solutions to all specific issues, nor does it articulate detailed design solutions. It does however provide broad estimates of probable costs, based on an examination of numerous parts of the former railway corridor that identifies likely works required (clearing, trail construction, bridges, drainage, signage, etc).

With respect to individual trail planning, there are two basic elements:

- ✚ Individual Trail Feasibility Study – establishes whether a trail route is viable; refines potential alternative trail routes; identifies issues/challenges to trail development; identifies the possible market for the trail; broadly identifies costs; provides feasibility statement on the practicalities of developing the trail; and
- ✚ Trail Development Plan – identifies precise route of proposed trail; identifies construction techniques and materials; provides reliable cost estimates and detailed works lists; identifies signage requirements and costs; provides trail inspection and maintenance schedules.

Following the establishment of trail feasibility and the preparation of a detailed trail development plan, trail construction can begin. This process ensures a maximum return on public (and private) investment in trail development work. Far too often, people leap to construct trails without any idea of who uses them, why, when, how much it is going to cost, how to market a trail etc. The result is often trails that are underused and eventually “return to the bush”.

The preparation of a detailed trail development plan will deliver a high quality, locally focussed and well-managed and maintained trail for use by residents and visitors.

If the decision to proceed is taken, the preparation of a trail development plan is the next logical step.

12.3 Trail Construction Stages

Development of trails can often be staged so that parts of trails are developed in line with available funding sources. It is often not possible to open the full length of a trail simultaneously as significant physical, financial, community and institutional work needs to be undertaken. This is the case in many recreational trails around Australia. It has not detracted from their utility or the enjoyment of them by users; however, there is a need to be conscious of how stages are marketed. Promotional material needs to clearly articulate what sections are open and what this means for users.

A staged approach to planning and development is often the best approach as it better suits the capacity of the entity charged with delivering the project. Trails can take up to 10 years to develop from initial planning stages. The “new” Bibbulmun Track in WA was some 4 years in the detailed planning and construction. This was a significant trail project with backing by the State Government – it stands out as a track planned and built relatively quickly. Other rail trail projects provide better illustrations of a realistic timeframe. A Feasibility Study for the Great Victorian Rail Trail was prepared in 2004; the trail opened in 2012. Interestingly, this trail was completely developed in one stage as the result of a large Commonwealth Government grant after the tragic Black Saturday bushfires in 2009. The Port Fairy Warrnambool Rail Trail (a 37km trail) was subject to various studies and plans from 2002; it was opened in 2010 – again all in one stage.

There will always be arguments about where construction of a trail should commence, especially if it is a long trail (as this proposed 213km rail trail is) and it passes through a number of towns and villages.

The most obvious northern terminus is the Queanbeyan Railway Station (especially given its nearness to Canberra), and the southern terminus would be the Bombala Railway Station yards. Starting development of the trail at the nearest point to such a large potential user group almost guarantees an initial high level of use given that people will not have to travel far to commence their trail ride or walk. The Queanbeyan to Michelago section would also immediately provide a commuting pathway for the residents of the South Jerrabomberra residential estate that is currently being developed.

The argument that trail construction should start at the southern end to facilitate economic stimulation of Bombala is valid, but it is two hours from Canberra and that two-hour drive may not entice users to Bombala for what would only be a short ride/walk to Jincumbilly (until all other sections were developed).

The criteria used to determine the recommended stages of development for the trail were:

- ✚ Trail sections anchored in trailheads (preferably near to major population centres).
- ✚ Trail sections enabling local people to use the facility for local walks and rides and for commuting purposes.
- ✚ Construct cheaper sections earlier than expensive ones (affordability).
- ✚ Construct most attractive sections first.
- ✚ Probable economic impacts.
- ✚ Finished product logic.
- ✚ Ease of access for users.
- ✚ Ease of trailhead development.
- ✚ Numbers of rural properties through which the rail trail would pass.

Assessment of potential stages was done in a broad sense against all these criteria, rather than assessing each section against each individual criterion. Combined with the field assessment, consideration of these elements allows the determination of the implementation schedule.

- ✚ Stage 1 of construction: Queanbeyan to Michelago (49kms).
- ✚ Stage 2 of construction: Michelago to Bredbo (30kms).
- ✚ Stage 3 of construction: Bredbo to Cooma (36kms).
- ✚ Stage 4 of construction: Cooma to Nimmitabel (38kms).
- ✚ Stage 5 of construction: Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly (37kms).
- ✚ Stage 6 of construction: Jincumbilly to Bombala (24kms).

If the Snowy Monaro Regional Council decides to proceed with trail construction, and the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council remains not involved, construction of the trail would by necessity need to be completely within the SMRC area (with Michelago being the northern terminus and construction commencing in Michelago).

12.4 Sourcing Funding

Once the decision is taken to proceed with the implementation of any of the proposed Monaro Rail Trail, one of the first tasks will be to seek funding for the next phase which is the preparation of a detailed trail development plan (i.e. the construction blueprint). It will also be prudent to start the process of finding construction funding. All funding sources available at that time will need to be identified and funding applications prepared as soon as possible. (Funding programmes often change and are subject to review – current funding programmes are discussed in Section 14).

12.5. Environmental Issues

A number of key environmental issues have been identified. These include:

- ✚ Clearing of regrowth vegetation along the corridor, and the likely need for clearing permits and the possible future need for offset re-vegetation.
- ✚ The potential for the spread of weeds (African Love Grass and serrated tussock) during the construction phase and, potentially, through usage of the trail.
- ✚ Contamination of soils as a result of the operations of the railway and the manner in which former bridges were constructed and maintained.
- ✚ The potential for sedimentation of watercourses as a result of trail construction and bridge works.

In addition, care will need to be taken in the ongoing maintenance of the proposed rail trail to ensure weeds and pathogens are not unwittingly spread by maintenance machinery. Ongoing clearing at the sides of the rail trail will be required to keep the trail corridor at acceptable widths.

The means of ensuring these issues are dealt with would be more fully considered in the next phase of this project – the detailed Trail Development Plan – should it proceed to that stage.

SECTION 13 -TRAIL MANAGEMENT

13.1 Introduction

Once a decision is taken to proceed with the development of the proposed rail trail between Queanbeyan and Bombala, decisions will need to be made about the management regime that will be put in place to manage and maintain the rail trail. A serious commitment to long term management by the trail’s proponents will be required, particularly as there is likely to be a significant investment of Government funds.

Ongoing management of the construction programme and operation of the trail will be crucial in achieving sustainable and well-used facilities. Options are available for future management of the trail.

The NSW Government is using the Tumbarumba Rosewood rail Trail (in the Snowy Valleys Council) as a ‘pilot’ project and this is likely to be the model that all other rail trails in NSW follow. What follows draws on standard administrative practice in Victoria (which has the most mature process for rail trail development and management), provides commentary on the key attributes and issues and provides advice on the types of skills and tasks a management committee should undertake; these elements will not necessarily be governed by whatever administrative procedures are adopted. The commentary is provided as a series of best practice notes. They are also provided for the Council to consider likely ongoing arrangements if the trail proceeds.



The trail manager should install warning signage indicating that trail users should be prepared for inclement weather and sudden changes in the weather, as is done in other places (such as Pelion Gap, Tas). Other management options include trail closures in extreme conditions.

13.2 Common Elements of Good Management

While legislative regimes differ, the operations of many trails across the country are marked by a common set of features. Some common characteristics about all aspects of operation are discussed below.

13.3 Types of Management Structure

There are three primary ways a rail trail (or indeed any trail) can be managed:

- ✚ Local Government as sole manager – e.g. Railway Reserves Heritage Trail, WA and the newly developed Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail in NSW

- ✚ Local Government as lead player in partnership with other stakeholders (State Government and community) – e.g. Murray to the Mountains, Victoria
- ✚ Local Government as a player in the management structure – e.g. Great Southern Rail Trail Victoria; Riesling Trail, SA

Each of the three models has its advantages and disadvantages.

Rail trails where a single Council manages a rail trail are often managed as a recreation asset of the Council, no different from a range of other assets. This has the advantage of simplicity but has no community ownership and buy-in and treats a rail trail as similar to swimming pool or park – assets provided simply for the local community with no outside appeal (bearing in mind that these rail trails will attract visitors).

In the case of the Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail in NSW, an informal community committee (comprising representatives from various sectors of the community including the historical society, landcare etc) has been set up to work cooperatively with the Council staff appointed to construct and maintain the rail trail.

Trails where Local Government is the lead player in partnership with other stakeholders is the most common approach used in Victoria. A strong argument for this model is community ownership. Those involved in a number of trails strongly put forward the view that community involvement needs to be significant and meaningful. If this does not occur, people will say “It’s Council’s problem, why doesn’t Council fix it?” The other advantages of this model are summed up by contrasting it with experiences of trail managers where the Local Government is involved simply as a player.

Those involved in management of the two trails where Councils are involved as simply a player (option 3) believe that Councils should play a much stronger role for various reasons:

- ✚ A rail trail project needs solid and proper support from the responsible Council on an ongoing basis and preferably from the project commencement. There is a concern that a long-term vision for the trail is missing. Such long-term views are often (though not always) located within a Council rather than outside a Council structure.
- ✚ The project is a community resource (as evidence by the large number of local people using the trail), therefore the community should contribute to the trail (including through the Council).
- ✚ One of the challenges for one of the Committees is the process of renewal and that many of the Committee members have been on the Committee since inception (in the late 1990s) and new blood is needed. If a trail sits “within the Council” i.e. is driven or at least strongly supported within the Council, the institution can take a trail through these times of transition much easier than can a community-based model.
- ✚ Council should have a significant responsibility in the trail’s management – it should be responsible for seeking funds, for involving the community in a meaningful way and for keeping the project going when community involvement drops (as it inevitably will at times). Many significant funding programmes are open only to Local Governments (rather than community groups). The funding for this Study is one such example.

The Great Southern Rail Trail (Gippsland, Victoria) was entirely community driven; proponents believe that there was, and there continues to be, a need to engage a range of individuals,

organisations and governments – this is a lot easier if the project is driven by the community rather than by Government. One issue that has arisen (though not with rail trails but on other recreational assets) is the sense of proprietorial ownership that can occur when a community group is the sole manager. This has both advantages and disadvantages, but it has been the experience of Local Governments (often around showgrounds) that such proprietorial ownership can lead to management difficulties when changes are required.

The final decision on a management option may well depend on the State Government's position.

The model which is the preferred model for rail trail management across Australia (i.e. the one that is the most common) is one where the Local Government or Governments has a lead role in partnership with other stakeholders.

The Snowy Monaro Regional Council can determine the management structure if it determines to proceed with the rail trail. The NSW Government may also set a preferred management structure.

13.4 Committees of Management

A formal Committee of Management could be established as a way of getting community ownership; this is the established process in Victoria and has been successful in managing a number of rail trails. In Victoria, Committees of Management under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act have a number of powers and duties:

Powers

- ✚ Managing the reserve;
- ✚ Undertaking works and improvements;
- ✚ Using workers;
- ✚ Deriving income;
- ✚ Spending, borrowing and investing;
- ✚ Controlling users;
- ✚ Entering into legal proceedings; and
- ✚ Granting tenancies (licences, leases, permits)

Duties

- ✚ Financial records and auditing;
- ✚ Reporting – financial, annual, performance;
- ✚ Liability insurance – duty of care;
- ✚ Duties as an employer;
- ✚ Council rates (payable by occupiers under lease, licence and tenancies – commercial and agricultural); and
- ✚ Responsibilities under Freedom of Information and Ombudsman requirements.

Committees of Management have traditionally absorbed the responsibility for pursuing the development of a rail trail including the preparation of concept plans and business plans.

Any committee set up to run the trail should have a similar set of powers and duties.

13.5 Skill Sets

At a general level, skill sets that would be useful for the committee to have as a whole include:

- ✚ Leadership skills – critical to hold the committee together, to inspire and motivate, to advocate to a wider audience and to maintain focus on a long-term vision;
- ✚ Community skills – the skills to motivate community and volunteer efforts;
- ✚ Business skills – skills to understand and tap into locally based businesses – the capacity to communicate to businesses in ways that garner their support;
- ✚ Entrepreneurial skills – a business-like approach to running a trail is critical;
- ✚ Administrative skills – expertise and knowledge of government grants, and how to apply for them. General administration skills are also critical;
- ✚ Environmental/scientific skills – understanding of native flora and fauna and wider environmental issues. The ability to communicate these to a wider audience is desirable;
- ✚ Engineering skills – the capacity to understand design and construction of all manner of trail infrastructure;
- ✚ Governmental skills – the ability to liaise with and understand government departments and politicians; and
- ✚ Users – it is essential that the Committee understand the needs and requirements of various targeted user groups.

These ‘selection criteria’ needs to be considered in selecting committee members. Project initiation skills are important in the early stages whereas ongoing management skills are more appropriate once the trail is established.

13.6 Trail Maintenance

Ongoing trail maintenance is a crucial component of an effective management programme – yet it is often neglected until too late. Countless quality trails have literally disappeared because no one planned a maintenance programme, and no one wanted to fund even essential ongoing repairs. It is therefore essential that funds be set aside in yearly budgets for maintenance of this trail (if it proceeds) - to ensure user safety and enjoyment, and to minimise liability risks for land managers.

13.6.1 A Trail Maintenance Plan

Ongoing maintenance costs can be minimised by building a trail well in the first place. A well-constructed trail surface will last considerably longer than a poorly built trail. Signs, gates, posts and bollards installed in substantial footings stand less risk of being stolen or damaged. Well designed, built well and thoughtfully placed management access gates and trail user gates will keep motor vehicles and motorised trail bikes off the trail with a consequent lesser need for surface repairs. Trail furniture (such as seats, trail directional marker posts and interpretation) should be installed (during the construction/upgrading process) in substantial footings sufficient to withstand high winds and theft. These should require minimal ongoing maintenance.

Building good trails in the first place is the very best way of minimising future problems and costs. As a second line of defence, a clear and concise Management Plan with a regular maintenance programme written into it will aid significantly in managing ongoing resource demands.

The goals of a Trail Maintenance Plan are to:

- ✚ Ensure that trail users continue to experience safe and enjoyable conditions;
- ✚ Guard against the deterioration of trail infrastructure, thereby maintaining the investment made on behalf of the community;
- ✚ Minimise the trail manager's exposure to potential public liability claims arising from incidents which may occur along the trail; and
- ✚ Set in place a management process to cover most foreseeable risks.

Most minor repairs (bridges, fences and gates) are largely labour intensive rather than capital expensive. Calamitous events such as fire or flood will naturally generate significant rebuilding activity and consequent costs. These events are generally unmanageable and should simply be accepted as part of the longer-term reality of trail management.

Resourcing a maintenance programme is crucial, and funds will be required on an ongoing basis to enable this essential maintenance. This matter should be addressed in the preparation of the maintenance plan. It would be short sighted to go ahead and build the rail trail and then baulk at the demands of managing and maintaining it.

13.6.2 Public Liability and Risk Management

It is prudent that the trail manager is aware that – whether or not visitors are actively encouraged to come to the rail trail – they carry a significant duty of care towards those visitors accessing the trail. The maintenance of a quality trail is therefore critical from this perspective. Legislative changes across Australia have reduced the number of small claims against land managers. However, liability generally rests with the land managers and hence, every attempt should be made to minimise the risk of accident or injury to trail users (and therefore the risk of legal action).

While public liability is certainly an issue for all land managers, it is not a reason to turn away from providing safe, sustainable and enjoyable resources. It is simply a mechanism by which to recognise the responsibilities inherent in managing natural and built resources. Dealing with a perceived liability threat is not about totally removing that threat – it is about doing all that is manifestly possible to provide safe access opportunities for visitors, thereby minimising the risk of liability claims.

A formal Hazard Inspection process is crucial in the ongoing maintenance plan. Not only will this define maintenance required and/or management decisions to be addressed, it is vital in ensuring safe conditions and therefore in dealing with any liability claim which may arise in the future. Courts are strongly swayed by evidence of a clear and functional programme, and a regular series of reports, with follow-up actions, will go a long way to mitigating responsibility for injuries. Further, clearly defined 'User Responsibility' statements in brochures, maps, policy documents, plans and public places will assist this process.

13.6.3 Trail Maintenance Activities

The discussion that follows provides general guidance for the development of maintenance plans should the rail trail proceed. It is not a substitute for specific maintenance plans for a trail. It should be considered as additional advice to any existing maintenance plans for the existing rail trail.

Maintenance on the rail trail should be divided between regular inspections and simple repairs, a one (or two) person job, and quarterly programmes undertaking larger jobs such as significant signage repairs or weed / vegetation control. A range of basic machinery, tools and equipment will be required for this work.

At the core of any trail maintenance programme is an inspection regime. The relevant Australian Standards sets out the basis for frequency of trail inspections. It only covers walking tracks and provides for inspections every 30 days (or less) for Class 1 trails, every 90 days for Class 2 trails, and annually for Class 3-6 trails.



Volunteers organised by the Committee of Management at a busy bee to undertake maintenance work along the rail trail near Port Fairy in western Victoria.

This sets the minimum standard for inspections and is a guide only. What the Australian Standards

do not include but should include is an inspection of any trail after significant weather events such as storms, fire, floods, and high winds in addition to the regular inspection programme. The trail should have its own maintenance plan that may, for particular reasons, have more frequent inspections. Particular needs should be recognised in an individual trail maintenance plan.

Clear records of each activity/inspection will be kept by the body with responsibility for maintenance. Pro-formas serve to maximise user safety and minimise liability risks. It will also provide a valuable record of works undertaken and make for efficient use of maintenance resources over time.

In general, Maintenance Plans are based around regular inspections, at which time simple maintenance activities should take place concurrently. More time-consuming maintenance activities should take place every six months, while detailed Hazard Inspections should occur annually. Further, the capacity to respond immediately to random incoming reports of hazards or major infrastructure failures should be built into the Plans.

The presence of trees along some sections of the trail means that time will be spent removing damaged and fallen trees and branches in the aftermath of a storm.

One of the most frequent maintenance tasks will be attending to fallen branches and limbs, repairing trail surfaces, replacing stolen or damaged signs (including road signs), clearing culverts and under bridges and ensuring gates and fences are functioning as intended.

Table 23: Key Elements for a Trail Maintenance Programme

Activity	Notes
Check, repair or replace all trail signage, esp. road-crossings and directional markers	<p>Particular attention needs to be given to signs at road crossings or junctions. Each crossing should be carefully checked to ensure that all signage is present, and that all signs are clearly visible. Particular attention must be given to ensuring that "Trail Crossing ahead" signs (on roadside at approach to trail crossing) are not obscured by overhanging vegetation.</p> <p>Each trailhead should be carefully checked to ensure that all signage is present, and that all signs are clearly visible and legible. An inventory of locations needs to be prepared to assist in regular maintenance.</p> <p>Interpretive panels should be checked for damage and cleaned if necessary. If damage is too great, replacement is essential. An inventory of locations needs to be prepared to assist in regular maintenance.</p>
Check and cut-back overhanging or intruding vegetation	<p>Undergrowth vegetation grows quickly, and over time will continue to intrude into the trail 'corridor'. Such intruding vegetation will need to be cut back to provide clear and safe passage for trail users.</p> <p>Care will be taken to ensure that sharp ends are not left protruding into the trail as these can harm trail users. It should be noted that trailside vegetation hangs lower when wet, and allowances should be made for this when assessing whether or not to prune. "Blow-downs" - trees or limbs that have fallen across the trail - will be cleared as a part of this process. Sight lines must be kept clear either side of road crossings as a part of this process, to ensure that users can clearly see a safe distance either way at road crossings.</p>
Check condition of trail surface for erosion (or other) damage and arrange repairs if necessary; trim off regrowth vegetation	<p>Some of the trail sections will require regular surface maintenance, though this should be minimal as the rail formation was originally constructed with drainage a major consideration. Primary focus will be on erosion damage caused by water flowing down or across the trail and by illegal motor vehicle and trail bike use. This must be repaired as soon as it is noted, or it will get worse, quickly.</p>

	Earthen surfaces may need to be topped up after heavy storms, though good design will minimise such washouts.
Check and clear drains	<p>Drainage maintenance is critical. Drains need to be checked and cleared once or twice/year and after heavy rainfall events. Regular maintenance especially after heavy rainfall is essential.</p> <p>Most maintenance will involve clearing of material from silted up or blocked drains.</p> <p>Any scouring out of table drains should be stabilised as soon as possible.</p> <p>Drain blockages should be cleared as urgent priority.</p> <p>Silt traps at culvert discharges or entry points should be cleared regularly.</p> <p>Drains through cuttings will require attention, though care during construction of trail (through cuttings) will minimise ongoing maintenance requirements.</p>
Check structural stability of built structures such as trailside furniture, bridges, interpretive signage, interpretive shelters	Visual inspection is appropriate though detailed inspection should follow storm events.
Maintain all non-slip surfaces	Maintenance on these surfaces is critical to prevent build-up of conditions that can lead to deterioration. Leaf blowing, sweeping, gurneying and the application of algaecide are all appropriate techniques. The appropriate technique and efficiency will be subject to site conditions.
Undertake Hazard Inspection and prepare Hazard Inspection Report	This should be done annually

13.6.4 Maintenance Costs

Maintenance costs are a major consideration in any public infrastructure project. These need to be offset against a range of benefits – both economic and non-economic. Detailed costings are not part of this project but the Council needs to have some understanding of the possible maintenance costs. The following presents a broad discussion on costs informed by other projects and real-life rail trail costs.

Estimating the cost of maintaining a trail is difficult due to the unpredictability of events such as wild fires, ferocious storms, occasional flooding and malicious damage. Heavy rains and the subsequent runoff can cause considerable damage to trail infrastructure – especially if drainage is not attended to well during the construction of the trail. Deliberate and willful damage and vandalism can also contribute significantly to the need for ongoing maintenance and replacement of infrastructure. Volunteers can be organised (through a coordinated programme) to carry out much of the work at a limited cost to the trail manager.

According to a report prepared by the Rail to Trails Conservancy in the USA (*Rail Trail Maintenance and Operation – Ensuring the Future of Your Trails – A Survey of 100 Rail Trails, July 2005*), the cost to maintain trails is hard to determine. The report provides two general answers for why it is difficult to estimate maintenance costs. First, the trail may be part of a larger budget for a single park or even an entire parks and recreation department. Specific costs for the trail aren't separated out. Second, small trail groups, though run by competent and extremely dedicated volunteers, tend to be 'seat-of-the-pants' operations. Maintenance is done "as needed," funds are raised "as needed," and the people are volunteering because they love the trail, not because they love doing administrative tasks like budgeting.

Evidence of actual trail maintenance costs for individual items along a rail trail, or any trail for that matter, are scarce. However, the activities of a strong Committee of Management and an effective volunteer maintenance programme can **significantly** reduce the maintenance burden on a local government.

In Victoria, the Murrindindi Shire Council manages and maintains approximately 85% of the (134km) Great Victorian Rail Trail. It spends around \$2,000/km on maintenance activities each year. Anecdotal information indicates that initial construction issues necessitate an increased level of maintenance of the trail surface (and drainage through cuttings). A higher level of (initial) construction quality (i.e. better trail surfacing and better drainage through cuttings) would mean less ongoing maintenance. At present there is no "Friends of" group to undertake some of this maintenance (and lessen the cost burden of maintenance).

Maintenance responsibility does appear to significantly affect cost. Approximately 60% of the surveyed trails reporting costs were maintained primarily by a government agency, implying paid staff and/or contractors. The other 40% of trails were primarily maintained by a non-profit or volunteer organisation. Annual costs for government-run trails were just over \$US2,000/mile (\$US1,250/km). This is not much more than the overall average of \$US1,500/mile (\$US940/km), but it nearly triples the average for volunteer-run trails of just under \$US700/mile (\$US440/km).

There will be numerous items that will require ongoing attention and maintenance. Fencing and gates should be installed (during the construction process) in substantial concrete footings sufficient to withstand removal by 4WD vehicles. Trail furniture (such as seats, signage, trail directional marker posts and interpretation) should be also installed in substantial concrete footings. These should require minimal ongoing maintenance.

The most frequent maintenance task will be attending to signage. Replacing stolen or damaged trail signage may be required, but how much time spent on this task is guesswork.

The biggest maintenance costs involved are obviously maintenance of the items that initially cost the most to install: the trail surface itself (due to erosion from stormwater runoff and

usage – especially misuse by unauthorised users such as trail bike riders) and maintenance of bridges.

It is difficult estimating the costs involved in maintaining a trail until every last bridge and other infrastructure items have been installed.

As stated earlier, ongoing maintenance can be minimised by building a trail well in the first place. This means the better the initial trail surface, the lower will be the ongoing maintenance of that trail surface.

A similar situation applies to bridges. Reconstructed and refurbished bridges will require little or no maintenance for many years. However, after perhaps a decade of use they will require more and more maintenance of decking timbers (if used) and more scrutiny of fixings (depending on what materials are used for decking).

The use of volunteers to undertake many of the routine repairs and cleaning tasks can substantially reduce the costs to the management authority.

Whilst it is impossible to provide an estimate of ongoing maintenance at this stage, an allowance around **\$4,000/km/year** is not an unreasonable basis on which to work. Some notes on these figures follow:

- ✚ The general costs are on the high side of figures that have been obtained in research (noting the caveats in the report about very limited available data). It is a conservative estimate.
- ✚ Bridge maintenance costs can be a significant portion of any maintenance bill. Given that this trail will only have a limited number of relatively small bridges, the lower end of this range may be more likely.
- ✚ Good asset management practice suggests money be put aside every year for maintenance, even though much of it will not be spent in the first 5-10 years as there will be limited need for maintenance. The dollar figure/km/yr is an “end-case scenario”.
- ✚ Costings are at full commercial rates (but of course this would be far less if volunteers are involved). US evidence suggests significant savings using volunteer maintenance (trails maintained by volunteers costs one-third of those maintained by Government entities).
- ✚ The maintenance estimate provided in the report is an estimate only based upon certain design parameters and construction standards. For example, repurposing bridges using material other than timber such as expanded steel mesh or fibreglass reinforced plastic for the decking which would have a different maintenance regime and costing.



Local schools, and other groups such as service clubs maintain sections of the Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail in Victoria.

- ✚ A significant portion of any maintenance budget for any trail is surface repair. There will be very limited need for surface repairs in the first 5 years.
- ✚ Bridge maintenance is also a significant maintenance cost. Bridges are even less likely to need repair for the first 5 years (or even 10 years) of a trail's life. Re-constructed and refurbished bridges will require little or no maintenance for many years. However, after perhaps a decade of use they will require more and more maintenance of decking timbers (if used) and more scrutiny of fixings (depending on what materials are used for decking). Pre-fabricated bridges (suggested for some water crossings) require less maintenance over time.
- ✚ Maintenance on these two critical elements (surface and bridges) is even less likely to be needed in the first 5-10 years if the trail is built well in the first place. The key message is 'spend more on construction and spend less on maintenance'. For example, the newly opened (and well-constructed) Kingaroy-Kilkivan rail trail is only costing \$500/km/year at this early stage of its life
- ✚ The likely maintenance costs in the first few years of a trail's life will focus on sign damage and inspections.

13.6.5 Reducing Maintenance Costs

Using volunteers is the key element in reducing the maintenance costs. Volunteers could undertake much of the ongoing maintenance of the trail if a volunteer maintenance programme is arranged. It should be ensured that whoever is charged with ongoing responsibility for managing the trails has genuine and specific trail knowledge. It is not sufficient to be a skilled gardener, conservationist or environmental scientist. If training is required to bring staff knowledge levels up to a high standard, this should be seen as a priority to be undertaken early in the construction process. Trail skills are better learned over a longer time, with hands-on practice, than in short briefing sessions.

- ✚ The Munda Biddi Trail Foundation assists with planning, developing, marketing and maintaining the trail. It enlists paid memberships, enrolls and manages volunteers, holds trail and community events, and provides information and resources to enhance the quality of the trail experience. **Over 85% of that trail is maintained by volunteers.**
- ✚ Activities of the Friends of the Lilydale to Warburton Rail Trail include revegetation, weed eradication, protection of remnant species, and building and restoration work.
- ✚ Parklands Albury Wodonga a community-based, not for profit organisation focused on undertaking the conservation of "bush parks" in and around Albury-Wodonga from an ecological perspective, whilst allowing sympathetic recreational access. One of the Group's projects is managing and maintaining the High Country Rail Trail.

The Bibbulmun Track is Western Australia's premier long-distance walking track. The Track's success can be put down in large part to the efforts of the Bibbulmun Track Foundation. The Bibbulmun Track Foundation is probably the most successful 'Friends of' Group in Australia, with a paid-up membership in excess of 2,100 (in a number of categories).

The Foundation is not the track manager – this job is done by the Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPAW). The Foundation is a not-for-profit community based organisation established to provide support for the management, maintenance and marketing of the Bibbulmun Track. The Foundation encourages community participation, ownership and education, develops

opportunities for tourism, employment and training, advocates the protection of natural and historical values of the Track, attracts funds and other resources, and promotes the track as accessible to all.

Corporate sponsorship has made possible its “Eyes on the Ground” maintenance volunteer programme – volunteers adopt a section of the track and ensure it remains well maintained. Approximately 780km (80%) of the Track is “managed” in this way by volunteers – a Herculean effort in this time-poor modern environment. They carry out basic maintenance activities such as pruning, clearing minor obstacles, replacing trail markers and keeping campsites clean and report regularly on conditions likely to affect walkers or the long-term future of the Track itself to the track manager. The maintenance volunteers have developed the same sense of ownership of ‘their’ section of Track. There are also office and field activity volunteers.

The Foundation has a number of corporate sponsors and also receives funding from the Lotterywest Trails Grants Programme (WA Lotteries). Importantly, the Foundation has developed a number of paying events on the Track to support its ongoing work.



Trail managers and “Friends of...” groups often arrange ‘Adopt-a-Trail’ programmes to ensure the rail trail is well maintained – by volunteers. In the USA it is common for each section (or kilometre) of a trail to be assigned to, or ‘adopted’ by, a volunteer.

Table 24: Estimate of Maintenance Costs – Queanbeyan to Michelago (49km)

Task	Frequency / note	Possible Costs
Inspect and check trailhead facilities and infrastructure	2 trailheads at average repairs of \$500 per site.	\$1,000
Trail surface - allowance for incidental repairs to, and upgrading of, gravel trail surface.	Allowance of 2% of replacement cost (i.e. 2% of \$2,940,000).	\$58,800
Check side vegetation growth and overhead vegetation and cut back where required. Clearing of fallen trees and branches.	Allowance of 3 person days per 10km section per year (@ \$500/day).	\$7,500
Slashing of trail environs to reduce weeds and fire load/risk. (See Note 1)	Timing dependent on seasonal growth patterns. Allowance for up to 5 times per year.	\$6,250
Inspection and routine maintenance of bridges (all timber components, decking, handrails, etc). Check for obstructions and clearing under bridges.	Allowance of \$5,000 per year for large timber bridges, \$2,000 per year for short timber bridges	\$41,000
Check and clear culverts.	Allowance of 20 hours for checking and cleaning.	\$2,000
Check road crossings. Replace damaged and/or missing signs and undertake other tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give Way signs - Road Ahead signs - Trail Crossing warning signs - Road name signs - Regulatory signs - Check sight distances and clear vegetation if necessary 	6 crossings (major and minor) at average repairs of \$300 per crossing.	\$1,800
Inspection of and allowance for replacement of trail directional marker logo/arrow plates and trail kilometre posts (incorporating Emergency Markers)	2 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 10 replacements @ \$400 ea).	\$4,000

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Allowance for repairs to trailside furniture and occasional replacements (when required).	Inspection and minor repairs every 6 months. 1 replacement per year.	\$1,000
Check miscellaneous signs along trail (e.g. Road Ahead, Give Way, trail name, distance signs, "No Trespassing", bridge load signs, etc).	5 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 25 signs @ \$200 ea).	\$5,000
Check management access gates and fences at road crossings. Make repairs where necessary.	Allowance of \$5,000 per year for repairs.	\$5,000
Check toilets (2).	Allowance for cleaning (5 times each @\$200/visit)	\$2,000
Check operation of stock crossings (fences, gates and grids).	Allowance for minor repairs (20 @ \$100 ea)	\$2,000
Check interpretation along trail for damage and structural stability.	Allowance for replacement of 1 panel per year.	\$1,000
Inspection of rail trail (3 times/year).	Allowance for 3 inspection trips per year	\$4,500
Preparation of annual Hazard Inspection Report.	1 person days @ \$1,000/day.	\$1,000
\$143,850 excl GST (per annum)		

This equates to a rate of approximately \$2,936/per kilometre per annum.

Table 25: Estimate of Maintenance Costs – Michelago to Bredbo (30km)

Task	Frequency / note	Possible Costs
Inspect and check trailhead facilities and infrastructure	1 trailhead at average repairs of \$500 per site	\$500
Trail surface - allowance for incidental repairs to, and upgrading of, gravel trail surface.	Allowance of 2% of replacement cost (i.e. 2% of \$1,800,000).	\$36,000
Check side vegetation growth and overhead vegetation and cut back where required. Clearing of fallen trees and branches.	Allowance of 3 person days per 10km section per year (@ \$500/day).	\$4,500

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Slashing of trail environs to reduce weeds and fire load/risk. (See Note 1)	Timing dependent on seasonal growth patterns. Allowance for up to 5 times per year.	\$3,750
Inspection and routine maintenance of bridges (all timber components, decking, handrails, etc). Check for obstructions and clearing under bridges.	Allowance of \$5,000 per year for large timber bridges, \$2,000 per year for short timber bridges	\$56,000
Check and clear culverts.	Allowance of 20 hours for checking and cleaning.	\$2,000
Check road crossings. Replace damaged and/or missing signs and undertake other tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give Way signs - Road Ahead signs - Trail Crossing warning signs - Road name signs - Regulatory signs - Check sight distances and clear vegetation if necessary 	8 crossings (major and minor) at average repairs of \$300 per crossing	\$2,400
Inspection of and allowance for replacement of trail directional marker logo/arrow plates and trail kilometre posts (incorporating Emergency Markers)	2 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 6 replacements @ \$400 ea).	\$2,400
Allowance for repairs to trailside furniture and occasional replacements (when required).	Inspection and minor repairs every 6 months. 1 replacement per year.	\$1,000
Check miscellaneous signs along trail (e.g. Road Ahead, Give Way, trail name, distance signs, "No Trespassing", bridge load signs, etc).	5 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 15 signs @ \$200 ea).	\$3,000
Check management access gates and fences at road crossings. Make repairs where necessary.	Allowance of \$3,000 per year for repairs.	\$3,000
Check toilets (2).	Allowance for cleaning (5 times each @\$200/visit)	\$2,000

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Check operation of stock crossings (fences, gates and grids).	Allowance for minor repairs (20 @ \$100 ea)	\$2,000
Check interpretation along trail for damage and structural stability.	Allowance for replacement of 1 panel per year.	\$1,000
Inspection of rail trail (3 times/year).	Allowance for 3 inspection trips per year	\$4,500
Preparation of annual Hazard Inspection Report.	1 person days @ \$1,000/day.	\$1,000
\$125,050 excl GST (per annum)		

This equates to a rate of approximately \$4,168/per kilometre per annum.

Table 26: Estimate of Maintenance Costs – Bredbo to Cooma (36km)

Task	Frequency / note	Possible Costs
Inspect and check trailhead facilities and infrastructure	1 trailhead at average repairs of \$500 per site	\$500
Trail surface - allowance for incidental repairs to, and upgrading of, gravel trail surface.	Allowance of 2% of replacement cost (i.e. 2% of \$2,160,000).	\$43,200
Check side vegetation growth and overhead vegetation and cut back where required. Clearing of fallen trees and branches.	Allowance of 3 person days per 10km section per year (@ \$500/day).	\$6,000
Slashing of trail environs to reduce weeds and fire load/risk. (See Note 1)	Timing dependent on seasonal growth patterns. Allowance for up to 5 times per year.	\$5,500
Inspection and routine maintenance of bridges (all timber components, decking, handrails, etc). Check for obstructions and clearing under bridges.	Allowance of \$5,000 per year for large timber bridges, \$2,000 per year for short timber bridges	\$66,000
Check and clear culverts.	Allowance of 20 hours for checking and cleaning.	\$2,000
Check road crossings. Replace damaged and/or missing signs and undertake other tasks:	7 crossings (major and minor) at average repairs of \$300 per crossing	\$2,100

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give Way signs - Road Ahead signs - Trail Crossing warning signs - Road name signs - Regulatory signs - Check sight distances and clear vegetation if necessary 		
Inspection of and allowance for replacement of trail directional marker logo/arrow plates and trail kilometre posts (incorporating Emergency Markers)	2 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 8 replacements @ \$400 ea).	\$3,200
Allowance for repairs to trailside furniture and occasional replacements (when required).	Inspection and minor repairs every 6 months. 1 replacement per year.	\$1,000
Check miscellaneous signs along trail (e.g. Road Ahead, Give Way, trail name, distance signs, "No Trespassing", bridge load signs, etc).	5 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 20 signs @ \$200 ea).	\$4,000
Check management access gates and fences at road crossings. Make repairs where necessary.	Allowance of \$4,000 per year for repairs.	\$4,000
Check toilets (2).	Allowance for cleaning (5 times each @\$200/visit)	\$2,000
Check operation of stock crossings (fences, gates and grids).	Allowance for minor repairs (30 @ \$100 ea)	\$3,000
Check interpretation along trail for damage and structural stability.	Allowance for replacement of 1 panel per year.	\$1,000
Inspection of rail trail (3 times/year).	Allowance for 3 inspection trips per year	\$4,500
Preparation of annual Hazard Inspection Report.	1 person days @ \$1,000/day.	\$1,000
\$149,000 excl GST (per annum)		

This equates to a rate of approximately \$4,138/per kilometre per annum.

Table 27: Estimate of Maintenance Costs – Cooma to Nimmitabel (38km)

Task	Frequency / note	Possible Costs
Inspect and check trailhead facilities and infrastructure	1 trailhead at average repairs of \$500 per site	\$500
Trail surface - allowance for incidental repairs to, and upgrading of, gravel trail surface.	Allowance of 2% of replacement cost (i.e. 2% of \$2,280,000).	\$45,600
Check side vegetation growth and overhead vegetation and cut back where required. Clearing of fallen trees and branches.	Allowance of 3 person days per 10km section per year (@ \$500/day).	\$6,000
Slashing of trail environs to reduce weeds and fire load/risk. (See Note 1)	Timing dependent on seasonal growth patterns. Allowance for up to 5 times per year.	\$4,750
Inspection and routine maintenance of bridges (all timber components, decking, handrails, etc). Check for obstructions and clearing under bridges.	Allowance of \$5,000 per year for large timber bridges, \$2,000 per year for short timber bridges	\$54,000
Check and clear culverts.	Allowance of 20 hours for checking and cleaning.	\$2,000
Check road crossings. Replace damaged and/or missing signs and undertake other tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give Way signs - Road Ahead signs - Trail Crossing warning signs - Road name signs - Regulatory signs - Check sight distances and clear vegetation if necessary 	13 crossings (major and minor) at average repairs of \$300 per crossing	\$3,900
Inspection of and allowance for replacement of trail directional marker logo/arrow plates and trail kilometre posts (incorporating Emergency Markers)	2 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 8 replacements @ \$400 ea).	\$3,200

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Allowance for repairs to trailside furniture and occasional replacements (when required).	Inspection and minor repairs every 6 months. 1 replacement per year.	\$1,000
Check miscellaneous signs along trail (e.g. Road Ahead, Give Way, trail name, distance signs, "No Trespassing", bridge load signs, etc).	5 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 20 signs @ \$200 ea).	\$4,000
Check management access gates and fences at road crossings. Make repairs where necessary.	Allowance of \$4,000 per year for repairs.	\$4,000
Check toilets (2).	Allowance for cleaning (5 times each @\$200/visit)	\$2,000
Check operation of stock crossings (fences, gates and grids).	Allowance for minor repairs (30 @ \$100 ea)	\$3,000
Check interpretation along trail for damage and structural stability.	Allowance for replacement of 1 panel per year.	\$1,000
Inspection of rail trail (3 times/year).	Allowance for 3 inspection trips per year	\$4,500
Preparation of annual Hazard Inspection Report.	1 person days @ \$1,000/day.	\$1,000
\$140,450 excl GST (per annum)		

This equates to a rate of approximately \$3,696/per kilometre per annum.

Table 28: Estimate of Maintenance Costs – Nimmitabel to Jincumbilly (37km)

Task	Frequency / note	Possible Costs
Inspect and check trailhead facilities and infrastructure	trailhead at average repairs of \$500 per site	\$500
Trail surface - allowance for incidental repairs to, and upgrading of, gravel trail surface.	Allowance of 2% of replacement cost (i.e. 2% of \$2,220,000).	\$44,400
Check side vegetation growth and overhead vegetation and cut back where required. Clearing of fallen trees and branches.	Allowance of 3 person days per 10km section per year (@ \$500/day).	\$6,000

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Slashing of trail environs to reduce weeds and fire load/risk. (See Note 1)	Timing dependent on seasonal growth patterns. Allowance for up to 5 times per year.	\$4,625
Inspection and routine maintenance of bridges (all timber components, decking, handrails, etc). Check for obstructions and clearing under bridges.	Allowance of \$5,000 per year for large timber bridges, \$2,000 per year for short timber bridges	\$46,000
Check and clear culverts.	Allowance of 20 hours for checking and cleaning.	\$2,000
Check road crossings. Replace damaged and/or missing signs and undertake other tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give Way signs - Road Ahead signs - Trail Crossing warning signs - Road name signs - Regulatory signs - Check sight distances and clear vegetation if necessary 	9 crossings (major and minor) at average repairs of \$300 per crossing	\$2,700
Inspection of and allowance for replacement of trail directional marker logo/arrow plates and trail kilometre posts (incorporating Emergency Markers)	2 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 8 replacements @ \$400 ea).	\$3,200
Allowance for repairs to trailside furniture and occasional replacements (when required).	Inspection and minor repairs every 6 months. 1 replacement per year.	\$1,000
Check miscellaneous signs along trail (e.g. Road Ahead, Give Way, trail name, distance signs, "No Trespassing", bridge load signs, etc).	5 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 20 signs @ \$200 ea).	\$4,000
Check management access gates and fences at road crossings. Make repairs where necessary.	Allowance of \$4,000 per year for repairs.	\$4,000
Check toilets (2).	Allowance for cleaning (5 times each @\$200/visit)	\$2,000

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Check operation of stock crossings (fences, gates and grids).	Allowance for minor repairs (35 @ \$100 ea)	\$3,500
Check interpretation along trail for damage and structural stability.	Allowance for replacement of 1 panel per year.	\$1,000
Inspection of rail trail (3 times/year).	Allowance for 3 inspection trips per year	\$4,500
Preparation of annual Hazard Inspection Report.	1 person days @ \$1,000/day.	\$1,000
\$130,425 excl GST (per annum)		

This equates to a rate of approximately \$3,525/per kilometre per annum.

Table 29: Estimate of Maintenance Costs – Jincumbilly to Bombala (24km)

Task	Frequency / note	Possible Costs
Inspect and check trailhead facilities and infrastructure	1 trailhead at average repairs of \$500 per site	\$500
Trail surface - allowance for incidental repairs to, and upgrading of, gravel trail surface.	Allowance of 2% of replacement cost (i.e. 2% of \$1,440,000).	\$28,800
Check side vegetation growth and overhead vegetation and cut back where required. Clearing of fallen trees and branches.	Allowance of 3 person days per 10km section per year (@ \$500/day).	\$3,750
Slashing of trail environs to reduce weeds and fire load/risk. (See Note 1)	Timing dependent on seasonal growth patterns. Allowance for up to 5 times per year.	\$3,000
Inspection and routine maintenance of bridges (all timber components, decking, handrails, etc). Check for obstructions and clearing under bridges.	Allowance of \$5,000 per year for large timber bridges, \$2,000 per year for short timber bridges	\$0
Check and clear culverts.	Allowance of 20 hours for checking and cleaning.	\$2,000
Check road crossings. Replace damaged and/or missing signs and undertake other tasks:	16 crossings (major and minor) at average repairs of \$300 per crossing	\$4,800

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give Way signs - Road Ahead signs - Trail Crossing warning signs - Road name signs - Regulatory signs - Check sight distances and clear vegetation if necessary 		
Inspection of and allowance for replacement of trail directional marker logo/arrow plates and trail kilometre posts (incorporating Emergency Markers)	2 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 4 replacements @ \$400 ea).	\$1,600
Allowance for repairs to trailside furniture and occasional replacements (when required).	Inspection and minor repairs every 6 months. 1 replacement per year.	\$1,000
Check miscellaneous signs along trail (e.g. Road Ahead, Give Way, trail name, distance signs, "No Trespassing", bridge load signs, etc).	5 replacements per 10km section per year (i.e. 10 signs @ \$200 ea).	\$2,000
Check management access gates and fences at road crossings. Make repairs where necessary.	Allowance of \$2,000 per year for repairs.	\$2,000
Check toilets (2).	Allowance for cleaning (5 times each @\$200/visit)	\$2,000
Check operation of stock crossings (fences, gates and grids).	Allowance for minor repairs (30 @ \$100 ea)	\$3,000
Check interpretation along trail for damage and structural stability.	Allowance for replacement of 1 panel per year.	\$1,000
Inspection of rail trail (3 times/year).	Allowance for 3 inspection trips per year	\$4,500
Preparation of annual Hazard Inspection Report.	1 person days @ \$1,000/day.	\$1,000
		<i>\$60,950 excl GST (per annum)</i>

This equates to a rate of approximately \$2,540/per kilometre per annum.

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Note 1: *The necessity to slash could be much reduced if the rail trail is located within a narrower, fenced corridor and adjoining landowners graze stock within that part of the corridor deemed 'surplus to requirements'. Slashing costs are based on the fencing option whereby the corridor is fully fenced (resulting in a 6m wide trailway). Any other options will mean higher maintenance costs.*

Note 2: *Use of volunteers would substantially reduce maintenance costs.*

Note 3: *Reporting of routine maintenance requirements by trail users will obviate need for many scheduled inspections.*

Note 4: *Appointment of a Trail Manager, with responsibility for regular inspections of entire trail, will substantially reduce need for unscheduled and expensive maintenance.*

Note 5: *Maintenance on the two critical elements (surface and bridges) is unlikely to be needed in the first 5-10 years if the trail is built well in the first place*

SECTION 14 – RESOURCES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

(Note: Funding programmes do change; the information presented in this report is current at the time of writing).

Once the decision is taken to proceed, one of the first tasks will be to seek development funding. All funding sources available at that time will need to be identified and funding applications prepared as soon as possible, and dedicated resources made available. The Commonwealth and State Governments regularly review funding programmes (particularly before and after elections); such decisions make the need to review this section at the time of seeking grants critical.

14.1 Commonwealth Government

The \$841.6 million Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) supports the Australian Government's commitment to create jobs, drive economic growth and build stronger regional communities into the future. This includes a further \$200 million for a fourth round of the programme which is anticipated to open in the second half of 2019 (at the time of writing, the programme has not opened).

There are two streams of funding available under the programme – Infrastructure Projects Stream and Community Investment Streams. The Infrastructure Projects stream is the most relevant as it supports projects which involve the construction of new infrastructure, or the upgrade or extension of existing infrastructure that provide economic and social benefits to regional and remote areas. It provides grants between \$20,000 and \$10 million. For most projects grant funding will be up to 50 per cent or up to 75 per cent of eligible project costs. Project location will determine the percentage of grant funding. Local Governments are eligible for the funds. Projects must be completed by December 2021.

Outdoor recreation generally and trail projects specifically have been funded by this programme in past years. It has funded a large number of walk and cycle trails, and mountain bike trails and mountain bike "destinations" across the country. Of direct relevance to this project, the programme has funded a number of rail trail initiatives. These are:

- ✚ Somerset Regional Council (Queensland) received \$1.4 million to complete the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail.
- ✚ Alpine Shire Council (Vic) received \$1.3 million for the Great Valley Trail project completes the shared trail between Bright and Harrietville. The 14 kilometre trail will link the end of the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail at Bright with Victoria's Alpine Region.
- ✚ Parklands Albury Wodonga Limited (Vic) received \$91,000 for completing the Shelley to Tallangatta Rail Trail. The project involves restoring a collapsed section of a historic trestle bridge and gravelling a section of the rail trail.

Funding grants under this programme are also quite significant. Two trail projects provide good examples:

- ✚ East Gippsland Shire Council (Vic) received \$1.5 million for the first stage of the Omeo Mountain Bike Destination Project including funds for design and construction of mountain bike tracks.

- ✚ Yarra Ranges Shire Council (Vic) received \$3 million for the construction of 100 kilometres of mountain bike trails on the hills surrounding the town of Warburton.

Infrastructure activities are not eligible for the Community Investments Stream.

In February 2018, the Commonwealth Government committed \$6.5 million to the Northern Rivers Rail Trail through the Regional Jobs and Investment Programme. Unfortunately, that programme was only available to selected regions and the Monaro Rail Trail is not in one of those regions (in addition, the programme does not appear to be operational at the time of writing)

14.2 NSW Government

Details of NSW Government funding programmes for rail trails are not clear and have changed over time. In 2014, the NSW Government announced the creation of the **Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund** (RTIF). The \$110 million fund was (according to the Government) to enable regional destinations to develop their full potential by investing in critical visitor economy infrastructure, such as airport upgrades and cruise and rail trail infrastructure. In the initial announcement, \$50 million (of the \$110 million) was dedicated to rail trail development. In early 2015, the Minister for Regional Development announced that the \$50 million would be limited to two corridors – Tumbarumba Rosewood and the Northern Rivers (Casino – Lismore – Byron Bay - Murwillumbah). In June 2015, it was announced that only \$5 million would be allocated from the RTIF to develop the Tumbarumba-Rosewood Rail Trail as a pilot project. The Northern Rivers Rail Trail submission was unsuccessful.

The NSW Government has committed \$5 million funding to the proposed Tumbarumba Rosewood Rail Trail (part of the Wagga Wagga to Tumbarumba line) as a 'pilot' project. Construction is now underway and it is understood that the State Government has supplied additional funds. As noted above, this funding was made available through the Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund (a component of which was specifically set aside for rail trails).

In August 2017, the NSW Government committed \$6.5 million to the Northern Rivers Rail Trail pilot project (matched as noted in 14.1 by the Commonwealth Government). It is not clear which programme funded this contribution. It may have been funded from the \$300 million Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund which invests in infrastructure to increase tourist visitation to regional NSW and create jobs. This fund particularly focuses on assets that will grow and further diversify NSW regional economies.

At this stage, there does not appear to be a specific fund for rail trail development in NSW, a contrast to the position adopted by the Queensland Government which has committed \$14 million over 4 years to plan and develop rail trails specifically as part of its *Queensland Cycling Action Plan*. The NSW State Government has yet to evaluate current pilot projects – it may be that once this is done, funding will be made available through such programmes as the Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund. At least one other rail trail project is being prepared by its advocates for submission to this funding programme.

14.3 Private Sponsorship

Sponsorship is big business – and very competitive. Two main options exist: either negotiate with local/national corporate entities which have a geographical and social connection with the area through which a trail passes or go after the ‘big’ players for big projects. Many large companies have formalised sponsorship programmes.

Elsewhere in Australia, funding for trail development has been received from a number of major (and minor local) companies.

- ✚ Alcoa has been a major contributor to Western Australia’s two premier long distance tracks – the Bibbulmun Track (walk) and the Munda Biddi Trail (mountain bike).
- ✚ BHP Billiton provided over \$200,000 for the Coast to Crater Rail Trail in western Victoria to help construction.
- ✚ GlaskoSmithKline Australia has donated \$10,000 to the development of the Warrnambool to Port Fairy rail trail project to encourage employees to combine their physical exercise with commuting to work. GSK has stated “We are proud to contribute to the establishment of the Port Fairy rail trail through our Community Partnerships Programme. We see this project as being of benefit not only to our own employees, but also to the local community as a whole.”

Significant sums can be gained if benefits can be proven. Any company with an operation within the region would appear to be a potential sponsor.

Companies are looking to be good local citizens and being associated with a positive asset such as a trail can be good for business. Companies should be approached with the message that such a project will bring a number of benefits to the region. Any approaches to corporate sponsors should focus on a main message that trails and the company products provide an alliance of healthy sustainable living and healthy sustainable products and sustainable economic opportunities (if such a link exists).

Corporate entities are looking to make community commitments in a number of ways other than direct funding. The Macquarie Bank Foundation looks to supply time and expertise as well as funding. Many other banks have both a competitive grants programme and a volunteer scheme that provides paid volunteer leave to every employee. Organisations such as the ANZ and National Banks also look for community development options for their staff e.g. corporate team building days are held on a trail. It is important to note that, when considering these options, there are often exclusivity provisions around such programmes.

What is important in dealing with potential corporate sponsors is to have:

- ✚ a clear trail development plan (the next stage of work should the trail proceed);
- ✚ a well-developed message;
- ✚ clear pointers as to what and where their engagement might be; and
- ✚ a clear indication of how they might benefit from their involvement.

14.4 Other Trail Funding Resources

14.4.1 The Heart Foundation

The Heart Foundation Local Government Awards are held each year to acknowledge projects and initiatives that local councils and organisations are delivering in their communities to promote and improve heart health. While not a significant source of funds, there is a \$5,000 prize for the overall winner and a \$2,000 prize for each State winner. The award also offers positive promotional opportunities. The award is for Local Governments rather than community-based organisations; this does provide a “hook” for councils to become involved in a trail project.

The Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail has won the Best Overall project. Lake Fred Tritton, an artificial lake in Richmond Shire (Qld) with a significant walk trail constructed around its edges, won the Best Overall project and the Recreation Infrastructure Project in 2004. The Peninsular Pathlinks Programme, a programme to develop 77 kilometres of new trails and walkways in the 42 communities in the Mornington Peninsula Shire (Victoria) won the Best Overall project and the Recreation Infrastructure Project in 2005. For further details, the Heart Foundation’s website is www.heartfoundation.com.au.

14.4.2 Work for the Dole

Schemes to provide meaningful work experience and some training for long-term unemployed are provided under the Work for the dole scheme. The programme generally only supplies labour – the host agency is responsible for tools, materials, technical supervision etc.

14.4.3 Conservation Volunteers Australia

Conservation Volunteers Australia provides small crews of volunteers, with a supervisor, to undertake environmental activities. Teams of between five and eight people work for one to two weeks. An administration fee is imposed by CVA. Materials, tools and technical supervision need to be provided by the host agency. CVA has been involved in trails project elsewhere in Australia – they were heavily involved in construction of a new walking track around the base of Mt Tibrogargan in the Glasshouse Mountains in South East Queensland. This trail is of the highest quality and is a testimony to their skills as trail builders.

14.4.4 Prison Crews

Crews of minimum-security inmates have worked extensively in trail construction in Western Australia in the last 15 years. In the Northern Territory, NSW and Queensland, prison crews have been successfully used recently on trail and park projects.

For example, the Gympie Regional Council (in Queensland) has partnered with Gympie Probation and Parole to help maintain the station yards of the Mary Valley Rattler. The hours committed and the dollar value of those hours are not insignificant. In 2013/14, community service workers attached to Gympie Probation and Parole contributed a total of 6,917 community service hours (valued at over \$150,000) to volunteer community groups, Council initiatives, church groups and sporting clubs across the Gympie region by community service workers.

The labour supplied by inmates goes directly towards each community organisations’ and Councils’ goals, while the inmates gain an opportunity to develop positive work habits, self-discipline and pro-social behaviours within a working environment.

14.4.5 Volunteers

Volunteers are often the last thought-of resource but are often the most effective. Many trails are only built – and then kept alive – by volunteer input.

There is also a growing network of trail advocates whose experience is extremely worthwhile. Concerns have been expressed in a number of forums (including popular media) about getting volunteers in a time when people have very busy lifestyles. This is acknowledged; however, the Bibbulmun Track in Western Australia provides an encouraging lesson (where some 80% of the 1,000km trail is maintained by volunteers).

Volunteer labour can also be used in innovative ways to benefit a number of community sectors. The Lilydale Warburton Rail Trail (Victoria) needed bridge construction and put out a public tender for the work. The tender was won by the local branch of the Country Fire Authority, which needed a new fire engine. Labour in bridge construction was “swapped” for a new fire engine.

14.4.6 Philanthropy

There are a number of philanthropic organisations in Australia (though not in the same numbers as the USA). The brief has not permitted time to extensively research all these.

The Macquarie Bank Foundation currently contributes more than \$2.5 million a year in community grants. Its core areas include the health care and research, the environment and the arts (trails can address each of these core areas).

The Ian Potter Foundation has a number of interests, including environment and conservation (details can be found at www.ianpotter.org.au). Its Environment and Conservation programme supports small projects that combine elements of biodiversity and ecology preservation, volunteerism and community education. A trail development could fall within this mandate.

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Monaro Rail Trail

Snowy Monaro Regional Council Briefing

5 November 2020

Our Vision

The Monaro Rail Trail is Australia's Greatest

Our Purpose

To contribute to our regional and local communities through sustainable economic growth, health and wellbeing, while enhancing our environment and preserving our rail heritage





Executive Summary

The 213km Monaro Rail Trail, will use the disused Queanbeyan to Bombala Railway line, and has the potential to become one of the Iconic Rail Trails of the World, similar to the Otago Rail Trail in New Zealand. The Rail Trail will cater for cyclists, walkers, fund-raisers, mobility scooters and family groups.

The route will connect and unite the towns and villages of Queanbeyan, Michelago, Royalla, Bredbo, Cooma, Nimmitabel and Bombala. It will be easily integrated into the Canberra cycle network, as indicated on the Attachment #1. It would be one of the few Rail Trails with immediate access from a major city and or from an international airport which adds to its attractiveness for both Australian and international tourists.

To establish the Monaro Rail Trail (MRT) as Australia’s Greatest, MRT Inc. has sought Federal and State Government support with Capital Grants for a total of \$62.82 Million over 2 years. The first step is to finalise Planning and Design which will take 4-6 months and cost \$400,000. The objective is to have a “shovel-ready” project by July 2021 as suggested by NSW Senator Jim Molan.

Capital Expenditure

STAGE (refer Attachment #5)	COST	SOURCE
Planning and Design	\$400,000	State and Federal Governments each contributing \$200,000
Stage 1 Construction	\$23.57 M	50/50 Federal and NSW State Governments
	\$1.0 M	100% ACT Government not included in \$62.82M above
Stage 2 Construction	\$25.96 M	50/50 Federal and NSW State Governments
Stage 3 Construction	\$13.29 M	50/50 Federal and NSW State Governments

Annual Economic Benefits

Stage 1	\$10.72M
Stage 2	\$7.05M
Stage 3	\$6,65M
Total	\$24.42M



Other Benefits

- Financial stimulus to numerous small businesses
- Regional jobs totalling an estimated 60 FTE small contractor employees during construction
- Ongoing local jobs estimated to be 150 FTE generated by small business operators along the route
- Promotes physical health and mental wellbeing in a region affected in recent years by drought, bushfires, and loss of visitors due to COVID-19
- Ongoing tourism attraction ranking with NZ's Iconic Otago Rail Trail
- Preservation of our Heritage including indigenous, rail and agriculture

Community Support

There is strong community support evidenced by:

- Over 600 submissions to the Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study 2019 (96% in favour)
- Raising of \$12,500 in Crowd Funding from the regional/local community for the initial study – the Monaro Rail Trail Pre-Feasibility Study 2018.

MRT Inc Next Steps

- 1) Encourage the Snowy Monaro Regional Council to consider and adopt the MRT Inc. recommendations given below.
- 2) Encourage the Snowy Monaro Regional Council to endorse MRT Inc submissions to Federal and State Governments for the \$400,000 funding needed to finalize detailed planning.



Recommendations for Council.

Monaro Rail Trail Inc. seeks Snowy Monaro Regional Council (SMRC) support as outlined in the following recommendations:

- 1) SMRC accepts this Submission, re-affirms support and strongly advocates for the development of the Monaro Rail Trail, recognising it will be a major economic driver for the Snowy Monaro Community.**
- 2) SMRC formally advises the following bodies of Councils strong support and desire to expedite the Monaro Rail Trail;**
 - a) Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council and the ACT Government**
 - b) NSW Government elected representatives (including Deputy Premier Hon John Barilaro MLA, Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC and Minister for Regional Transport & Roads Paul Toole MLA) as well as Officials of relevant Departments (including Regional Transport, Crown Lands and Local Land Services)**
 - c) Commonwealth Government elected representatives (including Senator Jim Molan AO DSC, Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack and Member for Eden-Monaro Hon Kristy McBain)**
- 3) SMRC initiates consultation with the NSW State Government to facilitate the License/Lease of the Queanbeyan to Bombala Rail corridor for the purposes of developing the Monaro Rail Trail. The Licence/Lease should commence from 1st May 2021 to allow construction to be commenced on 1 July 2021.**
- 4) SMRC establishes a MRT Section 355 Management Committee to oversight development of the Monaro Rail Trail and invites representatives from MRT Inc. and Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council to participate.**
- 5) SMRC seeks Grant funding for a reputable Consultant to undertake a Study into Maintenance Cost and Funding opportunities for Rail Trails in line with the Scoping Study brief prepared by MRT Inc.**
- 6) SMRC provides funding of up to \$4000 to allow the Monaro Rail Trail Inc. to Trademark the Logo and wording 'Monaro Rail Trail AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST' to facilitate the beginning of a remarkable Rail Trail and protect an Iconic branding opportunity.**
- 7) SMRC support funding applications submitted by MRT Inc. to both the NSW State Government and Federal Government for funding totalling \$400,000 to allow for the development of a Trail Master Plan (incorporating trail design), a detailed Business Case for the Monaro Rail Trail, Scoping Studies for the MRT Heritage Plan and Environmental Plan, Review of Environmental Factors and Risk Management Plan.**
- 8) SMRC Grants Officer works with MRT Inc. to investigate opportunities for potential grants relevant to the planning, construction and maintenance of the Monaro Rail Trail and identify, the appropriate organisation, to lodge applications consistent with SMRC Policy.**
- 9) Ensure that the Monaro Rail Trail is featured prominently as a Game Changer in all Council and Regional Planning documents to support funding priorities.**



MRT Inc progress

Achievements to Date

- Formation of MRT Inc. in August 2015
- Extensive Community consultation since 2015
- Creation of MRT website and Facebook page with over 2,000 followers
- Pre-Feasibility Study 2018 funded by MRT Inc. through Crowd Funding of \$12,500
- MRT Feasibility Study 2019 funded by SMRC
- Production of MRT Fly-over promotional video and promotional material
- Formation of MRT Steering Group in 2020 and planning workshop
- Consultations with key Stakeholders (last 6 months);
 - Hon J Barilaro MLA
 - Sen J Molan AO DSC
 - Snowy Monaro Regional Council Officers
 - Local Land Services
 - Cooma Monaro Progress Association
 - Nimmitabel Advancement Group
 - Bombala community representatives
- Consultation with key Rail Trail associations including;
 - Tumbarumba Rail Trail
 - Northern Rivers Rail Trail
 - Otago Rail Trail (NZ)
 - Riesling Rail Trail (SA)
- MRT Organisation, Structure & processes
 - Revised MRT Inc. Constitution to achieve ACNC registration (and possible charitable status)
 - Developed the Vision, Purpose, Aims & Values Statement of MRT Inc.
 - Agreed upon a Rail Trail Concept Development Plan including a 3 stage approach
 - Implemented a Steering Group organisation structure
 - Secured pro-bono professional resources including planning, legal, engineering, project management, financial, environmental and business competencies
 - Lodged MRT Project Submissions with Federal & State Governments (Inc \$400K for Planning work involving Trail Development Plan, Business Case, Staged approach.
 - Developed a Capital Expenditure & Economic Benefit Schedule based on the MRT Feasibility Study 2019
 - Developed a Quality management system for the organisation
 - Prepared a Maintenance Cost Recovery Brief
 - Developed the MRT Maintenance Discussion Paper
 - Produced a Project Development & Construction Implementation Plan (GANTT Chart)
 - Created a Project Resource Plan
 - Created Geospatial map of the proposed staged development and village precinct trails
 - Distributed Ambassador Taking Points for local promotion



Work Underway

- Seeking SMRC support
- Lobbying Federal and State Governments for support
- Developing a Sponsorship Policy
- Developing a Strategic Plan
- Finalising Village Precinct Trail and Gravel Grinder map concepts
- Endeavouring to secure and trademark "Australia's Greatest Rail Trail", marketing concept
- Investigating Rail Trail lease arrangements
- Proposing a consultancy to understand actual Rail Trail Maintenance Costs & Funding Opportunities
- Developing the Australia Rail Trail Concept (based on NZ experience) marketing concept
- Updating Banners, merchandise, and promotional material
- Seeking a prominent Australian as a Patron
- Commencing Trail Development Plan scoping document /brief for a consultant
- Considering options for use of existing rail tracks for tourism opportunities
- Understanding Rail Heritage values
- Invitation to Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC to engage
- On-going programme of Community consultation.



Background Information

The vision of utilising the disused corridor has been discussed since 1989 after the last train to Cooma.

MRT Inc. was formed in 2015 to investigate developing a Rail Trail similar to other successful trails in North East Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland and New Zealand. Substantial community consultation was undertaken including stalls at markets, promotions by retailers and meetings in towns and villages.

MRT Inc. raised over \$12,500 through Crowd Funding within a week for a pre-Feasibility Study in 2018. The Snowy Monaro Regional Council subsequently funded the Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study 2019 which is on the Council Website.

The MRT development is unique in that it will bring benefits to each town and village immediately by creating segments of the trail along its entire length in Stage 1 which is completely within NSW.

Consultation has also occurred with Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (approx. 30km of rail trail in this LGA) as well as ACT Government (for links from Canberra).

Vision Mission

Attachment #2 indicates the Vision, Purpose, Aims and Values of Monaro Rail Trail Inc.

Benefits

It is apparent that every rail trail throughout Australia and elsewhere in the World provides considerable benefits. A summary is provided as Attachment #3.

Economic

It is projected that the complete Monaro Rail Trail will deliver annual economic benefits of \$24.42 M pa, primarily to small business in towns and villages struggling after recent adversities of drought, bushfire, and reduced tourism due COVID-19. These benefits will continue long after Snowy 2.0 construction is completed. A summary of Expenditure and Economic Benefits is included as Attachment #4.

Employment

It is conservatively estimated that 60 FTE local jobs will be created over the 2 years of construction. The work packages will be structured to enable small contractors to participate.

Additional, experience on other Rail Trail Trails indicates that perhaps 150 FTE additional jobs will be created by small businesses engaged in hospitality, accommodation, transport, retail and tourism.

Health & Wellbeing

There are numerous articles indicating the enormous benefit derived by people who exercise outdoors, both physically and mentally. These benefits are included in the MRT Feasibility Study 2019 (Ref #1.)



Heritage

The project aims to work with other organisations to enhance the preservation of railway assets. This will include sections of track left intact for possible Tourist Rail use, preservation of NSW Heritage listed bridges at Ingelara Creek and Bredbo and maintenance of the Colinton Tunnel and rail sidings.

Signage will explain the Indigenous and European heritage at particular locations including to designated locations off the route.

Particularly for international visitors, the MRT also provides an opportunity to explain the varied agricultural features and local industries e.g. shearing sheds.

Link to Local Precincts, Attractions and Businesses

The MRT will facilitate links to local cycle/walking precincts in each town and village which will encourage visits to such attractions as Lake Wallace in Nimmitabel, Murrumbidgee River at Bredbo and Cooma, Platypus viewing at Bombala.

Importantly, links will provide access to businesses and services such as accommodation, cafes, general stores, bike shops, transport points, clothing/retail providers and tourist attractions. Each town and village will have **Town Precinct Trails** developed to take users on a tour of the Town. Each town and village will have links to **Gravel Grinder Trails** developed to take users into the quiet rural roads adjacent each town. Each town and village will have links to **Mountain Bike Trails**. **The MRT will be the Monaro Spine to link a truly amazing bike/walking experience.**

MRT Inc is engaging with local Communities for their input into local attractions, possible trails and services available.

Evidence of Benefits from the recently completed Tumbarumba- Rosewood Rail Trail

As an indication of success, the 21km Tumbarumba – Rosewood Rail Trail was completed in early March 2020 and has had typically 1600 persons per month, even with COVID-19 travel restrictions. With more than 6,000 rail trail users over 4 months (including the COVID lock down) rail trail management confidently expects to exceed the Economic Benefit of \$1.5 M stated in the Business Case.

Several stores have increased business substantially (30-50% at Rosewood stores and Tumba Bike & Blooms) and many have diversified to cater for rail trail cyclists and walkers. There are many and varied stories of growth and success arising from within these Communities.

The MRT Feasibility Study 2019 (Ref #1) estimated that each year 65,000 people would undertake the full trip on the completed Monaro Rail Trail. Thousands of others will ride shorter sections such as day trip from Canberra to Michelago or Cooma to Nimmitabel and then use shuttle bus return.



Risk Management

There are a number of Risks to be considered and managed;

- Biosecurity managed through Local Land Services and Farmers
- Biosecurity managed by trail design and user education
- Financial probity managed through SMRC
- Project management through appointment of competent contractors and processes.

Construction

Construction is proposed over 2-3 years with Stage 1 (99 km) involving 10km around each of the 4 Town/Villages of Michelago, Bredbo, Cooma, Nimmitabel and 20km at Bombala with a completed trail from Queanbeyan/Canberra to Michelago of 49 km. There is significant community support for the MRT in each of these towns & villages and commencing various sections will provide a project of common interest in which they each have a part, reduce jealousy/rivalry and enable work packages suitable for local contractors. The section between Queanbeyan and Canberra will be the most popular by users, particularly since it is envisaged there will be links from the Canberra Airport, Hume and ACT.

Stages 1, 2 & 3 will progressively link the towns and villages as well as establish toilets, refurbish railway shelter sheds, provide signage and small power supplies for re-charging of mobility scooters and e-bikes.

The project schedule is shown in a Gantt Chart as Attachment #5.

The scope of the work will involve fencing and bridge repair where necessary, replacement of some timber bridges with concrete culverts, removal of steel rails (with sale proceeds establishing a Maintenance Fund to support on-going maintenance costs), levelling ballast and providing 2.5m wide sealed (or gravel in certain locations) surface, gates, farm management structures and trailhead parking and construction of highway underpasses for safe cycle crossings. Trail design will address allowance for service vehicles to provide maintenance such as weed control.

Like the recently completed and highly successful Tumbarumba-Rosewood Rail Trail, a competent experienced Project Manager would be engaged reporting to the MRT Trail Management Committee of Council.

Transfer of Rail Easement Responsibility

The entire 213km x 40m rail easement is currently owned by NSW Government. For the rail trail to be established, responsibility for the easement would need to be transferred to the Snowy Monaro Regional Council (183km) and Queanbeyan Palerang Council (30km).

The easement including the rail trail and associated facilities could be managed by Council Sub-Committees as is done with many other rail trails in Victoria, South Australia and Queensland or Community Trust.



Transfer of responsibility would need to occur prior to the start of construction and may be achieved through issue of Lease/Licence (to allow immediate construction to commence) and eventually title transfer.

The issue of a Lease or License would also enable other future options (such as a proposed Canberra-Eden Railway) to be considered if NSW Transport, as is usually the case, maintains its rights to the corridor.

Maintenance

The cost of maintaining the 213km rail trail varies depending on surface. A sealed trail has reduced maintenance cost compared to a gravel surface. However, there are other costs including weed control, fencing repairs, and drainage and asset maintenance which are common irrespective of trail surface.

Based on experience of other Australian rail trails, it is anticipated that maintenance costs of the Monaro Rail Trail could be in the order of \$400,000 per annum as indicated in Attachment# 4 and based on Australian and Otago Rail Trail annual expenditure. This is considerably less than the estimate based on US data included in the 2019 Feasibility Study. A comprehensive Discussion Paper (Reference #2) has been developed to analyse Australian maintenance costs and funding, however reliable information is difficult to source. Confidence would be enhanced by a Consultant formally approaching many Local Governments with Rail Trail experience.

Councils will obviously have concern regarding the impact on ratepayers. Such impact can be minimised by the sale of the steel rails, which are estimated to be valued at over \$1M, based on Tumbarumba Rail Trail experience, to create a Maintenance Fund. This will supplement other sources of income including the sale of "Rail Passports" to be stamped at small businesses, sponsorships, commercial franchises, merchandise sales and work by volunteers.

Consequently MRT Inc. estimates that the annual residual Maintenance cost to SMRC after sharing with Queanbeyan-Palerang Council, would be approximately \$150 thousand per annum. This could be further reduced if some of the funding the NSW Government pays John Holland to maintain the corridor was transferred to Council. To increase confidence in both maintenance costs, methods of delivery and opportunities for raising revenue to offset costs, consideration should be given to seeking a NSW Government Grant for a reputable consultant to undertake a review of Rail Trail Maintenance strategies (scope, costs, revenue) across Australia and NZ and make recommendations of "best practices". Such information would be valuable to all Councils who have or are considering Rail Trails.



References

- #1 MRT Feasibility Study 2019 for Snowy Monaro Regional Council on SMRC Website
- #2 Maintenance and Recovery Costs for the Monaro Rail Trail Discussion Paper 11 October 2020

Attachments

- #01 MRT Map
- #02 MRT Inc. Vision Purpose, Aims and Values
- #03 Benefits of Established Rail Trails
- #04 Expenditure and Economic Benefit Table
- #05 Works Schedule Gantt chart
- #06 MRT Talking Points
- #07 MRT Maintenance Discussion Paper
- #08 NSW Minister Toole's Speech to Parliament
- #09 Sen Molan Newsletter of 23 October 2020 extract "Shout Out - Monaro Rail Trail"
- #10 MRT Organization Chart
- #11MRT Meet the Team

Compiled on 2 November on behalf of MRT Inc by;

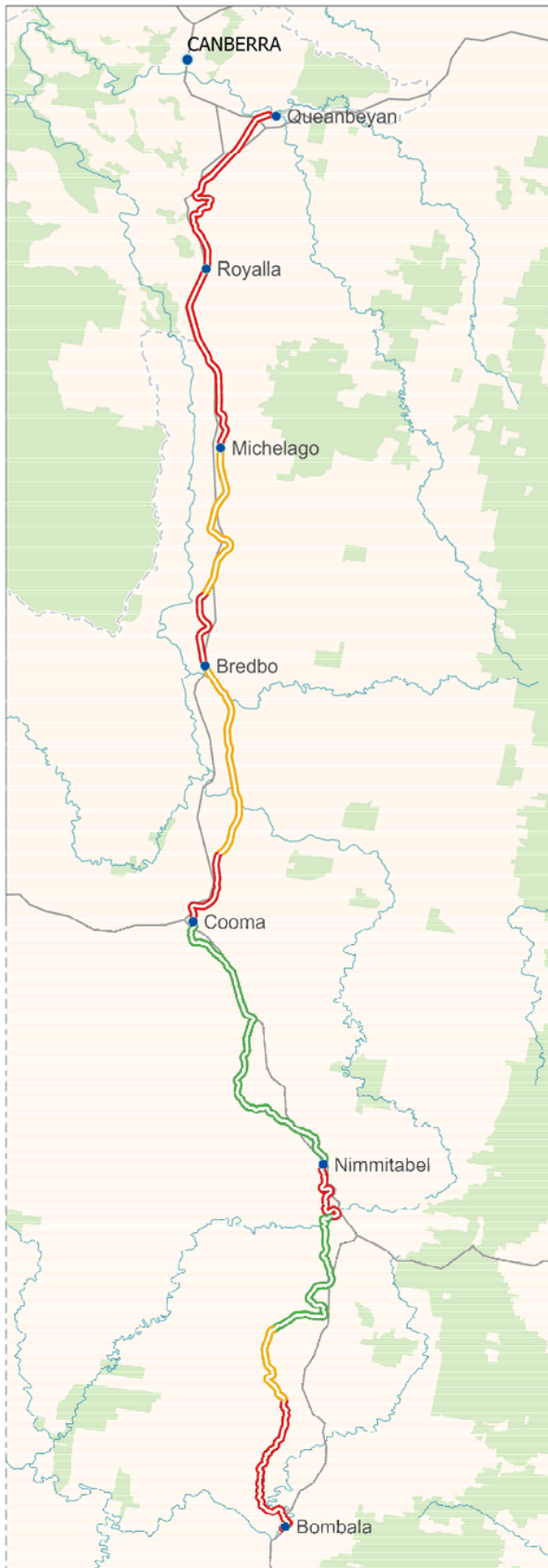
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Andrew Carter BSc, PGDip Business Administration

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Frank Bakker BEng. (Mech.)

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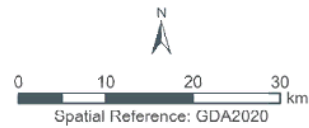


Proposed Development

Development Stages

- Stage 1 (99 km)
- Stage 2 (56 km)
- Stage 3 (58 km)

- Major road
- National park / state forest



Prepared by: Raelene Forbes
 Date: 15/09/2020

Sources:
 Administrative boundaries © Commonwealth of Australia (Geoscience Australia) 2016
 Transport, topographic data © Department of Finance, Services and Innovation 2018

Disclaimer: Map created by Monaro Rail Trail Inc (MRT). While the map has been created with all due care, MRT does not guarantee or represent the map to be free of errors or omissions. Each user of this map is responsible for determining its suitability for their intended use or purpose. MRT and its employees, officers, agents or representatives gives no warranty in relation to the data (including accuracy, reliability, completeness, currency or suitability) and accepts no liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for any loss, damage or costs (including consequential damage) relating to any use. © Monaro Rail Trail Inc. 2020

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MONARO RAIL TRAIL Inc.

Our Vision

The Monaro Rail Trail is Australia's Greatest

Our Purpose

To contribute to our regional and local communities through sustainable economic growth, health and wellbeing, while enhancing our environment and preserving our rail heritage

Our Aims

1. To ensure the rail corridor activity enhances sustainable economic growth of the region
2. To deliver many, vibrant and varied business opportunities and jobs in Australia's High Country
3. To deliver a multi-use recreation trail primarily suited to cycling, walking and running that allows for other compatible activities consistent with the short and the long term active recreation needs of the region, including compatible rail use where practical
4. To provide our community residents and visitors with opportunities to contribute to their good health and wellbeing
5. To deliver the best corridor outcome for the region's community through partnerships with the Private Sector, Governments and Philanthropy
6. To work constructively with adjacent landowners in rural land management matters
7. To use the corridor to facilitate environmental enhancement
8. To facilitate knowledge of the region, including Indigenous, European, Agricultural and Rail Heritage
9. To deliver a funding approach and business plan that will not burden local government or the community
10. To link and help unite the region's villages and towns
11. To provide an opportunity to supplement and enhance the Jindabyne Activation Precinct and form part of Australia's premier year-round alpine destination
12. To preserve the corridor for current and future generations
13. To deliver Game Changer 10 in the Snowy Monaro Destination Management Plan 2019
14. To collaborate with like-minded organisations



Our Values

Ensure we represent a broad cross-section of community views

Strive for high safety, environmental, risk & quality outcomes

Learn from reflection and process improvement

Work to achieve community aspirations

Achieve financial probity

Aim for Best Practice

#3 attachment



Rail Trail Benefits

The Snowy Monaro Regional Council funded feasibility study suggested the economic gain to the Monaro is in the order of \$25 million per year. This is primarily in the accommodation and hospitality sector but new business opportunities exist, in bike hire and servicing, for shuttle bus services and for tour operators. Observations of rail trails elsewhere in Australia and in New Zealand have shown that farming landholders have taken the opportunity to establish on farm B&B style accommodation. There is also the opportunity for localized mini tours and adventure add on such as kayaking on the Murrumbidge at Bredbo.

A primary reason for rail trails being so popular is that they offer safe off-road recreational opportunities. Both individuals and families prefer this safe environment for cycling, running and or walking.

In Canberra, running and cycling groups have spoken of the need for trails that allow for off road events. In past years such groups have been able to use quiet country roads around Canberra but as local roads have become busier, NSW authorities are discouraging these events on open roads and the proposed rail trail will be a much safer alternative.

Rail trails around the world offer school groups the opportunity for science excursions and adventure trips. There is no reason that this would be any different on the MRT given the large number of school groups in towns and villages along the Monaro rail corridor.

In rural areas rail trails can be conservation corridors. Local land care groups are interested in these corridors as they can be refuges for endangered species - plant and animal. Many rail trail care groups also engage in revegetation projects.

Where the trails pass through urban areas different user groups take advantage of them. Walkers, runners, young families with strollers and people on mobility scooters make great use of these recreational paths.

A strong and successful tourism activity such as the MRT can bring confidence to small communities. This positivity often spawns new activities small communities thought not possible. For example, one little village on the Otago rail trail now hosts a ukulele festival. Others host charity rides and running events. Indeed, there are some who say the rail trail has brought international recognition of the Otago region in NZ.

MONARO RAIL TRAIL

EXPENDITURE/ECONOMIC BENEFIT/MAINTENANCE COSTS

ATTACHMENT 4

15092020 V4

	QUEANBEYAN TO MICHELAGO		MICHELAGO TO BREDBO		BREDBO TO COOMA		COOMA TO NIMMITABEL		NIMMITABEL TO BOMBALA		COMPLETED km	EXPENDITURE \$M	ECONOMIC BENEFIT \$M	MAINTENANCE COST \$ per annum
STAGE 1														
KILOMETRES	49		10		10		-		10	20	99			148500
EXPENDITURE \$M		8.18		1.84		1.93				4.65	23.57			
ECONOMIC BENEFIT \$M		4.98		1.15		1.15				3.44		10.72		
STAGE 2														
KILOMETRES			20		26		-		10		56			84000
EXPENDITURE \$M				6.72		13.75				1.55	25.96			
ECONOMIC BENEFIT \$M				2.29		3.61				1.15		7.05		
STAGE 3														
KILOMETRES							38		20		58			87000
EXPENDITURE \$M							5.89			3.1	13.29			
ECONOMIC BENEFIT \$M							4.36			2.29		6.65		
TOTALS	49		30		36		38		10	50	213	62.82	24.42	319500

NOTE: Expenditure numbers exclude GST

Based on Monaro Rail Trail Feasibility Study 2019

ID	Task Mode	% Complete	Task Name	Duration	Start	2021		2022				2023	
						2nd Half Qtr 3	1st Half Qtr 4	1st Half Qtr 1	2nd Half Qtr 2	2nd Half Qtr 3	1st Half Qtr 4	1st Half Qtr 1	2nd Half Qtr 2
1													
2		7%	Monaro Rail Trail Project Plan	975 days?	Mon 19/08/19								
3		41%	Initial Consultation Phase	358 days?	Mon 19/08/19								
16		9%	Build the Organisation Structure	121 days?	Thu 7/05/20								
24		0%	Detailed Investigation Phase	125 days	Thu 24/09/20								
43		0%	Follow up Consultations	145 days	Thu 22/10/20								
56		0%	NSW Gov Legislation Changes	20 days	Thu 29/04/21								
59		0%	Securing Funding	20 days	Thu 13/05/21								
62		0%	Construction Phase	502 days?	Thu 10/06/21								
63		0%	Stage 1	201 days?	Thu 10/06/21								
76		0%	Stage 2	241 days?	Fri 18/03/22								
86		0%	Stage 3	181 days?	Fri 2/09/22								

Project: MRT Attachment 5 Date: Wed 16/09/20	Task		Inactive Summary		External Tasks
	Split		Manual Task		External Milestone
	Milestone		Duration-only		Deadline
	Summary		Manual Summary Rollup		Progress
	Project Summary		Manual Summary		Manual Progress
	Inactive Task		Start-only		
Inactive Milestone		Finish-only			



Talking points for MRT ambassadors

Rail trails are successful where ever they are built.

1. Rail trails are common in other Australian states, in NZ, in Europe and USA and Canada but NSW has only one.
2. NSW has over 2800km of disused rail line but only one rail trail (of 25km)
3. The Queanbeyan to Bombala rail line of 213km has had no train service since 1989 and could be repurposed as Australia's best rail trail.

The Monaro Rail Trail uses an abandoned public asset.

1. Puts the disused corridor to use but preserves it for any future rail service.
2. Conserves and maintains heritage listed rail infrastructure – bridges, sidings, the tunnel and enhances the heritage listed railway stations.
3. Encourages a new and sustainable tourism activity in the region.

The Monaro Rail Trail is for locals too

1. Creates a recreation trail for walkers, runners and cyclist.
2. Provides a safe off-road recreation asset for locals and tourists.
3. Creates opportunities for related events – charity rides and runs, school excursions.

The Monaro Rail Trail creates business

1. Creates new business opportunities in the hospitality and tourism sector.
2. Spreads business activity throughout the year - the winter season is already saturated.
3. Takes tourists into villages and towns not part of the existing alpine tourism market.

The Monaro Rail Trail feasibility study completed in November 2019

1. Reported that the MRT has all the ingredients for success – the appealing and varied landscape, the placement of villages and towns and the big user market place of Canberra/Queanbeyan.
2. Indicated that the MRT will boost the hospitality industry as rail trail users sought food, refreshments and accommodation.
3. Pointed to new business opportunities in bike hire, shuttle services and tour planners and operators.
4. Estimated the economic gains to be \$25m per year.

The Monaro Rail Trail is compatible with planning at many levels

1. State planning in transport, regional development and tourism.
2. Council planning in tourism, heritage protection.



Maintenance costs and cost recovery for the Monaro Rail Trail -a discussion paper

Funding the operational costs of the MRT is a topic that must be addressed. In this discussion paper the anticipated operational cost is reviewed and the question of how the three primary stakeholders will pay for the cost is raised. Most importantly there is the need to look at income generation as a means of offsetting operational costs.

A. Maintenance costs -estimation

The SMRC funded feasibility study suggested that maintenance costs of the proposed MRT could be in the order of \$850,000 per annum. At MRT Inc we feel this figure may be high and question its origin.

In the feasibility report it was stated that actual information on maintenance costs is hard to obtain and the authors have therefore used information from the USA to derive an annual maintenance cost of A\$4000 per km. They do consider this to be a high-end estimate. MRT Inc has obtained data from, firstly a NZ government report on maintenance of the top 22 NZ cycle trails (1), and secondly from budget data of, the Otago Central Rail Trail Trust in NZ and the Clare Valley Riesling trail in South Australia. This information suggests a much lower maintenance cost on the MRT may be possible, perhaps in the order of A\$1500 per km or \$320,000 per annum

Data presented in Table 1 below, clearly illustrates that there is a big difference in estimates of maintaining rural cycle paths. We believe that the data for the Otago Rail Trail is accurate in its collection and is relevant to the MRT because of similarities of climate and type of trail. The low rainfall environment in particular contributes to less erosion of the trail surface. The Otago Trail has several large steel bridges whereas the MRT has more bridges, and although of shorter length they are of timber construction, so extra allowance may need to be made for upkeep of bridges on the MRT corridor. Nevertheless, the real-life Otago Rail Trail data does suggest that maintenance on the MRT could well be much less than \$850,000 suggested in the feasibility report. A figure of \$400,000 is realistic.

[1] Monaro Rail Trail

A discussion paper

MRT7.3 31 Oct. 2020



Source of data	Nature of data and date of report	Cost per km	Total cost per year for MRT of 213 km
The SMRC Draft Feasibility report 2019 refers to USA data	USA data not necessarily specific to rural cycle trails. Dated 2005	A\$4000	A\$852,000
NZ Government (1)	Data averaged for 22 rural cycle trails. Dated 2015	A\$1258	A\$267,954
NZ Government (1)	Data specific to Otago Central Rail Trail. Dated 2015	A\$1110	A\$236,430
NZ Government Dept of Conservation. (2)	Budget for Otago Central Rail Trail 2019/20 Note 1	A\$1560	A\$332,280
Clare Valley Riesling Trail South Australia 2019	Operating Budget 2019 Note 2	\$1181	\$251,553

Table 1. Comparison of trail maintenance costs using data from different sources. Note1. This maintenance cost covers; trail surface, amenity and structure maintenance, weed control and structural inspections by qualified staff. Note 2 This covers trail surface, weed control and asset maintenance.

B. Income to offset maintenance costs

The cost of maintaining the MRT need not be an additional expense for the three primary stake holders and their rate payers. Government financial support and income generation by the MRT should contribute significantly to offset operational costs.

In the long term it is expected that as rail trails become more common in NSW, the government will provide funds for maintenance as it does with other public infrastructure such as footpaths and cycle paths. Rail trails will then apply for grants from that funding line.

Will trail users pay for the experience? Rail trails are immensely appealing and provide users with a high level of satisfaction. Users are therefore prepared to contribute in many and different ways to maintenance funding. Unlike many popular national parks with defined entry points where user pay fees can easily be collected, rail trails have many entry/exit points and there can be no similar fee collection mechanism. Alternative mechanisms for income streams are necessary. Some of these are evaluated and shown in the Table3 & 4 below. The first table lists fund raising options of a fairly high predictability and the second suggests possible activities that might emerge with time. From these projections it is reasonable that annual operation expenses could be offset by an income stream of \$225,000.

[2] Monaro Rail Trail



Ideas for income generation on the MRT

Activity of high certainty	Comment	Possible \$ value of activity	Income per annum
Proceeds of sale of rail steel put into an Investment Fund	In the Tumarumba RT proceeds from sale of rail were kept in the project.	MRT rail steel sale proceeds net \$1,000,000. Assume annual return of 3.5%.	\$35,000
Passports sold in MRT supporter stores	On the Otago Rail Trail 13% of users make this purchase. Net profit of \$10 per passport.	MRT has 65,000 users, 8,500 purchase a \$10 Passport.	\$85,000
Supporting businesses buy advertising on MRT website and brochures	Based on income generation on the Otago Rail Trail	Website \$50,000 Print \$25,000	\$75,000
Grants e.g. Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, Boco Roco, NSW Heritage, others			\$10,000
Donations via electronic donation boxes on MRT website and key entry points to the rail trail. (scan a QR code and link to MRT donation website)	Security dictates that we cannot have cash donation boxes on the trail. An increasingly cashless society also means we collect donations electronically.		\$10,000
Billboard advertising in rail corridor	Already in place near Royalla and Michelago	Advertisers each currently paying \$8000 per annum to the advertising agency, MRT takes the commission (instead of NSW Government)	\$5,000
Tangible income in early years			\$225,000

Table 2. Potential for income generation using recognised means and activities.

Income producing activities that will emerge with time	Comment	Annual value of the activity
MRT Annual charity ride- Merchandise sales- Events by other cycle or run groups that pay a fee-	These will develop with time as MRT user numbers increase and the Management Trust grows in confidence	\$20,000

Table 3. Other income producing activities that will emerge over time as user numbers increase and opportunities for income generation arise.



C. Net operational costs

The data presented suggest that annual operational costs given in the original feasibility study may be high and that a lesser figure of \$400,000 is realistic for the MRT. Also, we have indicated that a significant income stream can be generated to offset those costs. The net result is an annual operational cost of less than \$200,000 that will need to be met.

Anticipated operation expense	Anticipated income stream	Net expenses to be shared by stakeholders
\$400,000	\$225,000	\$175,000

Table 4. Net operational expenses for MRT

D. Cost sharing by stakeholders

The 213km rail corridor traverses the shires of Queanbeyan Palerang, 30km, and Snowy Monaro, 183km. At first glance this factor of length of traverse maybe a simple way of cost sharing but there is an argument that the ACT Government should be included in cost sharing arrangements. The ACT borders the western side of the rail corridor from Queanbeyan to a point near Williamsdale, a length of 30km. It will be Canberra riders who dominate the user demographics and Canberra accommodation and hospitality business sectors that stand to gain from the increased interstate tourism related to the rail trail. Perhaps the QPRC and the ACT should have an equal role in cost sharing along that 30km segment of the rail trail.

In Table 5 below, the net operational cost of maintaining the line is apportioned to the three stakeholders and done on the basis of each stakeholder's exposure to the rail corridor. It is apparent that the real cost of supporting the MRT is very small for the QPRC and the ACT government. For the SMRC the cost is larger but well outweighed by the benefits to each of the communities along the rail corridor.

Stakeholder	Length of access to rail corridor (total length 213km)	Cost Sharing percent	Cost to be apportioned \$175,000
Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council	30km (approximate)	7.5	\$13,125
ACT Government	30km (approximate)	7.5	\$13,125
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	183km	85.0	\$148,750

Table 5. A simplistic approach to cost sharing for the 3 key stakeholders where cost is apportioned based on length of frontage to the rail corridor.



The involvement of community groups along the corridor will be important. Some will provide voluntary labour for some maintenance projects and others will see the rail trail corridor as an opportunity to enhance an existing activity e.g. showcase rail history or land-care. Judging from community participation in trail maintenance in other regions of Australia there is no reason to think the same will not happen on MRT. This is an unknown quantity but must be acknowledged.

Summary

- The three key stakeholders should be confident that annual operation costs on the MRT will not be as high as originally estimated.
- Furthermore, a significant income stream can be generated by MRT Inc to offset the cost.
- Taking into account the income stream and cost sharing by stakeholders, none of the stakeholders should be deterred from supporting the project.

References

- 1 Ngā Haerenga, The Great Rides of the New Zealand Cycle Trails: Some Benefits in Relation to Costs. A report prepared for the NZ Government Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment by Antong Victorio 5 August 2016.
- 2 New Zealand Government Dept of Conservation; Otago Central Rail Trail work forecast June 2019.

Prepared by

Andrew Carter, Fay Steward and Ken Lister



Paul Toole

Acting Deputy Premier

Acting Minister for Regional NSW, Industry and Trade

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 16 October 2020

TRANSFORMATIVE RAIL TRAIL A STEP CLOSER

Communities from Casino to Murwillumbah are set to benefit from a rail trail that will attract thousands of visitors a year and create much-needed jobs and investment for the Northern Rivers.

Acting Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Paul Toole said work will soon get underway on the Northern Rivers Rail Trail project, after legislation was passed to close two sections of the disused rail corridor.

"The NSW Government is contributing \$7.8 million to develop the Tweed stage of the project into a scenic walking and cycling trail, which will help to grow local economies along the rail corridor, increase job opportunities, and provide a safe, accessible transport option for tourists and locals," Mr Toole said.

"This project will support 200 direct and indirect jobs and once completed, the Northern Rivers Rail Trail is expected to attract more than 82,000 visitors annually, injecting much-needed cash flow into local cafes, shops and restaurants."

Member for Tweed Geoff Provest said the Rail Trail will preserve the unique heritage value of the rail corridor itself, as well as providing an alternative transport route that connects smaller rural communities to major city centres in the Northern Rivers.

"We've seen the success of NSW's pilot rail trail project from Tumbaramba to Rosewood which has delivered a vibrant revitalised area with massive tourism and recreation benefits, and we want to see this replicated in the Northern Rivers Rail Trail," Mr Provest said.

Member for Clarence Chris Gulaptis said making regional communities an even better place to live is a major priority for the NSW Government and this project is just one of the great lifestyle options being rolled out.

"The Rail Trail will be a great asset for people living in the area as well as those travelling through the region," Mr Gulaptis said.

The project is to be completed in stages, with Tweed Council leading the first stage which will redevelop 24 kilometres of track from Murwillumbah to Crabbes Creek, and Richmond Valley Council leading stage two linking 13 kilometres from Casino to Bentley.

The final stage is intended to link approximately 90 kilometres from Bentley to Crabbes Creek and is still in the early stages of development. The community will be consulted on opportunities for complementary public transport and cycling activities in this section of the corridor.

Jo Hocking | Minister Toole | 0418 379 848

EXTRACT FROM 23 OCTOBER 2020 NEWSLETTER OF SENATOR JIM MOLAN

SHOUTOUT – MONARO RAIL TRAIL

I was delighted in September to attend a meeting in Cooma with the Steering Team of the Monaro Rail Trail (MRT) Project. You don't need to be a passionate cyclist or fitness fanatic to know that rail trails—converting rail lines to riding/jogging/walking surfaces and developing extensive associated tourist services—are enjoying great success at present in Australia, New Zealand and indeed globally.

The NSW Government has confirmed that it is not feasible to upgrade or redevelop the disused rail corridor from Queanbeyan to Bombala as a rail line. MRT committee members are from communities along this route. They have been working tirelessly since August 2015 to put the line to productive use. Preserving 130+ years of railway history is an important aim: many stations, freight yards, bridges and even a small tunnel along the way are NSW Heritage listed. The timber bridges and tunnel near Bredbo reveal, in superb detail, the magnificent skills of the 1880s builders. These will be prominent attractions along the trail.

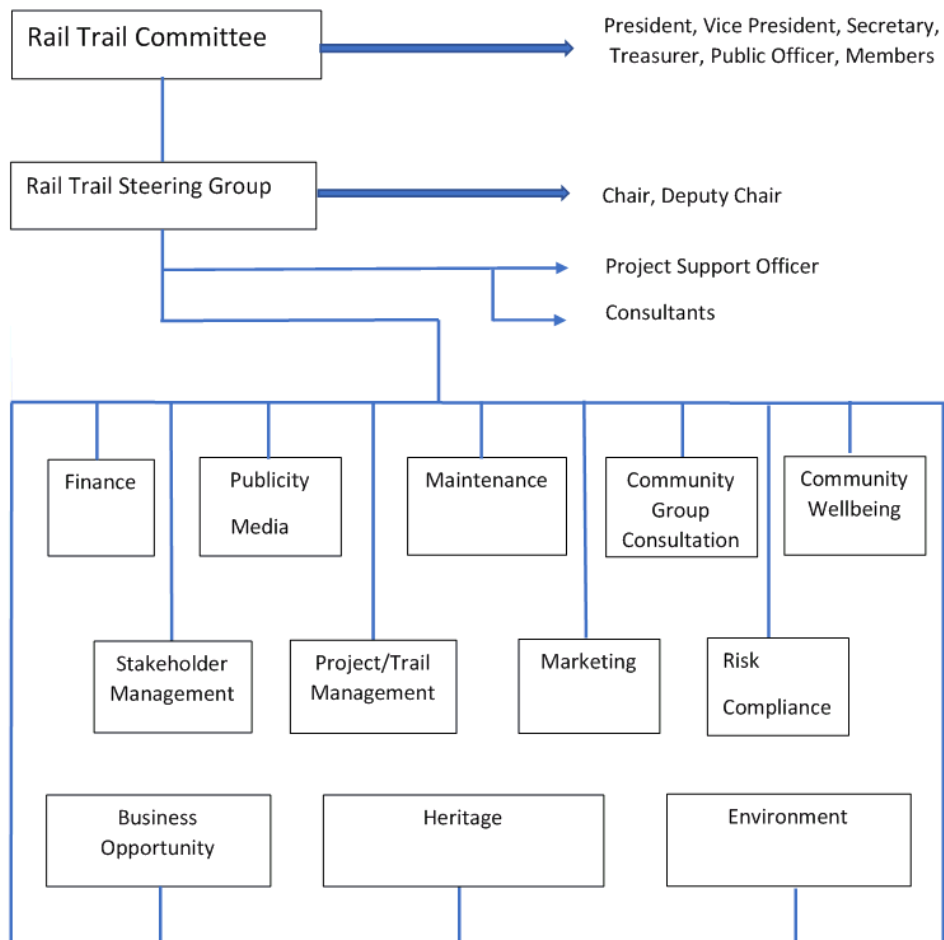
The Snowy Monaro Regional Council has conducted a feasibility study on the trail, and the draft report recommends that the trail should proceed subject to conditions being met. The MRT Steering Team has supported these findings and is keen to continue engagement with those with concerns about the proposal. That's a commitment I welcome. The team points to the sustained, significant boost to local economies along the Tumbarumba-Rosewood Rail Trail, and they proudly proclaim that the Monaro Rail Trail could be the longest and greatest in Australia. It would rival and exceed the world-famous 150km Otago Rail Trail in New Zealand.

Back to my September meeting! It is not often that I walk away from a consultation where we have 'put a tick' in the following boxes: COVID-19 recovery; bushfire recovery; mental and physical health benefits for our communities, cyclists, walkers, disabled outdoor users and visitors; revitalisation of regional tourism (including off-snow season); boosting town and village businesses; and regional employment opportunities. On top, it's all part of a wonderfully sustainable activity. The trail will turn an unproductive asset into a low impact public asset that contributes to the regional economy. Landcare groups will also help with some monitoring activities and revegetating our mighty Monaro landscape. To realise this, we need the widest community support and commitment.

I thank Cooma Community Nurse Mary Walters and the MRT Inc Committee and Steering Team for their extraordinary dedication to this project. We live in a fabulous part of Australia, and I share their desire to promote it. I look forward to working with them to secure appropriate funding for the Monaro Rail Trail Development Plan and Business Case, which are the next two action points for this magnificent project.



**MONARO RAIL TRAIL INC
 ORGANISATION STRUCTURE**





MONARO RAIL TRAIL Inc. – Meet the Team

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MRT Inc President

Mary Walters RN

Mary has worked for over 40 years as a highly respected Community Nurse in Australia, Middle East and France. She has seen first-hand how her passions of physical and mental health enhance positive well-being. As a Farmer, Mary has also experienced droughts and the associated health, financial and relationship challenges, many of which can be alleviated through exercise such as cycling and walking. This is her prime motivation to take on the role as MRT Inc President. Indeed, the proposed Monaro Rail Trail would transit her property and hence she has a sound understanding of issues of interest to Landowners. Mary recognises the great opportunity a Rail Trail would provide to benefit the physical & mental health, economic growth and well-being of the Monaro Community. Mary has a rural property east of Cooma.

MRT Inc Secretary and Public Officer

Michael Daniel

Michael Daniel has lived in Steeple Flat near Nimmitabel for the last 10 years. He is a system engineer (nearing retirement) who is currently working with Snowy Hydro in Cooma. He has cycled all his life as a tourist, to keep healthy and have fun, and to commute, when he worked in the city. He believes the rail trail would rejuvenate the economy and lifestyle of the local villages, especially villages like Nimmitabel that are not exposed to the Jindabyne centric winter and summer alpine sports tourism. He looks forward to the day he can commute to work from Nimmitabel, off road and in safe and pleasant surroundings.

MRT Inc Treasurer

Andrew Carter BSc. PGDip Business Admin.

Andrew is a resident of Canberra where he has worked in technical roles in Forestry and Botany at the ANU. He spent several years in Nepal as part of an Australian Government aid project in community forestry and saw the importance of bottom up communication when dealing with small communities. The last 15 years of his working life was in private enterprise with his award-winning small business in retail and hospitality. During this time, he served on the executive of the industry marketing group and professional associations. He and his wife have ridden many cycle trails in Europe and New Zealand and have seen how rail trails are an assured way to bring new life to small business in rural areas.



MRT Inc. STEERING GROUP MEMBERS

MRT Steering Team Leader & Team Leader - Stakeholder Management

Ken Lister BEng (Elect), CPEng, FIEAust, MAICD

Ken has over 40 years' experience in the energy industry including generation, transmission and distribution, until retiring from Snowy Hydro Ltd in 2016 as Chief Operating Officer. In this role, Ken was responsible the safety, operations, engineering & maintenance as well as CAPEX and OPEX projects of this multi-state business with assets approx. \$3Bn and responsibility for over 300 personnel. Ken has been Member and Chair of several NFP Boards including as Australian Lead for the guidance and support of a Children's Home in Uganda. Ken resides in Cooma.

MRT Team Leader – Finance

Andrew Carter BSc. PGDip Business Admin.

MRT Team Leader - Project Management

David Byrne BEng (Civil), PGDip Management, CPEng, MIEAust

Dave has over 35 years' experience in project management and leadership including Director of Engineering Services - Cooma-Monaro Shire Council, Quality Manager Special Projects - NSW Public Works, Drainage Agent - Costains Civil Engineering UK. Dave also held various industry and leadership roles including: Secretary of the South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc. 13 years, Executive Committee member of the NSW Water Directorate 11 years, Chair of the Monaro Group Engineers Australia 13 years, Cooma Rotary 14 years. David resides in Cooma.

MRT Team Leader – Risk & Compliance

Peter Coumbis LLM (Syd), MCom (NSW), Dip Prac Man (QLS)

Peter recently stepped down as General Counsel of the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) in North Queensland. His role at AIMS since 2009 focussed on corporate management and government policy as well as preparing contracts in relation to intellectual property, commercial property, construction law, vessel charters, research collaborations, IT and consultancy service agreements. Peter's role included acting as its Senior Lawyer, Manager of the Commercial Services Group, its FOI and Privacy Officer and PID Act Investigator. Peter has had a long career in the private sector which included senior commercial partner with Ashurst and corporate counsel at Westfield. Since moving to Cooma, he has taken up the honorary roles of director and chairperson at the Sir William Hudson Nursing Home and continues to



be engaged in legal work on a part-time basis as Special Counsel for AIMS and for various Commonwealth government agencies in a consultancy capacity. Peter resides in Cooma.

MRT Team Leader – Media & Publicity

John Sim BA, Dip Ed

John has been a Secondary School Teacher inspiring youth his love of Geography and the outdoors for 38 years. He currently works on a casual basis as a Discovery Ranger in the Kosciuszko National Park where he can share his love of nature assisting in the education of School Students and in a liaison role with the general public. John is a keen cross-country skier, cyclist and currently President of the Cooma Cycling Club which comprises about 100 active Participants in this relatively small Town. John has strong positive network with other Community organisations and uses his influence to encourage people of all ages to develop their physical, mental and emotional potential. John resides on a rural property north of Cooma.

MRT Team Leader – Maintenance

Frank Bakker BEng, MIEAust

Frank is a Mechanical Engineer with 40 years' experience in the Power Industry. The last 15 years he has been actively in Project Management, currently working in a project operational readiness specialist role. Frank is an avid bushwalker, cross country skier and cyclist. He has qualifications as a white-water instructor and sea kayak senior instructor. Now resident in Cooma for 32 years, with wife and two adult sons. He is keen to expand and promote activities for both residents and visitors in the Monaro and sees the Monaro Rail Trail as a great way to do this.

MRT Inc. SPECIALIST CONSULTANTS

MRT Team – Business Specialist

Kathy Kelly BEc, FCA, GAICD

Kathy is a chartered accountant and registered company auditor with over 30 years of experience. As a Director of Boyce Chartered Accountants (1989 - 2019), she managed the firm's Cooma office and provided specialist tax and audit services to agribusinesses, and business advisory services to clients ranging from small businesses and charities through to larger agricultural clients. Kathy also led the Cooma Chamber of Commerce as President from 2015 until 2018, a period in which membership tripled and the Chamber was awarded Best Chamber Far South Coast with the NSW Business Chamber for both the 2017 and 2018 years which led to State Finals. Kathy now undertakes charity work and non-executive directorship positions. Kathy has a strong understanding of charities and not for profits including the governance requirements around these entities. She is passionate about contributing to regional and rural areas. Kathy resides in Cooma.



MRT Team – Planning Specialist

Fay Steward BSc, PGDip Urban & Regional Planning, PGDip Business Admin.

Fay's career spans some 40 years developing strategic land use policy and strategy for NSW Government land planning and management agencies, as well as entrepreneurial roles with Vodafone, and venture capital firms in the telecommunications industry. She has held executive management roles in the private and public sectors; most recently as Executive Director Land Planning and Management for the ACT Government. Here, Fay was responsible for Canberra's urban services, National Arboretum Canberra, commercial forests, and national parks. Fay has worked with many community organisations to establish co-operative agreements managing public land for community benefit. Now retired and living in Bega, Fay is a small-scale beekeeper, and Director of the SE Region Local Land Services Board. As a cyclist, she is keen to assist development of trails throughout NSW for all ages and abilities.

MRT Team - Map Based Technology Specialist

Raelene Forbes BE, BSc.

Skills and Experience

After a stint as an educator, Raelene found her calling working with maps and map data. Her 14 years' experience in the spatial industry includes roles in both private industry and government, working in the fields of navigation, natural resource management, agriculture, biosecurity and utilities. In her current role at Snowy Hydro, she is responsible for leading a strategic program to implement and integrate map based technologies and processes to better support safety, operational effectiveness and decision making. Having spent part of her teenage years growing up in the Hunter Valley, Raelene can clearly see the range of opportunity the Monaro Rail Trail will bring to the region in which she and her family now call home. She knows good maps and map data will be needed to inform the project. More importantly they will allow the community and all other stakeholders to engage with the project in a way that is accessible, familiar and easily understood.

MRT Team – Accounting and Finance Specialist

Tom Bartlett BComm, CPA, MBA

Skills and Experience

Tom has over 25 years of experience in operationally-focused Finance roles within the Manufacturing, Mining & Energy industries. Currently employed by Snowy Hydro Ltd in the role of Senior Manager - Project Accounting and Finance Services, a role which requires him to partner closely with the Asset Management & Technology team and the wider business to provide oversight, insight & foresight in relation to the Long Range Projects Budget. More specifically, Tom is responsible for the provision of quality Project Accounting services, reporting & analysis, development & review of complex financial models to support the justification of project business cases. Tom resides in Rose Valley, near Cooma.



MRT Team – Monaro Landowner Specialist

Charlie Maslin B AgEcon

Charlie has been farming in the Bombala area since the early 1980's. He is passionate about managing his property to the best of his ability and looks to maintaining ground cover, reducing weeds and returning streams to a better ecological state. A keen bike rider, he enjoys the local back roads and trails and values them as a way of seeing the beauty of the local area. He has ridden rail trails in NZ and Europe and is confident the proposed MRT would be a world class destination. Charlie is a landholder with a section of the rail corridor running through his property. He believes the rail trail might cause some inconvenience in the running of his business but looks to the long-term benefit to the district and he is excited about the prospects such a project would offer to this region, especially for the Bombala community.

10.6 BICENTENNIAL GARDEN/ PARKS - BOMBALA

Record No:

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
Author: Councillor Sue Haslingden
Attachments: Nil

Councillor Suzanne Haslingden has given notice that at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 19 November 2020, she will move the following motion.

MOTION

That Council:

- A. Ensures that gardens, trees and significant plantings in all parks throughout Snowy Monaro Regional Council area, are not impacted by any works or developments. These sites and plantings are to be protected by a Conservation Management Plan that will manage parks and gardens, with a Tree Management Plan developed to ensure that trees are conserved into the future;
- B. Acknowledge that the Bombala Bicentennial Garden is significant to the community;
- C. Assess the Bombala Bicentennial Garden by a heritage expert for inclusion on Council's Heritage Listing;
- D. Explain to the Community what alternatives were considered that required removal of trees;
- E. Explain to the Community whether any construction methods were investigated that could have saved the trees; and
- F. Confirm whether an arborist was consulted.

BACKGROUND

On the 21 October, the Bombala Community woke to find that precious trees in the Bicentennial Garden had been chopped down and quickly cleaned up and removed in preparation of the development of a pump site within the park associated with the Bombala Sewerage Upgrade Project. Numerous trees were destroyed. These trees were planted in 1988, planted to a landscape architects plan under the guidance of the Bicentennial Committee, a community representative group.

Berridale nearly lost very old heritage memorial trees due to lack of consultation and awareness.

Yet to demolish one tree in Cooma's Centennial Park there was extensive consultation, arborists reports etc. This park is listed on the Cooma Monaro Heritage List.

It is clear that there is a lack of consistent Strategic Risk Management for major and minor projects, developments and undertakings,

Councillors have to query whether risks associated with Projects (both major, minor and developments) are being analyzed, addressed and transparently communicated so that appropriate consideration and recommendations can be determined collectively.

What is of concern to the Bombala community is a potential culture that it is an easier option to demolish/do and seek forgiveness rather than seek approval initially.

Council is urged to take action and review if sound and effective approaches had been followed in developing and providing transparent and collaborative options to Council: in this and all of the major, minor and development projects occurring and proposed.

Options need to be recommended to Council, and in cases to the community, prior to any 'in-house' decisions.

This clearly highlights a flaw in SMRC Governance procedures (what the organisation does), Administration (setting goals and the objectives) and Management (who coordinates).

Emerging Risks and Flash Risks need to be an agenda item for Council's Audit Risk and Improvement Committee. These risks need to be appropriately identified early on, and systems put in place that identify who is responsible in determining how to manage the risks.

Risk Management and the need for urgent rectification by developing a (or updating) Conservation Management Plan including a (or updated) Tree Management Plan and making sure these plans are communicated in all undertakings is a top priority for this Council.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S RESPONSE

Clause 9. 1 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice provides as follows:

9.1 Notices of Motion

- (1) *The deadline for lodging notices of motion in writing for inclusion on the business paper for consideration at any meeting of the Council, shall be eleven (11) days prior to the meeting.*
- (2) *A councillor must give notice of business in writing no later than 4.00pm on the Tuesday that follows the ordinary meeting of council.*
- (3) *At an Ordinary meeting Councillors may give notice of motions in writing to be listed as matters on the business paper for the next Ordinary meeting of Council.*
- (4) *The rules applying to the content of Questions also apply to the content of Notices of Motion.*
- (5) *Councillors are to ensure, where it is intended that staff be asked to carry out some specific defined action, that a Notice of Motion is written in such a way that, if carried, the motion carries such clear and unambiguous direction.*

The proposed motion has significant policy impacts. The first sentence in part A, as currently worded, will put in place a Council policy that will prevent many maintenance type works from being undertaken on all gardens, trees and significant plantings within parks. This will include, for example replanting, redesign and changing layout of areas, significant pruning and removing dying, dead or dangerous trees. The blanket and broad prohibition, on any works that have an impact, can also be construed to cover most maintenance works.

The development of conservation management plans for all parks has not been allowed for in the current operational plan. A further report will need to come to Council once the cost of developing these has been scoped. Plans will need to be developed for over 30 identified parks and a range of pocket parks that also exist. Before the motion could be implemented a report will need to come back to council identifying the source of funds for the project.

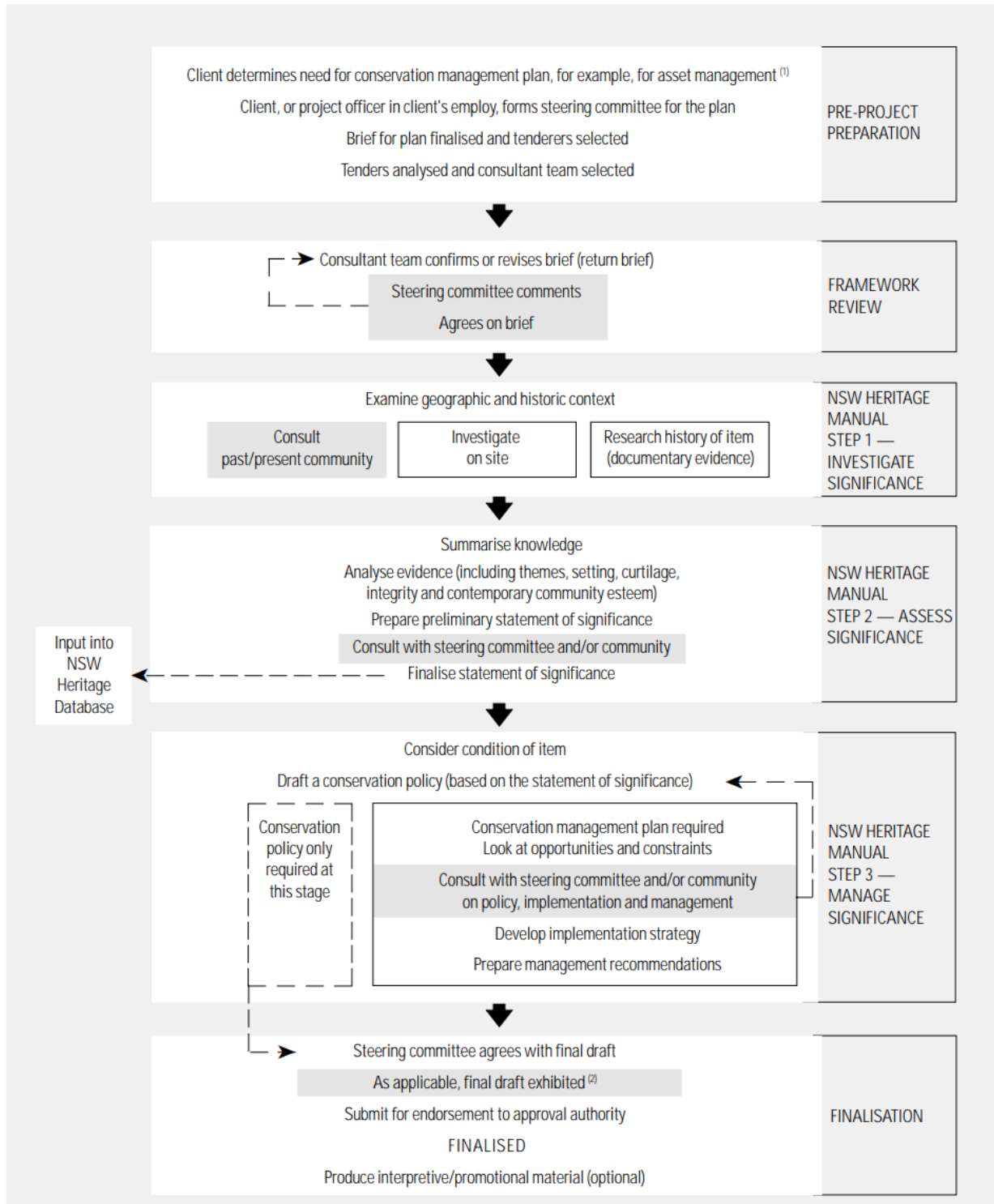
It is assumed that the motion is calling for a conservation heritage plan as defined by Heritage Act 1977. As such it would entail creating a document that—

- a) identifies the heritage significance of the park, and
 - b) sets out policies and strategies for the retention of that significance, and
-

- c) is prepared in accordance with the guidelines for the preparation of conservation management plans (if any) publicly issued from time to time by the Heritage Council.

The following diagram sets out the process for development of the conservation management plans for each park:

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN FLOW CHART



Currently the Council is working on developing plans of management for its community land. These are required under the Local Government Act and look at how the community land is to be managed and used. Council is required to have these plans in place, but their focus will be on the management of the land for community use. While this will consider any heritage value within the land, it will not meet the requirements of a conservation management plan. There may be potential to combine the two plans into a single plan where there is an individual management plan, but a number of the smaller and less complex parks and reserves will be incorporated into a generic plan of management under the accepted process for effectively managing community land.

13. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

In accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993, Council can exclude members of the public from the meeting and go into Closed Session to consider confidential matters, if those matters involve:

- (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals; or
- (b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- (c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; or
- (d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed;
 - (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or
 - (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or
 - (iii) reveal a trade secret,
- (e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law; or
- (f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property; or
- (g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege or information concerning the nature and location of a place; or
- (h) an item of Aboriginal significance on community land.

and Council considers that the closure of that part of the meeting for the receipt or discussion of the nominated items or information relating thereto is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security of such information, and discussion of the material in open session would be contrary to the public interest.

In accordance with Section 10A(4) of the Local Government Act 1993 the Chairperson will invite members of the public to make verbal representations to the Council on whether the meeting should be closed to consider confidential matters.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT pursuant to Section 10A subsections 2 & 3 and Section 10B of the Local Government Act, 1993 (as amended) the following items on the agenda for the Ordinary Council meeting be dealt with in Closed Session for the reasons specified below:

13.1 Legal Actions and Potential Claims Against SMRC as at 31 October 2020

Item 13.1 is confidential in accordance with s10(A)(2)(e) of the Local Government Act because it contains information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law and discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

2. The press and public be excluded from the proceedings of the Council in Closed Session on the basis that these items are considered to be of a confidential nature.
3. That the Minutes and Business Papers including any reports, correspondence, documentation or information relating to such matter be treated as confidential and be withheld from access by the press and public, until such time as the Council resolves that the reason for confidentiality has passed or become irrelevant.
4. That the resolutions made by the Council in Closed Session be recorded in the Minutes of the Council Meeting.
5. That upon this recommendation being moved and seconded, the Chairperson invite representations from the public as to whether this part of the meeting should be closed to consider the nominated item.