



Central Coast Council  
Business Paper  
Ordinary Council Meeting  
**09 November 2020**





# COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST IS THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP) FOR THE CENTRAL COAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST DEFINES THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND IS OUR ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE**

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST BRINGS TOGETHER EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TO SET KEY DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES**

One - Central Coast will shape and inform Council's business activities, future plans, services and expenditure. Where actions are the responsibility of other organisations, sectors and groups to deliver, Council will work with key partners to advocate on behalf of our community.

Ultimately, every one of us who live on the Central Coast has an opportunity and responsibility to create a sustainable future from which we can all benefit. Working together we can make a difference.

## RESPONSIBLE

**WE'RE A RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY, COMMITTED TO BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND DELIVERING A GREAT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN ALL OUR INTERACTIONS.** We value transparent and meaningful

communication and use community feedback to drive strategic decision making and expenditure, particularly around the delivery of essential infrastructure projects that increase the safety, liveability and sustainability of our region. We're taking a strategic approach to ensure our planning and development processes are sustainable and accessible and are designed to preserve the unique character of the coast.



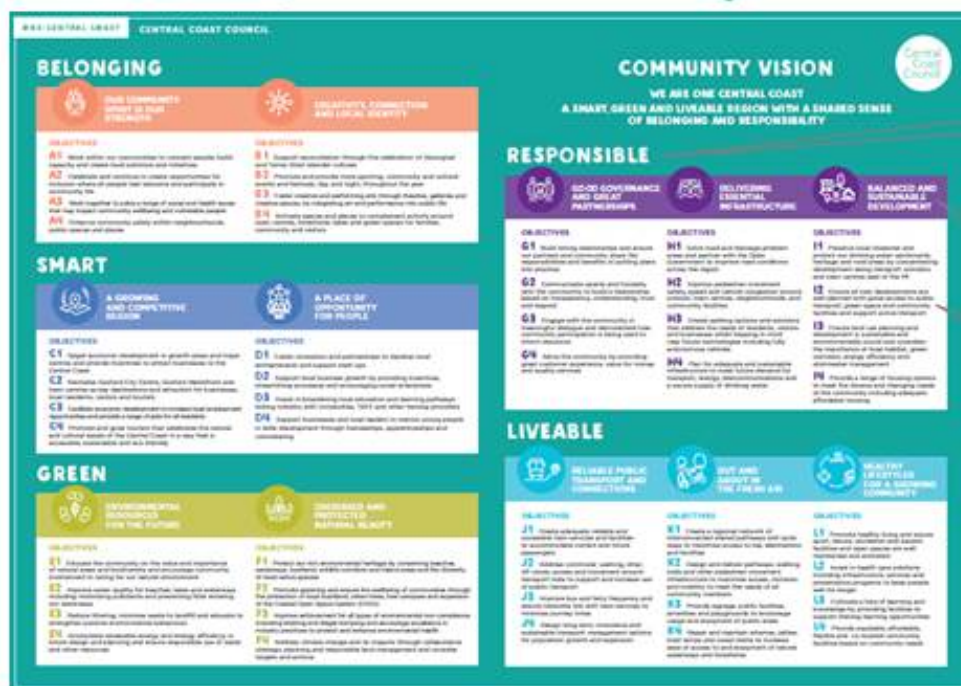
**Good governance and great partnerships**

**G2** Communicate openly and honestly with the community to build a relationship based on transparency, understanding, trust and respect

**There are 5 themes, 12 focus areas and 48 objectives**



All council reports contained within the Business Paper are now aligned to the Community Strategic Plan. Each report will contain a cross reference to a Theme, Focus Area and Objective within the framework of the Plan.



Theme  
Focus Area  
Objective



# Meeting Notice

**The Ordinary Council Meeting  
of Central Coast Council  
will be held remotely - online  
Monday 9 November 2020 at 6.30 pm,  
for the transaction of the business listed below:**

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## **5 Confidential Items**

- 5.1 Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report - INV25/2019

Jamie Loader  
**Acting Chief Executive Officer**

**Item No:** 1.1  
**Title:** Disclosures of Interest  
**Department:** Governance

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9 November 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Trim Reference: F2020/00039 - D14240924

Chapter 14 of the *Local Government Act 1993* ("LG Act") regulates the way in which the councillors and relevant staff of Council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public functions.

Section 451 of the LG Act states:

- (1) *A councillor or a member of a council committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the council or committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.*
- (2) *The councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the council or committee:*
  - (a) *at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or*
  - (b) *at any time during which the council or committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.*
- (3) *For the removal of doubt, a councillor or a member of a council committee is not prevented by this section from being present at and taking part in a meeting at which a matter is being considered, or from voting on the matter, merely because the councillor or member has an interest in the matter of a kind referred to in section 448.*
- (4) *Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to a councillor who has a pecuniary interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting, if:*
  - (a) *the matter is a proposal relating to:*
    - (i) *the making of a principal environmental planning instrument applying to the whole or a significant part of the council's area, or*
    - (ii) *the amendment, alteration or repeal of an environmental planning instrument where the amendment, alteration or repeal applies to the whole or a significant part of the council's area, and*
  - (a1) *the pecuniary interest arises only because of an interest of the councillor in the councillor's principal place of residence or an interest of another person*

## 1.1 Disclosures of Interest (contd)

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*(whose interests are relevant under section 443) in that person's principal place of residence, and*

- (b) the councillor made a special disclosure under this section in relation to the interest before the commencement of the meeting.*
- (5) The special disclosure of the pecuniary interest must, as soon as practicable after the disclosure is made, be laid on the table at a meeting of the council and must:*
  - (a) be in the form prescribed by the regulations, and*
  - (b) contain the information required by the regulations.*

Further, the Code of Conduct adopted by Council applies to all councillors and staff. The Code relevantly provides that if a councillor or staff have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed as well as providing for a number of ways in which a non-pecuniary conflicts of interests might be managed.

### **Recommendation**

***That Council and staff now disclose any conflicts of interest in matters under consideration by Council at this meeting.***



**Item No:** 1.2  
**Title:** Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting  
**Department:** Governance

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9 November 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Trim Reference: F2020/00039 - D14241134



## **Summary**

Confirmation of minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 26 October 2020.

## **Recommendation**

***That Council confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 26 October 2020.***

## **Attachments**

**1** Minutes - Ordinary Meeting - 26 October 2020      D14259863



**Central Coast Council**

**Minutes of the  
Ordinary Meeting of Council**

**Held remotely - online  
on 26 October 2020**

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**Present**

Mayor Lisa Matthews and Councillors Greg Best, Jillian Hogan, Kyle MacGregor, Chris Burke, Chris Holstein, Bruce McLachlan, Jilly Pilon, Louise Greenaway, Jeff Sundstrom, Richard Mehrtens, Doug Vincent and Jane Smith.

**In Attendance**

Jamie Loader (Acting Chief Executive Officer), Boris Bolgoff (Director Roads, Transport, Drainage and Waste), Julie Vaughan (Director Connected Communities), Scott Cox (Director Environment and Planning), Ricardo Martello (Executive Manager Innovation and Futures), Krystie Bryant (Executive Manager People and Culture), Mark Margin (Acting Chief Information Officer) and Shane Sullivan (Unit Manager Governance and Business Services).

The Mayor, Lisa Matthews, declared the meeting open at 6.32pm.

At the request of the Mayor, Mr Jamie Loader, Acting Chief Executive Officer advised that the meeting will be held remotely in accordance with section 747A of The Local Government Act 1993 clause 1(a)(i) and section 413L of The Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. Councillors were also reminded to adhere to the relevant policies and procedures including the Code of Meeting Practice and Code of Conduct.

The Mayor, Lisa Matthews, advised in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice that the meeting is being recorded and read an acknowledgement of country statement.

The reports are recorded in their correct agenda sequence.

The Mayor, Lisa Matthews, advised that Councillors Gale and Marquart have formally submitted their resignations in accordance with section 234(1)(b) of the Local Government Act effective immediately.

**Apologies**

Time commenced: 6.35pm

**Moved: Councillor Smith**

**Seconded: Councillor Burke**

**Resolved**

- 1065/20** *That Council note that no apologies or leaves of absence have been submitted for tonight's Ordinary Meeting or future meetings.*
- 1066/20** *That Council note the resignations of Councillors Marquart and Gale.*
- 1067/20** *That Council formally thanks former Councillors Marquart and Gale for their contributions during their term of Council.*

**For:**

**Unanimous**

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**1.1 Disclosures of Interest**

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Time commenced: 6.42pm

**3.4 Deferred Item - The Entrance Channel - Studies and Reports**

Councillor McLachlan declared a less than significant non pecuniary interest in the matter as he was a member of the Tuggerah Lakes Breakthrough Association and as such he has an association with Angus Jackson. He chose to stay in the meeting and participate in discussion and voting on this matter as it does not prejudice or influence his decision on the matter.

**6.2 Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report - INV25/2019**

Councillor Smith declared a less than significant non pecuniary interest in the matter as she is referred to as Mayor at the time of the incident referred to in the report. She chose to stay in the meeting and participate in discussion and voting on this matter as it does not prejudice or influence her decision on the matter.

Councillor Best declared a significant non pecuniary interest in the matter as he is the subject identified in this item. Councillor Best left the meeting at 11.53pm and did not return.

**Moved:** **Councillor Best**

**Seconded:** **Councillor MacGregor**

**Resolved**

- 1068/20** *That Council receive the report on Disclosure of Interest and note advice of disclosures.*

**For:**

**Unanimous**



**1.2 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings**

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Time commenced: 6.45pm

**Moved:** **Councillor MacGregor**

**Seconded:** **Councillor Mehrstens**

**1069/20 That Council confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on the 12 October 2020 and the Extraordinary Meetings held on 19 October 2020, 20 October 2020 and 21 October 2020.**

**For:**

**Mayor Matthews, Councillors Best, Burke, Hogan, Holstein, MacGregor, McLachlan, Mehrstens, Pilon, Smith, Sundstrom and Vincent**

**Abstained:**

**Councillor Greenaway**

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**1.3 Notice of Intention to Deal with Matters in Confidential Session**

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Time commenced: 6.46pm

**Moved:** **Councillor Best**

**Seconded:** **Councillor Holstein**

**Resolved**

**1070/20 That Council resolve that the following matters be dealt with in closed session, pursuant to s. 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993 for the following reasons:**

**Item 6.1 – Deferred Item - Mayoral Minute – Staff Matter**

**Reason for considering in closed session:**

**2(a) contains personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors)**

**Item 6.2 – Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report – INV25/2019**

**Reason for considering in closed session:**

**2(i) alleged contraventions of any code of conduct requirements applicable under [section 440](#).**

**Item 6.3 – Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report – INV6/2020**

**Reason for considering in closed session:**

**2(i) *alleged contraventions of any code of conduct requirements applicable under [section 440](#).***

***That Council resolve in accordance with section 10A(2)(a) and (i) of the Local Government Act that this matter be considered in closed session of Council as it relates to alleged contraventions of the Code of Conduct made under section 440. On balance consideration of this matter in open Council would not be in the public interest as it contains confidential information and the matter remains undetermined by Council at this time.***

***For:***

***Mayor Matthews, Councillors Best, Burke, Hogan, Holstein, Greenaway, MacGregor, McLachlan, Mehrtens, Smith, Sundstrom and Vincent***

***Against:***

***Councillor Pilon***

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**1.4      *Mayoral Minute - Minister's Notice of Intention to Issue a Suspension Order and Council's Submission in Reply - 26 October 2020***

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Time commenced:      6.47pm

Councillor Best left the meeting at 6.52pm and returned 6.52pm.

Councillor Pilon left the meeting at 7.06pm and returned at 7.07pm.

Councillor Pilon left the meeting at 7.28pm and returned at 7.29pm

Councillor Greenaway left the meeting at 8.03pm and returned at 8.04pm.

*Moved:      Mayor Matthews*

- 1      That Council formally table the notice (Attachment 1) dated Wednesday 21 October from the Minister for Local Government issuing a notice of intention to issue a suspension order.*
- 2      That Council, subject to any final editorial amendments to ensure correctness and clarity of response, adopts as the response to the Notice, Attachment 2 – Draft Submission.*
- 3      That Council authorises the Mayor to consult with Councillors for further inclusion of information prior to submission.*
- 4      That Council authorises the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, in consultation with independent legal advisers, to finalise the attached draft submission to ensure correctness and clarity of the response.*
- 5      That Council provide the final submission to the Minister for Local Government by close of business on 28 October 2020.*

- 6 That Council include the reports, presentations or investigations or other relevant materials from DMB Pty Ltd or any other external and internal experts be presented to the Minister for Local Government, Ms Shelley Hancock.
- 7 That the Acting Chief Executive Officer provide DMB Pty Ltd authorisation to;
  - a further investigate the financial controls and reporting within the Central Coast Council.
  - b to have access to all financial staff within the Central Coast Council to ask questions relating to the current financial situation.
  - c provide urgent local government specific finance and accounting training to Directors and financial staff within Central Coast Council.
- 8 That Council request the final submission be placed on Councils website and the Chief Executive Officer give consideration to the proactive release of the attachments to the submission in accordance with the GIPA Act.

Amendment Moved: Councillor Best

Amendment Seconded: Councillor McLachlan

- 1 That Council notes the Minister for Local Government, Ms Shelley Hancock show cause notice under section S438K of the Local Government Act calling on Council to demonstrate why it should not be suspended.
- 2 That further to the recent resignations of Councillors and that this Council has lost the communities confidence and some \$250 million dollars of restricted funds, Council recognises that there is no creditable financial way forward under this elected Council and therefore accepts the Minister's offer of suspension/administration.
- 3 That further this Council has clearly acted unlawfully in accessing some \$250 million dollars of restricted funds leaving Council with no alternative but to refer this illegal act formally to the Independent Commission Against Corruption.
- 4 That Council notes in taking the steps above this Council puts the interests of its ratepayers first and expedites an end to the financial bleeding of this Council.
- 5 That in the event that this Council is suspended and administration takes place that Council requests the Minister to maintain the democratic process and not penalise the community through affording them the opportunity to elect their new Council and preserve the democratic procedure as scheduled in the September 2021 Local Government Elections.

For:  
Councillors Best, Burke, Holstein, McLachlan  
and Pilon

Against:  
Mayor Matthews, Councillors Greenaway,  
Hogan, MacGregor, Mehrtens, Smith,  
Sundstrom and Vincent



The amendment was put to the vote and declared LOST.

**Moved: Mayor Matthews**

**Resolved**

- 1071/20 That Council formally table the notice (Attachment 1) dated Wednesday 21 October from the Minister for Local Government issuing a notice of intention to issue a suspension order.**
- 1072/20 That Council, subject to any final editorial amendments to ensure correctness and clarity of response, adopts as the response to the Notice, Attachment 2 – Draft Submission.**
- 1073/20 That Council authorises the Mayor to consult with Councillors for further inclusion of information prior to submission.**
- 1074/20 That Council authorises the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, in consultation with independent legal advisers, to finalise the attached draft submission to ensure correctness and clarity of the response.**
- 1075/20 That Council provide the final submission to the Minister for Local Government by close of business on 28 October 2020.**
- 1076/20 That Council include the reports, presentations or investigations or other relevant materials from DMB Pty Ltd or any other external and internal experts be presented to the Minister for Local Government, Ms Shelley Hancock.**
- 1077/20 That the Acting Chief Executive Officer provide DMB Pty Ltd authorisation to;**
- a further investigate the financial controls and reporting within the Central Coast Council.**
  - b to have access to all financial staff within the Central Coast Council to ask questions relating to the current financial situation.**
  - c provide urgent local government specific finance and accounting training to Directors and financial staff within Central Coast Council.**
- 1078/20 That Council request the final submission be placed on Councils website and the Chief Executive Officer give consideration to the proactive release of the attachments to the submission in accordance with the GIPA Act.**

**For:**

**Mayor Matthews, Councillors Greenaway, Hogan, Holstein, MacGregor, Mehrtens, Smith, Sundstrom and Vincent**

**Against:**

**Councillors Best, Burke, McLachlan and Pilon**

**Procedural Motion – Motion of Urgency**

Time commenced: 8.11pm

**Moved: Councillor Smith**

**Seconded: Mayor Matthews**

**Resolved**

**1079/20 That Council consider a motion of urgency regarding Council Transparency for our Community with this matter being urgent due to relating to transparency regarding the current financial situation.**

**For:**

**Mayor Matthews, Councillors Greenaway, Hogan, Holstein, MacGregor, Mehrrens, Smith, Sundstrom and Vincent**

**Against:**

**Councillors Best, Burke, McLachlan and Pilon**

The Mayor declared it is appropriate that Council should consider the matter as a matter of urgency.

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**U6/20 Motion of Urgency - Council Transparency for our Community**

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Time commenced: 11.29pm

Councillor Best left the meeting at 11.53pm and did not return.

**Moved: Councillor Smith**

**Seconded: Councillor Vincent**

**Resolved**

**1080/20 In view of the current financial crisis this Council recognises:**

- 1 That the role of the elected Councillors as the governing body of Council is to direct and control the affairs of this Council in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.**
- 2 That all confidential information which has any bearing on the current financial crisis is available to all of the Councillors in accordance with the Code of Conduct and Section 664 of the Local Government Act 1993 as it is necessary to fulfil their functions to make informed decisions in a reasonable and diligent manner.**
- 3 Any material that is deemed to be confidential must be accompanied by formal legal advice from legal counsel advising why that document or information is required to be confidential and for what period of time.**

**1081/20 That this Council demonstrates maximum transparency toward our community in the information and processes dealing with the current financial crisis facing Central Coast Council. The following applies whether or not an Administrator has temporarily taken the place of the elected Council or the elected Council remain in place acting under a performance improvement order. The Council shall as a minimum require:**

- 1 The establishment of a prominent and easy to find web page on Council's website that provides up to date information about Council's financial status and access to non-confidential relevant reports, minutes and other information, including information to be made public as a result of this resolution.**
- 2 The substantive report from the Forensic Audit is to be provided to the Mayor, Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee simultaneously on completion, and made available to all Councillors, subject to the need for confidentiality in relation to particular items.**
- 3 On the completion of the Forensic Audit a report will be provided to Council noting its completion and resolving if it will be released to the public at that time.**
- 4 A public report is to be provided which outlines the root cause of the current financial crisis and actions to be taken, subject to any need for confidentiality in relation to particular items. The report will allow the public to understand the essential findings and the situation, as it is then known, of Councils financial position. The public report must be released to the public within 7 days of the knowledge of the root cause being delivered to the Council.**
- 5 As an outcome of the of the investigations of DMB Pty Ltd, a public report is to be provided which reports on the findings of the investigations whilst maintaining confidentiality as appropriate.**
- 6 All correspondence between the NSW Government and Council related to the current financial crisis will be forwarded to the Councillors at the time it is received or sent.**
- 7 From this point onwards, until otherwise determined, Council will conduct a Council meeting (either Ordinary or Extraordinary as required) which is open to the public on a fortnightly basis.**
- 8 Each (fortnightly) Council meeting during the next 12 months will receive a report that details;**
  - i. the financial position of council at that time**
  - ii. progress against the 100 day action plan**
  - iii. progress of the Forensic Audit, until completed**



- iv. an outline of any other relevant strategy in response to the Financial Crisis and progress against those strategies**
- v. progress against any Performance Improvement Order that is in place.**

**For:**  
**Mayor Matthews, Councillors,**  
**Greenaway, Hogan, Holstein, MacGregor,**  
**McLachlan, Mehrtens, Pilon, Smith,**  
**Sundstrom and Vincent**

**Against:**  
**Councillor Burke**

**Procedural Motion**

Time commenced: 11.53pm

**Moved: Councillor Smith**  
**Seconded: Mayor Matthews**

**Resolved**

**1082/20 That Council move into confidential session to consider legal advice regarding item U6/20 – Motion of Urgency - Council Transparency for our Community the time being 11.53pm.**

**1083/20 That Council also consider items 6.1 - Deferred Item - Mayoral Minute - Staff Matter, 6.2 - Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report - INV25/2019 and 6.3 - Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report – INV6/2020 in confidential session before returning to open session.**

**For:**  
**Mayor Matthews, Councillors Burke,**  
**Greenaway, Hogan, Holstein, MacGregor,**  
**Mehrtens, Smith and Sundstrom**

**Against:**  
**Councillors Best, McLachlan, Pilon and Vincent**

**Procedural Motion – Exception**

Time commenced: 8.17pm

**Moved: Councillor Smith**  
**Seconded: Councillor MacGregor**

**Resolved**

**1084/20 That Council withdraw item 5.2 - Notice of Motion - State advice, Council restricted funds, legal advice and moving forward as per clause 10.3 of the**

**Code of Meeting Practice as it was dealt with at the 20 October 2020  
Extraordinary Meeting as a Motion of Urgency.**

**1085/20 That Council adopt the following items as a group and in accordance with the report recommendations:**

<b>Item #</b>	<b>Item Title</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b><i>Pecuniary Interest Disclosure Returns 2019-2020</i></b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b><i>Meeting Record of the Water Management Advisory Committee meeting held 12 August 2020</i></b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b><i>Meeting Record of the Gosford Foundation Trust Management Committee meeting held 22 September 2020</i></b>

**1086/20 That Council discuss the following items individually:**

<b>Item #</b>	<b>Item Title</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b><i>Draft Land Transaction Policy - Outcome of Public Exhibition</i></b>
<b>2.2</b>	<b><i>100 Day Action Plan – Status Report</i></b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b><i>Deferred Item - The Entrance Channel - Studies and Reports</i></b>
<b>3.5</b>	<b><i>Deferred Item - The Entrance Beach North - Coastal Erosion Update</i></b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b><i>Notice of Motion - Affordable Housing</i></b>
<b>5.3</b>	<b><i>Deferred Item - Notice of Motion - Leveraging Jobs Hub off \$250M State Government Rail Investment at Kangy Angy</i></b>
<b>5.4</b>	<b><i>Deferred Item - Notice of Motion - Tradie led COVID recovery for the Central Coast</i></b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b><i>Deferred Item - Mayoral Minute - Staff Matter</i></b>
<b>6.2</b>	<b><i>Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report - INV25/2019</i></b>
<b>6.3</b>	<b><i>Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report – INV6/2020</i></b>
<b>U6/20</b>	<b><i>Motion of Urgency – Council Transparency for our Community</i></b>

**For:  
Unanimous**

**2.1 Draft Land Transaction Policy - Outcome of Public Exhibition**

Time commenced: 8.24pm

Councillor Sundstrom left the meeting at 8.24pm and returned at 8.27pm.

Councillor Hogan left the meeting at 8.24pm and returned at 8.28pm.

**Moved:** Councillor Smith

**Seconded:** Councillor MacGregor

**Resolved**

**1087/20 That Council adopt the draft Land Transaction Policy as contained within this report with the following amendments:**

**a Principles**

- 5 The following principles are provided to define duties and obligations of Council and Council staff. It should be noted that there will be occasions where an exception to the principle is required for the best outcome of all parties. Such exceptions require approval at a Council meeting.**

**b Dedications**

- 11 Land dedications must be treated in the same way as a land acquisition or sale by Council. In seeking Council resolution to support the decision, the report to Council must include details of the long-term maintenance costs, benefits of the land dedication (including social, environmental and /or economic), outcome of due diligence investigations, financial impact analysis and an independent valuation where appropriate (unless the value of the land does not justify a valuation). Appropriate records must be kept detailing the purpose of the dedication and any conditions or restrictions of the dedication.**

**c Market Value**

- 16 Land transactions will occur at market value, as assessed by a registered independent valuer appointed by Council, unless the value of the land does not justify a valuation. Council resolutions should allow scope for negotiation to ensure market value is secured.**

**d Review of land portfolio**

- 17 A strategic review of Council's land portfolio needs be undertaken periodically by Council. A review of Council's land portfolio should be a public process with all considerations listed below being documented and reported to Council for approval.**

**1088/20 That Council revoke the following policies of the former Gosford City Council:**

- a Land and Property Transactions Policy (to be replaced by Land Transaction Policy)**
- b Acceptance of Care, Control & Management of Public lands acquired by other Authorities (to be replaced by Land Transaction Policy)**
- c Citywide Business Improvement Districts (no longer needed)**
- d Easements/Leases/Licences-Utilities, Authorities and Companies (no longer needed)**

**1089/20 That Council revoke the following policy of the former Wyong Shire Council:**

- a Policy for Property Transactions – Sales and Acquisitions (to be replaced by Land Transaction Policy)**

**For:**

**Unanimous**

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## **2.2 100 Day Action Plan - Status report**

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Time commenced: 8.35pm

Councillor Best left the meeting at 8.52pm and returned at 8.53pm.

**Moved: Councillor MacGregor**

**Seconded: Councillor Sundstrom**

**Resolved**

**1090/20 That the report on Central Coast Council's serious financial situation be received and noted.**

**For:**

**Mayor Matthews, Councillors Hogan, Holstein, Greenaway, MacGregor, Mehrstens, Smith, Sundstrom and Vincent**

**Against:**

**Councillors Best, Burke, McLachlan and Pilon**

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## **3.1 Pecuniary Interest Disclosure Returns 2019-2020**

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This item was resolved by the exception method.

**Moved: Councillor Smith**

**Seconded: Councillor MacGregor**

**Resolved**

- 1091/20 That Council receive the report on Pecuniary Interest Disclosure Returns 2019-2020 and note that the Chief Executive Officer has tabled Pecuniary Interest Disclosure Returns, pursuant to Clause 4.25 of Council's Code of Conduct.**

**For:**  
**Unanimous**

**3.2 Meeting Record of the Water Management Advisory Committee meeting held 12 August 2020**

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This item was resolved by the exception method.

**Moved: Councillor Smith**  
**Seconded: Councillor MacGregor**

**Resolved**

- 1092/20 That Council receive the report on Meeting Record of the Water Management Advisory Committee meeting held 12 August 2020.**

**For:**  
**Unanimous**

**3.3 Meeting Record of the Gosford Foundation Trust Management Committee meeting held 22 September 2020**

---

This item was resolved by the exception method.

**Moved: Councillor Smith**  
**Seconded: Councillor MacGregor**

**Resolved**

- 1093/20 That Council receive the report on Meeting Record of the Gosford Foundation Trust Management Committee meeting held 22 September 2020.**

**For:**  
**Unanimous**

**3.4 Deferred Item - The Entrance Channel - Studies and Reports**

---

Time commenced: 8.59pm

Councillor McLachlan declared a less than significant non pecuniary interest in the matter as he was a member of the Tuggerah Lakes Breakthrough Association and as such he has an association with Angus Jackson. He chose to stay in the meeting and participate in discussion and voting on this matter as it does not prejudice or influence his decision on the matter.

Councillor Sundstrom left the meeting at 9.07pm and returned at 9.09pm.

**Moved:** **Councillor McLachlan**

**Seconded:** **Councillor Holstein**

**Resolved**

**1094/20 That Council receive the report on Deferred Item - The Entrance Channel - Studies and Reports.**

**1095/20 That Council acknowledges the key findings of the report that shows a southern training wall may have merit to restrain the entrance channel from migrating southwards where it can become perched on the rock shelf (PBP 1988). However, a single training wall would still not provide for safe navigation and would be associated with some loss of amenity and aesthetics (PBP 1994).**

**1096/20 That Council receive a report from staff identifying the opinion of both the Tuggerah Lakes expert panel and Manly Hydraulics Laboratory in relation to the provision of a southern training wall.**

**For:**

**Unanimous**

The meeting was adjourned at 9.26pm and resumed at 9.34pm.

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**3.5 Deferred Item - The Entrance Beach North - Coastal Erosion Update**

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Time commenced: 9.34pm

**Moved:** **Councillor McLachlan**

**Seconded:** **Mayor Matthews**

**Resolved**

**1097/20 That Council note the information contained within this information report.**

**For:**

**Unanimous**

**5.1 Notice of Motion - Affordable Housing**

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Time commenced: 9.50pm

Councillor Greenaway left the meeting at 10.27pm and returned at 10.29pm.

Councillor Best left the meeting at 10.32pm and returned at 10.32pm.

**Moved:** Councillor Smith

**Seconded:** Councillor MacGregor

**Resolved**

**1098/20** That Council requests the Chief Executive Officer to prepare a "Council Affordable Housing Land (CAHL) Proposal" meeting the criteria as outlined in the Affordable Housing Strategy.

**1099/20** As part of the process of developing the CAHL, the Chief Executive Officer conduct a workshop with Councillors prior to the end of February 2021 that includes:

- a) economic information / modelling of identified suitable sites
- b) options to deliver affordable housing including partnerships with providers
- c) an outline of a process that ensures transparency and good governance

**1100/20** That the draft CAHL be reported to Council no later than the last meeting in March 2021 before being exhibited for 28 days.

**For:**  
Mayor Matthews, Councillors Hogan,  
Holstein, MacGregor, Mehrrens, Smith,  
Sundstrom and Vincent

**Against:**  
Councillor Best, Burke, Pilon and  
McLachlan

**Abstained:** Councillor Greenaway

**5.2 Notice of Motion - State advice, Council restricted funds, legal advice and moving forward**

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This item was withdrawn in accordance with clause 10.3 of the Code of Meeting Practice (minute 1084/20).

**5.3 Deferred Item - Notice of Motion - Leveraging Jobs Hub off \$250M State Government Rail Investment at Kangy Angy**

---

Time commenced: 10.34pm

Moved: Councillor Best  
Seconded: Councillor McLachlan

- 1 That Council congratulates the key contractors, their some 300 employees and the State Government for their \$250 million intensity rail hub investment at Kangy Angy that will employ more than 300 FTEs.
- 2 That further Council recognises the outstanding contribution by the former Wyong Council and its staff in being able to competitively secure such an extraordinary jobs boost for our region.
- 3 That despite this Council's strident opposition and repeated representations against this massive investment and jobs initiative, Council now look to leverage from this project through the establishment of a Local Rail Hub Business Network not unlike the vision Wyong Council staff had for the job-generating proposed Airport Hub at Warnervale.
- 4 That Council in partnership with the State, the Regional Development Australia (RDA) and the broader business community with a view to bring together a taskforce to investigate this unique opportunity and potential jobs bonanza.
- 5 That Council request the Chief Executive Officer to report on such an initiative providing preliminary advice and possible direction that Council may wish to consider.

For:  
Councillors Best, Burke, Holstein, McLachlan  
and Pilon

Against:  
Mayor Matthews, Councillors Greenaway,  
MacGregor, Mehrrens and Smith

Abstained: Councillors Hogan, Sundstrom  
and Vincent

A division was called by Councillors Best and McLachlan

For:  
Councillors Best, Burke, Holstein, McLachlan  
and Pilon

Against:  
Mayor Matthews, Councillors Greenaway,  
MacGregor, Mehrrens and Smith

Abstained: Councillors Hogan, Sundstrom  
and Vincent

The motion was put to the vote and declared LOST.

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#### **5.4 Deferred Item - Notice of Motion - Tradie led COVID recovery for the Central Coast**

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Time commenced: 11.00pm

Councillor Burke left the meeting at 11.02pm and returned at 11.04pm.



**Moved:** **Councillor McLachlan**

**Seconded:** **Councillor Best**

**Resolved**

**1101/20 That Central Coast Council recognises the local economy is one of its core pillar responsibilities, and that COVID 19 economic impacts now require Council to urgently provide economic leadership and stimulus to the Central Coast Region.**

**1102/20 That Council acknowledges the key role of its planning department and its ability via fast tracking of the DA process, an immediate boost to construction, our second largest workforce on the Central Coast.**

**1103/20 That Council finances, even with maximum Rate Rise percentages allowed, is projecting at \$50M budget loss for 2020, resulting in a cut backs to Capital Works programmes across the Coast.**

**1104/20 That any increased efficiency of the planning department, can play a vital role in increasing Council revenues, through collection of development contributions, fees and charges.**

**1105/20 That Council via the Chief Executive Officer now investigate and report back to Council, measures to assist in the fast tracking of DA assessments, including allocating additional resources to the planning department, in order to reduce DA assessment turnaround times.**

**For:**

**Mayor Matthews, Councillors Best, Burke, Holstein, McLachlan, Pilon, Smith, Sundstrom and Vincent**

**Against:**

**Councillors Hogan, Greenaway, MacGregor and Mehrrens**

At this stage of the meeting being 11.53pm the meeting moved into Confidential Session with the members of the press and public excluded from the closed session and access to the correspondence and reports relating to the items considered during the course of the closed session being withheld. This action is taken in accordance with Section 10a of The Local Government Act, 1993.

The meeting resumed in open session at 1.16am on Tuesday 26 October 2020 and the Acting Chief Executive Officer reporting on proceedings of the confidential session of the ordinary meeting as follows:

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**6.2 Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report - INV25/2019**

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Time commenced: 12.28am on Tuesday 26 October 2020

Councillor Best left the meeting at 11.53pm and did not return.

Councillor Hogan left the meeting at 12.49am and returned at 12.51am.

**Moved:** **Mayor Matthews**

**Seconded:** **Councillor Sundstrom**

**Resolved**

**1068/20** ***That Council defer this item to allow the subject Councillor the opportunity to make a verbal submission to Council in regard to this matter as required under the Code of Conduct.***

**1069/20** ***That Council provide the Councillor with another letter advising of the opportunity to make a verbal submission.***

**For:**

**Mayor Matthews, Councillors Burke, Hogan, Holstein, McLachlan, Pilon, Sundstrom and Vincent**

**Against:**

**Councillors Greenaway, MacGregor, Mehrstens and Smith**

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**6.3 Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report - INV6/2020**

---

Time commenced: 12.24am on Tuesday 26 October 2020

Councillor Best left the meeting at 11.53pm and did not return.

**Moved:** **Mayor Matthews**

**Seconded:** **Councillor Burke**

**Resolved**

**1070/20** ***That noting the resignation of former Councillor Marquart, Council notes that this matter no longer requires a determination of Council.***

**1071/20** ***That this matter now be referred to the Office of the Internal Ombudsman for any appropriate action.***

**For:**

**Mayor Matthews, Councillors Burke, Holstein, Greenaway, MacGregor, McLachlan, Mehrstens, Pilon, Smith and Sundstrom**

**Against:**

**Councillors Hogan and Vincent**

**The Meeting** closed at 1.20am on Tuesday 26 October 2020.

**Item No:** 1.3  
**Title:** Notice of Intention to Deal with Matters in Confidential Session  
**Department:** Governance

---



9 November 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Trim Reference: F2020/00039 - D14241302

### **Summary**

It is necessary for the Council to adopt a resolution to formalise its intention to deal with certain matters in a closed and confidential Session. The report is incorporated in the "Confidential" business paper which has been circulated.

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires the Chief Executive Officer to identify those matters listed on the business paper which may be categorised as confidential in terms of section 10A of the *Local Government Act 1993*. It is then a matter for Council to determine whether those matters will indeed be categorised as confidential.

### **Recommendation**

***That Council resolve that the following matters be dealt with in closed session, pursuant to s. 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993 for the following reasons:***

**Item 5.1 – Deferred Item - Code of Conduct Investigation Report – INV25/2019**

***Reason for considering in closed session:***

***2(i) alleged contraventions of any code of conduct requirements applicable under [section 440](#).***

***That Council resolve in accordance with section 10A(2)(a) and (i) of the Local Government Act that this matter be considered in closed session of Council as it relates to alleged contraventions of the Code of Conduct made under section 440. On balance consideration of this matter in open Council would not be in the public interest as it contains confidential information and the matter remains undetermined by Council at this time.***

### **Context**

Section 10A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) states that a Council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises:

*2(a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors),*

- 2(b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,*
- 2(c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,*
- 2(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,*
- 2(e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,*
- 2(f) matters affecting the security of the Council, Councillors, Council staff or Council property,*
- 2(g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,*
- 2(h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land.*
- 2(i) alleged contraventions of any code of conduct requirements applicable under section 440*

It is noted that with regard to those matters relating to all but 2(a), 2(b) and 2(d)(iii) it is necessary to also give consideration to whether closing the meeting to the public is, on balance, in the public interest.

Further, the Act provides that Council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (section 10A(3)).

As provided in the Office of Local Government Meetings Practice Note August 2009, it is a matter for the Council to decide whether a matter is to be discussed during the closed part of a meeting. The Council would be guided by whether the item is in a confidential business paper, however the Council can disagree with this assessment and discuss the matter in an open part of the meeting.

### **Attachments**

Nil

**Item No:** 2.1  
**Title:** 100 Day Recovery Action Plan - Status Report  
**Department:** Governance

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9 November 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Reference: F2020/00039 - D14260648  
Author: Sarah Georgiou, Section Manager, Councillor Support  
Manager: Shane Sullivan, Unit Manager, Governance and Business Services  
Executive: Jamie Loader, Acting Chief Executive Officer

## **Report Purpose**

At its Ordinary meeting held 26 October 2020, the Council resolved as follows:

- 1081/20 Each (fortnightly) Council meeting during the next 12 months will receive a report that details;*
- i. the financial position of council at that time*
  - ii. progress against the 100 day action plan*
  - iii. progress of the Forensic Audit, until completed*
  - iv. an outline of any other relevant strategy in response to the Financial Crisis and progress against those strategies*
  - iv. progress against any Performance Improvement Order that is in place.*

## **Summary**

Due notice is given of this matter in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice. The report and any relevant attachments will be provided prior to the Ordinary Meeting of 9 November 2020. The reason for providing this report as a late item is so that it can reflect as far as practicable the current situation with regard to Council's actions and response.

**Item No:** 2.2  
**Title:** Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy and Consideration of Submissions  
**Department:** Governance

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9 November 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Trim Reference: F2020/01829 - D14258876

Author: Nicole Schull, PA to Unit Manager  
Manager: Shane Sullivan, Unit Manager, Governance and Business Services  
Executive: Jamie Loader, Acting Chief Executive Officer

## **Report Purpose**

To adopt the Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy set out in Attachment 1 to this report and to consider submissions received during the 28 day public exhibition period.

## **Recommendation**

***That Council adopt the Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy set out in Attachment 1 to this report pursuant to section 252(1) of the Local Government Act 1993 noting that no submissions were received.***

## **Background**

At its meeting held on 14 September 2020 Council resolved as follows:

- 846/20 *That Council resolve, for the purposes of section 253(1) and 252(1) of the Local Government Act 1993, to give public notice of, and to publicly exhibit for not fewer than 28 days, the proposed amendments to the adopted "Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy" set out in Attachment 1 to this report with a further report to be provided at the conclusion of the exhibition period.*
- 847/20 *That the Council note that the recommended amendments to the "Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy" as Attached to this report comply with the 'Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provisions of facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW' issued by the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government pursuant to section 23A of the Local Government Act 1993.*

## **2.2 Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy and Consideration of Submissions (contd)**

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Accordingly, the amended Policy was placed on public exhibition for 28 days to seek public submissions. The exhibition period closed at 5.00pm on 23 October 2020 and no submissions were received.

Section 252(1) of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) requires that:

*"....within the first 12 months of each term of a council, the council must adopt a policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred or to be incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, the mayor, the deputy mayor (if there is one) and the other councillors in relation to discharging the functions of civic office."*

Council is not able to provide facilities or reimbursement for expenses to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillors other than in accordance with the adopted Policy.

No submissions were received by Council concerning the amendments to the Policy. It is now recommended that Council adopt the Policy as set out in Attachment 1.

### **Consultation**

The amended Policy was on public exhibition for 28 days. No submissions were received.

### **Financial Impact**

The recommendation in this report will have some financial impact on Council. This will be monitored as part of Council's established financial reporting requirements with any necessary budget adjustments made through quarterly financial reporting to Council. There is currently budget provision for the expenses and facilities provided under the Policy.

### **Attachments**

- 1** DRAFT Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy Sep 2020      D14144762



# Councillor Expenses and Facilities **Policy**

Date to be updated

Policy No: CCC 0020

Policy owner:	Governance and Business Services, Office of the CEO
Approved by:	Council
Date of approval:	Date to be updated
Policy category:	Statutory
Content Manager No:	D#####
Review date:	1 September 2022



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## Policy Summary

1. This policy enables the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors to help them undertake their civic duties.
2. It ensures accountability and transparency, and seeks to align Councillor expenses and facilities with community expectations. Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.
3. The policy has been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, and complies with the Office of Local Government's Guidelines for the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Mayors and councillors in NSW.
4. The policy sets out the maximum amounts Council will pay for specific expenses and facilities. Expenses not explicitly addressed in this policy will not be paid or reimbursed. The main expenses and facilities are summarised in the table below. All monetary amounts are exclusive of GST.

Expense or facility	Maximum amount	Frequency
Corporate Uniform	\$1,000 per Councillor \$500 per Councillor	Upon election Per full twelve months thereafter
General travel expenses	\$12,500 per Councillor	Per year
Interstate, overseas and long-distance intrastate travel expenses	\$15,000 per Councillor	Per year
Accommodation and meals	\$500 per Councillor	Per night
Provision for Partners	\$1000 per Councillor	Per year
Professional development	\$12,000 per Councillor	Per year
ICT expenses	\$4,000 per Councillor \$3,000 per Councillor (equipment)	Per year Upon election
Carer expenses	\$8,000 per Councillor	Per year
Home office expenses	\$300 per Councillor	Per year
Access to facilities in a Councillor room	Provided to all Councillors	Not relevant

5. Additional costs incurred by a Councillor in excess of these limits are considered a personal expense that is the responsibility of the Councillor.
6. Councillors must provide claims for reimbursement within three months of an expense being incurred. Claims made after this time cannot be approved.
7. Detailed reports on the provision of expenses and facilities to Councillors will be publicly tabled at a Council meeting every six months and published in full on Council's website. These reports will include expenditure summarised by individual Councillor and as a total for all Councillors.
8. This policy will commence on the declaration of the first election of Councillors to the Central Coast Council.

## Part A - Introduction

### **Introduction**

9. The provision of expenses and facilities enables Councillors to fulfil their civic duties as the elected representatives of Central Coast Council.
10. The community is entitled to know the extent of expenses paid to Councillors, as well as the facilities provided.
11. The purpose of this policy is to clearly state the facilities and support that are available to Councillors to assist them in fulfilling their civic duties.
12. Expenses and facilities provided by this policy are in addition to fees paid to Councillors. The minimum and maximum fees a council may pay each Councillor are set by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal as per Section 241 of the Local Government Act 1993 and reviewed annually. Council must adopt its annual fees within this set range.
13. Council staff are empowered to question or refuse a request for payment from a Councillor when it does not accord with this policy.

### **Policy objectives**

14. The objectives of this policy are to:
  - (a) enable the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses incurred by Councillors while undertaking their civic duties;
  - (b) enable facilities of a reasonable and appropriate standard to be provided to Councillors to support them in undertaking their civic duties;
  - (c) ensure accountability and transparency in reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors;

- (d) ensure facilities and expenses provided to Councillors meet community expectations;
- (e) support a diversity of representation; and
- (f) fulfil Council's statutory responsibilities.

## **Principles**

15. Council commits to the following principles:

- (a) Proper conduct: Councillors and staff acting lawfully and honestly, exercising care and diligence in carrying out their functions;
- (b) Reasonable expenses: Providing for Councillors to be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred as part of their role as Councillor;
- (c) Participation and access: Enabling people from diverse backgrounds, underrepresented groups, those in carer roles and those with special needs to serve as a Councillor;
- (d) Equity: There must be equitable access to expenses and facilities for all Councillors;
- (e) Appropriate use of resources: Providing clear direction on the appropriate use of Council resources in accordance with legal requirements and community expectations; and
- (f) Accountability and transparency: Clearly stating and reporting on the expenses and facilities provided to Councillors.

## **Private or political benefit**

16. Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.
17. Private use of Council equipment and facilities by Councillors may occur from time to time. For example, telephoning home to advise that a Council meeting will run later than expected.
18. Such incidental private use does not require a compensatory payment back to Council.
19. Councillors should avoid obtaining any greater private benefit from Council than an incidental benefit. Where there are unavoidable circumstances and more substantial private use of Council facilities does occur, Councillors must reimburse Council.
20. Campaigns for re-election are considered to be a private interest. The following are examples of what is considered to be a private interest during a re-election campaign:
- (a) production of election material;
  - (b) use of Council resources for campaigning;
  - (c) use of official Council letterhead, publications, websites or services for political benefit; and
  - (d) fundraising activities of political parties or individuals, including political fundraising events.

## Part B - Expenses

### General expenses

21. All expenses provided under this policy will be for a purpose specific to the functions of holding civic office. Allowances for general expenses are not permitted under this policy.
22. Council will cover expenses and/or provide facilities deemed appropriate and necessary by the Chief Executive Officer to assist Councillors in the performance of their civic duties. ***This includes but is not limited to ad hoc events for which there is an associated cost such as corporate events, Council events and events at Council facilities.***
23. Expenses not explicitly addressed in this policy will not be paid or reimbursed

### Specific expenses

#### Corporate Uniform

24. Council will cover the costs up to a limit of \$1,000 per Councillor upon the commencement of their term of office to use for the provision of a Council Corporate Uniform as ~~determination~~ ***determined*** by the Chief Executive Officer. This would include the costs of both suitable Council professional attire and Council attire suitable for a site inspection or depot visit.
25. Thereafter Council will cover the costs up to a limit of ~~up to~~ \$500 per Councillor per annum.

### General travel arrangements and expenses

26. All travel by Councillors should be undertaken using the most direct route and the most practicable and economical mode of transport.
27. Each Councillor may be reimbursed up to a total of \$12,500 per year for travel expenses incurred while undertaking official business or professional development or attending approved conferences and seminars within NSW. This includes reimbursement:
- (a) for public transport fares;
  - (b) for the use of a private vehicle or hire car;
  - (c) for parking costs for Council and other meetings;
  - (d) for tolls;
  - (e) for documented ride-share programs, such as Uber; and
  - (f) by Cabcharge or equivalent.

28. Allowances for the use of a private vehicle will be reimbursed at the rate contained in the Local Government (State) Award.
29. Councillors seeking to be reimbursed for use of a private vehicle must keep a log book recording the date, distance and purpose of travel being claimed. Copies of the relevant log book contents must be provided with the claim.

### **Interstate, overseas and long-distance intrastate travel expenses**

30. This part includes reference to long distance intrastate travel. At Central Coast Council long distance intrastate travel is travel that is estimated to take more than four hours from the Councillor's residence.
31. In accordance with Clause 4, Council will scrutinise the value and need for Councillors to undertake overseas travel. Councils should avoid interstate, overseas and long-distance intrastate trips unless direct and tangible benefits can be established for the Council and the local community. This includes travel to sister and friendship cities.
32. Total interstate, overseas and long-distance intrastate travel expenses for Councillors will be capped at a maximum of \$15,000 per Councillor per year. This amount will be set aside in Council's annual budget.
33. Councillors seeking approval for any interstate and long-distance intrastate travel must submit a business case to, and obtain the approval of, the Chief Executive Officer prior to travel.
34. Councillors seeking approval for any overseas travel must submit a request to, and obtain the approval of, a full Council meeting prior to travel.
35. The request should include:
  - (a) objectives to be achieved in travel, including an explanation of how the travel aligns with current Council priorities and business, the community benefits which will accrue as a result and its relevance to the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties;
  - (b) who is to take part in the travel;
  - (c) duration and itinerary of travel; and
  - (d) a detailed budget including a statement of any amounts expected to be reimbursed by the participant/s.
36. For interstate and long-distance intrastate journeys of less than three hours the class of air travel is to be economy class.
37. For interstate journeys by air of more than three hours, the class of air travel may be premium economy where it is available.

38. For international travel, the class of air travel is to be premium economy if available. Otherwise, the class of travel is to be economy.
39. Bookings for approved air travel are to be made by Council staff on behalf of the Councillor.
40. For travel that is reimbursed as Council business, frequent flyer points will not accrue to Councillors. This is considered a private benefit.

#### **Travel expenses not paid by Council**

41. Council will not pay any traffic or parking fines or administrative charges for toll road accounts.

#### **Accommodation and meals**

42. Council will reimburse costs for accommodation and meals (when meals are not provided) while Councillors are undertaking prior approved travel or professional development.
43. The daily limits for accommodation and meal expenses within Australia is \$500 per Councillor per night.
44. The daily limits for accommodation and meal expenses outside Australia are to be determined in advance by the Chief Executive Officer.
45. Councillors will not be reimbursed for the purchase of alcoholic beverages.

#### **Refreshments for Council related meetings**

46. Appropriate refreshments may be available for Council meetings, Council Committee meetings, Councillor briefings, approved meetings and engagements, and official Council functions as approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
47. As an indicative guide for the standard of refreshments to be provided at Council-related meetings, the Chief Executive Officer must be mindful of Part B Monetary Rates of the NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009, as adjusted annually.

#### **Professional development**

48. Council will set aside \$12,000 per Councillor annually in its budget to facilitate professional development of Councillors through programs, training, education courses, conferences, seminars and membership of professional bodies. This is in addition to professional development opportunities identified by the Chief Executive Officer that may be determined appropriate for all Councillors.
49. In the first year of a new Council term, Council will provide a comprehensive induction program for all Councillors which ~~consider~~ **considers** any guidelines issued by the Office of Local

Government (OLG). The cost of the induction program will be in addition to the ongoing professional development funding.

50. Annual membership of professional bodies will only be covered where the membership is relevant to the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties, the Councillor actively participates in the body and the cost of membership is likely to be fully offset by savings from attending events as a member.
51. Approval for professional development activities is subject to a prior written request to the Chief Executive Officer outlining the:
  - (a) details of the proposed professional development;
  - (b) relevance to Council priorities and business; and
  - (c) relevance to the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties.
52. In assessing a Councillor request for a professional development activity, the Chief Executive Officer must consider the factors set out in Clause 51, as well as the cost of the professional development in relation to the Councillor's remaining budget.

***52A Council will provide Councillors with access to the Employee Assistance Program as provided to Council employees.***

**Conferences and seminars**

53. Council is committed to ensuring its Councillors are up to date with contemporary issues facing ~~council~~ **Council** and the community, and local government in NSW.
54. Provision for attendance at conferences and seminars is provided as part of Professional Development.
55. Approval to attend a conference or seminar is subject to a written request to the Chief Executive Officer. In assessing a Councillor request, the Chief Executive Officer must consider factors including the:
  - (a) relevance of the topics and presenters to current Council priorities and business and the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties; and
  - (b) cost of the conference or seminar in relation to the total remaining budget.
56. Council will meet the reasonable cost of registration fees, transportation and accommodation associated with attendance at conferences approved by the Chief Executive Officer. Council will also meet the reasonable cost of meals when they are not included in the conference fees. Reimbursement for accommodation and meals not included in the conference fees will be subject to Clauses 42 to 45.



57. Council will meet the costs of official conference dinners for an accompanying person of a Councillor up to \$1,000 per Councillor per year.

### **Local Government NSW Annual Conference**

58. Councillors will ~~also~~ be permitted to attend the Local Government NSW Annual Conference. Council will reimburse the cost of registration fees and where the conference is outside the local government area, the cost of travel, accommodation and meals not covered by the conference registration, subject to the provisions in ~~'Accommodation and meals'~~ **Clauses 42 to 45.**
59. For the Local Government NSW Annual Conference only, Council will meet the costs of the official conference dinner for an accompanying person of a Councillor.

### **ICT expenses**

60. Council will provide, or reimburse Councillors for expenses associated with, appropriate ICT devices and services up to a limit of \$4,000 per annum for each Councillor. This may include mobile phones and tablets, mobile phone and tablet services and data, and home internet costs. Allowances will only be made for tablets, tablet services and data to tablets where a Councillor consents to receiving communications and business papers from Council by electronic means only.
61. Council may provide appropriate ICT equipment up to a limit of \$3,000 per Councillor upon the commencement of their term of office. The determination as to what equipment will be provided will be made by the Chief Executive Officer based upon Council's general ICT program and identified business needs.
62. Reimbursements will be made only for communications devices and services used for Councillors to undertake their civic duties, such as:
- (a) receiving and reading Council business papers;
  - (b) relevant phone calls and correspondence; and
  - (c) diary and appointment management.
63. Councillors may seek reimbursement for applications on their mobile electronic communication device that are directly related to their duties as a Councillor, within the maximum limit.
64. Council may from time to time provide Councillors with upgraded equipment or new facilities where doing so will result in efficiencies and aligns to Council's general ICT program.

### **Special requirement and carer expenses**

65. Council encourages wide participation and interest in civic office. It will seek to ensure Council premises and associated facilities are accessible, including provision for sight or hearing-impaired Councillors and those with other disabilities.
66. Transportation provisions as outlined in this policy, such as access to Cabcharges, will also assist Councillors who may be unable or unwilling to drive a vehicle.
67. In addition to the provisions above, the Chief Executive Officer may authorise the provision of reasonable additional facilities and expenses in order to allow a Councillor with a disability to perform their civic duties.
68. Councillors who are the principal carer of a child or other elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family member will be entitled to ~~re-imbursement~~ **reimbursement** of carer's expenses up to a maximum of \$8,000 per annum for attendance at official business, plus reasonable travel from the principal place of residence.
69. Child care expenses may be claimed for children up to and including the age of 16 years where the carer is not a relative.
70. In the event of caring for an adult person, Councillors will need to provide suitable evidence to the Chief Executive Officer that reimbursement is applicable. This may take the form of advice from a medical practitioner.

### **Home office expenses**

71. Each Councillor may be reimbursed up to \$300 per year for costs associated with the maintenance of a home office, such as minor items of consumable stationery and printer ink cartridges.

### **Insurances**

72. In accordance with Section 382 of the Local Government Act 1993, Council is insured against public liability and professional indemnity claims. Councillors are included as a named insured on this Policy.
73. Insurance protection is only provided if a claim arises out of or in connection with the Councillor's performance of his or her civic duties, or exercise of his or her functions as a Councillor. All insurances are subject to any limitations or conditions set out in the policies of insurance.
74. Council shall pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim accepted by Council's insurers, whether defended or not.
75. Appropriate travel insurances will be provided for any Councillors ~~traveling~~ **travelling** on approved interstate and overseas travel on Council business.

**Legal assistance**

76. Council may, if requested, indemnify or reimburse the reasonable legal expenses of:
- (a) a Councillor defending an action arising from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act 1993;
  - (b) a Councillor defending an action in defamation, provided the statements complained of were made in good faith in the course of exercising a function under the Act; and
  - (c) a Councillor for proceedings before an appropriate investigative or review body, provided the subject of the proceedings arises from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act 1993 and the matter has proceeded past any initial assessment phase to a formal investigation or review and the investigative or review body makes a finding substantially favourable to the Councillor.
77. In the case of a conduct complaint made against a Councillor, legal costs will only be made available where the matter has been referred by the Chief Executive Officer to a conduct reviewer or conduct review panel to make formal enquiries into that matter in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.
78. Legal expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising out of the performance by a Councillor of his or her functions under the Local Government Act 1993 are distinguished from expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising merely from something that a Councillor has done during his or her term in office. For example, expenses arising from an investigation as to whether a Councillor acted corruptly would not be covered by this clause.
79. Council will not meet the legal costs:
- (a) of legal proceedings initiated by a Councillor under any circumstances;
  - (b) of a Councillor seeking advice in respect of possible defamation, or in seeking a non-litigious remedy for possible defamation; and
  - (c) for legal proceedings that do not involve a Councillor performing their role as a Councillor.
80. Reimbursement of expenses for reasonable legal expenses must have Council approval by way of a resolution at a Council meeting prior to costs being incurred.

**ASIC or Relevant Searches**

81. Council will meet the costs of any ASIC or relevant searches undertaken by Councillors to assist in providing appropriate responses in relation to declarations as Key Management Personnel under the Related Party Disclosures requirements of Council's Financial Statements.

## Part C - Facilities

### General facilities for all Councillors

#### Facilities

82. Council will provide the following facilities to Councillors to assist them to effectively discharge their civic duties:
- (a) a Councillor common room appropriately furnished to include telephone, photocopier, printer, desks, computer terminals, pigeon holes and appropriate refreshments (excluding alcohol);
  - (b) access to shared car parking spaces while ~~attending Council offices on~~ **undertaking** official business; and
  - (c) a name badge which may be worn at official functions, indicating that the wearer holds the office of a Councillor and/or Mayor or Deputy Mayor; and
  - (d) appropriate meeting spaces to allow Councillors to meet with community members as determined by the Chief Executive Officer.
83. The provision of facilities will be of a standard deemed by the Chief Executive Officer as appropriate for the purpose.
84. Council may from time to time provide additional facilities for Councillor use such as protective equipment for use during site visits.

#### Stationery

85. Council will provide the following to Councillors:
- (a) Electronic letterhead template, to be used only for correspondence associated with civic duties; and
  - (b) Electronic Christmas or festive message.
86. Council may from time to time provide stationery or branded items for Councillor use.

#### Administrative support

87. Council will provide administrative support to Councillors to assist them with their civic duties only. Administrative support may be provided by staff in the Mayor's office or by a member of Council's administrative staff as arranged by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.
88. Council staff are expected to assist Councillors with civic duties only, and not assist with matters of personal or political interest, including campaigning.

## Additional facilities for the Mayor

89. Council will provide to the Mayor a maintained motor vehicle and appropriate, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer, motor vehicle with a fuel card. The vehicle will be supplied for use in attending official business and professional development and attendance at the Mayor's office. The vehicle can also be used for reasonable private benefit.
90. A parking space at Council's offices will be reserved for the Mayor's Council-issued vehicle for use on official business, professional development and attendance at the Mayor's office.
91. Council will provide the Mayor with a furnished office incorporating a computer configured to Council's standard operating environment, telephone and meeting space. ***On the rare occasions where the Mayor is unable to attend the office and use the equipment provided due to an emergency situation, Council will meet the reasonable costs of reimbursement for office equipment up to \$500 per occasion as agreed with the Chief Executive Officer.***
92. In performing his or her civic duties, the Mayor will be assisted by a small number of staff providing appropriate support, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer.
93. The number of exclusive staff provided to support the Mayor and Councillors will not exceed the number of full-time equivalents identified in the adopted organisational structure and as provided in the adopted budget.
94. Council staff in the Mayor's office are expected to work on official business only, and not for matters of personal or political interest, including campaigning.
95. The Mayor will be entitled to travel business class up to an additional annual limit of \$15,000 on any travel undertaken.
96. Council will meet the reasonable costs as determined by the Chief Executive Officer, and up to a \$1,000 annual expenditure limit associated with the attendance of the Mayor's spouse or partner whilst the Mayor is undertaking official business at Conferences, functions, award night ***nights*** and events.
97. Council will also meet the reasonable cost as determined by the Chief Executive Officer and up to a \$2,000 annual expenditure limit, of travel expenses and additional accommodation expenses (in addition to the expenses incurred by the Mayor) for the Mayor's spouse or partner whilst the Mayor is undertaking official business at Conferences, functions and events.
98. The Mayor will also have access to an additional annual limit of up to \$2,000 for the Mayor and the Mayor's spouse or partner attending dinners, non-council functions, charity and fundraising events, community and corporate or industry events which are relevant to Council's interest and where Council's representation would be expected.

99. The Mayor is entitled to digital subscriptions to two daily newspapers and/or delivery of those same newspapers to the Council office.

## **Processes**

### **Approval, payment and reimbursement arrangements**

100. Expenses should only be incurred by Councillors in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

101. Approval for incurring expenses, or for the reimbursement of such expenses, should be obtained before the expense is incurred.

102. Up to the maximum limits specified in this policy, approval for the following may be sought after the expense is incurred:

- (a) local travel relating to the conduct of official business;
- (b) carer costs; and
- (c) ICT expenditure.

103. Final approval for payments made under this policy will be granted by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.

104. All requests for reimbursement will be reviewed by two staff members and payment will be authorised by a staff member with the appropriate financial delegation.

105. The Chief Executive Officer will provide a system for the request of reimbursements for Councillors. This will include a form whereby Councillors will be required to specifically identify the clause within this policy to which the request relates.

### **Direct payment**

106. Council may approve and directly pay expenses. Requests for direct payment must be submitted through the appropriate system for assessment against this policy using the prescribed form, with sufficient information and time to allow for the claim to be assessed and processed.

### **Reimbursement**

107. All claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred must be made on the prescribed form, supported by appropriate receipts and/or tax invoices and be submitted through the appropriate system.

### **Advance payment**

108. Council may pay a cash advance for Councillors attending approved conferences, seminars or professional development.

109. The maximum value of a cash advance is \$200 per day of the conference, seminar or professional development to a maximum of \$600
110. Requests for advance payment must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for assessment against this policy with sufficient information and time to allow for the claim to be assessed and processed.
111. Councillors must fully reconcile all expenses against the cost of the advance within one month of incurring the cost and/or returning home. This includes providing to Council:
- (a) a full reconciliation against the provisions of this policy of all expenses including appropriate receipts and/or tax invoices; and
  - (b) reimbursement of any amount of the advance payment not spent in attending to official business or professional development.

### **Notification**

112. If a claim is approved, Council will make payment directly or reimburse the Councillor through accounts payable.
113. If a claim is refused, Council will inform the Councillor in writing that the claim has been refused and the reason for the refusal.

### **Reimbursement to Council**

114. If Council has incurred an expense on behalf of a Councillor that exceeds a maximum limit, exceeds reasonable incidental private use or is not provided for in this policy:
- (a) council will invoice the Councillor for the expense; and
  - (b) the Councillor will reimburse Council for that expense within 14 days of the invoice date.
115. If the Councillor cannot reimburse Council within 14 days of the invoice date, they are to submit a written explanation to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer may elect to deduct the amount out of the Councillor's allowance.

### **Timeframe for reimbursement**

116. Unless otherwise specified in this policy, Councillors must provide all claims for reimbursement ***within three months of an expense being incurred*** ~~by the end of the financial year or within three months of an expense being incurred, whichever comes last.~~ Claims made after this time cannot be approved.

## Disputes

117. If the Councillor disputes a determination under this policy, the Councillor should discuss the matter with the Chief Executive Officer.
118. If the Councillor and the Chief Executive Officer cannot resolve the dispute, the Councillor may submit a notice of motion to Council seeking to have the dispute resolved.

## Return or retention of facilities

119. All unexpended facilities or equipment supplied under this policy are to be relinquished immediately upon a Councillor or Mayor ceasing to hold office.

## Publication

120. This policy will be published on Council's website.

## Reporting

121. Council will report on the provision of expenses and facilities to Councillors as required in the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005.
122. Detailed reports on the provision of expenses and facilities to Councillors will be publicly tabled at a Council meeting every six months and published in full on Council's website. These reports will include expenditure summarised by individual Councillor and as a total for all Councillors.

## Auditing/Review

123. The operation of this policy, including claims made under the policy, will be included in Council's audit program and an audit undertaken at least every two years.

## Breaches

124. Suspected breaches of this policy are to be reported to the Chief Executive Officer.
125. In accordance with the Code of Conduct this Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy is a policy of Council and must not be contravened.
126. Alleged breaches of this policy shall be dealt with by the following processes ~~outlined~~ **outlined** for breaches of the Code of Conduct, as detailed in the Code and in the Procedures for the Administration of the Code.
127. Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in a recognised Council recordkeeping system.



## Definitions

128. In this policy:

<b>Accompanying person</b>	Means a spouse, partner or de facto or other person who has a close personal relationship with or provides carer support to a Councillor.
<b>Appropriate refreshments</b>	Means food and beverages, excluding alcohol, provided by Council to support Councillors undertaking official business
<b>Act</b>	Means the <a href="#"><u>Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)</u></a>
<b>Annual Conference</b>	Means Local Government NSW Annual Conference
<b>Clause</b>	Unless stated otherwise, a reference to a clause is a reference to a clause of this policy
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	Means the Code of Conduct adopted by Council or the Model Code if none is adopted
<b>Councillor</b>	Means a person elected or appointed to civic office as a member of the governing body of Council who is not suspended, including the Mayor
<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	Means the General Manager of Council and includes their delegate or authorised representative
<b>ICT</b>	Means <del>Telecommunications</del> and <b>telecommunications and is an acronym for</b> Information Communications and Technology
<b>Incidental personal use</b>	Means use that is infrequent and brief and use that does not breach this policy or the Code of Conduct
<b>Long distance intrastate travel</b>	Means travel to other parts of NSW of more than three hours duration by private vehicle
<b>Maximum limit</b>	Means the maximum limit for an expense or facility provided in the text and summarised in the table in Clause 4.
<b>NSW</b>	New South Wales
<b>Official business</b>	Means functions that the Mayor or Councillors are required or invited to attend to fulfil their legislated role and responsibilities for Council or result in a direct benefit for Council and/or for the local government area, and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meetings of Council and committees of the whole;</li> <li>• meetings of committees facilitated by Council;</li> <li>• civic receptions hosted or sponsored by Council; and</li> <li>• meetings, functions, workshops and other events to which attendance by a Councillor has been requested or approved by Council.</li> </ul>

<b>Professional development</b>	Means a seminar, conference, training course or other development opportunity relevant to the role of a Councillor or the Mayor
<b>Regulation</b>	Means the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (NSW)
<b>Year</b>	Means the financial year, that is the 12-month period commencing on 1 July each year.

## Related resources

### 129. Legislation:

- a. [Local Government Act 1993 \(NSW\)](#) Sections 252 and 253
- b. [Local Government \(General\) Regulation 2005](#), Clauses 217 and 403

### 130. Associated/Internal documents:

- a. Code of Conduct (found on the intranet)
- b. Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW, 2009
- c. Local Government Circular 09-36 Guidelines for Payment of Expenses and Facilities
- d. Local Government Circular 05-08 legal assistance for Councillors and Council Employees.

## History of revisions

Amendment history	Details
Original approval authority details	Council
	D12757794
	26 July 2017 – Minute number 504/17
	Policy adopted pursuant to section 253(2) of the Local Government Act.

## Version # 2

23 October 2017 – Minute numbers 669/17 and 700/17 (public exhibition)

18 December 2017 - adoption

D12835914

*Amendments:*

Clause 6.2 General travel arrangements and expenses.

The current provisions in this clause are insufficient given the size of the Central Coast local government area, and the number of residents in that local government area. Taking into consideration the likely travel that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors will need to undertake, it is recommended that this clause be amended to provide for up to a total of \$12,500 per Councillor per year.

Reimbursement under this proposed amended clause will require the submission of appropriate documents such as a log book or opal card statement.

Clause 6.7 Interstate, overseas and long distance intrastate travel expenses.

This clause is recommended to be amended to provide for a maximum of \$15,000 per Councillor per year. It is noted that this is a reasonable maximum for this category of travel given the role of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors in pursuing the interests of the local government area.

Expenditure in this category requires a Councillor to provide a business case and have the prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer. Overseas travel requires prior approval by way of a Council resolution.

Clause 6.18 Accommodation and meals

This clause is recommended to reflect a maximum of \$500 per Councillor per night for accommodation and meals.

Providing a specific amount gives greater transparency as to the provision to Councillors for accommodation and meals. The amount reflects the reasonable costs of accommodation and meals, particularly in metropolitan Sydney.

Clause 6.23 Professional development and Clause 6.29 Conferences and Seminars

It is recommended that these two provisions be combined to allow an amount of \$12,000 per Councillor per year.

In practice, attendance at conferences and seminars will almost always be part of a Councillor's professional development and distinguishing the two provisions is arbitrary.

It is noted that s. 232 of the Act provides that Councillors are required to make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform the role of a Councillor. In addition, the Act provides for regulations to be made for induction and other professional development for Mayors and Councillors. The Office of Local Government advised on 22 December 2016 that it has commenced work on development of these regulations and it is appropriate that Council provide adequate funding to facilitate meeting these future regulations.

Clause 6.42 Special requirement and carer expenses.

It is recommended that the provision for carer expenses be \$8,000 per Councillor per year. This is to reflect the current cost of care for children, those with special needs.

It is noted that this clause includes provision for those who may need to care for a dependent over the age of 16 years upon consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.

Part 10: Additional facilities for the Mayor.

To appropriately reflect the size and scale of the role of Mayor of Central Coast Council a number of provisions are recommended in this Part.

This includes travel expenses, provision of an appropriate vehicle for official duties, newspaper subscription and allowances for a small number of spouse/partner attendances at events and the like. These provisions reflect the community expectations of the role of Mayor of Central Coast Council and the likely impact and time demands this important role brings.

Various: Amendment of all references to 'General Manager' to 'Chief Executive Officer', to reflect the current Council corporate structure and nomenclature.

Amendments to the table in the Policy Summary to reflect the proposed changes.

Version # 3

9 April 2020 – Minute Number 268/18

D13186819

*State reasons for amendments:*

In the table of the new section 4:

Expense or facility	Maximum amount	Frequency
Corporate Uniform	\$1,000 per Councillor	Upon election
	\$500 per Councillor	Per full twelve months there after

In the new section 23 to 24 under Part B – Expenses, Specific Expense:

**Corporate Uniform**

23. Council will cover the costs up to a limit of \$1,000 per Councillor upon the commencement of their term of office to use for the provision of a Council Corporate Uniform as determination by the Chief Executive Officer. This would include the costs of suitable Council professional attire.
- 
24. Thereafter Council will cover the costs up to a limit of up to \$500 per Councillor per annum.

Version # 4

9 July 2020 – Minute Number 649/18

D13186819

*State reasons for amendments*

New Clause 57 under Part B – Expenses, General Expenses –Conferences and Seminars is proposed as follows:

- 57 Council will meet the costs of official conference dinners for an accompanying person of a Councillor up to \$1,000 per Councillor per year.

The proposed addition of a new Clause 81 under the following heading:

*ASIC or Relevant Searches*

- 81 Council will meet the costs of any ASIC or relevant searches undertaken by Councillors to assist in providing appropriate responses in relation to declarations as Key Management Personnel under the Related Party Disclosures requirements for Council's Financial Statements

New Clause 22 under Part B – Expenses, General Expenses is proposed as follows:

- 22 Council will cover expenses and/or provide facilities deemed appropriate and necessary by the Chief Executive Officer to assist Councillors in the performance of their civic duties.

649/18 That Council adopt the amended Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy set out in Attachment 1 to this report, with the following amendment to Clause 116;

- To allow Councillors to claim expenses up until the end of the financial year or within three months of the occurrence of the expense, whichever comes last.

## Version # 5

27 August 2018 – Minute Number 850/18

D13259207

*State reasons for amendments*

New Clause 48 under Part B – Expenses, General Expenses Professional Development is proposed as follows:

- 48 Council will set aside \$12,000 per Councillor annually in its budget to facilitate professional development of Councillors through programs, training, education courses, conferences, seminars and membership of professional bodies. **This is in addition to professional development opportunities identified by the Chief Executive Officer that may be determined appropriate for all Councillors.**

The proposed addition of a new Clause 81 under Part C – Additional Facilities for the Mayor is as follows:

- 92 In performing his or her civic duties, the Mayor will be assisted by a small number of staff providing **appropriate**

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administrative and secretarial support, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

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**Item No:** 2.3  
**Title:** Mountain Bike Feasibility Study  
**Department:** Environment and Planning

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9 November 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Reference: F2020/00037 - D14185149  
Author: Sharyn Styman, Ecologist  
Manager: Luke Sulkowski, Unit Manager, Environmental Management  
Executive: Scott Cox, Director Environment and Planning

## Summary

Council commenced a Mountain Bike Feasibility Study in 2019. The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study Discussion Paper (the Discussion Paper) for the purpose of community consultation.

This report recommends that Council place the Discussion Paper on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

## Recommendation

- 1 That Council endorse the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study Discussion Paper for the purpose of community consultation.**
- 2 That Council place the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study Discussion Paper on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.**
- 3 That a further report come back to Council on the outcomes of the community consultation on the Mountain Bike Feasibility Discussion Paper and that Council note that the proposed expenditure of up to \$15,000 towards the 'Consultation Report' as described in this report is included in Council's adopted 2020/21 Operational Plan.**

## Context

At its Ordinary Meeting of 10 August 2020, Council resolved:

- 767/20 That Council recognises the economic and social benefits of Mountain Biking.
- 768/20 That Council acknowledges the importance of a structured approach to developing facilities and tracks for Mountain Bikes in conjunction with a targeted tourism strategy.



- 769/20 *That any working group includes business representation to leverage the economic and jobs outcomes of a comprehensive strategy.*
- 770/20 *That Council complete the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study to allow for the recommendations of the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study Discussion Paper and subsequent community engagement report to be considered.*
- 771/20 *That Council give consideration to options for engaging key stakeholders in the planning and development of mountain bike facilities and opportunities across the Central Coast be postponed until after the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study has been completed.*

This report is in response to 770/20 and provides background to the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study and a summary of the findings and recommendations, as presented in the Discussion Paper. This report seeks Council's endorsement of the Discussion Paper for the purpose of community consultation and that a report on the outcomes of the community consultation come back to Council.

### **Mountain Biking**

Participation in mountain biking is rapidly growing and presents opportunities for encouraging active lifestyles, tourism and economic development, as well as increased appreciation of the local environment and heritage.

In the Central Coast Council area, the primary purpose-built mountain bike facility, The Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park, is located in Ourimbah State Forest at Wyong Creek. Mountain bike riding is also permitted on a number of shared-use fire trails and management trails in local national parks, state forests and Council reserves.

Unauthorised mountain bike trail construction is a challenging management issue not only for Central Coast Council but for many public and private land managers on the Central Coast, Greater Sydney, the Newcastle area and further afield. One of the drivers of unauthorised mountain bike trail building is reported to be a shortfall in the availability of authorised mountain bike trails. The construction of unauthorised mountain bike trails without appropriate planning and assessment, design, approval and maintenance poses risks to land managers, riders and the community and has the potential to significantly compromise natural environments and heritage sites. The construction and use of unauthorised trails on Council land is not permitted nor condoned.

Council has trialled multiple approaches to reduce the impacts of unauthorised trails in Council's natural reserves with substantial investment of staff resources and materials over many years. There have been attempts to raise awareness, engage with riders and to close unauthorised trails. However, these actions have not been effective in the long-term and the repeated closure of unauthorised trails has diverted finite resources from other programs in Council's natural reserves.

There is currently no strategic framework for managing the rapidly increasing demand for mountain biking across the Central Coast. A strategic framework for the region would assist in managing the demand for mountain biking in a manner that provides economic and community well-being benefits while protecting the natural environment and heritage, including on Council managed land.

In order to develop a strategic framework, there is a range of information relevant to the Central Coast that needs to be collected, collated and analysed. This information would include the current supply of mountain bike facilities; utilisation patterns, unmet demand, opportunities and risks including to environmental and heritage assets, management options and community views. A mountain bike feasibility study would provide some of the information required to inform a strategic framework.

### **Mountain Bike Feasibility Study**

Council initiated a Mountain Bike Feasibility Study in 2019 in response to:

- a rapidly emerging land management issue, being the increasing construction and subsequent use of unauthorised mountain bike tracks in Council's natural reserves
- requests from commercial entities and government to explore the tourism opportunities for mountain biking on the Central Coast that may include Council's natural reserves
- an action relating to mountain bike opportunities identified in the *Central Coast Destination Management Plan 2018-2021*
- requests from the local community for further authorised opportunities for mountain biking on the Central Coast, including in Council's natural reserves

The aim of the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study was to assist Council in planning for recreation in Council's natural reserves by:

- identifying the role that Council's natural reserves may play in the provision of mountain biking experiences across the Central Coast
- protecting areas of high conservation and heritage value
- minimising the key drivers for the building of unauthorised trails
- maximising the safe use of Council reserves by all visitors

The Mountain Bike Feasibility Study contributes to Council's ability to deliver multiple objectives in the *One Central Coast Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028* (CSP) including to protect our rich environmental heritage and to promote healthy living and enjoyment of the natural world by increasing access to green spaces in the context of a growing Central Coast.

### **Consultation**

At the time of preparing this report, a Councillor Briefing was scheduled for 2 November 2020 to provide Councillors with an overview of the findings of the Mountain Bike Feasibility

Study and the proposed public exhibition of the Discussion Paper and associated financial impact.

The Mountain Bike Feasibility Study gathered information from a variety of sources, with community and stakeholder consultation being a key component. In June 2019 extensive consultation was conducted to help Council understand community views, demand, utilisation, opportunities and risks for mountain bike riding on the Central Coast.

Consultation included:

- **Online community survey** - 1949 responses received during the 28-day period, including 359 responses from non-riders. Survey included targeted questions for riders, as well questions for the general community to respond to.
- **Written submissions** - five public submissions received
- **Face-to-face focus groups** - 25 targeted attendees to separately discuss the topic from the perspective of the mountain bike industry and conservation groups
- **Meetings with key land managers and external agencies** - face to face or via telephone, with NPWS and Forestry Corporation
- **COSS Advisory Committee presentation** - introduced the study and upcoming community consultation
- **Staff workshops** - prior to and during the Study to discuss mountain biking in relation to managing natural areas

The community were able to access information on the study, including the survey, via Council's Your Voice - Our Coast webpage. The community were notified of the consultation via newspaper advertisement, social media posts, flyers available at targeted Council customer service centres and libraries, flyers displayed on community notice boards and key entry points to Council reserves, flyers issued to local schools for display and key stakeholders were directly emailed.

### Discussion Paper

The findings of the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study are presented in the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study Discussion Paper that was finalised in April 2020. The Discussion Paper is anticipated to assist in informing Council's future decisions in relation to the provision for and management of mountain biking trails on the Central Coast, in consultation with the community.

The Mountain Bike Feasibility Study has linkages with a number of existing and future Council strategies including the Active Lifestyles Strategy, Nature-based Recreation Strategy, Green Grid Plan, Central Coast Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan, Central Coast Destination Management Plan 2018-2021 and Central Coast Tourism Opportunity Plan 2019-2024. These strategies have been considered in the preparation of the Discussion Paper.

The key findings of the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study presented in the Discussion Paper include the following:

### *Supply*

- 23 locations used for mountain biking within the Central Coast region, however the activity is only permitted at 14 of these locations with the majority of these are on fire trails as a shared use
- 18 km of authorised trails at Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park in Ourimbah State Forest
- Estimated 38 km of unauthorised trails on public land.

### *Community and Stakeholder Engagement*

- Approximately 60% of respondents ride two or more times a week for 1-4 hours with weekends being the most popular
- Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park and Kincumba Mountain Reserve were the two most popular riding locations identified on the Central Coast
- Proximity to where riders live was identified as a key factor to the location chosen, with a majority of riders travelling 30 minutes or less to their most frequently used location
- Almost 70% of non-riding respondents undertake bushwalking with close to 50% visiting their preferred location at least once a week
- Lack of clarity regarding which trails are authorised for mountain biking was a shared concern amongst all respondents both riders and non-riders
- Other issues raised included conflict between users of shared trails, construction of unauthorised tracks, environmental impacts, increasing demand and lack of authorised trails.

### *Case Studies*

- Nine case studies providing an overview of mountain bike trail building projects, including Old Mans Valley in Hornsby, Blue Derby in Tasmania and Glenrock State Conservation Area near Newcastle, are presented.

### *Site Selection Criteria*

- Site selection matrix to identify suitable locations for local, regional and national significance mountain bike trail networks
- An additional 13 criteria to assess the feasibility of potential riding destinations
- Outcomes of assessment of sites in relation to their potential trail significance – national, regional or local.

### *Feasibility Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations*

#### Feasibility Study Analysis

- Only 7% of respondents indicated fire trails were their preference for riding
- A high number of unauthorised trails and expressed demand for locally accessible and regional level trails indicates significant unmet demand
- Six options for responding to current and future demand for mountain bike trails, and any forward plan could involve a combination of the following:
  - Retain status quo
  - Expand and enhance the shared trail network
  - Increase education and awareness
  - Improve partnerships
  - Develop a regional trails plan
  - Increased enforcement

#### Feasibility Study Conclusion

- Central Coast Region has sufficient demand to develop a number of mountain bike trail destinations
- Most of the identified opportunities are on state-owned or managed land which could be supplemented with local opportunities on Council managed land

#### Feasibility Study Recommendations

- Establish agreed trail assessment criteria to identify unauthorised trails that should be closed
- Undertake a trails audit and management program for Council's natural reserves
- Develop an education and awareness program to be delivered by Council to provide information on mountain biking and the location of authorised trails in the Central Coast region
- Prepare a Regional Trails Plan that could be led by Council and prepared in collaboration with state land managers and rider groups
- Adopt a trails approval process that allows local users and the community to have a say on any new trail proposals

#### **Financial Impact**

The cost of completing the Mountain Bike Feasibility Study to date was \$57,522 excluding GST and staff resources.

To inform and consult the community during the public exhibition 28-day period the following will be available on the Your Voice Our Coast webpage:

- Discussion Paper
- Information Video
- Online Submission Form
- Frequently Asked Questions

An information presentation for interested Council Committee and Advisory Committee members will also be conducted.

Council received a high response rate (1949 responses) to the online survey in 2019, and there has been ongoing press and social media interest regarding mountain biking on the Central Coast in 2020. It is therefore anticipated that Council will receive a large number of submissions during the public exhibition of the discussion paper. If there is a high response to the discussion paper as anticipated and current staff resources are unable to analyse the submissions and prepare a consultation report as expected there is already an allowance in the current adopted project budget to engage an external consultant to undertake this work.

This also enables Council to maintain transparency and ensure robust unbiased data analysis and reporting. Given this, a consultant will likely need to be engaged to analyze the submissions and prepare a consultation report. The estimated cost of data analysis and preparation of a consultation report is \$15,000. Council should proceed with public exhibition only if expenditure against the current adopted \$15,000 budget is endorsed.

A cost estimate for implementing the recommendations in the Discussion Paper has not been provided, as the purpose of the Discussion Paper is to inform further consultation with the community and Council's future decisions in relation to the options for provision for and management of mountain biking trails on the Central Coast.

### **Link to Community Strategic Plan**

Theme 2: Smart

#### **Goal C: A growing and competitive region**

S-C4: Promote and grow tourism that celebrates the natural and cultural assets of the Central Coast in a way that is accessible, sustainable and eco-friendly.

### **Risk Management**

Failing to place the Discussion Paper on public exhibition may limit opportunity for further community comment, feedback and refinement prior to making final recommendations to Council to seek endorsement for the development of a draft mountain biking action plan for the Central Coast region.

The potential key risks from unauthorised mountain biking on Council land have been identified as follows:

- Public liability risk and safety of all users of trails
- Reputation risk
- Environmental and heritage risk
- Operational risks due to the vandalism to property, assets and infrastructure

**Attachments**

- |          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | Mountain Bike Feasibility Study Discussion Paper  | D14207462 |
| <b>2</b> | Mountain Bike Feasibility Study Engagement Report | D14207472 |



# MOUNTAIN BIKE FEASIBILITY STUDY DISCUSSION PAPER

Final Report

April 2020

Prepared by Otium Planning Group in conjunction with World Trail.







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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

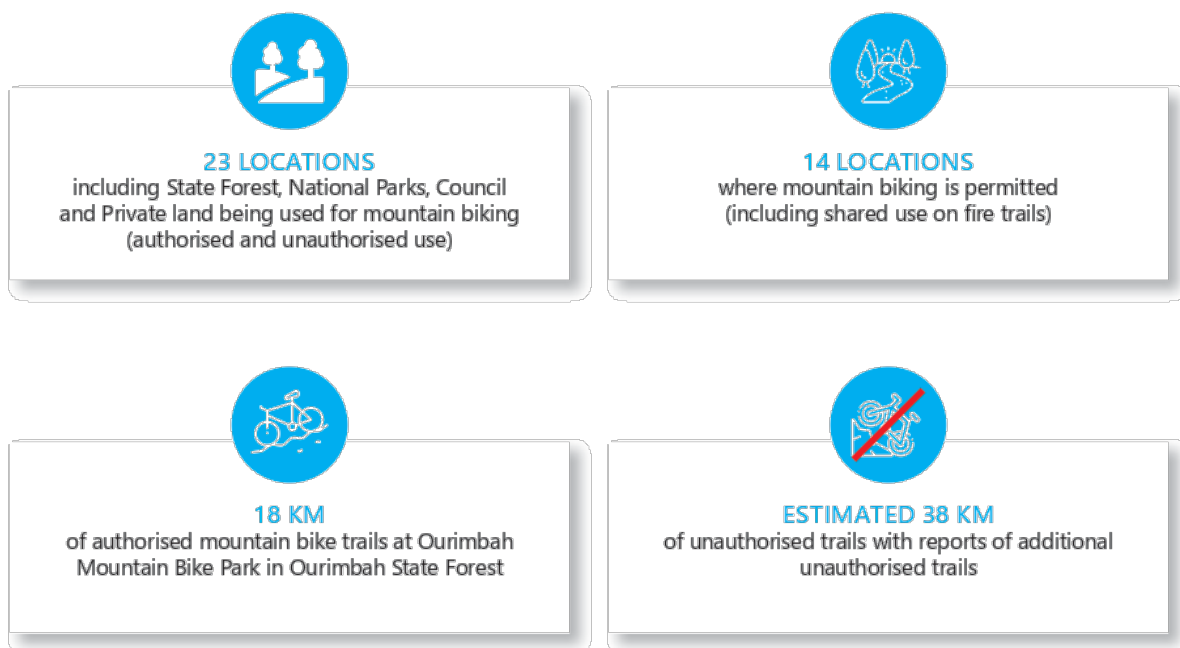




This project investigated the feasibility of establishing a mountain bike trail network within the Central Coast Council area. The study included site visits, industry review, community surveys, workshops and consultation with a range of stakeholders.

### 1.1 CURRENT SITUATION

Within the region there is an established public mountain biking facility located at Ourimbah State Forest which has approximately 18 km of trail network. A private facility at Kulnura - Cedar Brush Creek has another 27 km of authorised trail network. There are a number of other locations where mountain biking is allowed as a shared use along the fire trails (including Kincumba Mountain and Rumbalara), but additional unauthorised trails have been constructed. This includes on Council land and within National Parks. Unauthorised trails have been identified at Kincumba Mountain, Bouddi National Park and Brisbane Water National Park.



## 1.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An extensive engagement program was undertaken with mountain bike riders, the general community and other stakeholders. This included a community survey (receiving 1949 responses) to understand community views on mountain biking on the Central Coast. Workshops and meetings were also held with the mountain bike industry, conservation groups, traditional custodians of the land, National Parks and Forestry NSW.

### The key findings were:

- « **81.5%** of survey respondents currently **participate in mountain biking**.
- « A large proportion of mountain bike riders on the Central Coast are **typically riding two or more times** per week (60%), with a preference of flow trails (46%).
- « **Only 25%** of the mountain bikers who completed the survey **are members of a mountain bike club**.
- « The **most popular** locations identified for mountain biking were **Ourimbah (40%) followed by Kincumba (22%)**.
- « **Kincumba** was chosen as **the most preferred location** due to its location / proximity and ease of access to residential areas (54%).
- « Current trail types being ridden (in order of highest to lowest highest response) includes general Trails, Cross Country, Flow and Gravity. However, the **preferred trails to ride were Flow, general Trails, Gravity and Cross Country**. While the preferred types were all reasonably even in response rates indicating that diversity should be a focus for any proposed developments. It may also indicate a current lack of flow trails being available.
- « Almost **30% of current mountain bike riders** (responding to the survey) were **not aware that some trails were unauthorised**, indicating that improved education/awareness/signage strategies are important considerations in any strategy.
- « There is **concern** from some in the community regarding the development of the **unauthorised trails in COSS (Coastal Open Space Strategy)** land and that these trails could be a threat to protection of the environmental values in these areas.
- « Similar **concerns** were expressed regarding the potential for unauthorised trails to cause **damage to cultural heritage sites**.
- « There is a **need for a planned, authorised trail network to meet growing demand** for mountain bike riding and management action to close and revegetate the unauthorised trails.

### A range of benefits from mountain biking were identified, these include:

- « **Economic** – mountain biking can have a positive impact on the economy. This can be from tourism perspective and additional spend within the community.
- « **Social and health benefits** – opportunity to socialise with friends and family, participating in a healthy and physically active pursuit, positive health impacts including reducing physical and mental health problems.
- « **Environmental benefits** – increasing access and connection to natural environments, well-built trails in the right location can reduce unauthorised trail development, passive surveillance can reduce antisocial behaviour and illegal dumping in areas. Increased connection with nature also helps to support conservation activities.

### A range of issues and concerns were identified through the consultation. These include:

- « **User conflicts** - concern around behaviour of some users of the shared trails.
- « **Environmental Impacts** – many of the unlawful trails are not professionally built and could be causing erosion and spreading weeds as a result of their location, construction method and limited ongoing maintenance.
- « **Demand** – there is a large population of mountain bikers on the coast, which will only increase over time due to population growth and increasing popularity of mountain biking. There are currently limited authorised trails available to meet the demand. This means that unauthorised trails will continue to propagate and the potential for damage to sensitive landscapes will remain unmanaged.
- « **Awareness and education** - there would appear to be a lack of awareness about the locations and trails that support mountain biking on lawful trails. Improved signage and education will be needed to address this.

### 1.3 OPTIONS FOR MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL PROVISION

There are a number of options and strategies for responding to current and future demand for mountain bike trails, any forward plan could involve a combination. The options include:



**Retain Status Quo** with limited provision of purpose-built mountain bike trails and continued support for shared use on fire trails and service tracks. This is unlikely to address the spread of unplanned trails arising from the increasing demand in the community for places to ride within natural areas. The development of unlawful/unauthorised trails is a direct response to community need but risks causing damage to environment and cultural heritage sites.



**Improve partnerships** in provision– the Central Coast Mountain Bike Club is currently operating and maintaining the trails at Ourimbah. Working with the club and other groups to improve the extent of trails at Ourimbah (or other locations) is an option that relies on community or other agency partners to develop and maintain trails.



**Expand and enhance the shared trail network** for recreational riders – this may address some of the recreational riding demand which is for trail networks within natural areas. It does not address demand for flow and other more specialist trails which would be left to specific club or other agency managed sites. A detailed assessment of opportunities could identify additional service track and fire trail sections that could support an overall recreational shared trail network.



**Develop a regional trails plan** - Identify suitable sites for new shared trails, identify opportunities for urban bike parks (skills circuits, pump tracks) to meet localised demand and implement some local or regional flow trails which can complement the existing shared trail network. This plan would be prepared in partnership with other land managers and mountain bike riders.



**Increase education and awareness** – better information about where to ride and trail etiquette on shared networks. Education, signage and awareness are key factors in any successful strategy to respond to increasing demand. About 30% of riders are currently unaware of where they can lawfully ride, which trails can be ridden and the difficulty of the trails.



**Increased enforcement** – This would involve the closing and revegetation of unauthorised trails in sensitive areas. This would need to be informed by a detailed trail audit to identify priority locations. If new trails in suitable locations are developed to cater to the demand, then increased enforcement can be pursued for any unauthorised trails developed. The closure of trails should be undertaken in partnership with local MTB clubs and users, so they understand the reasons, are able to assist in the work and have an opportunity to be involved in the location and construction of trails in sanctioned locations.



## 2 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS





## 2.1 OVERALL FEASIBILITY CONCLUSION

The Central Coast Region has potential to develop a number of mountain bike trail destinations that would appeal to a regional catchment, including attracting riders from Greater Sydney. Some opportunities were also identified that may offer opportunities for nationally significant trails with the potential to attract users from across the country and overseas.

However, most of the identified opportunities are on state owned or managed land which could be supplemented with local opportunities on Council Managed areas. While there is demonstrated demand from local residents for more trails and especially lawful trails, there is also significant concern for the Coastal Open Space System reserves which are highly valued by the community and existing unauthorised trails have the potential to impact on conservation and cultural heritage values.

Council has immediate concerns that need to be addressed in terms of impacts from unauthorised trails and increasing demand for places to ride. The strategy that is most likely to be successful involves:

- « Collaboration with mountain bike riding groups to locate and develop new sustainable riding opportunities which meet both local access and regional access needs.
- « Adopting an education and awareness campaign including signage.
- « Closure and revegetation of unauthorised trails unless they have been audited and all stakeholders agree they can be converted into a sanctioned trail.
- « Establishing shared or club management and maintenance of sanctioned trail networks on public or leased land.

Should Central Coast Council consider that positioning the Central Coast as a mountain bike trails destination aligns with their longer term tourism and economic development strategy then the Regional Trails Plan developed in partnership with state land managers and the mountain bike community should be the precursor to the preparation of a detailed feasibility/ business case for development of one or more nationally significant trail networks with 80 km or more of tracks. This would need to be a partnership project and the selected sites would not be on council managed lands.

## 2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered for consideration.

1. Undertake a detailed trails audit and trail management program for Council managed natural reserves that assesses existing trails, identifies and confirms the shared trail network and any single use (MTB) trails that can be sustained. The audit and assessment should include:
  - « Identification of trails to be closed and revegetated based on audit results or identification of impacts that cannot be mitigated. (see Recommendation 2)
  - « Identification of trails where simple low-cost management action (such as additional signage and user education) can address the current issues.
  - « Determination of some "focus trails" as part of the shared trail network, to host environmental education and interpretive elements that increase the opportunities for recreational riding with a focus on experiencing nature.
  - « Identification of trails that need to be realigned, upgraded or repaired to ensure they are sustainable. Upgrading to include improved signage and wayfinding.
  - « Identification of future strategic trail links that can help reduce user conflicts and mitigate impacts.
2. Establish agreed trail assessment criteria to identify unauthorised trails that should be closed:
  - « Trails not constructed to a suitable standard and at risk of causing erosion.
  - « Trails within ecologically or culturally sensitive areas which are likely to cause damage to those values and are not supported by land managers or traditional owners.
  - « Trails which have unsafe features or poor design creating unacceptable risk to riders or other users.
3. Develop an education and awareness program including signage, social media and website content on Council's website and rider sites such as Trailforks<sup>1</sup> to provide information on mountain biking and the location of authorised in the Central Coast region. Interaction with this and other rider sites should also seek to remove reference to, or highlight the status of, the unauthorised trails.

<sup>1</sup> [www.trailforks.com](http://www.trailforks.com)



4. Prepare a Regional Trails Plan. This could be led by Council and prepared in collaboration with state land managers and mountain bike rider groups. The plan should include the following elements:
  - « Develop a vision for the region and if the plan integrates with tourism and economic development strategies or is just focused on the needs of residents.
  - « Establishment of a stakeholder engagement group including relevant government agencies and rider groups.
  - « Identification of key sites for investigation. This can include both natural reserves as well as other public land (working with the stakeholder engagement group) and should investigate:
    - A regionally significant and/or national trail network (Ourimbah State Forest is considered the most suitable, subject to agreement from landowner)
    - Local and regional trails
    - Urban bike parks (pump tracks and skills development tracks)
    - Adaptive mountain biking opportunities
    - Potential sites for acquisition to complement existing sites, provide access to sites or offer a new location for trails.
  - « Opportunities for partnerships to embellish or establish new trails and facilities with other clubs or government agencies.
  - « Identification of unauthorised trails that need closure and remediation/ revegetation.
  - « Focus on larger length trails and single use networks being developed in partnership with clubs on public land identified in the site selection criteria.
  - « Within council reserves identify opportunities to deliver shared use opportunities on fire trails and access trails, that can be managed sustainability and protect values.
  - « Consider prioritising nature focused shared trail rides that cater to family, recreation and nature riding demand. These should provide interpretive elements and a focus on local environmental or cultural values.
  - « Development of a management and maintenance framework for the ongoing operation of any site including consideration of funding and resourcing requirements.
5. Adopt a trails approval process that allows local users and the community to have a say on any new trail proposals. This should include the following:
  - « Site suitability assessment (soils and vegetation)
  - « Constraints assessment (conservation and cultural heritage)
  - « Access assessment (linkage to bike way access or carparks)
  - « Demand (supported by local riders and rider groups)
  - « Community approval (local community support, concerns can be addressed)
  - « Management assessment (does council have the resources to maintain the trail or is a local club or volunteer group agreeing to be responsible for maintenance)
  - « Construction plan assessment (meets MTBA/ IMBA trail standards)



### 3 INTRODUCTION



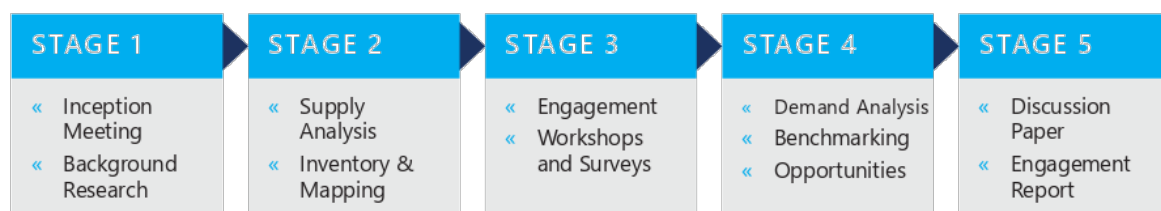


The Central Coast Council (Council) have identified an increase in mountain bike participation as both a sport and a recreation activity, which has created an increase in demand for suitable areas to ride. While Council currently provides for mountain bike riding on fire and management trail systems in its natural reserves, it has noticed that a number of unauthorised trails have also been constructed in some reserves. The construction of unauthorised mountain bike trails poses environmental, heritage and reputational risk to Council in terms of legislation, community expectations and the experience of other reserve users. Unauthorised mountain bike trails may also pose a risk to riders where construction is poor or where the level of difficulty is unknown to the rider. The aims of the feasibility study are therefore:

- « Identify the role that Council's natural reserves may play in the provision of mountain bike experiences across the Central Coast.
- « Protect areas of high conservation and heritage value.
- « Minimising the key drivers for the building of unauthorised trails.
- « Maximise the safe use of Council Reserves by all visitors.

### 3.1 THE PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The following outlines the project methodology for the feasibility study.



### 3.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of previous and existing plans, reports and policies relating to natural reserves and mountain biking on the Central Coast region was undertaken. Relevant key themes identified in the literature are summarised below.

Table 1: Background Literature Review

Source	
Central Coast Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028	<p>Sets a 10-year strategic plan for the Central Coast region. Five themes are outlined within the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Belonging</li> <li>« Smart</li> <li>« Green</li> <li>« Responsible</li> <li>« Liveable</li> </ul> <p>Key focus areas relating to mountain biking within these themes include the cherished and protected natural beauty and healthy lifestyles for a growing community.</p>
Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2018-19 – Central Coast Council	<p>Outlines the actions Council will take to deliver on the Community Strategic Plan. It sets a Corporate Vision of 'A vibrant and sustainable Central Coast'</p>
Central Coast Destination Management Plan 2018-2021	<p>Guides the tourism development and destination management to help ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the sector in the Central Coast region.</p> <p>The vision is 'the natural choice for leisure, business and major events in regional NSW'</p> <p>The plan recognises the importance and opportunities for sporting events and outlines the following action</p> <p><i>2.2 – Develop a business case for new mountain bike trails to attract a world class event to the Central Coast</i></p>

Source	
Central Coast Tourism Opportunity Plan 2019 - 2024	Provides strategic direction to guide tourism and the opportunities it creates for the Central Coast. The key challenges and opportunities have been identified including future tourism capital investment and product development. These opportunities include opportunities to upgrade suitable mountain biking trails.
Central Coast Council - Bike Plan	<p>The Bike Plan outlines the policies and desired improvements required to achieve Councils vision for:</p> <p><i>'People of all ages and abilities can walk and cycle on safe, inclusive and connected facilities'</i></p> <p>Action plan item 8.5: Provide more and better information</p> <p>Including to develop and launch a 'Cycling on the Central Coast' web site to promote all information on cycling including mountain biking</p>
Plan of Management – Kincumba Mountain Regional Reserve	<p>Outlines how the Kincumba Mountain Regional Reserve is to be managed in the future. Kincumba Mountain Regional Reserve is seen as a valuable community asset that provides a variety of visitor experiences appropriate to the reserve with the objective of achieving ecological sustainable management.</p> <p>The action under 4.3.2.6 provided that Council develop a Code of Practice for the use of mountain bikes within Kincumba Mountain Regional Reserve. The Code of Practice will identify authorised and unauthorised trails and establish a framework of participation for its ongoing management.</p>
Central Coast Council Mountain Bike Event – July 2016	<p>A survey was undertaken to understand the behaviours of mountain bike riders, seek thoughts on existing trails and facilities and understand how to encourage mountain bike riders to the Central Coast.</p> <p>Key findings included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Majority of riders are members of a club</li> <li>« Regularly (once a month) travel outside of their local area to ride</li> <li>« Central Coast trails seen as 'better' or 'about the same' compared with trails in other locations</li> <li>« However, facilities are generally considered worse than other areas (noting parking, toilets, taps/water and wayfinding signs)</li> </ul>
Wyang Soft Adventure Market Assessment - 2016	An assessment of a soft adventure product being developed for Wyong was undertaken and included trends and opportunities. Existing mountain bike events were identified as was the opportunities that the state forests provided for mountain biking opportunities.
Presidents Hill Feasibility Assessment - 2015	This report undertook an assessment of the suitability of Presidents Hill (Waterview Park) for the development of Mountain Biking trails. This report identified that the site would only be suitable to construct a small-scale mountain bike facility (less than 5km) of trails for novice and intermediate mountain bikers.



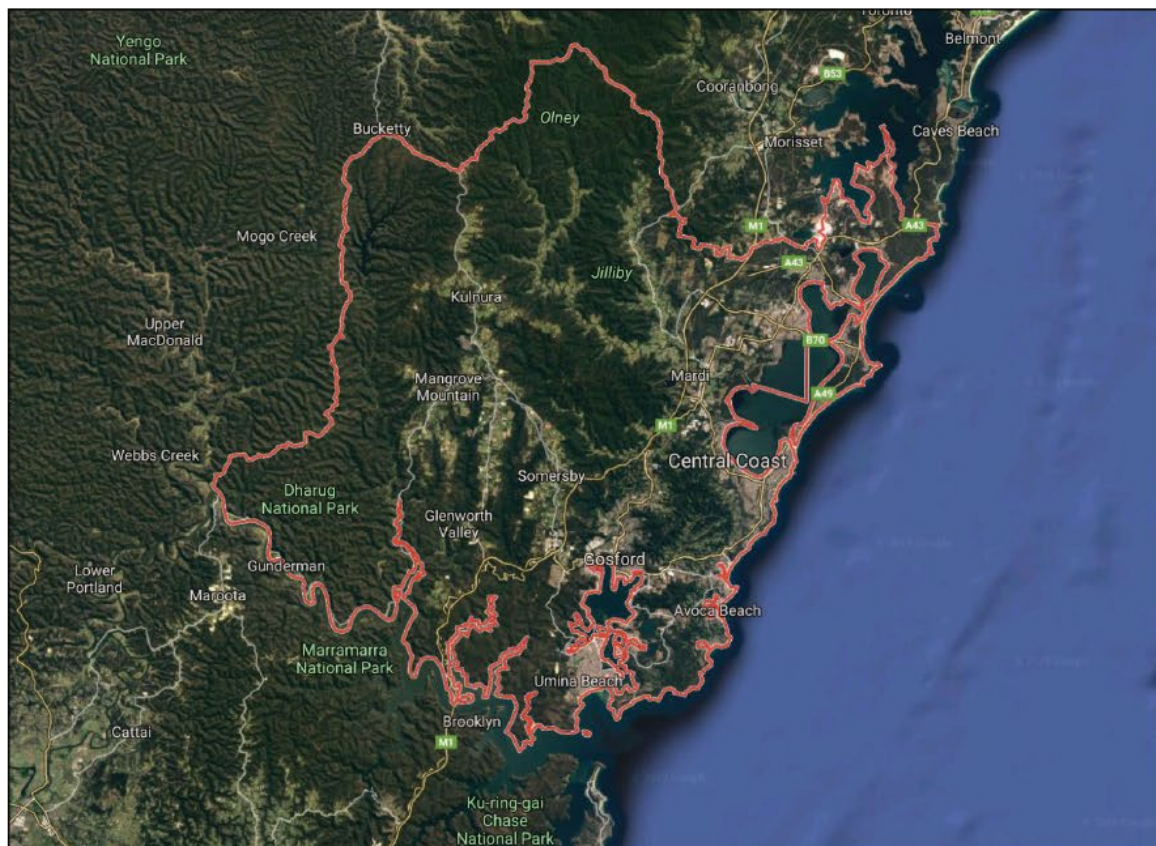
## 4 THE CENTRAL COAST





The New South Wales Central Coast is one hour's drive north of Sydney and covers an area of 168,000km<sup>2</sup>. More than half of the region is comprised of National Parks, State forests, regional and local open space and conservation areas. In 2018 the estimated residential population of the Central Coast region was 342,047 this is up from 336,611 in 2016 and 322,657 in 2011<sup>2</sup>

Figure 1: Central Coast Local Government Area



The area is also expected to experience strong growth in the coming years as the table below indicates.

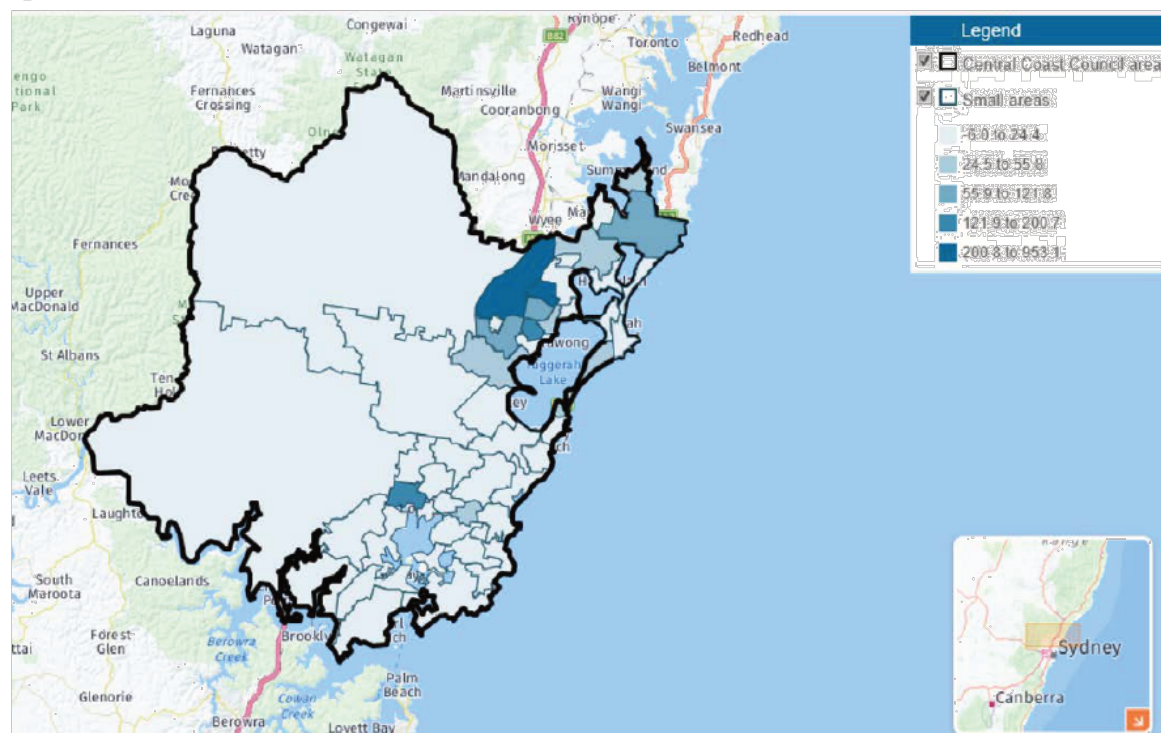
Table 2: Population growth to 2036 in the Central Coast

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	Total Change	Average annual change
Total Population	335,309	354,915	373,925	394,019	414,615	79,306	1.07%

<sup>2</sup> Profile Id - <https://profile.id.com.au/central-coast-nsw>

The below map demonstrates the population growth expected from 2016 to 2036. The map shows the overall percentage for the Central Coast and demonstrates that, with the exception of West Gosford and Erina in the south, the growth is expected to the region's north eastern corridor, particularly Woongarah, Warnervale – Wallarah – Bushells Ridge.

Figure 2: Outline of Growth Area for Central Coast LGA<sup>3</sup>



This growth is further evidenced in the below table, which outlines the areas with the highest growth expected until 2036.<sup>4</sup>

Area	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	Total Change	Avg. annual % Change
Central Coast Council area	335,309	354,915	373,925	394,019	414,615	+79,306	+1.07
Avoca Beach - Picketts Valley - Copacabana - MacMasters Beach	9,057	9,175	9,230	9,236	9,247	+189	+0.10
Bateau Bay	12,373	12,693	13,324	14,098	14,535	+2,162	+0.81
Berkeley Vale - Chittaway - Glenning Valley	13,410	13,775	14,328	14,457	14,627	+1,217	+0.44
Blue Haven	6,531	6,617	6,472	6,390	6,302	-229	-0.18
Budgewoi - Halekulani - Buff Point	9,570	9,877	10,218	10,314	10,474	+904	+0.45
Charmhaven - Lake Haven	6,247	6,417	6,519	6,875	7,241	+994	+0.74
East Gosford - Point Frederick	6,323	7,145	7,196	7,330	7,533	+1,210	+0.88
Erina	5,075	5,686	6,090	6,455	6,788	+1,714	+1.47
Ettalong Beach - Booker Bay	6,202	6,769	6,953	7,096	7,235	+1,033	+0.77
Forresters Beach - Wamberal	9,805	10,348	10,522	10,593	10,591	+786	+0.39

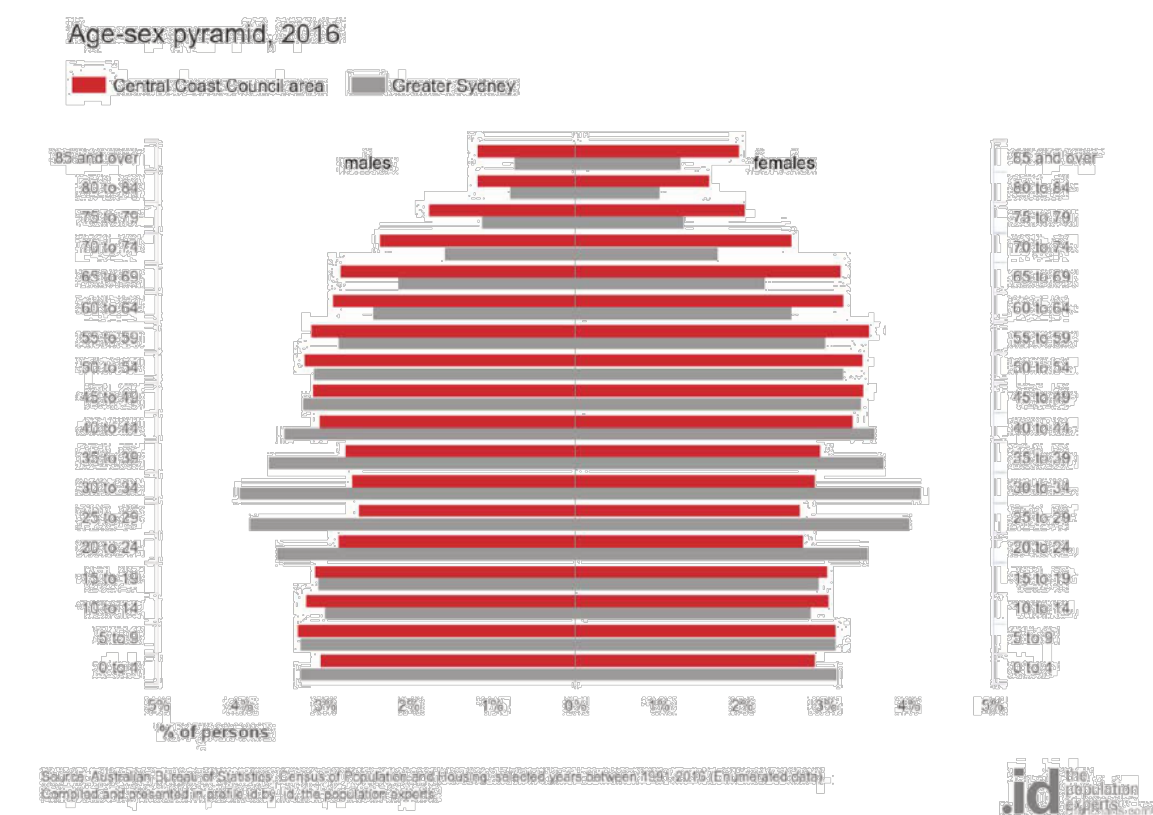
<sup>3</sup> Forecast ID - <https://forecast.id.com.au/central-coast-nsw>

<sup>4</sup> Forecast ID - <https://forecast.id.com.au/central-coast-nsw>

Area	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	Total Change	Avg. annual % Change
Gorokan	8,473	8,720	8,906	9,036	9,156	+682	+0.39
Gosford - West Gosford	4,970	6,187	7,653	9,361	11,028	+6,058	+4.07
Green Point	6,530	6,602	6,493	6,474	6,489	-41	-0.03
Gwandalan - Summerland Point	5,844	6,197	6,115	6,575	7,847	+2,003	+1.48
Hamlyn Terrace	6,218	8,541	10,535	11,113	10,943	+4,725	+2.87
Holgate - Matcham - Erina Heights	2,430	2,338	2,290	2,275	2,284	-146	-0.31
Kanwal - Wyongah	6,226	6,358	6,907	8,014	9,342	+3,115	+2.05
Kariong	6,559	6,467	6,471	6,531	6,682	+123	+0.09
Killarney Vale - Tumby Umbi	12,565	12,640	12,707	12,817	12,968	+403	+0.16
Kincumber	7,224	7,335	7,422	7,475	7,497	+273	+0.19
Kincumber South - Bensville - Empire Bay - Killcare	9,641	9,671	9,852	9,813	9,845	+205	+0.11
Lake Munmorah - Chain Valley Bay	8,449	8,940	10,091	12,927	15,328	+6,879	+3.02
Lisarow - Mt Elliot	5,419	5,398	5,414	5,590	5,900	+481	+0.43
Long Jetty - Shelly Beach - Toowoona Bay - Blue Bay	9,449	10,204	10,793	10,899	10,973	+1,524	+0.75
Manning Park	2,531	2,524	2,569	2,613	2,666	+135	+0.26
Mountains	3,959	4,019	4,115	4,214	4,314	+355	+0.43
Narara - Niagara Park	10,902	11,105	11,177	11,018	10,963	+61	+0.03
Noraville - Norah Head	4,124	4,148	4,136	4,119	4,141	+17	+0.02
North Gosford - Wyoming	14,123	15,582	16,795	16,832	16,939	+2,817	+0.91
Ourimbah - Palmdale - Kangy Angy	4,585	4,634	4,710	4,897	5,208	+623	+0.64
Point Clare - Tascott - Koolewong - Woy Woy Bay	7,757	7,802	7,938	7,946	8,004	+247	+0.16
San Remo - Doyalson - Colongra	4,778	4,893	4,946	5,508	5,948	+1,170	+1.10
Springfield	4,208	4,048	3,968	4,009	4,085	-123	-0.15
Terrigal - North Avoca	14,126	15,339	15,265	15,219	15,103	+977	+0.34
The Entrance - The Entrance North	5,788	6,551	7,521	8,261	9,007	+3,219	+2.24
Toukley - Canton Beach	5,842	6,316	6,710	6,942	7,123	+1,281	+1.00
Tuggerah - Mardi	5,975	5,932	5,987	6,632	7,839	+1,864	+1.37
Tuggerawong - Tacoma - Rocky Point	2,291	2,326	2,338	2,370	2,458	+167	+0.35
Umina Beach - Pearl Beach - Patonga	17,819	18,055	18,061	18,183	18,348	+528	+0.15
Valleys	4,333	4,400	4,480	4,583	4,741	+408	+0.45
Wadalba	2,934	4,546	5,693	6,880	7,609	+4,675	+4.88
Warnervale - Wallarah - Bushells Ridge	1,107	2,188	4,931	8,089	11,648	+10,541	+12.49
Watanobbi	3,978	3,967	3,895	3,875	3,879	-99	-0.13
Woongarah	5,313	6,928	10,024	13,490	15,983	+10,670	+5.66
Woy Woy - Blackwall	12,775	12,966	13,300	13,419	13,619	+844	+0.32
Wyong	4,329	5,209	5,512	5,828	6,747	+2,418	+2.24
Yattalunga - Saratoga - Davistown	7,142	7,340	7,352	7,346	7,389	+247	+0.17



Figure 3: Breakdown of age and gender in Central Coast compared with greater Sydney area

**Key Findings of Demographic Analysis:**

- « High proportion of 50 plus males and females in Central Coast compared with greater Sydney.
- « Lower proportion of 20-44-year-old males and females when compared with greater Sydney.
- « High median age of 42, compared with greater Sydney at 36, NSW and Australia are 38.
- « Similar proportions of youth (to 19 y.o.) as that for greater Sydney.
- « High proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population at 3.8% compared with greater Sydney 1.5% and NSW 2.9%.
- « Lower proportion of couples with children, 28% compared with greater Sydney at 35% and NSW at 32%.
- « Higher proportion of older couples with children 12% compared with greater Sydney at 8% and NSW 10%.
- « Higher proportion of lone person households at 25% compared with greater Sydney at 20% and NSW at 22%.
- « Low proportion of medium and high-density housing, 22% compared with greater Sydney 44% and NSW 33%.
- « Low Median weekly household income of \$1,256 compared with greater Sydney \$1,745 and NSW \$1,481, however there is also lower median weekly mortgage repayment and weekly rent compared with greater Sydney and NSW.
- « Lower proportion of households renting at 26% compared with greater Sydney 33% and NSW 30%.
- « Lower proportion of people born overseas 15% compared with greater Sydney 37% and NSW 28% and a low proportion of people have language at home other than English 6% compared with greater Sydney 36% and NSW 25%.
- « The SEIFA index of disadvantage Central Coast was considered more disadvantaged (989) compared with greater Sydney 1018 and NSW 1001. The areas of Holgate, Erina Heights, Forresters Beach, Wamberal were considered the lowest level of disadvantage. While Wyong, Toukley, Canton Beach and The Entrance were considered to be the areas of the highest disadvantage.



## 5 MOUNTAIN BIKING





## 5.1 INTRODUCTION TO MOUNTAIN BIKING

While there are a number of different mountain biking styles, mountain biking typically involves cycling off road on a variety of unsealed surfaces through a natural setting. This usually involves manoeuvring through specifically designed trails which encounter obstacles such as trees, rocks, man-made structures and other technical trail features.<sup>5</sup> Mountain Biking offers significant health, fitness, sport, recreation, and tourism opportunities. It is emerging as a particularly attractive activity for regions characterised by outstanding environmental landscapes.

Increasing interest in mountain biking aligns with one of the key 'megatrends' identified by the Australian Sports Commission: "from extreme to mainstream". This megatrend captures the rise of lifestyle, adventure and alternative sports which are particularly popular with younger generations. These sports typically involve complex, advanced skills and have some element of inherent danger and/or thrill-seeking. They are also characterised by a strong lifestyle element and participants often obtain cultural self-identity and self-expression through these sports.

Evidence from a number of studies and across the sport and recreation industry is that mountain biking in Australia is increasing in popularity rapidly<sup>6</sup>. This popularity is arising from a general participation demand, more people wanting to ride on trails in natural areas. Increased participation in active recreation is an overall emerging trend and, in many locations, this means walking, riding and running on trails. In addition, the increasing availability of mountain bikes, decreasing prices and increased awareness of the activity helps drive increased participation. The increasing availability and affordability of E bikes is also driving demand with many more people now able to cycle and explore off path trails.

There are a range of different trail types for mountain bike riders. The following table outlines the key types.

Table 3: Trail Types<sup>7</sup>

Type	Description
Cross Country (XC)	Primarily single-track oriented with a combination of climbing and descending, and natural trail features of varying technicality. Cross country trails appeal to the majority market and can cater for timed competitive events. Typically, bikes are lightweight with shorter travel, dual suspension or have no rear suspension.
All Mountain (AM) (same as Gravity Enduro)	Similar to cross country and primarily singlet rack oriented, with greater emphasis on technical descents, with non-technical climbs. All mountain trails can cater for timed competitive events. All mountain trails may use uplift to the trailhead. Bikes are typically light weight with medium-travel dual suspension.
Gravity Flow	Similar to gravity enduro however are usually more targeted towards beginner-intermediate level riders. Typically have long descents with minimal climbing, with low to moderate gradients, lots of berms rollers and rollable jumps. The trails are usually accessed by shuttle.
Downhill (DH)	Purely descent trails with emphasis on steep gradients for speed and technical challenge with a focus on skill development, can cater for timed competitive racing. Downhill trails usually require uplift to the trailhead. Bikes are designed for descending, built for strength overweight and typically long-travel dual suspension.
Freeride (FR)	Typically, descent focused trails with emphasis solely on technical challenge and skill development. Feature built and natural terrain technical features, drops and jumps. Appeals to the more experienced market, caters for competitions judging manoeuvres and skills. Bikes typically medium to long-travel dual suspension built for strength.
Park (PK)	Built feature environment with emphasis on manoeuvres, skill development and progression. Appeals to wide market including youth and can cater for competitions judging aerial manoeuvres. Can include jump tracks, pump tracks and skills parks. Typically, dirt surfaced but can include hardened surfaces. Bikes are typically built for strength, with short travel suspension.
Touring (TO)	Typically, long distance riding on reasonably uniform surface conditions and lower grades. Touring trails are dual direction linear trails or long-distance circuits with a focus on reaching a destination. Touring trails can include rail trails, access/fire roads and single track. While there is a limited market for long distance mountain biking, touring trails can be ridden in sections making them accessible to all. Bikes may be carrying panniers or towing trailers, and are usually robust with limited suspension, however, for short sections or day trips most mountain bikes are suitable.

<sup>5</sup> Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Sustainable Mountain Bike Strategy, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

<sup>7</sup> Queensland Mountain Bike Strategy, 2018.

There are also a range of different mountain bike users with different skills and abilities who seek a range of experiences on the trails. The following table provides an overview of the different mountain bike user types.

Table 4: Mountain Bike Users

Type	Experience Sought	Classification Sought	Market Potential
Leisure	Includes general cyclists of all ages and abilities and potentially the largest market. They ride infrequently, often have limited skills and require very accessible trails. Not members of clubs and more likely to use highly accessible routes close to home or make the journey to trail facilities with amenities and services such as bike hire, cafés and toilets.	Generally, seek White (Easiest) and Green (Easy) classification trails. Progress to Blue (Moderate) trails.	Large
Enthusiast	Purely recreational mountain bikers with moderate skills and variable fitness and ride weekly. They are typically aged 29-49 and form the existing market majority. Typically, don't compete in events and possess limited outdoors experience. Prefer trails with good trail signs, seek technical but not too challenging trails. Most likely to take short breaks to mountain bike.	Mostly Green (Easy) and Blue (Moderate) classification trails. Progress to Black (Difficult) trails.	Moderate
Sport	Competitive mountain bikers, who ride regular routes multiple times a week and are members of mountain bike clubs. They are a small but influential market. They are willing to seek less accessible trails, have a high fitness level and are technically proficient but may have limited outdoor skills. They ride a very wide variety of trails.	Green (Easy) to Double Black (Extreme)	Small but influential
Adaptive mountain biking	Riders with disability lived experience who require modified or specialised riding equipment to participate, such as hand cycles. There is an emerging group of people who use off-road hand cycles to participate.	All Classifications as per the Adaptive Trail Rating (ATR) system	Small
Independent	Skilled outdoor enthusiasts who ride once a week and are technically proficient with good level of fitness. Generally, a small market. Often involved in other outdoor activities, capable of planning their own rides and ride a very wide variety of trail classifications. Adventure is more important than the technical challenge and they seek more remote trails.	White (Easiest) to Black (Difficult)	Small
Gravity	Highly skilled technical riders who seek very challenging trails, typically ride at least once a week and are often members of clubs. They represent a small market that requires purpose-built trails often with an uplift facility, which are repeatedly used in a concentrated manner. Gravity riders seek specific trails with the highest classifications.	Blue (Moderate) to Double Black (Extreme)	Small



## 5.2 THE MOUNTAIN BIKE INDUSTRY

When discussing trends in the mountain biking industry, it is necessary to firstly break down what is meant by 'the mountain bike industry'. Essentially, the mountain bike industry can be thought of as a conglomeration of different business areas, including:

- « Bike and equipment manufacturing and retail.
- « Mountain bike event organising (both competitive and recreational).
- « Mountain bike guided tours and skills tuition.
- « Commercial shuttle operations (including the use of chairlifts as uplift facilities).
- « Provision of traditional tourism services targeting mountain bike tourists (accommodation, food and beverage, etc.).
- « Trail design and construction.

While the mountain bike industry is quite diverse, the trends in the industry tend to cross the various different business areas, with each influencing, and being influenced by, the others. For example, the popularity of the enduro World Series (the highest level of gravity enduro racing), influences the development and manufacturing of gravity enduro bikes, leading to an increase in the consumer uptake of such bikes, which in turn leads to increases in local attendance at similar events, which in turn leads to the development of more gravity enduro trails. These various factors all influence, and are influenced by, each other.



Figure 4: IMBA Green XC Trail Derby, Tasmania  
(photo by World Trail)

## 5.3 GROWING POPULARITY OF GRAVITY ENDURO EVENTS

Gravity enduro racing appears to be riding a wave as the most popular competitive discipline currently. This is probably because it is closer to the type of riding that the majority of people like to do with their friends – riding the descents as fast as possible, and then riding together on the climbs and socialising. By contrast, traditional cross-country disciplines (Olympic, marathon and short-course) appear to require more commitment and discipline and appear to be less attractive and accessible to the average rider.

The flipside to increasing growth in gravity enduro racing seems to be a decrease in participation in more traditional cross-country competitive disciplines. Some of Australia's oldest and longest running long- format cross-country races have recently ceased, citing causes such as low participation and attendance and increasing costs to run events. It is not clear if this is an accurate assessment, or simply an anecdotal snapshot in time. After all, cross-country mountain bike racing remains an Olympic event and is still the flagship UCI World Cup and World Championship event.



Figure 5: Gravity Trail Derby, Tasmania (photo by World Trail)



## 5.4 BIKE DEVELOPMENT

Typically, the most popular mountain bikes in the market today have 29-inch wheels, tubeless tyres, hydraulic disc brakes, 10-12 gears (rear derailleurs only) and front and rear suspension. The most popular frame materials are aluminium and carbon fibre, with steel and titanium less common, but still not uncommon. The modern mountain bike is low maintenance, light, responsive and forgiving.

Improvements and decreasing production costs in electric battery and motor technology is driving the increasing penetration of E-bikes (electric bikes) into the market. E-bikes are also referred to as pedal assist bikes – that is, the battery and motor supply power to the drivetrain when the rider is pedalling, providing assistance to the rider, increasing the average speed and extending the range for the average rider. They do not have a throttle like a motorbike and don't really allow riders to ride faster than a skilled rider already can. The main impact of E-bikes is that riders who believe they are too old, too unfit, too inexperienced or are otherwise not capable of going mountain bike riding, are now able to experience the sport using an E-bike. The real benefit of E-bikes therefore is that they have the potential to greatly increase participation and expand the market for mountain bike trails, beyond the stereotypical adventure/thrill seeking mountain bike rider cliché.

## 5.5 GRAVITY FLOW TRAILS

Increasingly, mountain bike riders are looking to ride gravity flow trails. These trails have some cross-over with the gravity enduro phenomenon but are usually more targeted towards beginner-intermediate level riders. The key elements of gravity flow trails are:

- « Long descents, with minimal climbing;
- « Typically, shuttle accessed, point-to-point trails;
- « Low – moderate gradients (say 5-10%);
- « Lots of berms, rollers and rollable jumps;
- « No need to pedal or brake hard, unless you choose to;
- « Anyone with basic bike handling skills can ride a gravity flow trail, but experienced riders ride faster and hit jumps/gaps that inexperienced riders don't even see.

This developing market utilises access via vehicles (or other means such as chairlift), offers the opportunity for mountain bike riders to experience wilderness and forests through long rolling descents and enjoy a mountain bike experience that is high on thrills and enjoyment and low on hard work, sweat and exertion. This style of trail is tapping into a growing market segment that wants to be uplifted to the top of the hill



Figure 6: Gravity Flow Trail, Blue Derby, Tasmania (photo by Flow MTB)

## 5.6 INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Women's participation in mountain bike is growing slowly, but many commercial tour operators are actively looking to expand this market through product packaging and cooperative marketing. For example, over the last two years Mt Buller Alpine Resort in Victoria has offered a women's mountain bike weekend called 'Mind, Body, Bike' that includes social rides, guided tours and skills tuition, with additional optional elements like food and wine, yoga, cooking classes, massage and mindfulness.

A wide range of women's specific products are now available from bikes to apparel to accessories. Performance, pricing and styling is on par to men products.



Figure 7: Women in Mountain Biking (photo by Shutterstock)



## 5.7 GROWTH OF PUMP TRACKS

Pump tracks are becoming more common. Once hidden in backyards of only the most dedicated mountain bike riders, pump tracks are now being constructed at the trailheads of mountain bike destinations and in urban areas where local municipal governments are seeing the value in this emerging form of recreational infrastructure. While traditionally constructed with soil, crushed rock or clay, the modern, best-practice pump tracks are being constructed with a smooth, low maintenance asphalt surface, sub-surface drainage and landscaping elements including vegetation, turf, lighting, shelters, bench seating and more.

The key benefits of asphalt pump tracks are:

- « They can be constructed for low budgets.
- « They can be constructed in small areas.
- « They can be constructed quickly;
- « They can be used by bikes (BMX, mountain bike, balance bikes, kids' bikes), skateboards, scooters and even in-line skates;
- « They have lower inherent risk than skate parks – there are no 'falls from heights', no sharp edges, no forced risks. All obstacles are rollable;
- « Minimal maintenance and lifespan approaching 15 years;
- « Excellent environment for learning bike handling skills;
- « Suitable for all ages and all skill levels.



Figure 8: Gladstone Pump Track (photo by World Trail)



## 5.8 INCREASING ACCEPTANCE OF MOUNTAIN BIKING AS A LEGITIMATE MAINSTREAM SPORT

While mountain biking has been in the Olympics now since the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games, it is reaching a new level of acceptance as a mainstream sport. Its rise coincides with a decrease in popularity of many traditional, structured sports like football, cricket, basketball etc.

Specific children's mountain bike programs are growing in popularity all around Australia. This is possibly being driven by the increasing lack of fitness and physical activity amongst young people. Parents and teachers see mountain biking as a means of engaging young people in an activity that promotes physical activity and exposes them to the outdoors.



Figure 9: World Cup Cross Country Mountain Bike Racing (photo by Shutterstock)

## 5.9 GROWTH OF MOUNTAIN BIKE TOURISM AS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER

Mountain bike tourism is tourism where the primary purpose of the visit is to ride mountain bikes. It is similar to many other popular adventure/ outdoor sports, like snow skiing, scuba diving, rock climbing, surfing and golf. Enthusiasts of these sports organize their holidays around their preferred sporting activities.

Previously, many Australian mountain bike riders looked overseas for their mountain biking holidays. Destinations such as Canada, USA and New Zealand offered some of the world's leading mountain bike destinations. While these destinations are still among the world's best and no doubt on the wish lists of many Australian riders, the quality and size of some Australian trail destinations is now comparable to these overseas destinations, convincing many Australian mountain bike riders to spend their money in Australia instead.

Mountain bike tourism brings sustainable economic benefits. It brings money into the local economy and creates job opportunities as new businesses spring up to service the visiting riders. Detailed later in this report is a number of successful Australian mountain biking destinations and provides benchmarks including estimates of mountain bike tourism visitation.

With the success of mountain biking destinations like Derby in Tasmania, Government agencies around Australia have started to appreciate the economic value that mountain bike trails can bring, particularly in rural areas of Australia, where many traditional industries are declining. Looking around Australia there are many mountain bike tourism projects recently completed or currently underway, demonstrating the value and benefits that government agencies see in developing mountain biking products, these include;

### Victoria

- « Creswick - currently in planning stages. Seeking to construct around 100km of predominantly cross-country trails. \$2.56M in funding secured.
- « Warburton - currently in planning stages. Seeking to construct around 100km of cross- country and gravity trails. Council has secured around \$12M in funding.

### Queensland

- « Wanggetti Trail - currently in planning stages. Seeking to construct around 100km of shared-use walking and mountain bike trail to become new iconic multi-day wilderness experience. \$41M secured for construction funding in 2019 QLD State budget.
- « Eungella -Finch Hatton – Mackay Regional Council is currently planning an international standard trails destination based in the Pioneer Valley with trails through National Park and State Forest lands. Funding is yet to be finalised.

### Northern Territory

- « Alice Springs - NT Government recently announced a plan to design and build the Red Centre Adventure Ride in the West MacDonnell Ranges. Due to be completed at the end of 2019. Funding of \$12M secured.

### Tasmania

- « St Helens – Currently in the construction phase. Around \$4.5M in funding secured for project construction.
- « Kentish - Currently in construction stage 1. Seeking to construct around 100km of mountain bike trails. Seeking around \$4.1M in funding, with some funding already secured for Stage 1 of construction.
- « Derby – Recently completed Stage 2 of construction, now home to over 100km of purpose-built mountain bike trails.
- « Maydena – mountain bike park opened in January 2018 in southern Tasmania, predominantly focused on gravity and advanced riding.

### South Australia

- « Adelaide - planning and works underway to develop and position Adelaide as leading mountain bike destination.

### New South Wales

- « Jindabyne - NSW government recently announced plans to extend the Thredbo Valley Track all the way to Jindabyne. \$9.8M in funding secured.
- « Wollongong - planning works underway to look at developing Mt Keira at Wollongong as a major mountain bike tourism destination.
- « Orange - planning works underway to look at developing Mt Canobolas at Orange as a major mountain bike tourism destination.

### 5.10 HEALTH BENEFITS

Mountain Bike riding can provide a number of health benefits. The Australian Health Policy Collaboration has released the Australian Health Tracker<sup>8</sup> which seeks to provide data on chronic diseases, conditions and their risk factors. The Health Tracker provides rates for children and adults who are overweight and obese, and those who are physically inactive. This provides that 63.4% of Australian adults (18 years and older) are either overweight or obese. In addition, 66.3% of Australian adults are not getting enough physical activity.

Mountain biking can play a positive role in reducing the risk of physical and mental health problems. Furthermore, physical inactivity has significant economic implications. The annual economic cost of physical inactivity in Australia (healthcare, productivity and mortality costs) was estimated to be \$13.8 billion in 2008<sup>9</sup>. Similarly, reducing inactivity by 10% is estimated to lower health sector costs by \$96 million annually and increase leisure-based productivity by \$79 million, home-based productivity by \$71 million and workforce productivity by \$12 million<sup>10</sup>. Although health care costs are not the responsibility of local government, it would be reasonable to assert that health care costs are a burden for the community, and that the more money spent on healthcare related to physical inactivity, the less money available for other types of health care and other projects/spending which can benefit communities and regions.

### 5.11 IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Understanding the environmental impacts of mountain biking can be somewhat difficult as the amount of detailed research is still limited compared with other forms of recreational activities such as hiking. It is understood that the largest environmental impacts for mountain biking are during the initial construction of the trails.<sup>11</sup> Some studies have compared the environmental impacts of mountain biking against other recreational activities including hiking and horse riding to established trails.

One particular study in Canada investigated the plant density, diversity and soil exposure before and after 500 one way passes by bikers and hikers. The findings of this was that there was no significant differences between hiking and mountain biking on the three areas investigated.<sup>12</sup> Another study in Australia investigated the impacts of mountain biking compared to hiking on subalpine grassland.<sup>13</sup> Vegetation and soil were measured including different intensities of use which included (none, 25, 75, 200 and 500 passes across slope, 200 pass up and down slope) for mountain biking and for hiking (200 and 500 passes across slope). This study outlined that mountain biking up and down a moderate slope had a greater impact when compared with riding across the slope. It also outlined that there was more damage than hiking but only at high use (500 passes). Overall however the study concluded that hiking and mountain biking appear to have similar environmental impacts.<sup>14</sup>

The research into soil erosion and compaction has outlined that the soil type (erodibility) and the amount of moisture have the greatest influence on the significance of mountain biking effects on soil.<sup>15</sup> An early study into soil erosion found that mountain biking generated less sediments when compared to horses and hikers.<sup>16</sup> Another study found that mountain bike trails were similar to hiking and multi-use trails when comparing trail impact indicators such as width, incision, and soil loss.<sup>17</sup> Slope was noted as an important factor that can change the condition of a trail rather than the level of use.<sup>18</sup> Riding technique and skill level could also play a factor on erosion.<sup>19</sup>

Trail design and management are much larger factors in environmental degradation than the type or amount of use.<sup>20</sup> Studies have demonstrated that poorly designed or located trails are the biggest cause of trail impacts.<sup>21</sup> The best trail alignments avoid the habitats of rare flora and fauna and greatly minimize soil erosion, muddiness, and tread widening by focusing traffic on side-hill trail alignments with limited grades and frequent grade reversals.<sup>22</sup>

Mountain biking as with all forms of recreational activities has some impact on the environment. While there is still limited detailed research into mountain biking impacts, those studies that have been completed have generally identified that the impacts to well designed and located mountain biking trails are similar to those of hiking and are considered to have less impact when compared to horse riding.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.atlasesaustralia.com.au/ahpc/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/physical-activity-and-sedentary-behaviour>

<sup>10</sup> Cadilhac et al. 2011 cited in <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/physical-activity-and-sedentary-behaviour>

<sup>11</sup> Marion, J.L., Wimpey, J., 2007. Environmental impacts of mountain biking: science review and best practices. In: Webber, P. (Ed.), *Managing Mountain Biking*, IMBA's Guide to Providing Great Riding. International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Boulder, pp. 94–111.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Pickering, C.M., Rossi, S., Barros, A. 2011. Assessing the impacts of mountain biking and hiking on subalpine grassland in Australia using an experimental protocol. *Journal of Environmental Management*, Vol 92 Issue 12, pp 3049–3057.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Quinn, M., Chernoff, G. 2010. *Mountain Biking: A review of the ecological effects: A literature review for Parks Canada National Office.*

<sup>16</sup> Pickering, C.M., et al. 2010. Comparing hiking, mountain biking and horse riding impacts on vegetation and soils in Australia and the United States of America. *Journal of Environmental Management*, Vol 91, pp 551–562.

<sup>17</sup> Pickering, C.M., et al. 2010. Comparing hiking, mountain biking and horse riding impacts on vegetation and soils in Australia and the United States of America. *Journal of Environmental Management*, Vol 91, pp 551–562.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Quinn, M., Chernoff, G. 2010. *Mountain Biking: A review of the ecological effects: A literature review for Parks Canada National Office.*

<sup>20</sup> Marion, J.L., Wimpey, J., 2007. Environmental impacts of mountain biking: science review and best practices. In: Webber, P. (Ed.), *Managing Mountain Biking*, IMBA's Guide to Providing Great Riding. International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) Boulder, pp. 94–111.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.



## 6 MOUNTAIN BIKING ON THE CENTRAL COAST





Mountain biking is a popular pastime on the Central Coast, having grown over a long period into a strong and active local mountain bike culture. Consequently, the Central Coast has many bike shops, a bike hire facility, various shared cycle paths as well as a BMX and Road Cycling club.

The Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park is the main sanctioned venue for mountain bikers on the Central Coast and is the focus of most organised club events. There are plenty of trails to suit all riders; from the family loop for those just getting started, to the cross country and gravity trails that are used in National Cup events. All in all, there are over 18kms of trails to explore. The Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park is operated by the Central Coast Mountain Bike Club under a Forest Permit issued by the Forestry Corporation of NSW. The Club funds events, developments and maintenance of infrastructure through memberships, fund raising and grants. Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park is free for general use. Commercial operators and organised groups/schools need to seek appropriate approvals. There are a range of commercial operators using Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park for events / shuttle / skills clinics which is providing local employment, tourism and recreation opportunities.

The Convict 100, a 65km Marathon Cross Country race is well known as one of Australia's most challenging Mountain Bike marathon races, following the historic Convict Trail through the Dharug and Yengo National Parks. The course features a mix of fast fire trail, technical rock gardens, rocky descents and spectacular ridgeline views.

### 6.1 MOUNTAIN BIKING LOCATIONS ON THE CENTRAL COAST

The Central Coast has a wealth of natural areas and the Coastal Open Space System (COSS) is a valued asset which has been planned and enhanced over many years. One of the issues of concern is the potential impacts of mountain bike trails on the COSS. The following map outlines the COSS system.





Figure 10: Map of Central Coast Coastal Open Space Land (COSS)

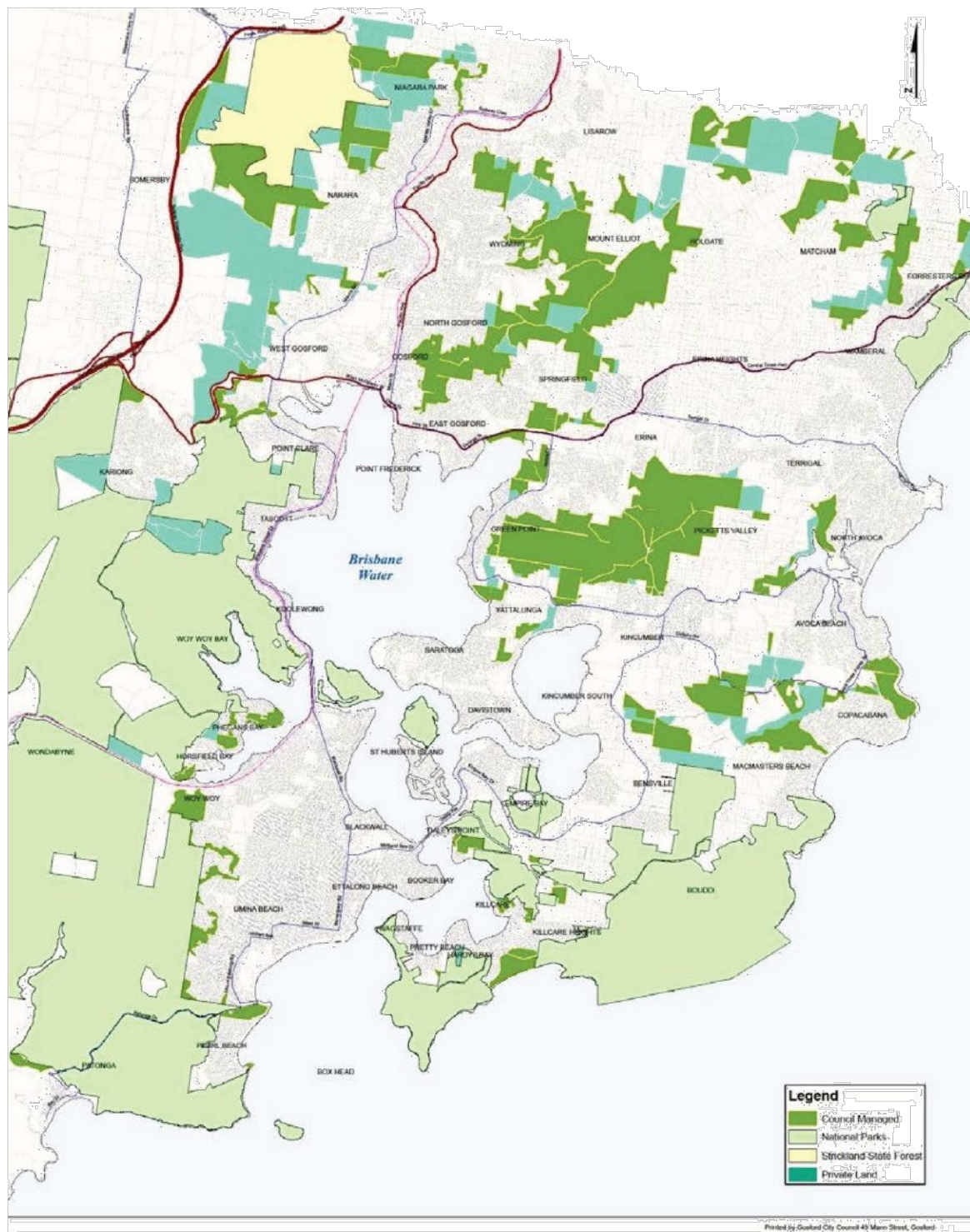


Figure 11: Mountain biking locations across the Central Coast region.



Table 5: Mountain Bike Locations identified in Central Coast Region

Name	Location	Land Area Ha	Zone	Site Observations	Identified Activities	Approved Activities	Land Tenure	Land Manager
Blackwall Mountain	Access via Maitland Bay Rd	40ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	Council reports unsanctioned MTB trails	Riding permitted on some fire trails	Central Coast Council	Central Coast Council
Bouddi National Park	NP is accessed from Putty Beach Drive, or Scenic Road Central Coast NSW	1681.9 ha	Non-Urban	World trail visited the site and noted a number of unsanctioned trails. The site lacked adequate infrastructure	20 km Unsanctioned trails throughout the NP (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Camping, Swimming, Fishing and Mountain Biking on Fire Trails	National Park	NSW National Parks & Wildlife
Bradleys Reserve North Avoca	Access via Bradleys Rd	27ha	Community Use	No site visit	Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Existing walking track with some unsanctioned technical features. Has a few kilometres of trail from the highway down to the lagoon foreshore	Central Coast Council Reserve COSS	Central Coast Council



Name	Location	Land Area Ha	Zone	Site Observations	Identified Activities	Approved Activities	Land Tenure	Land Manager
Brisbane Water National Park	Access is via Woy Woy Rd	14520 ha	Non-Urban	No site visit. Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails	Offers great walks, cycling and fishing spots. The park protects ancient Aboriginal rock engraving sites	Mountain bike riding permitted on a 20km fire trail loop called Tommo's loop and Rocky Ponds Cycling Loop	National Park	National Parks and Wildlife
Davis Town Road Bushland	Access via Avoca Beach Rd	4.63 ha	Freehold	No site visit	Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Green Point - Bushland reserve - private parcel in between Davidson Road and Pixie Avenue Reserves, no approved activities	Central Coast Council Reserve COSS	Central Coast Council
Glenworth Valley	Access via Peats Ridge Rd	3970ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	Popran National Park allows MTB on some trails. Glenworth Valley is advertising they will invest in 120km of MTB trails	Mountain biking, horse riding, quad biking, kayaking, abseiling, laser skirmish, camping.	National Park	National Parks and Wildlife
Jilliby State Conservation Area	Central Coast 1.25hr Drive from Sydney 30 min from Gosford NSW	3,884 ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	Area is approved for 4WD touring, mountain biking, horse riding and bush walks through the forest	Plan of Management states mountain biking only permitted on roads and management trails not permitted off roads, trails or walking tracks	National Park	NSW National Parks & Wildlife
Katandra Reserve	Access via Katandra Rd	190ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)		Central Coast Council Reserve COSS	Central Coast Council
Kincumba Mountain Reserve	Access via Island View Dr	660 ha	Non-Urban	17 trails totalling 18km Picnic areas Car parking Proximity to school & residential zoning Kiosk for event hire	18 km of Unsanctioned Trails throughout the reserve. (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Multiple walking tracks through rain forest and mountainous terrain. Riding not permitted on walking tracks, riding is permitted on some fire trails	Central Coast Council Reserve COSS	Central Coast Council
McPherson State Forest	Access via Gorge Downes Drive	6500ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	No available information	Existing walking tracks	State Forest	Forestry Corporation of NSW



Name	Location	Land Area Ha	Zone	Site Observations	Identified Activities	Approved Activities	Land Tenure	Land Manager
Munmorah State Conservation Area	Access via Pacific Hwy	997ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	Reports of unsanctioned mountain bike trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Camping, Swimming, Fishing.  Plan of Management only states mountain biking permitted on roads and management trails not permitted off roads or trails or walking tracks	National Park	National Parks and Wildlife
Mt Alison	Access via Pacific Hwy	130ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	Council reports unsanctioned MTB trails	Riding permitted on some fire trails	Central Coast Council	Central Coast Council
Olney State Forest	Access via Martinsville and Wattagan Forest Rds	20,000ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	The Hunter Mountain Bike Association manages a mountain bike track in Olney State Forest	Forest Permit Arrangement with Forestry Corporation of NSW to allow mountain biking	State Forest	Forestry Corporation of NSW
Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park in Ourimbah State Forest	Central Coast 1.25hr Drive from Sydney 30 min from Gosford  Red Hill Rd Ourimbah Central Coast NSW	Permit Area 216ha (State Forest total is 3,175ha)	Non-Urban	World trail visited the site and noted a number of well built and maintained trails. Site lacked adequate infrastructure.	Variety of riding opportunities for all skill levels.  Regular club race events, popular weekend destination with local riders	A trail network of 18 km (trail breakdown is 11 green, 22 blue, 9 black) with a mix of XC and DH trails. A Shuttle Service is available 7 days per week  Forest Permit Arrangement with Forestry Corporation of NSW to allow mountain biking. Central Coast Mountain Bike Club are the primary permit holder.	State Forest	Forestry Corporation of NSW
Pixie Avenue Bushland	Access via Pixie Av	7.87 ha	Freehold	No site visit.	Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Green Point – Bushland reserve, no approved activities	Central Coast Council Reserve COSS	Central Coast Council
Rumbalara Reserve	Access via Maidens Brush Rd, Mt Elliott	358ha	Non-Urban	Evidence of some unauthorised trails	Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Fire trails use allowed	Central Coast Council Reserve COSS	Central Coast Council
Strickland State Forest	Access via Strickland Forest Rd	490ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	No information available	Existing walking tracks and identified for permitted hunting	State Forest	Forestry Corporation of NSW

Name	Location	Land Area Ha	Zone	Site Observations	Identified Activities	Approved Activities	Land Tenure	Land Manager
Trail Share-Kulnura Cedar Brush Creek	Collins Rd via Brush Ck Rd, 1.5 hrs from Sydney, 30 min from Gosford	NA	Non-Urban	No site visit. Sanctioned trail network	Mix of IMBA Green to Black Diamond Trails, with some North Shore Features	6 trails totalling 27km (There are 4 grades, ranging from the 4 km entry-level green trail, with wide tracks and minimal climbing, to the challenging 8km black and red trails packed with technical singletrack, aerial platforms, roller-coaster downhills and over 400m of vertical climbing. The terrain is highly varied and will challenge every rider in one or other dimension <sup>23</sup> )  Accommodation Coaching	Private Property	Privately operated by Trail Share
Wambina Nature Reserve	Access via Matcham Rd	55ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	No sanctioned activity	National Parks	National Parks and Wildlife
Wambina Road Reserve	Access via Matcham Rd	27ha 43ha	1/ DP1087483 133/ DP1142189	No site visit	Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Riding permitted on some fire trails.	Central Coast Council Reserve COSS	Central Coast Council
Wyong State Forest	Access via Watagan Forest Rd	490ha	Non-Urban	No site visit	No information available	Existing walking tracks	State Forest	Forestry Corporation of NSW
Wyrabalong National Park	Cromarty Hill Rd	515ha	Community Use	No site visit	Reports of unsanctioned MTB Trails (no breakdown of trail difficulties can be provided as these are unsanctioned trails)	Plan of Management only states mountain biking permitted on roads and management trails not permitted off roads or trails or walking tracks	National Park	National Parks and wildlife

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.trailshare.re-zycle.com/>



## 7 CONSULTATION SUMMARY





The following section provides a summary of the consultation and community engagement outcomes. More detailed information on the engagement and survey can be found within the Engagement Report (separate report).

## 7.1 COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community survey was developed to seek the community's feedback on mountain biking on the Central Coast. The aim of the survey was to understand community views, participation and demand, current riding locations and the opportunities and risks for mountain bike riding on the central coast. The survey was hosted on-line and propagated widely through social media and council's communication channels.

A total of 1949 responses were received to the survey. Out of these 1590 (81.58%) currently participated in mountain biking within the Central Coast. A series of questions were asked both riders and non-riders to gather more information. A summary of the responses is outlined below.

### 7.1.1 Mountain Bike Rider Information

#### Riding Characteristics

Over 50% of the current mountain bikers would rate their ability as intermediate with only 8% indicating they are a beginner. Approximately 60% of respondents were also riding two or more times a week with the most popular times being Saturday and Sunday morning followed by Friday afternoons.

Table 6: Survey Result – How would you rate your ability?

How would you rate your ability?	
Beginner	8.03%
Intermediate	53.11%
Advanced	38.86%

Table 7: Survey Result – How often do you go mountain biking?

How often do you go mountain biking?	
Three or more times a week	27.91%
Twice a week	32.28%
Once a week	20.51%
Once a fortnight	8.87%
Once a month	9.39%
Once a year	1.03%

Table 8: Survey Result – What day and time do you normally go mountain biking?

What day and time do you normally go mountain biking?	Morning	Lunch time	Afternoon	Night
Monday	47.94%	21.01%	56.61%	15.98%
Tuesday	45.17%	19.31%	59.85%	17.37%
Wednesday	39.00%	19.76%	59.62%	20.79%
Thursday	37.55%	20.33%	56.96%	26.01%
Friday	44.56%	19.56%	62.07%	15.82%
Saturday	77.05%	35.70%	46.85%	5.90%
Sunday	76.04%	37.20%	48.57%	5.40%

Over 90% of respondents are spending between 1-4 hours mountain biking and generally riding with friends.

The responses indicate that just over half ride between 1-2 hours which would indicate a high degree of recreational riding on locally accessible trails. Riders are more likely to travel to a destination if there is more than 2 hours' worth of riding. This is supported with the proportion of rides in weekday mornings and afternoons, indicating shorter duration recreational riding at local destinations.

Table 9: Survey Result – Length of time mountain biking

How long do you usually undertake the activity for?	
Less than 1 hour	1.42%
1-2 hours	51.26%
2-4 hours	42.67%
4-6 hours	4.20%
More than 6 hours	0.45%

Table 10: Survey Result – Who do you ride with?

When you go riding, who do you ride with?	
Alone	20.80%
With friends	61.17%
With family	11.27%
With a club	1.22%
With an organized group (but not part of a club)	5.54%
Once a year	1.03%

Significantly only 25% of respondents were members of a mountain bike club. This means that self-directed, recreational riding is a dominant motivation and that competition is not a significant driver of participation.

Table 11: Survey Result – Are you a member of a mountain bike club?

Are you a member of a Mountain Bike club?	
No	75.24%
Yes	24.76%

### Trail Preferences

Trail riding was the type of trail most ridden followed by cross country, however this could reflect the availability of trails as opposed to the preference of riders. When asked their preferred trail to ride, a much greater proportion indicated a desire to ride flow trails which supports the assumption this is an unmet need and that there is lack of diversity in the current trail network.

Table 12: Survey Result – What type of trails do you ride?

What type of trails do you ride on the Central Coast	
Trail Riding	76.84%
Descent / Gravity	51.94%
Cross Country	67.16%
Flow Trail	58.32%
Fire Trails Only	17.55%
Other	4.19%

Table 13: Survey Result – Preferred trail

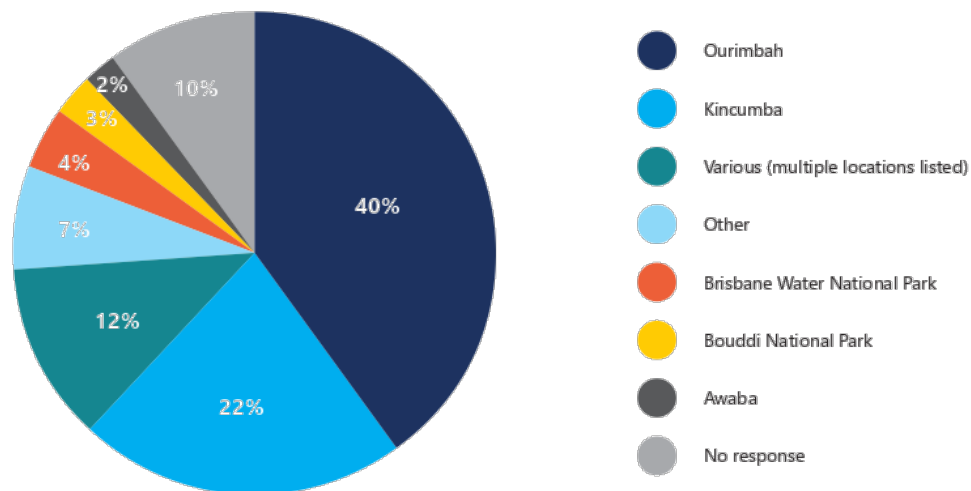
What is your most preferred trail to ride?	
Flow Trail	47.10%
Trail Riding	44.71%
Descent / Gravity	40.06%
Cross Country	39.42%
Fire Trails Only	7.16%
Other	2.58%



### Riding Locations

The most popular location for mountain biking on the Central Coast was Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park, followed by Kincumba Mountain Reserve. Approximately 12% listed multiple locations across the Central Coast.

Figure 12: Survey Result – Location Most Often Ridden



When asked to explain location preference, the main reason for Ourimbah was the trail network / trail diversity and options (66%). The location / access and proximity score next highest with 19%.

However, at Kincumba 54% of respondents identified that the main reason was the location / ease of access and proximity. The trail network / trail diversity scored next highest at 28%.

Figure 13: Survey Result – Why do you ride Ourimbah State Forest

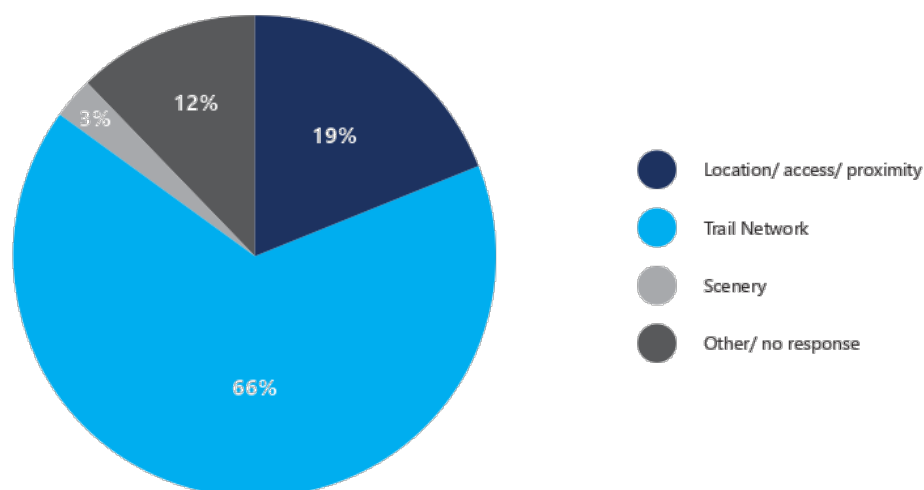
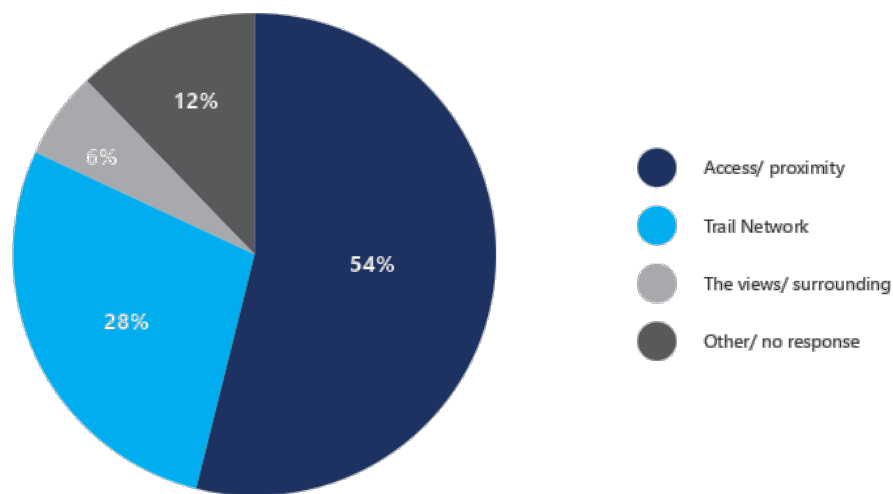


Figure 14: Survey Result – Why do you ride Kincumba?



#### Essential Facilities and Priorities for Preferred Locations

Trail signage, car parking and water were considered the essential facilities that should be provided at mountain biking locations (followed closely by toilets and site information). Respondents were also asked what facilities are required at their preferred location with 45% of respondents indicating toilets and water were the highest priorities at Ourimbah.

At Kincumba, trail improvements/sanctioned trails were the highest priority (39%).

Table 14: Survey Result – Essential Facilities Required

What do you think are the essential facilities that should be provided at mountain biking locations?	
Car parking	67.65%
Public Transport	4.57%
Trail Signage	80.10%
Toilets	56.75%
Seating	9.28%
Water	61.18%
Site Information	55.84%
Fencing to protect	35.65%
Other	9.14%

#### Travel Time and Use of Multiple Locations

##### Travel Time and Use of Multiple Locations

Over 65% of respondents are travelling 30 minutes or less to their most frequently used mountain bike location. This aligns with proximity being a key factor in the location chosen for a majority of respondents. Approximately 65% of respondents also ride in other locations.

Table 15: Survey Result – Travel Time

How long does it take to travel to this location?	
Less than 15 minutes	30.28%
15-30 minutes	35.07%
30 minutes – 1 hour	20.21%
1-2 hour	12.29%
More than 2 hours	2.15%

Table 16: Survey Result – Other locations for mountain biking

Is there another location on the Central Coast you frequently use for mountain biking?	
No	35.11%
Yes	64.89%

### Unauthorised Trails and Other Outdoor Recreation

Over 70% of respondents are aware that unauthorised mountain bike trails have been constructed and the majority of respondents attributed this to a lack of authorised trails. A secondary motivating factor was the convenience of a local option (location / proximity) as sanctioned trails were too far away to be accessible for some respondents.

Table 17: Survey Result – Unauthorised trails

Are you aware that some unauthorised mountain bike trails have been developed on some Council reserves?	
No	29.70%
Yes	70.30%

### 7.1.2 Non-Riders

There were 350 respondents who did not currently ride mountain bikes. These were asked a series of questions regarding their thoughts on mountain bike riding, current activities and any concern regarding mountain biking on the Central Coast. Out of the non-riders, approximately 46% indicated that they would consider mountain biking if formal trails were provided.

Table 19: Survey Result – Would you consider mountain biking?

Would you consider mountain bike riding if formal trails were provided in some natural areas	
No	39.49%
Yes	46.31%
Unsure	14.20%

### Non-Rider Outdoor Recreation Activities and Locations

The most popular activity undertaken by non-riders was bushwalking with over 68%.

Table 20: Survey Result – Recreation activities undertaken by non-riders

What activities do you do?	
Bushwalk	68.89%
Picnic	1.85%
Photography	2.96%
Art	0.74%
Relaxation	7.78%
Other	17.78%

Approximately 85% of respondents also visit other bushland or natural reserves on the Central Coast with over 50% of respondents indicating that they undertake bushwalking, hiking and walking in these areas.

Table 18: Survey Result – Bushland Reserves

Do you visit any bushland or natural reserve areas on the Central Coast?	
No	15.34%
Yes	84.66%

### Activity Frequency

more frequently than non-riders, with nearly 60% of riders using reserves twice a week or more compared with only 28% of non-riders. There was a diverse range of preferred locations provided, with Bouddi National Park, Kincumba, Rumbalara and Wyrabalong all proving popular. Close to 50% of respondents indicated they would visit their preferred location once a week or more.

Table 21: Survey Result – Frequency of visits to bushland reserve

How often do you visit this location?	
Three or more times a week	14.01%
Twice a week	14.01%
Once a week	20.62%
Once a fortnight	12.06%
Once a month	31.91%
Once a year	7.39%

### 7.1.3 All Respondents – Views and Attitudes Towards Mountain Biking

All respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their level of support for a range of strategies towards mountain biking. There was support of over 90% agreeing or strongly agreeing to allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use. Over 85% agreed with development of new shared trails that would allow for mountain biking as well, while approximately 87% agreed for the development of limited mountain bike trails in suitable locations. Over 75% of respondents also indicated that they are concerned about the lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorised.

When reviewing the responses, it is important to remember that overall 18.4% of respondents were not Mountain Bike riders and 81.6% were. Responses to the following issues were not reflective of these proportions, indicating that Riders share many concerns about non-sanctioned and unplanned trails for mountain biking and conversely that non-riders were not necessarily unsupportive of developing sanctioned trails for mountain biking.

Table 22: Survey Result: Mountain Biking Strategies

What day and time do you normally go mountain biking?				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue to allow mountain bike riding where currently allowed (on some existing fire trails as shared use)	78.90%	16.57%	2.67%	1.86%
Allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use	74.32%	16.50%	5.52%	3.66%
Development of new shared trails which allow mountain biking as well	70.66%	15.14%	8.12%	6.08%
Development of limited mountain bike only trails in suitable locations	67.31%	19.93%	7.63%	5.13%
Lease specific areas to clubs to provide mountain bike trails	53.87%	24.44%	13.42%	8.26%
Only State managed areas such as State Forests and National Parks should provide mountain bike trails	4.38%	8.64%	46.20%	40.77%
Council should not provide any mountain bike trails	3.37%	3.14%	16.92%	76.57%

Table 23: Survey Result: Concern Regarding Bushland Reserves

Are you concerned about the following?		
	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Behaviour of some mountain bike riders on shared trails?	30.12%	69.88%
Allowing mountain bikes in nature conservation reserves?	29.51%	70.49%
Construction of unauthorised mountain bike tracks?	51.94%	48.06%
Construction of unauthorised walking tracks?	45.21%	54.79%
Lack of proper / authorized trails for mountain bike riders?	86.66%	13.34%
Lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorized?	75.29%	24.71%
Increasing numbers of mountain bike riders in Council managed reserves?	25.06%	74.94%



## 7.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### 7.2.1 Mountain Bike Industry

A focus group was held with mountain bike riders on the Central Coast. This included representatives from the local mountain bike club, bike shops and riders. The following provides a summary of the key discussion points.

- « The Central Coast Mountain Bike Club operate from Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park in the Ourimbah State Forest which is managed by the Forestry Corporation with the club having a permit to operate. There is potential to expand at this location. The Club currently has gravity and cross-country trails and any new developments need approval from Forestry. The Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park is currently run by Club members (volunteers) with free access to the mountain bike community/ general public. They have large use on the weekends and over 18km of trails but believe there is the ability to have 85km of trails.
- « There is high demand for mountain biking reported from local bike shops, approximately 85% of sales are in mountain bikes.
- « Number of Sydney residents also coming to Central Coast as it is only an hour away and there are limited facilities in Sydney.
- « There is a significant risk with the current network of trails as there are limited trail markings and signage.
- « Kincumba is a popular spot as it has multiple entry points, in a central location and allows a quick ride with good elevation.
- « There is a limited relationship with Council, previous proposals to develop mountain biking have not been supported.
- « Opportunity for the Mountain Bike Community to work as a group with Council, they have a desire for good quality trails to be built and to achieve this without impacting the environment or heritage sites. Support for proposed dual use trails on climbing trails.
- « Desire of the mountain bike community to have a trail network but trails that are built are blocked by Council and new trail alignments occur as a result, they are just told there is no opportunity for trails to be built and therefore illegal trails are being developed. There is a financial opportunity for tourism and healthy living in supporting the industry. A willingness of the group to see positive changes and be part of the solution.

### 7.2.2 Environmental Conservation Groups

A workshop was held with representatives from environment and conservation groups. A summary of the key points is provided below:

- « Overall there was a significant concern regarding the damage that unauthorised mountain bike trails could have on the environment. This includes erosion, spreading of weeds, impacts to flora and fauna as well as damage to cultural heritage sites.
- « There was concern around locations where mountain bikers are riding and in particular COSS land. The COSS land has a particular value that should be protected.
- « There was a general agreement that mountain biking on fire trails is acceptable, however it was acknowledged that a majority of mountain bikers prefer single track riding.
- « There was a general agreement that mountain biking is an active and healthy pursuit and can be provided for in the right location.
- « That unauthorised trails in high value land should be closed and revegetation should be undertaken.
- « Some concern around the conflict between users, particularly walkers and mountain bikers.
- « A discussion and request for successful dual use trails found in other locations (examples have been provided in the case studies – see Smithfield and Atherton).

### 7.2.3 Forestry Corporation of NSW

The Central Coast Mountain Bike Club have a Forest Permit with the Forestry Corporation of NSW. This permit is issued under the Forestry Act 2012 and comes with a designated parcel of land and a set of conditions and an annual fee. The permit area is audited every year or as needed to determine if the area is being managed accordingly. The Club (permittee) has various responsibilities under the conditions, including maintenance of the trails. There is currently a network of approximately 18km of mountain bike trails including Downhill, Cross Country and a children's development area with a few others approved including a second Downhill, flow/gravity and a pump track.

Should the club wish to develop infrastructure on the site, they may seek permission in writing from Forestry NSW. The Club is required to obtain any relevant approvals such as environmental assessment and any local government approvals. As the area is a timber reserve FCNSW will communicate with the club in advance if the timber needs to come out of the Club's permit area.

FCNSW has had issues with unauthorised trails being built but not just in relation to mountain biking, with trail bikes, horse riding and 4wd as well. Engagement with the Mountain Bike Club and auditing process under the permit has assisted to reduce this. There has been an increase in demand for trails across NSW over the past few years with about 15 approved mountain bike parks across the State and other agreements on State Forests in NSW. Demand has also increased for commercial operators to offer experiences and products such as events, shuttle services, tours and skill clinics. Each commercial operator requires their own Forest Permit and also permission from the Club to operate within the Mountain Bike Park.

Mountain bike riding is allowed in State Forests on formed roads. There is approximately 60,000km of formed roads within NSW State Forests. Designated and purpose-built mountain bike single trails must be under a Forest Permit to ensure due diligence, trail ownership/accountability and communication. Single trails not managed under a Forest Permit are considered unauthorised.

### 7.2.4 National Parks and Wildlife

Discussions with National Parks and Wildlife staff around mountain biking in the region indicated that there was a mix of sanctioned and unauthorised trails in National Parks. Key points from the discussion are provided below:

- « Bouddi National Park has an estimated 15-20km of trails.
- « There are also trails located within Brisbane Water National Park however the extent of the trail network is unknown.
- « Unauthorised trail building has increased in the past couple of years, causing damage to some environment and heritage sites.
- « MTB Events have also been held without any approvals.

### 7.2.5 Department of Premier and Cabinet

Mountain Biking was discussed with a Senior Project Officer within the Department of Premier and Cabinet. A summary of the discussion is outlined below:

- « A NSW Mountain Biking Strategy is currently being prepared.
- « Some cross-agency networks have recently been established in Northern Sydney. Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai and Northern Beaches Councils are working together with National Parks and other state land managers to look at ways to respond to the rising demand for mountain biking.
- « Hornsby Shire Council have developed a network of trails at Old Mans Valley. This has been built and managed by Council with 30km sanctioned and 150km unsanctioned trails.
- « Rider numbers are certainly increasing, and the issue of unauthorised trails being built is one that is happening across the state.
- « There are some examples of private developments coming in to try and target mountain biking as well. However, this is a pay for use situation.
- « Glenworth Valley – is expected to have 15km of trails by the end of the year, with a view to a much bigger network over time.

### 7.2.6 Traditional Custodians of the land

A meeting was held with representatives from Darkinjung local Aboriginal Council. Darkinjung have concerns with unauthorised trails being built through land they own which is also causing damage to cultural heritage sites (in particular at Kincumba). Development of any trail network (if it is on their land) needs to be approved at a board level.



## 8 CASE STUDIES





Below are number of case studies providing an overview of mountain bike trail building projects with trail types, visitation numbers (if known), management and operation methods, issues and challenges faced, and key learnings identified from the projects.

### 8.1 OLD MANS VALLEY – NSW (HORNSBY SHIRE COUNCIL)

Hornsby Shire Council is located in northern Sydney with almost 70% of the area being bushland. In 2008 an Unstructured Recreation Strategy was undertaken for the Council which highlighted the increasing popularity of mountain biking. One of the recommendations was for further investigation into developing mountain bike trails. Site feasibility studies were undertaken, and Old Mans Valley was selected as the most appropriate site. There was opposition from some members of the community regarding the proposal, however Council approved development of stage 1 of the track. Initially a Trailcare Program undertook the maintenance of the trails, however this is now professionally maintained. Water and toilets are not located on site but are located nearby. A small pump track is also located on site. The Council looked at the likely benefits of providing for mountain biking including the following:

- « Access to authorised mountain bike trails promotes healthy living for a large age range.
- « Youth participation and reductions in antisocial behaviour.
- « Creating opportunities for strong economic and social return.
- « More access to scenic bushland areas for public on bike ready tracks.

Some of the challenges identified throughout the project were:

- « Unknown process – first by a Sydney local government area.
- « Controversial – bushland area and the proximity to homes.
- « Meeting the market, eg, design, for a successful mountain bike facility.
- « Site constraints (amount of space, the terrain and Plan of Management).
- « Competing land uses.
- « Traffic plan for parking & bike crossings.

#### Key Learnings

- « Trying to stop mountain biking without any plan generally fails and increases opportunities for conflict.
- « Be proactive - do something or more asset damage will occur and trail user conflicts will increase.
- « Communicate, consider and educate – so all stakeholders have a good understanding of the issues.
- « Good partnerships lead to good decisions and sustainable outcomes.
- « The result is a popular off-road cycling facility which has reduced unauthorised riding.
- « Averaging approximately 900 laps per week over the past 4 years.
- « An average of 300 users per week.

Figure 15: Hornsby Mountain Bike Trail



## 8.2 BLUE DERBY - TASMANIA (DORSET COUNCIL)

Blue Derby is the single largest and most ambitious mountain bike project ever in Australia, involving the construction of 125km of purpose-built mountain bike trails in the stunning wilderness of northeast Tasmania.

The driver behind this project is economic development through mountain bike tourism. An emerging form of tourism, mountain bike tourism provides good returns on investment and provides new incentives for people to visit regional areas. The township of Derby, around which the trail network is based, was once a prosperous tin mining town, but has been declining for many years since the tin mining operations ceased. Since the project commenced in 2014, however, the township has seen a reversal of fortune, with new businesses opening providing hospitality and accommodation services, property sales increasing and tourism visitation increasing massively.

The Blue Derby Trails project is led by Dorset Council, and was made possible with funding through the Australian Government's Regional Development Australia Fund. Project partners include Break O'Day Council, Forestry Tasmania, Parks & Wildlife, and public, private and community sectors. World Trail has been the lead contractor on all design and construction of trails.

The Blue Derby trail network has been constructed to attract riders of all skills and abilities. The trail network includes IMBA green trails (Beginner) through to IMBA Black Diamond (Most difficult), with most of the trails falling into the IMBA Blue (Intermediate) classification. This mix of trails allows for riders to develop their skills and have the opportunity to develop their skills. Advanced riders have many options to enjoy themselves and test their ability on the advanced trails. Gravity trails are well catered for in Blue Derby due to their growing popularity.

Current visitation numbers for Blue Derby are approximately 45,000 riders per year.

Blue Derby is managed by Dorset Council who employ a trail maintenance team to ensure the trails are maintained to a high standard. Providing well maintained trails is key to encouraging riders to visit and return regularly to Blue Derby.

**Key learnings from the project include:**

- « Consultation with key stakeholders early in the project feasibility stage;
- « Proactive council;
- « Front end development of relationships with land managers and council;
- « Front end community consultation;
- « Professionally designed and constructed trails;
- « Develop strategies to boost local economic benefit.

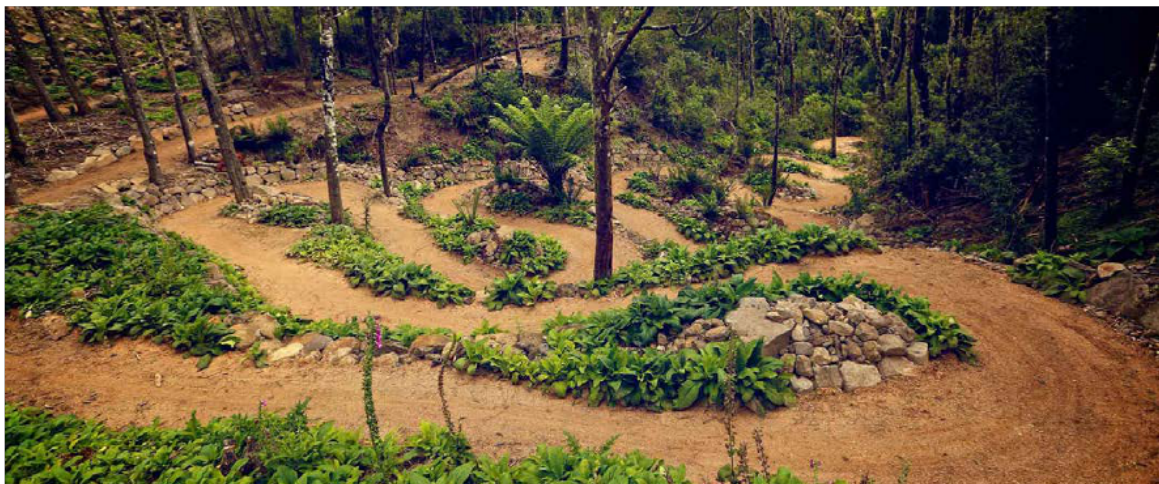
In recognition of this great project, Dorset Council recently won a national Award for Excellence in Economic Development for the Blue Derby Mountain Bike Trails. The project was presented as the winner of the Community Economic Development Award at the Economic Development Australia (EDA) Conference in Queensland in September 2015.

Prior to this, the Blue Derby project also won the Delivering Excellence – Smaller Council's Award at the Local Government Association of Tasmania's Awards for Excellence in July 2015.

### OVERALL PROJECT BUDGET:

Approximately \$4.5 million in Federal and State funding

Figure 16: Blue Derby Trails, Tasmania (photo by World Trail)





### 8.3 SMITHFIELD MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS – CAIRNS, QLD (QUEENSLAND PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE)

Smithfield mountain bike trails are located within the Smithfield Conservation Park. This park borders the Kuranda National Park and the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The park is managed for the conservation of natural and cultural values and to provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities for visitors through partnerships with key stakeholders. Due to its high conservation value certain areas of the park are restricted.

Figure 17: Signage Smithfield Mountain Bike Park



The Smithfield network consists of 35km of trails and has been constructed to attract riders of all skills and abilities. The trail network includes IMBA green trails (Beginner) through to IMBA Double Black Diamond (Most difficult), with most of the trails falling into the IMBA Blue (Intermediate) classification. This mix of trails allows for riders to develop their skills and have the opportunity to develop their skills. Advanced riders have many options to enjoy themselves and test their ability on the advanced trails. These trails are also shared use trails with bushwalkers, however primarily only encouraged shared use on the easier (green) trails. This is generally encouraged as a result of the additional trail width, better line of sight and slower speeds, smoother surface and less obstacles compared with the more difficult trails.

Figure 18: Signage Smithfield Mountain Bike Park



This park has also hosted many events including several rounds of the UCI Mountain Biking World Cup. The first of these was held in April 2014, with subsequent World Cup events planned for 2015 and 2016, followed by the UCI Mountain Biking World Championships in 2017.

Current visitation numbers for Smithfield are approximately 30,000 riders per year.

Smithfield is managed by QPWS (Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service). Funding for trail construction and trail maintenance has been provided by the Cairns Mountain Bike Club, Tourism QLD, Sport and Recreation Qld and Cairns Regional Council.

Key learnings from the project include:

- « Front end consultation between the Cairns Mountain Bike Club and QPWS;
- « Front end community consultation;
- « Event Promotion;
- « Good multi-use outcomes with walkers, runners and riders sharing access and ascent trails;
- « Highly valued resource for local riders and as a strong contributor to local economy through competitive events and the International UCI events.

#### OVERALL PROJECT BUDGET:

Approximately \$1.5 million

Figure 19: Smithfield Trails, Cairns (photo by Flow Magazine)



#### 8.4 FALLS CREEK MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS – FALLS CREEK, VICTORIA (FALLS CREEK ALPINE RESORT MANAGEMENT BOARD)

In 2009 Falls Creek Resort Management Board commissioned a concept plan for a purpose-built mountain biking network in the resort, with the aim of creating a new summer-based tourism attraction.

With the completed concept plan for the resort, they successfully applied for funding, receiving over \$2 million from Government agencies to support the project.

Stage 1 construction works commenced in the summer of 2011/2012, with stage 3 works winding up in around March 2014.

This represents another 'world-class' trail network for Australia, in line with some of the European and North American ski-resort style mountain bike destinations.

The Falls Creek trail network has been constructed to attract riders of all skills and abilities. The trail network includes IMBA green trails (Beginner) through to IMBA Double Black Diamond (Most difficult), with most of the trails falling into the IMBA Blue (Intermediate) classification. This 40 km mix of trails allows for riders to develop their skills and have the opportunity to develop their skills. Advanced riders have many options to enjoy themselves and test their ability on the advanced trails. The trail network includes about 5km of lift-accessed downhill trails and 10km of Gravity trails which appeal to the growing mountain bike trend.

Falls Creek Mountain Bike network is managed and maintained by Falls Creek Management Board who oversaw the development of the network.

##### Key learnings from the project include:

- « Working in remote locations;
- « Development of alternative trail treatments;
- « Consideration of seasonal visitation;
- « Develop a signature event;
- « Promote long stay durations to long capitalise on significant distance;
- « Need to continue to evolve the product.

##### OVERALL PROJECT BUDGET:

Approximately \$2.5 million

Figure 20: Falls Creek Trails, Victoria (photo by Flow Magazine)





## 8.5 MT BULLER MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS – MT BULLER, VICTORIA (MT BULLER AND MT STIRLING ALPINE RESORT MANAGEMENT BOARD)

The Mt Buller Alpine Resort Management Board embarked on a program to construct mountain bike trails in 2006 with the preparation of a concept plan. Their goal was to attract increased visitation to the resort in the non-winter period. Construction of trails began in the summer of 2007/2008 and has continued every year since then.

Subsequent to the development of the Master Plan the project was developed in six stages over the past seven years, gradually expanding and improving the mountain biking trail network, to the point where it is now attracting in excess of 20,000-30,000 specific mountain bike visitors per summer and hosts some of the biggest mountain biking events.

The mountain's signature event, Bike Buller, run by Rapid Ascent, is a three-day mountain biking festival. It has grown from 252 participants in 2009 to 691 participants in 2013. The event organizers believe that the 2013 event also attracted about 1300 spectators and estimate the financial impact of the event to be around \$2.3 million. The resort has also hosted rounds of the Australian National Mountain Biking Series, with competitors claiming the trails are among the toughest and best on the circuit.

Mt Buller Trail network has been developed in in the following stages:

- « Master Plan Development;
- « Construction Stage 1 2007/2008;
- « Construction Stage 2 2008/2009;
- « Concept Plan Development for an IMBA Epic Ride 2009;
- « Construction Stage 3 2009/2010;
- « Construction Stage 4 2010/2011;
- « Construction Stage 5 2011/2012;
- « IMBA Epic ground-truthing 2012;
- « Construction Stage 6 2012/2013.

The Mt Buller trail network has been constructed to attract riders of all skills and abilities. The trail network includes IMBA green trails (Beginner) through to IMBA Double Black Diamond (Most difficult), with most of the trails falling into the IMBA Blue (Intermediate) classification. The purpose-built trails allows for riders to develop their skills with a majority of the network catering for the intermediate to advanced rider. Facilities include:

- « Over 100km of quality cross-country trails, including 40km of singletrack
- « A 50km long-distance cross-country descending trail
- « Four downhill trails serviced by shuttles
- « Australia's first modular pump track, setup in the Mt Buller Village
- « A range of tours, camps, clinics and skills sessions for all levels and types of riders
- « Accommodation

Mt Buller Mountain Bike network is managed by Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board who oversaw the development of the network and who manage the ongoing trail maintenance. Current visitation numbers are not available.

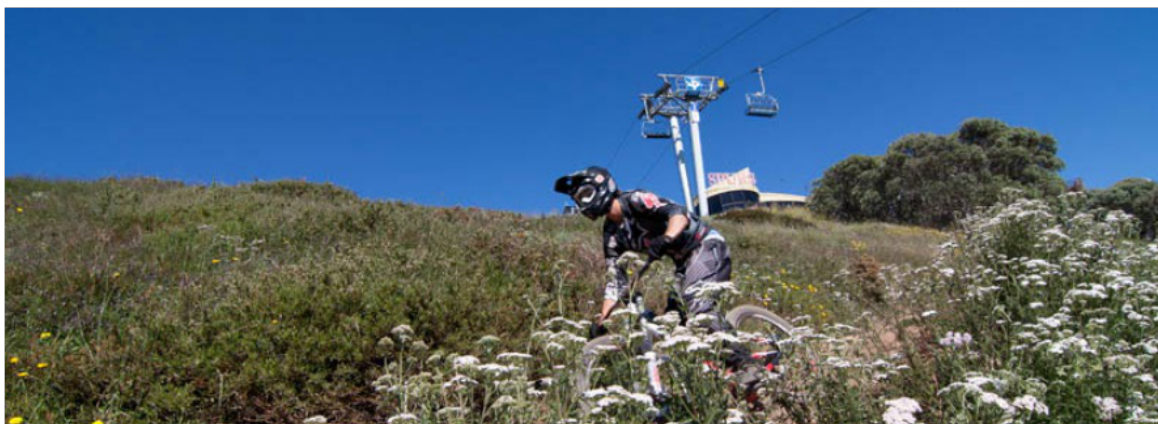
Key learnings from the project include:

- « Ensure chairlift will service summer visitation;
- « Ensure commitment of retail operators to operating during the summer;
- « Critical mass of product prior to opening.

### OVERALL PROJECT BUDGET:

\$2.5 million

Figure Z1: Mt Buller Trails, Victoria (photo from mtbuller.com.au)



## 8.6 ATHERTON FOREST MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK – ATHERTON, QUEENSLAND (QUEENSLAND PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE)

In 2010 a concept plan was developed for mountain bike trails in the Sylvia Creek valley, Atherton. Since then four contracts have been awarded by the land manager, QPWS, to construct new mountain biking trails. The land managers and the local mountain biking community have proactively supported the development of this extensive trail network, with a number of local mountain bikers being employed by the trail building contractors. Feedback from the Australian mountain biking community has been excellent.

The current trail network is in excess of 60km long with a trailhead in the centre of Atherton and a 2km shared-use link track into the mountain biking single trail proper. Trail styles included in the network include, cross-country, downhill and all-mountain in a variety of difficulty levels, showcasing beautiful rainforests, Eucalypt forests and more.

The Atherton network has been constructed to attract riders of all skills and abilities. The trail network includes IMBA green trails (Beginner) through to IMBA Double Black Diamond (Most difficult), with most of the trails falling into the IMBA Blue (Intermediate) classification. The easy (green) trails are also shared use with bushwalkers with signage in place to provide information to riders and bushwalkers. The additional trail width and walking in the opposite direction to the mountain bikers assists allow these trails to be shared.

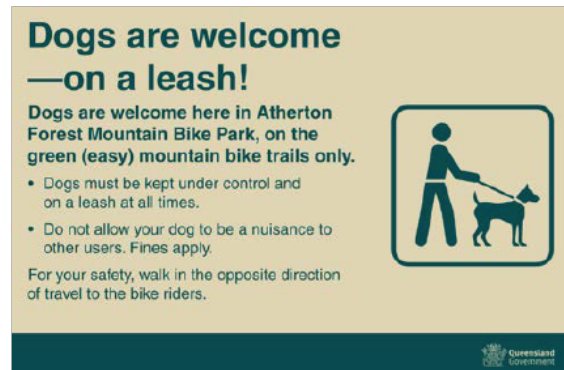
Figure 22: Signage Atherton Mountain Bike Park



Figure 24: Atherton Forest Park Trails, Atherton (photo by Flow Magazine)



Figure 23: Signage Atherton Mountain Bike Park



Atherton Trail Network (volunteer based) is managed by QPWS and TRC (Tablelands Regional Council) who oversaw the development of the network and who manage the ongoing trail maintenance.

Key learnings from the project include:

- « Front end consultation between the Cairns Mountain Bike Club and QPWS;
- « Front end community consultation;
- « Event Promotion;
- « Utilise the legacy from events with additional investment.

The Trail Network has been developed in the following stages:

- « Concept Plan development 2011;
- « Stage 1 2011;
- « Stage 2 2012;
- « Stage 3 June 2013;
- « Stage 4 September 2013;
- « Stage 5 July 2014

**OVERALL PROJECT BUDGET:**

Approximately \$2 million in Federal and State funding



## 8.7 STROMLO FOREST PARK – ACT (CHIEF MINISTERS DEPARTMENT, TERRITORY VENUES & EVENTS, CANBERRA OFF ROAD CYCLISTS)

In 2003 the ACT was ravaged by bushfires that burnt many homes, took several lives and burnt out the historic Mt Stromlo Observatory. Prior to the fires the area had been popular with local mountain bikers, although there were no formal trails in place at that time.

Following the fires, the ACT government decided to invest heavily in developing Mt Stromlo into a multi-disciplinary recreational venue of world class standard. World Trail were engaged to undertake the design of a network of downhill and cross-country mountain biking trails, working alongside Stephen Hodge (responsible for the design of the road cycling criterium track), Robert de Castella (responsible for the design of the cross-country running circuit) and many others to ensure the park would work seamlessly as an integrated recreational facility.

As the project developed and Stromlo Forest Park took shape, World Trail encouraged the venue managers to think big, and the idea that the park could one day host rounds of the UCI Mountain Biking World Cup and the UCI Mountain Biking World Championships took root. Eventually, with a lot of behind the scenes planning, meetings, liaison and hard work, this became a reality. In 2008 Stromlo Forest Park was the venue for Round 6 of the UCI Mountain Biking World Cup and in 2009 it hosted the pinnacle of international mountain biking events, the UCI Mountain Biking World Championships. Today the park continues to be a major mountain biking destination in

Australia with strong visitation figures. Over 40km of trails are available as well as having a pump track, purpose-built event pavilion, a 1.2km road criterium track, 2.5km grass cross country running track, equestrian trails, toilet facilities and drinking water.

World Trail's involvement at Stromlo Forest Park included:

- « Detailed design of the mountain bike trail network, including multi-use trails, cross country trails, downhill trails and 4X track;
- « Project management of the entire mountain bike park construction;
- « Construction of cross-country trails;
- « Consultation on the development of signage;
- « Installation of signage;
- « Extensive consultation with stakeholders and identified user groups;
- « Construction of new trails and modifications to existing trails as required by the UCI for a round of the 2008 Mountain Biking World Cup and the 2009 Mountain Biking World Championships.

### OVERALL PROJECT BUDGET:

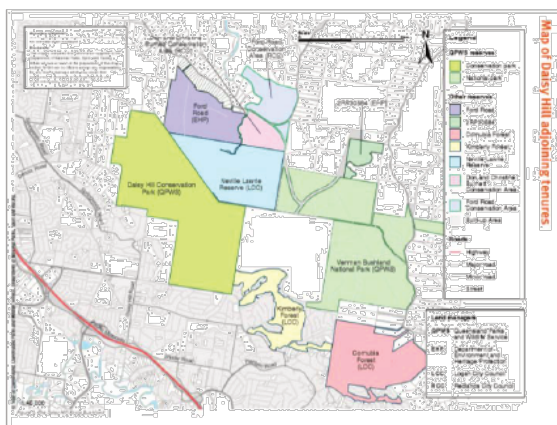
Approximately \$900,000 (mountain bike trails), overall facility in excess of \$7 million

Figure 25: Stromlo Trails, Canberra (photo by Flow Magazine)

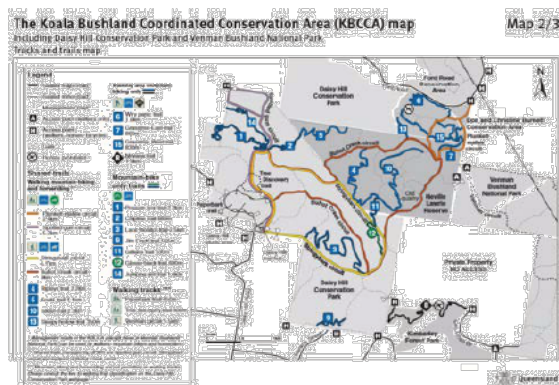


## 8.8 KOALA BUSHLAND COORDINATED CONSERVATION AREA (DAISY HILL, QLD)

The Queensland Government, Logan City Council and Redland City Council forged a formal long term conservation agreement in 1996, creating the Koala Bushland Coordinated Conservation Area (KBCCA) Bringing together Daisy Hill Conservation Park and Koala Centre, Venman Bushland National Park, Don and Christine Burnett Conservation Area and Ford Road Conservation Area. The KBCCA is approximately 25km south east of Brisbane and covers an area over 1500ha of remnant bushland. It is managed by all of these parties. The area is surrounded by urban development, and provides vital habitat for turtles, water rats, platypus, water dragons and frogs including the vulnerable tusked frog. The area includes open eucalypt forests, melaleuca wetland and patches of lowland rainforest and is home to possums, gliders, powerful owls, glossy black cockatoos, swamp and red necked wallabies and a variety of reptiles and other birds. The KBCCA also protects important koala habitat. There is approximately 37km of trails (including Daisy Hill and the nearby Cornubia and Underwood) with (20km) in Daisy Hill (across multiple tenures) with XC trails.



Daisy Hill receives around 4600 wheel passes monthly (about 55,000 passes per year) Counters in the park demonstrated that mountain bike participation increased as new styles of trails were provided. This entire area caters for a range of different user groups including horse riding, walking, and mountain biking.



A number of the trails are shared use (some with horse riders, walkers and mountain bikers) with the Give Way code used. The shared trails are wider and easier to ride with better line of sight. The amenities include toilets and picnic spots.



The trails are managed and maintained by State Government NPWS, there is a mountain bike club that operate from Daisy Hill and the nearby Underwood and Cornubia Forests and they are provided with event permits throughout the year. A trail alliance volunteer group also works closely with Council and State Government on identifying issues as they may arise.



## 8.9 GLENROCK STATE CONSERVATION AREA (NSW)

Glenrock State Conservation Area is located is a small (544ha) reserve approximately 5km south of Newcastle. The area is managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) with the conservation area used by visitors for many different activities including bush walking, trail running, horse riding and hang gliding.

In 2008, NPWS engaged World Trail to undertake an audit and review of the existing, mostly informal network of mountain bike trails to determine a feasible network of trails that could be formalised and promoted for use by mountain bikers. World Trail's recommendations were adopted, and the trail network formalised and included in the 2010 NPWS Glenrock State Conservation Area Plan of Management. Several works were undertaken to improve the network, including construction projects by World Trail in 2011 and 2012 and others by volunteers and NPWS staff.

Given the success of the network, in 2016 World Trail was engaged by NPWS to prepare a concept plan for an expanded network in the conservation area, with some

new areas of the park potentially made available for further trail expansion. The plan recommended a 29.2km network of fourteen trails, incorporating some existing formal and informal trails.

There is currently 14km of cross-country mountain biking trails and 20km of linked management trails in the northern section of the park. There are trails to suit all levels (15 green, 24 blue, 5 black and 1 double black) winding through open forest and woodlands. There are a number of regular mountain biking events held at Glenrock, including:

- « Port to Port – 4-day stage race
- « Hunter School MTB Championships – 2-day event with over 250 school children participating
- « Shimano MTB Grand Prix Race Four – 1-day event
- « Skills Coaching
- « Hunter Schools MTB coaching
- « Local bike store group rides



A large proportion of the trail building and maintenance is undertaken by a volunteer group, the Glenrock Trails Alliance, formed in 2004. The group's aim is to see a sustainable and enjoyable network of single trail within the

park and to advocate for access to the south of the park, through a sustained open working relationship with the NPWS.



## 9 SITE SELECTION CRITERIA





When considering suitable locations for mountain bike trails or a network, the following considerations are relevant:

- « Potential environmental and heritage impacts and mitigation strategies
- « Importance of the trail development to the local and wider community in terms of recreation, economy and health outcomes
- « Level of significance the trail network may have (national, regional or local)
- « Effects on the local community and existing users of a proposed location

Central Coast Council will need to consider these questions in analysing the results of the site selection matrix, to ensure the selected site fits into the overall planning strategies for the region. In addition, any of the sites considered suitable below would then require a detailed assessment to investigate if a trail network could be established given constraints around environmental and cultural heritage considerations.

Based on the findings of the mountain bike trail inventory, a site selection matrix has been developed to identify the most suitable sites for riding in the Central Coast. The site selection matrix is based on criteria derived from MTBA Trail Guidelines<sup>24</sup> general trail planning, design and construction principles.

Trail networks fall into three levels of significance, local, regional and national. For the purposes of this report, and as a strategy for establishing criteria to determine a site's suitability, the local significance model will be adopted as the minimum requirement.

The criteria for a local significance trail network are as follows:

Table 24: Local Significance Criteria

Criteria	Metric	Minimum infrastructure desired
Length of trails	Up to 20km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Car Park</li> <li>« Toilets</li> <li>« Water</li> <li>« Trail Head Signage</li> <li>« Trail Markers</li> </ul>
Number of loops	2 +	
Proportion of single track	> 80%	
Minimum area of site	> 250ha	
Location	Selected Areas	
Road access	Must have clear public road access	
Trail classification range	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	

Below are the criteria for regional and national significance mountain bike trail networks. This may assist Council to determine if sites are suitable should they wish to progress the action identified in the Central Coast Destination Management Plan<sup>25</sup> item 2.2 being the development of "... a business case for new mountain bike trails to attract a world class event to the central coast".

The criteria for a regional significance trail network are as follows:

Table 25: Regional Significance Criteria

Criteria	Metric	Minimum infrastructure desired
Length of trails	20km – 80km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Car Park</li> <li>« Water</li> <li>« Toilets</li> <li>« Trail Head Signage</li> <li>« Trail Markers</li> </ul>
Number of loops	2 +	
Proportion of single track	> 50%	
Minimum area of site	> 500ha	
Location	< 40km from 15,000 population	
Road access	< 10km from highways and primary roads.	
Trail classification range	Mixture of trail classifications, IMBA Green and Blue required as a minimum.	

<sup>24</sup> Australian Mountain Bike Trail Guidelines 2019

<sup>25</sup> Central Coast Destination Management Plan 2018-2021

The criteria for a national significance trail network are as follows:

Table 26: National Significance Criteria

Criteria	Metric	Minimum infrastructure desired
Length of trails	> 80 km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>« Car Park</li> <li>« Toilets</li> <li>« Water</li> <li>« Trail Head Signage</li> <li>« TrailMarkers</li> <li>« Accommodation</li> <li>« Bike hire- rider services</li> <li>« Café</li> <li>« Event hosting capabilities</li> </ul>
Number of loops	2 +	
Proportion of single track	> 50%	
Minimum area of site	> 1500 ha	
Location	< 180 km from airport/major transport links.	
Road access	< 20 km from major highways	
Exclusion zones	> 90 km from another national scale centre	
Other	Must be within 1 km of a national or state road	
Trail Classification range	Mixture of trail classifications, IMBA Green and Blue required as a minimum.	



In addition to the significance models developed in the Australian Mountain Bike Trail Guidelines, World Trail considers an additional 13 criteria that help assess the feasibility of potential mountain bike destinations. These criteria highlight the constraints and opportunities of a proposed location with the aim of identifying a suitable trail model.

These criteria are outlined below:

#### **1. National and International Connectivity.**

The potential to access both local, domestic and international travellers strengthens the viability of a region as a potential location for mountain bike tourism. Access to a region by established travel routes strengthens the regions potential as a major mountain bike tourism destination. This level of access would support potential opportunities for a destination to offer premium international events, such as World Cups, World Championships, and other Domestic and Regional mountain bike events. Hosting of events is seen as an opportunity to showcase the trail product to the broadest market.

#### **2. Proximity to regional population centre**

Proximity to regional population centres provides a ready market for mountain bike tourism. This may have a flow on effect by encouraging more local riders to participate in the sport, while providing additional regional economic stimulus.

#### **3. Connectivity of the Township to the Trail Head**

When analysing a regions potential as a mountain bike destination, World Trail consider the opportunity to ride in-ride out of a commercial centre to the trail network, less than a few hundred metres from the commercial centre to be the ideal scenario.

#### **4. Accommodation**

The ability to offer accommodation in close proximity to any potential trail network is a key criteria World Trail uses to evaluate a regions potential. This is based on the current availability of accommodation and the opportunity to develop future accommodation options as demand facilitates.

#### **5. Hospitality option**

Hospitality options provide facility for mountain bike riders who regularly frequent café's and other hospitality services when out riding. This provides a great opportunity to stimulate local economies.

#### **6. Natural Attributes**

Mountain bike riders are seeking outdoor experiences, a picturesque environment will help to promote a potential trail network.

#### **7. Tenure**

Availability of suitable land parcels for development of a trail head, competitive overlay and trail network are key criteria to the successful development of a mountain bike destination. The tenure of the land parcels that facilitate this must be public property, be lease hold with the opportunity to lease, or be free hold which can be purchased. The land parcel must be able to accommodate a trail network of up to approximately 85 km, with the opportunity to extend this network as demand increases.

#### **8. Events**

The opportunity for a mountain bike trail destination to host events is considered highly desirable when identifying a suitable location for a trail town. Mountain bike events are an important motivator for many visitors and can often be the way that many riders visit a destination for the first time. Events include elite (for example, the Enduro World Series held in Derby in 2017 and again in 2019, which is an elite level event, but attracts many spectators) and mass-participation events (for example, 24-hour cross-country and Enduro style events). The venue may also host National and Regional events such as the Australian mountain bike marathon championships and local club events which encourage participation in the sport.

#### **9. Trail Products**

Provision of a range of mountain bike riding products enhances the opportunities for visitation to a region by a diverse clientele. This is a key consideration when identifying a suitable location, ensuring trail products can be developed to offer a number of mountain bike experiences, catering for all levels of rider ability and fitness levels.

#### **10. Retail Services**

Proximity to regional business centres provides access to shopping centres, bicycle shops, tour operators, medical services and all other services mountain bike riders may require.

#### **11. Emergency Services**

Proximity to emergency services is considered desirable for a mountain bike trail destination. Ideally services would generally lie within 100 km of any response location in the trail network.

#### **12. Existing Outdoor Adventure Culture**

An active outdoor culture will provide additional outdoor experiences for mountain bike tourists wishing to combine mountain biking with other outdoor activities. This provides opportunity for economic stimulus to existing and new tourism operators.

#### **13. Communications**

Communications play an important role in developing a region's development by providing connectivity for emergency services, media events, social media and general communications for visitors.



The following table outlines the assessment of the sites in relation to their potential trail significance. Please note that the information presented in the below table has been gathered from a variety of sources. No assessment of permissibility or compliance with relevant environmental or planning legislation has been made. Inclusion of sites in the table does not indicate that the relevant consent/regulatory authority has or will grant approval for the specified land use or the use is operating in accordance with relevant legislation and approvals. Land managers have not and may not endorse the ratings and other information presented within the table.

Table 27: Site Assessment against local significance criteria

Site	Length of trails	Proportion of single track	Area in ha	Location	Road access	Exclusion zones	Other	Trail Classification range	Rating
Blackwall Mountain	No Data unsanctioned, >20km could be constructed.	None	<250ha Approx. 40ha	Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	None	Excluded due to land area
Bouddi NP	20km unsanctioned, 10km fire trails, could be increased to >80km.	Currently 66% unsanctioned single trail, remaining 33% sanctioned fire trail	>250ha Approx. 1681ha	20 min from Gosford	Clear public road access	Zone 1 along the coastal shoreline is currently an exclusion zone.	Tenure will allow expansion.	IMBA Green – Double Black Diamond.	National
Bradleys Road Bushland R0234	No Data unsanctioned, > <20km sanctioned	100%	<250ha	Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	None	Excluded due to land area
Brisbane Water National Park	No data on unsanctioned, 20km fire trails. >80	0% single trail, possible to develop 100% single trail.	>250ha Approx. 14520ha	Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will allow expansion.	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	National
Chamhaven	No Data unsanctioned >20km	100%	>250ha Approx. 455ha	30min from Gosford.	Clear public road access	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow expansion	IMBA Green	Excluded due to lack of elevation and tenure.
Davistown Road Bushland R0231	No Data unsanctioned, <20km	None	<250ha Approx. 4.6ha	Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	None	Excluded due to land area
Glenworth Valley	No data on unsanctioned, >80km could be constructed.	Potentially 100%	<250ha Approx. 3970ha	40min from Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will allow for trail network expansion	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	National Significance.



Site	Length of trails	Proportion of single track	Area in ha	Location	Road access	Exclusion zones	Other	Trail Classification range	Rating
Jillby State Conservation Area	No Data >80km	Potentially 100%	>250ha Approx. 3884ha	30 min from Gosford	Clear public road access	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will allow expansion	IMBA Green – Double Black Diamond.	National
Kincumba Mountain Reserve	18km unsanctioned, 15km fire trails, could be increased to 20km – 80km	Currently 50% unsanctioned single trail, 50% sanctioned fire trail	>250ha Approx. 660ha	Gosford	Clear public road access	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints	No opportunity to expand.	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	Regional
McPherson State Forest	No data on unsanctioned, >80km could be constructed.	100%	<250ha Approx. 6500ha	15min from Gosford.	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	National Significance.
Munmorah State Conservation Area	18km sanctioned, could be increased to 20 - 80km.	Currently 100%	>250ha Approx. 997ha	50 min from Gosford	Clear public road access	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will allow some expansion.	IMBA Green – Blue	Regional
Mt Alison	No Data unsanctioned, >20km could be constructed.	None	<250ha Approx. 130ha	30min from Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	None	Excluded due to land area
Olney State Forest	No data on unsanctioned, >80km could be constructed.	100%	<250ha Approx. 20,000ha	1hr from Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will allow for trail network expansion as required. The site is readily accessible from the Pacific Motorway.	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	National Significance.
Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park in Ourimbah State Forest	18km sanctioned, could be increased to >80km.	Currently 100%	>250ha Approx. 3175ha	30 min from Gosford	Clear public road access	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will allow expansion.	IMBA Green – Double Black Diamond	National
Pixie Avenue Bushland Green Point RO232	No Data unsanctioned, <20km	None	<250ha Approx. 7.87ha	Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	None	Excluded due to land area

Site	Length of trails	Proportion of single track	Area in ha	Location	Road access	Exclusion zones	Other	Trail Classification range	Rating
Rumbalara Reserve / Katandra Reserve and Ferntree Reserve	No Data unsanctioned, >20km sanctioned	100%	>250ha Approx. 600ha	Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow expansion	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	Regional
Strickland State Forest	No Data unsanctioned <20km could be constructed.	100%	<250ha Approx. 490ha	15min from Gosford.	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	Local Significance.
Trail Share-Kulnura	27km sanctioned trails, At maximum	100% sanctioned single trail on private land	<250ha Approx. 170ha	40km to Gosford	Moderate access	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Expansion into state forest possible with inter agency co-operation.	IMBA Green – Double Black Diamond	Regional – while the size on its own is smaller than local it directly adjoins a State Forest therefore an opportunity as a regional rating
Wambina Nature Reserve	No Data unsanctioned, <20km sanctioned	None	<250ha Approx. 55ha	Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	None	Excluded due to land area
Wambina Road Reserve R0080	No Data unsanctioned, <20km sanctioned	None	<250ha Approx. 70ha	Gosford	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will not allow trail development	None	Excluded due to land area
Wyrabalong National Park	No data unsanctioned, 20km – 80km could be constructed.	100%	>250ha Approx. 515ha	30 min from Gosford.	Clear public road access.	None Identified. Require further information on cultural and environmental constraints.	Tenure will allow expansion.	IMBA Green to Double Black Diamond	Regional

## 9.1 SITE ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

A site assessment criterion was developed to assess existing sites within the Central Coast. The following outlines a summary of the key findings:

### 9.1.1 Suitable National level sites

#### **Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park within Ourimbah State Forest;**

- « Adequate tenure for expansion;
- « Forest Permit Arrangement with Forestry Corporation could be increased to allow for expansion;
- « Existing MTB club and infrastructure;
- « 30 min Gosford and within close proximity from Sydney;
- « Ourimbah if developed further could meet much of the demand on the Central Coast;
- « The current trail network would need to be expanded requiring further professionally built trails to meet demand;
- « Current 18km of trails would need to be expanded to greater than 80km to meet the demands of a nationally significant site;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

#### **Jilliby National Park;**

- « Adequate tenure for expansion if negotiated with the land manager;
- « 30 min Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney;
- « Jilliby offers the opportunity to develop a national significance trail network close to Gosford due to its connectivity and significant land parcel size.
- « This site would be developed as a separate project to Ourimbah if the current Ourimbah trail network cannot be developed;
- « Information provided during the development of this report has indicated sanctioning of the unsanctioned trails and development of new trails would not be supported by the land manager;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

#### **Bouddi National Park;**

- « Adequate tenure for expansion in zone 2 if approvals can be sought from the land managers;
- « Currently has sanctioned mountain biking allowed on some fire trails;
- « 20 min from Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney;

- « Draft report by NSWNP outlining how it would engage with the mountain biking community to develop sustainable mountain biking opportunities after investigating options for biking opportunities in the park;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction.
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

#### **Brisbane Water National Park**

- « Adequate tenure for expansion if negotiated with the land manager;
- « Largest Land Parcel within close proximity to Gosford;
- « 20 min from Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

#### **McPherson State Forest**

- « Substantial tenure for expansion if negotiated with the land manager;
- « 15 min from Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney;
- « Provides great opportunity to develop a Nationally significant trail network close to Gosford;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

#### **Olney State Forest**

- « Substantial tenure for expansion if negotiated with the land manager;
- « 1hr from Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney;
- « Provides great opportunity to develop a Nationally significant trail network within a reasonable distance from Gosford;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

**9.1.2 Suitable Regional level sites****Kincumba Mountain Reserve;**

- « Limited tenure for expansion;
- « Regional to Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney.
- « Currently contains numerous unsanctioned trails.
- « Centrally located and easily accessible;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm site's suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

**Wyrabalong National Park**

- « Limited tenure for expansion;
- « 30min from Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney;
- « Suitable for Green to Blue difficulty trails
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction.

**Trail Share Kulnura**

- « Limited tenure for expansion;
- « Proximity to Gosford and Sydney;
- « Requires inter agency support to provide tenure to expand
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

**Munmorah State Conservation Area**

- « Limited tenure for expansion;
- « Proximity to Gosford and Sydney;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction.

**Rumbalara/ Katandra/ Ferntree Reserves**

(as these reserves adjoin each other they have been combined for this section of the report)

- « Limited Tenure for expansion if assessed as an individual land parcel;
- « Proximity to Gosford and Sydney;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

**Wyong State Forest;**

- « Adequate tenure for expansion if negotiated with the land manager;
- « 30 min Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

**9.1.3 Suitable Local level sites****Strickland State Forest;**

- « Limited tenure for expansion;
- « 15 min from Gosford and within close proximity to Sydney;
- « Currently a well-known site designated for high public usage;
- « Requires cultural and environmental investigations to confirm sites suitability for trail construction;
- « Suitable for Green to Double Black Diamond difficulty trails.

**9.1.4 Excluded sites****Davistown Road Bushland R0231**

- « Excluded due to lot size below 250ha.

**Pixie Avenue Bushland Green Point R0232**

- « Excluded due to lot size below 250ha.

**Wambina Road Reserve R0080**

- « Excluded due to lot size below 250ha.

**Wambina Nature Reserve**

- « Excluded due to lot size below 250ha.

**Charmhaven**

- « Excluded due Freehold Land Tenure;
- « Excluded due to lack of elevation.

**Bradleys Road Bushland R0234**

- « Excluded due to lot size below 250ha.

**Blackwall Mountain**

- « Excluded due to lot size below 250ha.

**Mt Allison**

- « Excluded due to lot size below 250ha.



### 9.1.5 Summary of Sites

The following map provides a summary of the sites and the suitability based on the site assessment.





## 10 FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS





## 10.1 DEMAND FOR MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS

There is significant existing demand for mountain biking opportunities in the Central Coast region. Out of the 1949 completed surveys over 80% currently participate in mountain biking. Adding to this 46% of the non-riders would consider taking up mountain biking if formal trails were provided. With population growth and the proximity to Sydney, participation in mountain biking on the Central Coast is likely to continue to increase which in turn increases the demand for trails.

The market research undertaken for this study includes consideration of general participation data, survey results and stakeholder consultation. The clear indication is that there are insufficient authorised trails to meet the demand. The combination of unmet demand and a desire for locally accessible trails has meant that a number of unauthorised trails have been built.

There is strong desire for locally accessible trail networks. This is no different to most outdoor recreation and self-directed active recreation. Residents will want to walk, ride, exercise, run and experience nature close to home if possible. Further, they will value the residential areas that allow them to do so. The Central Coast has a wealth of natural areas and the desire to walk, run or cycle through them is expected. This is demonstrated through 54% of survey respondents who ride at Kincumba suggested proximity and access as being a key reason for riding at that location. In addition, 51% of survey respondents typically undertake mountain biking for only 1-2 hours with high participation during the week, suggesting a preference for trails that can be easily accessed locally. In other words, riders using Kincumba are more motivated by its proximity and ease of access than the quality or diversity of the trail network. On the other hand, Ourimbah users are more motivated by the quality and diversity of the trail network.

The surveys further suggested that there is also strong demand for a larger regional or national scale trail network. Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park in Ourimbah State Forest is the main location for riders on the Central Coast (40%) with the main reason being the trails and the trail network. This shows that mountain bikers will be willing to travel to a suitable destination if it provides a variety of trails. It would be suggested that this would be more likely to be when participants have additional time (over two hours) worth of riding time available. Current trails being ridden (in order of highest response through the community engagement) include Trail, Cross Country, Flow and Gravity but the preferred trails to ride provide a slightly different perspective with Flow, Trail, Gravity and Cross Country.

While the preferred trails were all reasonably even in response rates indicating that these trails should be a focus for any proposed developments. It may also indicate a current lack of flow trails being available. The majority of riding currently would appear to be from a recreation perspective with over 75% of respondents not a member of a mountain bike club. This presents an opportunity for any future trail developments to be developed to allow for both day to day recreation riding while also providing the opportunities for competitive mountain bike events. This position is supported by a number of Council documents that outline the opportunities for mountain biking on the Central Coast (see Section 2.2).

General indications from active recreation participation data reinforce that self-directed outdoor activity is increasing, often fitness or exercise related and often undertaken in natural environments as a preference.

The recent results from the Ausplay participation surveys illustrate.

Figure 26: NSW 18-19 Top Activities\* (Ausplay)

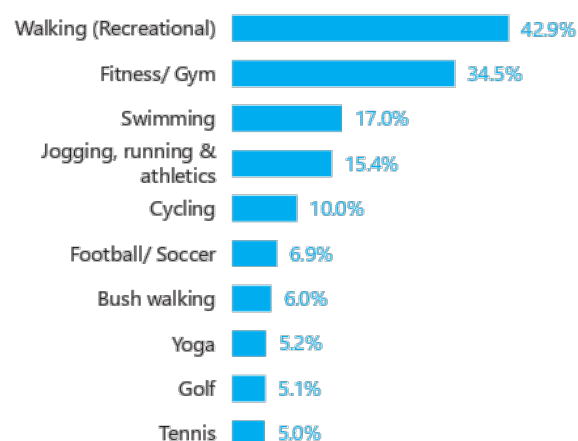
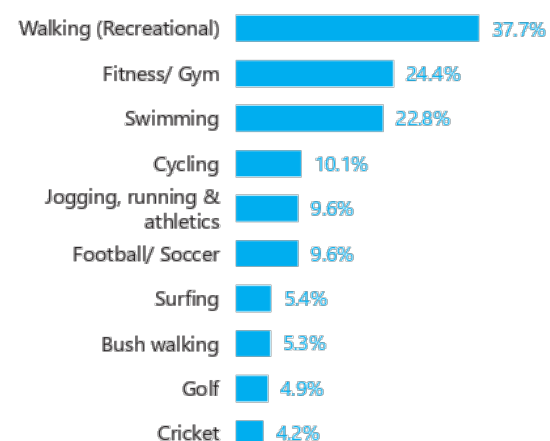


Figure 27: Central Coast LGA Top Activities\* \*\* 18-19 (Ausplay)



\* Sample count is greater or equal to 10. For sample size less than 10, estimate has a high relative margin of error and is considered too unreliable to report.

\*\* Based on respondents who provided a valid postcode and therefore overall state result may not match other parts of this report.

## 10.2 RISKS AND BENEFITS OF PROVIDING TRAILS

There are a number of risks and benefits that need to be considered in providing mountain biking trails on the Central Coast. The following risks have been identified:

### 10.2.1 Risks

The potential risks associated with mountain bike trail provision are summarised below:

#### Concerns regarding environment and cultural heritage:

The consultation identified that there is significant concern regarding damage to the environment. These concerns included erosion, spreading of weeds, impacts to flora and fauna and damage to cultural heritage sites. There was also particular concern regarding COSS land and its value and protection of the land. As discussed in Section 4.10, the current available research is limited, but in general the impact of properly constructed trails is likely to have similar impact to bush walking. However, impacts will increase with higher levels of use intensity combined with poor (unsustainable) trail design. Trail alignment and soil types also influence the appropriate design responses and suitability of a site to host any trails.

Dealing with environmental risks including dispersal of weeds, erosion and habitat or species impact, will require assessment of site suitability, trail alignment and trail design. Often trail design will need detailed investigation of alignment options to minimise impacts and avoid sensitive areas. However, for users the aesthetic of the trail and the naturalness of the site are highly important. In managing risk, there is a balance needed between creating a desirable trail versus protecting values, but they do not need to be mutually exclusive. The outcome of an assessment will determine if:

- « The local soil conditions and sensitivity of the vegetation community, specific fauna or flora species is such that no trail should be provided as the impact cannot be effectively managed. Sites in this category are also unlikely to support walking trails.
- « The local conditions and habitat constraints are such that the construction methods required are too visually intrusive or not financially viable.
- « Management of environmental risk is possible with appropriate trail alignment, design and user management.
- « Trails represent limited additional environmental risk, due to the ability to mitigate risks through design and/or existing use and infrastructure.

Cultural heritage concerns are more complex and recommended trail planning and design requires collaboration with and consent of traditional owners. Trails should not be in place if there are concerns from traditional owners regarding impacts on culturally significant sites and no agreed mitigation is possible.

**Risk of inaction:** The level of demand for mountain bike trails and riding opportunities is likely to increase. The impacts of lack of supply are already evident in the spread of unauthorised trails. There is a risk that

not communicating a clear direction for the future of mountain biking on the Central Coast and providing clear information on a range of local and regional (lawful) options, that unauthorised trails will continue to propagate and subsequent impacts on natural areas will be greater than if a demand management and lawful provision approach is undertaken.

Unauthorised trails can pose a risk to the safety of both mountain bikers and other recreation users. Without adequate signage regarding trail difficulty or appropriate construction standards, an unauthorised trail also presents a risk to the rider who may not have a level of skill appropriate to the trail.

More active enforcement can assist but can be resource intensive and a management model that focuses only on prohibition and enforcement has a limited chance of success. Mountain bike riders expressed concerns during the consultation, that Council have not been supportive of previous approaches to work together to find shared solutions to providing sustainable trails in suitable areas.

Reviewing strategies in other locations (see case studies in Section 7) demonstrate that a collaborative model for addressing need is usually successful. Engaging the users in the development of solutions and establishing a planning framework for determining suitable locations for trails has the dual benefit of educating user groups as well as facilitating them to invest in the solutions.

**Conflict between users:** The consultation highlighted concerns, mostly raised by walkers but also some riders, regarding conflict between riders and walkers on shared trail networks or where unsanctioned trails intersected with walking trails and shared trails. The concerns were around rider speed, riders giving way or walkers not moving to one side and the risk of injury to either party. Some comments were also received re conflicts between trail runners and other users.

Managing this potential conflict has been resolved in numerous locations with the adoption of trail etiquette or user protocols to be respectful of all users. The combination of signage and education programs has been relatively successful in shared trail networks with many examples detailed in Section 7.

The biggest risk may occur where there are single use tracks (i.e. designed just for walkers or just for riders) and these are not clearly designated (as can be the case with unauthorised trails). If a rider is travelling at speed on a gravity track (which are usually one-way) and are not expecting to see a walker there is potential for collisions.

Managing this risk requires the establishment of an authorised trail network, closure of unauthorised trails, good trail design, signage and education of users.



**Resourcing trail management:** Once a direction has been determined from Council it is important that adequate resourcing is provided to implement any actions. Regardless of the approach adopted, there is a need to ensure those responsible for trail maintenance are adequately resourced to inspect frequently and repair or resolve issues in a timely manner. If not, trails can become dangerous, eroded and unstable.

There are many examples of joint and shared management between councils and community groups and many examples where leased sites are established and managed solely by the lessee. Regardless of the model adopted it is important that the following resource needs are considered:

- « Regular inspection and user reporting of issues
- « Prompt repair of trail surface failures or damage from storms
- « Maintenance of signage and wayfinding
- « Education and awareness/ promotion
- « User management, control of unsanctioned behaviour or construction of unauthorised trails

#### 10.2.2 Benefits

There are multiple potential benefits from providing mountain bike riding in the community these are summarised below.

**Environmental Awareness and Education:** The market analysis indicated there were many more recreational riders who were not riding to compete, rather riding for recreation. Research has previously indicated the strong preference of recreational riders for natural areas. The same rationale that applies to provision of walking tracks applies to riding trails. Exposing people to the natural environment and providing targeted education and interpretation can increase appreciation or valuing of natural areas and awareness of the need to protect these areas.

While this can increase support for and appreciation of the protection and management of natural areas it also offers opportunities to shift behaviours and other values associated with the environment.

**Health benefits:** Mountain biking can provide significant health benefits this is discussed in Section 4.9. the activity is suitable for a range of age groups. With the advent of e-bikes providing pedal assist, even more people will be inclined to exercise in natural areas. Much of the emerging evidence around regular contact with nature and regular exercise support the significant physical and mental health benefits that accrue from exercising in natural environments.

Although health care costs are not the responsibility of local government, it would be reasonable to assert that health care costs are a burden for the community, and that the more money spent on healthcare related to physical inactivity, the less money available for other types of health care and other projects/spending which can benefit communities and regions.

Investing in infrastructure that enables residents to be outdoors and physically active has significant benefits for local communities as well as individuals.

**Recreation benefits for local community:** As discussed in Section 9.1, there is increasing participation in outdoor and nature-based recreation. Introducing new participants to the sport, the environment and the outdoors has a range of benefits. In addition to the health benefits, having people recreate in these spaces ultimately helps residents to value and understand the importance of maintaining and protecting the environment.

Providing the infrastructure for recreation opportunity is a fundamental role of local government and participation numbers suggest that investing walking riding and running infrastructure is just as critical as the need for sports fields and facilities. The social benefits of providing for outdoor recreation include:

- « Increased social interaction and cohesion'
- « Improved mental and physical health
- « Support for local economies
- « Increased productivity

**Potential tourism and economic benefits:** There are a range of tourism benefits associated with mountain biking. Given the proximity of Sydney there is a lot of riders who would frequent any significant regional trail development. Council had previously undertaken a survey in 2016 to understand mountain bike riders. This survey showed that 75% of respondents had spent at least one night at a mountain biking destination and had spent an average of \$83 each in the local area on the day of the event. In 2013, World Trail undertook a survey of 1300 riders and this showed that 82% of riders had been on a mountain bike holiday (at least an overnight stay) with 67% of these having 3 or more mountain bike holidays a year. Typically (74% of respondents) are spending \$500 or more on the holiday.

The tourism benefits are also cumulative in that the provision of additional activities such as mountain bike trails can add to the range of other activities and both increase duration of stay (of visitors) and increase the return visits. The Central Coast already has a reputation for its natural areas, walks and coastal reserves, the additional provision of well-planned select trail locations will contribute to overall destination appeal and the tourism economy.

### 10.3 CURRENT PROVISION SUMMARY

There are currently 14 locations (only 4 of these are Council land) where mountain biking is permitted in some form on the Central Coast. The large majority of these are on fire trails as a shared use. While this is responding to and meeting some demand, only 17.55% indicated that they ride fire trails, with only 7.16% suggesting that it is their preferred trail. Shared use fire trails do provide for recreation use and can be an important link to any single use trail networks. They are integral to any future trail network planning.

The most significant authorised trail network is located at Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park in Ourimbah State Forest. There is an 18 km trail network with 11 green, 22 blue, and 9 black trails which includes a mix of cross country and downhill trails. Given the population of the Central

Coast and surrounding areas, as well as anticipated future growth, there would appear to be insufficient number of trails to meet the demand. The mountain bike community is willing to work with council and other landowners to develop high quality trails without impacting the environment or culturally significant heritage sites. This collaborative approach has worked in other locations as demonstrated through the case studies in Section 7.

**The high number of unauthorised trails and the expressed demand for both locally accessible and regional level (drive to) trails indicates there is significant unmet demand and substantial support for collaboration on future provision with user groups able to develop and maintain trails.**

### 10.4 OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPING MOUNTAIN BIKE OPPORTUNITIES



**Retain Status Quo** with limited provision of purpose-built mountain bike trails and continued support for shared use on fire trails and service tracks. This is unlikely to address the spread of unplanned trails arising from the increasing demand in the community for places to ride within natural areas. The development of unlawful/ unauthorised trails is a direct response to community need but risks causing damage to environment and cultural heritage sites.



**Improve partnerships in provision** – the Central Coast Mountain Bike Club is currently operating and maintaining the trails at Ourimbah. Working with the club and other groups to improve the extent of trails at Ourimbah (or other locations) is an option that relies on community or other agency partners to develop and maintain trails.



**Expand and enhance the shared trail network** this may address some of the recreational riding demand which is for trail networks within natural areas. It does not address demand for flow and other more specialist trails which would be left to specific club or other agency managed sites. A detailed assessment of opportunities could identify additional service track and fire trail sections that could support an overall recreational shared trail network.



**Develop a regional trails plan** – identify suitable sites for new shared trails, identify opportunities for urban bike parks (skills circuits, pump tracks) to meet localised demand and implement some local or regional flow trails which can complement the existing shared trail network. This plan would be prepared in partnership with other land managers and mountain bike riders.



**Increase education and awareness** – better information about where to ride and trail etiquette on shared networks. Education, signage and awareness are key factors in any successful strategy to respond to increasing demand. About 30% of riders are currently unaware of where they can lawfully ride, which trails can be ridden and the difficulty of the trails.



**Increased enforcement** – This would involve the closing and revegetation of unauthorised trails in sensitive areas. This would need to be informed by a detailed trail audit to identify priority locations. If new trails in suitable locations are developed to cater to the demand, then increased enforcement can be pursued for any unauthorised trails developed. The closure of trails should be undertaken in partnership with local MTB clubs and users, so they understand the reasons, are able to assist in the work and have an opportunity to be involved in the location and construction of trails in sanctioned locations.

It is likely that a combination of the above options needs to be considered in any final strategy. For example, Ourimbah State Forest is providing a range of mountain biking opportunities however the survey results also suggest that this alone will not meet the demand that is currently available. It is evident that proximity is also a key factor into the development of the trail network in the Central Coast and therefore additional considerations are required for local opportunities to ride for 1-2 hours. The above options in isolation are unlikely to achieve any meaningful results in responding to the concerns and issues identified by the community.



## 10.5 SUMMARY OF TRAIL OPPORTUNITIES

The detailed site assessments are discussed in Section 8.1

There are a number of sites that present an opportunity for future investigation and development. Seven sites meet the criteria for a national level development, six sites meet the regional criteria with one meeting the local criteria. Out of these 14 sites only 2 are on Council land. Therefore, it is important that any future direction involves working closely with other government agencies. Locations that are close to residential areas and can accommodate the development of up to 20 km of trails are likely to meet the needs of riders who are looking to ride for up to 1-2 hours. These sites that are close to residential areas would also be suitable to include urban bike parks (such as a pump track) to provide additional opportunities for riders.

Sites that meet the regional criteria that would allow the development of between 20-80 km of trails would support the riders looking for 1-4 hrs riding at a time. This would include a range of trail difficulties and styles to be constructed. Should Central Coast wish to support a nationally significant network, sites would need to support a trail network in excess of 80 km and this could only be achieved if state land managers were supportive. It is recommended that the region can support 2 locally significant sites, a regionally significant site and possibly

a nationally significant site. The provision of a nationally significant destination requires detailed planning and an interagency collaboration. However, Council could act as a supporter and catalyst for such a project as there would be significant tourism and economic benefits to the region.

While there are some opportunities identified on council owned or managed lands, it must be acknowledged that more detailed investigation and site review is required for any new proposal. Not the least of which is the preparation of cultural heritage and environmental studies or assessments to inform any planning or decision making. The council sites where further investigation for regional or local level trail development are:

- « Kincumba Mountain Reserve
- « Rumbalara/ Katandra/ Ferntree Reserves

Trails investigation for these sites are subject to the planning frameworks and assessments discussed later in this document. However, these sites provide some opportunities already (mostly shared trails) and undertaking more detailed planning in conjunction with the user groups could identify what are and are not sustainable options for the two sites and how best to prioritise any new trail development and closure and revegetation of unauthorised trails.



## 10.6 MANAGING MOUNTAIN BIKING IN THE CENTRAL COAST

A key part of the feasibility assessment for providing Mountain Bike Trails is to consider what management approaches would work in the Central Coast region.

The following points summarise the key considerations in developing a management approach:

1. There is current demand for mountain bike trails and trends indicate this may grow. This demand includes access to local opportunities for general riding and gravity and flow tracks as well as destination/ regional sites with multiple styles and grades.
2. A number of authorised trails are already provided across a number of sites, however there are also several unauthorised trails.
3. The general community, some land managers and traditional owners have all expressed concern regarding the potential impacts of unauthorised trail development and unauthorised riding on walking tracks.
4. The assessment of potential sites identified multiple opportunities with many of these managed by state agencies.
5. The local mountain bike community is very active and club-based facility has already been developed and

is maintained by the club. the riding community has expressed a strong desire to collaborate on planning, developing and maintaining trails.

6. Any successful approach would need to be regionally focused and involve a shared plan between council, state agencies and mountain bike riders and clubs.
7. A management framework needs to consider both infrastructure and users.
8. Council already manages a significant natural area resource and any approach would need to consider available resources and the existing management plans in place for individual sites.
9. Immediate priorities include the management of unauthorised use and trails as well as forward planning for new trails in appropriate and sustainable locations.

**The recommended framework involves two components:**

1. Planning and Management Framework (proactive strategy)
2. Use Management Issues Framework (reactive strategy)

These are illustrated below:

Figure 28: Planning and Management Framework

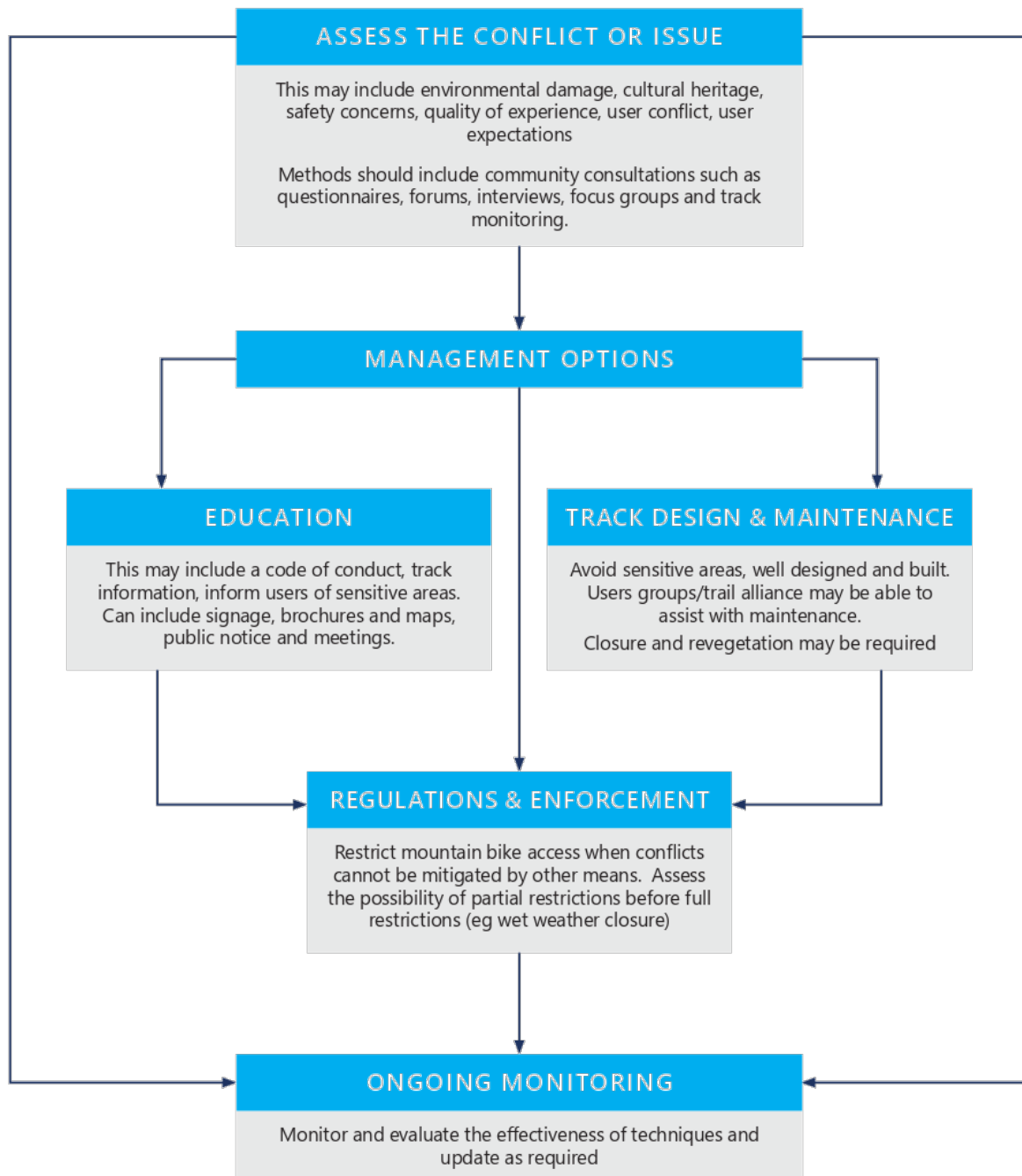


*This report has completed most of the baseline information- with the exception of the detailed trails audit which should focus on council lands as a priority so as to be able to rapidly address potential environmental or cultural heritage impacts.*

The proposed approach to managing mountain biking issues (reactive management) is illustrated below, this framework explains the flow of dealing with issues as they arise during management of mountain biking.



## Reactive Strategy - Framework for Managing Mountain Biking Issues



<sup>26</sup> Adapted from - Chiu, L, Kriwoken, L. 2003. Managing Recreational Mountain Biking in Wellington Park, Tasmania, Australia. *Annals of Leisure Research*, Vol 6 No 4 pp339-361.



## 11 WARRANTIES AND DISCLAIMERS





The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their own experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.



Central  
Coast  
Council

# MOUNTAIN BIKE FEASIBILITY STUDY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

FEBRUARY 2020

Prepared by  
Otium Planning Group Pty Ltd  
[in conjunction with World Trail]





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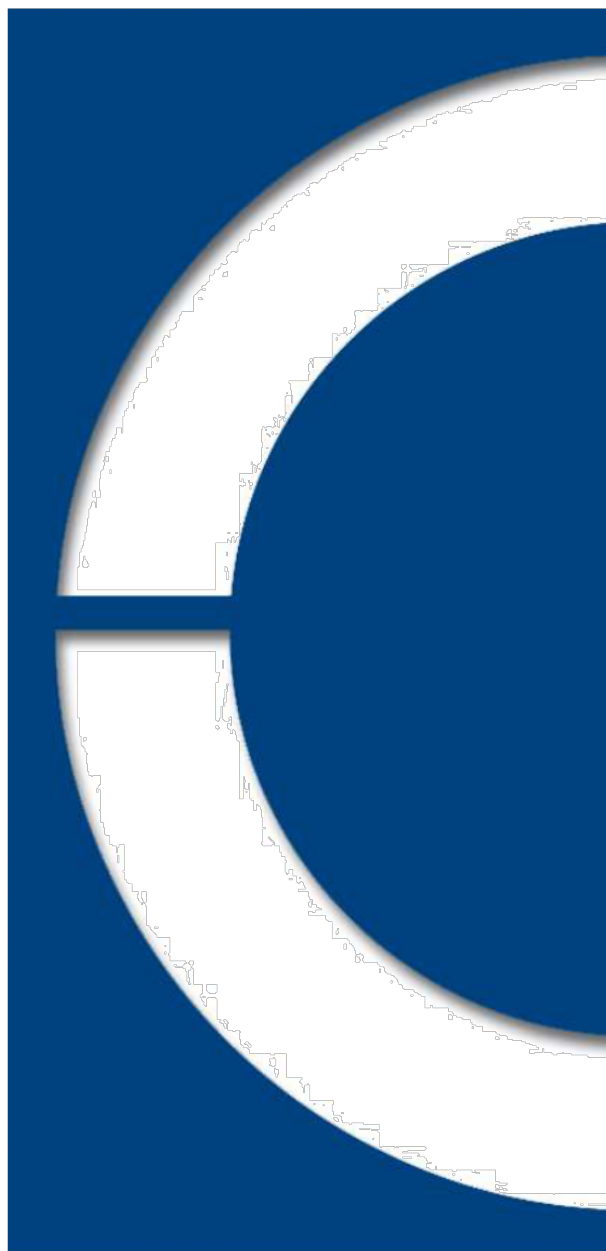
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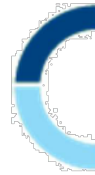
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## 1. Introduction

This report outlines the community engagement undertaken to develop the mountain bike feasibility study draft discussion paper. To prepare the discussion paper a range of community engagement activities were undertaken.

This included the following:

- Community Survey
- Engagement with the Mountain Bike industry and key stakeholders
- Engagement with Environmental Conservation Groups
- Stakeholder Consultation including:
  - Forestry Corporation
  - National Parks and Wildlife
  - Department of Premier and Cabinet
  - Traditional Custodians of the land



## 2. Community Survey

A survey was developed to seek the community's feedback on mountain biking on the Central Coast. The aim of the survey was to understand community views, participation and demand, current riding locations and the opportunities and risks for mountain bike riding on the central coast.

A total of 1949 responses were received to the survey. Out of these 1590 (81.58%) currently participated in mountain biking within the Central Coast. A series of questions were asked of both riders and non-riders to gather more information. An overview of the responses is outlined below.

### 2.1 Mountain Bike Riders Information

#### Riding Characteristics

Over 50% of the current mountain bikers would rate their ability as intermediate with only 8% indicating they are a beginner. Approximately 60% of respondents were also riding two or more times a week with the most popular times being Saturday and Sunday morning followed by Friday afternoons.

**Table 1: Survey Result – How would you rate your ability?**

How would you rate your ability?	
Beginner	8.03%
Intermediate	53.11%
Advanced	38.86%

**Table 2: Survey Result – How often do you go mountain biking?**

How often do you go mountain biking?	
Three or more times a week	27.91%
Twice a week	32.28%
Once a week	20.51%
Once a fortnight	8.87%
Once a month	9.39%
Once a year	1.03%

**Table 3: Survey Result – What day and time do you normally go mountain biking?**

What day and time do you normally go mountain biking?				
	Morning	Lunch time	Afternoon	Night
Monday	47.94%	21.01%	56.61%	15.98%
Tuesday	45.17%	19.31%	59.85%	17.37%
Wednesday	39.00%	19.76%	59.62%	20.79%
Thursday	37.55%	20.33%	56.96%	26.01%
Friday	44.56%	19.56%	62.07%	15.82%
Saturday	77.05%	35.70%	46.85%	5.90%
Sunday	76.04%	37.20%	48.57%	5.40%





Over 90% of respondents are spending between 1-4 hours mountain biking and generally riding with friends. The responses indicate that just over half ride between 1-2 hours which would indicate a high degree of recreational riding on locally accessible trails. Riders are more likely to travel to a destination if there is more than 2 hours' worth of riding. This is supported with the proportion of rides on weekday mornings and afternoons, indicating shorter duration recreational riding at local destinations.

**Table 4: Survey Result - Length of time mountain biking**

How long do you usually undertake the activity for?	
Less than 1 hour	1.42%
1-2 hours	51.26%
2-4 hours	42.67%
4-6 hours	4.20%
More than 6 hours	0.45%

**Table 5: Survey Result – Who do you ride with?**

When you go riding, who do you ride with?	
Alone	20.80%
With friends	61.17%
With family	11.27%
With a club	1.22%
With an organized group (but not part of a club)	5.54%

Significantly only 25% of respondents were members of a mountain bike club. This means that self-directed, recreational riding is a dominant motivation and that competition is not a significant driver of participation.

**Table 6: Survey Result – Are you a member of a mountain bike club?**

Are you a member of a Mountain Bike club?	
No	75.24%
Yes	24.76%

### Trail Preferences

Trail riding (76.84%) was the type of trail most ridden followed by cross country (67.16%), however this could reflect the availability of trails as opposed to the preference of riders. When asked their preferred trail to ride, a much greater proportion indicated a desire to ride flow trails (47.10%), which supports the assumption this is an unmet need and that there is lack of diversity in the current trail network.



Table 7: Survey Result – What type of trails do you ride?

What type of trails do you ride on the Central Coast	
Trail Riding	76.84%
Descent / Gravity	51.94%
Cross Country	67.16%
Flow Trail	58.32%
Fire Trails Only	17.55%
Other	4.19%

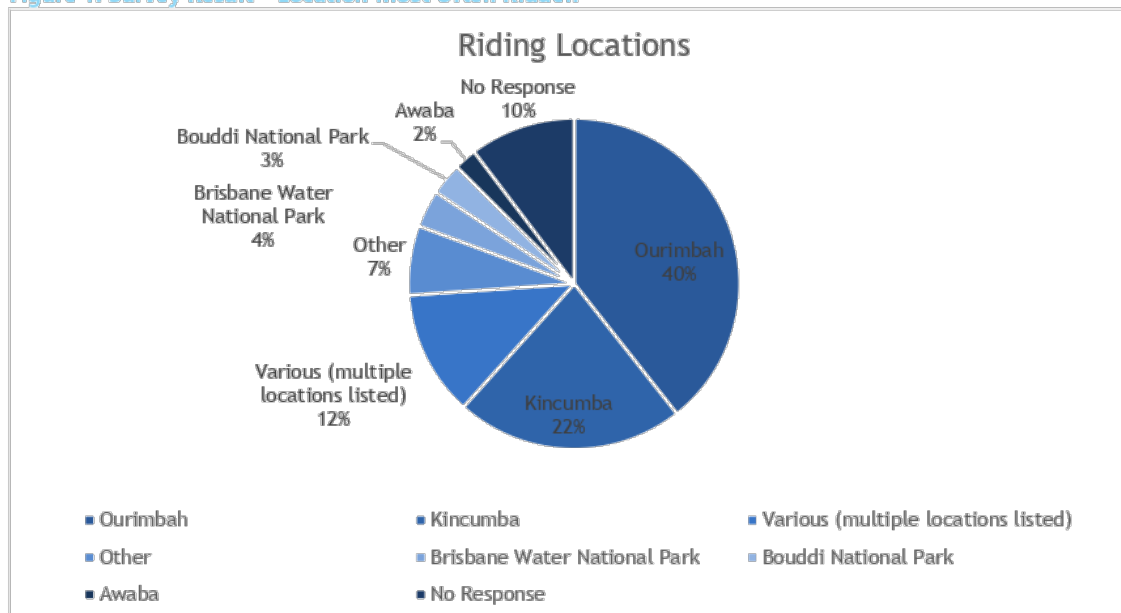
Table 8: Survey Result – Preferred trail

What is your most preferred trail to ride?	
Trail Riding	44.71%
Descent / Gravity	40.06%
Cross Country	39.42%
Flow Trail	47.10%
Fire Trails Only	7.16%
Other	2.58%

### Riding Locations

The most popular location for mountain biking on the Central Coast was Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park (40%), followed by Kincumba Mountain Reserve (22%). Approximately 12% of respondents listed multiple locations across the Central Coast.

Figure 1: Survey Result – Location Most Often Ridden





When asked to explain location preference, the main reason for Ourimbah was the trail network / trail diversity and options (66%). The location / access and proximity scored next highest with 19%.

However, at Kincumba 54% of respondents identified that the main reason for this location preference was the location / ease of access and proximity. The trail network / trail diversity scored next highest at 28%.

Figure 2: Survey Result – Why do you ride Ourimbah State Forest

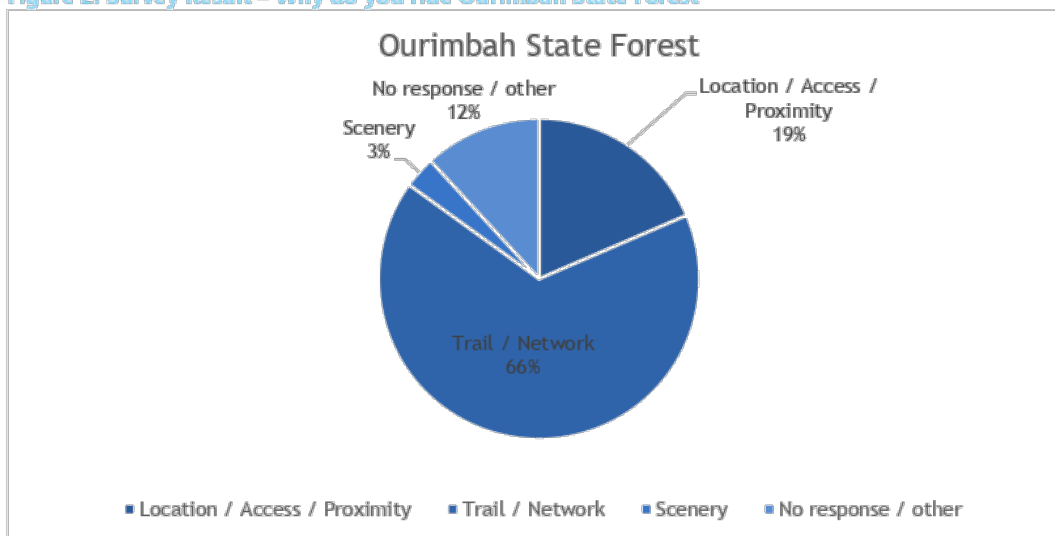
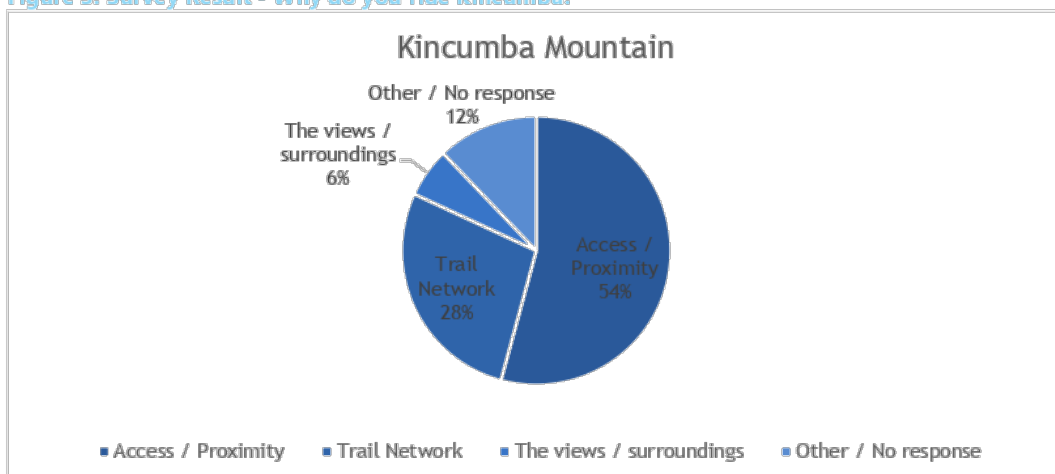


Figure 3: Survey Result - Why do you ride Kincumba?





### Essential Facilities and Priorities for Preferred Locations

Trail signage (80.10%), car parking (67.65%) and water (61.18%) were considered the essential facilities that should be provided at mountain biking locations, followed closely by toilets (56.75%) and site information (55.84%). Respondents were also asked what facilities are required at their preferred location with 45% of respondents indicating toilets and water were the highest priorities at Ourimbah.

At Kincumba, trail improvements/sanctioned trails were the highest priority (39%).

**Table 9: Survey Result – Essential Facilities Required**

What do you think are the essential facilities that should be provided at mountain biking locations?	
Car parking	67.65%
Public Transport	4.57%
Trail Signage	80.10%
Toilets	56.75%
Seating	9.28%
Water	61.18%
Site Information	55.84%
Fencing to protect	35.65%
Other	9.14%

### Travel Time and Use of Multiple Locations

Over 65% of respondents are travelling 30 minutes or less to their most frequently used mountain bike location. This aligns with proximity being a key factor in the location chosen for a majority of respondents. Approximately 65% of respondents also ride in other locations.

**Table 10: Survey Result – Travel Time**

How long does it take to travel to this location?	
Less than 15 minutes	30.28%
15-30 minutes	35.07%
30 minutes – 1 hour	20.21%
1-2 hour	12.29%
More than 2 hours	2.15%

**Table 11: Survey Result – Other locations for mountain biking**

Is there another location on the Central Coast you frequently use for mountain biking?	
No	35.11%
Yes	64.89%





### Unauthorised Trails and Other Outdoor Recreation

Over 70% of respondents are aware that unauthorised mountain bike trails have been constructed and the majority of respondents attributed this to a lack of authorised trails. A secondary motivating factor was the convenience of a local option (location / proximity) as sanctioned trails were too far away to be accessible for some respondents.

**Table 12: Survey Result – Unauthorised trails**

Are you aware that some unauthorised mountain bike trails have been developed on some Council reserves?	
No	29.70%
Yes	70.30%

Approximately 85% of respondents also visit other bushland or natural reserves on the Central Coast with over 50% of respondents indicating that they undertake bushwalking, hiking and walking in these areas.

**Table 13: Survey Result – Bushland Reserves**

Do you visit any bushland or natural reserve areas on the Central Coast?	
No	15.34%
Yes	84.66%

## 2.2 Non-Riders

There were 350 respondents who did not currently ride mountain bikes. These were asked a series of questions regarding their thoughts on mountain bike riding, current activities and any concern regarding mountain biking on the Central Coast. Out of the non-riders, approximately 46% indicated that they would consider mountain biking if formal trails were provided.

**Table 14: Survey Result – Would you consider mountain biking?**

Would you consider mountain bike riding if formal trails were provided in some natural areas	
No	39.49%
Yes	46.31%
Unsure	14.20%

### Non-Rider Outdoor Recreation Activities and Locations

The most popular activity undertaken by non-riders was bushwalking with over 68%.



Table 15: Survey Result – Recreation activities undertaken by non-riders

What activities do you do?	
Bushwalk	68.89%
Picnic	1.85%
Photography	2.96%
Art	0.74%
Relaxation	7.78%
Other	17.78%

There was a diverse range of preferred locations provided, with Bouddi National Park, Kincumba, Rumbalara and Wyrribalong all proving popular. Close to 50% of respondents indicated they would visit their preferred location once a week or more.

#### Activity Frequency

Frequency of participation in outdoor recreation activities was more evenly distributed than for riders. Riders appear to be participating more frequently than non-riders, with nearly 60% of riders using reserves twice a week or more compared with only 28% of non-riders.

Table 16: Survey Result – Frequency of visits to bushland reserve

How often do you visit this location?	
Three or more times a week	14.01%
Twice a week	14.01%
Once a week	20.62%
Once a fortnight	12.06%
Once a month	31.91%
Once a year	7.39%

## 2.3 All Respondents – Views and Attitudes Towards Mountain Biking

All respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their level of support for a range of strategies towards mountain biking. There was strong support evident, with over 90% of all respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing to allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use. Over 85% agreed with development of new shared trails that would allow for mountain biking as well, while approximately 87% agreed with the development of limited mountain bike trails in suitable locations. Over 75% of respondents also indicated that they are concerned about the lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorised.

When reviewing the responses it is important to remember that overall 18.4% of respondents were not Mountain Bike riders and 81.6% were. Responses to the following issues were not reflective of these proportions, indicating that riders share many concerns about non-sanctioned and unplanned trails for mountain biking and conversely that non-riders were not necessarily unsupportive of developing sanctioned trails for mountain biking. A breakdown of responses for riders and non-riders has been provided to illustrate these responses.



Table 17: Survey Result: Mountain Biking Strategies (all responses)

Participation in mountain biking is increasing in many areas. This increases demand for mountain bike riding trails. What strategies do you support to respond to this demand? Please indicate your level of support.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue to allow mountain bike riding where currently allowed (on some existing fire trails as shared use)	78.90%	16.57%	2.67%	1.86%
Allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use	74.32%	16.50%	5.52%	3.66%
Development of new shared trails which allow mountain biking as well	70.66%	15.14%	8.12%	6.08%
Development of limited mountain bike only trails in suitable locations	67.31%	19.93%	7.63%	5.13%
Lease specific areas to clubs to provide mountain bike trails	53.87%	24.44%	13.42%	8.26%
Only State managed areas such as State Forests and National Parks should provide mountain bike trails	4.38%	8.64%	46.20%	40.77%
Council should not provide any mountain bike trails	3.37%	3.14%	16.92%	76.57%

Table 18: Survey Result: Mountain Biking Strategies (non-riders responses)

Participation in mountain biking is increasing in many areas. This increases demand for mountain bike riding trails. What strategies do you support to respond to this demand? Please indicate your level of support.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue to allow mountain bike riding where currently allowed (on some existing fire trails as shared use)	39.87%	46.08%	7.84%	6.21%
Allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use	29.37%	29.04%	24.09%	17.49%
Development of new shared trails which allow mountain biking as well	26.58%	20.27%	26.58%	26.58%
Development of limited mountain bike only trails in suitable locations	35.10%	35.76%	13.58%	15.56%
Lease specific areas to clubs to provide mountain bike trails	22.48%	27.85%	24.16%	25.50%
Only State managed areas such as State Forests and National Parks should provide mountain bike trails	7.28%	15.23%	48.68%	28.81%
Council should not provide any mountain bike trails	12.13%	10.16%	41.64%	36.07%

**Table 19: Survey Result: Mountain Biking Strategies (Riders Responses)**

Participation in mountain biking is increasing in many areas. This increases demand for mountain bike riding trails. What strategies do you support to respond to this demand? Please indicate your level of support.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue to allow mountain bike riding where currently allowed (on some existing fire trails as shared use)	87.34%	10.18%	1.56%	0.92%
Allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use	83.92%	13.82%	1.55%	0.71%
Development of new shared trails which allow mountain biking as well	80.07%	14.04%	4.18%	1.70%
Development of limited mountain bike only trails in suitable locations	74.19%	16.55%	6.36%	2.90%
Lease specific areas to clubs to provide mountain bike trails	60.51%	23.72%	11.15%	4.62%
Only State managed areas such as State Forests and National Parks should provide mountain bike trails	3.76%	7.23%	45.67%	43.33%
Council should not provide any mountain bike trails	1.48%	1.63%	11.59%	85.30%

**Table 20: Survey Result: Concern Regarding Bushland Reserves (all responses)**

Are you concerned about the following?		
	Yes	No
Behaviour of some mountain bike riders on shared trails?	30.12%	69.88%
Allowing mountain bikes in nature conservation reserves?	29.51%	70.49%
Construction of unauthorised mountain bike tracks?	51.94%	48.06%
Construction of unauthorised walking tracks?	45.21%	54.79%
Lack of proper / authorized trails for mountain bike riders?	86.66%	13.34%
Lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorized?	75.29%	24.71%
Increasing numbers of mountain bike riders in Council managed reserves?	25.06%	74.94%

**Table 21: Survey Result: Concern Regarding Bushland Reserves (non-riders responses)**

Are you concerned about the following?		
	Yes	No
Behaviour of some mountain bike riders on shared trails?	69.74%	30.26%
Allowing mountain bikes in nature conservation reserves?	70.30%	29.70%
Construction of unauthorised mountain bike tracks?	86.80%	13.20%
Construction of unauthorised walking tracks?	71.62%	28.38%
Lack of proper / authorized trails for mountain bike riders?	75.42%	24.58%
Lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorized?	87.75%	12.25%
Increasing numbers of mountain bike riders in Council managed reserves?	61.79%	38.21%





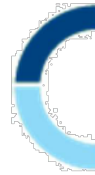
Table 22: Survey Result: Concern Regarding Bushland Reserves (Riders responses)

Are you concerned about the following?		
	Yes	No
Behaviour of some mountain bike riders on shared trails?	21.58%	78.42%
Allowing mountain bikes in nature conservation reserves?	20.71%	79.29%
Construction of unauthorised mountain bike tracks?	44.40%	55.60%
Construction of unauthorised walking tracks?	39.50%	60.50%
Lack of proper / authorized trails for mountain bike riders?	89.06%	10.94%
Lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorized?	72.06%	27.38%
Increasing numbers of mountain bike riders in Council managed reserves?	17.20%	82.80%

There were a range of concerns outlined by respondents regarding mountain biking. These concerns have been grouped into a number of different themes and these have been detailed in the table below along with a selection of the responses.

Table 23: Survey Result: Specific concerns about mountain biking

Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
The need for an appropriate trail network	32.22%	<p>'Appropriately constructed and well managed trails enhance rather than detract from the environment. Building proper trails will provide a mechanism for self-regulation and will stop additional trails being built. I have found the mountain biking community in general to be very environmentally conscious and willing to behave appropriately provided the infrastructure is in place.'</p> <p>'Too many riders and not enough trails'</p> <p>'By having professionally constructed mountain bike specific trails in the reserves, it will prevent illegally built trails in sensitive areas and trespassing on private land.'</p> <p>'Variety and level of trails are important but need to manage these with sacred sites and make sure these are identified and separated.'</p>
Concerns about the damage to the environment	15.67%	<p>'Mountain bike riders need to respect the full range of values of public land and desist from constructing tracks without consent of the land owner.'</p> <p>'Destruction of native/endangered species and disturbance to wildlife areas.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Very concerned about the impact that mountain bike riding can have on our natural environment, especially in areas with fragile environments'</p> <p>'If done properly, the bush should be there for us all to share'</p> <p>'I think you'll find that most mountain bikers are nature lovers, many of whom would be receptive to education about the sensitive areas in which they ride but who may be unaware of the damage it may cause or causes'</p>
Healthy and Active Sport	11.76%	<p>'I am a citizen who is always very conscious and concerned about our natural spaces and our care for flora and fauna. So therefore, environmental protection is my top priority. But at the same time, I believe that the more we get people participating in activities in natural spaces, the more there is a chance they will value our resources and help to protect what we have. So I think it's fantastic that mountain biking is a fast growing sport/leisure activity. It's also great for our nation's fitness'</p> <p>'Healthy outdoor activities should be encouraged'</p> <p>'Mountain bike riding can be a healthy, adventurous exercise but like many 'sports' or activities it can be detrimental to the environment unless it is properly controlled.'</p> <p>'I don't understand why walking trails are ok but bikes are not encouraged'</p> <p>'Great activity for kids and families and we have so much available land and space'</p> <p>'It's important to encourage our youth to exercise and enjoy our magnificent bushlands'</p> <p>'MTB should be encouraged as another form of managing our increasing obesity, cardiovascular, diabetes, mental health issues. It also helps social interaction.'</p> <p>'It's a growing Olympic sport and recreation activity that offers significant social and economic benefits to residents and the region'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
Conflict between users	8.85%	<p>'Safety when walking on narrow mixed-use trails. accidents between bush walkers and bikes'</p> <p>'My only concern is that if Council was to leave the trails open to walkers and runners as well you will then have a safety issue'</p> <p>'Concerned about bikes and walkers together. 90% of both are good, but there are 10% of walkers and riders who make it dangerous for the other.'</p>
Signage	6.82%	<p>'There is not even signage to advise where the bikes are permitted.'</p> <p>'Risk of inexperienced riders on unauthorised unmarked trails putting themselves in danger riding behind their ability'</p> <p>'Better signage of routes'</p> <p>'More signage and information about where you can and can not ride. It is very to start riding in areas not allowed if there is no information.'</p> <p>'Just the need to provide clear signage and public information awareness about shared trails to limit conflict between walkers and mountain bikers.'</p> <p>'This could include online resources such as maps and entry points, track lengths, difficulty etc.'</p> <p>'Where shared walking and biking zones are established wayfinding and signage should be created at tight corners or limited sight zones to avoid clashes between walkers and mountain bikers.'</p> <p>'Lack of signage is dangerous for everyone'</p>
Safety Concerns	5.08%	<p>'Safety such as maintenance needed on a lot of local trails'</p> <p>'People sabotaging trails and putting riders at risk'</p> <p>'My concern is park rangers trying to block tracks with fences and branches. This creates dangerous hazards and often leads to a lengthening of the trail to avoid the blockage so it does more harm than good'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Attempts by people to sabotage the mountain bike trails'</p> <p>'Disgruntled people deliberately putting obstacles across trails which can cause dangerous accidents not only to bike riders, but to the public in general.'</p> <p>'Concerned about liability and reliability/maintenance of constructed trails'</p> <p>'More authorised trails means better safety for other users of the trails'</p>
Tourism opportunities	4.79%	<p>'council should provide well designed official trails to cater for this hugely popular recreation and tourism activity.'</p> <p>'Massive tourism boost.'</p> <p>'CC is so lucky to have the terrain and hills to provide the perfect areas to promote legal and sanctioned trail riding. It is an untapped goldmine for locals and tourists to utilize these potential trails.'</p> <p>'Setting up more purpose built MTB trail areas will enhance tourism and reduce the number of unsanctioned trails being built.'</p> <p>'Mountain biking has been shown to bring revenue into local communities if good quality trails are provided (look at Derby in Tasmania). This would benefit council.'</p>
Partnerships	4.50%	<p>'Would like to see a partnership between council / clubs and local riders where sustainable trails are built, maintained and monitored'</p> <p>'Council should work with local mtb clubs and experienced trail builders to provide a challenging but safe network of trail.'</p> <p>'a proactive and cooperative partnership'</p> <p>'The council should take a proactive approach to MTB in the community and engage with locals to develop a plan for areas where trails have already been built, legally or not.'</p>





Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Only that if a plan is not in place and communicated effectively to all, then minority groups from each side (pro and anti mtbking) will continue to act irrationally and without thought/consideration for others and fuel the unnecessary negative sentiment that creates angst and division.'</p> <p>'You will not beat the Trail builders. You need to work with them'. If suitable trails (including technically challenging ones) are provided, an other areas are marked off limits, (due to eco reasons, or Aboriginal significance), then most people will respect that.'</p> <p>'I believe Council has to negotiate with riding groups and clubs particularly in regards to Mtb trail building and ongoing maintenance. It seems to me that if a blanket ban on Mtb specific trails continues then illegal Mtb trails will continue to be built despite all the fences etc. This presents a range of issues but most importantly ones of safety. If there was genuine negotiation and sanctioned trails along with the appropriate facilities and signage then I see it as a boon for our community on so many levels.'</p>
Erosion	3.34%	<p>'There is a potential for increasing erosion and drainage problems'</p> <p>'There are some natural areas where erosion and encroaching on the reserves is already a problem'</p> <p>'Main problem is unauthorised construction of trails in erosion prone areas leading to gully erosion even in National Parks'</p> <p>'I am both pro mountain biking and pro nature conservation. I think that the development of the trails needs to be done in a way that has minimal environmental impact. For example, professionally built with good drainage systems to reduce erosion and constructed using primarily natural materials with minimal vegetation removal.'</p>
Cost and financial considerations and concerns	1.74%	<p>'How the potential increase in trail maintenance will be funded'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Lack of funds from Councils for the upkeep of the trails that are currently provided to the public'</p> <p>'There is a significant cost in establishing and more importantly maintaining mountain bike trails to an acceptable standard'</p> <p>'Who would be tasked with trail maintenance'</p> <p>'I would like to see Council put some real funding into mountain biking'</p> <p>'With adequate funding to the existing clubs to expand and maintain their allocated space, there would be limited unsanctioned trail development'</p>
Education	1.45%	<p>'Public information awareness about shared trails to limit conflict between walkers and mountain bikers'</p> <p>'Online resources such as maps and entry points, track lengths, difficulty etc.'</p> <p>'A lack of education among the general community, coupled with the entrenched beliefs of more "traditional" nature users, leads to continued conflicts between mountain bikers and hikers'</p> <p>'Lack of General public knowledge of riding etiquette'</p> <p>'A bit of education for everyone wouldn't go astray'</p>
Enforcement	1.45%	<p>'More vigorous monitoring of correct trail use'</p> <p>'there should be penalties (which are enforced and backed up by camera monitoring) for riders who deliberately move into non-trail areas'</p> <p>'Should be more policing'</p> <p>'As part of managing it you should have ranger presence and enforce rules'</p>
Illegal Trail Construction	1.16%	<p>'Illegally constructed trails. Uncertainty about which trails are legal.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Riders need to keep to defined trails and not make unauthorised modifications to tracks to make them more "exciting".'</p> <p>'Impacts on sensitive ecological areas, building of unauthorised trails'</p>
Litter	1.16%	<p>'My concerns are about the rubbish left by some MTB riders'</p> <p>'There is quite a bit of rubbish at mtb trails in the area.'</p> <p>'As long as no rubbish is left behind I have no issues'</p> <p>'litter control. Maybe have signs saying take "your rubbish with you!"'</p>

Respondents were asked for any other comments regarding mountain biking in the Central Coast Region. Similar to the previous question there was a range of thoughts provided, these have been outlined in the table below along with some of the responses received.

**Table 24: Survey Result: Any other Comments**

Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
Support for Mountain Biking	24.37%	<p>'I support responsible mountain bike riding respecting other users. All users should have equal rights and responsibilities to ensure a safe and pleasant experience for all'</p> <p>'They are fine to do it, but only where allowed!'</p> <p>'If Council provided specific, exclusive trails for mountain biking, everyone wins because we elderly bushwalkers can walk with on our trails with confidence.'</p> <p>'I agree that it is important to allow people to undertake this type of activity as it is great for physical health and provides other positive health outcomes and so understand we need a strategy that enables mtb in the area. BUT we need to prioritise reserves for important habitat for local native species.'</p> <p>'Purpose built tracks in suitable areas.'</p>

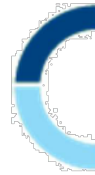


Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'As a regular user of Kincumba Mtn Reserve, I come across many Mountain Bikers daily. They all display respect towards the environment and also others users of the space. The more people getting outdoors and making use of the wonderful reserves and spaces council and the earth has to offer the better! Whether they are on foot or on a mountain bike.'</p> <p>'Central coast is a growing community and it needs to support mountain bikes along with all outdoor recreation'</p> <p>'I am not interested in mountain biking but if people are, then we have a lot of land available for them to enjoy their hobby.'</p> <p>'generally people including those riding mountain bikes and good people, and are considerate of those around them and the environment they enjoy riding in.'</p> <p>'There should be some designated trails for biking, as these people deserve their share of the bushland'</p> <p>'Strongly feel there should be more areas open to mountain biking. Anything to encourage younger people to appreciate the natural environment.'</p> <p>'My group of mtb riders are mostly in their 70's and very respectful of the environment, So it is not only tearaways that use these trails'</p>
Tourism Opportunity	19.75%	<p>'Growing sport with a good economic record, chance to capitalise on an already great tourist area. We regularly travel with friends and family and spend dollars in other local economies to go riding. From my experience, MTBers are very keen to look after the bush and be responsible, that is one of the reasons we ride.'</p> <p>'Mtn biking is a huge industry and could be a large tourist draw card for the coast if properly organised with purpose built trails designed by bikers and track building specialists.'</p> <p>'We have fantastic locations and terrain for mountain biking trails on the Central Coast. There is plenty of</p>





Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>demand already and the sport is only growing, it would be an opportunity missed to not capitalise on what we have. It can only benefit the community and local businesses if well managed.'</p> <p>'Mountain biking is an exponentially growing sport, Council has a small window of opportunity to take management of the local trails and upgrade them to make them more fun and safer and maintain them throughout use. This will not only keep mountain bike groups from clearing native bush land, but will also attract central coast tourism and generate more money into local businesses and the community.'</p> <p>'the potential for increased business and employment due to MTB tourism is significant. Comparisons should be made to other regions where initiatives have been implemented.'</p> <p>'Improved trails and more around would be fantastic for tourism on the central coast it's a great place to explore'</p>
Healthy and active sport	18.03%	<p>'Mountain biking is a joyous way of staying physically and mentally fit.'</p> <p>'We need council to invest, as other areas have done. There are social, health &amp; economic advantages.'</p> <p>'Mountain bike riding is a healthy sport and riders need land especially designated for this activity'</p> <p>'Its great to see young people getting out and about and exercising - please don't put limitations and costs on this exercise, rather work with them to develop more recreation areas'</p> <p>'It is a good activity that promotes a healthy lifestyle along with enjoying our beautiful surrounds on the central coast.'</p> <p>'Great family activity that keeps people active and improves health, happiness and wellbeing.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'My primary school aged kids are starting to enjoy MTB riding and I think it's a healthy and social sport for them to pursue.'</p> <p>'The idea that people are getting exercise in a public reserve should be celebrated and not restricted.'</p> <p>'I just had the best morning ever mountain biking with my five-year-old daughter- just wish there were more opportunities to bring our family together doing things like that'</p> <p>'People exercising and enjoying the outdoors should never be discouraged'</p> <p>'It is a great sport for so many people. Mountain biking is so much fun, I do it with my son and daughter and its one of the few sports you can actively do together. Its also great to get kids active and parents active and away from screens and being sedentary. This sport should be actively promoted by council for healthy lifestyles'</p>
Need more trails	10.42%	<p>'love to see more of it in future'</p> <p>'Make more trails'</p> <p>'There needs to be more venues to cater for the growing number of riders'</p> <p>'More family friendly and beginner tracks for learners and younger children that have a central trail head to enable safe supervision of children.'</p> <p>'It's a sport that is growing so fast. We need more trails to keep up with demand'</p> <p>'I personally enjoy where I ride and only ride on legal trails operated by clubs. It would be nice to have more of this type of riding available on the Coast.'</p> <p>'The continued population growth will see continued demand for MTBing, especially since the topography is so suited. Proactive steps will see good results rather than trying to fix things at a later date'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Mountain biking is only going to get bigger and more popular. If councils can do their best to provide appropriate trails for the community, then I believe it will bring revenue and more people into the community. The council needs to make sure there are a range of different tracks to suit all riding types eg. Downhill, trail, XC, Dirt jumps and freeride tracks.'</p>
Opportunity	3.99%	<p>'There is a huge opportunity for the CC to become a MTB centre. It is close to Sydney and has a diversity of landscapes. Using a collaborative approach that is considerate and respectful of the full range of values that land has a regional plan that provides for the full range of MTB experiences in locations that don't impact on cultural sites and heritage values, ecological and environmental values, social values, other public land users etc the CC could see the development of a lucrative MTB industry'</p> <p>'the Central Coast has a massive opportunity to capitalise on its natural beauty by utilising areas such as Mount Kincumber as 'active adventure playgrounds'. We have a huge and available tourist market in Sydney that can be tapped into.'</p> <p>'We have fantastic locations and terrain for mountain biking trails on the Central Coast. There is plenty of demand already and the sport is only growing, it would be an opportunity missed to not capitalise on what we have. It can only benefit the community and local businesses if well managed.'</p> <p>'Fantastic opportunities for Council, the local residents, as well as visitors. With the provision of suitable trails (for beginners as well as advanced), the significant areas (Aboriginal &amp; ecological) can be avoided and preserved. There needs to be a suitable alternate however, otherwise the continuation of illegal trails will continue. The majority of people will respect the significant areas if there is information and alternatives provided'</p> <p>'Creating formal shared trail routes and construction and rehabilitation is a good opportunity to also re-establish original natural ecosystems within these areas.'</p>

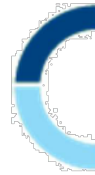


Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'This issue should be seen as an opportunity for environmentally sustainable economic development for our region.'</p> <p>'Real opportunity exists for the Central Coast region to become a MTB mecca, bringing significant tourism \$ and providing locals with sport (Olympic and professional pathway), recreation and business/employment opportunities. Please don't let this opportunity pass by.'</p> <p>'There is a huge opportunity to showcase our beautiful region.'</p>
Locations with mountain biking provided as an example	3.44%	<p>'Mount Stromlo in the ACT and Hornsby have great facilities'</p> <p>'look at other areas where communities have thrived with appropriate facilities. E.G Mt Stromlo in Canberra, Mt Annan, Awaba, Glenrock, and Wingello in NSW. Derby in Tasmania, etc'</p> <p>'Have travelled to Tasmania, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Snowy Mtns, Victoria etc etc. where managed trails are providing human, environmental and economic benefits. The Central Coast has so much to offer.'</p> <p>'Mountain Bike riding is huge in the USA, Canada, Europe and NZ. That comes from properly built, maintained and financially backed trails.'</p> <p>'Other councils around New South Wales and other states have already realised that mountain biking provides a good safe exercise for the public and also generate a lot of revenue for local businesses. my friends and I already plan trips to Canberra Thredbo Tasmania Queensland just to ride mountain bike trails built by councils in those areas'</p> <p>'There are many examples in adjoining local government areas (Hornsby for example), in the ACT (Stromlo, Majura Pines) NSW, Victoria (Bright) , Tasmania (Derby, Maydena) and internationally where high quality, professionally constructed networks of trails have been built in consultation with relevant</p>





Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		stakeholders with great success. We could do this here and add another attraction to the coast.'
Partnerships	3.08%	<p>'The only way to succeed is to create a culture of collaboration between all stakeholders and user groups.'</p> <p>'The trail system is loved and well maintained. Extra support from council in any capacity would be greatly appreciated'</p> <p>'Assist the clubs and volunteers financially to develop the trails'</p> <p>'Council should liaise with mountain bike organisations to get their support for a joint strategy'</p> <p>'The mtb community is eager to work with council, as we have been for a long time, to find mutual agreement.'</p> <p>'engage with the MTB community and build designated trails. Most MTB riders will be respectful of these trails BUT it needs to be done in collaboration with bike riders to ensure the best possible outcome for the COS sites and all users'</p> <p>'A strong relationship with local clubs and riders could see a healthy partnership develop and allow for shared responsibility and care /maintenance/planning of tracks.'</p> <p>'All interest groups need to work collaboratively to develop trails that minimize impact on the natural environment and respects and preserves culturally significant areas/sites'</p>
Investment and financial considerations	2.99%	<p>'It appears one major problem is the lack of adequate funds for upkeep. If any mountain bike trails are built where will the funds for their upkeep come from?'</p> <p>'Increase funding as it's great for the whole family and keeping fit is fun'</p> <p>'I would like to think the council will put more money into trails and encourage more young people to this healthy sport.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'The sport is rapidly growing and any investment into new trails and facilities would be a worthy investment for our community.'</p> <p>'MTB has a great community benefit and professionally built authorised trails that would be of advantage to everybody. I would like it to the council investing in skate parks.'</p>
Controls and restrictions	2.81%	<p>'The sport should be restricted to areas under private commercial management, with public liability insurance'</p> <p>'It has to well-managed though and not in sensitive areas. Riders need to respect walkers in shared paths.'</p> <p>'Needs to be restricted and strictly monitored'</p> <p>'Mountain bike riding should not be encouraged as an appropriate recreational activity on the Central Coast. Like speedway racing it should be restricted to a designated area on degraded land. Council should not encourage the further destructive of our natural environment.'</p> <p>'Should be restricted to minimize damage to our open spaces.'</p>
Damage to the environment	2.54%	<p>'It's fine unless it causes environmental issues like littering, soil erosion etc.'</p> <p>'Council should provide tracks so they don't destroy the national parks'</p> <p>'I have watched the enjoyment which trails riders can get from their sport &amp; feel that it is important for them to have venues in which to ride. I feel that it's even more important for our remaining natural environment, fauna &amp; flora to have protection from encroaching damage, degradation &amp; destruction'</p> <p>'MBR should not be allowed in COSS lands or Council reserves with high biodiversity values, because it allows weeds, diseases and pests to invade the forest, and disrupts the peaceful enjoyment of the reserves by others.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'I recognise this is an area of sporting interest for some and that it is an Olympic sport also. However without careful management this sport leaves our natural areas open to increased bush fire risk, severe erosion, degradation through littering and the incursion of weeds carried in on the treads of the bikes. Overall this leads to further degradation of habitat and increased species loss. The cost to our environment should not be ignored at the prospect of a few extra tourist dollars for the region'</p>
No trails developed in sensitive areas	2.54%	<p>'I do not think that these bike trails should be in Reserves or National Parks as these fragile areas which can easily be damaged.'</p> <p>'MBR should not be allowed in COSS lands or Council reserves with high biodiversity values, because it allows weeds, diseases and pests to invade the forest, and disrupts the peaceful enjoyment of the reserves by others.'</p> <p>'Conservation of our natural areas must be the number one priority. If bike trails are to be developed it must not be in environmentally sensitive areas which these days is most of the Central Coast'</p> <p>'I agree that it is important to allow people to undertake this type of activity as it is great for physical health and provides other positive health outcomes and so understand we need a strategy that enables mtb in the area. BUT we need to prioritise reserves for important habitat for local native species.'</p> <p>'I think it is important that council provide mountain bike riders with places to ride safely on authorised tracks but have major environmental concerns about any plans to create new tracks, negatively impacting our local ecosystems.'</p> <p>'Purpose built tracks in suitable areas.'</p> <p>'It has to be well-managed though and not in sensitive areas'</p> <p>'The COSS lands are there primarily to preserve our environment. They benefit all residents not just</p>

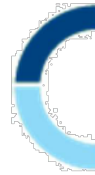


Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		specific users like mountain bikers although mountain biking if well managed can certainly coexist with our natural areas.'
Safety Concerns	1.27%	<p>'Please maintain the safety of walking trails as this should be the primary activity in nature reserves'</p> <p>'Safety for all natural resource users is paramount'</p>
Education and information	1.18%	<p>'council should educate riders about the damage they do when they go making illegal tracks'</p> <p>'There is limited information reaching many community / resident groups to encourage greater awareness of issues. Central Coast has a network of groups who can disseminate and encourage public participation'</p> <p>'There is way too little information given to people about what species and what ecologies live in bushland.'</p> <p>'education programs addressing the damaging impact of unauthorized track development in environmentally sensitive areas'</p> <p>'Put on some education sessions on site regarding the ecosystems, erosion and conservation areas for mountain bikers and the public. There is a definite need for properly designed and maintained tracks which can be achieved. There may also be scope to provide user pays tracks to assist with a revenue stream to help maintain trackers etc. Council needs to discuss and network with clubs other councils and interested stakeholders to see how other areas are doing this successfully. Mountain biking is not going away.'</p> <p>'More info about what areas are available to mountain bike in'</p>
Enforcement	1.18%	<p>'If it should exist it needs very close supervision.'</p> <p>'There should be strict policing to ensure proper use only &amp; limit damage to the environment. Understand younger generation need some space but can they/do they respect these areas.'</p>





Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'I would like to see some sort of policing of mountain bike riders in national parks'</p> <p>'Council need to increase compliance in COSS reserves to ensure illegal bike trails are not constructed in the bush.'</p> <p>'As well as having regulations about mountain bike riding there needs to be some way for it to be policed and delinquent riders fined otherwise they will take no notice.'</p>
Maintenance considerations	1.09%	<p>'Council must build and manage the trails (with volunteer help perhaps). This would avoid or at least reduce the building of illegal trails.'</p> <p>'I don't think we should be actively trying to promote and increase the number of mountain bikers in the Central Coast region without more resources than we currently have to manage reserves'</p> <p>'In many of the parks and reserves we bushwalk the trails already degraded through lack of maintenance and erosion.'</p> <p>'We need better managed areas and trails'</p> <p>'Just need regular maintenance to mountain bike trails'</p> <p>'Better consultation between registered clubs and council regarding the construction and maintenance of trails'</p>
Signage	1.00%	<p>'Clear signage and encouraging clubs to police their own members is a vital part of keeping trails safe for others and protecting the natural environment.'</p> <p>'Safe, well-signposted trails will encourage more people out to see our beautiful local environment'</p> <p>'I think there should be signs advising riders which tracks they are permitted on and a list of prohibitions (littering, illegal construction/alterations within bushlands), and general courtesy information (give way to bushwalkers, slow down on bends, respect the</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		natural flora and fauna by not destroying the natural environment).'  'Would be great to have more trails marked and maps available of the trails as well as beginner trails available and marked as beginner trails with progression trails also available'
Should not be restricted	0.36%	'Don't ban/restrict it. It's not going to go away. Embrace it'  'Legitimate activity that should be encouraged and facilitated.'

## 2.4 Survey Demographics

The large majority of survey respondents (80.78%) were male.

**Table 25: Survey Results: Gender**

What gender do you identify as?	
Male	80.78%
Female	17.38%
Non-Binary	0.36%
Prefer not to say	1.48%

Respondents were located across a range of suburbs, with Terrigal being the highest at 4.33%. Interestingly 18.76% of respondents came from outside of the Central Coast region. The following table outlines the suburbs and the respective response rates.

**Table 26: Survey Results: Suburb**

What suburb do you live in?		
Suburb	Percentage	Ward
Alison	0%	Wyong
Avoca Beach	3.51%	Gosford East
Bar Point	0%	Gosford West
Bateau Bay	2.01%	The Entrance
Bensville	1.38%	Gosford East
Berkeley Vale	1.82%	The Entrance
Blackwall	0.69%	Gosford West
Blue Bay	0.06%	The Entrance
Blue Haven	0.38%	Budgewoi
Booker Bay	0.50%	Gosford West
Bouddi	0.44%	Gosford East



What suburb do you live in?		
Box Head	0.06%	Gosford East
Budgewoi	0.63%	Budgewoi
Budgewoi Peninsula	0%	Budgewoi
Buff Point	0.38%	Budgewoi
Bushells Ridge	0.06%	Wyang
Calga	0.25%	Gosford West
Canton Beach	0%	Budgewoi
Cedar Brush Creek	0.06%	Wyang
Central Mangrove	0.06%	Wyang (part), Gosford West (part)
Chain Valley Bay	0%	Budgewoi
Charmhaven	0.13%	Budgewoi
Cheero Point	0.06%	Gosford West
Chittaway Bay	0.19%	The Entrance
Chittaway Point	0.25%	The Entrance
Cogra Bay	0%	Gosford West
Colongra	0%	Budgewoi
Copacabana	2.70%	Gosford East
Crangan Bay (part)	0%	Budgewoi
Daleys Point	0.13%	Gosford East
Davistown	1.44%	Gosford East
Dooralong	0.06%	Wyang
Doyalson	0.19%	Budgewoi
Doyalson North	0%	Budgewoi
Durren Durren	0%	Wyang
East Gosford	0.82%	Gosford West
Empire Bay	0.69%	Gosford East
Erina	1.88%	Gosford East
Erina Heights	0.19%	Gosford East
Ettalong Beach	0.82%	Gosford West
Forrester's Beach	1.25%	The Entrance
Fountaindale	0.19%	The Entrance
Frazer Park	0%	Budgewoi
Freemans	0%	Budgewoi
Glenning Valley	0.31%	The Entrance
Glenworth Valley	0.13%	Gosford West
Gorokan	0.63%	Budgewoi (part), Wyong (part)
Gosford	0.88%	Gosford West
Green Point	2.07%	Gosford East
Greengrove	0.06%	Gosford West
Gunderman	0%	Gosford West
Gwandalan	0.38%	Budgewoi
Halekulani	0.19%	Budgewoi
Halloran	0.06%	Wyang
Hamlyn Terrace	0.63%	Budgewoi (part), Wyong (part)
Hardys Bay	0.31%	Gosford East

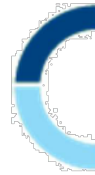


What suburb do you live in?		
Holgate	0.44%	Gosford East
Horsfield Bay	0.19%	Gosford West
Jilliby	0.50%	Wyang
Kangy Angy	0.06%	Wyang
Kanwal	0.69%	Budgewoi (part), Wyong (part)
Kariong	1.13%	Gosford West
Kiar	0%	Wyang
Killarney Vale	1.07%	The Entrance
Killcare	0.82%	Gosford East
Killcare Heights	1.32%	Gosford East
Kincumber	3.95%	Gosford East
Kincumber South	0.06%	Gosford East
Kingfisher Shores	0%	Budgewoi
Koolewong	0.19%	Gosford West
Kulnura	0.19%	Wyang (part), Gosford West (part)
Lake Haven	0.69%	Budgewoi
Lake Munmorah	1.00%	Budgewoi
Lemon Tree	0.13%	Wyang
Lisarow	1.25%	Wyang (part), Gosford East (part)
Little Jilliby	0%	Wyang
Little Wobby	0.06%	Gosford West
Long Jetty	0.82%	The Entrance
Lower Mangrove	0%	Gosford West
MacMasters Beach	2.01%	Gosford East
Magenta	0.19%	Budgewoi (part), The Entrance (part)
Mangrove Creek	0%	Gosford West
Mangrove Mountain	0.31%	Gosford West
Manning Park	0.38%	Budgewoi
Mardi	1.07%	Wyang
Marlow	0%	Gosford West
Matcham	0.82%	Gosford East
Moonee (Part)	0.06%	Budgewoi
Mooney Mooney	0.13%	Gosford West
Mooney Mooney Creek	0%	Gosford West
Mount Elliot	0.19%	Wyang
Mount White	0%	Gosford West
Narara	1.32%	Wyang
Niagara Park	0.31%	Wyang
Norah Head	0.44%	Budgewoi
Noraville	0.13%	Budgewoi
North Avoca	1.94%	Gosford East
North Gosford	0.56%	Wyang (part), Gosford West (part)
Ourimbah	1.38%	Wyang (part), The Entrance (part)
Palm Grove	0.06%	Wyang
Palmdale	0.25%	Wyang





What suburb do you live in?		
Patonga	0.19%	Gosford West
Pearl Beach	0.50%	Gosford West
Peats Ridge	0.06%	Gosford West
Phegans Bay	0.19%	Gosford West
Picketts Valley	0%	Gosford East
Point Clare	1.57%	Gosford West
Point Frederick	0.06%	Gosford West
Point Wolstoncroft	0%	Budgewoi
Pretty Beach	0.38%	Gosford East
Ravensdale	0.06%	Wyang
Rocky Point	0.06%	Wyang
San Remo	0.19%	Budgewoi
Saratoga	1.51%	Gosford East
Shelly Beach	0.50%	The Entrance
Somersby	0.25%	Wyang (part), Gosford West (part)
Spencer	0.06%	Gosford West
Springfield	0.88%	Gosford West (part), Gosford East (part)
St Huberts Island	0.31%	Gosford East
Summerland Point	0.19%	Budgewoi
Tacoma	0%	Wyang
Tacoma South	0.06%	Wyang
Tascott	0.13%	Gosford West
Ten Mile Hollow (Part)	0.06%	Gosford West
Terrigal	4.33%	Gosford East
The Entrance	0.44%	The Entrance
The Entrance North	0.13%	The Entrance
Toowoona Bay	0.06%	The Entrance
Toukley	0.44%	Budgewoi
Tuggerah	0.19%	Wyang (part), The Entrance (part)
Tuggerawong	0.25%	Wyang
Tumbi Umbi	0.88%	The Entrance
Umina Beach	3.01%	Gosford West
Upper Mangrove	0%	Gosford West
Wadalba	0.38%	Wyang
Wagstaffe	0.13%	Gosford East
Wallarah	0.06%	Wyang
Wamberal	3.32%	Gosford East (part), The Entrance (part)
Warnervale	0.19%	Wyang
Watanobbi	0.25%	Wyang
Wendoree Park	0%	Gosford West
West Gosford	0.38%	Gosford West
Wisemans Ferry (Part)	0%	Gosford West
Wondabyne	0%	Gosford West
Woongarah	0.69%	Budgewoi
Woy Woy	0.94%	Gosford West



What suburb do you live in?		
Woy Woy Bay	0.25%	Gosford West
Wybung	0%	Budgewoi
Wyoming	1.32%	Wyong
Wyong	0.82%	Wyong
Wyong Creek	0.13%	Wyong
Wyongah	0.31%	Wyong
Yarramalong	0%	Wyong
Yattalunga	0.13%	Gosford East
Outside Central Coast	18.76%	NA

The large majority (47.52%) of survey respondents were aged between 35-49, 12.53% of respondents were aged 60 years or older.

**Table 27: Survey Results: Age**

How old are you?	
15-19	4.61%
20-24	2.13%
25-29	5.44%
30-34	9.57%
35-39	14.07%
40-44	17.97%
45-49	15.48%
50-54	11.58%
55-59	6.62%
60 years and over	12.53%

A large majority of respondents were employed in full time work (72.27%), followed by not seeking work (retired, unable to work) at 10.01%, and then part time work at 8.95%.

**Table 28: Survey Results: Employment Status**

What is your employment status?	
Full-time	72.27%
Not seeking work (eg retired, unable to work)	10.01%
Part-time	8.95%
Student	4.32%
Casual	3.32%
Seeking work	0.71%
Carer	0.41%

Over 40% of the survey respondents identified having an income of \$104,000 or more.

**Table 29: Survey Results: Income**

What is your annual income?	
Negative income	1.22%
Nil income	4.56%
Less than \$10,400	2.31%



What is your annual income?	
\$10,400 – \$15,599	1.48%
\$15,600 – \$20,799	1.16%
\$20,800 – \$31,199	3.15%
\$31,200 – \$41,599	2.57%
\$41,600 – \$51,999	4.69%
\$52,000 – \$64,999	6.93%
\$65,000 – \$77,999	10.21%
\$78,000 – \$103,999	21.69%
\$104,000 or more	40.05%



### 3. Key Stakeholder Meetings

#### 3.1 Mountain Bike Industry

A focus group was held with mountain bike riders on the Central Coast. This included representatives from the local mountain bike club, bike shops and riders. The following provides a summary of the key discussion points.

- The Central Coast Mountain Bike Club operate from Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park in the Ourimbah State Forest which is managed by the Forestry Corporation with the club having a permit to operate. There is potential to expand at this location. The Club currently has gravity and cross-country trails and any new developments need approval from Forestry. The Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park is currently run by Club members (volunteers) with free access to the mountain bike community/ general public. They have large use on the weekends and around 20km of trails but believe there is the ability to have 85km of trails.
- There is high demand for mountain biking reported from local bike shops, approximately 85% of sales are in mountain bikes.
- Number of Sydney residents also coming to Central Coast as it is only an hour away and there are limited facilities in Sydney.
- There is a significant risk with the current network of trails as there are limited trail markings and signage.
- Kincumba is a popular spot as it has multiple entry points, in a central location and allows a quick ride with good elevation.
- There is a limited relationship with Council, previous proposals to develop mountain biking have not been supported.
- Opportunity for the Mountain Bike Community to work as a group with Council, they have a desire for good quality trails to be built and to achieve this without impacting the environment or heritage sites. Support for proposed dual use trails on climbing trails.
- Desire of the mountain bike community to have a trail network but trails that are built are blocked by Council and new trail alignments occur as a result, they are just told there is no opportunity for trails to be built and therefore illegal trails are being developed. There is a financial opportunity for tourism and healthy living in supporting the industry. A willingness of the group to see positive changes and be part of the solution.

#### 3.2 Environmental Conservation Group

A workshop was held with representatives from environment and conservation groups. A summary of the key points is provided below:

- Overall there was a significant concern regarding the damage that unauthorised mountain bike trails could have on the environment. This includes erosion, spreading of weeds, impacts to flora and fauna as well as damage to cultural heritage sites.
- There was concern around locations where mountain bikers are riding and in particular COSS land. The COSS land has a particular value that should be protected.
- There was a general agreement that mountain biking on fire trails is acceptable, however it was acknowledged that a majority of mountain bikers prefer single track riding.





- There was a general agreement that mountain biking is an active and healthy pursuit and can be provided for in the right location.
- That unauthorised trails in high value land should be closed and revegetation should be undertaken.
- Some concern around the conflict between users, particularly walkers and mountain bikers
- A discussion and request for successful dual use trails found in other locations (examples have been provided in the case studies – see Smithfield and Atherton).

### 3.3 Forestry Corporation of NSW

The Central Coast Mountain Bike Club have a Forest Permit with the Forestry Corporation of NSW. This permit is issued under the Forestry Act 2012 and comes with a designated parcel of land and a set of conditions and an annual fee. The permit area is audited every year or as needed to determine if the area is being managed accordingly. The Club (permittee) has various responsibilities under the conditions, including maintenance of the trails. There is currently a network of approximately 18km of mountain bike trails including Downhill, Cross Country and a children's development area with a few others approved including a second Downhill, flow/gravity and a pump track. In total there are 26 trails (9 green, 12 blue, 1 black).

Should the club wish to develop infrastructure on the site, they may seek permission in writing from Forestry NSW. The Club is required to obtain any relevant approvals such as environmental assessment and any local government approvals. As the area is a timber reserve FCNSW will communicate with the club in advance if the timber needs to come out of the Club's permit area.

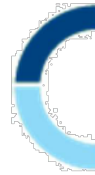
FCNSW has had issues with unauthorised trails being built but not just in relation to mountain biking, with trail bikes, horse riding and 4wd as well. Engagement with the Mountain Bike Club and auditing process under the permit has assisted to reduce this. There has been an increase in demand for trails across NSW over the past few years with about 15 approved mountain bike parks across the State and other agreements on State Forests in NSW. Demand has also increased for commercial operators to offer experiences and products such as events, shuttle services, tours and skill clinics. Each commercial operator requires their own Forest Permit and also permission from the Club to operate within the Mountain Bike Park.

Mountain bike riding is allowed in State Forests on formed roads. There is approximately 60,000km of formed roads within NSW State Forests. Designated and purpose-built mountain bike single trails must be under a Forest Permit to ensure due diligence, trail ownership/accountability and communication. Single trails not managed under a Forest Permit are considered unauthorised.

### 3.4 National Parks & Wildlife

Discussions with National Parks and Wildlife staff around mountain biking in the region indicated that there was a mix of sanctioned and unauthorised trails in National Parks. Key points from the discussion are provided below:

- Bouddi National Park has an estimated 15-20km of trails.
- There are also trails located within Brisbane Water National Park however the extent of the trail network is unknown.
- Unauthorised trail building has increased in the past couple of years, causing damage to some environment and heritage sites.
- MTB Events have also been held without any approvals.



### 3.5 Department of Premier and Cabinet

Mountain Biking was discussed with a Senior Project Officer within the Department of Premier and Cabinet. A summary of the discussion is outlined below:

- A NSW Mountain Biking Strategy is currently being prepared.
- Some cross-agency networks have recently been established in Northern Sydney. Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai and Northern Beaches Councils are working together with National Parks and other state land managers to look at ways to respond to the rising demand for mountain biking.
- Hornsby Shire Council have developed a network of trails at Old Mans Valley. This has been built and managed by Council with 30km sanctioned and 150km unsanctioned trails.
- Rider numbers are certainly increasing, and the issue of unauthorised trails being built is one that is happening across the state.
- There are some examples of private developments coming in to try and target mountain biking as well. However, this is a pay for use situation.
- Glenworth Valley – is expected to have 15km of trails by the end of the year, with a view to a much bigger network over time.

### 3.6 Traditional Custodians of the land

A meeting was held with representatives from Darkinjung local Aboriginal Council. Darkinjung have concerns with unauthorised trails being built through land they own which is also causing damage to cultural heritage sites (in particular at Kincumba). Development of any trail network (if it is on their land) needs to be approved at a board level.



## 4. Written Submissions

A number of written emails and submissions were also received from stakeholders during the preparation of the report. These have been summarised below:

### 4.1 Mountain Biking Interest Groups

Submissions from several mountain bike stakeholders have been summarised below:

- There is a desire for mountain bikers to be working together. A new Facebook page called Central Coast MTB Trail Advocacy was launched which attracted a large amount of interest from the mountain bike community.
- There is a high level of demand for mountain biking not just from residents on the Central Coast but also from Sydney and Newcastle residents.
- There is significant demand at Kincumba and Ourimbah which are both busy throughout the week. On the weekend stakeholders are reporting increased visitation from Sydney residents as well.
- Ourimbah is extremely popular with riders from the northern end of the Coast and people from Northern Sydney.
- The primary spot on the southern end of the Coast is Kincumba Mountain. Kincumba is surrounded by residential development so there is a significant population accessing the trails by simply riding in.
- Mountain biking trails can assist with tourism especially during the winter months when business are typically quiet.
- Mountain biking is a family sport and should be promoted accordingly, there are not many sports that family groups can enjoy together.
- Central Coast Mountain Bike Club needs financial support to ensure that they can maintain their existing trails.
- The Central Coast has the perfect environment for mountain bikers.

### 4.2 Environmental Conservation Interest Groups

Submissions from the environmental interest groups and stakeholders are summarised below:

- Mountain bikers have a legitimate right to use public open-space areas.
- There needs to be an enforcement component to prevent additional illegal tracks from being built. This can include procedures for early detection, closure and rehabilitation.
- Mountain bikers need to respect the environment they use by remaining on the designated tracks, not taking short cuts which can cause damage to plants and start erosion.
- The mountain bike club should assist with appropriate education programs.
- Some areas of COSS land are fragile and need protection.
- Any tracks should be closed after periods of heavy rain, similar to sporting fields.
- Tracks where mountain bike riding is permissible should be clearly sign-posted.



- Areas should be patrolled, with rangers issuing fines for inappropriate use.
- Bike tracks should not be permitted in locations with highly erodible soils.

### 4.3 General Feedback

Some general feedback was also received throughout the engagement phase. This included a submission outlining the opportunity to develop a multi-use trail link across the Central Coast that would be suitable for walkers, horse riding and mountain biking.





## 5. Warranties and Disclaimers

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their own experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.



**Item No:** 3.1  
**Title:** Meeting Record of the Employment and Economic Development Committee meeting held 23 September 2020  
**Department:** Innovation and Futures

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9 November 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Reference: F2018/00100 - D14234962

Executive: Ricardo Martello, Executive Manager Innovation and Futures

### **Summary**

The purpose of this report is for Council to note the Meeting Record of the Employment and Economic Development Committee meeting held 23 September 2020.

### **Recommendation**

***That Council receive the report on Meeting Record of the Employment and Economic Development Committee meeting held 23 September 2020.***

### **Background**

The Employment and Economic Development Committee held a meeting on 23 September 2020. The Meeting Record of that meeting is Attachment 1 to this report.

There are no recommendations to Council. The Meeting Record is being reported for information only in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

### **Link to Community Strategic Plan**

Theme 4: Responsible

### **Goal G: Good governance and great partnerships**

G3: Engage with the community in meaningful dialogue and demonstrate how community participation is being used to inform decisions.

### **Attachments**

- |          |  |           |
|----------|--|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | Employment and Economic Development Committee Meeting Record - 23 September 2020 | D14234938 |
|----------|--|-----------|

# Employment and Economic Development Committee Meeting Record 23 September 2020



Location:	Zoom Meeting	
Date:	23 September 2020	
Time	Started at: 3.04pm	Closed at: 5pm
Chair	Councillor Jane Smith	
File Ref	F2018/00100	

**Present:**

Councillor Chris Holstein (left 4.16pm), Councillor Kyle MacGregor, Councillor Bruce McLachlan, Councillor Jane Smith, William Adames, John Asquith, Mike Goodman (joined 4.02pm)

**External Attendees:**

Tim Burt – NSW Business Chamber (joined 3.36pm, left 4.29pm), Paula Martin – NSW Business Chamber, Michelle Van de Mortel – TAFE NSW

**Council Staff present:**

Ricardo Martello – Executive Manager Innovation and Futures, Christine Jarvis – Business Development Manager, Celia Pennycook – Social Planner (left 4.30pm), Zoie Magann – Advisory Group Support Officer

## Item 1 Apologies, Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

Apologies received: Councillor Jeff Sundstrom

The Chairperson, Councillor Jane Smith, noted apologies for rescheduling the meeting from 1 September 2020.

Councillor Jane Smith declared the meeting open and completed an Acknowledgement of Country statement and Connection to Land Statement.

It was noted that Councillor Rebecca Gale has resigned from the Advisory Group.

## Item 2 Disclosure of Interest

Councillor Bruce McLachlan declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest as he had done previously, as a business owner on the Central Coast.

Councillor Jane Smith declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest as a board member of the Marine Discovery Centre, which was mentioned a few times throughout the meeting with regard to employment opportunities.

Employment and Economic Development Committee Meeting Record  
23 September 2020



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**Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Records**

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The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record from 14 July 2020.

The Advisory Group reviewed the Action Log, noting that some actions are still pending and updates will be provided when available.

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**Item 4 Update on Economic Development Strategy (Action 7 – Standing Item)**

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Christine Jarvis (Business Development Manager) provided an update on the draft Economic Development Strategy (EDS) and supplementary draft Economic Recovery and Resilience Framework.

The following key points were noted:

- Both documents were on public exhibition for 28 days starting 22 June 2020.
- Feedback was collated for consideration and a report is going to Council on Monday 28 September 2020 regarding adoption of both documents.
- A statement regarding pandemic was added to both documents – this was previously announced to the Advisory Group via email.
- Once documents are adopted, the Advisory Group will be able to review the associated Action Plan and consider way forward.
- There are six key aspects of achieving outcomes identified in the draft Framework: leadership, governance, performance, resourcing, accountability, and agility.
- Noted that Federal budget is being announced in October, which will help guide recovery from pandemic, particularly with regard to the funding and support available.
- Members discussed info sharing vs. actions – some interested in championing change and getting quick wins (short term vs. long term), rather than receiving more data/presentations.

**Action:** Staff to provide further info on v-shaped economic recovery model for Advisory Group info.

**Action:** Paula Martin to liaise with Chief Economist from NSW Business Chamber regarding info on how regional NSW is recovering from pandemic.

**Action:** Staff to invite representative from Hunter Research Foundation to future meeting to share their findings with regard to pandemic and economic recovery.

**Action:** Ricardo Martello to provide economic data as available to Advisory Group members (for consideration outside of meetings).

**Action:** Michelle Van de Mortel to share info on TAFE NSW VET Training initiatives with Advisory Group, including types of funding available, target audiences and how to champion training for employment.

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**Item 5 Youth Unemployment (Action 26)**

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Celia Pennycook (Social Planner) provided presentation on youth unemployment.

The following key points were noted:

- Unemployment rates for July 2020 show Central Coast (4.2%) faring better than NSW (7.2%) and Australia (7.5%) as whole. We typically have higher rate but are currently at lowest for at least a decade.



Employment and Economic Development Committee Meeting Record  
23 September 2020



- Rates reflect some of pandemic impact, but don't include those who have reduced work hours or pay (difference between unemployment and underemployment). This means there are people not included in data who are still struggling due to changes.
- Central Coast still has lower participation rates (people working or looking for work) comparatively, possibly due to higher percentage of ageing population and people with disabilities.
- Figures for youth unemployment have decreased since last census, however young people are still most impacted by pandemic (particularly with regard to mental health). Younger workers are more likely to lose income and not qualify for government payments.
- Currently there are 24,962 young people working or looking for work:
  - 8,815 employed full time
  - 11,991 employed part time
  - 3,634 unemployed
- Youth unemployment rate by district shows highest in San Remo-Budgewoi, and lowest in Mountains District. Suburb with greatest number of unemployed young people is Umina Beach-Pearl Beach-Patonga, and lowest is Kariong.
- There are many barriers for young people with employment:
  - Only 0.5% of positions are entry level.
  - Number of part time jobs for 15-19 year olds has halved since 2008.
  - 1 in 5 young people out of work for a year or more (numbers doubled since 2009).
  - Now competing with more experienced people for fewer jobs due to pandemic.
- Pathways into sustained employment for youth include more entry level jobs, matching training to jobs in growth industries, and offering support for disadvantaged young people.
- Member noted that organisation is struggling to find RTO to partner with to provide entry level roles. Michelle advised there is capacity in TAFE NSW to address this.
- Discussion around jobs available on Central Coast pre-pandemic and now – in May 2020 there were only around 250 jobs available, but now back to around 1,000.
- Central Coast Virtual Jobs Fair happening on 30 September to help address employment. More info here: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/central-coast-virtual-jobs-fair-registration-118245622841>
- Concerns raised about what will happen once government support is reduced (e.g. when JobKeeper payments and the like are suspended).
- Staff noted that Council runs work experience programs for disadvantaged groups.

**Action:** Michelle Van de Mortel and John Asquith to talk offline about training opportunities for entry level positions.

#### **Item 6                      Update from NSW Business Chamber (Actions 31 and 36)**

Tim Burt (Policy Manager Workforce Skills – NSW Business Chamber) provided the Advisory Group with an update on the recently released COVID-19 Youth Review.

The following key points were noted:

- Youth survey recently completed to collect feedback regarding careers and impacts of pandemic. Report info here: <https://www.skillsroad.com.au/download-covid-youth-review#Download%20Report>
- Results show increase in youth being open to changing plans and undertaking jobs that aren't limited to interest area, to help optimise career stability and ensure financial security. Related concern that there may not be enough jobs in the future. Youth also want better industry and career related advice at school, and for career related discussions to start earlier.
- Good news story that Supporting Apprentices and Trainees subsidy has been extended to March 2021.

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- There has been drop in apprentice commencement numbers. 2019 had 7,019 and there is only 4,492 forecast for 2020.
- Noted that job vacancies on Central Coast have bounced back dramatically to pre-pandemic levels (1,000 – 1,200). This aligns with comments that employers are actually struggling to fill positions.
- Currently exploring options for pre-apprenticeship programs, which TAFE NSW have also increased options for.
- Highlighted importance of Council supporting local schools to understand processes and how to promote local jobs to boost economy.
- Noted Kickstart scheme in UK as good model. Scheme subsidises work placements for young people receiving social security payments.
- Important to consider transport models in conjunction with employment – how can Council support mobility of young people to undertake training and influence jobs.
- Suggestion made regarding establishment of a Sub-Committee of interested Advisory Group members, who would focus on promoting local jobs in short term (matching ideas, resources and opportunities to promote economic activity).

**Action:** Tim Burt to provide one-page info sheet on key opportunities to support youth employment and pathways for consideration of the Advisory Group.

**Action:** Krystie Bryant to provide info on options for supporting apprenticeships (what is already done and what could be implemented), with consideration to Kickstart Scheme in UK.

#### **Item 7                      Working from Home Opportunities (Action 37)**

Ricardo Martello (Executive Manager Innovation and Futures) provided a presentation on opportunities generated by working from home (WFH).

The following key points were noted:

- As previously discussed, there is significant opportunity to generate economic benefit for region as less people are leaving the Central Coast for work in current pandemic (typically 44,200 commuters daily).
- Revisited data regarding Central Coast economy, noting trends across different sectors, with view to understand how to capitalise on opportunities.
- Ricardo provided preview of “Imagine the new Central Coast” video – promo drafted for retaining economic benefit locally in the new climate.
- Staff are advocating with State government for investments in digital infrastructure which will support WFH.
- Research continues with regard to commuters and people WFH in terms of personal lives, wellbeing and work.
- Also looking at options for coworking/remote working spaces on the Central Coast. There are currently 7 of these spaces available on the Central Coast (all in different suburbs so not competing with each other). Challenge is that Council is restricted with promoting specific spaces due to governance considerations.
- Might be worthwhile to leverage experience of people already benefiting from WFH, as well as highlighting environmental benefits in promos. Such considerations may appeal to large corporations, particularly those who pay high commercial rent and wish to adopt more sustainable practise.

**Action:** Staff to share “Imagine the new Central Coast” promo video and data on working from home research with Advisory Group when available.

Employment and Economic Development Committee Meeting Record  
23 September 2020



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**Item 8                      Advisory Group Plan Moving Forward (Action 38)**

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The Advisory Group agreed to focus on the Action Plan from the EDS at the next meeting, assuming it is adopted by Council before then.

Frank Sammut (Central Coast Industry Connect) and Peter Crane (Central Coast Food Alliance) have been invited to the next meeting to discuss food and agriculture initiatives for the region.

**Action:** Advisory Group Support Officer to circulate details of EDS adoption following Council meeting on 28 September 2020, as well as any other relevant info to be unpacked at next meeting (dedicate one hour to topic).

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**Item 9                      General Business and Close**

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It was noted that October is small business month and there are a number of events running:

- Central Coast Council was successful in getting State grant to promote initiative supporting businesses moving to digital platforms. More info here: <https://www.businessmonth.nsw.gov.au/activity/future-proof-your-business-with-this-digital-activation-free-on-demand-program/>
- Virtual Job Fair happening as previously mentioned.
- 2020 Central Coast Women in Business Event (not run by Council) happening at The Entertainment Grounds. More info here: <https://www.businessmonth.nsw.gov.au/activity/2020-central-coast-women-in-business-event/>
- Bigger Backyard Virtual Business Expo expected late October – will include virtual stalls and guest speakers. Link will be shared once available.

**Action:** Topic of small business and cooperatives to be discussed at future meeting, with regard to opportunities for the future.

The meeting closed at 5pm

**Next Meetings:**                      **Tuesday 27 October 2020**  
   **4pm – 6pm**  
   **Zoom Meeting (TBC)**

**Item No:** 4.1  
**Title:** Questions with Notice  
**Department:** Governance

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9 November 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Reference: F2020/00039 - D14242288



The following question was submitted by former Councillor Gale at the Ordinary Meeting  
26 October 2020:

### **Operational Budget Meetings**

*Following on from my motion on 24 July 2018, can the CEO advise how often he met with ELT to discuss the high level cash flow statements and rolling forecast against Operational Budget prior to releasing the Quarterly Budget Review Statements?*

Response:

This question relates to actions taken by the Chief Executive Officer, Gary Murphy. It is not possible to provide a response at this time as the Chief Executive Officer, Gary Murphy is currently on leave.

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### **Attachments**

Nil