SHIRE OF CAPEL
TRAILS MASTER PLAN
2025 - 2035

DRAFT - JUNE 2025

GOVERNMENT OF
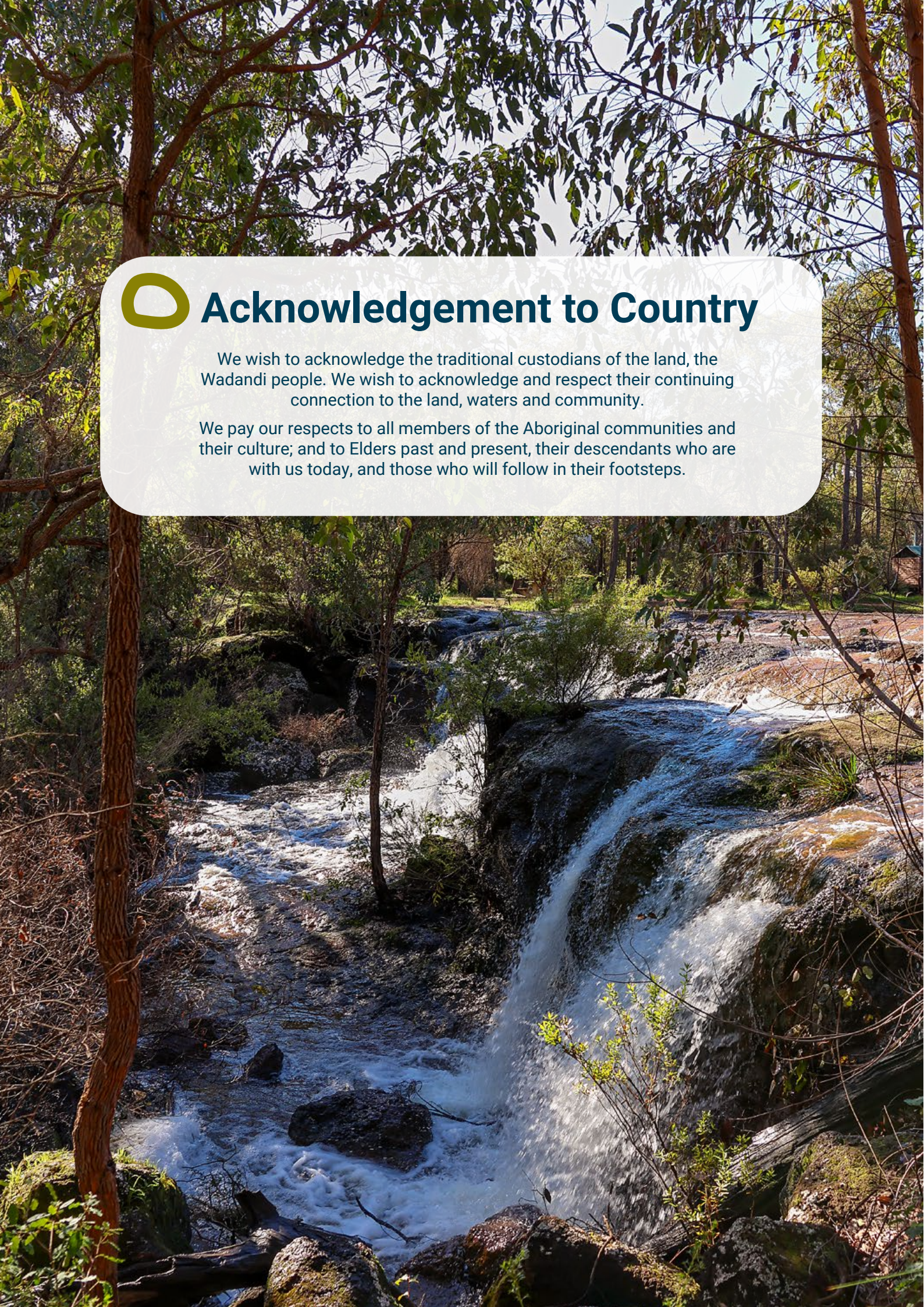WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SHIRE of CAPEL

TREDWELL

Acknowledgement to Country

We wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the Wadandi people. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and community.

We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their culture; and to Elders past and present, their descendants who are with us today, and those who will follow in their footsteps.

Contents

Acknowledgements

Images

Supplied by the Shire of Capel and Tredwell

Revision	Date	Details
V0	29/04/2025	Shire of Capel Trails Master Plan Draft April 2025
V1	20/06/2025	Shire of Capel Trails Master Plan Draft June 2025

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Executive Summary

Project Background and Scope

The Shire of Capel (Shire) is home to some of the world's most biologically diverse landscapes, including the last remaining Tuart Forest. This unique region blends new urban developments with rich rural heritage, offering a diverse mix of coastal communities, quiet seaside settlements, and charming country towns, each with its own distinct character.

This Trail Master Plan aims to enhance recreational opportunities by improving and expanding a diverse and accessible network of trails catering to various users groups including walkers, cyclists, equestrian, trail bike and nature enthusiasts. By upgrading existing trails and strategically developing new connections, the plan will provided residents and visitors with greater opportunities to engage in physical activity, immerse themselves in nature, and enhance their overall health and wellbeing.

The Trails Master Plan presents a vision, guiding principles, strategic directions and actions for consideration across the Shire. It outlines a planned staged approach over the next 10 years to support the securing of funds, development of trail users markets and the enhancement of recreational and tourism opportunities across the region.

The project methodology comprised three key stages, as detailed below.

Stage 1: Project Start-up and Background Review

Stage 2: Trail Assessment and Stakeholder Consultation

Stage 3: Report Development

A wide range of background information has been reviewed to inform the development of the Trails Master Plan and ensure alignment with wider objectives across the state, region and local area.

Online platforms such as TrailsWA and other user generated websites provided additional context on existing trail networks, user activity and the digital presence of local trails.

The development of the Trails Master Plan was also informed by an on-ground audit, community consultation and stakeholder engagement. This involved an internal workshop with Shire of Capel staff, targeted meetings with key external stakeholders, a combination of virtual and in person community workshops and an online survey.

The survey results indicated an overall trail experience rating of 2.3 out of 5 within the Shire of Capel. Respondents identified several key areas for improvement, including:

- Enhanced trail connectivity (i.e. linking towns, beaches, forests)

- Improved trail maintenance

- Increased provision of multi-use trails (i.e. walking, cycling, horse riding)

- Additional facilities and amenities (i.e. parking, toilets, seating, shade and picnic areas)

- Greater promotion and visibility (i.e. signage, advertising and marketing).

Vision

A diverse, accessible and sustainable trail network that showcases the Shires unique beauty. Trails will enhance connectivity between towns, promote wellness and active lifestyle for our community while supporting local businesses and tourism.

In order to deliver the vision, the following series of Strategic Outcomes have been developed.

A. Integrated Planning & Management

B. Quality, Safe and Sustainable Network of Existing Trails

C. Sustainable, Responsible and Relevant Trail Developments

D. Information and Marketing

E. Community, Tourism & Economic Development

Executive Summary

Strategy and Action Plan

To effectively allocate funding towards a quality trail network across the Shire, a phased and prioritised approach is essential. Potential projects have been identified and broadly prioritised based on need, demand, feasibility, location and benefit. Each action includes an indicative implementation timeframe, estimated cost range and identification of potential delivery partners.

Strategic Outcome A: Integrated Planning & Management Underpinning a sustainable, integrated, and accessible trails network is a strategic framework and coordinated approach with prioritised investment and appropriate allocation of resources		Priority
A1	**Integrated Framework:** Implement an integrated framework for the planning and management of trails across the Shire of Capel.	High
A2	**Trail Planning, Management and Maintenance:** Ensure that consistent, comprehensive and best practice processes are utilised in the planning, management and maintenance of the Shire of Capel trails network.	High
Strategic Outcome B: Quality, Safe, and Sustainable Network of Existing Trails Existing trails are enhanced to provide high quality, safe, and sustainable opportunities for residents and visitors with a range of interests and abilities.		Priority
B1	**Tuart Walk:** *Be guided by DBCA in promoting the Tuart Walk as a key regional trail, with a focus on improving accessibility and ensuring it is inclusive for users of all abilities.*	*
B2	**Bushland Walk:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Bushland Walk as an important linkage to the Lake Walk.	Medium
B3	**Lake Walk:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Lake Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.	High
B4	**Wetland Walk:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Wetland Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.	Medium
B5	**Gelorup Nature Trail:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Gelorup Nature Trail.	Medium
B6	**Tuart Discovery Trail:** *Collaborate with DBCA to elevate the Tuart Discovery Trail as a must-visit destination that showcases the natural and cultural significance of the Tuart Forest.*	*
B7	**Munda Biddi:** *Work in partnership with the DBCA to position the trail as a premier cycle tourism experience through the Shire, highlighting local landscapes, heritage, and visitor offerings.*	*
B8	**Joshua Lake Walk:** Maintain, enhance and promote Joshua Lake Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.	High
B9	**Ironstone Gully Falls Trails:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Ironstone Gully Falls Trail that showcases the seasonal waterfall, geology, Aboriginal history, flora and fauna.	High
B10	**Preston River Ramble:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Preston River Ramble, while assessing the trail's capacity to accommodate mountain bike use in line with regional cycling strategies and user needs.	Low
B11	**Boyanup Heritage Trails:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Boyanup Heritage Trail.	Low

* Where trails are owned and managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), the Shire of Capel's involvement is limited to a supporting role, with any actions or initiatives subject to DBCA's direction, management responsibilities, and approval processes.

Executive Summary

Strategic Outcome C: Sustainable, Responsible and Relevant Trail Developments New trail developments are strategic, well considered, responsive to community need and aligned with key stakeholder priorities.		Priority
C1	**Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link (Tuart Forest Section):** Support the staged development of the Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link as a key regional connection.	High
C2	**Five Mile Brook Walking Trail:** Collaborate with Main Roads Western Australia to facilitate the asset transition of the Five Mile Brook Walking Trail in Gelorup, ensuring its integration into the local trail network.	High
C3	**Capel River Trail:** Collaborate with relevant landowners and stakeholders to assess the feasibility of a staged trail development along the Capel River.	Medium
C4	**Capel to Peppermint Grove:** Evaluate potential route options to determine the safest and most appropriate cycling alignment between Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach.	Medium
C5	**Rail Trail:** Investigate the feasibility of developing rail trails within the Shire of Capel	Low
C6	**Mountain Bike Skills Park:** Investigate the feasibility of developing a Mountain Bike Skills Park within the Shire of Capel	Low
C7	**Bridle Trails:** Protect, enhance and formalise the region's network of strategic connections for equine trail users.	Medium
C8	**Munda Biddi Trail:** *Collaborate with DBCA to investigate the feasibility of establishing a spur trail through Boyanup town centre.*	*
C9	**Gravel Riding:** Support key stakeholder led initiatives to develop and promote a suite of signature gravel riding routes.	Medium
C10	**Trail Bike Riding:** Support key stakeholder led initiatives that promote sanctioned trail bike riding.	Medium
C11	**Art & Culture Trail:** Explore opportunities to develop an inclusive Art and Culture Trail that is accessible to people of all abilities	Medium
C12	**Drive Trail:** Explore the potential to establish a Wellness Themed Drive Trail	Low
C13	**Paddle Trail:** Explore opportunities to develop paddle trails, including canoe and stand-up paddle board routes.	Low
C14	**Peppermint Grove Beach:** Develop a discovery trail at Peppermint Grove Beach	Medium
C15	**Harewoods Rd Bushlands Reserve, Dalyellup:** Protect, enhance and formalise a trail network within the Harewoods Bushland Reserve to safeguard the site's environmental values.	Low
C16	**Road Cycling:** Support key stakeholder led initiatives to develop and promote a suite of signature road cycling routes.	Medium
Strategic Outcome D: Information and Marketing Well promoted, consistent and reliable trail information encourages recreational trail users to confidently, safely and sustainably explore the region.		Priority
D1	Provide consistent and reliable signage, maps and supporting information for all trails across the Shire.	High
D2	Increased promotion and marketing of trail opportunities across the Shire of Capel	Medium
Strategic Outcome E: Community, Tourism & Economic Development Use trail development and provision as a community, tourism and economic development tool.		Priority
E1	Use trail development and provision as a community, tourism and economic development tool.	High

Introduction

Project Background and Scope

The Shire of Capel (Shire) is home to some of the world's most biologically diverse landscapes, including the last remaining Tuart Forest. This unique region blends new urban developments with rich rural heritage, offering a diverse mix of coastal communities, quiet seaside settlements, and charming country towns, each with its own distinct character.

Historically, the Shire has developed trail assets in response to immediate community needs. However, many of these trails were established without comprehensive documentation of infrastructure, maintenance requirements, or precise mapping.

The existing *Trails Master Plan*, developed in 2009, no longer fully reflects the Shire's evolving priorities, demographic changes, or the growing emphasis on connecting communities. There is now a need for a modernised and well planned trail network that aligns with the Shire's current vision and aspirations.

This Trail Master Plan aims to enhance recreational opportunities by improving and expanding a diverse and accessible network of trails catering to various users groups including walkers, cyclists, equestrian, trail bike and nature enthusiasts. By upgrading existing trails and strategically developing new connections, the plan will provided residents and visitors with greater opportunities to engage in physical activity, immerse themselves in nature, and enhance their overall health and wellbeing.

Beyond recreation, trails play a vital role in cultural and environmental preservation. The Shire is home to a rich heritage and unique ecosystems that require careful management and conservation. Through sustainable trail planning and development, this Trails Master Plan will ensure that these valuable assets are protected for future generations.

Additionally, a well-planned trail network can serve as an economic driver by attracting visitors, supporting local businesses, and fostering regional tourism. By enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities, the plan can stimulate local economic growth and create new employment prospects.

The Trails Master Plan will serve as a guiding framework for the Shire and key stakeholders, providing strategic direction for trail development and infrastructure improvements. It will help address gaps in existing knowledge, ensure the effective management of trail assets, and inform future planning initiatives. By integrating trail development into broader strategic documents, the plan will support the long term sustainability and enhancement of the Shire's trail network.

The Trails Master Plan presents a vision, guiding principles, strategic directions and actions for consideration across the Shire. It outlines a planned staged approach over the next 10 years to support the securing of funds, development of trail users markets and the enhancement of recreational and tourism opportunities across the region. The Trails Master Plan will consider the distinct characteristics of the Shires urban and rural centres, ensuring that trails are well maintained, accessible, promoted and sustainable.

Additionally, the Trails Master Plan will build upon the findings of the *Established Trails Audit and Service Plan* completed in November 2024 (Appendix). By leveraging the insights and recommendations from this audit, the plan will ensure continuity.

Project Methodology

The project methodology comprised three key stages, as detailed below.

- Stage 1: Project Start-up and Background Review
- Stage 2: Trail Assessment and Stakeholder Consultation
- Stage 3: Report Development

This approach included a comprehensive review of background documents, trail use trends and participation data to establish the current state and identify opportunities. A trail audit, along with stakeholder and community engagement through workshops, surveys, and targeted consultation, informed the development of the Trails Master Plan. Relevant trail planning frameworks and standards also guided the formulation of the strategy and action plan.

Introduction

The Shire of Capel

The Sense of Place Statement

In the heart of Wadandi Country lies the Shire of Capel. Nestled between the Whicher Range and the pristine WA coastline, divided by the course of rivers and arterial highways, the Shire of Capel seamlessly weaves together a rich tapestry of history, nature, and community.

Our land whispers stories of a complex and protected past, where the ebb and flow of Aboriginal and migrant communities have shaped the very fabric of our existence. Here, heritage intertwines with the present and looks to the future, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in the legacy of our industrious history rooted in Boyanup railway, agriculture, mining and horseracing, and together act as custodians of our breathtakingly diverse natural environment for future generations.

From the coastal wetlands and ancient forests to the gentle inland pastures and expansive beaches, our landscapes offer protected havens for a myriad of wildlife and rare giant tuarts, paperbarks and Moreton Bay fig trees. Heritage buildings and artefacts excite those with a passion for the past, whilst the love of nature nurtures the soul. Trails carve paths of exploration through the forests and beaches, allowing intrepid walkers, cyclists and horse-riders to uncover hidden gems, and immerse themselves in the raw beauty of our landscape.

Amidst open farmland and rural tranquility, life here takes on a slow pace, embodying the essence of small-town living, offering respite from the bustling world while remaining within reach of the supporting amenities and infrastructure of adjacent major cities. From rural retreats in Gwindinup to coastal-suburban havens in Dalyellup, an array of diverse living environments meet the needs of diverse family compositions within our nature-loving community.

Built on a foundation of volunteers' dedication and commitment, our people support and connect with one another with a camaraderie that transcends generations. Active, inclusive community groups and clubs cater to diverse interests, all ages and all abilities. Community facilities, events and services abound from Gelorup to Boyanup, nurturing the wellbeing and enrichment of all who call this place home.

Our community respectfully bears the responsibility of being custodians of this remarkable landscape we have inherited and will pass on to future generations. They look to a future of controlled, sustainable growth around their civic and town-centres, to meet the evolving housing and service demands of an aging population, alongside a growing population of rural residents looking for a tranquil lifestyle away from the stresses of city living.

Whilst inherently low density, the Shire is experiencing significant population growth within the greater Bunbury region. Population is concentrated around five urban centres each recognised for their unique characteristics:

- The town of Capel, situated on the Capel River in the south of the Shire, the economic and administrative centre

- The town of Boyanup to the north-east of the Shire,, a small country town with extensive railway heritage on the Preston River

- The rapidly growing urban area of Dalyellup in the north of the Shire, developing as a district centre on the edge of the City of Bunbury

- The semi-rural suburb of Gelorup, to the east of Dalyellup

- The coastal village of Peppermint Grove, set between the coastal dunes and low-lying wetlands east of Capel.

Additional rural communities are found within Stratham, North Boyanup, The Plains, Stirling Estate, Gwindinup Ludlow and Capel River.

Introduction

People and Population

Understanding the defining characteristics of the resident population and the visitor economy is essential to the strategic planning and development of a trail network that responds to the needs of both local communities and visitors. The following section presents key demographic indicators for the Shire of Capel, drawn from the 2021 ABS Census*, and highlights their implications for recreational trail planning and provision.

Resident Community Profile
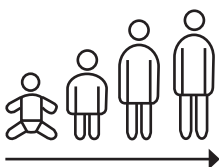
Current Population

19,002

Projected Population (2050)

32,900**

Median age

38

Families

5,093

Families with children

47%

Families without children

37.4%

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people

2.7%

of population

Country of Birth

Australia	**73.3%**
England	**6.1%**
South Africa	**3.7%**
New Zealand	**2.7%**
Philippines	**1.7%**
Zimbabwe	**1.0%**

Median weekly household income

$1,949
(WA $1,815)

Unemployed

3.8%

Socio-economic disadvantage (SEIFA)

982
Capel

1000
National average

Volunteer work

18.5%

Source:

* 2021 Census All persons QuickStats for Capel

** Shire of Capel Infrastructure & Development projections

Introduction

Visitor Economy

The *South West Edge Trail Tourism Opportunities Analysis 2023* highlights the region's exceptional potential for trail-based tourism, underpinned by its striking coastal and inland landscapes, rich biodiversity, cultural heritage and high-quality trail networks. The report focus's on delivering 'hero experiences' that have the best potential to:

• Drive visitation and expenditure

• Reflect the heart and soul of the WA brand story (*Walking on a Dream*)

• Focus on what is unique, memorable and engaging about the destination.

The *Bunbury Geographe Region Overnight Visitor Fact sheet 2023,* prepared by Tourism WA Insights and Planning (May 2024) reports that visitors to the region spend on average $156 per day and stay for approximately 3.6 days. The three most common activities undertaken by domestic visitors are eating out, visiting friends and relatives and sightseeing. Refer to the table below for data relevant to informing trail planning within the Shire of Capel.

Indicator	The Bunbury Geographe Region		Implications for Trails
Total Visitors	834,000		With a significant number of visitors to the broader region, the Shire of Capel has the opportunity to position itself as a trail based destination, leveraging its natural assets and proximity to key travel routes.
Total Spend	$466M		
Average Trip Length	2.8 days - Domestic 27.1 days - International		Trail development can support increased local economic activity by encouraging longer stays and higher visitor spend through complementary services (i.e., cafes, local produce, accommodation, wellness)
Average Trip Spend	$520 - Domestic $1800 - International		
Average Daily Spend	$183 - Domestic $66 - International $156 - Total Domestic + International		
Purpose of Travel	Domestic 40% - Holiday 41% - Visiting Friends & Relatives 15% - Business 4% - Other	International 52% - Holiday 30% - Visiting Friends & Relatives 7% - Business 12% - Other	Trails can serve both recreational visitors and locals entertaining guests. Interpretative trails, nature based experiences and accessible trails can enhance the visitor offering for both leisure tourists and those visiting family and friends.
Top 3 Activities	Domestic 50% - Eat out/dine at a Restaurant 40% - Visit Friends and Relatives 20% - Sightseeing / Looking around	International 95% - Eat out/dine at a Restaurant 94% - Go shopping for pleasure 92% - Go to the beach	The trail network can be positioned as a scenic, family-friendly, and culturally enriching option that complements dining and sightseeing. Trails that integrate local food, art, history, and nature could appeal to both domestic and international markets. Coastal access and proximity to beaches are an added asset.

WELCOME TO THE BOYANUP HERITAGE TRAIL

The Boyanup Heritage Trail is a pleasant 1100 metre stroll through the early settlement history of Boyanup, starting here in Lions Park and ending at the CWA rooms on South Western Highway.

The trail follows the south side of Bridge Street before turning down the Highway to the designated crossing point. There are 3 panels to view via a short spur down the west side of the Highway, before returning to the crossing and continuing southward to the end point, outside the CWA rooms. Trail markers and directional signs clearly designate this route. In most cases panels are visible from some distance away.

You can either walk back along the same route, or you can detour via Simmons Street and Thomas Street, for a change of scene and to absorb more of the quiet country feel of the town.

The Boyanup Heritage Trail showcases significant aspects of the cultural history of the area via a series of engaging and attractive interpretive panels:

1. The Bull and Bush: Up from the ashes
2. Hunts Butcher's Shop: A prime location for a prime steak
3. Railway town: And the fettlers who kept the wheels turning
4. Dairy delight: Riding on the milking cow's back
5. St Louis Catholic Church: A fine step up from kerosene boxes
6. The original Post Office: A link to the world beyond
7. Remembering the fallen: The War Memorial, and the Avenue of Oaks
8. The General Store: Food and fellowship, at last in the heart of town
9. Hitching's Garage: Mending madmen's machinery
10. St George's Anglican Church: Built to last, at last
11. The old Agricultural Hall: Social centre of the community
12. Under the oaks: The old school, and schoolmaster's house

Take your time to enjoy this lovely walk, and enjoy reading the stories behind many of the historic buildings of Boyanup. As with many small country towns, there's more to the past than might at first meet the eye! Please wander in to one of the cafes or stores along the way for some refreshments.

The Boyanup Heritage Trail is one of a growing suite of "Shire of Capel Trails". Ask at the Shire office on Forrest Road in Capel for more information, or go to: capel.wa.gov.au/trails

13. Treat central: The bakery, and the old tuck shop
14. The Methodist Church: Built by brickies on holiday
15. The CWA Rooms: A meeting place for women

Boyanup Heritage *Trail*

Strategic Context

Background Review

A wide range of background information has been reviewed to inform the development of the Trails Master Plan and ensure alignment with wider objectives across the state, region and local area.

Online platforms such as TrailsWA and other user-generated websites provided additional context on existing trail networks, user activity and the digital presence of local trails.

The key documents and online trail platforms have been listed below.

National

- Australia's Sport Participation Strategy, Playwell Everyone has a place in sport (2023)
- The Australian Physical Literacy Framework, Sport Australia (2019)
- Blueprint for an Active Australia, Heart Foundation (2019)

State

- WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027
- WA Hiking Strategy - Bushwalking and Trail Running in Western Australia 2020-2030
- WA Mountain Bike Strategy - Mountain biking and off-road cycling in Western Australia 2022-2032
- Trail Development Series
  - Part A: Guide to the Trail Development Process
  - Part B: A Guide to Community Consultation
  - Part C: Guide to using Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis
  - Part D: Checklists and Templates
- Management Guidelines
  - WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines
  - WA Mountain Bike Management Guidelines
  - WA Horse Trail Management Guidelines
- Concentric Circles - Guidance for Trails Tourism Close to Perth, 2024
- South West Edge Trail Tourism Experience Opportunities (2023)
- Bunbury-Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy

Local

- Plan for the Future - Incorporating the Strategic Community Plan (2023 -2033) & Corporate Business Plan - Strategic Initiatives (2023 - 2027)
- Shire of Capel Established Trails Audit and Service Plan (2024)
- Shire of Capel Sports Spaces Plan (2021 - 2031)
- Shire of Capel Equine Assessment Report (2025)
- Shire of Capel Place Plan (2023 -2027)
- Economic Development Framework (2023 - 2027)
- Shire of Capel Trails Master Plan (2009)
- Shire of Capel Sports Spaces Plan (2021 - 2031)
- Shire of Capel Equine Assessment Report (2025)

Online Trail Platforms

- Trails WA
- Explore Parks WA
- Alltrails
- Trailforks
- Strava
- Google Maps/Earth
- Shire of Capel Trails wepage

Note: This is not a comprehensive list but a selection of commonly used platforms.

Community Contributions

Concepts/proposals/submissions from community members and groups have also been reviewed as part of the community consultation process.

Strategic Context

WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027

Vision - by 2027 WA's trails will connect more people to Country through shared experiences in diverse landscapes, resulting in greater community, social, cultural, economic, environmental, health and wellbeing outcomes for WA.

The following Guiding Principles apply in implementing the strategies and actions:

- Access, equity and inclusion
- Aboriginal leadership and collaboration
- Engagement
- Quality trails
- Sustainability
- Environment and culture
- Community benefit
- Consumer focus
- Consistency
- Innovation
- Visitor economy contribution
- Evidence base.

Trails are categorised into significance categories:

- State trails - An extended trail or trail network that is of sufficient quality and with appropriate facilities, products and services to be recognised beyond the State and to attract visitors to WA.
- Regional trails - A major trail or trail network that services a population centre or large regional community, with facilities and services of a standard and appeal that could attract visitors from outside the region.
- Local trails **-** A trail that services the local community and provides facilities suited to local use. Some local trail may have potential for development to regional status.

WA Hiking Strategy Bushwalking and trail running in Western Australia 2020-2030

Vision - All Western Australians and visitors have the opportunity to connect to country and explore natural landscapes through bushwalking and trail running.

WA Mountain Bike Strategy - Mountain biking and off-road cycling in WA 2022-2032

Vision - More West Australians and visitors can access and participate in mountain bike opportunities that are sustainable and provide long term health, economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits to the community.

WA Horse Trail Management Guidelines, 2025

Vision and objectives - Horse trails across WA are sustainably designed and developed for the right users, in the right areas, for the right reasons. High quality trails will enhance awareness and protection of cultural, natural and heritage values, underpinned by strong partnerships and community ownership.

Strategic Context
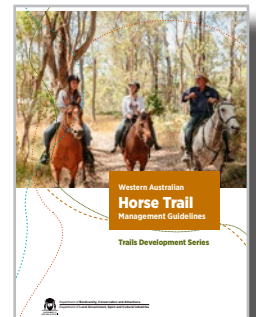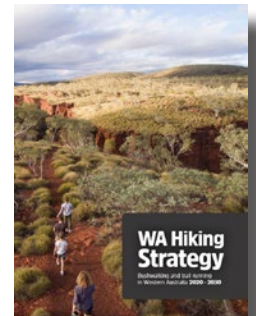
Concentric Circles - Guidance for Trails Tourism Close to Perth, 2024

This report applies a Concentric Trails Study Methodology in order to develop a high-level strategic roadmap that can guide trail destination management and domestic trail visitation into the future aiming to achieve the right trails for the right users, in the right place, at the right time.

Building on the proximal concentric circle model, the wedge dispersal model illustrates how trail-based visitors may travel based on engagement with multiple destinations. Instead of a simple 'out and back' itinerary to a single trail, a wedge overlay expands travel into a broader area, incorporating other trail or non-trail destinations. This approach helps guide investment in trails and support services to enhance tourism dispersal, extend visitor stays, and boost regional spending. It also identifies potential travel corridors, showing how destinations that may not compete directly with high-quality trail nodes can still attract visitors by focusing on hospitality, attractions (e.g., cultural, heritage, food, and wine), and events that complement trail-based tourism.

The Shire of Capel is positioned just below the southern wedge and within a three-hour drive of Perth. It plays a supporting role in the transitional movement of the significant trail-based market segment, whose primary destination is the Margaret River Region further south. With a coordinated approach to trail development and tourism integration, Capel has the opportunity to capitalise on this growing market by positioning itself as a complementary destination that enhances the broader trail experience.

Strategic Context
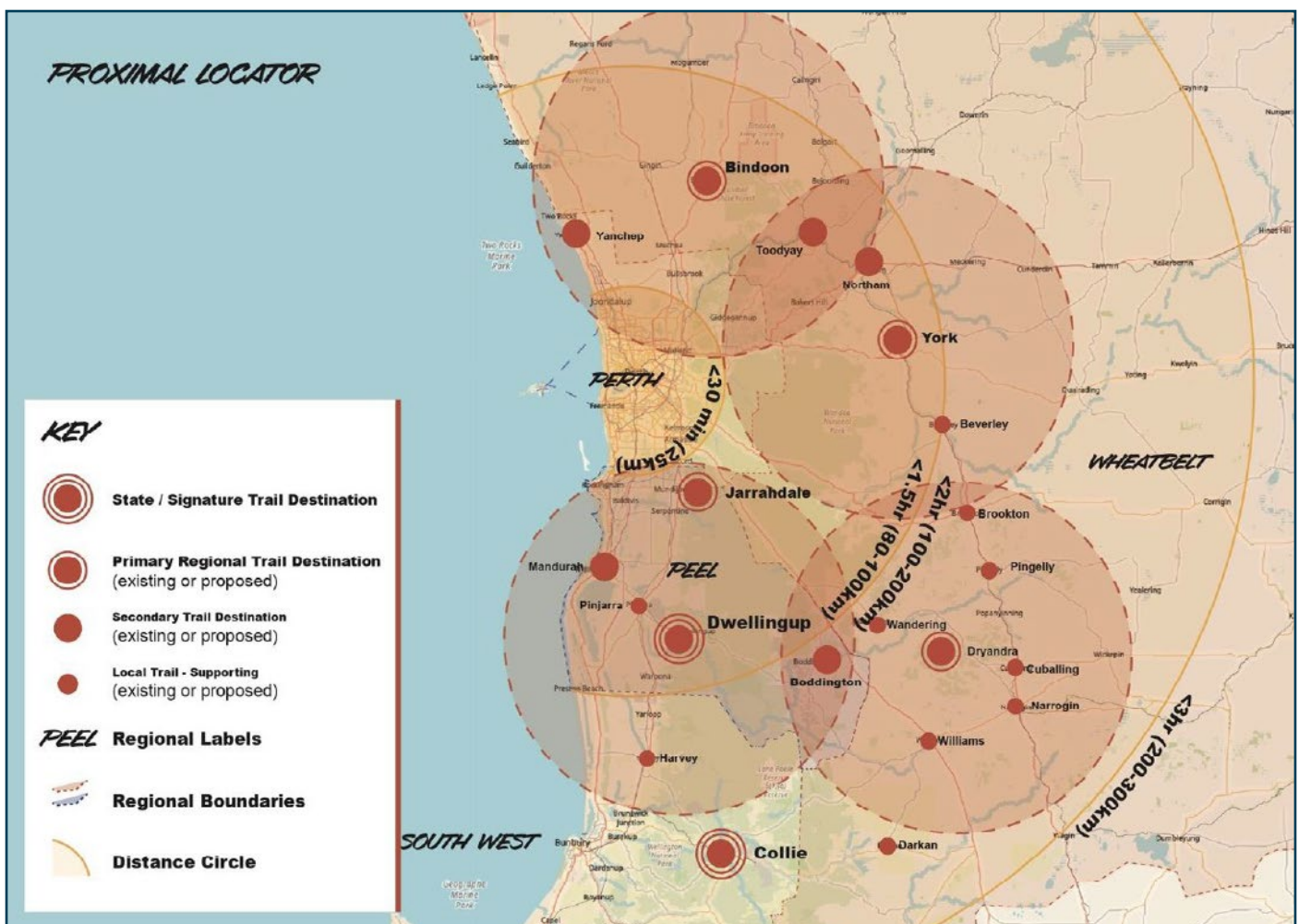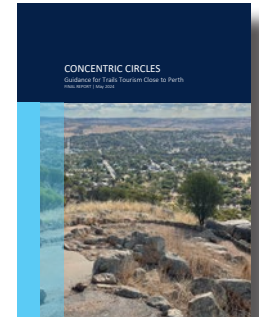
**South West Edge Trail Tourism Experience Opportunities (2023)**

Tourism Western Australia initiated the Trail Tourism Experience Opportunities report to guide the enhancement of trail tourism experiences in and around National Parks along the South West Edge, a scenic drive route connecting the Perth, Peel, South West, Great Southern, and Esperance regions.

Multi-day experience opportunities were evaluated based on trail activity type (hiking or cycling) to better understand target markets and their preferences. While most trail users favour a specific activity, research indicates crossover with other adventure activities. Destinations with strengths in multiple trail types were assessed for multi-activity experiences. Drawing from The Future of Global Tourism Demand, new product opportunities were mapped against three key experience clusters—wellness (transformation), adventure, and Aboriginal culture (heritage)—aligned with the region's tourism strengths.

The suitability of regions for multi-day trail tourism development was determined by factors such as:

• Unique and/or exceptional natural landscapes or features that support activity

• Density of supporting products and services that support experience clusters

• High quality trail or trail networks.

The following table highlights key multi-day tourism experience opportunities for the Shire of Capel, as detailed in the South West column.
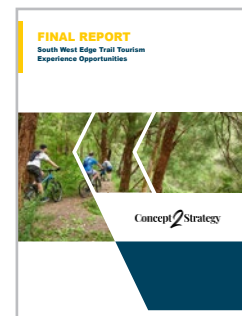
| Experience Cluster	Perth	Peel	South West	Great Southern	Esperance
Hiking					
Wellness			✔	✔	
Adventure				✔	✔
Aboriginal culture	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Cycling					
Wellness		✔	✔	✔	
Adventure	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Paddling					
Adventure (Whitewater)				✔	
Adventure (Sea Kayaking)				✔	✔
Adventure (Flatwater Canoe)			✔	✔	
Horse Riding					
Wellness			✔		✔
Adventure		✔	✔		

✔ ✔ **New product development opportunity**

Strategic Context

Bunbury-Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy

Key features of the proposed 2050 cycling network for Bunbury-Wellington's southern towns include:

- An inter-regional primary route through the Tuart Forest linking Dalyellup to Capel, Peppermint Grove Beach and ultimately Busselton

- At least one connection linking Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach

- A tourist trail following the dormant Bunbury-Northcliffe railway (connecting Balingup, Donnybrook, Boyanup and Dardanup to Bunbury)

- A tourist trail following the railway linking Boyanup to Capel and ultimately Busselton

- A tourist trail along the Preston River linking Boyanup to Bunbury

- A tourist trail along Gavins Gully, linking Dardanup to the Preston River trail

- A tourist trail linking Donnybrook to Mumballup, and ultimately Boyup Brook along the disused railway.
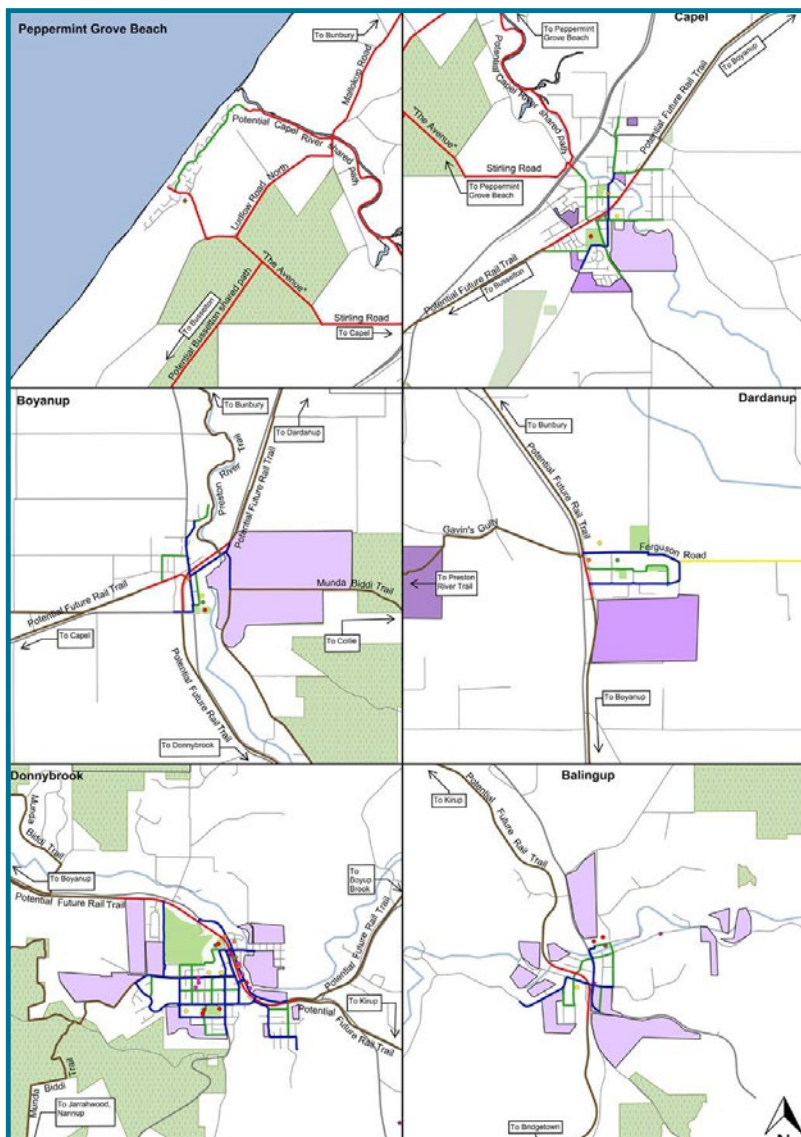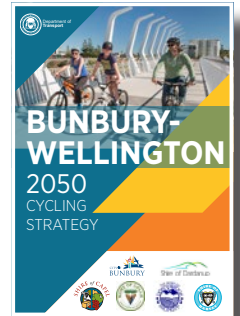
Strategic Context

Plan for the Future

Incorporating the Strategic Community Plan (2023 -2033) & Corporate Business Plan - Strategic Initiatives (2023 - 2027)

Trails carve paths of exploration through the forests and beaches, allowing intrepid walkers, cyclists and horse-riders to uncover hidden gems, and immerse themselves in the raw beauty of our landscape.

People: Strengthen and enhance the well-being of our community

1.5. A healthy and active community

Encourage informal recreation through well planned and developed public open spaces, cycle and walk paths, trails and traversable streetscapes.

Planet: Manage and protect our environment

2.5 Improved connection and access to natural assets of the forest and coastal environment

Manage the interface between natural areas and built environment through improved infrastructure (e.g. boardwalks, paths and trails) that enables access to areas without negative impacts.

Places: Provide and maintain suitable infrastructure and facilities

5.2 Improved transport options

Establish and promote local trails networks that encourages pedestrian and cycling activity

**Shire of Capel Established Trails Audit and Service Plan (2024)**

The primary objective is to provide a thorough overview of the current trail infrastructure and functionality for both the community and visitors.

Shire of Capel Sports Spaces Plan (2021 - 2031)

The Sport Spaces Plan (SSP) has considered current provision, projected demand and examined existing and future site feasibilities and the financial parameters of the Shire's Integrated Planning Framework.

Shire of Capel Equine Assessment Report (2025)

The study was undertaken to investigate the future use of Lot 4997 (Reserve 28825) and Lot 1, 744 Bussell Highway Dalyellup (which combined are referenced as Reserve 28825 in the report, as well as the South West Equine Centre - SWEC).

Strategic Context
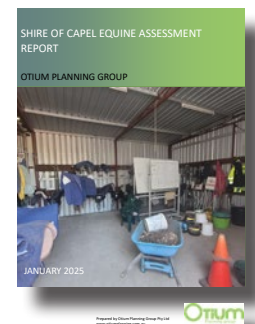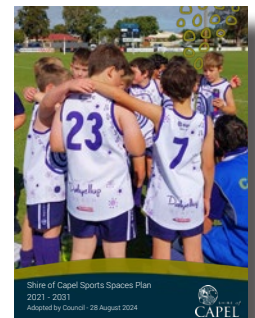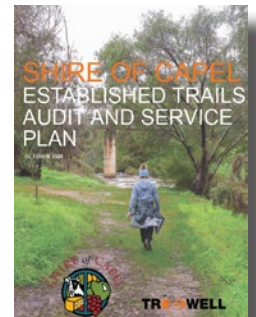
Shire of Capel Place Plan (2023 -2027)

A Sense of Place is the meaning that people attach to a geographical location.

Defining the Localities

Boyanup - Intimate, rural village townsite defined by its interwoven green spaces, historic railway infrastructure and heritage walking trails that connect the community to adjacent natural and built heritage.

Capel - A rural country town proud of its dairy, agriculture and timber origins and hidden treasures, with a civic and commercial heart that welcomes visitors and the surrounding communities.

Dalyellup - A modern master planned suburb with the vibrancy of a district centre on the doorstep of the City of Bunbury, whilst retaining the relaxed casual character of its coastal location. Beachside living with high quality public open space and outdoor leisure opportunities.

Gelorup - Hidden rural residential suburb with limited local amenity, that weaves rural lifestyle homes between natural woodlands and wetlands, supported by the city level services of nearby Bunbury.

Peppermint Grove Beach - A tranquil, secluded beachside village that offers a serene escape from city life where visitors and locals alike can immerse themselves in the natural beauty of the coastline and nearby Tuart Forest supported by the proximity of the larger-town amenity of Capel and Busselton.

Stratham & Coastal Rural Localities - Rural residential retreats hidden between open farmlands, mature Tuart forests, remnant heritage sites and expansive beaches.

Inland Rural - Remote rural living on large acreage farmsteads threaded between winding rivers, bushland and fields.

Economic Development Framework (2023 - 2027)

Six key areas of focus for the Economic Development Framework

- Targeted strategic sector development (tourism, agribusiness, business, freight and logistics)
- Ease of doing business
- Residential and key worker accommodation
- Enabling economic infrastructure and activity
- Activating places and localities
- Connecting and enabling creativity.

Shire of Capel Trails Master Plan (2009)

The Trails Master Plan provided a five year initial implementation for 15 projects. An overview of the progress and current status of key trail projects since 2009 is provided on the following page.

Strategic Context
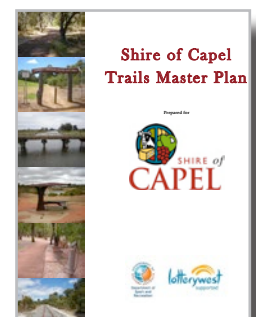
Status of 2009 Trails Master Plan Projects

The following table provides a summary of the key trail projects that were proposed in the Shire of Capel Trails Master Plan 2009. It details the proposed specifications and provides a current status of each initiative as either Complete, Partially Complete, Not Commenced or Funding Secured.

Trail Name	Description	Shire Owned or Managed Land	Status
Mallokup Bridge Heritage Trail	1.5 - 2km walk and cycle trail along the levee bank from Mallokup Bridge to Peppermint Grove Beach, including a viewing platform & interpretation signage. Requires Water Corporation permission to use as a walking trail. *Shelter and interpretation signs at Mallokup Bridge have been installed.*	No Water Corporation permission required to use walking trail.	Partially Complete
Capel to Peppermint Grove Beach Trail	Shared use paths along Peppermint Grove Road, (linking up with existing paths in the Peppermint Grove Beach estate), a new path along a portion of Ludlow North Rd, a new pathway through the Tuart Forest (along the road reserve called The Avenue), a new pathway along Gunclub Rd, and a new pathway (and sections of boardwalk) along Stirling Rd and Mallokup Rd to connect with the existing crossing of Bussell Highway and the existing paths within Capel townsite. *Requires follow up with the Shire of Capel Executive Leadership Team regarding land tenure between DBCA and Shire of Capel.*	Limited land parcels owned by the Shire	Partially Complete
Capel to Boyanup Trail (Railway Reserve)	A dual-use trail within the disused railway reserve between Capel and Boyanup. The length is approximately 18km. If the decision is made to retain the railway tracks, the existing firebreak (which runs parallel with the tracks on the northern side of the railway for most of the length between Capel and Boyanup) could be used. Requires Public Transport Authority approval for use as a potential multi use trail (walking, mountain biking, horse riding)	No Requires Public Transport Authority approval	Not Commenced
Capel Heritage Trail	The heritage trail would commence from the Capel Community Centre, and use existing footpaths where available and be signposted with interpretation signage to the most significant sites within the town.	Yes	Not Commenced
Boyanup Heritage Trail	Revamping the old in-town heritage trail in Boyanup - making use of much of the original information prepared in 1994. The proposed (new) heritage trail would commence from Settler's Park, and use existing footpaths where available. A new section of trail will be required along the northern side of the old railway between South West Highway and the maze crossing of the railway near the Boyanup Transport Museum.	Yes	Complete
Ironstone Gully Falls Trail	A circuit trail through the Ironstone Gully Falls Reserve (Reserve 3801), commencing and finishing at the existing parking/picnic area. The proposed trail would be approximately 1000m long (20 – 30 minutes duration).	Yes	Complete

Strategic Context

Trail Name	Description	Shire Owned or Managed Land	Status
Capel Circuit Trail	A Capel River Walk Trail along the banks and floodplain of the Capel River between the proposed new bridge across the river between Barlee Road and Jamieson Road (near the school) and the drainage reserve at the western end of town near Hannaby Park; and completion of the circuit by including sections of the proposed in-town heritage trail.	No	Not Commenced
Tuart Forest Heritage Trail	The heritage trail would commence at the Ludlow Settlement and travel through the length of the Tuart Forest to terminate at a proposed recreation site being proposed by the Department of Environment and Conservation at the old limekiln site. The approximate length is 10 kilometres. The trail would also encompass a walk trail being proposed by DEC at a proposed recreation site on Higgins Road	No DBCA	Partially Complete
Ludlow Settlement Heritage Trail	This project will involve an assessment of the entire settlement to determine an appropriate route for a heritage trail and the works required to develop a walk trail. *The Shire's role is advocacy and promotion.*	No DBCA	Partially Complete
Capel Rive Canoe Trail	The Capel River provides an opportunity for a water-based trail (or canoe trail) taking users to various historic and natural sites along the river, between the river mouth and Capel Vale Winery.	No	Not Commenced
Capel to Bunbury Links	Though not a trail in its truest sense, the currently unconstructed road reserve that is the northerly extension of Minninup Drive between Stratham and Dalyellup provides an excellent route for a pathway link between these two residential areas. *Funding secured for Design phase in 2025/2026 subject to feasibility approval (Road reserve on Mangles Rd only, western side of Tuart Forest National Park). Cost estimate and construction 2026/2027*	Yes	Funding Secured
Capel to Ludlow Rail Trail	The railway line between Capel and (the former) Ludlow station (near the Ludlow Forestry Settlement) has been closed and disused for many years. Disused railways make excellent multi-use trails and there are now dozens of rail-trails in operation around Australia, including the extremely popular Mundaring Railway Reserve Heritage Trail.	No	Not Commenced
Existing Trails Upgrading Program	Trail improvements at Preston River Ramble, Joshua Brook Circuit, Dalyellup Bushland Trail and Dalelllup Lake Circuit.	Yes	Partially Complete
Drive Trails	Two drive trails that will take future visitors to a wide range of attractions throughout the Capel Shire and in particular to the existing and proposed (non-motorised) trails of the Shire. East Side and West Side	NA	Not Commenced
Capel Single Track Project	Single track course suitable for teenagers. *Reserve 21929 Gavins Rd & East Rd - Some areas within this reserve have historically been used to bury asbestos therefore impacting on the Shire's ability to maintain this reserve.*	Yes	Not Commenced

Vision & Principles

Strategic Planning Pyramid

The establishment of a common vision for the Trails Master Plan provides a goal for the Shire of Capel, other organisations and the wider community to coordinate initiatives towards.

As illustrated below, the vision facilitates the development of associated strategic outcomes, which in turn provide the framework for the development of Strategies (specific approaches to achieve the strategic outcomes and fulfill the vision). Individual Actions are then identified to deliver on each of the Strategies and address the relevant issues identified during the research and consultation phases.

Utilising this approach produces a strategic plan with clearly articulated actions, responsibilities assigned, and an estimate of likely resources required - resulting in a clear and actionable implementation plan to deliver the overall vision.

Vision

The following vision has been developed based on the findings of the Trails Master Plan development process, informed by the issues and opportunities that emerged during community and key stakeholder consultation, background research and on-ground assessments.

A diverse, accessible and sustainable trail network that showcases the Shires unique beauty. Trails will enhance connectivity between towns, promote wellness and active lifestyle for our community while supporting local businesses and tourism.
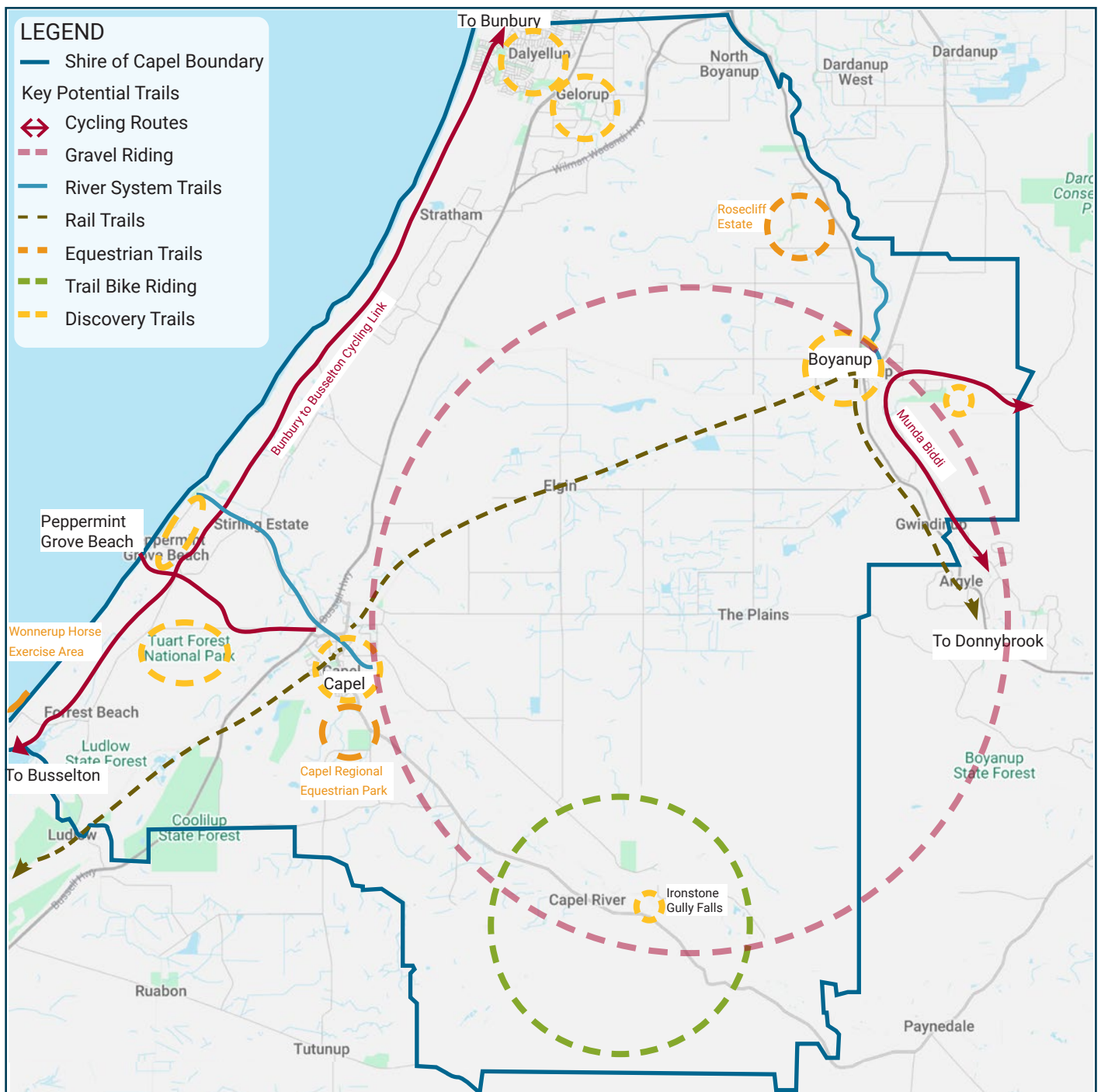
Current Environment — Where we are now

Vision — Where we want to be

VISION

OUTCOMES

STRATEGIES

ACTIONS

Vision & Principles

Trails opportunities map

Sixteen (16) new trail opportunities have been identified and displayed on the trail opportunities map. They have been categorised as cycling, gravel, river system, rail, equestrian, trail bike riding and discovery trails.

As part of the *Shire of Capel Established Trails Audit and Service Plan, November 2024*, a comprehensive audit was conducted on eleven (11) existing trails. These trails are categorised as Discovery Trails and are represented in the accompanying map in yellow, providing a visual reference for their location within the trail network.
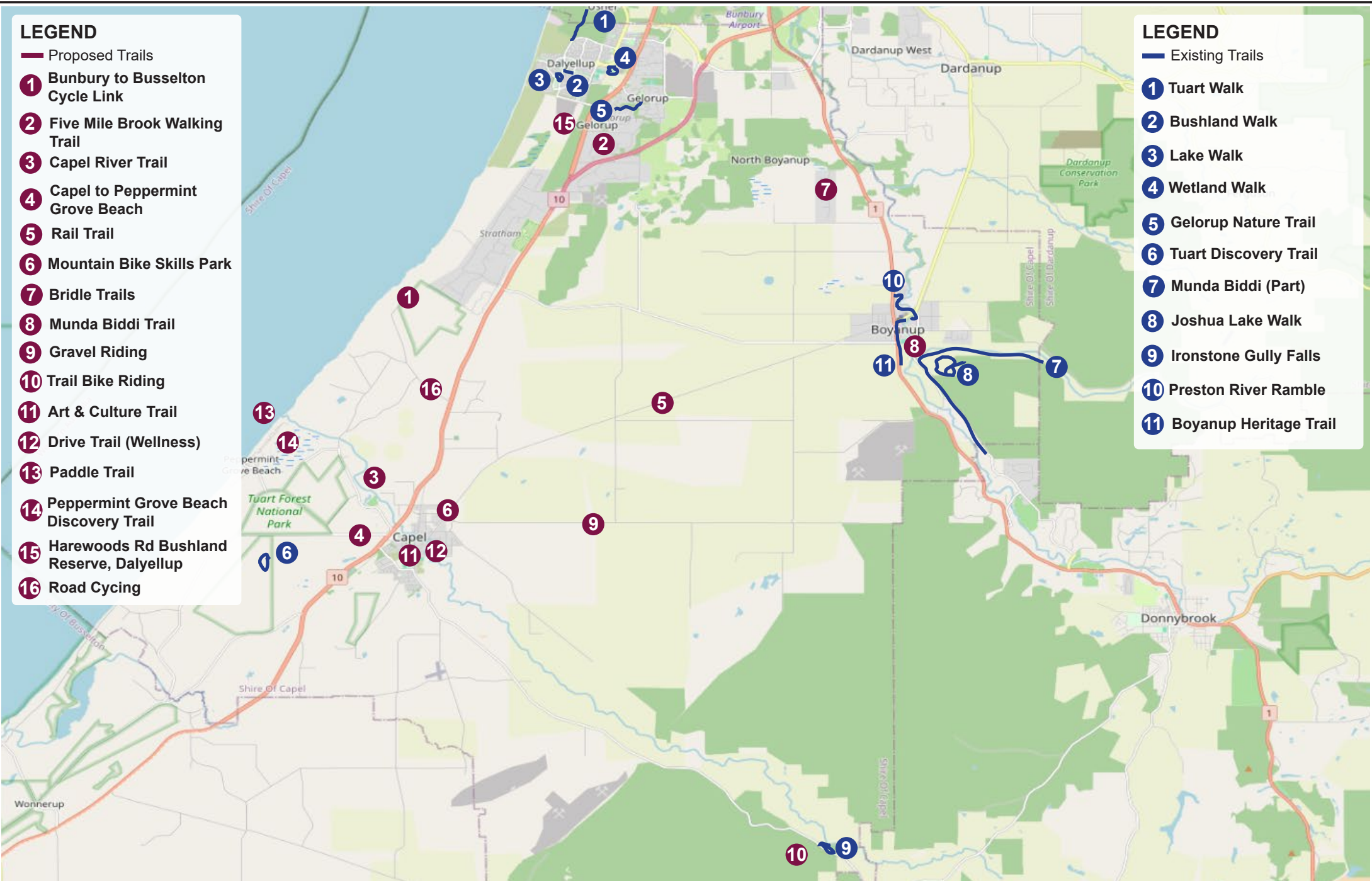

LEGEND

— Shire of Capel Boundary

Key Potential Trails

↔ Cycling Routes

--- Gravel Riding

— River System Trails

--- Rail Trails

--- Equestrian Trails

--- Trail Bike Riding

--- Discovery Trails

Vision & Principles

New Trail Development Opportunities

New trail opportunities have been identified through the findings of the community consultation, online survey and key stakeholder interviews, existing trails audit, background review, demographic, participation and trends analysis. These trail development opportunities are community driven initiatives that have the potential to provide economic, tourism, health and well-being benefits and encourage activation of trails within the Shire of Capel.

Ref	Trail Name	Opportunity
1	Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link	Support the establishment of a key regional cycle connection, Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link - Tuart Forest Section in Stratham.
2	Five Mile Brook Walking Trail	Work with Main Roads Western Australia to promote the natural walking trail in Gelorup connecting Yalinda Drive, Jilley Road and the Tuart Tree Exclusion Zone.
3	Capel River Trail	Explore opportunities for a staged development of a trail along the Capel River, recognising that the majority of the land is not owned or managed by the Shire. Potential connections for the trail may include: • Peppermint Grove Beach to Mallokup Bridge • Mallokup Bridge to Hannaby Park • Hannaby Park to Capel Drive (Curved Road Bridge) • Capel Drive (Curved Road Bridge) to Capel River Railway Bridge • Capel River Railway Bridge to Capel Footbridge (Barlee Rd/Jamieson Rd)
4	Capel to Peppermint Grove	Consider potential trail or shared linkages between Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach. Potential connections may include • A potential shared path along Capel River (Refer above Point 3) • A route via "The Avenue", Stirling Road through the Tuart Forest National Park *(As referenced in the Bunbury Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy)*
5	Rail Trail	Support regional discussions with surrounding local government areas to explore potential future rail trail opportunities, including: • Bunbury to Boyanyp • Boyanup to Capel • Capel to Ludlow These discussions should consider a surface suitable for multiple user groups, including horses, walkers, runners and cyclists.
6	Mountain Bike Skills Park	Assess the feasibility of developing a mountain bike skills facility, with consideration for site constraints and future trail linkages. Potential locations include East Road (R21929) or the gravel pit on Goodwood Road.

Vision & Principles

Ref	Trail Name	Opportunity
7	Bridle Trails	Explore the opportunity to upgrade and develop bridle trails with suitable support infrastructure (i.e. horse float parking) • Rosecliff Estate, utilising unmade roads and the existing Hayclif Ave, North Boyanup and the former trotting track. • Capel Regional Equestrian Park • Wonnerup East Horse Exercise Area (adjacent to Forrest Beach Road)
8	Munda Biddi Trail	Collaborate with DBCA & Munda Biddi Trail Foundation to investigate the feasibility of realigning the Munda Biddi Trail or establishing a spur trail through Boyanup town centre.
9	Gravel Riding	With the growing popularity of gravel riding identify a safe trail network of existing dirt and gravel roads that could be leveraged to create looped routes of varying distances from town centres. Ensure accessibility for e-bikes including charging stations.
10	Trail Bike Riding	Support key stakeholder led initiatives that promote sanctioned trail bike riding, with a focus on safety, environmental sustainability and economic development (i.e. Capel 200 Trail Bike Rally)
11	Art & Culture Trail	Develop an Art and Culture trail that is accessible to all and aligns with the Shire of Capel Place Plan (2023 - 2027). *Note: Given that Bunbury is home to the largest street and public art collection in regional Australia & Busselton features Sculptures by the Bay and The Public Artwork Trail, this initiative can leverage from the existing market.*
12	Drive Trail	Explore the opportunity to establish a wellness themed drive trail, inspired by successful models such as the Cape to Cape Nature and Indulgence Trail. This initiative could highlight the region's natural landscapes, wellness experiences and mindful travel opportunities. Potential trail names may include The Backroads and Balance Trail, The Capel Mindful Meander, The Capel Vitality Trail.
13	Paddle Trail	Opportunity to enhance water-based recreation by developing paddle trails that showcase the region's rivers and coastal environments. This initiative could include: • Capel River Canoe Trail • Stand Up Paddle Board Trail (i.e. Peppermint Grove Beach, Dalyellup Beach)
14	Peppermint Grove Beach	Enhance connectivity by developing a loop trail that links key points of interest in Peppermint Grove Beach using existing paths, footpaths, carparks and beach to showcase points of interest such as the lookout (Peppermint Grove Terrace) and wetlands.
15	Harewoods Rd Bushland Reserve, Dalyellup	Explore the opportunity to develop a trail in the bushland reserve located adjacent Bussell Highway at Harewoods Road. This trail would enhance connectivity to local schools (i.e. Dalyellup College), nearby residential areas, new residential developments and users of Reserve 23000.
16	Road Cycling	In alignment with the Bunbury Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy support the development of the 2050 cycling network for Bunbury_Wellington's southern towns as part of the broader regional vision.

Trends

Participation Rates

Trails are an important type of recreational facility which enable people to participate in physical activity and lead healthy lifestyles, whether in their home location or visiting other regions.

The Ausplay Participation Survey, administered by Sport Australia, provides regularly updated data on participation rates in physical activities across each state and territory of Australia. The following table provides participation rates for the top ten physical activities among adults in Western Australia from January to December 2024.

It is evident that walking (recreational) is the most popular physical activity among WA adults with a participation rate of 47.5%. Bush walking, running and jogging and cycling also featured among the top ten physical activities.

Activity		WA Adult Participation Rate Jan - Dec 2024		
		Total (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)
1	**Walking (Recreational)**	47.8	39.1	56.5
2	Fitness/Gym	31.9	28.5	35.2
3	**Bushwalking**	17.4	14.3	20.4
4	Swimming	15.5	13.2	17.8
5	Running/joggin	15.4	16.7	14.1
6	**Cycling**	10.4	12.2	8.6
7	Pilates	6.0	0.8	11.3
8	Football/soccer	5.8	9.7	2.0
9	Basketball	4.9	7.2	2.6
10	Yoga	4.7	1.5	7.9

Note: A new baseline has been established with the 2023-24 AUSPLAY data. It cannot be directly compared with figures from 2015 - 2023.

Trends

Trends in Trail Use and Development

Over the past five years trail use and development has evolved and matured within the Australian context. A number of industry trends and observations have been noted in the WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022-2027. These are outlined below.

Participation

Growth in popularity of trails

Participation in outdoor recreation activities including recreational walking, bushwalking and mountain biking has been growing since 2017. The COVID-19 pandemic supercharged this growth, with many land managers reporting record trail use in 2020 and 2021.

Land managers have also noted that many participants venturing onto the trail during the pandemic are inexperienced which has also led to an increase in incidents.

According to recent AusPlay data many Australians are favouring participation in informal recreation over structured sport. Trails offer more flexibility than traditional sports, as users can participate in a variety of different ways, independently or with variable group sizes, at times that suit them. Many trail users are drawn to trails to connect to nature and experience physical and mental health benefits.

Increase in female participation

Female participation in outdoor recreation activities has increased over recent years, particularly in bushwalking which now has more female participants than male in Australia.[1] AusPlay research indicates females are increasingly drawn to trail experiences that provide opportunities to spend time in nature and harness the physical and mental health benefits.

Inclusion and accessibility

Visiting outdoor places and spaces, including trails, can be more challenging for people living with a disability. The need to develop inclusive trails and trail experiences for people of all abilities is becoming more widely recognised, with trails catering to a range of abilities being incorporated into new trail development projects. Additional infrastructure and equipment including high contrast signage, accessible canoe launches, all terrain and beach wheelchairs and adaptive mountain bikes are just some of the equipment in use, improving the accessibility of the outdoors and trails.

Trail experiences

Trails for transportation

Trails have the potential to be integrated into active transport routes to work, school, retail precincts, community and recreation facilities. Integration between other transport services such as trains and buses, will be key in encouraging more people to use trails for commuting.

E-rideables and E-bikes

There is an increased use of e-bikes, e-scooters and other e-transportation on trails and paths. Financial year 2021 saw record sales of e-bikes in Australia and e-cargo bikes are increasing in popularity for short trips and commuting.[2] The challenge moving forward is adapting trail planning, design, construction and maintenance to suit these new modes of trail use whilst also addressing the potential safety issues and conflict with other trail users.

Multi-modal long distance trails

There is an emerging trend for multi-modal long distance trails such as rail trails, offering trail users options to tailor experiences to their preference including mode of transport and length of experience. Bike packing, cycle touring and multi-day walking routes also provide opportunities for small business development to support these activities and users.

Events and trails

Trail running and multi-sport adventure races and events are becoming more popular as people look to 'get off the beaten track' and challenge themselves in demanding and diverse terrain.

Trends

Funding

Revenue models

Revenue models to support trail development, maintenance and provision of supporting infrastructure have diversified in recent years to include user pays, shuttle services, commercial operators, trail sponsorship and/or merchandise sales.

Increased trails investment

In response to the 2019/2020 summer bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic, many state and territory governments have invested in projects that enhance community resilience, restore wellbeing and stimulate economic growth. Many such projects throughout Australia are trail projects and include new mountain bike destinations, walking/hiking trails, rail trails and interpretive trail experiences. Several states are developing iconic trails of national significance to attract interstate and international visitation.

In Western Australia, the 2024–25 State Budget will deliver more than $165 million for new and upgraded boating facilities, campgrounds, trails, and tourist attractions, making it easier for more Western Australians to enjoy the State's great outdoors. This represents a significant opportunity to package and promote Western Australia's trail experiences under a cohesive brand to further strengthen its position as a premier outdoor adventure destination in Australia.

Digital communication

Digital apps

Social media and the use of apps is commonplace in today's society including within the outdoor recreation and trails industry. Digital apps are available for navigation, performance monitoring, training, marketing and promotion. Trail users are increasingly using digital apps in preference to paper maps and guidebooks as a source of information. Apps present an opportunity to assist in promotion of trails, awareness of environmental and cultural heritage values, capture important participation data, allow users to report maintenance issues, and improve safety on trails.

Digital apps can also create safety issues if relied on for navigation without backup options that can be used in the event of a disruption to the electronic system such as a flat battery.

Social media and bloggers

Trail users and tourists are turning to social media pages and blog posts to connect with community groups and share information on their trail experience. This has on occasion led to a location 'going viral' and an unexpected influx of visitors to a location, causing issues with overcrowding and safety. Blog posts often provide key sources of detailed information regarding trails. Proliferation of user-created or 'open source' digital information presents challenges for trail managers, as information can be incorrect/misleading and dilute official information sources.

Safety

Safety education

Increased participation particularly during COVID-19 has anecdotally seen an increase in incidents and injury. Many of these new trail users may be unfamiliar with the risks associated with the Western Australian landscape or how to prepare to ensure their safety and that of others. Education of participants in safety and preparation is needed to ensure all trail users, including the growing number of less experienced trail users, are well equipped.

Emergency response

Climate change is creating more extreme weather events including bushfires, severe storms, flooding, and extreme temperatures. It is important that emergency services can advise trail users of trail closures, weather conditions or bushfires that may pose a risk and trail users can communicate their plans and reach for help in an emergency. Emergency services and navigation apps are increasingly being used to share trail issues and emergency information with trail users.

Trends

In addition to the trends identified in the Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint, broader industry research highlights several emerging patterns influencing trail and tourism experiences.

People seeking experiences over products, and transformational travel

There is a growing consumer, societal, demographic, and cultural shift towards valuing experiences over products, with an increasing emphasis on social relationships and meaningful connections. Visitors seek experiences that are personalised and relevant to them, often driven by storytelling and opportunities to engage with local communities. Trends such as "living like a local" and "fostering connections" reflect this shift, as travellers prioritise authenticity and community engagement.

Additionally, there is a rising demand for transformational travel, where individuals seek experiences that encourage personal reflection, growth, and celebration of significant life milestones, such as completing a long-distance hike or undertaking a major road trip following retirement or recovery from illness.

De-stressing in nature

Scientists have noticed that adults today are more stressed compared to a decade ago. This is likely due to a mixture of fast paced lifestyles, increasing reliance on technology, global trend towards urban living and the newfound awareness of significant global issues such as climate change. As such, de-stressing in nature is becoming more important than ever. De-stressing in nature has been linked to numerous benefits, including improved attention, lower stress, better mood and reduced risk of psychiatric disorders. Trails provide this opportunity to de-stress in nature.

Popularity of nature-based tourism and eco-accommodation

As societies around the globe become increasingly urbanised, people may suffer from a phenomenon known as 'nature deficit'. Research from Tourism Australia into the Australian travel mindset found that getting away from crowds is more important than ever before, as holidays provide the opportunity for people to take the time to reconnect with the natural world. Nature-based tourism, where people can immerse themselves in the natural environment, is a key tourism draw card. Recreational trails enable people to 'escape crowds' and reconnect with the natural environment, however, this must be curated to ensure that visitation is sustainable and does not lose the basis of its appeal. It is important that trails provide true nature-based experiences which are distinct from urban activities.

Consumer interest in ecotourism has sustained strong demand for appropriately located eco-accommodation in the Australian marketplace, particularly those that cater to the luxury market.

Loss of biodiversity & heritage

Around the world, valuable ecosystems and heritage sites are under pressure from urban expansion, unsustainable tourism practices and agricultural clearing, and the effects of climate change. It is important that trails are planned for in suitable areas and that threats to the loss of biodiversity and heritage are effectively mitigated and managed.

Attracting and retaining volunteers

Organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to attract and retain volunteers. This is due to a range of factors such as increasingly busy lifestyles, increasing standards/processes and competing priorities.

Going against this broader trend, trail "care groups" are becoming increasingly popular and attract enthusiasts who are happy to give up their time to undertake maintenance and upgrade projects along trails.
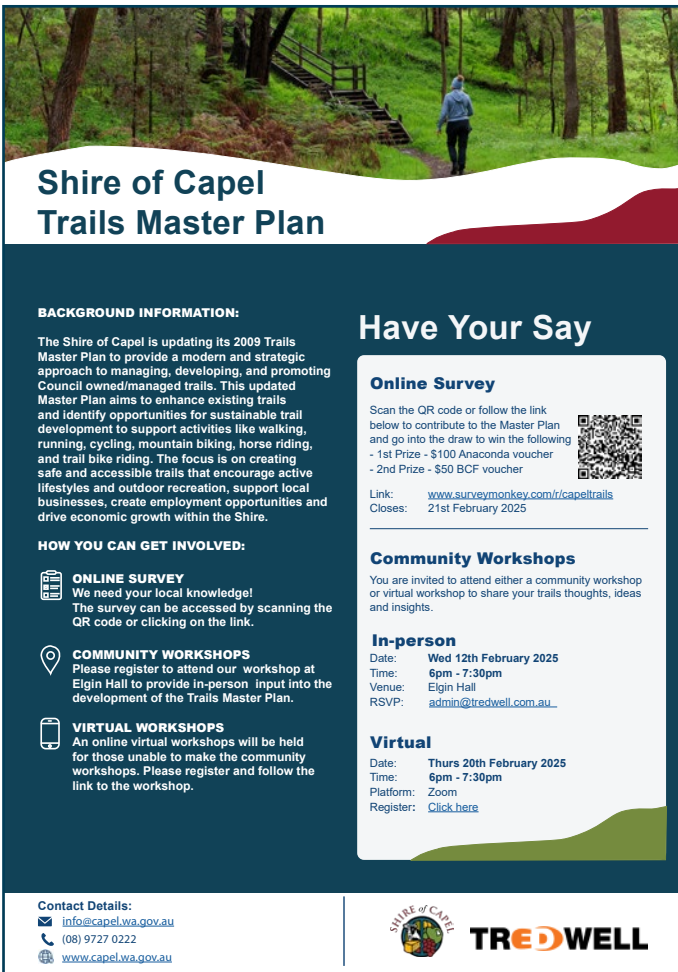
Consultation

Consultation

Process

The development of the Trails Master Plan was informed by community consultation and stakeholder engagement. This involved an internal workshop with Shire of Capel staff, targeted meetings with key external stakeholders, a combination of virtual and in person community workshops and an online survey.

To support engagement and raise awareness, information was disseminated to stakeholders and the broader community via an information flyer. Additionally, a feature article was published on the Shire of Capel's Latest News page, highlighting the various opportunities for community involvement in the project.

Shire of Capel Trails Master Plan

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Shire of Capel is updating its 2009 Trails Master Plan to provide a modern and strategic approach to managing, developing, and promoting Council owned/managed trails. This updated Master Plan aims to enhance existing trails and identify opportunities for sustainable trail development to support activities like walking, running, cycling, mountain biking, horse riding, and trail bike riding. The focus is on creating safe and accessible trails that encourage active lifestyles and outdoor recreation, support local businesses, create employment opportunities and drive economic growth within the Shire.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED:

ONLINE SURVEY
We need your local knowledge! The survey can be accessed by scanning the QR code or clicking on the link.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS
Please register to attend our workshop at Elgin Hall to provide in-person input into the development of the Trails Master Plan.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS
An online virtual workshops will be held for those unable to make the community workshops. Please register and follow the link to the workshop.

Have Your Say

Online Survey

Scan the QR code or follow the link below to contribute to the Master Plan and go into the draw to win the following
- 1st Prize - $100 Anaconda voucher
- 2nd Prize - $50 BCF voucher

Link: www.surveymonkey.com/r/capeltrails
Closes: 21st February 2025

Community Workshops

You are invited to attend either a community workshop or virtual workshop to share your trails thoughts, ideas and insights.

In-person
Date: **Wed 12th February 2025**
Time: **6pm - 7:30pm**
Venue: Elgin Hall
RSVP: admin@tredwell.com.au

Virtual
Date: **Thurs 20th February 2025**
Time: **6pm - 7:30pm**
Platform: Zoom
Register: Click here

Contact Details:
info@capel.wa.gov.au
(08) 9727 0222
www.capel.wa.gov.au

Findings

Key Shire of Capel staff and members of the Trails Reference Group attended the **Internal Stakeholder Meeting**. Discussions covered topics such as:

- Upgrades and maintenance of existing trails, with an emphasis on strengthening current assets
- Opportunities to establish strategic linkages
- Identifying points of difference to enhance trail appeal
- Marketing and promotion (i.e. destination website)
- Emerging markets such as wellness, e-bikes, gravel, stand up paddle boarding
- Improving accessibility to support inclusive and accessible tourism
- Encouraging community involvement in trail development and management
- Ensuring alignment with state and local planning documents.

The **Key Stakeholder Meetings** were held with representatives from:

- Trails Reference Group (Shire of Capel)
- Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS)
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
- Water Corporation
- Trail Groups (i.e. Ironstone Adventure Riding Club, Ludlow Tuart Forest Restoration Group Inc., Capel Land Conservation District Committee, WA Horse Trekkers Club).

A **Community workshop** was held at Elgin Hall and virtual meeting via zoom. Key themes that emerged from the discussions included:

- Insufficient maintenance of existing trails
- Limited availability of trail promotional materials
- Opportunities to enhance trail connectivity
- Connections between towns (i.e. railways, rivers)
- Community vision for the future of trails
- Concerns regarding safety (i.e. cyclist, horse riders, walkers).

Insights gathered through these community and stakeholder consultations have directly informed the development of the Trails Master Plan.

Consultation

Community Online Survey

A total of 151 community members completed the survey, with 80% indicating that they had used a trail in the Shire of Capel in the past 12 months. Frequency of trail use varied, with 23% using trails a few times per year, 21% monthly, 18% a few times per month and 15% weekly and 11% a few times per week. Only 9% reported rarely or never using trails. These results indicate strong community engagement with local trails and underscore their values for recreation and outdoor activity.

Why Trails Important

Connection with Nature & Environment

Most commonly referenced themes were nature, peace, scenery, or the outdoors.

Physical & Mental Well-being
Trails support exercise, fitness, and mental well-being, offering space for relaxation and stress relief.

Recreation & Outdoor Activities

Trails are used for walking, cycling, mountain biking, horse riding, and running, with calls for more multi-user access.

Safety & Accessibility

Trails provide a safer alternative to roads for children, dog walkers, and mobility aid users, though connectivity concerns exist.

Family, Social & Community Connection

Trails provide quality time with family, socialising with friends, group walks and building a strong community

Exploration, Identity & Access to Place

Trails help people explore and appreciate their region's unique natural and cultural identity. They provide connections between communities, access to meaningful places, and support local businesses and tourism.

Most Popular and Preferred Trail Activities

1 Walking

2 Bushwalking

3 Nature Appreciation

4 Cycling (Road & Gravel)

5 Horse Riding

6 Bird Watching

7 Mountain Bike Riding

8 Trail Running

9 Paddling (Canoeing/Kayaking)

10 Trail Bike Riding

Top 3 Most Popular Trails

1 Ironstone Gully Falls Trail, Capel River (SoC)

2 Tuart Discovery Trail, Forest Beach (DBCA)

3 Joshua Lake Walk, Boyanup (SoC)

Consultation

Community Online Survey

Skill Level in Preferred Activity

32% Beginner

33% Intermediate

35% Advanced

Top 3 ways to find out about Trails, Trail Facilities and Events

1 Word of Mouth

2 Social Media Pages

3 Websites (i.e. Strava, AllTrails, Shire website)

Overall Trail Experience Rating

**Average Rating
2.3 out of 5**

Overall Satisfaction with Trail Experiences

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Unsure
Contribution to tourism/visitor offerings	21%	**36%**	24%	5%	1%	13%
Signage (condition, type, amount)	22%	**44%**	22%	3%	0%	9%
Information provision (brochures,maps,websites)	30%	**37%**	10%	3%	1%	19%
Promotion/awareness of trails	**48%**	34%	4%	5%	0%	9%
Connectivity (e.g. linkages)	**43%**	19%	14%	2%	0%	22%
Maintenance of trails	17%	**36%**	26%	8%	0%	13%
Number and diversity of trails	**32%**	31%	14%	5%	1%	17%
Quality of trail experiences	8%	**33%**	35%	12%	2%	10%
Accessibility for all (all ages, mobility devices,prams)	14%	**34%**	18%	10%	2%	22%
Support facilities (toilets, shelters, seats)	30%	**31%**	17%	4%	1%	17%
Car parking	15%	**33%**	27%	9%	2%	14%
Safety and security	11%	27%	**31%**	7%	3%	21%
Trail user conduct	5%	20%	**41%**	12%	5%	17%

Consultation

Community Online Survey

Suggested Improvements for Existing Trails

Connectivity & Expansion

- Improve connections between forest trails and the beach.
- Expand cycling and mountain bike paths.
- Develop more multi-use trails for walking, cycling, and horse riding.
- Extend and connect trails between Capel, Boyanup, Busselton, and Bunbury.
- Rail trail development, including utilising disused rail corridors.
- More long-distance (10km+) trails, especially near Capel and Boyanup.

Facilities & Amenities

- More parking: particularly at Tuart Forest Walk, Joshua Lake Walk, Gelorup Trail.
- Toilet facilities: Tuart Forest Walk, Joshua Lake Walk, Boyanup area.
- Seating & shade shelters to improve trail comfort.
- BBQ & picnic areas: Joshua Lake was mentioned as an ideal location.
- Better environmental care: Removal of invasive species (e.g., Arum Lilies) and replanting with natives.

Accessibility & Signage

- Better-maintained trails: Regular clearing of vegetation to reduce snake hazards.
- More paved & accessible paths for wheelchair users.
- Horse-friendly trails with float parking and water sources.
- Dog-friendly trails: More trails allowing pets on lead, dog waste bags at trailheads.
- Improved lighting: Especially at intersections and on trails like Dalyellup.

Trail Promotion & Awareness

- More advertising & marketing to encourage local and visitor use.
- Better signage to highlight trails not widely known.
- Educational signage about local flora, fauna, and conservation efforts.
- Improved signage: Trail maps, directions, QR codes for flora/fauna info.

Proposals or Ideas for new trail developments

Capel Trails

- A trail along the Capel River to the ocean would be amazing, starting from Capel Primary School and following the river to Peppermint Grove Beach.
- A cycle/walk path connecting Capel town centre to Peppermint Grove Beach.
- Develop a trail in Capel town between the bridges:
  - The pedestrian bridge near Capel school is lovely, but the area is overgrown and unmaintained.
  - The bridge in town near Colroys is polluted and uninviting—needs improvements.
- Ideally, a central accessible path/boardwalk along the Capel River, from Hannaby Park to Capel Tavern car park.
- More trails in the Capel town region, possibly near the river.
- Would love to see a trail through Capel along the river.
- A trail from Capel townsite to Peppermint Grove would be good.

Consultation

Community Online Survey

Rail Trail & Old Railway Line

- Old railway line between Boyanup and Capel should be cleaned up for horse riding, biking, and walking (no motorbikes).

- Rail trail from Capel to Boyanup along the old railway line.

- Rail trail from Capel to Peppermint Grove Beach.

- Bike path along the old railway line between Capel and Boyanup.

- Old rail line between Boyanup and Donnybrook could be used for trails, even along the maintenance track.

- Use the railway—it goes straight through town.

- Other towns have used rail lines; crazy that this cleared area is not upgraded for walkers.

- Would love to see existing railway tracks made into paths.

- A path from Capel to Peppermint Grove Beach would be amazing.

Boyanup Trails

- I ride trails nearly every day around Boyanup, traveling 30 to 40kms often outside the Shire, potential for fabulous forest trails.

- More mountain bike trails east of Boyanup, designed to allow for vehicle shuttling of bikes from the bottom to the top.

Peppermint Grove Beach Trails

- A trail from Capel to Peppermint Grove Beach would be good.

- A bike path linking Tuart Forest along Stirling Rd to Peppermint Grove Beach.

- There should be hot mix trails for walkers, runners, and mountain bikers along Stirling Road to link Peppermint Grove Beach to Capel.

Dalyellup

- Connecting Gelorup to Dalyellup and more trails through Gelorup.

- Development of a trail network along the coastal dunes from Dalyellup to Forrest Beach—similar to the Great Ocean Ride in Esperance.

- Possibility to link Maidens Trails into the Dalyellup beachfront.

- More paved walks that allow off-leash dogs (example: Watson's Reserve in Eaton).

General Trail Development

- Better bike paths and horse trails. More trails in general.

- Need a new, well-maintained trail that is far enough into the bush to feel safe walking alone.

- More trails to get around—link to Busselton from Dalyellup.

- Fix existing trails before building new ones.

- Connectivity of different trails is key to creating better trail experiences.

- Signage improvements needed along the Tuart Walk.

Busselton Connection & Regional Trails

- More connectivity between different trails.

- Would love a linkage from Dalyellup to Busselton.

- The Dalyellup to Busselton trail should happen, this would boost tourism along the coast.

Trail Audit

Trail Audit
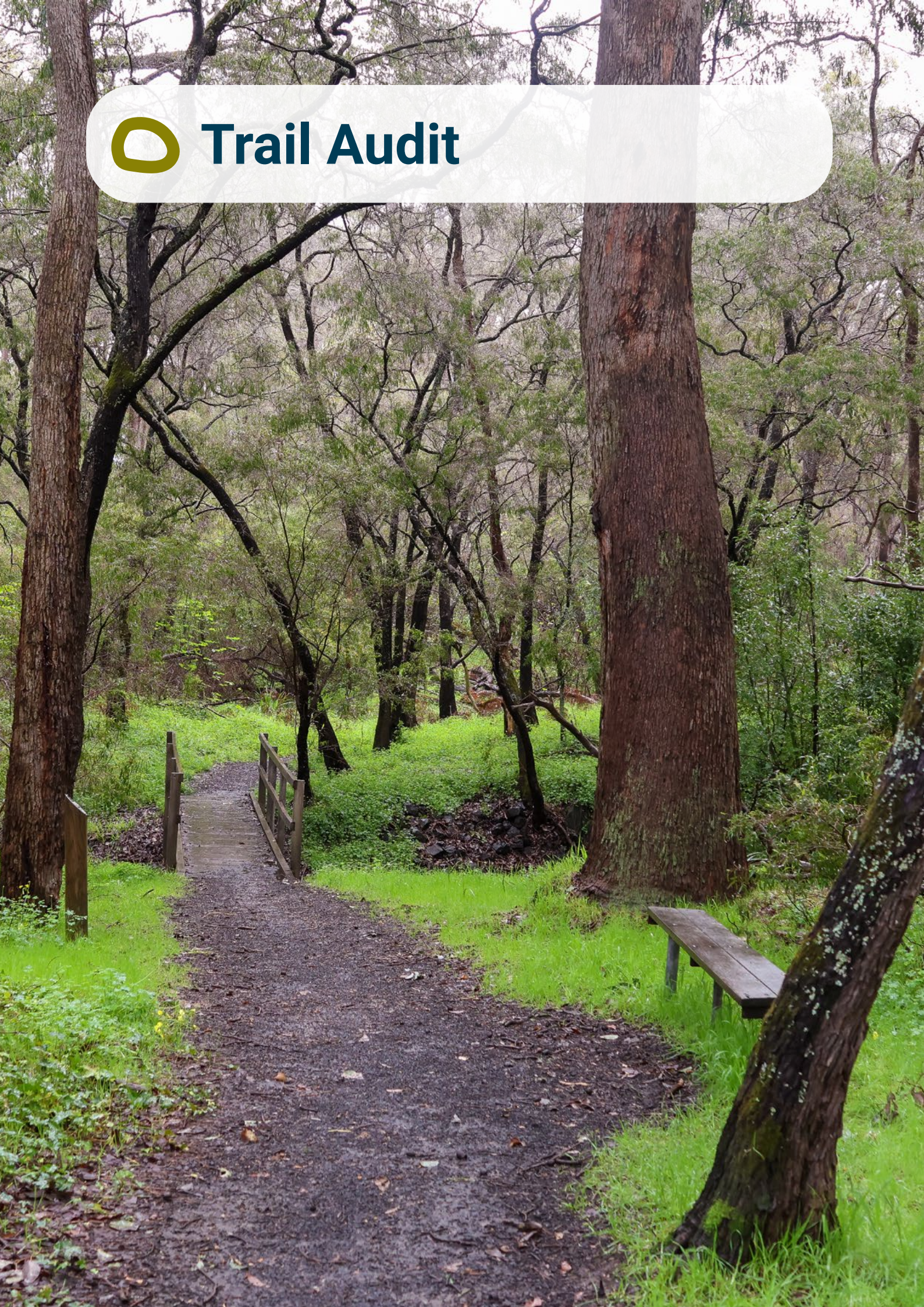
Inventory of Existing Trails

An on-ground audit was conducted across eleven trails, during which data was collected and key observations were recorded. The table and maps provide a summary of the findings. A comprehensive account of the audit is presented in the *Established Trails Audit and Service Plan (2024)*.

Map Ref	Trail	Area	Grade	Key User Type/s	Hierarchy	Manager
1	Tuart Walk	Dalyellup	1 - Easiest	Walking, Cycling	Local	DBCA
2	Bushland Walk	Dalyellup	2 - Easy	Walking, Cycling	Local	SoC
3	Lake Walk	Dalyellup	2 - Easy	Walking, Cycling (part)	Local	SoC
4	Wetland Walk	Dalyellup	1 - Easiest	Walking, Cycling	Local	SoC
5	Gelorup Nature Trail	Gelorup	2 - Easy	Walking	Local	SoC
6	Tuart Discovery Trail	Forest Beach	2 - Easy	Walking	Regional	DBCA
7	Ironstone Gully Falls Trail	Capel	3 - Moderate	Walking	Local	SoC
8	Joshua Lake Walk	Boyanup	2 - Easy	Walking, Cycling	Local	SoC
9	Munda Biddi	Boyanup	Long Distance	Cycling	State	DBCA
10	Preston River Ramble	Boyanup	3 - Moderate	Walking	Local	SoC
11	Boyanup Heritage Trail	Boyanup	2 - Easy	Walking	Local	SoC
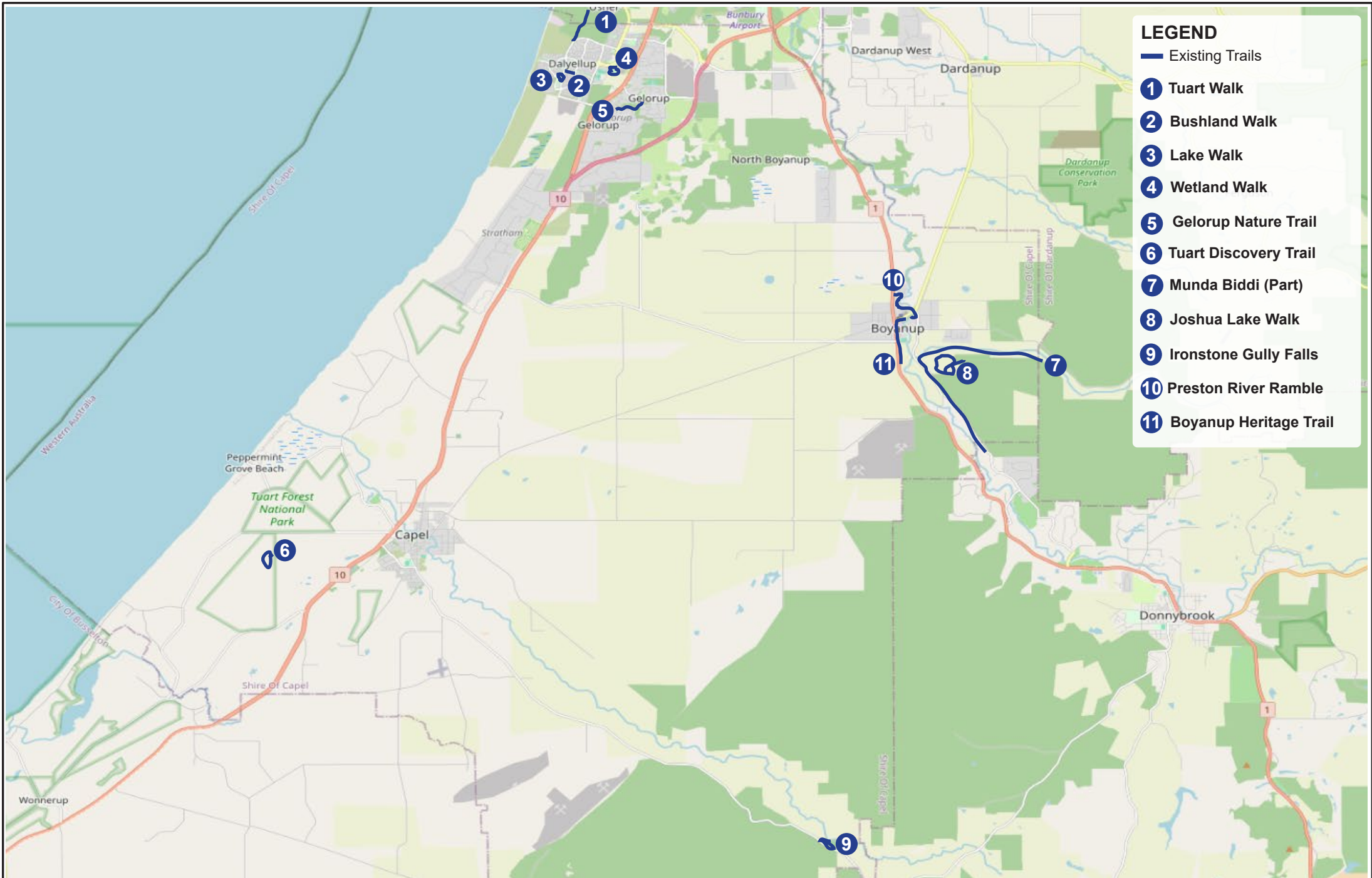
LEGEND

— Existing Trails

1 **Tuart Walk**
2 **Bushland Walk**
3 **Lake Walk**
4 **Wetland Walk**
5 **Gelorup Nature Trail**
6 **Tuart Discovery Trail**
7 **Munda Biddi (Part)**
8 **Joshua Lake Walk**
9 **Ironstone Gully Falls**
10 **Preston River Ramble**
11 **Boyanup Heritage Trail**

Client
Shire of Capel

PROJECT
Shire of Capel Trails Master Plan

DRAWING TITLE
Shire of Capel Existing Trails

Drawn:
AP
Reviewed:
NT

Rev. | Date | Description

DRAFT

Map No.
MAP 1

Revision
–
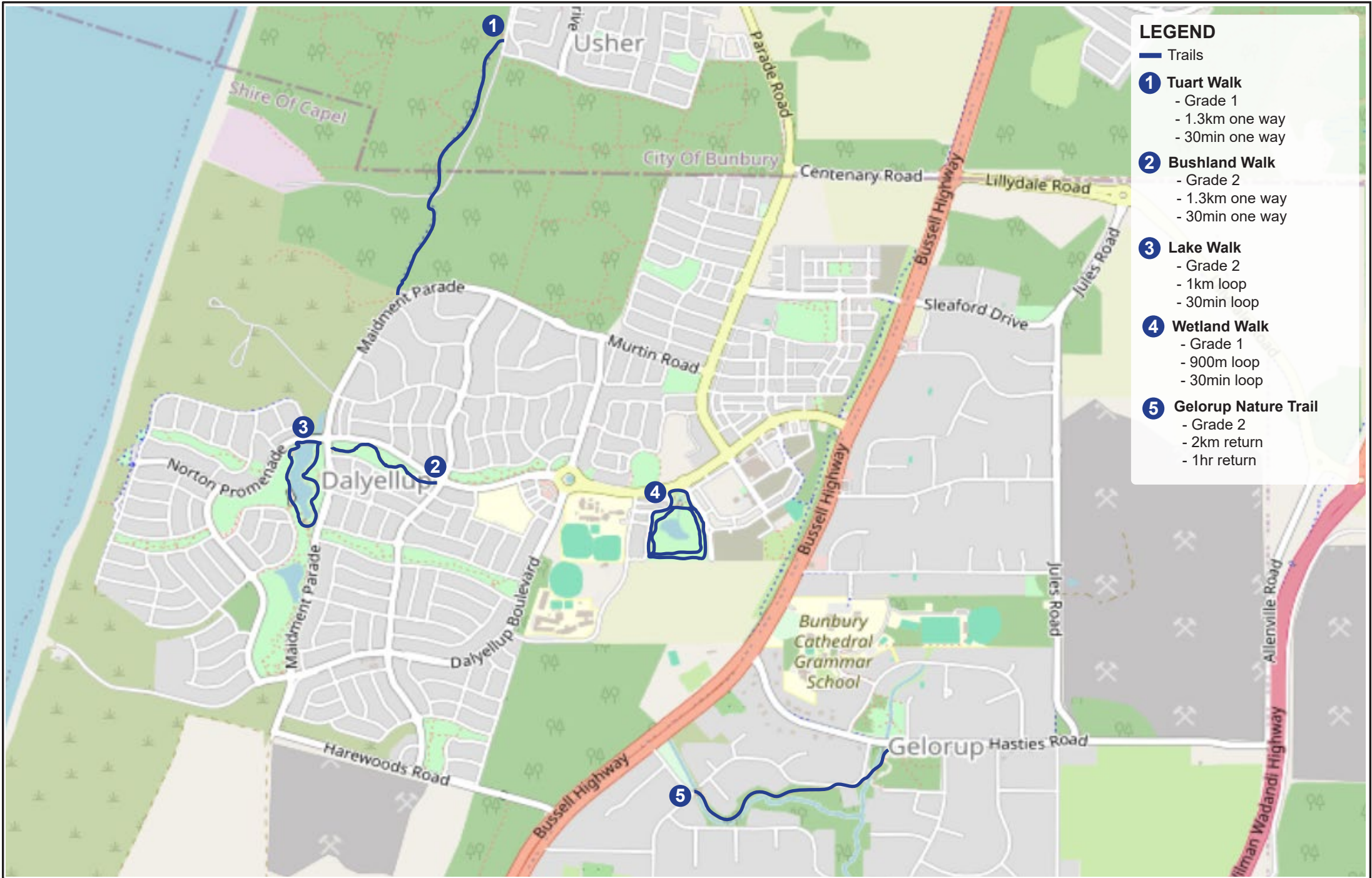
LEGEND

— Trails

1 Tuart Walk
- Grade 1
- 1.3km one way
- 30min one way

2 Bushland Walk
- Grade 2
- 1.3km one way
- 30min one way

3 Lake Walk
- Grade 2
- 1km loop
- 30min loop

4 Wetland Walk
- Grade 1
- 900m loop
- 30min loop

5 Gelorup Nature Trail
- Grade 2
- 2km return
- 1hr return
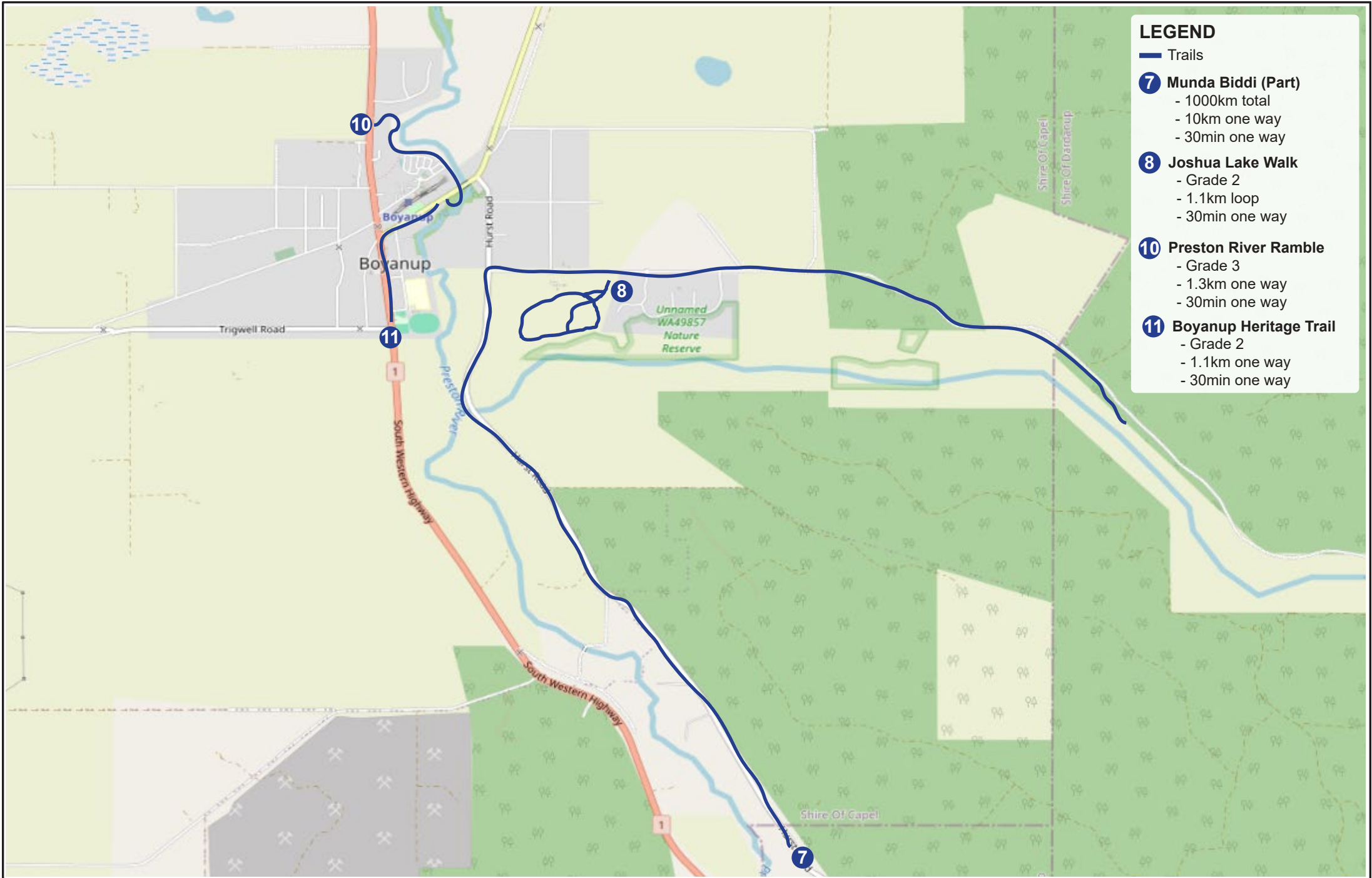
Boyanup

Trigwell Road

Hurst Road

Preston River

South Western Highway

Unnamed WA49857 Nature Reserve

Shire Of Capel

Shire Of Dardanup

Shire Of Capel

TREDWELL

Tredwell Management Services
3/217 Henley Beach Road
Torrensville, SA 5031
Phone: 08 8234 6387

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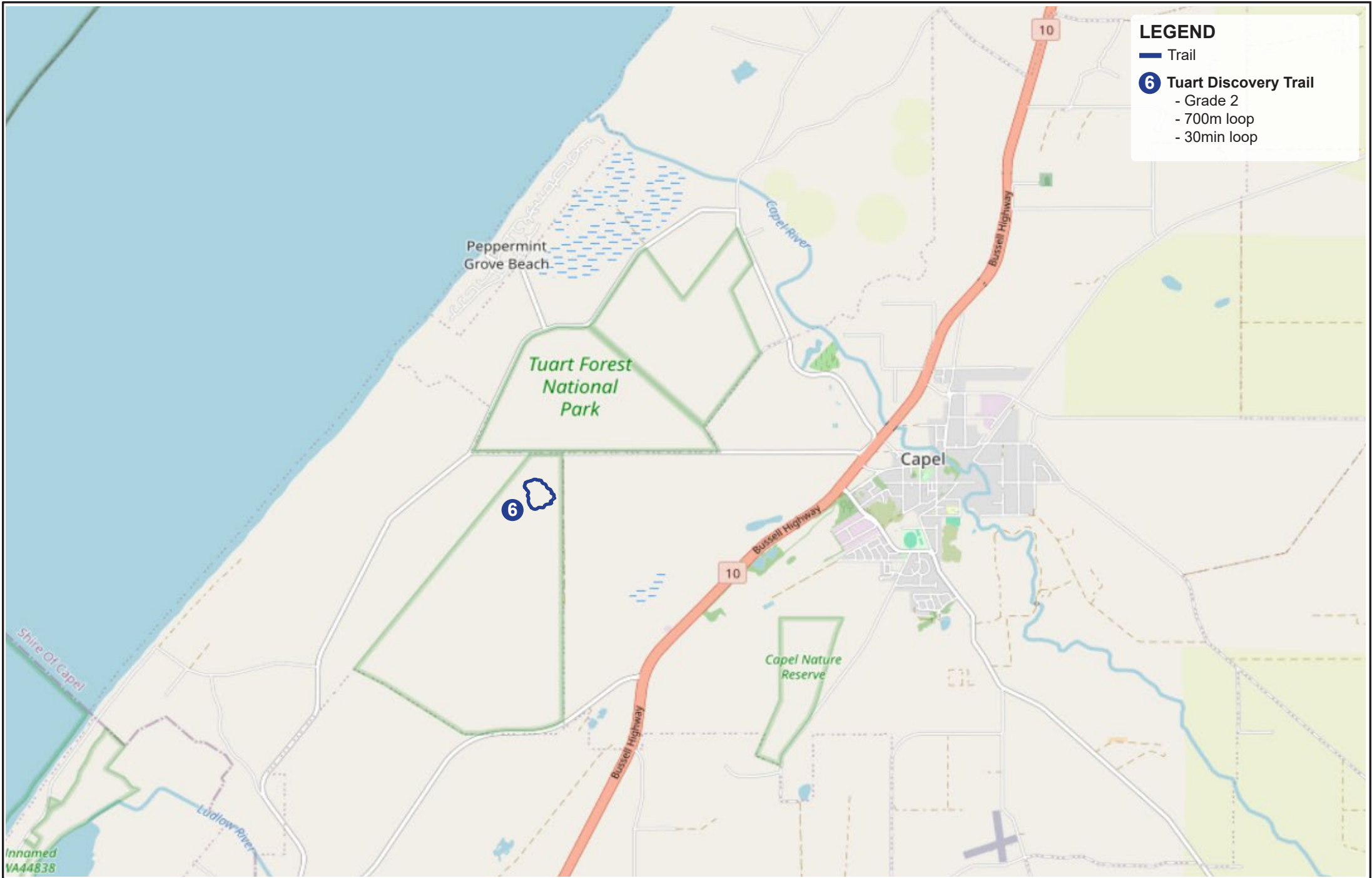
Client
Shire of Capel

PROJECT
Shire of Capel Trails Master Plan

DRAWING TITLE
Capel River Existing Trails

Drawn:
AP
Reviewed:
NT

Rev.	Date	Description

DRAFT

Map No.
MAP 4

Revision
–

Peppermint
Grove Beach

Capel River

Tuart Forest
National
Park

Bussell Highway

Capel

6

Bussell Highway

Capel Nature
Reserve

Shire Of Capel

Ludlow River

Innamed
VA44838

Trail Audit

Issues and Opportunities

The summary of key issues and opportunities for the Shire of Capel's existing tracks and trails have been identified below which have been used to inform the Action Plan.

Key Existing Trail Issues and Opportunities
Many trails have not been regularly maintained and are in poor to fair condition, with overgrown vegetation, surface degradation, and limited accessibility for users of varying ages and abilities.
Signage and waymarking is sparse or absent across several sites, and existing signs are often inconsistent in style, deteriorated, or outdated highlighting the need for a unified signage strategy aligned with current standards.
Supporting infrastructure such as seating, shade shelters, drinking fountains, and toilet facilities is also limited or lacking entirely, reducing the overall quality and comfort of the trail experience.
Information provision remains inadequate, with limited availability of maps, brochures, and digital resources, and a lack of coordinated promotion undermines public awareness and trail usage.
Trail connectivity is another key gap, with missed opportunities to link existing trails to points of interest (i.e. community facilities, town centres, heritage sites, lookouts etc).
There are strategic opportunities to develop new trails in locations that strengthen and expand connectivity, creating a more integrated and accessible system.
There is significant opportunity to enhance the trail network by improving accessibility for all users.
There is a clear need to establish trail connections between Shire of Capel townships to support a range of users including cyclists, walkers, runners, and horse riders while contributing to active transport networks and advancing broader mobility and access objectives.
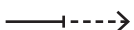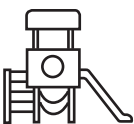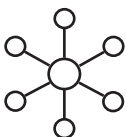
Strategy & Action Plan

Trail Planning Principles

The following trail planning principles are adapted from best-practice guidelines and have been specifically tailored to inform the development of the Trails Master Plan. These principles, outlined below, provide the foundational framework for the Plan.

1. Ensure socially, economically and environmentally sustainable trail development and management

2. Provide trails which are readily accessible, provide links between key destinations (towns) and promote active lifestyles

3. Provide a diverse range of trail opportunities and encourage the broadest possible community participation

4. Maximise use of existing trails where they are appropriately located and have the capacity to sustain additional use

5. Manage trails professionally, effectively and equitably

6. Provide safe trails through adherence to relevant legislative and activity safety requirements

7. Ensure that universal design principles are embedded into trail design and development

8. Maximise the opportunity to attract trail-related programs and events

9. Encourage community involvement in the planning and design of trails

10. Involve local Indigenous People in the planning, design & interpretation; of trails which have Aboriginal heritage values

11. Support, promote and advocate for trail users in relation to relevant issues within the region

12. Develop & maintain partnerships to provide trails and associated facilities.

Strategic Outcomes

In order to deliver the vision, the following series of Strategic Outcomes have been developed.

A. Integrated Planning & Management

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

B. Quality, Safe and Sustainable Network of Existing Trails

Existing trails are enhanced to provide high quality, safe and sustainable opportunities for residents and visitors with a range of interests and abilities.

C. Sustainable, Responsible and Relevant Trail Developments

New trail developments are strategic, well considered, responsive to community need and aligned with key stakeholder priorities.

D. Information and Marketing

Well promoted, consistent and reliable trail information encourages recreational trail users to confidently, safely and sustainably explore the region.

E. Community, Tourism & Economic Development

Use trail development and provision as a community, tourism and economic development tool.

Strategy & Action Plan

Project Assessment & Timeframe

In order to effectively focus available funding (private, local, state, federal) to deliver a quality walking, cycling and horse riding network across the Shire, a phased and prioritised approach is required. Potential projects have been identified and broadly prioritised based on:

- Need/Demand: field observation, professional judgment and input from the Shire of Capel staff
- Feasibility: project size, resource requirements/cost, social, economic or environmental constraints, likelihood of successful implementation
- Location: Proximity to residential populations, proximity to existing trails networks, identified gaps in current provision, connectivity, proximity to significant visitor/tourist attractions
- Benefit: Overall benefit to the region and community (social, environmental, economic).

It is anticipated that implementation of the Trails Master Plan will include consultation with stakeholders and the wider community. Levels of community interest in a project should further inform prioritisation. A potential project that generates a high level of public interest and is relatively easy to implement at reasonable cost should be prioritised above a project requiring substantial funding, has significant constraints and limited public interest.

Each action has an indicative timeframe for implementation:

- Short (2025- 2028) - 3yrs
- Medium (2029 - 2034) - 6yrs
- Longer (2035+) - 10yrs+
- Ongoing.

These timeframes should be reviewed periodically.

The Shire of Capel will work with its partners towards implementation, acknowledging that timeframes and priorities will be influenced by various factors such as funding priorities. Key projects requiring initial feasibility studies, design development and/or cross-agency collaboration will likely take multiple years. Some actions will be reliant on the successful completion of other actions.

Implementation will be staged as it is not feasible to deliver all identified trail projects at the same time.

Indicative Cost Estimates

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

Cost	Estimated Cost Range
Low (L)	<$100,000
Medium (M)	$100,000 - $500,000
High (H)	>$500,000

Partners

There are various complexities surrounding trail planning and development, including multiple land tenure, cross government boundary/regional projects involving multiple government departments, and the diverse, and sometimes conflicting aspirations of community stakeholders. Recognising this, the Shire of Capel (SoC) will need to collaborate with a variety of partners, noting that some of the identified actions may not be deliverable without such support.

Partners include:

- Trails Management Group (TMG)
- Traditional Owners/ First Nations Peoples (TO/FNP)
- Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS)
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
- Department of Planning, Lands & Heritage (DPLH)
- Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC)
- Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA)
- Department of Transport (DoT)
- Department of Water & Environmental Regulation (DWER)
- Water Corporation (WC)
- Trail User Groups (TUG)
- TrailsWA (TWA)
- Neighbouring Council (NC)
- Bunbury Geographe Tourism Partnership (BGTP)
- Private Developers (PD)
- Friends of Group (FoG)
- Munda Biddi Trail Foundation (MBTF)
- Capel Chamber of Commerce (CCC).

Strategy & Action Plan

Overview

Strategic Outcome A: Integrated Planning & Management Underpinning a sustainable, integrated, and accessible trails network is a strategic framework and coordinated approach with prioritised investment and appropriate allocation of resources		Priority	Cost	Area
A1	**Integrated Framework:** Implement an integrated framework for the planning and management of trails across the Shire of Capel.	High	Low	Shire wide
A2	**Trail Planning, Management and Maintenance:** Ensure that consistent, comprehensive and best practice processes are utilised in the planning, management and maintenance of the Shire of Capel trails network.	High	Low	Shire wide
Strategic Outcome B: Quality, Safe, and Sustainable Network of Existing Trails Existing trails are enhanced to provide high quality, safe, and sustainable opportunities for residents and visitors with a range of interests and abilities.		Priority	Cost	Area
B1	**Tuart Walk:** *Be guided by DBCA in promoting the Tuart Walk as a key regional trail, with a focus on improving accessibility and ensuring it is inclusive for users of all abilities.*	*		Dalyellup
B2	**Bushland Walk:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Bushland Walk as an important linkage to the Lake Walk.	Medium	Low	Dalyellup
B3	**Lake Walk:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Lake Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.	High	Low	Dalyellup
B4	**Wetland Walk:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Wetland Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.	Medium	Low	Dalyellup
B5	**Gelorup Nature Trail:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Gelorup Nature Trail.	Medium	Medium	Gelorup
B6	**Tuart Discovery Trail:** *Collaborate with DBCA to elevate the Tuart Discovery Trail as a must-visit destination that showcases the natural and cultural significance of the Tuart Forest.*	*		Forest Beach
B7	**Munda Biddi:** *Work in partnership with the DBCA to position the trail as a premier cycle tourism experience through the Shire, highlighting local landscapes, heritage, and visitor offerings.*	*		Boyanup
B8	**Joshua Lake Walk:** Maintain, enhance and promote Joshua Lake Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.	High	Medium	Boyanup
B9	**Ironstone Gully Falls Trails:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Ironstone Gully Falls Trail that showcases the seasonal waterfall, geology, Aboriginal history, flora and fauna.	High	Medium	Capel
B10	**Preston River Ramble:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Preston River Ramble, while assessing the trail's capacity to accommodate mountain bike use in line with regional cycling strategies and user needs.	Low	High	Boyanup
B11	**Boyanup Heritage Trails:** Maintain, enhance and promote the Boyanup Heritage Trail.	Low	Low	Boyanup

* Where trails are owned and managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), the Shire of Capel's involvement is limited to a supporting role, with any actions or initiatives subject to DBCA's direction, management responsibilities, and approval processes.

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategic Outcome C: Sustainable, Responsible and Relevant Trail Developments New trail developments are strategic, well considered, responsive to community need and aligned with key stakeholder priorities.		Priority	Cost	Area
C1	**Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link (Tuart Forest Section):** Support the staged development of the Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link as a key regional connection.	High	High	Bunbury to Busselton
C2	**Five Mile Brook Walking Trail:** Collaborate with Main Roads Western Australia to facilitate the asset transition of the Five Mile Brook Walking Trail in Gelorup, ensuring its integration into the local trail network.	High	Low	Gelorup
C3	**Capel River Trail:** Collaborate with relevant landowners and stakeholders to assess the feasibility of a staged trail development along the Capel River.	Medium	High	Peppermint Grove Beach to Capel
C4	**Capel to Peppermint Grove:** Evaluate potential route options to determine the safest and most appropriate cycling alignment between Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach.	Medium	Medium - High	Peppermint Grove Beach to Capel
C5	**Rail Trail:** Investigate the feasibility of developing rail trails within the Shire of Capel	Low	High	Shire wide
C6	**Mountain Bike Skills Park:** Investigate the feasibility of developing a Mountain Bike Skills Park within the Shire of Capel	Low	Medium	Capel
C7	**Bridle Trails:** Protect, enhance and formalise the region's network of strategic connections for equine trail users.	Medium	Low	North Boyanup
C8	**Munda Biddi Trail:** *Collaborate with DBCA to investigate the feasibility of establishing a spur trail through Boyanup town centre.*	*		Boyanup
C9	**Gravel Riding:** Support key stakeholder led initiatives to develop and promote a suite of signature gravel riding routes.	Medium	Low	Shire wide
C10	**Trail Bike Riding:** Support key stakeholder led initiatives that promote sanctioned trail bike riding.	Medium	Low	Shire wide
C11	**Art & Culture Trail:** Explore opportunities to develop an inclusive Art and Culture Trail that is accessible to people of all abilities	Medium	Low	Shire wide
C12	**Drive Trail:** Explore the potential to establish a Wellness Themed Drive Trail	Low	Low	Shire wide
C13	**Paddle Trail:** Explore opportunities to develop paddle trails, including canoe and stand-up paddle board routes.	Low	Low	Shire wide
C14	**Peppermint Grove Beach:** Develop a discovery trail at Peppermint Grove Beach	Medium	Low	Peppermint Grove Beach
C15	**Harewoods Rd Bushlands Reserve, Dalyellup:** Protect, enhance and formalise a trail network within the Harewoods Bushland Reserve to safeguard the site's environmental values.	Low	Medium	Dalyellup
C16	**Road Cycling:** Support key stakeholder led initiatives to develop and promote a suite of signature road cycling routes.	Medium	Low	Shire wide

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategic Outcome D: Information and Marketing	Priority	Cost	Area
Well promoted, consistent and reliable trail information encourages recreational trail users to confidently, safely and sustainably explore the region.	Priority	Cost	Area
D1 Provide consistent and reliable signage, maps and supporting information for all trails across the Shire.	High	Low	Shire wide
D2 Increased promotion and marketing of trail opportunities across the Shire of Capel	Medium	Medium	Shire wide
Strategic Outcome E: Community, Tourism & Economic Development	Priority	Cost	Area
Use trail development and provision as a community, tourism and economic development tool.	Priority	Cost	Area
E1 Use trail development and provision as a community, tourism and economic development tool.	High	Low	Shire wide

Strategic Outcome A: Integrated Planning & Management

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

Strategy & Action Plan
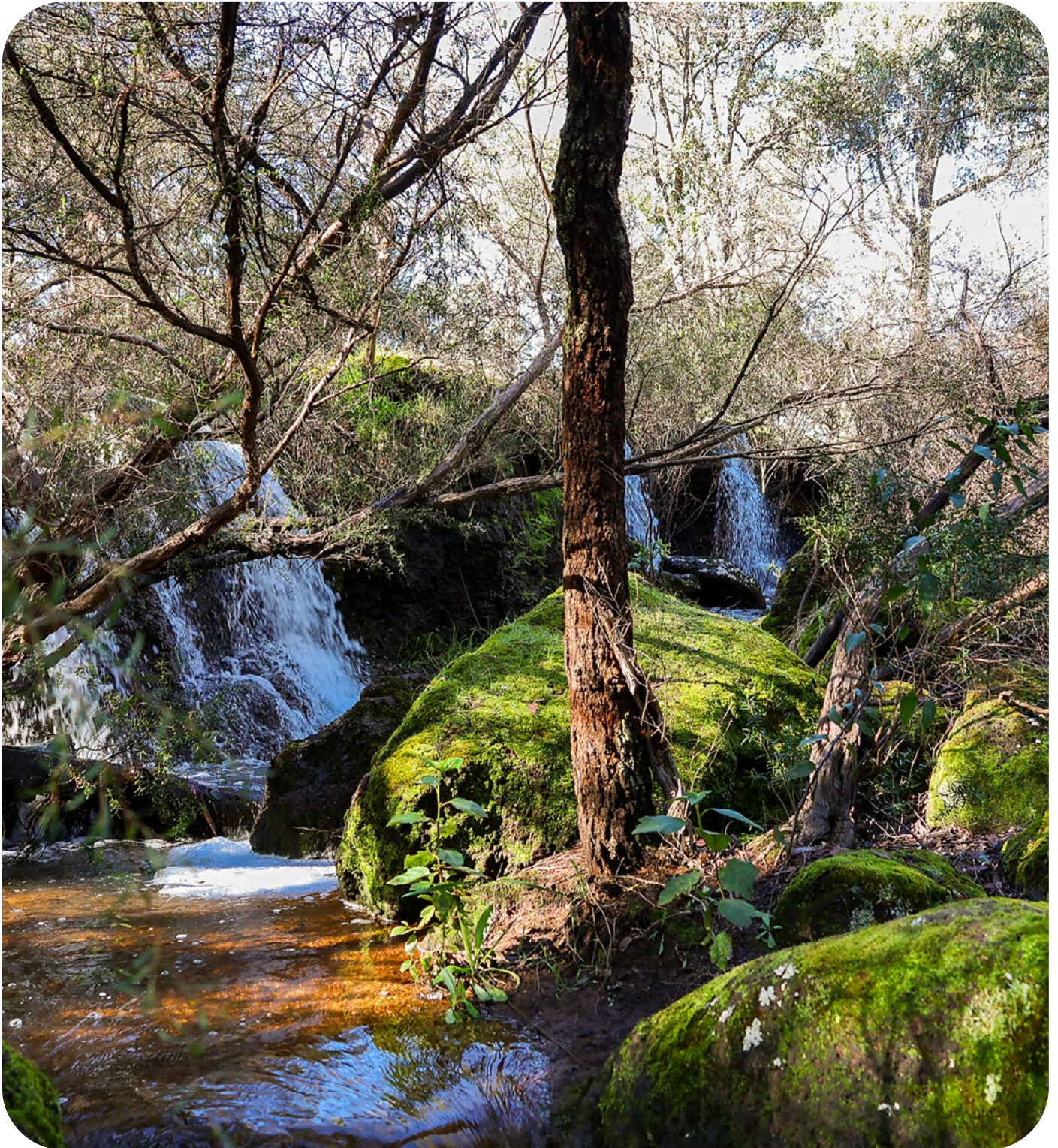
Strategy A1 Integrated Framework

Implement an integrated framework for the planning and management of trails across the Shire of Capel.

Rationale

Integrated trail networks present opportunities to deliver positive outcomes across multiple sectors, including health, recreation, transport, and environmental conservation. The Trails Master Plan establishes a strategic framework to guide the ongoing development, maintenance, and enhancement of trails, supporting long-term economic, social, and environmental benefits.

A coordinated, integrated approach is essential to ensure alignment and collaboration between the Shire of Capel, relevant Western Australian Government agencies (e.g., Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries; Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions), industry stakeholders, businesses, and the trail user community. Ongoing success in implementing the Trails Master Plan will be underpinned by the continued operation of the Trails Management Group and the allocation of dedicated staff resources within the Shire focused on trail development and activation. Continued collaboration and appropriate resourcing will be critical to delivering the Plan's objectives.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
A1.1	Continue to support the Trails Management Group, ensuring it benefits from specialist knowledge and inputs from the State Government (e.g. Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions), Trail User Groups, Traditional Owners & First Nations peoples/ and Tourism.	Short	SoC, TMG, CITS, DBCA, TO/FNP	Low
A1.2	Advocate and seek funding for a Trails Planning and for the allocation of dedicated staff time or resourcing to support trail planning and development, enabling coordination of the Trails Master Plan in partnership with the Trails Reference Group and other key stakeholders.	Short	SoC, CITS	Low
A1.3	Incorporate trail planning initiatives into planning and budget processes, such as local and regional plans (e.g. strategic plans, development plans, tourism strategies and initiatives of other relevant organisations).	Ongoing	SoC	Low
A1.4	Facilitate and strengthen partnerships and cross-border collaboration with surrounding Council's to implement mutually beneficial trail development projects.	Ongoing	SoC, NC	Low
A1.5	Incorporate First Nations peoples, cultural, educational and heritage interests into trail development initiatives (e.g. Karri Karrak Aboriginal Corporation and Gnaala Karla Booja Aboriginal Corporation).	Ongoing	SoC, TO/FNP	Low
A1.6	Prioritise trail developments that strengthen active transport connections such as walking and cycling between towns within the Shire, enhancing regional linkages and community accessibility.	Ongoing	SoC, MRWA, CITS, DBCA	Low
A1.7	Leverage the trails network as a platform to foster community awareness and promote the protection of high-value environmental assets through initiatives such as educational programs, community events, and interpretive signage.	Ongoing	SoC, DBCA	Low
A1.8	Advocate for the public acquisition of land which has the potential to contribute to strategic trail projects in the future.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low
A1.9	Work with trail user groups to promote a Trail User Code of Conduct to ensure that all types of trail users are informed about their expected behaviour and trail etiquette. Ensure that trail information (including trailhead signage) clearly states permitted trail user types.	Ongoing	SoC, TUG, TMG	Low

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy A2 Trail Planning, Management and Maintenance

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

Rationale

The 8-Stage Trail Development Process introduces a structured, best-practice framework that ensures consistency, transparency, and quality in the planning, delivery, and renewal of trails. Its adoption by the Shire of Capel embeds due diligence, stakeholder engagement, and continual improvement into each stage of trail development transforming proposals into sustainable, high-quality trail assets.

This process facilitates clear communication with stakeholders by defining development stages and outlining forthcoming steps, enabling informed engagement throughout the trail lifecycle. In addition, the application of industry standards such as standardised naming conventions, consistent inspection and risk management procedures, and tailored trail management plans supports the delivery of safe, functional, and context-sensitive trails across the Shire. Ongoing use of this methodology will ensure the trails network continues to evolve in a coordinated and sustainable manner.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
A2.1	Establish a standard procedure, manual and schedule for trail inspections, hazard reporting and maintenance works, and integrate into regular asset management programs to be undertaken by staff and/or volunteers.	Short	SoC, TUG	Low
A2.2	Use and promote the 8 Stage Trail Development Process as the standardised methodology for all trail developments and renewals. Raise awareness about the standardised process and ensure that key stakeholders are engaged at key points.	Ongoing	SoC	Low
A2.3	Ensure that each trail in the SoC has a clearly defined name which is consistent, relevant and representative of the experience. This ensures that each trail can be clearly identified for trail management, maintenance, signage, safety and promotion. Where supported by Traditional Owners, identify and utilise the Indigenous names of key sites and features.	Ongoing	SoC, TO/FNP, TUG	Low
A2.4	Seek opportunities to enhance access for people of all abilities and where appropriate i.e. for Class 1 walking trails and shared use paths, undertake accessibility audits of trails to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.	Ongoing	SoC	Low - Medium
A2.5	Develop Trail Management Plans for SoC owned/managed trails to clearly define roles, responsibilities and service standards.	Ongoing	SoC	Low - Medium
A2.6	Ensure all new trail developments are guided by relevant Western Australian standards such as the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines, Western Australian Mountain Bike Management Guidelines, and WA Horse Trail Strategy while aligning with applicable national standards and sustainable design principles (e.g. Australian Mountain Bike Trail Guidelines, AS2156 Walking Tracks Parts 1 & 2).	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	NA
A2.7	Monitor and evaluate the success of the trails network through usage monitoring (i.e. observations, trail counters), user experience surveys and achievement of trail management objectives.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low
A2.8	Explore opportunities to engage local volunteers, trail users, and 'Friends of' groups as community stewards of the Shire's trail network. Where appropriate, delegate responsibilities such as routine trail inspections and basic maintenance activities to support ongoing trail care and foster community ownership.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low

Strategic Outcome B: Quality, Safe and Sustainable Network of Existing Trails

Existing trails are enhanced to provide high quality, safe and sustainable opportunities for residents and visitors with a range of interests and abilities .

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B1 Tuart Walk

Be guided by DBCA in promoting the Tuart Walk as a key regional trail, with a focus on improving accessibility and ensuring it is inclusive for users of all abilities.

Rationale

Tuart Walk, located within Kalgulup Regional Park, extends from Ocean Drive to Maidment Parade. The trail is managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). Originally earmarked for residential development, the area has since been preserved as public open space, providing significant recreational and environmental value. Prior to European settlement, this landscape was home to the Noongar people, and the area continues to hold cultural significance. The trail showcases the unique Tuart tree, which is endemic to a narrow 420km coastal strip between Busselton and Jurien Bay, making the area both ecologically and culturally important.

The Tuart Walk is a popular shared-use trail, catering to a broad range of users including walkers, runners, cyclists, and those participating in wheeled activities such as rollerblading and scootering. The existing trail is a well-formed, hardened surface with no steps and is classified as a Class 1 (Easiest) trail; however, it currently lacks some supporting infrastructure. To improve year-round accessibility for unassisted wheelchair users and families with prams, consideration should be given to formalising the informal car park at the northern trailhead (Ocean Drive), incorporating accessible toilet facilities, and updating trailhead signage in line with the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines to include key user information. Additional measures such as the inclusion of braille or audio signage could also be considered to improve accessibility.

Enhancing the trail's accessibility not only improves user safety and comfort but also ensures the trail remains inclusive and welcoming for all members of the community. In addition, these improvements will support increased visitation, encourage active transport, and align with best practice trail development and universal design principles.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B1.1	Liaise with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to: • Consider renaming the trail, currently known as Tuart Walk to better reflect its use for activities such as cycling, roller blading and skateboarding (i.e. Tuart Trail or Tuart Path). Where supported by Traditional Owners, incorporate Indigenous names for key sites and features along the route. • Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Class 1 (Easiest) Tuart Walk in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines and incorporating universal access (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation). • Upgrade the informal dirt car park at the northern end (Ocean Drive) into a formal car park, including the addition of toilet facilities, to enhance user accessibility and safety, including disability access. • Assess the type and extent of vegetation encroachment along the trail, identify high-priority areas where overgrowth impacts trail access or safety and regularly prune vegetation. • Replace the main head board (Maidment Parade end). • Inspect trail every 30 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Class 1 trail and for management of risk.	Medium	DBCA, NC, WC, SoC	Medium - High

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B2 Bushland Walk

Maintain, enhance and promote the Bushland Walk as an important linkage to the Lake Walk.

Rationale

Bushland Walk is a sealed shared use pathway through an east-west corridor in Lawson Park that links Hornibrook Road to Maidment Parade, passing through areas of remnant vegetation. There is a playground and half court basketball court within the park. The western end of this trail joins the Lake Walk around Dalyellup Lakes.

The trail is currently classified as a Grade 2 trail under the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines, which defines it as an easy trail with a modified or hardened surface, gentle hills, and occasional steps. It requires no prior bushwalking experience and is generally suitable for people of all fitness levels, with clear directional signage and limited obstacles. This classification is intended to ensure inclusivity and a positive experience for a wide range of users.

To maintain this classification and meet community expectations, regular surface inspections and trail condition assessments are essential. Enhancements such as upgraded signage, improved lighting, and consistent surface quality will ensure the trail continues to align with the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines' key criteria, which include gradient, quality of tread, signage clarity, presence of steps, and suitability for varying experience and fitness levels.

To further protect the trail environment and user experience, strategies should be employed to discourage the creation of informal tracks, including the use of natural barriers (e.g. logs, temporary fencing). These actions will support the long-term sustainability, safety, and functionality of the Bushland Walk as an important community asset and connector trail.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B2.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Class 2 (Easy) Bushland Walk in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation).	Medium	SoC	Low
B2.2	Encourage the use of the formal pathway and minimise environmental degradation caused by the creation of unauthorised trails by using natural barriers (i.e. fallen logs, temporary fencing) to physically close off tracks.	Short	SoC	Low
B2.3	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Class 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	SoC	Low
	Outside of Trail Audit Project Scope: Consider designating a parking bay near basketball court to address and manage the issue of informal parking on the grass.	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B3 Lake Walk

Maintain, enhance and promote the Lake Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.

Rationale

The Lake Walk is a loop trail that circumnavigates the main lake at Dalyellup. It features a shelter and viewing platform at the south-western corner, as well as facilities such as toilets and a playground. While the majority of the trail is accessible to all abilities there is a flight of steps at the northern end leading up to Norton Promenade.

The trail is currently classified as a Grade 2 trail under the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines, which defines it as an easy trail with a modified or hardened surface, gentle hills, and occasional steps. It requires no prior bushwalking experience and is generally suitable for people of all fitness levels, with clear directional signage and limited obstacles. This classification is intended to ensure inclusivity and a positive experience for a wide range of users.

To enhance user safety and experience, additional signage should be considered to alert users to key trail conditions, including the presence of steps, areas susceptible to seasonal flooding and potential health hazards associated with contact with lake water. Accessibility and year round usability could be improved through the possible installation of a raised boardwalk in the flood prone section of the trail. Upgrading the trail's infrastructure not only improves safety and comfort but also reinforces the trail's role as an inclusive, community-friendly asset. These improvements will help drive increased visitation, support active transport, and align with best-practice principles in trail development and universal design.

A key opportunity exists to promote trails connections from Lake Walk to nearby strategic parks such as Lawson Park (Bushland Walk) Lakes Park, Daablone Park, McMillan Park and Beach Park.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B3.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Class 2 (Easy) Lake Walk in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time, loop and map for orientation). Also, consider including a reminder about the presence of stairs, a warning regarding water may cause ill effects to humans and animals and the trail is susceptible to flooding.	Medium	SoC	Low
B3.2	Develop and implement a repair plan that includes resurfacing, crack filling or level grinding to reduce the risk of tripping hazards, ensuring the path remains safe and accessible for all users.	Short	SoC	Low
B3.3	Once the water has receded, conduct an assessment of any water damage to the trail infrastructure. Implement necessary repairs and perform comprehensive cleaning to restore the affected areas. Consider a raised boardwalk over the track prone to flooding.	Short	SoC	Low
B3.4	Install signage at the lakes edge to explain the habitat value of the uprooted tree and ensure the area is made safe for public access.	Short	SoC	Low
B3.5	Implement a maintenance program for wooden infrastructure, including the staircase, bridge, shelters, viewing platforms and barrier fencing to ensure their structural integrity and extend their lifespan through regular inspections and upkeep.	Medium	SoC	Low
B3.6	Regular inspections of trail lighting is conducted to ensure all fixtures are functioning properly and provided adequate illumination. Energy efficient or solar powered lighting solutions could be considered to reduce costs and environmental impact.	Medium	SoC	Low
B3.7	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Class 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	SoC	Low
B3.8	Identify and promote trail connections from Lake Walk to nearby strategic parks such as Lakes Park, Daablone Park, McMillan Park and Beach Park to expand the trail network and improve access to recreational destinations across Dalyellup.	Medium	SoC	Low

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B4 Wetland Walk

Maintain, enhance and promote the Wetland Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.

Rationale

The Wetland Walk is a sealed, well-formed trail that encircles the wetland in Dalyellup East, with an additional footpath running around the outer perimeter. It also has a small boardwalk section over the wetland with seating that provides an opportunity to pause and appreciate the natural surroundings. It is a highly valued community asset, catering primarily to walkers and runners and classified as a Grade 1 (Easiest) trail under the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines. The trail features a hardened surface, is free of steps, and offers a low gradient, making it suitable for users of all abilities, including those using wheelchairs, mobility aids, prams, or walking with young children.

However, recent residential development in the area between Wicklow Boulevard and Wallung Road has temporarily disrupted connectivity at the southern end of the trail. In addition, natural wear, minor infrastructure degradation, and vegetation encroachment have affected overall trail condition, safety and user experience.

Enhancing the trail's accessibility not only improves user safety and comfort but also ensures the trail remains inclusive and welcoming for all members of the community. In addition, these improvements will support increased visitation, encourage active transport, and align with best practice trail development and universal design principles.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B4.1	Review and upgrade trailhead signs for the Class 1 (Easiest) Wetland Walk in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time, loop and map for orientation).	Medium	SoC	Low
B4.2	Ensure the repair of the gravel section of the trail and establish a reconnection between Wicklow Boulevard and Wallung Road at the southern end of the trail.	Short	SoC, PD	Low
B4.3	Consider level grinding the raised section of the pathway to reduce the risk of tripping hazards, ensuring the path remains safe and accessible for all users.	Short	SoC	Low
B4.4	Assess the type and extent of vegetation encroachment along the trail, identify high-priority areas where overgrowth impacts trail access or safety and regularly prune vegetation.	Medium	SoC	Low
B4.5	Inspect trail every 30 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Class 1 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	SoC	Low
B4.6	Consider the development of a greater Dalyellup urban trails network, potentially incorporating key reserves such as: • Norton Reserve • Murtin Park	Longer	SoC	Low

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B5 Gelorup Nature Trail

Maintain, enhance and promote the Gelorup Nature Trail.

Rationale

The Gelorup Nature Trail connects Sheoak Park on Bussell Highway to Hasties Road and is highly regarded for its seasonal display of Western Australian wildflowers. Currently commencing adjacent to the local fire station, the trail would benefit from being realigned to begin at the nearby community centre and skate park precinct, where existing infrastructure such as parking and public amenities including toilets would enhance user convenience and encourage greater use.

The trail is classified as a Grade 2 walk under the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines, indicating an easy-level trail with a generally hardened surface and gentle gradients. It is accessible to people of varying fitness levels and requires no prior bushwalking experience. Despite its appeal, several gaps in trail infrastructure and continuity have been identified that, if addressed, would significantly improve user experience, safety, and functionality. Key improvement needs include the provision of clear directional signage particularly where the trail deviates onto Hamstead Road, along with the formalisation and widening of existing surfaces to ensure consistency with Grade 2 standards.

There are also opportunities to extend the trail into Sheoak Park, which would enhance the trail's endpoint by offering an improved sense of arrival and additional parking. A potential extension into Michael Tichbon Park should also be explored to support the development of a more cohesive and connected local trail network. Future linkage opportunities

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B5.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Class 2 (Easy) Gelorup Nature Trail in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation).	Medium	SoC	Low
B5.2	Consider installing a surface drain, grated trench drain or swale to prevent water from flowing from the fire station driveway over the trail.	Medium	SoC	Low
B5.3	Install waymarkers at all intersections along the trail in line with Australian Standard 2156.1. Consider incorporating distance markers to enhance the trails suitability for community recreation.	Short	SoC	Low
B5.4	Ensure the entirety of the trail is 900mm or more and has a well maintained, hardened surface with minimal intrusions. Address sparse areas by replenishing gravel where necessary.	Short	SoC	Medium
B5.5	Consider upgrading the Hamstead Road verge to incorporate a modified or hardened surface with a width of at least 900m or more.	Medium	SoC	Low
B5.6	Mandate the removal of residential sand stockpiles encroaching on the trail corridor.	Short	SoC	Low
B5.7	Consider extending the formal trail into: • Sheoak Park to improve the point of interest at the trail's endpoint and increase parking availability. • Michael Tichbon Park	Medium	SoC	Medium
B5.8	Consider realigning the trail to run behind the fire station and extend into the community centre carpark, positioning it near the recreation area (Note that approvals for vegetation removal may be required).	Medium	SoC	Low
B5.9	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Class 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	SoC	Low
B5.10	If feasible, explore the opportunity to develop a linkage to Harwoods Rd Bushland Reserve (Refer C15)	Medium	SoC	NA

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B6 Tuart Discovery Trail

Collaborate with DBCA to elevate the Tuart Discovery Trail as a must-visit destination that showcases the natural and cultural significance of the Tuart Forest.

Rationale

The Tuart Discovery Trail is located within Tuart Forest National Park and managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). The trail offers an easy walk over mostly flat terrain through James Block, an area of historical significance as the last site harvested for saw logs in 1973. Interpretive signage along the trail provides insights into the area's cultural and ecological history. The Shire of Capel supports the promotion of the Tuart Discovery Trail to raise awareness of the Tuart Forest's ecological significance and foster community education and sustainability values through nature-based experiences.

The Tuart Discovery Trail was identified as the second most popular trail in the Shire based on feedback from the community survey conducted during the public consultation process.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B6.1	Liaise with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to: • Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Class 2 (Easy) Tuart Discovery Trail in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time, loop and map for orientation). • Make sure all promotional materials and trailhead signs include mosquito warnings. • Review and upgrade the interpretation signs in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines & Australian Standard 2156.1 • Ensure the entirety of the trail is 900mm or more and has a well maintained, hardened surface with minimal intrusions. • Conduct a review of the trees along the trail to assess and ensure they do not pose a risk to walkers due to potential falling hazards. • Implement an eradication program for the removal of Arum Lily. • Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Class 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	DBCA	NA

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B7 Munda Biddi

Work in partnership with the DBCA & Munda Biddi Trail Foundation to position the trail as a premier cycle tourism experience through the Shire, highlighting local landscapes, heritage, and visitor offerings.

Rationale

The Munda Biddi Trail is a world-class, long-distance cycling trail that spans over 1,000 kilometres from Mundaring to Albany, offering a unique off-road riding experience through some of Western Australia's most diverse and scenic landscapes. Within the Shire of Capel, the trail currently follows Joshua Creek Road (a gravel surface), transitions onto Armstrong Street, and continues along the bitumen surface of Hurst Road. While this alignment enables regional connectivity, sections of the route, particularly along Hurst Road have limited verge width and no dedicated cycling shoulder, which may compromise rider safety.

There is an opportunity to strengthen the trail's identity and function within the Shire by improving infrastructure, signage, and local promotion, as well as exploring the feasibility of a realigned off-road section. Enhancing the trail experience will not only support regional tourism and economic development, but also improve safety and increase the visibility of local attractions and services, particularly in Boyanup township. These improvements align with broader objectives identified in the Bunbury Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B7.1	Liaise with the DBCA & Munda Biddi Trail Foundation to: • Advocate for the addition of a shoulder on Hurst Rd to improve safety for cyclists. • Facilitate the inspection and maintenance of trail markers, ensuring they are in good condition and strategically located. • Promote Boyanup township as a destination, highlighting available accommodation, dining options and local activities to enhance visitor experience. Consider installing a bike repair station.	Ongoing	DBCA, MBTF, MRWA	NA
B7.2	Collaborate with DBCA & the Munda Biddi Foundation to facilitate a site assessment, concept plan, cost estimate for the establishment of a spur trail through the Boyanup town centre (Refer C8)	Longer	DBCA, MBTF, MR	NA

![Tredwell logo]

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B8 Joshua Lake Walk

Maintain, enhance and promote Joshua Lake Walk to improve accessibility and ensure it caters to users of all abilities.

Rationale

Joshua Lake Walk is a hard surface loop trail that circumnavigates the lake, passing through areas of revegetated woodland and grassy spaces of the Yoganup North mineral sands mine site. The trail offers a opportunity to observe the regeneration efforts and interpretation panels explain both the natural and cultural history. Unique features such as the sculpture tree and the presence of native fauna including kangaroos, bandicoots, and brushtail possums enhance the trail's appeal and create a memorable nature based experience for users of all ages.

The trail not only serves a recreational function but also acts as a living case study in post-mining land use and environmental restoration, helping to educate the community and promote sustainable land management practices. It exemplifies how formerly disturbed landscapes can be transformed into accessible, meaningful public spaces that support biodiversity and foster community connection to place.

A current limitation for users is the trail's location, which places it at a significant distance from the nearest public toilet facilities. To enhance accessibility and support broader community use including families, older adults, and visitors with specific needs the provision of on-site amenities, such as a toilet, would be a valuable improvement.

The Joshua Lake Walk was identified as the third most popular trail in the Shire based on feedback from the community survey conducted during the public consultation process.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B8.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Class 2 (Easy) Joshua Lake Walk in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and loop, map for orientation). • Consider renaming the trail, currently known as Joshua Lake Walk to better reflect its use for activities such as cycling (i.e. Joshua Lake Trail or Joshua Lake Path)	Medium	SoC	Low
B8.2	Review and replace the danger sign at the sandy beach area to clearly communicate whether swimming is permitted or not, while ensuring the sign effectively conveys the water hazard.	Short	SoC	Low
B8.3	Replace the cement drain cover to ensure safety and proper functionality.	Short	SoC	Low
B8.4	Install a interpretation sign near the sculpture tree to provide an explanation of its significance.	Medium	SoC	Low
B8.5	Consider the installation of toilet facilities, to enhance user accessibility providing essential facilities that accommodate a wider range of visitors.	Medium	SoC	Medium
B8.6	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	SoC	Low

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B9 Ironstone Gully Falls Trails

Maintain, enhance and promote the Ironstone Gully Falls Trail that showcases the seasonal waterfall, geology, Aboriginal history, flora and fauna.

Rationale

The Ironstone Gully Falls Trail, located approximately 17 kilometres south-east of Capel, is a historically significant site that has been reserved for public recreation since 1903. Set within a natural bushland environment, the trail leads to a picturesque seasonal waterfall where a stream cascades over ironstone rock formations, peaking in a dramatic nine-metre drop between August and October. The site's natural beauty, combined with its cultural heritage and accessibility, makes it a highly valued destination for both locals and visitors.

Interpretive signage has recently been installed, adding educational and cultural depth to the visitor experience. These panels explore the area's geology, flora and fauna, Aboriginal history and creek further enhancing its role as a nature-based learning destination.

To ensure the ongoing sustainability, safety, and appeal of the trail, there is a need to maintain and enhance key infrastructure, including signage, drainage, and access routes. Addressing issues such as informal trail creation, waterlogging, and vehicle access will help protect the site's environmental integrity while improving the overall trail experience. Promoting the trail through interpretive and wayfinding improvements will further elevate its profile and support its continued use as a key asset within the Shire of Capel's trail network.

The Ironstone Gully Falls Trail was identified as the most popular trail in the Shire through the community survey conducted as part of the public consultation process, reflecting strong local engagement and recognition of its recreational and environmental value.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B9.1	Install signage for the Class 3 (Moderate) Ironstone Gully Falls Trail inline with Australian Standard 2156.1 and WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines • Trailhead (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time, loop and map for orientation). • Waymarkers (i.e. track marker) • Interpretation (i.e. Geology, Creek, Flora & Fauna, Aboriginal History)	Short	SoC, TO/FNP	Low
B9.2	Consider optimal vehicle access within the park. The following options may be evaluated: a. Full restriction (vehicle access limited to carpark only) b. Partial restriction (vehicle access permitted to carpark and picnic area only) c. Full access (unrestricted access, with entry and exit gates open at all times to prevent cars reversing on the trail)	Short	SoC, TO/FNP	Low
B9.3	Review all management signage and replace damaged or worn signs. Implement clear signage for campfire rules pending Council's decision.	Short	SoC,	Low
B9.4	Improve drainage by installing culverts, swales or elevating the trail in affected areas to allow water to flow off the trail more effectively and prevent future water logging.	Short	SoC,	Low
B9.5	Encourage the use of the formal trail and minimise environmental degradation caused by the creation of unauthorised trails by using barriers (i.e. waymarkers, fallen logs, temporary fencing) to physically close off tracks.	Short	SoC,	Low
B9.6	Inspect trail every 6 months or less, to ensure built facilities will be managed for public risk in line with requirement for Class 3 trail.	Ongoing	SoC,	Low
B9.7	Work in partnership with Main Roads WA to upgrade the entrance to Ironstone Gully Falls from Goodwood Road to improve safety, access and viability.	Short	SoC, MRWA	Medium

Strategy B10 Preston River Ramble

Maintain, enhance and promote the Preston River Ramble, while assessing the trail's capacity to accommodate mountain bike use in line with regional cycling strategies and user needs.

Rationale

The Preston River Ramble commences at Lions Park and follows a scenic route along the banks of the Preston River, before diverting away from the watercourse and ascending a set of stairs to conclude at the information bay on the South Western Highway. The trail offers a tranquil, shaded walking experience that connects the community with its natural surroundings. Despite its appeal, a number limitations have been identified that currently restrict the trail's functionality, safety, and accessibility. Additionally, informal mountain bike use has been observed along parts of the trail. To maintain trail integrity and manage user conflict, consideration should be given to either formalising and managing this route as a walk only or inclusive of cycling as referred to as a Tourist Trail in the *Bunbury-Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy*.

Enhancement of Lions Park, as the primary trailhead, presents an opportunity to improve visitor comfort and inclusivity through the provision of accessible parking, upgraded seating, and repositioning of signage to avoid reliance on stairs at the commencement of the trail. Improvements to the northern end of the trail, including wayfinding and tread upgrades, will support a more legible and accessible connection to the South Western Highway, reinforcing its function as a recreational link.

To ensure public safety and ensure long-term functionality, an ongoing maintenance program is required for the trail and associated infrastructure, including regular inspections and targeted asset renewal as needed.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B10.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Class 3 (Moderate) Preston River Ramble in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation).	Longer	SoC	Low
B10.2	Collaborate with the local community to upgrade Lions Park, focusing on improving visitor experience and accessibly. This may involve enhancing parking facilities, updating park furniture and relocating trail head signage to reduce the need for steps at the start.	Longer	SoC	Medium
B10.3	Enhance the existing dirt car park between the bridges to include the installation of appropriate drainage system. These improvements aim to mitigate erosion, enhance user accessibility and improve safety.	Longer	SoC	Medium
B10.4	Formalise the trail connection to the South Western Hwy by installing wayfinding markers and/or enhancing the trail tread.	Longer	SoC	Low
B10.5	In response to community sentiment, either formally sanction the mountain bike trail within the walking trail area or decommission it to maintain the integrity of the walking trail's intended use. Refer B10.9	Longer	SoC	Low - Medium
B10.6	Improve drainage by installing culverts or swales to the trail in affected areas to allow water to flow off the trail more effectively and prevent erosion.	Longer	SoC	Low
B10.7	Implement a maintenance program for wooden infrastructure, including the staircase, shelter, barrier fencing, seats, arch and retaining wall (Lion Park) to ensure their structural integrity and extend their lifespan through regular inspections and upkeep.	Medium	SoC	Low - Medium
B10.8	Inspect trail every 6 months or less, to ensure built facilities will be managed for public risk in line with requirement for Class 3 trail.	Ongoing	SoC	Low
B10.9	Explore the feasibility of creating a Tourist Trail along the Preston River as outlined in the *Bunbury-Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy*. *Tourist Trail - provides long distance, off road (predominately unsealed) riding experience through natural settings, away from motorised traffic.*	Longer	SoC, NC	NA

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy B11 Boyanup Heritage Trail

Maintain, enhance and promote the Boyanup Heritage Trail.

Rationale

Boyanup Heritage Trail starts in Lions Park and ends at the CWA rooms on South Western Highway. The trail is designed to highlight key elements of the region's cultural heritage through a series of interpretive panels, offering visitors a self-guided journey through the town's rich past. As a Grade 2 (Easy) trail, it is intended to be accessible to a broad cross-section of the community, including families, seniors, and visitors seeking a low-impact, educational experience.

Heritage trails play a vital role in fostering a deeper connection between people and place. They promote cultural awareness, celebrate local stories, and contribute to the preservation of community identity. Additionally, they support tourism by encouraging visitors to explore local landmarks and spend more time in town centres. Well-maintained trails with engaging interpretation and inclusive infrastructure create a welcoming environment that benefits both residents and visitors.

To ensure the Boyanup Heritage Trail continues to meet these outcomes, upgrades are required to signage, accessibility, and infrastructure. Reviewing and updating the trailhead signage in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 will ensure users receive accurate and consistent trail information. Relocating the existing Lions Park trailhead closer to the footpath will improve accessibility, particularly for individuals with reduced mobility, while a secondary trailhead sign at the southern end would support wayfinding for those approaching from the opposite direction.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
B11.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Class 2 (Easy) Heritage Trail in line with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation).	Longer	SoC	Low
B11.2	Consider relocating the Lions Park trailhead adjacent to the footpath to improve accessibility to a wide range or users (i.e. cater for those with reduced mobility).	Longer	SoC	Low
B11.3	Consider installing a secondary trailhead sign at the southern end of the trail.	Longer	SoC	Low
B11.4	Ensure that trail infrastructure is well maintained and regularly updated to enhance safety and positive user experience (i.e. seats, interpretation signs).	Ongoing	SoC	Low
B11.5	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Class 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	SoC	Low

Strategic Outcome C: Sustainable, Responsible and Relevant Trail Developments

New trail developments are strategic, well considered, responsive to community need and aligned with key stakeholder priorities.

Strategy C1 Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link (Tuart Forest Section)
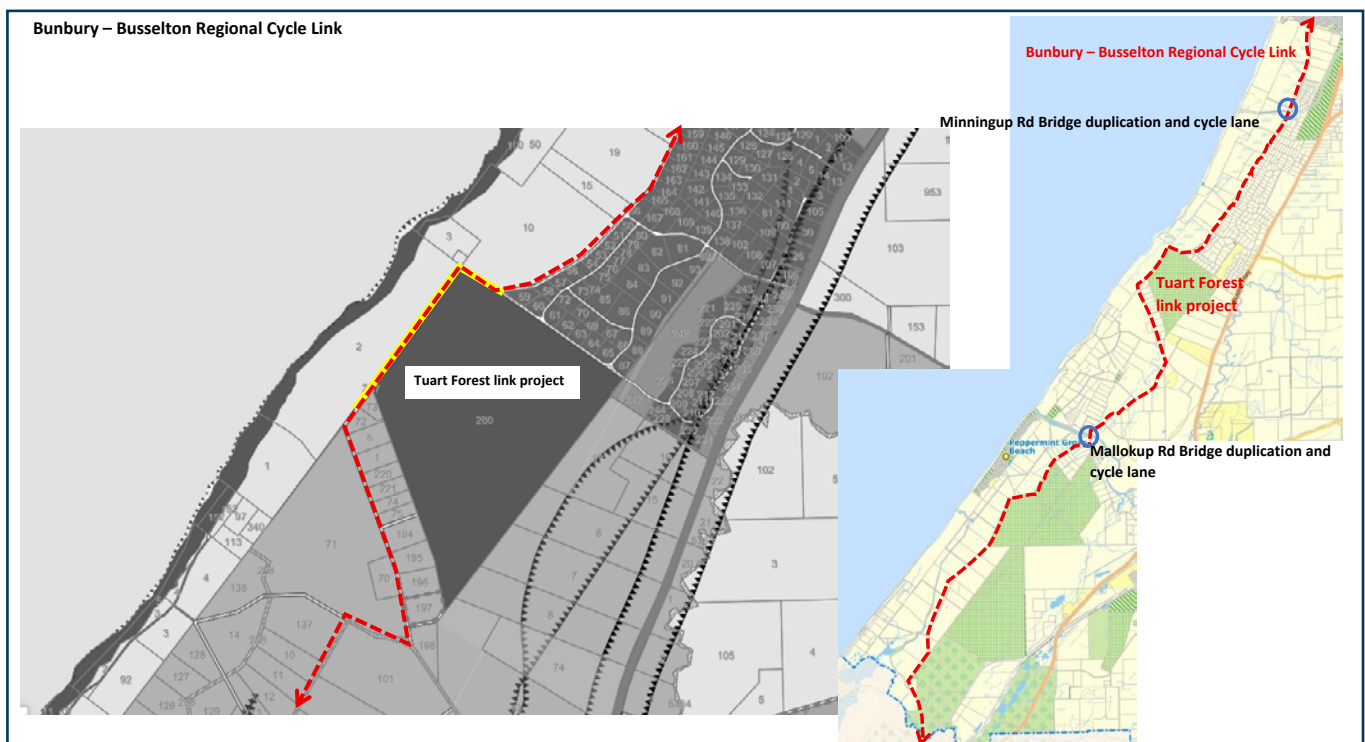
Support the staged development of the Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link as a key regional connection.

Rationale

The B*unbury – Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy* has been developed by the Department of Transport in collaboration with the South West Development Commission, the City of Bunbury, and the Shires of Capel, Collie, Dardanup, Donnybrook-Balingup and Harvey. It sets out a blueprint for connecting, enhancing and extending the region's cycling routes through the development of an interconnected network of off-road shared paths, protected on-road bike lanes and low-stress residential streets.

A key inter-regional opportunity is linking Bunbury to Busselton. There are several options noted in section 5 of the report. Option 1: Connecting local roads, Option2: Along the coast, Option 3: Through the Tuart Forest and Option 4: Along the former rail corridor. The Shire of Capel has received funding from the 2024 WA Bicycle Network Grants Program for the design and construction of the Tuart Forest Road Reserve at Stratham (refer to map below).

As the planning and development of the Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link progresses, there is an opportunity to incorporate points of interest along the route to enhance the user experience. One such example is the Ludlow Tuart Forest Restoration Group precinct, which features a 2.2 km walking trail showcasing the unique ecological and cultural significance of the Tuart Forest.

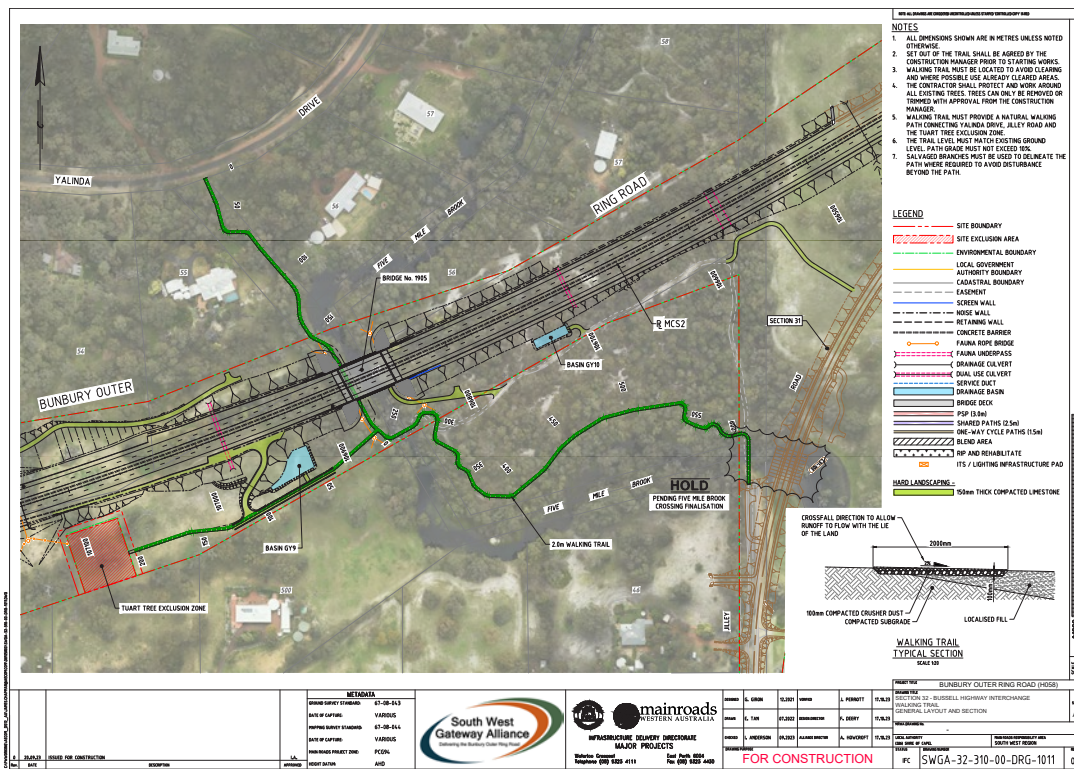| No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C1.1	Continue to collaborate with the Department of Transport, South West Development Commission, the City of Bunbury, and the Shires of Capel, Collie, Dardanup, Donnybrook-Balingup and Harvey to progress panning for a continuous cycling connection between Bunbury to Busselton.	Ongoing	DoT, NC, SoC, TUG	High
C1.2	Design and construct a cycle link within the Tuart Forest Road Reserve at Stratham.	Short	DoT, DBCA, SoC	Medium
C1.3	Continue to seek funding for the development of the Bunbury to Busselton Cycling Link.	Ongoing	DoT, NC, SoC	Low
C1.4	Determine the inspection interval for an easy cycling trail to ensure it is maintained in a condition that is consistent with the requirements for a regional shared use cycling trails.	Short	DoT, NC, SoC	Low

Strategy C2 Five Mile Brook Walking Trail

Collaborate with Main Roads Western Australia to facilitate the asset transition of the Five Mile Brook Walking Trail in Gelorup, ensuring its integration into the local trail network.

Rationale

As part of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road (BORR) project, Main Roads Western Australia has constructed the Five Mile Brook Walking Trail in Gelorup, a Class 3 (Moderate) walking trail developed in accordance with Australian Standard AS2156. The trail provides a formal connection between Yalinda Drive, Jilley Road, and the Tuart Tree Exclusion Zone, offering residents and visitors a safe, accessible route through a semi-natural setting.

The trail not only supports local pedestrian movement but also plays an important role in preserving access to natural bushland and promoting active lifestyles within the community. With its completion, the intention is for the trail to transition to the management of the Shire of Capel to ensure long-term maintenance, promotion, and integration into the local trail network.

Facilitating this asset transfer in collaboration with Main Roads WA will ensure that appropriate management responsibilities are formalised and that the trail continues to meet local community expectations. Integration into the Shire's trail network will also support consistent wayfinding, signage, and maintenance standards, contributing to the delivery of a cohesive and high-quality trails experience across the region.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C2.1	Work in partnership with Main Roads Western Australia to facilitate the agreed and coordinated asset transition of the Five Mile Brook Walking Trail to the Shire of Capel	Short	MRWA, SoC	Low
C2.2	Effectively promote the new Five Mile Brook Walking Trail through a coordinated marketing approach. Refer to D2 - Promotion and Marketing strategies and actions.	Short	MRWA, SoC	Low
C2.3	Inspect trail every 6 months or less, to ensure built facilities will be managed for public risk in line with requirement for Class 3 trail.	Ongoing	SoC	Low

![Logo] **Strategy & Action Plan**

Strategy C3 Capel River Trail

Collaborate with relevant landowners and stakeholders to assess the feasibility of a staged trail development along the Capel River.

Rationale

As the majority of land adjoining the Capel River lies outside Shire ownership or management, it is essential to engage all relevant landowners and land managers in the trail planning process. The *Bunbury – Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy* and the *Greater Bunbury Regional Bicycle Master Plan* highlighted the importance of creating a connection between Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach. Community consultation also revealed strong support for this initiative, with numerous submissions proposing trail development ideas and emphasising the value such a connection would bring to both Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach communities.

A staged trail development approach could include:

•   Peppermint Grove Beach to Mallokup Bridge

•   Mallokup Bridge to Hannaby Park

•   Hannaby Park to Capel Drive (Curved Road Bridge)

•   Capel Drive (Curved Road Bridge) to Capel River Railway Bridge

•   Capel River Railway Bridge to Capel Footbridge (Barlee Rd/Jamieson Rd).

Strategic access points to the Capel River that may facilitate access to the river include Reserve 46456 and 46457 (near Capel Vale Wines) and Reserve 9515 (adjacent to Hannaby Park).

There is also evidence of informal access routes through the dunes at Peppermint Grove Beach, where individuals currently traverse the area in an unsanctioned manner to reach the levee bank. This highlights a community demand for improved access and the need for a formalised trail connection. Preliminary discussions with the Water Corporation, specifically the Operations Manager for the Leeuwin District and the Drainage Team have confirmed that the levee is actively used. It was recommended that further liaison with the Water Corporation's Liveability Department, via Kylie Olney, may assist or inform the planning process.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C3.1	Implement the Eight Stage Trail Planning Process for each of the stages, emphasising the following key components • Executive Leadership Team to determine land tenure • Identification of potential funding sources to support the trail planning process • Early stakeholder and landholder consultation to support access agreements and collaborative planning	Medium	SoC, WC, DBCA, CITS, DPLH, WAPC, TO/FNP	Low - Medium
C3.2	Work collaboratively with Water Corporation to investigate the feasibility of formalising a trail alignment from Mallokup Bridge to Peppermint Grove Beach. *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning.*	Short	SoC, WC	Low

![Logo] **Strategy & Action Plan**

Strategy C4 Capel to Peppermint Grove Beach

Evaluate potential route options to determine the safest and most appropriate cycling alignment between Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach.

Rationale

The *Bunbury – Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy* identified a potential connection between Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach could be achieved by

- a shared path along the banks of the Capel River (refer to Strategy C3)
- formalising existing trails through the Tuart Forest
- providing protected on-road cycling facilities along either Stirling or Mallokup roads.

Current status

- A recent surface upgrade at 'The Avenue', has improved access through the regrowth Tuart Forest providing a connection between Ludlow Rd North and Gun Club Road.
- Works are also planned for a section of the Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link - Tuart Forest Section. Refer Strategy C1
- Stirling and Mallokup Roads currently lack dedicated cycling infrastructure (i.e sealed shoulders, bike lanes, signage). These conditions present significant safety risks for cyclists. Additionally, the Bussell Highway which separates Capel and Peppermint Grove Beach acts as a major barrier to safe and continuous access between the two communities.

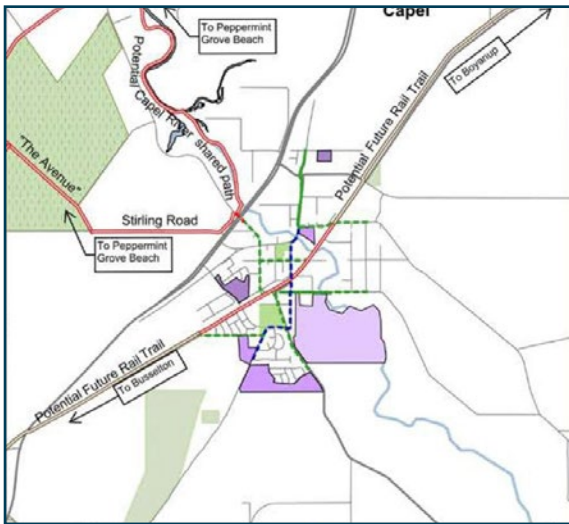| No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C4.1	Collaborate with relevant landowners and stakeholders to assess the feasibility of a staged trail development along the Capel River (Refer to Strategy C3.2) *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning.*	Short	WC, SoC, DPLH, WAPC	Low
C4.2	Collaborate with DBCA to assess the feasibility of formalising existing trails through the Tuart Forest, recognising DBCA as the lead agency.	Longer	DBCA, SoC	Low
C4.3	Assess the potential for widened road shoulders on Stirling and Mallokup Roads and other priority routes to support safe cycling infrastructure and align with regional active transport objectives	Medium	MRWA, DoT, SoC	Medium
C4.4	Advocate for the provision of a safe crossing point on the Bussell Highway for pedestrian, cyclist and equestrians.	Short	MRWA, DoT, SoC, CITS	High

Strategy C5 Rail Trail

Investigate the feasibility of developing rail trails within the Shire of Capel.

Rationale

Community consultation has identified a strong interest in improving regional connectivity, with many participants recognising disused rail corridors as valuable opportunities for trail development. The potential to re-purpose existing rail lines or adjacent maintenance tracks into rail trails presents a strategic opportunity to create safe, accessible, and scenic linkages between key townships, including Bunbury to Boyanup, Boyanup to Capel, and Capel to Ludlow.

Rail trails are increasingly recognised for their ability to deliver multiple community benefits. They provide low-impact, family friendly routes for walking, cycling, horse riding, and running, while preserving historical transport corridors and enhancing access to natural and cultural landscapes. A well-designed rail trail can support tourism, promote active transport, and encourage local economic activity through increased visitation to towns and trail connected businesses.

For the Shire of Capel, a rail trail could significantly strengthen regional connections, improve recreational infrastructure, and align with broader trail and tourism strategies across the South West. The development should include consideration of a multi-use surface suitable for diverse user groups and universal access. Collaborative planning and engagement with neighbouring local governments will be critical to realising a coordinated and regionally significant trail network.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C5.1	Undertake a feasibility assessment for the staged development of a regional rail trail linking, Bunbury, Boyanup, Capel and Ludlow via disused rail corridors. Note: In assessing potential alignments the use of adjacent land such as an existing maintenance track parallel to the rail line may be considered. *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning.*	Longer	SoC, NC, landowner/ manager	Medium

Strategy C6 Mountain Bike Skills Park

Investigate the feasibility of developing a Mountain Bike Skills Park within the Shire of Capel.

Rationale

A mountain bike skills park is a purpose built facility designed to develop riders' technical ability in a safe and controlled environment. These parks typically cater to all skill levels from beginners to advanced riders. They provide a valuable space for individuals to build confidence and competency before venturing onto longer or more challenging trails.

Establishing a mountain bike skills park within the Shire of Capel would enhance local recreational offerings, support youth engagement, and promote healthy, active lifestyles. It would also position the Shire as a family friendly cycling destination, encouraging tourism and local economic activity through increased visitation.

Strategically locating the park in proximity to a future rail trail such as the proposed Capel to Boyanup corridor would provide seamless integration into a broader off-road cycling network. This linkage would allow riders to warm up at the skills park before embarking on longer rides and offer an accessible hub for events, training sessions, or community programs. Alternative locations may also be considered, including but not limited to the Gravel Pit on Goodwood Road (crown land west of the Capel 200 Trial Bike Rally venue) or the reserve adjacent to the Capel Recreation Ground which may offer suitable terrain and access for such a facility.

Additionally, a skills park would support the goals of the *Bunbury−Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy* by expanding infrastructure for mountain biking and helping to foster a cycling culture in the South West. With appropriate planning and stakeholder collaboration, the park could become a high-value asset.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C6.1	Undertake a detailed assessment of suitable locations for a mountain bike skills park, with particular consideration given to the reserve adjacent to the Capel Recreation Ground. *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning.*	Longer	SoC	Low

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy C7 Bridle Trails

Protect, enhance and formalise the region's network of strategic connections for equine trail users.

Rationale

Horse riding is a well established activity in rural and peri-urban areas within the Shire of Capel. With strong local interest in recreational trail riding and high levels of horse ownership in surrounding communities, there is growing demand for accessible, safe, and enjoyable equestrian trails.

Currently, many horse riding opportunities within the Shire are informal and occur along public roadsides, firebreaks, unsealed tracks, private land or forested areas. However, the lack of formalised, designated horse riding trails with appropriate infrastructure such as float parking, mounting areas, troughs, and resting points limits both the quality of the experience and the long term sustainability of equestrian trail use.

As land use in the Shire continues to evolve, particularly with the expansion of residential areas and changes to public land management, there is a risk that informal equestrian routes may be lost or compromised. Integrating equestrian considerations into broader trail and open space planning is essential to ensure continuity of access and the preservation of key riding corridors. This includes strategic opportunities such as the proposed rail trails, formalisation of unmade road reserves in areas like Rosecliff Estate, and potential reuse of the former trotting track at Hayclif Avenue. Future planning should ensure that it is also inclusive of horse-drawn carriages and supports a diversity of uses within the equestrian community.

Existing facilities such as the Wonnerup East Horse Exercise Area (adjacent to Forrest Beach Road), which provides dedicated beach access, the Capel Regional Equestrian Park and Reserve 28825 and Lot 1 Riding for the Disabled already contribute to the Shire's equestrian offering. However, a coordinated approach to planning and enhancing the trail network supported by community consultation will be essential to maintain and grow trail riding opportunities.

Potential Bridle Trails Rosecliff Estate — 11/02/2025 — 1:14670
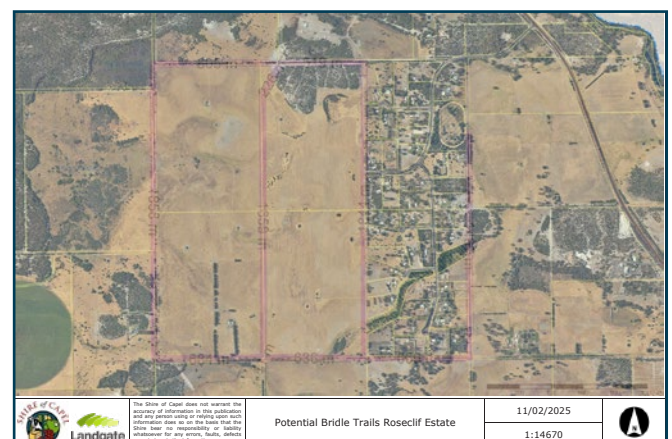
No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C7.1	Undertake a site assessment, concept plan, cost estimate and corridor evaluation for the proposed Rosecliff Estate Bridle Trail, including consideration of the former trotting track at Hayclif Ave as a Trailhead.	Medium	SoC	Low
C7.2	Consider opportunities to allow for horse riding on proposed rail trails (refer Strategy C5)	Longer	SoC	Low
C7.3	Ensure that current and potential strategic corridors (i.e. road reserves, designated horse beach areas) are identified, considered and protected in the development of plans for new residential subdivisions.	Medium	SoC	Low

Strategy C8 Munda Biddi Trail

Collaborate with DBCA to investigate the feasibility of establishing a spur trail through Boyanup town centre.

Rationale

The *Bunbury Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy* identifies a potential realignment of the Munda Biddi Trail to direct riders through the centre of Boyanup. This adjustment aims to strengthen the relationship between the trail network and local communities by enhancing access to township amenities, such as cafes, shops, accommodation, and visitor information.

Creating a spur trail through Boyanup would deliver multiple benefits. It would increase trail user visibility within the town, encouraging stopovers and local spending that directly support small businesses and tourism operators. It also enhances the rider experience by providing rest opportunities and a sense of place.

From a planning perspective, the spur trail offers an opportunity to integrate cycling infrastructure more closely with town centre development, support active transport connections, and potentially leverage funding for complementary improvements such as signage, trailheads, bike parking, and wayfinding. It aligns with broader goals to activate regional towns through trail tourism and create vibrant, trail-connected communities.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C8.1	Collaborate with DBCA & the Munda Biddi Foundation to facilitate a site assessment, concept plan, cost estimate for the establishment of a spur trail through the Boyanup town centre. *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning.*	Medium	DBCA, MBF	Low

Strategy C9 Gravel Riding

Support key stakeholder led initiatives to develop and promote a suite of signature gravel riding routes.

Rationale

Gravel riding is one of the fastest growing forms of cycling, attracting both recreational riders and cycling tourists seeking scenic, low traffic routes that offer a blend of adventure and accessibility. The Shire of Capel's rural road network, forested corridors, and landscapes present an ideal setting for gravel riding, with potential to create distinctive experiences that appeal to both locals and visitors. To ensure the routes reflect rider preferences and local conditions, development should be informed by community input as well as data driven tools (i.e. strava).

By identifying and formalising a small number of signature gravel routes featuring high scenic value, varied terrain, and connections to key amenities the Shire can establish itself as a gravel riding destination within the South West. Promoting these routes through digital mapping, wayfinding, and tourism materials will support local businesses, activate rural areas, and contribute to a diversified trail offering that complements existing walking, equestrian, and mountain biking infrastructure.

Additionally, the development of these routes aligns with regional cycling strategies and supports broader objectives around health, tourism, and active transport. Long-term maintenance and route signage should be considered to ensure rider safety and a high-quality experience.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C9.1	Encourage and support community led efforts to identify, formalise and promote a select number of signature gravel routes featuring high scenic value, varied terrain, and connections.	Medium	SoC, UG	Low

Strategy C10 Trail Bike Riding

Support key stakeholder led initiatives that promote sanctioned trail bike riding, with a focus on safety, environmental sustainability and economic development.

Rationale

The Capel 200 Trail Bike Rally, a long-standing community event, has operated for over 47 years within the Capel–Jarrahwood State Forest and adjacent pine plantations. In response to growing demand for safe and sustainable off-road motorcycling, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) proposed the establishment of a designated Capel 200 Trails Zone. This initiative would streamline event approvals, reduce the reliance on informal access, and support sustainable trail maintenance through a collaborative management approach between DBCA and the local trail bike club.

The proposal recognises the importance of providing sanctioned trail riding opportunities as a means of reducing unauthorised off-road vehicle use, while supporting community recreation and regional tourism. The initiative also aligns with the Forest Management Plan 2024–2033, which highlights the increasing role of nature-based tourism and the need to identify additional designated areas for recreational vehicle use.

While the Capel 200 Trails Zone concept has not progressed beyond early stages, its potential remains significant. The footprint of the annual event represents a fraction 0.125% of the proposed zone area and has demonstrated a sustainable operating model. Ongoing support for stakeholder led initiatives such as this reflects a low-impact, partnership based approach to trail bike management, allowing the Shire to advocate for well managed recreation opportunities without assuming direct delivery responsibility.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C10.1	Encourage and support community led events that generate local economic benefits, such as the Capel 200 Trail Bike Rally.	Medium	SoC, DBCA, IARC	Low

Strategy C11 Art & Culture Trail

Explore opportunities to develop an inclusive Art and Culture Trail that is accessible to people of all abilities.

Rationale

The development of an inclusive Art and Culture Trail in the Shire of Capel presents an opportunity to celebrate local creativity, heritage, and identity while enhancing community wellbeing and visitor experiences. With Bunbury home to the largest street and public art collection in regional Australia, and Busselton featuring well-established initiatives such as Sculptures by the Bay and The Public Artwork Trail, there is clear regional momentum and market interest in cultural tourism that can be leveraged.

The Shire of Capel is already home to a growing collection of public art, cultural installations, and creative initiatives. By curating and connecting these existing elements through an accessible trail, the Shire can create a unique and inclusive attraction that supports local artists, activates public spaces, and encourages residents and visitors to engage with the region's cultural landscape. The trail would also contribute to placemaking objectives and align with broader efforts to diversify tourism offerings across the South West.

The proposed Art and Culture Trail should also align with the Shire of Capel Place Plan (2023–2027) to ensure it reflects the unique character, values, and aspirations of local communities. The Place Plan provides a framework for shaping vibrant, connected, and inclusive public spaces that celebrate the identity of each locality. Aligning the trail with this plan will help embed it within broader strategic goals, such as strengthening town centre activation, fostering community pride, and enhancing liveability.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C11.1	Support the planning and development of an inclusive Art and Culture Trail by identifying opportunities to showcase existing public art, cultural landmarks and creative initiatives in alignment with the Shire of Capel Place Plan (2023 -2027) (i.e. Project between Capel Library and State Library). *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning.*	Medium	SoC	Low

Strategy C12 Drive Trail (Wellness)

Explore the potential to establish a Wellness Themed Drive Trail.

Rationale

The creation of a wellness-themed drive trail presents an opportunity to position the Shire of Capel as a destination for mindful and restorative travel, responding to the growing demand for nature-based wellbeing experiences. Inspired by models such as the Cape to Cape Nature and Indulgence Trail, this initiative could connect visitors to a curated journey of scenic backroads, health-focused venues, natural attractions, and opportunities for relaxation and reflection. Potential trail names could include The Backroads and Balance Trail, The Capel Mindful Meander, or The Capel Vitality Trail, each evoking a sense of calm, connection, and rejuvenation.

By developing a trail that encourages slow travel and conscious exploration, the Shire can diversify its tourism offering while reinforcing its commitment to community health, environmental appreciation, and local economic support. Furthermore, this initiative could activate underutilised rural assets, foster partnerships with local wellness providers, and contribute to the region's broader place identity and liveability.

The *Concentric Circles* report identifies logical time bands that influence inbound visitation patterns, noting that travel durations of 30 minutes to one hour typically suit short breaks and health and wellbeing-focused experiences. Day trips are generally preferred within a one to two-hour radius, while destinations located two to three hours away are more likely to attract weekend visitors. Complementing this, The *Future of Global Tourism Demand* highlights a growing interest in wellness experiences, particularly among luxury travellers. Wellness tourism has seen sustained growth in recent years, reflecting broader lifestyle trends that prioritise holistic health, mindfulness, and connection to nature.

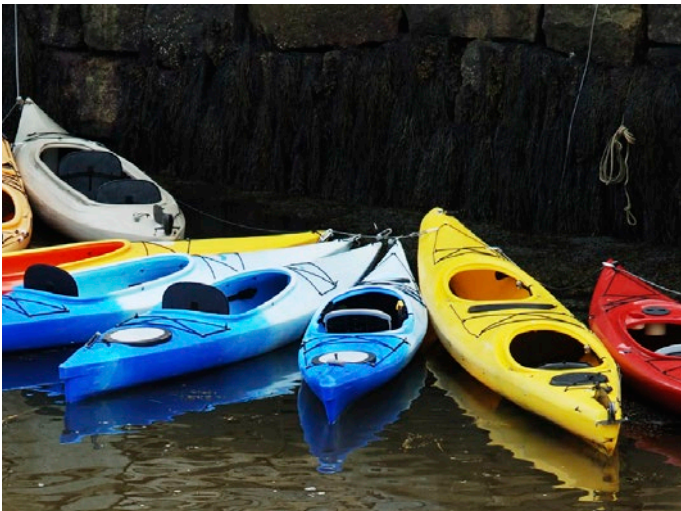| No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C12.1	Investigate the feasibility of developing a Wellness-Themed Drive Trail that highlights the Shire's natural landscapes, health and wellbeing experiences, and local tourism assets drawing on regional visitation patterns and aligning with emerging trends in wellness tourism. *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning.*	Longer	SoC, CCC	Low

Strategy C13 Paddle Trail

Explore opportunities to develop paddle trails, including canoe and stand-up paddle board routes.

Rationale

The Shire of Capel is uniquely positioned to enhance its recreational offering through the development of paddle trails, leveraging its picturesque coastline and inland waterway. This initiative presents an opportunity to activate underutilised natural assets, foster low-impact recreational use, and support community wellbeing through outdoor activity and connection to nature.

Proposed trails such as the Capel River Canoe Trail and a Stand-Up Paddle Board Trail could cater to a range of skill levels and user groups, offering both locals and visitors an immersive experience of the region's natural beauty. These trails would not only contribute to the Shire's recreational diversity but also support tourism development by encouraging longer stays and seasonal visitation. It also complements existing trail and tourism strategies by extending the Shire's recreational network into its waterways, strengthening its identity as a destination for nature-based and adventure tourism.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C13	Undertake a feasibility assessment to identify suitable locations and design considerations for paddle trails, including a potential Capel River Canoe Trail and Stand-Up Paddle Board Trail. *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning, with a focus on environmental sustainability, recreational access, and tourism potential.*	Longer	SoC	Low

Strategy C14 Peppermint Grove Beach Discovery Trail

Develop a discovery trail at Peppermint Grove Beach.

Rationale

Peppermint Grove Beach offers a unique combination of coastal scenery, environmental features, and community spaces that can be connected through a Discovery Trail to enhance local amenity, visitor experience, and place identity. The proposed trail would utilise existing paths, footpaths, beach access points, and carparks to create a continuous and engaging route linking key destinations such as the Beach, Peppermint Grove Terrace lookout, nearby wetlands, Apex Park, Community Centre, Peppermint Grove Beach Holiday Park and the public amenities.

This initiative provides an opportunity to formalise and promote movement through the area while encouraging outdoor activity, nature appreciation, and increased visitation. It also supports local tourism by offering an accessible and low impact attraction that aligns with the natural character of the area.

The trail could also serve as a link in the broader trail network by connecting to the future Capel River Trail specifically the proposed section from Peppermint Grove Beach to Mallokup Bridge (refer to Strategy C3) thereby contributing to regional trail connectivity and enhancing long-term trail planning outcomes for the Shire.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C14.1	Undertake a site assessment and concept planning process for the proposed Peppermint Grove Beach Discovery Trail, identifying opportunities to connect key destinations using existing infrastructure, and ensuring alignment with broader trail network planning, including the future Capel River Trail link (refer to Strategy C3).	Medium	SoC	Low

Strategy C15 Harewoods Rd Bushland Reserve, Dalyellup

Protect, enhance and formalise a trail network within the Harewoods Bushland Reserve to safeguard the site's environmental values.

Rationale

Harewoods Road Bushland Reserve in Dalyellup, located adjacent to Bussell Highway, is a significant natural asset currently supporting equestrian activities through the Bunbury Horse and Pony Club (BHPC) and the Riding for the Disabled Association Australia South West (RDAASW). The site has been the subject of recent strategic investigations, including the Shire of Capel Equine Assessment Report (January 2025), which considered the future use and capacity of Reserve 28825 and adjoining Lot 1 to support structured sporting activities.

The reserve sits within an area experiencing ongoing residential development, leading to increased community pressure on open spaces. As Dalyellup grows, there is a demonstrated shortfall in formal sporting facilities, which may result in greater reliance on natural areas such as Harewoods Road Bushland Reserve for unstructured recreational pursuits, including walking, running, and nature appreciation. To maintain the ecological integrity of the site while accommodating this rising demand, it is essential to formalise a network of low impact trails. Doing so will help manage access, minimise environmental degradation, and guide users away from sensitive vegetation and habitat areas.

A well planned trail network should also explore opportunities to connect with the Gelorup Nature Trail , subject to the identification of a safe and feasible crossing point at Bussell Highway to enable future connectivity to Sheoks Park.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C15.1	Develop a concept plan for a formalised trail network within Harewoods Road Bushland Reserve that balances recreational use with environmental protection. *Align with the Eight Stage Trail Planning Framework to ensure best practice planning.*	Longer	SoC	Low-Medium
C15.2	Investigate the feasibility of a safe crossing point on Bussell Highway crossing into Sheoak Park to enable future connectivity between Harewoods Road Bushland Reserve and the Gelorup Nature Trail.	Longer	SoC	Low-Medium

Strategy C16 Road Cycling

Support key stakeholder led initiatives to develop and promote a suite of signature road cycling routes.

Rationale

Road cycling continues to grow in popularity across the region, offering economic, recreational, and health benefits for local communities and visitors alike. By supporting key stakeholder led initiatives, the Shire can help develop and promote a suite of signature road cycling routes that leverage the region's diverse landscapes, scenic roads, and tourism potential. These routes can attract a wide range of users, from recreational cyclists to more experienced riders, contributing to local vibrancy and promoting active lifestyles.

In alignment with the Bunbury Wellington 2050 Cycling Strategy, this initiative supports the development of a connected and accessible cycling network across Bunbury-Wellington's southern towns. Enhancing infrastructure, promoting safety, and encouraging bike friendly communities will help deliver on the region's broader cycling vision while supporting local business activation, tourism growth, and regional connectivity. The progressive improvement of road shoulders, line marking, bike lanes, and signage will ensure that infrastructure meets contemporary standards for safety, comfort, and usability.

Community consultation highlighted strong concerns regarding cyclist safety on existing road networks, with many people expressing that riding on current routes often feels unsafe or precarious, some even stating that they feel as though they are "taking their life into their own hands." These perceptions underscore the need for targeted infrastructure improvements and the creation of designated routes that prioritise cyclist safety and visibility.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
C16.1	Encourage and support community led efforts to identify, formalise, and promote a select number of signature road cycling routes that are safe, well connected, and enjoyable for riders of varying skill levels.	Medium	SoC, UG	Low
C16.2	Continue to work in collaboration with Main Roads WA, the Department of Transport and other key stakeholders to progressively enhance road cycling infrastructure along the region's key routes. Upgrades may include resurfacing, widening road shoulders, installing dedicated bike lanes, improving line marking and signage, and addressing known safety concerns (i.e. Bussell Highway crossing) to ensure infrastructure meets the needs of road cyclists and aligns with current standards for safety, comfort, and accessibility.	Ongoing	SoC, MRWA, DoT, UG	Medium
C16.3	Encourage towns and businesses across the region to foster a 'bike friendly' culture which promotes a welcoming culture to cycling visitors (e.g. encourage provision of bike racks, e-charging points).	Medium	SoC, Comm	Low

Strategic Outcome D: Information and Marketing

Well promoted, consistent and reliable trail information encourages recreational trail users to confidently, safely and sustainably explore the region.

Strategy & Action Plan

Strategy D1 Trail Information

Provide consistent and reliable signage, maps and supporting information for all trails across the Shire.

Rationale

Trail signage and information provision have been identified as key priorities through community consultation and site assessments. Effective signage is essential for both user enjoyment and safety, with guidance provided by the *WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines*, *Western Australian Mountain Bike Management Guidelines* and *Australian Standard AS2156.1 Walking Tracks Classification and Signage,* among other relevant frameworks.

There is a strong opportunity to promote the Shire of Capel's trail offerings in a contemporary and consistent manner. A coordinated approach to signage, marketing, and branding—aligned with the *Shire of Capel Place Plan 2023–2027* (e.g. Capel Palette and local heritage elements) will enhance visitor experience and reinforce local identity. Additionally, incorporating First Nations language and cultural narratives into trail signage, particularly at trailheads, presents a meaningful opportunity to celebrate cultural heritage and deepen the sense of place across the network.

Capel
Origins: Noongar name Coolingup, place of children, koolanga. The English name Capel was adopted in 1899, named after John Bussell's cousin, Miss Capel Carter.

Description

A civic and commercial - residential centre founded on mineral sands mining but deeply connected to the natural beauty of the nearby coast and Tuart forest, and the adjacent agricultural lands.

Boyanup
Origins: Place of quartz from the Noongar *'Boya'* for rock.

Description

An agricultural rural locality, historically at the junction of road, rail and river, forming the social and commercial heart of the surrounding rural community.

Dalyellup
Origins: Noongar for 'place of still, foaming water': where the fresh and salt waters mix, creating foamy waters.

Description

A relaxed, coastal suburb in the forest by the sea characterised by diverse housing options, commercial and community centres, in a diverse, picturesque landscape featuring pristine sandy beaches, coastal dunes, and pockets of natural bushland.

Gelorup
Origins: Place of the bee from the Noongar *Gelora*, a native bee attracted to the local banksia.

Description

Large semi-rural properties within close proximity to the amenity and employment opportunities in Bunbury City Centre but protected from the invasive urban sprawl, surrounded by sacred sites, farmlands, quarries and valued natural habitats from seasonal wetlands and woodlands to the coastal forests and beaches.

Peppermint Grove Beach
Origins: Named for the presence of peppermint trees *Agonis flexuosa* in the area.

Description

A rural-coastal cul de sac positioned on the Quindalup sand dunes between wetlands, forests and ocean.

Stratham & Coastal Rural Localities
Origins: Stratham named for the original homestead, Stratham Park, named after John Scott's family home in Scotland.

Description

These productive rural localities (Stratham, Stirling and Forrest Beach) benefit from coastal access to stunning beaches and azure sea, alongside lush fertile pasturelands and mineral-rich coastal plains.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
D1.1	Develop all trail related information in alignment with the Brand Guidelines, Place Plan, and the broader priorities of the Greater Bunbury–Geographe region to maintain a cohesive and recognisable regional identity.	Short	SoC, TMG, NC, UG, BGTP	Low
D1.2	Design a suite of trail signage templates (trailhead, wayfinding, interpretation signs) which aligns with WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines and Australian Standard 2156.1-2001 Walking Tracks – Classification and Signage.	Short	Soc, TMG	Low
D1.3	Regularly review third party websites (e.g. Trailforks, AllTrails etc.) to ensure trail information is accurate and up to date.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low
D1.4	Allocate sufficient resources for periodic reviews and updates of trail maps and information including signage and online and printed resources.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low
D1.5	Update and enhance visitor information signage at key points across the Shire to include information about the region's trails and other recreational opportunities.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low
D1.6	Ensure personal in tourism related roles, including Visitor Information Centre staff are well informed and regularly updated to provide accurate trail information to visitors.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low
D1.7	Investigate opportunities for the inclusion of First Nations people's language and history on trail signage with a focus on trail head signage.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG TO/FNP	Low

Strategy D2 Promotion and Marketing

Increased promotion and marketing of trail opportunities across the Shire of Capel.

Rationale

Increased promotion and marketing of recreational trails within the Shire of Capel will help to raise awareness of the region's diverse and accessible nature based experiences, encouraging greater participation in outdoor recreation and supporting tourism development. It is essential that promotional content accurately reflects the on ground experience to manage visitor expectations and maintain credibility.

A coordinated approach to marketing the trail network, featuring consistent branding, accurate trail information, and clear messaging will support both community engagement and regional positioning. This is particularly important as the Shire continues to grow its trail offerings, with new trails complementing existing assets.

The establishment of a primary trailhead in Capel, supported by secondary trailheads in Dalyellup and Boyanup, will provide key locations for visitor information and help promote the full suite of trails available throughout the Shire. These trailheads will serve as central points for maps and trail information, helping locals and visitors navigate and explore the trail network with confidence.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
D2.1	Establish a primary trailhead in Capel, with secondary trailheads in Dalyellup and Boyanup, to serve as central visitor information points showcasing the Shire's recreational trail network.	Medium	SoC, TMG	Medium
D2.3	Develop and regularly update promotional materials including trail maps, brochures, and digital content that communicate accurate trail information. Ensure new trails are promptly included in all promotional platforms upon completion.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low
D2.4	Install consistent and visible promotional signage at key entry points, public open spaces, and visitor destinations across the Shire to raise awareness of the trail experiences available.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG	Low
D2.5	Identify and pursue partnership opportunities for collaborative marketing and promotion of trails, including cooperative campaigns with regional tourism organisations, community groups, and local businesses. • e.g. The Shire of Capel is part of the Bunbury Geographe Tourism Partnership (BGTP), alongside neighbouring LGAs under the BunGeo brand. There is an opportunity to promote trails collectively as 'BunGeo Trails' to improve regional visibility. A dedicated trails section on the BunGeo platform, with links across each LGA's website, would enhance user experience and recognition, particularly as most trail users are unaware of local government boundaries.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG, TUG, BGTP	Low

Strategic Outcome E: Community, Tourism and Economic Development

Use trail development and provision as a community, tourism and economic development tool.

Strategy & Action Plan
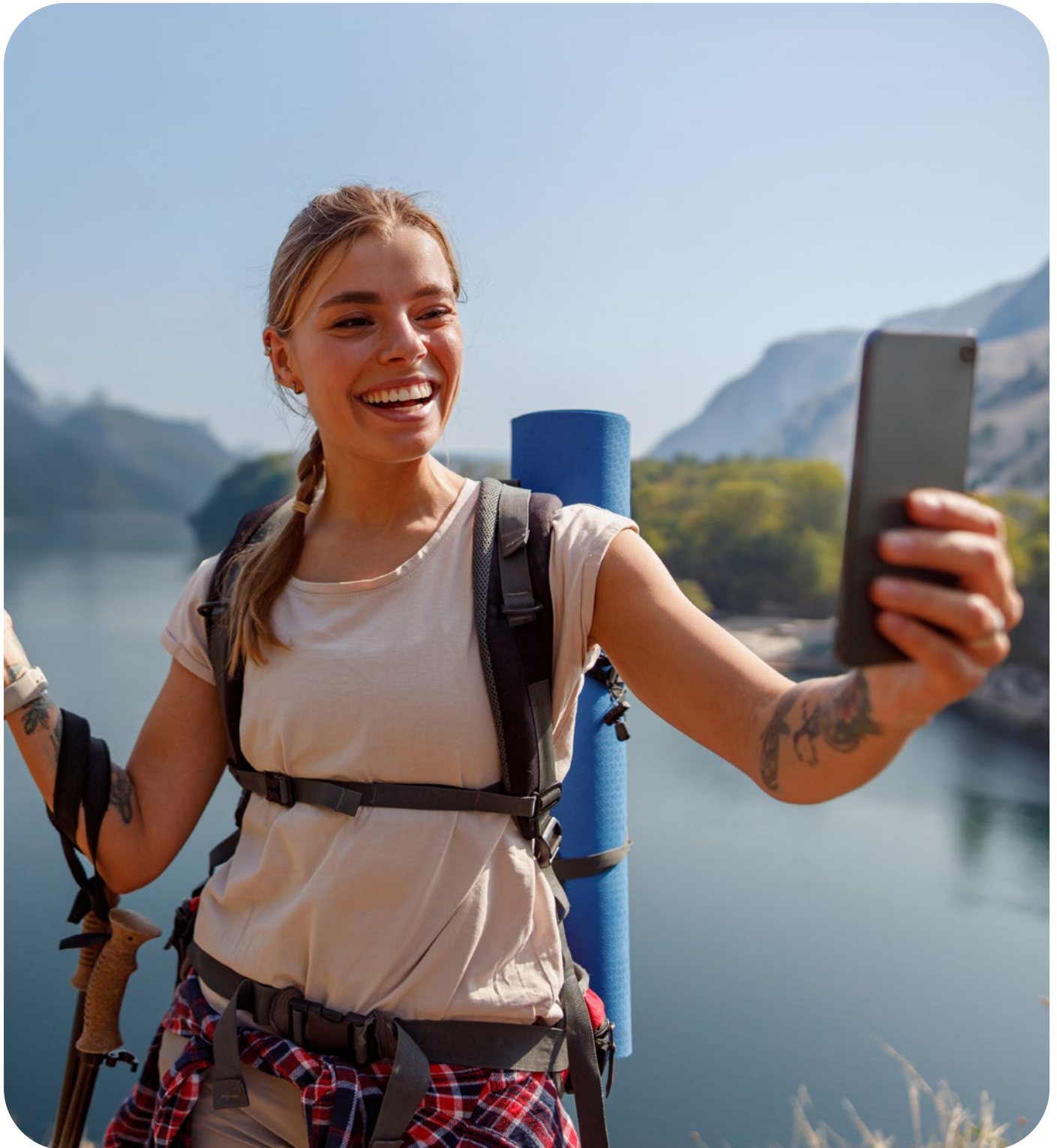
Strategy E1 Community, Tourism and Economic Development

Use trail development and provision as a community, tourism and economic development tool.

Rationale

Well-established trail networks and their associated activities can deliver substantial economic and social benefits to the Shire of Capel, particularly through increased tourism and local business engagement. Supporting special events that activate the trail network will help raise the profile of existing and future trails, attract visitors, and generate sustained economic returns for the region.

There is significant potential to develop vibrant trail precincts across the Shire, which over time can become focal points for recreation, tourism, and community activity. The implementation of the Trails Master Plan will play a key role in enhancing the Shire's tourism and events portfolio.

Collaboration with the private sector and local businesses will be critical to ensure that trail experiences are well supported through complementary services such as food and beverage offerings, retail outlets, accommodation, transport, guided tours, events, and equipment hire. These partnerships will be essential in creating a comprehensive and welcoming visitor experience that benefits both residents and the broader regional economy.

No.	Action	Timeframe	Key Partners	Cost
E1.1	Attract and retain trail related events and provide support to ensure ongoing sustainability.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG, CCC	Low
E1.2	Encourage businesses (e.g. tour operators, equipment hire, associated retail outlets, hospitality venues, accommodation providers etc.) to promote, utilise and enhance trails and associated visitor experiences and to capitalise on nature-based tourism initiatives.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG, CCC	Low
E1.3	Encourage agencies involved in trail development and/or management to collaborate and share trail information and resources (i.e. asset management resources, governance models, trail maintenance resources).	Ongoing	SoC, TMG, CCC	Low
E1.4	Develop the region's trail network in a formalised and balanced manner to ensure the protection of the region's environmental and cultural heritage values.	Ongoing	SoC, TMG, CCC	Low

Trail Management & Funding
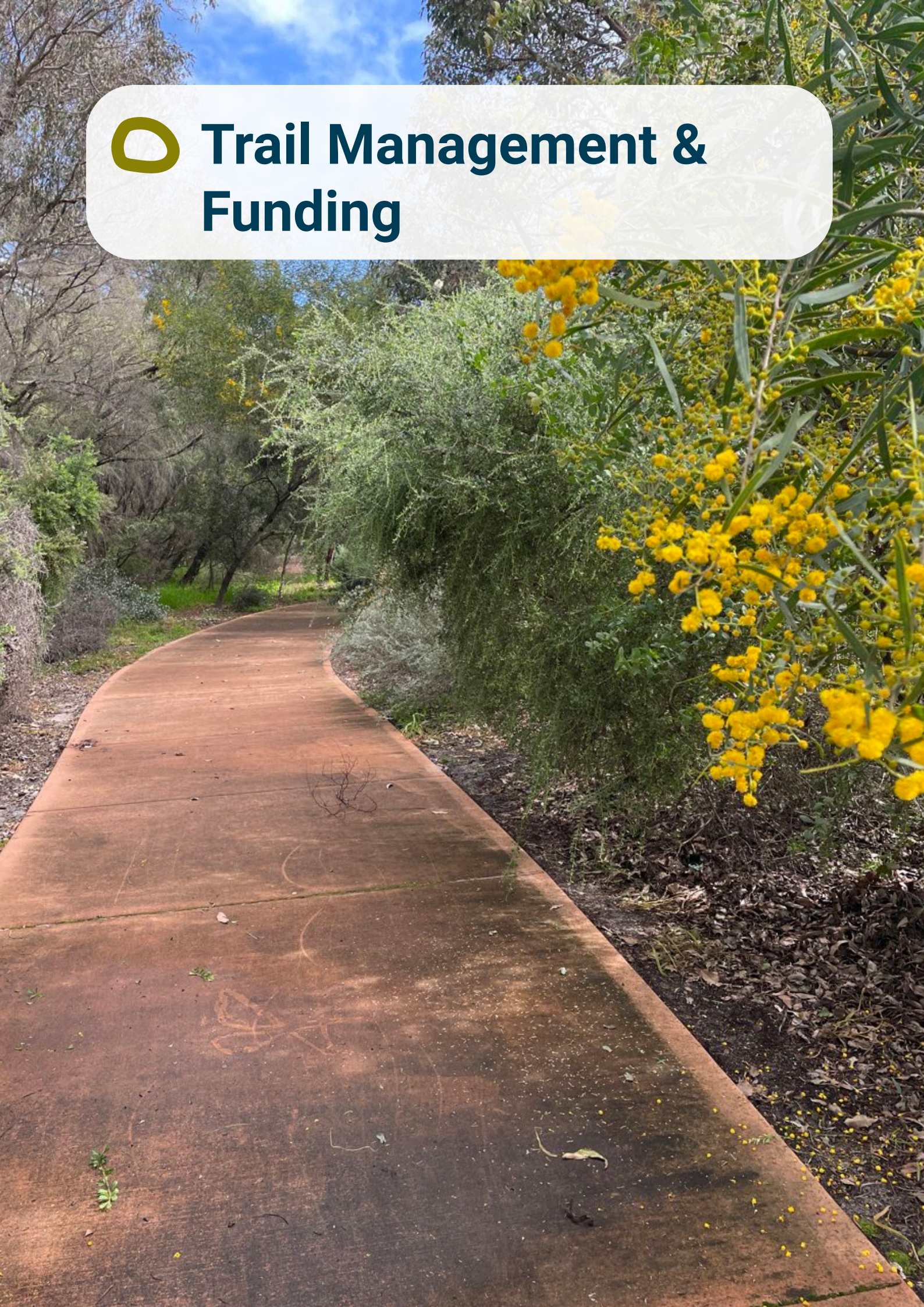
Trail Management & Funding

Key Considerations

There is no one-size-fits-all management and funding model which addresses the ongoing requirements for recreational trails. Each trail or trail network has its own context and stakeholders which need to be considered in determining the opportunities, constraints and most appropriate capital and operational funding sources. For example, the requirements for the proposed development and operation of a an Rail Trail from Capel to Boyanup will differ significantly from the requirements of upgrading an existing, local-level trail such as Joshua Lake Walk.

The relevant management and funding model should be determined in 'Stage 2: Framework' of the 8-Stage Trail Development Process and clearly articulated through a Trail Management Plan. These are to be reviewed and updated as new opportunities or constraints arise.

Ongoing management requirements (beyond the trail development phase) are a particularly important consideration to ensure that any trail project which attracts capital investment can also be sustainably maintained with appropriate resources available.

An effective trail management model must:

- Have clear governance and accountability
- Be legally allowed under State and National regulations and legislation
- Support and maintain the visitor experience
- Be supported by funding sources with potential to create self-generated revenue streams to enable investment back into the trail
- Recognise the strengths and expertise offered
- Allocate and define roles and responsibilities.

There are various models which could be applied to trail management, as outlined over the following pages.

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities involved in trail management are to be agreed upon and documented in a Trail Management Plan. The allocation of roles and responsibilities should be formally documented, such as in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Two of the key roles in trail management are the trail owner and the trail operator. These can be defined as:

- Trail Owner: the entity that owns the physical structure of the trails and is usually the owner or manager of the land the trails are on. The trail owner carries the liability for the health and safety of all trail users.
- Trail Operator: the entity that maintains the trails to the agreed standards of the owner.

Responsibilities involved in trail management include:

- Planning and Coordination - Trail network planning; consultation and collaboration; policy development.
- Advocacy, Funding and Partnerships - Advocating for the trail or trail network; partnering with stakeholders; capital investment; revenue generation; funding attraction.
- Trail Development - Trail planning and design; impact assessment; trail construction.
- Trail Management and Maintenance - Trail inspections and maintenance; hazard control measures; invasive species management; vegetation management; volunteer attraction/management; trail user compliance; management of funds; legal responsibility/duty of care.
- Information Provision - Information collation; map creation and updates; brochure design and updates; website design and updates; social media; promotional material approval; brochure distribution; monitoring online information sources.

Trail Management & Funding

Sole Agency Trail Management

By default, the manager of the land a trail is located on is the entity responsible for trail management. Many trails are managed solely by the land manager, which is often a local or state government agency, such as the Shire or DBCA. This model places all roles and responsibilities with the land manager. While community groups and members may be consulted regarding management initiatives, they do not take on any responsibility for trail management.

Trail managers are often eligible to apply for external grant funding for capital investments, however, this often does not extend to trail operation and maintenance.

A key disadvantage of this management model is that land managers, such as local governments, often have numerous parcels of land and recreational assets to manage which results in management of the trail being one of many competing priorities for budget allocations and management efforts. This model does not recognise or embrace the opportunities and additional skills and resources which may be available through partnerships.

Trail Management Partnership

Trail management partnerships can bring many benefits to both trail users and managers, and optimise use of resources available for trail management and maintenance.

Partnerships may involve two or more stakeholder groups, such as the land owner/manager, state and local government agencies, trail user/stewardship groups, funding providers/sponsors and other interest groups. Owners and operators are often the same entity, however, they can also be different organisations.

Various partnership approaches are outlined in the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia's (IPWEA) Practice Note 10.6 Parks Management - Paths Trails and Tracks (2021), including:

- Volunteer/User Group Support
- Committee of Management
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)
- Incorporated Society/Association, Trust or Public Company
- Public-Private Partnership.

These approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Volunteer/User Group Support

Increasingly, trail managers are establishing and/or partnering with community programs, such as volunteer Trail Care groups, to leverage community volunteer support, skills and enthusiasm for trails. Such programs engage with the trail user community and foster a sense of pride and responsibility for the trail network. These organisations often assist with trail user education and reinforce positive trail behaviours.

Through these arrangements, trail managers benefit from hours of volunteer resources which would otherwise need to allocated through budgets, and empowered trail users who take on roles as stewards of the trail/trail network and the surrounding environment.

Trail Management & Funding

The establishment of a Trail Care program needs to consider liability and insurance requirements for use of tools and tasks required to be undertaken by volunteers. Management of the volunteer program must be allocated to a member of staff and budgeted for. In some cases, the development of a Trail Adoption Agreement can help to formalise roles and responsibilities, and empower volunteers to work more autonomously.

Committee of Management

Councils can appoint a committee of local citizens to exercise a function on behalf of Council with respect to a park, reserve, hall or facility or undertaking under the control of the Council, and delegate to the Committee the care, control and management of the work or activity, and the expenditure of such monies as Council may vote.

Memorandum of Understanding

Collaborative trail management approaches can be agreed upon and documented through an 'umbrella agreement' known as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This allows for two or more partnership bodies to clearly understand the terms of the agreement, including roles, responsibilities, and processes for income and expenditure.

Incorporated Society/Association, Trust or Public Company

A common partnership model for trail management is for an incorporated society/association, trust or public company to be established to provide support for management and marketing of the trail.

An incorporated society/association is operated for the benefit of its members in line with its constitution.

A trust operates under the rules of a trust deed, and trustees are appointed. Funds generated are used for the purpose of the trust to be fulfilled. The trust may or may not be charitable.

A public company has appointed directors (some who may receive a directors' fee) and the purpose is to operate in a business-like manner making profits and either re-investing in the trail project or declaring dividends to project investors.

As a separate entity to Council, such organisations may be eligible to access a different range of funding sources, and are usually responsible for their own insurances and finances.

Public Private Partnerships

With this approach, the land manager/s work with the private sector to invest in income generating infrastructure which the private sector then operates, usually under a lease or term contract arrangement. This is a relatively common model used in the operation of recreation facilities (such as private sector management of recreation/aquatic centres) and is likely to be most effective for trails which offer a significant tourist/business opportunity.

The specific business model for such a partnership would need to be determined in close collaboration between partners to ensure the arrangement will be mutually beneficial.

Business models to be considered for such a partnership may include fee for use/user pays, user subscriptions/annual pass, sponsorships/contributions from beneficiaries.

Trail Management & Funding

Trail Funding Sources

It is important to recognise both the capital investment required for trail development/upgrade, as well as the ongoing operational costs associated with the trail. Funding for general trail maintenance is often more difficult to source as the outcomes are more difficult to quantify and are not seen as being as 'appealing' to funding bodies as new developments.

Potential sources of revenue for trails include:

- Rates and charges
- Local, State and Federal government grant funding
- Private sector funding
- User fees
- Commercial operator fees
- Sponsorship programs
- Trail event proceeds
- Fundraising/Donations.
- Merchandise and information sales

State and Federal Government Grant Funding

State and Federal Governments regularly operate funding programs which can be applied to trail developments. Due to the wide ranging benefits of recreational trails, trail projects may be eligible for funding through programs from different sectors of government. For example, through sport and recreation, health and wellbeing, environmental conservation, cultural heritage, community development or tourism and economic development etc. However, this funding is in most cases only applicable for use in the upfront capital investment for the development and enhancement of trails and associated infrastructure and not ongoing trail management and maintenance.

Private Sector Funding

Commercial and private sector funding is often used by organisations to assist with trail developments and ongoing operations.

Opportunities such as trail naming rights and in-kind donations of labour and materials are a potential resource for new developments and upgrades, as well as specific funding programs.

User Fees

Some trails raise revenue by charging a fee for use which contributes to the facility's management and maintenance costs. Various options may be offered to trail users such as one-off passes, seasonal passes/subscriptions, membership fees etc. Fees are also frequently imposed for use of other publicly-owned recreation assets such as swimming pools and recreation centres. User fees are usually only appropriate where an iconic and very high quality experience is offered. For example, user fees are charged through the sale of walker permits for iconic trails such as the Larapinta Trail (Northern Territory) and the Three Capes Track (Tasmania).

Commercial Operator Fees

Commercial operators which provide services associated with recreational trails (e.g. tour companies, equipment hire, shuttle services, food/beverage providers) can be required to pay a fee to the trail manager, often in the form of a permit, licence or rent. This offers the opportunity for the operator's revenue sourced from trail users to contribute towards the ongoing funds required for a quality trail product. For example, Break O'Day Council rent key sites at the trailhead of the St Helen's Mountain Bike Trail Network to businesses which complement the trail network, such as cafes and bike hire.

Sponsorships

Sponsorship programs are an effective way to engage with the local business community, create a profile for the trail network and to raise funds for trail management and maintenance. Local businesses may be willing to contribute to trail networks in their local area if they can see the benefit that this brings their business and broader community.

In return for sponsorship funds, sponsors are promoted and gain recognition in their community. Providing different tiers of sponsorships with capped numbers (e.g. platinum, gold, silver, bronze) allows for exclusivity and supports a higher profile for those contributing larger funds. For example, the Jindabyne Trails Stewardship offers the opportunity for local businesses to become financial partners and/or sponsor specific trails in the network. Such sponsorships are recognised on prominent signs and online.

Trail Management & Funding

Trail Event Proceeds

A portion of proceeds from trail-related events can be allocated towards trail management and maintenance. For example, the Dragon Trail Event in Tasmania helped raise funds for the Break O'Day Trails Collective for management and maintenance of the trail networks.

Fundraising/Donations

Fundraising initiatives such as programs, events, raffles and donation boxes/machines, offer the opportunity for the community to contribute to the management and maintenance of their local trail network. Using technology advancements, such as 'tap and go' EFTPOS machines, QR codes/ smart phones, and online apps reduces the administration required. For example Trailforks, a global source of mountain bike trail information, has established a system called 'Trail Karma' which allows trail users to donate directly to their local trail association.

The Australian Sports Foundation also offers the opportunity to make a tax deductible donation to a project/recipient. It can be a single donation or regular donations.

Merchandise and Information Sales

A common revenue source for iconic trails is the sale of trail merchandise (e.g. badges, stickers, hats, post cards, passports/stamps) and trail information (e.g. guidebooks, apps, maps). For example, the Bibbulmun Track Foundation sells merchandise through their website, with proceeds going towards maintaining the track. Items for sale include branded caps, rocktape, snake bite kits, tea towels, keep cups, water bottles, stickers, magnets and guide books.

Trail Management & Funding

Case Studies

A wide range of different management models and funding sources have been implemented for recreational trails across Australia and internationally.

The Bibbulmun Track Foundation, Western Australia

The Bibbulmun Track Foundation is an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation established to provide support for the management, maintenance and marketing of the Bibbulmun Track. As an incorporated organisation, the Foundation is managed by a ten person volunteer Board of Management, bound by the Constitution.

Whilst the Western Australian State Government is the managing authority, the Bibbulmun Track Foundation is recognised as the primary focal point for community-based support and involvement, and has primary responsibility for promoting and maintaining the Track through the Newmont Boddington 'Gold Eyes on the Ground' volunteer maintenance program. The partnership, with key roles and responsibilities, is outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding.

bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Darling Downs Residents Association, Western Australia

The Darling Downs Residents Association Incorporated is a not-for-profit volunteer organisation, which is primarily focused on engaging and supporting residents living within the Darling Downs Equestrian Estate, which is about 35km south east from Perth in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale.

The Darling Downs Residents Association takes on the role of initiating, implementing and facilitating appropriate maintenance and developments for the public land within the Equestrian Estate, including the bridle trails. The DRRA and the Shire collaboratively maintain a Strategic Development Plan which is updated annually, and reported on quarterly. Financial support, in line with the Strategic Development Plan, is provided by the Shire.

This partnership is agreed upon through a Memorandum of Understanding which was initiated in 2017 and renewed in 2020.

ddra.org.au

NT Parks Fee Structure, Larapinta Trail, Northern Territory

The Larapinta Trail, established in 2002, winds 223 kilometres across the Yeperenye (caterpillar) Dreaming country of the Western Arrernte people, tracking the spine of the Chewings and Heavitree ranges through the Tjoritja/Western MacDonnell Ranges National Park. Since it opened, the trail has evolved from a favourite local walk to a world-renowned trek with up to 5000 walkers each year.

In 2021, Northern Territory Parks established a user fee for the iconic Larapinta Trail through sale of walker permits purchased online.

The fee provides much needed revenue to effectively manage the cultural and biodiversity values of the area, and also helps with maintaining infrastructure, servicing the trail (including cleaning of facilities) and providing reliable water supplies.

The trail walking fee starts at $25 for a two-day walk and caps at $125 for 6+ days of walking. Camping fees are paid in addition to the walking fee.

depws.nt.gov.au

Trail Management & Funding

Otago Central Rail Trail Charitable Trust, New Zealand

The Otago Central Rail Trail Charitable Trust was formed in 1994 to help raise funds to develop the Otago Central Rail Trail. The Trust now actively works to help sustain and promote the Rail Trail and aims to facilitate greater public interest and involvement in the work including encouraging the support of local communities along the trail.

The 150km Rail Trail was opened in 2000 and is now supported by a wide range of local accommodation, tour, food, equipment and transport services.

The Otago Central Rail Trail's success in attracting visitors and improving the local economy is attributable to the Trust's development, coordination and promotion of the trail, as well as contributions by the Department of Conservation, and collaboration of local businesses.

otagocentralrailtrail.co.nz

Friends of the Riesling Trail, Clare Valley, South Australia

The Riesling Trail is managed by the not-for-profit group of volunteers known as the Friends of the Riesling Trail, in collaboration with various stakeholders including Council, State Government and businesses.

The trail was instigated by the Clare Valley Winemakers with funding support from the South Australian Government through the Office for Recreation and Sport, as well as from South Australian Tourism. The mining company BHP donated a significant amount of steel to repair bridges and volunteers donated hundreds of hours to work on the trail.

Various grants have been received over time for development, maintenance and marketing. The South Australian Government regularly contributes to the maintenance costs of the trail.

rieslingtrail.com.au

Break O'Day Trails Collective, Tasmania

The Break O'Day Trails Collective have worked with Council to seek innovative approaches to financially sustaining the region's trail networks.

The Trail Ambassador Program is the primary revenue source for the trail network and has gained great levels of support. It provides 'exclusive' participation with promotional opportunities for ambassadors.

EFTPOS Donation Machines are located at the point of sale in a range of local businesses which provides an easy and accessible option for community members provide trail donations.

Rental of space at the trailhead to trail-related businesses (e.g. cafes, equipment hire, transport services) has created another revenue stream, which also helps to create high quality and supported trail experiences.

All funds raised through these streams are directly deposited into an account specifically for the Break O'Day Trails Collective for the ongoing maintenance and management of the trail network.

sthelensmtbtrails.com.au

Trail Management & Funding

Maintenance Schedule

Maintenance Cost Estimates

The Shire is responsible for the management and maintenance of approximately 11.5 kilometres of existing trails, along with an additional 10 kilometres of road that forms part of the Munda Biddi Trail.

The on-going maintenance costs for trails in Australia can vary significantly depending on various factors, including the trails location, usage, local conditions, extreme weather events and detrimental activities such as vandalism. This makes predicting on-going maintenance expenses challenging.

Maintenance schedule

A trail maintenance schedule for the eleven trails is outlined in the accompanying *Shire of Capel Established Trails Audit and Service Plan.* The Shire of Capel owns/manages 8 of these trails, while the remaining three, Tuart Walk, Tuart Discovery Trail and the Munda Biddi are owned or managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

This schedule adheres to the *Australian Standard 2156.1 – 2001: Walking Tracks Part 1- Classification and Signage* which specifies the following inspection and maintenance intervals.

- Class 1 (Easiest)

Tracks and adjacent natural and built elements will be inspected and maintained regularly. Inspection interval: 30 days or less

- Class 2 (Easy)

Tracks and adjacent natural and built elements will be inspected and maintained regularly. Inspection interval: 90 days or less

- Class 3 (Moderate)

Built elements will be inspected and maintained regularly. Any built facilities will be managed for public risk. Inspection interval: 6 months or less.

Adhering to these intervals is essential to ensure tracks are appropriately classified and to provide clear guidance for land managers in meeting safety and risk management obligations.

As new trails are developed, they will need to be incorporated into the inspection and maintenance schedule in accordance with the applicable classification standards.

Implementing and Review

Resourcing

This Trails Master Plan will need to be adequately resourced to achieve successful implementation of the identified actions and delivery of the overall vision for the Shire.

Implementation has not been funded and the Trails Master Plan will be reliant on the Shire of Capel's budget cycles and external funding. The Shire of Capel budget cycles plan and allocate financial resources for various programs, services, and infrastructure projects. The Shire of Capel's budget cycles reflect Council's commitment to striking a balance between rate revenue, the long-term financial sustainability of Capel, whilst maintaining and improving services that are valued by the community.

Potential external funding sources are available through federal and state government programs which could support the development of trail projects. In addition to government funding programs, private and commercial sector opportunities may also be available. Government funding programs continually change so it is recommended that the relevant websites are frequently reviewed.

Opportunities to form partnerships with other potential stakeholders, including land managers or commercial entities with interests in trail development may need to be sought to deliver synergies and successful outcomes in the implementation of the Action Plan.

Strategy Review, Evaluation and Update

The implementation of the Action Plan should be continually monitored by Council staff, in collaboration with the proposed Trail Management Group (Outlined under Strategy A1 - Integrated Framework), with annual reports to Council.

The Trails Master Plan should be reviewed and updated every 10 years. This process is to include an audit of the status of each action within the action plan. Actions may be amended, removed or re-prioritised. This evaluation should consider current trends, population and demographic shifts, and community engagement is encouraged during this process to ensure that the evolving needs and aspirations of the community are identified and reflected.
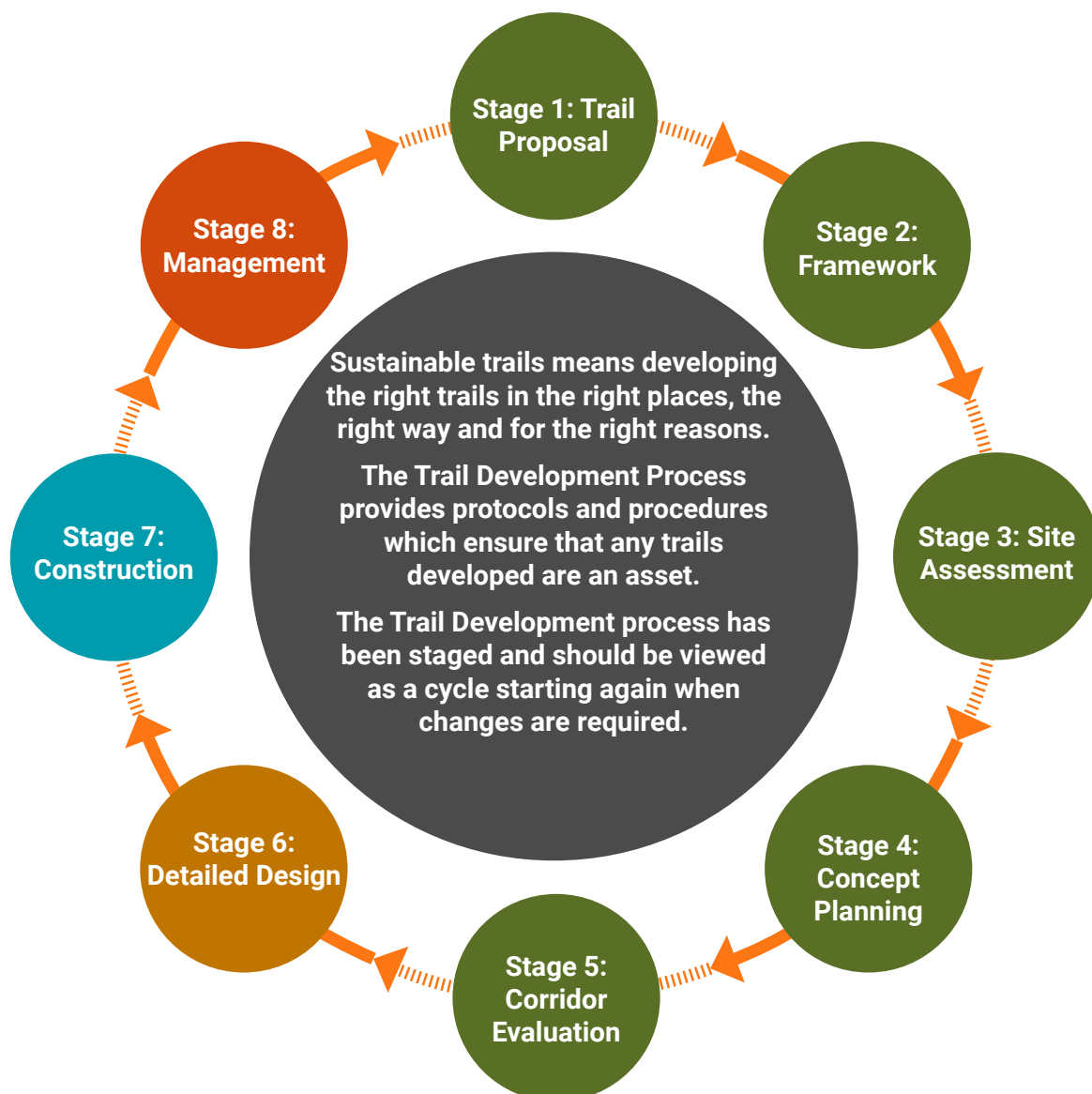
Trail Standards & Planning

Trail Development

The Western Australia Government in 2019, published a *Trails Development Series, Part A to D* comprehensively detailing the trail planning process for all types of recreational trails. It is referenced in many contemporary trail planning guidelines and strategies across Australia.

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

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

Sustainable trails means developing the right trails in the right places, the right way and for the right reasons.

The Trail Development Process provides protocols and procedures which ensure that any trails developed are an asset.

The Trail Development process has been staged and should be viewed as a cycle starting again when changes are required.

Stage 1: Trail Proposal
Stage 2: Framework
Stage 3: Site Assessment
Stage 4: Concept Planning
Stage 5: Corridor Evaluation
Stage 6: Detailed Design
Stage 7: Construction
Stage 8: Management

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

Trail Standards & Planning

Eight Stage Trail Planning Process

The Shire will use the Trail Development Process for all new trails to ensure a consistent, high-quality and strategic approach. The eight stage trail development process and the expected outcomes associated with each stage are outlined in the table below. Expert input is recommended at various stages to support best-practice planning, delivery and management.

Stage		Outcome	
1	**Trail Proposal**	The proposed area is either supported in principle for trail development, or is not supported due to environmental, social or cultural constraints. The purpose of a proposal could be to identify potential suitable areas for consideration.	Desktop
2	**Framework**	A project outline, developed by project steering group (stakeholders), including: project objectives, project management model, stakeholder roles, target market, requirements, standards, execution, and ongoing trail management model.	Desktop
3	**Site Assessment**	Undertake a broad scale study of the area and identify constraints, soil types, vegetation etc.	Desktop
4	**Concept Planning**	Identify opportunities and conceptual trail plan including infrastructure requirements produced. Broad trail corridors are physically flagged in the field.	Desktop
5	**Corridor Evaluation**	Detailed assessment of trail corridors for use in determining the final trail alignment.	Field
6	**Detailed Design**	Detailed trail design is produced and physically flagged in the field, including: trail classifications, technical trail features, construction types and specifications. Planning for the use of Sustainable Trail Building Techniques to mitigate potential environmental impacts. Approval processes may include: environmental approvals (refer Legislative Context in Section 02), Development Application (DA), Construction Certificate (CC), and/or Complying Development Certificate (CDC). Where works are proposed within a road reserve, formal approval must be obtained as required under Section 138 of the Roads Act 1993.	Field
7	**Construction**	Trail is constructed in line with the detailed design.	Field
8	**Management**	Management plan implemented detailing maintenance and monitoring requirements.	Field

Trails Development Series, Part A to D published in 2019 by the Western Australian Government

Trail Standards & Planning

Trails Hierarchy

A successful regional trails network requires trails of varying levels of significance in order to meet the needs of different user group and market segments. The trails hierarchy provides a guide for the level of infrastructure required for trails to meet the needs of their intended users to ensure that an appropriate standard of facilities is provided. A trail's level on the hierarchy indicates the partnerships required to successfully manage the trail, the level of promotion likely to be appropriate and the infrastructure which can be expected by users.

The *WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines (2024)* outlines the significance categories (hierarchy) and corresponding trail models as summarised in the table below.

Hierarchy Level	Definition	Example
State	An extended trail or trail network that is of sufficient quality and with appropriate facilities, products and services to be recognised beyond the State and to attract visitors to Western Australia	• Munda Biddi • Dwellingup
Regional	A major trail or trail network that services a population centre or large regional community, with facilities and services of a standard and appeal that could attract visitors from outside the region. Regional trails keep visitors in the region longer and align with the focus for regional tourism organisations.	• Tuart Discovery Trail • Giants of Mandurah • Bunbury to Busselton Cycle Link
Local	A trail that services the local community and provides facilities suited to local use. Some local trails may have potential for development to regional status. Local trails are more likely to be the focus of local tourism organisation and visitor centres and are not a focus for Tourism WA marketing.	• Gelorup Nature Trail • Boyanup Heritage Trail • Preston River Ramble

Trail Model	Definition	Example
Trail Town	A population centre which has been assessed and accredited as a destination, offering high-quality trails encouraging extended stays, trail user related services, facilities, trail related businesses, trail branding and signage.	• Collie • Dwellingup
Trail Centre	A managed multiple trail facility with dedicated visitor services, supported by high quality trails, encouraging single day visits, trail user related services and trail branding and signage. A Trail Centre can stand alone in an individual location but may be positioned within a Trail Town.	• Dwellingup Trails and Visitor Centre • Wellington Dam
Trail Network	A collection of linked trails, often of the same trail type and typically accessed via a trailhead. A Trail Network may be standalone in an individual location and can form part of a larger Trail Town or Trail Centre.	• Wambenger Arklow MTB Network, Collie
Individual Trails	Individual linear or looped trails are typically small individual trails that stand alone in a community setting. Long distance trails can link these trails to another trail model and can also be the precursor to developing a tourism destination.	• Bushland Walk & Lake Walk, Dalyellup

Trail Standards & Planning

Trail Classification System

Using standardised and consistent terminology to define a trail's classification, attributes, and difficulty level enables users to make informed decisions about its suitability for their needs and abilities. Guidelines such as the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines, WA Mountain Bike Management Guidelines and WA Horse Trail Management Guidelines provide detailed specifications and may be used by land managers, trail designers, trail builders and volunteers involved in planning, design and construction.

Walking Trails

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5
Difficulty	Easiest	Easy	Moderate	Difficult	Extreme
Gradient	Flat	Gentle hills	Short, steep hills	Very steep	Very steep and difficult
Quality of Tread	Well-formed hardened trail	Formed trail	Formed trail, some obstacles and/or some rock hopping	Rough trail, many obstacles and/or extensive rock hopping	Rough unformed trail, and/or arduous rock hopping and/or rock scrambling
Quality of Markings	Clear directional signage	Clear directional signage	Directional signage	Limited directional signage	Limited or no directional signage
Steps	No steps	Occasional steps or no steps	Many steps	Many steep flights of stairs or many steep uneven sized steps.	N/A
Experience & Fitness Level	No experience required. Suitable for all levels of fitness.	No experience required. Suitable for all levels of fitness.	Some bushwalking experience and moderate level of fitness required.	Experienced bushwalkers and good level of fitness required.	Very experienced bushwalkers and high level of fitness required.
General class description	All abilities access, flat, even, hardened surface with no steps or steep sections. Suitable for unassisted wheelchair users and prams. Clear directional signage. No bushwalking experience required.	Easy trail with modified or hardened surface, gentle hills and occasional steps. Clear directional signage. No bushwalking experience required. May be suitable for assisted wheelchair users (if ramps are provided at steps).	Moderate trail with short steep hills, rough surface, many steps and some rock hopping. Directional signage. Some bushwalking experience and moderate fitness required.	Difficult trail with rough surface, very steep and extensive rock hopping. Directional signage may be limited. Bushwalking experience, navigation and emergency first aid skills, and good fitness required.	Extreme trail with very rough surface, very steep. Arduous rock hopping and/or scrambling. Limited or no directional signage. For very experienced bushwalkers with navigation and emergency first aid skills, and high level of fitness.

Mountain Bike Trails

	easiest	easy	moderate	difficult	extreme
DESCRIPTION	Likely to be a rail trail, wide purpose built cycle trail or fire road with a gentle gradient and smooth surface and free of obstacles. Frequent encounters are likely with other cyclists, walkers, runners and/or horse riders.	Likely to be a purpose built mountain bike trail or rail trail with gentle gradients, smooth surface and some unavoidable obstacles. May encounter other cyclists, walkers, runners and/or horse riders	Likely to be single track with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles.	Likely to be single track with steep gradients, variable surface and many obstacles.	Trails which incorporate very steep gradients, highly variable surface and unavoidable severe obstacles.
RECOMMENDED FOR	Beginner or novice riders with basic bike skills.	Beginner riders with basic mountain bike skills.	Intermediate riders with some technical skills.	Experienced riders with good technical skills.	Very experienced riders with a high level of technical skills.
TRAIL WIDTH	1500mm or wider	900mm or wider	600mm or wider	300mm or wider	150mm or wider
TRAIL SURFACE & OBSTACLES	Hardened with no challenging features on the trail.	Mostly firm and stable. Trail may have rollable technical trail features and/or obstacles such as logs, roots and rocks.	Possible sections of rocky or loose tread. Trail may have natural obstacles such as rocks, roots and logs and some constructed technical trail features.	Variable and challenging. Unavoidable obstacles such as logs, roots, rocks, drop-offs or constructed technical trail features.	Widely variable and unpredictable. Expect large, committing and unavoidable obstacles.
TRAIL GRADIENT	Climbs and descents are mostly shallow.	Climbs and descents are mostly shallow, but may include some moderately steep sections.	Mostly moderate gradients, but may include steep sections.	Contains steep descents and/or climbs.	Expect steep, loose and rocky descents or climbs.

Horse Trails

The WA Horse Trail Management Guidelines include a Horse Trail Classification system designed to assist trail users in making informed decisions about the suitability of a trail for their own abilities and those of their horse.

Difficulty	Easiest	Easy	Moderate	Difficult	Extreme
Gradient	Flat	Gentle hills	Short, steep hills	Very steep	Very steep and difficult
Quality of Tread	Wide, well-formed trail	Formed trail	Formed trail and may include sections of rocky ground and variable surface.	Rough trail with highly variable surface.	Rough trail with highly variable surface and may include unformed or natural surface.
Obstacles	Generally minimal obstacles. Gates and bollards may be present.	Generally minimal obstacles. Step-overs, gates, bollards and easy shallow ford crossings with low-speed water flow may be present.	Occasional obstacles such as rocks, logs and shallow fords may be present. There may be some obstacles that require dismounting.	Obstacles are expected. Water crossings may be present.	Challenging obstacles are expected.
Quality of Markings	Clear directional signage	Clear directional signage	Directional signage	Limited directional signage	Limited or no directional signage
Experience & Fitness Level	Basic level of riding skill and fitness required. Inexperienced riders will need a trained and experienced horse.	Basic level of riding skill and fitness required. Inexperienced riders will need a trained and experienced horse.	Intermediate level of riding skill and moderate fitness required. A horse with some trail experience and training is recommended.	Experienced riders with good skills/fitness. Riders may require navigation equipment and self-reliance in managing first aid and horse health. A horse that is experienced and suitably trained is recommended.	Very experienced riders with a high level of skill/fitness. A high level of skill with navigation equipment and self-reliance in managing first aid and horse health is required. A horse that is experienced and suitably trained is highly recommended.
General Class Description	Typically a flat, well-formed, wide trail with minimal obstacles and clear directional signage. Gates and bollards may be present. Recommended for those with a basic level of riding skill and fitness. Inexperienced riders will need a trained and experienced horse.	Typically easy trail with formed surface, gentle hills, minimal obstacles and clear directional signage. Gates, step-overs, bollards and shallow ford crossings with low-speed water flow may be present. Recommended for those with a basic level of riding skill and fitness. Inexperienced riders will need a trained and experienced horse.	Moderate trail with short, steep hills and variable surface. Occasional obstacles such as rocks, logs and shallow ford crossing may be present. There may be obstacles that require dismounting. Directional signage is provided. Recommended for riders with an intermediate level of riding skill and moderate fitness. A horse with some trail experience and training is recommended.	Difficult trail with rough, variable surface, very steep hills and obstacles to negotiate. Water crossings may be present. Directional signage may be limited. Recommended for experienced riders with good skills/fitness and self-reliance in managing first aid, horse health and navigation where required. A horse that is experienced and suitably trained is recommended.	Extreme trail with rough variable surface, very steep and difficult terrain with challenging obstacles. Limited or no directional signage. Recommended for very experienced riders with a high level of skill/fitness and self-reliance in managing navigation, first aid and horse health. A horse that is experienced and suitably trained is highly recommended.

Trail Bike Trails

Easy - Mostly unsealed roads with a good surface, some rough sections but not to steep, suitable for novice riders. Suitable for basic trail bikes with dual-purpose tyres and adventure bikes.
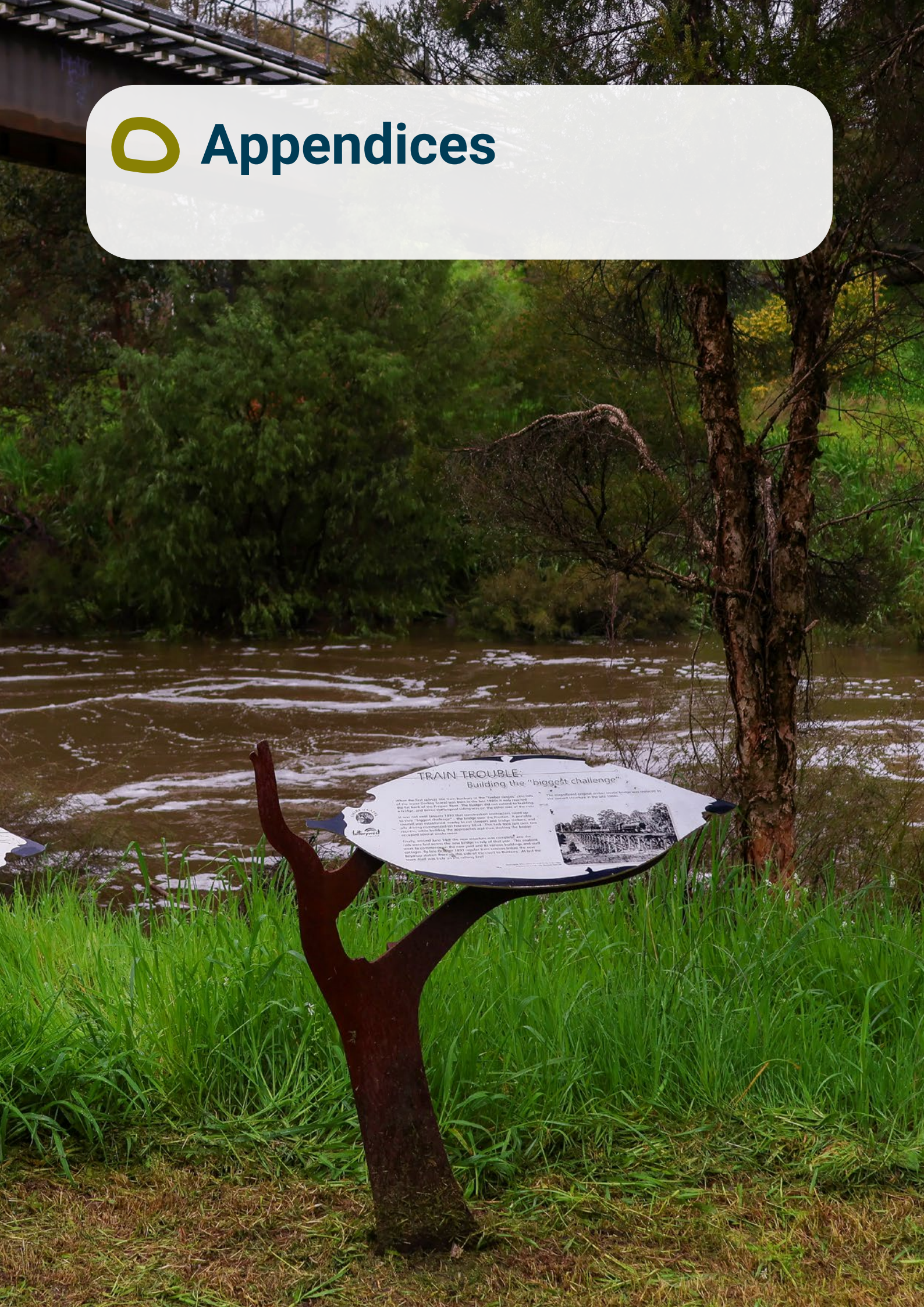
Medium - May include steep, rocky, sandy track sections with shallow water crossings. May be slippery and have difficult water crossings after rain. Suitable for riders with some trail riding experience during good conditions and for intermediate and advanced riders in wet conditions. Enduro motorcycles are recommended.

Difficult - Frequent long steep, rocky track sections, uneven surface, tight bends. Water crossings may be deep and difficult to navigate or possibly impassable after rain. Recommended that riders be experienced in these conditions, travel in a group, and use enduro motorcycles with good tyres.

Very Difficult - Loose, rocky surfaces, muddy, slippery and possibly unrideable when wet. Climbs and descents are very steep requiring advanced skills, excellent tyres and well prepared enduro motorcycles. Recommended to carry Personal Locator Beacon (PLB), tow ropes, and essential spares if riding in remote areas. Riders are advised to carry sufficient fuel to allow return via the same route if the track is impassable. Water crossings may be very difficult or impassable after recent rain.

Source: *https://www.exploreoutdoors.vic.gov.au/where-to-start/track-and-trail-grading-information*

Appendices

SHIRE OF CAPEL
ESTABLISHED TRAILS AUDIT AND SERVICE PLAN

NOVEMBER 2024

Disclaimer

We make every reasonable effort to ensure the information we source for your report is true, correct and accurate and that we fully and properly represent our findings to you.

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Introduction

Project Background and Scope

The Shire of Capel, sprawling across 558km², is a diverse and vibrant region home to over 18,000 residents. Its landscape is a rich mosaic, featuring pristine coastlines, lush rural areas, and charming historic towns. The region is distinguished as one of Australia's most bio diverse areas, including the last remnants of the magnificent ancient Tuart forest.

The Shire is also deeply connected to its Aboriginal heritage, as reflected in the Wadandi place names throughout the region, from Boyanup to Gwindinup.

The Established Trails Audit and Service Plan, compiled by Tredwell Management Services acts as a critical starting point in gathering information on each of the existing trails in term of trail infrastructure and functionality.

By consolidating this data into a comprehensive database accessible Shire, it aims to improve the management and enhancement of the trail network for the benefit of the entire community.

Historically, trail assets in the Shire have been introduced based on immediate community needs, often without sufficient documentation of infrastructure, maintenance procedures, or accurate coordinates. Consequently, there has been a significant gap in understanding the conditions of these trails and how to maintain them effectively.

The Trails Audit serves as a crucial initial step in addressing this information gap. Its primary objective is to provide a thorough overview of the current trail infrastructure and functionality for both the community and visitors. This audit will identify immediate safety concerns and facilitate their prompt resolution. Additionally, it will inform strategic planning and integrate necessary capital works into the Shire's broader strategic documents, ensuring the long-term sustainability and enhancement of the trail network.

Project Methodology

The plan has been prepared by Tredwell Management for the Shire of Capel utilising the following six stage approach:

○ Stage 1: Trail, Signage and Infrastructure Audit

○ Stage 2: Hazard Assessment

○ Stage 3: Trail Grading

○ Stage 4: Visitor Needs Assessment

○ Stage 5: Trails Maintenance Plan

○ Stage 6: Report

CRAGGY PEAR
THE FELTING POT
WORKSHOPS

OPEN

THE METHODIST CHURCH: Built by brickies on holiday

Back in the early 1950s the local Methodists were the only major faith to not have a spiritual meeting place of their own. They'd "made do" with a variety of down-market options over the decades. This included lay-preacher Jack Beukers cycling around the district to minister to the then-Congregationalists and Pastor Short coming from Busselton to hold a service in the Winwoods house, near Capel.

In 1953 Rev. Cook met with local Methodists and hatched a plan to build a church at last. The congregation then raised funds, mainly by door-knocking, and finally nearly two years later, all was in place for construction to commence. To cut costs and in a remarkable act of generosity bricklayers built the church during their holidays, with local churchmen providing the labour. The new building was officially opened in June 1956.

The hall next door was similarly built across a two-year period, from 1960 to 62. Sunday School and a variety of other functions were held there through the years, especially after the Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist churches combined Australia-wide to form the Uniting Church in 1977. Colourbond cladding has since modernised the look of the building, and a new verandah has replaced the original front porch. The church house, too, remains little changed.

Neither the church nor the hall have been used for their original purposes since 1995.

Trail Audit of Existing Trails

The following existing trails were subject to an audit.

1. Tuart Walk, Dalyellup
2. Bushland Walk, Dalyellup
3. Lake Walk, Dalyellup
4. Wetland Walk, Dalyellup
5. Gelorup Nature Trail, Gelorup
6. Tuart Discovery Trail, Stirling Estate
7. Ironstone Gully Falls Trail, Capel
8. Joshua Lake Walk, Boyanup
9. Munda Biddi, Boyanup
10. Preston River Ramble, Boyanup
11. Boyanup Heritage Trail, Boyanup

Audit Findings & Recommendations

Audit findings, with an trail map, actions, priority and indicative coast have been developed based on the on-ground audit and identified required works. Actions provided for each trail are:

1.1 - 1.3	Tuart Walk
2.1 - 2.4	Bushland Walk
3.1 - 3.7	Lake Walk
4.1 - 4.5	Wetland Walk
5.1 - 5.9	Gelorup Nature Trail
6.1	Tuart Discovery Trail
7.1	Munda Biddi
8.1 - 8.6	Joshua Lake Walk
9.1 - 9.6	Ironstone Gully Falls Trail
10.1 - 10.8	Preston River Ramble
11.1 - 11.5	Boyanup Heritage Trail

Audit Process

A tailored data field structure was developed for the collection of trail information using ESRI's Collector for ArcGIS. This was used on a mobile device while traversing the trails to collect data, with data saved to the cloud-based storage system as interactive maps for analysis, and downloadable as mapping layers in Geographic Information System software.

The on-ground trail audit identified and collected data and georeferenced photographs relating to:

*   Trail name

*   Length, width, direction

*   Surface material

*   Condition in line with IPWEA's Condition Assessment and Performance Guidelines:

    1. Very Good Condition

    2. Minor Defects Only

    3. Maintenance Required

    4. Requires Renewal

    5. Asset unserviceable

*   Trail classification / difficulty in line with Australian Standard 2156.1.

*   Opportunities for improvement of the trail experience

*   Required works.

*   Trail support infrastructure such as: signage, seats, bridges, fencing, steps, viewing structures.

*   Points of interest

*   Hazards (e.g. erosion, water runoff, drainage, off track access, encroaching vegetation).

The relevant GIS data outputs and photographs have been provided to the Shire of Capel for integration into the Shire's mapping and asset management systems.

Cost Estimates

An estimate of the resources required to implement each action has been identified to inform Council's budget processes. These estimates should be reviewed with details of the scope of works prior to implementation or as part of annual business and budget planning.

The indicative cost ranges used are:

*   Low: <$5,000

*   Medium: $5,000 - $10,000

*   High: >$10,000

Prioritisation

Recommended actions have been prioritised to enable a staged approach to the enhancement of existing trails within the Shire of Capel.

Actions have been and prioritised as 'High', 'Medium', or 'Low', based on:

*   Benefit: Overall benefit to trail users, managers and the surrounding environment

*   Need/Demand: field observation and requirement to mitigate existing levels of risk

*   Feasibility: project size and resource requirements/cost

It is anticipated that implementation of the recommended actions will include consultation with partners (i.e. Friends of Groups, DBCA, Munda Biddi Foundation)

Operational Expenditure or Capital Expenditure

Each action is categorised as either operational or capital expenditure.

*   Operational Expenditure (OpEx)

Ongoing costs required for the day-to day maintenance and operation of the trails (i.e. routine maintenance, regular inspections, upkeep of trail signage, costs associated with trail safety)

*   Capital Expenditure (CapEx)

Investment in assets or improvements that enhance or upgrade the trail infrastructure, generally resulting in a long-term benefit (i.e. significant upgrades to trail infrastructure, adding new amenities)

*   External

The Shire of Capel is not the landowner or manager (i.e. DBCA)

TUART WALK AUDIT MAP

Seat

Interpretation Signage

Paving - No Seat

Primary Trailhead Ocean Drive

Vegetation Encroachment

Water Fountain

Secondary Trailhead Maidment Parade

0   100   200m
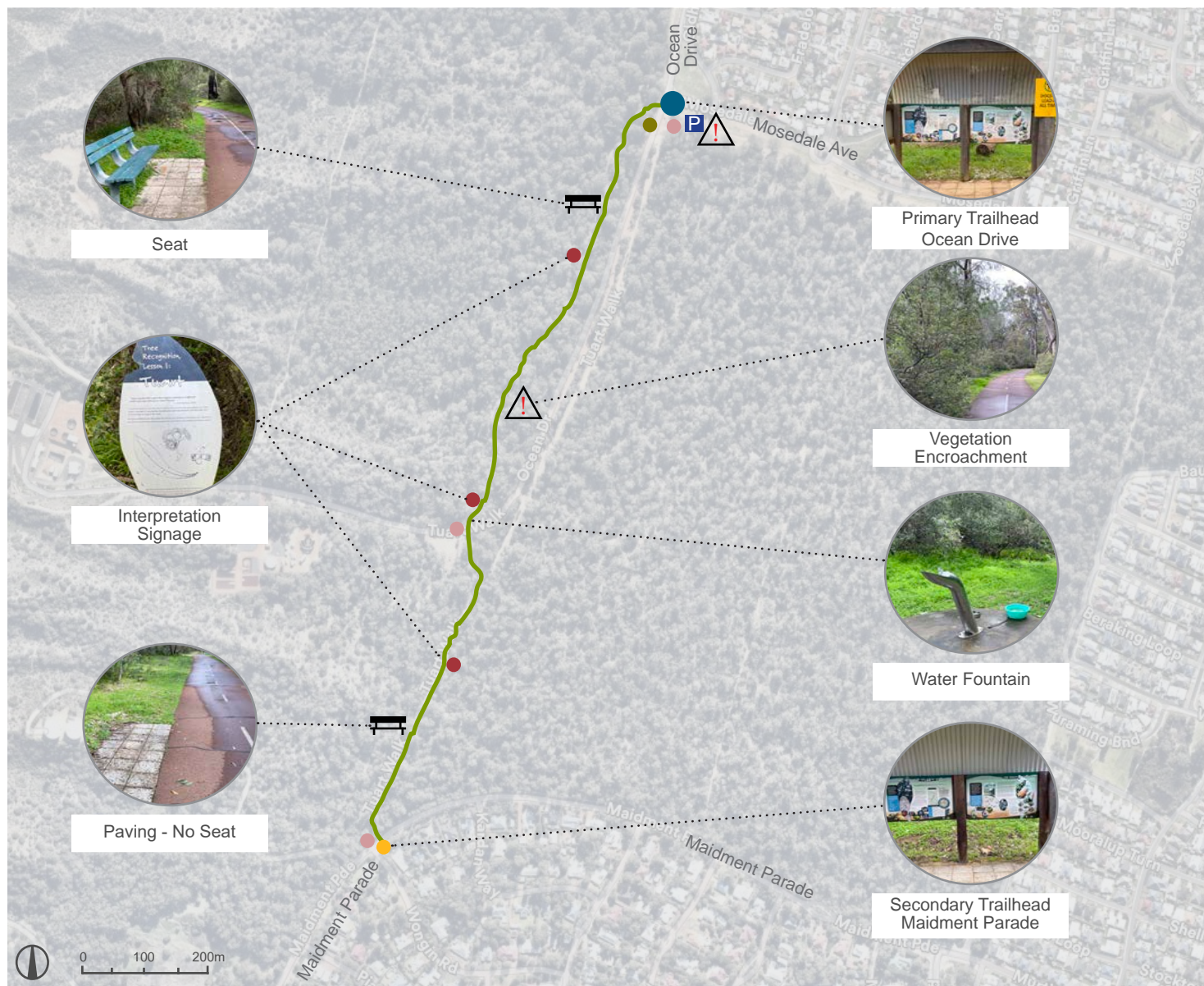
TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Tuart Walk DALYELLUP	GRADE 1

TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
1.3km ONE WAY	30 min ONE WAY

TRACK CONDITION	ACTIVITIES
Broad, hard surfaced track suitable for wheelchair use. 1200mm or more	Walking, Cycling, Roller blading, Skateboards, Wheelchairs

LEGEND

— Tuart Walk

P Car Parking

● Primary Trailhead Sign

● Secondary Trailhead Sign

● Interpretation Sign

● Waymarking/Directional Sign

● Management/Warning Sign

Seat

⚠ Hazard

AUDIT NOTES

Tuart Walk

Tuart Walk, located within Kalgulup Regional Park, spans from Ocean Drive to Maidment Parade. Initially reserved for residential development, the area is now preserved as public open space. Before European settlement, this landscape was home to the local Noongar people, and it features the unique Tuart tree, which is native to the 420km coastal strip between Bussetlon and Jurien Bay.

Hazards

1. The car park at the northern end (Ocean Drive) is informal, with uneven surfaces, inadequate drainage, and no designated disability parking.
2. Vegetation is progressively encroaching on the track.
3. A paved area lacks seating posing a hazard due to the absence of resting areas for users on a Class 1 Trail.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
1.1	In consultation with the key stakeholders (i.e. City of Bunbury, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and Water Corporation): - Consider renaming the trail, currently known as Tuart Walk to better reflect its use for activities such as cycling, roller blading and skateboarding (i.e. Tuart Trail or Tuart Path) - Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Grade 1 Tuart Walk in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 and incorporating universal access (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation). - Upgrade the informal dirt car park at the northern end (Ocean Drive) into a formal car park, including the addition of toilet facilities, to enhance user accessibility and safety, including disability access. - Assess the type and extent of vegetation encroachment along the trail, identify high-priority areas where overgrowth impacts trail access or safety and regularly prune vegetation.	Medium	High	External CoB DBCA WC
1.2	Install a seat at the existing paved area (Maidment Parade end).	High	Low	OpEx
1.3	Inspect trail every 30 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 1 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	Low	OpEx
1.4	Replace the main head board (Maidment Parade end).	High	Low	OpEx

BUSHLAND WALK AUDIT MAP

Interpretation Sign | Informal Trails | Seat | Lighting | Shelter/Picnic Area

TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Bushland Walk DALYELLUP	GRADE 2

TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
1.3km ONE WAY	30 min ONE WAY

TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Modified or hardened surface. 900mm or more	Walking, Cycling, Roller blading, Skateboards

LEGEND

— Bushland Walk
● Primary Trailhead Sign
● Interpretation Sign
● Waymarking/Directional Sign
⟰ Shelter/Picnic Area
⟱ Seat
● Lighting
⚠ Hazard

AUDIT NOTES

Bushland Walk

Bushland Walk is a sealed shared use pathway through an east-west corridor in Lawson Park that links Hornibrook Road to Maidment Parade, passing through areas of remnant vegetation. There is a playground and half court basketball court within the park. The western end of this trail joins the Lake Walk around Dalyellup Lakes.

Hazards

1. Several informal trails have been established branching off the sealed shared use pathway.
2. Graffiti on interpretation sign obscures informational content diminishing the user experience.
3. Limited parking for recreation pursuits (vehicles were observed parking on the grass adjacent to the basketball court).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
2.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Grade 2 Bushland Walk in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation).	Medium	Medium	OpEx
2.2	Encourage the use of the formal pathway and minimise environmental degradation caused by the creation of unauthorised trails by using natural barriers (i.e. fallen logs, temporary fencing) to physically close off tracks.	High	Low	OpEx
2.3	Regular inspections of trail lighting is conducted to ensure all fixtures are functioning properly and provided adequate illumination. Energy efficient or solar powered lighting solutions could be considered to reduce costs and environmental impact.	Medium	Low	OpEx *If replacement or renewal required CapEx*
2.4	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	Low	OpEx
	* Outside of Trail Audit Project Scope *Consider designating a parking bay near basketball court to address and manage the issue of informal parking on the grass.*	NA	NA	NA

LAKE WALK AUDIT MAP

Stairs

Uprooted Tree

Path Submerged

Bridge & Barrier Fencing

Norton Promenade Bridge

Health Warning Sign

Trail Surface Cracking

Lighting

Viewing Platform

Playground

TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Lake Walk DALYELLUP	GRADE 2

TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
1km LOOP	30 min LOOP

TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Modified or hardened surface. 900mm or more	Walking (Part - Cycling, Roller blading, Skateboards)

LEGEND

— Lake Walk

--- Lake Walk (Flooded)

P Car Parking

● Primary Trailhead Sign

● Interpretation Sign

● Management/Warning Sign

🏕 Picnic Area/Shelter

🪑 Seat

🚻 Toilet

● Lighting

═ Bridge

⚠ Hazard

AUDIT NOTES

Lake Walk

The Lake Walk is a loop trail that circumnavigates the main lake at Dalyellup. It features a shelter and viewing platform at the south-western corner, as well as facilities such as toilets and a playground. While the majority of the trail is accessible to all abilities there is a flight of steps at the northern end leading up to Norton Promenade.

Hazards

1. South-western portion of the trail is currently underwater.
2. An uprooted tree is located at the lakes edge (western side).
3. Cracking is evident at various points along the path, which may present a risk to users by increasing likelihood of trips and potential injury.
4. Infrastructure such as the staircase, bridge and barrier fencing are constructed from wood and are showing wear.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
3.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Grade 2 Lake Walk in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time, loop and map for orientation). Also, consider including a reminder about the presence of stairs, a warning regarding water may cause ill effects to humans and animals and the trail is susceptible to flooding.	Medium	Medium	OpEx
3.2	Develop and implement a repair plan that includes resurfacing, crack filling or level grinding to reduce the risk of tripping hazards, ensuring the path remains safe and accessible for all users.	High	High	OpEx
3.3	Once the water has receded, conduct an assessment of any water damage to the trail infrastructure. Implement necessary repairs and perform comprehensive cleaning to restore the affected areas. Consider a raised boardwalk over the track prone to flooding.	High	High	OpEx *If works required (i.e. Boardwalk) CapEx*
3.4	Arrange for the safe removal or relocation of the uprooted tree at the lakes edge.	High	Medium - High	OpEx

RECOMMENDATIONS......continued

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
3.5	Implement a maintenance program for wooden infrastructure, including the staircase, bridge, shelters, viewing platforms and barrier fencing to ensure their structural integrity and extend their lifespan through regular inspections and upkeep.	Medium	Medium - High	OpEx
3.6	Regular inspections of trail lighting is conducted to ensure all fixtures are functioning properly and provided adequate illumination. Energy efficient or solar powered lighting solutions could be considered to reduce costs and environmental impact.	Medium	Medium - High	OpEx *If replacement or renewal required CapEx*
3.7	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	Low	

WETLAND WALK AUDIT MAP

Secondary Trailhead

Primary Trailhead
Qualum Way

Vegetation
Encroachment

Uneven Path - Raised

Wetland Perimeter
Fencing

Boardwalk

Interpretation Sign

Pathway Alteration -
converted to gravel

New Residential Development

TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Wetland Walk DALYELLUP	GRADE 1

TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
900m LOOP	30 min LOOP

TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Broad, hard surfaced track suitable for wheelchair use. 1200mm or more	Walking, Cycling, Roller blading, Skateboards, Wheelchairs

LEGEND

— Wetland Walk
● Primary Trailhead Sign
● Secondary Trailhead Sign
● Interpretation Sign
🪑 Seat
⊪⊪ Boardwalk
⚠ Hazard

AUDIT NOTES

Wetland Walk

Wetland Walk is a sealed pathway that encircles the wetland in Dalyellup East. Additionally, there is a footpath that runs around the outer perimeter of the wetland.

Hazards

1. The path has been cut and converted to gravel as a result of housing development work.
2. A seat has been vandalised with graffiti, potentially deterring users from utilising the seat.
3. Vegetation is progressively encroaching on the track.
4. The pathway is lifting at a joint, causing an uneven surface where the sections meet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
4.1	Review and upgrade trailhead signs for the Grade 1 Wetland Walk in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time, loop and map for orientation).	Medium	Medium	OpEx
4.2	Ensure the repair of the gravel section of the trail and establish a reconnection between Wicklow Boulevard and Wallung Road at the southern end of the trail.	High	Medium	CapEx
4.3	Consider level grinding the raised section of the pathway to reduce the risk of tripping hazards, ensuring the path remains safe and accessible for all users.	High	Low	OpEx
4.4	Assess the type and extent of vegetation encroachment along the trail, identify high-priority areas where overgrowth impacts trail access or safety and regularly prune vegetation.	Medium	Low	OpEx
4.5	Inspect trail every 30 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 1 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	Low	OpEx

GELORUP NATURE TRAIL AUDIT MAP

Sparse Gravel

Federation Bridge

Sand Stockpiles Encroachment

Gate - Hampstead St

Trail - Hampstead Road

Water Damage

TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Gelorup Nature Trail GELORUP	GRADE 2
TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
2km RETURN	1 hr RETURN
TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Modified or hardened surface. 900mm or more	Walking

LEGEND

— Gelorup Nature Trail

···· Gelorup Nature Trail (footpath)

P Car Parking

● Primary Trailhead Sign

● Secondary Trailhead Sign

● Waymarking/Directional Sign

⚠ Hazard

AUDIT NOTES

Gelorup Nature Trail

The trail links Sheoks Park on Bussell Highway to Hasties Road, which includes Michael Tichbon Park, renowned for its stunning display of Western Australian wildflowers.

Hazards

1. Water is flowing across the trail at the entrance from Hasties Rd affecting the trail.
2. The track width is variable (Grade 2 trail requires 900mm or more) and the gravel is becoming increasingly sparse
3. Trail diverts onto Hampstead Road and there is no footpath, directional markers or formal trail alignment.
4. Parking at Federation Bridge is limited.
5. Parking is available at the Community Centre on Hasties Rd, however there is a potential risk of vehicles obstructing the fire station driveway to park close to the trailhead.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
5.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Grade 2 Gelorup Nature Trail in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation).	Medium	Medium	OpEx
5.2	Consider installing a surface drain, grated trench drain or swale to prevent water from flowing from the fire station driveway over the trail.	Medium	Low	OpEx
5.3	Install waymarkers at all intersections along the trail in line with Australian Standard 2156.1. Consider incorporating distance markers to enhance the trails suitability for community recreation.	High	Low	OpEx
5.4	Ensure the entirety of the trail is 900mm or more and has a well maintained, hardened surface with minimal intrusions. Address sparse areas by replenishing gravel where necessary.	High	Medium - High	OpEx
5.5	Consider upgrading the Hamstead Road verge to incorporate a modified or hardened surface with a width of at least 900m or more.	Medium	High	CapEx
5.6	Mandate the removal of residential sand stockpiles encroaching on the trail corridor.	High	Low	OpEx

RECOMMENDATIONS......continued

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
5.7	Consider extending the trail into Sheoak Park to improve the point of interest at the trail's endpoint and increase parking availability.	Medium	Medium	CapEx
5.8	Consider realigning the trail to run behind the fire station and extend into the community centre carpark, positioning it near the recreation area (Note that approvals for vegetation removal may be required).	Medium	High	CapEx
5.9	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	Low	OpEx

TUART DISCOVERY TRAIL AUDIT MAP (Landowner DBCA)

Shelter

Interpretation Signage

Trailhead Poor Condition

Fallen Tree

Stirling Rd

Higgins Rd

0   50m
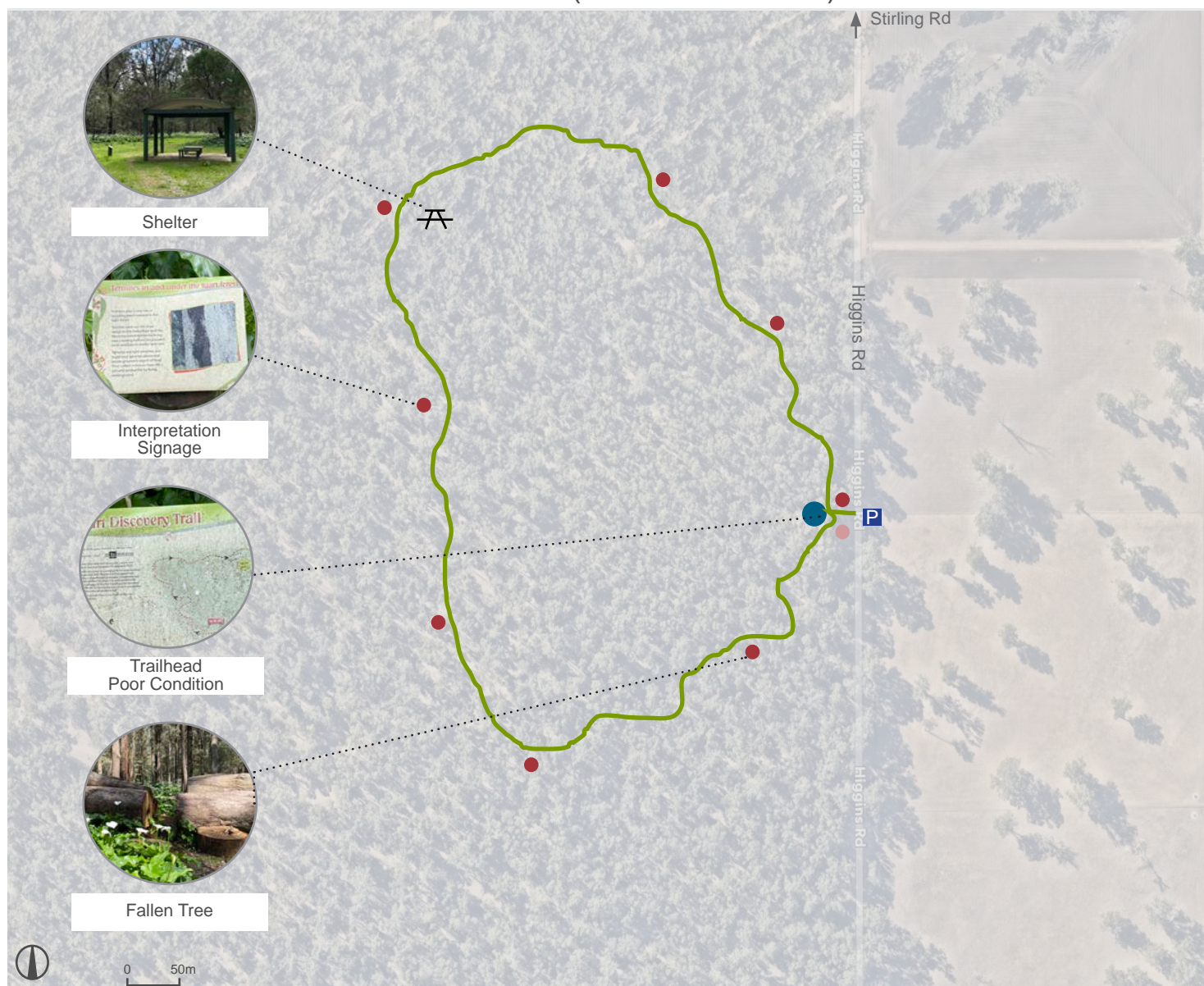
TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Tuart Discovery Trail STIRLING ESTATE	GRADE 2

TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
700m LOOP	30 min LOOP

TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Modified or hardened surface. 900mm or more	Walking

LEGEND

— Tuart Discovery Trail

P Car Parking

● Primary Trailhead Sign

● Interpretation Sign
(Indicative location only)

● Management/Warning Sign

⊼ Picnic Area/Shelter

AUDIT NOTES

Tuart Discovery Trail

Tuart Discovery Trail is located within the Tuart Forest National Park, under the management of DBCA. It is an easy walk over mostly flat surface through James Block which was the last area harvested for saw logs in 1973. Along the trail, you'll find several interpretive signs that provide information about the area's history.

Hazards

1. Trailhead sign with map is in poor condition and refers to 'proposed shelter'.

2. Mosquito borne disease and general discomfort to trail users.

3. Fallen trees have the potential to become on issue if not addressed.

4. The track width is variable (Grade 2 trail requires 900mm or more).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
6.1	Liaise with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) to: - Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Grade 2 Tuart Discovery Trail in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time, loop and map for orientation). - Make sure all promotional materials and trailhead signs include mosquito warnings. - Review and upgrade the interpretation signs in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 -Ensure the entirety of the trail is 900mm or more and has a well maintained, hardened surface with minimal intrusions. - Conduct a review of the trees along the trail to assess and ensure they do not pose a risk to walkers due to potential falling hazards. - Implement an eradication program for the removal of Arum Lily. - Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 2 trail and for management of risk.	Medium	NA	External DBCA

MUNDA BIDDI (PART) AUDIT MAP (Trail Manager DBCA)

Bike Sign

Directional Sign

Waymarker Sign

Shire Boundary Sign

Waymarker Damaged

Gravel Road

Armstrong St

Hurst Rd

0   100   200m

TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL LENGTH
Munda Biddi BOYANUP	1000km

TRAIL LENGTH WITHIN THE SHIRE	ESTIMATED TIME
10km ONE WAY	30 min ONE WAY

TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Gravel and Bitumen	Cycling

LEGEND

— Munda Biddi

● Waymarking/Directional Sign

● Management/Warning Sign

⚠ Hazard

AUDIT NOTES

Munda Biddi (part)

The Munda Biddi is a cycling trail stretching over 1000kms from Mundaring to Albany. Within the Shire of Capel, the trail follows the gravel road of Joshua Creek Rd, transitioning onto to Armstrong St and then connecting to the bitumen road of Hurst Road.

Hazards

1. Hurst Road lacks a shoulder
2. A damaged waymarker has fallen on the side of the road.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
7.1	Liaise with the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation and DBCA to: - Advocate for the addition of a shoulder on Hurst Rd to improve safety for cyclists. - Facilitate the inspection and maintenance of trail markers, ensuring they are in good condition and strategically located. - Promote Boyanup township as a destination, highlighting available accommodation, dining options and local activities to enhance visitor experience. Consider installing a bike repair station.	Medium	NA	External DBCA

JOSHUA LAKE WALK AUDIT MAP

Seat

Broken Cement Drain Cover

Danger Shallow Water Sign

Interpretation Sign

Trailhead Sign

Accessible Car Park

Sculpture

Picnic Area/Shelter

Armstrong St

0   100   200m

TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Joshua Lake Walk BOYANUP	GRADE 2

TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
1.1km LOOP	30 min ONE WAY

TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Modified or hardened surface. 900mm or more	Walking, Cycling, Roller blading, Skateboards, Scooters & Prams

LEGEND

— Joshua Lake Walk

P Car Parking

♿ Accessible Car Park

● Primary Trailhead Sign

● Interpretation Sign

● Management/Warning Sign

⊼ Picnic Area/Shelter

⊞ Seat

||||| Bridge

⚠ Hazard

● Sculpture

AUDIT NOTES
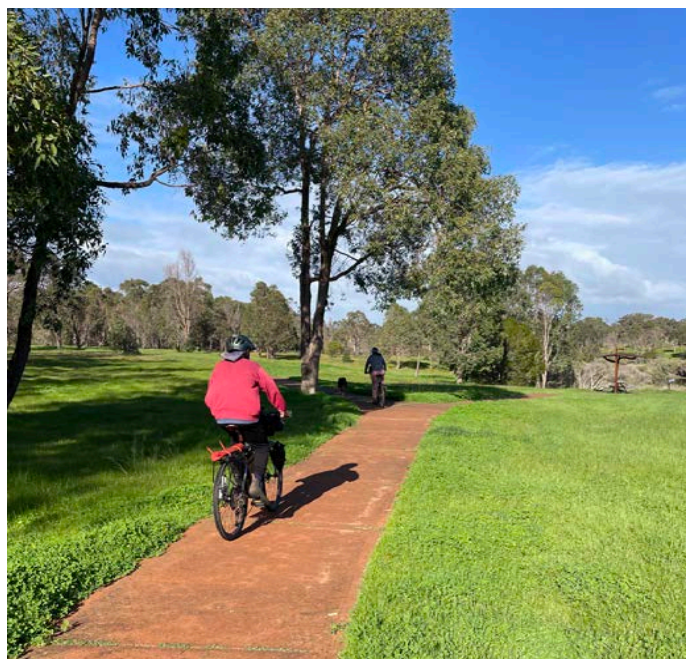
Joshua Lake Walk

Joshua Lake Walk is a loop trail that circumnavigates the lake, passing through areas of revegetated woodland and grassy spaces of the Yoganup North mineral sands mine site. The trail offers a opportunity to observe the regeneration efforts.

Hazards

1. The danger sign at the sandy beach area indicates that the water is shallow and displays the warning "DO NOT DIVE' which implies that swimming is permitted.
2. Trailhead signage in poor condition, with significant fading.
3. Damaged cement drain cover has loose pieces adjacent to the trail.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
8.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Grade 2 Joshua Lake Walk in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and loop, map for orientation). - Consider renaming the trail, currently known as Joshua Lake Walk to better reflect its use for activities such as cycling (i.e. Joshua Lake Trail or Joshua Lake Path)	Medium	Medium	OpEx
8.2	Review and replace the danger sign at the sandy beach area to clearly communicate whether swimming is permitted or not, while ensuring the sign effectively conveys the water hazard.	High	Low	OpEx
8.3	Replace the cement drain cover to ensure safety and proper functionality.	High	Low	OpEx
8.4	Install a interpretation sign near the sculpture tree to provide an explanation of its significance.	Medium	Low	OpEx
8.5	Consider the installation of toilet facilities, to enhance user accessibility providing essential facilities that accommodate a wider range of visitors.	Medium	High	CapEx
8.6	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	Low	OpEx

IRONSTONE GULLY FALLS TRAIL AUDIT MAP (*under development*)

Informal Trail to Capel River

Entrance Gate

Toilet

Directional Sign

Trail Condition Boggy Terrain

Vehicle Track

Habitat Tree

Exit Gate
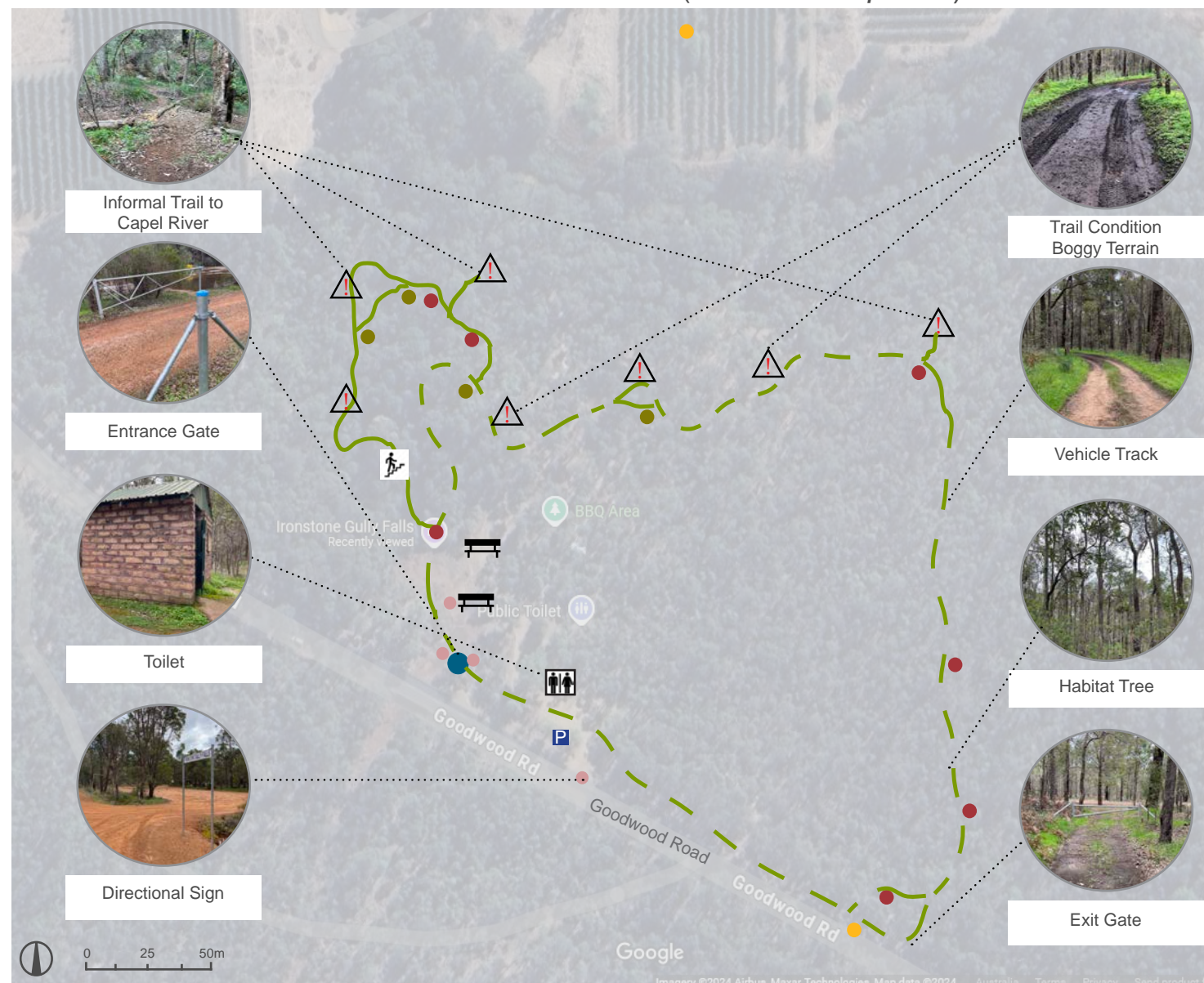
TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Ironstone Gully Falls Trail, CAPEL	GRADE 3

TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
1.5km approx LOOP	60min LOOP

TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Generally modified surface. Variable & generally less than 1200mm	Walking and Vehicles

LEGEND

— Ironstone Gully Falls Trail (walk only)

--- Ironstone Gully Falls Trail (vehicles and walkers)

P Car Parking

● Primary Trailhead Sign *(proposed)*

● Secondary Trailhead Sign

● Interpretation Sign *(proposed)*

● Waymarking/Directional Sign *(proposed)*

● Management/Warning Sign

Seat

Toilet

⚠ Hazard

Steps

AUDIT NOTES

Ironstone Gully Falls Trail

Located 17kms south-east of Capel, this historic picnic area was reserved in 1903 for use as a recreation area. Although not an official trail, development plans are underway. From August to October, a seasonal stream rambles over a series of rapids culminating in a nine metre waterfall..

Hazards

1. The majority of the proposed trail is shared with public vehicle traffic.

2. Camp fires poses a risk during dry conditions.

3. After heavy rainfall sections of the trail experience poor drainage, leading to water accumulation and muddy conditions that may affect accessibility and trail safety.

4. Informal trails to the river exist and present a safety risk due to unstable footing and potential for erosion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
9.1	Install signage for the Grade 3 Ironstone Gully Falls Trail inline with Australian Standard 2156.1 - Trailhead (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time, loop and map for orientation). - Waymarkers (i.e. track marker) - Interpretation (i.e. Geology, Creek, Flora & Fauna, Aboriginal History)	High	Medium	CapEx
9.2	Consider optimal vehicle access within the park. The following options may be evaluated: a. Full restriction (vehicle access limited to carpark only) b. Partial restriction (vehicle access permitted to carpark and picnic area only) c. Full access (unrestricted access, with entry and exit gates open at all times to prevent cars reversing on the trail)	High	Low	OpEx
9.3	Review all management signage and replace damaged or worn signs. Implement clear signage for campfire rules pending Council's decision.	High	Low	OpEx
9.4	Improve drainage by installing culverts, swales or elevating the trail in affected areas to allow water to flow off the trail more effectively and prevent future water logging.	High	Medium - High	CapEx

RECOMMENDATIONS......continued

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
9.5	Encourage the use of the formal trail and minimise environmental degradation caused by the creation of unauthorised trails by using barriers (i.e. waymarkers, fallen logs, temporary fencing) to physically close off tracks.	High	Low	OpEx
9.6	Inspect trail every 6 months or less, to ensure built facilities will be managed for public risk in line with requirement for Grade 3 trail.	Ongoing	Low	OpEx

PRESTON RIVER RAMBLE AUDIT MAP

Trailhead
South Western Hwy

Unsanctioned MTB track

Community Foreshore
Restore River Ramble

Track Erosion

Waymarker

Rutting

Trailhead
Bridge Street
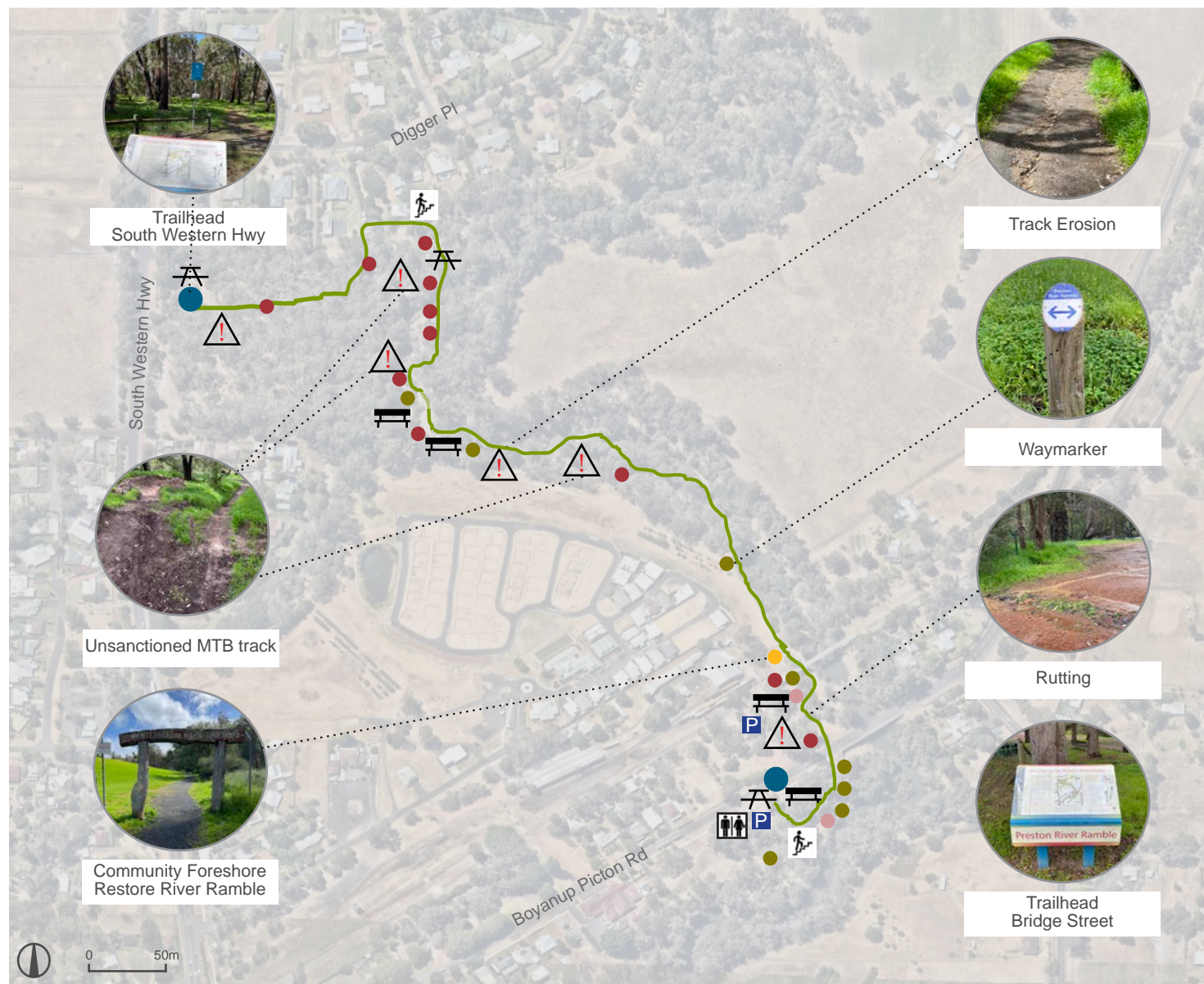
TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Preston River Ramble, BOYANUP	GRADE 3

TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
1.3km ONE WAY	30 min ONE WAY

TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Generally modified surface. Variable & generally less than 1200mm	Walking

LEGEND

— Preston River Ramble

P Car Parking

● Primary Trailhead Sign

● Secondary Trailhead Sign

● Interpretation Sign

● Waymarking/Directional Sign

● Management/Warning Sign

⛆ Picnic Area/Shelter

▭ Seat

⚠ Hazard

🚶 Steps/Staircase

🚻 Toilet

AUDIT NOTES

Preston River Ramble

The trail starts in Lions Park, offering a scenic route along the edge of the Preston River. Toward the northern end the trail deviates from the river and ascends via a flight of stairs and concludes at the information bay located on the South Western Highway.

Hazards

1. Informal trail alignment from SW Hwy end.
2. Mountain bike riders are utilising the track, predominately from the SW Hwy end. Walkers have a likelihood of encountering cyclists which may cause conflict.
3. The carpark area between the bridges is unstructured and suffers from erosion due to inadequate drainage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
10.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Grade 3 Preston River Ramble in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation).	Medium	Medium	OpEx
10.2	Collaborate with the local community to upgrade Lions Park, focusing on improving visitor experience and accessibly. This may involve enhancing parking facilities, updating park furniture and relocating trail head signage to reduce the need for steps at the start's start.	Medium	High	CapEx
10.3	Enhance the existing dirt car park between the bridges to include the installation of appropriate drainage system. These improvements aim to mitigate erosion, enhance user accessibility and improve safety.	Medium	High	CapEx
10.4	Formalise the trail connection to the South Western Hwy by installing wayfinding markers or enhancing the trail tread.	High	Low	OpEx
10.5	In response to community sentiment, either formally sanction the mountain bike trail within the walking trail area or decommission it to maintain the integrity of the walking trail's intended use.	Low	High	OpEx
10.6	Improve drainage by installing culverts or swales to the trail in affected areas to allow water to flow off the trail more effectively and prevent erosion.	High	Low	OpEx

RECOMMENDATIONS......continued

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
10.7	Implement a maintenance program for wooden infrastructure, including the staircase, shelter, barrier fencing, seats, arch and retaining wall (Lion Park) to ensure their structural integrity and extend their lifespan through regular inspections and upkeep.	Medium	Medium - High	OpEx
10.8	Inspect trail every 6 months or less, to ensure built facilities will be managed for public risk in line with requirement for Grade 3 trail.	Ongoing	Low	OpEx

BOYANUP HERITAGE TRAIL AUDIT MAP

St Louis Catholic Church

The General Store

Wayfinding Sign

Directional Sign

Bridge St

South Western Hwy

South Western Hwy

Trailhead
Lions Park

Interpretation Sign

The Methodist Church

0   50

TRAIL OVERVIEW

TRAIL NAME	GRADE DIFFICULTY
Boyanup Heritage Trail, BOYANUP	GRADE 2
TRAIL LENGTH	ESTIMATED TIME
1.1km ONE WAY	30 min ONE WAY
TRACK CONDITION	APPROVED ACTIVITIES
Modified or hardened surface. 900mm or more	Walking

LEGEND

— Boyanup Heritage Trail

P Car Parking

● Primary Trailhead Sign

● Interpretation Sign

● Waymarking/Directional Sign

● Management/Warning Sign

⅄ Picnic Area

Seat

Toilet

AUDIT NOTES
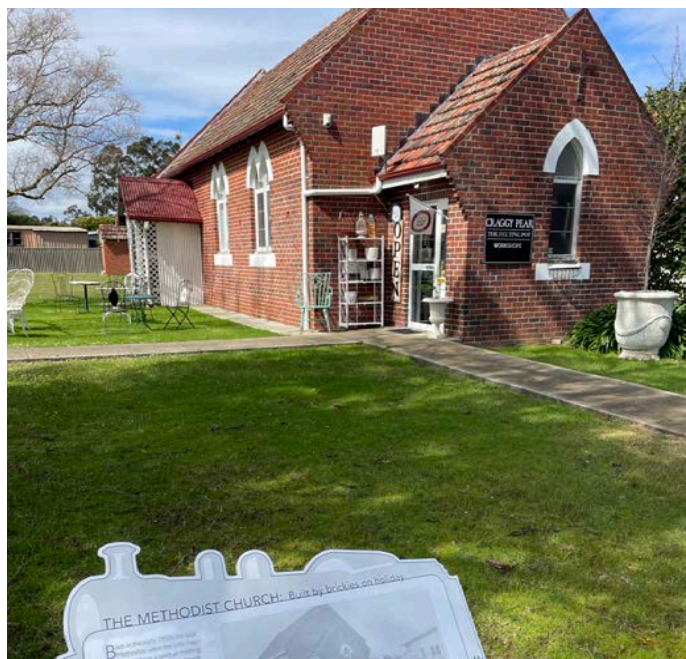
Boyanup Heritage Trail

Boyanup Heritage Trail starts in Lions Park and ends at the CWA rooms on South Western Highway. The trail is designed to highlight key elements of the region's cultural heritage through a series of interpretive panels, providing visitors with an informative experience.

Hazards

1. The carpark in Lions Park is limited in capacity.
2. The trailhead is located on the lower side of the Bridge St, which presents challenges for accessibility.
3. There is no trailhead at the southern end of the trail.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Action	Priority	Indicative Cost	CapEx or OpEx
11.1	Review and upgrade trailhead sign for the Grade 2 Heritage Trail in line with Australian Standard 2156.1 (e.g. track rating, type of track, distance, estimated completion time and whether it is one-way or return, map for orientation).	Medium	Medium	OpEx
11.2	Consider relocating the Lions Park trailhead adjacent to the footpath to improve accessibility to a wide range or users (i.e. cater for those with reduced mobility).	High	Low	OpEx
11.3	Consider installing a secondary trailhead sign at the southern end of the trail.	Medium	Low	OpEx
11.4	Ensure that trail infrastructure is well maintained and regularly updated to enhance safety and positive user experience (i.e. seats, interpretation signs).	Ongoing	Low	OpEx
11.5	Inspect trail every 90 days or less, to ensure surface is kept in line with requirement for Grade 2 trail and for management of risk.	Ongoing	Low	OpEx

03
Trail Planning and Standards

The strategic alignment towards the WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022 - 2027 signifies the Shires commitment to integrating its strategies and actions with the broader state vision and guiding principles.

WA Strategic Trails Blueprint 2022 - 2027 Vision

By 2027, Western Australia's trails will connect more people to Country through shared experiences in diverse landscapes, resulting in greater community, social, cultural, economic, environmental, health and wellbeing outcomes for Western Australia.

Guiding Principles

- Access, equity and inclusion
- Aboriginal leadership and collaboration
- Engagement
- Quality trails
- Sustainability
- Environment and culture
- Community benefit
- Customer focus
- Consistency
- Innovation
- Visitor economy contribution
- Evidence base

Adaptive Hiking Program.
Image courtesy of Break the Boundary

Eight Stage Trail Planning Process

The Western Australia Government in 2019, published a Trails Development Series, Part A to D comprehensively detailing the trail planning process for all types of recreational trails. It is referenced in many contemporary trail planning guidelines and strategies across Australia.

Trails are like any other asset or facility development and as such, are subject to a formal planning and approval process. A robust trail development process moves trail development away from a purely design and construction approach to a more

considered and planned approach. Working within a standardised methodology is especially important for trails with numerous stakeholders and those in high conservation areas. Building rigour into the development process will ensure that project proposals are transformed into professionally built and sustainable assets.

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

1. Proposal

The proposed area is either supported in principle for trail development, or is not supported due to environmental, social or cultural constraints. Or the proposal may identify suitable areas.

2. Framework

A project outline is developed by the project steering group (stakeholders), including: project objectives, project management model, stakeholder roles, target market, requirements, standards, execution, and ongoing trail management model.

3. Site Assessment

A broad scale study of the area is undertaken which identifies constraints, soil types, vegetation etc.

4. Concept Planning

Opportunities are identified and conceptual trail plan is prepared including infrastructure requirements. Broad trail corridors are physically flagged in the field.

5. Corridor Evaluation

Detailed assessment of trail corridor.

6. Detailed Design and Approvals

Detailed trail design is produced and physically flagged in the field, including: trail classifications, technical trail features, construction types and specifications. Planning for the use of Sustainable Trail Building Techniques to mitigate potential environmental impacts.

Approval processes may include: environmental approvals (refer Legislative Context in Section 02), Development Application (DA), Construction Certificate (CC), and/or Complying Development Certificate (CDC). Where works are proposed within a road reserve, formal approval must be obtained as required under Section 138 of the Roads Act 1993.

7. Construction

Trail is constructed in line with the detailed design.

8. Management

The Trail Management Plan is implemented detailing maintenance and monitoring requirements.

WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines

The WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines were released in October 2024 by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

These guidelines compliment the Trails Development Series and provide direction on developing and managing sustainable hiking trails.

The guidelines cover a range of key topics including:

- Understanding Hiking
- Aboriginal Collaboration
- Stakeholders
- Strategic and Legislative Context
- Developing Sustainable Trails
- Trail Design
- Facilities and Structures
- Management
- Events
- Walking Trail Classification System

Additionally, the guideline defines bushwalking and trail running under the broader term hiking.

Hiking = bushwalking + trail running

Hiking experiences are further categorised into three types:

- Short Hikes
- Day Hikes
- Long Distance Hikes

Sustainable Trails

Western Australia is experiencing a surge in trail development driven by increasing demand. It is crucial to maintain a high standard of trail development to ensure trails meet best practice sustainability principles.

Sustainable Principles

- High Quality Experience

High quality experiences designed for the target market, considering those who deliver tourism experiences, supported by marketing, promotion and experience development.

- Genuine Aboriginal Relationships

Genuine partnerships and engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities for better outcomes, in culturally responsive ways of working.

- Respects Community

Positive contribution to communities with appropriate stakeholder and community engagement and partnerships, respecting cultural heritage.

- Plan, Design and Built for Longevity

Consistent and effective trail planning, design and construction for longevity, minimal maintenance, fire resilience and ease of management, complying with standards and trails classification system.

- Respects Environment

Appropriate to the landscape, respecting sense of place, natural and cultural values and reducing impacts on ecosystems, habitat and wildlife.

- Good Governance

Governance and accountability are clear and simple to initiate and administer over the longer term.

- Resourceful Business Model

A business model that provides ongoing resources including people, equipment and infrastructure to manage the trail, inclusive of user and community groups with the benefits visible to the community.

Source: WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines, 2024

Significance Categories (Hierarchy)

A successful trails network requires trails of different levels of significance in order to meet the needs of different user group/market segments.

The trails hierarchy provides a guide for the level of infrastructure required for trails to meet the needs of their intended users and to ensure that an appropriate standard of facilities is provided.

A trail's level on the hierarchy indicates the partnerships required to successfully manage the trail, the level of promotion likely to be appropriate and the infrastructure which can be expected by users.

Western Australia's trails and trail network are classified into significance categories including:

State

An extended trail or trail network that is of sufficient quality and with appropriate facilities, products and services to be recognised beyond the State and to attract visitors to Western Australia, such as Bibbulmun Track or the Cape to Cape Track.

Regional

A major trail or trail network that services a population centre or large regional community, with facilities and services of a standard and appeal that could attract visitors from outside the region.

Regional trails keep visitors in the region longer and align with the focus for regional tourism organisations.

Local

A trail that services the local community and provides facilities suited to local use. Some local trails may have potential for development to regional status.

Local trails are more likely to be the focus of local tourism organisation and visitor centres and are not a focus for Tourism WA marketing.

Source: WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines, 2024

Hierarchy

The trails hierarchy provides a guide for the level of infrastructure required for trails to meet the needs of their intended users and to ensure that an appropriate standard of facilities is provided.

State

Regional
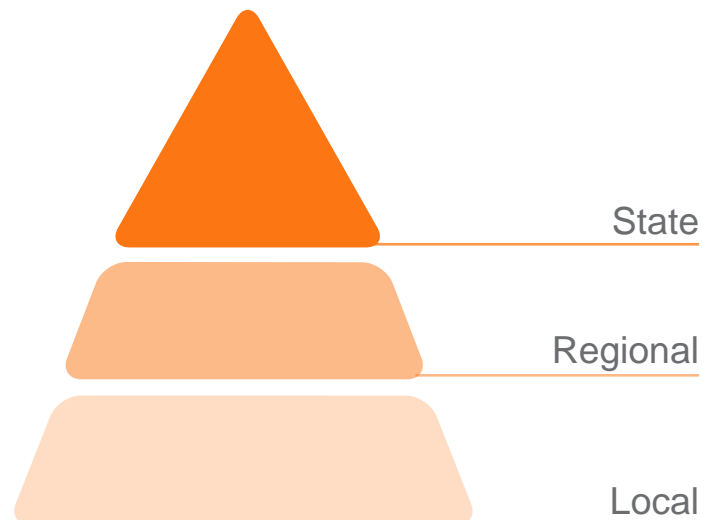
Local

Trail Models

In Western Australia, the experience of trails for both locals and visitors is enriched through the creation of interconnected trail clusters within specific areas. These trail models are catergorised in the WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines as follows:

Trail Town

A population centre which has been assessed and accredited as a destination, offering high-quality trails encouraging extended stays, trail user related services, facilities, trail related businesses, trail branding and signage.

Trail Centre

A managed multiple trail facility with dedicated visitor services, supported by high quality trails, encouraging single day visits, trail user related services and trail branding and signage. A Trail Centre can stand alone in an individual location but may be positioned within a Trail Town.

Trail Network

A collection of linked trails, often of the same trail type and typically accessed via a trailhead. A Trail Network may be standalone in an individual location and can form part of a larger Trail Town or Trail Centre.

Individual Trails

Individual linear or looped trails are typically small individual trails that stand alone in a community setting. Long distance trails can link these trails to another trail model and can also be the precursor to developing a tourism destination.

The Shire currently has a Trail Network with a series of individual trails and outdoor experiences**.**
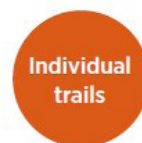
Source: WA Hiking Trail Management Guidelines, 2024

Trail Classification Systems

Trail classifications allow land managers to develop trails that are appropriately designed for the anticipated trail users and to provide suitable levels of facilities and management.

Trail grading systems are a primary means of informing people about the features of trails and assists in their marketing and promotion.

Grading systems are designed to assist people to make informed decisions on route selection to ensure they match their skill level to the difficulty of the trail.

Walking Trails

Walking trails are classified according to the Australian Standard 2156.1-2001 Walking Tracks – Classification and Signage.

The aim of this system is to encourage people who are not regular or confident bushwalkers to get out there and give it a go. It is specifically designed to reassure entry level walkers, particularly persons with a disability or people walking with children, that a particular trail is suitable for their skill level. Under this system, walking trails are graded on a difficulty scale from grades one to five, as outlined below.

Class	Description	Track Conditions	Experience Level	Risk Mitigation
Class 1 Easiest	No bushwalking experience required. Flat even surface with no steps or steep sections. Suitable for wheelchair users with assistance. Walks no greater than 5km.	Generally, a broad, hardened surfaced track suitable for wheelchair use. Width: 1200mm or more. Well maintained with minimal intrusions. Grades in line with AS1428. Steps must have alternate ramp.	Users need no previous experience and are expected to exercise normal care regarding their personal safety.	Inspection interval: 30 days or less.
Class 2 Easy	No bushwalking experience required. The track is a hardened or compacted surface, may have gentle hill section or sections and occasional steps. Walks no greater than 10km.	Generally, a modified or hardened surface. Width: 900mm or more. Well maintained with minimal intrusions. Generally, no steeper than 1:10. Minimal use of steps.	Users need no previous experience and are expected to exercise normal care regarding their personal safety.	Inspection interval: 90 days or less.
Class 3 Moderate	Suitable for most ages and fitness levels. Some bushwalking experience recommended. Tracks may have short steep hill sections a rough surface and many steps. Walks up to 20km.	Generally, a modified surface, sections may be hardened. Width: Variable and generally less than 1200mm. Kept mostly clear of intrusions/obstacles. Gradient may exceed 1:10 but generally no steeper than 1:10. Steps may be common.	Users need no bushwalking experience and a minimal level of specialised skills. May encounter natural hazards such as steep slopes unstable surfaces and minor water crossings. Users responsible for their own safety.	Inspection interval: 6 months or less.
Class 4 Difficult	Bushwalking experience recommended. Tracks may be long, rough, and very steep. Directional signage may be limited.	Generally distinct without major modification to the ground. Encounters with fallen debris and other obstacles are likely.	Users require a moderate level of specialised skills such as navigation skills. May require maps & navigation equipment. Users need to be self-reliant, particularly for first aid/weather hazards.	Inspection interval: 6 to 12 months.
Class 5 Extreme	Very experienced bushwalkers with specialised skills, including navigation and emergency first aid. Tracks are likely to be very rough, very steep and unmarked. Walks may be more than 20km.	Limited modification to natural surfaces and track alignment may be indistinct in places. Minimal cleaning. Debris along the track.	Users require a high degree of specialised skills, may require maps and navigation equipment. Users need to be self-reliant, particularly for first aid/weather hazards.	Inspection interval: 6 to 18 months.
Class 6	Very experienced bushwalkers with specialised skills, including navigation and emergency first aid. No defined track.	No modification of the natural environment.	Experience in the outdoors and a high level of specialised skills/equipment required. Need to be self-reliant, particularly for first aid/weather hazards.	Tracks will not be managed for public risk.

Mountain Bike Trails
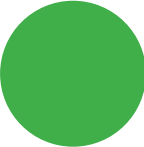
The International Trail Marking System is used universally on ski fields and has been adapted by the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) for mountain bike trails.

The Australian Mountain Bike Management Guidelines (2019) adopted the IMBA system with some additions and further interpretations, as outlined below.

Classification	Description
Very Easy	Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface and no obstacles. Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic bike skills, and most bikes.
Easy	Wide trail with a gentle gradient smooth surface. Some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks. Suitable for beginner cyclists with basic mountain bike skills, and off-road bikes.
Easy with intermediate Sections	Likely to be single track with a moderate gradient, variable surface and some obstacles such as roots, logs and rocks. Suitable for mountain bikers with mountain bikes.
Intermediate	Single trail with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles. May include steep sections. Suitable for skilled mountain bikers with mountain bikes.
Intermediate with Difficult Sections	Suitable for competent mountain bikers, used to physically demanding routes. Expect large and unavoidable obstacles and features. Challenging and variable with some steep climbs or descents and loose surfaces
Difficult	Dangerous & unavoidable obstacles, some sections will be easier to walk. Navigation & personal survival skills are highly desirable. Suitable for experienced mountain bike riders.
Extreme	Dangerous, severe trails & unavoidable obstacles, extreme levels of risk, some sections will be easier to walk. Navigation & personal survival skills are highly desirable. Suitable for experienced mountain bike riders.

Horse Riding Trails

The Horse Trail Difficulty Rating System includes a description of horse trail classifications, as outlined below.

Classification	Description
Easy	Most suitable for novices seeking a relatively short distance trail requiring a basic level of skill and horse & rider fitness. Most likely to be fire roads or wide single tracks with a gentle grade (not exceeding 10%) and a relatively obstacle free, hardened natural surface. Likely to be shared-use.
Intermediate	Most suitable for riders seeking a short to medium distance trail requiring moderate levels of skill/fitness. Most likely to be a combination single trail and/or fire road with obstacles, variable surface, and a moderate slope. Likely to be shared-use.
Difficult	Suitable for riders seeking a very challenging trail requiring a high level of skill, fitness, and basic navigation skills. Most likely to consist of challenging single trail and/or fire road with many obstacles, variable surface, and steep sections. Some trail routes may not be marked at all. Likely to be shared-use, however may located in remote areas where encounters with others may be minimal.

Grading systems

Designed to assist people to make informed decisions on route selection to ensure they match their skill level to the difficulty of the trail.

04

Visitor Needs Assessment

Visitor Needs Assessment

The table below outlines the key visitor types, key considerations and strategic recommendations for each of the trails. A comprehensive outline of each of the trail actions are detailed within Chapter 2 Trail Audit.

Trail Name	Visitor Type	Key Considerations	Key Strategic Recommendations
Tuart Walk	• Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature walkers, dog walkers, cyclist) • Tourists • Educational groups (i.e. schools)	• Collaborate with key stakeholders (City of Bunbury, DBCA & Water Corporation) • Continue to emphasise the importance of the Tuart Tree • Cater for All Abilities.	Accessibility: ensure the trail is suitable for all Amenities: enhance the experience for all visitors, especially older adults, families with children and people with disability (i.e. upgraded carpark, installation of toilet) Interpretation: focus on the role Tuart trees play in local biodiversity and conservation efforts. Consider promoting Tuart Discovery Trail as another similar trail option.
Bushland Walk	• Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature walkers, dog walkers & playground/ basketball court users) • Tourists linking from Lake Walk	• Focus on creating a balance between a natural experience and recreational needs • Integrate with the Lake Walk to expand the trail network.	Sustainability: decommission informal trails to protect the bushland Trail Signage and Promotion: ensure that both trails (Bushland Walk and Lake Walk) have consistent design elements to create a unified feel across the network.
Lake Walk	• Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature lovers, bird watchers, dog walkers & park users) • Tourists • Educational groups (i.e. schools)	• Continue to highlight the aquatic ecosystems • Integrate with the Bushland Walk to expand the trail network.	Accessibility: promote that the majority of the trail is suitable for all Safety: ensure areas susceptible to flooding or near deep water are fenced or signage installed to mitigate potential hazards Facilities: consider raised boardwalks over the area prone to flooding to minimise environmental disturbance Trail Signage and Promotion: ensure that both trails (Lake Walk and Bushland Walk) have consistent design elements to create a unified feel across the network.
Wetland Walk	• Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature lovers, bird watchers, dog walkers) • Educational groups (i.e. schools)	• Focus on educating people about wetland ecosystems	Accessibility: following the completion of the residential development, prioritise ensuring the trail is accessible and suitable for all users Interpretation: provide educational displays on wetland functions (e.g. water filtration, wildlife habitat etc).

Trail Name	Visitor Type	Key Considerations	Strategic Recommendations
Gelorup Nature Trail	• Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature lovers, bird watchers, dog walkers)	• Enhance the trail alignment and wayfinding.	Alignment: consider realign the trail to run behind the fire station and extend into the community centre carpark (pending environmental approvals) Wayfinding: clearly mark the trail to guide walkers (i.e. waymarkers could include distances).
Tuart Discovery Trail	• Tourists • Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature walkers, dog walkers) • Educational groups (i.e. schools)	• Collaborate with DBCA to emphasise the importance of the Tuart Tree • Although full accessibility may not be achievable, prioritising and striving to accommodate a broad range of abilities remains a key objective.	Accessibility: strive to make the trail accommodating for users of all abilities Condition: ensure the entirety of the trail is 900mm or more and has a well maintained, hardened surface with minimal intrusion Interpretation: focus on the role Tuart trees play in local biodiversity and conservation efforts. Consider promoting Tuart Walk as another similar trail option.
Munda Biddi	• Cyclist (i.e. adventure cycling and bikepacking)	• Collaborate with the Munda Biddi Foundation • Prioritise cyclist safety while providing the opportunity to detour into Boyanup, where riders can access accommodation, dining and entertainment options for an enhanced trail experience.	Facilities: consider installing a bike repair station in Boyanup and fostering a cyclist friendly environment, such as supporting local cafes to include bike stands and amenities to encourage visitation and enhance the overall experience for the riders.
Joshua Lake Walk	• Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature lovers, dog walkers, cyclists) • Educational groups (i.e. schools) • Mine restoration followers	• Further highlight the trails narrative on mine rehabilitation, emphasizing the successful restoration of the area.	Accessibility: strive to make the trail accommodating for users of all abilities and cyclists on the Munda Biddi. The installation of toilets would offer essential facilities, enhancing accessibility and catering to a diverse range of visitors Interpretation: focus on the mine rehabilitation story.

Trail Name	Visitor Type	Key Considerations	Strategic Recommendations
Ironstone Gully Falls	• Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature walkers, dog walkers, picnickers) • Tourists	• Establish a clear, well defined trail alignment with effective wayfinding • Safety and signage around waterfall and river • Determination regarding shared vehicle/pedestrian zones and campfire regulations.	Potential Trail Conflict: address shared zones between vehicles and pedestrians, as well as campfire regulations by implementing appropriate strategies to ensure safety, accessibility and environmental protection. Signage: provide wayfinding and interpretation signage on the significance of Ironstone Gully Falls, while also encouraging visitors to remain on designated trails to protect the surrounding environment.
Preston River Ramble	• Local residents (i.e. fitness enthusiasts, nature walkers, dog walkers) • Tourists	• Emphasise riverside ecology and history • Creation of mountain bike trails within the walking trail area • The condition of the carparks and trail tread is suboptimal.	MTB Trail: In response to community sentiment, either formally sanction the informal mountain bike trail within the walking trail area or decommission it to maintain the integrity of the walking trail's intended use. Maintenance: develop and implement a maintenance and improvement plan to upgrade the car park and trail tread, incorporating effective drainage solutions to enhance functionality.
Boyanup Heritage Trail	• Visitors (i.e. history enthusiasts) • Educational groups (i.e. schools)	• Historical interpretation and educational opportunities • Relocation of the Lions Park trailhead.	Community Pride: Foster community pride by collaborating with local stakeholders to preserve the heritage value of the buildings and ensure the upkeep of the interpretive signage. Accessibility: Consider relocating the Lions Park trailhead adjacent to the footpath to enhance accessibility to a wide range or users (i.e. cater for those with reduced mobility).
Promotion and Marketing (All Trails)	• Visitors • Locals	• Provide consistent information to users of trails to minimise risk, preserve nature features and enhance recreational opportunities.	Promotion and Marketing: use a combination of approaches to reach and engage the target audience (i.e. websites such as TrailsWA, social media posts, creation of high quality promotional materials such as maps and brochures, develop partnerships, focus on sustainable practices and community engagement).

Promotion and Marketing

The current promotional materials and marketing examples include:

*   A brochure for Boyanup, detailing Joshua Lake Walk, Preston River Ramble and the Heritage Trail.

*   A dedicated webpage for the The Mundabiddi, managed by the Munda Biddi Trail Foundation accessible at www.mundabiddi.org.au.

*   An Explore Parks WA webpage for the Tuart Forest National Park

*   The Shire of Capel webpages highlighting top things to do, such as Gelorup's recommendation to '*take a stroll though Michael Tichbon Park*'

Existing Brochures

THE PRESTON RIVER RAMBLE

The Preston River Ramble is a delightful 1300 metre stroll along the banks of the river, starting in Lions Park and ending at the information bay on South Western Highway.

You can either walk back along the same route – or you can detour via footpaths on the Highway and Bridge Street, for easy access to shops and the tavern. The Preston River Ramble showcases significant aspects of both the natural and cultural history of the area via a series of engaging and attractive interpretive panels:

1. Three generations of road bridge
2. The "biggest challenge" for the railway
3. Sensory panel #1: Sound
4. Granny Simmons and Meadowbrook Estate
5. Twin towering flooded gums
6. Sensory panel #2: Scent
7. Birds of the bush and banks
8. Waterbirds: Waders and wonderful swimmers
9. Sensory panel #3: Taste
10. Floods: Their history and impact
11. Frog song: Motorbikes and western banjos
12. River restoration and the LCDC's vital role
13. Sensory panel #4: Sight
14. "Digger": A true "local hero" in Boyanup
15. Marri and jarrah: But which is which?
16. Sensory panel #5: Touch

Wander along the river and enjoy this very special walk – and keep your eyes out for the many birds that frequent both the river and the vegetation along the banks. In spring the trail route comes alive with colour as wildflowers burst into bloom – but this is a beautiful walk at any time of the year!
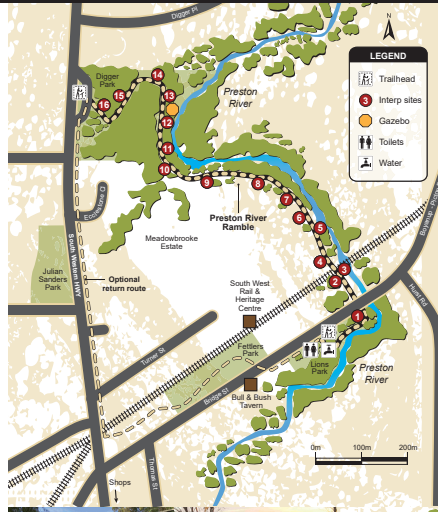
THE JOSHUA LAKE WALK

For eleven years from 1986 to 1997 this site was the Yoganup North mineral sands mine. When it closed Iluka Resources joined forces with the local community to rehabilitate the site and create a peaceful place for local people (and visitors) to enjoy.

The Joshua Lake Walk is a lovely hard-surfaced loop trail of approximately 1100 metres. It circumnavigates the lake, and takes walkers through a mix of revegetated woodland and pleasant open grassy spaces. Along the way five interpretive panels explain both the natural and cultural history of this lovely place:

1. Beyond furniture: The artworks and the artist
2. Revegetation: A growing environment
3. Night life: Frequent furry feeders
4. Child's play: A community keeps watch
5. Feathered friends: Birds of the brook

Take your picnic or your thermos – there are three unique picnic tables and two sets of stone seats scattered around the trail. Feel free to leave your cares behind – and remember to take your litter with you.
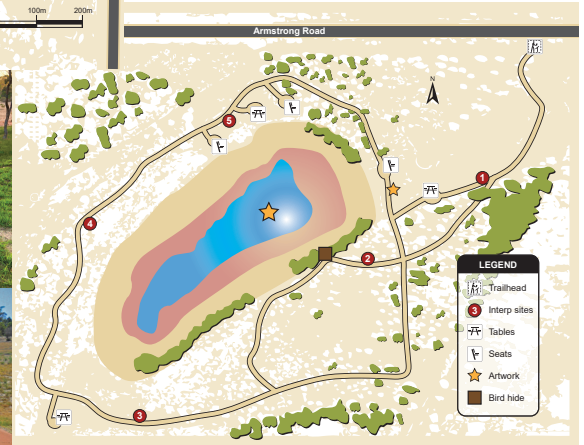
THE BOYANUP HERITAGE TRAIL

The Boyanup Heritage Trail also commences in Lions Park, and is a pleasant 1100 metre stroll through the early settlement history of the town. The southern end point is near the former CWA rooms on South Western Highway.

The trail follows the south side of Bridge Street before turning down the Highway to the designated crossing point. There are 3 panels to view via a short spur down the west side of the Highway, before returning to the crossing and continuing southward to the terminus, outside the CWA rooms. Trail markers and directional signs clearly designate this route. In most cases panels are visible from some distance away.

You can return via the same route, or you can walk back along Simmons Street and Thomas Street, for a change of scene and to absorb more of the quiet country feel of the town.

The Boyanup Heritage Trail interprets the major sites and stories from the early history of the area via a series of informative and appealing panels:

1. The Bull and Bush: Up from the ashes
2. Hursts Butcher's Shop: A prime location for a prime steak
3. Railway town: And the fettlers who kept the wheels turning
4. Dairy delight: Riding on the milking cow's back

5. St Louis Catholic Church: A fine step up from kerosene boxes
6. The original Post Office: A link to the world beyond
7. Remembering the fallen: The War Memorial, and the Avenue of Oaks
8. The General Store: Food and fellowship, at last in the heart of town
9. Hitching's Garage: Mending madmen's machinery
10. St George's Anglican Church: Built to last, at last
11. The old Agricultural Hall: Social centre of the community
12. Under the oaks: The old school, and school-master's house
13. Treat central: The bakery, and the old tuck-shop
14. The Methodist Church: Built by brickies on holiday
15. The CWA Rooms: A meeting place for women

Take your time to enjoy this lovely walk, and enjoy reading the stories behind many of the historic buildings of Boyanup. As with many small country towns, there's more to the past than might at first meet the eye! Please wander in to one of the cafes or stores along the way for some refreshments.

05

Trails Maintenance Plan

Trails Maintenance Plan

A trail maintenance schedule for the eleven trails is outlined in the accompanying table. This schedule adheres to the Australian Standard 2156.1 – 2001: Walking Tracks Part 1- Classification and Signage which specifies the following inspection and maintenance intervals.

Class 1

Tracks and adjacent natural and built elements will be inspected and maintained regularly. Inspection interval: 30 days

Class 2

Tracks and adjacent natural and built elements will be inspected and maintained regularly. Inspection interval: 90 days or less

Class 3

Built elements will be inspected and maintained regularly. Any built facilities will be managed for public risk. Inspection interval: 6 months or less.

The following table provides an indicative guide to assist Council in determining the appropriate intervals for inspections of walking tracks, according to Australian Standard 2156.1 – 2001: Walking Tracks Part 1- Classification and Signage. The table provides the identified walking track's name, grade, applicable risk management guidelines, and guide to the frequency and timing of inspections across the calendar year. *Note: the interval may vary based on the works program.*

Inspection Intervals - Guide only

Trail Name	Grade	AS 2156.1-2001 Risk Management	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Tuart Walk	1	Inspection Interval: 30 days or less	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Bushland Walk	2	Inspection Interval: 90 days or less			√			√			√			√
Lake Walk	2	Inspection Interval: 90 days or less			√			√			√			√
Wetland Walk	1	Inspection Interval: 30 days or less	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Gelorup Nature Trail	2	Inspection Interval: 90 days or less			√			√			√			√
Tuart Discovery Trail	2	Inspection Interval: 90 days or less			√			√			√			√
Munda Biddi	NA	NA - Long Distance Cycling Route Recommended inspection frequency: every 12 months or less.		√										
Joshua Lake Walk	2	Inspection Interval: 90 days or less			√			√			√			√
Ironstone Gully Falls	3	Inspection Interval: 6 month or less			√*						√*			
Preston River Ramble	3	Inspection Interval: 6 month or less			√*						√*			
Boyanup Heritage Trail	2	Inspection Interval: 90 days or less			√			√			√			√

√* - Inspection interval has a range (6 month or less), it is recommended that tracks with high levels of built features and usage are inspected more frequently than 6 monthly.