

EES now on exhibition.

Warburton Mountain Bike Destination Project



Public comment invited

Yarra Ranges Council (the proponent) has prepared an Environment Effects Statement (EES) for the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination project (the Project).

The EES, together with the draft Planning Scheme Amendment (PSA)(C198yran), are now available for public comment for 40 business days.

This notice is provided pursuant to the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (Vic) (EE Act), the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) and *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PE Act).
Written submissions can be made between Friday 26 November 2021 and **11:59pm on Tuesday 25 January 2022**.

Project Description

The Project is a proposed world-class mountain biking destination centred around Warburton, approximately 70 kilometres east of Melbourne. A significant informal network of mountain bike trails currently exists within the region and there is evidence of increasing use of these trails by local and visiting riders. Mountain biking in this locality started around 15 years ago and was concentrated in the Yarra State Forest in the vicinity of Mount Tugwell.

Yarra Ranges Council has identified mountain biking as an opportunity for tourism growth within the region which would support the region through stimulating the visitor economy and improving the health and wellbeing of its residents. The project would create iconic trails eligible for International Mountain Bike Association Gold Level Ride Centre status which would position Warburton as an internationally significant mountain biking destination.

The project objectives are to:

- Facilitate tourism growth and associated positive economic and jobs growth in the Yarra Valley region
- Create iconic mountain bike trails eligible for International Mountain Bike Association Gold Ride Centre status
- Create spectacular riding experiences that have a competitive advantage over existing mountain bike destinations and leverage Warburton's beautiful township, rural valley and surrounding forested slopes
- Enhance the health and wellbeing of the community
- Maintain the significant biodiversity and heritage values within the project area and provide opportunities for the community to connect with and appreciate their importance

The project consists of up to 177 kilometres of mountain bike trails providing a range of mountain bike experiences to suit all levels of riding. The project also includes a new Visitors Hub and main trailhead at the Warburton Golf Course and other trailheads at Mount Tugwell, Mount Donna Buang and Wesburn Park.

If the Project gains all required approvals, construction of Stage 1 is anticipated to begin (approximately 110km of trails and supporting infrastructure) in mid to late 2022.

EES process

In May 2020, the Victorian Minister for Planning determined an EES would be required for the project under the *Environment Effects Act* (EE Act). In June 2020, the Commonwealth Government determined that approval would be required under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and accredited the EES process for the related assessment. In September 2020, DELWP issued draft Scoping Requirements for the project's EES for public comment. Following consideration of feedback, the final Scoping Requirements were issued, and identified the matters to be investigated and documented in the EES.

The key approvals required under Victorian legislation are planning approval via a Planning Scheme Amendment under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; a works on waterways permit under the *Water Act 1989*; approvals under the *National Parks Act 1975* and an approved *Cultural Heritage Management Plan* (CHMP) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Additional approvals required include a 'Permit to take protected flora from public land' under the FFG Act and approval for amendment of the Yarra Ranges National Park Management Plan. Other approvals may be required and will be determined throughout the course of the EES.

The EES process is accredited to assess impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) under the EPBC Act through the Bilateral Assessment Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria. The Commonwealth Minister or delegate will decide whether the project is approved, approved with conditions or refused under the EPBC Act, after having considered the Minister for Planning's assessment under the EE Act.

The Victorian Minister for Planning will provide a final assessment of the effects of the project following public exhibition of the EES and a subsequent inquiry.

This EES has considered MNES for making a determination under the EPBC Act. You can make a submission on the matters assessed for the purposes of the relevant provisions under the EPBC Act, by making a submission on the EES.

After considering the Victorian Minister for Planning's assessment under the EE Act, the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment will make a determination whether to approve the Controlled Action under the EPBC Act.

Procedures for the EES were published and are available Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) website at: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environment-assessment/browse-projects/projects/warburton-mountain-bike-destination>

You can also read more about the EES process for the project at the above link

Any person may make a written submission on the EES and draft PSA during the exhibition process. All such submissions will be treated as submissions on the EES.

How to access the EES and Exhibited Documents

The EES and the draft PSA application are now available to read and download at www.rideyarraranges.com.au

Should COVID-19 restrictions allow, hard copies of the EES and the draft PSA will be made available at the following locations during the exhibition period:

- Yarra Ranges Council Community Hub**
2415 Warburton Hwy, Yarra Junction VIC 3797
- Arts Centre Warburton**
3409 Warburton Hwy, Warburton VIC 3799
- Yarra Ranges Council Offices**
Chapel St, Lilydale VIC 3140 (Medicare Bldg)
- State Library of Victoria**
328 Swanston St, Melbourne 3000

Subject to COVID-19 restrictions on Community Facilities. Please check the COVIDSafe Settings for metropolitan Melbourne for updates.

www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covidsafe-settings

EES Information Pack

You can request an EES information pack which contains:

- USB loaded with the complete EES and draft PSA.
- Printed Project Overview including a map.

For those who cannot access either the physical or electronic sites to view the EES and draft PSA, hard copies may be requested and purchased from The Proponent by emailing mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au or call 1300 368 333.

Summary Brochure \$10; Main Report \$50; Technical Reports \$60 each; Attachments \$50 each; Map Book \$30, Entire EES (Main Report, all Technical Reports, all Attachments, Map Book) \$750.

Please note the EES is a long document (approx 3500 pages) and we encourage the use of electronic versions.

Drop In Sessions

Drop in sessions will be held by The Proponent at the following locations and times:

- Arts Centre Warburton**
3409 Warburton Hwy, Warburton VIC 3799
Friday 3 December 2021 2pm to 6pm
Tuesday 7 December 2021 12pm to 4pm
Wednesday 15 December 2021 9am to 1pm
Wednesday 12 January 2022 2pm to 6pm

Face to Face Sessions

Saturday 18 December 2021 10am to 1pm

Online Information Session

Monday 20 December 2021 7pm to 8pm

How to make a submission

Submissions on the EES and the draft PSA must be made in writing and be received by **11:59pm on Tuesday 25 January 2022**.

Each submission is a public document and will be treated as a submission on the EES and the draft PSA. Only one submission is needed to address all of your views about the project, its effects and the relevant documents. Online submissions are preferred and can be lodged via the Victorian Government's engagement website: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/warburton-iac>

Where a submitter is unable to lodge a submission online, they must contact Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) through the **DELWP Customer Call Centre on 136 186 (select option 6)** and request a hardcopy submission coversheet. Each hardcopy submission must be accompanied by a coversheet issued by PPV.

All submissions must state the name and address of the person making the submission. Petition and pro-forma responses will be treated as a single submission and only the first names from a petition or pro-forma submission will be registered and contacted.

Submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published on the Engage Victoria website. Do not include personal information in the body of your submission (such as your email address or phone number) or photos of people, particularly children. Your submission and your name will be made public.

The submission process is independently managed by PPV and any enquiries regarding the management of submissions and the Inquiry and Hearing process should be directed to them.

The Inquiry and Advisory Committee Process

The Minister for Planning will appoint a joint Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) under the EE Act and the PE Act to hold an Inquiry into the project and its environmental effects. The IAC will review the public submissions, the EES and draft PSA and will consider the environmental effects of the project in accordance with terms of reference issued by the Minister for Planning.

After the exhibition period, the IAC will hold a Directions Hearing on Friday 11 February 2022 where the necessary arrangements and timetable for the public hearing will be established. Further information about the Directions Hearing arrangements (including whether it will be held in person or conducted online by video conference) will be published on <https://engage.vic.gov.au/warburton-iac> when determined. The IAC will follow the health advice from the Victorian Government and the Chief Health Officer in making this decision.

The public hearing process will commence in the week beginning Tuesday 15 March 2022 and will run for approximately three (3) to four (4) weeks as required.

Members of the public and any other parties seeking to be heard at the public hearing are required to submit a written submission and indicate on the online submission form or hardcopy submission coversheet that they would like to be heard at the hearing.

Information on the hearing process and timetable will be published as it becomes available at: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/warburton-iac>

Questions

In relation to the Project or EES Documentation

- Yarra Ranges Shire Council
P.O. Box 105, Anderson Street
Lilydale, VIC 3140
1300 368 333
(03) 9735 4249
mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au
www.rideyarraranges.com.au

In relation to making a submission or the Inquiry Process

- Planning Panels Victoria
136 186 (select option 6)
planning.panels@delwp.vic.gov.au

In relation to the EES Process

- Impact Assessment Unit, DELWP
environment.assessment@delwp.vic.gov.au

Warburton Mountain Bike Destination

A WORLD-CLASS MOUNTAIN BIKE DESTINATION IN THE HEART OF THE YARRA RANGES



Scan to view Project Website

