

REFERRAL OF A PROJECT FOR A DECISION ON THE NEED FOR ASSESSMENT UNDER THE *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978*

REFERRAL FORM

The *Environment Effects Act 1978* provides that where proposed works may have a significant effect on the environment, either a proponent or a decision-maker may refer these works (or project) to the Minister for Planning for advice as to whether an Environment Effects Statement (EES) is required.

This Referral Form is designed to assist in the provision of relevant information in accordance with the *Ministerial Guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978* (Seventh Edition, 2006). Where a decision-maker is referring a project, they should complete a Referral Form to the best of their ability, recognising that further information may need to be obtained from the proponent.

It will generally be useful for a proponent to discuss the preparation of a Referral with the Impact Assessment Unit (IAU) at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) before submitting the Referral.

If a proponent believes that effective measures to address environmental risks are available, sufficient information could be provided in the Referral to substantiate this view. In contrast, if a proponent considers that further detailed environmental studies will be needed as part of project investigations, a more general description of potential effects and possible mitigation measures in the Referral may suffice.

In completing a Referral Form, the following should occur:

- Mark relevant boxes by changing the font colour of the 'cross' to black and provide additional information and explanation where requested.
- As a minimum, a brief response should be provided for each item in the Referral Form, with a more detailed response provided where the item is of particular relevance. Cross-references to sections or pages in supporting documents should also be provided. Information need only be provided once in the Referral Form, although relevant cross-referencing should be included.
- Responses should honestly reflect the potential for adverse environmental effects. A Referral will only be accepted for processing once IAU is satisfied that it has been completed appropriately.
- Potentially significant effects should be described in sufficient detail for a reasonable conclusion to be drawn on whether the project could pose a significant risk to environmental assets. Responses should include:
 - a brief description of potential changes or risks to environmental assets resulting from the project;
 - available information on the likelihood and significance of such changes;
 - the sources and accuracy of this information, and associated uncertainties.
- Any attachments, maps and supporting reports should be provided in a secure folder with the Referral Form.
- A CD or DVD copy of all documents will be needed, especially if the size of electronic documents may cause email difficulties. **Individual documents should not exceed 2MB as they will be published on the Department's website.**

- A completed form would normally be between 15 and 30 pages in length. Responses should not be constrained by the size of the text boxes provided. Text boxes should be extended to allow for an appropriate level of detail.
- The form should be completed in MS Word and not handwritten.

The party referring a project should submit a covering letter to the Minister for Planning together with a completed Referral Form, attaching supporting reports and other information that may be relevant. This should be sent to:

Postal address

**Minister for Planning
GPO Box 2392
MELBOURNE VIC 3001**

Couriers

**Minister for Planning
Level 20, 1 Spring Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3001**

In addition to the submission of the hardcopy to the Minister, separate submission of an electronic copy of the Referral via email to ees.referrals@delwp.vic.gov.au is required. This will assist the timely processing of a referral.

PART 1 PROPONENT DETAILS, PROJECT DESCRIPTION & LOCATION

1. Information on proponent and person making Referral

Name of Proponent:	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Authorised person for proponent:	Marg Allan
Position:	Regional Director Loddon Mallee Region Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Postal address:	Box 3100 Bendigo Delivery Centre Vic 3554
Email address:	harcourtmbp@delwp.vic.gov.au
Phone number:	(03) 5430 4683
Facsimile number:	(03) 5448 4982
Person who prepared Referral:	Amanda Johnson
Position:	Program Manager, Regional Planning and Approvals
Organisation:	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Postal address:	Box 3100 Bendigo Delivery Centre Vic 3554
Email address:	amanda.johnson@delwp.vic.gov.au
Phone number:	03 5430 4626
Facsimile number:	03 5448 4982
Available industry & environmental expertise: (areas of 'in-house' expertise & consultancy firms engaged for project)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DELWP: Environment and Natural Resources Group, Loddon Mallee - Preliminary Biodiversity Assessment • Blue Devil Consulting: Paul Foreman - Botanical Investigation for Rare and Threatened Species • Biosis: Rohan Simkin and Daniel Gilmore - Habitat hectare and desktop threatened species assessment • Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation: Di Smith - Preliminary Indigenous Cultural Heritage Assessment • Biosis: Kym Oataway - Cultural Heritage Management Plan • DELWP: David Bannear, Archaeologist, Planning Group - European Cultural Heritage • GHD: David May - Land Capability Assessment • Practical Ecology: Andrew Stephens - Bushfire Management Statement Dirt Art: Simon French – Construction

2. Project – brief outline

Project title:

Harcourt Mountain Bike Park (MTB Park)

Project location: (describe location with AMG coordinates and attach A4/A3 map(s) showing project site or investigation area, as well as its regional and local context)

MGA Coordinates: 55: 258530, 5902148 at entry from Picnic Gully Road.

The site is located in central Victoria in the Shire of Mount Alexander.

Approximately 2km east of the township of Harcourt the end Picnic Gully Road (off Market Street) the site is a former pine plantation area at the foot of Mount Alexander. Along its western and northern edges the site adjoins the Mount Alexander Regional Park.

See maps at attachment 1

Short project description (few sentences):

The project development fulfils an election commitment to construct a purpose-built mountain bike facility involving 34 kilometres of single track cross country trails, a visitor landing area with toilet block, bollards and signage (see attachment 2 – Media Release 20/11/2014).

A linking off-road path to Harcourt will be developed in partnership with Mount Alexander Shire as a separate project but is not a part of this referral.

3. Project description

Aim/objectives of the project (what is its purpose / intended to achieve?):

The project aim is to construct an international standard mountain bike park (MTB Park) to boost the local economy, bringing tourists to central Victoria, growing local jobs and providing an opportunity for active recreation in the community. The MTB Park will consist of 34 kilometres of trails of varying levels of difficulty, and a trail-head comprising composting toilet facility, shelters and seating and a 'jumping off' point for the trails.

The MTB Park surrounds the area locally known as 'the Oaks', a small oak plantation, but will not traverse the main part of this area (a trail is required to the west and east to join the trail network from north to south). Access to the Oaks will be retained for non-cycling users and it will continue to be available for passive uses (e.g. picnics, camping and weddings).

Access to the Mount Alexander Regional Park (the Regional Park) will not be available through the site.

Background/rationale of project (describe the context / basis for the proposal, eg. for siting):

The initial scoping study commissioned by Goldfields Track Inc (GTI) determined that the facility will have valuable economic benefits, and is estimated that in the fifth year of operation the MTB Park may have an overall economic annual impact of \$9.8 million, attract 100,000 visitors and create up to 65 jobs (see attachment 3).

Local community members lobbied for the MTB Park to be constructed at the site to boost tourism and recreational activity in Harcourt. The Andrews Labor Government committed to construct a state-significant world-class MTB Park at the site in 2014.

The mountain bike park at Harcourt will repurpose land for the benefit of local community, businesses and visitors.

There has been strong stakeholder support for construction of the park, with a local stakeholder committee leading development of a feasibility study and master plan. The Victorian Government will work in close partnership with stakeholders to ensure the final product reflects the needs and interests of the greater community.

The government will provide \$1.99 million from the Regional Infrastructure Fund to construct the Harcourt Mountain Bike Park with DELWP providing \$500,000 to undertake the preliminary investigations and planning for the project.

A specialist mountain bike construction company (Dirt Art) has been contracted to undertake the construction of the facility on DELWP's behalf. It is anticipated that this will create up to six local

jobs for the construction period. It is anticipated that several these positions will be offered to members of the Dja Dja Wurrung clans.

Main components of the project (nature, siting & approx. dimensions; attach A4/A3 plan(s) of site layout if available):

The main component of the project is 34km of mountain bike single track, associated visitor landing area at the entrance (bollards, signage and a toilet facility). See attachment 4 for the final design layout of the twelve trails and attachment 5 for the trail head conceptual design.

Work was undertaken in the detailed design to avoid high value native vegetation (including known occurrences of threatened flora, steeply sloping areas and indigenous cultural heritage sites. Additionally, adjoining neighbours were consulted and trails relocated

Ancillary components of the project (eg. upgraded access roads, new high-pressure gas pipeline; off-site resource processing):

Mount Alexander Shire Council, DELWP and Regional Development Victoria are working with Dirt Art (the contractor) to develop an off-road path leading from Harcourt township to the trail head. It is likely that this will be along Market Street and Picnic Gully Road. It is anticipated this track will be constructed with a gravel base. It is likely that the road can be constructed without impacting on native vegetation.

Key construction activities:

The construction of the tracks involves the scraping and shaping of the contours of the land back to bare mineral earth (see Construction Environment Management Plan at attachment 6 for further detail on construction methodology). Some movement of boulders and/or logs will occur to construct the trails as required. Previously quarried granite from the onsite quarries will be utilised in construction (walls, track armouring, bollards etc). Work will be done using small excavators (90cm wide blade) and hand labour in areas of sensitivity. A visitor 'landing area' at the entrance to the park will contain signage, shelters and picnic tables. A toilet facility (2 toilets) will be constructed at the trail head for use by all visitors to the site. Other works will include repair of main road and upgraded access to the Oaks.

The concept design proposed the removal of 6.245 hectares of native vegetation; redesign has avoided the areas of highest quality native vegetation and construction techniques will minimise the removal in areas of lower quality. Trails will be micro-sited to avoid native vegetation removal. It is anticipated that the amount of native vegetation removal for the approved design will be less than 3 hectares and comprise understorey removal and trees of <10cm diameter only.

Works to be undertaken by DELWP as part of the development of the MTB Park include:

- *Maintenance of tracks* - grading, installation of cut-off drains and/or culverts, resheeting
- *Oaks area* - as for track maintenance and installation of 'bollards' - these could be traditional timber structures that require soil disturbance or some of the previously quarried large granite pieces shifted in place using an excavator
- *Public safety works – Quarries* - installation of guard rails; relocation of quarried stone
- *Water Race* - decommissioning or maintenance
- *Tree Safety* removal of dangerous exotic trees, works on natives only as necessary (scarred trees will be managed as necessary in years to come, in consultation with Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DDWCAC));
- *Closure of tracks* not required for MTB trails or access - installation of bollards/fencing; ripping short sections and revegetating
- *Weed management* - spraying and mulching; DDWCAC have been contracted to prepare a Weed Management Plan for the site
- *Revegetation* works across site - a Revegetation Plan will be developed in conjunction with the DDWCAC.

Key operational activities:

The key operational activities of the MTB Park will be informal mountain bike riding by individuals. The area may be used for organised competition at the discretion of the land manager. Other informal uses include bushwalking, horse riding (to be confined to land management trails), camping in the Oaks, and picnicking.

At completion of the construction works the site will be managed by a skills-based Committee of Management (that will include DDWCAC and local community representatives) and will be guided

by an operational management plan to be developed by DELWP prior to the opening of the trails. This will include a revegetation and weed management plan and maintenance of trails and tracks. DDWCAC have been commissioned to develop the weed management plan for inclusion in the operational management plan.

Funding will be provided to the Committee by DELWP for the first three years to assist with these works.

Key decommissioning activities (if applicable):

NA

Is the project an element or stage in a larger project?

☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, please describe: the overall project strategy for delivery of all stages and components; the concept design for the overall project; and the intended scheduling of the design and development of project stages).

The project is a single build, unstaged project with operational activities that will be managed via CHMP and Operational Management Plan.

Is the project related to any other past, current or mooted proposals in the region?

☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, please identify related proposals.

4. Project alternatives

Brief description of key alternatives considered to date (eg. locational, scale or design alternatives. If relevant, attach A4/A3 plans):

None considered as this project meets a specific election commitment for the site.

The concept layout proposed by GTI has been modified to meet the site's constraints and mitigate environmental impacts.

Brief description of key alternatives to be further investigated (if known):

None

5. Proposed exclusions

Statement of reasons for the proposed exclusion of any ancillary activities or further project stages from the scope of the project for assessment:

The linking pathway from Harcourt township is at concept stage only. A separate planning application will be submitted for the proposal if required. It is not anticipated that the pathway will create any impacts in either native vegetation removal or waterway crossing issues as it will be constructed on mostly cleared road reserve and wind around any mature native trees. The pathway has been included in the cultural heritage considerations for the project.

6. Project implementation

Implementing organisation (ultimately responsible for project, ie. not contractor):

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Implementation timeframe:

July/August 2017 with completion by mid-December 2017. NB: Dirt Art advise that the trails will 'settle' better if constructed on damp soils; construction will not occur during heavy rainfall events and as such completion time is weather dependent.

Proposed staging (if applicable):

Project will not be staged

7. Description of proposed site or area of investigation

Has a preferred site for the project been selected?

☐ No ☒ Yes If no, please describe area for investigation.
If yes, please describe the preferred site in the next items (if practicable).

General description of preferred site, (including aspects such as topography/landform, soil types/degradation, drainage/ waterways, native/exotic vegetation cover, physical features, built structures, road frontages; attach ground-level photographs of site, as well as A4/A3 aerial/satellite image(s) and/or map(s) of site & surrounds, showing project footprint):

The site sits at the western base of Mount Alexander which is part of the Harcourt Batholith (Granodiorite). Mount Alexander is the highest peak in the Loddon Catchment at 741 metres.

Elevations across the subject site range from approximately 380 to 540 metres above sea level. Slopes typically are in the range of 8% to 25%. These slopes occupy over 80% of the site.

The site is comprised of rolling hills characterised by prominent rock outcrops and gentler rock-free slopes and saddles. Rock outcrops occur across the site in granitic slabs and small boulder fields.

Located in the West Victorian Dissected Uplands the site has granitic soils and a long-term mean rainfall of 626 mm most of which occurs during winter and spring. Frosts are common in winter months although the risk period is greatest between May and September.

The soils, vegetation and landscape features present have been significantly modified since European settlement, particularly during the period of use of the site for plantation purposes that commenced in 1917.

During the period of operation of the site as a pine plantation many tracks were constructed. Some of these will be maintained for emergency management and access purposes. The balance of the tracks will be closed (initially with granite bollards) and progressively rehabilitated with native species (map showing retained tracks at attachment 7).

Maps and photographs are included in the attachments and investigative documents.

Site area (if known): 221.07 hectares

Route length (for linear infrastructure) 34 kilometres of single direction trails of one metre width (see plan at attachment 4). An additional one metre either side will potentially be impacted by construction (i.e. worst case maximum of three metres) although this is dependant of terrain and subsurface materials.

A visitor 'landing area' at the entrance to the park will contain signage, shelters and picnic tables. A toilet facility (containing 2 toilets) will be constructed closer to the oak forest (the Oaks) but within the landing area (encircled by trail 1) for use by all visitors to the site. Other works will include repair of existing tracks required for emergency use and adjoining land owner access and upgraded access to the Oaks (via the existing track) from Picnic Gully Road.

Current land use and development:

The land is unreserved Crown land, formerly leased to Hancock's Victoria for pine plantation and logging. Two abandoned quarries exist on site and some of the previously quarried stone will be used in track construction and as bollards. The quarries will be assessed for public safety risks and appropriately signed or fenced off.

Most of the site is disturbed however two areas of intact native vegetation remain on the two knolls on the site (see attachment 8 which shows the previous plantation areas). Some revegetation of the site was attempted however this was limited in species diversity and not successful (mostly *Cassinia arcuata* remains). The site is weedy and pine wildlings occur over much of the site. The centre of the site contains an experimental oak plantation.

The whole site is currently used for passive recreation mostly centred on the Oaks, with walking, horse riding and mountain biking occurring on an unregulated basis throughout the site. Camping also occurs at various locations on the site and it is anticipated that the development will better help regulate this activity.

The site is not connected to existing services including water, wastewater, power or gas and has limited amenities to support the uses currently undertaken on site.

Description of local setting (eg. adjoining land uses, road access, infrastructure, proximity to residences & urban centres):

Adjoining land use to the north, west and south is agriculture and includes grazing and orchards with accompanying residences. The land to the east is Mount Alexander Regional Park (the Regional Park) and is managed by Parks Victoria.

The site is accessed from the west by Picnic Gully Road, a gravel road from Harcourt township. Picnic Gully road is the extension of the formed Market Street which starts in the township area. Northern access to the site is via Coopers Road (unmade) over the water supply channel.

The land is located approximately two kilometres east of the Harcourt township which has a population of 439. Harcourt township is small and contains a petrol station, café, post office, pre-school on the eastern side of the old highway (now Harmony Way) and the leisure centre (sports facility), primary school, general store, and bowls club to the west. The now disused train station is also to the western side of the town.

The nearest residential dwelling to the site is on the northern end; this house is approximately 38 metres to the north (some of its shedding is on the Crown land). The nearest house to the west is 87 metres from the boundary of the subject site. Approximately 50 dwellings are within 1 km of the site boundary and a map showing these is at attachment 9.

Planning context (eg. strategic planning, zoning & overlays, management plans):

The site is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) and is subject to the Bushfire Management Overlay, the Heritage Overlay Schedule 798 (HO798) and the Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 4) (ESO4) under the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme (Planning Report is at attachment 10).

No management plan currently exists for the site although one will be prepared before the mountain bike trails are finalised to assist the Committee of Management (see draft table of contents for the management plan at attachment 11).

Planning scheme requirements:

- Clause 36.03 PCRZ - states that no permit is required for 'informal outdoor recreation' as long as the use is conducted by or on behalf of the public land manager (in this instance DELWP);
- Clause 42.01 ESO - A permit is required to '...Construct bicycle pathways and trails.' Native vegetation clearing in former plantation areas is exempt from the need for a permit under the ESO.
 - ESO4 - All applications for use and development of land within 100 metres of the Mount Alexander Regional Park. DELWP is the referral authority for these applications.
- Clause 43.01 - Heritage Overlay (HO798) - A permit is required to '...Construct a building or construct or carry out works, including:
 - Bicycle pathways and trails
 - Construct or display a sign
- Clause 44.06 - Bushfire Management Overlay - A permit is required to carry out works associated with the use of a site for '...Leisure and Recreation'. DELWP is the responsible fire authority and therefor the referral authority for the site.
- Clause 52.17 of the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme exempts the removal of native vegetation from the requirement for a planning permit where the removal is on Crown land and the removal is to manage Crown land. The works must be on Crown land managed by or on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (as constituted under Part 2 of the *Conservation, Forest and Lands Act 1987*) and to the minimum extent necessary.

The planning permit application was forwarded to and assessed by the Barwon South West Land, Planning and Approvals team to provide some separation between the applicant and referral authority roles. The response from Barwon South West region is at attachment 12.

Local government area(s):

Mount Alexander Shire Council

Overview of key environmental assets/sensitivities in project area and vicinity (cf. general description of project site/study area under section 7):

Land Use Capability

The site has a general land capability of 'good'. Three quarters of the site according to Lidar is <10% grade. The site is unsuitable for a septic toilet.

European Cultural Heritage

A Heritage Study for the site was undertaken in-house by David Bannear (attachment 13).

Historic features of significance are a Valonia oak plantation established to produce acorn tannin for hides. This is the area covered by the HO798 – Oak Forest at Mount Alexander.

Two sites are listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory; Heritage Victoria has advised that these will be removed from the Inventory as it is reviewed as they are no longer classified as archaeological sites in accordance with Heritage Victoria's current assessment policy. These are listed as:

- Harcourt Oak Plantation Quarry Road Harcourt North, Mount Alexander Shire H7724-0267
- Picnic Gully Road House Site Joseph Young Drive Harcourt, Mount Alexander Shire H7723-0636

Very little evidence of the second site is left in situ; what remains is some non-indigenous garden and traces of foundations. Whilst this area will be surrounded by the trail head trail, no works will disturb the remains.

Native Flora

The site is within the Goldfields Bioregion and flora values identified within the study area are as follows:

- 214,779 ha of native vegetation.
- Four Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs)

Ecological Vegetation Class	Status
Granitic Grassy Woodland (dominant EVC on site)	vulnerable
Granitic Hills Woodland	endangered
Creekline Grassy Woodland	endangered
Tall Marsh	depleted

- *Potential* areas of White Box – Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum grassy woodlands and derived native grasslands *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth) (EPBC) listed community;
- Potential habitat for four significant flora species:
 - Crimson Spider-orchid *Caladenia concolor* (EPBC – vulnerable; *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG) listed)
 - Matted Flax-lily *Dianella amoena* (EPBC – endangered; FFG listed)
 - Clover Glycine *Glycine latrobeana* (EPBC – vulnerable; FFG listed)
 - Tough Scurt-pea *Cullen tenax* (FFG listed)

Native Fauna

Potential *habitat* for twelve FFG Act listed species:

- Brush-tailed Phascogale *Phascogale tapoatafa*
- Grey-headed Flying Fox *Pteropus poliocephalus*
- Eastern Bent-wing Bat *Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis*
- Lewin's Rail *Lewinia pectoralis*
- Square-tailed Kite *Lophoictinia isura*
- Barking Owl *Ninox connivens*
- Powerful Owl *Ninox strenua*

- Swift Parrot *Lathamus discolor*
- Speckled Warbler *Chthonicola sagittata*
- Diamond Firetail *Stagonopleura guttata*
- Bibron's Toadlet *Pseudophryne bibronii*
- Golden Sun Moth *Synemon plana*

Golden Sun Moth, Brush-tailed Phascogale, Swift Parrot, Powerful Owl and Speckled Warbler are known in the surrounding area. Golden Sun Moth and Swift Parrot are also listed as 'critically endangered' and the Grey-headed Flying-fox as 'vulnerable' under the EPBC Act.

Indigenous Cultural Heritage

The site falls within the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DDWCAC) area.

Five Aboriginal places are recorded within the Activity Area:

- Lianyuck – Mount Alexander Southern Low Density Artefact Distribution (VAHR 7723-0305)
- Harcourt North 2 (VAHR 7724-0302)
- Lianyuk Quartz Scrapper – Mount Alexander (VAHR 7724-0354)
- Lianyuk – Mount Alexander Northern Low Density Artefact Distribution (VAHR 7724-0357)
- Lianyuk – Mount Alexander – The Oaks Artefact Scatter (VAHR 7724-0361).

The preliminary investigation undertaken by the DDWCAC on the site found additional significant scatters, and some scar trees.

An assessment undertaken by Biosis for the Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) found the following additional cultural areas on site:

- Five rock shelters
- Five scarred trees
- Numerous artefact scatters

(see map at attachment 14 showing the recorded and new sites found by Biosis).

DDWCAC have agreed that no further assessment (i.e. a 'complex assessment') is required.

A CHMP has been developed (see attachment 15) and submitted for approval. In developing the CHMP, construction of the MTB trails; installation of signage, toilets, table and shelters and future management activities as previously listed was considered.

9. Land availability and control

Is the proposal on, or partly on, Crown land?

☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, please provide details.

Entirely on Crown Allotment 2002, Parish of Harcourt (Parcel P375678)

Current land tenure (provide plan, if practicable):

Unreserved Crown land (see statement at attachment 16)

Intended land tenure (tenure over or access to project land):

The Victorian Environment Assessment Council (VEAC) in the *Box-Ironbark Forests & Woodlands Investigation* (ECC, 2001) recommended the area be '...returned after harvest and revegetation for inclusion in the park. These historic features are to be protected...' (recommendation C5). The historic features referred to are the oak plantation which will be excluded from the MTB trails.

DELWP will undertake a process with government to seek an amendment to these recommendations to allow for a different reservation to occur that better reflects the proposed use of the site and includes protection for the Oaks.

Other interests in affected land (eg. easements, native title claims):

The DDWCAC Land Use Activity Agreement (LUAA) applies to the site. The LUAA recognises traditional owner rights:

- (i) to enjoy the culture and identity of the Dja Dja Wurrung;
- (ii) to maintain a distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land and the natural resources on or depending on the land;

- (iii) to access and remain on the land;
- (iv) to camp on the land;
- (v) to use and enjoy the land;
- (vi) to take natural resources on or depending on the land;
- (vii) to conduct cultural and spiritual activities on the land; and
- (viii) to protect places and areas of importance on the land.

The LUAA requires the Crown to notify the DDW of the proposed activities and negotiate the way works will be undertaken. This was done as part of the CHMP development process.

10. Required approvals

State and Commonwealth approvals required for project components (if known):

Cultural Heritage Management Plan

Planning Permit from Mount Alexander Shire Council

Works on Waterways permit from North Central CMA

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act: permit to take protected flora - DELWP

Have any applications for approval been lodged?

☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, please provide details.

Planning permit lodged concurrently with Mount Alexander Shire Council

Cultural Heritage Management Plan draft under review by DDWCAC

Approval agency consultation (agencies with whom the proposal has been discussed):

Mt Alexander Shire Council;

Department of Energy and Environment (Commonwealth);

North Central CMA

Other agencies consulted:

DDWCAC

Parks Victoria

PART 2 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

11. Potentially significant environmental effects

Overview of potentially significant environmental effects (identify key potential effects and comment on their significance and likelihood, as well as key uncertainties):

Land Use Capability

The Land Inventory of the Loddon River Catchment - a reconnaissance survey (N.Schoknecht, DCFL 1988) in the Map Unit Descriptions 2.39 L/HrG - Low Hills to Hills - rolling Granitic assesses the site's susceptibility to land deterioration as follows:

- Sheet and track erosion (moderate)
- Wind erosion (moderate to high)

The susceptibility is the maximum degree likely under unsuitable management conditions. Sheet and track erosion can be managed by rabbit control and revegetation. Similarly, wind erosion is managed by maintaining vegetative cover and rabbit control.

The site has a general land capability of 'good'. Three quarters of the site according to Lidar is <10% grade. The site is unsuitable for a septic toilet.

Track erosion is visible and active across the site. The works included in the project will stabilise the existing track network to be retained for management purposes and access for property to the south (see map at attachment 17). Other tracks will be closed and rehabilitated.

Construction of trails with incorrect gradients and lack of armouring is highly likely to cause erosion. Redesign of the trails away from steep slopes and construction of trails with gradients between 5% and 10% will reduce erosion risk. The redesigned mountain bike trails will generally avoid slopes of >20% and where this is not possible will be armoured using granite from the quarry onsite unless they are on existing rock faces.

The location of some of the conceptual tracks were incorporated into vehicular tracks or near dam inlets and may cause increased erosion to those structures; relocation and micro-siting have now avoided these areas.

Aboriginal Heritage

The site falls within the DDWCAC area. Within the geographic region, there are 140 previously recorded Aboriginal places, consisting of 175 place components: artefact scatters, Low Density Artefact Distributions (LDAD, scarred trees, earth and stone features. Of these, five Aboriginal places are recorded within the Activity Area:

- Lianyuck – Mount Alexander Southern Low Density Artefact Distribution (VAHR 7723-0305)
- Harcourt North 2 (VAHR 7724-0302)
- Lianyuk Quartz Scrapper – Mount Alexander (VAHR 7724-0354)
- Lianyuk – Mount Alexander Northern Low Density Artefact Distribution (VAHR 7724-0357)
- Lianyuk – Mount Alexander – The Oaks Artefact Scatter (VAHR 7724-0361).

An initial investigation into the cultural heritage on the site found many significant scatters, and some scar trees. All Aboriginal places located within the Activity Area are surface artefact scatters or isolated surface artefacts which have not been tested for subsurface continuations (although one, VAHR 7724-0361 was found to have artefacts embedded in an eroded track, suggesting a subsurface continuation of the site). Materials of quartz, hornfels, basalt and crystal quartz have been identified with the artefacts consisting of a range of angular fragments, flakes and tools.

A Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is required and has been submitted for approval. The assessment undertaken for the CHMP found the following additional cultural artefacts/areas on site:

- Five rock shelters
- Five scarred trees
- Numerous artefact scatters

(see map at attachment 14). DDWCAC have agreed that no further assessment (ie a 'complex

assessment') is required.

DELWP has agreed to implement a range of measures to reduce impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage and these will be managed via the CHMP. The conditions are included in the CHMP at attachment 15.

European Cultural Heritage

The Oak Plantation is a standout feature of the Shire's heritage overlay, and the core of the Oaks picnic and camping area will be avoided.

A single trail running north-south on either side of the Oaks will provide the linkage to the balance of the trail network.

VEAC recommended (recommendation C5 Mt Alexander Regional Park) that the Oaks be protected. Heritage Victoria have determined that with sympathetic planning the proposed MTB park poses no risk to heritage values of the Oaks plantation.

Two sites are listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory; Heritage Victoria has advised that these will be removed from the Inventory as it is reviewed as they are no longer classified as archaeological sites in accordance with Heritage Victoria's current assessment policy. These are listed as:

- Harcourt Oak Plantation Quarry Road Harcourt North, Mount Alexander Shire H7724-0267
- Picnic Gully Road House Site Joseph Young Drive Harcourt, Mount Alexander Shire H7723-0636

Very little evidence of the second site is left in situ; what remains is some non-indigenous garden and traces of foundations. Whilst this area will be surrounded by the trail head trail, no works will disturb the remains.

Native Vegetation

6.245 hectares of clearing was assessed as required for the concept design. The final detailed design and micro-siting of tracks to accommodate environmental constraints has reduced this to up to 3 hectares of understorey only. The vegetation overall is in the moderate risk pathway under the Biodiversity Assessment Guidelines.

It is expected that some disturbance to and removal of non-threatened native understorey will occur during construction. This will be minimised through micro-siting of trails. DELWP will undertake some revegetation works as part of the construction of the MTB trails and an operational management plan will be developed that includes ongoing revegetation works.

A summary of potential impacts and mitigation measures is provided at attachment 18 and the investigation reports accompany this referral.

12. Native vegetation, flora and fauna

Native vegetation

Is any native vegetation likely to be cleared or otherwise affected by the project?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, answer the following questions and attach details.

What investigation of native vegetation in the project area has been done? (briefly describe)
Habitat hectare and threatened species investigation including surveys for threatened species; undertaken by Biosis and Blue Devil Consulting respectively.

What is the maximum area of native vegetation that may need to be cleared?

☒ NYD Estimated maximum area of 3 hectares of native understorey vegetation with a biodiversity score of less than 0.6.

How much of this clearing would be authorised under a Forest Management Plan or Fire Protection Plan?

☒ N/A approx. percent (if applicable)

Which Ecological Vegetation Classes may be affected? (if not authorised as above)

☐ NYD ☒ Preliminary/detailed assessment completed. If assessed, please list.

Four EVCs present on site, two of which are endangered. (See Figure 2 on page 25 of Biosis report "*Harcourt Mountain Bike Park: Habitat hectare and desktop threatened fauna assessment*").

Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC)	Conservation Status	Location on site
Granitic Grassy Woodland	vulnerable	Dominant EVC
Granitic Hills Woodland	endangered	Restricted to the highest elevation areas
Creekline Grassy Woodland	endangered	Rare occurrences along intermittent streams and drainage lines
Tall Marsh	depleted	Restricted to a dam in the south-west

Have potential vegetation offsets been identified as yet?

☐ NYD ☒ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Offsets are not required as no permit for native vegetation removal is triggered. A permit is required under the ESO specifically to construct bicycle pathways and trails, but not required under the ESO to remove, destroy or lop any vegetation.

Clause 52.17 of the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme *exempts* the removal of native vegetation from the requirement for a planning permit where the removal is on Crown land and the removal is to manage Crown land. The works must be on Crown land managed by or on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (as constituted under Part 2 of the *Conservation, Forest and Lands Act 1987*) and to the minimum extent necessary.

As removal of native vegetation is exempt, offsets are not required to be provided. However, impacts from the permanent clearing (i.e. the trails) will be counterbalanced by directly compensating from additional management programs and actions including weed control and ongoing revegetation of the site. These works will be described in an Operational Management Plan (OMP) (see attachment 11 for outline of OMP).

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

A planning permit application has been submitted to Mount Alexander Shire Council. Please see attachment 10 for the planning permit application report and DELWP public land manager/referral authority conditional consent letter (attachment 12) for further information.

NYD = not yet determined

Flora and fauna**What investigations of flora and fauna in the project area have been done?**

(provide overview here and attach details of method and results of any surveys for the project & describe their accuracy)

A habitat hectare assessment and threatened species survey was undertaken by Biosis (see Table 2 below for results). A separate survey targeting specific flora species was undertaken by Blue Devil Consulting prior to the Biosis study.

Table 2 Habitat hectares of native vegetation within the study area

Habitat Zone ID		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
EVC #: Name*		GGW	GGW	CGW	GGW	GHW	GGW	GGW	GGW	GGW	TM	GHW	GGW	CGW	
	Max Score	Score	Score	Score								Score	Score	Score	Total
Site Condition	Large Old Trees	10	10	3	4	4	10	3	6	5	1	0	NA	0	0
	Canopy Cover	5	5	0	5	5	5	5	3	0	0	NA	0	0	
	Lack of Weeds	15	15	4	4	6	9	6	6	6	6	9	9	6	
	Understorey	25	25	15	15	20	15	10	15	15	10	15	15	5	
	Recruitment	10	10	10	10	5	10	10	10	10	10	NA	10	5	
	Organic Matter	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	2	
	Logs	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	NA	2	4
Total Site Score		41	47	50	59	43	51	48	35	34	48	40	22	45	
Landscape Value	Patch Size	10	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	
	Neighborhood	10	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	Distance to Core	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	Total Landscape Score	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
HABITAT SCORE		100	57	63	66	75	59	67	64	51	50	64	56	38	61
Habitat points = #/100		1	0.57	0.63	0.66	0.75	0.59	0.67	0.64	0.51	0.5	0.64	0.56	0.38	0.61
Habitat Zone area (ha)		124.426	5.483	3.263	6.443	5.689	9.926	24.702	7.701	23.674	0.086	0.532	2.389	0.466	214.779
Habitat hectares (Hha)		70.923	3.454	2.154	4.832	3.356	6.650	15.809	3.927	11.837	0.055	0.298	0.908	0.284	70.923

GGW = Granitic Grassy Woodland CGW = Creekline Grassy Woodland GHW = Granitic Hills Woodland TM = Tall Marsh

Information at page 18, Biosis report

See Section 3 of the Biosis report “*Harcourt Mountain Bike Park: Habitat hectare and desktop threatened fauna assessment*” for description of survey method and results, particularly Figures 3 to 6 on pages 26 to 29 for further information.

Targeted surveys were undertaken during November-December 2016 to determine presence of Golden Sun Moth. The surveys were undertaken to the standards required by the Commonwealth government to satisfy the requirements of the EPBC Act (i.e. 4 x weekly surveys when nearby populations are known to be flying). No individuals were located. Subsequent discussion with the Department of Environment and Energy (3 March 2017) confirmed no referral under the EPBC Act is required for any of the species or for the listed community as the site had previously been mostly cleared for pine plantation.

Plantation locations were researched and a plan is at attachment 8.

Have any threatened or migratory species or listed communities been recorded from the local area?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, please:

List species/communities recorded in recent surveys and/or past observations.

Indicate which of these have been recorded from the project site or nearby.

No threatened flora species were recorded on site.

The EPBC listed *White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodlands and derived native grasslands* was assessed as potentially occurring on site. Staff from the Department of Energy and Environment met with the MTB Park project team and staff from the Planning Group (Geoff Ralphs/Tara Horsnell) on 3/3/17 and agreed that no referral was required for the project.

Category	Scientific Name	Common Name	Location	Conservation Status		
				EPBC Act	FFG Act	VIC
Invertebrate	<i>Synemon plana</i>	Golden Sun Moth	nearby	N/A	threatened	vulnerable
Birds	<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	Swift Parrot	nearby	Critically endangered	threatened	vulnerable
	<i>Ninox connivens</i>	Barking Owl	nearby	N/A	threatened	vulnerable
Mammal	<i>Phascogale tapoatafa</i>	Brush-tailed Phascogale	nearby	N/A	threatened	vulnerable

If known, what threatening processes affecting these species or communities may be exacerbated by the project? (eg. loss or fragmentation of habitats) Please describe briefly.

None expected given the large area of established habitat in which the species have been observed nearby and not finding GSM during targeted survey

Are any threatened or migratory species, other species of conservation significance or listed communities potentially affected by the project?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, please:

List these species/communities:

Indicate which species or communities could be subject to a major or extensive impact (including the loss of a genetically important population of a species listed or nominated for listing) Comment on likelihood of effects and associated uncertainties, if practicable.

o

Is mitigation of potential effects on indigenous flora and fauna proposed?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Avoidance of high value native vegetation by design of trail network. Trails have been designed to avoid the native vegetation remnants on the knolls where no plantation were established.

No trails will be constructed in areas of native vegetation a strategic biodiversity score of >0.61. No trees with a >10cm diameter at breast height will be removed.

Trails will be constructed upslope of trees to prevent damage to root integrity (see Section 7.2, page 28 CEMP).

See attachment 4 for trail network map showing areas of moderate and high value vegetation

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

From 1917 to 2015 the site was developed and managed as a non-native pine plantation. Plantation locations were across a significant majority of the site, and native vegetation was removed in these areas for the plantation plantings. See attachment 8 for the plan showing these plantation locations.

13. Water environments

Will the project require significant volumes of fresh water (eg. > 1 Gl/yr)?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, indicate approximate volume and likely source.

Will the project discharge waste water or runoff to water environments?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, specify types of discharges and which environments.

Are any waterways, wetlands, estuaries or marine environments likely to be affected?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, specify which water environments, answer the following questions and attach any relevant details.

A single creek crossing is proposed on the eastern edge of the Oak forest through an existing ford. Any works required will be subject to a Works on Waterways permit and will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of that permit.

The creek crossing on the western side of the Oak forest will utilise the existing track. Mitigation is discussed below.

Are any of these water environments likely to support threatened or migratory species?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, specify which water environments.

Are any potentially affected wetlands listed under the Ramsar Convention or in 'A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia'?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, please specify.

Could the project affect streamflows?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe implications for streamflows.

Could regional groundwater resources be affected by the project?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, describe in what way.

Could environmental values (beneficial uses) of water environments be affected?

<input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, identify waterways/water bodies and beneficial uses (as recognised by State Environment Protection Policies)
Could aquatic, estuarine or marine ecosystems be affected by the project? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, describe in what way.
Is there a potential for extensive or major effects on the health or biodiversity of aquatic, estuarine or marine ecosystems over the long-term? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please describe. Comment on likelihood of effects and associated uncertainties, if practicable.
Is mitigation of potential effects on water environments proposed? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please briefly describe. Creek crossings have been limited in the network design, and, where required, will be treated with rock armouring, or existing crossing points will be utilised. No formal bridge or platform structures will be required.
Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

14. Landscape and soils

Landscape

Has a preliminary landscape assessment been prepared? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please attach.
Is the project to be located either within or near an area that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to a Landscape Significance Overlay or Environmental Significance Overlay? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, provide plan showing footprint relative to overlay. The construction of the MTB Park triggers the provisions of Clause 42.01 of the ESO in that a permit is required to '...Construct bicycle pathways and trails.' Clearing of native vegetation regrowth in former plantation areas is exempt from the need for a permit under the ESO. The ESO4 also triggers a permit requirement for '...all applications for use and development of land within 100 metres of the Mount Alexander Regional Park'. DELWP is the only referral authority and is a <i>determining</i> referral authority under the ESO4 in accordance with Clause 66.04 for '...any use or development which the responsible authority considers may not satisfy the environmental objective of this schedule' and '... all applications for use and development of land within 100 metres of the Mount Alexander Regional Park'. See planning report at attachment 10). Identified as of regional or State significance in a reputable study of landscape values? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please specify. Within or adjoining land reserved under the <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please specify. Within or adjoining other public land used for conservation or recreational purposes? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please specify. Adjoins Mount Alexander Regional Park (eastern boundary) reserved under <i>Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978</i> and other unreserved Crown land surrounding northern end.
Is any clearing vegetation or alteration of landforms likely to affect landscape values? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please briefly describe. Viewing points at the trail head and southern knoll will be improved through the removal of pine trees and dead shrubs. This work has been included to improve the overall experience of users of the park by allowing a greater appreciation of the views of the surrounding landscape.

Is there a potential for effects on landscape values of regional or State importance?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes Please briefly explain response.

Works for the project are designed to improve the area's landscape values, including improving views from Mount Alexander, and revegetation and weed control. Ongoing management of the site will involve removal of pines and weeds improving the landscape values.

Is mitigation of potential landscape effects proposed?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

Note: A preliminary landscape assessment is a specific requirement for a referral of a wind energy facility. This should provide a description of:

- The landscape character of the site and surrounding areas including landform, vegetation types and coverage, water features, any other notable features and current land use;
- The location of nearby dwellings, townships, recreation areas, major roads, above-ground utilities, tourist routes and walking tracks;
- Views to the site and to the proposed location of wind turbines from key vantage points (including views showing existing nearby dwellings and views from major roads, walking tracks and tourist routes) sufficient to give a sense of the overall site in its setting.

Soils**Is there a potential for effects on land stability, acid sulphate soils or highly erodible soils?**

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

The *Land Inventory of the Loddon River Catchment - a reconnaissance survey* (N.Schoknecht, DCFL 1988) in the Map Unit Descriptions '2.39 L/HrG - Low Hills to Hills - rolling Granitic' assesses the site's susceptibility to land deterioration as follows:

- Sheet and track erosion (moderate)
- Wind erosion (moderate to high)

The susceptibility is the maximum degree likely under unsuitable management conditions.

Sheet and track erosion can be managed by rabbit control and natural revegetation. Similarly, wind erosion is managed by maintaining vegetative cover and rabbit control.

Track erosion is visible and active across the site. The works proposed include stabilisation of the existing track network that is planned to be retained for vehicle access allowing for management of the park and access for the property to the south. The map at attachment 7 shows the areas of track (marked in red) to be retained and improved for emergency and management access.

The remaining vehicle tracks have been identified as not required for management purposes so will be closed and rehabilitated.

In accordance with the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA), average trail grade should be between 5% - 10% in the descending direction and the maximum sustained trail grade should not exceed 20%. The trail network at Harcourt has been designed in accordance with the guidelines and will generally avoid slopes of >20%. Where this is not possible the trails will either be on granite slabs or will be armoured using granite from the quarry onsite.

Are there geotechnical hazards that may either affect the project or be affected by it?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

15. Social environments**Is the project likely to generate significant volumes of road traffic, during construction or**

operation?

☒ NYD No ☐ Yes If yes, provide estimate of traffic volume(s) if practicable.

During construction, there will be four to five crews each made up of three crew members with one vehicle towing a small excavator on a trailer. The excavator (pictured) is a rubber tracked mini excavator with a blade width 900 to 1200 mm. The site office and compound will be located offsite. The landholder on the east boundary immediately south of the trail head entrance has offer his land as a location for the site office and the contractor is currently considering that offer. Traffic will be minimal due to small crew numbers and limited to the beginning and the end of the day. Hours of operation will be 7am to 4pm. The CEMP (see attachment 6) has been developed to ensure construction is undertaken with the least environmental impact.



During operation users of the MTB Park will be encouraged through signage, marketing and information online to park in Harcourt township and ride to the site via Market Street/Picnic Gully Road. DELWP is working with Mount Alexander Shire to provide an off-road track to the site that will reduce traffic, dust, and noise and create a safer cycling environment. VicRoads have agreed to lower the speed limit on Market Street to 80 kph. An Operational Management Plan (OMP) is being drafted. This will guide the operation of the Park. See attachment 11 for draft OMP structure.

Is there a potential for significant effects on the amenity of residents, due to emissions of dust or odours or changes in visual, noise or traffic conditions?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, briefly describe the nature of the changes in amenity conditions and the possible areas affected.

Once operational, there is potential for increase in dust and noise from additional daytime vehicular traffic. Mitigation measures are detailed below.

Is there a potential for exposure of a human community to health or safety hazards, due to emissions to air or water or noise or chemical hazards or associated transport?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe the hazards and possible implications.

Is there a potential for displacement of residences or severance of residential access to community resources due to the proposed development?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe potential effects.

Are non-residential land use activities likely to be displaced as a result of the project?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe the likely effects.

The area known as 'The Oaks' is a popular place for residents of the region to visit. The project has been designed to ensure that access to The Oaks is not compromised and the contractors have designed the work plan to ensure their works are managed so as not to be obvious and invite early use of the trail network.

Do any expected changes in non-residential land use activities have a potential to cause adverse effects on local residents/communities, social groups or industries?

☐ NYD ☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe the potential effects.

Is mitigation of potential social effects proposed?

NYD No ☒ Yes If yes, please briefly describe.

Because of extensive consultation with the residents, several alterations were made to the project to address their concerns.

This consultation has resulted in changes that include:

- revegetation works to be undertaken in partnership with the local Landcare group to screen the two houses at the northern side of Picnic Gully Road to assist with potential dust increase;
- planting works along the road reserve to the south of Picnic Gully Road, against the eastern side of MTB Park to screen the property on that southern corner from the MTB

Park; and, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • track relocation further away from the boundary to allay concerns of the residents to the north regarding noise and dust impacts. <p>An off-road pathway from Harcourt to the subject site is proposed. Riders will be encouraged using social media, website and signage, to park their cars in the town and ride to the site.</p>
Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information) The CEMP also provides direction on how noise and vibration will managed and mitigated.

Cultural heritage

Have relevant Indigenous organisations been consulted on the occurrence of Aboriginal cultural heritage within the project area? <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, list any organisations that it is proposed to consult. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, list the organisations so far consulted. Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation
What investigations of cultural heritage in the project area have been done? (attach details of method and results of any surveys for the project & describe their accuracy) Preliminary investigation undertaken by DDWCAC revealed that further investigation and CHMP would be required. Biosis were contracted to undertake archaeological investigations and prepare a CHMP. The preliminary results are described in the section on existing conditions above and the CHMP is at attachment 15.
Is any Aboriginal cultural heritage known from the project area? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, briefly describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any sites listed on the AAV Site Register • Sites or areas of sensitivity recorded in recent surveys from the project site or nearby • Sites or areas of sensitivity identified by representatives of Indigenous organisations See section 11
Are there any cultural heritage places listed on the Heritage Register or the Archaeological Inventory under the <i>Heritage Act 1995</i> within the project area? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please list. See section 11
Is mitigation of potential cultural heritage effects proposed? <input type="checkbox"/> NYD <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please briefly describe. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance of significant cultural heritage sites on the north and south knoll and other sites as agreed with DDWCAC. • Collection of oral history for the site • Collection of already found artefacts for storage by DDWCAC prior to works commencing. • Research excavations on sites of high artefact finds prior to commencement of works. • Collection of any artefacts for recording and storage by DDWCAC during works. See conditions in CHMP at attachment 15.
Other information/comments? (eg. accuracy of information)

16. Energy, wastes & greenhouse gas emissions

What are the main sources of energy that the project facility would consume/generate? <input type="checkbox"/> Electricity network. If possible, estimate power requirement/output <input type="checkbox"/> Natural gas network. If possible, estimate gas requirement/output <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Generated on-site. If possible, estimate power capacity/output <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please describe.
--

Please add any relevant additional information.

Dirt Art will use portable generators as required for cutting stone etc.

What are the main forms of waste that would be generated by the project facility?

- ☐ Wastewater. Describe briefly.
- ☐ Solid chemical wastes. Describe briefly.
- ☒ Excavated material. Describe briefly.

A small amount of soil and rock waste may be generated – this will be used on site to backfill holes from the removal of the pine plantation/woody weeds.

- ☐ Other. Describe briefly.

Please provide relevant further information, including proposed management of wastes.

Management of waste is detailed at Section 7.10 in the CEMP

What level of greenhouse gas emissions is expected to result directly from operation of the project facility?

- ☒ Less than 50,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum
- ☐ Between 50,000 and 100,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum
- ☐ Between 100,000 and 200,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum
- ☐ More than 200,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum

Please add any relevant additional information, including any identified mitigation options.

17. Other environmental issues

Are there any other environmental issues arising from the proposed project?

- ☒ No
- ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe.

18. Environmental management

What measures are currently proposed to avoid, minimise or manage the main potential adverse environmental effects? (if not already described above)

- ☒ Siting: Please describe briefly

Trails have been sited to avoid high value and high risk areas with particular attention paid to cultural heritage and biodiversity assets (see final trail design at attachment 4)

- ☒ Design: Please describe briefly

Design of the trails is in accordance with International Mountain Bike Association standard. The trails have been designed to maximise the MTB users' experience without impacting on other uses and the environment.

- ☒ Environmental management: Please describe briefly.

The construction will be undertaken in accordance with project's Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) developed by Dirt Art in consultation with the project manager. It reflects the avoidance requirements and the CHMP conditions for construction and is provided at attachment 4

- ☐ Other: Please describe briefly

Add any relevant additional information.

19. Other activities

Are there any other activities in the vicinity of the proposed project that have a potential for cumulative effects?

- ☐ NYD
- ☒ No
- ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe.

20. Investigation program

Study program

Have any environmental studies not referred to above been conducted for the project?

☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, please list here and attach if relevant.

Bushfire Management Statement – will be used to assist development of operating plan. The facility will be closed on Code Red days and an event safety plan has been developed (attachment).

Has a program for future environmental studies been developed?

☒ No ☐ Yes If yes, briefly describe.

An ongoing Management Plan will be developed and include amongst other things: revegetation, pest plant and animal and emergency management.

Consultation program

Has a consultation program conducted to date for the project?

☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, outline the consultation activities and the stakeholder groups or organisations consulted.

Once the results of the environmental investigations were known DELWP undertook a wide-ranging consultation process. This included a public information session at the Harcourt Leisure Centre (invitation for which was by a Harcourt area-wide Australia Post mailout), a stall at the Harcourt Applefest, one-on-one adjoining landholder conversations and four discussion sessions regarding final design. An element of this communication is the monthly mailout to interested parties (see attachment 19).

Undertaking the consultation has led to changes in the final design including:

- moving the northern trails away from the boundary;
- moving trails near the entrance at Picnic Gully Road away from the western boundary;
- putting in link points on long tracks so riders have choices about how long they ride; and
- moving the trailhead further away from the road entry to the park.

Additionally, a Communications and Engagement Plan was developed by the Project Control Group to ensure continued communication about the project with the community as the project progresses (see attachment 20). A highlight of this communication will be an Open Day at the Oaks during construction to display the progress and construction techniques and allow locals to talk to the contractor about the works. Monthly updates will continue during construction.

A comprehensive log of engagement activities is attached for information (see attachment 21).

Has a program for future consultation been developed?

☐ NYD ☐ No ☒ Yes If yes, briefly describe.


Continued communication and engagement with community will be provided throughout the building of the project.

A major part of this will be the establishment of the committee of management for future site management.

Authorised person for proponent:

I, Marg Allan, Regional Director, Loddon Mallee DELWP confirm that the information contained in this form is, to my knowledge, true and not misleading.

Signature:



Date

16/6/2017

Person who prepared this referral:

I, Amanda Johnson, Program Manager, Regional Planning and Approvals, DELWP, confirm that the information contained in this form is, to my knowledge, true and not misleading.

Signature:



Date:

16/6/2017