



Harcourt Mountain Bike Park

Project update, December 2016

Situated next to Mount Alexander Regional Park, the Harcourt mountain bike park will offer up to 34 kilometres of dedicated mountain bike trails and magnificent views alongside a natural forest setting.

Within five years of completion the project is estimated to inject \$9.8 million into the local economy, attracting 100,000 visitors each year and creating 58 jobs.

Built to International Mountain Bicycling Association standards, the park will be consistent with future development plans for the Harcourt area while improving the site's environmental value.

Tender process

The project is rolling ahead as Member for Bendigo West, Maree Edwards, announced on 1 December that tenders were invited for the design and construction of the park.

The deadline for tender submission has been extended to 31 January 2017 with the successful tenderer expected to be announced in April 2017.

Appointments

Russell Manning has been appointed as the new Project Manager for the Harcourt mountain bike park and will start on Monday 9 January 2017. The role will oversee all aspects of the project including design, construction and community consultation. Russell will begin informal community consultations with stakeholders in January.

Mount Alexander Shire Council Councillor Tony Cordy and local resident Annette Rae have recently been appointed to join the Community Reference Group (CRG).

Forrest tour

Forrest is a small Victorian town with approximately 200 residents that was originally established around the hard wood logging industry.

In early January 2017, the CRG and Project Control Group will embark on a tour of the Forrest Mountain Bike Trails, touted to be one of the premier mountain bike destinations in Victoria.

The groups will look over the site and speak to the land managers about the design and construction of the trails and what worked and what did not. The tour will also help both groups gain insight into how the small community of Forrest has benefitted from the park's construction.

Community consultation

The government is committed to delivering a world class mountain bike park. To do this, DELWP and its project partners, Regional Development Victoria and Goldfields Track Inc. need to hear the community's opinions, have their input and have them work closely with the successful tenderer so that the design and potential infrastructure of the park reflects the needs and interests of the greater community.

To include the successful tenderer and to ensure the community's full involvement in the design and layout of the park in this environmentally sensitive site, DELWP has pushed formal community consultation timelines out to autumn 2017.

Get involved

Community members are encouraged to register their interest to receive project updates and become involved in future consultation and engagement opportunities.

Register your interest at harcourtMBP@delwp.vic.gov.au or call DELWP on 136 186.

For more information go to www.delwp.vic.gov.au/parks-forests-and-crown-land/harcourt-mountain-bike-park



Harcourt Mountain Bike Park

Project update, February 2017

Situated next to Mount Alexander Regional Park, the Harcourt mountain bike park (HMBP) will provide up to 34 kilometres of dedicated mountain bike trails and magnificent views alongside a natural forest setting.

The project is expected to inject substantial funds into the local economy, attracting 100,000 visitors each year and generate local jobs.

Built to International Mountain Bicycling Association standards, the park will be consistent with future development plans for the Harcourt area while improving the site's environmental value.

Design and works

The site of the mountain bike park is on the old plantation site on the west side of Mount Alexander.

The majority of the car parking is planned to be catered for in the Harcourt township and riders will be encouraged to support local businesses and take the short ride to the trail head on the mountain. There will also be limited parking provided at the mountain bike park.

The Victorian Government is not purchasing private land to build a car park.

The park will not be fenced and will be open to all recreational users including walkers and horse riders.

Three new barbeques have recently been installed at 'The Oaks' replacing older styles and comply with fire regulations. Toilet facilities will also be provided for the mountain bike park and will be located where they can also be accessible to users of 'The Oaks.'

The community will also notice that works will begin soon to upgrade the fire access track.

Tender process

Tender submissions for the trail construction are being evaluated and DELWP expects to have a contractor on board in early April.

Forrest tour

On 13 January 2017, the Community Reference Group and the Project Control Group visited the Forrest Mountain Bike Trails, touted to be one of the premier mountain bike destinations in Victoria, to learn about the successes and challenges of building a world class mountain bike park.

The town has significantly benefitted economically and socially since the mountain bike park was built approximately 10 years ago.

Also of note, was that mountain bike riders are very willing to ride the three kilometres from town to the trail head. This is approximately the same distance from the Harcourt township to the proposed trail head of the Harcourt mountain bike park.

Community consultation

DELWP and its partners held a Community Information Session on 8 February 2017 at the Harcourt Leisure Centre. More than 40 community members attended the event. It was an important opportunity for community members to ask questions and give their feedback on the early stages of the project.

Community members are excited about the project and are expressing their support for the many expected benefits.

Many residents told us that they supported the project and look forward to its economic benefits to the Harcourt community.

Harcourt Mountain Bike Park

There is strong support to retain access to 'The Oaks' and for the park to be available to a range of existing compatible recreational users.

There was also a number of people concerned about ensuring safe rider access to and from the mountain. DELWP and Mount Alexander Shire staff are working together to review various options before discussing with the community a preferred route.

Russell Manning, Project Manager, HMBP, has also met and will continue to meet with interested people to gather ideas, listen to opinions, provide progress updates and discuss this exciting project.

The next opportunity to have your say, get more information or ask questions about the project will be at the 2017 Harcourt Apple Fest on 11 March in Harcourt. Look out for the Harcourt Mountain Bike Park stall and be ready to share your ideas.

Please contact Russell Manning at 5430 4444 or harcourtmbp@delwp.vic.gov.au for more information or any enquiries on the project.

Project Timelines

March	April	May	June	July 2017	August – November
Trail tenderer evaluation.	Contractor appointed. Preliminary design out for public comment and community consultation.	Community feedback included in final trail design. Trail design completed and submitted for Federal and State environmental planning approvals.	Federal and State environmental planning approvals underway.	Trail design approved. Construction begins, weather permitting.	Construction to be undertaken and completed.

Get involved

Community members are encouraged to register their interest to receive project updates and become involved in future consultation and engagement opportunities.

Register your interest at harcourtmbp@delwp.vic.gov.au or call DELWP on 136 186.

For more information and updates, visit www.delwp.vic.gov.au/harcourt-mbp

The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2017



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Harcourt Mountain Bike Park

Project Update

March 2017

Situated on a former pine plantation next to Mount Alexander Regional Park, the Harcourt mountain bike park will offer up to 34 kilometres of dedicated trails and magnificent views alongside a natural forest setting.

Once fully operational the park is expected to inject substantial funds into the local economy, attracting thousands of visitors each year and generate local jobs.

Built to International Mountain Bicycling Association standards, the park will be consistent with future development plans for the Harcourt area while improving the site's environmental value.

‘Apple of my eye’

It is not hard to see why Harcourt Valley is adored, not just by the loyal local community, but the thousands of visitors each year to the beautiful Central Highlands. This was obvious at this year's successful Harcourt Applefest, which pulled one of the biggest crowds to what is still known as the ‘apple centre’ of Australia.

DELWP was proud to be a part of Applefest and to connect with the community to hear what people think about the project and what it means to them. Project Manager, Russell Manning, was in his element, engaging with more than 200 people on the day, listening to their comments and answering questions about this exciting new project for the region. Since then Russell has been out and about holding face-to-face meetings with landholders and residents adjoining the project site.

Over the last few months it has been important for us to make connections with everyone who is interested in the project and to hear from them, share information and keep them up to date with the next steps. We should know the outcome of the tender process for the design and construction of the trails very soon and be ready to announce the successful contractor in April. The tender process has been rigorous and there will further opportunity for community consultation once the contractor is appointed and the design phase commences.



Russell Manning guiding visitors through the plans while apple royalty looks on

Harcourt Mountain Bike Park

Movement on the mountain

While the tender process and contractor appointment gets sorted, DELWP has been coordinating essential works to improve the site's amenity, safety and environmental value.

Soon after Easter, work will commence on upgrading a fire access track. Our partners, the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation is rolling out a much needed blackberry control program and they are also developing a strategy so weeds can be effectively controlled.

Behind the scenes, the Community Reference Group is working with the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation on the design of signs for the park and possible names for the trails as well as the name of the park. If you've got any ideas, by all means let us know.

In response to questions raised at community engagement sessions, we're also working with VicRoads, and Mount Alexander Shire on options for the best access to the mountain bike park from the Harcourt Township. We'll keep you posted on this as part of future community information sessions.

Time is ticking ...

While we are on track to deliver a world-class destination for Harcourt, it's important to keep in mind that project timelines are always dependent on the progress of various approvals. We will keep you up to date with any changes so that everyone has the latest information.

March	April	May	June	July 2017	August – November
Trail tenderer evaluation.	Contractor appointed. Preliminary design out for public comment and community consultation.	Community feedback included in final trail design. Trail design completed and submitted for Federal and State environmental planning approvals.	Federal and State environmental planning approvals underway.	Trail design approved. Construction begins, weather permitting.	Construction to be undertaken and completed.

We want to hear from you

It's important to us that we are talking to you and giving you the opportunity to become involved in future consultation and engagement opportunities.

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Project Update

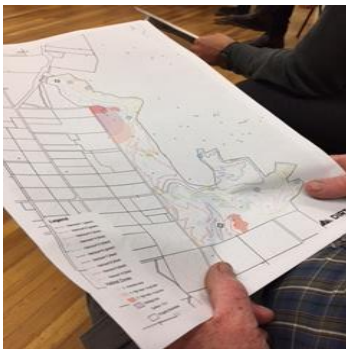
April 2017

Situated on a former pine plantation next to Mount Alexander Regional Park, the Harcourt mountain bike park will offer up to 34 kilometres of dedicated trails and magnificent views alongside a natural forest setting.

Once fully operational the park is expected to inject substantial funds into the local economy, attracting thousands of visitors each year and generate local jobs.

Built to International Mountain Bicycling Association standards, the park will be consistent with future development plans for the Harcourt area while improving the site's environmental value.

Design stage rolls into action



We are working with a leading mountain bike trail company to design and deliver the Harcourt mountain bike park.

Dirt Art is one of the largest trail companies in Australasia with strong links to the global mountain bike fraternity, managing the design and delivery of the 2018 Commonwealth Games mountain bike venue.

Part of the design stage will be Dirt Art's commitment to work with the community and stakeholders on the design of the trails to ensure ample opportunity for consultation on the preliminary design.

Having your say

During April, it was great to come together with adjoining landholders, residents and the wider community to discuss the preliminary design of the trails.

Ideas and suggestions were put to the designer and once the changes have been made and final design approved, we will send out the final version to those registered on our mailing list. Please find details for registering at the end of this update.

There will be employment opportunities during construction and the Dirt Art team will be seeking local accommodation during the construction stage.



Harcourt Mountain Bike Park

Car versus bike

The Community Reference Group met last month to discuss a range of topics including the concept of minimal car parking at the park by having an off-road link from the town to the park. The group is supportive of this approach to ensure minimal disruption to the Oaks during major events and providing a safe off road access from the town to the mountain bike park. We will keep you informed about the feasibility of this concept throughout the planning process.

DELWP, Mount Alexander Shire and VicRoads staff met on site to discuss traffic management including the off-road pathway. VicRoads committed to reducing the speed limit along Market Street to 80 kmph and this change is expected to be implemented soon. Other traffic management issues are being reviewed by council.

Getting technical

The Technical Reference Group along with experienced riders have conducted field inspections of the park. They have provided details for a potential route that will maximise rider experience while enhancing cultural heritage and environmental values of the area. The area takes in spectacular views of the valley and surrounds and would be a great addition to the trail network if we are able to balance rider experience and cultural heritage and environmental values.

Park improvements

Dja Dja Wurrung teams have been busily spraying blackberries and gorse on the site and expect to be there for a few weeks, weather permitting. They are also completing a weed management plan for the mountain bike park to target species and assess where funding is best utilised. The road maintenance program is to commence within next few weeks.

How are we tracking?

May	June	July	Aug – Dec
Community feedback included in final trail design	Commonwealth and State environmental planning approvals underway	Trail design approved	Construction underway and completed
Final trail design for Commonwealth and State environmental and planning approvals		Construction begins, weather permitting	

Keeping in touch ...

It's important to us that we are talking to you and giving you the opportunity to become involved in future consultation and engagement opportunities.

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There's also our website: delwp.vic.gov.au/harcourt-mbp

Harcourt Mountain Bike Park

Project Update

May 2017

Situated on a former pine plantation next to Mount Alexander Regional Park, the Harcourt mountain bike park will provide around 34 kilometres of dedicated trails with magnificent views, alongside a natural forest setting. When its fully operational, the park site will be enhanced with more native plantings and reduction in weeds.

The park is expected to inject substantial funds into the local economy, attracting thousands of visitors each year. This will provide opportunities for existing and new local businesses to thrive, generating local jobs.

Built to International Mountain Bicycling Association standards, the park will be consistent with future development plans for the Harcourt area.

We promised you world class ...



The trail design has been finalised and will provide an unforgettable experience for riders and visitors to Harcourt. The unique trail design will set apart Harcourt from other parks across the country.

The design includes access to the northern knoll and parts of the southern knoll where there are spectacular views over Harcourt Valley and across to the west, as far as the Grampians.

We have finalised design following input from neighbours, the local community, mountain bikers, Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation and environmental experts.

Project Manager, Russell Manning said all feedback has been considered and incorporated.

“This is a really excellent design and includes feedback from the Technical Reference Group, Community Reference Group, adjoining landholders and community members.

“I would like to thank everyone who gave their time and provided suggestions. We have been able to work with our contractor, Dirt Art, to arrive at a design that will give Harcourt an edge over other mountain bike parks by taking in the unique landscape and characteristics of this beautiful part of the region.

“Dirt Art has listened to all ideas and advice as part of our commitment to work with the community and stakeholders.” Russell said. The final design has been submitted to Mount Alexander Shire Council as part of the planning approval process.

Harcourt Mountain Bike Park

What's next?

On the 12 May, we submitted a planning permit application to Mount Alexander Shire Council. A planning officer is assessing the application as we work through the next steps in the planning process.

An Environment Effects referral is also in progress which DELWP officers are assessing. This step is needed when a project could potentially have significant environmental effects. A written referral is sent to the Minister for Planning asking if an Environment Effects Statement is required. We'll keep you posted on the progress.

In other news ...

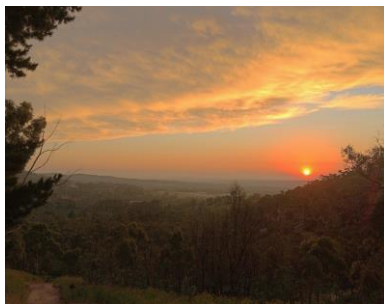
- We are reviewing plans for a possible off-road path from the Harcourt township to the site
- Weed control targeting blackberry and gorse has been completed
- Maintenance work is underway on main emergency access track
- We are working with Harcourt Landcare and Picnic Gully Road residents regarding funding to remove woody weeds and revegetate the north side of Picnic Gully Road

It's all about the view

Over the past few months our project team has been capturing the stunning attributes of the site alongside Mount Alexander Regional Park. Here's just a few ...



Northern steep terrain and rocky outcrop



Harcourt Valley across to the west



View from southern knoll

We're getting there ...

June	July	Aug – Early 2018
Commonwealth and State environmental planning approvals underway	Planning approvals finalised Construction begins, weather permitting	Construction underway and completed

Keep in touch

Russell Manning is the Project Manager. You can register your interest at harcourtmbp@delwp.vic.gov.au, call us on 136 186 or check progress on delwp.vic.gov.au/harcourt-mbp