

ANGLESEA TRAILS

Opportunity Prospectus



November 2022

There is huge potential for an incredible formalised trail network to strengthen the Anglesea Adventure brand and offer amazing experiences for locals and visitors. The economic, health and environmental outcomes of this network would benefit current and future generations. Trails weave their way around Anglesea, along the coast and into the bush. We would love to enhance the existing formal network by improving linkages along the coast and into the townships to make this even better for riders, runners, walkers and explorers and need investment to make this a reality.

A TRAIL NETWORK LIKE NO OTHER

Anglesea is unique. A special place for adventures in the outdoors, and much more. Loved by locals and visitors, nestled in a beautiful environment where coast meets hinterland.

Imagine catching glimpses of the deep blue ocean from trails that wind through Victoria's most biodiverse heathland and bushland high above the cliffs of Anglesea. Feeling a world away while you connect with people, nature and wildlife on free-flowing trails with great variety for all ages and abilities. Add to this easy transport access and the ability to ride, run or walk in and out of the Anglesea township which offers visitors an array of amazing accommodation, retail and hospitality, and easy access to the Surf Coast hinterland and Otways.

Only 1 hour and 40 minutes from Melbourne and 40 minutes from Geelong, this network will be unique – trails in and around a beautiful coastal town offering an abundance of outdoor adventure activities and of course, all that the coast has to offer.

There is an opportunity to create a very special trail network that will provide community and visitors with amazing experiences. A trail network like no other.

The trail network will further position Anglesea as one of the premier outdoor adventure destinations in Victoria and nationally, complementing the existing attractions of the area. It will diversify the offering of the local area to the biking community (estimated 342,000 mountain bike participants across Australia (and growing) directly spending \$630.8 million per annum), and keep existing and new visitors here longer to run, walk and explore.

This project will strengthen Anglesea Adventure's tourism brand proposition as a year-round, active outdoor adventure destination.

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- **\$2.8m investment requirement**
- **107km trail network**
- **36 trails**
- **Huge economic potential**
- **Anglesea Adventure: enhanced destination**
- **Riders, runners, walkers, hikers and explorers**
- **Potential 40,000 visits annually**
- **Significant health benefits**
- **Strong community interest**

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THE OUTCOMES WE SEEK

- Protect, conserve and restore the unique Anglesea environment
- Anglesea as an outdoor adventure destination
- Create a quality trail network for our community and visitors
- More people, more active, more often = better health and economic boost.

THE POTENTIAL IS EXCITING

The conceptual Anglesea Mountain Bike Trail Network includes 36 trails and 107km of dedicated and shared use trails, spanning from Aireys Inlet to Torquay, with Anglesea in the centre. Although primarily for use by riders, the network will provide an array of opportunities for runners, walkers, hikers and explorers to immerse themselves in the wonderful natural environment. The trees, wild flowers, birds, animals, coastline, hinterland, views, solitude, socialisation – it all awaits the avid explorer, on two legs or two wheels. The network includes beginner and intermediate trails that explore and connect with the beautiful environments. The beginner trails are perfect for the mass market of families and novice riders, while the intermediate trails will challenge and excite more experienced riders.

From a riding perspective, there is significant community demand and interest in this project evidenced through strong participation in mountain biking locally, led by the growth of the Surf Coast Mountain Bike Club, significant support for the Anglesea Bike Park and enthusiasm for maintaining existing bike park facilities. Surf Coast has seen a boom in use of the formal Eumeralla Trails and Anglesea Bike Park. Runners, walkers and hikers also love the existing shared-use trail sections and many more will enjoy a vastly improved network.



SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS

- Improved health outcomes through physical activity, socialisation with family and friends and connection to the natural environment, more activities for young people, improved safety through awareness and knowledge, accessibility with easy level trails for all riding abilities and improved connections throughout Anglesea.
- Environmental benefits include increased advocacy for the environment, closure and rehabilitation of unnecessary trails, reduce building of illegal trails, removal of off-road vehicles and decrease in rubbish dumping.
- The network will diversify the local offering, increasing visitor yield through spending in nearby hospitality, retail and accommodation businesses.
- At over 100km, the network will provide riders, runners, walkers and hikers with more trails than can be explored in a day, encouraging longer visits. The central proximity to the mountain bike networks of Forrest and the You Yangs, and other trails including Lorne waterfalls, Aireys Inlet, the Great Ocean Walk and various Rail Trails, offers even greater incentive to use Anglesea as a base to stay and explore.
- There are no other coastal MTB networks in Victoria, therefore the project will fill a state-wide tourism gap of a coastal trail network; one that offers riding, running and walking experiences along the beautiful Surf Coast, with associated tourism activities and opportunities. It will be one-of-a-kind.
- There is significant potential benefit to the tourism industry in the off season and shoulder seasons where people would come to the region for riding, running and walking; providing an essential boost in quieter months.
- The trail network will offer a low-cost activity and provide social and health benefits to a wide demographic and for all ages and abilities.
- Additional visitation and longer stays may support the establishment of new businesses, and/or existing businesses providing new or longer offerings, or diversifying their products.

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POTENTIAL ECONOMIC BENEFIT

A preliminary economic impact assessment of the concept MTB Network has identified benefits during the implementation and operational phases that will be critical to our community in a post-COVID-19 recovery:

- **Economic benefits of Implementation:** the expenditure of the proposed implementation / construction cost of \$2,501,942 will lead to a total economic benefit of \$4,629,000 and short-term job creation of between 18 jobs. Additional benefits will be attained through the planning phase; estimated at \$300,000.
- **Economic benefits of operational phase:** the true economic Impacts of this project will be realised during the operational phase – i.e. once construction is complete and the trail network is in use.
- **The potential benefits during the operational phase include:**
 - A 10% growth scenario would deliver an estimated \$24m benefit to the local economy and support a total of 122 jobs;
 - A 30% growth scenario would deliver an estimated \$70m benefit to the local economy and support a total of 352 jobs.

A REGIONAL PRIORITY

The Anglesea MTB Trail Network is identified as a regional priority for funding in the Growing Adventure Tourism in the Barwon South West Region Strategy (GATS). The GATS identifies two regional priorities within the Surf Coast:

- The Surf Coast Walk
- Anglesea MTB Network



Anglesea is recognised in the GATS document as one of four priority mountain bike hubs in the Great Ocean Road region including You Yangs, Forrest and Grampians. The benefits to the wider region, where riders will be attracted to come and play, stay, relax and enjoy, and travel to play some more, will be a great support to the tourism industry recovering in a post-COVID economic climate.

The region is bursting with outdoor adventure opportunities to support the visitor economy and resident experience, evidenced by the Great Ocean Road Coastal Trail, Surf Coast Walk, Great Ocean Walk, Forrest MTB Network, You Yangs MTB Network and various other trails. This project will enhance the amazing offering and position Anglesea as a destination to access all opportunities.

There is strong alignment with the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Board's 'Active Adventure' experience pillar, and Vision to provide 'outstanding seamless visitor experiences to drive yield and dispersal growth'.

The Surf Coast Shire and Anglesea township offer an array of tourism opportunities to our visitors. The stunning environments, retail and hospitality providers, cultural and historical sites, amazing experiences, activities and events. Investing in this project will strengthen Anglesea's tourism brand proposition as a year-round, active outdoor adventure destination and help to deliver a regional priority:

"To be recognised as Victoria's premier trail destination with a range of trails and cycling touring routes that offer exceptional natural adventure experiences of Victoria."

POTENTIAL VISITS BOOST

The existing Eumeralla network has over 20,000 visits per year which is significant given this is collected from only one entry point/trail head and there are only 24km of formal trails.

The visitation to a network of over 100kms of trails with multiple trail heads would be far greater than those currently seen; with potential to be more than 40,000.

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CLEAR OUTCOMES TO MEET OUR CHALLENGES

1. Encourage increased visitation and extended length of stay year-round to Anglesea and the Surf Coast – essential for the local economy, particularly in a post-COVID-19 recovery given how our businesses have suffered throughout the pandemic with dramatically reduced tourist numbers.
2. Encourage increased participation in riding, running, walking and hiking among existing and new visitors and local Surf Coast Shire residents providing both economic and social benefits – the Surf Coast Shire population has increased and will continue to do so. The Great Ocean Road will continue to attract increased visitors seeking new experiences.
3. Satisfy the growing demand for MTB and shared-use trails while supporting better environmental outcomes – this aligns with Council's position as a leader in the region and country for sustainable and environmental practices.

FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES

The 107kms of proposed network will include a wide range of trails varying from beginners to advanced riders, with the same principles applicable to runners and walkers. Mountain Bike Australia rate trails as Easy (green circle), Intermediate (blue square) and Difficult (black diamond), noting that this network only includes green and blue.

Some green trails are current or old management vehicle tracks which provide wider and flatter trails for beginner riders, while connecting to areas like Coogoorah Park in Anglesea provide fun experiences for new riders to develop their skills and confidence.

As an easy to intermediate network, it will assist people of all ages and riding abilities to develop and also want to explore other local and regional trails, assisting the economies of each of these areas.



DEVELOPING AN AMAZING NETWORK

Surf Coast Shire have recently released a 'Ride Guide' which highlights all formal trails around Anglesea.

To provide some context to the proposed MTB Trail Network, the 'Ride Guide' map is displayed below with the yellow highlights showing the areas that will increase the current formal network by 36km creating an amazing 107km network. The proposed works would also upgrade all existing trails, close illegal trails and install signage throughout the network.

More detailed mapping of the network will be available after vegetation and cultural heritage assessments are completed including wider community consultation to determine the feasibility of all new trails, and Land Manager approval is obtained.

The full Surf Coast Ride Guide is available at: www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/04-experience/tourism/surf-coast-mtb-guide-2021_web.pdf



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FUNDING IS ESSENTIAL

1. Quite simply, Federal and State Government funding is essential for this project to proceed.
2. The cost estimate to undertake vegetation and cultural assessments and detailed design is \$300,000, and the estimate to complete construction of the network is \$2,500,000. Funding of \$2,800,000 will make this amazing project a reality, delivering 36 trails totalling 107kms (including new trails and improving existing trails), improved/new trail heads, supporting amenities, closure of illegal trails, signage and promotion.

Funding will provide an amazing opportunity to increase and diversify the local and regional tourism offering, create economic benefit and social and health outcomes for our community and visitors alike. The economic loss to the region of this project not happening is far greater than the investment required.

The trails opportunity is exciting, unique, will strengthen the appeal and offering of Anglesea Adventure and support the protection, conservation and restoration of the unique Anglesea environment.

There are significant health and tourism outcomes for our community and visitors waiting to be capitalised on. The opportunity is here, let's make it real.

Ride Guide Map: Existing trail network and proposed areas that will include new trails

