

FINAL

**DRAFT**



SHIRE OF YORK  
**TRAILS**  
**MASTER PLAN**  
2019 - 2028



# SHIRE OF YORK TRAILS MASTER PLAN 2019 - 2028

Prepared by Common Ground Trails Pty Ltd for the Shire of York

#### Acknowledgements:

Common Ground Trails wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the Shire of York and relevant stakeholders that contributed to the contents of this Master Plan.

The authors of the Shire of York Master Plan acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Shire of York Trails Master Plan has been developed to guide future strategic investment in trails recreation, tourism and event development across the Shire of York, Western Australia. The Master Plan reflects the aspirations of the Shire of York to become an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable trails destination. The Trails Master Plan has been developed in line with the Shire of York Strategic Community Plan and considers the five community aspiration themes:

## THE PLACE TO LIVE:

To be a place which is attractive and accessible for the young and elderly and attracts people in the middle age groups to work and settle in the Shire. The York community aspires to a balanced population structure in the long term.

## A LEADER IN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENT:

To be a place which is renowned for its cultural heritage and the quality of its natural environment, and for the care taken by the community of both.

## DRIVING THE YORK ECONOMY FORWARD

To have a vibrant, diverse and prosperous local economy which is sustainable in the long term, makes sustainable use of its natural and built heritage and community assets and delivers benefit in the form of local jobs, business opportunities and a positive image for the Shire.

## BUILT FOR RESILIENCE:

To have secured an infrastructure base (e.g. buildings, roads, footpaths, parks, communications, water and energy ...) which is affordable, is managed at a level of risk accepted by the community, supports a sustainable environment, increases rural and town resilience, and is responsive to community needs.

## STRONG LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE:

To be a community where there is effective and responsive leadership and governance, a sense of collective purpose and shared direction and a willingness and desire to work together for that future.

Aligned with the Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2017-2021 this Master Plan considers bushwalk, urban walk, mountain bike, cycling, equestrian, 2WD, paddle and trailbike trails. Due to constraints within the Shire of York 4WD has not been considered in this plan.

This Master Plan was developed in partnership with community groups, the Shire of York and key land managers. Recommendations were developed by assessing the existing supply of trails and infrastructure, events, tourism and commercial products, governance, management, and promotion of trail opportunities in the Shire of York. Development models and processes derived from world's best practice in international trail destinations will provide a clear framework to guide actions and responsibilities.

The Shire of York Trails Master Plan supports the key objectives of the WA Trails Blueprint to develop a statewide network of sustainable trails, facilities and associated infrastructure; to raise the recreational and tourism profile of Western Australian trails; and to develop a diverse revenue stream to ensure economic sustainability.

The vision for trails in the Shire of York Region is:

**ESTABLISH YORK AS A TRAILS TOWN, OFFERING VISITORS AND LOCALS ACCESSIBLE AND IMMERSIVE TRAIL EXPERIENCES, WHICH CAPITALISE ON THE SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES ON MOUNT BROWN, MOUNT BAKEWELL AND ALONG THE AVON RIVER. TRAILS WILL PROVIDE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCALS AND ENTICE VISITORS TO THE REGION.**

Supporting this vision, the four objectives key to development of the Shire of York as a trail's destination are:

### **1. TRAIL NETWORK**

Develop a high quality trails network, creating interlinked experiences catering for all trail users and activity types.

This master plan proposes the town of York becomes an interlinked trail network providing experiences for all ages and capabilities. The master plan aims to create a trails destination that is accessible, caters for growing demand, and ensures high quality infrastructure and services. Recommendations for new trails focus on delivering trail experiences that utilise existing infrastructure, connect locals and visitors to the town centre, Mt Brown, the Avon River and Mt Bakewell. Trails should make use of natural landforms and fill the identified gaps in the existing trail offering in the Shire of York, benefiting local residents and visitors.

### **2. TRAIL USER EXPERIENCE**

Ensure quality trail experiences, which will deliver social, economic and tourism benefits to the community.

It is important to ensure promotion of trail opportunities and experiences is appropriate to the level of development and the intended markets. This master plan recommends development of a cohesive, hierarchical marketing and promotion plan linking signage, maps and other marketing material with an online platform. Locations identified with potential for hosting events should consider the requirements for event infrastructure and sustainable revenue based models for hosting events.

The development of appropriate trail facilities in strategic locations will encourage visitation and expenditure in town, resulting in a tangible economic impact for the community. It is imperative that sustainable management models are established for facility development and ongoing management. This will provide opportunities to establish and grow businesses that compliment trail activities and encourage public and private investment in trails and associated facilities.

### **3. TRAILS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

Well planned and designed facilities and services appropriate to scale and significance of trails, aimed at encouraging use of the trails network by local residents and visitors.

Infrastructure and services associated with trails are crucial to trail user experience. A thorough and coordinated approach to provision of trail information, signs, trailheads, amenities etc. will ensure trail users gain access to the experience they are seeking. The highest priority recommendation for trails infrastructure in the region is development of a signage plan covering trail heads, directional signs, and safety and emergency signage. Key to successful and sustainable infrastructure development is ensuring trail services provided match the key requirements for location significance for each trail type.

### **4. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

Optimise governance and management structures across local government, trail landowners and stakeholder groups to ensure the Shire of York and the Avon Valley are positioned as trails destinations.

Previous attempts by the Shire of York to implement trails masterplans have not been successful. This master Plan is designed to be digestible and the recommendations are considered achievable. A key recommendation of this master Plan is the need for a cohesive and unified approach to trail planning and development across the shire. Central to achieving this requires an implementation plan, which the Shire of York can use as a guiding document to achieve the recommendations in this master Plan.

Effective and efficient governance and management structures are key to the sustainability and longevity of any trail development. Given the range of stakeholders with an interest in trails, there are opportunities to explore different trail management models. This Master Plan recommends exploring opportunities on private land and opportunities for local government management of trails on state managed land.

## TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Common Ground have identified the following trail experiences outlines in table below and in figure 1 on the following page. An implementation plan should be development to ensure a staged approach for delivery.

Short Term High Priority	Short Term Medium Priority	Medium Term Medium Priority	Long Term Low Priority
Mt Brown Network (walk, mountain bike, equestrian)	Mt Bakewell Summit Trail	Equestrian exercise area (base of Mt Bakewell)	Golf course wildflower walk
Heritage Walk Trails - rationalisation	Avon River Trail - including Access for All Trail	Mt Bakewell shared use (walk/run and mountain bike)	Paddle Trail (seasonal)
2WD Self Drive Trails - rationalisation	Trail Hub - Avon Park	Mt Bakewell mountain bike descent	York to Northam river walk (Constraints)
	Mount Bakewell private mountain bike park	Road Cycle Routes	Equestrian link -Mt Brown to Mt Bakewell base (Constraints)
	Off Road Vehicle Area - Upgrades	Touring Cycle Route	York to Bruce Rock Rail Trail (Constraints)
		Gravel Cycle Route	Walk to York (Constraints)
			Mt Observation trail network (Constraints)

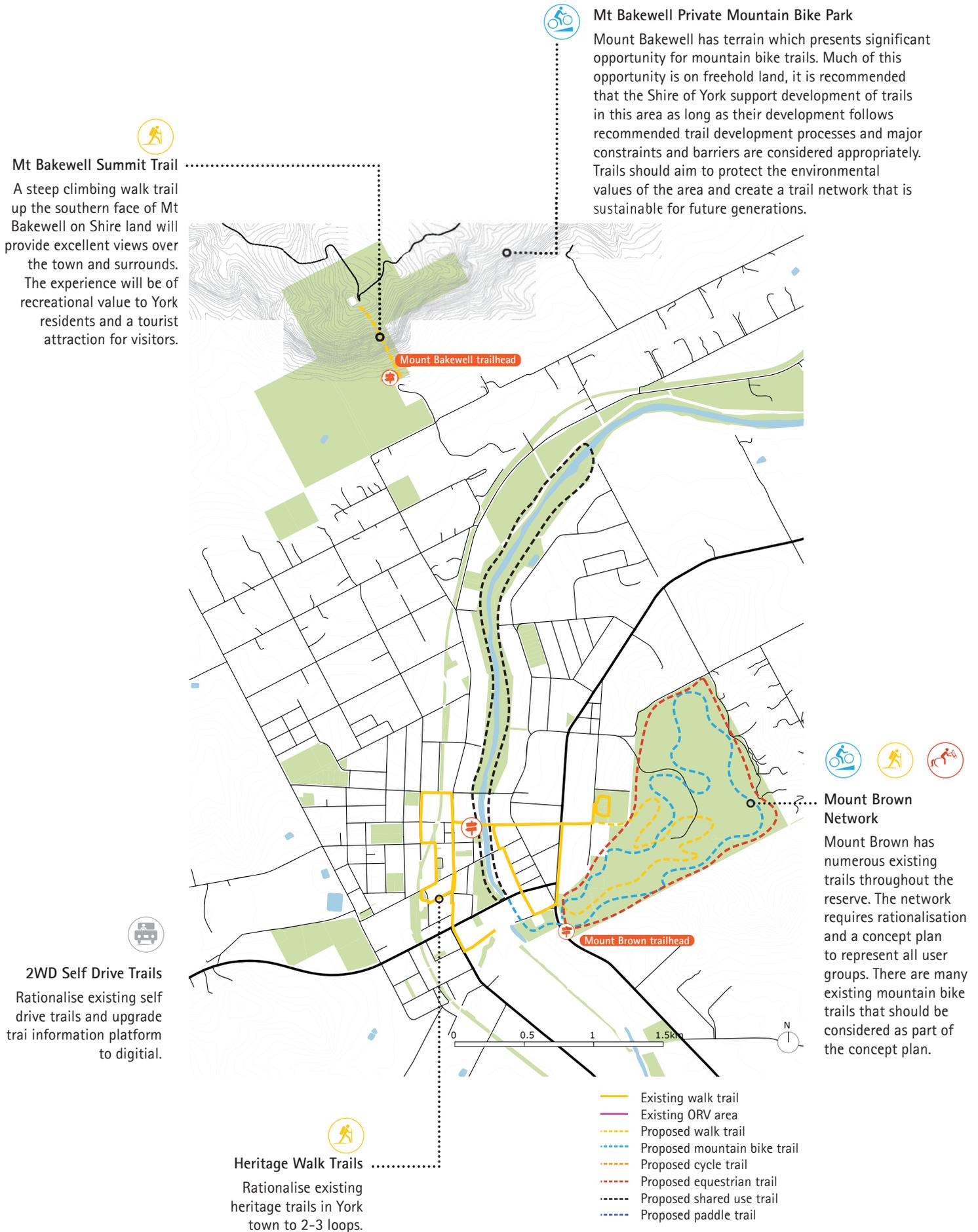
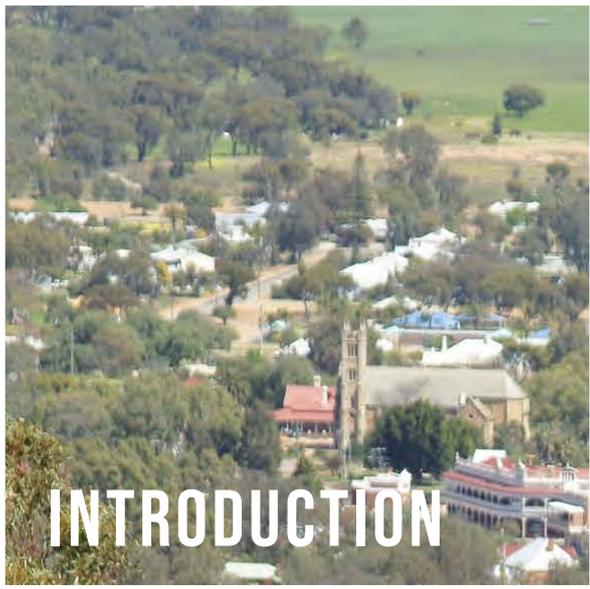


Figure 1. Short term priority trail recommendations



# INTRODUCTION

The Shire of York is situated 100km to the east of Perth and has the opportunity to offer a range of outdoor adventure activities for both local residents and visitors to the region. The unique landforms of Mount Bakewell and Mount Brown offer an opportunity to create a trail network between the two peaks, encompassing the town centre and the Avon River.

The Shire of York is ideally situated to prosper in the growth and economic benefits of trails. Being only an hour from the Perth metropolitan area, the Shire of York has an opportunity to increase tourism market share through developing and promoting trails as an additional draw card. There are many existing reasons to visit the Shire of York, including the rich history of the town, the rolling agricultural landscapes surrounding the town and many interesting events that take place in York all year round.

Recognising the potential of the Shire of York to capitalise on trails, the brief for the Shire of York Master Plan includes a review of the full breadth of trail opportunities within Shire of York, aligned with the Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2017–2021 (the Blueprint). The vision for trails in Western Australia as defined in the Blueprint is more people using Western Australia's trail network resulting in greater community, social, cultural, economic, environmental, health and wellbeing outcomes for Western Australia.

The Shire of York has commissioned the development of two previous trails master plans (2008 and 2014). Neither of these plans have been adopted, and there has subsequently been a change of Government Officers and Councillors. The current Shire of York Councillors and Officers are motivated to implement recommendations outlined in an approved trails master Plan.

The recommendations outlined in the previous plans were sensible and appropriate at time of development. In the development of this current master Plan, the previous recommendations were reviewed. If the project was still considered to be a priority, feasible and achievable, they have been included in this plan.

## ACTIVITIES

Trails considered in the Shire of York Master Plan are those outlined in the Blueprint, refer to figure 2. Note 4WD has not been considered in this plan due to constraints (see section Project Constraints on page 12). The Shire of York is not considered suitable for 4WD activities presently. Dive and Snorkel trail opportunities don't exist within the shire.



Figure 2. Activity types

## PLANNING CONTEXT

The Blueprint outlined a planning structure for trails state-wide with regional trails master plans referencing all trail types falling under state-wide activity based strategies, refer to figure 3. The Shire of York Master Plan is considered a localised trail plan.



Figure 3. State-wide trails planning structure

# PROJECT AREA



The project area encompasses the Shire of York and where appropriate considers other Shires in the Avon Valley. All publicly available land within the study area has been considered, including road reserves and Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions estate.

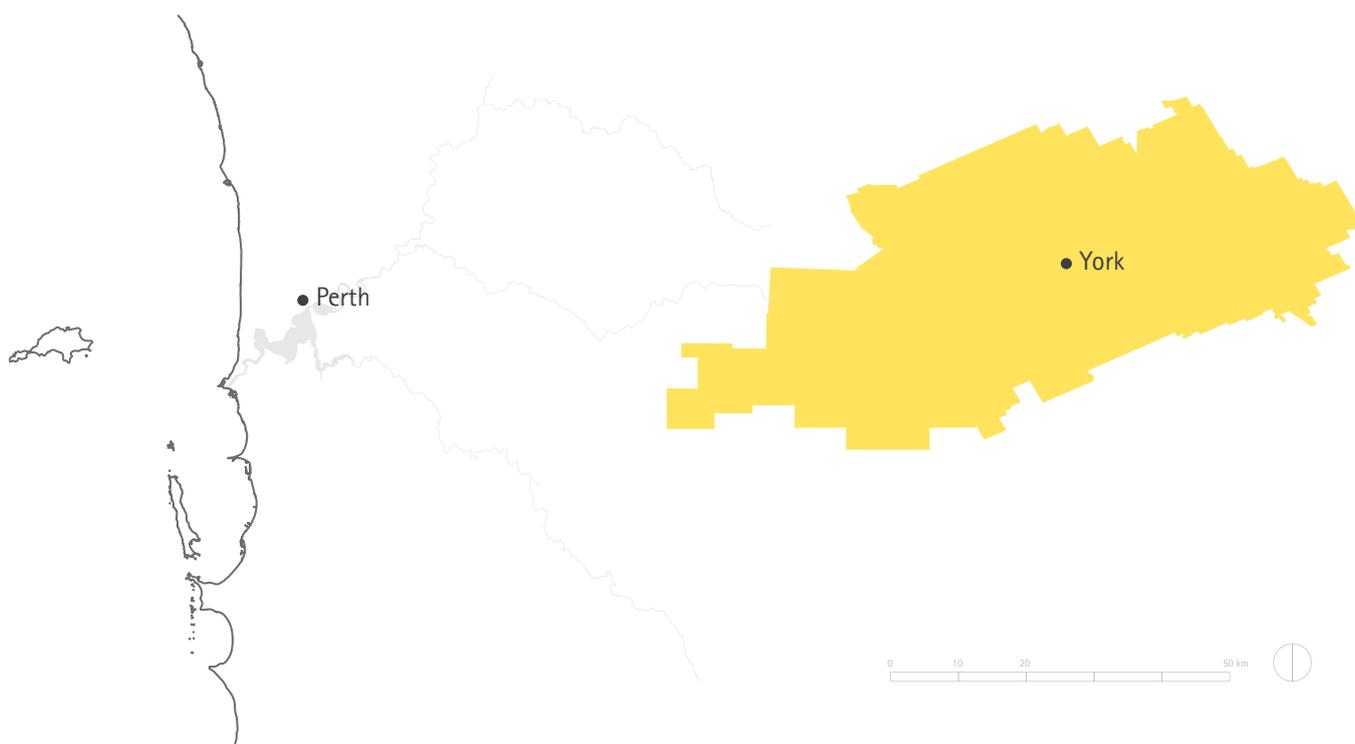


Figure 4. Project area location

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

To the west of the Shire are the forested areas of the Darling Plateau including the State forest. Primarily jarrah forest featuring banksia, grass trees and intermittent granite outcrops. Wandoo and marri dominate the lower valley slopes on the loamy soils and wildflowers are prevalent on the forest floors in springtime. (Weaving, 1994)

York townsite is built on the Avon River. Water levels in the river fluctuate annually with rainfall. The Avon River System drains 120,000 square kilometers of land mass. Seasonal flooding is not uncommon. (Weaving, 1994)

Further west the landscape is dominated by agriculture. The landscape is gently undulating with broad fields and relatively little remnant vegetation. (Weaving, 1994)

Trail based activities are inherently a nature-based activity and protection of environmental values is essential for delivering enjoyable trail experiences. By applying sustainable planning, design and construction principles, trails can protect these values, by:

- avoiding sensitive ecosystems and old growth trees
- keeping users on designated trails
- reducing fire management risk (i.e. knowing where users will be)
- applying standard trail widths, minimising the disturbance footprint and associated effects
- development provides the opportunity to rehabilitate trails that are unsustainable and impact environmentally sensitive areas
- creating stewards for the environment through facilitating a sense of community ownership of the trails
- providing recreation opportunities to improve physical and mental health
- connecting people to places
- creating economic development opportunities through tourism and visitor services
- creating passive surveillance.

Locations that are popular for trail based recreation can coincide with sites of significance for traditional owners, given they can both occur in natural, relatively undisturbed areas. There are many areas of significance within the Shire of York, including ten Registered Aboriginal Sites. (Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System, n.d.) Should detailed site planning progress for any of the locations recommended in this master Plan, traditional owners will be consulted in accordance with the relevant legislation and any requirements of the South West Native Title Settlement.

## TENURE

The areas identified within this plan as suitable for trail development are lands managed by the Shire of York.

Additionally, a private mountain biking opportunity has been identified on Mount Bakewell, which will require consultation and collaboration between land managers.

Low priority projects have been identified on Department of Biodiversity, Conservations and Attractions land. These are within Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSA) and have been documented to show that they have been considered but are currently not feasible.

The land tenure along the riparian zones of the Avon River are varied. The Shire of York should attempt to gain tenure of the riparian zones, from a conservation and a recreation perspective. One day, future generations may be able to walk or ride between Northam and York along the Avon River.

## PROJECT CONSTRAINTS

All areas with the potential for trail development were considered in the project area, with constraints being part of the assessment process. Some potential constraints to trail development include:

- Conflicting land uses and zoning, such as agriculture, public drinking water source areas and private land access
- Environmental constraints, such as disease risk areas, the presence of threatened species or ecological communities, topography and hydrography
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage registered sites and sites of known significance
- Tenure constraints, where potential trails traverse differing tenure types
- Conflicts between trail users

## AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is the dominant industry in the Shire of York with 136,100ha of agricultural land holdings (63% of the Shires land area) generating approximately \$46.2M in production value per annum. Cereal crops (particularly wheat) are the most prevalent and valuable to the economy, followed by wool production. (York, n.d.)

## DISEASE RISK AREAS (DRA)

Disease caused by Phytophthora species, a soil borne fungal pathogen, is wreaking havoc on susceptible native flora species in the southwest of WA, particularly the introduced Phytophthora cinnamomi. To contain it's spread; it is essential to follow strict hygiene protocols and avoid moving soil material between infested and uninfected areas. Disease Risk Areas (DRA) are areas of forest quarantined to try and prevent further spread of dieback. Trail based recreation activities except walking are prohibited or restricted within or adjacent to DRA's and this has been taken into account when recommending locations for development. Please note any trail development especially on DBCA estate will need to include an assessment of the extent of dieback presence on the site and implementation of appropriate planning and management protocol.

## PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SOURCE AREAS (PDWSA) AND RESERVOIR PROTECTION ZONES (RPZ)

Operational Policy 13, 2012 implements the Government's response to the 2010 parliamentary committee report on recreation within public drinking water source areas. It is aimed at ensuring recreational activity in Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSAs) is conducted in ways which maximise water quality to protect public health. It identifies that:

- Existing approved recreation (i.e. events and facilities) should be maintained at September 2012 approved levels. New or enhanced recreation (i.e. events and facilities) needs to be located outside proclaimed PDWSAs
- Individuals undertaking passive land based recreation activities (not part of organised events) in PDWSAs (such as trail based activities) are:
  - Not supported in Reservoir Protection Zones (RPZ) - public access in reservoir protection zones is prohibited except along public roads
  - Supported in PDWSA outer catchments, subject to recreation compatibility requirements noting that recreation cannot exceed 2012 approved levels and new or enhanced recreation needs to be located outside proclaimed PDWSAs.
  - Supported in the wellhead protection zones and outer catchments of groundwater source areas.

The 2018 review of Policy 13 was in consultation draft at the time of writing this master Plan. Restrictions outlined above are still in place. The Draft update does however outline that special consideration will be provided for proposals consistent with strategic – level recreation planning documents prepared by governments or within a government endorsed report. (DWER, 2018)

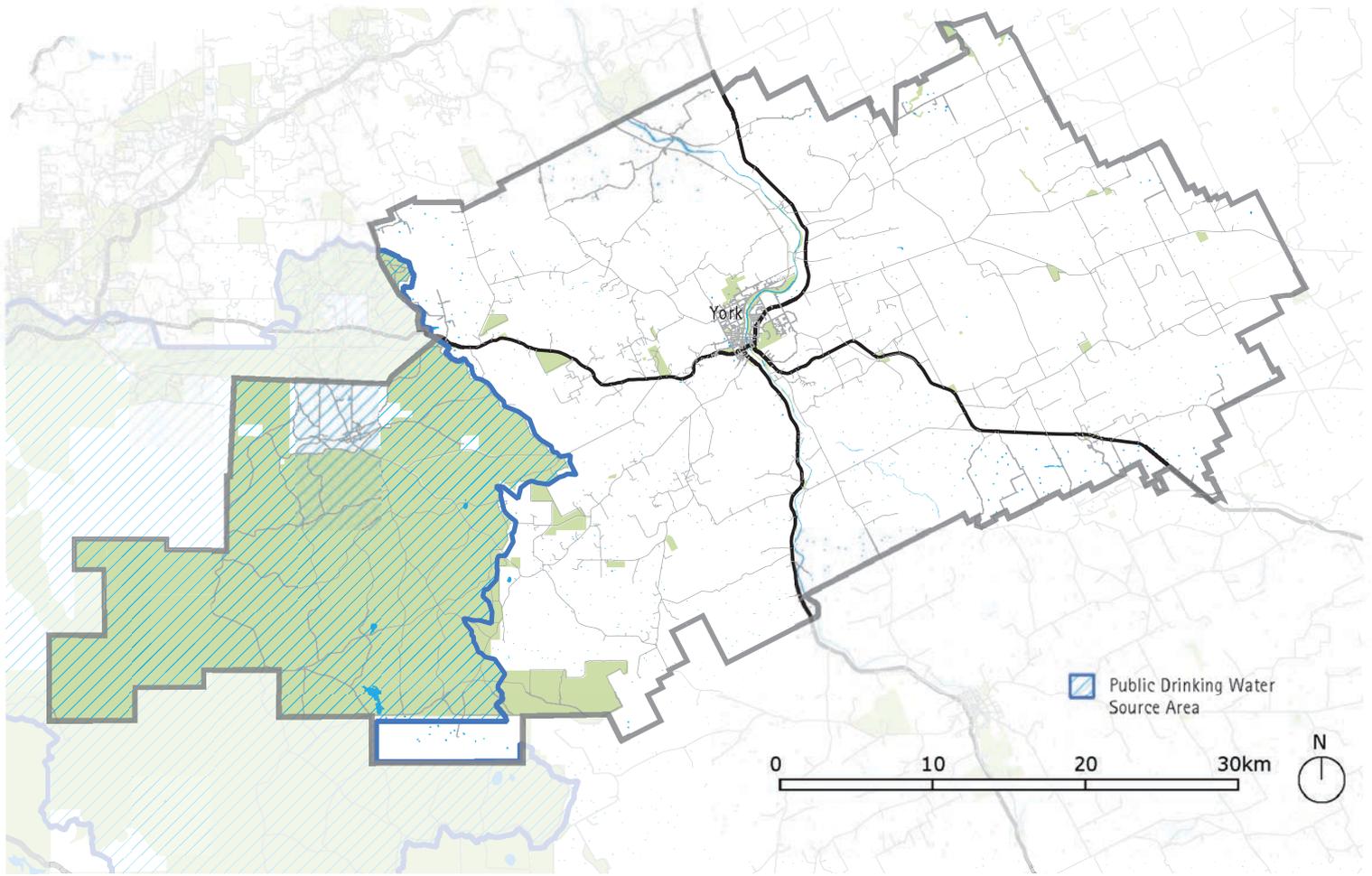


Figure 5. Project area tenure (available for public recreation) and constraints.

## UNSANCTIONED TRAILS

There are currently significant amounts of trail in the Shire of York region that are unsanctioned or informal. These comprise of fire management access tracks and informal user-created trails. These trails have not been formally planned or designed nor has their construction necessarily been in accordance with best practice. In preparation of this master Plan none of the unsanctioned trails have been formally assessed for their sustainability or suitability for use.

Whilst it can be argued that the continued construction and use of unsanctioned trails is reflective of the demand in the community, it must be acknowledged that the continued construction and use of unsanctioned trails may lead to further degradation and, in some cases, irreversible impacts on environmental and heritage values. This master Plan provides the opportunity to investigate locations for potential trail development, which would include a formal assessment of some or all unsanctioned trails within the relevant areas. The outcome of the assessment could be the closure, replacement or upgrade of unsanctioned trails as part of a high quality, sustainable trail network.

From a land managers perspective, unsanctioned trails present many issues including:

- They can have an adverse effect on the site due to lack of planning and/or poor construction or maintenance. Where unsanctioned trails breach environmental legislation, for example through damage to sensitive habitats or designated wildlife and archaeological/cultural sites, they may constitute criminal offences for which the land managers may be held liable
- They can breach planning legislation, leading to enforcement action
- They can cause disruption to routine land management practices
- They can lead to conflict between user groups
- They can pose risks to those building or using unsanctioned trails and features if they are not properly designed, constructed and maintained.

There are a few options for managing unsanctioned trails, in all instances clear, transparent and effective communication between the land manager and unsanctioned trail builder/s is required to ensure effective implementation. At one end of the scale the land manager might choose to close the trail and remove any unsafe features, at the other end there may be opportunities for trail user groups/clubs to have full responsibility for trail design, building and maintenance. Some models for management are outlined below.

**Removal of unsanctioned trails** – The land manager is entitled to remove unsanctioned trails..

**Adoption of trails by land manager** – This approach may be appropriate where the land manager is prepared to take full responsibility for the trail. This is unlikely unless the trail could be incorporated into a planned trail, and only when appropriate checks and approvals have been completed.

**Volunteering agreements** – An agreement is developed following discussion between a land manager and trail user group/club about options for volunteer maintenance of trails. The agreement needs to be clear on where responsibilities lie and trails may need to be improved to meet standards for classification.

**Agreements with formal user groups/clubs** – A land manager enters into an agreement with a formal trail user group/club that has a governance structure, training provision and insurance for trail work. The agreement could take a variety of forms depending on the aims and objectives of both parties and could include responsibilities for building trails, risk assessments, trail inspections, repair and decommissioning. The agreement should also set out points of contact and set out processes for any joint decision making.



Avon River. Image credit Common Ground Trails

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The Shire of York has a population of 3,606 (Census, 2016) across a total area of approximately 2,150 square kilometres. The Shire's population is forecast to be 4,260 in 2026, as depicted in the Western Australia Tomorrow population forecasts using the highest growth scenario. Much of this potential growth is likely to occur within the York town centre. (Department of Planning, 2016)

The Shire of York has a median age of 50 years old, with an even distribution of male and female, 48.9% and 51.1% respectively. There are 652 families, and children aged 0 - 14 years make up 17.8% of the population and people aged 65 years and over make up 27.8% of the population. (Stastics, 2016)

It is critical for young children to interact with their natural environment both to develop a positive regard for the environment and to flourish as healthy individuals. Continued participation in outdoor recreation is also important for maintaining quality of life into our later years. Recreational trails will assist Shire of York residents' young and old, to maintain quality of life.

## SHIRE OF YORK VISITATION

The Shire of York is a popular tourist destination reporting an average of 172,505 tourist visits annually. The Shire has a rich history, with history dating back thousands of years. There are nearly 100 known Noongar cultural sites in the area surrounding the Shire of York. These include caves, some of which are the homes of mythological beings, ceremonial sites, rock art, paintings and artefacts.

York was the first Western Australian inland town to be settled by Europeans in 1831, two years after Perth was settled in 1829. There is a fascinating array of Victorian and Federation architectural styles, making it a very interesting and beautiful town to visit.

There is a strong community focus, with regular events held including multiple local festivals. In springtime the Shire of York bursts into fields of yellow, as the Canola crops go into flower. There also pockets of bushland that are carpeted in wildflowers.

The Shire of York is popular with the adventure tourism market, drawn to the town by Sky Dive York, and the Off Road Vehicle Areas, both situated on the north east of town.

Although dominated by the day trip visitor, optimising the region's overnight and multi-day market is critical to increasing the economic value of tourism in the local market.

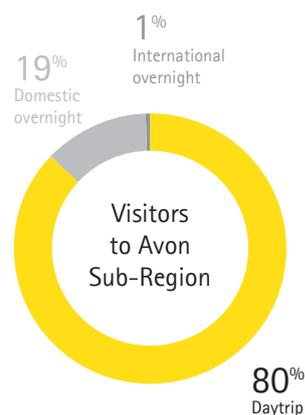


Figure 6. Breakdown of visitors to Avon Sub-Regions by type, 2006 to 2011. Source: Avon Sub-Regional Economic Strategy 2013.

Whilst a large percentage of the trail market will be day-trippers, trail visitors tend to stay longer in an area than average visitor markets, as they seek out multi trail options and off trail experiences.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) identified in their Global Report on Adventure Tourism (2013) that by nature, adventure travellers are;

- less sensitive to deficiencies in hard tourism infrastructure, such as airports and paved roads
- more sensitive to soft tourism infrastructure, such as signage, high-quality guide training and clean trails
- they tend to seek a variety of activities during their holiday, not limited to their primary reason to travel
- appreciate destinations that offer a greater diversity of active and immersive activities. (UNWTO, 2013)

Table 1. Key tourism assets and factors motivating visitors as outlined in 'York A Strategy for Tourism Development 2013).

Key Tourism Assets	Factors Motivating Visitors
Heritage	Heritage architecture Heritage building restoration Heritage urban walk trails
Entrepreneurship	Skydive York York Racecourse
Natural Surrounds	Mount Brown Reserve Mount Bakewell Mount Observation Avon Park The Avon River
Festivals	York Jazz Festival York Spring Garden Festival Festival of Motoring Timeless Treasures Antique Auction York Agricultural Show Wheels for Hope Motorcycle Festival (a 2-day event) York Easter Antiques Fair York Cup
Accommodation	Over 35 facilities including: Bed and breakfasts Guest houses Hotels Motels Country retreats Self-contained cottages Farm stays Caravan park
Dining	16 existing dining options in town, and an additional 3 in the surrounding area
Retail and Facilities	34 existing off-trail experiences including shops, galleries, sights, museums, Mount Brown reserve, the Avon River and the ORV area

## MARKET SEGMENTS AND MOTIVATORS

Trail Users come from a variety of backgrounds and are categorised according to whether trail usage was their primary motivation for travel or as an incidental activity. When assessed against key tourism markets identified by Tourism WA and Tourism Australia (refer Table 2) there are noted similarities.

There are three distinct trail user markets that include locals, 'destination trail users' and 'trail users while on holiday'. Further research is required to determine the size and potential for growth of these markets, as well as the benefits and impacts resulting from increased visitation to the Shire of York.

### LOCALS

Trails are key attractions for visitors looking for quality nature-based experiences. Equally important are the local users, many of whom have worked hard to drive the development of trails so others may enjoy them and without whose efforts many trails would not exist. The local trail user market includes trail users who reside in or near the Shire of York. There is potential for sustainable growth in participation within the local trail user markets through ensuring appropriate and sufficient trails are provided and community volunteer sporting and trail care groups are encouraged and supported.

### DESTINATION TRAIL USERS

The destination trail user market includes experienced trail users who regularly travel with the trails as a primary motivator. They have likely visited other Australian or international trails destinations. They seek high quality trail with good supporting infrastructure in scenic / natural locations. Locations that combine desirable terrain with tourist activities and infrastructure have the best market appeal for destination trail users. This group also includes event participants who travel to a destination specifically for the event, typically spending additional time pre or post event to explore the area. Destination Trail Users are more likely to be "Dedicated Discoverers" under Tourism WA's segmentation of Experience Seekers.

### TRAIL USERS WHILE ON HOLIDAYS

The trail users while on holidays market includes typically less experienced trail users, whose primary motivator for travel is not the trails. They generally comprise the leisure market and represent the largest market potential. This market view trail use as a secondary motivation for their visit and will participate in trail activities incidentally. They will likely hire equipment as required. They may place less emphasis on the trail and more on accessibility of the facility, the setting and nearby attractions and amenities. These users are usually found in 'holiday' destinations and are seeking a unique holiday experience, relating to either culture, nature, cities, comfort, leisure, cafes/restaurants etc. Locations that combine these tourist attractions with trail opportunities have the best market appeal for this market segment. York already has notable visitation due to the marvelous Heritage values of the town, and busy events calendar. Trails will enhance visitors experience and may encourage extended stays.

## MARKET SEGMENTATION COMPARISON

When assessed against the segments of the key markets identified by Tourism WA and Tourism Australia it can be seen that the two types of trail tourists share many common traits.

Table 2. Tourism market segment comparison.

IDENTIFIED TOURISM MARKET	DESTINATION TRAIL USERS	TRAIL USERS WHILE ON HOLIDAY
<b>Experience Seekers</b>		
International visitors that prefer to travel to new and different places	✓	✓
Highly predisposed to Australia's offer	✓	✓
More likely to stay longer, spend more and disperse to regional areas	✓	
Found among all age groups, income levels and geographic locations	✓	✓
And are seeking;		
Authentic personal experiences	✓	✓
Social interactions	✓	✓
Meeting and interacting with the locals	✓	✓
Experiencing something different from their normal day-to-day life	✓	✓
Understanding and learning about different lifestyles and cultures	✓	✓
Participating in the lifestyle and experiencing it, rather than observing it	✓	✓
Challenging themselves – physically, emotionally and/or mentally	✓	
Visiting authentic destinations that are not necessarily part of the tourist route	✓	✓
Exposure to unique and compelling experiences	✓	✓
<b>Dedicated discoverers</b>		
Visitors travelling primarily for learning and new experiences	✓	✓
Those who want to discover something new	✓	✓
<b>Aspirational Achievers</b>		
Visitors travelling primarily for relaxation and indulgence		✓
Those who view travel and holidays as a reward for their hard work and success in life	✓	✓

## MARKET MOTIVATORS AND NEEDS

### Diversity

A large quantity and variety of trail types and classifications located in varied terrain and topography.

### Uniqueness

Iconic, memorable and fun experiences in a unique setting. Typically in a natural landscape, with high visual and emotional value and often connected to an attraction.

### Quality

A range of high quality experiences, predominantly on purpose designed trail. Also relates to the provision of quality information, services and infrastructure.

### Accessibility

Trails located within close proximity of residences and short stay accommodation. Also relates to the provision of cohesive, well signed, mapped and promoted trails. Connectivity to other trails, transport, services and infrastructure increase accessibility from the trails. Visitor services to improve accessibility for less experienced users.

### Community

An established user group community offering market credibility, a sense of belonging and camaraderie through events, volunteer support and social engagement.

# PLANNING CONTEXT



The Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2017–2021 (the Blueprint) provides the overarching framework for consistent and coordinated planning, development and management of quality trails and trail experiences across Western Australia. Under the Blueprint sits State-wide activity based trails strategies which flow into regional

trails master plans and then localised trail master plans. The following table outlines existing strategic planning documents and strategies and master plans relating to trails which have informed the Shire of York Trails Master Plan.

Table 3. Relevant planning documents

DOCUMENT	SUMMARY
<b>Government Planning &amp; Policy</b>	
Shire of York Strategic Community Plan 2016–2026	A long-term planning document that sets out the community's vision and aspirations for the future, and the key strategies we will need to focus on to achieve our aspirations.
DRAFT Shire of York Local Planning Strategy (2019)	The Local Planning Strategy is a key priority of the Strategic Community Plan. It sets a framework for the Shire to update the local planning scheme and policies to reflect the community's aspirations and priorities.
Shire of York Access & Inclusion Plan 2018–2023	The purpose of the Plan is to identify barriers to access and propose solutions to ensure that everyone has equal access to services and facilities in the Shire of York.
York. A Strategy for Tourism Development (2013)	The strategy outlines the many strengths of the community, guides future development of the tourism sector based on these strengths, and recognises opportunities for future growth.
DRAFT Liveable Neighbourhoods (2015) Department of Planning Western Australian Planning Commission	Liveable Neighbourhoods is the Western Australian Planning Commission's operational policy for the design and assessment of structure plans and subdivision to guide the future development of Perth and Peel and the State's regional centres.
First Interim State Public Health Plan for Western Australia (2016) Department of Health	Objective 1 Empowering and enabling people to make healthy lifestyle choices. Policy Priority 1.2 A more active WA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote environments that support physical activity and reduced sedentary behaviour</li> <li>▪ Reduce barriers and increase opportunities for physical activity across all populations</li> <li>▪ Increase understanding of the benefits of physical activity and encourage increased activity at all stages of life</li> <li>▪ Motivate lifestyle changes to reduce sedentary behaviour</li> </ul> Policy Priority 1.3 Curbing the rise in overweight and obesity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote environments that support people to achieve and maintain a healthy weight</li> </ul>
Operational Policy 13: recreation within public drinking water source areas on Crown land DRAFT update for public comment (2018) Department of Water and Environment Regulation	The intent of this policy is to protect drinking water quality and public health by managing recreation in public drinking water source areas on Crown land.
<b>Trail Planning and development</b>	
Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2017–2021	Provides background on growth and trends in trails; Summarises current situation in WA, supply, demand; Identifies issues for trail development in WA. Provides guiding principles, strategic directions and actions for consideration across the state. Is a guide for consistent and coordinated planning, development and management of quality trails and trail experiences across WA.
Western Australian Mountain Bike Strategy 2015 – 2020	Identifies priority areas for development of mountain bike trails, racing, events, participation and tourism.
Western Australian Mountain Bike Management Guidelines (Draft), Parks and Wildlife, 2016	Provides guidelines for development and management of all mountain bike trails in WA. Aspiration to be adopted by all land managers.
Western Australia Hiking Strategy (in preparation) 2019	Proposes opportunities and benefits of bushwalking and trail running for Western Australia. Addresses existing challenges and provides guidance and structure for decision makers, land managers, trail planners and the community. Advises on infrastructure and facilities, trail classifications, Code of Conduct, Management and Governance
Taking the Reins, The Western Australian Recreational Horse Trail Strategy 2015	Proposes opportunities and benefits of horse trail riding for Western Australia. Addresses existing challenges and provides guidance and structure for decision makers, land managers, trails planners and the community. Advises on infrastructure and facilities, trail classifications, Code of Conduct, Management and Governance
Back on Track, WA State Trail Bike Strategy 2008	Proposes opportunities and benefits of trail bike riding for Western Australia. Addresses existing challenges and provides guidance and structure for decision makers, land managers, trails planners and the community. Advises on infrastructure and facilities, trail classifications, Code of Conduct, Management and Governance



# METHODOLOGY AND CONSULTATION

## METHODOLOGY

In order to develop a Trails Master Plan for the Shire of York the following methodology was employed:

### PROJECT DEFINITION

In consultation with the Project Management Group, the projects underlying philosophy goals and aspirations were identified. Relevant facilities both national and state were benchmarked for their characteristics and relevant literature was reviewed, including a status review of actions listed in the 2008 and 2014 Trails Master Plans.

### STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Meetings and workshops were conducted with key stakeholders and trail user groups. A trail use survey was conducted including an online survey and an interactive map allowing respondents to place pins on specific locations and detail existing issues and potential trail opportunities.

### TRAILS AUDIT AND DETAILED GAP ANALYSIS

On the ground audits of existing trails and potential locations for new trails were conducted. These audits also included a brief assessment of all associated infrastructure. An analysis of the trail demand in comparison to the current supply of trails and trail types in each location was also conducted.

### CONSTRAINT DEFINITION AND OPPORTUNITY PLANNING

The Shires opportunities and constraints including potential facilities, existing trails and social, cultural, environmental and physical constraints, were identified and reviewed.

### PRELIMINARY FINDINGS REVIEW AND VISION DEVELOPMENT

The preparation and presentation of preliminary findings identifying constraints, opportunities and proposed priorities was presented as a Vision document to the project management group and was published for public feedback.

### REVIEW AND HANDOVER

Draft documentation, Vision review and final documentation and distribution of Shire of York Trails Master Plan

## CONSULTATION

Consultation undertaken as part of development of the Shire of York Trails Master Plan was an inclusive and valuable process which has informed project outcomes. Stakeholder and community input assisted in developing a long term vision for trails in the Shire and contributed to a better understanding of the following issues:

- Existing trails and extent of use
- Local constraints and aspirations
- Potential locations suitable for trail development
- Opportunities for ongoing management
- Overall consultation highlighted the increasing demand for high quality trail experiences.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT GROUP

A Project management Group (PMG) was established to determine the overall priorities for the project and provide guidance throughout the development of the Master Plan. The group included representatives from the Shire of York, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural and Common Ground Trails.

## STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The purpose of stakeholder consultation was to inform the relevant parties of the Master Plan process and objectives, seek information on local and regional opportunities and constraints, review priority locations and identify potential governance structures.

The following organisations and groups were invited to provide input into the Master Plan:

- Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions – Parks and Wildlife (DBCA)
- Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC)
- Shire of York
- DLGSC Wheatbelt
- Avon Valley Track & Trails Group
- Recreational Trailbike Riders Association of WA Inc
- Western Trails Alliance
- Shire of Quairading
- York Pony Club
- Avon Branch of the Wildflower Society of WA
- Avon Valley Environmental Society Inc
- River Conservation Society Inc
- York Avon Valley Tourism –
- Chair of York Business Association
- Adult Riding Clubs Association of WA
- Alzheimer's WA
- Avon Valley Therapeutic Equestrian Centre
- Balkuling Horse and Pony Club
- Bicycling Western Australia
- CWA
- Cycling Without Age
- Donkey Society of WA Inc
- Friends of Bibbulmun Track
- Greenhills Progress Association
- Retirees WA
- River Conservation Society
- RSL York Subbranch
- Senses
- St. John Ambulance York Subcentre
- Talbot Brook Community Group
- The York Society
- Tipperary Miniature Donkey Stud
- Trails WA
- WA Endurance Riders Association (WAERA) Inc
- WA Horse Council
- WA Mountain Biking Association
- Wheatbelt Women's Health Hub
- York Community Resource Centre
- York Garden Club
- York Men's Shed Inc.
- York Pony Club
- York Probus Club
- York Seniors Mobility group
- York Visitors Centre
- York Weight Watchers
- York YouthCare council
- Swimming Club
- Netball Club
- Hockey Club
- Off road riding club

## USER GROUP CONSULTATION

The following groups attended workshops:

- Avon Valley Tracks and Trails
- Representatives from the local Ballardong community
- River Conservation Society
- Recreational Trailbike Riders Association of WA Inc
- The Shire of York
- Perth Trail Series participants
- York Hand Gliding
- Ultra Series WA
- Walk to York – David Hovell
- Western Trails Alliance

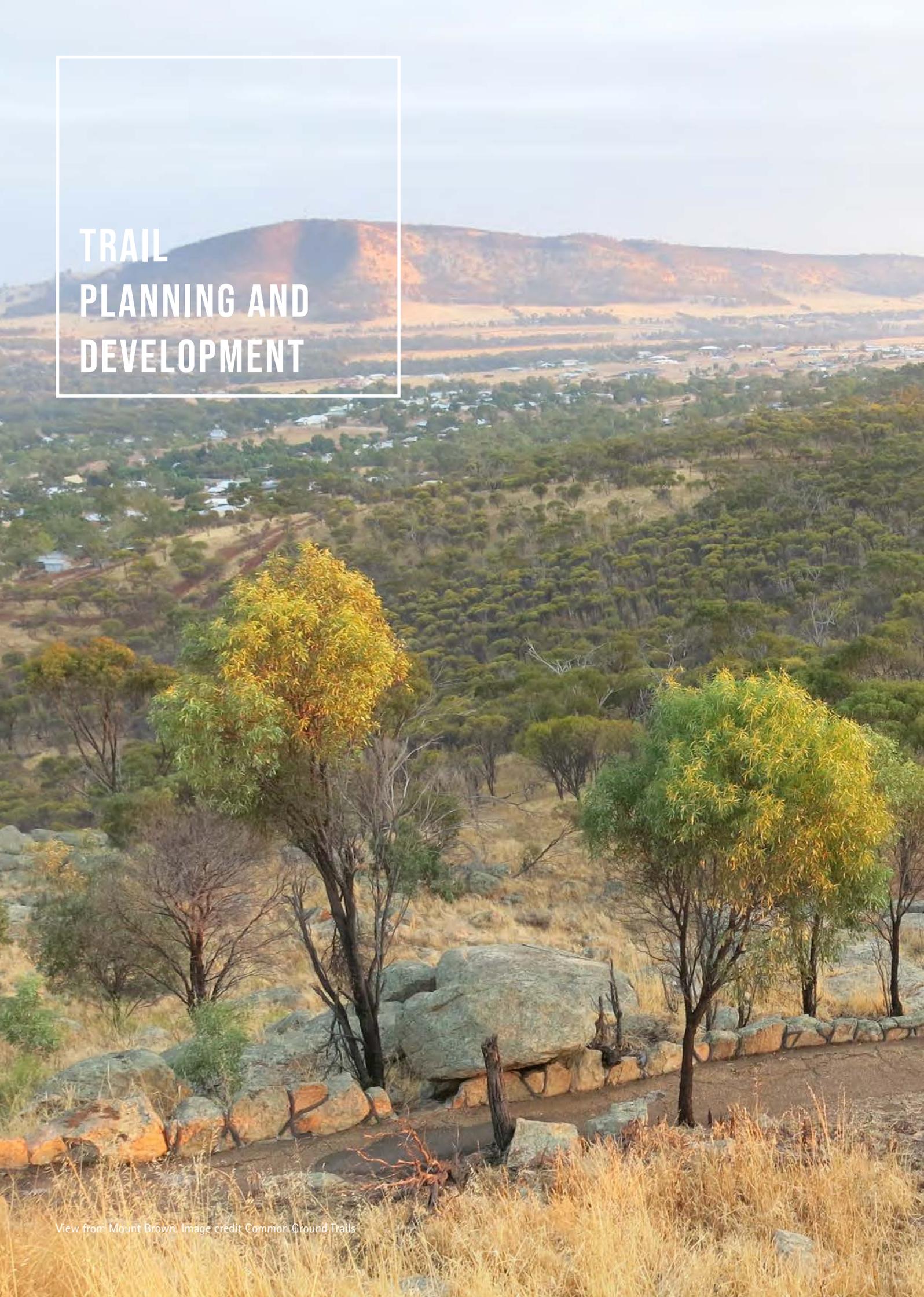
User group consultation identified gaps in the supply of trails, trail opportunities, club capacity to assist in the trail development process and current issues relating to trails.

An online trail user survey was distributed to the wider community as part of the information gathering process. This Survey was distributed through the user group networks, Local Government networks and social media. The comment period was three weeks and a total of 334 responses were received.

The survey proved a useful tool in providing an insight into trail use patterns and preferences for trails and development locations. It also identified where respondents recreate, how often and in some cases barriers to participation.

Key User group consultation outcomes:

- There is high existing demand for trails in the Shire of York
- There is a lack of variety of trail type and classification
- There is a keen interest from residents and visitors for trail experiences and supporting facilities in the Shire of York



# TRAIL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Successful and sustainable trails require strategic location planning, which involves understanding trail types, users and classifications, these are outlined in the following pages.

A number of strategies are employed to ensure the appropriate trail models and trail types are developed in the appropriate locations. Factors for consideration include location significance, spatial distribution, event requirements and trail model detail.

Regional master planning has not been undertaken in the Wheatbelt, but investigations identified that York is likely a regionally significant trail town with regionally significant opportunities for walk, mountain bike and equestrian.

Whilst the Off-Road Vehicle facility is only significant locally in scale, it plays a much more important role due to the lack of provision of Off-Road facilities close to the Perth metropolitan area.

## TRAIL HIERARCHY

A number of strategies are employed to ensure the appropriate trail models and trail types are developed in the appropriate locations. Factors for consideration include location significance, spatial distribution, event requirements and trail model detail. Table 4 below provides an overview of the significance hierarchy for trails.

Table 4. Significance Hierarchy

NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
A trail facility for a large population centre and/or a tourism resource that caters for at least a week of unique trail based opportunities	A trail facility for a small population centre or large community and/or a tourism resource that caters for short breaks or weekend trips	A trail facility for a small community and/or a tourism resource that caters for day trips

### LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE

Location significance defines the scale, reach and connectedness for trail development in a given location. It also identifies the supporting services and infrastructure that is required to meet the significance rating. The location significance indicates a population centre or area's opportunity, including the desired recreation and tourism outcomes.

Priority locations for trail development in the project area have been categorised as being nationally, regionally or locally significant. All locations, when being developed, should be consistent with the relevant development procedures and standards (refer to page 38 Trail Development).

Locally significant locations cater for community based trail use with tourism demand limited to day visits. Facilities are developed within a 10-15km zone from population centres unless servicing existing recreation and camp sites, or significant population centres where alternate opportunities do not exist. Locally significant locations can develop around the trail town and trail centre models, but can also be stand-alone individual and networked trail systems. They contain limited services and infrastructure but may host events if suitable. Locations of local significance may develop limited trail types and classifications and can expect demand from surrounding regional and national locations.

Regionally significant locations cater for small population centres or large communities and/or tourism resources that cater for short breaks or weekend trips. Facilities should be developed within a 15-20km zone, and be focused around a primary trail centre or trail town model. They provide a minimum level of services and infrastructure and can host national and regional events. Locations of regional significance should encompass broad trail types and classifications. Regional locations will see demand for trails from surrounding nationally significant locations.

Nationally significant locations capture the tourism market for at least a week of unique trail experiences and can provide a large recreation resource for a major population centre. They are developed to cater for international, interstate and intrastate tourism as a priority and facilities fall within a 20-25km zone, or 30 minutes driving. Trail development is focused around a primary trail town model and can include trail centres, networks or individual trails. Locations of national significance should develop all trail types and classifications where appropriate. These locations will experience very high demand and should provide a high level of services and infrastructure for trail users and also have the ability to cater for major international and/or national events.

## TRAIL MODELS

Recognising that trail opportunities for local communities and visitors are enhanced by the development of clusters of linked trails in different localities/ environments this master Plan looks at identifying the features that make successful trails, networks and trail towns as defined in the Blueprint (DSR+, 2017).

A trail model defines the extent of development for a trail facility. Depending on a number of factors, the scale of trail model can vary significantly from individual trails up to trail centres and trail towns. The type of trail model should be appropriate to the significance rating of the trail facility and where possible, allow for opportunities to generate revenue that can sustain the development. Refer Table 5 for a summary of trail models relating to significance level.

Development of a trail facility based on a trail model does not preclude other types of trails from being developed within or nearby the location. The potential integration and conflict management associated with user groups in the area would be managed through further stages of planning.

### INDIVIDUAL TRAILS

Trails come in a variety of types and configurations and are defined by their model, system, use, direction and classification. They can accommodate a range of user types.

Individual linear or looped trails are generally not considered as a development model for a destination. Long distance trails can link individual trails and can also be the precursor to developing a destination. Small individual trails typically form part of a trail town, centre or network model.

#### Short Linear Trails

These are linear, marked routes which can be completed in under a day and are of varying lengths. They are generally marked in two directions as they need to be used as a return journey. Short linear trails are often associated with key visitor attractions such as summits, vistas, headlands and beaches, and may include campgrounds or huts.

#### Long Distance Linear Trails

Long distance trails often connect towns or locations. These are long multi-day routes which start and finish in different locations and may be broken up into smaller sections. They can be iconic tourism products however the market for end to end use is relatively limited and often specialised.

#### Loop Trails

Generally, the same attributes as linear trails except they start and finish in the same location.

### TRAIL NETWORK

A trail network is a single site with multiple signed and mapped trails of varying type and classification, with no visitor centre and limited user facilities. A trail network may be standalone within a population centre or individual location, or form part of a trail centre or trail town. If not part of a trail town, trail networks are often located away from population centres, or in a location that does not provide essential visitor services.

Trail networks suit locations where demand does not exist for significant development and there is no supporting population centre. They also suit locations close to residential population centres as passive recreation facilities for community use.

With careful planning, trail networks can be designed to accommodate staged development with a view to becoming a trail centre as demand increases.

### TRAIL CENTRE

A trail centre is a single site with dedicated visitor services and trail facilities, provided by a single trail provider. It includes multiple signed and mapped trails of varying type and classification. A trail centre can be part of a trail town and incorporates a trail network. They are typically located close to major population centres or iconic locations.

### TRAIL TOWN

A trail town is a population centre or popular recreation destination that offers a wide range of high quality trails as well as related services, facilities, businesses, strong branding and supportive governance. They can incorporate trail centres and typically have multiple trail networks. A trail town may consist of multiple sites, hosting several signed and mapped trails of varying type and classification.

Trail facilities such as car parking and visitor services are available within the vicinity, typically provided by independent businesses. In order to appeal to the market majority, it is important trail towns are user friendly and have high quality directional signage and maps.

Trail towns benefit from having a single central information and service centre to promote and provide access to trails. Although different, these can act similarly to a trail centre. Trail towns should have at least one cohesive trail network offering multiple classifications and trail types within a single uninterrupted area (for example, with no major road crossings).

To be classed as a Trail Town a location/town needs to be assessed and accredited as per the Blueprint.

### TRAIL PRECINCT

A precinct may be designated where there are a number of major opportunities within close proximity to each other and a major population centre. Models can be linked strategically through physical infrastructure or promotion and marketing to create a large and diverse trail destination.

Due to its scale, a precinct has the capacity to serve a variety of different trail user types through the provision of user-infrastructure at individual sites.

Table 5. Trail models, significance, scope and extent

	INDIVIDUAL TRAILS	TRAIL NETWORK	TRAIL CENTRE	TRAIL TOWN	TRAIL PRECINCT
National Significance	Only if part of trail town	Only if part of trail town	✓	✓	✓
Regional Significance	Only if part of trail town	✓	✓	✓	✗
Local Significance	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Population centre based user services & facilities	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Site-based user services & facilities	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Associated infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multiple trail models	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Multiple trails	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Single trail	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓

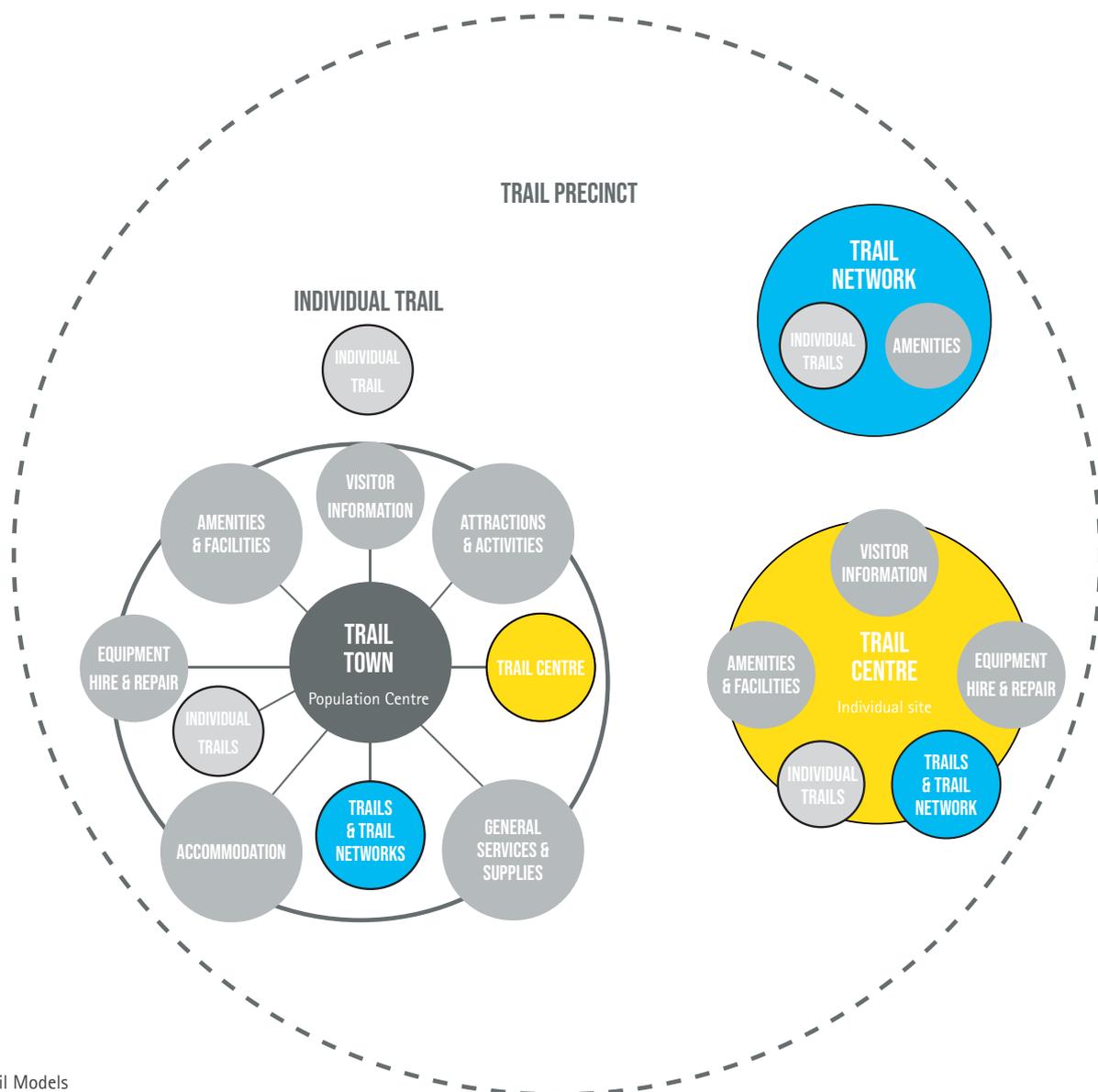


Figure 7. Trail Models

## TRAIL TYPES

Trails are pathways or routes that are used for recreation, tourism and appreciation of natural and cultural values. Trails are developed both as local community infrastructure and as a visitor experience (DLGSC, 2017). Trails considered in this master Plan are those outlined in the Blueprint, note dive/snorke and 4WD trails have not been considered:



Bushwalking/  
urban walk/  
trail running



Mountain Biking



Cycling



Equestrian



Paddle



Trailbike



2WD

The following pages contain trail type summaries outlining defined user types and trail classification within each trail type and providing an overview of location significance criteria. Table 6 below outlines the key requirements for each location significance rating.

Table 6. Location Requirements

KEY REQUIREMENTS	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
<b>GENERAL</b>			
Tourism market	●	●	○
Recreation resource	●	●	●
Accommodation	●	●	○
Cafe	●	●	○
Visitor Services	●	●	○
Visitor information	●	●	●
Car Parking	●	●	●
Toilets	●	●	●
Showers	●	●	○
Trail Signage	●	●	●
Trail Mapping	●	●	●
Event Infrastructure	●	●	○
<b>MOUNTIAN BIKE/CYCLE</b>			
Bike sales/repair	●	●	○
Bike hire	●	●	○
<b>EQUESTRIAN</b>			
Float parking	●	●	●
Adequate space at trail head to saddle up	●	●	●
Horse agistment	●	●	○
Waste management	●	●	○
<b>PADDLE</b>			
Canoe/kayak launch structure	●	●	●
Canoe/Kayak hire	●	●	○
<b>Trailbike/4WD</b>			
Access to fuel supply	●	●	○

- Critical
- Preferable
- Non-essential

## BUSHWALKING / URBAN WALK / TRAIL RUNNING

### USER TYPES

Bushwalking and Trail Running user types fall on a spectrum from recreational to enthusiast (DLGSC, 2019). Recreational walker and runners typically use the trails close to home whereas enthusiasts are willing to travel to experience specific trails.



### TRAIL CLASSIFICATION

Walk trail classification follows the Australian Walking Track Grading System (Parks Victoria, 2010) and is implemented as a voluntary standard.

- Grade 1 - No bush walking experience required. Flat even surface with no steps or steep sections. Suitable for wheelchair users who have someone to assist them. Walks no greater than 5km.
- Grade 2 - No bush walking experience required. The track is a hardened or compacted surface and may have a gentle hill section or sections and occasional steps. Walks no greater than
- Grade 3 - Suitable for most ages and fitness levels. Some bush walking experience recommended. Tracks may have short steep hill sections a rough surface and many steps. Walks up to 20km.
- Grade 4 - Bush walking experience recommended. Tracks may be long, rough and very steep. Directional signage may be limited.
- Grade 5 - Very experienced bush walkers with specialised skills, including navigation and emergency first aid. Tracks are likely to be very rough, very steep and unmarked. Walks may be more than 20km

### LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CRITERIA	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Experience/natural attraction	Close proximity to major population centre and/or high scenic quality	Moderate to high Scenic quality	Low to high scenic quality
Spectrum of opportunity	Short walks, day walks and multi day walks or multiple day walks, a minimum of 40km of trail.	Short walks and day walks, up to 40km of trail	Short walks and day walks, up to 10km of trail
Proportion of quality single track	> 70%	> 50%	> 80%
Location	< 180 km from airport/major transport links	< 40km from 15,000 population	Selected areas
Road Access	< 20k from major HWYs	< 10km from HWY and primary roads	Must have clear public access
Exclusion zones	> 90km from another national scale centre	> 45km from another national or regional scale centre	
Other	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	
Trail Classification Range	Mixture of trail classifications. Grade 1 and 2 required as a minimum	Mixture of trail classifications. Grade 1 and 2 required as a minimum	Grade 1- 5

## MOUNTAIN BIKING

### USER TYPES



Mountain Bikers are typically divided into five user types based on trail requirements and expectations (Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, 2015).

TYPE	REASON FOR MTB TRAVEL	TRAVEL NEEDS AND MOTIVATORS	RECREATION NEEDS AND MOTIVATORS	TRAIL STYLE	CLASSIFICATIONS SOUGHT	MARKET POTENTIAL
Leisure	Secondary	Accessibility & uniqueness	Accessibility and quality	Touring & Cross Country	White to Green	Large
Enthusiast	Primary	Diversity and quality	Accessibility and quality	Cross Country, All Mountain & Park	Green to Blue	Moderate
Sport	Primary	Community and diversity	Diversity	Cross Country & All Mountain	Green to Double Black	Small but influential
Independent	Secondary	Uniqueness and diversity	Diversity	Touring Cross Country & All Mountain	White to Blue	Small
Gravity	Primary	Community and quality	Accessibility	Free Ride, Down Hill & Park	Blue to double black	Small

### TRAIL CLASSIFICATION

Mountain biking trail classifications are guided by the Western Australian Mountain Bike Guidelines. Trails are rated from easiest through to extremely difficult.

- Easiest (White Circle)- Likely to be a fire road or wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and free of obstacles.
- Easy (Green Circle) - Likely to be a combination of fire road or wide single track with a gentle gradient, smooth surface and relatively free of unavoidable obstacles.
- Moderate (Blue Square) - Likely to be a single trail with moderate gradients, variable surface and obstacles.
- Difficult (Black Diamond) - Likely to be a challenging single trail with steep gradients, variable surface and many obstacles.
- Extreme (Double Black Diamond) - Extremely difficult trails will incorporate very steep gradients, highly variable surface and unavoidable, severe obstacles.

### LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CRITERIA	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Length of trails	> 80km	20km-80km	Up to 20km
Number of loops	4+	2+	2+
Proportion of single track	> 50%	> 50%	>80%
Minimum area of site	> 1500ha	> 500ha	>250ha
Location	< 180 km from airport/major transport links	< 40km from 15,000 population	Selected areas
Road Access	< 20k from major HWYs	< 10km from HWY and primary roads	Must have clear public access
Exclusion zones	> 90km from another national scale centre	> 45km from another national or regional scale centre	
Other	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	
Trail Classification Range	Mixture of trail classifications. Green and Blue required as minimum.	Mixture of trail classifications. Green and Blue required as minimum.	Green Circle – double black diamond

## CYCLE

### USER TYPE

The peak body for cycling in WA Westcycle defines the following user types.

- Commuting
- Road
- Track
- Mountain bike
- Cyclocross
- BMX
- Touring
- Race

This strategy considers road, cyclocross (gravel) and touring under the trail type cycling.

### TRAIL CLASSIFICATION

There is no standard for classification of cycle trails considered under cycling trails in this master Plan.

### LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CRITERIA	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Spectrum of opportunity	Range of defined routes	Range of defined routes	Range of defined routes, focus on local connections
Location	< 180 km from airport/major transport links	< 40km from 15,000 population	Selected areas
Road Access	< 20k from major HWYs	< 10km from HWY and primary roads	Must have clear public access
Exclusion zones	> 90km from another national scale centre	> 45km from another national or regional scale centre	
Other	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	



## EQUESTRIAN

### USER TYPE

Horse riders can be divided into four user types based on distance and recreation or event based riding (ATHRA, 2015).



TYPE	STYLE
Horse Trail Riding	Riding outside of enclosed areas for pleasure, challenge, experience and educational outcomes
Endurance Riding	A more active and intense form of recreational or competitive horse riding. Typically involves riding in organised events generally on loop trails with distances of approximately 80km
Horse Trekking	Long distance point to point riding involving either the use of pack horses or support vehicles to carry overnight camping equipment and supplies, or base camp style which involves self catering and overnight camping.
Harness Driving	Hitching the horse to a 2 or 4 wheel vehicle and driving on the trails.

### TRAIL CLASSIFICATION

Classification of Horse Trails in WA is based on the National ATHRA model which includes

- Easy (Class 1) Green
- Moderate (Class 2) Blue
- Advanced (Class 3) Black

### LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CRITERIA	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Experience / natural attraction	Close proximity to major population centre and/or high scenic quality.	Moderate to high Scenic quality	Low to high scenic quality
Spectrum of Opportunity	Short rides, day rides and multi day rides or multiple day rides, a minimum of 80km of trail.	Short rides and day rides, up to 80km of trail	Short rides and day rides, up to 20km of trail
Location	< 180 km from major transport links	< 40km from 15,000 population	Selected areas
Road Access	< 20k from major HWYs	< 10km from HWY and primary roads	Must have clear public access
Exclusion zones	> 90km from another national scale centre	> 45km from another national or regional scale centre	
Other	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	
Trail Classification Range	Mixture of trail classifications, easy and moderate required as a minimum	Mixture of trail classifications.	Easy - Advanced

## PADDLE

### USER TYPE

There is no State Strategy for paddling currently and as such user types are not defined. For the purpose of this Common Ground planning documentation user types are defined as leisure paddler, recreation paddler and sport paddler. Craft considered include all non-motorised watercraft.



### TRAIL CLASSIFICATION

An International River Guiding System exists to categorise white water trail experiences.

- Grade I: Easy Rivers that are flat with slow moving water and the occasional small or simple rapid.
- Grade II: Novice Rivers that frequently have rapids which are moderately sized with small and simple waves and eddies.
- Grade III: Intermediate For a rafter with some training and proficiency, these rivers are easily navigated.
- Grade IV: Advanced These rivers are considered to be very challenging, with long stretches of rapids with irregular waves.
- Grade V: Expert These rivers have all the same issues as grade IV does, however it is going to be more extreme.
- Grade VI: Unraftable.

### LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CRITERIA	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Experience/natural attraction	Close proximity to major population centre and/or high scenic quality	Moderate - high scenic quality	Low - High scenic quality
Spectrum of opportunity	Short trips, day trips and multi day trip options	Short trips and day trips	Short trips and day trips
Location	< 180 km from airport/major transport links	< 40km from 15,000 population	Selected areas
Road Access	< 20k from major HWYs	< 10km from HWY and primary roads	Must have clear public access
Exclusion zones	> 90km from another national scale centre	> 45km from another national or regional scale centre	
Other	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	
Trail Classification Range	Mixture of trail classifications.	Mixture of trail classifications.	Mixture of trail classifications.

## TRAILBIKE

### USER TYPE

Recreational Trail Bike riders can be divided into user types based on riding style and rider objectives (Trail Bike Management Australia, 2007)

TYPE	STYLE
Destination riding/Touring	A destination ride is a ride to somewhere and back again, ranging from a couple of kilometres of single loop up to many hundreds of kilometres covered over several days.
Cross Country	Informal riding in wide open spaces
Family Trails	Similar style and character to a destination ride, but with allowance made for restricted capabilities of smaller bikes and younger riders.
Freestyle	An extension of Cross country riding with inclusion of features such as obstacle and jumps providing added challenge for riders.
Circuit Riding	Moto-cross style circuits, in a relatively confined space containing berms, jumps catering to differing levels of technical ability.
Competitive Events	Organised events



The table below outlines the type of trailbike registration available in WA and where each level of registration allows riders to ride. This strategy has only considered ORV areas and public roads and trails.

PRIVATE PROPERTY/ CLUB TRACK	ORV AREA	EVENTS	PUBLIC ROADS AND TRAILS
Driver's license not required		Driver's license required	
No registration			
Off road registration			
Class B Conditional registration			
Class A full road registration			

For the purpose of this master Plan circuit riding within ORV areas is the only user type that is discussed. This is due to constraints within the Shire of York for other user types presently.

### TRAIL CLASSIFICATION

There are currently no defined trail classifications for trail bike trails.

### LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CRITERIA	NATIONAL	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Length of trails	> 100km	40km-150km	Up to 20km
Number of loops	4+	2+	2+
Proportion of single track	> 50%	> 50%	>80%
Minimum area of site	> 3000ha	> 1000ha	>250ha
Location	< 180 km from airport/major transport links	< 40km from 15,000 population	Selected areas
Road Access	< 20km from major HWYs	< 10km from HWY and primary roads	Must have clear public access
Exclusion zones	> 90km from another national scale centre	> 45km from another national or regional scale centre	
Other	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	Must be within 1km of a national or state road	

## 2WD

2WD trails that traverse the Shire of York are typically aimed at the tourist market and being on sealed roads don't have a classification. The typical structure of these trails is based on paper maps available from the visitor centre, or downloadable on the Shire Website. The maps identify numerous routes through the Shire with points of interest.





View from Mount Brown. Image credit Common Ground Trails

## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Ensuring sustainable trails both from a management and trail experience perspective requires a thorough development process. As outlined in the DRAFT DLGSC Trail Development Series, working within a standardised methodology is especially important in high conservation areas and building rigor into the development process ensures high quality outcomes on the ground. (DLGSC, 2019)

Following adoption of the Shire of York Trails Master Plan the trail development process involves 8 stages and involves a constant evaluation, review and improvement process as trails are extended or revised. Table 7 provides a summary of the trail development process.

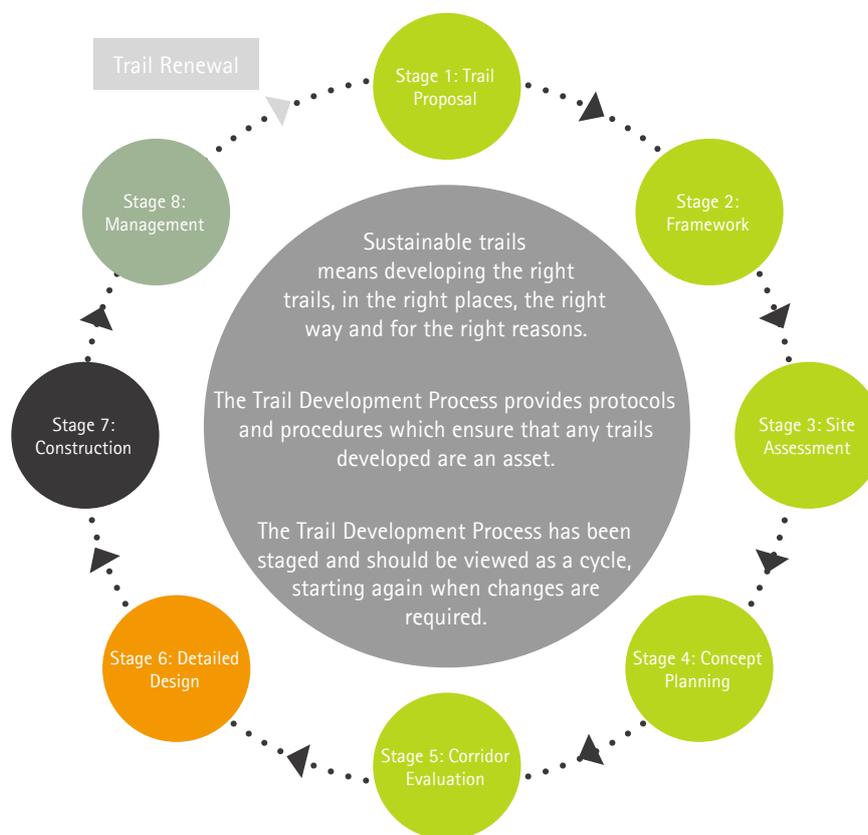


Figure 8. Trail development process. Source: WA Mountain Bike Management Guidelines.

## DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS

The needs and drivers of the various markets are different and need to be considered when developing a location.

Trails can be both a primary motivator for travel and an activity undertaken whilst a traveler is visiting an area for another primary purpose. It can also be an activity undertaken by residents of a community surrounding trail facilities.

Apart from primary motivators, development drivers for a location or site will make it attractive to visitors. When assessing the locations in the Shire of York, the development drivers were considered, as outlined in Table 7.

Table 7. Potential Drivers for trail development

DEVELOPMENT DRIVER	DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located within proximity to or with good access from major population centres</li> <li>Diversity of trail experiences</li> </ul>
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Event-specific infrastructure designed to cater for racing particular to specific styles and formats to industry standards</li> <li>Emphasis on quality of trails and facilities</li> </ul>
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located within proximity to other tourism experiences, accommodation and visitor services</li> <li>Align to unique landscape and biodiversity experiences</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located within proximity to or with good access from major population centres</li> <li>Existing community involvement</li> <li>Ensure good engagement and involvement of community based trail bodies</li> <li>Emphasis on quality of trails and facilities</li> </ul>

## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT MODELS

There are numerous case studies from around Australia and the world that demonstrate public and private investment in trails and associated facilities provides significant, sustainable benefits to local communities, and local and regional economies (Angus and Associates, 2013; Zovko, 2013). These benefits include local community engagement and enjoyment, increased participation in recreational activity, the ability to attract a dedicated trails market, business and sponsorship opportunities and economic benefits for the local areas as well as the broader regional and State economies.

Investment returns are indicated by:

- The successful, long term diversification of local economies via expansion in the tourism sector
- Measurable increases in visitation through trail counts, overnight stays and visitor spending
- An increase in the local population and a decrease in the local unemployment rate

Trails may be located on public or private land and may be managed by public or private entities exclusively or by both in partnership arrangements. Trail management models within the Shire of York should be investigated. Private enterprise should be supported by the Shire to provide trail experiences and facilities where appropriate,

alleviating the Shire from management requirements. The Shire should support community involvement in the design and management of trails and advocate for the Shire of York's trail offerings online and in publications.

Table 8. Comparison of management models

	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	PARTNERSHIP
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government agency has sole management responsibility of the trail facility.</li> <li>• Commercial and event operators may contribute financially to the management of trails.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private land owner has sole management responsibility of the trail facility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple stakeholders share management responsibility of the trail facility.</li> <li>• Partners could include non-government incorporated agencies, such as peak bodies, state government bodies, private bodies, foundations or trusts, and volunteer bodies.</li> <li>• Volunteers may contribute to the management of trails.</li> </ul>
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity on roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Majority of tenure is Crown land.</li> <li>• Consistent approach to development processes and standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No political interference with decision making.</li> <li>• Can be flexible and responsive to market preferences and trends.</li> <li>• Can provide a specific and unique experience to fill a gap without consideration of broader priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage a broad support base for maintenance, development, funding, events and promotion.</li> <li>• Multiple funding contributors.</li> <li>• Risk can be shared.</li> <li>• Funding can come from a range of partners.</li> <li>• Single management entity to take responsibility on behalf of stakeholders.</li> </ul>
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining the status quo will mean limitations on resourcing.</li> <li>• Political pressures lead to uncoordinated priorities.</li> <li>• Grants not always available to government bodies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No examples in Shire of York to date.</li> <li>• Decisions can be made, such as trail closures, with no public consultation.</li> <li>• Caters to a limited market.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger number of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Potential for political pressures to influence decision-making.</li> </ul>



**CURRENT  
SITUATION**

## LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

There are many factors that influence trail planning and use, including access, proximity to population, landscape character, tenure, and natural and cultural values, these have been summarised for the Shire of York in the following pages.

### ACCESS

The Shire of York is connected to Perth, a major population centre, by public transport. Trans WA operates bus services passing through York once daily.

The Shire of York is easily accessible via the Great Eastern Highway, and the Great Southern Highway from Perth. Situated between Northam and Beverly, York is accessible from the north and the south.

Accessibility to new trail experiences should be considered in all planning, ensuring there is sufficient, safe car parking facilities at trail heads, and ensuring safe access and egress to trail head locations.

### TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

York is located on the Darling Plateau with a landscape characterised by a dissected, rolling landscape with major v-shaped river valleys and scattered rough granitic outcrops. Mount Brown, Mount Bakewell and Mt Observation are the highest points within the shire offering views across the surrounding woodland and agricultural landscapes. The Avon River transects the Shire South to North and offers paddling opportunities.

### TENURE

The areas identified for recreation within the project area are located on a variety of tenures, including, State forest, bushland reserves and local parks, and recreation reserves. Generally private land has not been considered except in cases where proposals are located adjacent public reserves.

## PARTICIPATION AND DEMAND

### PARTICIPATION IN RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY

The Shire of York Trails Master Plan supports Local Governments obligations under the Public Health Act 2016 to produce a Public Health Plan, part of which is to provide spaces to enable the health and well-being of Shires population.

One in five Australians experience a mental health condition in a given year and almost one in two will experience a mental health condition at some point in their lifetime. (ABS, 2008) Physical exercise, socialising, and spending time in nature are known to be recommended complementary and preventative treatments for anyone suffering, or at risk from suffering, from mental health conditions.

Across Australia participation in sport and physical recreation has seen a significant downturn when comparing the last two latest Participation in Sport and Recreation (Australia) surveys outlined in table 9 below. This decrease has been noted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and is in line with increased incidence of overweight and obesity (particularly amongst children), and the associated costs to individuals, communities and governments. Compelling evidence shows that increased levels of physical activity can bring wide-ranging benefits to communities, which extend beyond physical health to include benefits around mental health, personal wellbeing and social cohesion. Making recreational facilities accessible in all communities is a critical strategy for increasing physical activity and preventing obesity.

Table 9. Persons participating in Sport and Physical Recreation 2016-17

Activity	Participants 2016-17	Change from 2011-2012
Cycling (does not distinguish between road, mountain bike and BMX)	1,151,900	-15.7%
Bushwalking	285,600	-34.5%
Canoeing / Kayaking	129,700	-8%
Cross Country Running	70,600	-14.9%
Horse riding / Equestrian activities / Polo	142,000	-4.5%
Trail Bike Riding	41,500	-36.3%
4WD / Drive	No data	No data

Overall males tended to engage in recreational activity at a greater rate than females, primarily due to the high participation rates in cycling/BMXing. Whilst females were more likely to walk or horse ride for exercise than males; males were more likely than females to participate in cycling/BMXing, canoeing and trail bike riding as shown in table 10 below.

Table 10. Persons participating in Sport and Physical Recreation 2016-17

Activity	Male participation rate (%)	Female participation rate (%)
Cycling / BMXing	8.5	4
Bushwalking	1.4	1.7
Canoeing / Kayaking / Dragon boat racing	0.8	0.5
Cross Country Running	0.3	0.4
Horse riding / Equestrian activities / Polo	0.2	1.2
Trail Bike Riding	0.1	0

The Australian Sports Commission (Australian Sports Commission, 2010) reports that walking (excluding bushwalking) continues to be the most popular activity nationally, across gender and age demographics. Cycling is rated the fourth most popular activity, followed by running (fifth most popular) and bushwalking (eighth most popular).

An estimated 2.7 million overnight visitors to WA participated in nature-based activity in 2015-2016, 27% of all the State's overnight visitors and an increase of 15% a year from 2012 (DSR, 2017).

## PARTICIPATION IN TRAIL BASED ACTIVITIES

Community participation in trail based activities is hard to quantify. Formal data on actual use is limited to information collected by the user survey as part of the consultation process. The same can be said for trail based tourism in the region – anecdotally, visitors are known to use existing trail facilities but there is little specific data available. While participation statistics are limited for the project area, information on general visitor numbers and demographics has been drawn from a number of sources to ascertain current participation levels and predict expected demand in the future.

## BARRIERS

Barriers to participation in trail related activities vary across the trail types. A recent survey in the Perth and Peel region outlined the barriers to participation, as displayed in Table 12 below. The main barrier to participation in the Shire of York presently is lack of facilities and lack of available experiences. When developing experiences in the Shire of York the barriers to participation should be considered, and factored into design, signage and marketing.

Table 11. Participation barriers

TRAIL TYPE	BARRIERS
Bushwalking / urban walk / trail running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Availability of trail related information</li> <li>▪ Safe place to park car</li> <li>▪ Accessibility of trailheads</li> </ul>
Mountain Bike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceptions of mountain biking being an extreme sport</li> <li>▪ Limited understanding of the benefits</li> <li>▪ Under supply and inaccessibility of appropriate trails</li> <li>▪ Restricted opportunity for skill building and progression.</li> </ul>
Equestrian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expense of owning a horse</li> <li>▪ Availability of trail information</li> <li>▪ Under supply of trails close to agistment and that are horse specific</li> <li>▪ Transport to trails</li> <li>▪ Parking availability</li> </ul>
Paddle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expense of equipment</li> <li>▪ Unclear progression pathways</li> <li>▪ Availability of trail related information</li> </ul>
4WD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expense of equipment</li> <li>▪ Availability of information on where can legally drive</li> </ul>
Trail bike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expense of equipment</li> <li>▪ Availability of information on where can legally ride</li> <li>▪ Lack of Off Road Vehicle areas for ORV registered bikes</li> </ul>

## ACCESS & ACCESSIBILITY

The term 'access' can have a variety of meanings in trail planning. For the purpose of the Shire of York Trails Master Plan, the meanings of access and accessibility are as follows:

Access is the means or opportunity to approach or enter a physical place to undertake trail based activities.

Accessibility is the degree to which a trail opportunity is available to as many people as possible.

The Shire of York Trails Master Plan aims to support and reinforce the implementation of the Blueprint by making trails accessible in the Shire of York. Strategies include:

- Increasing the availability and attractiveness of trails and trail facilities
- At trail locations, offer opportunities for people to participate, progress and fine tune skills and training
- Offering a range of trails that suit different levels of technical difficulty
- Linking facilities with and advocating for other means of access than private vehicle (for example, public transport and bike paths)
- Offering visitor services to inexperienced trail users, such as equipment hire, maps and guides

Recognising that not every location can be developed to provide for all trail types, the Shire of York Trails Master Plan focuses on:

- Providing certain types of opportunities in the most appropriate sites
- Utilising existing infrastructure and assets where feasible
- Focusing development on a select number of sites
- Connecting trail experiences creating a network around the townsite
- Delivering high quality infrastructure and trails where development occurs, to ensure high utilisation with minimal maintenance

## TRAIL USER SURVEY

To understand the existing trends in trail use across the Shire of York a trail user survey was conducted. The online survey consisted of a survey and an interactive map where users could drop pins locating existing trails or potential new trail opportunities. The survey was distributed widely through local government networks, trail user clubs, and social media.

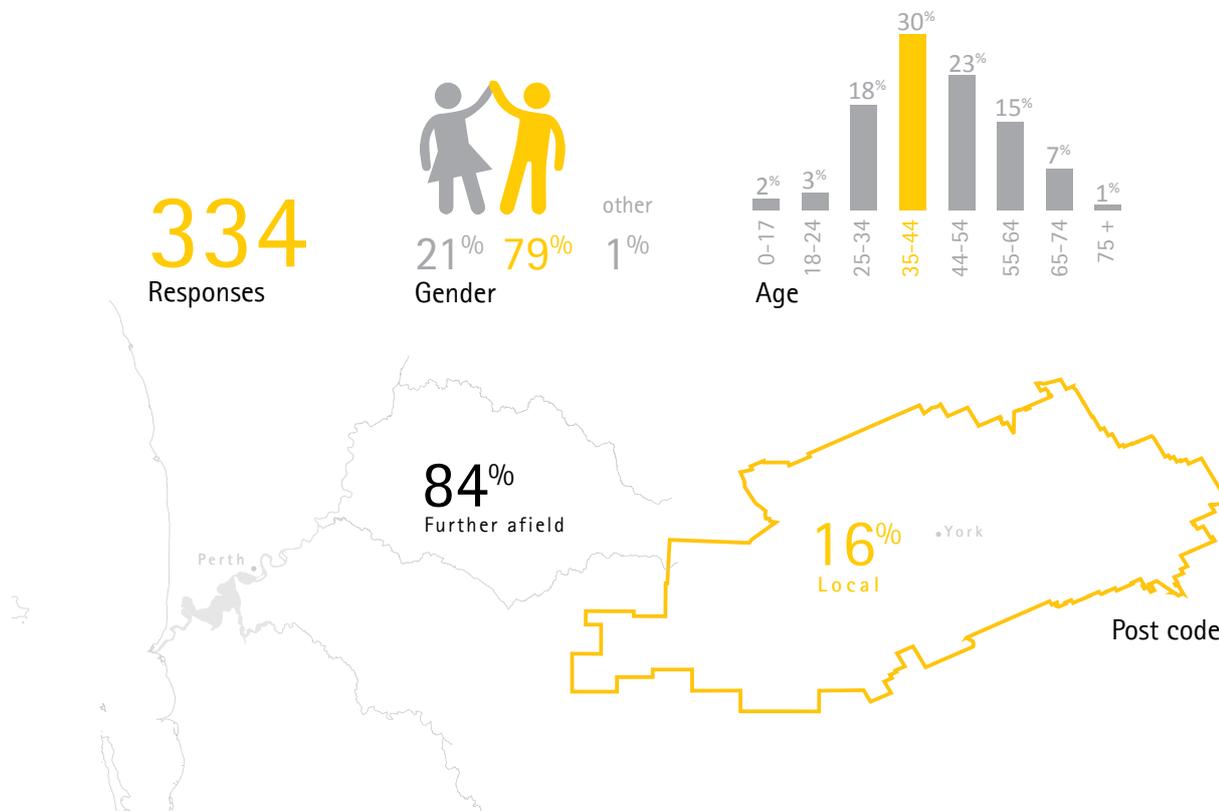
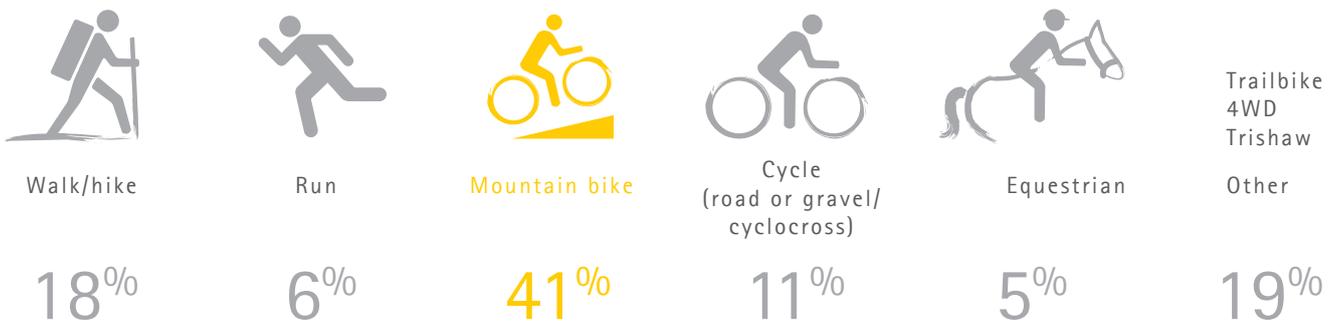


Figure 9. York Trail User Survey respondents gender, age and location of residence.

In using the data gathered from the survey it is important to note potential for survey bias where trail enthusiasts are likely to fill out such surveys but those new to trails are less likely to participate. This results in results skewed towards intermediate and advanced trail users.

Common responses from the survey indicated:

- Trail users are multi-disciplinary participating in a range of trail based recreation activities
- By developing trails and facilities, the Shire of York has the potential to encourage and attract new visitors, as 84% of respondent did not live in the Shire of York.
- There is a lack of trail facilities in the Shire of York presently
- There is a keen mountain bike market that is interested in York as a mountain bike destination
- Trail users are willing to travel larger distances to reach trails with 50% of respondents indicating they'd be willing to travel 100km or more.



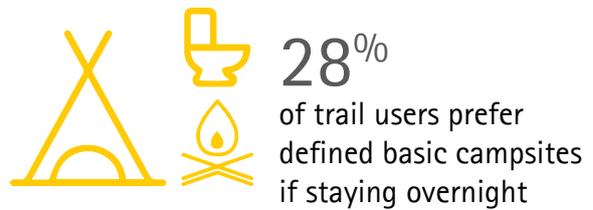
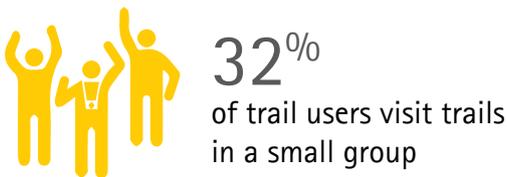
Preferred method of exploring trails



the majority of trail users rated their ability for their preferred recreation type as advanced

53% spend half the day on the trail

35% visit trails in the York Region several times a year



Top 3 sources of information about trails

EXPERIENCE THE OUTDOORS  
**FITNESS**  
 SOCIALISING

top three reasons for using trails

Figure 10. York Trail User Survey results summary.

## TRAIL SUPPLY

The Shire of York currently has a limited range of informal trails across the different trail user types. The trail audit completed as part of this Master Plan collected basic information on all designated trails across the Shire and investigated areas that may be suitable for experience development.

There are no designated trail networks in the Shire of York presently. There is a suite of official 2WD trails, highlighting the Shires main points of interest. The information for 2WD options is extensive, and could be overwhelming to visitors, especially those that English is not their first language.

There are 5 separate suggested heritage walk trails in the townsite. The heritage buildings in York are magnificent, and arguably some of the best examples of Victorian and Federation architecture in the State. The urban heritage walk trail app is easy to use and provides excellent information on each point of interest.

The York visitor centre promotes 4 walk trails. The Avon River, Golf Links reserve, Mount Brown and Mount Observation. The leaflets are text only, with no maps, and there is no wayfinding signage on any of the walks, making them very hard for visitors to navigate.

A website called WalkGPS highlights 5 unmarked bushwalking routes through state forest and national park. These routes highlight some of the best forest landscapes in the Shire of York but are not advisable for entry level bushwalkers, as they required experience in navigation. (Osborne, 2003)

York is fortunate to be home to 1 of the states 6 gazetted Off Road Vehicle areas. The facility is managed by the Shire and currently receives high weekend visitation. There is little information available about the facility out with the Recreational Trail Riders' Associate of WA website.

## TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE

For consistency each trail has been classified according to their significance at a state, regional and local level. Classification for WA's trails and trail networks as per the Blueprint is as follows.

### STATE TRAILS

An extended trail or trail network that is of sufficient quality and with appropriate facilities, products and services to be recognised beyond the State and to attract visitors to WA.

### REGIONAL TRAILS

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

### LOCAL TRAILS

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

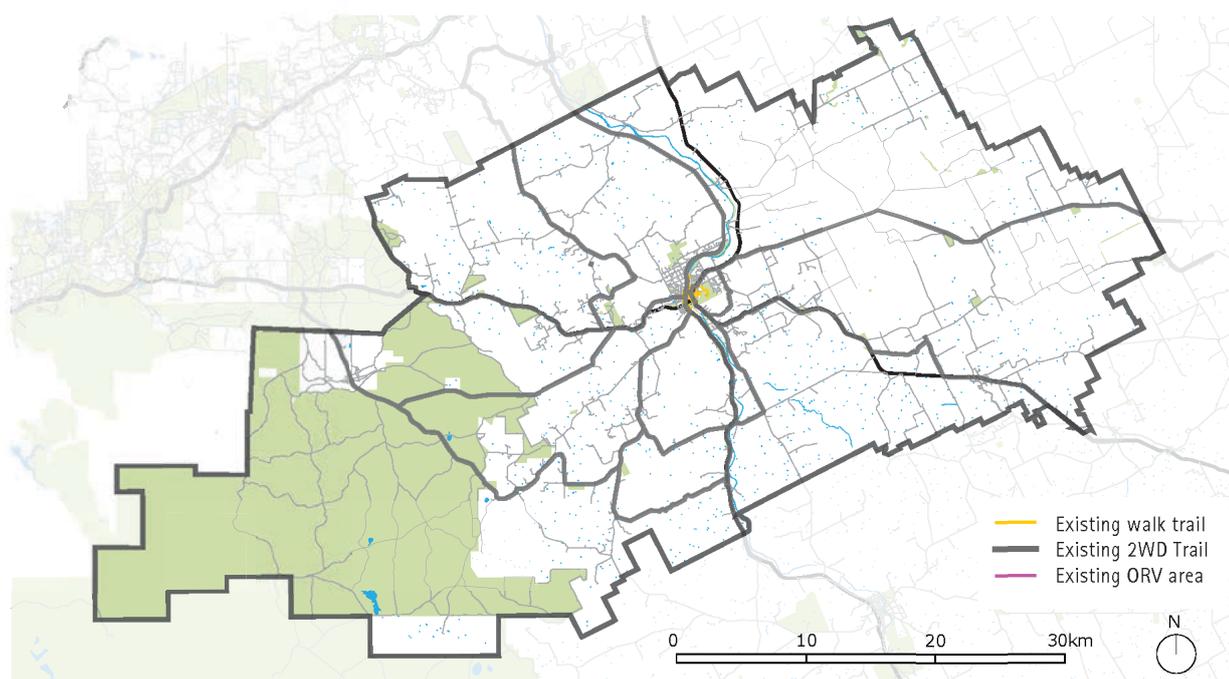


Figure 11. Existing trail supply

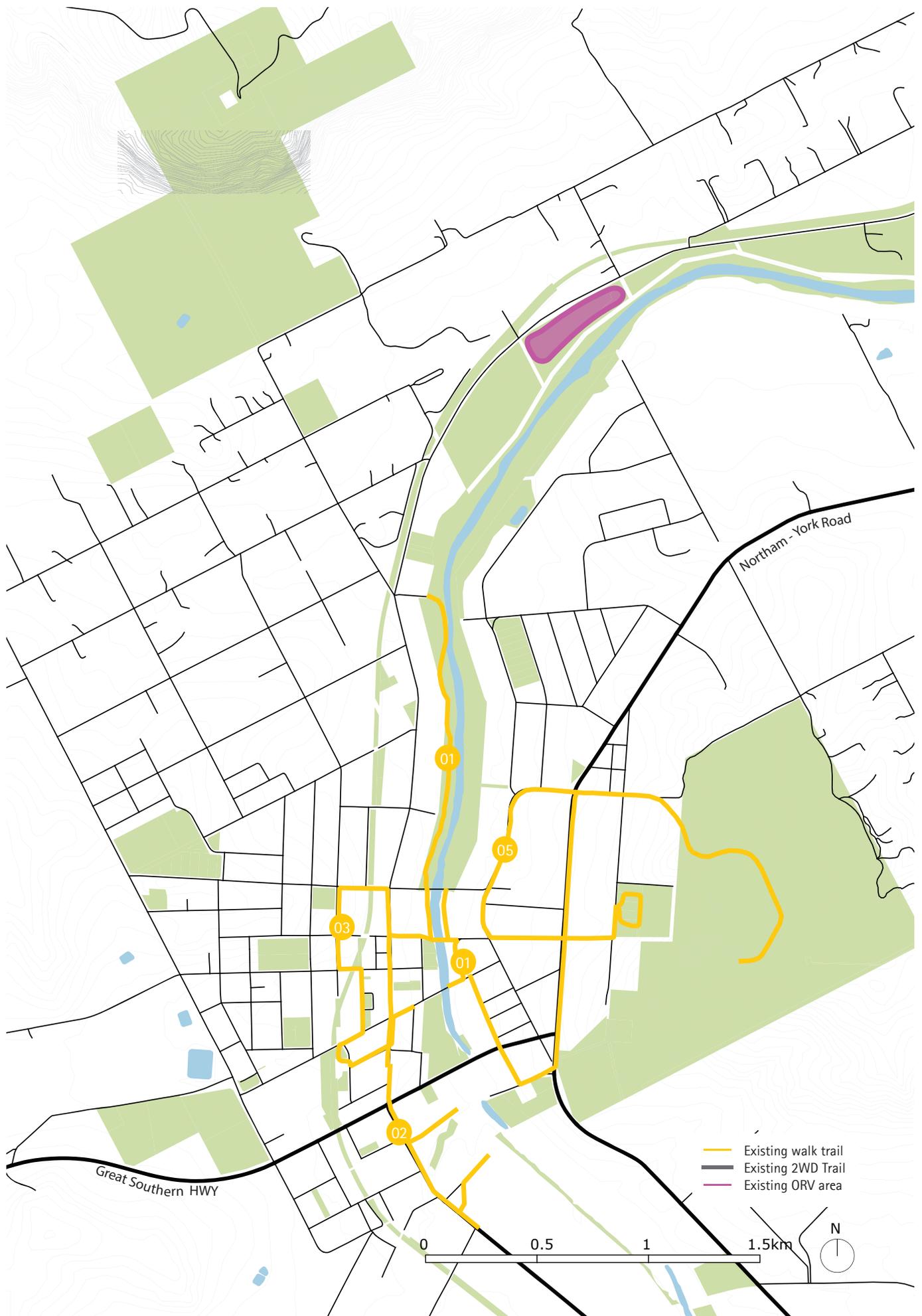


Figure 12. Existing trail supply

## BUSHWALKING / URBAN WALK / TRAIL RUNNING TRAILS

Bushwalking in the Shire of York is undertaken in a relatively ad-hoc fashion. Walkers utilise the Avon river, unsanctioned trails around Mt Brown, and various cross country walks.

Based on the user survey (refer to figure 13) there is a similar balance between the number of male and female participants. Most participate with a friend or partner, or in groups less than 6 people. If staying overnight the preference was defined basic camping. Trail runners represented 22% of the respondents and other trail types that walking and trail running respondents participated in were mountain biking, cycling and Off Road Vehicle activities.



n=88



defined basic campsites



with friend or partner

(2-4 hours)

time spent on trail per visit



top 3 other trail activities participated in

Table 12. Existing Bushwalk/Urban Walk/Trail Running trails

	Trail Name	Trail Significance	Length (km)	Classification	Visitor Services Quality	Trail Quality	Trail Manager
01	Avon River Trail	Local	3.8	Grade 2	Average	Average	SOY
02	Heritage Trail – Walk 1 Avon Terrace	Local	1.5	Grade 1	Average	Average	SOY
03	Heritage Trail – Walk 2 Blandstown	Local	2	Grade 1	Average	Average	SOY
04	Heritage Trail – Walk 3 Commerce Institutions & Industry	Local	2	Grade 1	Average	Average	SOY
05	Heritage Trail – Walk 4 The east bank	Local	6	Grade 1	Average	Average	SOY
06	York Cemetery Historical Walk Trail	Local	0.3	Grade 2	Average	Average	SOY

Figure 13. Bushwalk / Urban Walk user group survey responses.

## BUSHWALKING / URBAN WALK / TRAIL RUNNING GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Table 13. Bushwalking / Urban Walk / Trail Running gaps and desired improvements

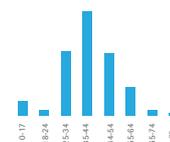
ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	Current participation rates state-wide for walking (recreation) and bushwalking are high and growing. It is assumed that with population growth there will be more people seeking walking experiences.	Accessible recreational walk trails in the Shire of York.
Demand	State-wide participation rates for walking are high and 18% of those surveyed noted bushwalking is their preferred activity.  Trail running is an emerging trail use which is growing in popularity, and 22% of surveyed walkers already participate in trail running.	Experiences that cater for walkers and runners in the Shire of York.
Participation	A sustainable trails community requires a strong leisure and beginner cohort but 99% of those surveyed said they were intermediate or advanced (noting the survey bias towards trail enthusiasts).	Improve access and growth in beginner participation.
Location Significance	The Shire of York is currently of local significance for walking.	The Shire of York is recognised as an area of regional significance for walking.
Trail significance	The experiences existing in the Shire of York are of local significance.	The Shire of York has trail experiences of regional significance.
Infrastructure and Facilities	National, regional and local locations have minimum infrastructure and facilities requirements, but the Shire of York is lacking in basic requirements such as trail signage and trail mapping.	The Shire of York has the key requirements to be of regional significance.
Quality	Trail users are seeking a high quality trail experience. There are limited experiences in the Shire of York, that are of average quality.	Consolidated and high quality experiences in the Shire of York.
Quantity	There are limited experiences in the Shire of York, totaling 15.6km. The Avon River Trail is the only experience considered as a bushwalk. 99% of surveyed individuals preferred forest or open plain walking.	A selection of high quality forest and open plain walking options in the Shire of York.
Uniqueness and Experience	The Avon River is a major point of interest in the town. It is underutilised. The two main landscape features Mt Brown and Mt Bakewell are also under utilised and would both provide unique walking experiences.	The Shire of York has a variety of unique walking experiences.
Usability	Trail systems should be easy to navigate and intuitive, but the survey indicated that signage was below average, and the availability of trail related information was also not sufficient	The Shire of York has accessible walking experiences with clear trailhead and directional signage.
Trail Classification	All existing trails in the Shire of York are short and Class 2. There is a lack of experiences suitable for all, including those who are mobility impaired. Additionally, there are no trails for people wishing to spend a few hours on a trail, runners to cover large distances, or opportunities for beginners to advance.	The Shire of York has a diverse array of trail classifications catering for individuals across a capability spectrum, allowing access for all.

## MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS

There are no sanctioned mountain bike trails in the Shire of York. Mountain bike participation is increasing exponentially, riders are increasing in competence and they are seeking new, diverse experiences across the state. There are a number of unsanctioned mountain bike trails designed and ridden by passionate and competent mountain bikers. These trails have been utilised for events, and in 2019 there are 3 events on Mt Brown. The trails suit riders with a high level of ability and are not suitable for beginners. There is opportunity to rationalise existing trails and design additional trails on Mt Brown to cater for all level of rider and provide excellent event facilities.



n=142



defined basic campsite



in a small group

(2-4 hours)

time spent on trail per visit



top 3 other trail activities participated in

## MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Table 14. Mountain Bike Trail gaps and desired improvements

ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	An estimated 264,000 (13.2%) Perth residents ride for recreation in a typical week. Perth is one of the fastest growing capital cities in the country and Shire of York in only an hour drive from Perth. There are currently no sanction mountain biking opportunities in the Shire of York.	The Shire of York has designated high quality mountain bike trails which are attractive to local residents, surrounding Shires and Perth metropolitan area.
Demand	The existing trails in the Shire of York are unsanctioned, i.e. have either informal access (have no formal authorisation from land manager) or have been illegally constructed within public reserves	The Shire of York has a supply of trails that provide quality experience and meet current and future demand.
Participation	A sustainable trails community requires a strong leisure and beginner cohort but 100% of those surveyed said they were intermediate or advanced (noting the survey bias towards trail enthusiasts).	The Shire of York has mountain bike trails that are appealing to beginners, intermediate and advanced riders.
Location Significance	As there are no sanctioned mountain biking trails in the Shire of York there is currently no location significance.	The Shire of York prioritises investment in providing quality experience and facilities creating a regionally significant mountain biking location.
Infrastructure and Facilities	National, regional and local locations have minimum infrastructure and facilities requirements. The Shire of York has many existing elements, which accompanied by quality trail networks, could put York on the map as a trail town.	The Shire of York has infrastructure and facilities sufficient to cater for the significance of the mountain biking experiences.
Quality	Trail users are seeking a high quality trail experience but there are no sanctioned trails in the Shire of York presently.	The Shire of York has a selection of high quality mountain biking experiences.
Quantity	Trail users are seeking a high quality trail experience but there are no sanctioned trails in the Shire of York presently.	The Shire of York has a selection of high quality mountain biking experiences.
Uniqueness and Experience	Presently there are no sanctioned mountain biking opportunities in the Avon Valley. The closest facilities are situated on the Darling Scarp. Mountain bike trails in the Shire of York could offer a different trail style and experience.	The Shire of York has mountain bike experiences that differ from those available on the Darling Scarp.
Usability	Trail systems should be easy to navigate and intuitive. The existing unsanctioned trails on Mt Brown present a good opportunity to utilise trails that already exist, to rationalize the network and create complimentary experiences for all levels of riders.	The Shire of York has accessible, cohesive trail networks, with good signage and comprehensive pre-visit trail information.
Trail Classification	There are no sanctioned mountain bike trails in the Shire of York.  The existing unsanctioned trails on Mt Brown are intermediate to advanced. Rationalisation will allocate clear classifications to the trails and identify opportunities for trails suitable for beginners through to advanced.	The Shire of York has a suitable mix of classifications of trails, allowing progression of trail users and challenge to advanced riders.

Figure 14. MTB user group survey responses.

## CYCLE TRAILS

It should be noted that a key action of the Western Australia Bicycle Network (WABN) Plan 2014–2031 is to improve planning for cycling in the regions. Specifically, to identify gaps in existing cycling networks, plan for future growth corridors, and produce strategic and operational plans for identified regional centres and surrounding areas.

A Wheatbelt 2050 Cycling Strategy is currently in development, focusing on towns that border the Perth metropolitan area. This Master Plan takes in to account the current deliverability of trail experiences in the Shire of York. The Wheatbelt 2050 Cycling Strategy may create opportunity for increased scope and create opportunities to access funding to implement the priorities detailed in the strategy. The implementation plan for this master Plan should take this in to account.



n=49



town based accommodation



with friend or partner

(2-4 hours)

time spent on trail per visit



top 3 other trail activities participated in

## CYCLE TRAIL GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Table 15. Cycle Trail gaps and desired improvements

ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	In 2018 Western Australian cycle participation rate was 11.6% (SportAus, 2018). Online open data sources show heat maps of rider movement around the Shire of York. Many riders will cover large distances and there is more scope to encourage riders to incorporate the Shire of York into their routes.	The Shire of York and York townsite are inviting locations to cycle, stop for coffee or lunch, and/or utilise as an overnight stop.
Participation	Heat maps of the Shire of York show cycling activity. The respondents to the recent survey who's preferred activity was cycling was 11%, which is in line with statewide participation. The 2017 Western Australia Bike Network Plan acknowledges there has been an increase in recreational riding over the past 15 years. (Transport, 2017) York is perfectly placed to accommodate cyclists, both local and visitors,	York is a vibrant cycling destination, with residents and visitors utilising cycle as a method of transport and recreation.
Location Significance	The Shire of York does not have enough trail or adequate facilities to rate as a nationally or regionally significant cycling location.	The Shire of York has designated cycling routes and facilities making it a regional cycling destination.
Trail Significance	No cycling trails in the Shire of York are classified as regional or state significance.	The Shire of York is a main destination on a regional cycle trail.
Infrastructure and Facilities	National, regional and local locations have minimum infrastructure and facilities requirements. The Shire of York has many existing elements, which accompanied by quality cycling routes could put York on the map as a trail town.	The Shire of York has infrastructure and facilities to support regionally significant cycling.
Location	A majority of those surveyed indicated they'd be willing to travel up to 100 km to access trail experiences.	Develop cycling opportunities within the Shire of York for both local residents and visitors. Consider routes from the townsite and linking York to the Darling Scarp and the Perth Metropolitan area.
Quality	Safety of on road cycle routes is the main concern for riders.	The Shire of York has safe cycling routes on sealed and unsealed roads. The Shire has sufficient safety signage on designated cycling routes.
Uniqueness and Experience	Uniqueness is a primary travel motivator. York does not promote cycling as an activity in the Shire.	The Shire of York has a great opportunity to promote an alternative cycling experience. The rolling agricultural landscape and tree lined gravel roads are attractive riding landscapes to a variety of cyclists.
Usability	Trail systems should be easy to navigate and intuitive. There are no designated cycling routes in the Shire of York presently.	The Shire of York has multiple cycling routes visible and accessible from the townsite, inviting experiences accessible from the Perth metropolitan area and excellent pre-visit trail information.

Figure 15. Cycle user group survey responses.

## EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

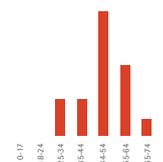
There are many horse owners in the Shire of York. Many exercise their horses on their own property, on the road reserves or travel further afield for more varied riding experiences. There are no designated equestrian trail experiences on offer in the Shire of York.

The York Racecourse is situated at the base of Mt Bakewell and is home to York Racing Inc, which includes the York Turf and Harness Club. The racecourse is host to thoroughbred events. Other equestrian uses include shows, gymkhanas, rallies, clinics, sales and breed assessment days. Increasing participation in equestrian in the Shire of York will not only be of benefit to the residents, visitors and the Shire, but also to York Racing Inc.

There were only 16 respondents to the recent survey that identified their preferred activity as equestrian (refer to figure 16) The majority were female and aged 44–54. Most rate their technical ability intermediate and seek more challenge to advance skills. The majority of respondents ride alone, which is reflective of utilising their own property to participate. Almost 82% of riders prefer forest experiences, which are lacking in the Shire of York. Over 50% were members of a club, and 69% find out about trails by following social media pages



n=16



defined basic campsites

## EQUESTRIAN TRAIL GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Table 16. Equestrian Trail gaps and desired improvements

ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	There are many horse owners in the Shire of York, and if there were sufficient float parking people would travel for trail experiences.	The Shire of York has designated equestrian opportunities on Crown land.
Participation	A sustainable trails community requires a strong leisure and beginner cohort but none of the riders in the Shire of York identified as beginners.	Improve access and growth in beginner participation. There is also potential for engagement of aged or retired riders from various disciplines.
Location Significance	There are no equestrian trail experiences within the Shire of York.	York has equestrian trails that encourage participation by Shire residents, and encourage visitation from riders traveling from out with the Shire.
Infrastructure and Facilities	There are no equestrian trail experiences within the Shire of York, therefore no trailhead, signage or float parking facilities.	The Shire of York is known for providing equestrian trail experiences and offers introductory opportunities for beginners and visiting riders.
Quality	Trail users are seeking a high quality trail experience but there are no equestrian trail experiences within the Shire of York.	The Shire of York has equestrian trail experiences that cater for local riders with sufficient signage and road crossing points. There is provision of sufficient parking of horse floats and area to saddle up, to encourage visitors to travel to the Shire of York.
Uniqueness and Experience	There are no equestrian trail experiences within the Shire of York. If there were sufficient equestrian trail opportunities in the Shire of York, there could be an opportunity for a commercial trail ride provider.	The Shire of York has equestrian experiences that encourage local riders to venture further afield, encourage visitation by equestrian from surrounding Shires, and provide an opportunity for a commercial provider to provide trail experiences.
Usability	There are no equestrian trail experiences within the Shire of York.	The Shire of York has a cohesive equestrian experience encouraging participation by locals and visitors, including wayfinding signage, warning and etiquette signage and pre-visit trail information.
Trail Classification	There are no equestrian trail experiences within the Shire of York.	The Shire of York has equestrian trail experiences that allow for beginner participation and encourage progression in capability of existing riders.



solo

(2-4 hours)  
time spent on trail per visit



top 3 other trail activities participated in

Figure 16. Equestrian user group survey responses.

## TRAIL BIKE TRAILS

Recreational trail bike riding takes many forms from riding on motocross-style circuits, to long distance off-road touring. The Shire of York is fortunate to have one of Western Australia's 6 gazetted Off Road Vehicle areas within close proximity to town and the Perth Metropolitan area.

In order to access designated Off Road Vehicle areas in Western Australia vehicles are required to have standard road registration or ORV registration. ORV Registration fees go into an Off Road Vehicle fund, which assists in maintenance and upgrades to Off Road Vehicle areas.

The existing facility is a small MX circuit but attracts many visitors over the weekends and holidays. There is significant potential to attract events and clubs (there is anecdotal evidence to suggest this is already happening). Off trail facilities include toilet, gas barbeque, covered shelter, car parking and vehicle loading ramp.

In the recent survey (refer to figure 17) 94% of trail bike riders were male and the largest age bracket represented was 35-44. Many riders also participated in bushwalking and mountain biking. Only 4% identified themselves as beginners, and the majority of riders were seeking half day and full day trail experiences.

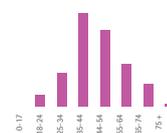
## TRAIL BIKE TRAIL GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Table 17. Trail Bike Trail gaps and desired improvements

ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	The state Trail bike strategy suggests there were 50,000 trailbikes in WA 2008. There is insufficient data available regarding the growth in the market since then, but there is anecdotal evidence that there is a large market that could benefit the Shire of York. The advent of affordable Electric motorcycles may exponential increases in users.	The Shire of York facility encourages visitation from surrounding Shires and the Perth metropolitan area.
Demand	17% of survey respondents indicated trail biking is their preferred activity.	Improve supply of trails that provide quality experience.
Participation	A sustainable trails community requires a strong leisure and beginner cohort but only 4% of those surveyed said they were beginners (noting the survey bias towards trail enthusiasts).	The Shire of York facility has experiences suitable for beginners and families. Some ORV areas have installed trail counters available to monitor the usage at the facility
Trail Significance	The Shire of York ORV areas is of local significance in size but is of regional significance given its proximity to the Perth metropolitan area, and the lack of ORV facilities in the region.	As the circuit is in a designated gazetted areas there are no current desired improvements to increase trail significance.
Infrastructure and Facilities	The existing facility has a small, dated composting toilet, a single shelter and a single barbeque. There is also poor delineation of site boundaries.	Toilet facilities that can accommodate current and future user numbers. Sufficient off trail facilities to create a family friendly facility. Clear site boundaries which protect riders and surrounding environment. Noise bunding and tree planting to assist with dampening of noise emissions.
Quantity	The existing facility is approximately 4Ha and consists of a small practice MX circuit, a junior circuit and a small trail riding area away from the tracks. There is sufficient room for future expansion within the current boundaries and the gazettal area extends into the farm area to the west.	The opportunity to expand the current facility within the currently gazetted area by upgrading the small trail riding area and creating a child friendly/introductory circuit. There is potential to improve the peewee trail to be more suitable for younger riders and attract more families to the region.
Uniqueness and Experience	The circuit in the Shire of York is unique in that it is 1 of only 6 facilities across the state.	The Shire of York's Off Road Vehicle facility is a family friendly experience, encouraging families to travel to York to participate.
Usability	The condition of the circuit is currently exceptional due to recent upgrades to the facility by the Shire of York. It is considered one of the benchmarks for Off Road Vehicle areas in the state. A great example of what can be done as a model for distributed, smaller areas to provide facilities.	Improve signage in town directing users to the facility and increase pre-visit trail information by uploading the facility and associated user information on to the Trails WA website. Inclusion of the ORV area on the Shire of York town Map.



n=58



(2-4 hours)  
time spent on trail per visit



top 3 other trail activities participated in

Figure 17. Trail bike user group survey responses.

## 2WD TRAILS

There are currently 14 Shire of York specific self-drive 2WD trails, and 3 drive trails that incorporate York as a place of interest.

## 2WD TRAIL GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Table 18. 2WD Trail gaps and desired improvements

ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	There is limited data available regarding the current and potential 2WD trail user market.	The Shire of York is appealing to day trippers and overnight visitors that wish to explore the Avon Valley by car.
Uniqueness and Experience	There are existing points of interest in the Shire that are not being well promoted. Inclusion on the Trails WA website would increase visibility.	The Shire of York is a must visit destination when seeking a 2WD experience.
Usability	There are currently 14 Shire of York specific self-drive 2WD trails, and 3 drive trails that incorporate York as a place of interest. The level of information presented to a visitor is overwhelming. The existing brochures have written descriptions of the routes making it very hard to navigate, especially for those that English is not their first language.	The Shire of York has easily understood 2WD trail signage and mapping. All points of interest are easily identified, and suggested itineraries are easy to follow and available on Trails WA.



# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## EXISTING GOVERNANCE

The stakeholders involved in trail development can be very diverse. Local Governments, Regional Councils, Community Advisory Committees, Development Commissions, Tourism Bodies, Government Departments and user group bodies all play a vital role in the governance of trails.

Typically, trail development bodies across the state have worked in isolation, however, more recently there has been a movement towards cooperative governance structures. The emerging hierarchy of trail governance in the Shire of York includes the key bodies outlined in table 13 below.

Table 19. Key governance bodies

Governance Body	Role
WA Trails Reference Group	Advises on implementation of State trail strategies and monitors progress and proposed actions and outcomes reporting back to government and industry.
Avon Valley Tracks and Trails	Community based advisory body.
Trails WA	Established to raise funds and carry out projects to further the development and promotion of trails.
<b>Bushwalking</b>	
Bushwalking WA	Peak Body for bushwalking/hiking in WA.
<b>Mountain biking</b>	
Westcycle	Peak body for cycling and oversees all variations of cycling including mountain biking in WA.
<b>Cycling</b>	
Westcycle	Peak body for cycling and oversees all variations of cycling in WA.
<b>Equestrian</b>	
ATHRA	Peak body for equestrian recreation in Australia.
<b>Trailbike</b>	
Recreation Trailbike Riders Association	Peak body for trailbike recreation in WA.

Each of these bodies typically has an interest in both trail advocacy and events. They have, or aspire to have, formal structures and are capable of assisting the trail development process. Trails in a number of locations rely heavily on volunteer trail bodies for sustainable development and management of the activity.

There is opportunity to develop sound governance structures supporting trails within the Shire of York by combining representatives from relevant organisations. It is important that the Shire of York takes a lead role in managing trails on Crown land and supports local groups and governance bodies to reach agreed outcomes and goals.

## EXISTING MANAGEMENT

The existing experiences within the Shire of York are under the Shires management. The Avon River trail is within Shire reserve and is managed by the Infrastructure Services Department. In 2018 there were fire mitigation works carried out through the riparian habitats on the east and west banks of the Avon River in the townsite. These works will allow for emergency management access but have also created extensions to the existing Avon River trail. The trail base is blue metal, which is accommodating to bicycles and prams.

The Shire of York is responsible for keeping the urban heritage walk trail brochures and app up to date, and the 2WD self-guided drive brochures current.

## VOLUNTEER TRAIL MANAGEMENT

Trail users are passionate about building and maintaining trails, and typically 'custodian' communities naturally form around popular trail networks and parks. There is an opportunity in the Shire of York to build rewarding relationships between the community and the Shire, to maintain and promote trail experiences within the Shire of York.

Good facility management is key to ensuring a sustainable and consistent product which can be promoted confidently. Whilst the responsibility for management generally lies with the trail owner, it is possible to create partnerships to involve volunteers in some of these activities, such as:

- Trail auditing inspections and condition reporting
- Trail building initiatives
- Event support

Incorporating clear roles and responsibilities for volunteer bodies in the ongoing management of trails can yield a number of positive outcomes, including:

- Reduced management costs through using volunteer resources,
- Creation of stewards for the environment
- Creating a fun and vibrant community
- Strengthened relationships and networks

## GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Issue	Gaps	Desired improvements
Management and Maintenance	There is limited capacity in the Shire of York for the Shire officers to manage and maintain trails. Quality standards and trail management and maintenance documentation. The Draft DLGSC trail develop series should be used as a guide.	The Shire of York staff have access to guidelines and standards for trail maintenance. AS2156.1_2001 Walking Track Classification and Signage and AS 2156.2_2001 Infrastructure Design. The DRAFT DLGSC Trails Development Series documents will be published in 2019.
Resourcing	The Shire are currently resourced to deliver the existing works plan that exclude trail maintenance.	Internal Shire of York staff are aware of trail maintenance standards. The Shire of York partner with community groups to manage and maintain the Shires trail assets.
Funding	DLGSC and LotteryWest joint funding is one of the only avenues for trail funding currently, with only \$1 million available across all trail types statewide. The Shire of York, State and Federal Government and private investors are also a potential funding sources for trails.	The Shire of York has access to appropriate funding of trail infrastructure, with a focus on planning, design and construction of quality networks in the Shire of York.
Research	Trail use data across the Shire of York is limited as is market visitation data.	The Shire of York has a clear picture of who they are as a trail's destination, who their trail users are and the markets they are providing for.

## PROMOTION AND MARKETING

Promotion of trails can increase recreation, tourism and event markets. Trail destinations that can harness the power of word-of-mouth marketing will build a strong brand and market presence. The Shire of York does not presently promote or market trails. There is an opportunity to develop a simple promotion and marketing plan to introduce the Shire of York as a trail destination, as trail experiences continue to develop across the Shire.

Various tourism bodies are responsible for promoting the Shire of York. Destination Perth is the official travel website for the Shire of York. The Avon Valley is well represented on the Destination Perth website, and this is the perfect platform to promote the Shire of York as a trail's destination following experience development. Avon Tourism is an additional platform for promotion of experiences in the Avon Valley, including the Shire of York and offers opportunities to operators in the area to promote through their website and brochures. York Visitor Centre is situated on Avon Terrace, the main street in the town of York, and reported over 36,270 visitors through the doors in 2017/18. User friendly maps, apps and websites will assist the visitor centre in promoting the experiences on offer in the Shire, resulting in greater visitor experience, return visitation and excellent word of mouth promotion.

Trails WA is a free resource providing detailed information on recreational trail experiences, including maps and imagery. Land managers are responsible for creating an account and uploading their trail experiences on to the Trails WA platform. The Shire of York should invest resources in promoting the Shire of York via Trails WA.

### PROMOTION AND MARKETING GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Issue	Gaps	Desired improvements
Trail Experiences	Lack of trail experiences with the Shire of York.	Multiple trail experiences for different trail users in the Shire of York. Providing opportunities for recreation users, through to enthusiasts. An experience that differentiates the Shire of York to the surrounding areas, ensuring Avon Valley visitors have York on their itinerary.
Trail Information	Current trail information is available from the Visitor Centre in York. The brochures consist of written descriptions of routes to be followed but are not way-marked trails.	Up to date information available on Trails WA website. Trailhead and directional signage on sanctioned trails.
Tourism	There are currently limited marketable tourism products.	High class trail facilities, and a value proposition that can be promoted to engage and attract trail tourists and general tourists.
Promotion	Limited promotion of the Shire of York.	A coordinated marketing and branding of Shire of York experiences to improve understanding and promotion of all trail opportunities in the Shire.

## EVENTS

Social and competitive events contribute to the creation of strong trail user communities. Events can be a major motivator for some cohorts within each trail user type and often play a significant part in increasing participation.

Suitable trails and adequate infrastructure are required to run national and regional events. Social events require less specific infrastructure but still require quality trails and visitor services. The Shire has the potential in terms of setting and location to be hosting more events including cycling, equestrian and trail running.

Event	Location	Details
<b>Mountain Biking</b>		
WA Gravity Enduro	Mt Brown	Successful inaugural event in 2018, racing marked trails on Mt Brown. Participation is capped at 370 competitors.
WA State Downhill	Mt Brown	Peel District mountain bike club state downhill
XCO State Series	Mt Brown	Perth Mountain Bike Club cross country race.
<b>Cycling</b>		
York Cycling Festival	York	CycleSport WA event that has a variety of cycling events over 2 days. There is a selection of races for all ages and capabilities, including a Mt Brown hill climb. In 2018 CycloSportif was incorporated into the York Cycling Festival.
Cyclo Sportif	York	A fun event hosted by Bicycling WA that offers a scenic ride that combines the best of flat open country roads and undulating hills. This year we are offering a choice of four distances: A - 108km, B - 79km, C - 54km and a family friendly (and reasonably flat) 25km.
Numbat Cup	Mt Brown	Perth Mountain Bike Club cyclocross race

## EVENTS GAPS AND DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Issue	Gaps	Desired improvements
Event Facilities	The Shire of York lacks suitable trails and infrastructure for state, national and international events.	The Shire of York has facilities and infrastructure that can support state, national and international events.

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. The foreground and middle ground are dominated by large green fields, some of which are yellow, likely rapeseed. A winding river or stream is visible on the left side. In the lower right, there is a circular racetrack with a dirt track and a grassy center. The background shows a vast, flat landscape extending to the horizon under a clear blue sky.

# TRAILS VISION AND OBJECTIVES

## **VISION**

ESTABLISH YORK AS A TRAILS TOWN, OFFERING VISITORS AND LOCALS ACCESSIBLE AND IMMERSIVE TRAIL EXPERIENCES, WHICH CAPITALISE ON THE SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES ON MOUNT BROWN, MOUNT BAKEWELL AND ALONG THE AVON RIVER. TRAILS WILL PROVIDE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCALS AND ENTICE VISITORS TO THE REGION.

## **OBJECTIVES**

### **1. TRAIL NETWORK**

Develop a high quality trails network catering for all trail users and activity types.

### **2. TRAIL USER EXPERIENCE**

Ensure quality trail user experiences, which will deliver social, economic and tourism benefits to the community.

### **3. TRAILS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

Well planned and designed facilities and services appropriate to scale and significance of trails, aimed at encouraging use of the trails network by local residents and visitors.

### **4. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

Optimise governance and management structures across trail landowners and stakeholder groups to ensure the Shire of York and the Avon Valley are positioned as trails destinations.



**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Shire of York Master Plan provides a framework to guide the strategic development of trails in the Shire of York working towards achieving the vision. Recommendations have been developed based on analysis of the current situation, user survey, stakeholder and community engagement and presented under each of the objectives identified for trails in the Shire of York.

For each recommendation the project lead and partners have been identified and implementation timeframes specified.

Project leads and partners include the following:

SOY – Shire of York

DPLH – Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage

Recommendations have been categorised into the following planning horizons:

Short Term High Priority – planned works to be developed within 1-3 years

Short Term Medium Priority – planned works to be developed within 1-5 years

Medium term– planned works to be developed with 5-10 years

Long term – planned works to be completed after 2028 (beyond the scope of this master Plan)

Longer planning and implementation horizons have been specified where it is viewed the recommendation is not a high priority.

Cost estimates have been provided for proposed trails in Appendix A.

## OBJECTIVE 1. TRAIL NETWORK

DEVELOP A HIGH QUALITY TRAILS NETWORK CATERING FOR ALL TRAIL USERS AND ACTIVITY TYPES.

Recommendations for new trails focus on delivering the trail experiences that showcase the best of the Shire of York. Trail recommendations are outlined in the following pages. The recommendations outlined below will help development of new trails and ongoing management, ensuring quality is consistent and experiences are to a high standard.

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
1.1 Develop an implementation plan which includes a timeline for the delivery of priority trails, consistent with the trail development process outlined in Table 14 below.	SOY		Short/ongoing
1.2 Conduct a thorough condition audit of all existing trails and related facilities and keep up to date.	SOY	Community Groups	Short/ongoing
1.3 Establish a central database for trails data and upload all trail information on to Trails WA website.	SOY		Short/ongoing
1.4 Ensure appropriate engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders is undertaken in all stages of trail development, consistent with relevant legislation and the South West native title settlement.	All stakeholders	DPLH	Ongoing

Table 20. Trail development process.

Source: WA Mountain Bike Management Guidelines.

	STAGE	OUTCOME
PLANNING	1. PROPOSAL	The proposed area is either supported in principle for trail development, or is not supported due to environmental, social or cultural constraints. Or proposal to identify suitable areas.
	2. FRAMEWORK	A project outline, developed by project steering group (stakeholders), including: project objectives, project management model, stakeholder roles, target market, requirements, standards, execution, and ongoing trail management model.
	3. SITE ASSESSMENT	Undertake a broad scale study of the area and identify constraints, soil types, vegetation etc.
	4. CONCEPT PLANNING	Identify opportunities and conceptual trail plan including infrastructure requirements produced. Broad trail corridors are physically flagged in the field.
	5. CORRIDOR EVALUATION	Detailed assessment of corridor.
	6. DETAILED DESIGN	Detailed trail design produced and physically flagged in the field, including: trail classifications, technical trail features (TTFs), construction types and specifications.
CONSTRUCTION	7. CONSTRUCTION	Trail is constructed in line with the detailed design.
MANAGEMENT	8. MANAGEMENT	Management plan implemented detailing maintenance and monitoring requirements.

DESKTOP

FIELD

## TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for existing trails have been provided based on trail audits, previous trails masterplanning, outcomes of the public survey and community consultation.

Recommendations for new trails focus on delivering the trail experiences that showcase the best of the Shire of York. The landscape features within Shire of York that have potential to provide iconic trail experiences are outlined in figure 18. The proposed trails outlined in the following pages are not intended to preclude any locations from development, should there be opportunity, stakeholder support, available funding and a sustainable management model.

This master plan has identified priority sites, future development processes may lead to additional opportunities or constraints being identified. Private development can supplement provision of trails from government and should be assessed and supported if deemed appropriate.

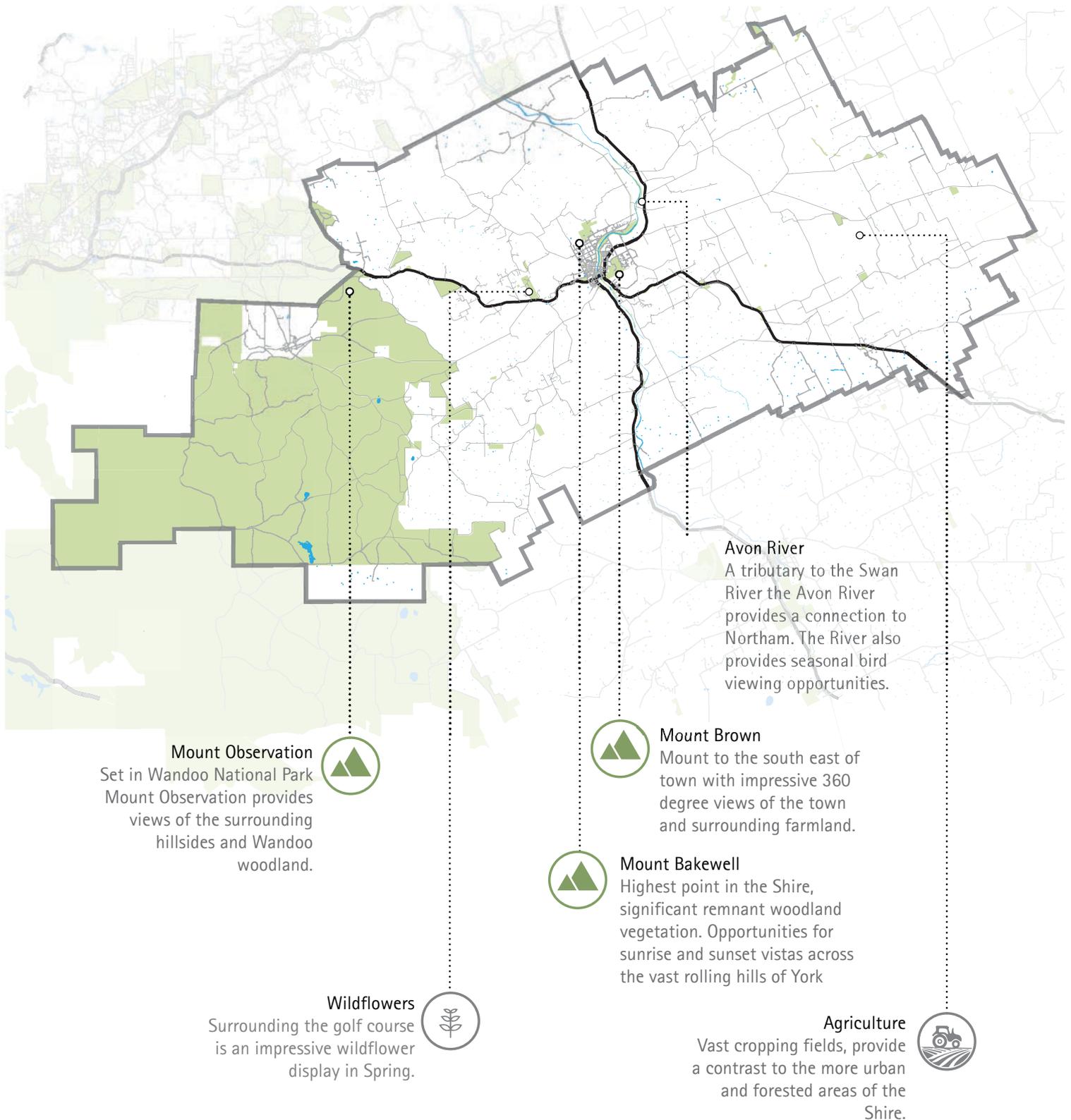


Figure 18. Iconic landscape experiences in the Shire of York.

## REGION OVERVIEW

The Shire of York has numerous landscapes of interest, and there are many areas where trail experiences could be developed. Three main areas have been identified as focal points, Mt Brown, Mt Bakewell and the Avon River. In addition to the three focal areas, the existing urban heritage walk trails and self drive trails have been identified as priorities to update.

It is important that the Shire of York progresses with projects that are deliverable and of benefit to both residents and visitors. Once priority projects are established the Shire can then focus on showcasing all of the other assets the Shire has to offer. There are some wonderful sites throughout the Shire reserves which have seasonal wildflowers and very interesting bird life. Many of these areas can be accessed presently, although creating trail experiences would open the experiences up to more people.

Three focus areas:

	MOUNT BROWN	MOUNT BAKEWELL	THE AVON RIVER
Walk Trail	✓	✓	✓
Mountain Bike Trail	✓	✓	✓
Equestrian Trail	✓		
Trail Head	✓	✓	✓
Directional Signage	✓	✓	✓
Warning Signage (road crossings, user conflicts and etiquette etc.)	✓	✓	✓
Car Parking	✓	✓	✓
Toilets	✓	✓	✓
Environmental Assessments (Flora/Fauna/Dieback)	✓	✓	✓
Aboriginal Engagement (SWALC)	✓	✓	✓

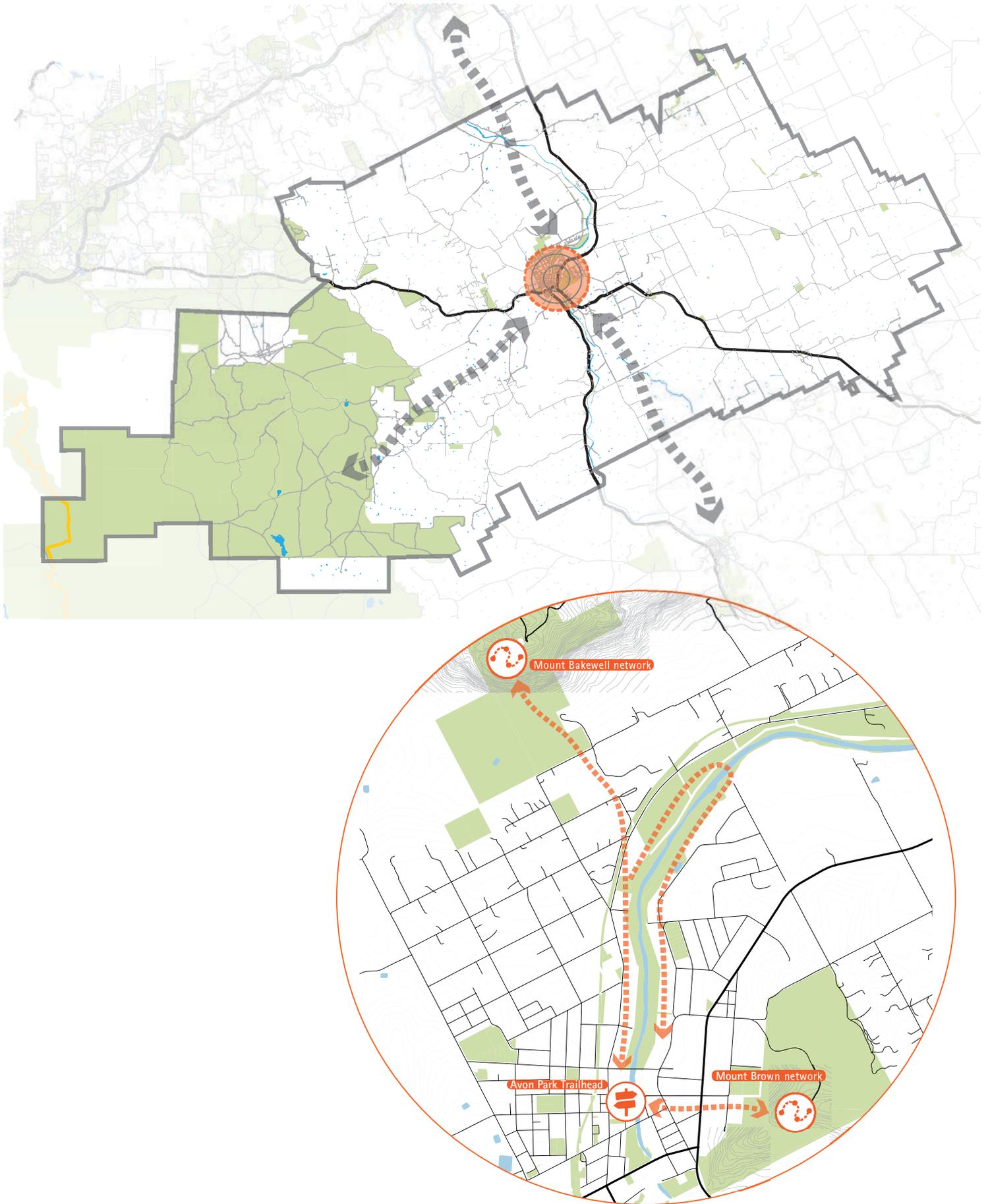


Figure 19. Region overview, three focus areas for trails - Mount Brown, Mount Bakewell and the Avon River, broader connections into York and these trail networks should also be considered.



## BUSHWALKING / URBAN WALK / TRAIL RUNNING

Bushwalking in the Shire of York has been ad-hoc to date. The only designated walking experiences are the urban heritage walks and the Avon River Trail.

### The Avon River Trail

The Avon River Trail has been documented in past planning documents and is recognised as an asset to the town of York, for both residents and visitors. Recent works have provided additional access either side of the river. The preferred type of walking trail is a loop walk (DLGSC, 2019). Ideally there would be a range of loop trails of varying distance departing from a Trail Hub in Avon Park. Where feasible the trail should be grade 1, access for all.

There is an underutilised area of bushland to the south of the Balladong bridge. This area should be considered as an extension of the access for all trail. Birdlife on the river fluctuates annually and a bird hide containing interpretive panels would be of interest to both locals and visitors and add to the experience on the Avon River Trail.

### Mt Bakewell Summit Trail

My Bakewell is the highest peak in the Shire of York and local residents have reported people regularly asking how you get to the top. The views from the top of Mt Bakewell are extensive, and it is a location where both sunset and sunrise can be witnessed.

There is an opportunity to create a challenging climbing trail, which would be an experience that would challenge fitness, provide excellent views and provide locals and visitors an exciting way to access the summit of Mt Bakewell.

An additional meandering trail would create a loop experience and offer a lesser grade gradual ascent and descent of the mountain. This trail could be dual use with mountain bikers utilising as a climbing trail only.

Mt Bakewell is a place of significance to Aboriginal people and further engagement should be carried out should the Shire progress with the summit trail.

### Mt Brown

Many people already walk the unsanctioned trails on Mt Brown. The summit is a short 1.5km walk from Avon Park and offers wonderful views across the town and of Mt Bakewell to the north west. The current trails ascend the slope at a precarious gradient, which is not inviting for many walkers. There is no signage, which makes it difficult to navigate if you are not familiar with the tracks. The alternative route is a 3km walk up the bitumen Pioneer Road.

There is an opportunity to create an inviting, grade 2 or 3 walk trail to the summit of Mt Brown. There is also an opportunity to create a loop trail around the summit, allowing for views across the Shire and may provide vantage points for spectators to watch mountain biking events.

The summit infrastructure is dated, and the signage needs replacement. There is scope for an impressive lookout, with interpretative panels and seating. A site re-design should be considered to incorporate increased visitor flow and events.



## MOUNTAIN BIKING

Mountain biking has become increasingly popular in York following numerous successful events on the unsanctioned trails on Mt Brown. Event managers have mapped and monitored trails before and after events. Photos taken prior to 2019 events have highlighted that there have been erosion issues occurring since the trails were used for events in 2018. This is likely due to increased number of riders coming to York to practice on the trails before events, and the increased visibility of the York trails due to social media.

Environmental studies (flora, fauna and dieback) should be carried out across the Mt Brown reserve and a detailed concept design created to develop a sustainable trail network servicing multiple trail users.

The existing unsanctioned trails are very attractive to a portion of the mountain biking community. Any development and rationalisation of the existing network should take this into account, and the Shire should work closely with the York mountain bike community and event organisers to ensure the integrity of the York trails are not lost. There is however a need to provide entry level and progressively challenging experiences to riders at the beginner end of the spectrum. Mt Brown reserve is of sufficient size to cater for all level of abilities.

A concept plan allows for proper management of the reserve and offers opportunity for community involvement in design, management, maintenance and rehabilitation programs.



## CYCLE

Cycle trails can be relatively low cost to implement if utilising existing infrastructure. A number of routes should be established and mapped. Simple wayfinding signage could be attached to existing signage, and strategically located warning signage should be considered. The Wheatbelt Cycle Network plan, currently in development by the Department of Transport, should be consulted prior to proceeding with any further planning for cycling in York.

### Future Rail Trail

The railway line between York and Bruce Rock is no longer functional. There are still railway tracks on the western section, but the rails have been removed between Quairading and Bruce Rock. A rail trail linking the York townsite to Bruce Rock would create a multi-day experience and would create an easy day ride out to Greenhills Pub and the Greenhills Heritage Trail. It is currently unknown if the train line will become active again as transport methods and fuel innovations continue. Should the tracks be removed from the western end of the line, a rail trail should be considered.



## EQUESTRIAN

The Shire of York, and especially York townsite is home to many horse and pony owners. There is a high density of small acreage properties in town, and larger properties towards the periphery of town.

There are currently no public equestrian exercise areas or trails in the Shire of York. The west of the shire is within public drinking water catchment area, therefore is not suitable for equestrian activity.

Equestrian opportunities around Mt Brown should be investigated by developing a concept design of the Mt Brown reserve. A trail around the perimeter of the reserve would create a 5km loop. There is a requirement for float parking and sufficient area to saddle up to accommodate riders coming from further afield.

The base of Mt Bakewell has previously been identified as an equine precinct. There is a lot of equestrian activity, including the York Racecourse. Further consultation and community engagement are required to determine a suitable public horse exercise area within Shire reserve and determine a suitable trail head location. The Shire of York has thoroughbred racing and training, and interactions between horses and other recreational users needs careful consideration.

The equestrian community would benefit from a trail linking an equine precinct to Mt Brown, crossing the river and connecting via Red Swamp Place. This should be a long-term aim. Easy navigation and multiple exercise opportunities would assist York to be an attractive location for horse owners, create a commercial equestrian opportunity and increase equestrian interest in general resulting in support for the York Racing facility.



## PADDLE

There is an opportunity for seasonal paddling in the Shire of York. The Avon River can be high flowing in winter, but during dryer months the river can cease to flow entirely. An Avon River paddling experience is feasible and can be achieved by creating access to the river for people to climb in and out of boats. The ecology of the riverbanks and surrounds should be considered for environmental value to ensure river access is not detrimental to habitat, or river flow. A clear line of portage should be available for individuals to carry watercraft from vehicles to the water.

Educational signage about safety should be displayed at the access point highlighting the fluctuating flow of the Avon River, the possibility of submerged objects, and additional safety information.



## 2WD

There are 14 Shire of York brochures that outline self-drive opportunities within the Shire, and an additional 3 trails that note York as a destination in the itinerary. There is a lot of detail in the brochures, and they lead to many points of interest. The brochures do not contain maps, rather written directions, which can be complicated. Written directions are also very difficult for people that English is not their first language, or anyone wishing to drive the trails on their own.

A solution to the overwhelming content within the drive trail brochures is to develop a Shire of York point of interest map. Each point should be numbered, and the reverse of the map should have information on each site. A list of recommended itineraries may help those that do not wish to plan the entire drive themselves and give an indication of timeframes.

Recommended itineraries could be uploaded on to the Trails WA website. Detailed information on each site can be loaded on to Trails WA, including maps and images.



## TRAIL BIKE

The Shire of York is fortunate to have one of Western Australia's 6 gazetted Off Road Vehicle areas within close proximity to town and the Perth Metropolitan area. There are many trail bikes and off road vehicles looking for areas to recreate across the state. Creation of inviting off road vehicle areas encourages skills development and competence of young riders, discourages riding in other areas and can create a social atmosphere and an exciting day out for the entire family.

The existing ORV area could be enhanced for riders and local residents. Extensions to the facility should include noise buffers such as vegetation and earth bunding. Electric bikes are becoming more readily available, and there is a likelihood that in the future many ORV will be electric, reducing the requirement for noise buffering solutions.

# SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

## HIGH PRIORITY

The following trail recommendations are considered high priority for development, please note trail alignments are indicative only. Refer to Appendix A for more detail on each trail.



### Self Drive Trails

Rationalise existing self drive trails and upgrade trail information platform to digital.



### Mount Brown Network

Mount Brown has numerous existing trails throughout the reserve. The network requires rationalisation and a concept plan to represent all user groups. There are many existing MTB trails that should be considered as part of the concept plan.



### Heritage Trails

Rationalise existing heritage trails in York town to 2-3 loops.

- Existing walk trail
- Existing ORV area
- - - Proposed walk trail
- - - Proposed mountain bike trail
- - - Proposed cycle trail
- - - Proposed equestrian trail
- - - Proposed shared use trail
- - - Proposed paddle trail

# SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

## MEDIUM PRIORITY

The following trail recommendations are considered high priority for development, please note trail alignments are indicative only. Refer to Appendix A for more detail on each trail.



### Mt Bakewell Summit Trail

A steep climbing walk trail up the southern face of Mt Bakewell on Shire land will provide excellent views over the town and surrounds. The experience will be of recreational value to York residents and a tourist attraction for visitors.



### Mt Bakewell Private MTB

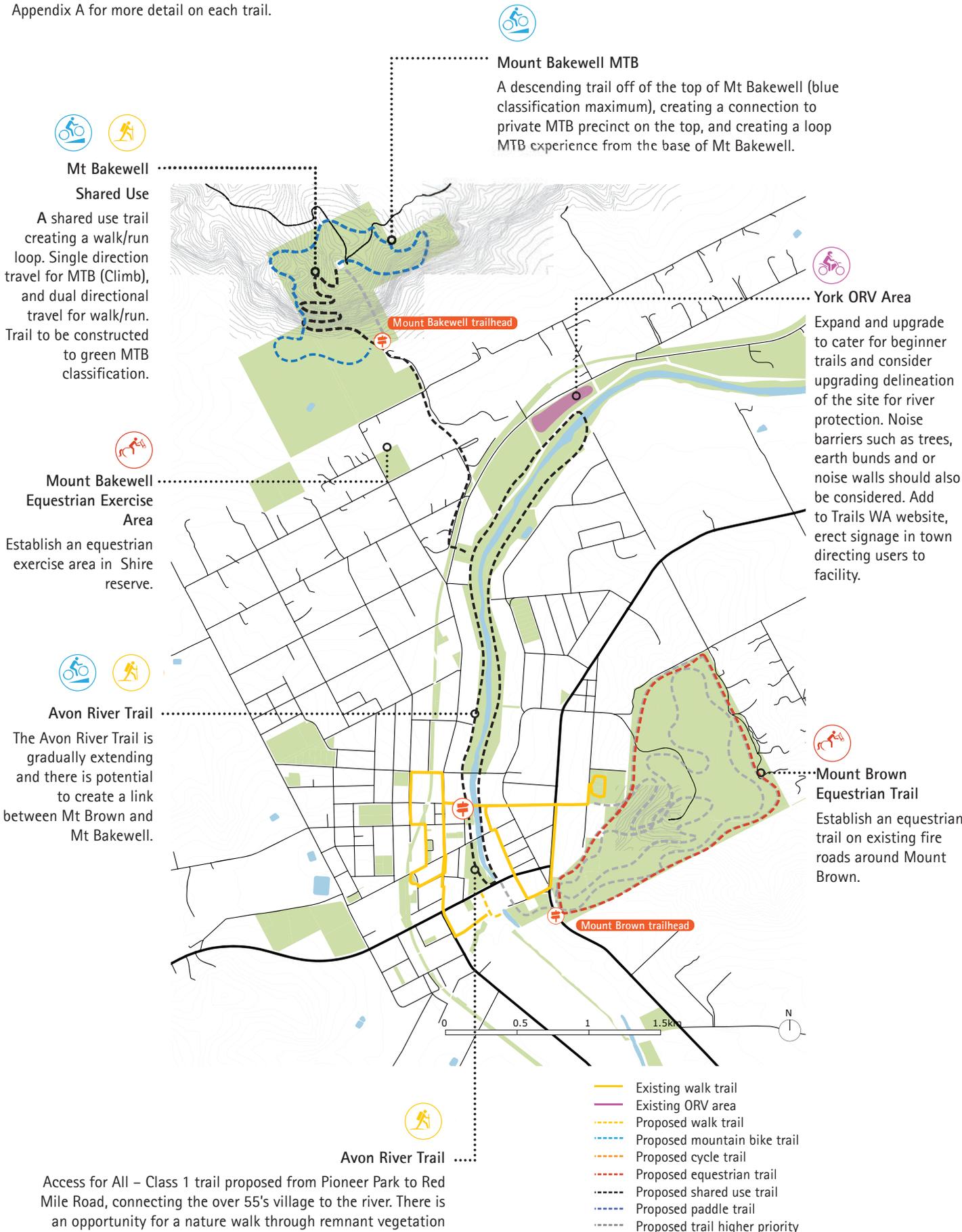
Mount Bakewell has terrain which presents significant opportunity for mountain bike trails. Much of this opportunity is on freehold land, it is recommended that the Shire of York support development of trails in this area as long as their development follows recommended trail development processes and major constraints and barriers are considered appropriately. Trails should aim to protect the environmental values of the area and create a trail network that is sustainable for future generations.



- Existing walk trail
- Existing ORV area
- Proposed walk trail
- Proposed mountain bike trail
- Proposed cycle trail
- Proposed equestrian trail
- Proposed shared use trail
- Proposed paddle trail

# MEDIUM TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The following trail recommendations are considered medium priority for development, please note trail alignments are indicative only. Refer to Appendix A for more detail on each trail.



**Mt Bakewell Shared Use**  
 A shared use trail creating a walk/run loop. Single direction travel for MTB (Climb), and dual directional travel for walk/run. Trail to be constructed to green MTB classification.

**Mount Bakewell Equestrian Exercise Area**  
 Establish an equestrian exercise area in Shire reserve.

**Avon River Trail**  
 The Avon River Trail is gradually extending and there is potential to create a link between Mt Brown and Mt Bakewell.

**Avon River Trail**  
 Access for All – Class 1 trail proposed from Pioneer Park to Red Mile Road, connecting the over 55's village to the river. There is an opportunity for a nature walk through remnant vegetation between Balladong Road and Red Mile Road. Seasonal birdlife congregating on the Avon River merits a bird hide with ramped access to allow for access for all and should be accompanied by interpretation.

**Mount Bakewell MTB**  
 A descending trail off of the top of Mt Bakewell (blue classification maximum), creating a connection to private MTB precinct on the top, and creating a loop MTB experience from the base of Mt Bakewell.

**York ORV Area**  
 Expand and upgrade to cater for beginner trails and consider upgrading delineation of the site for river protection. Noise barriers such as trees, earth bunds and or noise walls should also be considered. Add to Trails WA website, erect signage in town directing users to facility.

**Mount Brown Equestrian Trail**  
 Establish an equestrian trail on existing fire roads around Mount Brown.

- Existing walk trail
- Existing ORV area
- - - Proposed walk trail
- - - Proposed mountain bike trail
- - - Proposed cycle trail
- - - Proposed equestrian trail
- - - Proposed shared use trail
- - - Proposed paddle trail
- - - Proposed trail higher priority

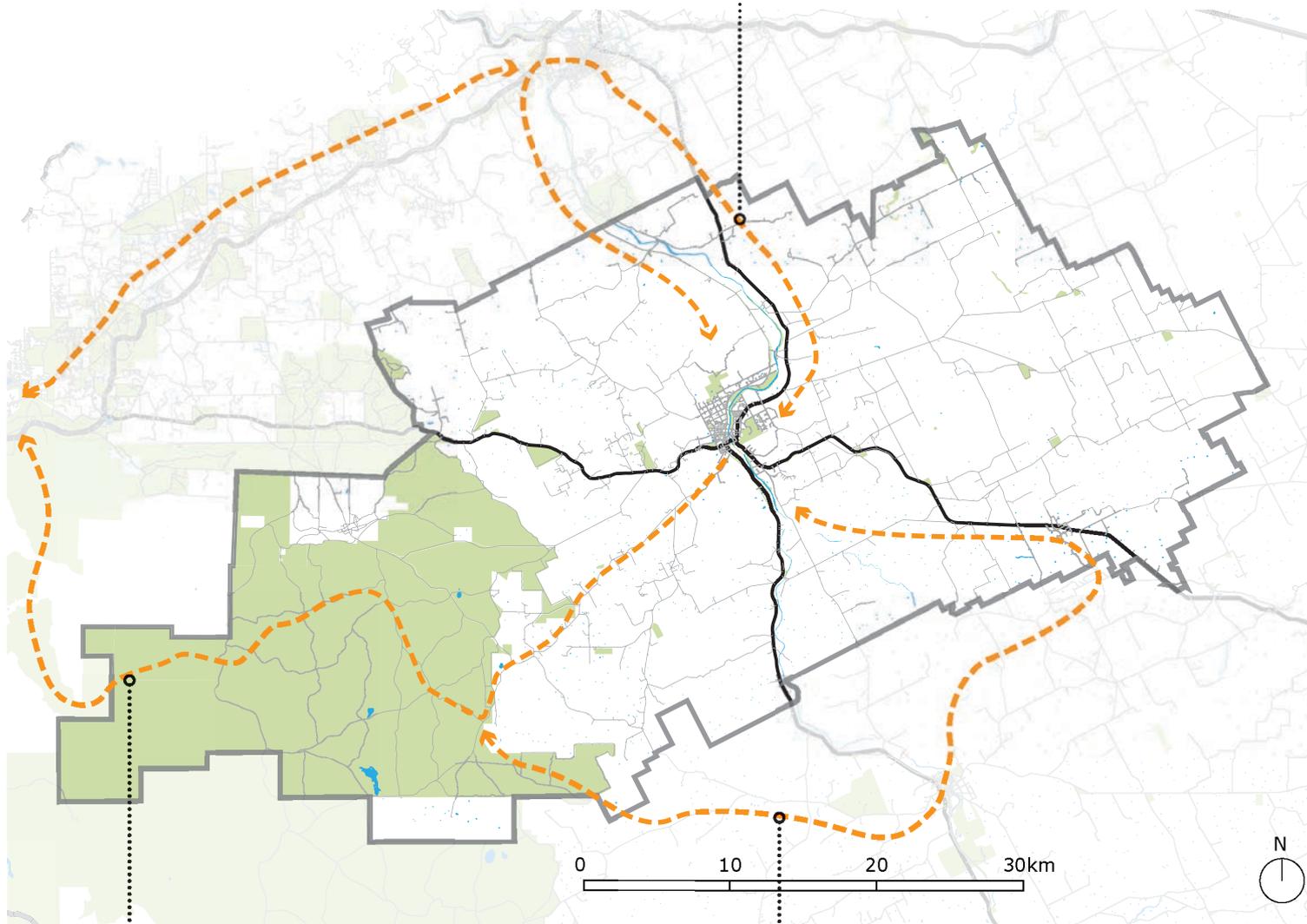
## MEDIUM TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The following trail recommendations are considered medium priority for development, please note trail alignments are indicative only. Refer to Appendix A for more detail on each trail.



### Road Cycle Routes

York to Northam – York to Beverley – Proposed road loops of varying distance will be detailed in the master plan. Online platforms show high cycle use presently, mapping and outlining designated routes will offer visitors additional cycling activities.



### Touring Route

Mundaring, Northam (via Kep Track), York, Pickering Brook, Mundaring. York is the perfect half way point for a 2-3 day cycle. Riders can travel on the Kep track from Mundaring to Northam, then travel Northam to York (via river trail in the future), and then back via gravel roads and through existing roads within the Mundaring State Forest to Pickering Brook. The trail will then connect to the proposed Perth Hills Trail Loop, connection on to the Munda Biddi to return to Mundaring.

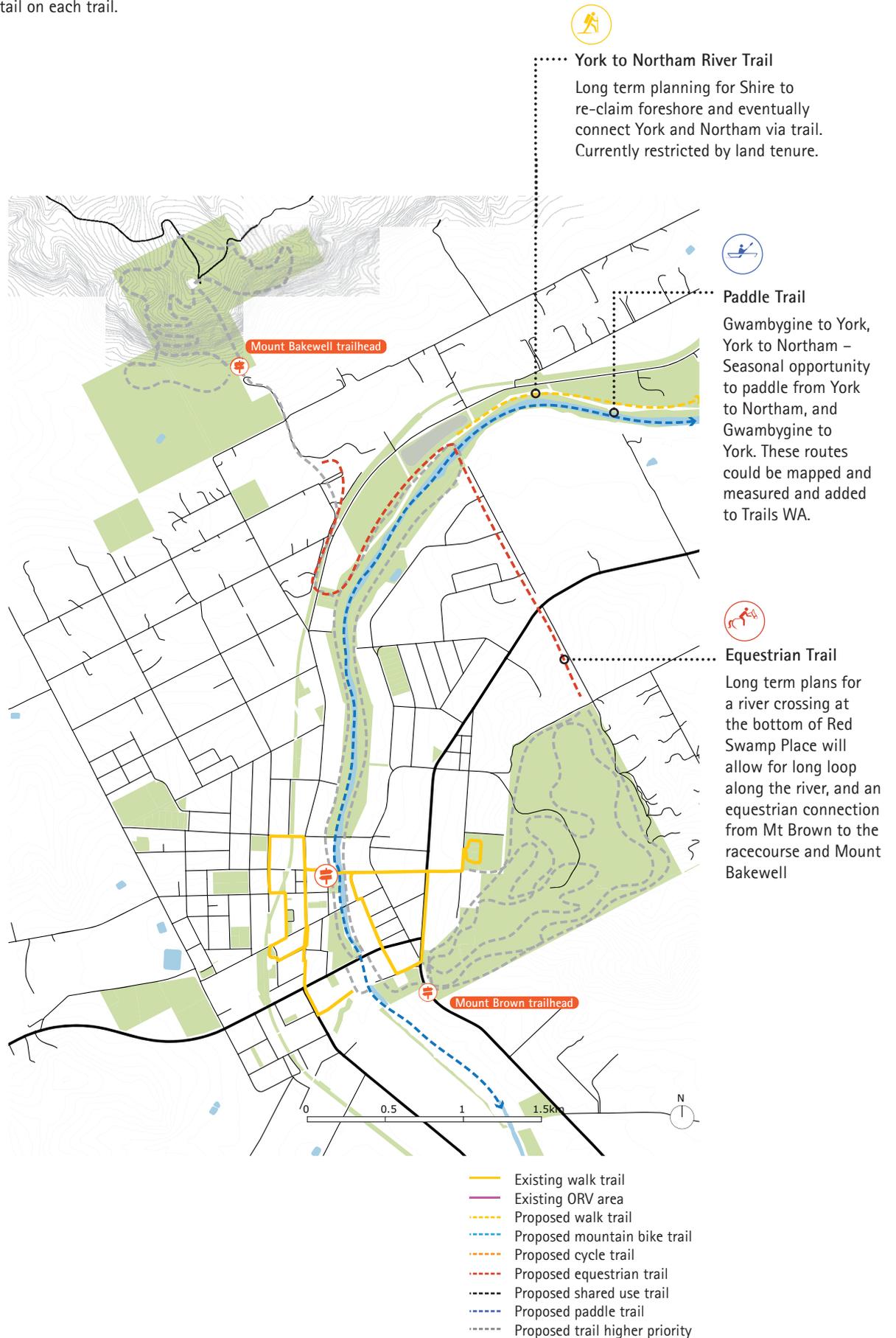


### Gravel Cycle Route

York, Talbot, Beverley, Greenhills, York – full day cycle opportunities from town, seasonally taking in the canola fields and wildflowers. If a rail trail comes to fruition in the future the trail can link it at Greenhills Inn.

## LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The following trail recommendations are considered low priority for development, please note trail alignments are indicative only. Refer to Appendix A for more detail on each trail.



## LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

The following trail recommendations are considered low priority for development, please note trail alignments are indicative only. Refer to Appendix A for more detail on each trail.



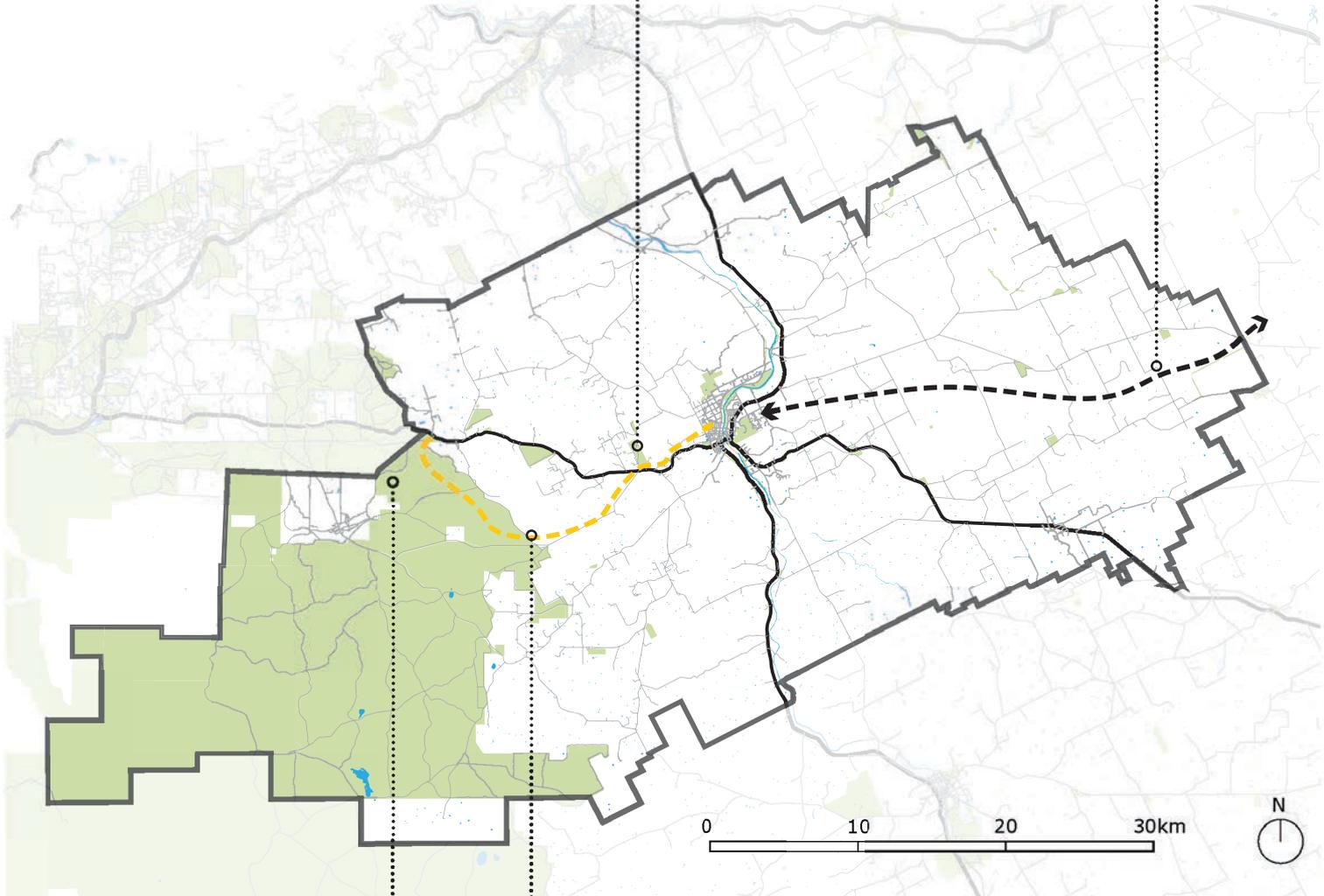
### Golf Course wildflower walk

Seasonal wild flower walk. Terrain is good for a simple class 2, low maintenance walk trail. A loop walk, with interpretation and views out towards Mt Bakewell.



### York to Bruce Rock Rail trail

Review if tracks are removed off of the alignment. Investigate use of service roads adjacent to tracks. Seasonal inundation with water will require infrastructure investment.



### Walk to York

Subject to changes in the PDWSA policy 13 investigate potential for walk trail connecting Mount Observation to York.



### Mount Observation trail network

Subject to changes in the PDWSA policy 13 investigate potential for walk trail loops and a mountain bike loop.

## OBJECTIVE 2. TRAIL USER EXPERIENCE

ENSURE QUALITY TRAIL USER EXPERIENCES, WHICH WILL DELIVER SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND TOURISM BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY.

It is important to ensure promotion of trail opportunities and experiences is appropriate to the level of development and the intended markets. On an ongoing basis, it will be important to maintain up to date, accurate trail information to ensure accurate communication and accessibility for users.

Events can provide considerable economic benefit to the local communities in which they are hosted. With implementation of this master plan, there will be opportunities to create new events, improve existing events and support the development of the high performance environment. These opportunities will be of interest to organisations already running events as well as the existing and emerging private event promoters' market. It will be important to manage the increase in competition in the events market, and to grow it sustainably, ensuring adequate infrastructure and support.

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
2.1 Record and analyse trail usage data and market visitation for all existing and new trail facilities. Establish a central reporting system to provide information for the industry.	SOY		Short/ ongoing
2.2 Develop a marketing and promotion strategy that establishes a trail brand and identifies promotional opportunities through partnership with Experience Perth, Avon Valley Tourism and Tourism WA.	SOY		Short/ ongoing
2.3 Ensure locations identified for hosting events consider the requirements for event infrastructure and sustainable revenue based models for hosting events.	All stakeholders		Ongoing
2.4 Develop a coordinated marketing presence, linking signage, maps and other marketing collateral to increase awareness of the trails and services in the Shire of York Region. Use Trails WA as the online platform.	SOY		Short/ ongoing
2.5 Encourage and support new trail business opportunities and identified gaps in service provision.	SOY		Short/ ongoing

## OBJECTIVE 3.

### TRAILS INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

WELL PLANNED AND DESIGNED FACILITIES AND SERVICES APPROPRIATE TO SCALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF TRAILS, AIMED AT ENCOURAGING USE OF THE TRAILS NETWORK BY LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

Infrastructure and services associated with trails are crucial to trail user experience. A thorough and coordinated approach to provision of trail information, signs, trailheads, amenities etc. will ensure trail users gain access to the experience they are seeking and prompt return visits.

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
3.1 Develop signage plan for trails in the Shire of York (covering trail heads, directional signs, safety and emergency signage), with consistent branding and in line with Australian Standards where available.	SOY		Short/ongoing
3.2 Support the Shire of York visitor centre staff and facilities to be a central contact and information point for trails, supported by an online platform (Trails WA).	SOY		Short/ongoing
3.3 Develop a visible and accessible central trail head/hub in Avon Park which outlines trail experiences in the Shire of York. Update and upgrade as additional trail experiences are developed.	SOY		Short/ongoing
3.4 Ensure trail services provided match the key requirements for location significance for each trail type.	SOY		Short/ongoing

## OBJECTIVE 4. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

OPTIMISE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES ACROSS TRAIL LANDOWNERS AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS TO ENSURE THE SHIRE OF YORK AND THE AVON VALLEY ARE POSITIONED AS TRAILS DESTINATIONS.

Key to the sustainability and longevity of any trail development is an effective and efficient governance and management structure. It is recommended that a Shire of York develop an implementation plan and identify key stakeholders for each aspect of the master Plan. Consultation with stakeholders from all trail types, neighboring landowners and local businesses is important for feasible concept design and will optimise results.

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
4.1 The Shire of York forms a sub-committee of officers responsible for delivery of the trails master plan.	SOY	Community Groups	Short/ ongoing
4.2 Develop a volunteer program to assist in the ongoing management of trails, and the environments they exist in, involving local clubs and organisations. Ensure the program is accessible, well promoted, coordinated and adequately resourced.	SOY	Community Groups	Medium/ ongoing
4.3 Conduct an annual review of the master plan recommendations to monitor progress and ensure outcomes are achieved.	SOY		Ongoing
4.4 Prepare a policy and process to guide access to private land, with consideration given to lease or licensing arrangements. Work with private landowners to develop public trails on Mt Bakewell.	SOY		Medium
4.5 Utilise policy and process to work with private landowners to develop public trails along the Avon River .	SOY		Long

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# APPENDIX A

## TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following tables provide more detail regarding each trail proposal. Proposed trails focus on delivering the trail experiences that showcase the best of the Shire of York and fill the identified gaps in the existing trail offer. The proposed trails outlined are not intended to preclude any other trails from development, should there be opportunity, stakeholder support, available funding and a sustainable management model. All trail development should follow appropriate trail development process as outlined in Appendix B.

This planning process has identified priority trails, future development processes may lead to additional opportunities or constraints being identified. Private development can supplement provision of trails from government and should be supported where they meet the objectives of the final master plan.

For each existing trail and recommended new trail the following have been identified:

### Trail Priority

Proposed trail recommendations have been categorised into the following planning horizons:

Short Term High Priority – planned works to be developed within 1-3 years

Short Term Medium Priority – planned works to be developed within 1-5 years

Medium term – planned works to be developed with 5-10 years

Long term – planned works to be completed after 2028 (beyond the scope of this master Plan)

### Economic Impact

Economic Impact refers to the potential for the trail to have an economic impact for the region. It also assess the potential for the trail to generate revenue for ongoing management. The higher the rating the more economic value the trail potentially has.

### Community > Tourism

Community > Tourism rating refers to the nature of the trail opportunity being primarily related to community recreation value or tourism value. The higher the rating the more potential for tourism value the trail has.

### Opportunity

The opportunity rating refers to the potential value of the trail experience, taking into consideration the landscape features, scope and scale of trail, accessibility and support infrastructure.

### Redevelopment need / deliverability

For existing trails – the need for redevelopment to bring the quality of the trail in line with the opportunity. The higher the rating the less need for redevelopment.

For proposed trails – the deliverability rating refers to the general location of the trail considering trail supply, management, planning and land use. The higher the rating the more easily delivered the trail improvements/development is.

## EXISTING TRAILS

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	LENGTH (KM)	CLASSIFICATION	VISITOR SERVICES QUALITY	TRAIL QUALITY	TRAIL MANAGER	
TRAIL MODEL	TRAIL PRIORITY	ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY > TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	REDEVELOPMENT NEED		
<b>URBAN WALK</b>							
01	Heritage Trail 1	Local	1.2	Grade 1	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
<p>Previous master plans suggest rationalising heritage trails to create 2-3 loops. Common Ground trails support amalgamation and rationalising to create 2-3 loops, upgrade app and upload routes on to Trails WA website. The existing app is very informative and easy to use. It was released in 2014, and updated in 2017. There have been significant advances in app capability in the past 5 years, and this app could be slightly more attractive to a larger audience.</p>							
02	Heritage Trail 2	Local	1.4	Grade 1	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
03	Heritage Trail 3	Local	1.8	Grade 1	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
04	Heritage Trail 4	Local	5.1	Grade 1	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
05	York Cemetery Heritage Trail	Local	0.5	Grade 2	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
06	Avon Walk Trail	Local	16	Grade 1	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail	Medium	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
<b>Self Drive Trails</b>							
07	Self Drive Trail 1 - Gwambygine	Local	24	Easy	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail - Loop	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
<p>Common Ground suggest a rationalisation of the existing drive trail suite. Amalgamate in to one map displaying points of interest, similar to the Margaret River Region map, and accompany with suggested routes. Ideally Avon Tourism update the map on their website - very poor detail presently. A drive trail map, with a similar level of information to the Heritage Trail app.</p>							
08	Self Drive Trail 2 - Railway Road	Local	5.6	Easy	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail - one way	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
09	Self Drive Trail 3 - Spencers Brook/ Mokine	Local	73	Easy	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail - Loop	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
10	Self Drive Trail 4 - Sandgate Road	Local	32	Easy	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail - Loop	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
11	Self Drive Trail 5 - Helena Road	Local	58	Easy	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail - Loop	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
12	Self Drive Trail 6 - York to York via Talbot	Local	66	Easy	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail - Loop	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
13	Self Drive Trail 7 - Ghost Towns Tour	Local	87	Grade 1	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Individual Trail	Short - High	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
<b>TRAILBIKE</b>							
14	York Off Road Vehicle Area	Regional	4Ha	Varies	Average	Average	Shire of York
	Trail network	Medium	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	
<p>Expand and upgrade to cater for beginner trails and consider upgrading delineation of the site for river protection. Noise barriers such as tree, vegetation bund and or noise walls should also be considered. Add to Trails WA website, erect signage in town directing users to facility,</p>							

## PROPOSED TRAILS

RECOMMENDATION	TRAIL PRIORITY	LENGTH (KM)	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	PROJECT LEAD	PROJECT PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
TRAIL MODEL			ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY > TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	DELIVERABILITY
<b>SHARED USE</b>						
Avon River Trail	Short - Medium		Local	Shire of York	River Cons. Society	Medium
Individual Trail			● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Multi-use trail providing a loop trail around the Avon River. Class 1 on the western side of the river from Balladong over 55's community in to town. Surface to remain as is along fire access. Long term planned river crossing at the base of Red Swamp Place. Crossing to be built to accommodate walk, bike and equestrian. Link Avon River Trail up to the existing fire trails on either side of the river, creating a full loop experience for walkers, runners and cyclists, and a linking trail for equestrian from Mt.Brown to the base of Mt.Bakewell.						
Mt. Bakewell Shared Use	Long	2	Regional	Shire of York	AVTAT	Medium
Individual Trail			● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
A meandering trail to compliment the proposed climbing walk trail. This trail will be an easy (green) mountain bike ascent trail, linking riders to the top of Mt Bakewell, and offering walkers an alternative ascent or descent, creating a loop walk. Common Ground suggest this trail be considered if a private mountain bike facility is constructed on the top of Mt Bakewell.						
<b>WALK TRAIL</b>						
Mt Bakewell - Summit Trail	Short - Medium	1	Regional	Shire of York	AVTAT	Short
Individual Trail			● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Mt Bakewell is the highest point in the Shire of York, with an elevation of 417m. The summit of Mt Bakewell is the perfect vantage point to view the town of York and surrounding Shire. The sunrise and sunset can both be viewed from the summit of Mt Bakewell. A steep, steady, climbing trail on Shire land to the summit of Mt Bakewell will provide the community and visitors with a recreational opportunity that is challenging and rewarding. An opportunity such as a challenging climb will attract a number of people, as there are no other opportunities like this in the surrounding area. A complimentary meandering trail is also proposed should a private mountain biking facility be developed on Mt. Bakewell. The meandering trail will also create a loop with the challenging climb trail, which enthusiasts may come and use for incline training.						
Mt Brown	Short - High	5	Local	Shire of York	AVTAT	Short
Individual Trail			● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
A walk starting at the trail hub in Avon Park. Heading east over the Swing Bridge and up past the cemetery, the trail will lead up to Mt Brown lookout. The alignment will then follow the existing stone descent to the carpark area, passing the ablutions, then cross over the road and round the top of Mt Brown, opening up views to the south. The trail will return to the base of the hill, crossing the road and joining the Avon River Trail via the Residency Museum and Clifford St. The distance from the Trail Hub in Pioneer Park to Mt Brown lookout is 1.5km. This can also be walked as a linear trail, with a 3km return.						
Avon River Trail - Access for all	Short - Medium	0.9	Local	Shire of York	AVTAT, River Cons. Society	Medium
Section of Trail			● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Access for all trail from the trail head in Pioneer Park up past Balladong Road bridge. Trail to continue under the Balladong Road bridge for short bush-walk experience, with ramped access to a birdhide on the river. A ramp to be installed to link the Balladong over 55's community, from Balladong road, down on to the Avon River Trail.						
Golf Course wild flower walk	Long	0.9	Local	Shire of York	Wild Flower Society, AVTAT	Medium
Individual Trail			● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Seasonal wildflower walk at the Golf Course. Relatively low cost class 2 trail. Good material for easy graded walk trail, and relatively low maintenance if constructed well. Interpretation requirement with imagery of plants and seasonal flowers.						
<b>PADDLE</b>						
Avon River Paddle Trail	Long	10 -35	Regional	Shire of York	AVTAT, River Cons. Society	Medium
Individual Trail (Seasonal)			● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Seasonally there is an opportunity to paddle from Gwambygine to York, and York to Northam.						

PROPOSED TRAILS – CONTINUED

RECOMMENDATION	TRAIL PRIORITY	LENGTH (KM)	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	PROJECT LEAD	PROJECT PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
<b>MOUNTAIN BIKE (MTB)</b>						
Mt. Brown – XC	Short – High	20	Regional	Shire of York	SOY MTB Community	Short
Trail Network			● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●
There are a number of existing MTB trails on Mt. Brown. Common Ground recommend that the Shire work with the local MTB community to rationalise existing trails, and begin sanctioning the trails.						
Mt. Bakewell MTB	Medium	2	Regional	Shire of York	Land owners & York MTB Community	Medium
Trail Network			● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●
A descending trail off of the top of Mt Bakewell (blue classification maximum), creating a connection to private MTB precinct on the top, and creating a loop MTB experience from the base of Mt Bakewell.						
Mt. Bakewell Private MTB	Medium	7–10	Regional	Land owners & York MTB Community	Shire of York	Medium
Trail Network			● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●
Mount Bakewell has terrain which presents significant opportunity for mountain bike trails. Much of this opportunity is on freehold land, it is recommended that the Shire of York support development of trails in this area as long as their development follows recommended trail development processes and major constraints and barriers are considered appropriately. Trails should aim to protect the environmental values of the area and create a trail network that is sustainable for future generations.						
<b>CYCLE</b>						
Road Loop – York to Northam	Medium	70	Local	Shire of York		Medium
Individual Trail			● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●
Online platforms indicate high use road riding between York and Northam.						
Gravel Route TBD – York Talbot Beverly	Medium	90	Local	Shire of York	DOT	Medium
Individual Trail			● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●
Gravel trail loop, taking in the York landscapes, passing Talbot Hall, Beverly and out past Greenhills pub and Heritage Trail. Ideally cycling back along the York to Greenhills rail trail, but in the meantime designing a route along existing roads						
Touring Loop – Mundaring/ Kep Track/ Northam/ York / Pickering Brook	Medium	>200	Local	Shire of York	DOT	Medium
Trail network			● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ●
Mundaring, Northam (via Kep), York, Pickering Brook, Mundaring. York is the perfect half way point for a 2–3 day cycle. Riders can travel on the Kep track from Mundaring to Northam, then travel Northam to York (via river trail in the future), and then back via gravel roads and through existing roads within the Mundaring State Forest to Pickering Brook. The trail will then connect to the proposed Perth Hills Trail Loop, connection on to the Munda Biddi to return to Mundaring.						

PROPOSED TRAILS – CONTINUED

RECOMMENDATION	TRAIL PRIORITY	LENGTH (KM)	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	PROJECT LEAD	PROJECT PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
TRAIL MODEL			ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY > TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	DELIVERABILITY
<b>EQUESTRIAN</b>						
Mount Bakewell Equestrian Exercise area	Medium	5	Local	Shire of York		Medium
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Establish an equestrian trail in reserves surrounding the racecourse.						
Mount Brown Equestrian Trail	Medium	6	Local	Shire of York		Medium
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Establish an equestrian trail on existing fire roads around Mount Brown						
Equestrian Link	Long		Local	Shire of York		Long
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Long term plans for a river crossing at the bottom of Red Swamp Place will allow for long loop along the river, and an equestrian connection from Mt Brown to the racecourse and Mt Bakewell						

PROPOSED OPPORTUNITIES WITH CURRENT CONSTRAINTS

RECOMMENDATION	TRAIL PRIORITY	LENGTH (KM)	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	PROJECT LEAD	PROJECT PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
TRAIL MODEL			ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY > TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	DELIVERABILITY
<b>MOUNTAIN BIKE (MTB)</b>						
Mt. Observation	Long	15	Local	Shire of York	SOY MTB Community	Short
<b>Individual Trail</b>			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Area within Public Drinking Water Source Area and protected under Recreational Policy 13						
<b>WALK TRAIL</b>						
Walk to York	Long	70	Local	Shire of York		Long
<b>Individual Trail</b>			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Area within Public Drinking Water Source Area and protected under Recreational Policy 13						
Mt. Observation	Long	10	Local	Shire of York		Long
<b>Trail Network</b>			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Area within Public Drinking Water Source Area and protected under Recreational Policy 13						
York to Northam River Trail	Long	30	Local	Shire of York		Long
<b>Individual Trail</b>			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Property boundaries are to the middle of the Avon River or to the high water mark. Shire should consider re-claiming the river edges when properties are sold for conservation and recreation.						

<b>SHARED USE</b>						
York to Bruce Rock Rail Trail	Long	30	Local	Shire of York		Long
<b>Individual Trail</b>			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Railway not accessible. There are still train tracks on the railway line between York and Greenhills. In the future, should these tracks be removed, the Shire should consider a rail trail from York to Bruce Rock. The Greenhills pub is a good distance for a cycle, or horse ride.						

# APPENDIX B

## COSTINGS

### RESOURCING AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Funding for trails varies and most projects that are successful in receiving grants and sponsorship are well planned and form part of a wider strategy and or master Plan. They have benefits, either environmental, social and/or economic. Well developed project plans, business cases and sound concept design will assist in gaining support.

Many grants programs are short lived, or change focus over time, therefore funding opportunities should be continually review. Some potential funding sources include:

- Federal Government
- State Government - DBCA
- State Government - DLGSC (Lottery West)
- Local Government
- Grants
- Public Private Partnership
- Crowd Funding
- Entrepreneurial Contributions
- Large Enterprises

Potential funding and partnership opportunities relevant to this project include:

- Australia Council - Community Partnerships - [www.australiacouncil.gov.au](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au)
- BUPA Health Foundation Grants Program - [www.bupa.com.au](http://www.bupa.com.au)
- Commonwealth Bank Staff Community Fund - [www.commbank.com.au](http://www.commbank.com.au)
- Community Business Bureau (CBB) Community Development Grants [www.cbb.com.au](http://www.cbb.com.au)
- Department of Local Government and Communities: Youth Activities Grants - [www.communitieswa.gov.au/grants](http://www.communitieswa.gov.au/grants)
- Department of Sports and Recreation - [www.dsr.wa.gov.au](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au)
- Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal Grants - [www.frrr.org.au](http://www.frrr.org.au)
- Harold Mitchell Foundation - [www.haroldmitchellfoundation](http://www.haroldmitchellfoundation)
- Healthway Aboriginal Health Project - [www.healthway.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthway.wa.gov.au)
- Healthway Health Promotion Project Grants and Sport and Racing sponsorship - [www.healthway.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthway.wa.gov.au)
- Lotterywest - Community spaces outdoor - [www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au/grants](http://www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au/grants)
- Lotterywest - Trails - [www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au/grants/grant-types/trails](http://www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au/grants/grant-types/trails)
- RAC Sponsorship - Community Partnerships - [www.rac.com.au](http://www.rac.com.au)
- SportAus Move it AUS - participation and infrastructure grants - [www.sportaus.gov.au](http://www.sportaus.gov.au)
- Telstra Foundation Social Innovation - [www.telstrafoundation.com](http://www.telstrafoundation.com)

### COST ESTIMATES

Cost of signage will be determined following detailed trail audit of existing signage and development of a signage plan for the region (refer to recommendation 3.1).

For proposed trails the cost estimates outlines in table 21 on the following page are provided for each development stage (note trail proposals are typically done internally by the land manager, framework and corridor evaluation are based on trail significance, management cost is 5% of construction).

Table 21. Cost Estimates

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	APPROXIMATE DISTANCE (KM)	PROPOSAL FRAMEWORK	SITE ASSESSMENT	CONCEPT PLANNING	CORRIDOR EVALUATION	DETAILED DESIGN	CONSTRUCTION	MANAGEMENT	
				\$2/m	\$1/m		\$3/m	\$40/m		
<b>BUSHWALK/URBAN WALK/TRAIL RUN</b>										
Mt Brown Walk Trail linear	Regional	3	\$4K	\$6K	\$3K	\$10K	\$9K	\$120K	\$6K	
Mt Brown Walk Trail linear with loop at summit	Regional	5	\$4K	\$10K	\$5K	\$10K	\$15K	\$200K	\$10K	
Avon River Trail – Short Loop	Local	4	\$2K	\$10K	\$5K	\$5K	\$15K	\$200K	\$10K	
Avon River Trail – Long Loop	Local	10	\$2K	\$20K	\$10K	\$5K	\$30K	\$600K	\$30K	
Avon River Trail Access for All extension, plus bird hide	Local	1	\$2K	\$2K	TBC	\$5K	TBC	TBC	TBC	
Note Concept Development, Detailed Design and Construction cost are to be confirmed as there are additional civil requirements for infrastructure.										
Mt Bakewell – Summit Trail	Local	1.5	\$2K	\$20K	\$10K	\$5K	\$20K	TBC	TBC	
Note Construction costs will be determined by design outcomes.										
Golf Course – Wildflower walk	Local	1.5	\$2K	\$3K	\$3K	\$5K	\$5K	\$60K	\$3K	
River Trail –York to Northam (shared use)	Local	Long term low priority – feasibility and costing should be carried out as cost estimates now will not represent cost in future.								
<b>MOUNTAIN BIKE</b>										
Mt Brown – MTB	Regional	10-20	\$4K	\$30K	\$15K	\$10K	\$45K	\$600K	\$30K	
Mt Bakewell – MTB Private	Regional	10-15								
Mt Bakewell – MTB public green trail (shared use with walking)	Local	2	\$2K	\$4K	\$3K	\$5K	\$6K	\$80K	\$4K	
Mt Bakewell – MTB public descent trail	Local	2	\$2K	\$4K	\$3K	\$5K	\$6K	\$80K	\$4K	
<b>EQUESTRIAN</b>										
Mt Brown Periphery Loop	Regional	6	\$4K	\$6K	\$15K	\$10K	\$18K	\$240K	\$12K	
Mt Bakewell – horse exercise area TBD at the base of Mt Bakewell	Local									
North South connection – Mt Brown to Mt Bakewell Equestrian precinct.	Long term low priority – feasibility and costing should be carried out as cost estimates now will not represent cost in future.									
<b>CYCLE</b>										
Road Cycle Routes	Trails utilise existing infrastructure									
Touring Cycle Route	Trails utilise existing infrastructure									
Gravel Cycle Route	Trails utilise existing infrastructure									
<b>PADDLE</b>										
Avon River Trail	Paddle craft launch infrastructure will vary in cost depending on design and materials.									