



Bark

Private land

Gully

DRAFT
March 2012

CLARENCE TRACKS AND TRAILS STRATEGY 2012

Prepared for Clarence City Council



ROAD

Tunnel Hill

XC track loop

inspiring place

TASMAN HIGHWAY

CAMBRIDGE

CONTENTS

Section 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Purpose	2
1.3 Project Methodology	3
1.4 Acknowledgements	3
Section 2 Planning Context	5
2.1 Benefits of Tracks and Trails	5
2.2 State-wide Policy and Planning Framework	7
2.2.1 Trails Tasmania Strategy 2007	7
2.2.2 Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan 2008	8
2.2.3 Greater Hobart Mountain Bike Masterplan 2011	9
2.2.4 Tasmanian Open Space Policy 2010	9
2.2.4 Other Policy Documents	10
2.3 Clarence City Guiding Documents	10
2.3.1 Clarence City Council Strategic Plan 2006-2011	10
2.3.2 Clarence Bushland and Coastal Strategy 2011	12
2.3.3 Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Strategy	12
2.3.4 Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Action Plan	13
2.4 Community Views on Tracks and Trails	14
2.4.1 General Comments	14
2.4.2 Online Survey Results	15
2.4.3 Summary	23
Section 3 Strategic Directions	25
3.1 Vision and Guiding Principles	25
3.2 Policy Statements	26
3.3 Strategies	27
3.3.1 Comprehensive and Integrated Tracks and Trails Planning	27
3.3.2 Innovative and Sustainable Design and Construction	29
3.3.3 Communication of Consistent Tracks and Trails Classification Systems	30
3.3.4 Commitment to Ongoing Maintenance	33
3.3.5 Effective Information and Promotion	35
3.3.6 Efficient Funding and Resource Use	36
3.3.7 Working in Partnership	38
Section 4 Implementation Plan	39
4.1 Planning and Management Action Plan	39
4.2 Tracks and Trails Activity Plan	45
Attachment 1 Tracks and Trail Development Criteria	49
Attachment 2 Tracks and Trails Committee Charter	50

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In recent years Clarence City Council have allocated significant resources to the development and management of a recreational trail network, including specialised trail-based infrastructure such as the Clarence Mountain Bike Park. As a result of this effort, the Clarence area has a number of quality recreational trails and trail-based recreation 'hubs', catering for a diversity of recreational users, both within urban areas as well as rural settings. The Clarence Foreshore Trail is an example of a quality recreational asset, which attracts visitors from outside the local area.

The demand for quality tracks and trails continues to grow. Recreational walking, cycling and mountain biking are consistently among the most popular activities at the national and state level. These trends also reflect local participation data. Health and wellbeing concerns, including high rates of childhood and adult obesity, heart disease, and the incidence of diabetes are also factors in the demand for tracks and trails. Quality recreational networks provide equitable opportunities for active lifestyle for all age and skill levels, and are associated with other benefits such as non-motorised transport, and a safe environment for social interaction.

Tracks and trails also provide a means of accessing and enjoying the diversity of landscapes within the Clarence area, including the beaches and coast, inland bushland reserves, parks, and urban settings.

Planning, development and management of the recreational trail network is currently guided by the *Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Action Plan*, which identifies both significant and secondary link trails within the City, key issues, recommendations and actions. The Action Plan provides guidance for the implementation of identified tracks and trail priorities, and responds in part to an earlier internal Council document – the *Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Strategy 2003*. The recently completed *Clarence City Council Bushland and Coastal Strategy* also provides guidance relating to the development and management of tracks and trails on reserved land within the municipality.

These documents have provided Council staff with a basic framework for decision-making, but are not supported by an overarching policy framework, or strategic direction.

Inspiring Place were engaged by Council in 2011 to review the *Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Strategy and Action Plan*, and provide Council with a consistent approach to tracks and trails planning, grounded on contemporary approaches to recreation planning, local participation and demographic trends, and agreed principles and strategies. It is intended that this document will provide this overarching direction, and compliment the revised Action Plan, leading to well-considered actions and the continued development of an outstanding tracks and trail network.

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to undertake a review of the *Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Strategy 2003* and the *Tracks and Trails Action Plan* to provide a new Strategy, to guide Councils planning, development, management and promotion of tracks and trails into the future.

The revised Strategy incorporates:

- rationale and background information not included in the original strategy, such as an overview of the benefits of tracks and trails, up to date trends and participation data;

- a vision and management principles for the Clarence City Council tracks and trails network;

- a policy framework for tracks and trails planning which provides clear linkages between relevant facets of Council's recreational planning program, including general open space and bushland planning, tracks and trails, and activity specific trail planning (e.g. mountain biking planning);

- a number of strategies forming a strategic direction, and including guidance relating to trail classification, safety and risk management, criteria for assessing trail proposals; and

- a revised Activity Plan, setting out clear priorities for the planning, development, management and promotion of the Clarence tracks and trail network in the future.

1.3 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The project has included the following tasks:

Review of background material, including Council documentation (e.g. the *Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Strategy 2003* and the *Tracks and Trails Action Plan 2008*), relevant state-level strategies and plans, and promotional material;

Preparation of questionnaire for an online community survey (via Survey Monkey), and analysis of results to form the main consultation component of the project;

Detailed review of the recommended actions in the Activity Plan with Council staff, to identify actions already implemented, and new actions and priorities;

Preparation of a draft revised Tracks and Trails Strategy incorporating the elements outlined in Section 1.2;

Preparation of a framework for the review of the 5 Year Tracks and Trails Action Plan;

Presentation of the draft Strategy to Council and the Tracks and Trails Committee;

Revision of draft Strategy for public exhibition; and

Preparation of the final Strategy incorporating amendments following the public exhibition.

1.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Inspiring Place would like to acknowledge the support and knowledge of Council staff that assisted with the preparation of the Plan.

We would also like to acknowledge the input of the Clarence Tracks and Trails Committee, and the broader community members who completed the online survey.

SECTION 2

PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1 BENEFITS OF TRACKS AND TRAILS

A range of benefits are associated with tracks and trails. The summary in Table 2.1, whilst not exhaustive, provides a rationale for the allocation of resources into the development of a quality tracks and trail network in the Clarence area.

The benefits have been listed under the following categories:

- Health and Wellbeing;
- Social and Community;
- Environmental;
- Transport; and
- Tourism and Economic.

Benefits of Tracks and Trails	Examples
Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved fitness, health, wellbeing, and disease prevention (e.g. associated with obesity)Trail users tend to be healthier and place less burden on the health care system
Social and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased safety associated with quality trail networks due to increased presenceCreation of opportunities for community interaction, and fostering a sense of community pride/ownershipCan help to protect open spaces and create more pleasing environments to live inProvide a safe and controlled environment for the aged, children and inexperienced to be physically activeWalking or riding is a cheap and sustainable form of transportEnables pet owners to exercise their dogs

Table 2.1. Summary of Tracks and Trails Benefits.

Benefits of Tracks and Trails	Examples
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking and cycling are energy efficient forms of transport in comparison to cars, and reducing dependency on non-renewable fuel sources • Lower vehicle use results in reduced air and noise pollution • Can facilitate greater awareness and appreciation of the natural environment and landscape features • Conservation of the natural environment can be enhanced through better management practices on and around trails
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced traffic and parking congestion, and overall expenditure on car maintenance, fuel and parking • More efficient use of land than other forms of transport • Existing infrastructure can be retrofitted for non-motorised transport routes • Walking and cycling decreases wear on roads and overall maintenance and repairs
Tourism and Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be an important component of a visitor experience – attracting visitors to an area • Can encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more in an area • Trail-based events attract visitors to particular areas • Purpose built trails may attract niche tourism markets (e.g. horse riders, mountain biking, kayaking and diving) • Active people, who regularly use trails are more productive at work, and have less sick days • Trail users spend a considerable amount at local businesses when purchasing equipment and supplies • A quality trail network may increase property values of houses and businesses adjacent to well-developed trail networks • Quality trail networks may provide commercial business opportunities (e.g. tour and guiding companies, transport companies and equipment hire companies)

Table 2.1. Summary of Tracks and Trails Benefits.

2.2 STATE-WIDE POLICY AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The following is a summary of selected state-wide recreation trail policy and planning frameworks, of relevance to the development of the Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Strategy.

2.2.1 Trails Tasmania Strategy 2007

The *Trails Tasmania Strategy* was developed in recognition of the significant demand for, and benefits associated with recreational trail opportunities, within the Tasmanian context. The Strategy sets out a framework to guide coordinated decision-making, funding and resource allocation, management and promotion of a diverse recreational trail network across the state. The Strategy outlines actions aimed at achieving an integrated state-wide trail network, including standardisation of trail classification and development standards.

The priority actions identified in the Strategy, of particular relevance to tracks and trails planning in the Clarence area include:

- Support the preparation of local recreation trail plans

- Assessment of the opportunities for the development of shared trails;

- Plan, develop and manage a network of cross-urban shared trails to connect public open space with community facilities and residential areas;

- Support the planning, development and management of high quality mountain bike trails and parks;

- Support the retrofitting of urban areas and towns to provide recreational trails and linkages (e.g. bike lanes to facilitate sustainable commuting);

- Ensure mechanisms are in place for realising the potential for recreational trails in the re-use of railway corridors, road reserves and easements; and

- Local councils take on the responsibility for leading the working groups for priority trail projects.

The Strategy provides Council's recreational trail planners a higher-level reference to ensure consistency with other councils and land management agencies across the state.

2.2.2 Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan 2008

The *Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan* evolved from the Trails Tasmania Strategy – recognising the impetus for the focus on mountain bike planning at a state level arose from the increasing popularity of the sport, the demand for a diversity of riding opportunities and subsequent pressure on land managers, and the natural values of Tasmania, and the potential to be a world-class mountain bike destination.

The Plan identifies a hierarchy of trails, including Regional Mountain Bike Hubs and Bike Parks, and local mountain bike trail networks. The Plan recognises the Clarence Mountain Bike Park as a ‘hub’ within the Hobart southern region. Other shared and mountain bike trails in the area, such as sections of the Tangara Trail network, make up a local network.

The Plan also recommended the need for the preparation of regional mountain bike plans. *The Greater Hobart Mountain Bike Plan* was prepared in 2011 and identifies a number of existing and potential mountain bike tracks within Clarence.

Some of the recommended actions of particular relevance to tracks and trails planning in the Clarence area include:

- Adopt the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) trail classification system;

- Adopt the approach to shared use trail difficulty rating as outlined in the Trevallyn Nature Recreation Area and Kate Reed Nature Recreation Area Draft Track Strategy 2009;

- Adopt IMBA trail planning, design and construction principles and guidelines;

- Consider opportunities for shared use trail developments;

- Provide ‘mountain bike preferred’ trails (e.g. designed and constructed specifically for mountain biking);

- Build strong relationships with volunteers (e.g. Trail Care Crews);

- Adopt and communicate the mountain bike rider code of conduct; and

- Implement risk management systems for trail networks.

2.2.3 Greater Hobart Mountain Bike Masterplan 2011

The *Greater Hobart Mountain Bike Plan* was prepared in 2011 with a steering committee comprising representatives from Hobart, Glenorchy, Kingborough and Clarence Councils, Wellington Park Trust, Cycling South and Sport & Recreation Tasmania. The Plan provides a regional overview of mountain biking opportunities and identifies gaps and priority projects. It identifies existing and proposed tracks that are particularly suitable for mountain biking including Tangara Trail, Clarence Foreshore Trail and trails in the Meehan Range.

2.2.4 Tasmanian Open Space Policy 2010

Local councils across Tasmania have significant responsibilities when dealing with open space planning, development and management. The *Tasmanian Open Space Policy* highlights the important contribution to quality of life that open spaces provide communities, including 'linear linkages' such as trails and pathways.

Open Space policies and strategies to be considered in relation to tracks and trails planning include:

- Ensure open space systems are connected by a network of off-road transport routes and trails, facilitating non-motorised transport;

- Accommodate multiple use where possible, included shared-trails to cater for a range of compatible user groups, and consolidating resource input;

- Provide enhanced opportunities for people with mobility impairment; and

- Investigate the potential for building greater volunteer involvement and support, including community trails partnerships.

2.2.4 Other Policy Documents

Other documents of relevance to tracks and trails planning include:

Tasmania's Plan for Physical Activity 2011-2021, which addresses physical inactivity and the associated health conditions prevalent in Tasmania, provides a framework whereby government and community can work together to make physical activity an integral component of community life;

Healthy By Design: A Guide to Planning and Designing Environments for Active Living in Tasmania provides practical guidance to the design and management of open spaces to facilitate safe physical activity and healthy lifestyles; and

Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy which recognises that cycling and walking are important transport options now and for the future and will make our communities more livable and better connected and our people healthier and physically active.

2.3 CLARENCE CITY GUIDING DOCUMENTS

2.3.1 Clarence City Council Strategic Plan 2006-2011

The *Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Action Plan* summaries the strategies relevant to, and which support, the development of the Clarence tracks and trail network.

Objectives	Relevant Strategies
<i>To enhance and increase the opportunities for all people in the community to participate in recreational activities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement key plans and strategies including the Tracks and Trails Strategy • Work in partnership with government and community organisations to provide required infrastructure and facilities
<i>To maximise the economic benefits of tourism.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community and industry groups to develop and promote the tourism product including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Heritage Trails ◦ Recreation Trails • Develop promotional material, signage and interpretation of tourism products
<i>To promote the use and appreciation of the natural environment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the appropriate use of natural environments, including beaches and bushland for recreational activities, in ways that support and conserve those places. • Maximise the accessibility of environmentally based recreation activities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Providing information to promote awareness and utilisation ◦ Enhancing the physical accessibility of natural areas to promote use and choice
<i>To ensure that existing infrastructure is maintained and renewed to meet identified service and amenity levels.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, implement and review an Asset Management Plan for roads, footpaths and cycleways which provide for effective and safe transport of people and goods throughout the City, and provides a review mechanism for system capacity and renewal • Pursue federal funding opportunities
<i>To provide for infrastructure that meets the future needs of the community.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a framework for infrastructure expansion which considers community need, consistent with the Land Use Strategy and equitable allocation of costs
<i>To enhance and protect the City's natural assets.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with key community groups, business organisations and government agencies to manage and enhance our natural environment and identify emerging issues • Recognise important environmental values or issues through the planning scheme including significant landscapes skyline vistas

Table 2.2. Clarence City Council Strategic Plan Strategies.

2.3.2 Clarence Bushland and Coastal Strategy 2011

Council has recently completed the *Clarence Bushland and Coastal Strategy*. The Strategy responds to the recognised importance of natural areas to the health and wellbeing of the community, as well as for the conservation of local biodiversity.

Section 2.3 'Key Management Topics; Recreation' describes a number of issues including:

Management of the needs of various users while protecting biodiversity;

Planning that incorporates design for active communities, health and wellbeing; and

Management of impacts of recreational use through properly located and maintained facilities.

Section 3.4 of the Strategy focuses on 'enjoying natural areas, and includes the following actions relevant to tracks and trails planning:

Adopt the 'healthy parks, healthy people' philosophy, connecting the conservation of biodiversity and natural areas with community health and wellbeing programs";

Evaluate the adequacy of recreation infrastructure in the natural area network; and

Investigate opportunities to link tracks and trails initiatives with wider natural area management through developing integrated land management planning for the broader trail network.

2.3.3 Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Strategy

The Tracks and Trails Strategy 2003 was primarily an internal document, which provided a good summary of the community consultation process undertaken at the time, an overview of trends and demographics, and a series of options. Whilst the Strategy provided a useful context, it was not drafted in the context of a sound policy framework or strategic direction for trails planning, development and management.

The options, or potential responses to meeting community tracks and trails needs, have been grouped into the following categories:

Acquisition;

Maintenance;

Education/promotion;

Management;

Public Liability issues; and

Cost implications.

The options have been considered in the preparation of the current Strategy, and in some cases have formed the basis for strategies and actions in the current report.

2.3.4 Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Action Plan

The *Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Action Plan* was prepared in 2008 in order to:

“guide the development of tracks and trails within Clarence in accord with the objectives of the Tracks and Trails Strategy...and provide a framework for developing an integrated network of tracks and trails bushland and coastal areas with links to urban locations around the municipality”¹

The Action Plan has proven to be a sound document. The Plan includes a Five Year Activity Plan (2008-2013), which details a series of actions, and the priority for implementation, timing, and responsible parties. A review of the progress of the Activity Plan was included in the current project.(see Section 4).

The *Tracks and Trails Action Plan* is Council's primary planning document relating to recreational trail planning and management.

The Council is currently in the process of preparing a Health and Wellbeing Policy, which will also address the importance of a quality tracks and trails network for the broader community.

¹Clarence City Council (2008), *Tracks and Trails Action Plan*, page 1.

2.4 COMMUNITY VIEWS ON TRACKS AND TRAILS

2.4.1 General Comments

The consultation conducted as part of the development of the 2003 Tracks and Trails Strategy is summarised below. The consultation included a call for public submissions (21 received), a community workshop (23 attendees) and a resident phone survey (403 respondents). The following summarises the common themes or comments received:

Further extension and improvement of the continuity of the trail network, and improved distributional planning (e.g. geographically and by trail type);

Use of public open space allocations and other planning tools to create or retain tracks and trails as part of subdivisions and other development processes;

A preference for multiple use trails where practical, and clear indication of the appropriate user groups in some cases;

Improved signage, information and interpretation;

The need to establish a Tracks and Trails Management Committee (this has been implemented);

Improvement of maintenance regimes – to better match on-ground requirements, and ensure maintenance requirements are considered as part of new trail developments; and

Encourage residents to use tracks and trails.

P H O N E S U R V E Y

A phone survey was conducted as part of the development of the 2003 Tracks and Trails Strategy, in which 403 Clarence City Council residents were surveyed. The major findings from this survey were:

59% indicated that they had used the tracks and trails within the Clarence area, and 44% indicated that they used them at least once a week;

Leisure walking (47%), walking the dog (19%), and cycling (15%) were cited as the main purposes for using tracks and trails, and the underlying reasons for participation in these trail-based activities were exercise (46%) and pleasure and enjoyment (31%);

Respondents indicated the most important features of tracks and trails were; condition, access, being in a natural area, appearance, views and having somewhere to sit; and

Respondents indicated that information was important, especially about special features along the track (e.g. interpretation), general signage, and brochure.

2.4.2 Online Survey Results

An online survey was developed specifically to gain an insight into community views about the existing tracks and trails network within the City of Clarence, and aid in the identification of needs and gaps. The survey was available via a link from Council's website.

280 responses were received, providing a valuable source of information to inform tracks and trails planning. The following summarises the responses to each of the questions asked in the survey. The survey was not random and should be considered in the context of the limited community 'sub-group' that it represents. The views of respondents do not necessarily represent the views of the wider community of the Clarence municipal area, but rather those people particularly interested in tracks and trails, who are regular users, and who are proficient internet users. For example, there was a strong response from mountain bikers, which likely reflects the age and technology savvy nature of this user group.

Please identify the trails that you are aware of from the following list?

A high percentage of respondents indicated that they had heard of and used the Clarence Foreshore Trail (76%), and half of the respondents had heard of and used, the Tangara Trail (32% indicated that they had heard of it, but never used it). Approximately 41% of respondents had heard of and used the Meehan Range Skyline Trail (36% had heard of it, but never used it).

The Clarence Kayak Trail (76% had never heard of it) and the Charles Darwin Trail (56% had never heard of it) were the trails in the Clarence area that respondents knew least about.

How have you accessed information about the existing tracks and trails within the City of Clarence?

The most popular responses were:

I am aware of tracks and trails through my own exploration
(65% of respondents)

Word of mouth information from friends and family (53.4%)

From the 'Popular Walks in Clarence' brochure (39.4%)

From the internet (e.g. Council website, PWS website) –
(30.7%)

From signs and interpretation (26.5%)

Have you ever used tracks, trails or cycle ways in Clarence?

The vast majority (about 95%) of respondents indicated that they had used tracks and trails in Clarence.

How often do you use the tracks and trails within the City of Clarence?

Approximately 25% of respondents indicated that they use tracks and trails in the Clarence area 2-3 times per week, 20% nearly everyday; 20% once a month, and 18% once a week and 'not often' (Figure 2.1).

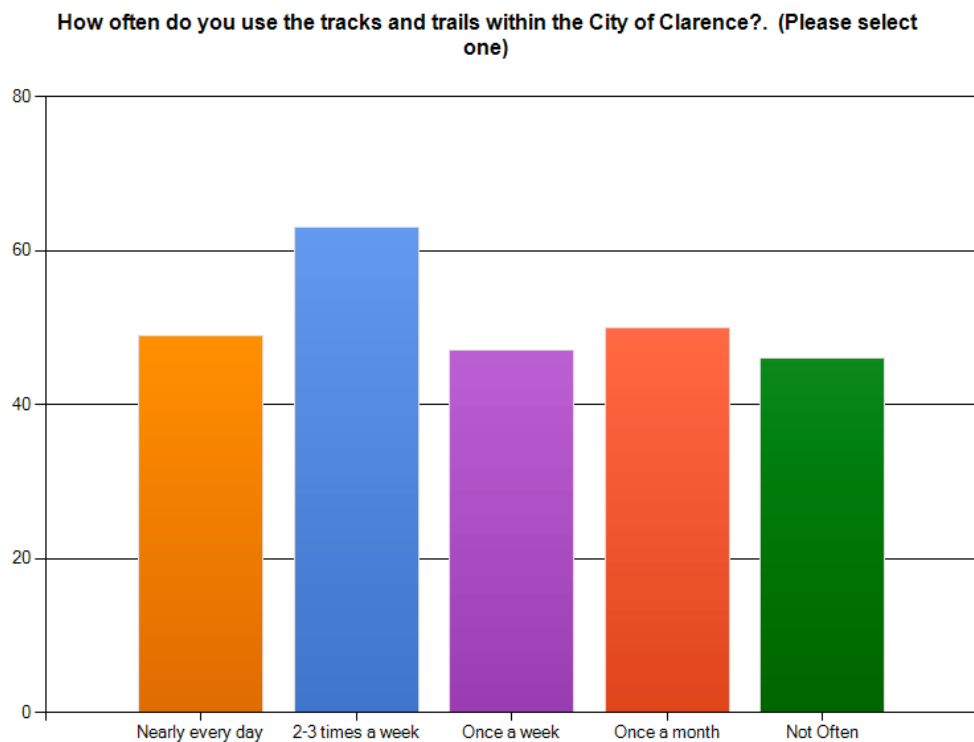


Figure 2.1. Frequency of Use

How would you rate the choice, variety and availability of tracks and trails within the City of Clarence?

The majority of respondents (54%) rated the overall choice, variety and availability of tracks and trails as 'good', 23% 'very good', and 20% 'average'. Only 2% rated choice, variety and availability of tracks and trails as 'poor'. There were no responses for 'very poor'.

How would you rate Councils overall management of the tracks and trails network?

The majority of respondents rated Council's management of the tracks and trails network as 'good' (49%), 32% as 'average', 11% as 'very good', 7% as 'poor', and only 0.8% as 'very poor'.

What are the main activities that you use the tracks and trails for?

The survey asked respondents to list activities they used the trails in order of participation. Recreational walking (including walking the dog) was the most popular main activity. Mountain biking and horseriding were also popular as a main activity by survey respondents. (Figure 2.2).

Recreational cycling and walking (including bushwalking, recreational walking jogging and dog walking) were rated as the most popular secondary activity by respondents. Walking and cycling for transport was the least popular which may reflect the poor development of trails along transport routes.

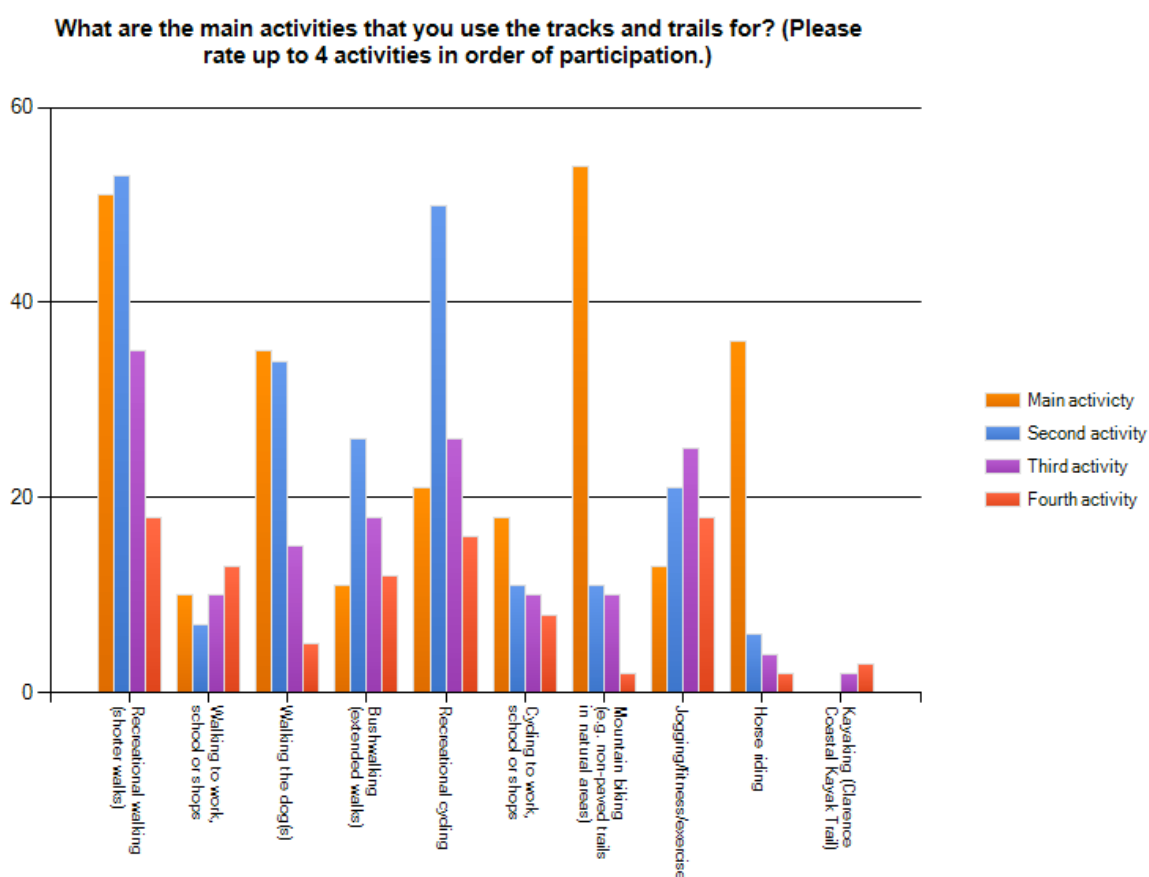


Figure 2.2. Main Activities.

How important are the following values to you when deciding to use tracks and trails?

The top three 'very important' options were:

1. Health, wellbeing and fitness benefits (65% of respondents)
2. Enjoying the natural environment (63%)
3. Enjoying the coast (46%)
4. Well linked and connected (46%)
5. Well designed and constructed (41%)

The three least important options were:

1. Safe place to ride my horse (35%)
2. Walking with the dog (28%)
3. Commuting to work using tracks and trails (25%)

How Important are the following aspects to your use and enjoyment of a track or trail within the City of Clarence?

The top five 'very important' responses were:

1. Information signage and at the start of the track or trail (37% of respondents)
2. Directional road signs to the track or trail (35%)
3. Web-based information about the track (31%)
4. Car parking at the start of the track or trail (26%)
5. Brochure information about the track or trail (20%)

The three least important responses were:

1. Access to play equipment (44%)
2. Parking for horse trailers (36%)
3. Bike parking racks (35%)

If you have used the Clarence Foreshore Trail, please rate the sections that you use:

Approximately 50% of respondents rated the Bellerive Boardwalk to Second Bluff, and the Howrah Beach sections of the Clarence Foreshore Trail as being of 'high standard' (e.g. providing a quality experience with no improvements required).

In general, only a low number of respondents rated any of the Clarence Foreshore Trail sections as being of 'poor standard', and in need of improvement. Approximately 14% of respondents indicated that the Tranmere Foreshore section is of a poor standard, followed by the Lindisfarne and Geilston Bay (11%), and the Montagu Bay to Rosny Point section (9%).

Approximately 45% of respondents had not used the Tranmere foreshore section of the Clarence Foreshore Trail, and 43% had not used the Geilston Bay section.

Please indicate why you do not use any of the tracks and trails:

Of those respondents who indicated that they do not use tracks and trails in the Clarence area, 49% selected the 'I don't have information on how to find and use tracks and trails', 29% selected 'there aren't any tracks and trails near where I live', 25% 'tracks and trails don't interest me, and I have no reason to use them', approximately 10% indicated that age or illness prevents them from using tracks and trails.

Do you consider there is a need for any new tracks and trails (or missing links) to be constructed within the City in the next 3 years?

The majority of respondents indicated that they thought there is a need for new tracks and trails to be constructed within the next three years.

Location of Proposed Tracks and Trails:

This was an open question, with many differing comments recorded. The following is a brief summary of the most common responses:

Further extension of, and improvements to the Clarence Foreshore Trail, with an aim to link all towns and settlements along the coast in the longer-term;

Improved shared walking and cycling trails/connections between suburbs within the City to facilitate safe commuting as well as recreation, such as between:

Howrah to Rokeby;

Rokeby to Lauderdale;

Lindisfarne to Geilston Bay; and

Cambridge to Richmond.

New recreational trails in particular areas, including:

Mt Rumney;

Within and around Richmond; and

A coastal trail linking Lauderdale to Cremorne, and on to Clifton Beach.

Missing linkages within the Tangara Trail network, including:

Between School Road and Delphis Drive;

Between Gellibrand Drive and School Road; and

Connection to the South Arm Conservation Area.

New mountain biking opportunities, such as:

Trails within and surrounding the Clarence Mountain Bike Park (land managed by Council and the Parks and Wildlife Service);

Trails across the Meehan Range (managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service); and

Trails in the Risdon Brook Dam area (managed by Southern Water), including to Mt Direction (managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service).

Improved conditions on, and connecting to, the Tasman Bridge for cyclists (responsibility of the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources).

Other comments:

As with the previous question, there were many varied answers to this open question. Generally feedback was positive about Councils efforts in relation to tracks and trails planning, development and maintenance within the City.

The common issues and identified needs summarised in no particular order were:

Better signage of tracks and trails (e.g. on-ground track signage and directional signage to trail opportunities);

Dogs off leash (e.g. safety issue for cyclists);

Trees or other shelter along exposed trails/areas;

Improved promotion of tracks and trail opportunities (e.g. improved trail booklet);

Ensure that bushland values are conserved;

Unauthorised trail bike use on some trails;

Signage and trail marking along the Tangara Trail is confusing;

Conflict between walkers and cyclists on some tracks and trails;

Improved cycling infrastructure to facilitate safe commuting (e.g. bike lanes along major roads);

Long-term maintenance issues (e.g. long grass in need of mowing along sections of the Tangara Trail);

New quality mountain bike trails;

Public toilets along the Tangara Trail;

Tracks and trails should be a priority in the consideration of new developments and subdivisions;

Conditions for cyclists on the Tasman Bridge (e.g. widen lanes);

2.4.3 Summary

Some broad conclusions that can be drawn from the two separate consultation processes include:

Recreational walking, cycling and mountain biking were popular trail-based activities, followed by horse riding. Mountain biking and horse riding both had strong responses as 'main activities', while recreational walking and cycling had more of a spread across main, second, third and fourth activity;

The strong level of participation in the survey by horse riders and mountain bikers reflects the availability of tracks in Clarence for these user groups, and is consistent with national and international trends showing mountain biking numbers growing.

'Leisure' or 'recreational' walking continued to be one of the most popular activities, followed by dog walking and horse riding;

'Fitness, health and wellbeing', or 'exercise', and enjoyment (e.g. of the natural environment and coast) were the most important motivators for trail use; and

Improved information (e.g. brochure, on-line), signage, and interpretation were seen as important elements of Councils approach to trail planning and development.

SECTION 3

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

3.1 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The vision has been developed in response to the feedback received on tracks and trails, and draws on the intent of the vision for the Tasmanian trail network in the *Trails Tasmania Strategy 2007*:

“Tasmania will be recognised as a leader in providing and managing a sustainable recreation trail network that provides a diversity of experiences that enhance the lifestyle, health and wellbeing of Tasmanians and their visitors”

The draft vision for the Clarence City Council is that:

The tracks and trails network will provide diverse and sustainable recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, showcasing and connecting the coast, bushland, and urban environments within the City.

The following principles are intended as a guide for decision-making, and aid realisation of the vision. Council and the community will work towards:

achieving better co-ordination of the planning, development, management and resourcing of tracks and trails and other recreational facilities and services within the Clarence area;

supporting sustainable management practices for existing and new tracks and trails, including responding to local environmental conditions, and implementing best practice standards and guidelines;

responding to community and visitor needs and priorities for improved tracks and trail experiences, including the health and wellbeing benefits for local residents;

providing trail experiences and infrastructure that have the capacity to contribute to economic activity and bring benefits to the local community and businesses; and

ensuring that safe opportunities for non-motorised transport (e.g. commuting on foot or by bike) are upheld as an important function of an integrated track and trail network.

3.2 POLICY STATEMENTS

The following policy statements relate to the elements contained within the vision statement and guiding principles. The statements are essentially protocols to guide a consistent approach to tracks and trail development, planning and management within the City. Council will:

P1. Provide multi-use (shared-use) trail opportunities as a first priority.

P2. Implement a consistent approach to tracks and trails signage across the City, including the design/style of signage, and the type and amount of information provided..

P3. Adopt universal track classification systems (e.g. the Australian Walking Track Grading System, International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) Trail Difficulty Rating System, and Horse SA Grading System) to guide design, and assign and describe the level of difficulty of tracks and trails within the City in order to Classify multi-use trails as recommended in Attachment 5 of the Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan 2009², and with reference to the Users Guide to the Australian Walking Track Grading System.

P4. Continue to develop and distribute information about tracks and trails, including printed material (e.g. Popular Tracks in Clarence booklet, Tangara Trails Brochure), updated online information, including detailed maps where appropriate.

P5. Adopt and communicate a Tracks and Trails User Code of Conduct,.

P6. Integrate tracks and trails, including non-motorised transport planning into all relevant facets of Councils planning, development and maintenance roles (e.g. planning scheme development and review, transport plans, and operational plans).

P7. Work in partnership with other land managers such as Parks and Wildlife Service, recreational clubs and organisations, and volunteers to plan, develop, manage, and maintain a tracks and trails network which is sustainable, is of a consistent standard across tenure boundaries, and which is enriched by the skills and enthusiasm of the community of trail uses.

² For example, using the coloured symbols of the IMBA Trail Classification System, in conjunction with trail user universal pictograms and a basic description.

3.3 STRATEGIES

Seven main strategies have been identified to assist Council and the community of Clarence to plan, develop, manage and promote a sustainable and integrated tracks and trail network. These strategies are:

1. Comprehensive and integrated tracks and trails planning;
2. Innovative and sustainable tracks and trails development;
3. Adoption and communication of consistent tracks and trails classification systems;
4. Commitment to ongoing maintenance of tracks and trails;
5. Provision of information about and promotion of tracks and trails;
6. Provision of funding and resources use for trail planning, development, management and maintenance; and
7. Working in partnership with other land managers, community groups and volunteers.

A brief rationale for each strategy is provided below, and potential actions identified.

3.3.1. Comprehensive and Integrated Tracks and Trails Planning

This Strategy refers to the need to ensure that it is based on sound analysis rather than an ad hoc approach. Proposals for tracks and trails development and upgrade should be considered in context with the Tracks and Trails Action Plan and be, broadly consistent with state-wide and regional directions for recreational planning.

Tracks and trails planning should be integrated with, and incorporated into other facets of the work Council undertakes, including related fields such as broader recreation and open space planning, strategic planning and development approvals, and transport and community infrastructure planning.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Ensure that tracks and trails planning responds to, and is consistent with state-wide and regional recreational planning approaches.

This includes being broadly consistent with the intent of the *Trails Tasmania Strategy*, the *Tasmanian Open Space Policy*, the *Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan*, and the *Greater Hobart Mountain Bike Master Plan*, among other relevant strategic documents.

Parks and Wildlife Service has specific legislative and operational frameworks that determine the permitted user groups and activities within P&W managed land which needs to be considered as part of the track planning process.

2. Continue to undertake research and monitoring programs that will enhance Councils knowledge and understanding of community recreation needs, and more specifically those of tracks and trails users.

This may include undertaking regular user surveys (e.g. using the online survey prepared for this project as a template to ensure consistency in data collection), demographic analysis, and on-ground monitoring (e.g. trail counters, and face to face surveying).

3. Strengthen internal Council mechanisms that will facilitate a higher level of integration of tracks and trails planning with other roles and responsibilities.

This may includes ensuring that a planning representative continues to be involved in tracks and trails committee meetings, and that the tracks and trails officer continues to be informed about pending development applications.

3.3.2 Innovative and Sustainable Design and Construction

This Strategy provides a basis for sustainable tracks and trails design and construction, and the possibilities to be innovative in the implementation of that principle.

‘Sustainable’ in this sense, means tracks and trails and associated facilities will be environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. They should be of a high standard, with consideration of, and response to local environmental and cultural values and be implemented following ‘best practice’ guidelines. The Strategy recognises the value of existing trail design and construction guidelines and processes in ensuring that the Clarence Tracks and Trails network is of the highest standard possible.

Potential environmental and cultural/social issues associated with trail design and construction, which need to be considered include:

Soil displacement/erosion, which can result in sedimentation of waterways;

Introduction and spread of weeds and plant diseases from trail use as well as from imported materials;

Altered composition of native vegetation communities (e.g. increased light penetration and introduction of exotic species, disturbance of threatened species);

Altered hydrology (e.g. from poorly constructed crossing points across water bodies, or inadequate drainage works);

Soil compaction;

Displacement of a pre-existing use/user group;

Disturbance to historic cultural heritage fabric (Aboriginal and European); and

Aesthetic or visual impacts of tracks and trails infrastructure.

Innovative design and effective communication will be important in the provision of safe and enjoyable multiple-use tracks and trails. Multiple-use trails provide a means of providing opportunities for a range of trail user groups, in a way that minimises resource input and effort. User Codes of Conduct are commonly used as a way to facilitate this.

A Trail User Code of Conduct is provided in the *Draft Tangara Trail Network Activity Plan* (see Attachment XX).which has been based on Consideration should be given to the international 'Leave No Trace' principles in the preparation of the Code of Conduct.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- 1. Consider how to meet tracks and trail demand through the provision of multiple-use trails, as this will maximise resource use and effort.**
- 2. Communicate a Trail User Code of Conduct to facilitate safe shared use, which captures elements such as respect for other trails users, staying on designated tracks and trails, and minimising impacts on the environment.**
- 3. Adopt innovative trail design techniques with reference to construction guidelines (eg: *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Single Track* for mountain biking or; *Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A – Pedestrian & Cyclist Paths* for recreational cycling); and encourage a culture of innovation in trail planning, design and construction, including the trialling of new materials and techniques, and problem solving in relation to ongoing management such as separation of users at 'pinch points' (e.g. separate bike and pedestrian trails where sight lines are poor, or to make descents safer)**
- 4. Ensure that environmental impacts of proposed and upgraded tracks and trails are adequately assessed (e.g. via an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process),**

3.3.3 Communication of Consistent Tracks and Trails Classification Systems

This Strategy responds to the need to ensure consistency in the way that the level of difficulty of tracks and trails are communicated – both within the City, and more broadly at a state and national level. Consistency in the communication of difficulty and type of experience allows trail users to make informed decisions about the suitability of a particular trail experience in relation to their personal skill level. This in turns aids safety and risk management, and increases the likelihood that users will have a positive trail experience.

Council have adopted a walking track classification system, based on the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service Track Classification System. This

system has in turn been adapted from the Australian Standard for Walking Tracks, and includes the following categories of tracks:

Class 1 Aus. Standard (Very Easy): Wheelchair standard nature trail;

Class 2 Aus. Standard (Easy): Standard nature trail;

Class 3 Aus. Standard (Moderate): Track Grade 1 and 2; and

Class 4 Aus. Standard (Strenuous): Track Grade 3.

In 2010, the Victorian Department of Sustainability (DSE) completed the *Users Guide to the Australian Walking Track Grading System*. This document presents a consistent approach to the interpretation and communication of the Australian Walking Track Grading System, aimed at public users. The Guide describes technical and public descriptors for each track category, including:

Symbols;

Distance;

Gradient;

Quality of path;

Quality of markings;

Experience required;

Time required to complete; and

Presence of steps.

Adoption of the public descriptors outlined in the Guide will enhance public information and understanding about trail experiences, and clarify personal decision-making about whether a particular trail is within the ability of an individual.

Similarly, Council uses the *International Mountain Bike (IMBA) Trail Difficulty Rating System* to clarify the differences in difficulty between trail categories for mountain bike trails within the City but modified slightly to suit the Australian context³ as recommended in the Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan 2008. The trail rating system also provides guidance for land managers (e.g. broad

³ IMBA Australia (2009) *Trail Difficulty Rating System*.

design and construction standards), as well as descriptors aimed at trail users. Categories used for the trail difficulty rating system are:

White Circle – ‘Very Easy’;

Green Circle – ‘Easy’;

Blue Square – ‘Intermediate’;

Black Diamond – ‘Difficult’;

Double Black Diamond – ‘Extreme’.

The *IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System* also incorporates a ‘land managers guide’, which is used as a default standard for the design and construction of mountain bike trails, including technical trail features.

Classification, or track difficulty rating systems for horse riding are not as well developed, or widespread as those for walking and mountain bike riding. Consultation with horse riders from the Tangara Recreational Trails committee has provided a framework for a rating system.

Easy – Tracks away from roads and road crossings, usually through wide open paddocks or vegetated corridors with adequate clearances from fences and overhanging vegetation, where distractions and potential hazards are minimal. Requires good basic horse handling skills.

Intermediate – Tracks that are separated from local roads with a wide verge or go along narrow fenced corridors. Obstructions to negotiate may include drain crossings or minor road crossings, or other distractions from adjacent land use such as quarry operations or emu/pig farming. Requires good horse handling skills.

Advanced - Tracks alongside busy roads with a range of potential hazards and distractions requiring excellent horse handling skills. Hazards may include major road crossings, confined space or steep drop offs to one side.

A working group made up of Clarence, Hobart, Glenorchy, Kingborough, Brighton, Sorell and Derwent Valley Councils and facilitated by the Derwent Estuary Program is developing a regional trails website in 2012. As part of the project the need for a consistent track rating system across the entire region has been identified. It is expected this will be developed as part of the website project utilising existing track rating guidelines already adopted by Councils.

The system is expected to include pictograms and basic descriptors (e.g. using the *Users Guide to the Australian Walking Track Grading System* and *IMBA Australia Trail Difficulty Rating System*) in addition to colour and pictograms.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Adopt a track difficulty rating system for all permitted users groups based on:

the *Australian Standards for Walking Tracks* (directly or via the adapted PWS Track Classification System), in conjunction with the *Users Guide to the Australian Walking Track Grading System*;

the *IMBA Australia Trail Difficulty Rating System* to guide the difficulty and type of experience of mountain bike trails;

2. In conjunction with horse riding groups, develop a track rating system for horse riding tracks.

3. Incorporate the track difficulty rating system including basic descriptors on all trail publications, websites and signage at trail access points.

4. Continue to liaise with other southern regional councils to develop a consistent rating system across the region, based on recommendations outlined in Section 5.4.1 and Attachment 5 of the *Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan 2009* to guide the classification and signage of multiple-use trails.

3.3.4 Commitment to Ongoing Maintenance

Although tracks and trails in Clarence have developed and evolved over a number of years, the first Tracks and Strategy was only prepared in 2004. Without a framework for developing and maintaining tracks and trails, the process has been ad—hoc and reactive with maintenance usually carried out in response to damage through erosion or wear and tear. Many tracks have been neglected over the years and some have fallen into disrepair, resulting in the need for upgrades to bring them back to an appropriate standard.

Other tracks are footpads formed through use over time and in some locations (such as sections of the Tangara Trail) the footpads or single track are in remarkably good condition with minimal maintenance requirements apart from the need for grass mowing.

In order to manage ongoing maintenance requirements there are three approaches that need to be adopted for a sustainable track network:

1. Build well-constructed and sustainable tracks with an emphasis on appropriate materials, good drainage to prevent track damage through erosion and build to an appropriate standard for the type of users and frequency of use. The majority of tracks in Clarence will be constructed to Class 3 Walking Track, based on the Australian Standards or IMBA standards for purpose-built mountain bike tracks..
2. Upgrade existing tracks to the appropriate Australian Standard and, where required, realign or modify the track to eliminate erosion and water damage. Once tracks are upgraded to a standard they are much easier to maintain.
3. Implement an annual maintenance program, which includes an annual track inspection and maintenance works in order to keep tracks at a good standard. This is more economical than the costs associated with major repairs and rehabilitation for tracks that have been neglected. Approximately 7% of the capital project cost is required for ongoing maintenance.

Tracks and Trails are highly valued by residents of Clarence City Council with 45% of survey respondents indicating they use tracks twice a week or more. This frequency of use makes members of the public well-placed to report issues or problems on particular trails. By adopting a track monitoring program and inviting members of the community to join up as a volunteer (including members of Landcare Groups), issues such as fallen tree branches, overgrown vegetation impeding the track or erosion caused by heavy rains can be reported and in some cases dealt with by the volunteer. The program would be run in a similar way to a Landcare Group with induction, training and support provided to volunteers on the Track Monitoring Program. Where a track monitoring volunteer considers maintenance or minor repairs are required a process would be in place to decide on a course of action. This will involve an assessment of the risk to public safety, treatment required and the level of priority and urgency.

Although Council will carry out track inspections and maintenance annually to keep tracks in a safe and well-maintained condition (such as spraying weeds or applying additional gravel), the track monitoring program can provide a significant contribution to the upkeep of the tracks network and free up Council resources for more major works.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- 1. Ensure that tracks are constructed or upgraded to the appropriate standard using suitable materials and design to minimise future maintenance costs.**
- 2. Carry out annual inspections and document maintenance regimes in an annual works program, Reserve Activity Plans, or other document.**
- 3. Tap into the skills and energy of trail user groups and community volunteers by establishing a track monitoring program to minimise ongoing tracks and trails maintenance costs.**

3.3.5 Effective Information and Promotion

This Strategy identifies and stresses the importance of easily accessible information about tracks and trails opportunities. The need for improved information was a theme that was transmitted strongly throughout the consultation.

Currently Council provides online as well as printed information about tracks and trails. Online information is provided on the Council website as a link from the 'recreation' page. Information about individual tracks and trail experiences are presented in the same format as in the 'Popular Walks in Clarence' booklet, including basic maps. A basic map of the trails in and surrounding the Clarence Mountain Bike Park is also provided.

A regional tracks website is also being developed through a joint project of the Southern Tasmanian Councils and Derwent Estuary Program which intends to be a dedicated 'home' for tracks and trails information for the Greater Hobart Area. Information will be categorised into user groups (e.g. mountain biking, cycling, walking, and horse riding), level of difficulty and amount of time required to use the track. This is expected to be ready in 2013.

A revision of the 'Popular Walks in Clarence' booklet is currently underway. The new version will be titled 'Popular Tracks in Clarence' to better encompass a broader range of trail experiences, including mountain biking, cycling and horse riding. A brochure and downloadable map is also available for the Tangara Trail.

Signage comprises the main form of information provision on-ground, but is absent on many tracks and trails. Where signage does exist it is highly varied in its style, design and condition across the City. In addition to clear provision of information, quality signage can act as a promotional tool to entice visitors on to particular tracks and trails experiences. Council has prepared guidelines

for tracks and trails signage, which provides templates for the style and content of signs. and will create consistency of tracks and trails signage, and act as default branding for the trail experiences on offer within the City.

The Department of infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) developed *Cycleway Directional Signage Resource Manual* in 2012, which should be referenced and used in conjunction with the Clarence Tracks and Trails Signage Guidelines.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- 1. Periodically update the ‘Popular Tracks in Clarence’ booklet to capture the development of new trail experiences, trail closures, upgrades etc.**
- 2. Update Councils online ‘tracks and trails’ information.** This may simply be providing a link to the regional trail website under development.
- 3. Develop detailed trail maps for different types of user groups or for specific trail networks with multiple circuits/options (e.g. the Tangara Trail, Clarence Foreshore Trail and major recreational trail hubs (e.g. Clarence Mountain Bike Park) which include topography, location of facilities and services and trail difficulty.**
- 4. Prepare Signage Implementation Plans for individual tracks and track networks that identify the location and type of signage required, based on the Clarence Tracks and Trails Signage Guidelines.**
- 5. Consider preparing thematic interpretation plans for priority trails, to enhance the user experience, communicate information about the trail or place in a creative way, and contribute to ‘selling’, or promoting the trail experience.** The *Draft Clarence Cultural Heritage Interpretation Plan* provides guidance on interpretation signage.
- 6. Integrate information about tracks and trails opportunities, including non-motorised transport options, into tourism and health and wellbeing programs and promotions.**

3.3.6 Efficient Funding and Resource Use

This Strategy recognises that funding and resources for tracks and trails planning, construction, management and maintenance are limited, and that tracks and trails are only one of the many responsibilities that Council has, and therefore, has limited time, funding, and track building expertise available internally to devote to this task.

In order to achieve the vision of a tracks and trails network providing diverse, equitable and sustainable recreational opportunities, there will need to be a strong commitment made by, and facilitated by a partnership approach between Council, other land managers and owners, trail users and the broader community.

External funding programs, whether Commonwealth or State Government, or through other programs (e.g. Tasmanian Community Fund) periodically provide opportunities for project-based funding. The concern regarding health and wellbeing (e.g. high obesity, heart disease and diabetes), combined with the significant demand for recreational tracks and trails, suggest that recreational trails are going to continue to be part of funding programs into the future.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- 1. Work in partnership with non-governmental organisations to access funding for trail development, upgrades or maintenance, which would otherwise not be available to Council.**
- 2. Ensure that there is adequate Council staff time (e.g. Tracks and Trails Planning Officer) dedicated to researching and applying for grants.**
- 3. Investigate opportunities for innovative ways to re-direct existing funding, or create new funding streams, for tracks and trails. For example, the *Trails Tasmania Strategy* highlights the possibility of a recreational trail levy on new developments, or a community-based levy/contribution.**
- 4. Work with trail-based user groups to raise money for smaller trail projects (e.g. one-off events to raise money for trailhead signage, seating, or other discrete item).**
- 5. Advise developers and consultants about the planning needs for the track and trails network to ensure development applications contain adequate trail linkages within new subdivisions.**
- 6. Implement the multiple-use policy statement as a general rule, as a means of maximising resource use and effort.**

3.3.7 Working in Partnership

This Strategy recognises the importance of developing and maintaining partnerships with other parties, whether other land managers, Councils, government agencies, or community groups, that will strengthen Council's ability to develop, manage and maintain a high quality tracks and trails network.

Council has fostered strong partnerships with a number of organisations and agencies in respect to tracks and trails, including the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS), other councils in the Hobart area, and environmental and recreational user groups (e.g. through the Tracks and Trails Committee).

Examples of existing partnerships between Council and community groups include the relationship with the Tangara Recreational Trail Association, the 'Caretaker Program' underway at the Clarence Mountain Bike Park, and Coastcare and Landcare programs involving tracks and trails.

The existing Tracks and Trails Committee is a forum for consulting with, and developing relationships with other relevant land managers, important stakeholders, and the community.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Continue to facilitate tracks and trails partnerships, including cross-tenure trail developments, with adjoining land managers, through the existing Tracks and Trails Committee. Where joint, or cross-tenure trails are developed, formalised management agreements should be considered (e.g. such as a Memorandum of Understanding or licence agreement), as a means of ensuring all parties are clear about their roles and responsibilities.

2. Continue to work in partnership with Coastcare, Landcare, Tangara Recreational Trail Association and other community volunteer organisations, including local trail user groups and associations, to plan, construct, manage and maintain the Clarence tracks and trails network.

3. Continue the 'Caretaker Program' at the Clarence Mountain Bike Park, as a means of ensuring that the Park is well maintained on a long-term basis, and of building community support and a sense of ownership for this facility.

4. Implement a Track Monitoring Program to provide a mechanism for members of the community to participate in track care and maintenance.

SECTION 4

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The *Clarence City Council Tracks and Trails Action Plan* sets out a 5 Year Activity Plan for 2008-2013. This Activity Plan is presented in two parts:

Recommendations for the overall planning and management of the City's tracks and trails – this includes action, details, priority, estimated completion and responsibility for instigating the action; and

More specific recommendations for each of the trails – this outlines the trail, section, land status, comments and estimated year of completion.

The 5 Year Activity Plan for 2008-2013 has been reviewed with regard to:

The outcomes of this project, and in particular the potential actions listed for each of the strategies (Section 4.1); and by reviewing progress in the implementation of the recommended actions listed within the Activity Plan for 2008-2013 (Section 4.2).

4.1 PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Table 4.1 sets out the planning and management actions for the City's tracks and trails. These are typically actions that will need to be considered on an ongoing basis and would be the responsibility of the Tracks and Trails Committee and the Planning Officer, and are based on the Recommended Actions in the Tracks and Trails Strategy..

Strategy	Recommended Action	Priority	Estimated Year of Completion	Responsibility
1. Integrated and needs-based tracks and trails planning	1.1 Ensure that tracks and trails planning responds to, and is consistent with state-wide and regional recreational planning approaches	High	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	1.2 Continue to undertake research and monitoring programs that will enhance Council's knowledge and understanding of community recreation needs, and more specifically those of tracks and trails users.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	1.3 Consider internal Council mechanisms that will facilitate a higher level of integration of tracks and trails planning with other roles and responsibilities.	High	Ongoing	Planning Officer
2. Innovative and sustainable tracks and trails development	2.1 Consider how to meet tracks and trail demand through the provision of multiple-use trails, as this will maximise resource use and effort.	High	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	2.2 Communicate a Trail User Code of Conduct to facilitate safe shared use, which captures elements such as respect for other trails users, staying on designated tracks and trails and minimising impacts on the environment.	High	2013	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	2.3 Adopt innovative trail design techniques with reference to construction guidelines and encourage a culture of innovation in trail planning, design and construction, including the trailing of new materials and techniques, and problem solving in relation to ongoing management such as separation of users at 'pinch points' (e.g. separate bike and pedestrian trails where sight lines are poor, or to make descents safer), or directional trails (e.g. for example, where users travel only north to south).	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	2.4 Ensure that environmental impacts of proposed and upgraded tracks and trails are adequately assessed (e.g. via an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process),	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer

Strategy	Recommended Action	Priority	Estimated Year of Completion	Responsibility
3. Adoption and communication of consistent tracks and trails classification systems	3.1 Adopt a track difficulty rating system for all permitted users groups, based on the <i>Australian Standards for Walking Tracks</i> (directly or via the adapted PWS Track Classification System), in conjunction with the <i>Users Guide to the Australian Walking Track Grading System</i> ; or the <i>IMBA Australia Trail Difficulty Rating System</i> to guide the difficulty and type of experience of mountain bike trails.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	3.2 In conjunction with horse riding groups, develop a track rating system for horse riding tracks.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	3.3 Incorporate the track difficulty rating system including basic descriptors on all trail publications, websites and signage at trail access points.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	3.4 Continue to liaise with other southern regional councils to develop a consistent rating system across the region, based on recommendations outlined in Section 5.4.1 and Attachment 5 of the <i>Tasmanian Mountain Bike Plan 2009</i> to guide the classification and signage of multiple-use trails.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
4. Commitment to ongoing maintenance of tracks and trails	4.1 Ensure that tracks are constructed or upgraded to the appropriate standard using suitable materials and design to minimise future maintenance costs.	High	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	4.2. Carry out annual inspections and document maintenance regimes in an annual works program, Reserve Activity Plans, or other document.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	4.3 Tap into the skills and energy of trail user groups and community volunteers by establishing a track monitoring program to minimise ongoing tracks and trails maintenance costs.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer

Strategy	Recommended Action	Priority	Estimated Year of Completion	Responsibility
5. Effective information about and promotion of tracks and trails	5.1. Periodically update the ' <i>Popular Tracks in Clarence</i> ' booklet to capture the development of new trail experiences, trail closures, upgrades etc.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	5.2. Update Councils online 'tracks and trails' information. This may simply be providing a link to the regional trail website under development.	High	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	5.3. Develop detailed trail maps for different types of user groups or for specific trail networks with multiple circuits/options (e.g. the Tangara Trail, Clarence Foreshore Trail and major recreational trail hubs (e.g. Clarence Mountain Bike Park) which include topography, location of facilities and services and trail difficulty.	Moderate	2013	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	5.4. Prepare Signage Implementation Plans for individual tracks and track networks that identify the location and type of signage required, based on the Clarence Tracks and Trails Signage Guidelines.	High	5 year review and annual review process	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	5.5. Consider preparing thematic interpretation plans for priority trails, to enhance the user experience, communicate information about the trail or place in a creative way, and contribute to 'selling', or promoting the trail experience. The <i>Draft Clarence Cultural Heritage Interpretation Plan</i> provides guidance on interpretation signage.	Moderate	2013	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	5.6. Integrate information about tracks and trails opportunities, including non-motorised transport options, into tourism and health and wellbeing programs and promotions.			

Strategy	Recommended Action	Priority	Estimated Year of Completion	Responsibility
6. Efficient funding and resources use for trail planning, development, management and maintenance	6.1. Work in partnership with non-governmental organisations to access funding for trail development, upgrades or maintenance, which would otherwise not be available to Council.	High	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	6.2. Ensure that there is adequate Council staff time (e.g. Tracks and Trails Planning Officer) dedicated to researching and applying for grants.	High	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee
	6.3. Investigate opportunities for innovative ways to re-direct existing funding, or create new funding streams, for tracks and trails. For example, the <i>Trails Tasmania Strategy</i> highlights the possibility of a recreational trail levy on new developments, or a community-based levy/contribution.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	6.4. Work with trail-based user groups to raise money for smaller trail projects (e.g. one-off events to raise money for trailhead signage, seating, or other discrete item).	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	6.5 Advise developers and consultants about the planning needs for the track and trails network to ensure development applications contain adequate trail linkages within new subdivisions.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	6.6. Implement the multiple-use policy statement as a general rule, as a means of maximising resource use and effort.	High	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer

Strategy	Recommended Action	Priority	Estimated Year of Completion	Responsibility
7. Working in partnership	7.1. Continue to facilitate tracks and trails partnerships, including cross-tenure trail developments, with adjoining land managers, through the existing Tracks and Trails Committee. Where joint, or cross-tenure trails are developed, formalised management agreements should be considered (e.g. such as a Memorandum of Understanding), as a means of ensuring all parties are clear about their roles and responsibilities.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	7.2. Continue to work in partnership with Coastcare, Landcare, Tangara Recreational Trail Association and other community volunteer organisations, including local trail user groups and associations, to plan, construct, manage and maintain the Clarence tracks and trails network.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	7.3. Continue the 'Caretaker Program' at the Clarence Mountain Bike Park, as a means of ensuring that the Park is well maintained on a long-term basis, and of building community support and a sense of ownership for this facility.	Moderate	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer
	7.4. Implement a Track Monitoring Program to provide a mechanism for members of the community to participate in track care and maintenance.	High	Ongoing	Tracks and Trails Committee and Planning Officer

Table 4.1. Planning and Management Action Plan for Clarence City Tracks and Trails (cont)

4.2 TRACKS AND TRAILS ACTIVITY PLAN

The Tracks and Trails Action Plan 2008-2013 identified 6 significant trails, which provide the basis for prioritising track development. These are:

- Clarence Foreshore Trail
- Meehan Skyline Trail
- Droughty Trail (Rokeby Hills)
- Charles Darwin Trail
- Tangara Trail
- Clarence Coastal Kayak Trail

The Action Plan also identified Secondary Link Trails utilising corridors along waterways. These include:

- Risdon Vale Rivulet
- Geilston Bay Rivulet
- Kangaroo Bay Rivulet
- Clarence Plains Rivulet
- Coal River
- Barilla Rivulet
- Risdon Brook

The following Table provides specific recommendations for works on the network of City's tracks and trails, based on incomplete projects from the 2008-2013 Tracks and Trails Action Plan. It is likely that the majority of these projects will be carried over to the 2014-2018 Action Plan.

Trail Name	Land Status	Comments	Estimated Completion Year
Clarence Foreshore Trail			
Simmons Park to Ronnie St. Lindisfarne	Crown	Public consultation carried out in October 2011. Design being prepared. Construction expected to commence in 2012 .	Funding 2011-12 financial year
Arlunya St. to existing path near Pindos Park, Tranmere	Crown	Track needs to be constructed. Incorporated into Tranmere Management Plan	Bicycle committee project
Droughty Point	Private	Subdivision process needs to preserve foreshore reserve for track construction.	Ongoing
Rokeby to Lauderdale	P&W and private	Discussion and negotiation with landowners underway. .	2012-13
Seven Mile Beach to Lauderdale	P&W	Improve access at Seven Mile Beach end.	2012-13
Mays Beach to Cremorne	P&W, Crown and private	Discussion and negotiation with landowner required.	2013-14
Howrah Point	Crown & Private	Negotiate with landowners to develop a track along the rocky foreshore	2013-14
Tranmere foreshore between Cleve Crt and Dunalla St	CCC	Tracks need to be constructed. See Tranmere Foreshore Plan.	2012-13
Lauderdale to Mays Beach	Crown, CCC & Private	Investigate options for the development of a legible route utilising the foreshore and footpaths.	2013-14
Opossum Bay to South Arm	Crown, CCC & Private	Undertake discussions and negotiations with landowner.	2013-14

Trail Name	Land Status	Comments	Estimated Completion Year
Clarence Foreshore Trail			
Cape Deslacs to Calverts Beach	Crown and private	These all are longer-term ideas for consideration that will involve considerable consultation with landowners and recreational users. It will also require finding funding and resources to develop and maintain trails.	Timing extends beyond the 5 Year Plan but Council will consider any opportunities that may arise
Calverts Beach to Johns Point	Crown and private		
Johns Point to South Arm	CCC		
Dorans Road to Gorrings Beach via Dixon Point and Maria Point	Crown and private		
Otago to Risdon Cove	Crown, CCC and private		
Risdon Cove – Geilston Bay	P&W and CCC		
Meehan Skyline Trail			
Risdon Vale from Downhams Rd to ridgeline at Rocky Tom and boundary with Parks and Wildlife land	CCC and private	Continue discussions with the three landowners to work towards allowing access on fire trails. Issues to be discussed with PWS and options for by-pass route given Flagstaff quarry operations.	2013-14
Rocky Tom to Belbins Rd.	P&W and private	Continue discussion and negotiation with single landowner in order to realign the realign steep track to provide a better grade and reduce likelihood of erosion. Alternative route options need to be explored.	2012-13
Belbins Rd to Mt Rumney	CCC	Signage and track construction required. Track legibility is poor along this section, and includes crossing of Cambridge Rd.	2012-13
Link trail – Mt Rumney to Tangara Trail at Acton	CCC	A public rights of way exists but signage is required to improve legibility. The alignment is steep and the possibility of using an old fire trail to realign the track should be investigated.	2012-13

Trail Name	Land Status	Comments	Estimated Completion Year
Meehan Skyline Trail			
Link trail – Dulcot to Meehan	P&W and private	These all are longer-term ideas for consideration that will involve considerable consultation with landowners and recreational users. It will also require finding funding and resources to develop and maintain trails.	Timing extends beyond the 5 Year Plan but Council will consider any opportunities that may arise
Mt Rumney to Lauderdale via Stanfields Hill	Private		
Link track from Bowen Bridge to Mt Direction	P&W, DIER		
Tangara Trail			
Various	CCC and private	Continue to expand and create new links through subdivision process	Ongoing
Various	CCC and private	Implement the <i>Tangara Trail Activity Plan 2012</i>	Ongoing
Seven Mile Beach	Private	Investigate options for an alternative route behind Seven Mile Beach Township. Waiting on further subdivision to create links.	2012-13
Clarence Coastal Kayak Trail			
Otago Bay to Five Mile Beach	Public waterways	Investigation of sections, points of interest, distance between landing sites	2013-14
Droughty Trail (Rokeby Hills)			
Sunray Street to Kunyah Bushland Reserve	CCC and private	These all are longer-term ideas for consideration that will involve considerable consultation with landowners and recreational users. It will also require finding funding and resources to develop and maintain trails. The latter three actions will be influenced by the outcomes of a large proposed subdivision at Droughty Point.	Timing extends beyond the 5 Year Plan but Council will consider any opportunities that may arise
Kunyah Bushland Reserve to Glebe Hill	CCC, DIER and private		
Trywork Point to Sunray Street, Rokeby	CCC and private		

ATTACHMENT 1

TRACKS AND TRAIL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

The following criteria were developed as part of the *Trails Tasmania Strategy 2007*. The criteria are a 'tool' to aid in the assessment of tracks and trails development proposals, and have a focus on sustainability, and are intended as an example only of the sorts of factors that need to be considered.

Tracks and trails developments should:

- be easily accessible to the Tasmanian community and visitors;

- have the potential support of the landowner or manager;

- have the potential for shared use;

- provide lifestyle benefits to the community and visitors for example improved health, enhanced visitor experiences, improved access, and greater choice for physical activity;

- not adversely impact on significant natural, cultural, social and other land use or recreational values;

- have potential for improving local economic activity for example nature based tourism, events, encourage longer visitor stays;

- provide improved alternative transport options via linkages with trails, roads and paths, reducing fossil fuel consumption, and air and noise pollution in both urban and rural areas;

- allow levels of risk and challenge to be appropriately managed without affecting the user experience; and

- provide quality experiences for users including access to unique landscapes, and where appropriate support facilities, signage and interpretation.

ATTACHMENT 2

TRACKS AND TRAILS COMMITTEE CHARTER

TRACKS AND TRAILS STRATEGY

Council is committed to providing a network of tracks and trails to meet the current and future needs of residents for various activities, including walking, cycling and horse riding. To advise the Council on the implementation of the Tracks and Trails Strategy the Council created a Tracks and Trails committee in 2005.

TRACKS AND TRAILS COMMITTEE OBJECTIVE

The Council has defined the objective of the committee, which is to advise council on the expansion and promotion of tracks and trails in Clarence

TRACKS AND TRAILS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

In order to execute this objective the Tracks and Trails Committee have defined a set of primary Terms of Reference, to test any initiatives, submissions and or proposals, to ensure that:

The committee's considerations and recommendations align with the stated objective to:

- Advise council on the expansion of tracks and trails; and
- Advise council on the promotion of tracks and trails.

The committee's advice to Council supports the defined aims of the Council Strategy, which are:

- The development of a trail encompassing the City coastal boundary – The Clarence Foreshore Trail
- A network of tracks in bushland areas that provide a range of challenges to users, including hill top and perimeter tracks; including Meehan Skyline Trail, an overland trail along Rokeby Hills to Droughty Point; and Charles Darwin Trail

- The development of tracks along rivulets and creeks such as Risdon Vale Rivulet, Geilston Creek, Kangaroo Bay Rivulet, Clarence Plains Rivulet, Risdon Brook, Coal River and Barilla Rivulet.
- The development of multi-use tracks, providing access for people with disabilities, where possible.
- Extensions to the Tangara Trail;
- The development of informative and interpretive signage along the tracks and trails network.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

In addition to the primary assessment against the Terms of Reference, the committee has defined assessment criteria to assist in the determination of priorities and recommendations that have qualified under the Terms of Reference. Criteria include:

- Public safety considerations
- Linking of tracks and trails into a network
- Linking tracks and trails with reserves, parklands, historical sites and public infrastructure
- Preservation and protection of native flora, fauna and geological features
- Supporting social equity
- Management and maintenance issues
- Striving for value for money by balancing need against budget considerations
- Maximising Tourism potential
- Alignment with established best practices for Tracks and Trails