

# Warburton Mountain Bike Destination | Project Update

## Community Update - September 2021

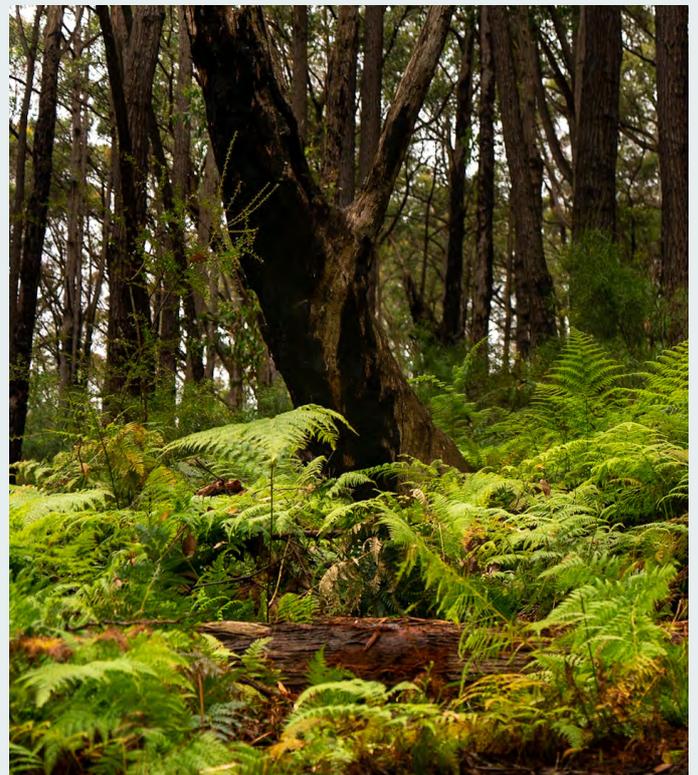
Since our last update, the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination team has been hard at work finalising more than 12-months of detailed technical studies that underpin the project's Environment Effects Statement (EES), in preparation for public exhibition of the EES later this year.

While the EES document is being prepared, Council is continuing to strengthen the outcomes of the project through ongoing engagement and collaboration with Wurundjeri Elders and undertaking a Gender Impact Assessment.

### Upcoming Public Exhibition

The EES, consisting of 15 chapters and six technical reports (Transport, Socio-economic, Land Use and Planning, Cultural heritage, Biodiversity & Habitats and a Surface Water, Groundwater and Geotechnical Hazards), is undergoing final reviews by the Technical Reference Group (TRG), the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) and Yarra Ranges Council throughout September and October. Once finalised and authorised by the Minister for Planning, it is expected the EES will be released for public exhibition around mid-November. During the exhibition period, community and stakeholders will be able to review all of the EES documents and make submissions to be considered as part of the process.

Further information on the public exhibition will be provided in the coming weeks, detailing where you can find a copy of the EES, along with upcoming community briefings and how to make a submission.



## Yarra Ranges Council has continued engagement with Wurundjeri Elders and is strengthening project outcomes through a Gender Impact Assessment.

We have been out and about in the hills ground-truthing with environmental planners and specialists completing technical assessments and refining trail designs, focusing on the importance and sensitivity of habitats and biodiversity values in the proposed project area. We are continuing to work with specialists identifying ways to avoid and mitigate potential environmental impacts.

The team has continued engagement with Wurundjeri Elders documenting and discussing intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage and intrinsic intangible values still felt by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. The project aims to mitigate any potential impacts, and aid the preservation of cultural values of the region.

Last year the Gender Equity Commission announced the Gender Equality Act 2020 to improve and promote positive action towards gender equality. Yarra Ranges Council, in support of the Act, is undertaking a gender impact assessment of the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination project to ensure it encourages and enables the achievement of gender equality and enhances the participation of people of different genders.



## What's next after exhibition

Following the exhibition of the EES, to commence in November this year, the Minister will likely appoint an independent panel to undertake an inquiry to consider the effects of the project. The inquiry is anticipated to be in February - March 2022.

Following the inquiry, the panel will prepare a report which will consider all of the information presented and provide recommendations for the Minister for Planning. The Minister will consider the relevant information, including the EES, submissions and response to submissions, and any inquiry report. The Minister's assessment and recommendations, anticipated to be announced May-June 2022, will conclude the EES process and determine the project's potential to proceed.

Subject to a successful outcome, construction on the project would commence shortly after the Minister's assessment, once the relevant government and statutory approvals have been received. Construction is anticipated to commence mid-2022, with trails to begin opening in the last quarter of 2022.

**For more information and updates, including an online interactive map showing the updated design go to: [www.rideyarraranges.com.au](http://www.rideyarraranges.com.au)**

**If you would prefer a hard copy of the information, please contact the WMBD Project Team on 1300 368 333 or email [mtb.planning@yarraranges.vic.gov.au](mailto:mtb.planning@yarraranges.vic.gov.au)**