



# Warburton Mountain Bike Destination

**A WORLD-CLASS MOUNTAIN BIKE DESTINATION IN THE HEART OF THE YARRA RANGES**

We're planning a world-class mountain bike destination in Warburton. The network of trails nestled in the surrounding mountains will bring visitors from around the world to experience Warburton's natural beauty and relaxing village atmosphere. It will also create more jobs and help grow the local economy.

## What is the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination?

The Warburton Mountain Bike Destination would:

- Be a world-class mountain bike hub centred around Warburton, around 70km from Melbourne
- Feature 44 trails covering 186km across three areas on Mt Donna Buang, Mt Little Joe and Mt Tugwell
- Connect with the popular Lilydale-Warburton Rail Trail and O'Shannassy Aqueduct Trail
- Have four "trail heads" with facilities for riders, including car parking, picnic areas, toilets and wash stations
- Have a main trail head at Warburton Golf Course, at the base of Mt Donna Buang and the signature 'Drop-a-K' trail - a 1000m vertical descent trail
- Have shuttle buses to take riders to the Mount Donna Buang summit and Mt Tugwell.

We have already secured \$11.3m in funding for stage one of the project, which includes around 110km of trails and four trail head facilities.

Once finished, we will apply to the International Mountain Bike Association as a Gold-Level Ride Centre. This would make Warburton the only Gold-Level centre in Australia and one of only three outside the USA.

## WARBURTON MOUNTAIN BIKE DESTINATION IS MORE THAN A WEEKEND ACTIVITY

Our aim is that the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination will deliver a range of opportunities for the region. Through the project we want to:

- Support the growth of tourism, which in turn will help grow the economy and jobs in the Yarra Valley region
- Create iconic mountain bike trails eligible for International Mountain Bike Association Gold-Level Ride Centre status
- Create spectacular riding experiences that have a competitive advantage over existing mountain bike trails and make the most of Warburton's beautiful town, valley and surrounding forested slopes
- Improve the health and wellbeing of the community
- Preserve the wide variety of plants and animals in the area as well as the area's cultural heritage. We also want create opportunities for the community to connect with these and appreciate how important they are.

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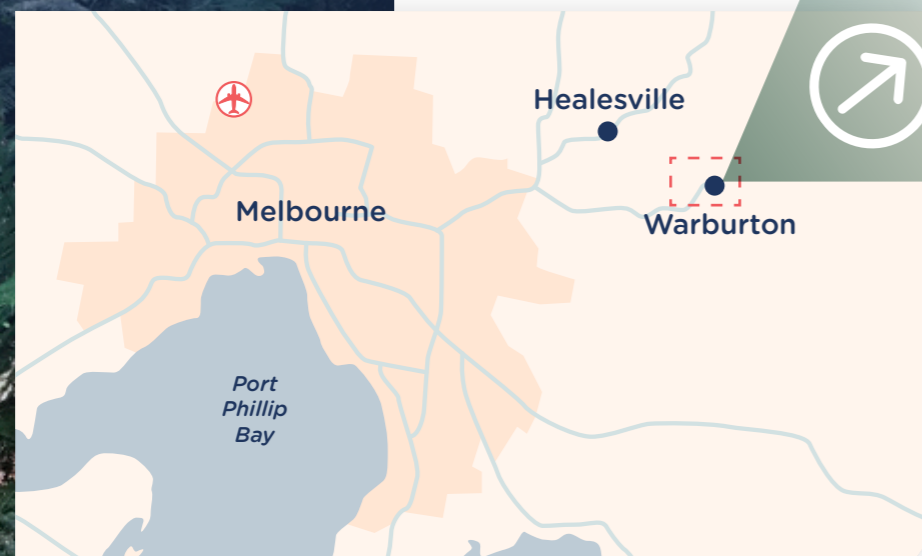
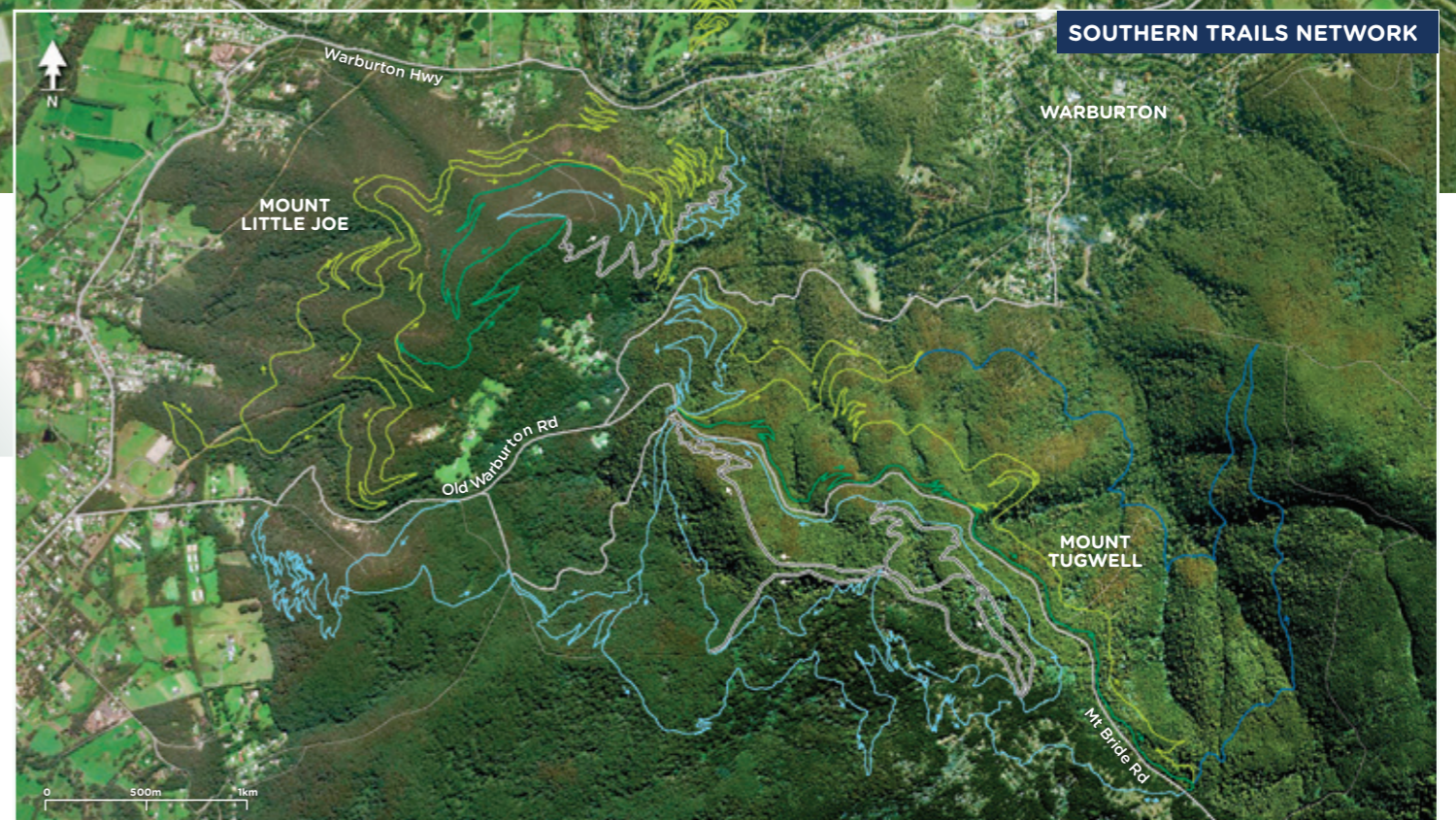
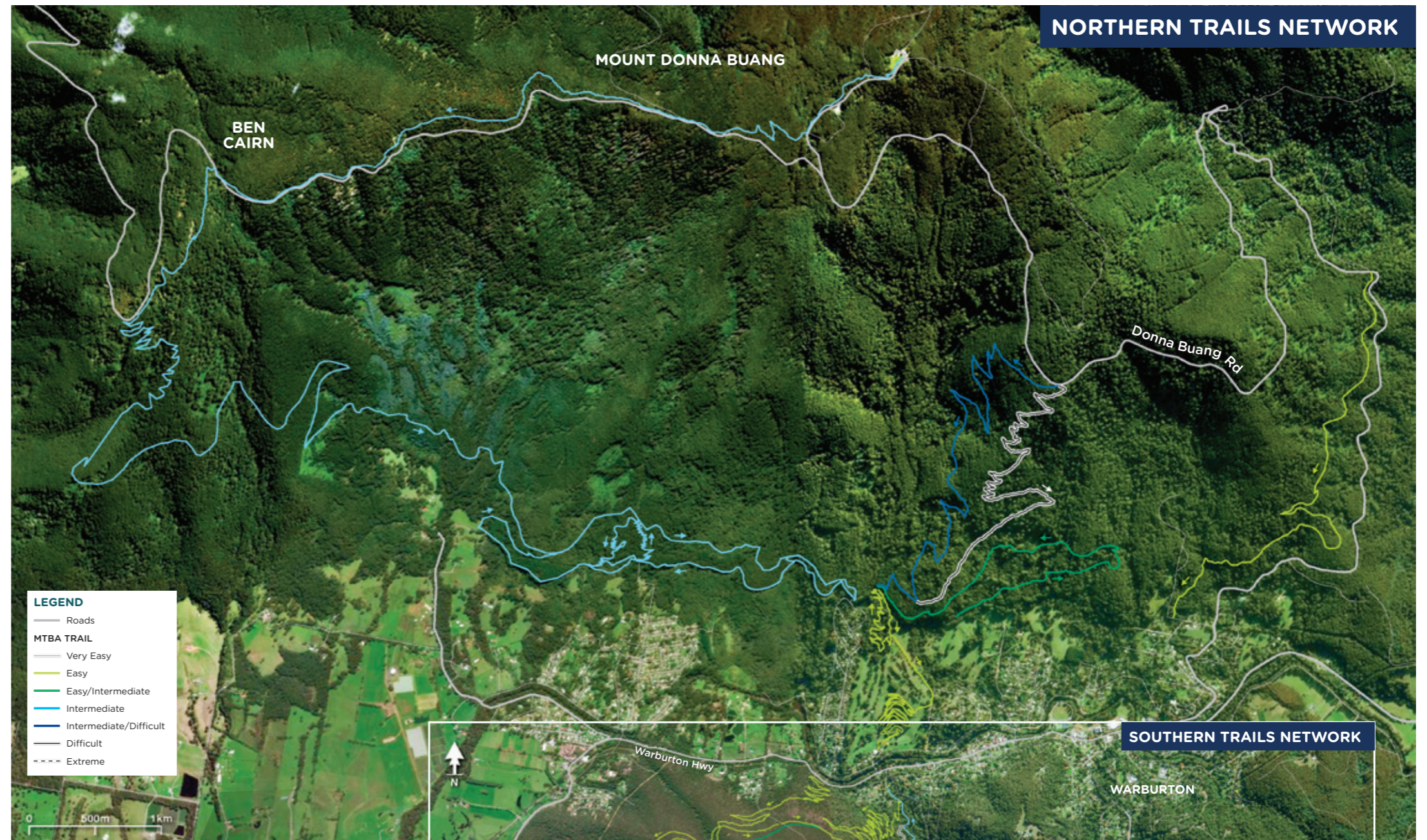
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# What does the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination mean for the local area?

Already a popular destination for weekend cyclists and tourists, Warburton is on the Yarra River and surrounded by tall mountains on either side. This makes it perfect for creating a ski village-style “ride in, ride out” experience, directly from town.

The trail network would be open from sunrise to sunset. International and interstate riders typically spend four to five days at a large mountain bike destination. This would extend Warburton’s weekend tourism market into the weekdays.



## Opportunities

- Revitalise Warburton by:
  - Encouraging new business
  - Attracting new visitors
  - Boosting local tourism.
- Improve the physical and mental health of the Yarra Ranges and Victorian community by:
  - Supporting a stronger connection with the environment
  - Increasing the number of volunteer and education opportunities
  - Improving community pride.
- Create new recreational opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages and riding abilities and support young people in the community to learn new skills.
- Increase tourism in the area, by offering family-friendly experiences that make the most of the area and put Warburton and surrounds on the map as an international destination.
- Increase job opportunities and improve the local economy.
- When all stages are completed in 2031, the project will:
  - Attract 128,000 new visitors to the area a year who will take part in 222,000 rides
  - Produce 77,000 overnight stays in the region
  - Create 159 jobs
  - Mean a \$31.2m increase to the local economy.



**128,000**

**new visitors annually to the Yarra Ranges**



**159**  
new jobs



**\$31.2 million**  
in economic spend



### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Protecting the area's natural and cultural environment are at the centre of how we have planned and developed this project.

We have been working with land managers and environmental agencies. We have already done detailed assessments of the environmental, social and economic impact of the project. As well as wide community consultation to understand key features and areas of importance.

Our community consultation found key themes the project needed to think about, such as:

- Making sure the trails can be used and enjoyed by locals
- Providing a good mix of easy, intermediate and difficult trail grades
- Making sure the road network and carparks can cope with the extra traffic
- Setting up a plan for ongoing maintenance of the trails and facilities
- Minimising traffic noise on local roads
- Celebrating and making sure we protect the area's natural environment
- Managing safety and risks, including bushfire risks
- Making sure we protect local heritage sites
- Keeping or improving walking and running tracks and trails.

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## Key steps in developing the project

### OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT AND OUR MASTER PLAN

We started developing the project after local riders suggested the idea in 2010 as part of Parks Victoria's *Healthy Parks Healthy People* program.

Since then, we have:

- run a feasibility study – to assess if and how the project could work
- done detailed planning work
- investigated how the project might impact the community and environment
- run community consultation
- asked for expert advice to develop the project's master plan.

We are developing the project in partnership with Parks Victoria and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. We have also asked for input from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Melbourne Water and the Upper Yarra Community Enterprise.

We have made a number of changes to the project's design because of what we found in our impact assessments and to include community feedback. This has included removing, redesigning and realigning trails to further reduce impacts and protect important local features.

The project has funding for stage one and we have appointed specialist mountain bike trail design and construction firm **World Trail** to complete the design of the trail network and construct the trails.

### ASSESSMENT AND APPROVALS

In Victoria, you may need to assess the possible environmental impacts or effects of a development under the *Environment Effects Act 1978 (Vic)*. This can include preparing an Environment Effects Statement (EES).

An EES is an assessment process that helps make sure major projects are designed, constructed and run to minimise impacts to the environment and the community.

An EES usually includes information like a description of the development and what other alternatives you have considered. It may also need information about the existing environment, how the project may impact the environment and what can be done to avoid, minimise or manage these impacts.

In December 2019, we gave the project's detailed environmental studies and analysis of the possible impact on the environment to the Victorian Government. They then decided whether we needed to prepare an EES.

The Minister for Planning decided that we do need an EES. The EES will let us know what approvals we need for the project, including the planning approval we need under a range of Australian and Victorian laws.

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We are now working through the EES process, which can take around 18 months. The process needs detailed investigation across a wide range of environmental factors including ecological, physical and social factors.

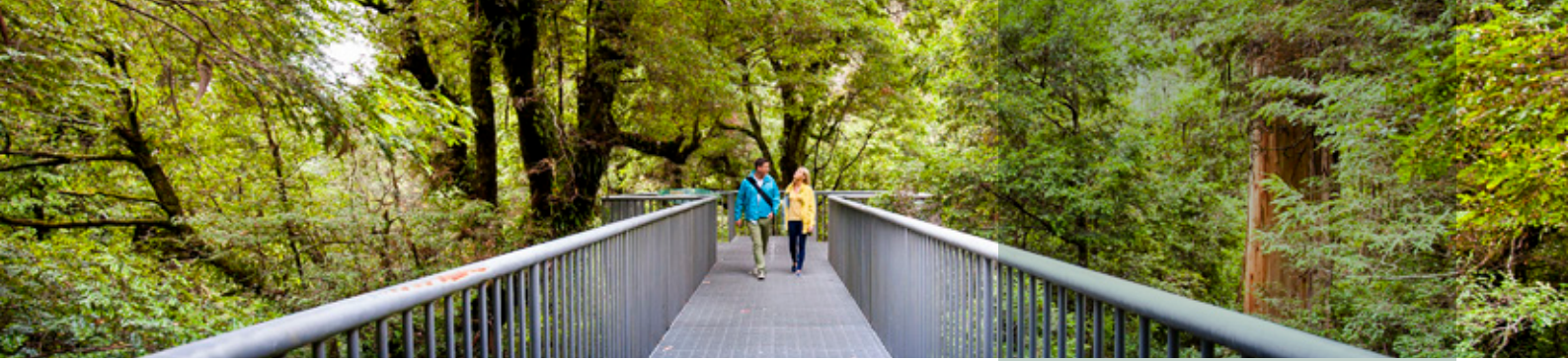
The EES will assess the effect the project will have on:

- Environment, habitats and biodiversity
- Waterways and catchments
- Social, economic, amenity and land use, including transport
- Cultural heritage.

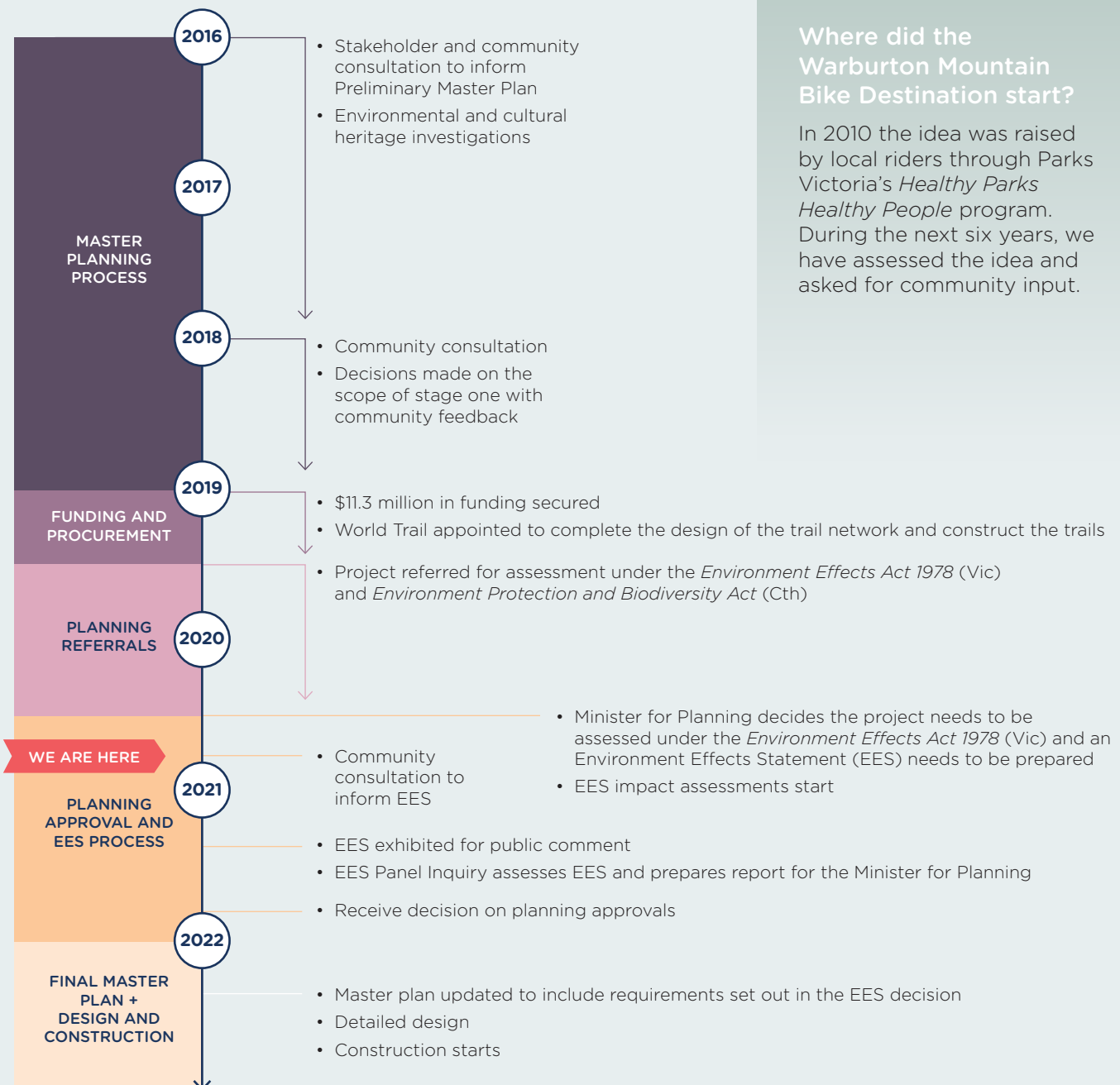
The process will include community consultation and the opportunity for the public to make a submission for the independent panel assessing the EES to consider.

You can read our EES and specialist studies fact sheet for more information.





## Project timeline



### Where did the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination start?

In 2010 the idea was raised by local riders through Parks Victoria's *Healthy Parks Healthy People* program. During the next six years, we have assessed the idea and asked for community input.

## Find out more and stay involved

NOVEMBER 2020

Community input is an important part of the EES process and the project's continued development. Sign up for project updates, find the latest information or ask a question on our website [rideyarraranges.com.au](http://rideyarraranges.com.au)

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