

DRAFT

LEEUWIN
NATURALISTE
REGIONAL
TRAILS
STRATEGY 2020



LEEWIN NATURALISTE REGIONAL TRAILS STRATEGY 2020

Prepared by Common Ground Trails Pty Ltd for the City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

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The authors of the Leeuwin Naturaliste Regional Trails Strategy acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Regional Trails Strategy has been developed to guide future strategic investment in trails recreation, tourism and event development across the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region of Western Australia (WA). The Strategy reflects the aspirations of the City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River to become an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable trails destination.

Aligned with the Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2017-2021, this Strategy considers bushwalk, trail running, off road cycling (mountain bike and shared use trail), and equestrian trails.

The trails strategy provides direction for the City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River and key stakeholders to develop facilities of varying scales that cater for a diverse range of trail types in appropriate locations.

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

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

The vision for trails in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region is:

TRAILS IN THE LEEUWIN NATURALISTE REGION WILL WEAVE TOGETHER THE REGION'S ATTRACTIONS PROVIDING CONNECTIONS WHICH IN THEMSELVES OFFER A VALUED EXPERIENCE.

Supporting this vision are 5 key objectives which are critical in ensuring development of the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region as a sustainable trails destination.

1. CREATE ENVIABLE GOVERNANCE

OPTIMISE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES ACROSS TRAIL LAND OWNERS, STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND REGIONAL PARTNERS TO ENSURE THE LEEUWIN NATURALISTE REGION IS POSITIONED AS A TRAILS DESTINATION.

The key to the success of establishing the region as a trail's destination is an effective and efficient governance and management structure. To maintain sustainability and consistency across the region it is recommended that a trails committee be formed and given responsibility for implementation of the strategy.

2. COMPLETE THE BACKBONE OF THE REGION

COMPLETE THE WADANDI TRACK THROUGH THE REGION, WHICH PROVIDES CONNECTION AND A STARTING POINT FROM WHICH EXPERIENCES AND TRAILS EMERGE FROM

The key spine trail in the network is the Wadandi Track, providing the primary north south connection through the region. The Wadandi Track will provide the gateway to the key natural and cultural experiences on offer. Prioritising completion of the Wadandi Track will be critical in establishing the region as a trails destination and getting the ball rolling on trails and experiences that hinge off the track.

3. IMPROVE THE ICONIC TRAIL EXPERIENCE

STRENGTHEN THE CAPE TO CAPE TRACK EXPERIENCE CREATING A TRULY ICONIC WORLD CLASS TRAIL EXPERIENCE.

The region's iconic trail experience is the Cape to Cape Track. While already well known as an iconic experience, strategic investment in alignment upgrades and the high profile sites along the route together with exploring opportunities to improve access to a range of accommodation options will elevate the offer on par with some of Australia's best.

4. INFILL IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

CREATE OFF THE SPINE A SERIES OF INFILL EXPERIENCES CONNECTING KEY DESTINATIONS, ATTRACTIONS AND EXPERIENCES. ENSURE QUALITY TRAIL USER EXPERIENCES, WHICH WILL DELIVER SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND TOURISM BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY.

Infill trail experiences will deliver experiences that showcase the best of the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region and fill the identified gaps in the existing trails offer. Trails proposed and recommended upgrades to existing trails will provide key connections and recreation experiences for local communities and provide the unique experiences that visitors are seeking. The priority infill experiences identified include:

- Busselton to Nannup Rail Trail connecting Busselton to the Munda Biddi at Jarrahwood
- Trees to Sea Trail connection between Nannup and the Coast along the Blackwood River
- Augusta Busselton Heritage Trail
- Cape Naturaliste loop
- Cape Leeuwin loop
- Winery trails
- Brewery Trail
- Mountain bike trails in Margaret River, Busselton, Dunsborough and Augusta
- Boranup Trail network
- Margaret River to Coast River Trail

5. MARKET AND PROMOTE THE EXPERIENCES ON OFFER

COMPREHENSIVE AND COORDINATED MARKETING PRESENCE TO PROMOTE THE TRAIL EXPERIENCES.

Marketing and promotion of the experience on offer needs to be appropriate to the level of development and to the intended markets. A comprehensive and cohesive strategy looking at how the diversity of experience can be packaged and marketed is needed to entice longer stays and repeat visits.



INTRODUCTION

Located in the South West of Western Australia, the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region offers a range of outdoor adventure opportunities. Trails are the fundamental means to explore and enjoy these unique places offering a multitude of experiences.

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region is ideally situated to prosper in the growth and economic benefits of trails. With an existing well established tourism offer a focus on trails will see a diversification and growth of tourism as well as social and physical benefits for locals. The region is made up of two local governments – City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

Recognising the potential of the Region to capitalise on trails, the brief for the Leeuwin Naturaliste Regional Trails Strategy includes a review of the full breadth of trail opportunities on LGA estate, aligned with the Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2017-2021 (DSR, 2017) (the Blueprint). The vision for trails in Western Australia as defined in the Blueprint is more people using Western Australia's trail network resulting in greater community, social, cultural, economic, environmental, health and wellbeing outcomes for Western Australia.

TRAIL TYPES

Trails considered in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Regional Trails Strategy include those outlined in Figure 1. For the purposes of this strategy mountain bike trails are considered those specifically designed for mountain biking and cycling trails are off road trails suitable for bicycles.



Figure 1. Activity types

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Western Australian Trails Blueprint outlines a planning structure for trails state-wide with regional trails master plans referencing all trail types falling under state-wide activity based strategies (refer to figure 2). The Leeuwin Naturaliste Regional Trails Strategy falls within regional trails master plans, which aim to provide regional context rather than detail the specifics of individual trails.

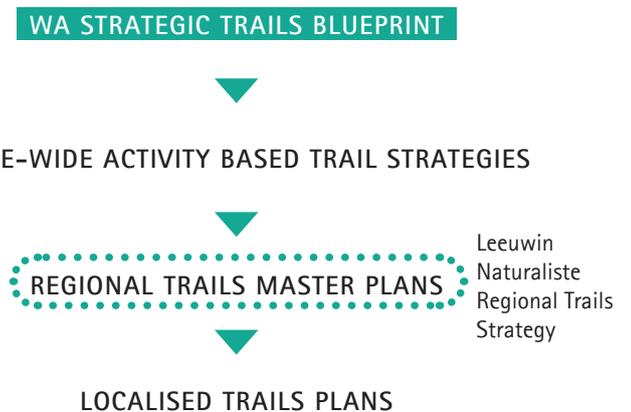


Figure 2. State-wide trails planning structure

PROJECT AREA

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region boasts a pristine, unique and environmentally significant natural environment that is a drawcard for tourists from all over the world. Trail based activities such as walking, trail running, mountain biking and horse riding provide opportunities for visitors and locals alike to access and enjoy these environments. The project area encompasses the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region of WA (refer to figure 3) which includes the City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

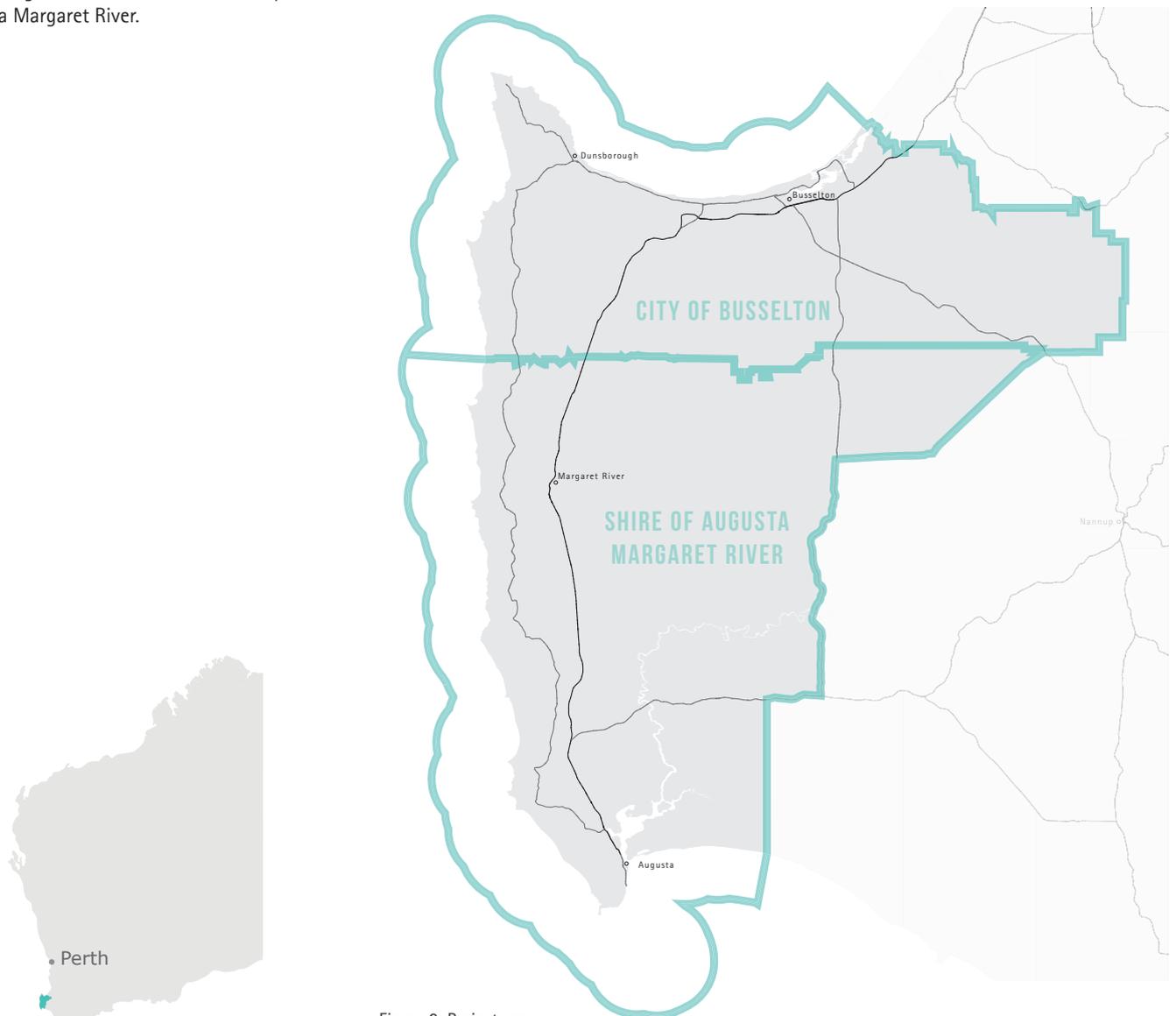


Figure 3. Project area

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region is well known for its rich mosaic of agricultural land uses, forests, spectacular coastline, the dominant dividing 'ridge', magnificent stands of karri and karst features (Department of Conservation and Land Management, 1997).

The Blackwood Plateau makes up the eastern portion of the project area and is a gently undulating plateau of rolling low hills and rises formed on the laterised surface of the Bunbury Trough. The northern edge of the Blackwood plateau is formed by the Whicher Range which abuts the Swan Coastal Plain to the north. Further west the Margaret River Plateau is a gently undulating 5-15 km wide area extending from Dunsborough to Augusta. It is dissected by a series of valley systems, including the Margaret River. The coast between Cape Naturaliste and Cape Leeuwin comprises a discontinuous ridge of Tamala Limestone with prominent rounded hills ranging between 160 m and 200 m in height and the underlying Leeuwin Black granite exposed in places. The Leeuwin Naturaliste Ridge contains hundreds of caves of significance due to the quality of the formations and the cultural and fossil remains they contain. The coastline west of the ridge comprises steep limestone and granite cliffs interspersed with sandy bays and steep sand dunes between rocky headlands. (South West Catchment Council, 2019)

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

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

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region as the traditional territory of the Wadandi people, who are located between Bunbury and Cape Leeuwin, and the Pibbelmen people, who occupy the lower Blackwood River (Smith, 1989). The Wadandi and Pibbelmen are two of the 14 different language groups known today as Noongar. Historically, the majority of activity by Noongar people is thought to have been concentrated along the Leeuwin Naturaliste coastline and near-coastal transition zone (Lilley, 1991). Noongar people migrated seasonally between these coastal areas and its hinterland to use various resources. Most activity was, and still is, near fresh water sources, which were used for camping, hunting, foraging and fishing.

Locations that are popular for trail based recreation can sometimes coincide with sites of significance for traditional owners, given they can both occur in natural, relatively undisturbed areas. Should detailed site planning progress for any of the locations recommended in this strategy, traditional owners will be consulted in accordance with the relevant legislation and any requirements of the Southwest Native Title settlement.

TENURE

The areas identified within the project area publicly available for recreation are located on a variety of tenures, including State forest, national parks, bushland reserves and local parks and recreation reserves. This Strategy focuses on land managed by the City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River. State managed and privately owned land has not been considered in detail for this project, other than broad recommendations.

PROJECT CONSTRAINTS

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

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

DISEASE RISK

Disease caused by Phytophthora species, a soil borne fungal pathogen, is wreaking havoc on susceptible native flora species in the southwest of WA, particularly the introduced *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. In an effort to contain its spread; it is essential to follow strict hygiene protocols and avoid moving between infested and uninfested areas. While detailed disease surveys would need to be undertaken for any trail development, current known extent has been taken into account when recommending locations for development.

UNSANCTIONED TRAILS

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

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

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

- They can have an adverse effect on the site due to lack of planning and/or poor construction or maintenance. Where unsanctioned trails breach environmental legislation, for example through damage to sensitive habitats or designated wildlife and archaeological/cultural sites, they may constitute criminal offences for which the land managers may be held liable
- They can breach planning legislation, leading to enforcement action

- They can cause disruption to routine land management practices such as forestry
- They can lead to conflict between user groups
- They can pose risks to those building or using unsanctioned trails and features if they are not properly designed, constructed and maintained.
- Impacts on amenity when located adjacent to residential areas.

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

- Removal of unsanctioned trails – The land manager is entitled to remove unsanctioned trails.
- Adoption of trails by land manager – This approach may be appropriate where the land manager is prepared to take full responsibility for the trail. This is unlikely unless the trail could be incorporated into a planned trail, and only when appropriate checks and approvals have been completed.
- Volunteering agreements – An agreement is developed following discussion between a land manager and trail user group/club about options for volunteer maintenance of trails. The agreement needs to be clear on where responsibilities lie and trails may need to be improved to meet standards for classification.
- Agreements with formal user groups/clubs – A land manager enters into an agreement with a formal trail user group/club that has a governance structure, training provision and insurance for trail work. The agreement could take a variety of forms depending on the aims and objectives of both parties and could include responsibilities for building trails, risk assessments, trail inspections, repair and decommissioning. The agreement should also set out points of contact and set out processes for any joint decision making.

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

Operational Policy 13, 2019 implements the Government's response to the 2010 parliamentary committee report on recreation within public drinking water source areas. It is aimed at ensuring recreational activity in Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSAs) is conducted in ways which maximise water quality to protect public health. It identifies that:

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

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region has a population of 50,875 with a median age of 41 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019). The region is predicted to see significant population growth with an increase of 3.1% (Band C predictions) by 2031 (Western Australia Tomorrow, 2019). With the predicted growth and urban expansion that comes with that growth, prioritising trails will become increasingly important. Ensuring access to local trails and providing connections between reserves should be a priority as urban development expands.

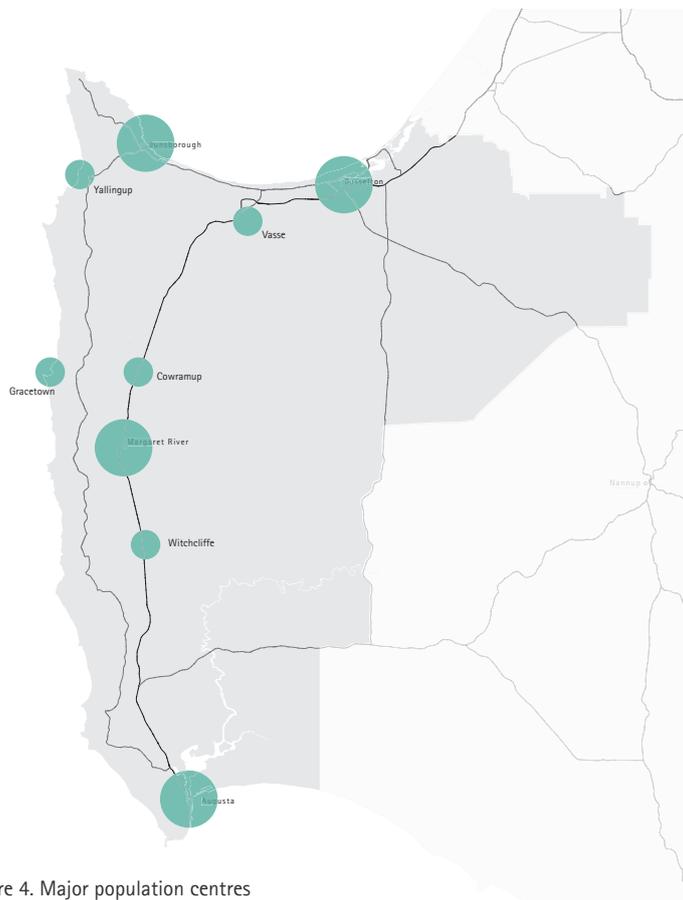


Figure 4. Major population centres

VISITATION SUMMARY

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region is a popular tourist destination with diverse opportunities from natural attractions to vibrant cities, rural lifestyles and a variety of local arts and cultural activities, festivals and events. Figures 5 to 8 provide a summary of current visitation. Intrastate travelers make up by far the majority of visitors to the region, with the Shire of Augusta Margaret River attracting slightly more international visitors than the City of Busselton. Holidays are the primary purpose of the visit.



Figure 5. City of Busselton Visitation Summary

Source: Tourism Research Australia, International and National Visitor Survey, 2019.

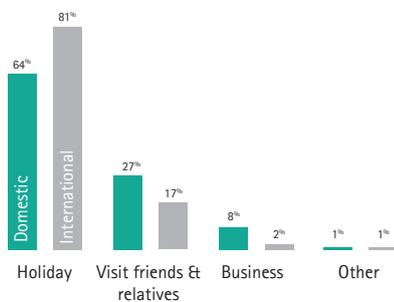


Figure 6. Purpose of visit to City of Busselton

Note: "Other" includes education, employment, personal appointment (e.g. medical), and all other purposes. Purpose of Visit is a multiple response question. Totals may not add up to 100%. Source: Tourism Research Australia, International and National Visitor Survey, 2019.

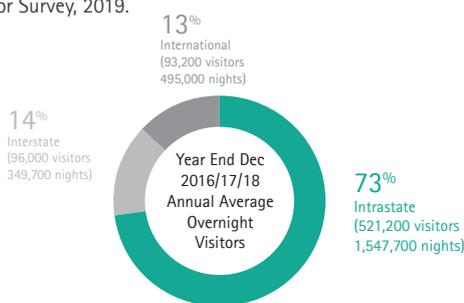


Figure 7. Shire of Augusta Margaret River Visitation Summary

Source: Tourism Research Australia, International and National Visitor Survey, 2019.

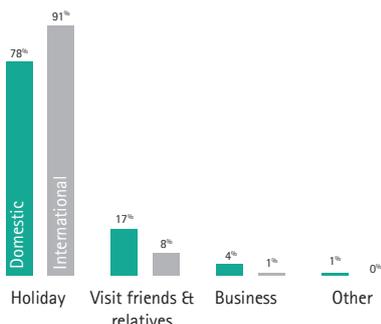


Figure 8. Purpose of visit to Shire of Augusta Margaret River

Note: "Other" includes education, employment, personal appointment (e.g. medical), and all other purposes. Purpose of Visit is a multiple response question. Totals may not add up to 100%. Source: Tourism Research Australia, International and National Visitor Survey, 2019.

TRAIL USER MOTIVATORS AND NEEDS

Trail Users come from a variety of backgrounds and are categorised according to whether trail usage was their primary motivation for travel or as an incidental activity. When assessed against key tourism markets identified by Tourism WA and Tourism Australia (refer Table 1) there are noted similarities.

There are three distinct trail user markets that include locals, 'destination trail users' and 'trail users while on holiday'. Further research needs to be undertaken to determine the size and potential for growth of these markets, as well as the benefits and impacts resulting from increased visitation to the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region.

LOCALS

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

DESTINATION TRAIL USERS

The destination trail user market includes experienced trail users who regularly travel with the trails as a primary motivator. They have likely visited other Australian or international trails destinations. They seek high quality trail with good supporting infrastructure in scenic / natural locations. These users are usually found in trails destinations and seek good terrain. Locations that combine desirable terrain with tourist activities and infrastructure have the best market appeal for destination trail users. This group also includes event participants who travel to a destination specifically for the event, typically spending additional time pre or post event to explore the area.

TRAIL USERS WHILE ON HOLIDAYS

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

MARKET SEGMENTATION COMPARISON

Following a review in 2017 of their segmentation in the domestic market, Tourism WA identified six target markets in the Australian traveling population. Based on the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region's high appeal and existing visitation within the domestic market this segmentation has been used to compare commonality of these markets with the two types of trail tourists.

The six new segments included Escape & Connect, Off the Beaten Track, Bright Lights, Culture Vultures, Family Fun and Relax & Rewind. Three of these six segments have been selected by Tourism WA as priority segments for interstate marketing: Escape & Connect, Off the Beaten Track and Bright Lights.

When assessed against the travel motivations and behaviour of the intrastate market, Leeuwin Naturaliste as a trail tourism destination has the potential to appeal to the Off the Beaten Track, and Escape & Connect segments.

Table 1. provides a broad assessment of the similarities between the intrastate and interstate market segments, providing some insight into the viable attractiveness for each market segment to Leeuwin Naturaliste Region.

Depending on the market, different motivators and experiences will be placed as the primary decision for engaging in the activity. Different user groups are driven by varying motivators, depending on whether they are undertaking travel or using the trails for recreation.

Further research is required to understand the primary motivators for travel for all trail activities. The needs of the various markets will be different for different trail user groups and need to be considered when developing a location.

Broadly, the primary motivators are controllable factors that influence destination choice, and can include:

Diversity

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

Uniqueness

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

Quality

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

Accessibility

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

Community

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

Table 1. Tourism market segment comparison.

IDENTIFIED TOURISM MARKET	DESTINATION TRAIL USERS	TRAIL USERS WHILE ON HOLIDAY
Off the Beaten Track		
Love the outdoors, especially hiking and camping	✓	✓
Seek the best value for money	✓	✓
Are practical and carefully make decisions	✓	
Have a lot of free time but keep active with hobbies	✓	✓
Are not too fussed about socialising/shopping/restaurants	✓	
Are environmental and love the simple life	✓	
And are seeking;		
To avoid crowds and touristy destinations	✓	
Nature and wildlife experiences	✓	✓
Holidays within Australia with a preference for regional destinations (rather than cities)	✓	
Affordable accommodation in standard hotels/motels or resorts, with friends and family, or in caravan or camping accommodation	✓	✓
Best value for money	✓	✓
Escape & Connect		
Value relationships and are socially active	✓	✓
Like to challenge themselves and be creative	✓	✓
Are passionate and busy with hobbies & interests	✓	✓
Have a strong interest in food, at home and out	✓	
Are motivated in their careers	✓	
Value fashion and style		✓
And are seeking;		
To disconnect and have a complete break from responsibilities and worries	✓	
A chance to reconnect with their partner	✓	✓
Food & wine experiences and sightseeing	✓	✓
Willing to pay more for a quality experience	✓	
More likely to choose higher end accommodation and have a higher average spend per trip/	✓	

TRAIL TYPE SPECIFIC MARKETS

WALK/TRAIL RUN and EQUESTRIAN

Walking, trail running and equestrian trail users can be further differentiated based on psychographic characteristics (shared personality traits, interests and lifestyles) identifying the following:

- **Leisure Trail Users:** typically, holiday makers who seek out accessible trails for use with family and friends. Time spent on trails is often short to half-day in duration.
- **Active Trail Users:** outdoor enthusiasts who will plan their visit to include use of trails. Time spent on trails is often half to full day or overnight stay.
- **Adventure Trail Users:** dedicated trail users who will seek out challenging trails or unique and extended experiences. Time spent on trails is often overnight and multi-day. See

In order to successfully cater for these diverse markets, this strategy aims to identify opportunities to develop quality trails within scenic locations with nearby attractions and amenities to suit different expectations and experiences.

MOUNTAIN BIKE and CYCLING

Understanding the various trail users and trail cohorts needs, expectations and requirements is essential in ensuring the long term sustainability of trails.

Mountain bikers are generally divided into the following cohorts each with differing trail requirements and expectations. Each cohort has differing trail type requirements, however there are also numerous overlaps between some segments. Different cohorts also have different barriers to entry and require different levels of trail user friendliness.

LEISURE (LS)

Includes general cyclists of all ages and abilities and is potentially the largest market. Typically, they ride infrequently, often have limited appropriate skills and require very accessible trails. They are not members of clubs and they are more likely to use highly accessible routes close to home or make the journey to trail facilities with amenities and services such as bike hire, cafes and toilets.

ENTHUSIAST (EN)

Enthusiasts are purely recreational mountain bikers with moderate skills and variable fitness and ride weekly. They are typically aged 29-49 and form the existing market majority. They typically don't compete in events and they possess limited outdoors experience. They prefer trails with good trail signage and seek technical but not too challenging trails. Enthusiast Mountain Bikers are the most likely to take short breaks to different areas.

SPORT (SP)

Competitive mountain bikers, who ride regular routes multiple times a week and are members of mountain bike clubs, they are a small but influential market. They are willing to seek less accessible trails, have a high fitness level and are technically proficient but may have limited outdoor skills. They ride a very wide variety of trails.

INDEPENDENT (IN)

Skilled outdoor enthusiasts who ride once a week and are technically proficient with good level of fitness. Generally they are a small market. Often involved in other outdoor activities, they are capable of planning their own rides and ride a very wide variety of trail classifications. The adventurous aspect is more important than the technical challenge and they seek more remote trails.

GRAVITY (GR)

Highly skilled technical riders who seek very challenging trails, typically ride at least once a week and are often members of clubs. They represent a small market that requires purpose-built trails, which are repeatedly used in a concentrated manner. Gravity riders seek specific trails with the highest classifications.

PARTICIPATION IN TRAIL BASED ACTIVITIES

Across Australia participation in sport and physical recreation has seen a significant downturn when comparing the last two Participation in Sport and Recreation (Australia) surveys outlined in Table 2 below. This decrease has been noted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and is in line with increased incidence of overweight and obesity (particularly amongst children), and the associated costs to individuals, communities and governments. Compelling evidence shows that increased levels of physical activity can bring wide-ranging benefits to communities, which extend beyond physical health to include benefits around mental health, personal wellbeing and social cohesion. Making recreational facilities accessible in all communities is a critical strategy for increasing physical activity and preventing obesity. The cost of physical inactivity to the Australian economy is estimated to be around \$14 billion (\$1.4 billion in WA) and productivity loss equates to 1.8 working days per employee per year at a cost of \$458 nationally (Be Active WA, 2012).

Table 2. Persons participating in Sport and Physical Recreation 2016-19. Source: (Australian Sports Commission, 2019)

Activity	Participants 2018-19	Change from 2011-2012
Cycling	2,386,200	+ 3%
Mountain Biking	251,400	+ 31%
Walking (recreational)	8,968,100	+ 1%
Bushwalking	1,167,200	+ 8%
Canoeing / Kayaking	282,200	+ 21%
Equestrian	203,100	+ 4%

Overall males tended to engage in recreational activity at a greater rate than females, primarily due to the high participation rates in cycling. Whilst females were more likely to walk or horse ride for exercise than males; males were more likely than females to participate in cycling and canoeing/kayaking as shown in table 3 below.

Table 3. Persons participating in Sport and Physical Recreation 2018-19. Source (Australian Sports Commission, 2019)

Activity	Male participation rate (%)	Female participation rate (%)
Cycling	14.5	8.5
Mountain Biking	2.1	0.4
Walking (recreational)	33.4	53.4
Bushwalking	5.7	5.6
Canoeing / Kayaking	1.7	1.1
Equestrian	0.3	1.7

The Australian Sports Commission (Australian Sports Commission, 2019) reports that walking (excluding bushwalking) continues to be the most popular activity nationally, across gender and age demographics. Cycling is rated the fifth most popular activity, followed by bushwalking (sixth most popular).

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



PLANNING CONTEXT

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

into regional trails master plans and then localised trail master plans. Strategic planning for the region also has important implications for trail planning and development. The following table outlines existing strategic planning documents and strategies and master plans relating to trails which have informed the LNRTS.

Table 4. Relevant planning documents

	DOCUMENT	SUMMARY
	Government Planning & Policy	
	DBCA Parks and Wildlife Management Plans	Management plans advising on land tenure and management strategies.
	Trail Planning and development	
STATE	Western Australian Strategic Trails Blueprint 2017-2021	Provides background on growth and trends in trails; Summarises current situation in WA, supply, demand; Identifies issues for trail development in WA. Provides guiding principles, strategic directions and actions for consideration across the state. Is a guide for consistent and coordinated planning, development and management of quality trails and trail experiences across WA.
	Western Australian Mountain Bike Strategy 2015 – 2020	Identifies priority areas for development of mountain bike trails, racing, events, participation and tourism.
	Western Australian Mountain Bike Management Guidelines, Parks and Wildlife, 2019	Provides guidelines for development and management of all mountain bike trails in WA. Aspiration to be adopted by all land managers.
	Western Australia Bushwalking and Trail Running Strategy (in preparation) 2019	Proposes opportunities and benefits of bushwalking and trail running for Western Australia. Addresses existing challenges and provides guidance and structure for decision makers, land managers, trail planners and the community. Advises on infrastructure and facilities, trail classifications, Code of Conduct, Management and Governance
	Taking the Reins, The Western Australian Recreational Horse Trail Strategy 2015	Proposes opportunities and benefits of horse trail riding for Western Australia. Addresses existing challenges and provides guidance and structure for decision makers, land managers, trails planners and the community. Advises on infrastructure and facilities, trail classifications, Code of Conduct, Management and Governance
REGIONAL	South West Mountain Bike Master Plan 2016	Proposes aspirational locations for development of and strategic investment into mountain biking opportunities, to establish the South West as an international mountain biking destination.
	Wadandi Track Master Plan	Provides background and direction regarding development of the Wadandi Track.
	Leeuwin Naturaliste 2050 Cycling Strategy	Department of Transport initiative, provides direction for development of cycling infrastructure across the region.
	Busselton Horse Trails Master Plan 2016-2020 Shire of Augusta Margaret River Bridle Trails Master Plan	Provides a broad overview of the equine trails in the region, and identifies strategic initiatives for future investment and development, to support the future growth of equestrian activity.

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

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

Following adoption of the Leeuwin Naturaliste Regional Trails Strategy by respective local governments the trail development process involves 8 stages and involves a constant evaluation, review and improvement process as trails are extended or revised. The diagram below provides a summary of the trail development process.

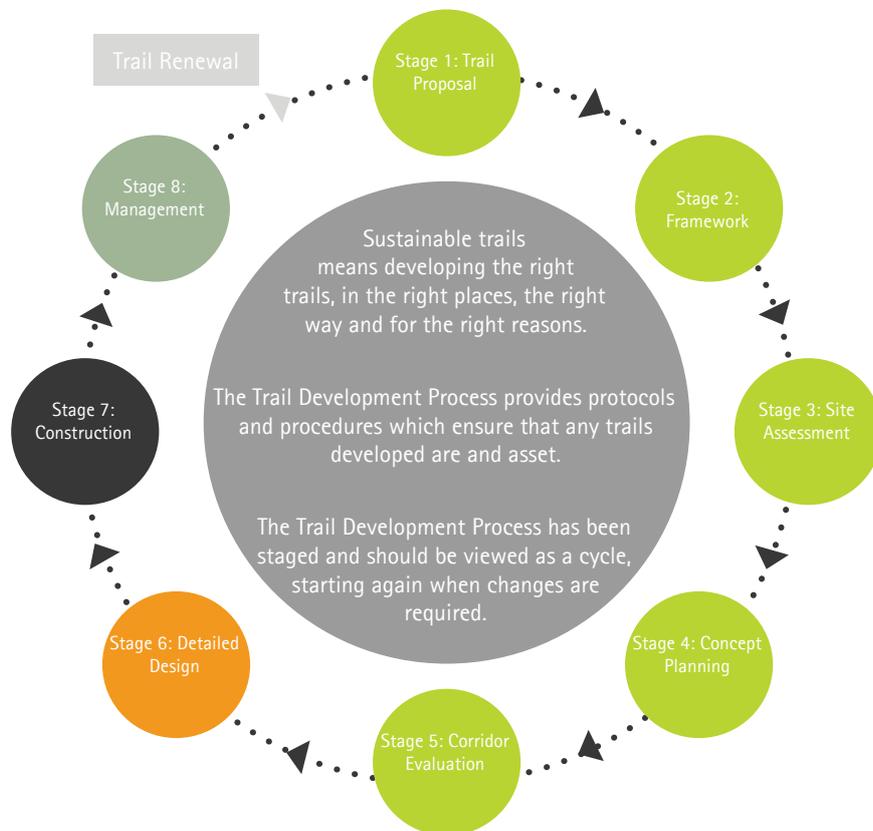


Figure 9. Trail development process

DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS

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

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

Apart from primary motivators, development drivers for a location or site will make it attractive to visitors. When assessing the locations in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region, the development drivers were considered, as outlined in Table 5.

Table 5. Potential Drivers for trail development

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

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT MODELS

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

Investment returns are indicated by:

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

Trails may be located on public or private land, and may be managed by public or private entities exclusively or by both in partnership arrangements.

A variety of development and management models need to be given further consideration to ensure sustainable growth of the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region as a trails destination. See Table 6 for a comparison of possible management models. Consistent with the experience of successful trail models worldwide, the following revenue models should be investigated during the planning stages to ensure sustainable management is achievable:

- Park entry fees
- Trail access fees
- Vehicle parking fees
- Shuttle uplift user fees (mountain bike trails)
- Lease of space to commercial operators
- Café, retail and/or rental income

Table 6. Comparison of management models

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

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

TRAIL HIERARCHY

A number of strategies are employed to ensure the appropriate trail models and trail types are developed in the appropriate locations. Factors for consideration include location significance, spatial distribution, event requirements and trail model detail. Table 7 below provides an overview of the significance hierarchy for trails.

Table 7. Significance Hierarchy

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

LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE

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

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

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

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

TRAIL MODELS

Recognising that trail opportunities for local communities and visitors are enhanced by the development of clusters of linked trails in different localities/ environments this strategy looks at identifying Trail Towns, Trail Centres and Trail Networks as defined in the Blueprint (DSR, 2017).

A trail model defines the extent of development for a trail facility. Depending on a number of factors, the scale of trail model can vary significantly from individual trails up to trail centres and trail towns. The type of trail model should be appropriate to the significance rating of the trail facility and where possible, allow for opportunities to generate revenue that can sustain the development. Refer Table 8 for a summary of trail models relating to significance level.

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

INDIVIDUAL TRAILS

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

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

Short Linear Trails

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

Long Distance Linear Trails

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

Loop Trails

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

TRAIL NETWORK

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

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

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

TRAIL CENTRE

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

TRAIL TOWN

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

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

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

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

TRAIL PRECINCT

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

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

Table 8. Trail models, significance, scope and extent

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

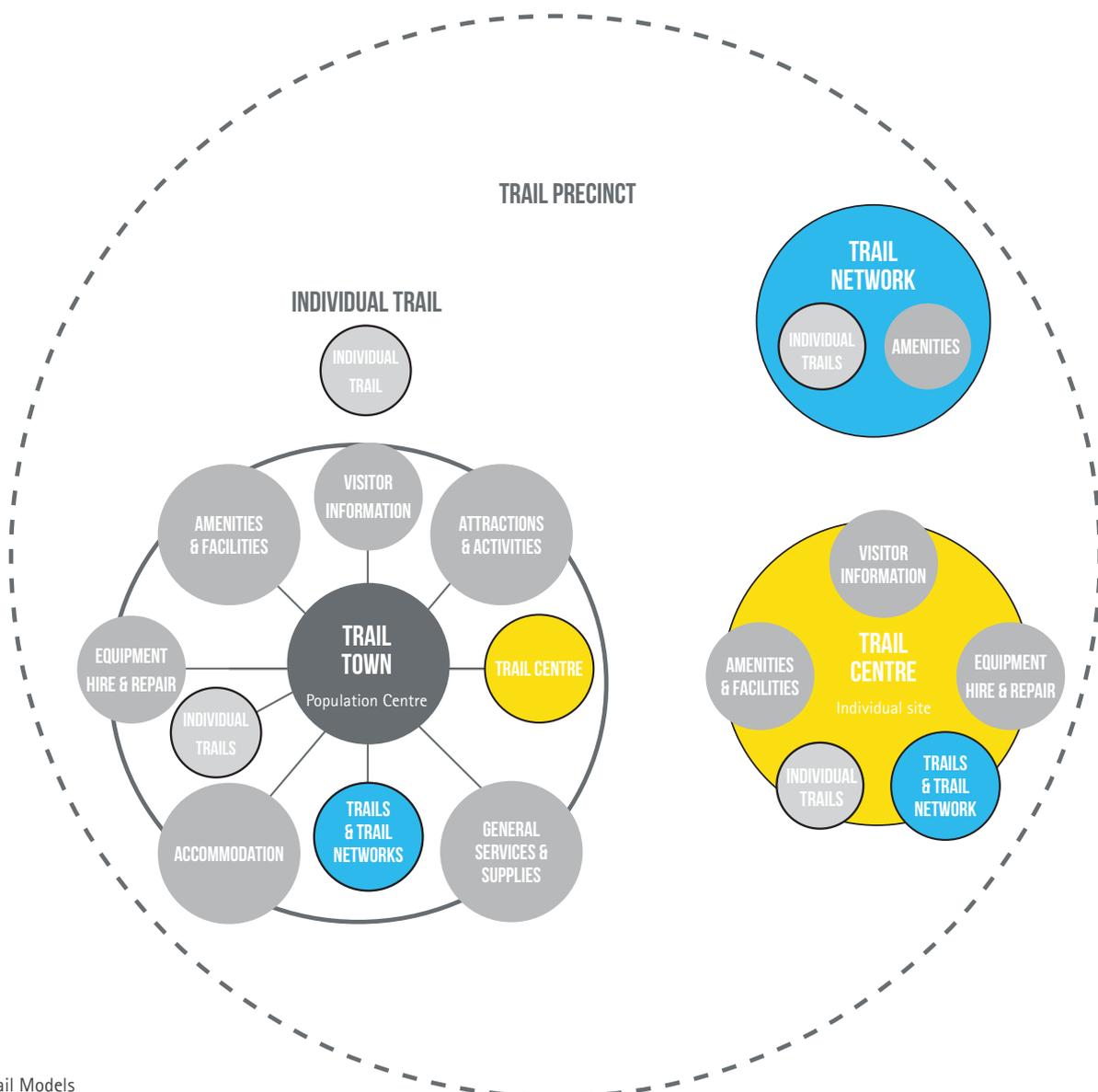


Figure 10. Trail Models

OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

There is currently no formal trails planning and development strategy in place to facilitate the coordinated development of recreational trails in the region. The objective of this project is to prepare a Regional Trails Strategy to identify opportunities for trail development, improvements to existing trails, linking of existing trails, supporting infrastructure, marketing and promotion and management requirements. This Trails Strategy considers trails on public land managed by the City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River. A number of trails in the region cross multiple tenures including Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) estate, in these cases the trail is considered in this strategy. Connections to trails managed by DBCA have been considered and broad recommendations regarding trails on DBCA managed land have been put forward.

The primary objective is to develop a strategy for the consistent and integrated development of a walking, off-road cycling and horse riding trails network in the City of Busselton and Shire of Augusta Margaret River including:

- A review of current trails in the study area;
- Stakeholder consultation and desktop review to determine current and future community need and desire for trails;
- Opportunities for future trail development; and
- Costing and prioritisation of recommended actions.

In order to develop Trails Strategy for the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region the following methodology was employed:

PROJECT DEFINITION

In consultation with the Project Control Group, the projects underlying philosophy goals and aspirations were identified. Relevant facilities both national and state were benchmarked for their characteristics and relevant literature was reviewed.

STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

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

TRAILS AUDIT AND DETAILED GAP ANALYSIS

On the ground audits of existing trails and potential locations, including assessment of associated infrastructure and marketing. Assessment of trail demand and comparison to current supply.

CONSTRAINT DEFINITION AND OPPORTUNITY PLANNING

Identified and reviewed the Region's opportunities and constraints including potential facilities, existing trails and social, cultural, environmental and physical constraints.

STRATEGY PREPARATION

Draft documentation, steering group review and final documentation and distribution of Leeuwin Naturaliste Regional Trails Strategy.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

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

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

PROJECT CONTROL GROUP

A Project Control Group (PCG) was established to determine the overall priorities for the project and provide guidance throughout the development of the Strategy. The group comprised representatives from City of Busselton, Shire of Augusta Margaret River and the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions – Parks and Wildlife.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

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

The following organisations and groups provided input into the Strategy:

- Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions – Parks and Wildlife (DBCA)
- Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC)
- City of Busselton
- Shire of Augusta Margaret River
- Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association
- WestCycle

Key stakeholder outcomes:

- There is significant opportunity for trails to attract tourists and visitors to the Region
- Trail planning processes need to consider necessary support infrastructure for trails
- There needs to be a focus on quality of trail experience rather than quantity
- Trail developments should not rely on land managers funding from existing budgets and new opportunities and models to generate funding should be explored
- Trail development needs to consider potential conflicts between user groups and other land uses
- Trail development should consider the use of degraded areas and rationalisation of existing trails to minimise environmental impacts.

USER GROUP CONSULTATION

The following user groups were consulted in the preparation of the Strategy:

- ATHRA
- Augusta Community Development Association
- Bushwalking WA
- Busselton Cycle Club
- Cape Mountain Bikers
- Dunsborough Running Club
- Friends of Cape to Cape Track
- Margaret River Coastal Residents Association
- Margaret River Off Road Cycling Club (MRORCA)
- Margaret River Trail Runners
- Meelup Committee of Management
- South West Capes Bridle Association

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

An online trail user survey was distributed to the wider community as part of the information gathering process. This survey was distributed through the user group networks, Local Government networks and social media. The comment period was three weeks and a total of 375 responses were received. The survey proved a useful tool in providing an insight into trail use patterns and preferences for trails and development locations. It also identified where respondents recreate, how often and in some cases barriers to participation.

Figures 11 and 12 provide an overview of survey results and trail user profiles. In using the data gathered from the survey it is important to note potential for survey bias where trail enthusiasts are likely to fill out such surveys but those new to trails are less likely to participate. This results in results skewed towards intermediate and advanced trail users.

Common responses from the survey indicated:

- Trail users are multi-disciplinary participating in a range of trail based recreation activities
- By developing trails and facilities, many locations throughout the project area (including in urban settings) have the potential to encourage and attract new people to trail based activities.
- Access to the start/finish of trails is a limiting factor in terms of trail use.
- Trail information is hard to find and often conflicting between sources.
- Trail signage and trail head facilities such as carparking and picnic infrastructure is lacking.
- Congested trails discourage beginners and families and result in less enjoyable experiences.
- There is a lack of advanced trails to challenge the aspiring and world class athletes
- There is a preference for trails in scenic locations and unique environments.
- Visits to trails in the Region are regular with most respondents indicating they visit weekly, monthly or several times a year.
- Trail users are willing to travel larger distances to reach trails with 48% of respondents indicating they'd be willing to travel 50km or more.

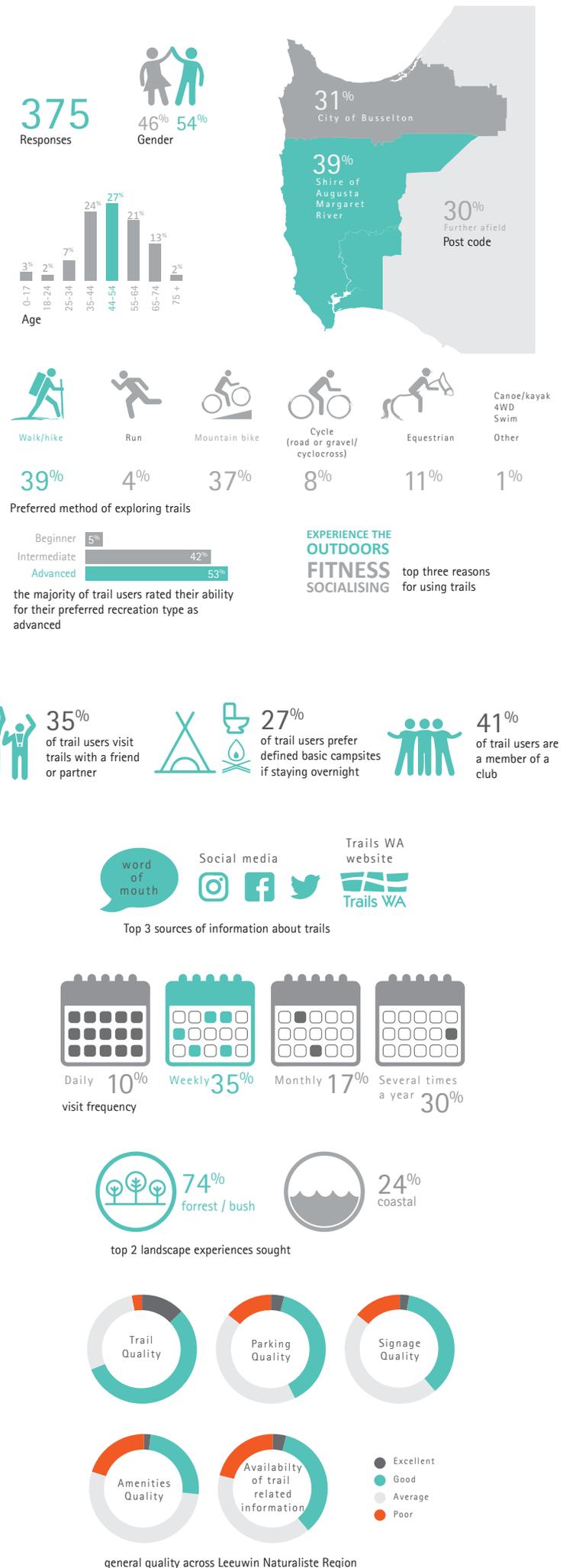


Figure 11. Trail user survey general responses

TRAIL USER PROFILE

Delving deeper into the survey responses provides an insight into trail user profile for each trail type (refer to Figure 12). Notable differences include a younger demographic participating in mountain biking and trail running, bushwalking and horse riding predominantly a female participation base and mountain bikers and bushwalkers being the most active participants within the region. Similarities included preference for accommodation if staying overnight and participating either with a partner/friend or in a small group.

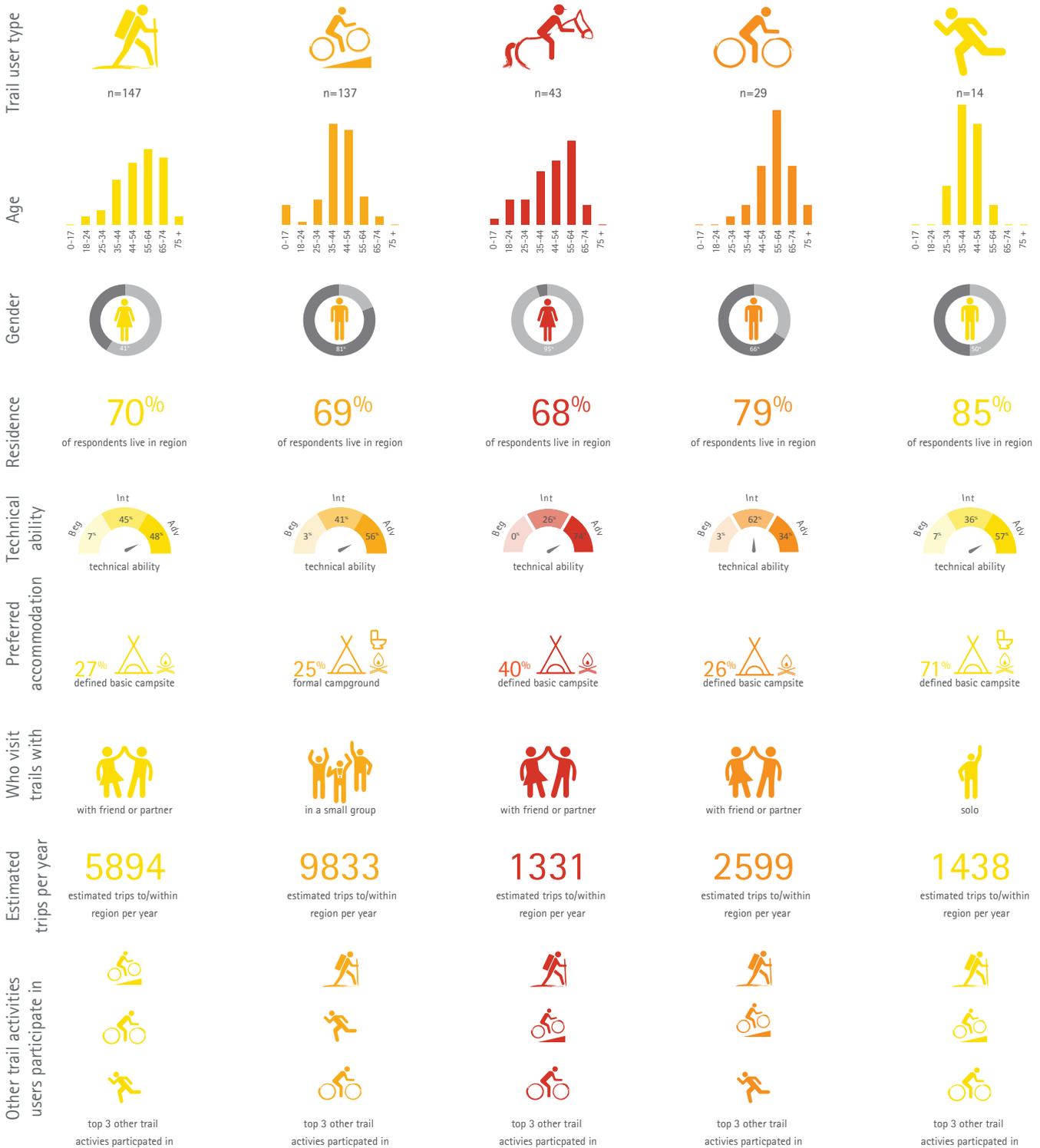


Figure 12. Trail user survey – user profile results



CURRENT SITUATION

TRAIL SUPPLY

The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region currently has a broad range of trails across the different trail user types. None of the existing designated trails in the region are characterised by formalised trail towns or centres. Experiences vary from short urban walks (less than 1km), to half day horse rides and mountain bike rides, through to multi day bushwalks. The Region as a whole contains 506km of designated sanctioned trails (walk, MTB, cycle, horse) 51% of those trails are on DBCA managed estate. 246km of designated sanctioned trails are managed by the City of Busselton and/or the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

Trails found on City of Busselton and Shire of Augusta Margaret River managed land form the focus of this Strategy and were subject to trail audits including collection of basic information and mapping. Trails on DBCA managed estate were not assessed. A significant proportion of existing trails (34%) in the region found on local government estate were assessed to be of average or poor quality and associated visitor services are also mostly of average or poor quality (37%). Quality of trail considers the visitor experience and physical condition of the trail itself, the ratings applied (excellent, good, average, poor) compare the trails against best practice international standards (such as IMBA). Visitor services assesses trail related infrastructure such as parking, signage, amenities, accessibility and information, the ratings applied (excellent, good, average, poor) compare these services against world best practice for local level trail networks. Note these assessments were of a broad nature and intended only to provide a snapshot of the current situation, a more thorough assessment of trail condition and visitor services is recommended.

TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE

To get a consistent approach to the assessment of trail developments each trail has been classified according to their significance at a state, regional and local level. Classification for WA's trails and trail networks as per the Blueprint is as follows.

STATE TRAILS

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

REGIONAL TRAILS

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

LOCAL TRAILS

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



Figure 13. Total trail supply in Leeuwin Naturaliste Region by trail type

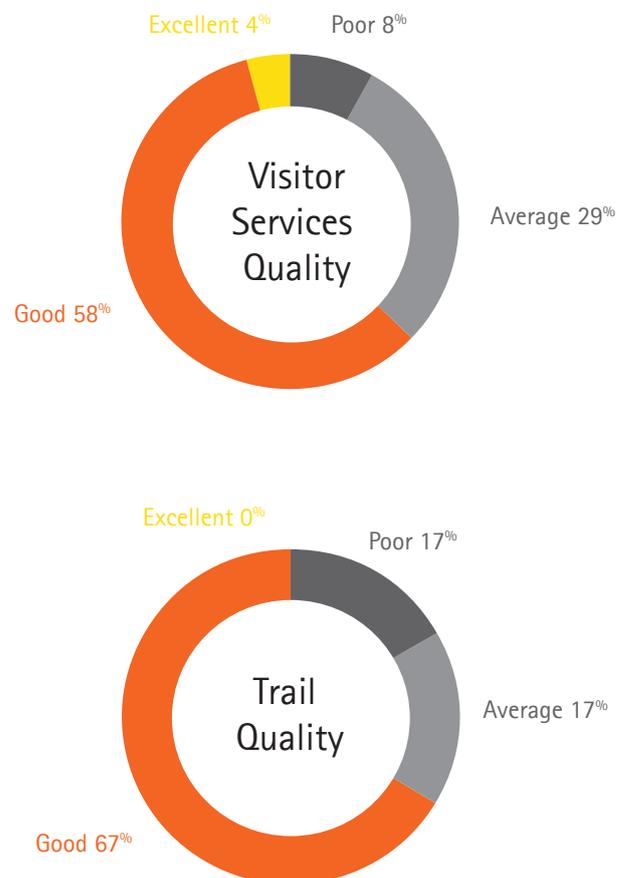


Figure 14. Existing visitor services and trail quality of trails located on local government managed land

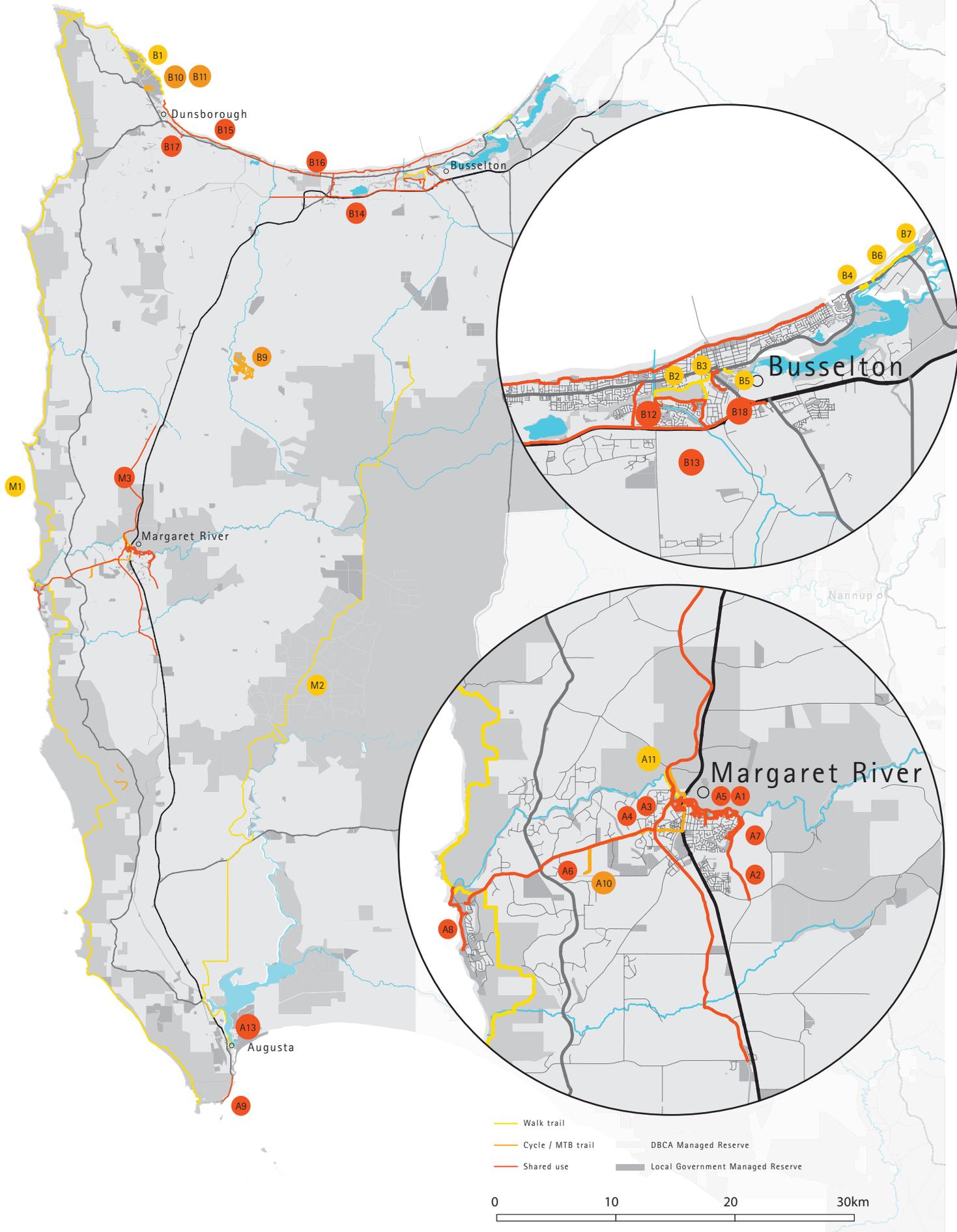


Figure 15. Existing trails on City of Busselton and Shire of Augusta Margaret River managed land

Table 9. Existing trails on City of Busselton and Shire of Augusta Margaret River managed land and trails that cross multiple tenures. These trails form the focus of this Strategy and were subject to trail audits including collection of basic information and mapping.

Trail Name	Trail Significance	Length (km)	Visitor Services Quality	Trail Quality	Land Manager	Trail Manager	
WALK / TRAIL RUN							
B1	Meelup Reserve Trail	Regional	0.8	Good	Good	CoB	CoB
B2	River West Trail	Local	4.6	Good	Good	CoB	CoB
B3	River Wetland Walk	Local	0.4	Excellent	Good	CoB	CoB
B4	Vasse Estuary Islands Walk	Local	0.7	Poor	Poor	CoB	CoB
B5	Vasse River Delta Wetlands Trail	Local	0.4	Average	Poor	CoB	CoB
B6	Wanda-Buri Coastal Trail	Local	1.5	Average	Poor	CoB	CoB
B7	Wonnerup Inlet Trail	Local	1.0	Average	Average	CoB	CoB
A11	Mini Keenans	Local	1.3	Poor	Poor	SoAMR	SoAMR
M1	Cape to Cape Track	State	125.0	Good	Average	DBCA	Friends of Cape to Cape
M2	Augusta Busselton Heritage Trail	Regional	79.7	Poor	Poor	SoAMR, CoB	SoAMR, CoB
CYCLE / MOUNTAIN BIKE							
A10	Margaret River Cycle Food and Beverage Trail	Local	13.1	Average	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR
B9	Middle Earth Network	Regional	22.5	Poor	Average	CoB	Cape MTB club
B10	Meelup MTB Trails	Regional	9.22	Excellent	Average	CoB	Cape MTB club
B11	Dunsborough Country Club MTB Trails	Local	8	Excellent	Average	CoB	Cape MTB club
SHARED USE							
B12	Bush Loop	Local	2.6	Good	Good	CoB	CoB
B13	Busselton Shared Use Path	Local	7.2	Good	Good	CoB	CoB
B14	Busselton Bypass	Local	9.5	Good	Good	CoB	CoB
B15	Dunsborough Dash	Local	7.9	Good	Good	CoB	CoB
B16	Geographe Bay Path	Local	22.7	Good	Good	CoB	CoB
B17	Lakes Loop	Local	2.0	Average	Good	CoB	CoB
B18	Vasse River Trail	Local	1.4	Good	Good	CoB	CoB
A1	Barret Street Trail	Local	3.5	Good	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR
A2	Wannang Bidli (Darch Trail)	Local	3.2	Good	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR
A3	MR Heritage Trail Bridge	Local	0.6	Good	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR
A4	Margaret River Heritage Trail - Karri	Local	2.3	Good	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR
A5	MR Heritage Trail River	Local	1.2	Good	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR
A6	Prevelly Shared Use Trail	Local	7.5	Good	Average	SoAMR	SoAMR
A7	Riverslea Trails	Local	3.3	Good	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR
M3	Wadandi Track	State	28.1	Average	Average	SoAMR, CoB	SoAMR, CoB
A8	Ocean Trail	Local	2.8	Good	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR
A9	Cape Leeuwin Trail	Local	2	Good	Excellent	SoAMR	SoAMR
A13	Pelican Trail	Local	1.2	Good	Good	SoAMR	SoAMR

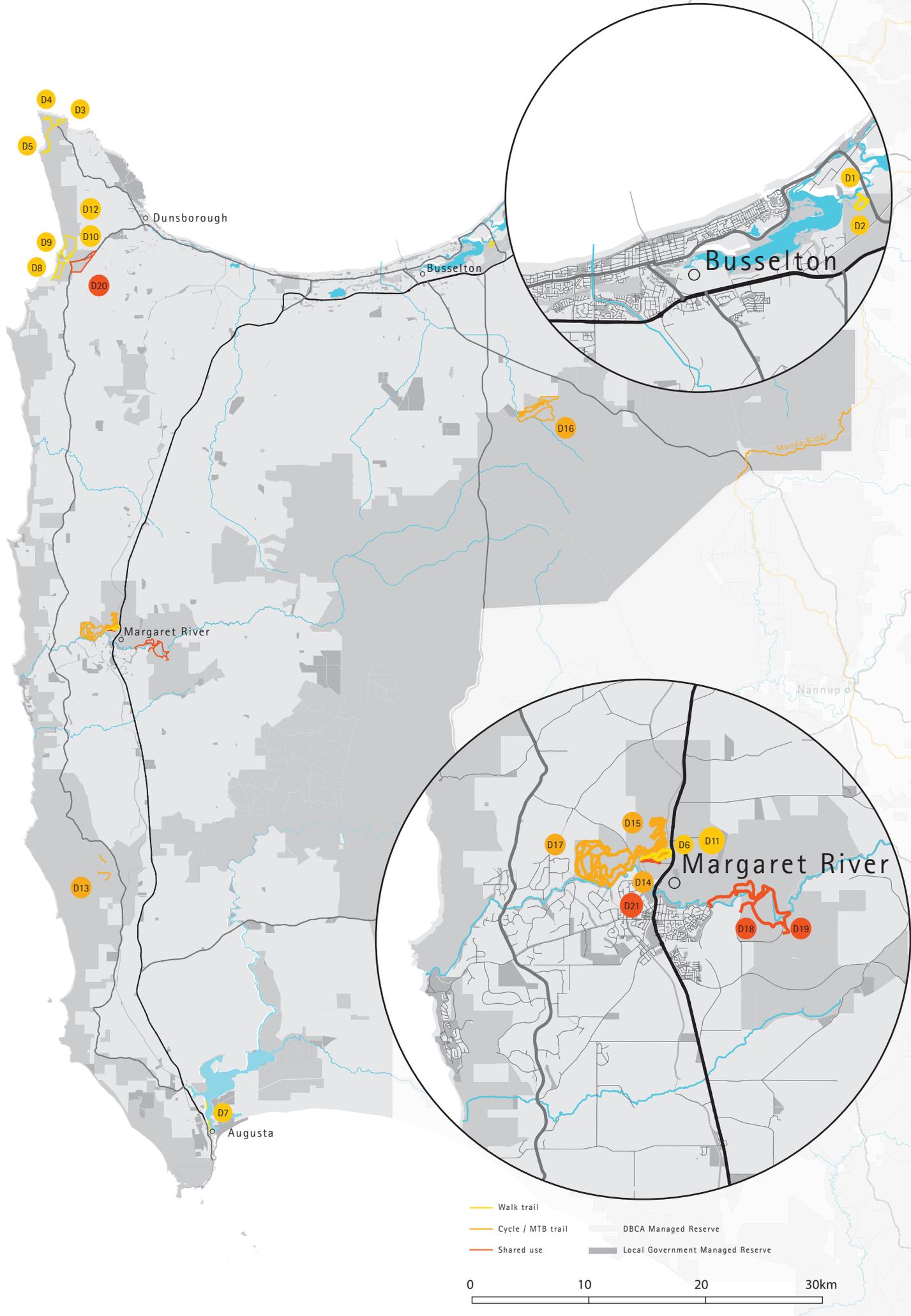


Figure 16. Existing trails on Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions managed land

Table 10. Existing trails on Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions managed land. These trails were not assessed in the trail audit and have been considered only in terms of their value to trail users and connections to and from for trails on local government managed land.

	Trail Name	Length (km)	Trail Manager
WALK / TRAIL RUN			
D1	Malbup Creek Boardwalk	0.2	DBCA
D2	Tuart Forest Possum Paths	1.36	DBCA
D3	Bunker Bay Loop	2.52	DBCA
D4	Cape Naturaliste Loop Track	2.65	DBCA
D5	Cape Naturaliste to Sugarloaf Rock	3.39	DBCA
D6	Chimney Trail	1.21	DBCA
D7	Pelican Trail	1.17	DBCA
D8	Quenda Trail	4.15	DBCA
D9	Torpedo Trail	3.07	DBCA
D10	Wardanup Trail	6.35	DBCA
D11	Wooditjup Walk Trails	1.08	DBCA
D12	Caves Trail	0.62	MRBTA
CYCLE / MOUNTAIN BIKE			
D13	Boranup Forest MTB	2.71	DBCA
D14	Wooditjup (Compartment 10)	12.38	MRORCA
D15	Pines Trail network	6.05	MRORCA
D16	Secret Whicher Trails	30.30	Cape MTB
D17	Creek Trails	19	MRORCA
SHARED USE			
D18	Bunij Biddi (10 Mile Brook)	6.93	DBCA
D19	Bunij Biddi (10 Mile Brook winter loop)	4.84	DBCA
D20	Dugdale Rd Trail	6.76	DBCA
D21	Wooditjup Shared Use	1.42	DBCA

BUSHWALKING AND TRAIL RUNNING TRAILS

Bushwalking in the Region varies from short half hour walks through to multi day walks along the Cape to Cape Track. Within local government managed reserves there is a total of 22km of designated bushwalk / trail running trail and 182km of shared use trail.

While already an iconic experience and a significant attractor the Cape to Cape Track requires strategic investment to improve the experience. Aligned along 4WD trails for large sections the user experience is interrupted and compromised. There is also significant potential to improve access to a wider range of accommodation options in particular the high yield luxury accommodation which would elevate the trail offer on par with some of Australia's best walk trail experiences.

User profile based on the survey (refer to Figure 12) indicates a majority of bushwalkers are female, participate with a friend or partner and prefer defined basic camping if staying overnight. Mountain biking, cycling and running were identified as the top three other trail based activities walkers participate in. Trail runners on the other hand prefer to run alone and majority are in the 35-44 age range (refer to Figure 12).

In terms of the identified trail user markets for bushwalking and trail running the following outlines for each the experiences sought:

Leisure Market - Key expectations and needs from the trail experience include being close to nature, exercise, a sense of awe and opportunity for learning. Primary visitor benefit of trail proposals is accessibility, accomplished by trails located in trail centres based around existing established destinations. Iconic trails accessible from visitor centres or high visitation locations make trails accessible to the broadest market.

Active Market - Key expectations and needs from the trail experience include challenge, exercise, connectivity, variety and socialising. Catering for this market requires creating extended iconic landscape experiences that also provide a bit of challenge.

Adventure Market - Key expectations and needs from the trail experience include escape, solitude and risk. Hikers in this market are seeking less curated and more challenging experiences.



Table 11. Bushwalking and trail running trail gaps and desired improvements

ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	Current participation rates state-wide for walking (recreation) (39%) and bushwalking (4.1%) are high and growing. With regional population expected to grow ensuring access to walking trails will be critical.	Develop recreation walk trails in high growth areas.
Demand	State-wide participation rates for walking are high and 39% of those surveyed noted bushwalking is their preferred activity. Trail running is an emerging trail use which is growing in popularity.	Improve supply of trails that provide quality experience
Participation	A sustainable trails community requires a strong leisure and beginner cohort but only 7% of those surveyed said they were of a beginner standard (noting the survey bias towards trail enthusiasts).	Improve access and growth in beginner participation
Trail significance	The only State significant trail in the region is the Cape to Cape Track.	Identify where the potential trail experience quality is high and focus on developing opportunities in these locations.
Infrastructure and facilities	State, regional and local trails have minimum infrastructure and facilities requirements, but few of the trails assessed meet these in particular for trailhead signage and trail markers Trail centres, trail towns and visitor services make bushwalking and trail running more accessible but there are currently no locations that have trail centres/towns or locations that have infrastructure to meet trail centre criteria. Local trails connecting key infrastructure within population centres and population centres with the broader trail network are currently haphazard with missing links.	Ensure trail developments have adequate infrastructure relevant to scale of development proposed. Develop trail opportunities focused around trail centres and visitor servicing. Prioritise townsite trail studies for planning and development of essential connecting trails at a local scale, ensuring adequate provision for local communities.
Quality	Trail users are seeking a high quality trail experience but only 10% of trails are considered to be excellent quality	Focus investment on consolidation and provision of high quality trails.
Quantity	All trails except the Cape to Cape Track and Wadandi Track are less than 10km in length, but 19% of those surveyed indicated they like to spend all day on the trail. There is a lack of day hike (approx. 20km) options.	Improve variety of trail length options in the region, with a focus on day loops taking in key attraction in the region for example the Caves.
Uniqueness and experience	The trail experience is duplicated across multiple trails in close proximity	Improve quality of existing trails and ensure outcomes are sustainable through a rationalisation program which prioritises unique experiences
Usability	Trail systems should be easy to navigate and intuitive, but survey responses indicated that signage quality was below average and availability of trail related information was also below average	Improve existing trail cohesiveness, signage and pre-visit trail information.

MOUNTAIN BIKE AND CYCLE TRAILS

Mountain biking is a popular activity in the region with a majority of trails located on DBCA estate. The Meelup and Dunsborough Country Club Trails are located on City of Busselton Reserve and managed by Cape Mountain Bikers. The Middle Earth network traverses City of Busselton managed land and Unallocated Crown Land managed by DBCA.

User profile based on the survey (refer to Figure 12) indicates a majority of mountain bikers are male, participate in small groups and prefer formal campgrounds if staying overnight. A majority rated their riding ability as advanced. Hiking, running and cycling were identified as the top three other trail based activities mountain bikers participate in. Survey results indicated that mountain bikers make the most trips to or within the region per year.

Cycling is also a popular activity in the region and is also highly accessible. Shared use trails including the Wadandi Track and the Prevelly Shared Use Trail for example are popular recreation cycling trails for both locals and visitors. Shared Use trail in Busselton provide important commuting links connecting key destinations across the town. Based on the survey cyclists were again mainly male, they rated their riding ability as intermediate and generally ride with a friend or partner.

In terms of the identified trail user markets for mountain biking and cycling, the experiences sought are outlined below:

Leisure riders - typically don't use mountain biking or cycling as a primary motivator for travel and typically favour accessibility and uniqueness. They have lower expectations of diversity but still seek quality.

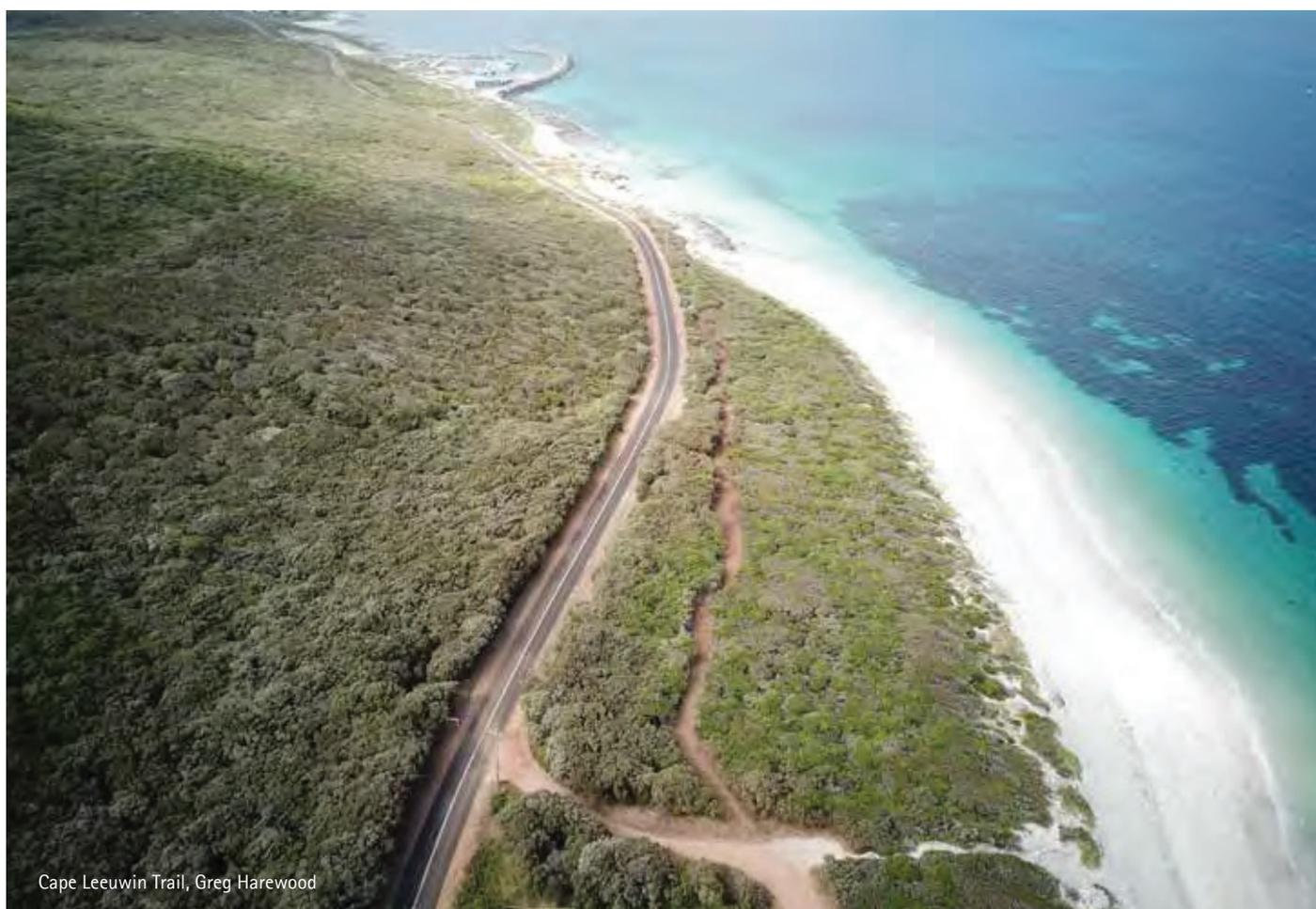
Enthusiasts - typically use mountain biking or cycling as a primary motivator for travel and typically seek destinations with quality and diversity, but they still value community. They have extremely high expectations and seek uniqueness. When riding for recreation enthusiasts seek accessibility and diversity and also value community.

Sport riders - typically use mountain biking or cycling as a primary motivator for travel and typically seek destinations with community and diversity. They have moderate expectations and still seek quality. When riding for recreation, sport riders seek diversity.

Independent riders - typically use mountain biking or cycling as a primary motivator for travel and typically seek destinations with uniqueness and diversity. They have low expectations. When riding for recreation independent riders seek diversity.

Gravity riders - typically use mountain biking as a primary motivator for travel and typically seek destinations with community and quality. They have high expectations and seek some diversity. When riding for recreation gravity riders seek accessibility.

In order to successfully cater for these diverse markets, this Strategy identifies opportunities to develop quality trails within scenic locations with nearby attractions and amenities to suit different expectations and experiences.



Cape Leeuwin Trail, Greg Harewood

Table 12. Mountain bike and cycle trail gaps and desired improvements

ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	Mountain biking and cycling have seen participation growth over the past 7 years and the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region has experienced the growth in mountain bike and cycling tourism. The current trail offer lacks diversity and quantity to continue to attract Enthusiast, Sport and Independent markets.	Increase provision of purpose built trails in strategic locations.
Demand	A significant proportion of popular mountain bike trails in the region are unsanctioned, ie have either informal access (have no formal authorisation from land manager) or have been illegally constructed within public reserves. Cycle tourism is a growing niche tourism market, few trails in the region connect to key visitor destinations or provide the experience that would attract cycle tourists.	Improve supply of trails that provide quality experience to meet current demand. Develop cycle trails which engage riders in the key landscapes of the region and connect key destinations such as towns and wineries/breweries/restaurants
Participation	A sustainable trails community requires a strong leisure and beginner cohort but only 3% of those surveyed said they were beginner riders (noting the survey bias towards trail enthusiasts). A vast majority of those surveyed were male.	Improve accessibility and growth in beginner and female participation.
Infrastructure and facilities	State, regional and local mountain bike trails have minimum infrastructure and facilities requirements, but no locations in the region meet these in particular for variety of trail style and supporting infrastructure and services. Trail centres, trail towns and visitor services make mountain biking more accessible but there are currently no locations that have trail centres or locations that have infrastructure to meet trail hub criteria.	Ensure trail developments have adequate infrastructure relevant to scale of development proposed. Develop trail opportunities focused around trail towns, trail centres and visitor servicing.
Quantity	The typical mountain biker's ride length is 20-30km, but only one trail network in the region caters for this without repeating trail.	Increase the quantity of sustainable purpose built mountain bike trail in strategic locations.
Uniqueness and experience	Uniqueness is a primary travel motivator, but the mountain bike and cycle trails in the Region offer largely the same trail style and experience.	Develop mountain bike and cycle opportunities in unique locations, and cater for a variety of riding styles.
Usability	Trail systems should be easy to navigate and intuitive, but existing networks are not cohesive and a majority of those surveyed indicated that signage was below average and indicated availability of trail related information was also below average	Improve existing trail cohesiveness, signage and pre-visit trail information.
Trail classification	There is little provision within the Region for advanced riders but 97% of survey respondents indicated their technical ability is intermediate/advanced.	Improve diversity of classifications to achieve a suitable mix of classifications and allow progression of trail users.

EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

There are no designated equestrian only trails in the region, horses are permitted on some of the shared use trails including the Wadandi Track and Dugdale Road Trail. Within the region the Horse riding is currently permitted on:

- Public roads, in accordance with traffic laws
- Conservation reserves at the following locations:
 - Designated areas within Boranup Forest
 - Designated areas within Wooditjup National Park
- Unallocated Crown land (UCL)
- Shire reserve – Roxburgh Road (R18838)
- Jays Beach, Augusta
- Privately owned land including private riding schools/commercial operators(with land owner permission)

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River Bridle Trail Master Plan and the Busselton Horse Trails Master Plan both identified opportunities across the region regarding development of bridle trails. The major opportunities identified were on DBCA managed estate with connecting trails on road and Shire/City reserves.

User profile based on the survey (refer to Figure 12) indicates a majority of horse riders are female, participate with a friend or partner and prefer defined basic campgrounds if staying overnight. A majority rated their riding ability as advanced. Hiking, mountain biking and cycling were identified as the top three other trail based activities horse riders participate in.

In terms of the identified trail user markets for equestrian trails the following outlines for each the experiences sought:

Leisure Market – Key expectations and needs from the trail experience include being close to nature, exercise, a sense of awe and opportunity for learning. Primary visitor benefit of trail proposals is accessibility, accomplished by trails located in trail centres based around existing established destinations. Iconic trails accessible from visitor centres or high visitation locations make trails accessible to the broadest market.

Active Market – Key expectations and needs from the trail experience include challenge, exercise, connectivity, variety and socialising. Catering for this market requires creating extended iconic landscape experiences that also provide a bit of challenge.

Adventure Market – Key expectations and needs from the trail experience include escape, solitude and risk. Riders in this market are seeking less curated and more challenging experiences.

Table 13. Equestrian trail gaps and desired improvements

ISSUE	GAPS	DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS
Market	Majority of equestrian routes are located in urban areas where there is increasing pressure from development. With population expected to grow in the coming decade ensuring access to safe equestrian trails is important.	Increase the quantity of sustainable purpose built equestrian trails in strategic locations.
Participation	A sustainable trails community requires a strong leisure and beginner cohort but none of those surveyed said they were beginners (noting the survey bias towards trail enthusiasts).	Improve access and growth in beginner participation. There is also potential for engagement of aged or retired riders from various disciplines.
Infrastructure and facilities	State, regional and local trails have minimum infrastructure and facilities requirements, but no trails in the region meet these in particular for variety of trail style and supporting infrastructure and services. Trail centres, trail towns and visitor services make equestrian trails more accessible but there are currently no locations that have trail centres or locations that have infrastructure to meet trail hub criteria.	Ensure trail developments have adequate infrastructure relevant to scale of development proposed. Develop trail opportunities focused around trail towns, trail centres and visitor servicing.
Usability	Trail systems should be easy to navigate and intuitive, but existing networks are not cohesive and a majority of those surveyed indicated that signage and suitable infrastructure such as float parking was below average and indicated availability of trail related information was poor.	Improve existing trail cohesiveness, signage and pre-visit trail information and ensure adequate infrastructure is provided.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

EXISTING GOVERNANCE

The stakeholders involved in trail development can be very diverse. Local governments, regional councils, community advisory committees, development commissions, tourism bodies, government departments and user group bodies all play a vital role in the governance of trails.

Typically, trail development bodies across the state have worked in isolation, however more recently there has been a movement towards cooperative governance structures. The emerging hierarchy of trail governance includes the key bodies outlined in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Key governance bodies

Governance Body	Role
WA Trails Reference Group	Advises on implementation of State trail strategies and monitors progress and proposed actions and outcomes reporting back to government and industry.
Trails WA	Established to advocate for the development of trails and to market trails.
Local Government	Development and management of trails on local government estate for recreation and tourism benefit.
Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions	Development and management of trails on State Government estate for recreation and tourism benefit.
Bushwalking and trail running	
Bushwalking WA	Peak Body for bushwalking/hiking in WA
Friends of Cape to Cape Track	Not For Profit community group formed to assist in management and development of the Cape to Cape Track.
Friends of Meelup	Facilitate the conservation and promotion of Meelup Regional Park
Margaret River Trail Runners	Local Clubs
Dunsborough Running Club	
Mountain biking	
Westcycle	Peak body for cycling and oversees all variations of cycling including mountain biking in WA.
Margaret River Off Road Cycling Association (MRORCA)	Local clubs
Cape Mountain Bikers	
Cycling	
Westcycle	Peak body for cycling and oversees all variations of cycling in WA.
Busselton Cycle Club	Local Club
Equestrian	
Australian Trail Horse Riders Association	Peak body for equestrian recreation in Australia
South West Capes Bridle Trails Association	Local club

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

A lack of a consistent approach to trail planning and development is evident in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region, with the haphazard approach to development of the Wadandi Track a prime example.

There is opportunity to improve governance structures supporting trails within the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region by combining representatives from relevant organisations based on geographic distribution of trail development. Strengthening the role, representatives and resourcing of the WA Trails Reference Group as outlined in the WA Trails Blueprint is also imperative to effective management of trails going forward.

EXISTING MANAGEMENT

Many trails in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region have a simple management structure where the land owner is also the operator (Refer to the Trail Development Series (DBCA and DLGSC)) for detailed explanation of alternate trail management models.) In these cases, insurances are held by the owner, maintenance is carried out as required, and resourcing comes from ongoing maintenance budgets.

The WA Trails Blueprint (DSR, 2017) identified the lack of resources for trail maintenance and the pressures placed on volunteers and land managers who undertake this work. As part of the Blueprint implementation, establishment of an online resource for trail planning, design and maintenance guidelines was recommended together with development of trail design, construction, visitor risk management and maintenance workshops for trail management organisations and user groups.

VOLUNTEER TRAIL MANAGEMENT

Trail users are passionate about building and maintaining trails, and typically 'custodian' communities naturally form around popular trail networks and parks.

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

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

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

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

The Meelup and Dunsborough MTB Trails are a good example locally of a successful management model where the City of Busselton owns the trails but the local club Cape Mountain Bikers manage the trails.

Table 15. Governance and management gaps and desired improvements

Issue	Gaps	Desired improvements
Governance	Structure hierarchical governance with single authority responsibility and paid employees is identified as a critical success factor in development and sustainability, but the region's volunteer bodies and individuals work in relative isolation with minimal leadership.	Establish a governance hierarchy, including steering committees comprised of stakeholder representatives, and identify lead roles and responsibilities.
Management and maintenance	Maintenance is heavily reliant on volunteer bodies, is not standardised and is not well resourced.	Set appropriate quality standards, improve management models and reduce pressure on volunteer bodies.
	Consistency across tenures and local government boundaries is poor.	Diversify trail management model, and increase resources available to fund trail management.
Resourcing	The proposed level of development is beyond the capacity of the agencies involved.	Seek additional funding to provide additional resources for agencies to progress recommendations of the Strategy
Funding	Lack of government funding for trails.	Campaign for appropriate funding of trail infrastructure, with a focus on planning, design and construction of the priority locations.
Research	Trail use data across all trails in the Region is limited as is market visitation data.	Improve research on markets and trail use

PROMOTION AND MARKETING

Promotion of trails can increase recreation, tourism and event markets. Trail destinations that can harness the power of word-of-mouth marketing will build a strong brand and market presence. Generally, the promotion of trails in the Region is very haphazard, with multiple sources online and in print, often containing conflicting information.

State, regional and local tourism organisations, and visitor centres are the bodies which market and promote the region and its destinations. Typically, promotion is focused on local signage, websites, social media, media organisations, and printed material such as visitor guides, but can include television commercials and travel documentaries.

Various tourism bodies are responsible for promoting the region. Margaret River Busselton Tourism Association provide destination marketing, visitor servicing and natural and historical asset management across a number of sites in the region. Trail based activities are promoted as a key attraction within the Region.

A number of other websites and social media promote the trail networks including Trails WA, trail user bodies and DBCA, commercial operators and event promoters.

Table 16. Promotion and marketing gaps and desired improvements

Issue	Gaps	Desired improvements
Trail Information	<p>Current trail information and maps are available from a range of sources, such as land managers, Trails WA, clubs and other trails resources, but there is inconsistency in detail, content and accuracy. Signage and way-finding on trail networks is often inconsistent, lacking or absent.</p> <p>The survey indicated a majority of trail information is currently sourced from social media and Trails WA. There is a need to have a central resource to link back to with accurate information.</p>	Consolidate accurate information on trails and make available via Trails WA and local tourism bodies. Ensure trailhead and trail directional signage is up to date.
Accessibility	Inability to find trails, trail information or trails with appropriate facilities prohibits many from using trails as often as they would like.	Set appropriate quality standards, improve management models and ensure existing and future trail facilities are well signed with adequate visitor services where appropriate.
Tourism	There are currently limited marketable tourism products.	Establish world class trail facilities, and a value proposition that can be promoted to engage and attract trail tourists and general tourists.
Promotion	Trail based activities are promoted as a key attraction in the Region however specific information on how or where to undertake trail based activity is limited.	Clarify and coordinate responsibilities for marketing and branding to improve understanding and promotion of all trail opportunities in the Region.
Destinations & Experiences	Unique destinations are more likely to attract international and interstate tourists. The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region contains internationally significant biodiversity. It is unique to other trail activity destinations, and its characteristic values should be promoted.	Create unique trail destinations that attract international visitors (within 2 hours travel time from accommodation), utilising the regions positioning, landscapes and biodiversity values. Balancing development with environmental values.

EVENTS

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

Suitable trails and adequate infrastructure are required to run national and regional events. Social events require less specific infrastructure but still require quality trails and visitor services. Competitive trail based events held in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region in 2019 are outlined in Table 17. The Region has the potential in terms of setting and location to be hosting more events across all trail types.

Table 17. Summary of competitive trail based events held in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region in 2019.

Event	Location	Details
Bushwalking		
Friends of Cape to Cape Group Walks	Various along Cape to Cape Track	Monthly social walks April to October
Trail running		
Margaret River Ultra Marathon	Margaret River	Held in January as part of Part of Perth Trail Series short course 11.8km and long course 14.9km, set on mainly fire road with some single track along the Cape to Cape Track.
South West MudFest	Wilyabrup	Mud Run, with obstacles.
Mountain Biking		
Cape to Cape MTB	Various	4 day stage MTB race taking in various locations across the Region.
Down South MTB Festival	Margaret River	Includes 2 rounds of the State Cross Country Mountain Bike Race Series and a series of other events including coaching and social rides.
WAGE	Various	WA Gravity Enduro Series, includes 2 rounds in the region at Dunsborough and Margaret River.
Summer Series	Various	Local club based series over summer with rounds at Dunsborough and Margaret River.
Chase the Thylacine	Busselton/ Nannup	2 day mountain bike adventure from Busselton to Nannup and back.
Equestrian		
Margaret River Dressage Series	Margaret River	Dressage Event including qualifiers and championship for State rankings.
Cycling		
Tour de Gracetown	Gracetown	Road race starting the Gracetown finishing at Juniper Winery.
Life Ride	Margaret River	3 Day staged road cycling event supporting Leukaemia Foundation
Multisport		
Busselton Festival of Triathlon	Busselton	Ironman triathlon, featuring ocean swimming, running and road cycling
X-Adventure Dunsborough	Dunsborough	Off road triathlon featuring ocean swimming, trail running and mountain biking.
Augusta Adventure Fest	Augusta	Off road triathlon featuring ocean swimming, inlet paddle, trail running and mountain biking. Note 2019 was the last year this event will be run.

Table 18. Event gaps and desired improvements

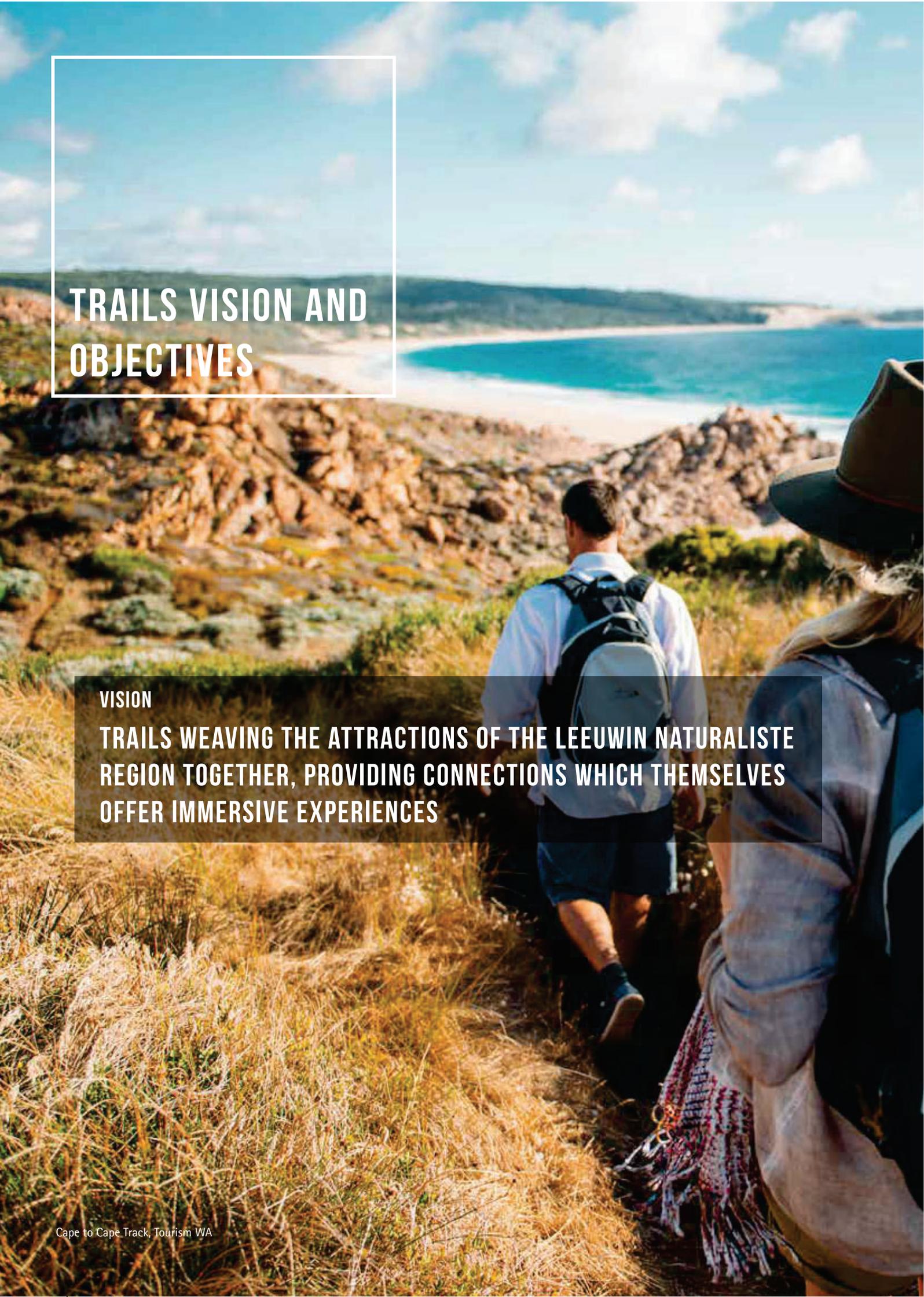
Issue	Gaps	Desired improvements
Event Facilities	The Leeuwin Naturaliste Region lacks suitable trails and infrastructure for state, national and international events.	Ensure developments suitable for hosting national and international race events have appropriate trails and permanent infrastructure for a range of trail types.

COMMERCIAL OPERATORS

Commercial operators provide a critical role in the tourism industry within the region and trails form an essential component of the offer. There are over 100 private or group tour companies with regular itineraries or options for tailor made trips. Many tours make use of the trails within the region offering visitors accessible and engaging experiences. Development of trails in captivating landscapes and which provide direct links to tourist destinations such as winery's, brewery's and restaurants encourages longer visitor stays in the region and also drives significant economic benefits.



Winery, Aaron McCreath



TRAILS VISION AND OBJECTIVES

VISION

TRAILS WEAVING THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE LEEUWIN NATURALISTE REGION TOGETHER, PROVIDING CONNECTIONS WHICH THEMSELVES OFFER IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

OBJECTIVES

1. CREATE ENVIABLE GOVERNANCE

Optimise governance and management structures across trail land owners, stakeholder groups and regional partners to ensure the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region is positioned as a trails destination.

2. COMPLETE THE BACKBONE OF THE REGION

Complete the Wadandi Track through the region, which provides connection and a starting point from which experiences and trails emerge from

3. IMPROVE THE ICONIC TRAIL EXPERIENCE

Strengthen the Cape to Cape Track experience creating a truly iconic world class trail experience.

4. INFILL IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

Create off the Wadandi Track a series of infill experiences connecting key destinations, attractions and experiences. Ensure quality trail user experiences, which will deliver social, economic and tourism benefits to the community.

5. MARKETING AND PROMOTE THE EXPERIENCES ON OFFER

Comprehensive and coordinated marketing presence to promote the trail experiences.

Delivering high quality trail experiences will involve showcasing the best the region has to offer in terms of natural and cultural values. The inherent landscape features and the key cultural attractions within the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region that have potential to provide iconic trail experiences are outlined in Figure 18 and 19.

The key spine trail in the network is the Wadandi Track providing the primary north south connection through the region. The Wadandi Track will provide the gateway to the key natural and cultural experiences on offer.

The regions iconic trail experience is the Cape to Cape Track. While already well known as an iconic experience, strategic investment in alignment upgrades and the high profile sites along the route together with exploring opportunities to improve access to a range of accommodation options will elevate the offer on par with some of Australia's best.

Infill trail experiences will deliver experiences that showcase the best of the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region and fill the identified gaps in the existing trail offer. Trails proposed and recommended upgrades to existing trails will provide key connections and recreation experiences for local communities and provide the unique experiences that visitors are seeking. The priority infill trail experiences identified are outlined in Figure 20 and include:

- Busselton to Nannup Rail Trail connecting Busselton to the Munda Biddi
- Trees to Sea Trail connection between Nannup and the Coast,
- Augusta Busselton Heritage Trail
- Cape Naturaliste loop
- Cape Leeuwin loop
- Winery trails
- Brewery Trail
- Mountain bike trails in Margaret River, Busselton, Dunsborough and Augusta
- Boranup Trail network
- Margaret River to Coast River Trail

Marketing and promotion of the experience on offer needs to be appropriate to the level of development and to the intended markets. A comprehensive and cohesive strategy looking at how the diversity of experience can be packaged and marketed is needed to entice longer stays and repeat visits. Equally as important is getting the governance and management right with the key recommendation being establishment of a trails committee or body that is driving the development of trails, ensuring a consistent approach across all land tenures.

It is recommended that Dunsborough, Margaret River and Augusta aim to achieve Trail Town status as per the assessment criteria currently under development by Trails WA. Primary trailheads at each end of the Wadandi Track should be located in prominent locations within Busselton and Augusta townsites. These primary trailheads should contain maps and information regarding the Wadandi Track alignment and the experiences that emerge from it. The intent of the trailheads is to provide wayfinding for those that have come specifically to use the trail and promotion and wayfinding for those that stumble upon it. Figure 17 outlines proposed trail towns.

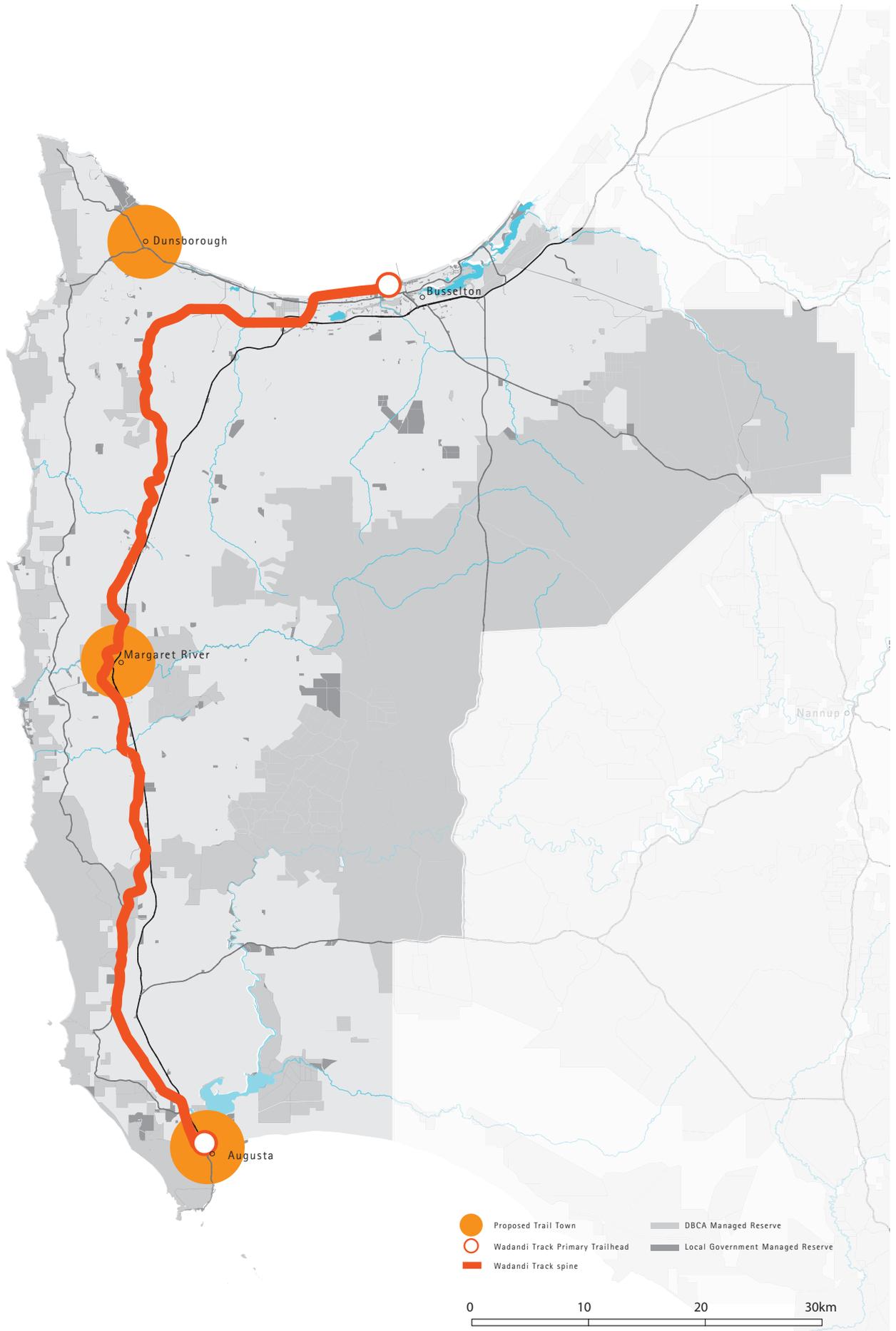


Figure 17. Proposed trail towns and trailheads.

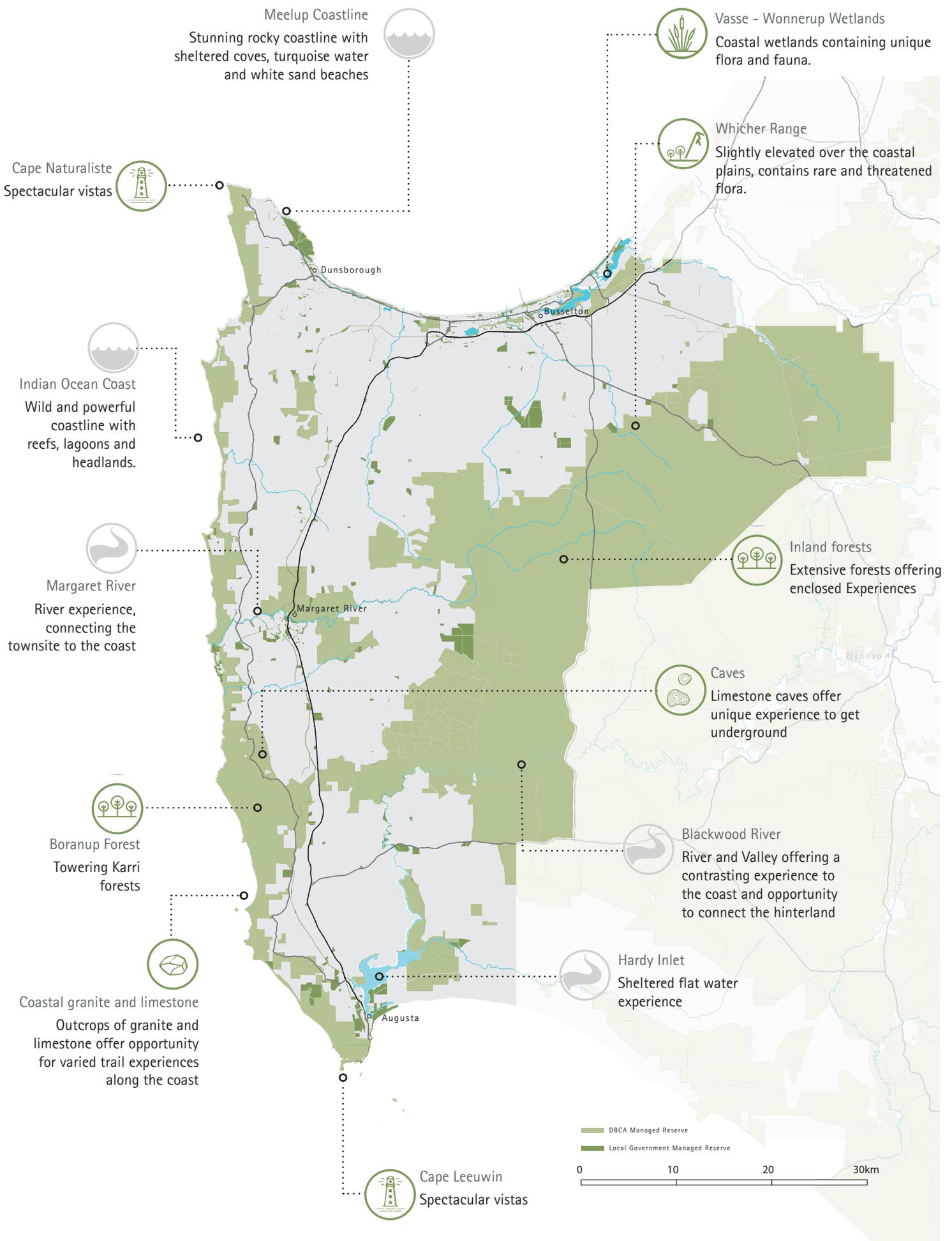


Figure 18. Iconic landscape experiences in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region.

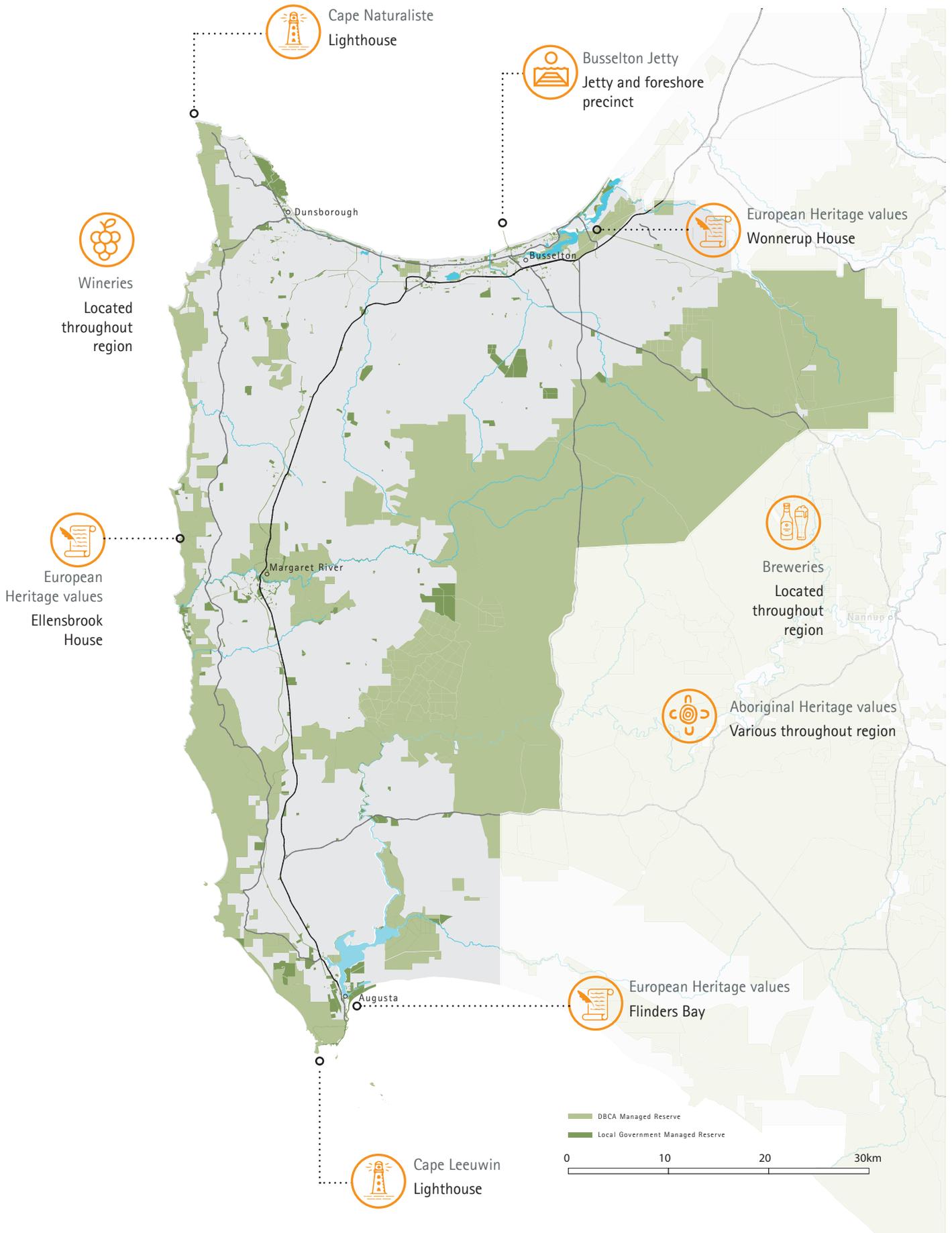


Figure 19. Iconic Cultural and built experiences in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region.

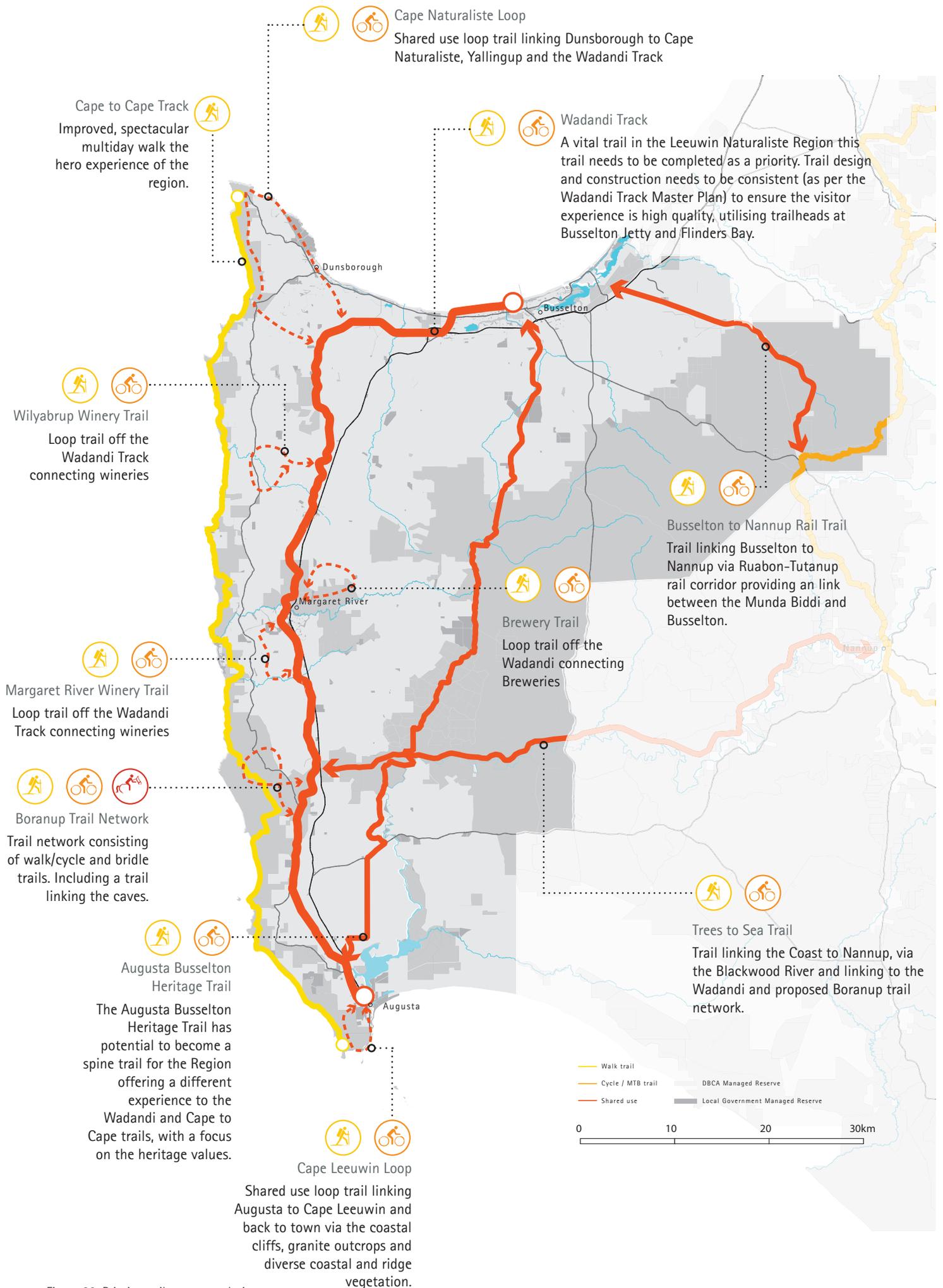


Figure 20. Priority trail recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVE 1. CREATE ENVIABLE GOVERNANCE

OPTIMISE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES ACROSS TRAIL LAND OWNERS, STAKEHOLDER GROUPS AND REGIONAL PARTNERS TO ENSURE THE LEEUWIN NATURALISTE REGION IS POSITIONED AS A SUCCESSFUL TRAILS DESTINATION.

Key to the sustainability and longevity of any trail development is an effective and efficient governance and management structure. Given the range of stakeholders with an interest in trails, it is important to ensure management arrangements have broad representation and a willingness by all parties to accept some level of responsibility. To ensure these roles and responsibilities are understood and carried out to a high standard, a governance hierarchy should be formally adopted by all relevant stakeholders.

To maintain sustainability and consistency across the Region it is recommended that a trails committee be formed and given responsibility for implementation of the strategy. The Trails Committee should contain director level representatives from each local government, as well as representatives from DBCA, DLGSC and tourism and trail type peak bodies. The role of the committee would be to oversee all strategic trail development, marketing and management, with a particular focus on seeking funding for high priority trails. The group should meet at a minimum of quarterly to coordinate key stakeholders and project priorities.

Of particular importance is the involvement of trail user group bodies, and other trail organisations and volunteers who have driven the advocacy and management of trails in the Region. The successful delivery and ongoing management of trail developments will depend on the participation and awareness activities generated by these groups, as well as the communities they have created.

The recommended governance hierarchy is outlined in figure 20.

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
1.1 Establish a Trails Committee with director level representatives from each local government, as well as representatives from DBCA, DLGSC and trail and tourism peak bodies.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA, MRBTA, MRWA	Short
1.2 Establish a mechanism for the Trails Committee to communicate efficiently with the WA Trails Reference Group	Trails Committee	DLGSC	Short
1.3 Create a trails coordinator position for the region to fit in with the recommended governance structure.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA, MRBTA, MRWA	Short
1.4 Develop or adopt a volunteer program to assist in the ongoing management of trails across tenures, involving local trail clubs. Formalise roles and responsibilities and ensure the program is accessible, well promoted, coordinated and adequately resourced.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Medium
1.5 Conduct an annual review of this strategy's recommendations to monitor progress and ensure outcomes are achieved	Trail Committee		Ongoing

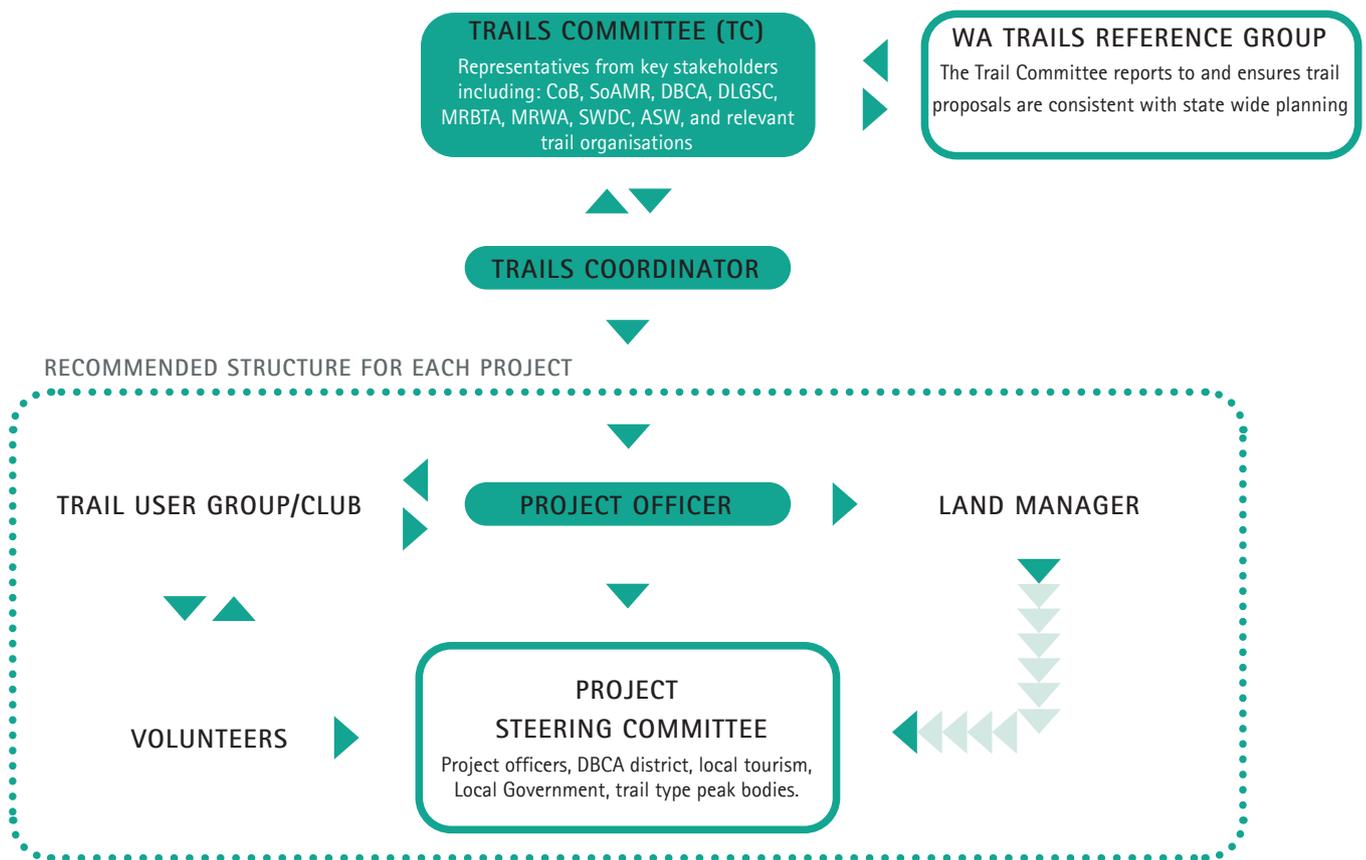


Figure 21. Recommended governance hierarchy

OBJECTIVE 2. COMPLETE THE BACKBONE OF THE REGION

COMPLETE THE WADANDI TRACK THROUGH THE REGION, WHICH PROVIDES CONNECTION AND A STARTING POINT FROM WHICH EXPERIENCES AND TRAILS EMERGE FROM

The key spine trail in the network is the Wadandi Track providing the primary north south connection through the region. The Wadandi Track has been identified as an iconic trail by the WA Trail Reference Group's (TRG) Iconic Trail Sub-committee. The Wadandi Track will provide the gateway to the key natural and cultural experiences on offer in the Region. It is imperative that the completion of the Wadandi Track be made the highest priority for both local governments. Key to the success of the Wadandi becoming a spine for the way visitors and locals experience the region is ensuring a consistent and high quality finish. The Wadandi Track Master Plan provides guidance on track design and infrastructure requirements.

Primary Trailheads for the Wadandi Track are located at Busselton and Augusta. These trailheads should provide maps and information regarding the Wadandi Track and the experiences that are available, complimenting online and print promotional material. Secondary Trailheads should be located at key access points along the alignment.

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
2.1 Develop an implementation plan which includes a timeline for the delivery of missing sections of the Wadandi Track	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing
2.2 Advocate to State and National Government seeking funding to complete the Track in one go.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing
2.3 Upgrade existing sections in poor condition and review consistency of recently completed sections.	CoB, SoAMR		Short



OBJECTIVE 3. IMPROVE THE ICONIC TRAIL EXPERIENCE

STRENGTHEN THE CAPE TO CAPE TRACK EXPERIENCE
CREATING A TRULY ICONIC WORLD CLASS TRAIL EXPERIENCE.

While already well known as an iconic experience, strategic investment in alignment upgrades, and the high profile sites along the route together with exploring opportunities to improve access to a range of accommodation options will elevate the offer on par with some of Australia's best multiday hikes.

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
3.1 Prioritise investment in the high profile visitor sites along the route to ensure visitor experience is of a consistent quality and impacts to environmental and heritage values are avoided.	DBCA	CoB, SoAMR	Short/ongoing
3.2 Reroute sections currently on 4WD tracks to ultimately make the trail single track for the entire alignment	DBCA	CoB, SoAMR	Short/ongoing
3.3 Work with business to explore opportunities to improve access to a range of accommodation options including provision of high end accommodation to attract the high yield walking market.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing

OBJECTIVE 4. INFILL IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

CREATE OFF THE WADANDI TRACK A SERIES OF INFILL EXPERIENCES CONNECTING KEY DESTINATIONS, ATTRACTIONS AND EXPERIENCES. ENSURE QUALITY TRAIL USER EXPERIENCES, WHICH WILL DELIVER SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND TOURISM BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY.

Infill trails will deliver experiences that showcase the best of the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region and fill the identified gaps in the existing trail offer. Trails proposed and recommended upgrades to existing trails will provide key connections and recreation experiences for local communities and provide the unique experiences that visitors are seeking.

The recommendations outlined below will help to ensure ongoing management of existing trails and development of new trails is consistent and implemented to a high standard.

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
4.1 Develop an implementation plan which includes a timeline for the delivery of priority trails, consistent with the trail development process outlined in Table 19.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing
4.2 Conduct a thorough condition audit of all existing trails and related facilities and keep up to date	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing
4.3 Establish a central database for trails data. Consider supporting proposal to fund Trails WA to be-come the central platform with publicly available trail information and land manager access to the back end to enable updating information regarding trail condition etc.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing
4.4 Ensure appropriate engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders is undertaken in all stages of trail development, consistent with relevant legislation, DBCA policy requirements and the South West Native Title Settlement.	All Stakeholders	DPLH	Ongoing
4.5 Develop a town site trail study for Busselton, Dunsborough, Margaret River and Augusta to determine detail around local trails connecting key local infrastructure and the broader trail network	CoB, SoAMR	CoB, SoAMR	Short

Table 19. Trail development process.

Source: Trail Development Series

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

DESKTOP

FIELD

The following pages outline detailed recommendations for existing and proposed trails in the region. For each existing trail and recommended new trail the following have been identified:

Economic Impact

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

Community - Tourism

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

Opportunity

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

Redevelopment need / deliverability

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

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

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

Short term - planned works to be developed within 1-5years

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

Long term - planned works to be completed after 2030 (beyond the scope of this strategy)

EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRAILS BUSSELTON AREA

- | Existing | Proposed |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Walk trail | Walk trail |
| Cycle / MTB trail | Cycle / MTB trail |
| Bridle trail | Bridle trail |
| Shared use | Shared use |
| B3 ID | 01 ID |

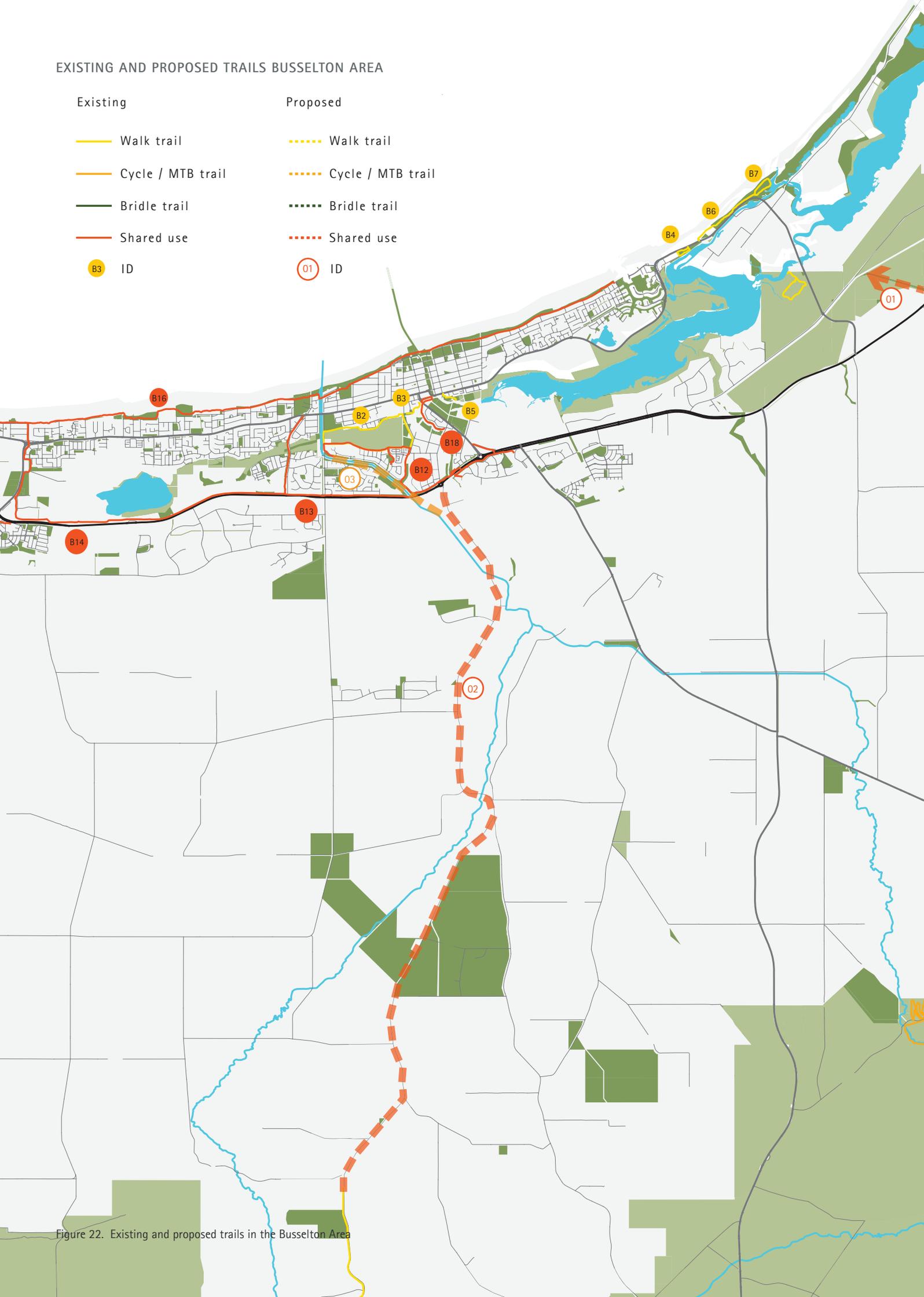


Figure 22. Existing and proposed trails in the Busselton Area

EXISTING TRAILS BUSSELTON AREA

Figure 22 and Table 20 and 21 below outline existing and proposed trails in the Busselton area and recommendations. Note existing trails on DBCA managed land were not apart of the brief for the trails audit.

Table 20. Existing trails in the Busselton area

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	LENGTH (KM)	CLASSIFICATION	VISITOR SERVICES QUALITY	TRAIL QUALITY	TRAIL MANAGER	
	TRAIL PRIORITY		ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY - TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	REDEVELOPMENT NEED	
BUSHWALK/TRAIL RUN							
B7	Wonnerup Wetland Trail	Local	1	Grade 1	Average	Average	CoB
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Wonnerup Inlet Trail is a valuable local trail providing recreation opportunity for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						
B6	Wanda-Buri Coastal Trail	Local	1.5	Grade 1	Average	Poor	CoB
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Wanda - Buri Coastal Trail is a valuable local trail providing recreation opportunity for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						
B4	Vasse Estuary Islands Walk	Local	0.7	Grade 1	Poor	Poor	CoB
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Vasse Estuary Islands Walk provides a valuable recreation opportunity for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities. Investigating creating a link to the Wanda-Buri Coastal Trail is also recommended.						
B5	Vasse River Delta Wetlands Trail	Local	0.4	Grade 1	Average	Poor	CoB
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Vasse River Delta Wetlands Trail is a valuable local trail providing recreation and learning opportunity for locals. It is recommended that the CoB investigate extending the trail experience further into the wetlands with boardwalks and bird hides building on the opportunity to interpret the values. It is also recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						
B3	River Wetlands Walk	Local	0.4	Grade 1	Excellent	Good	CoB
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	River Wetland Walk is a valuable local trail providing recreation opportunity for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						
B2	River West Trail	Local	4.6	Grade 1	Good	Good	CoB
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	River West Trail is a valuable local trail providing recreation opportunity for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						
SHARED USE							
B18	Vasse River Trail	Local	1.4	Grade 1	Good	Good	CoB
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Vasse River Trail provides an important recreation resource for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						
B12	Bush Loop	Local	2.6	Grade 1	Good	Good	CoB
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Bush Loop provides a valuable recreation opportunity for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	LENGTH (KM)	CLASSIFICATION	VISITOR SERVICES QUALITY	TRAIL QUALITY	TRAIL MANAGER	
	TRAIL PRIORITY		ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY - TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	REDEVELOPMENT NEED	
B13	Busselton Shared Use	Local	7.2	Grade 1	Good	Good	CoB
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
Busselton Shared Use Trail provides an important linking trail for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.							
SHARED USE							
B14	Busselton Bypass	Local	9.5	Grade 1	Good	Good	CoB
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
Busselton Byway provides an important linking trail for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.							
B16	Geographe Bay Path	Local	22.7	Grade 1	Good	Good	CoB
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
Geographe Path provides an important linking trail and recreation resource for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.							

PROPOSED TRAILS BUSSELTON AREA

Table 21. Proposed trails in the Busselton area

RECOMMENDATION	TRAIL PRIORITY	LENGTH (KM)	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	PROJECT LEAD	PROJECT PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME	
			ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY > TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	DELIVERABILITY	
SHARED USE							
01	Busselton to Nannup Rail Trail	Medium	33	Regional	CoB	DBCA	Medium
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
Trail linking Busselton to Nannup via Ruabon-Tutanup rail corridor providing an link between the Munda Biddi and Busselton. The corridor is also an important environmental link between the jarrah forests of the Whicher Scarp and the internationally recognised (and RAMSAR listed) Vasse-Wonnerup Wetlands System. Note significant constraints including flora, fauna and tenure will impact trail development.							
02	Augusta Busselton Heritage Trail	Medium	96	Regional	CoB	SoAMR, DBCA	Medium
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
The Augusta Busselton Heritage Trail has potential to become a spine trail for the Region offering a different experience to the Wadandi Track and Cape to Cape trails, with a focus on the heritage values. It is recommended that this trail be formalised and extended north to Busselton. Investigating suitability for promotion as an equestrian route and rerouting sections currently on private property should also be considered. While an important part of the bigger picture of trails in the region it is considered a low order priority, to be developed once trail tourism has reached critical mass.							
MOUNTAIN BIKE							
03	Busselton MTB	Low		Local	CoB	SoAMR, DBCA	Medium
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
Utilising the key drainage corridors around Busselton City including Vasse River Diversion Drain, Buayanup Drain and the Lennox River Drain, a network of trails could provide a series of north south connections through the City. While functional these corridors also provide the potential for creation of a network of fun single track mountain bike trails making use of the embankments for berms and rollers.							

EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRAILS DUNSBOROUGH AREA

Existing

Proposed

— Walk trail

⋯ Walk trail

— Cycle / MTB trail

⋯ Cycle / MTB trail

— Bridle trail

⋯ Bridle trail

— Shared use

⋯ Shared use

B3 ID

01 ID

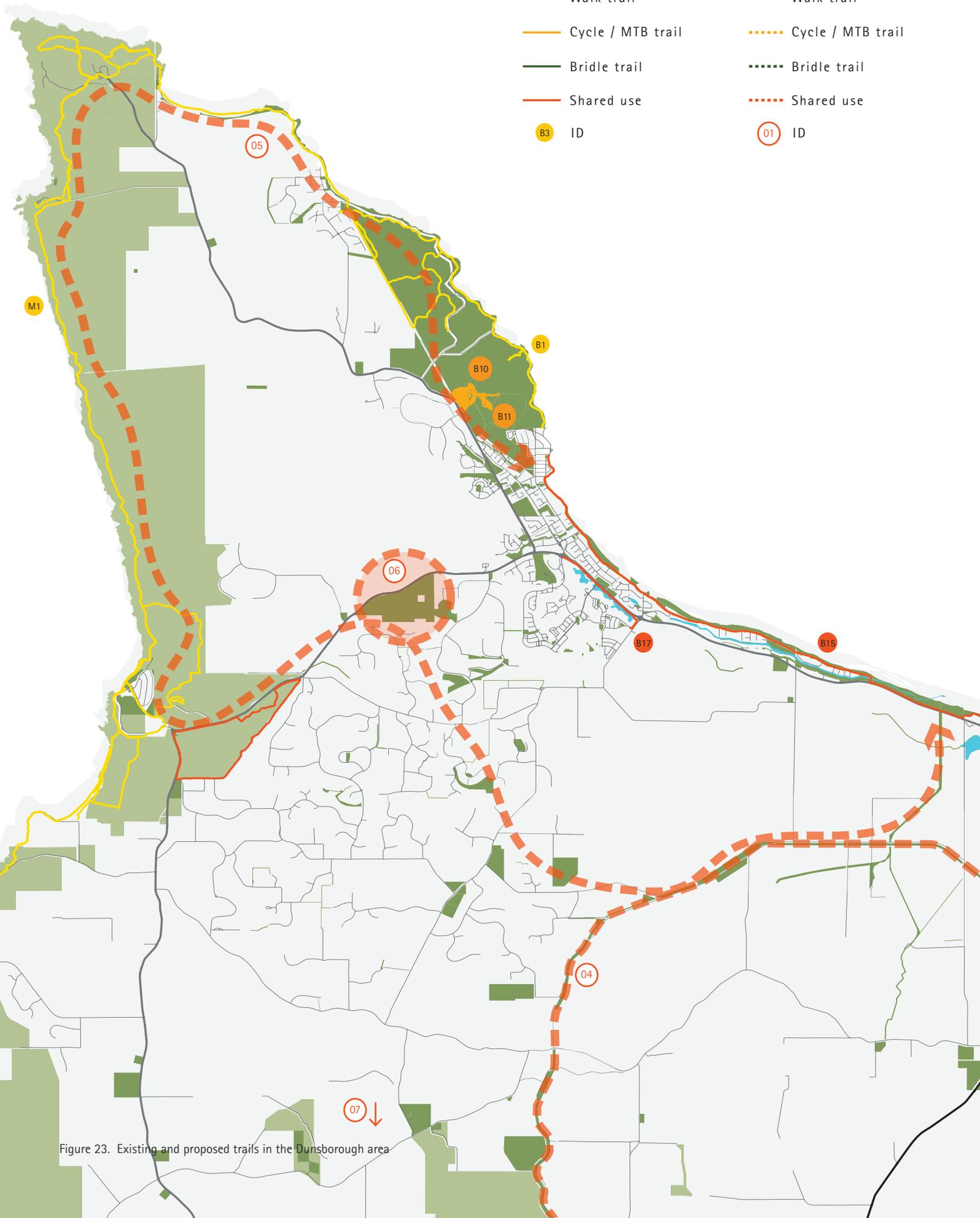


Figure 23. Existing and proposed trails in the Dunsborough area

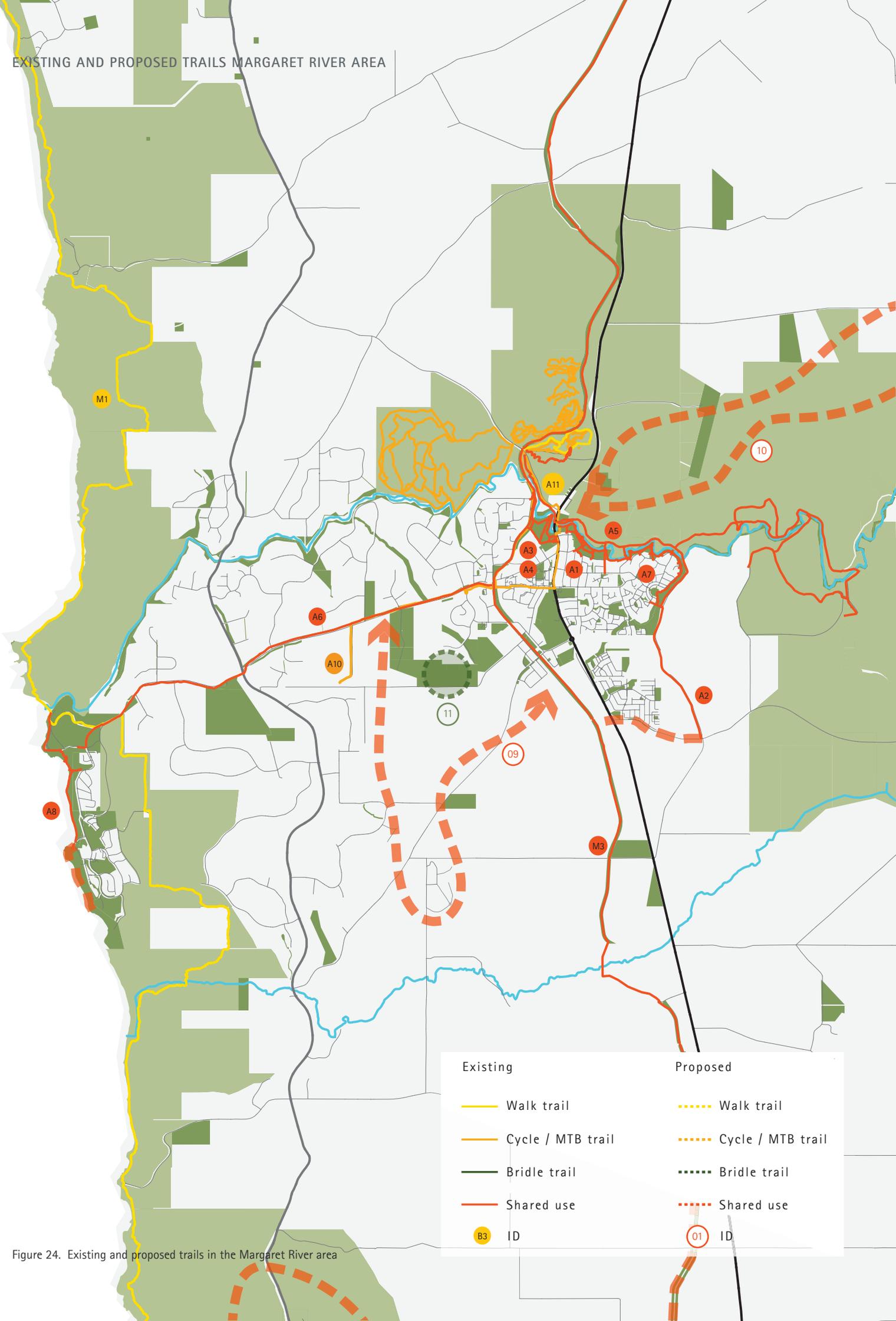
EXISTING TRAILS DUNSBOROUGH AREA

Figure 23 and Table 22 and 23 below outline existing and proposed trails in the Dunsborough area and recommendations. Note existing trails on DBCA managed land were not apart of the brief for the trails audit.

Table 22. Existing trails in the Dunsborough area

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	LENGTH (KM)	CLASSIFICATION	VISITOR SERVICES QUALITY	TRAIL QUALITY	TRAIL MANAGER	
	TRAIL PRIORITY		ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY - TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	REDEVELOPMENT NEED	
BUSHWALK/TRAIL RUN							
B1	Meelup Reserve Trail	Regional	21	Grade 2	Good	Good	CoB
	High		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	A spectacular walk trail along the Meelup coast this trail is valued by locals and is a drawcard for visitors. It is recommended that wayfinding and interpretation signage is updated and that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail itself. Understanding the environmental and social requirements, investigation into making this trail shared use should be initiated, enabling potential for this trail to form apart of the proposed Cape Naturaliste Loop.						
M1	Cape to Cape Track	Regional	125	Grade 3	Good	Average	Friends of Cape to cape
	High		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	A spectacular multiday walk the Cape to Cape is a major drawcard for visitors and locals, as a hero experience of the region visitor experience on this trail should be a priority to get right and of a high quality. Sections of the track should be realigned sections currently on 4WD tracks to create a better trail experience. As a priority focus investment on areas currently being promoted as tourist destinations such as Indijup Spa/ aquarium.						
MOUNTAIN BIKE							
B10	Meelup MTB Trails	Local	20	Varies	Excellent	Good	Cape MTB
	High		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Meelup MTB Trails together with the Dunsborough Country Club Trails form a key component of the mountain bike trail offer in the Region. Where possible it is recommended that the CoB investigate expansion of these trails taking in more of the coastal views, granite outcrops and diverse vegetation within Meelup Regional Park as per the South West MTB Master Plan.						
B11	Dunsborough Country Club	Local	8	Varies	Excellent	Good	Cape MTB
	High		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Dunsborough Country Club Trails together with the Meelup MTB Trails form a key component of the mountain bike trail offer in the Region. It is recommended that the CoB investigate expansion of these trails taking in more of the coastal views, and diverse vegetation within Meelup Regional Park as per the South West MTB Master Plan.						
SHARED USE							
B15	Dunsborough Dash	Local	7.9	Grade 1	Good	Good	CoB
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Dunsborough Dash provides an important linking trail and recreation resource for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						
B17	Lakes Loop	Local	2	Grade 1	Average	Good	CoB
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
	Lakes Loop provides an important recreation resource for locals. It is recommended that a detailed trail audit is undertaken in order to determine works required to improve the trail surface and routine maintenance activities.						

EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRAILS MARGARET RIVER AREA



Existing	Proposed
Walk trail	Walk trail
Cycle / MTB trail	Cycle / MTB trail
Bridle trail	Bridle trail
Shared use	Shared use
B3 ID	01 ID

Figure 24. Existing and proposed trails in the Margaret River area

EXISTING TRAILS MARGARET RIVER AREA

Figure 24 and Table 24 and 25 below outline existing and proposed trails in the Margaret River area and recommendations. Note existing trails on DBCA managed land were not apart of the brief for the trails audit.

Table 24. Existing trails in the Margaret River area

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	LENGTH (KM)	CLASSIFICATION	VISITOR SERVICES QUALITY	TRAIL QUALITY	TRAIL MANAGER	
	TRAIL PRIORITY		ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY - TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	REDEVELOPMENT NEED	
BUSHWALK/TRAIL RUN							
M1	Cape to Cape Track	Regional	125	Grade 3	Good	Average	Friends of C2C
	High		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
A spectacular multiday walk the Cape to Cape is a major drawcard for visitors and locals, as a hero experience of the region visitor experience on this trail should be a priority to get right and of a high quality. Sections of the track should be realigned sections currently on 4WD tracks to create a better trail experience. As a priority focus investment on areas currently being promoted as tourist destinations such as Indijup Spa/ aquarium.							
MOUNTAIN BIKE/CYCLE							
A10	Margaret River Cycle Food and Beverage Trail	Local	13		Average	Good	SoAMR
	High		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
A route that connects a few of the well known restaurants/wineries/breweries along trails. It is recommended that promotion and marketing be improved.							
SHARED USE							
A11	Minnie Keenans	Local	1.3	Grade 1	Average	Average	SoAMR
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
Mini Keenans provides a key link between town and Wooditjup National Park. Recommendation to formalise trail and use inline with local planning currently in preparation for the precinct.							
A1	Barret Street Trail	Local	3.5	Grade 1	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
The Margaret River provides a unique opportunity within the region for trails that are a valued recreation resource for locals and could potentially become a drawcard for visitors. Recommendations for Barret Street Trails are as per the local planning currently in preparation for the area.							
A7	Riverslea Trails	Local	3.3	Grade 2	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
The Margaret River provides a unique opportunity within the region for trails that are a valued recreation resource for locals and could potentially become a drawcard for visitors. Recommendations for the Riverslea Trails are as per the local planning currently in preparation for the area.							
A2	Wannang Biddi (Darch Trail)	Local	3.2	Grade 1	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
The Darch Trail is a valued recreation resource for locals, it is recommended that the SoAMR investigate options to link the trail west to connect to the Wadandi Track							
A3	Margaret River Heritage Trail – Bridge Walk	Local	0.6	Grade 2	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
A valued local trail set in a nice pocket of bush, it is recommended that duplicated trails are consolidated and signage is improved.							
A4	Margaret River Heritage Trail – Karri Walk	Local	2.3	Grade 2	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
A valued local trail set in a nice pocket of bush, it is recommended that duplicated trails are consolidated and signage is improved.							
A5	Margaret River Heritage Trail – River Walk	Local	1.2	Grade 2	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Low		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
A valued local trail set in a nice pocket of bush, it is recommended that duplicated trails are consolidated and signage is improved.							

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	LENGTH (KM)	CLASSIFICATION	VISITOR SERVICES QUALITY	TRAIL QUALITY	TRAIL MANAGER	
	TRAIL PRIORITY		ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY - TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	REDEVELOPMENT NEED	
A6	Prevelly Shared Use Trail	Local	7.5	Grade 1	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
An important link between Margaret River Townsite and the coast the Prevelly Shared Use Trail is a valued local recreation resource. It is recommended that the consistency of trail surface be improved and investigations into extending the trail in Prevelly to connect to the Ocean Trail.							
A8	Ocean Trail	Local	2.8	Grade 1	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
The Ocean Trail provides a valuable local recreation resource linking the rivermouth with the White Elephant Café, the spectacular coastal views also create a drawcard for visitors. It is recommended that the SoAMR investigate extending the trail from White Elephant Cafe south to Gas Bay.							
M3	Wadandi Track	Regional	105	Grade 1	Average	Average	SoAMR, CoB
	High		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
A vital trail in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region this trail needs to be completed as a priority. Trail design and construction needs to be consistent (as per the Wadandi Track Master Plan) to ensure the visitor experience is high quality.							

PROPOSED TRAILS MARGARET RIVER AREA

Table 25. Proposed trails in the Margaret River area

RECOMMENDATION	TRAIL PRIORITY	LENGTH (KM)	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	PROJECT LEAD	PROJECT PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
			ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY - TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	DELIVERABILITY
SHARED USE						
09	Margaret River Winery Trail	High	Regional	SoAMR	CoB	Short
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
The Wadandi Track presents many opportunities for cycle tourism in the Region. With over 95 cellar doors and 13 breweries the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region is one of the largest and most concentrated premium wine and beer producing regions in Australia. With the Wadandi Track forming a spine, spur trails connecting wineries and breweries have potential to become a world class experience combining heritage interpretation, food and wine offerings along a trail weaving its way through the region. Areas with most potential for such a trail include the Wilyabrup and Margaret River areas where there is a concentration of wineries and breweries within comfortable riding distance of eachother.						
10	Margaret River Brewery Trail	High	Regional	SoAMR	CoB	Short
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
The Wadandi Track presents many opportunities for cycle tourism in the Region. With the Wadandi Track forming a spine, spur trails connecting wineries and breweries have potential to become a world class experience combining heritage interpretation, food and wine offerings along trails weaving their way through the region. The concentration of breweries surround Margaret River township presents opportunity for a brewery trail linking the Wadandi track and town with breweries.						
EQUESTRIAN						
11	Margaret River Pony Club Bridle Trail Network	Low	Local	SoAMR		Long
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●
Formalise and develop further the existing network of trails in Roxborough Rd Reserve adjacent the Margaret River Pony Club.						

EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRAILS BORANUP AREA



Existing	Proposed
Walk trail	Walk trail
Cycle / MTB trail	Cycle / MTB trail
Bridle trail	Bridle trail
Shared use	Shared use
B3 ID	01 ID

Figure 25. Existing and proposed trails in the Boranup area

EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRAILS AUGUSTA AREA



Figure 26. Existing and proposed trails in the Augusta area

EXISTING TRAILS AUGUSTA AREA

Figure 26 and Table 27 and 28 below outline existing and proposed trails in the Augusta area and recommendations. Note existing trails on DBCA managed land were not apart of the brief for the trails audit.

Table 27. Proposed trails in the Augusta area

TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	LENGTH (KM)	CLASSIFICATION	VISITOR SERVICES QUALITY	TRAIL QUALITY	TRAIL MANAGER	
	TRAIL PRIORITY		ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY - TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	REDEVELOPMENT NEED	
BUSHWALK/TRAIL RUN							
M1	Cape to Cape Track	Regional	125	Grade 3	Good	Average	Friends of Cape to cape
	High		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
A spectacular multiday walk the Cape to Cape is a major draw card for visitors and locals, as a hero experience of the region visitor experience on this trail should be a priority to get right and of a high quality. Sections of the track should be realigned sections currently on 4WD tracks to create a better trail experience. As a priority focus investment on areas currently being promoted as tourist destinations such as Indijup Spa/ aquarium.							
M2	Augusta Busselton Heritage Trail	Regional	96		Poor	Poor	SoAMR, CoB
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
The Augusta Busselton Heritage Trail has potential to become a spine trail for the Region offering a different experience to the Wadandi and Cape to Cape trails, with a focus on the heritage values. It is recommended that this trail be formalised and extended north to Busselton. Investigating suitability for promotion as an equestrian route and rerouting sections currently on private property should also be considered. While an important part of the bigger picture of trails in the region it is considered a low order priority, to be developed once trail tourism has reached critical mass.							
SHARED USE							
A13	Pelican Trail	Local	1.2	Grade 1	Good	Good	SoAMR
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
The Pelican Trail provides a valuable local recreation resource, the spectacular coastal views also create a drawcard for visitors. It is recommended that SoAMR investigate extending the trail north to meet the proposed Wadandi Track terminus.							
A9	Cape Leeuwin Trail	Local	2	Grade 1	Good	Excellent	SoAMR
	Medium		● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
The Leeuwin Trail provides the start of a connection from Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse and the end of the Cape to Cape Track to Augusta townsite. The trail traverses through coastal vegetation along the coastline offering spectacular views. Finishing the trail should be a priority.							

PROPOSED TRAILS AUGUSTA AREA

Table 28. Proposed trails in the Augusta area

RECOMMENDATION	TRAIL PRIORITY	LENGTH (KM)	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	PROJECT LEAD	PROJECT PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME	
			ECONOMIC IMPACT	COMMUNITY - TOURISM	OPPORTUNITY	DELIVERABILITY	
SHARED USE							
04	Wadandi Track	High	105	Regional	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
A vital trail in the Leeuwin Naturaliste Region this trail needs to be completed as a priority. Trail design and construction needs to be consistent (as per the Wadandi Track Master Plan) to ensure the visitor experience is high quality.							
14	Augusta Loop	Low		Local	SoAMR		Long
			● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ●	
Link school to Wadandi Track and MTB trails for complete loop around town							

COST ESTIMATES

For existing trails cost estimates will require a detailed trail audit to determine trail condition and amount of work required to bring trail quality to excellent. As a guide the following rates are provided.

CURRENT TRAIL QUALITY	COST TO UPGRADE
Excellent	\$0/m
Good	\$5/m
Average	\$10/m
Poor	\$15/m

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

ID	TRAIL NAME	TRAIL SIGNIFICANCE	APPROXIMATE DISTANCE (KM)	PROPOSAL FRAMEWORK	SITE ASSESSMENT	CONCEPT PLANNING	CORRIDOR EVALUATION	DETAILED DESIGN	CONSTRUCTION	MANAGEMENT (per annum)	TOTAL
					\$2/m	\$1/m		\$3/m	\$40/m		
SHARED USE											
01	Busselton to Nannup Rail Trail	Regional	33	\$4K	\$66K	\$33K	\$10K	\$99K	\$3.9M	\$198K	\$4.37M
	Note construction cost estimates have been multiplied by 3 to account for trail width and the scale of this project.										
05	Cape Naturaliste Loop	Regional	45	\$4K	\$90K	\$45K	\$10K	\$135K	\$1.8M	\$90K	\$2.17M
06	Big Rock Reserve Trail Network	Regional	20	\$4K	\$40K	\$20K	\$10K	\$60K	\$800K	\$40K	\$974K
07	Wilyabrub Winery Trail	Regional	14	\$4K	\$28K	\$14K	\$10K	\$42K	\$1.1M	\$28K	\$1.27M
	Note construction cost estimates have been multiplied by 2 to account for wider trail.										
09	Margaret River Winery Trail	Regional	15	\$4K	\$30K	\$15K	\$10K	\$45K	\$1.2M	\$30K	\$1.36M
	Note construction cost estimates have been multiplied by 2 to account for wider trail.										
10	Margaret River Brewery Trail	Regional	15	\$4K	\$30K	\$15K	\$10K	\$45K	\$1.2M	\$30K	\$1.36M
	Note construction cost estimates have been multiplied by 2 to account for wider trail.										
12	Trees to Sea	Regional	73	\$4K	\$146K	\$123K	\$10K	\$219K	\$2.9M	\$146K	\$3.51M
13	Boranup Trail Network	Regional	30	\$4K	\$60K	\$30K	\$10K	\$90K	\$1.2M	\$60K	\$1.54M
14	Augusta Loop	Local	15	\$2K	\$30K	\$15K	\$5K	\$45K	\$600K	\$30K	\$727K
15	Cape Leeuwin Loop	Regional	15	\$4K	\$5K	\$2.5K	\$10K	\$45K	\$600K	\$30K	\$734K
MOUNTAIN BIKE/CYCLE											
03	Busselton Mountain Bike Network	Local	10	\$2K	\$14K	\$7K	\$5K	\$30K	\$400K	\$20K	\$487K
16	Augusta Mountain Bike Network	Local	15	\$2K	\$30K	\$15K	\$5K	\$45K	\$600K	\$30K	\$727K
EQUESTRIAN											
11	Margaret River Pony Club Bridle Trail Network	Local	5	\$2K	\$10K	\$5K	\$5K	\$15K	\$100K	\$5K	\$142K
										TOTAL	\$21.5M

OBJECTIVE 5. MARKET AND PROMOTE THE EXPERIENCES ON OFFER

COMPREHENSIVE AND COORDINATED MARKETING PRESENCE TO PROMOTE THE TRAIL EXPERIENCES.

Marketing and promotion of the experience on offer needs to be appropriate to the level of development and to the intended markets. A comprehensive and cohesive strategy looking at how the diversity of experience can be packaged and marketed is needed to entice longer stays and repeat visits.

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

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

RECOMMENDATION	PROJECT LEAD	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
5.1 Record and analyse trail usage data and market visitation for all existing and new trail facilities. Establish a central reporting system to provide information for the industry.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing
5.2 Develop a cohesive, hierarchical marketing and promotion strategy that establishes a trail brand and identifies promotional opportunities through partnership with MRBTA.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing
5.3 Ensure priority locations identified with high potential for hosting events consider the requirements for event infrastructure and sustainable revenue based models for hosting events.	All stakeholders		Ongoing
5.4 Develop a coordinated marketing presence, linking signage, maps and other marketing collateral to increase awareness of the trails and services in the Region. Use Trails WA as the online platform.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing
5.5 Encourage and support new trail business opportunities and identified gaps in service provision. Explore opportunities for Aboriginal enterprise and interpretation.	CoB, SoAMR	DBCA	Short/ongoing

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