HUNCHBACK HILL MASTERPLAN

SUPPORTING INFORMATION AND DETAILED STRATEGIES
These notes are intended to provide context and supporting or explanatory information for the Hunchback Hill Complex Masterplan. They also include additional description and details for many of the 36 strategies proposed for Hunchback Hill than could be provided in the summary version of the Wodonga Hills Activation Strategy.

These supporting notes comprise:
- A tabulated site assessment of the Hunchback Hill complex, summarising the advantages and limitations of the area for greater sustainable leisure, recreation and tourism use;
- A plan, and brief list, of the principal assets of the Hunchback Hill complex that could be employed to support the area’s “activation”;
- A summary of the approach and key factors that determined the role and character of the Hunchback Hill complex, and shaped the strategy’s and masterplan’s directions for the area; and,
- Descriptions and details of the 36 strategies proposed for the Hunchback Hill complex as shown on the masterplan (and summarised in the activation strategy).

The Hunchback Hill complex as addressed by this masterplan, and the Wodonga Hills Activation Strategy, includes both the lands owned and managed by Wodonga Council as well as the Crown Land Reserve managed by Parklands Albury Wodonga (PAW).
SITE ASSESSMENT - ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS

The Hunchback Hill complex presents the following advantages and limitations to activation of the area for greater sustainable leisure, recreation and tourism use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVANTAGES</th>
<th>LIMITATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Hunchback Hill complex is located approximately 5.5km from the town centre of Wodonga. It forms the western border to the Wodonga suburbs.</td>
<td>The south-east corner, western boundary and north-east corner are bordered by private property allowing no public access.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Easy links can be forged from the Hunchback Hill complex to Federation Hill (800m) through the existing pedestrian/road networks. | The other hills are further away:  
• 5.5km to Bears Hill  
• 7km to Huon Hill  
• 11km to Baranduda Range  
• 17km to Mahers Hill |
<p>| The Hunchback Hill complex is bounded by established residential subdivision to the north-east, east and south-east. To the north is partly rural residential subdivision. To the west and south-west is farming land. Proximity to the east gives easy access for walkers to the eastern entry to the site. | Proximity of the rifle range to the north-west of the site limits activity in this portion of the park. |
| Hunchback is the closest hill of all six sites to the Hume Hwy. Access to the site can be gained from the highway in minutes. The hill can be viewed from the highway. | |
| <strong>Land tenure</strong> | | |
| The council manages the northern arm of the site known as Klings Hill, and the lower northern face of McFarlanes Hill. | PAW manage the southern portion of the site entitled Felltimber Creek Nature Conservation Reserve. This reserve is made up of two parcels of land. The western parcel known as Swainsona Reserve, and the eastern parcel known as MacFarlanes Hill (the remainder not managed by the council). |
| | Split land management presents issues for coordination of the site as a whole. |
| <strong>Access (to the hill)</strong> | | |
| There are four entry points along the southern boundary (and south-east corner). The two entry points at the south-east corner provide safe entry to the park for walkers. | Lack of provision for pedestrian and cycle access along Felltimber Creek Rd limit safe access to the western entries (x2). Cyclists must ride along the road to access the mountain bike facilities at the second entry from the western end. These riders include children of primary school age. |</p>
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<tr>
<td>The site of the pump track provides a flat large area for parking and other facilities, for example for events, and a safer entry/exit point onto Felltimber Creek Rd. (The existing car parking and the pump track could be swapped with entry/exit confined to one location at the safest point on this section of Felltimber Creek Rd. This option would require a bridge over a creek to maintain access along the service road to the saddle).</td>
<td>The access to parking at the second most west entry point is located on a blind corner creating hazardous conditions for entering and exiting traffic. Limited space is available for on-street parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wide road shoulder adjacent to the most eastern entry on Felltimber Creek Rd provides opportunity for on-street parking for users.</td>
<td>Speeding vehicles on Felltimber Creek Rd (usually those travelling west to east) present a hazard to road cyclists and walkers, and to traffic entering and existing parking area at the blind corner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two entry points on the northern side, both for pedestrian and cycle access only. The entry west of Probyns Rd provides quick access to the saddle hub of intersecting tracks.</td>
<td>Generally vehicles park on the southern side of Felltimber Creek Rd requiring crossing of this road to enter the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>The eastern entry points do not provide adequate access for cyclists to enter the park to use the dedicated mountain bike tracks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking tracks are available through the vegetated slopes of the PAW managed lands. See section below for more details.</td>
<td>The rural subdivision to the north provides limited opportunities to access the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many dedicated mountain bike tracks are available throughout the PAW managed land. See section below for more details.</td>
<td>Lack of a perimeter road bordering the adjacent residential areas to the north limits opportunities for users to park vehicles adjacent to the complex.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access (within the hill)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking tracks are located parallel to Felltimber Creek Rd and are easily accessed by entry points for this road.</td>
<td>Conflicts occur where dedicated mountain bike tracks and walking tracks intersect on downhill bike runs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The southern slopes are well serviced with dedicated mountain bike tracks and a dedicated course.</td>
<td>Conflicts occur where dedicated mountain bike tracks are located within areas of endangered vegetation communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginners and pump track facilities for mountain bikes are located at the second most western park entry.</td>
<td>No mid slope tracks to provide access for walkers to vegetated slopes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridge management tracks provide ready access for walkers and bike riders to all edges of the park and to a scenic lookout from the summit.</td>
<td>Only one management track to the northern boundary of the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An unsealed road from the second most western entry from the south to the saddle of intersecting management ridge tracks provides an opportunity to allow public vehicle access for conventional cars to a car park at the saddle.</td>
<td>Scenic mature trees along the access road from Felltimber Creek and at the McFarlane's gate limit configuration of road upgrade and potential parking area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADVANTAGES</td>
<td>LIMITATIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potential to provide chauffeured tourist 4WD tours to the summit of Coyles Track.</td>
<td>Mountain bike riders use the vehicle road from the blind corner to the saddle, which would conflict with cars if access is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential access available from the unmade Danson Rd reserve following future subdivision. A number of mature endemic trees in this road reserve provide a scenic setting.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Setting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scenic mid slope vegetation on the northern faces and densely vegetated slopes on the southern face.</td>
<td>Modified farming landscape with few mature trees in open grassed paddocks across the spine ridge. Limited shade given by mature trees along the ridge trails. Coyles management ridge track in particular is barren of vegetation/mature trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cattle on the property leave visible signs of use.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Views</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hill presents a rural modified landscape view from the Hume Hwy of scattered trees in open paddocks with pockets of dense vegetation.</td>
<td>Mature trees tend to drop large limbs, which is a safety hazard to park users. (Impacts on track alignment and maintenance practices in removing damaged limbs, not trees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>270° views are available from the summit of the Coyles Track over adjacent rural lands to Murray River and encircling ranges in the distance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several vantage points on the Coyles Track to view rural lands to north and vegetated slopes below.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited views of urban residential areas. Distinctly more rural landscape than the Federation Hill northern setting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevation provides opportunities for fabulous views over the wider region.</td>
<td>Very little flat curtilage available for facilities or activity areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An area of relatively gently sloping land is available for an entry node off Danson Rd.</td>
<td>Many sites (x22) of slopes equal to or steeper than one to two occur on the northern, north-east, north-west and eastern slopes. Three isolated steep sites occur in the western PAW land and a large elongated steep site occurs along Felltimber Creek Rd along the eastern PAW land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two large sites of gully erosion occur in the council land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two creek corridors between the parking at the blind corner and the entry to the park limits capacity to expand car parking in this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADVANTAGES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fauna/flora</td>
<td>Several densely forested areas occur on the north and south slopes of McFarlanes Hill, within Swainsona Reserve and on the north, east and west facing slopes of Klings Hill. Site contains Ecological Vegetation Communities (EVC) listed as endangered, plus sites of observed endangered flora and fauna, particularly within the PAW managed lands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural heritage</td>
<td>Mature endemic trees on the mid slopes. Weeds located in creek on PAW lands. The Crown Land areas of Hunchback managed by PAW fall within mapped areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity. These areas also include two Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) listed sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Limited surveillance provided by mountain bike users during peak use times. Limited surveillance over the site due to proximity to rural subdivision rather than urban areas, limited entry points and dense vegetation on slopes. Lone bike riders may present issues if injured.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVATION ASSETS

The figure on the following page shows the principal assets of the Hunchback Hill complex that could be employed to activate the area for greater leisure, recreation and tourism use. These assets include:

- The surrounding (developed) public road network, mainly along the area’s southern side, and existing access/entry points (pedestrian and mountain bike);
- Potential access/entry points;
- The area’s current management track, walking track and designated mountain bike “single” track network;
- Areas of scenic vegetation;
- Vantage points, potential lookouts and major views to/from the area;
- Potential links or possible track/trail corridors; and,
- Locations potentially suitable for the provision of visitor facilities such as picnic or activity areas, entry nodes and trailheads.

- Strategy/masterplan rationale, and the planned role and character for the Hunchback Hill complex.
The strategy for the Hunchback Hill complex is largely driven by the area’s present role as the principal mountain biking destination in the Wodonga area, its particular access constraints and opportunities (largely focused along Felltimber Creek Rd and Coyles Rd, which is closed at present), the area’s varied and rugged landscape, and the significant scenic and biodiversity conservation assets occurring across the area (including part of the site being declared as a nature conservation reserve).

The primary mountain biking venue within the Wodonga hills, with the potential for the staged development of additional riding opportunities, and also offering a range of walking experiences and high vantage points.

Pivotal to the successful expansion and management of leisure, recreation and tourism opportunities across the Hunchback Hill complex will be effective co-operation between the council, Parklands Albury Wodonga (PAW) and community groups (particularly mountain bike groups). Many of the strategies identified apply across both the council and PAW tenures. Many proposed facilities are located on the boundary between these tenures, or pass across/through both land managers’ areas (with these tenure boundaries invisible, and irrelevant, to almost all leisure and recreation users). This is especially so for arrangements around the junction of Felltimber Creek Rd and Coyles Rd (at present closed, but proposed for public vehicle access as a key plank of the strategy), which is, and will continue to be, the principal entry point to the hill.

Recreational and leisure use of the Hunchback Hill complex has so far been strongly concentrated in the area’s south-east on the varied mountain bike tracks and facilities developed adjacent to Felltimber Creek Rd, and extending north-west up the Felltimber Creek valley, and on the Ridge Walking Track. More recently mountain bike cross-country tracks have been developed in the central valley and northern ridge/slopes on McFarlanes Hill. The strategy identifies the opportunity for greater development and use of this higher area on McFarlanes Hill for mountain biking, allied with revegetation and conservation efforts in places. The potential of this area to offer easier or introductory level mountain bike tracks (at present under-supplied in the Wodonga area) is also recognised. A staged and zoned approach to the further expansion of mountain biking tracks and facilities within the Hunchback Hill complex, as a whole, is also proposed, along with some rationalisation of existing tracks and conditions on new track development in high conservation values area.

To support greater use of the McFarlanes Hill area, and the Hunchback Hill complex generally, the strategy capitalises on Coyles Rd as an upgraded central “access spine” to provide visitor vehicle access to the approximate centre of the area. Visitor facilities and a major trailhead is proposed here, from where visitors, both mountain bikers and walkers, can radiate out onto a number of existing and proposed tracks and trails, including potential loop routes, as well as a future walking route traversing the Hunchback Hill complex from north to south-east in the longer term. The summit of Klings Hill (actually McDonalds Hill), offering stunning regional views, is one the key locations that will be more easily accessed from the upgraded Coyles Rd.
Activating the centre of the hill, along Coyles Rd, will also increase the area’s potential to accommodate occasional “events” and larger organised activities.

User safety has been a major consideration in planning for the Hunchback Hill complex. Providing for safe vehicle access to and from Felltimber Creek Rd and the existing mountain biking area, and ultimately along Coyles Rd to access other visitor use sites and activities, has been a priority. Safe cycling access along Felltimber Creek Rd, between the mountain bike zone and West Wodonga, has similarly been a major issue despite being outside the site’s boundaries. A number of other measures to improve user safety, as well as to reduce potential conflicts between leisure and recreation activities, have also been identified.

The strategy recognises the importance of protecting the hill’s remaining well vegetated slopes, and avoiding the further fragmentation of these areas by visitor facilities (notably tracks and trails). These areas include endangered vegetation communities with intact understoreys in several locations (a feature rare in the Wodonga area) and occurrences of the vulnerable Smooth Darling Pea. They also have significant scenic and landscape values, particularly in the north-east where these forested slopes form a “gateway” to the Wodonga district when viewed from the nearby Hume Highway. Revegetation and regeneration areas have also been identified to enhance habitat values (including in conjunction with track/trail development) or to address soil erosion and land slip hazards.

The McFarlanes Hill and “Swainsona Reserve” areas have been declared as the Felltimber Creek Nature Conservation Reserve. The stated management priority for this reserve is to “conserve and protect species, communities or habitats of indigenous animals and plants”, with a secondary or supporting role identified as providing for “passive recreation such as nature study and picnicking, and other recreational activities” where these are consistent with this primary purpose and “subject to management requirements”. Accordingly, specific strategies have been identified to prioritise conservation efforts in this area and further recreational use and development of the nature conservation reserve will be excluded or restricted in some locations (principally the larger remaining native vegetation areas). Elsewhere across the nature conservation reserve, in areas largely cleared or already developed for recreation, the strategy links the expansion of recreational use and facilities with measures for biodiversity protection or restoration.
HUNCHBACK HILL COMPLEX ACTIVATION STRATEGIES

A total of 36 strategies have been identified to “activate” the Hunchback Hill complex, as shown on the masterplan and summarised in the Wodonga Hills Activation Strategy. (These directions are specific to the Hunchback Hill complex, however the “general activation strategies” applicable to all the Wodonga hills, as described in Wodonga Hills Activation Strategy, will also apply.)

Strategy HHC.1 applies to the Hunchback Hill complex as a whole, while strategies HHC.2 to HHC.36 relate to specific sites, areas or corridors as shown on the masterplan.

Each of these strategies is described below including the suggested timing for each (and in some cases additional prioritisation information), and the management objectives that each strategy will achieve or help realise (from the list of objectives in the table at the end of this section). For many strategies, additional details of the underlying intention or rationale, or further planning and operational information to elaborate a strategy’s direction or details, are also provided.

Overall strategies

STRATEGY HHC.1
Employ a sequential or staged approach to the provision and location of additional dedicated mountain bike tracks in the Hunchback Hill complex across both the council and Parklands Albury Wodonga lands, as shown on the figure below. This approach will apply outside those areas identified as priority conservation zones (HHC.15 and HHC.16), and only under strict conditions in other identified significant conservation and scenic value areas (HHC.17 and HHC.14), as also shown on the figure below. In overview, this sequential or staged approach is as follows:

- Zone 1 - In Zone 1, dedicated mountain biking opportunities will continue to be concentrated in the area east of Coyles Rd where the existing cross-country tracks, technical circuit, and pump track are located. Additional mountain bike tracks may be developed in this area, as described in HHC.17 and HHC.18 or other tracks as warranted by demand.

- Zone 2 - Dedicated mountain biking tracks will be developed in the Zone 2 area, in addition to the “single” track proposed to link Vearings Management Track and Coyles Rd (HHC.26) as/when the tracks in Zone 1 reach capacity (and the creation of additional routes in that zone is not practical/sustainable). Zone 2 mountain biking tracks may also be developed when a considerable demand is expressed for a track type/experience that cannot be sustainably offered in Zone 1. The development of new mountain biking tracks or opportunities includes making substantial modifications to existing management tracks (such as “contouring” or re-routing) to make them more trafficable and/or appealing to mountain bikers. Zone 2 encompasses the area west of Coyles Rd and south of Coyles Management Track (and is partly within an Environmental Significance Overlay Zone).

- Zone 3 - The same principles would apply to developing dedicated mountain biking tracks in Zone 3, the elevated areas north of Coyles Management Track, as/when the additional opportunities possible in Zone 2 are at capacity. Zone 3 presents particular access challenges in terms of the long climb necessary for mountain bikers to reach this more elevated area. (Zone 3 is entirely within an Environmental Significance Overlay Zone.)
The site assessment, planning and design considerations to apply to any proposed new mountain bike tracks across all three zones, should also address the issues identified in the Wodonga Hills Activation Strategy (at Strategy O.11).

Timing: Short term, then ongoing

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 7. Sustainable use.

**Short term site-specific strategies**

**STRATEGY HHC.2**

Extend the current 70km speed limit on Felltimber Creek Rd to finish west of the junction with Coyles Rd (closed) and the existing, and proposed (HHC.3), vehicle entry point for mountain bikers and other recreational users.

Timing: Short term (high priority)

Relevant objectives: 2. Accessibility, connection and integration; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety.

**STRATEGY HHC.3**

Relocate, rationalise and upgrade the existing informal vehicle access and parking arrangements at the junction of Felltimber Creek Rd and Coyles Rd (closed) used by mountain bikers accessing the McFarlanes Hill track network and beyond, as well as other recreational users. Formalise an intersection to support turn off/on traffic movements from Felltimber Creek Rd into the Parklands Albury Wodonga lands. Replace the existing roadside parking with a defined and contained parking area (unsealed) within the Parklands Albury Wodonga lands and road reserve if appropriate (adjust fencing and gates as required). Realign entry to the existing Coyles Rd management track. Rehabilitate/revegetate the redundant parts of the existing roadside car park. This new vehicle access arrangement will also enable the proposed provision of public vehicle access north along Coyles Rd (HHC.22).

Timing: Short term (high priority, high cost item)

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety.

**STRATEGY HHC.4**

Establish a safer cycling route as an alternative (in part) to users riding along Felltimber Creek Rd to access the McFarlanes Hill tracks and other recreational opportunities (via the main entry point at the junction of Felltimber Creek Rd and Coyles Rd [closed]). Develop a shared path (compacted gravel or concrete) from the existing shared path on the south side of Felltimber Creek Rd (east of the Felltimber Creek bridge), running west along the southern side of a drainage reserve to the end of Lambourn Dve, then using Lambourn Dve as a low-traffic and low-speed route to its intersection with Felltimber Creek Rd. (See Strategy HHC.5 for a proposed connecting road-shoulder shared path west from the intersection of Lambourn Dve and Felltimber Creek Rd).

Timing: Short term (high priority)

Relevant objectives: 2. Accessibility, connection and integration; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety.

**STRATEGY HHC.5**

Establish a shared path (compacted gravel or concrete) along the southern shoulder of Felltimber Creek Rd west from the intersection with Lambourn Dve (and the proposed safer cycling route, HHC.4), to the existing and proposed (HHC.3) vehicle entry point for mountain bikers and other recreational users near the junction of Felltimber Creek Rd and Coyles Rd (closed). This path should be separated from the Felltimber Creek Rd carriageway by safety railings, bollards or similar. Pedestrian and cyclist warning signs would be required on Felltimber Creek Rd at the western crossing point near Coyles Rd.

Timing: Short term (high priority, high cost item)

Relevant objectives: 2. Accessibility, connection and integration; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety.
STRATEGY HHC.6
Manage, and as demand warrants expand/diversify (within the existing footprint), the existing mountain bike technical circuit located north-east of the junction of Felltimber Creek Rd and Coyles Rd (closed). Progressively upgrade this circuit to better meet accepted best-practice design, construction and management standards, especially to improve user safety, signage and wayfinding, and environmental impact management.

Timing: Short term, then ongoing

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 7. Sustainable use; 8. Biodiversity and habitat values; 9. Landscape and scenic values.

STRATEGY HHC.7
Rationalise and upgrade existing tracks, and improve signage, at the eastern end of (and entry to) the Ridge Walking Track to separate walkers and mountain bikers. Install measures at the eastern end of the Ridge Walking Track (chiefly on the lower alignment) to prevent access/use by mountain bikes such as steps, stiles, chicanes or pinch gates (preferably sited on steep side-slopes, rock pinches, or other “defendable” points on the walking track).

Timing: Short term

Relevant objectives: 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 7. Sustainable use.

STRATEGY HHC.8
Realign, rationalise and upgrade existing tracks, as well as improve signage at the western end/bend on the Ridge Walking Track, where the mountain bike technical circuit at present intersects the walking track in several places and the two track types are confused/unclear. Install measures on the Ridge Walking Track (chiefly on the lower alignment) to prevent access/use by mountain bikes such as steps, stiles, chicanes or pinch gates (preferably sited on steep side-slopes, rock pinches, or other “defendable” points on the walking track).

Timing: Short term

Relevant objectives: 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 7. Sustainable use.

STRATEGY HHC.9
Install measures on the Ridge Walking Track (on the lower alignment), just east of the mountain bike technical circuit, to prevent access/use by mountain bikes travelling east, such as steps, stiles, chicanes or pinch gates (preferably sited on steep side-slopes, rock pinches, or other “defendable” points on the walking track).

Timing: Short term

Relevant objectives: 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 7. Sustainable use.

STRATEGY HHC.10
Restrict or discourage visitor access along the northern sections of McMartins Management Track, due to proximity of the adjacent Wodonga Rifle Range.

Timing: Short term

Relevant objectives: 4. Visitor or neighbour safety.
STRATEGY HHC.11
Promote, signpost and manage the Coyles Management Track, from the proposed Coyles Rd visitor facility node and trailhead (HHC.23) to the north-western summit and vantage point on Klings Hill, as a shared path available to both walkers and mountain bikers. For walker safety this track should be recommended as the summit up route only, with the Vearings Management Track and proposed section of “single” track between Vearings Management Track and Coyles Rd, (HHC.26) recommended as the down route, encouraging an anti-clockwise circuit for mountain bikers.

Timing: Short term

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 9. Landscape and scenic values.

STRATEGY HHC.12
Check title boundaries at the interface with private lands, and the unmade road reserve, at the western end of the Felltimber Creek Nature Conservation Reserve (Swainsona Reserve) (Parklands Albury Wodonga lands). Adjust boundary fencing if/as required to accurately reflect cadastral boundaries. Include the unmade road reserve within the nature conservation reserve boundaries, as recommended by the Box-Ironbark Forests and Woodlands Investigation Final Report 2001 by the Environment Conservation Council, if possible. If supported by these investigations and on-ground fenceline/boundary adjustments, re-establish Vearings Management Track as a publicly available access point onto the hill for walkers and cyclists (with entry via the small western parking area off Felltimber Creek Rd).

Timing: Short term.


STRATEGY HHC.13
Identification of a reasonably flat and readily accessible (for larger vehicles) “event space” in the vicinity of the proposed new entry, intersection and car park at the junction of Felltimber Creek Rd and Coyles Rd (HHC.3), near the entry to the existing technical mountain bike circuit. To cater for mountain bike, duathlon, fun run, community biodiversity surveys, fundraising/promotions and similar events focused on the hill’s track and trail network. Located within the Parklands Albury Wodonga lands, potentially over sections of “un-required” track if necessary (for later repair/rehabilitation). This space could accommodate in the order of 180 to 200 parked cars (or equivalent uses).

Timing: Short term (ideally after the Coyles Rd and Felltimber Creek Rd junction has been upgraded, HHC.3)

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 8. Biodiversity and habitat values; 9. Landscape and scenic values.

STRATEGY HHC.14
Regeneration of endangered Grassy Woodland EVC (through grazing management, weed control, fire regime and so on) on the northern face of McFarlanes Hill, on council land east of Coyles Rd. Regeneration efforts should be focused on the western end of McFarlanes Hill, with consideration to limiting bushfire risk to adjoining rural residential areas along the hill’s northern margin. Active revegetation measures should be a prerequisite for, or accompaniment to, the further development of mountain bike tracks in this area (HHC.18), to enhance habitat and landscape values and improve the setting/amenity of future tracks.

Timing: Short term (time lag for full effectiveness)

Relevant objectives: 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 8. Biodiversity and habitat values; 9. Landscape and scenic values.
STRATEGY HHC.15
Prioritise conservation management and protection of the existing heavily timbered/vegetated and more rugged western (Swainsona Reserve) portion of the Parklands Albury Wodonga lands (west/south-west of Coyles Rd and immediately north of Felltimber Creek Rd) and the existing heavily timbered/vegetated steeper southern slope of McFarlanes Hill (fronting Felltimber Creek Rd, in the area roughly contained by the Ridge Walking Track). Continue active measures for conservation of the Smooth Darling Pea (Swainsona galegifolia), such as the establishment of revegetation populations and monitoring, in these bushland zones. Close and rehabilitate existing unauthorised or informal tracks and trails within these bushland zones, including an infrequently used “downhill” mountain bike track through Swainsona Reserve. Monitor for the creation of new unauthorised tracks/trails, and close and rehabilitate as located. Do not fragment these bushland zones by the development of further tracks, trails or other visitor facilities.

Timing: Ongoing.

Relevant objectives: 8. Biodiversity and habitat values; 9. Landscape and scenic values.

STRATEGY HHC.16
Prioritise conservation management and protection of the existing heavily timbered/vegetated and more rugged north-eastern slopes of the Hunchback Hill complex. Continue control measures for Blackberry and other noxious or environmental weeds on the margins of this area, especially around/along areas accessed by visitors or vehicles. Close and rehabilitate existing unauthorised or informal tracks and trails within this bushland zone, and monitor for the creation of new unauthorised tracks/trails. Do not fragment this zone by the development of further tracks, trails or other visitor facilities, other than establishment of the Danson Rd to Coyles Management Track walking track (HHC.35). This entire area is a very prominent series of hillslopes and spurs, including from the nearby Hume Highway (acting as a visual threshold or gateway, and the start/end of the ring of hills surrounding the Wodonga area).

Timing: Ongoing.

Relevant objectives: 8. Biodiversity and habitat values; 9. Landscape and scenic values.
STRATEGY HHC.17
Maintain the north-eastern end of McFarlanes Hill as a heavily timbered/vegetated steeper hill face, but permit the further development or formalisation of mountain bike tracks under strict conditions. All mountain bike track proposals should:
• Be assessed using the considerations set out in Strategy O.11;
• Be subject to an alignment “corridor” survey for the Smooth Darling Pea (Swainsona galegifolia), a listed threatened species, with appropriate planning/management responses to protect this species (such as plant relocation or revegetation, or trail re-routing);
• Be aligned to avoid or minimise impacts on existing trees, and to avoid degrading the slope’s scenic/landscape quality from the West Wodonga urban area;
• Be subject to Aboriginal cultural heritage investigation and approval;
• Include commitments to the control of major weed infestations along tracks accessing and within this area, to limit the spread of weeds by mountain bikers; and,
• Be subject to ongoing monitoring, reporting and remedial management as required.
• Monitor for the creation of new unauthorised tracks/trails, and close and rehabilitate as located.

Timing: Ongoing for vegetation protection/management. Short to medium term for mountain bike tracks (only if warranted by demand, and subject to constraints/conditions identified).


STRATEGY HHC.18
Manage, and as demand warrants, expand the existing mountain bike cross-country track area on McFarlanes Hill, predominantly cleared grassy paddocks and mostly scattered trees on the northern hillslope. Prioritise location for the development of additional cross-country and other mountain bike tracks (within Zone 1, HHC.1) as demand warrants. Issues such as those identified in Strategy O.11 should apply to the site assessment, planning and design of any proposed new mountain bike tracks in this area. Track development on the hillslopes in this area should be accompanied by active revegetation measures (especially on the northern slope, HHC.14), using endangered Grassy Woodland EVC and depleted Grassy Dry Forest EVC species, to enhance habitat and landscape values and improve the setting/amenity of future tracks. However revegetation sites should not extend onto the saddle at the valley’s eastern end, in order to not increase the vegetation mass in this area and the potential to become an ember source threatening the residential areas to the east during wildfire events.

Timing: Short to medium term (as warranted by demand).

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 7. Sustainable use; 8. Biodiversity and habitat values; 9. Landscape and scenic values.
STRATEGY HHC.19
Define/formalise the Klings Hill north-western summit and spectacular vantage point at the end of the Coyles Management Track, site of an existing ad hoc tin-roofed shelter and fireplace. Accessible to walkers and mountain bikers. Provide seating, shelter and orientation/interpretive information and possibly a toilet (in longer term if warranted by usage levels and management issues). Locate major built elements to avoid intrusions on the skyline.

Timing: Short to medium term (or sooner if warranted by demand).


STRATEGY HHC.20
Extend the existing shared path on the south side of Felltimber Creek Rd from its current end point (west of the Felltimber Creek bridge) westward along the southside of Felltimber Creek Rd to a crossing point opposite the start of the Ridge Walking Track. Pedestrian and cyclist warning signs would be required on Felltimber Creek Rd on the approaches to this crossing point.

Timing: Short to medium term

Relevant objectives: 2. Accessibility, connection and integration; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety.

STRATEGY HHC.21
Fencing and revegetation of the eroded sections of creekline and extensive land slip/slump areas (mainly on the southern slope) along the drainage line and valley upstream of Coyles Rd (below the Coyles Management Track). Undertake weed control along the entire creek corridor, in conjunction with revegetation, and especially along the heavily weed infested section downstream of Coyles Rd.

Timing: Short to medium term (time lag for full effectiveness)

Relevant objectives: 8. Biodiversity and habitat values; 9. Landscape and scenic values.

Medium term site-specific strategies

STRATEGY HHC.22
Permit public vehicle access along Coyles Rd, from the modified (safer) Felltimber Creek Rd junction (HHC.3) to the saddle and proposed parking area (HHC.23) at the junction the McFarlanes Hill and Coyles Management Tracks. Undertake minor road surface, drainage and safety signage improvements, as well as sealing the steeper section of road section upslope of the Felltimber Creek dam/causeway (and assess dam/causeway safety/integrity). Install lockable gates at the lower entry off Felltimber Creek Rd to manage access, and at the terminal saddle to prevent vehicle access (but permit management access) down Coyles Rd to the north.

Timing: Medium term, or sooner if warranted by demand (cannot proceed until the Coyles Rd and Felltimber Creek Rd junction has been upgraded [HHC.3] and provision of parking at the terminal saddle should proceed concurrently with any public access [HHC.23]) (high cost item).

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 5. All-abilities access.
STRATEGY HHC.23
Develop a car park and a low-key facilities node on the terminal saddle on Coyles Road, at the limit of proposed public access (HHC.22). The parking area(s) should complement and be designed to “fit” the site’s landform and bi-directional focus, as well as to protect existing mature trees (especially the striking old tree at the start of the McFarlanes Hill Track). A lobed car park design, with defined and contained parking both sides of the road reserve (and outside the dripline of mature trees), would be appropriate and functional. Sufficient space should be allowed for possible future expansion of the parking area(s), as well as for adjacent event spaces (HHC.28). Basic facilities suited for a major trailhead and activity node, such as shade shelter, seating, orientation and potentially a toilet (depending on demand and usage levels), should be provided. Screening and shelter plantings would also be warranted. This site will serve as a major node for the hill’s expanded track and trail network, both for walkers and cyclists.

Timing: Medium term, or sooner if warranted by demand (undertaken in conjunction with the upgrading and provision of public vehicle access on Coyles Rd, HHC.22)

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 5. All-abilities access; 9. Landscape and scenic values.

STRATEGY HHC.24
Establish a small roadside parking area on the north side of Felltimber Creek Rd (within the road reserve) at the start of the Ridge Walking Track. Upgrade the existing orientation information and provide a shade shelter and additional seating inside the Parklands Albury Wodonga lands. Close and rehabilitate the existing informal parking area on the opposite (south-east) side of Felltimber Creek Rd when this new area is established.

Timing: Medium term

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 2. Accessibility, connection and integration; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety.

STRATEGY HHC.25
Establish a small roadside parking area on the eastern side of Coyles Rd, just over (north) of the Felltimber Creek dam/causeway, to provide parking for mountain bike riders and a “middle” access point to the existing mountain bike technical circuit. Provide platform tables or seating on the small spur east of the parking area, near the access point to the technical circuit, as a rest/waiting and possible viewing point for riders.

Timing: Medium term, or sooner if warranted by demand (cannot proceed until after the upgrading of Coyles Rd for public access, HHC.22)

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences.
STRATEGY HHC.26
Establish a new section of cross-country “single” mountain bike track (within Zone 2, HHC.1) linking Vearings Management Track along a descending rounded ridgeline, then a series of rolling switchbacks down a steeper slope to join Coyles Rd (this alignment is now used as a “navigable route”). Recommended for one-way - downhill east - use to form an anti-clockwise circuit for mountain bikers in conjunction with the Coyles Management Track and northern section of Vearings Management Track. This new run of single track would also be accessible to mountain bikers via the proposed southern extension of Vearings Management Track (HHC.12) from the small Felltimber Creek parking area. Development of this track should be accompanied by active revegetation measures down the rolling switchbacks to Coyles Rd to assist in stabilising this slope, to partially screen the track from other parts of the hill, while also improving the track’s setting/amenity, and to create a vegetated link from the adjacent priority conservation zone (HHC.15) to the creekline below. Issues such as those identified at Strategy O.11 should apply to the site assessment, planning and design for this new track (which is shown, in broad concept only, in the Assessment of Proposed Klings Hill MTB Trail by World Trail Pty Ltd in 2015 - requiring considerable ground-truthing, detailed routing/alignment and on-site design).

Timing: Medium term (or sooner if warranted by demand)


STRATEGY HHC.27
Upgrade the existing short walking track (the “Gully Walking Track”) in Swainsona Reserve, running west from the small western parking area to two low-key (fenced) vantage points into the adjacent rocky creekline and over the bushy slope opposite. Upgrade wayfinding en-route and provide trailhead orientation/information at the parking area.

Timing: Medium term

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 7. Sustainable use.

STRATEGY HHC.28
Identification of a reasonably flat and readily accessible (for larger vehicles) “event space” adjoining the proposed Coyles Rd visitor facility node and trailhead (HHC.23) to cater for mountain bike, duathlon, fun run, community biodiversity surveys, fundraising/promotions on council and/or Parklands Albury Wodonga lands. Avoid siting the events space too close to existing mature trees in this area, the western part of which is within an Environmental Significance Overlay Zone. This space could accommodate in the order of 90 to 100 parked cars (or equivalent uses).

Timing: Medium term (cannot proceed until after the upgrading of Coyles Rd for public access, HHC.22)

STRATEGY HHC.29
Establish and signpost a small defined/contained parking area, with orientation/information, in the Coyles Rd reserve at its northern entry to the council lands (where this road at present terminates and is barricaded).

Timing: Medium term

Relevant objectives: 2. Accessibility, connection and integration.

STRATEGY HHC.30
Located south-east of the McMartin Track, fencing and revegetation of an eroded section of creekline and surrounding major gully erosion and minor land slumps, as well as “drainage capture” resulting in erosion of a section of management track above its upslope creek crossing. Revegetate using endangered Grassy Woodland EVC species.

Timing: Medium term (time lag for full effectiveness)

Relevant objectives: 8. Biodiversity and habitat values; 9. Landscape and scenic values.

STRATEGY HHC.31
Define the site extent, and undertake limited site works (such as vehicle access/entry, gates, levelling, clearing, drainage and so on), on the bench and flatter area on the western side of Coyles Rd, just over (north) of the Felltimber Creek dam/causeway, to provide an “overflow” or general use area. This site could accommodate multiple purposes on an as/when needed basis, such as a parking, overflow or support area for events centred on the proposed terminal visitor facility node and event space on Coyles Rd (HHC.23 and HHC.28); or the same for the proposed lower event space beside Felltimber Creek Rd (HHC.13); as an overflow or additional parking area, or as a smaller “event space” in its own right. This space could accommodate in the order of 60 to 70 parked cars (or equivalent uses). Visitor facilities are not proposed due to the envisaged irregular and flexible use of this site.

Timing: Medium to long term, or sooner if warranted by demand (cannot proceed until after the upgrading of Coyles Rd for public access, HHC.22)


STRATEGY HHC.32
Establish a walking track connecting the western end of the Ridge Walking Track to the proposed Coyles Rd visitor facility node and trailhead (HHC.23), and then Coyles Management Track to the north-western summit and vantage point on Klings Hill (HHC.12), and ultimately to the proposed north-eastern walking track link (HHC.35).

Timing: Medium to long term

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences.
Long term site-specific strategies

STRATEGY HHC.33
Establish/formalise an access road (unsealed) south down Danson Rd from Plunketts Rd, to provide public vehicle access to the north-east end of the Hunchback Hill complex and proposed visitor facilities and opportunities in, or accessed from, this corner of the site if/when developed (including a small low-key entry node [HHC.34], walking track link [HHC.35] and walk-in overnight camping site [HHC.36]) or if/when the adjacent area is further developed for rural residential uses and a local user catchment has been established. This vehicle access would also play a part in supporting development/use of the “Four Hills Walk”, enabling access to the probable north-western start/finish point of this longer route.

Timing: Long term

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 2. Accessibility, connection and integration; 5. All-abilities access.

STRATEGY HHC.34
Establish a small low-key entry node, with a defined/contained parking area, trailhead, seating and orientation, on the creek flat west of Danson Rd (realign fencing as necessary). Protect existing trees (earlier revegetation plantings) and undertake additional amenity and screening plantings.

Timing: Long term (dependent on the provision of public vehicle access along Danson Rd, HHC.33)


STRATEGY HHC.35
Establish a walking track from the proposed small low-key entry node off Danson Rd (HHC.34) up the well-timbered spur to the south/south-west, then across more open moderately sloped terrain to join the Coyles Management Track at the junction below the north-western summit on Klings Hill (HHC.11). This walking track link would also represent the final north-western section of the proposed “Four Hills Walk”.

Timing: Long term (preferably after the provision of public vehicle access along Danson Rd, but not dependent on it as walkers could also use the unmade road reserve) (required for full realisation of the “Four Hills Walk”)

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 7. Sustainable use.

STRATEGY HHC.36
Establish a small low-key walk-in overnight camping site, with limited facilities (platforms tables and single toilet), located in a scenic broad shallow perched valley in the hill’s north-east. The site should be fuel stoves only to avoid environmental impacts and reduce fire risks. Access/use to be managed via a booking or permit system, with maximum group size limits. Establish a short spur track accessing the site off the longer proposed walking track from the Danson Rd entry (HHC.35). Potentially part of the proposed “Four Hills Walk”.

Timing: Long term (after establishment of the walking track from Danson Rd to Coyles Management Track, HHC.35)

Relevant objectives: 1. Visitor activities and experiences; 4. Visitor or neighbour safety; 7. Sustainable use.
| 1   | Visitor activities and experiences | To expand and diversify the visitor activities and experiences offered across the Wodonga hills, as a whole and within each hill individually. To offer a range of quality nature-based or natural-setting visitor use opportunities which are in keeping with the underlying values of a site. |
| 2   | Accessibility, connection and integration | To increase the accessibility of the hills and their connection to the wider Wodonga area, as well as to better integrate the hills with existing and future surrounding open space and pathways networks. |
| 3   | Awareness, appreciation and understanding | To increase visitors’, and residents’, awareness, appreciation and understanding of the hills, the leisure and recreation opportunities they offer, and their values. |
| 4   | Visitor or neighbour safety | To ensure that visitors can enjoy the hills with a reasonable degree of safety and security, and that management of the hills does not create significant bushfire or other risks to neighbours or adjacent assets. |
| 5   | All-abilities access | To increase the locations and experiences across the hills that are accessible/suitable for disabled, less-mobile or elderly visitors. |
| 6   | Events and organised uses | To accommodate community and special events, and appropriate organised or commercial activities, at suitable locations within the hills. |
| 7   | Sustainable use | To ensure that leisure, recreation and tourism facilities and activities can be developed, managed and enjoyed without significant adverse impacts on the hills’ biodiversity, cultural heritage and scenic values or the experiences of other visitors. |
| 8   | Biodiversity and habitat values | To maintain and enhance the hills’ natural vegetation, habitat and biodiversity values and wildlife corridor connections to surrounding environmental lands. |
| 9   | Landscape and scenic values | To protect and enhance the hills’ landscape and scenic value as a backdrop to the Wodonga urban area and central element of the city’s character. |