



21 April 2022

# WEST COAST COUNCIL WALKS STRATEGY

Official Opening





# WEST COAST COUNCIL WALKS STRATEGY

## REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS

This report was drafted by Tourism Recreation Conservation (TRC) Tourism regarding the Next Iconic Walk strategy. The West Coast Walks Strategy is an initiative of the West Coast Council to guide the future development of walking trails that will draw visitors to the region and increase participation in sport and recreation in one of the world's most iconic landscapes.

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Following the release of the report, an opportunity for the community to provide feedback was provided and is presented below in a summarized form.

The proposal was released for public comment for a period of 3 weeks, from 21 March to 15 April 2022. The comment period was advertised via social media, Council website, local radio and LinkedIn. Feedback was received via email and post to Council office.

There were four feedback submissions received in relation to the proposal.

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**Name:** Jenny Groves

I am writing to you after having looked at this draft report. I feel deeply concerned that Trial Harbour has not been referenced as part of the report apart from incidentally. As part of the West Coast Council jurisdiction and a destination for visitors at an ever-increasing rate, I consider this a gross oversight.

I run an Airbnb at Trial Harbour and I am a permanent resident here. I have had visitors staying constantly... certainly this summer. Generally, they are walkers wishing to experience the West Coast. I am always advising on suitable walking trails as I am myself a walker and enjoy many of the trails around Trial Harbour. Unfortunately, many of these trails are being seriously damaged and eroded by vehicle use. My immediate response to reading your draft is the Trial Harbour is in your "too hard basket." Perhaps you feel that because of this abuse to the trails here, there would be an enormous backlash if this were to come under any of your control. However, I feel that it is going to be an enormous problem in the future....particularly when the road into Trial Harbour is upgraded to bitumen...Perhaps then it will come under the care of the West Coast Council having invested so much in the road? With the bitumen road, the infrastructure at Trial Harbour will NOT be able to cope with such an influx of uncontrolled use and abuse of the landscape which is currently increasing yearly. I have twice had to extinguish left fires this summer in non-camping spots as there is insufficient room in the designated camping ground. Parks and Wildlife are unable to contribute financially to any control of the trails without first being financed by independent groups. For example, the Lake Cumberland track was recently financed by the 4WD Club in an attempt to control the excess damage from vehicles around the lake. So, the buck passes back to you and responsibility needs to be taken for this community at Trial Harbour. If tourist promotion of walking trails is going to be such a priority with the Council, then Trial Harbour must be included in your strategy.

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**Name:** Johnny

In relation to the West Coast Walks Strategy, I believe the Zeehan to Melba Flats Rail Trail would be a great opportunity to expand on the popular Rail Trail outdoor activity transformation happening around Australia. It would expand upon a already established partially usable trail whilst building upon the rugged strong West Coast history of being one of the longest-lasting and most successful private railway companies in Australia.

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**Name:** David Ling

I just had a quick glance at the strategy. Actually disappointed Zeehan doesn't get much. It's great after work sometimes to hit Mt Zeehan, good cardio workout too.

Where's Mt Zeehan, on your list? Mt Dundas is also good that's a full challenging day hike.

Glad Mt Agnew got a mention. And Lake Sandra. I believe Lake Sandra Mt Murchison circuit would make a great multiday day walk. Look at the Mt Anne circuit down SW NP. Those carparks don't meet. People have to carpool, hitch hike, work out transport. I'm sure Roam Wild could even shuttle. When I did it I had bike in car. Parked Mt Murchison, rode bike to trailhead Lake Sandra, stashed it in bushes and when completed circuit went and picked up my bike. I think Lake Sandra as a three day walk would be great. Need the infrastructure though. Mt Murchison carpark needs improving and needs a public toilet. It is absolutely disgusting when people shit on side of road at carpark and in the first couple hundred meters of the walk.

I also don't like the idea of the Tyndall Range walk. It is such a sensitive area. It is damaged already. I reported an expanse of Phytophthora years ago. Nothing was done. And far too many people use it. Really need infrastructure on top too. Like camping platforms and toilets. But that encourages more people to go. Which isn't good.

Mt Hercules, thumbs up from me. Especially from Montezuma Falls Trailhead. That'd be great.

There's plenty of old tramways, that could be opened up for hiking and mountain biking. There's also some secret places like Frasers Hut and Morses Pimple that are best kept secret. There's beautiful places like Pulpit Rock that don't get a mention. But as a local it's good to have spots to oneself. My partner and I have dogs so its great to have dog friendly walks too.

Just my thoughts

Feel free to contact me. I'm also happy to meet up and discuss. And look into your draft report further.

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**Name:** Anonymous Walker

It is great to see a walks strategy created but there are omissions that need to be addressed. First the most important thing that can be done for walks on the West Coast is that a comprehensive set of notes be developed for self-guided walks be created and this be included on the Council website, this should occur as a priority. This should include research on walks that are not included in the audit but known to local walkers such as those around Zeehan and Strahan particularly those on the Gordon and include information about the use of huts etc.

Secondly, the assessment of the Mt Murchison walk as moderate/low priority is ridiculous. It is one of the best day walks in Tasmania and needs significant safety upgrades to the track and to the parking arrangements. This should be changed to high priority with a request of at least \$500,000.00.

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**Name:** PWS

## WEST COAST COUNCIL WALKS STRATEGY DRAFT REPORT

Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) are writing in response to the West Coast Council (WCC) Walks Strategy Draft Report. Most of the walking tracks in the strategy are managed by PWS. PWS supports many of the initiatives in the strategy and recommends some changes to the draft report.

The Strategy creates some confusion by comparing systems for classifying walking tracks that are used for different purposes. PWS Walking Track Strategy and Classification System and Australian Standard (AS2156) are used for the management and maintenance of tracks. Whereas the Australian Walking Track Grading System is a guide for public information about tracks. This distinction needs to be explained in the Strategy.

PWS supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing tracks on the West Coast. Managing walking tracks is PWS core business and the Walking Track Strategy and Classification System is applied State-wide. PWS resources for maintenance are also stretched State-wide. PWS agrees to the initiative of working with WCC to source alternative funding for capital works to existing tracks. The construction of new tracks is not support by PWS as the pressure to maintain existing track network is already a challenge as outlined in the Strategy.

The Table enclosed with this letter, provides comment against Section 8 Priority Implementation Plan of the Strategy. The walking tracks on land managed by PWS listed in the Table are described as supported, conditionally supported and not supported. Some additional maintenance and upgrade works have also been added to the Table.

The Australian Walking Track Grading System has been adopted PWS, contrary to statements in the Strategy. PWS was involved in developing the system to describe different grades of tracks to the public. All PWS's 60 Great Short Walks are described by this grading system on the webpage, in print and track signage.

The Australian Walking Track Grading System is not a suitable method for managing public information regarding Frenchmans Cap walking track. Frenchmans Cap is self-reliant and hazardous multi-day walk, managed through a State-wide visitor risk matrix to prepare walkers for the track. The signage and standard of track at the beginning must be consistent with level of risk to walkers for the entire track. No change to signage or facilities at the entrance to Frenchmans Cap is supported by PWS.

PWS agrees with the Strategy that our current Policy to limit visitation to remote tracks is reducing in effectiveness. It is PWS Policy to not promote or provide information about grade 4 – 6 or class T4 – T6 tracks/routes to minimise environmental impacts and risks to walkers. This information is becoming more and more available on online platforms outside the influence of PWS. PWS agrees different options for track management and public information need to be considered as part of any future Walking Track Strategy review.

**8. Actions Recommendations****8.1 Prioritised Implementation Plan****Queenstown**

Trail	General Recommendations	Requirements & Considerations	Priority	Community Benefit	Tourism Benefit	Cost Estimate	Agency	PWS Comments
<b>Horse Tail Falls</b>	Funding has already been allocated to West Coast Council held in trust for this.	Track follows alignment of an existing foot track used by locals.	High	Provides a very different style of offering to all other walking tracks on the West Coast which are bush and rainforest focussed.	Provides a very different style of offering to all other walking tracks on the West Coast which are bush and rainforest focussed		WCC	<u>Supported</u>  Funded project to construct as new walking experience on West Coast following an existing alignment.
<b>Confluence Trail Grade 3</b>	Formalise trail and investigate extension along King River.	Trail planning. Formal carparking and trailhead infrastructure. Sign system. Safety and access infrastructure. Interpretation.	Moderate - High	Some potential to increase community use of trail if formalised and extended beyond existing footprint. Popular with local trail advocates.	Opportunity for tourists to share the unique experience and story of the meeting of the Queen and King River at a location relatively close to QTN in comparison to other tourism focussed trails.	\$800 - \$1.3 million.	FPPF	<u>Conditional support.</u>  Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) has the same management objectives as Conservation Areas.  Planning for trail infrastructure will need to demonstrate it is compatible with natural and cultural values.  WCC will need a lease agreement to develop and manage the trail.

<b>Donaghys Hill Walk Grade 3</b>	Overall safety and sustainability improvements and upgrade of sign system.	Improve consistency of trail surface with compacted rubble and/or raised FRP deck	Routine	Upgrades to meet community expectations.	Upgrades to meet visitor expectations.	\$50k - \$300k	PWS	<u>Supported.</u>  Maintenance and upgrading of existing track and trail head facilities.
	Limiting factor for visitation is size of carpark.	Traffic Management Report required by Engineer for highway access and design civil works.				\$80 - \$100k		Working with WCC to source alternative funding for operational and capital works.
<b>Franklin Nature Trail Grade 2</b>	Overall safety and sustainability improvements and upgrade of sign system.  New toilet facility required as current system has failed.	Consider upgrade to Australian DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliance. Provide nodes and/or sitting areas to enjoy natural environment.	Routine Low – Moderate  High	DDA upgrades would enable more access for people with limited mobility.	DDA upgrades would enable more access for people with limited mobility.	\$50k - \$1million  \$150-\$200K	PWS	<u>Supported.</u>  Maintenance and upgrading of existing track and trail head facilities.  Working with WCC to source alternative funding for operational and capital works.

<b>Nelson Falls Walk Grade 2</b>	Explore contemporary design and all access improvements.  <b>Limiting factor for visitation is size of carpark</b>	Consider upgrade to Australian DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliance. Nodes and/or sitting areas to enjoy natural environment.  <b>Traffic Management Report required by Engineer for highway access and design civil works.</b>	Routine Low - Moderate	DDA upgrades would enable more access for people with limited mobility.	DDA upgrades would enable more access for people with limited mobility.	\$50k - \$1million	PWS	<b><u>Supported.</u></b>  Maintenance and upgrading of existing track and trail head facilities.  Working with WCC to source alternative funding for operational and capital works.
<b>Frenchmans Cap Track Grade 4</b>	Install compliant sign system.	Risk and compliance signage required at trailhead. Toilet installation at carpark/ trailhead.	Routine Low - Moderate	Upgrades to meet safety requirements and community expectations.	A toilet at carpark will improve experience for trail users and reduce instances of defecation on edge of carpark.	\$25k - \$300k	PWS	<b><u>Not supported</u></b>  Frenchmans Cap is self-reliant and hazardous multi-day walk.  The signage and standard of track at the beginning must
								establish the level of risk for walkers for the entire track.  No change to signage or facilities supported as existing is consistent with a PWS Statewide approach to multi-days walks.

<b>Kelly Basin Walk Grade 3</b>	Basic upgrades to trailhead infrastructure and signage.	<p>Address bridge closure by repairing existing or build low impact bridge over the River nearby.</p> <p>Trail structures and facilities including timber boardwalks, low level timber bridges and toilet are approaching end of life and will be a significant investment to replace.</p>	Routine Moderate - High	Local community that use trail would benefit from trail improvements.	Ensure that a World Heritage Area experience is appropriate and open for visitors	\$250k – \$1.5 – 2 million	PWS	<p><u>Complete</u></p> <p>Alternative pedestrian bridge completed and track reopened.</p> <p><u>Suggested</u></p> <p>Upgrading of existing track and trail head facilities.</p> <p>Working with WCC to source alternative funding for capital works.</p>
<b>Mount Lyell Summit</b>	Formalise trail and provide improved information.	<p>Trail and sign planning.</p> <p>Investigate loop opportunity.</p>	Moderate	Additional formal Grade 4 type trail for community.	<p>Additional formal Grade 4 type trail for visitors.</p> <p>Connections to Town and MTB facilities.</p>	\$35k - \$500k+	PWS	<p><u>Not supported</u></p> <p>PWS supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing tracks rather than construction of new tracks.</p>
<b>Fincham Track &amp; Raglan Range Track Grade 4</b>	Formalise trails and provide improved information.	<p>Trail and sign planning.</p> <p>Explore opportunity to use huts as overnight stops.</p>	Moderate	Additional formal Grade 4 longer distance trail for community.	Additional formal Grade 4 longer distance trail for visitors.	\$35k - \$500k+	PWS	<p><u>Not supported</u></p> <p>PWS supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing tracks rather than construction of new tracks.</p>
	Connections to Frenchmans Cap Trail.							<p>Suitably prepared, experienced and independent walkers can currently undertake a loop, if willing to accept the hazards on their own terms.</p>



Rosebery								
Trail	General Recommendations	Requirements & Considerations	Priority	Community Benefit	Tourism Benefit	Cost Estimate	Agency	PWS comments
<b>Montezuma Falls Walk Grade 3</b>	<p><del>Repair Swing bridge and general trailhead facility improvements.</del></p> <p>Boards walks and platform at end of life.</p> <p>Toilet needs replacing.</p> <p>Limit to visitation is unsealed road.</p>	Planning and engineering.	High	Will enable longer distance walks/rides to meet community expectations	Will enable longer distance walks/rides to meet visitor expectations.	<p><del>\$200k – \$500k+</del></p> <p>\$200-\$250+</p> <p>\$300 - \$500+</p> <p>?</p>	FPPF STT	<p><u>Supported</u></p> <p>PWS has an agreement with STT to manage this trail.</p> <p>Maintenance and upgrading of existing track and trail head facilities.</p> <p>Working with WCC to source alternative funding for operational and capital works.</p>
<b>Mount Murchison Track Grade 4</b>	Safety and sustainability improvements.	Road signage and parking. Risk and compliance signage required at trailhead. Consider new trailhead location	Routine Low - moderate	Some minor benefits to community through better quality information.	Some minor benefits to visitors through better quality information.	\$50k+	PWS	<p><u>Supported</u></p> <p>Maintenance and upgrading of existing track and trail head facilities.</p> <p>Working with WCC to source alternative funding for operational and capital works.</p>
		with improved parking and access.						

<b>Mount Murchison to Lake Sandra Loop CONCEPT Grade 4</b>	Concept requires additional trail at base to return to trailhead. Can't walk on Anthony Road.	Trail planning to investigate feasibility.	Moderate	Potential benefit to community seeking remote Grade 4 loop walking opportunities.	Potential benefit to visitors seeking remote Grade 4 loop walking opportunities.	\$500k+	PWS	<p><u>Not supported</u></p> <p>PWS supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing tracks rather than construction of new tracks.</p> <p>Suitably prepared, experienced and independent walkers can currently undertake a loop, if willing to accept the hazards on their own terms.</p>
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<b>Strahan</b>								
<b>Trail</b>	<b>General Recommendations</b>	<b>Requirements &amp; Considerations</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Community Benefit</b>	<b>Tourism Benefit</b>	<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>PWS comments</b>
<b>Henty River CONCEPT (Henty River Boat Ramp) Grade 3</b>	Provide a riverine trail network.	Trail planning design process needed, including consideration of carparking, sign system, safety infrastructure, and interpretation.	Moderate - High	Formalisation of trails which will make them more appealing to locals.	Close to Strahan and offers a naturebased experience in dense forest and by the riverside	\$400k - \$800k	PWS	<p><u>Not supported</u></p> <p>PWS supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing trails rather than construction of new tracks.</p>
<b>Ocean Beach Trail Grade 2</b>	Extend the Ocean Beach Trail to Strahan	Review detailed design of Ocean Beach Trail.	High	Provides longer trail that caters for community walking, running and cycling demand.	Provides longer trail that caters for walking, running and cycling visitor demand.	\$400k - \$650k	PWS	<p><u>Not supported</u></p> <p>PWS supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing trails rather than construction of new tracks.</p>

**Tullah**

Trail	General Recommendations	Requirements & Considerations	Priority	Community Benefit	Tourism Benefit	Cost Estimate	Agency	PWS comments
<b>Mount Farrell and Lake Herbert Trail Grade 4</b>	Risk and compliance signage required at trailhead. Refresh interpretation (currently mix of old and new signs). Improve trail markers.	Sign planning.	Routine	Upgrades to meet safety requirements and community expectations.	Upgrades to meet safety requirements and visitor expectations.	\$15k+	PWS	<p><u>Supported</u></p> <p>Maintenance and upgrading of existing track and track head facilities.</p> <p>Working with WCC to source alternative funding for operational and capital works.</p>

## Zeehan

Trail	General Recommendations	Requirements & Considerations	Priority	Community Benefit	Tourism Benefit	Cost Estimate	Agency	PWS Comments
<b>Spray Tunnel Grade 2</b>	Explore expanding the trail network by formalising existing trails.	Trail planning for entire site.	High	More trail opportunities to meet community expectations and outcomes.	More trail opportunities to meet tourism expectations and outcomes.	\$250k - \$750k	FPPF	<p><u>Conditional support</u></p> <p>Planning will need demonstrate compatibility with existing mountain bike use as well as natural, historic, and cultural values, plus mineral interests in the area.</p> <p>Maintenance and upgrading of existing track and track head facilities.</p> <p>Working with WCC to source alternative funding for operational and capital works.</p>
<b>Trial Harbour Trails Grade 3-4</b>	Improve walking trail information at Trial Harbour.	Sign planning. Signage, distances, duration, maps,	Routine Low	Upgrades to meet safety requirements	Upgrades to meet safety requirements and	\$35k+	PWS	<u>Not supported</u>

		routes at carpark alongside other geo and information signs.		and community expectations.	visitor expectations.			<p>There are no managed walking tracks in Trial Harbour.</p> <p>PWS supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing trails rather than construction of new trails.</p>
<b>Lake Cumberland &amp; Ernies Hill Trail Loop to Mt Agnew</b> <b>CONCEPT</b> <b>Grade 4</b>	Longer term consideration if demand increases.	Need to manage 4WD use, unsustainable erosion impacts and poor alignment issues.	Low	Potential benefit to community seeking remote walking opportunities.	Potential benefit to visitors seeking remote walking opportunities.	Unknown	PWS FPPF	<p><u>Not supported</u></p> <p>PWS supports the maintenance and upgrading of existing tracks rather than construction of new tracks.</p>