

2014 Master Plan

# GRAMPIANS PEAKS TRAIL

*Walk Victoria's Icons*



Healthy Parks  
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Regional  
Development  
Victoria



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# Executive summary

## What is the Grampians Peaks Trail?

The Grampians Peaks Trail will be a world-class, long-distance walking experience, showcasing the beauty and majesty of Gariwerd's natural and cultural landscapes. Visitors undertaking the 144 kilometre, multi-day walk will experience one of the great icon walks of Australia, representing a "must do" walking experience with an estimated visitation of 23,000 people per year by 2020.

The Grampians is a rugged and majestic landscape full of wonderful stories, including the rugged geology, the variable climate, the diverse flora and fauna, the ancient indigenous culture and the post-settlement landscape, all of which contribute to a rich and deep understanding of the Grampians landscape.

The Grampians Peaks Trail is centred around the telling of these stories through the creation of an extraordinary sequence of unique and memorable experiences that take the walker on a journey through this awe inspiring landscape.

## Where will the Grampians Peaks Trail go?

The Grampians Peaks Trail route is a high-quality, memorable and spectacular journey that incorporates many of the wonderful features of the Grampians, while protecting the important natural and cultural values of the park. The route connects some of Gariwerd's most spectacular peaks, from the massive sandstone outcrops in the north, to the rugged and remote Mount William range in the centre, down to the awe-inspiring peaks overlooking Dunkeld and the surrounding volcanic plains in the south.

The walk winds through many varied vegetation types from heathlands and low lying wetlands through to moist ferny gullies and montane woodlands. These landscapes will provide a great diversity in walk types, including day walks, overnight walks, segments walks, multi-segment walks and the epic north-south traverse.

The Grampians Peaks Trail will unite a disparate collection of existing tracks into a unified and identifiable trail beginning at Mount Zero in the north and finishing at Dunkeld in the south. Visitors can undertake the walk at any time of year and will experience natural beauty on a truly grand scale.

## Who will walk the Grampians Peaks Trail?

A wide range of experiences, walk options, levels of difficulty and accommodation types will be available along the trail, broadening the appeal of walking and providing opportunities for day walkers, overnight walkers, experienced bush walkers and school groups, as well as encourage participation from people who otherwise may not have considered the walk. Walkers will be both independent (self-guided) and guided (assisted) as part of a range of walking products.

The walk is expected to generate 32,000 visitor nights in 2015, increasing to over 80,000 visitor nights by 2025 when all segments of the trail are operational. The total number of walkers using the Grampians Peaks Trail is expected to increase from 13,800 people in 2015 to over 34,000 people by 2025.

## Where will you stay when walking the Grampians Peaks Trail?

On-walk accommodation is central to the experience of an iconic multi-day walk such as the Grampians Peaks Trail. As such, there will be both low and high yield accommodation along the walk which provide a range of exceptional experiences and broaden the appeal to a more diverse market.

The default accommodation for the entire length of the Grampians Peaks Trail will be hiker camps (provided by Parks Victoria), with camping on designated tent platforms which will be used by both independent and guided walkers. On-walk hiker lodges will be provided by the private sector; these are roofed structures which may include showers, toilet and kitchen facilities and will provide a more comfortable walking experience. They will cater for a higher yield market and will be used by guided walkers. Off-park accommodation will also be provided adjacent to the National Park, yet close to the walk, allowing walkers the opportunity to stay in more comfortable accommodation.

A number of potential settings exhibiting a variety of landscapes may be suitable for the establishment of roofed accommodation. The purpose of these examples is to indicate the variety of opportunities available.

## What services will support the Grampians Peaks Trail?

Iconic walking destinations around the world are supported by great 'walking' towns that provide high-quality, well-integrated and diverse visitor experiences, services and facilities provided

by both the public and private sectors. A broad range of products and services will need to be provided locally to support the development of the Grampians Peaks Trail, including accommodation, food, clothing retail, massage and spa, laundry, travel logistics, shuttle services, and equipment rental.

### What are the economic benefits of the Grampians Peaks Trail?

The Grampians Peaks Trail will provide a demonstrable economic benefit to the local community, the region and the State by supporting a wide range of investment opportunities for tourism, complementary services and infrastructure that provide an holistic and integrated walking experience.

The Grampians Peaks Trail will become a significant nature-based tourism icon and will enhance Victoria's reputation as a leading nature-based tourism destination in Australia. It will also strengthen the regional Victorian economy through the expansion of the tourism and service industries, with the potential to generate significant economic benefits.

The major economic benefit is the increased visitor spending and employment flowing directly from people who have come to walk the Grampians Peaks Trail, as well as increased visitation to the Grampians in general. In 2015 the trail will generate an estimated \$2.55 million, increasing to \$6.39 million by 2025.

Another important benefit is the capital expenditure and construction employment associated with building the Grampians Peaks Trail that will support 45 direct and 70 indirect full time jobs, helping to generate employment in the region.

The Grampians Peaks Trail will cost an estimated \$26 million and will be implemented in three stages. Stage 1 is underway through funding allocated by the State Government. This stage focuses on the delivery of the trail in the central segment around Halls Gap. Stages 2 and 3 of the trail will be in both the northern and southern sections of the park.

### What will the Grampians Peaks Trail look like?

The design of the trail is an important part of the walking experience. The Grampians Peaks Trail will be designed with a consistent suite of details that reinforce the identity and experience of the walk, can be deployed easily across different conditions and allow for the easy replacement of components. The highest level of craftsmanship and quality should be sought, along with construction techniques that suit the environment.

### How will the Grampians be protected?

The Grampians Peaks Trail will celebrate the unique flora, fauna, geology and cultural heritage of Gariwerd in a manner that is sympathetic and respectful of the landscape. The trail will be managed to the highest level of environmental stewardship and sustainability for future generations to enjoy, based on an understanding of natural values, ecological processes, and the specific requirements of significant plants and animals.

The Grampians Peaks Trail will allow more effective management of walking in the National Park and promote cultural and environmental awareness.

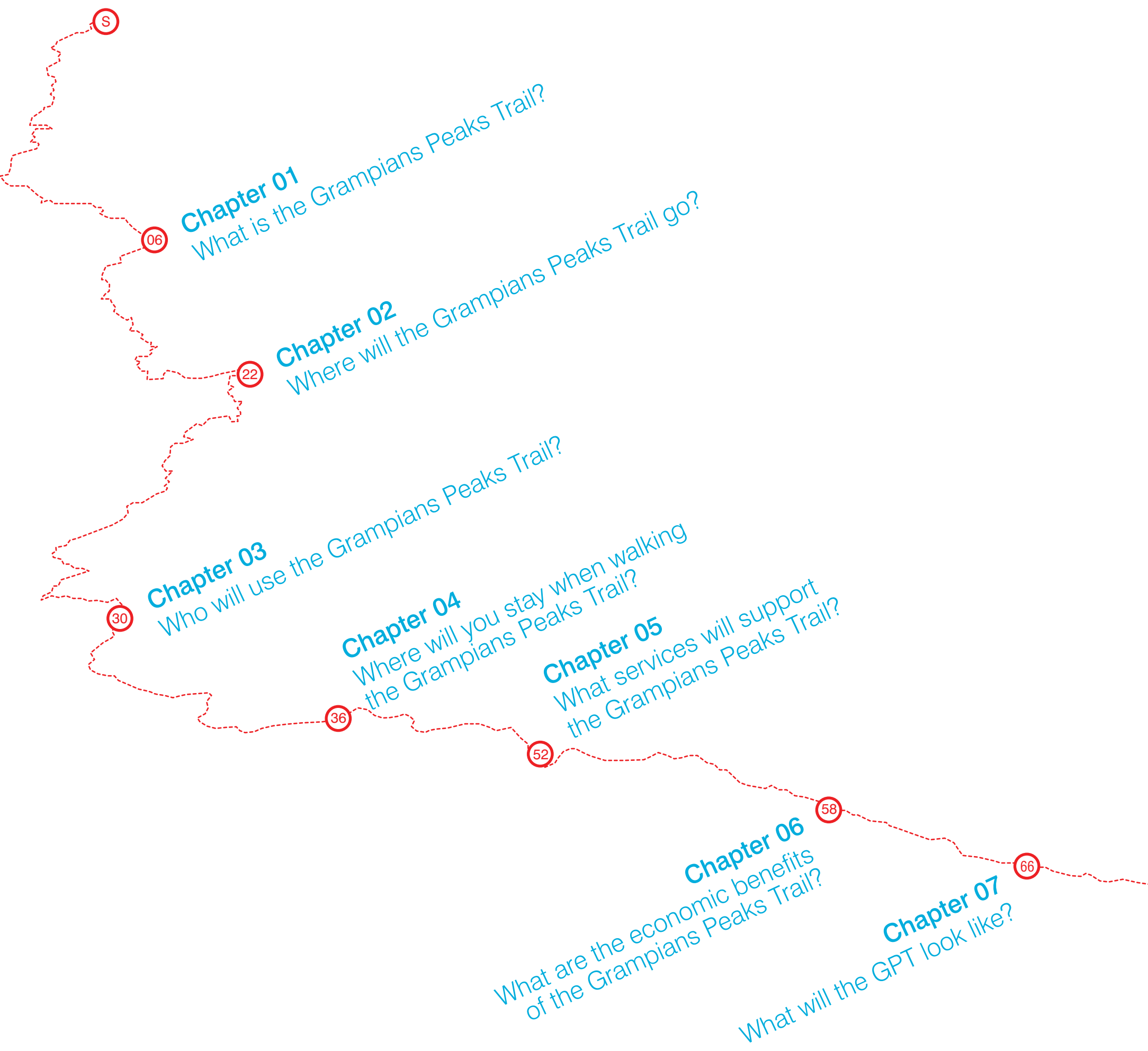
All Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure will be designed and constructed in accordance with the National Parks Act 1975 and the Park's Management Plan, avoid disturbance to the environment wherever possible, and undertake appropriate monitoring to ensure that visitor impacts are thoroughly understood and appropriate management plans and techniques can be implemented.

### How will the Grampians Peaks Trail be managed?

To ensure its enduring quality and economic sustainability, the Grampians Peaks Trail must be constructed, maintained and operated to the highest standards to achieve a full cost recovery for maintenance and operation, and in partnership with the private sector.

The proposed business model assumes that the core walk infrastructure, including the trail and hiker camps, will be publicly funded in a staged manner over a number of years. The private sector will provide the products and services, as well as roofed accommodation, to augment the experience and operation of an iconic multi-day walking experience.

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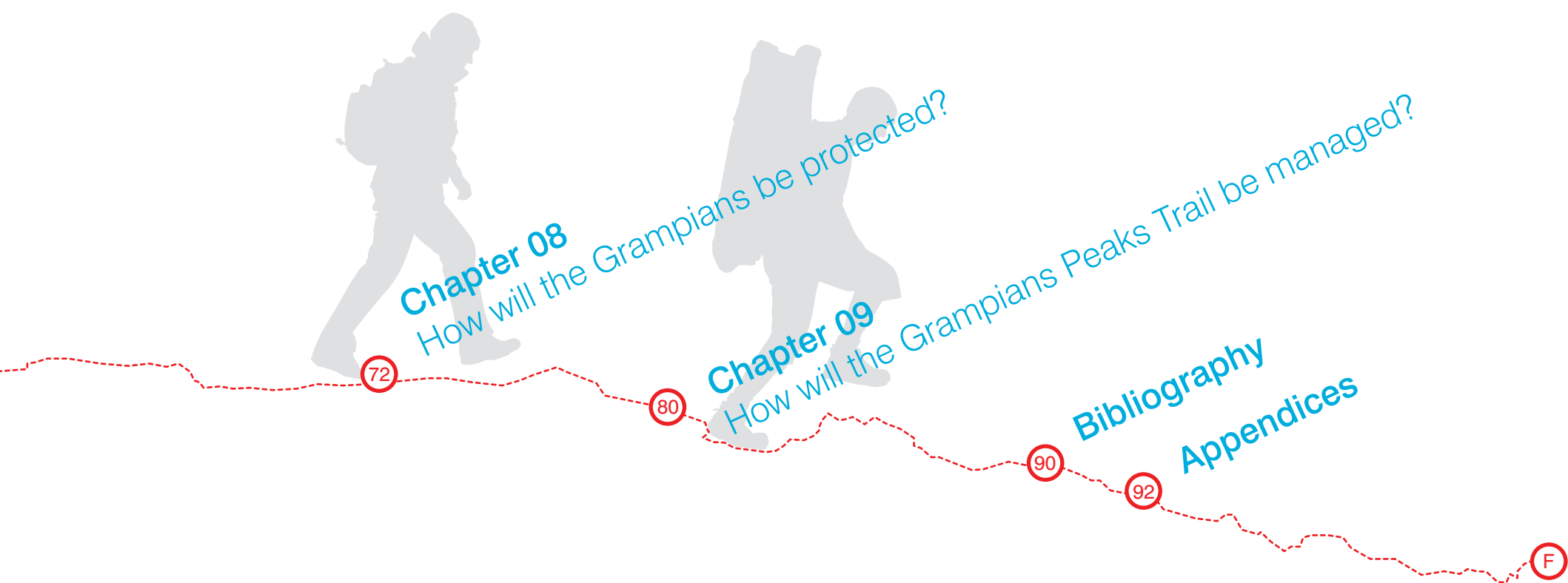
## Acknowledgments

The project team wishes to acknowledge the input and assistance of staff from Grampians Tourism, Parks Victoria and Tourism Victoria.

## Revisions

November 2012	Revision: A For Internal Review
February 2013	Revision: B For Internal Review
March 2013	Revision: C Draft
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June 2013	Revision: E Draft Master Plan
August 2013	Revision: F Draft Master Plan
August 2013	Revision: G Draft Master Plan
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# Chapter 01

## What is the Grampians Peaks Trail?



View from the Major Mitchell Plateau (Day 08)





“In the time before time, the Great Ancestor Spirit, Bunjil, began to create the world we see around us; the mountains, the lakes, the forests and the rivers, the plains and the seas. He created all the plants and all the animals”



# 1.1 Introduction

The Grampians National Park (Gariwerd) is one of Victoria’s most significant national parks with internationally recognised environmental and cultural values.

Gariwerd – Mountain Range, traditional definition of the Jardwadjali and Djab Wurrung People

## The Grampians

Located approximately 240 kilometres (3 hours drive) to the north west of Melbourne, the Grampians National Park is the fourth largest national park in Victoria (167,219 ha). It protects a diverse range of ecosystems, outstanding geological formations, spectacular landscapes and a rich indigenous and post settlement cultural heritage.

Renowned for its spring wildflower displays, it is an island of natural biodiversity within a predominantly agricultural landscape and contains almost one third of Victoria’s native flora. The park is of major importance for 167 species of rare or threatened plants and animals, of which 24 plants are endemic to the park.

The Grampians National Park is also a centre of highly significant indigenous cultural heritage including more than 80% of Victoria’s rock art sites, making it the pre-eminent area in the State for the interpretation of indigenous culture. The park is integral to the dreaming of the *descendant of Jardwadjali and Djab Wurrung people* who have maintained a strong association with the park since its declaration, including through Brambuk Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

The Grampians National Park is Victoria’s third most visited park and one of Australia’s most important nature based and cultural tourism destinations. It offers a diverse range of adventure and recreational activities including short and long distance hiking, four wheel driving, rock climbing, canoeing, fishing and bird watching.

## The Grampians Peaks Trail

The Grampians Peaks Trail will be a world-class, long distance walking experience, showcasing the beauty and majesty of Gariwerd’s natural and cultural landscapes. Visitors undertaking the walk will experience one of the great ‘wild walks’ of Australia.

The route connects some of Gariwerd’s most spectacular peaks, from the massive sandstone outcrops in the north, to the rugged and remote Mount William range and includes the awe inspiring peaks overlooking Dunkeld and the surrounding volcanic plains to the south.

The walk winds through many varied vegetation types from heathlands, to moist ferny gullies, from low lying wetlands to the montane woodlands. Visitors walking the Grampians Peaks Trail will experience a range of natural beauty on a truly grand scale.









## 1.2 Landform and ecology

The Grampians National Park makes a valuable contribution to Victoria's parks and reserves system, by protecting a viable, representative samples of the State's natural environment.

### Grampians landform

The topography of the Grampians National Park provides a stunning setting for a long-distance walk, supporting a diverse range of ecosystems, outstanding geological formations and spectacular landscapes. Mount William, the highest peak within the park reaches an altitude of 1168 metres and is moulded into the landscape in a series of abrupt escarpments west-dipping slopes which offer outstanding views of the surrounding environment. The Gariwerd Ranges have high rocky plateaus and sheltered gullies, and contrast with the flat and open farmland which surrounds the park.

The sediments which make up the Grampians were deposited about 400 million years ago and are approximately 3700 m deep. They are composed of layers of massive sandstones, siltstones and mudstones which were folded and tilted during the Middle Devonian period. Granitic magma intruded into the Grampians sediments around 395 million years ago, resulting in deeply weathered batholiths, dykes and sills. Several distinct ranges are identifiable– the Mount William, Mount Difficult,

Wonderland, Serra and Victoria Ranges. A spectacular topography of broad and rising dip slopes ends in sharp ridges which give way to escarpments and steep gorges with waterfalls. These features provide a foundation for the numerous rock formations, waterfalls and clear streams found within the park as well as providing an ecosystem for the threatened species of flora and fauna which are unique to the Grampians region. (Joyce and King 1980, Yeates 2001, Costermans 1981, Cayley and Taylor 1997, in Parks Victoria 2003).

### Ecological vegetation class

The Grampians National Park makes a valuable contribution to Victoria's parks and reserves system, by protecting a viable, representative samples of the State's natural environments. The park also enables visitors to enjoy and appreciate natural and cultural values, supporting a thriving tourism industry.

The Grampians bioregion has approximately 54 identified Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC) including Floristic Communities and 19 Ecological Vegetation Divisions (EVD). It is a

core area for biodiversity and is recognised as the single most important botanical reserve in Victoria (PV 2000a).

The Grampians National Park features:

- three of 139 Reference Areas in the State;
- 167 species threatened in Victoria (26 endemic), including 40 which are also nationally threatened and 30 Flora and Fauna Guarantee-listed;
- three of 21 Remote and Natural Areas in the State;
- 6.5% of the total park area included under Schedule Two of the National Parks Act 1975;
- 43% of the protected area network in the combined Wimmera and Glenelg–Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (CMA) regions.

The park is assigned the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Category II (National Parks) of the United Nations' list of National Parks and Protected Areas. Category II areas are managed primarily for ecosystem conservation and appropriate recreation.







The Grampians National Park is a core area for biodiversity and is recognised as the single most important botanical reserve in Victoria.



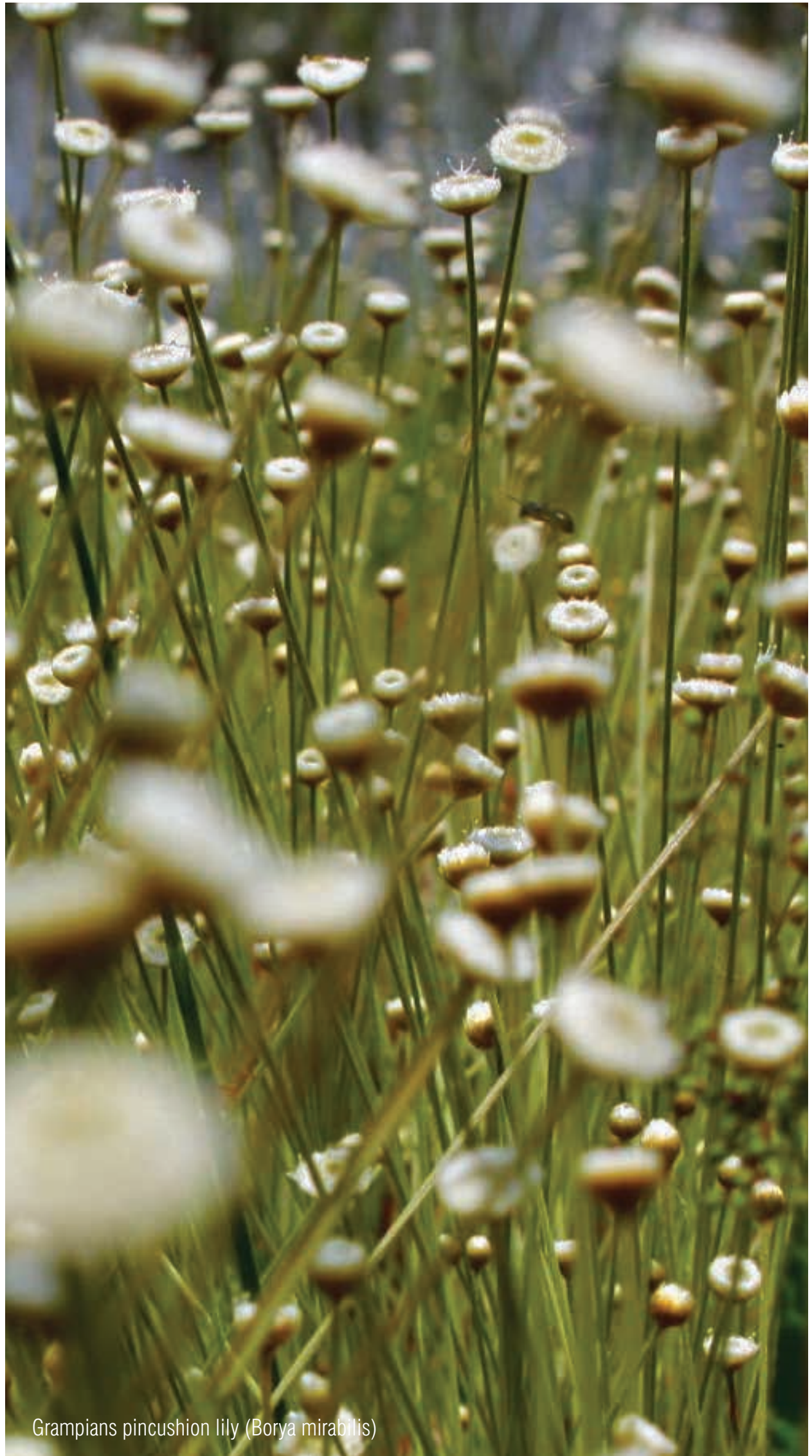
## 1.3 Natural values

The Grampians National Park is a dominant feature in the landscape of western Victoria, which is renowned for its spectacular natural scenery and wildflowers and, for its diverse flora and fauna species.

### Flora

Diverse vegetation of forests, woodlands, wetlands, fern gullies and spectacular spring flowers contribute to the aesthetic characteristics of the Grampians region (Crocker and Davis 2005). The Grampians National Park is home to more than 975 native vascular plant species while also supporting approximately one third of the State's indigenous flora species. Threatened species of flora found within the park are irregularly fragmented in distribution, with many of these species found nowhere else in Australia. The Grampians National Park features 167 species of threatened flora, of which 26 are endemic to the park. A further 98 plant species are listed as threatened under State or Commonwealth legislation. Species include the nationally endangered Grampians pincushion lily (*Borya mirabilis*), its distribution restricted to a single rock outcrop in the Grampians, and several other species that are critically endangered in Victoria such as the southern pipewort (*Eriocaulon australasicum*).

The park is notable as a floral wonderland, exhibiting a rich and colourful wildflower display in spring, with multitudes of herbs and shrubs flowering, such as Grampians boronia, Grampians parrot-pea, and the Grampians thryptomene. Of particular note is the species richness of wildflowers in the bacon and eggs or *Pultenaea* genus (17 species). The park is also rich in orchid species, with more than 75 terrestrial orchids recorded. The biodiversity of the area is due to the wide variety of rock and soil types and environmental niches. There are seven broad vegetation types in the park, including inland slopes woodland; sedge-rich woodland; herb-rich woodland; dry foothill forest; plains grassy woodland; valley grassy forest; and grassland. The most species-rich vegetation type found in the park, lateritic heathy woodland, is one of the richest vegetation communities in the world, with an average of 82 vascular species per 30m<sup>2</sup> quadrat (Paton & Paton 2004, Parks Victoria 2003, Parks Victoria 2005).



Grampians pincushion lily (*Borya mirabilis*)



## Fauna

The diverse habitats of the Grampians National Park support a large range of animals. It is home to around 40 species of mammals, 30 reptiles, 11 amphibians, six types of native fish and a number of significant butterfly species (Parks Victoria 2003, Parks Victoria 2005, ANHAT 2006). A variety of vegetation, topography and habitats provide shelter and food sources for at least 230 bird species, including thornbills, fairy-wrens, eagles, honeyeaters, whistlers, robins, wetland birds and parrots.

The low open shrubby woodlands in the park support many different nectar-feeding birds, and the tall open forests are important for hollow-dependent species such as the powerful owl (*Ninox strenua*). The Grampians wetlands, particularly those in the south of the park, support a diverse community of waterbirds, including the great egret (*Ardea alba*). The numerous cliff faces provide nesting sites for the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), and large populations of emus (*Dromaius novaehollandiae*)

are found throughout the lowland areas.

Nationally threatened animals recorded in the park include the endangered red-tailed black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksii graptogyne*), and smoky mouse (*Pseudomys fumeus*). There is also the vulnerable swift parrot (*Lathamus discolor*), warty bell frog (*Litoria raniformis*), brush-tailed rock wallaby (*Petrogale penicillata*), long-nosed potoroo (*Potorous tridactylus*), and heath rat (*Pseudomys shortridgei*).



Wedge Tail Eagle (*Aquila audax*)



## 1.4 Cultural values

Gariwerd in translation, means Mountain range created by Bunjil, an ancestral spirit who created all the lands, waters, animals, birds, fish and the people.

### Cultural values of Gariwerd

Aboriginal people have evolved and adapted their culture in cycles with the climate and changing environment for thousands of years but still hold the same belief systems about their place and role in their Country. When Aboriginal People say Country it refers to the lands and waters, birds, animals, rocks, mountains, sky, ancestral beings and spirits within the land and the dreamtime all at once. Aboriginal people do not see themselves as a separate species controlling the land, but just another form of it, with cultural obligations and responsibilities to ensure all those elements are in balance for the survival and sustainability of future generations. It is this way of being that made an era that seemed to be timeless.

Gariwerd in translation, means Mountain range created by Bunjil in the language of the Jardwadjali and Djab Wurrung peoples. The living descendants of these tribes are the Traditional Owners/Custodians who used and cared for this cultural landscape in the past and today with their living culture and practice. The Jarwadjali and Djab Wurrung people believe that Bunjil created all the lands, waters, animals, birds, fish and the people. Other ancestral

beings such as the Bram bram-bult brothers and Tchingal the giant megafauna Emu, have played a role in shaping the cultural landscape seen today from the Peaks Trail. Tchingal is said to have kicked open the mountains chasing Waa the crow. This is how Barigar (Rose's Gap), and Jananginj Njau (Victoria Gap) were formed in the Dreamtime story.

Placenames are important records of these dreaming stories that describe the landscape and its formation of features, plants and animals. Jananginj Njau translates to mean Camp of the Emu Foot, referring to the place where Tchingal camped in pursuit of Waa the Raven (historically recorded as the crow). While all life forms are important to the Djab Wurrung and Jardwadjali people, specific totemic animals hold special meaning, including the white Cockatoo, Red-tailed black Cockatoo and Wedge-tailed Eagle. Each carries spiritual symbology, kinship and dreaming connection with the people and informs interactions with the tribes and their Country.

To know one's land is to know the stories of it and how to care for all that is interconnected in the ecosystems and the spiritual nature and energy of those places. The land is sacred, and is the dwelling of ancestral spirits that created,

shaped and often became features in the cultural landscape.

The Djab Wurrung and Jardwadjali people have many dreaming stories that coincide with the management of special places and outlines the connection between certain animals, plants and elements. These stories are linked with the stars and are retold upon viewing certain constellations, at particular times of the seasons.

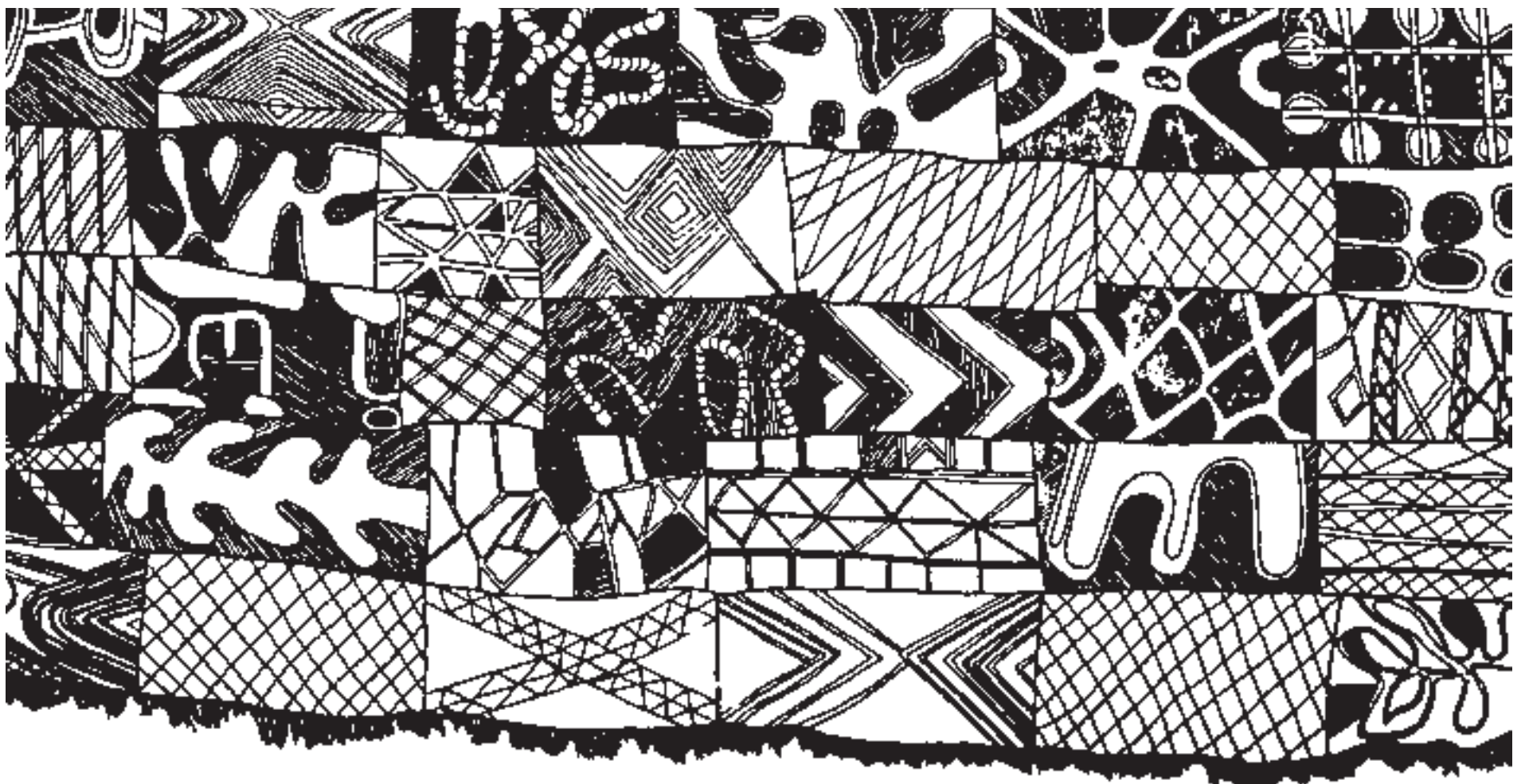
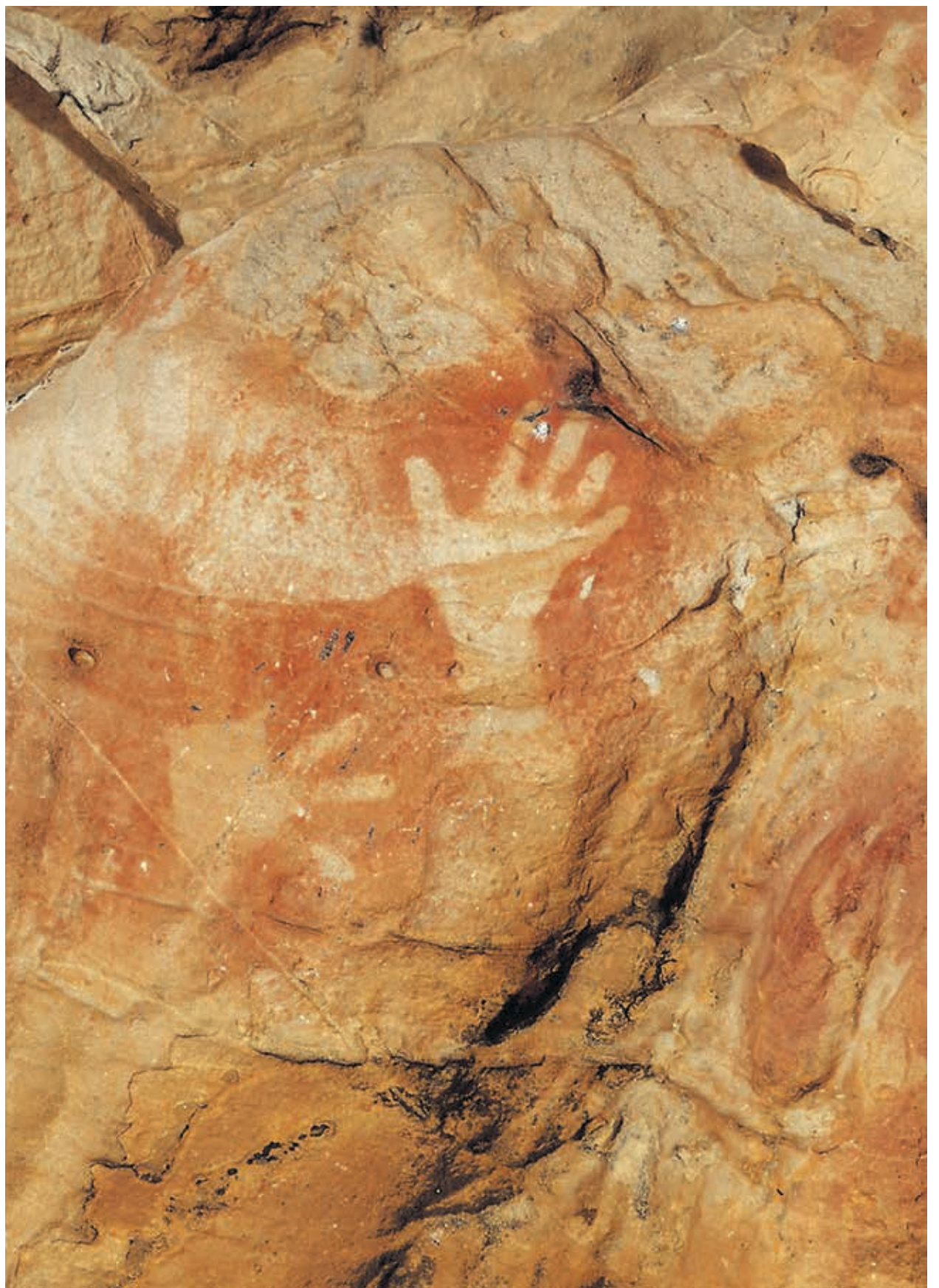
By living in and around Gariwerd, the Traditional Owners evolved with the climate, environment and adapted their seasonal movement, cultural and ceremonial way of life to survive. Being connected to Country holds a high level of understanding of many types of knowledge areas – today some are named geology, geography, hydrology, astronomy, botany, ecology, phenology and so on. The Djab Wurrung and Jardwadjali people still utilise their perceptive cultural observations of changes in the environment, through their understanding of the six seasons of Gariwerd. Seasonal calendars are dissimilar to the conventional calendars utilised today. There are certain environmental triggers that define when the season has changed, rather than a particular date. It is based on observation of change in climate, key species appearance or behaviour (breeding, movements, etc.) hydrology and other cultural/ceremonial values.





The six Seasons of Gariwerd consist of Gwangel Moronn means season of honeybees, after the summer heat starts to cool and the bees get busy with the flocking birds. Chinnup being a cold winter, is the season of Cockatoos, referring to their renowned presence in the landscape and signals the early wildflowers emergence. Larneuk is the season of nesting birds in early spring during the wettest time of year when the rivers are running high. Petyan is known as the season of wildflowers in late spring when the weather is tempestuous and the bush bursts into life. Ballamber is the season of butterflies, when the weather warms up and stabilises, which is necessary for the appearance of butterflies in early summer. Late summer is known as Kooyang, the season of Eels as the streams are drying up and so refers to movements of eels and hunting regimes.

Gariwerd is known more publicly for its cultural significance by the amount of rock art sites found within. These sites have been documented by archaeologists and registered as significant sites that historically document the land use and occupation of Gariwerd. Through radiocarbon dating, the Drual cave/shelter rock art was found to have been used 22,000 years ago. To go further in understanding the numbers suggested – this means that the traditional custodians have been connected to Gariwerd for approximately 880 generations. One of the most significant sites in the area is Bunjils Shelter, located in nearby Black Ranges State Park and is the only known site to have a painting of the creator being in his ancient form. This is where Bunjil sat with his two Wirringan (Dingoes) to look out over his creations.





# 1.5 Vision for the walk

The Grampians Peaks Trail will be a world-class, long distance walking experience, showcasing the beauty and majesty of Gariwerd’s natural and cultural landscapes.

## Guiding principles

A number of important principles will guide the design and implementation of the Grampians Peaks Trail, such that the vision for the walk is realised, the diverse stories of the Gariwerd are celebrated and the unique and important landscape of the Grampians is protected.

### Principle 1 – Memorable experiences

The Grampians Peaks Trail will provide a unique, memorable, exemplary, and sought after walking experience, capturing the diverse stories that describe the landscape. It will become one of the great multi-day walking adventures in Australia and the world.

### Principle 2 – Healthy lifestyles

The Grampians Peaks Trail will broaden the appeal of walking by providing a wide range of user experiences, levels of difficulty and walking accommodation options, with the aim of increasing participation and promoting healthier lifestyles.

### Principle 3 – Understanding & respect

The Grampians Peaks Trail will celebrate the unique flora, fauna, geology and cultural heritage of Gariwerd in a manner that is sympathetic and respectful of the landscape. The Grampians Peaks Trail will promote greater understanding of national park values through quality interpretation.

### Principle 4 – Sustainable

The Grampians Peaks Trail will be environmentally and financially sustainable, constructed utilising durable, local materials and managed to the highest level of environmental stewardship, protecting the environment for future generations to enjoy.

### Principle 5 – Economic benefits

The Grampians Peaks Trail will provide a demonstrable economic benefit to the local community, the Region and the State by supporting a wide range of investment opportunities for tourism, complimentary services and infrastructure that provide an holistic and integrated walking experience, from booking through to completion.





## Principle 6 – Social benefits

The Grampians Peaks Trail will attract unique partnership opportunities that will strengthen the social wellbeing of the local community.

## Landscape stories

The Grampians is a rugged and majestic landscape full of wonderful stories to be told. The Grampians Peaks Trail is centred around the telling of these stories through the creation of an extraordinary sequence of unique and memorable experiences that take the walker on a journey through this amazing landscape.

Undertaking the walk will reveal the diverse stories that are embedded within this awe inspiring landscape. These stories include the rugged geology, the variable climate, the diverse flora and fauna, the ancient indigenous culture and the post settlement landscape, all of which contribute to a rich and deep understanding of the Grampians landscape.

Unlike other well known multi-day walks such as the Overland Track in Tasmania, the Grampians Peaks Trail is not a 'wilderness walk' undertaken through pristine natural environments unmodified

by human activity. Instead, the Grampians is a fascinating layering of stories that tell of the unique natural and cultural evolution of this complex landscape.

The trail winds through a landscape that has undergone constant change and modification over time by both the forces of nature and culture. These stories challenge the notion of the 'bush' as untouched or 'wild'; instead exploring a deeper understanding about how the Australian landscape has evolved through time.

The experience of the walk will allow people to make sense of the landscape in which they are walking. These experiences help build a powerful connection with the National Park, to recognise the value and fragility of the environment, and to participate in its protection. People who walk the trail will leave with a greater understanding and respect for the landscape they have just passed through.

## Design philosophy

Walkers undertaking the Grampians Peaks Trail will be removed from their normal day to day reality, and inserted into a unique environment

where they become part of (and not separate to) the landscape. The walk is an immersive experience, where the landscape and walker become one. This experience is not something you watch from afar, but actively participate within.

This establishes the important design principle that the walk is primarily about stories and experiences rather than objects, and that the level of intervention necessary to support walkers within this landscape should be kept to a minimum to sustain the integrity of the experience and the environment. Walkers should not be conscious of the trail infrastructure required to support their journey ; such intrusions are an unnecessary distraction from the stories of the landscape itself.

What, then, are the stories that will make the Grampians Peaks Trail such a memorable and unique experience?





# 1.6 Walk description days 01, 02 & 03

Day 01 – Mount Stapylton



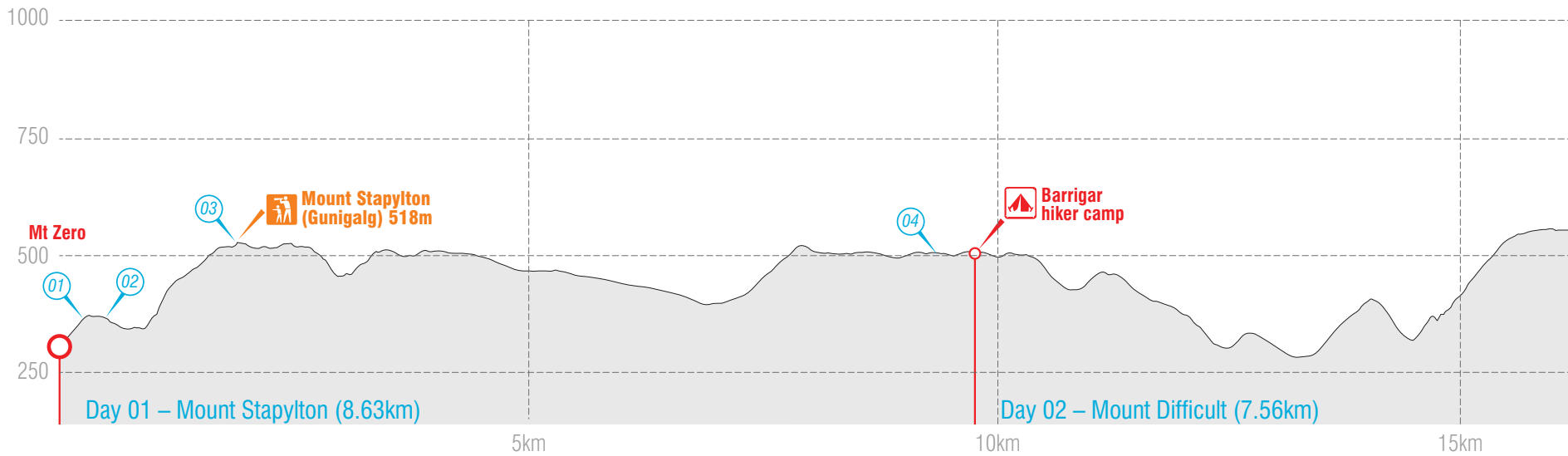
**Rugged landscape**  
Gariwerd rises majestically above the plains of western Victoria, forming jagged mountain chains up to 1100m. Millions of years ago the region was an ancient eastern shoreline of Australia. Massive forces, related to continental drift, uplifted, faulted and folded the sediment accumulated along this shore and turned sand into stone.



**Rock art**  
The Grampians has the largest number of rock art sites in southern Australia – more than 80 per cent of Victoria’s rock art sites. Approximately 60 art sites, containing more than 4,000 different motifs have been identified in the national park.



**Water supply**  
The Grampians are a key water catchment for the surrounding area, with much of the water being channelled to the Wimmera and Mallee via one of the most ambitious supply schemes in the world. Artificially created lakes include Lake Wartook, Lake Bellfield and Moora Moora Reservoir.

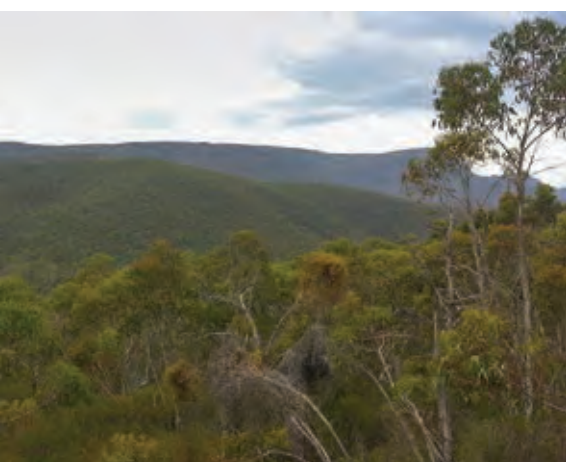
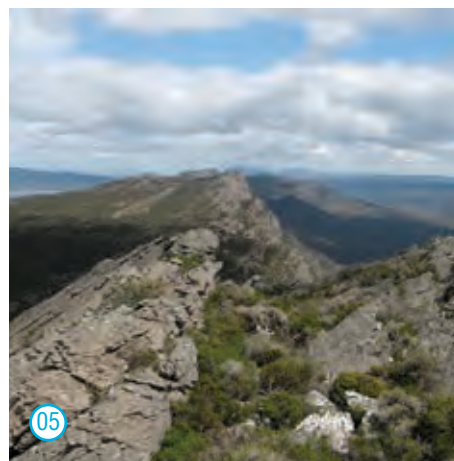






Day 02 – Mount Difficult

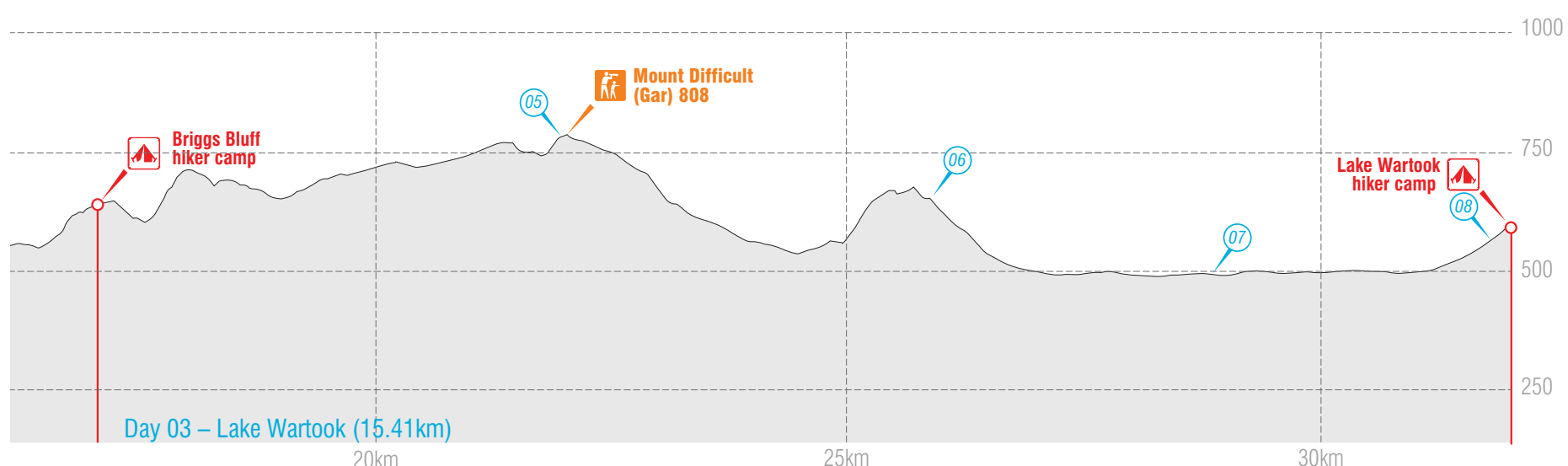
**An ancient landscape**  
Aboriginal people have had an association with the Grampians, traditionally known as Gariwerd, for thousands of years. Gariwerd is at the centre of creation stories for many of the Aboriginal communities in south-western Victoria. Archaeologists estimate that Indigenous Australians have lived in the Grampians region for over 20,000 years.



Day 03 – Lake Wartook



**Troopers creek**  
The former site of a police lock up that was established in 1857 on the Old Adelaide Road (now Roses Gap Road). The troopers collected the 10 pound landing tax from immigrants heading to the goldfields. Many landed in Adelaide and Robe in an attempt to avoid the Victorian tax. Troopers often gave their horses a spell in the Lake Wartook basin.





1.7 Walk description days 04, 05 & 06

Day 04 – Baroka



**Gariwerd six seasons**  
Six distinct weather periods are recognised in the Gariwerd seasonal cycle, relating to climatic features as well as environmental events such as plant flowering, fruiting and animal behavioural patterns. For thousands of years, the lives of the Jardwadjali and Djab Wurrung have been intimately linked to this seasonal cycle.

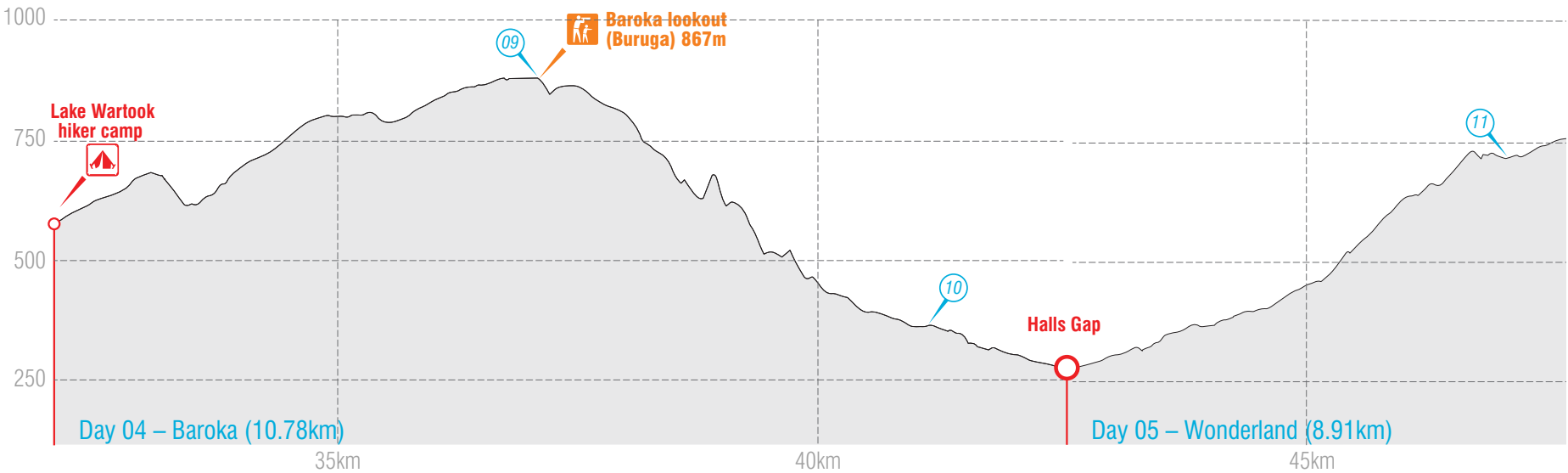


**Stone quarrying**  
During the late 1900's, a number of stone quarries operated in the Grampians (including Heatherlie Quarry), providing substantial quantities of high quality sandstone used in the construction of many important historic buildings in Melbourne, including Parliament House, the Town Hall and the State Library.



Day 06 – Mount Rosea

**Timber and charcoal**  
The National Park has been extensively logged in the past, resulting in changes to the landscape. Another forest industry in the Grampians was charcoal production. At Borough Huts there are three well-preserved cylindrical charcoal kilns.







### Meeting place

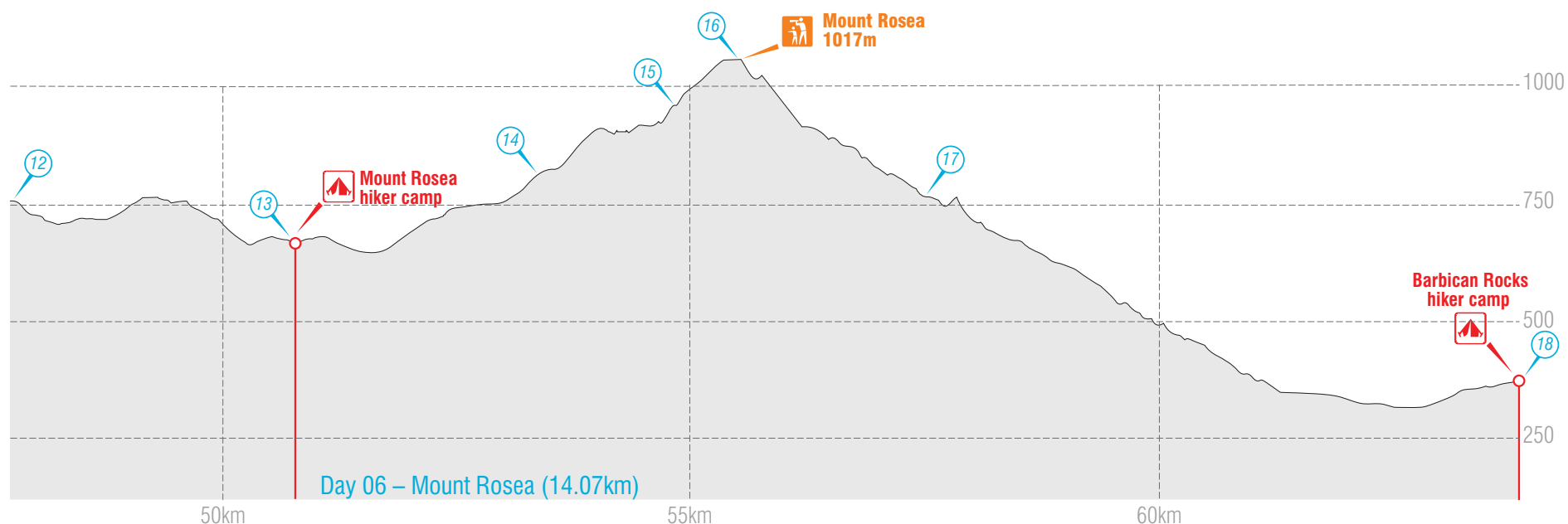
The Grampians has always been a meeting place. Walking the Grampians Peaks Trail will be a social experience as you get to know others in a different context, the swapping of stories, the sharing of meals, helping others to complete the walk and meeting other people along the journey.

Day 05 – Wonderland



### Guest houses

In the second half of the 19th century, the spread of railways and a developing interest in natural landscapes meant the beginnings of a tourist industry in the Grampians which saw the development of a range of guest houses that continues to this day.





# 1.8 Walk description days 07, 08 & 09

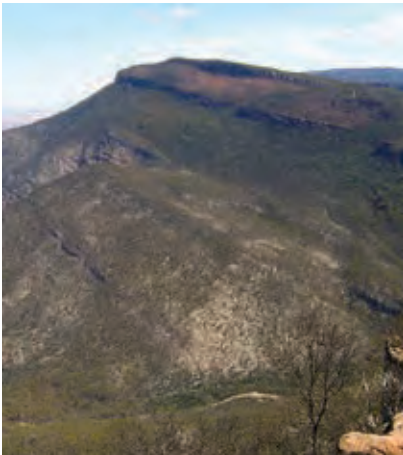
Day 07 – Mount William



**Flume**  
The Borough of Stawell was the first authority to harness Grampians water with the Stawell water supply system built between 1875 and 1881. Innovative and pioneering in its approach, it involved building more than 12 km of fluming, a tunnel and a pipeline. The original weir is still in use to supply water to Stawell.



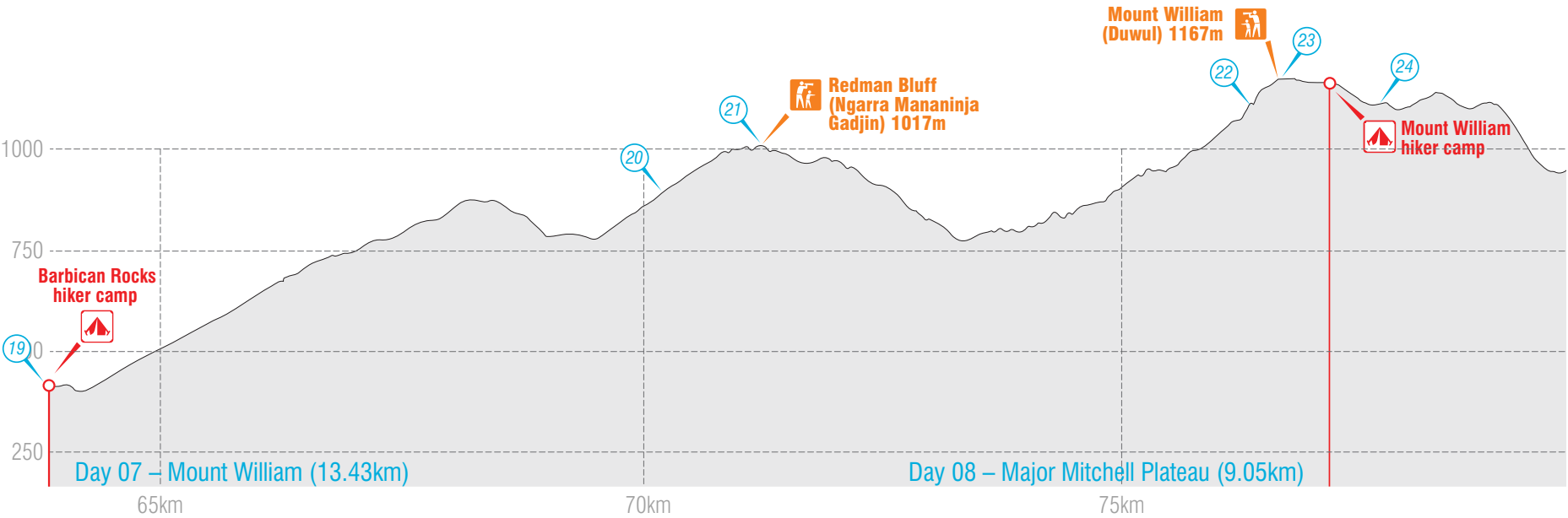
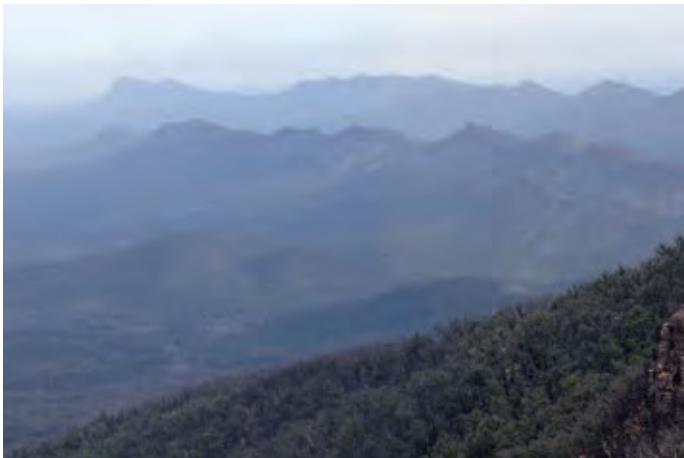
**Bunjil the creator**  
In the time before time, the Great Ancestor Spirit, Bunjil, began to create the world we see around us; the mountains, the lakes, the forests and the rivers, the plains and the seas. He created all the plants and all the animals.



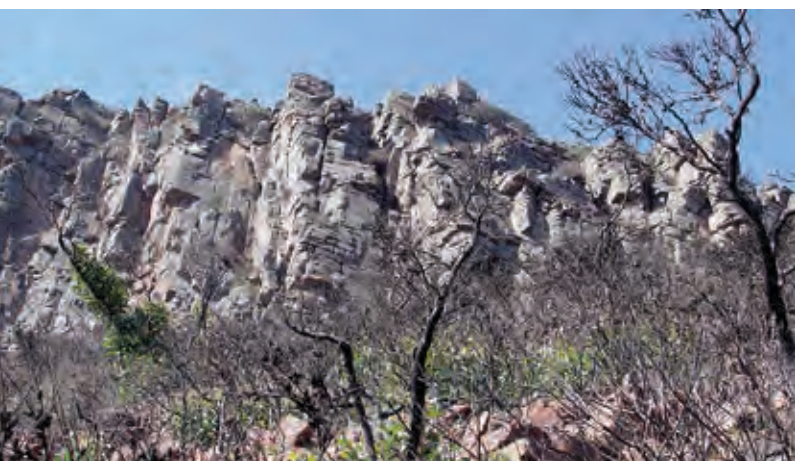
**Fire**  
Bushfires are a natural occurrence that has influenced the plant and animal diversity. Fires release nutrients to the soil and create rich seedbeds for newly dropped seed. The first rains after fires bring the landscape to life; a cycle of regrowth, competition and maturation starts all over again.



**Exploration and discovery**  
The first European to see the mountains was NSW Surveyor-General Major Thomas Mitchell during an 1836 expedition to what is now western Victoria. He named the ranges after the Grampians in his native Scotland.

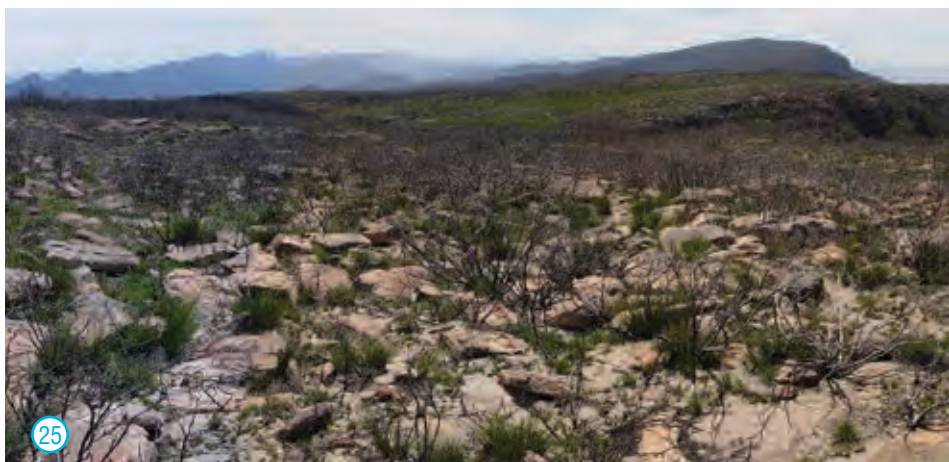
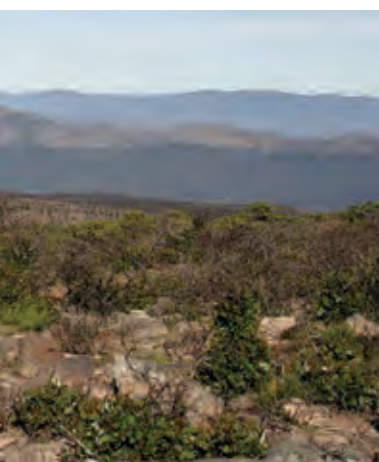
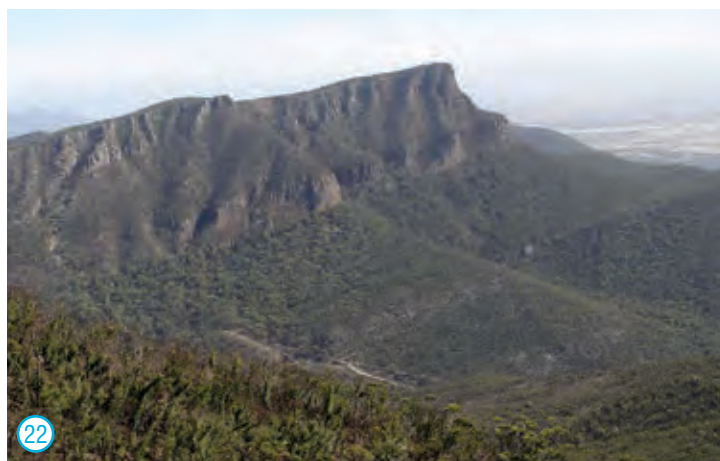




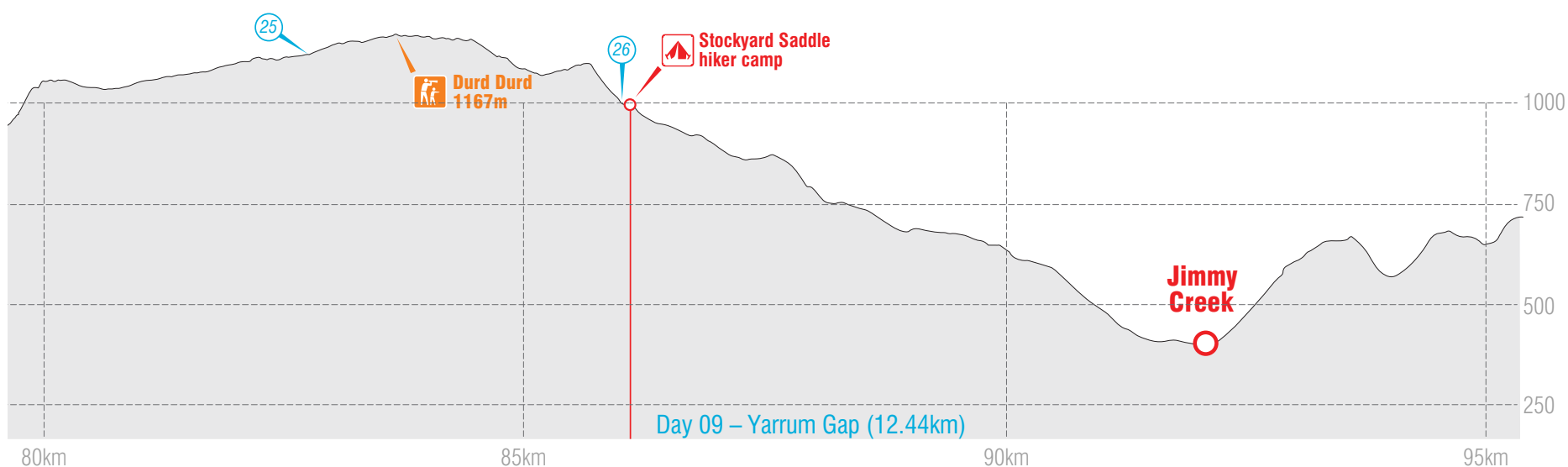


**Fauna**  
 Animals abound in the Grampians. Over 200 species of bird have been recorded in the park along with 35 species of mammal, 28 types of reptile, six native fish and eleven species of frogs.

Day 08 – Mitchell Plateau



Day 09 – Yarram





# 1.9 Walk description days 09, 10 & 11

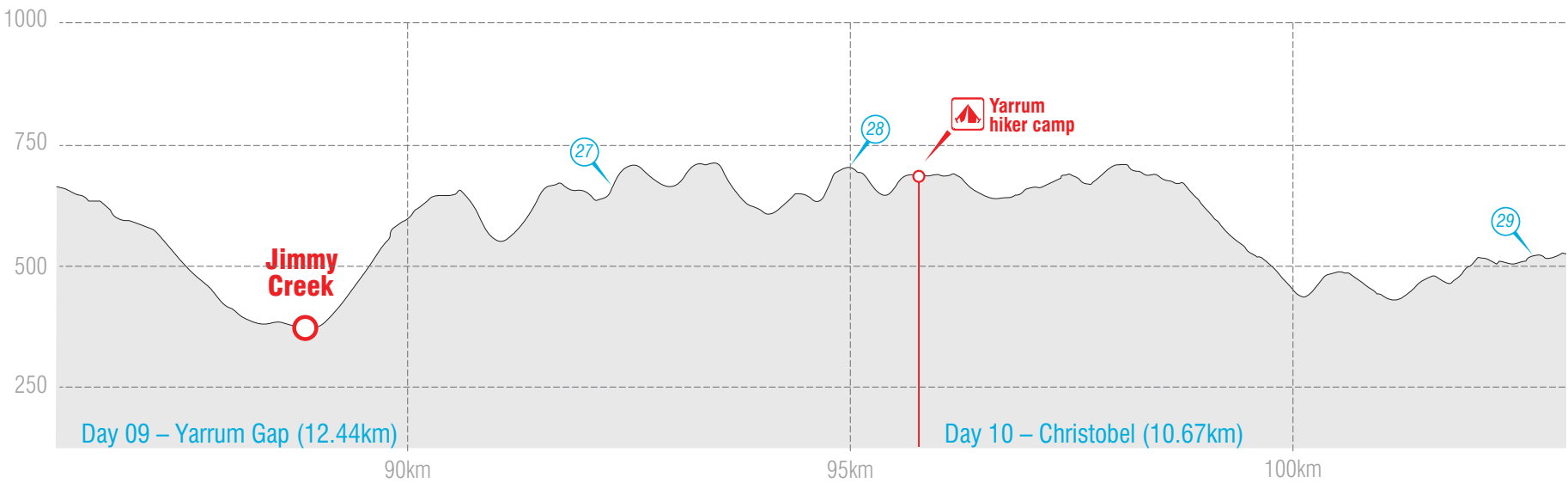
Day 09 – Yarram



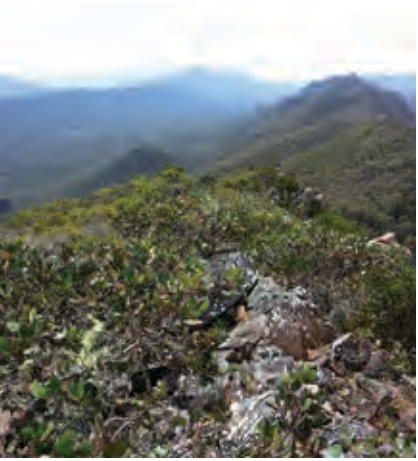
**Rock hopping**  
The brush-tailed rock-wallaby (*Petrogale penicillata*) live in areas with rocky habitat. In the Grampians, it is estimated that there are less than 60 of the Victorian species remaining, with only a third of these in the wild. A captive breeding program was established in 1996 to increase their numbers and for future re-introductions into the wild.



**Water**  
The Grampians is the headwaters of a number of important rivers including the Glenelg and the Wannon rivers. In the Grampians, annual precipitation can be as high as 1150 millimetres and snowfalls are not uncommon on the peaks.

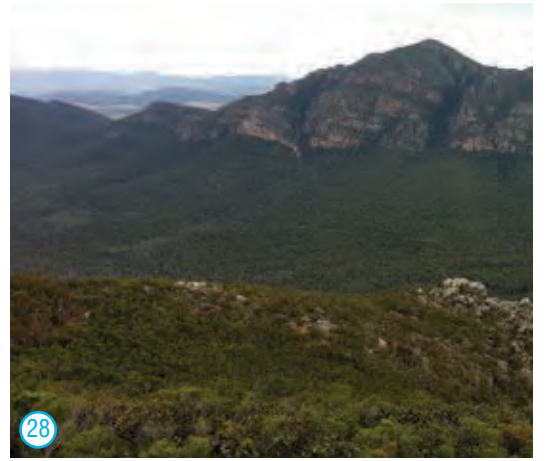






Day 10 – Christobel

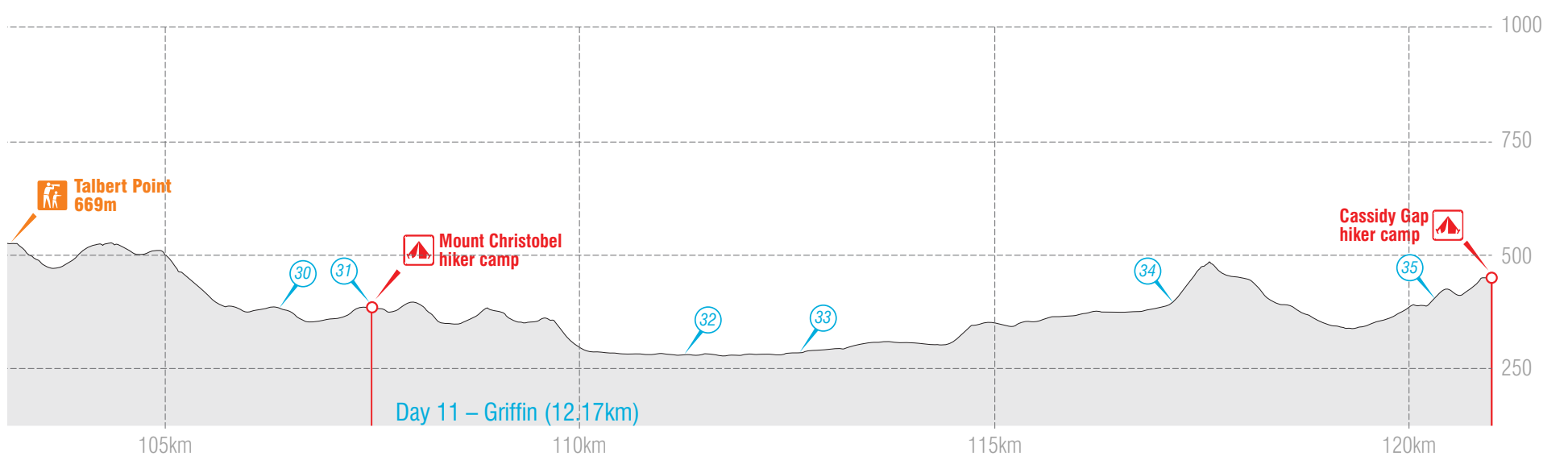
**Finding von Guerard**  
Eugene von Guerard painted a landscape south towards Mt Abrupt from a knoll slightly south of Talbert Point. He was painting a landscape at the time when the Grampians was largely untouched by white settlement, providing an important vision of a pre settlement landscape managed over thousands of years by the local aborigines.



Day 11 – Griffin



**The night sky-tchingal**  
Tchingal is the evil emu that terrorised people. It was hunted by the brothers Bram, and eventually killed by Weetkurrk. The battle between these helped to create the landscape of western Victoria. Warmed by the fire, listen to the creation story retold by an Aboriginal elder beneath the stars of the milky way.





1.10 Walk description days 12 & 13

Day 12 – Mount Abrupt



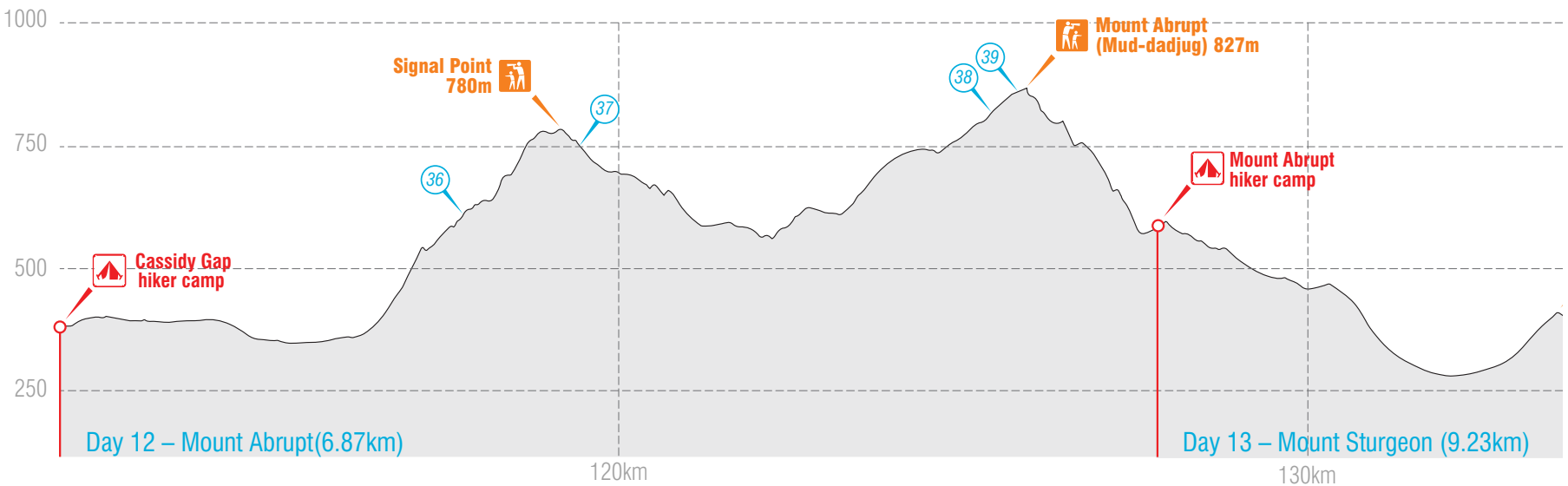
**The garden of victoria**  
In late 1854, Government botanist Ferdinand von Mueller set out on an exploration of the western and northern regions of Victoria. His travels brought him into the Grampians and he was so impressed by the variety and diversity of the flora that he later referred to the Grampians as “the garden of Victoria”.



**Cuesta**  
The Grampians consists of rugged sandstone cuestas with prominent ridges and near-vertical escarpments of rock. A cuesta is a ridge formed by gently tilted sedimentary rock strata in a homoclinal structure. Cuestas have a steep slope, where the rock layers are exposed on their edges, called an escarpment or, if more steep, a cliff.



**Smoky mouse**  
The smoky mouse (*fausse souris fuligineuse*) is a grey-furred mouse found in the Grampians and is currently rated as “vulnerable”. There are less than 2500 individuals left in the wild and all extant populations appear to be in decline. Vegetation changes, as well as feral cats, foxes and dogs appear to be the main causes.

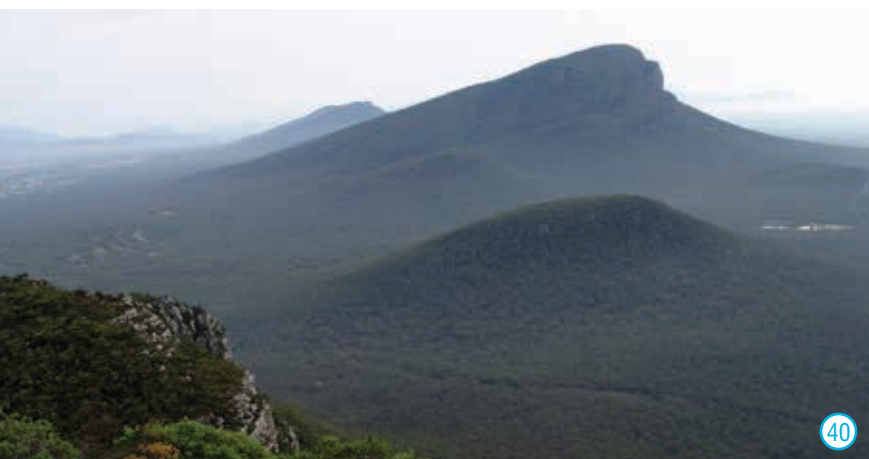
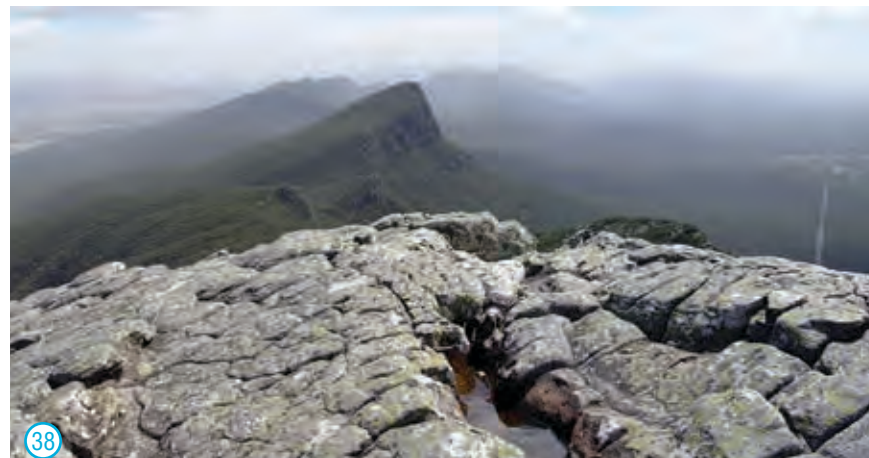
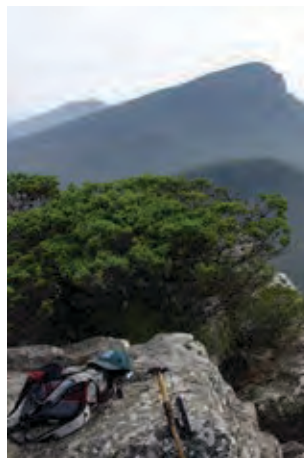






### Fires stick farming

Aboriginal people used fire as a sophisticated tool to manage and modify the landscape. At certain times of the year, Aboriginal people set fire to the bush to encourage new growth or 'green pick', which provided productive feeding grounds where animals would mass to exploit the fresh shoots. Over many years, the fires formed a 'mosaic' effect.



Day 13 – Mount Sturgeon



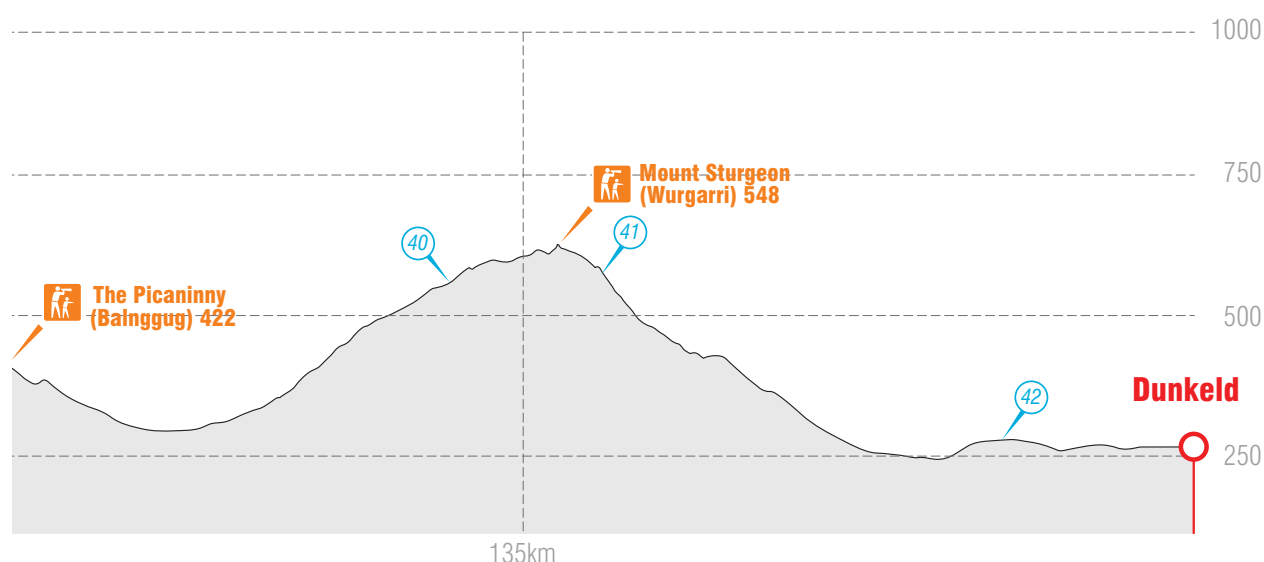
### Cinnamon Fungus

Cinnamon Fungus (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*) is a microscopic, soil borne pathogen (disease causing organism) that attacks and destroys plant root systems causing plants to die through lack of water and nutrients. Patches of dead or dying vegetation can indicate the presence of this silent killer and grass trees are particularly susceptible.



### Wildflowers

The Grampians is home to more than one third of Victoria's flora, in subalpine forest, shrub woodland, heathlands, swamps and riverine. Close to 970 native plant species occur in the Grampians, including 20 species found nowhere else in the world. Wildflowers bloom throughout the year.





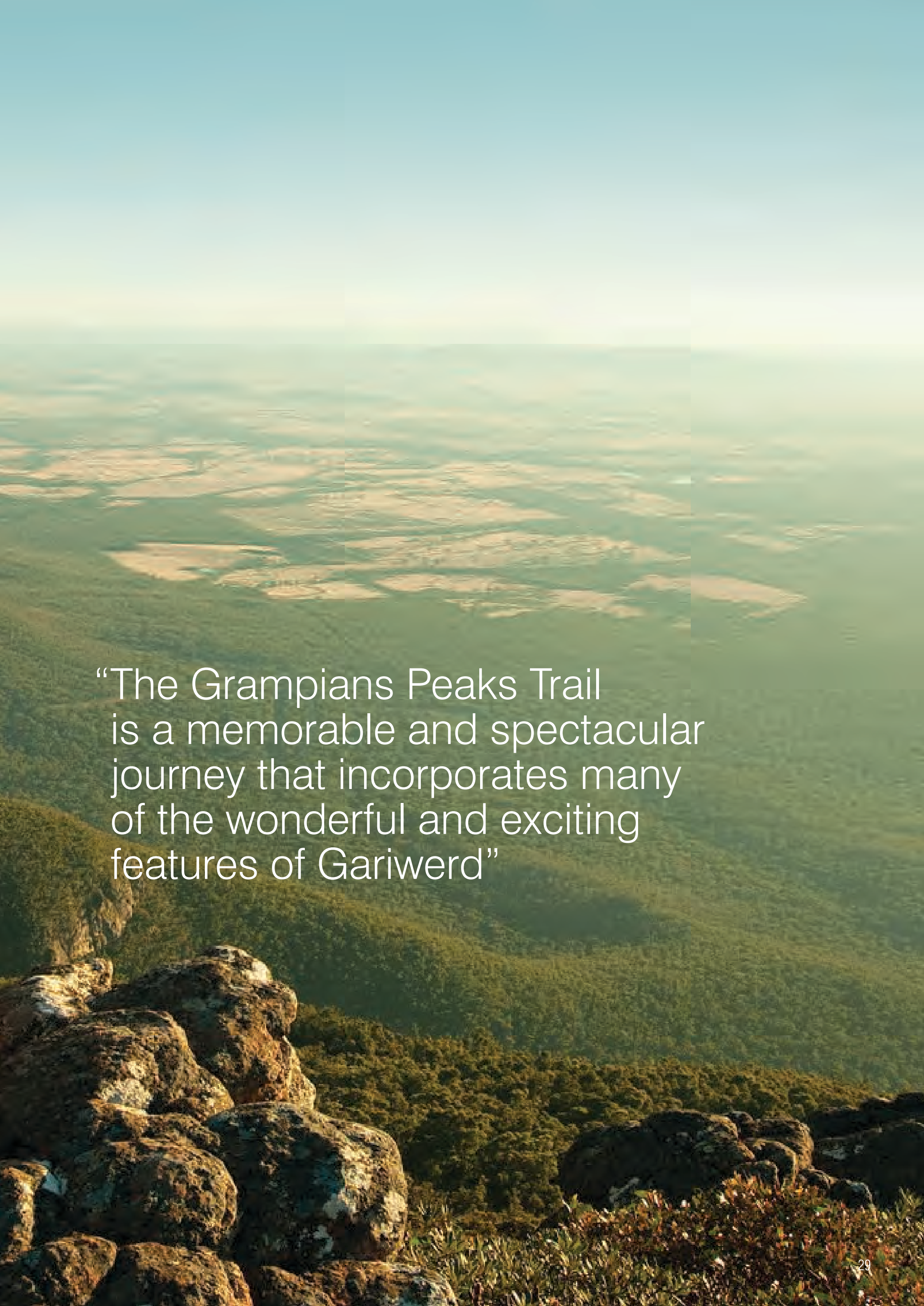
# Chapter 02

Where will the Grampians Peaks Trail go?



Standing atop Mount William, with Redman Bluff in the background (Day 07)





“The Grampians Peaks Trail  
is a memorable and spectacular  
journey that incorporates many  
of the wonderful and exciting  
features of Gariwerd”



## 2.1 Grampians Peaks Trail alignment

The Grampians Peaks Trail offers a memorable and spectacular journey that incorporates the wonderful features of the Grampians, while protecting the important natural and cultural values of the park.

### Route philosophy

The Grampians Peaks Trail will unite a disparate collection of existing walking tracks with sections of new track, creating a 144 kilometre long trail that will traverse the entire Grampians from north to south and provide an amazing diversity of walks for a broad range of people.

For more information on each segment and day of the walk, please refer to the detailed track notes contained in *Part B – Detailed Route Planning*. These notes describe each day of the walk in detail, outlining many of the key features and experiences that a walker will encounter along the journey. It also identifies a range of track construction and alignment issues.

To maximise the experience and to minimise the impact on the landscape, the alignment of the Grampians Peaks Trail has been developed based on the following criteria:

### Maximising the experience

- maximise the variety of walking experiences (including views, scenic quality and other interesting features) providing a wide range of experiences to keep the walk stimulating;
- incorporate as many of the iconic Grampians peaks as possible;
- allow the experience of being exposed and isolated to enhance the sense of remoteness;
- avoid existing roads and other infrastructure that may detract from the walking experience;
- avoid popular day use areas, where possible, to enhance the remote walking experience;
- allow for a diversity of walk options (including length, experience and difficulty) to cater for a broad range of walkers.

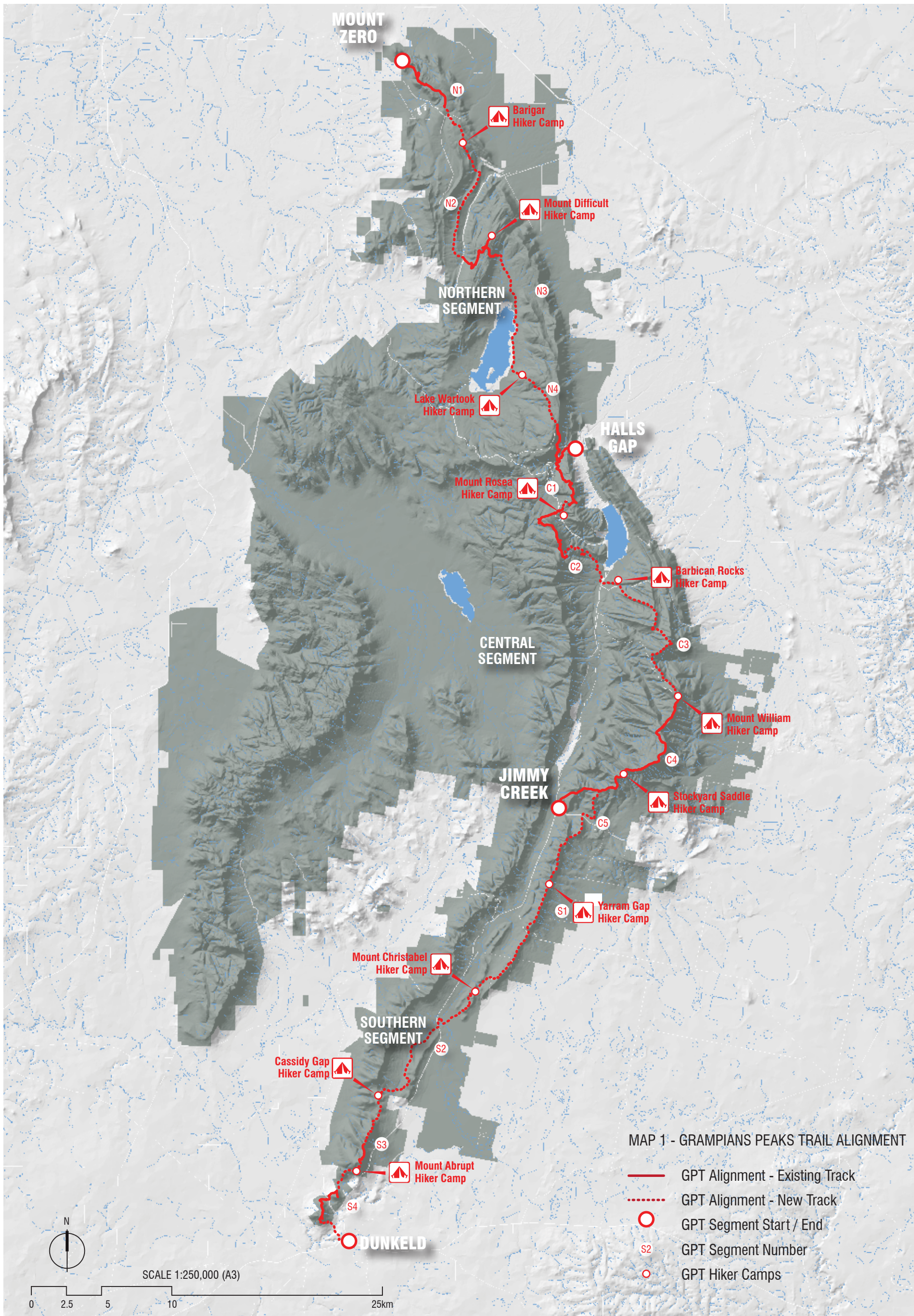
### Respecting cultural heritage

- avoid areas of sensitive cultural heritage.
- ### protecting the environment
- implement and manage the trail in a sustainable manner;
  - avoid delicate, sensitive or endangered ecologies, vegetation and fauna;
  - comply with the National Park Management Plan (2003);
  - utilise existing trails to minimise the need for new trails wherever appropriate;
  - minimise the need for trail infrastructure, such as bridges & boardwalks;
  - locate the trail within the National Park where possible;
  - utilise existing visitor infrastructure within the National Park where possible and appropriate;
  - ensure the trail is not visible from other locations within the landscape.

Figure 2.1 – Summary of Grampians Peaks Trail alignment

Segment	Code	Day	Start	Finish	Track exist	Track new	Length (m)
Northern	N1	01	Mount Zero	Barigar hiker camp	4,628m	4,008m	8,636m
	N2	02	Barigar hiker camp	Mount Difficult hiker camp	5,009m	10,414m	15,423m
	N3	03	Mount Difficult hiker camp	Lake Wartook hiker camp	2,694m	9,869m	12,563m
	N4	04	Lake Wartook hiker camp	Halls Gap township	5,813m	4,971m	10,784m
Central	C1	05	Halls Gap township	Rosea hiker camp	8,911m	0m	8,911m
	C2	06	Rosea hiker camp	Barbican Rocks hiker camp	14,069m	0m	14,069m
	C3	07	Barbican Rocks hiker camp	Mount William hiker camp	0m	13,434m	13,434m
	C4	08	Mount William hiker camp	Stockyard Saddle hiker camp	9,047m	0m	9,047m
	C5	09	Stockyard Saddle hiker camp	Yarram Gap hiker camp	2,927m	9,514m	12,441m
Southern	S1	10	Yarram Gap hiker camp	Mount Christabel hiker camp	0m	10,673m	10,673m
	S2	11	Mount Christabel hiker camp	Cassidy Gap hiker camp	0m	12,174m	12,174m
	S3	12	Cassidy Gap hiker camp	Mount Abrupt hiker camp	3,179m	3,697m	6,876m
	S4	13	Mount Abrupt hiker camp	Dunkeld township	4,440m	4,793m	9,233m
Total Grampians Peaks Trail distance					60,717m	83,547m	144,264m







## 2.2 Walk options

A distinguishing feature of the Grampians Peaks Trail is the range of walking options available, encouraging a diversity of people with varying abilities to undertake the walk.

### Types of walks

The 144 kilometre length of the trail, from Mount Zero in the north to Mount Sturgeon in the south, traverses a wide range of different landscapes, ecologies and climates, providing a great diversity in walk types. The main categories of Grampians Peaks Trail walks include:

#### Day walks

Day walks are an important option for many people, providing an introduction to the Grampians Peaks Trail and access to some of the park's key visitor sites. Many of these walks are located around Halls Gap where the Grampians Peaks Trail route coincides with high use day walks, such as the Wonderland and the Pinnacle. Day walks along the Grampians Peaks Trail should be seen as an opportunity to promote the entire walk and to encourage people to return to walk other segments in the future.

#### Overnight walks (1–2 nights)

Along the length of the Grampians Peaks Trail, there will be a number of overnight walks that link key sections of the trail, allowing people with limited time to experience the beauty, grandeur and excitement of the Grampians. These walks will utilise sections of the Grampians Peaks Trail, as well as new loop trails that will allow circuit walks beginning and ending in the same location.

#### Segment walks (3–4 nights)

The Grampians Peaks Trail is divided into three logical segments, each based around a 3 to 4 night walk. Each segment of the walk will be substantially different, offering different walking experiences and accommodation options. The focus on shorter 3 to 4 night walks recognises the limited market for the full north-south walk and the broader market for shorter 2–4 night walks.

#### Multi-segment walks (4–11 nights)

These are longer walks spanning multiple segments of the Grampians Peaks Trail that provide the more experienced walker with an opportunity for longer, more challenging journeys through the Grampians. The location of trailheads at key intervals along the walk allows for many multi-segment walk configurations.

#### Full north south walk (12 nights)

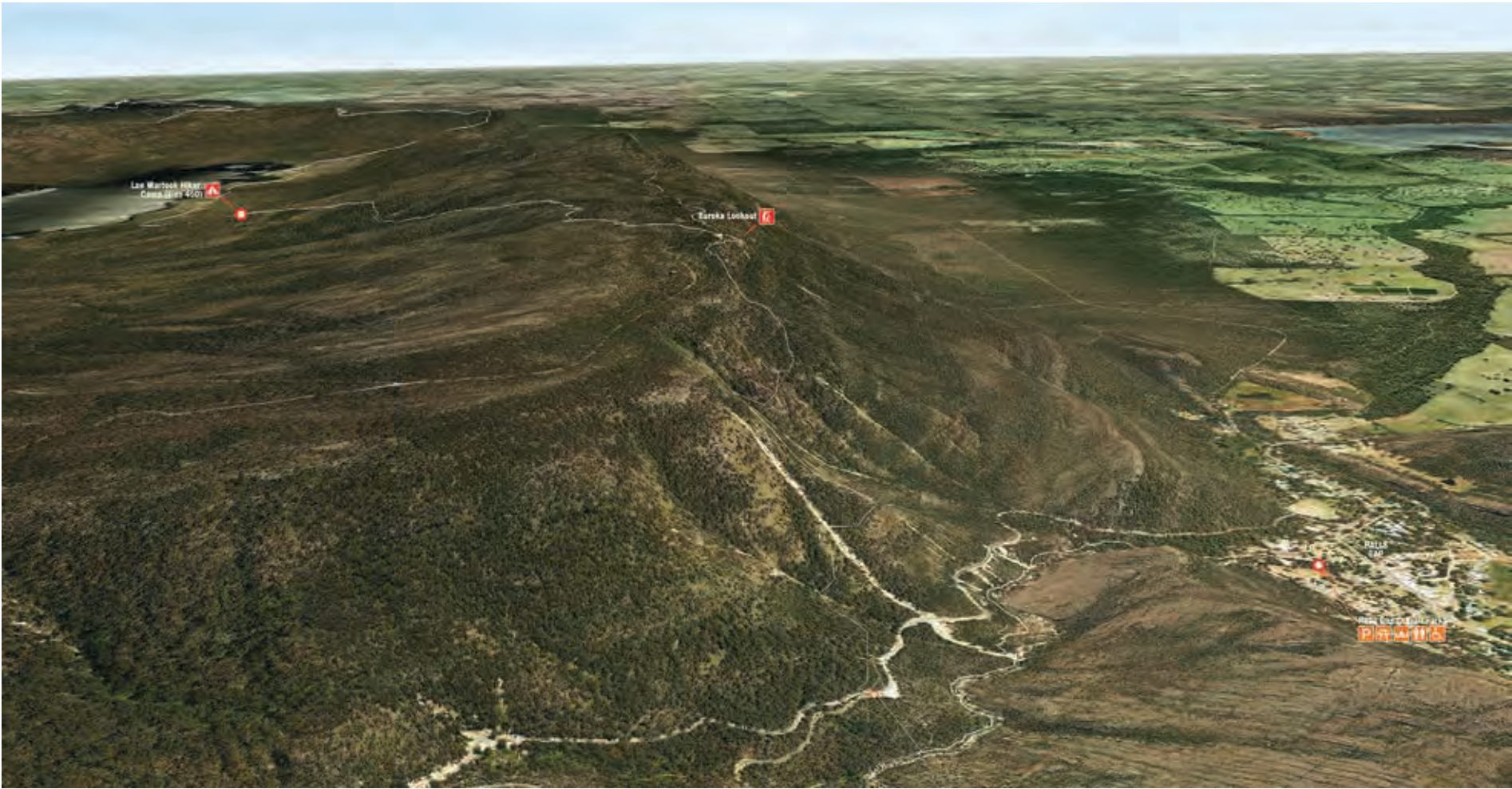
For many years, a long distance walk for the Grampians has been discussed. Many people know “someone” who has completed the traverse from “north to south”. Because of its length and difficulty, the full length Grampians Peaks Trail walk will be one of the great long distance hikes in the world, beginning at Mount Zero in the north and finishing 144 kilometres later in Dunkeld in the south.

Aerial perspective looking north west over of the Grampians National Park, showing the Grampians Peaks Trail proposed alignment and the major peaks encountered (not to scale)





Aerial perspective of Day 04 (Northern Segment N4) showing the descent down to Halls Gap from Baroka Lookout with the Elephant's Hide in the foreground.



Aerial perspective looking north west over of the Grampians National Park, showing the Grampians Peaks Trail proposed alignment and the major peaks encountered (not to scale)





## Segment walks

The Grampians Peaks Trail is divided into a northern, central and southern segment, creating three very different 3 to 4 night walking adventures.

### Northern segment

The northern segment traverses the drier and rockier northern Grampians, commencing at Mount Zero which rises out of the Wimmera Plains in the north and finishing at Halls Gap. The segment covers 47.4 kilometres over 4 days and 3 nights. Key features of this segment include the spectacular geology of Mount Stapylton and Hollow Mountain and a powerful indigenous presence (including aboriginal art shelters).

This segment provides a more integrated outdoor experience that may incorporate other adventure based activities into the walking package, including rock climbing, canoeing, bouldering and mountain biking. This segment of the walk may appeal to existing school groups who currently utilise this section of the National Park.

### Central segment

The central segment commences in Halls Gap and concludes at Jimmy Creek, covering 57.9 kilometres over 5 days and 4 nights. The segments includes some of the iconic peaks of Gariwerd, including Mount Rosea and Mount William, as well as the Major Mitchell Plateau.

The focus of this segment is the quintessential Grampians walking experience through some stunning landscapes with amazing views. The first half of this segment is less remote than other segments and will experience higher traffic due to the proximity to Halls Gap and a number of important day walks, including the Pinnacle and the Wonderland range. However, the Major Mitchell Plateau provides one of the great semi-remote walking experiences in Victoria.

### Southern segment

The southern segment commences at Jimmy Creek and concludes at Dunkeld in the south and covers 38.9 kilometres over 4 days and 3 nights. This segment includes some spectacular remote walking along the serrated ridges of both the William and Serra ranges.

Given the more remote location, there is an opportunity for this segment to focus on the development of higher yield, assisted walking packages that may include more comfortable roofed accommodation and high quality food and wine experiences.

## Walk direction

In the Grampians, the north to south walk direction is widely regarded as a 'better' walking experience, because many of the key features of the landscape unexpectedly and dramatically reveal themselves to the walker, rather than being visible for many kilometres prior to arrival. Consequently, the Grampians Peaks Trail shall be walked north to south in one direction.

The walk in one direction minimises the crossover between different groups of walkers, thereby promoting a more remote, back country walking experience. Many of the comparable precedent walks, including the Overland and Milford Tracks, operate successfully in one direction only.

It is also easier to manage hiker camp bookings for a single direction walk, as walker groups do not have to cross over mid-way and walk segments do not require an odd number of hiker camps to avoid two groups arriving at the same hiker camp from opposing directions. The carrying capacity is the same irrespective of whether it is walked in one direction or two.

Some management issues exist in relationship to school groups, which often prefer to split their walkers into two groups and walk in both directions, overlapping in the middle (refer to Section 8.5 Managing User Conflicts).



Each segment of the Grampians Peaks Trail will provide a different walking experience and cater to a different type of walker

Aerial perspective of Day 07 (central segment C3) showing the steady climb to Redman Bluff and onto Mount William, the highest point in the Grampians.



Aerial perspective of Day 08 (central segment C4) showing the perched Major Mitchell Plateau, one of the great semi remote walking experiences in Victoria.





## Trail connectivity

The Grampians Peaks Trail will form a central spine for walking in the Grampians. It is a vision for an iconic long-distance walk that will appeal to a broad range of users, basing themselves around the park. While not specifically defined, linking tracks, alternative routes and loops may connect the Grampians Peaks Trail to local communities including the Mount Zero precinct, Roses Gap, the Wartook Valley, Halls Gap and Dunkeld, enabling a range of off-park services and accommodation.

## Trail rationalisation

The construction of the Grampians Peaks Trail provides an opportunity to rationalise the extent of walking tracks in the National Park, creating a more sustainable and manageable trail network centred along a single spine. Any new trail to be constructed as part of the Grampians Peaks Trail should be offset by closures of trails, tracks and/or roads elsewhere in the park if possible. This principle is supported by the Native Vegetation Management Framework (2002) legislation.

The recent flood and fire recovery works (2011–13) undertaken by Parks Victoria has commenced a process of track and infrastructure rationalisation to ensure park assets are managed sustainably into the future. Existing tracks that may be suitable for offsetting new sections of trail include the Bomjinna walking track, Burma 4WD track, Ingleton Fireline North, Golton Gorge South walking track, Bomjinna campground, Delleys Dell walking track, Dairy Creek walking track, Sundial to Delleys Dell walking track and the Bellfield to Dairy Creek track.

## Land tenure

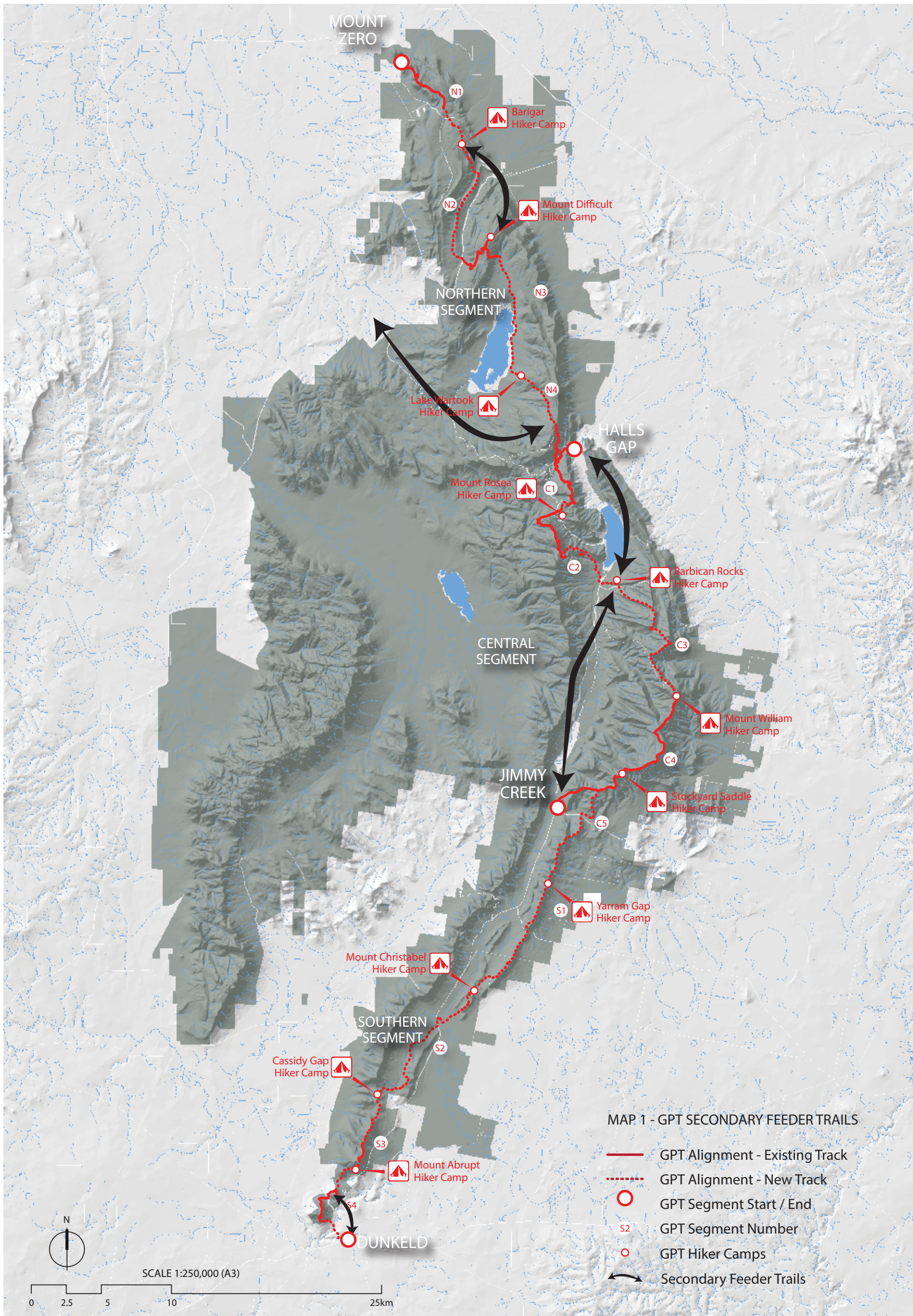
The walk is located primarily within the National Park, with exception of some road reserves close to Dunkeld, and Lake Wartook, which is managed by Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (on unreserved Crown land).

## Alignment works to date

Various reconnaissance of the proposed Grampians Peaks Trail alignment has been undertaken by Parks Victoria over the past decade in an effort to determine the best alignment linking sections of existing track. The master planning team has undertaken additional ground truthing of the proposed alignment in the northern and southern segments of the walk to further determine the ideal alignment. This reconnaissance has been undertaken at a strategic planning level only and further detailed ground truthing will be required for many sections of the trail once the project proceeds to a detailed design phase.



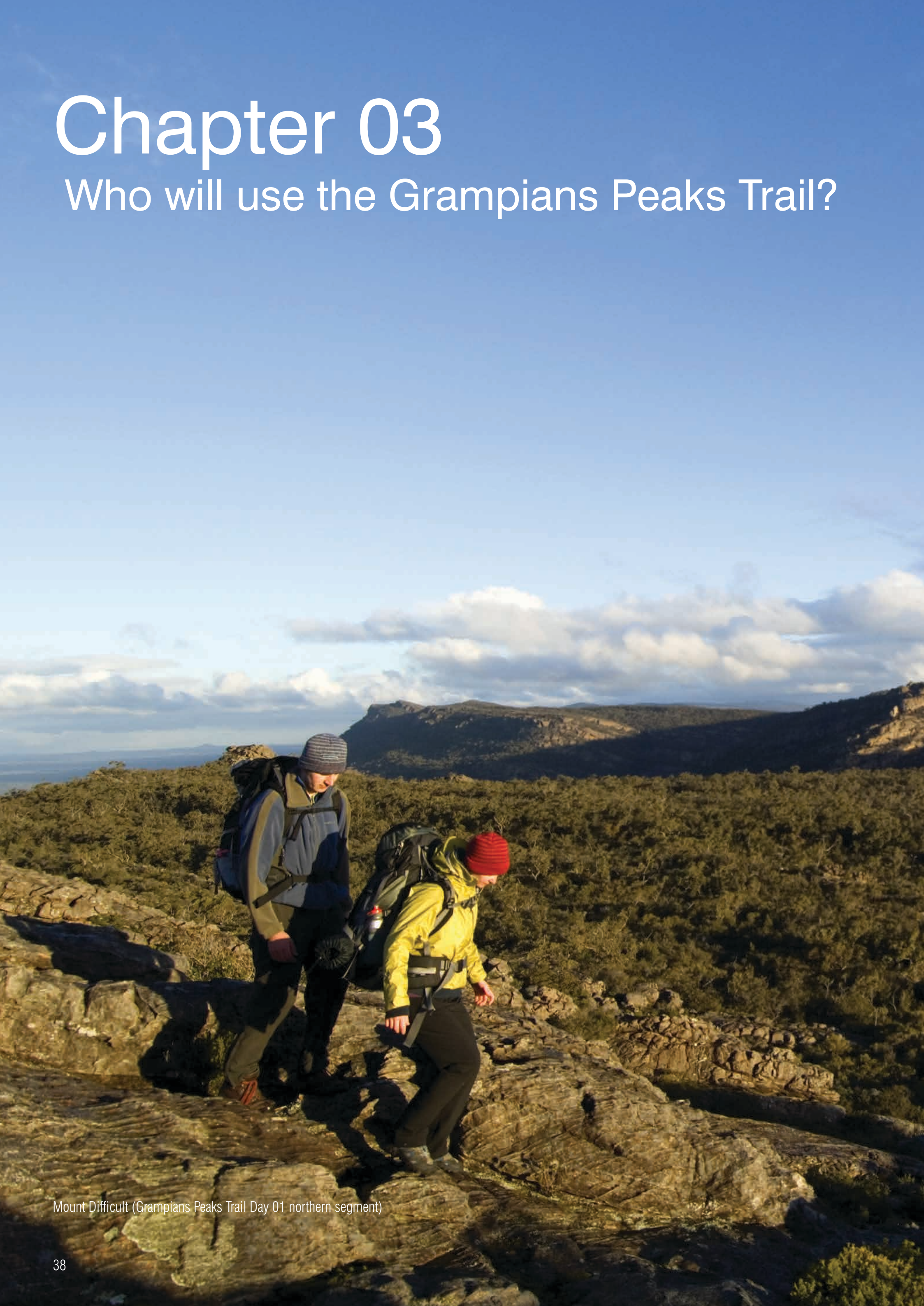






# Chapter 03

## Who will use the Grampians Peaks Trail?



Mount Difficult (Grampians Peaks Trail Day 01 northern segment)



The Grampians Peaks Trail will appeal to a broad range of users, including backpackers, experienced walkers, adventure tourists, school groups and day walkers.





## 3.1 Who will walk the Grampians Peaks Trail?

An important principle of the Grampians Peaks Trail is to broaden the appeal of walking by providing a wide range of experiences, walk options, levels of difficulty and accommodation types.

### Walker types

The Grampians Peaks Trail will provide walking experiences for a wide range of visitors including:

#### Day walkers

One day walkers will be primarily catered for in the Wonderland, Mt Rosea (*Bugiga–mirgani*) and with some shorter walking opportunities close to Dunkeld and Mt Zero (*Mura Mura*) / Mt Staplyton (*Gunigalg*) areas.

#### Overnight walkers

These are walkers undertaking 1 to 4 night walks with relatively safe and comfortable facilities located either on or off-park and includes both independent walkers, as well as supported and guided walkers (as part of a licensed tour operator package).

#### Experienced bush walkers

These are independent (self guided) and self sufficient bush walkers, adventure tourists and remote adventurers undertaking multi-day walks (including the full-north south walk) which offer both challenge and a degree of risk and discomfort.

#### School groups

These are larger groups of school children who walk sections of the Grampians Peaks Trail as part of an organised school camping expedition. School groups represent an important user group with many schools already utilising the Grampians. There is an important opportunity to build a lifelong connection to the Grampians. Consideration will be given as to how school groups interact and are managed in and around the Grampians Peaks Trail.

### Experience seekers

Research has been undertaken recently by Tourism Australia to understand the characteristics of Australia's ideal visitor through an analysis of market segmentation, consumption patterns, global lifestyle trends and the range of experiences on offer in Australia.

These ideal visitors are described as 'Experience Seekers' and refer to people who have a greater propensity to enjoy what Australia offers, have higher product consumption and are likely to spend more. An important target market for the Grampians Peaks Trail is the Experience Seeker, who may not be a seasoned walker but may be 'converted' into the walker market.

Experience Seekers have the following characteristics:

- are experienced international travellers;
- seek out and enjoy authentic personal experiences they can talk about;
- involve themselves in holiday activities, are sociable and enjoy engaging with the locals;
- are active in their pursuits and come away having learnt something;
- are somewhat adventurous and enjoy a variety of experiences on any single trip;
- place high importance on value and hence critically balance benefits with costs;
- place high value on contrasting experiences (i.e. different from their day-to-day lives).

### Walker characteristics

Surveys of walkers and discussions with commercial tourism operators suggest that walkers undertaking or interested in 'icon walks' have particular characteristics, including:

- higher than average levels of education, and be engaged in professional or similar occupations;
- come from households with higher than average levels of income;
- independent walkers tend to be in the younger to middle age groups, while walkers on commercial tours tend to be over 45;
- travel to the area specifically to walk the trail;
- on some trails, relatively high or increasing proportions of walkers come from interstate or overseas (e.g. on the Overland Track in the 2005-6 peak season, 58% of walkers were from interstate and 35% from overseas);
- are aware of, or have undertaken, similar walks in Australia or overseas; and
- a proportion (especially in the middle to older age groups) are 'comfort seekers' who seek adventure, but supported by options such as guides, transport of overnight packs, quality food and wine and roofed accommodation.

Understanding these characteristics is helpful in identifying future walker markets, and the types of experiences and marketing opportunities relevant to these markets. Capturing the higher yields of these market segments will provide significant regional economic benefits.



## 3.2 Walking products

### Trends in walking products

Important trends in the development of 'icon' walks and associated walking products include:

- demand for multi-day walks of medium duration (3-5 days);
- demand from single people (particularly women) looking for a safe and active walking experiences with opportunities to socialise;
- demand for diverse walks offering a range of landscape types and experiences with a minimum of repetition;
- demand for walks which provide a level of challenge but are moderate in difficulty;
- a preference for smaller walking groups (12 people or fewer);
- demand for on-walk roofed accommodation with a growing preference for huts over tents;
- demand for guided walking packages which encourage a wider range of walkers who may have difficulty carrying a full pack;
- the provision of high quality interpretation material such as booklets, maps, pod casts and mobile 'apps', as well as merchandising as a token of the experience;
- a strong interest in water as part of the overall walking experience;
- demand for multi-day walks with close proximity and access from major cities such as Melbourne and Adelaide.

### Walking products

The Grampians Peaks Trail is different to many other 'icon' walks due to the length and diversity of walks available that reflect the unique landscape of the walk. The Grampians Peaks Trail will provide the opportunity for innovative walking products to be developed for both low and high yield walkers, including -

#### Independent walks

These are day or overnight walks organised by an individual or group who choose to carry all their own equipment and organise their own car shuttles and pick ups. This also includes groups of self catering walkers staying in off-park accommodation.

#### Supported, self guided walks – drop off / pick up

These are day or overnight walks organised by an individual or group that utilise the services of a licensed tour operator (LTO) to provide shuttle, drop off and pick up services along the Grampians Peaks Trail.

#### Guided walks – on park camping

These are small, group-based escorted walking tours organised through a licensed tour operator (LTO), utilising the proposed hiker camps. Walkers may not be required to carry equipment, and meals and tents may be carried for them and prepared in advance for their arrival.

#### Guided walks – on park roofed accommodation

These are small, group-based escorted walking tours organised through a licensed tour operator (LTO), utilising serviced lodges at the beginning and end of each days walk. Walkers may only be required to carry a day pack, with all other equipment shuttled between lodges. Food and accommodation is prepared for their arrival.

#### Guided walks – off park accommodation

These are products developed by commercial operators providing walkers with daily shuttle drop-offs and pick-ups between the walk and off-park accommodation. It generally suits higher yield walkers who may require more luxurious meals and accommodation.

#### Multi-activity adventure packages

These are products developed by commercial operators that incorporate multiple adventure activities such as walking, rock climbing, mountain biking and canoeing / kayaking.

#### Existing walking packages in the Grampians

Many licensed tour operators (LTO's) already operate in the Grampians National Park. Currently most of these LTO's are focused on delivering adventure activities such as rock climbing and bike riding to individuals and school groups.

The success of the Grampians Peaks Trail is dependent on LTO's developing appropriate walking products that capitalise on the diversity and uniqueness of the walk. Operators with an existing client base and well integrated into the tourism industry are more likely to succeed. It is likely that more and more walking products supporting the Grampians Peaks Trail will emerge over time as demand for the walk increases.



# 3.3 Carrying capacity & walker demand

## What is carrying capacity?

The carrying capacity of the Grampians Peaks Trail is the maximum number of walkers the track can sustain without damage to the environment, the infrastructure or the walking experience. There are a number of practical limits that determine the carrying capacity, including:

### Landscape limits

The landscape limit is the extent to which the landscape itself can accommodate the trail infrastructure and walkers. To ensure that the environment (and consequently the experience of the walker) is maintained and managed in a sustainable way for future generations, it is crucial that the Grampians Peaks Trail minimises the impact on important park values, including flora, fauna, landscape and heritage.

### Infrastructure limits

The infrastructure limit is the extent to which the Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure (including the track and the hiker camps) can accommodate the walkers. There is a practical limit to the volume of people who can use the trail infrastructure, as too many people will lead to a deterioration in the quality of the infrastructure, as well as the experience.

### Social interaction limits

The social interaction limit identifies the maximum number of walkers the Grampians Peaks Trail can sustain before too many people compromise the natural and remote walking experience. Essentially, encountering too many walkers too often along the route will detract from the experience of the walk.

## Estimated Grampians Peaks Trail carrying capacity

The estimated carrying capacity of the Grampians Peaks Trail is based on assumptions informed by the landscape, infrastructure and social interaction limits, including:

- 24 people per hiker camp;
- 15 people per hiker lodge;
- 3 hiker lodges along the length of the Grampians Peaks Trail;
- allowance for off park accommodation.
- exclusion of day visitors.

Therefore the carrying capacity of the Grampians Peaks Trail when fully booked would be 130,305 visitor nights per annum (as outlined in Table 3.3 below).

## Carrying capacity comparisons

It is useful to examine the carrying capacity of other benchmark walks as a point of comparison.

### Overland track, Tasmania (5 nights)

Visitation to the Overland Track has been capped at approximately 48,000 visitor nights per year (8,000 walker per year x 5 nights).

### Three Capes, Tasmania (5 nights, proposed)

The carrying capacity of the proposed Three Capes Trail (currently being developed by the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service) is approximately 50,000 visitor nights per year (10,000 walkers per year x 5 nights).

Due to its length and number of walking days, the Grampians Peaks Trail has a greater carrying capacity than other ‘icon’ walks.

While on-park accommodation is limited by the maximum number of hiker camps and hiker lodges proposed, there is significant track capacity for walkers to stay off-park and be transported to and from each day’s walk. These volumes are outlined in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3 Summary of Grampians Peaks Trail carrying capacity

Segment	Walker type	People	Nights	Days	Visitor nights	Total
Northern segment	On park hiker camps	24	3	365	26,280	
	On park hiker lodges*	15	1	365	5,475	
	Off park accommodation*	12	2	365	8,760	40,515
Central segment	On park hiker camps	24	4	365	35,040	
	On park hiker lodges*	15	1	365	5,475	
	Off park accommodation*	12	1	365	8,760	49,275
Southern segment	On park hiker camps	24	3	365	26,280	
	On park hiker lodges*	15	1	365	5,475	
	Off park accommodation*	12	2	365	8,760	40,515
Estimated carrying capacity (visitor nights per annum)						130,305

\* Number of hiker lodges and off park accommodation are for calculations only and may vary due to market forces



Table 3.4 Summary of Grampians Peaks Trail estimated visitation demand

Segment	Walker type	2015	2020	2025
Stage 01 – central segment (65%)	Day walkers	8,600	10,976	14,008
	Overnight walkers	5,200	6,637	8,470
Stage 02 – southern segment (20%)	Day walkers			3,200
	Overnight walkers			2,000
Stage 02 – northern segment (15%)	Day walkers		3,400	4,339
	Overnight walkers		2,000	2,553
Total Grampians Peaks Trail walkers / year		13,800	23,013	34,571
Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitor nights / year		32,000	53,241	80,151

Walking demand

While the carrying capacity determines the maximum number of walkers the Grampians Peaks Trail can sustain, the walking demand is the estimated number of people who will undertake the walk, and is largely independent of carrying capacity. Estimating walker demand is useful in understanding how the Grampians Peaks Trail is to be constructed, the staging of works, and the likely costs and revenues the walk will generate over time. It is also useful in assessing the likely environmental and financial impact of the Grampians Peaks Trail on the National Park and the surrounding region.

Both in Australia and around the world, there is a growing market for nature-based tourism experiences, which is currently one of the fastest growing industry sectors. Nature-based tourism is providing an opportunity for people to interact with their natural environment and experience the landscapes, culture, flora and fauna they have to offer.

One of the major low impact activities that provide this opportunity is bushwalking. An increased focus on health, coupled with the changing demographics of an ageing population that is healthier, living longer and more active, is expected to contribute to a rise in physical activity and demand for walking.

Competition with other walks

There is growing competition to market state based ‘iconic walks’ – as such, the expectation and standard is constantly rising. The Grampians Peaks Trail will be entering an increasingly crowded and competitive ‘icon walk’ market. Consequently the Grampians Peaks Trail must differentiate itself from other competing walks, promoting the wonderful and unique stories of Gariwerd that will make this walk a much sought after experience.

Estimating Grampians Peaks Trail demand

Accurately estimating walking demand is a difficult task, particularly for a walk which already has a strong existing user base, coupled with the diversity of proposed walk types on offer once the Grampians Peaks Trail is complete.

The master plan estimates that in 2015, there will be 32,000 visitor nights resulting from the operation of the Grampians Peaks Trail, rising to 80,151 in 2025, when all segments of the walk are operational (refer Table 3.4). These figures represent the number of additional people (expressed in visitor nights) that will come to the Grampians to use the Grampians Peaks Trail, above and beyond existing visitation.

In arriving at these estimates, the project team considered a number of different methods for estimating the level of walking demand for

the Grampians Peaks Trail. These methods are outlined in Appendix 02 – Grampians Peaks Trail Visitation Demand Analysis. A comparison of the results from each method assist in determining the estimated demand for the Grampians Peaks Trail. A number of assumptions have used to assist this demand estimate, including the following –

- Average length of Grampians Peaks Trail walk = 3 visitor nights;
- Typically walkers will arrive a night before the walk and /or leave a night after completion = 4.5 visitor nights overall;
- Day walkers (4 hrs+) = 1 visitor night. It is assumed that day walkers will require accommodation for one night;
- Day visitors account for approximately. 60% of all visitation;
- Annual growth in visitation is 5%; and
- 65% weight to visitation in Central, 20% in Southern, and 15% in Northern.



# Chapter 04

## Where will you stay when walking the Grampians Peaks Trail?

Sleeping out under the night sky is one of the great experiences of the Grampians Peaks Trail.







## 4.1 Accommodation along the Grampians Peaks Trail

Along the Grampians Peaks Trail, there will be different types of accommodation that provide exceptional experiences for a broad range of visitors.

### Diversity of experience

These options recognise that on-walk accommodation is central to the experience of an iconic multi-day walk such as the Grampians Peaks Trail. The walk will include both low and high yield options which will expand the range of potential users for the walk. There are three types of accommodation proposed –

#### On-walk hiker camps

The default accommodation for the entire Grampians Peaks Trail will be hiker camps, with camping on designated tent platforms, a communal shelter and toilets. The hiker camps can be used by both independent and guided walkers and will be provided by Parks Victoria or managed by a private operator on behalf of Parks Victoria. On some sections of the trail, where there is demand, specifically designed hiker campsites may be provided for larger groups of up to sixteen people, including purpose built camps for school groups.

#### On-walk hiker lodges

These are roofed structures which may include showers, toilet and kitchen facilities and will provide a more comfortable walking experience. They will cater for a higher yield market and will be used by guided walkers. Such facilities will be provided through the private sector.

#### Off-walk accommodation

This is accommodation located adjacent to the National Park, yet close to the walk, allowing walkers the opportunity to stay in more comfortable accommodation. Off-walk accommodation can be used by both independent and guided walkers, as well as larger groups who prefer to self cater where cooking facilities are available. Such facilities will be provided through the private sector.

Each segment of the walk will offer different walking experiences and accommodation types.

#### Northern segment

The northern segment of the Park has a warm and dry climate and is more focused on outdoor adventure-based activities, including higher usage from school groups and rock climbers. The default accommodation along the trail will be hiker camps at key locations, with consideration for some off-walk roofed accommodation that can service the walking, school group and adventure activity markets.

#### Central segment

The default accommodation along this segment will be hiker camps at key locations. The alignment of the Grampians Peaks Trail through large areas of conservation and special protection zones provides a spectacular but heavily constrained setting for the provision of on-walk hiker lodges. Alternatively, off-walk accommodation opportunities exist on private land in and around Halls Gap and Lake Bellfield.

#### Southern segment

The southern segment of the Park is more remote and very rugged. Accommodation along this section of the Grampians Peaks Trail will be hiker camps, as well as on and off-walk roofed accommodation that can support higher yield walkers seeking greater comfort. Important links to existing adjacent accommodation should be promoted.

### Locating accommodation

All accommodation along the Grampians Peaks Trail must undergo thorough assessment to select an appropriate site based on the following principles –

#### Visitor experience

- be located after an achievable day's walking (typically 10km a day in the Grampians);
- reflect a diversity of settings such that each night's experience is unique and different;
- take advantage of views but be well hidden and not obviously visible from the trail;
- be located where there is good weather protection and not on the top of mountains;
- be located away from other activities and vehicles to heighten the sense of remoteness;
- be located off the main Grampians Peaks Trail alignment with a defined walk in and a walk out point; and
- not detract from the primary experience of the walk or diminish the remote experience.

#### Environment sustainability

- fit sensitively into the landscape with minimal ecological footprint, respectful of the carrying capacity of the site and avoiding damage to environmentally significant areas;

- be demountable to allow removal / relocation in the future if required;
- be located on existing disturbed sites where possible; and
- avoid impacting areas of cultural significance.

#### Management & operation

- be safe for all users and undergo a risk assessment (including tree fall, bushfire, falls from height, flood, drowning);
- be in accordance with park management plans, overlays, zoning and legislation, including regard for the National Parks Act 1975;
- be located to allow servicing by vehicle or quad bike where possible.

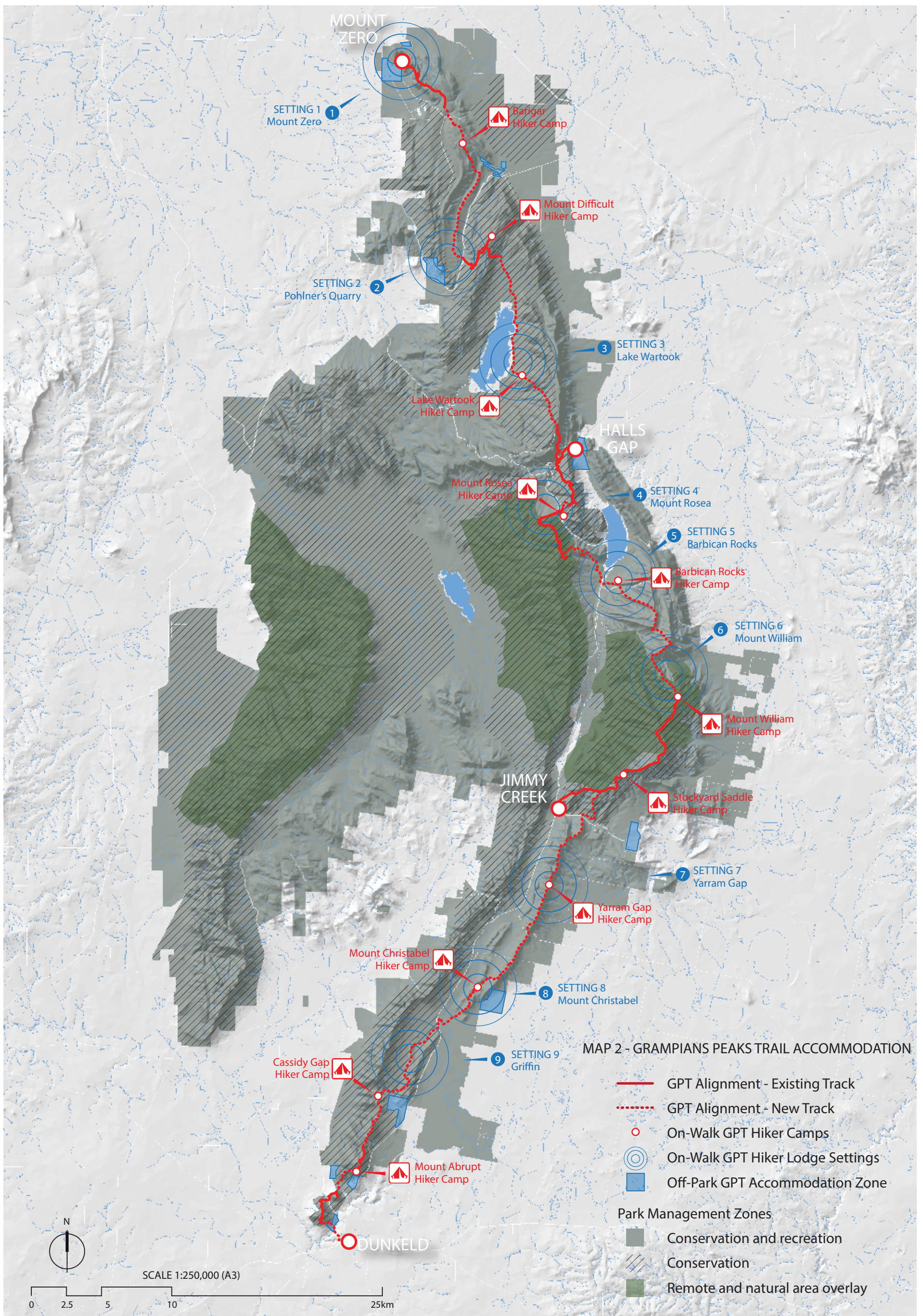
### Potential settings

A number of potential settings exhibiting a variety of landscapes may be suitable for the establishment of roofed accommodation. The purpose of these examples is to indicate the variety of opportunities available within the Grampians, from relatively intact natural settings within the conservation zone which have limited access (more constrained), to disturbed sites within conservation and recreation zones that may have good access and services (less constrained). Both on-park and off-park (private land) settings have been provided. All examples provide outstanding, world class views of the Gariwerd Ranges.

The Government has confirmed that no development will be considered within Natural and Remote Areas or Reference Areas; these zones have been excluded from consideration.

Ultimately, as on-walk roofed accommodation will be initiated through private sector investment, the viability of any locations will be determined by market forces, environmental regulations and legislation. As such, this list of examples is by no means exhaustive. It is recommended that any investment proposals will be subject to an expression of interest process to be run by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI), and with regard to the National Parks Act, the Park Management Plan and all other statutory planning legislation. Alternatively, opportunities also currently exist for investor initiated proposals consistent with the [Guidelines for Tourism Investment Opportunities of Significance in National Parks](#) (DSE, 2013).







## 4.2 On-walk hiker camps

### Hiker camp philosophy

A series of high quality, sustainable hiker camps will be constructed along the length of the Grampians Peaks Trail, providing an exceptional camping experience in a range of stunning natural environments.

The Grampians Peaks Trail will provide a range of accommodation options to cater for different user groups. The needs of independent walkers, small groups of less than eight people, and larger groups of up to 16 people, will be factored into the siting and provision of hiker camps along the length of the walk. The exact location and configuration will be determined during more detailed planning to ensure a range of experiences are catered for.

Each hiker camp will protect the environment by minimising the impact of people at each campsite. The use of elevated tent platforms and raised boardwalks has become the recognised means to provide a quality camping experience, while protecting the surrounding, sensitive environment from the effects of high numbers of walkers and uncontrolled 'bush camping'. This

is particularly so for the Grampians Peaks Trail, which will be open all year round, with no 'down time' for the surrounding landscape to recover.

A prototype design for the Mount Rosea hiker camp (Sean Godsell Architects) will be built in 2013 and will be used to refine the design, construction and management of all Grampians Peaks Trail hiker camps.

### Use & booking of hiker camps

Hiker camp sites will be available to both independent and guided walkers through a centralised booking system where each tent platform can be booked in advance (refer Section 9.2). LTO's will need to book on behalf of their clients and should not hold permanent bookings of hiker camps at the exclusion of others. LTO's offering walking packages may provide additional services for some walkers, such as carrying packs, providing cooked meals and setting up camp.

### Management of hiker camps

Initially all hiker camps will be managed and serviced by Parks Victoria, or by a private

operator under the supervision of Parks Victoria. Parks Victoria may also consider proposals for additional hiker camp infrastructure from LTO's should there be interest.

Regular monitoring of all hiker camps will be undertaken to understand the impact of hikers on the surrounding environment. Where degradation is visible, reducing the camp capacity or modifying the hiker camp design to minimise future damage may be required.

### School groups

The demand for hiking experiences in the Grampians for school groups is well established. Currently approximately 50,000 students each year walk trails which are proposed as part of the Grampians Peaks Trail alignment. School groups by their nature have different functional needs which influence hiker camp design. It is also preferable to provide a degree of separation between school groups and other walkers which may be seeking a degree of solitude, isolation or exclusivity.

Sleeping out under the night sky is one of the great experiences of the hiker camps.





Students and school-based programs can be viewed as the ‘entry level’ for the Grampians Peaks Trail, where an appreciation, understanding and connection with the walk and the cultural landscape is encouraged, facilitated and promoted by purpose built, group camps. School groups also provide off-peak demand which will help to sustain the viability of the Grampians Peaks Trail as an all-season experience.

### Hiker Camp design criteria

Although the specific setting will determine the exact design and layout of each hiker camp, they should all be designed in a consistent manner.

#### Hiker camp size

Hiker camps will accommodate a maximum of 24 people per night on 12 tent platforms. Each platform is large enough to pitch a tent or lay a swag, and is elevated off the ground and connected by boardwalks, ensuring minimal damage to the surrounding environment. It is a clearly delineated, controlled zone which will reduce camp site ‘creep’.

#### Construction method

Hiker camps will be constructed from durable materials utilising a modular construction system, allowing off-site fabrication and transportation in smaller, manageable sections.

#### Communal shelter

Each hiker camp will incorporate a communal shelter with bench seating where hikers can orientate themselves upon arrival, gather and discuss the day’s journey and provide protection from rain and extreme weather. Consideration should be given to weather sealed shelters where hiker camps are located at higher elevations.

#### Toilets

Each hiker camp will provide two unisex toilets. Sealed vault and composting toilets are the preferred toilet waste systems, although the type and volume will depend on each site and the estimated use. Solid waste will be contained within the system and removed, while liquid waste will be evaporated on site.

#### Lockers

Visitors undertaking a guided walking package through a licensed tour operator can arrange access to a locker containing camping equipment, food, water, supplies and other items packed off-site and delivered to the camp prior to arriving for the night, providing the opportunity for hikers to carry less while on the trail.

#### Water

Tanks collecting rain water from the toilet roof will be provided at each hiker camp, as water sources along the trail are scarce, particularly in summer. Parks Victoria cannot guarantee water quality to world health standards.

#### Power

Each hiker camp may provide unobtrusive, solar powered charge points for small electrical devices such as phones, GPS devices and digital cameras. To maintain a true camping experience, charge points will not run larger electrical devices or lights.

#### Security & safety

Each hiker camp will be designed in a robust manner to minimise potential damage from vandalism or other anti-social behaviour. Consideration will be given to the provision of emergency beacons or phones to assist with risk management and visitor safety.

#### Servicing & access

All hiker camps will require regular cleaning and maintenance of toilets and camp infrastructure. The frequency of servicing will depend on usage and time of year. Vehicle or quad bike access will be important to enable both supplies (including water, food, hiker gear, linen and other supplies) to be transported to the hiker camp. In remote locations, servicing by helicopter may be the only option; however landing sites may be limited.



Example of a tent platforms along the Overland Track in Tasmania. The use of elevated tent platforms and raised boardwalks has become the recognised means to provide a quality camping experience, while protecting the surrounding, sensitive environment





# 4.3 On-walk hiker lodge



Cradle Mountain huts, Overland Track, Tasmania

## Why hiker lodges on the Grampians Peaks Trail?

There are instances where investing in facilities inside the park boundaries is required to provide particular tourism products and experiences. Hiker lodges sited on long distance walking trails, such as the Grampians Peaks Trail, offer an experience that is difficult to provide otherwise.

Furthermore, it is unlikely that the hiker camps will satisfy the demand for higher yield walkers seeking on-walk accommodation as an integral part of their Grampians Peaks Trail walking experience. Hiker lodges offer a higher level of service and comfort that may attract a wider range of walkers who may otherwise be discouraged to walk the Grampians Peaks Trail. As such, on-walk hiker lodge accommodation targets the higher yield market sector, supporting important regional economic benefits and return for government expenditure.

## Hiker lodge philosophy

While hiker lodges offer higher levels of comfort and service, it is critical that the design is consistent with the long distance walking experience. Consequently, each hiker lodge will be designed to the highest level of environmental stewardship and operate to the smallest ecological footprint. These ‘green’

credentials represents an essential part of the walk ethos, creating an exclusive experience for each walker that is compatible with the stunning location within the Grampians National Park.

It is anticipated that hiker lodges will generally be used for a single night only, and that a number of lodges in separate locations may connect different stages of the walk, creating a memorable and unique multi-day, walking package. As a result, hiker lodges will need to sit within close proximity to the trail alignment (generally less than 1km) to limit the need for excessive additional walking each day.

## Management of hiker lodges

It is proposed that hiker lodges will be built, owned and operated by the private sector with a lease to operate within the National Park. To make hiker lodges economically viable, longer lease agreements than previously available would need to be negotiated in accordance with government policy and guidelines. The approval of on-walk hiker lodge proposals rests with the Department of Environment and Primary Industries and may be considered as part of an Expression of Interest process (refer Section 5.4 Private Investment).

Given the location within the National Park, the operation and servicing of hiker lodges

Hiker lodges sited on long distance and remote walking trails, such as the Grampians Peaks Trail, offer an experience that is difficult to provide otherwise.

Forrester Beach camp, Bay of Fires National Park





must not compromise the remote wilderness experience of other users, including the walking community, hiker camps users and the general public. As such, hiker lodges should be located in the vicinity of, but sufficiently separated from, adjacent hiker camps.

## Hiker lodge design criteria

Although the specific location and design of each hiker lodge within the National Park has yet to be determined, it will be influenced by market intelligence to determine which sites along the Grampians Peaks Trail represent the highest opportunity for the commercial success, as well as sound planning, environmental and landscape architectural principles.

### Hiker lodge size

The size of each hiker lodge should be commensurate with the type of remote wilderness experience on offer, as well as the carrying capacity of the site. This could take the form of two roofed lodges or five eco-tents accommodating up to 15 walkers.

### Location of hiker lodges

Hiker lodges should be located based on a range of experiential, sustainability and management criteria (refer to section 4.1) and through detailed site planning to meet environmental and cultural regulations.

### Construction

All structures must be built to the highest environmental standards and should be lightweight and demountable, utilising materials with low embodied energy and with the ability to be installed and removed with little, if any, impact on the landscape.

### Bathroom facilities

Hiker lodges should have bathroom and toilet facilities that utilise self composting or closed capture toilets that can be emptied once or twice a year. There is a general trend towards en suite bathrooms in high yield lodges and many visitors expect this to be provided. Shared facilities that are clean, private and unique to the setting (for example, stone floors, bush showers) may also meet market demand.

### Kitchen / dining

Many guided walking packages now offer high quality dining as an integral component of the walking experience. Given this, shared kitchen and eating facilities that respond to the unique setting of each lodge should be provided for use by both independant walkers and LTO groups. This may also include fireside cooking (with appropriate contingency for bushfire periods).

### Water

Hiker lodges should ideally be self sufficient with regard to water, with collection of rainwater from building roofs. Given the low rainfall and dry summers, however, it is likely that drinking water may need to be transported to site, along with other deliveries (such as food, linen and baggage transfers for walkers).

### Power

Because many locations along the walk do not have access to grid connected power, hiker lodges should be self sufficient in regards to electricity where possible, for example, by using solar panels. This clean, silent and cost effective power source will reinforce the green credentials of the walking package.

### Storage

Secure, lockable storage may need to be provided to operate and maintain the lodge.

### Servicing & access

Hiker lodges should be located close to road access, allowing the lodge to be easily serviced and supplied by vehicle. In remote locations, servicing by helicopter may be the only option; however landing sites may be limited in the Grampians.

### Bushfire considerations

The Grampians is a landscape that is highly susceptible to bushfire. Any hiker lodge design will need to consider appropriate strategies to minimise the investment and visitor safety risks posed by regular bushfires.

Please refer to Appendix 01 for examples of benchmark on-walk accommodation facilities.

### Acknowledging the differences in hiker lodge examples

A number of examples of operating hiker lodges have been investigated including established products in Central Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand. Many of these walks operate in remote landscapes where connections to adjacent communities and access to off-park accommodation options are limited. These examples suggest that for the hiker lodge investor/operator to be successful their lease should provide for a level of exclusivity.

Cradle Mountain huts, Overland Track, Tasmania





# Potential hiker lodge settings – northern segment

## Site 1 – Mount Zero

Located at the commencement of the walk, this off-park setting offers amazing views of the rugged sandstone cliffs of Mount Zero, Mount Stapylton, Flat Rock and Taipan Wall rising out of the surrounding flat, Wimmera landscape. The location offers an important opportunity to service both the walking and climbing communities. Access is excellent.

Land: private land (off-park)

Zoning: n/a (off-park)

Condition: disturbed

Access: excellent



## Site 2 – Pohlner

Located on a prominent escapement, this setting offers amazing views of the western side of the Mount Difficult range. Although in a more constrained park management zone, there is an excellent opportunity to rehabilitate a degraded quarry site and utilise the beautiful flat, woodland setting. Access is excellent off existing roads.

Land: national park (on-park)

Zoning: conservation & recreation

Condition: disturbed

Access: excellent



## Site 3 – Lake Wartook

Located on the edge of Lake Wartook, this setting offers the opportunity to incorporate a range of water-based activities into the walking experience, as well as cater for school groups. The site is immersed within the lake basin, offering panoramic views of the surrounding Serra and Difficult ranges.

Land: wannon water (unreserved crown) land

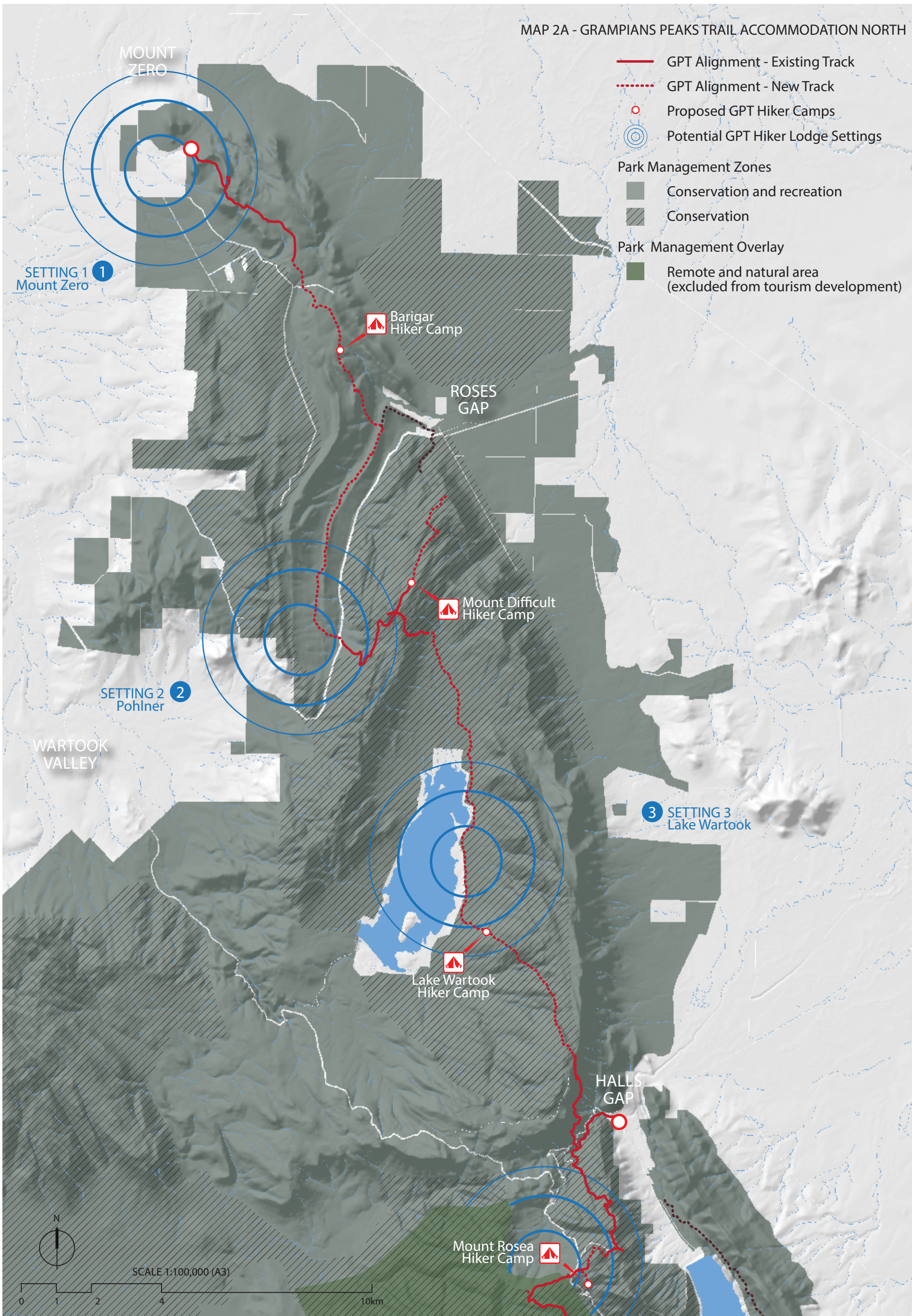
Zoning: n/a (off park)

Condition: disturbed

Access: poor









# Potential hiker lodge settings – central segment

## Site 4 – Mt Rosea

Located between the prominent Mt Rosea and Tower Hill, this setting offers a 360 degree uninterrupted view on the Grampians “Back Country” within a days walk from Halls Gap. Despite being within 500mts of an existing Track, this site would lend itself to remote area design principles of minimum footprint to maximise the Remote Visitor Experience offer.

- Land: national park
- Zoning: conservation & recreation
- Condition: undisturbed
- Access: partial, road within 500 metres



## Site 5 – Barbican Rocks

Located on-park, this setting offers fantastic views west towards Mount Rosea and over Lake Bellfield. It can service walks along the Grampians Peaks Trail to Mount William, as well as the proposed 3 day loop back to Brambuk. Situated at low elevation allows easier vehicular access and servicing. Care would be needed to ensure any infrastructure is not visible from the Serra Range.

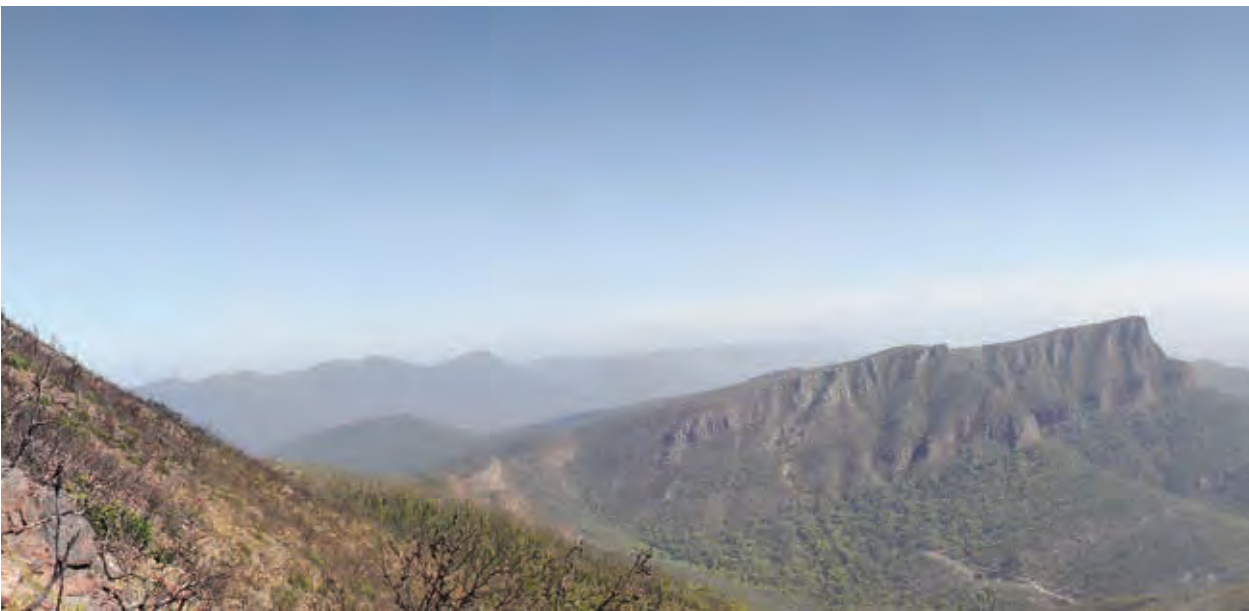
- Land: national park (on-park)
- Zoning: conservation & recreation, special protection overlay
- Condition: undisturbed
- Access: reasonable.



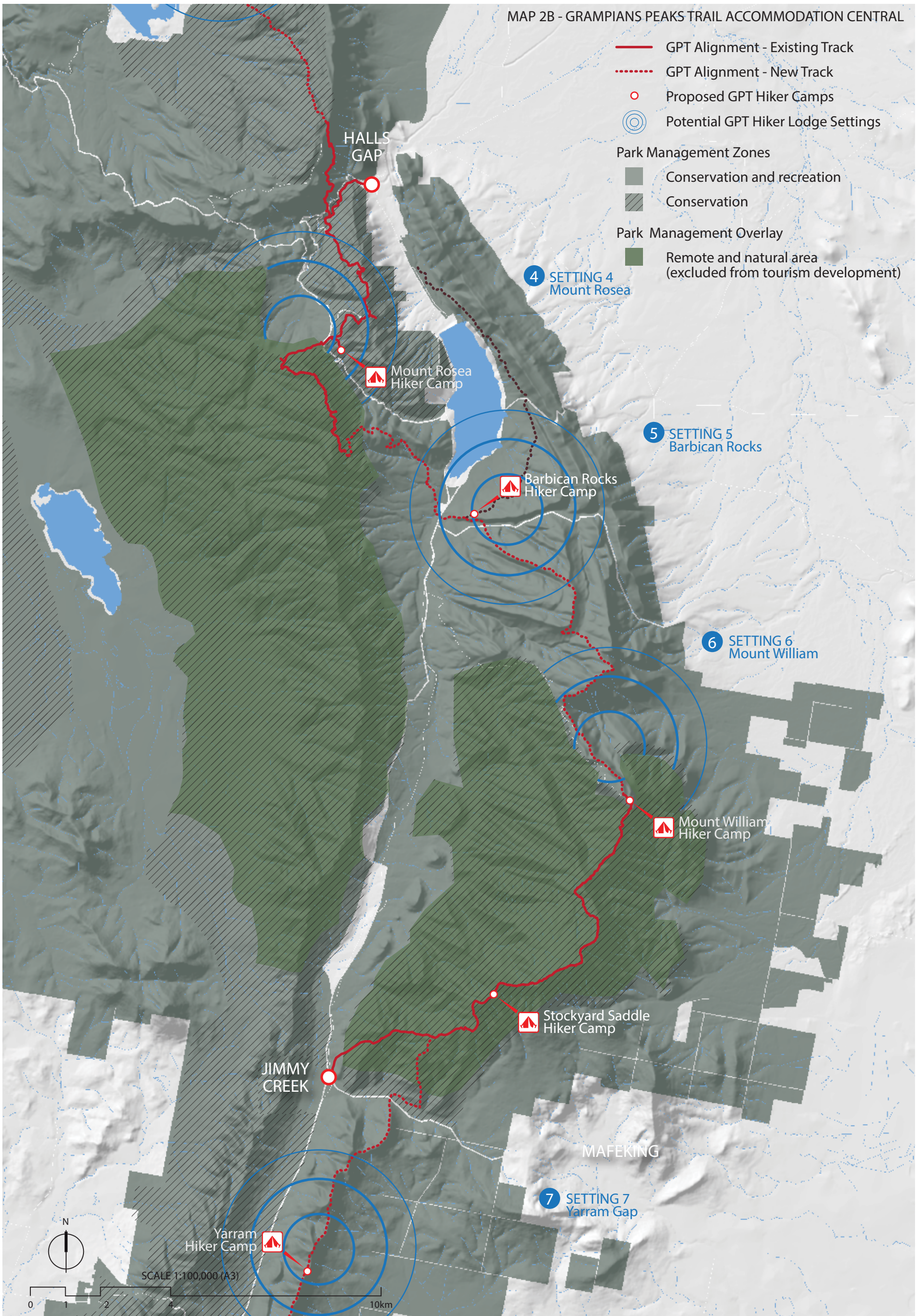
## Site 6 – Mt William Road

An opportunity exists to potentially locate a hiker lodge close to the summit of Mount William (on the north side of the existing road), taking advantage of the amazing elevated views westward across the Serra and Victoria Ranges. Vehicular access is good via the existing sealed road to the communication tower.

- Land: national park (on-park)
- Zoning: conservation & recreation, special protection overlay
- Condition: undisturbed
- Access: good









# Potential hiker lodge settings – southern segment

## Site 7 – Yarram Gap

There is a hiker lodge opportunity close to the proposed Yarram Hiker Camp. This setting is very rugged, with limited or no vehicular access. Any lodge in this location would need to be largely self sufficient with regard to power and water. It would represent a wonderful remote hiker lodge experience.

Land: national park (on-park)

Zoning: conservation & recreation

Condition: undisturbed

Access: poor



## Site 8 – Mount Christabel

This is an excellent setting for the location of a hiker lodge, with large areas of existing disturbed land close to the Grampians Peaks Trail alignment, both up on the range and further down in the valley. There are stunning views up and down the Serra and William Ranges. There is existing cleared vehicular access, although it is difficult and would require upgrading. New access roadways should not be constructed across the sensitive wetlands of the Wannon River.

Land: national park (on-park)

Zoning: conservation & recreation

Condition: disturbed

Access: existing track in poor condition



## Site 9 – Griffin

There is an opportunity for on park hiker lodge accommodation located close to Griffin picnic area. This setting has excellent vehicle access and is close to the Grampians Peaks Trail alignment. The landscape is open, flat red gum woodland and heathland with extensive views to the north and west of the Serra Range from the valley floor.

Land: national park (on-park)

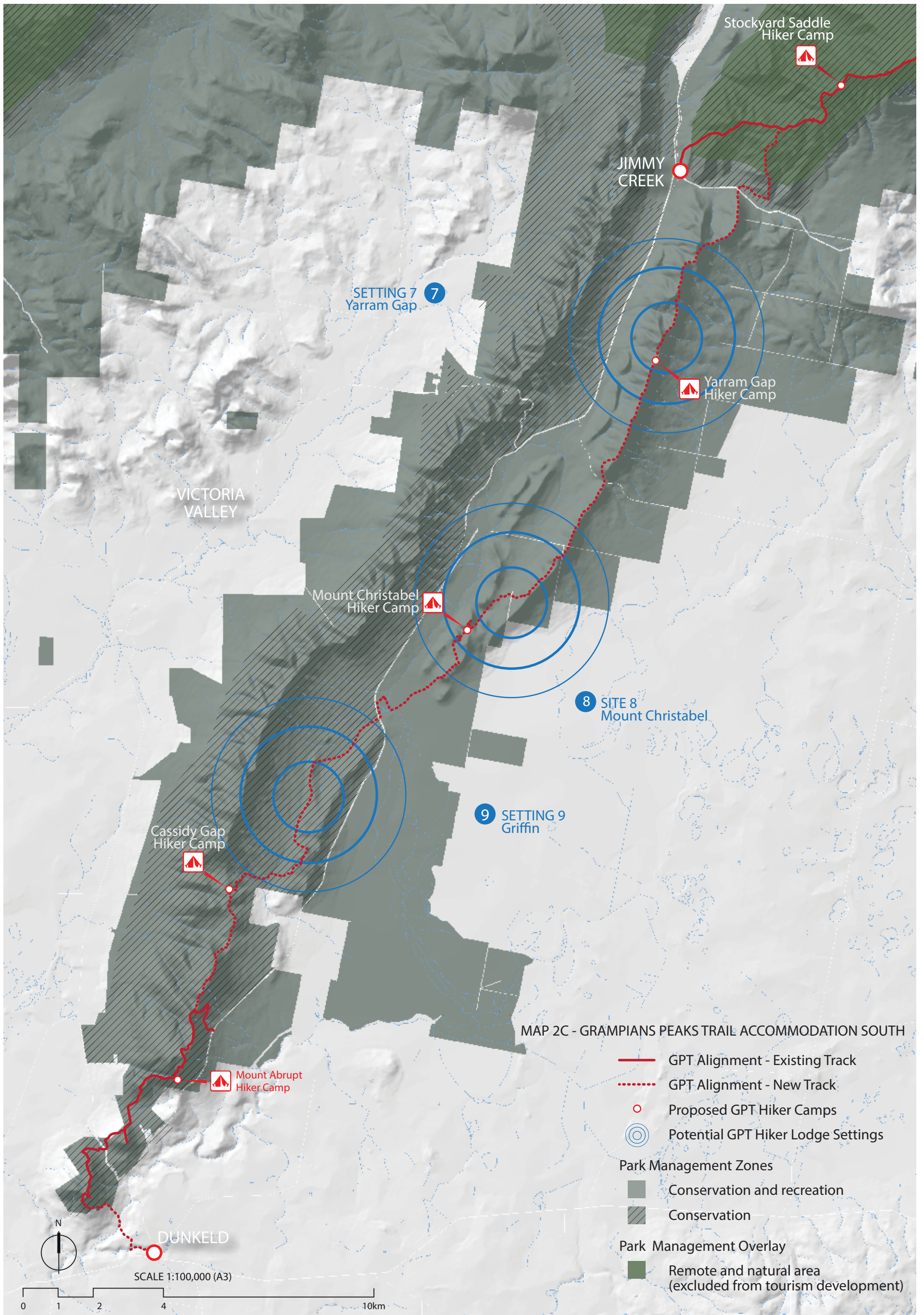
Zoning: conservation, special protection overlay

Condition: undisturbed

Access: excellent









## 4.4 Off-park accommodation

### Accommodation on private land

While on-walk accommodation, such as the hiker camps and lodges, best support the experience of an iconic, multi-day walk such as the Grampians Peaks Trail, it is also recognised that there are important off-park accommodation opportunities located on private land outside the National Park and in close proximity to the trail.

These locations offer opportunities to develop accommodation without the constraints and costs associated with developing within the National Park. As the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission report notes, “...the best course is to develop tourism ventures outside the boundaries of a national park.”

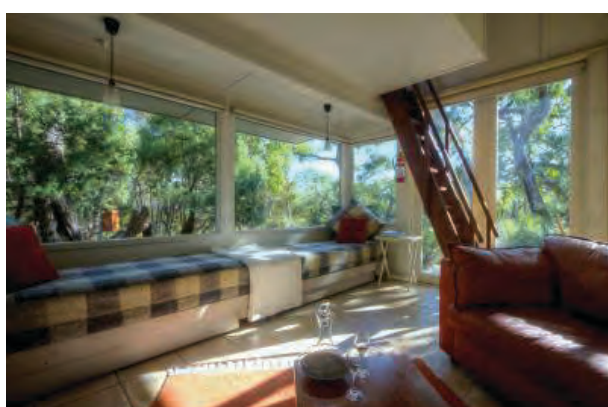
Off-park developments may also provide suitable accommodation at the beginning and conclusion of the walk. At the beginning, it may offer a level of luxury prior to departure on a tough but exciting hike. At the conclusion, it may offer a level of pampering and comfort, allowing walkers to recover and celebrate their adventure.

#### Off-walk accommodation benefits

The benefits of developing off-walk accommodation on private land include:

- private land will generally have better access to services (including power and water) and may therefore be less costly to develop;
- developments will not be constrained by National Park management zones and overlays, making development of larger projects more feasible;

Aquila Eco Lodge on the west side of Mount Abrupt is an excellent example of existing off-walk accommodation that can service the Grampians Peaks Trail.



- the opportunity to provide accommodation for a broader market beyond walkers using the Grampians Peaks Trail, thereby making the return on investment more attractive; and
- more flexibility for tourism projects through reforms to rural zoning that reduce permit requirements and provide greater flexibility for tourism land uses.

Other considerations for the development of off-walk accommodations include:

- the need for additional trail to connect the Grampians Peaks Trail with off-walk accommodation. This should be undertaken by Parks Victoria within the park and by the landowner on private land;
- the need for additional signage where track intersections occur. All signage should be consistent with Grampians Peaks Trail signage and meet the Parks Victoria signage guidelines;
- some off park accommodation may be located too far from the Grampians Peaks Trail and require daily shuttles to drop off at the beginning and pick up at the end of each days walk; and

### Off-walk opportunities

The success of the Grampians Peaks Trail will depend on the emergence of a range of accommodation options that support the walk. There is an opportunity for existing businesses to provide Grampians Peaks Trail accommodation packages either individually or in collaboration with licensed tour operators.

Halls Gap is ideally located to provide accommodation either at the beginning or end of a segment walk, or as an overnight stay during a multi-segment walk. The township of Dunkeld is ideally located to provide accommodation at the conclusion of the walk. A number of off-walk accommodation options already exist within close proximity to the Grampians Peaks Trail alignment, including Roses Gap Recreation Centre, numerous businesses in Halls Gap, Aquila Eco Lodges, Royal Mail Hotel and other accommodation in Dunkeld.





The potential exists for niche eco-tourism accommodation and services that support the walk to be located adjacent to the National Park at the following locations:

#### Mount Zero

Located at the start of the Grampians Peaks Trail, there is an opportunity to provide accommodation, as well as equipment and supplies, that can service both the walking and climbing communities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is existing demand for a facility in this location.

#### Roses Gap

There are a number of private land parcels in Roses Gap within close proximity to the Grampians Peaks Trail alignment, which could service a wonderful overnight Grampians Peaks Trail walk from Mount Zero to Roses Gap staying overnight at Barigar Hiker Camp, or form the start of an overnight walk to Halls Gap, staying at the Lake Wartook hiker camp.

#### Troopers Creek

The proximity of private land in the Wartook Valley to Troopers Creek provides opportunities for off-walk accommodation at the conclusion of Day 02, enjoying the beautiful western escarpment to the Mount Difficult range.

#### Cassidy Gap

A large parcel of land located close to the trail alignment could provide easy on-off trail access.

#### Brambuk (Halls Gap)

A large parcel of land behind Brambuk along Fyans Creek provides wonderful views of the Serra and William Ranges. This site could link into a 3 day and 2 night loop walk from Halls Gap to Mount Rosea and Barbican Rocks.

#### Dunkeld / Mount Abrupt

There are a number of privately owned parcels of land that offer adjacent connections to the final day of walking around Mount Abrupt and Mount Sturgeon.

### Examples of benchmark off-walk accommodation

There are a number of recent, high quality tourism developments located on private land that offer an insight into the type of off-walk accommodation that may be appropriate for both the Grampians Peaks Trail and the broader tourist market.

#### Great Southern lodge, South Australia

Southern Ocean Lodge offers an exclusive luxury lodge experience on Kangaroo Island. It is located atop a secluded cliff on a rugged stretch of coast and offers views of the wild Southern Ocean and pristine Kangaroo Island wilderness.

#### Bay of Fires lodge, Tasmania

Located on private land surrounded by National Park, the Bay of Fires Lodge is a luxury, solar powered eco-lodge designed with minimum impact on the environment. It operates as part of the Bay of Fires Walk, linking with the on park Forester Beach Camp.

#### Saffire Freycinet, Tasmania

Saffire is a luxury coastal resort located on Tasmania's Freycinet Peninsula, overlooking the Hazards Mountains and the pristine waters of Great Oyster Bay. It offers luxurious suites, day spa, restaurant, guest lounge and bar and links to the nearby Freycinet National Park, including the famous Wineglass Bay walk.

The Royal Mail Hotel in Dunkeld is an exceptional way to celebrate the completion of a Grampians Peaks Trail walk.






# Chapter 05

## What services will support the Grampians Peaks Trail?

Walking through the Grand Canyon in the Wonderland Range – Day 05 (Thomas Parkes)





Iconic walking destinations  
around the world are supported  
by towns that provide high quality  
services and facilities.



## 5.1 Creating a walking destination

Iconic walking destinations around the world are supported by great ‘walking’ towns that provide high quality, well integrated and diverse visitor experiences, services and facilities.

### Creating a walking town

An important ingredient to every iconic walking destination is the creation of a ‘walking town’ that can provide all necessary services that will encourage and support the development of the walk. This includes outfitting, accommodation, transport, food and beverage, laundry and dry cleaning and entertainment and ancillary activities, as well as a broader range of activities and events that can augment the walking experience.

Walking towns are always located in scenic locations and often have very distinct summer and winter activities that support different seasonal activities. These locations focus on the splendour of the landscape and the user experience often includes a strong emphasis on sustainable conservation and recreation.

Walking towns also exhibit a strong sense of community identity, pride and a collective sense that everybody is working together. Typically, walking towns form at the beginning and the end of a walking journey. As a result, the initial and final impressions are often what the visitor will remember most. Great international walking towns include Queenstown in New Zealand, Grindewald in Switzerland, Chamonix in France and Moab in the United States (refer Appendix 01).

### Halls Gap & Dunkeld – walking towns

An important objective is to transform Halls Gap and Dunkeld into internationally recognised ‘walking towns’ that will support the development of businesses that provide world class products and services for the Grampians Peaks Trail. Council will play an important role in realising this aim.

#### Improving the presentation of the town

Inspired by their scenic locations, walking towns are invariably well presented and attractive. An important goal is to improve the visual appearance of Halls Gap, and make better use of the stunning setting nestled between the mountains. This includes providing improved linkages to the Grampians Peaks Trail trailhead, which should be clearly located and easy to access. In Dunkeld, the final section of the Grampians Peaks Trail will be constructed from Mount Sturgeon into the town. It is important that this final section is a fitting end to an amazing journey.

#### Making the town ‘walkable’

Another important characteristic of walking towns is that they are very compact and promote walking and cycling. This reduced reliance on vehicles creates a safer, more relaxed, pedestrian friendly town.

#### Council & community led

If Halls Gap is to become a walking town, it is important that both the community and Council embrace this vision. Council should undertake an urban design study of Halls Gap, its linkages to the Grampians Peaks Trail and the town’s entrances. The study should investigate how the image, identity and amenity of the town can be improved through quality design of both the public and private realms.

Working with the community, concept plans should be developed that focus on creating a ‘walkable (and bike friendly) town’ involving streets upgrades and better linkages with the Grampians Peaks Trail. The study should outline a program for implementation and funding to assist Council and Parks Victoria in achieving early wins.

A structure plan was completed for Dunkeld in 2012. This plan should be updated to include provisions for the integration of the Grampians Peaks Trail through the township.

#### Regional economic benefits

The transformation of Halls Gap into a walking town that supports the Grampians Peaks Trail will help drive regional economic benefits through greater levels of investment in new and expanded businesses and increased employment.

### Linking to events & activities

Walking towns always provide a diverse range of integrated, value-added experiences, attractions and events which support the entire region and allow visitors to augment their experience of the walk.

Halls Gap should build upon its identity as the outdoor recreation and adventure sports centre of the Grampians, offering a range of activities in addition to the Grampians Peaks Trail, including climbing, bouldering, water sports, cycling, mountain biking, fishing and horse riding.

Stronger linkages should be made to adjacent attractions, including Mount Zero Olives and the Dunkeld. A range of seasonal events throughout the year should be promoted and incentives should be provided to encourage new business. This will help ensure the Grampians becomes one of the great walking destinations of the world.



## 5.2 Working with the community

The success of the Grampians Peaks Trail will emerge from a strong community ownership and pride for the walk.

### Developing community support

This will involve encouraging key partnerships between government, stakeholders and the community, including government departments, emergency services, local municipalities and planning authorities, public utility and water authorities, and tourism organisations.

### Working with the Traditional owners

The Grampians has a wonderful indigenous cultural heritage that is embedded within the landscape. An exciting opportunity exists to work with the traditional owners of Gariwerd to develop a range of Grampians Peaks Trail products and services that tell the indigenous story of this ancient landscape. This may include guided walking products with traditional owners, fire side stories, bush tucker meals and meaningful interpretation of indigenous creation stories. These products need to be viable and market tested.

### Licensed tour operators

Licensed tour operators (LTO) provide a range of recreational and educational services in the Park which expand the environmental, cultural and activity based experiences available to visitors. The success of the Grampians Peaks Trail is reliant on the development of a full range of guided walk and accommodation packages. LTO's play a vital role in developing these products to meet a growing and more diverse walking market. LTO's are also well placed to educate about conservation and park management issues and to encourage minimum impact park practices.

### Friends and volunteers

Friends groups, volunteers and students make a valuable contribution to park management. The Friends of Grampians–Gariwerd and the Friends of Zumstein take a pro-active role in park management by carrying out innovative projects and promoting the protection and conservation of the park. It is important that friends groups and volunteers are actively involved with the development of the Grampians Peaks Trail.

### Working with council

The Grampians Peaks Trail traverses four local government areas along its length. Parks Victoria will work closely with all councils to undertake works to improve the quality of the Grampians Peaks Trail experience and support the development of the walk. This may include upgrading infrastructure in key towns and locations, sealing and maintenance of access roads, supporting the development of local businesses or the promotion of the walk itself.

### Supporting local business

A walking town supports local businesses to develop and grow to service both the walk and the wider market, driving both local and regional economic development.

### Interest groups

Direct engagement with a range of relevant interest groups will provide vital information and feedback on the design and implementation of the Grampians Peaks Trail. This includes Bushwalking Victoria, the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) and the Grampians National Park Advisory Committee.

### Walker involvement

Finally, an opportunity exists to involve Grampians Peaks Trail walkers in a variety of useful tasks that can support the walk and the National Park, including animal and flora tracking and monitoring, track condition assessments and track maintenance, such as clearing fallen vegetation.



## 5.3 Outfitting & support services

### Outfitting & support services:

A range of products and services to facilitate the walking adventure will need to be developed to support the Grampians Peaks Trail, including –

- on-walk accommodation
- accommodation at the start and end of the journey;
- food and beverage;
- footwear and clothing retail;
- massage and spa;
- laundry and dry cleaning;
- transport, car hire and travel logistics;
- shuttle services to the start and end of walks; and
- rental of equipment, such as back packs, clothing, GPS and emergency equipment.

The location of Halls Gap midway through the walk provides an important re-supply point for longer Grampians Peaks Trail walks. Halls Gap does not currently provide the level of professional outfitting that may be expected of an iconic walking destination. Consequently, there is an opportunity for both existing and new businesses to evolve and innovate to develop new products and services over time.

### On-walk accommodation

A range of on-walk accommodation types are proposed for the Grampians Peaks Trail. For details (please refer to Chapter 4).

### Off-walk accommodation

Many people undertaking a Grampians Peaks Trail walk will arrive the day before or stay an additional night(s) after the completion of a walk, particularly after longer, more difficult journeys. Consequently, a diversity of pre and post walk accommodation needs to be provided, including self contained, bed and breakfasts, camping, hotel and farm stays.

### Food and beverage

As the walk develops, there will be growing demand for food and beverage services that can supply independent and guided walkers along the Grampians Peaks Trail. Catering for walkers will include the provision of meals ranging from simple through to more luxurious food and wine experiences. An important opportunity exists to utilise locally grown produce, including dairy, wine, beer and olives.

### Travel logistics

A distinguishing feature of the Grampians Peaks Trail is its relatively close proximity to Melbourne and Adelaide, offering fast and convenient access to the walk. Walking towns are typically well serviced by public transport, allowing visitors easy access to and from their destination.

How walkers arrive and depart the Grampians forms an important component of the overall Grampians Peaks Trail experience. The travel logistics must be clear, well coordinated and easy to organise, and must be seen as an integral part of the journey. Travel information and bookings should be easily available through a centralised Grampians Peaks Trail booking and information website (refer Section 8.2).

### Access by car

The Grampians is predominantly a self-drive destination with over 97% of visitors being self-drive tourists. Consequently, adequate car parking at trailheads should be provided, as many groups of independent walkers will car pool shuttle, dropping a car at either end of a walk segment (refer Section 7.3).

### Access by train and bus

Current access to the Grampians by public transport requires a train from Southern Cross Station to Stawell, with a connecting bus service to Halls Gap. The bus service currently runs only once a day. As the Grampians Peaks Trail develops and visitation increases, there may be the need for additional bus services to Halls Gap.

### Access by air

The nearest regional airport is located at Hamilton, with daily flights from Essendon Airport. It is questionable whether this is a practical way of accessing the Grampians Peaks Trail, due to the limited availability of flights and high transfer times and costs.

### Shuttle transport

Because public transport around the Grampians is limited, the establishment of a regular and convenient shuttle service will greatly assist the movement of walkers to and from different sections of their walk. This shuttle service should encourage walkers to leave their vehicles at Halls Gap or Dunkeld, thereby reducing the pressure on car parking at trailheads. There is an opportunity for LTO's to capitalise on this demand, which will grow over time as new sections of the walk are opened and visitation increases.



## 5.4 Private investment

The Grampians Peaks Trail will rely on the successful collaboration between the public and private sectors to provide the walking trail infrastructure and a full suite of complementary products and services to support the walking experience.

### Public & private collaboration

Over the long-term, the commercial viability of the Grampians Peaks Trail will require ongoing private investment, in addition to potential funding from government sources. It is therefore important to provide a structured process through which private sector enthusiasm and initiatives for appropriate investment can have a role in determining the best possible development and economic outcomes for the Grampians Peaks Trail, and ensuring that these outcomes have regard for the environmental and cultural values of the National Park.

### Investment in the national park

In recent years, there has been growing recognition that certain tourism experiences, such as hiker lodges located along a remote, multi-day walk, are reliant on visitors directly engaging with the park in a way that makes travelling to and from the park impossible or inconvenient. In such circumstances, private sector investment in sensible and sensitive developments along the Grampians Peaks Trail should be allowed, provided the investment complements environmental, heritage and other values and there is a net public benefit.

While the provision of the base infrastructure for the walk (including the trail and hiker camps) will be delivered by Parks Victoria, private investment that provides a range of accommodation options, walking packages and services should be supported.

### Process for private investment

The process for facilitating private investment within the National Park has been made clear with the release by the then Department of Sustainability and Environment of the *Guidelines for Tourism Investment Opportunities of Significance in National Parks*. These guidelines provide a streamlined process for assessing proposals for high quality tourism investment opportunities of regional and state significance in national parks.

The guidelines outline a five stage approval process to ensure that investor initiated proposals provide the greatest net public benefit. This will be determined by assessing the environmental outcomes (given the primary purpose of national parks is the preservation and protection of the natural environment), the social outcomes (given that parks are also for the use and enjoyment of the public) and the economic outcomes, where proposals may include broader economic benefits for the region.

It is understood the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) will oversee the approval process with input from relevant government departments, including Parks Victoria as the land manager for the park. The opportunity exists for DEPI to undertake an expression of interest for a range of private sector investment opportunities that will support the Grampians Peaks Trail.

The *Guidelines for Tourism Investment Opportunities of Significance in National Parks* also outlines the criteria to “make a proposal”. This is further covered in chapter 8 of this plan.

### Investment criteria

There are a range of investment criteria that will guide and prioritise the selection of preferred sites for private investment along the trail. These criteria include road accessibility, trail accessibility, existing base infrastructure, geophysical conditions, spectacular views and National Park management plans and overlays. The criteria will influence the decision making processes of the private sector, who will apply market intelligence to determine which particular sites represent the highest opportunity for commercial success.

### Land tenure

The Victorian Government has recently introduced for up to 99 year private leases within National Parks to provide greater investor confidence, a stronger incentive to develop innovative, high quality proposals and enough certainty and time to recoup a satisfactory return on investment.

### Rural zones review

To further encourage private investment in tourism facilities around National Parks, the Victorian Government has undertaken reforms to rural zoning which reduce or remove permit requirements and provide greater flexibility for land uses that support tourism ventures.

### Surety of investment

To ensure private investment is feasible, it is important that public funding is made available for the construction and operation of the base Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure, including the trail and hiker camps. Private investors require surety in knowing that the trail will be well constructed, operated and maintained (refer Section 9.1 Management).



# Chapter 06

What are the economic benefits of the Grampians Peaks Trail?

The Grampians Peaks Trail will provide a demonstrable economic benefit to the local community, the region and the State.

Walking down from the summit of Mount Rosea towards Burrough huts (Day 06)







# 6.1 Economic benefits of the Grampians Peaks Trail

The Grampians Peaks Trail will provide a demonstrable economic benefit to the local community, the region and the State by supporting a wide range of investment opportunities for tourism, complementary services and infrastructure that provide an holistic and integrated walking experience.

## Economic benefits

Through a combination of public and private investment, the Grampians Peaks Trail has enormous tourism potential to generate visitation and expenditure (on accommodation, food and the like) that will provide significant and enduring economic benefits to the region and the State. These benefits include:

- 1. Visitor spending and employment flowing directly from people who have come to walk the Grampians Peaks Trail;
- 2. Increased visitor spending and employment as a result of increased visitation to the Grampians;
- 3. Capital expenditure and construction employment associated with building the Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure;
- 4. Creation of a major nature based tourism icon for the State of Victoria; and
- 5. Reductions in unemployment in the Central Highlands / Wimmera region.

## Benefit 1

### Visitor expenditure at the Grampians Peaks Trail

A significant economic benefit will be the visitor spending and employment resulting directly from people who have come to walk the Grampians Peaks Trail. In 2025, the overnight visits associated with the Grampians Peaks Trail are expected to total 80,161 nights (refer Table 3.4) and are expected to generate expenditures of around \$6.39 million annually (refer Table 6.2).

This spending will support 35 full time jobs which directly service the Grampians Peaks Trail, including jobs associated with the provision of walking tours, supporting infrastructure, hiker lodges and other accommodation and services for Grampians Peaks Trail walkers. A further 25 indirect (or flow-on) full time jobs will be created in the wider state and national economies, including the Grampians region.

## Benefit 2

### Visitor expenditure at the grampians

It is likely that the promotion of the Grampians Peaks Trail will also attract more people to visit the Grampians in general, even if they do not walk the trail. In this way, development of the Grampians Peaks Trail will encourage more visitor expenditures in the Grampians.

By 2025, total expenditures by visitors to the Grampians are expected to reach \$85 million per year, a proportion of which will be attributable to the operation of the Grampians Peaks Trail. This spending is expected to support an estimated 425 direct full time jobs for people in the region, as well as 320 indirect (or flow-on) full time jobs in the wider state and national economies.

If the Grampians Peaks Trail is not constructed, it is likely the full extent of forecast visitation, expenditure and employment will not be achieved. This is a result of reduced promotion of the Grampians (without the Grampians Peaks Trail), as well as increased competition from other state, national and international visitor destinations.

Table 6.1 – Estimated employment outcomes associated with the Grampians Peaks Trail

Job type	Direct full time jobs	Indirect full time jobs	Total jobs
Construction Phase	45	70	115
Ongoing Operation Phase	35	25	60
Total employment	80	95	175



### Benefit 3

#### Capital expenditure & construction employment

The capital expenditure and construction employment associated with building the Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure is another important benefit. The total investment associated with the construction of the track and hiker camps is estimated to be \$26.7 million (refer Table 6.3 page 71), with a commensurate private sector investment in infrastructure such as accommodation, retail and other facilities (subject to market forces).

This capital expenditure will provide business opportunities for construction companies in the central-west region of Victoria (as well as from further afield), and can be expected to generate 45 direct full time jobs.

A further 70 indirect (flow-on) full time jobs will be generated elsewhere in the economy. This includes a wide range of sectors and services such as building supplies, equipment manufacturers, financial services, and other activities that support the construction industry.

### Benefit 4

#### Creation of major tourism icon

The development of the Grampians Peaks Trail will provide Victoria with a major nature-based tourism icon. The Grampians Peaks Trail is an integral component of Victoria's Walk Icons, a group of four multi-day walking products that provide outstanding experiences, albeit in different environments and unique ways. Collectively these trails will be important in establishing regional Victoria and the state as a popular destination for state, interstate and international visitors.

### Benefit 5

#### Creating new employment

The final economic benefit is the increase in local employment through the creation of more jobs related to the construction and operation of the Grampians Peaks Trail, as well as through an increase in general visitation to the Grampians that may be attributable to Grampians Peaks Trail promotional efforts. Unemployment in the Central Highlands -Wimmera region is currently 6.0% (October 2012, DEEWRR) and is higher than the Victorian average of 5.4%.

For more detail on the Grampians Peaks Trail economic assessment, please refer to Appendix 5.



## 6.2 Grampians Peaks Trail revenues

### Estimated Grampians Peaks Trail revenues

The Grampians Peaks Trail is expected to generate 32,000 visitor nights in 2015, increasing to 80,161 visitor nights by 2025 when all segments of the trail are operational. Over this period, the total number of walkers using the Grampians Peaks Trail is expected to increase from 13,800 people in 2015, reaching 34,571 people by 2025 (refer Table 3.4 Grampians Peaks Trail Demand Estimate).

In 2015, when the central segment of the trail is operational, the estimated revenues generated by the spending of walkers on the trail would be \$2.55 million, increasing to \$6.39 million by 2025. These figures allow for a blend of visitor types on different ‘packages’, as noted previously (refer Table 6.2).

In estimating the potential expenditures of these visitors, the following assumptions have been made –

- 13,800 overnight and day walkers use the Grampians Peaks Trail in 2015, increasing to 34,571 overnight and day walkers by 2025 (refer Table 3.4);
- average walk covers approximately 3 nights per walker;
- number of nights associated with the Grampians Peaks Trail is estimated at 32,000 nights in 2015, increasing to 86,161 nights in 2025 (refer Table 3.4); and
- average ‘basic’ spend for the typical independent walker is \$150/walk or \$50/night using hiker camp accommodation, increasing to \$420 or \$140/night for the intermediate guided walking package, and increasing to \$1,125/walk or \$375/night for the ‘high-end’ guided walking package using on-walk roofed accommodation.

Table 6.2 – Broad estimates of potential Grampians Peaks Trail revenues at full development/usage, 2015 and 2025

Year	Type of Grampians Peaks Trail walker	Number of total visitor nights on Grampians Peaks Trail	Average spend per visitor night on Grampians Peaks Trail	Estimated total revenues per year
2015	Independent walks	25,600 nights (80%)	\$50	\$1.28 million
	Intermediate guided walks	4,800 nights (15%)	\$140	\$0.67 million
	High end guided walks	1,600 nights (5%)	\$375	\$0.60 million
Total		32,000 nights (100%)	\$134 (derived average)	\$2.55 million
2025	Independent walks	64,129 nights (80%)	\$50	\$3.21 million
	Intermediate guided walks	12,024 nights (15%)	\$140	\$1.68 million
	High end guided walks	4,008 nights (5%)	\$375	\$1.50 million
Total		80,161 nights (100%)	\$134 (derived average)	\$6.39 million



## 6.3 Grampians Peaks Trail costs

### Estimated Grampians Peaks Trail costs

The total cost to construct the Grampians Peaks Trail base infrastructure (including trail and hiker camps) will be in the vicinity of \$27 million. This includes –

Upgrade of Existing Track	\$4,833,833
Construction of New Track	\$14,338,074
New Boardwalks / Bridges	\$2,550,500
Construction of Hiker Camps	\$5,005,000
Total cost	\$26,727,407

Government funding will likely be required to deliver the core Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure and to encourage a commensurate level of private sector investment in a range of products and services, including accommodation, that will support the walking experience (subject to the level of private investment and market forces).

### Grampians Peaks Trail operating costs

The cost to operate and maintain the Grampians Peaks Trail needs to be considered in the development of a sustainable business model. The development of a detailed business case will model potential revenue opportunities, on-ground maintenance regimes, marketing and promotions costs to deliver a world class experience. The master plan proposes that any fees derived from the walk ie camping, leases and/or use of the trail should offset operational costs, minimising the need for ongoing government funding.

Table 6.4 – Grampians Peaks Trail costs per segment (m)

segment	cost	cost/m
Northern	\$6,044,946	\$143/m
Central	\$11,921,186	\$205/m
Southern	\$8,761,275	\$224/m
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$26,727,407</b>	<b>\$192/m</b>

Table 6.3 – Summary of Grampians Peaks Trail construction costs

Segment	Day	Start	Finish	Track exist	Track new	Length (m)	Total cost	Segment cost
Northern	01	Mount Zero	Barigar HC	4,628m	4,008m	8,630m	\$1,301,585	
	02	Barigar HC	Mount Difficult HC	5,009m	10,414m	15,423m	\$1,422,893	
	03	Mount Difficult HC	Lake Wartook HC	2,694m	9,869m	9,896m	\$1,571,162	
	04	Lake Wartook HC	Halls Gap Township	5,813m	4,971m	10,784m	\$1,749,305	\$6,044,946
Central	05	Halls Gap	Rosea HC	8,911m	0m	8,911m	\$455,000	
	06	Rosea HC	Barbican Rocks HC	14,069m	0m	14,069m	\$455,000	
	07	Barbican Rocks HC	Mount William HC	0m	13,434m	13,434m	\$4,233,606	
	08	Mount William HC	Stockyard Saddle HC	9,047m	0m	9,047m	\$2,716,825	
	09	Stockyard Saddle HC	Yarram Gap HC (Jimmy)	2,927m	9,514m	12,441m	\$4,060,754	\$11,921,186
Southern	10	Yarram Gap HC	Mount Christobel HC	0m	10,673m	10,673m	\$3,010,737	
	11	Mount Christobel HC	Cassidy Gap HC	0m	12,174m	12,174m	\$1,925,346	
	12	Cassidy Gap HC	Mount Abrupt HC	3,179m	3,697m	6,876m	\$1,870,037	
	13	Mount Abrupt HC	Dunkeld township	4,440m	4,793m	9,233m	\$1,955,155	\$8,761,275
Total Grampians Peaks Trail distance				60,717m	83,547m	144,624m	\$26,727,407	\$26,727,407

Note: For a more detailed breakdown of construction cost, please refer to Appendix 03



# 6.4 Staging & implementation

## Staging the Grampians Peaks Trail

The construction of the Grampians Peaks Trail will be staged over a number of years, commencing in 2015 and completed by 2025 (refer to Table 6.3). Staging of works will be subject to available capital works funding and the level of private sector investment.

### Stage 1 – central segment

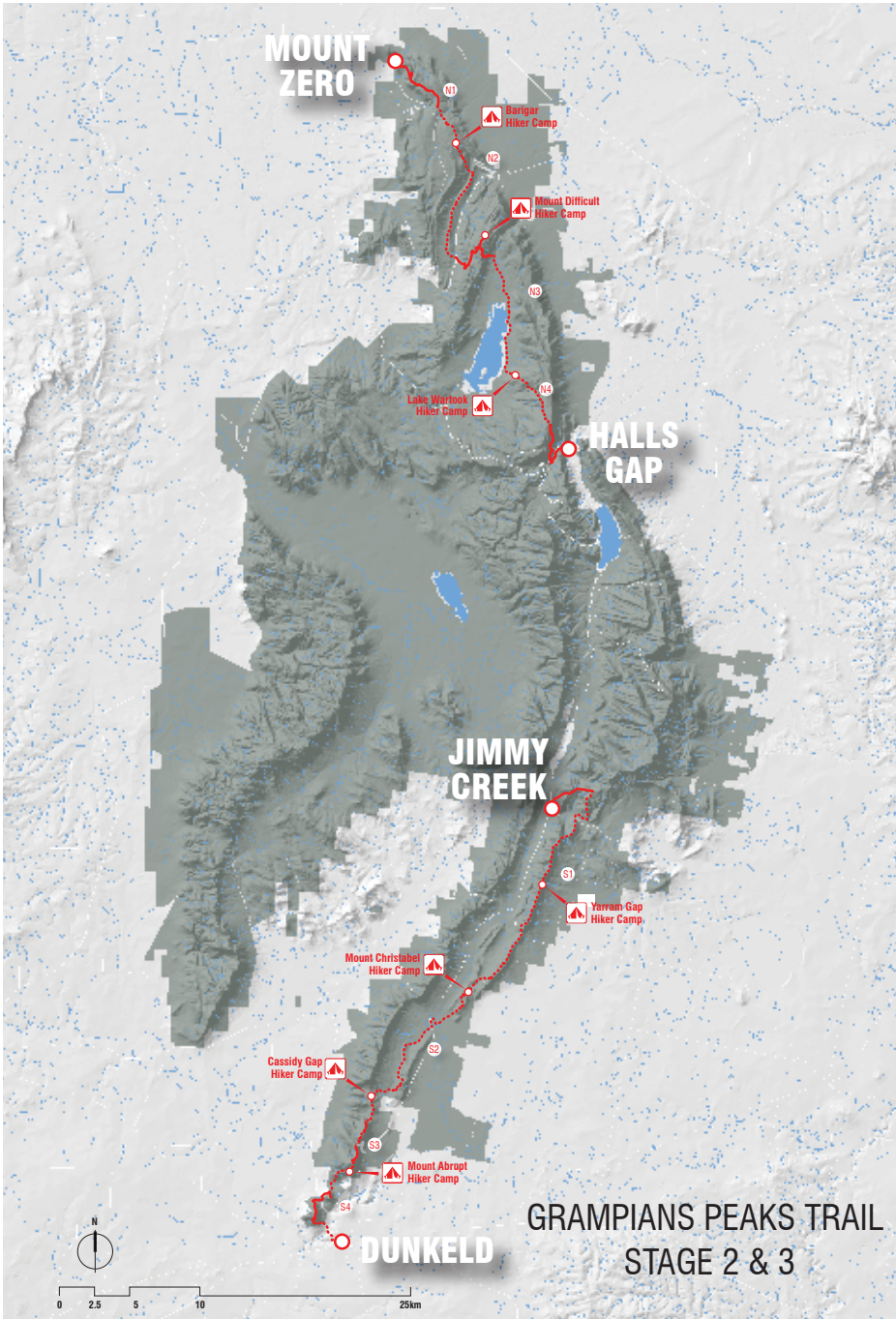
The next five years will focus on the central segment between Halls Gap and Jimmy Creek, which captures the quintessential Grampians walking experience, traversing stunning landscapes with amazing views. It includes iconic Grampians peaks such as Mount Rosea, Mount William and the Major Mitchell Plateau. While this segment is the most costly to build, it is also the longest (57.9 km) and contains the most existing track (34.9 km).

### Stages 2 & 3

Stages 2 and 3 will consist of the development of the Grampians Peaks Trail in both the northern and southern segments of the Park. The precise sequence of construction will be influenced by a range of factors including market forces, political interest, capital works funding and regional support.

The southern segment from Jimmy Creek to Dunkeld includes some spectacular remote walking along both the William and Serra ranges. While this segment is the shortest of the three (38.9 km), it contains the longest length of new track (31.3 km) and traverses some very remote and difficult terrain, where track construction costs are high.

The northern segment links Mount Zero to Halls Gap and includes the spectacular landscapes of Mount Stapylton, Hollow Mountain and Mount Difficult. This segment has the lowest cost to construct (\$143/m) and better existing access, making it considerably easier to construct. There is an opportunity for Parks Victoria to utilise volunteer labour in the construction of this segment.





Implementation

The following tasks need to be undertaken to allow the vision for the Grampians Peaks Trail to be realised in a timely and efficient manner:

Community consultation

- Undertake broad consultation on the draft master plan to gather feedback on the concept for the walk;
- Communicate the project vision and ambitions to the public and private sector;
- Work with the project partners and taskforce to consult broadly about the project objectives and design; and
- Undertake amendments to the master plan in accordance with the feedback received.

Refine business model

- Undertake a detailed Business Case that clearly identifies the benefits of the project;
- Confirm an appropriate business model, including refinement of management processes, resources and staffing.

Secure funding

- Seek funding to commence Stage 01 works;
- Secure funding for the development of the Grampians Peaks Trail website and on-line booking system to enable management of the walk.

New track & planning works

- Confirm the Grampians Peaks Trail alignment, including undertaking more detailed ground truthing where necessary;
- Undertake Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) for the proposed alignment, where required;
- Undertake detailed flora and fauna surveys and vegetation Net Gain analysis for the proposed alignment; and
- Undertake Native Title notification.

Initiating private investment

- Undertake an Expression of Interest process to ascertain private sector interest in the provision of products and services to support the Grampians Peaks Trail, in accordance with the recently released DSE guidelines (refer Section 5.4).

Construction of stage 1

- Commence construction of Stage 1 from Halls Gap to Jimmy Creek. This stage will be a high quality product that sets the standard for subsequent stages of project. Works have already commenced along this section of the Grampians Peaks Trail through funding made available through the State Government’s Flood Recovery programme.

Table 6.4 – summary of Grampians Peaks Trail staging

Stage 1 – central segment		
Planning phase (2 years)		2011 to 2013
Construction phase (3 years)		2013 to 2015
Operational start		End 2015
Stage 2 – northern or southern segment		
Planning phase (2 years)		2015 to 2016
Construction phase (3 years)		2017 to 2019
Operational start		End 2020
Stage 3 – northern or southern segment		
Planning phase (2 years)		2020 to 2021
Construction phase (3 years)		2022 to 2024
Operational start		End 2025
Note – Dates are indicative only and subject to change.		



# Chapter 07

What will the Grampians Peaks Trail look like?



View of the Pinnacle with Lake Bellfield and the William Range behind (Day 05)



The Grampians Peaks Trail will be designed using a consistent suite of details that reinforce the unique identity and experience of the walk.





# 7.1 Trail design

The Grampians Peaks Trail will be designed using a consistent suite of details that reinforce the unique identity and experience of the walk.

## Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure manual

An important component of the master plan is the Grampians Peaks Trail Infrastructure Design Manual which clearly identifies the suite of design details required to construct the walk. The manual establishes general design principles and guidelines, as well as indicative construction details, of all infrastructure to be used along the trail. A full copy of the Manual is included in Part C of the master plan.

### Grampians Peaks Trail design philosophy

The design of the trail is an important part of the walking experience. The Grampians Peaks Trail will be designed using a consistent suite of details that reinforce the identity and experience of the walk, can be deployed across a variety of conditions and allow for the easy replacement of components. The highest level of craftsmanship and quality should be sought, along with construction techniques that suit the environment.

The trail should match the surrounding environment, be aligned along natural

patterns within the landscape and integrate existing elements and obstacles. The need for constructed elements (such as bridges and ladders) should be minimised. Where required, a ‘light touch’ should be evident, and heavily engineered or over-designed solutions should be avoided. The trail itself will be constructed and maintained to the highest standards, consistent with Australian Standard AS 2156.1 Walking Track Classification and Signage.

### Trail grading system

Parks Victoria has adopted the Australian Walking Track Grading System to assist people who are not regular or confident bush walkers to experience walking by providing helpful information about walking trails. Track grading is the primary means of informing people about the features of walking tracks. This will also assist in the marketing and promotion of walking as a leisure activity. By providing a standardised level of difficulty or track grading, users are able to gauge whether a particular track is suitable for them. Please refer to Appendix 4 for a more detailed description of track grades.

### Grampians Peaks Trail grading

An important feature of the Grampians Peaks Trail is the broad range of walks on offer, from easier Grade 3 walks through to more challenging Grade 4, and technically difficult Grade 5 walks. This variety of track grades will ensure there is an appropriate walk for a broad range of visitors along the Grampians Peaks Trail, from beginner through to experienced.

While it is a goal to make the Grampians Peaks Trail as accessible as possible, there is also a recognition that certain areas will remain difficult to cater for experienced bush walkers. The opportunity for more challenging walking along the Grampians Peaks Trail will be an important point of difference within the market.

In most circumstances, the trail will be rated Grade 4. This is a reflection of the generally difficult, rocky and steep terrain within the Grampians. While a Grade 3 track is easier to walk, they require significantly higher levels of infrastructure (including steps and handrails) to meet this grade, which has a high environmental and financial cost.



Construction of a stone stairway leading to Mount Rosea demonstrating high quality craftsmanship, use of local stone and avoiding the need for handrails or balustrades through good trail alignment.





## Trail maintenance

It is important that the ongoing maintenance requirements of the trail are fully considered.

### Regular monitoring

All Grampians Peaks Trail assets will require regular monitoring to assess their condition and safety, as well as to ensure that visitor impacts are understood and to assist with conservation and protection of the environment.

### Funding of track maintenance

The business plan proposes a full cost recovery model where suitable revenue streams and cost structures provide support for the ongoing management and maintenance of all Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure.

## Trail material palette

A variety of different materials will be used to construct the Grampians Peaks Trail. These materials have been assessed for performance and durability, life cycle cost, availability, logistics, aesthetics, ability to work on site, salvageability, maintenance, sustainability and prefabrication.

### Grampians stone

The preferred material to construct trail infrastructure is stone found on-site or in the surrounding landscape. While more costly and labour-intensive to install, stone is by far the most durable and site-appropriate material. Local sandstone and other low maintenance materials will be used wherever possible and carefully blended into the surrounding landscape.

### Oxidised mild steel

Where structures are required, such as bridges, boardwalks and ladders, these elements can be constructed from mild steel that will oxidise in the environment. These elements should be robust enough to withstand bushfires.

### Hardwood timbers

Where possible, elements that are seen or touched by walkers should be constructed from larger dimensioned, Class 01 hardwood timbers, preferably salvaged or sourced from within the park. These timbers are more resistant to fire and often can be re-dressed or recycled after a fire. If destroyed, then the replacement timber can easily be re-installed over the surviving structural steel frame.

### Oxidised steel grating

In more remote locations, oxidised steel grating can be used in lieu of hardwood timbers. All materials should develop a patina of age, and weather gracefully, thereby integrating visually into the surrounding landscape.

Corten Steel signage



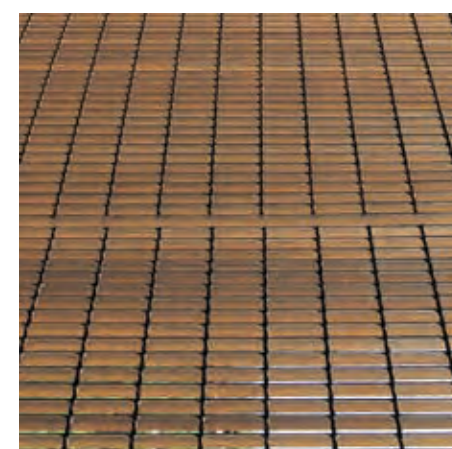
Grampians stone



Hardwood timbers



Steel Grating





## 7.2 Interpretation, wayfinding & signage

The walk will focus on telling the stories of this ancient and rugged landscape through the Six Seasons of Gariwerd.

### What is interpretation?

Interpretation is a means of communicating ideas, feelings and values to help foster positive attitudes towards the conservation of natural areas, better understand natural and cultural values, and to increase awareness of the relationship between people and the natural environment. Visitors are increasingly looking to experience something unique, with high levels of experiential learning of the natural and culture environment specific to the location. This learning is delivered through both active (guided) and passive (signage, guidebooks and maps) interpretation.

#### Interpretation for the Grampians Peaks Trail

A detailed interpretation framework for the Grampians Peaks Trail shall be developed. This framework will provide information, interpretation and education integrated into the walking experience, and will focus on telling the stories of this ancient and rugged landscape through the *Six Seasons of Gariwerd* or *Gariwerd – a Cultural Landscape*. An essential component of the walk is the interpretation of the natural and cultural environment by traditional Aboriginal owners and the integration of the key messages developed for Brambuk. The interpretation framework should:

- tell the stories of the landscape (including indigenous history, bird watching, plant identification, geography and geology);
- identify the level of interpretation required, the best method of integration and where these stories could be delivered along the walk;
- be designed in a manner that is sympathetic to the environment and non-invasive, such that people can choose not to access the interpretation if they want;
- explore alternate methods of delivery, particularly the use of digital information that can be downloaded prior to departure;
- allow seamless integration into the products and services offered by LTO's and Brambuk.

### Wayfinding

A clear and legible wayfinding strategy for the Grampians Peaks Trail shall be undertaken that investigates how people move around the Grampians, navigate to the correct location within the park and connect with different sections of the walk. All wayfinding, signage and interpretations should have regard to Parks Victoria's signage manual.

#### Access road

The Grampians Peaks Trail will be accessed and serviced via the main north south access road. Because all trailheads will be accessed from this central spine, there should be specific signage along the road highlighting key Grampians Peaks Trail features, facilities and access points. This signage should reflect the unique brand identity of the walk and may differ to standard signage.

### Trailheads

An important component of the wayfinding strategy will be the design and construction of trailheads at the logical beginning and end points for the different walk options. Trailheads should be designed as beautiful, functional, memorable places that provide orientation and gathering for walkers prior to departure. Trailhead design should be consistent across the entire walk, providing a recognisable experience that celebrates the commencement and conclusion of each section of the walk. There are a total of 12 trailheads located along the Grampians Peaks Trail.

#### Major trailheads

Major trailheads occur at the beginning and end of each segment of the walk and include Mount Zero, Roses Gap, Halls Gap / Brambuk, Burrough Huts, Jimmy Creek, Griffin and Dunkeld. Major trailheads could include a range of facilities where appropriate and feasible, including shelter, seating, toilets, signage and track information, tank water and car parking.

#### Minor trailheads

Minor trailheads occur at important intermediate access points to the Grampians Peaks Trail, including Troopers Creek, Mount Rosea carpark, Burrough Huts, Mount William, and Mount Abrupt. Minor trailheads may include a range of facilities where appropriate and feasible, including seating, signage and track information and tank water.

#### Car parking

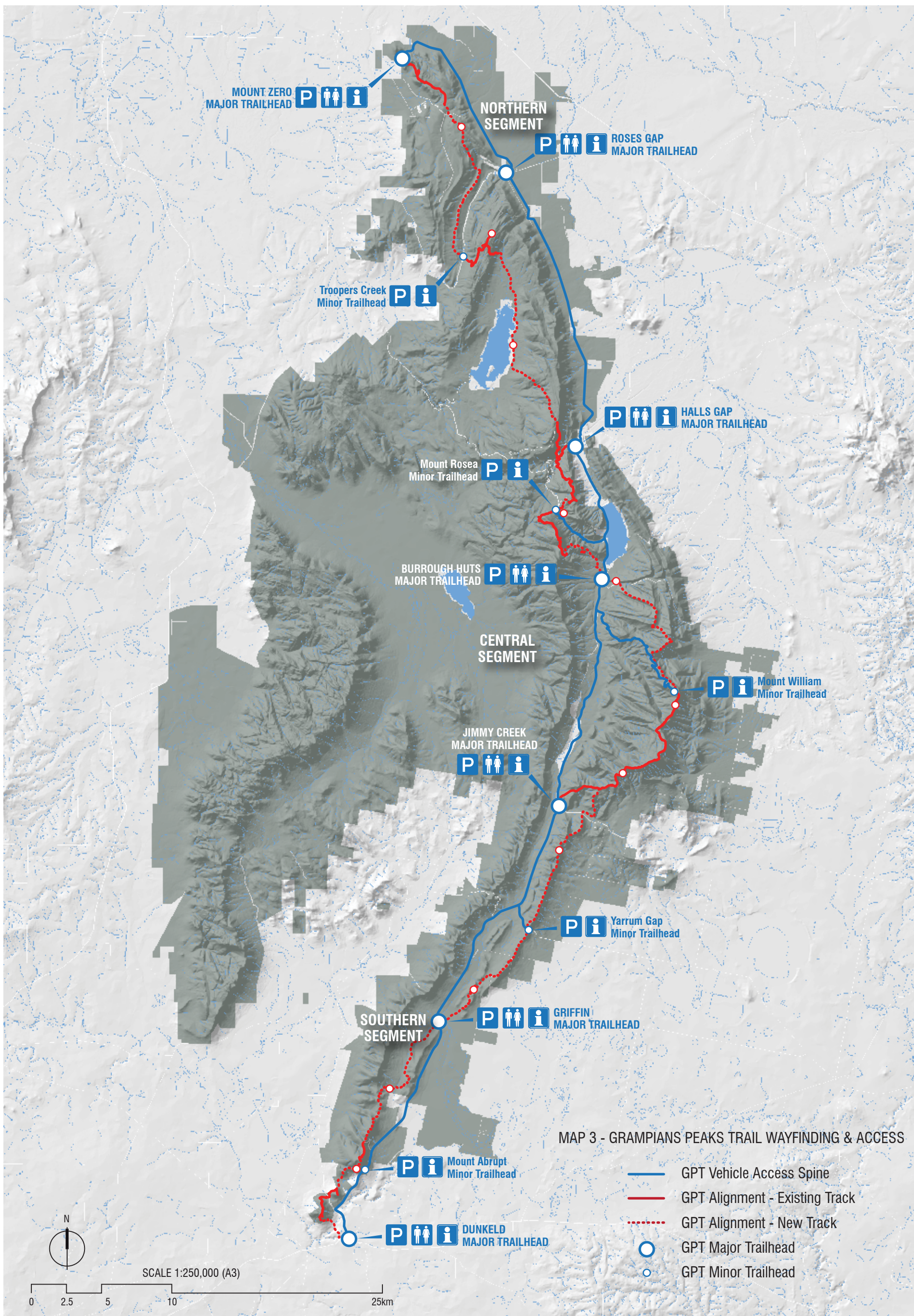
Given the majority of users access the Grampians by vehicle, the provision of adequate car parking at both major and minor trailheads is important. Many groups of self-guided walkers will car pool shuttle, dropping a car at either end of a Grampians Peaks Trail segment. The establishment of an efficient and regular shuttle service (walker drop-off and pick-up) by an LTO will help reduce demand for car parking facilities at trailheads.

### Track marking and signs

Signage and track markers along the Grampians Peaks Trail will be kept to a minimum through good trail definition and alignment and will only be provided to assist with directions at difficult locations and to identify hiker camp locations. Walkers will either purchase or download a detailed map with suggested walking itineraries, route notes, distances and average walking times between key features to aid navigation.

Where signage and track markers are required, they should be designed to reflect the unique identity of the walk. This track marking system will incorporate standardised trailhead signage and information boards, trail markers and appropriate interpretative signs where required along the trail.







# Chapter 08

## How will the Grampians be protected?



View of approaching storm from Briggs Bluff (Day 03 northern segment)





“The Grampians Peaks Trail will celebrate the unique flora, fauna, geology and cultural heritage of Gariwerd in a manner that is sympathetic and respectful of the landscape.”



## 8.1 Environmental context

The Grampians Peaks Trail will celebrate the unique flora, fauna, geology and cultural heritage of Gariwerd in a manner that is sympathetic and respectful of the landscape.

### Natural significance

The Grampians National Park is the fourth largest national park in Victoria. It is a core area for biodiversity and is recognised by Parks Victoria as the single most important botanical reserve in Victoria. The park makes a valuable contribution to Victoria's parks and reserves system, which aims to protect viable, representative samples of the State's natural environments. The park is assigned the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Category II (National Parks) of the United Nations' list of National Parks and Protected Areas. Category II areas are managed primarily for ecosystem conservation and appropriate recreation.

The Grampians National Park is listed on the Federal Governments National Heritage List (NHL) which recognises natural, historic and indigenous places that are of outstanding national heritage value to the Australian nation. The NHL citation notes that the Grampians are "the most important area for floristic richness and endemism in eastern inland Australia, and is important for species richness of freshwater and terrestrial invertebrates."

### Environmental principles

The Grampians Peaks Trail will be managed to the highest level of environmental sustainability and stewardship based on an understanding of the park's natural values, ecological processes

and the specific requirements of significant plants and animals, protecting the environment for future generations to enjoy.

### Environmental challenges

There are important environmental issues that need consideration when planning a long distance walk through the Grampians, including threats to biodiversity and climate change.

#### Climate change

In recent times, climate change has emerged as the major social, economic and environmental challenge facing contemporary society. The reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) provide the scientific basis to our understanding of climate change, stressing the need for a fundamental transition in the structure and functioning of human settlements, including built environments, to simultaneously mitigate climate change and adapt to the effects of climate change.

National parks are one of the areas where evidence of climate driven impacts is increasing. In 2010, Parks Victoria undertook the Climate Change Strategic Risk Assessment, describing the risks that climate change poses to Victoria's parks system and the risk assessment and adaptation planning necessary to help protect these parks.

These risks include increased bushfire impacts, increased flood and storm impacts, hotter, drier recreation conditions (leading to loss of amenity and changing visitation patterns), increased and generalised ecosystem stress (including weeds and pests, species geographic range changes and altered phenology) and increased financial costs and impacts.

The assessment noted four ecosystems at higher risk, including dry forests and woodlands, of which the Grampians forms an important part. The growing likelihood of significant climate change over the next century requires adaption strategies that manage the Grampians National Park in a sustainable manner, and help to build the resilience of ecologies under threat.

#### Threats to biodiversity

Since settlement, approximately half of Victoria's native vegetation has been cleared for agricultural and urban development, including 80% of the original cover on private land. This loss of native vegetation has led to many of Victoria's ecosystems becoming highly fragmented, stressed and vulnerable. While the Grampians National Park remains largely intact, it has become a habitat island surrounded by cleared farm land. Consequently, it plays an increasingly important role in the maintenance of biodiversity.

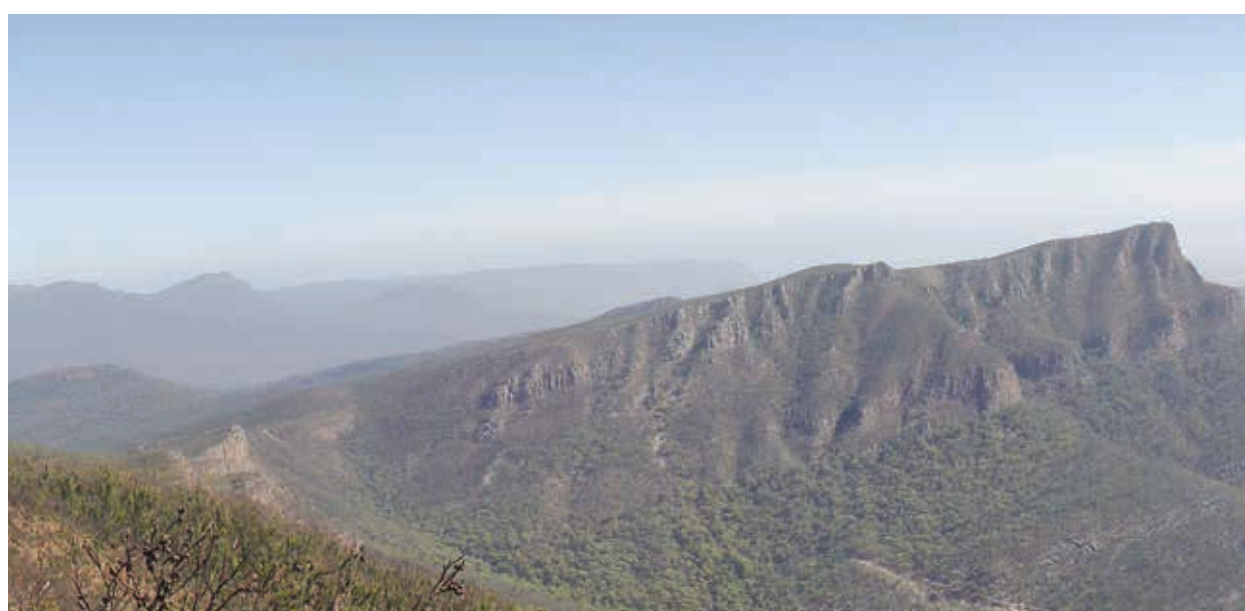
#### Threats from wildfire

The recent bushfires in the western Grampians are a timely reminder of the high bushfire risk within the National Park.

### Environmental risk assessment

In recognition of the significant natural and cultural values and the complex regulatory and planning context for the Grampians Peaks Trail, Parks Victoria engaged an independent ecologist to undertake an Environmental Risk Assessment (ERA) for the project. The ERA identified existing values, a range of potential threats and risks, and sets out processes to be followed during design development and implementation, to ensure compliance with current laws, regulations and the approved management plan.

View from Mount William to Redman Bluff (Day 07 central segment)





## 8.2 Policy context

There are a range of policy documents and legislation that will guide the development of the Grampians Peaks Trail.

### National Parks Act (1975)

In July 1984, the Grampians was declared a National Park. Consequently it became reserved and managed under the National Parks Act 1975 (Vic). The Act requires the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) to preserve and protect the natural condition of the park and its natural and other features and, subject to this, to provide for the use of the park by the public for enjoyment, recreation and education.

In 1992, the Act was amended to protect areas of remote and natural condition and to preclude new and incremental developments in these areas. There are three areas within the Grampians that are proclaimed remote and natural areas: the Victoria Range (Billawin Range), Serra Range and the Major Mitchell Plateau. The purpose is to ensure that each Remote and Natural Area “is controlled and managed in a manner that will protect and preserve the natural environment of the area, including indigenous flora and fauna and features of ecological, geological, scenic, archaeological, historic or scientific significance.”

### Native Vegetation Management Framework (2002)

The objective of this framework is “a reversal, across the entire landscape, of the long-term decline in the extent and quality of native vegetation, leading to a Net Gain. Net Gain is the outcome for native vegetation and habitat where overall gains are greater than overall losses and where individual losses are avoided where possible. The losses and gains are determined by a combined quality / quantity measure and over a specified area and period of time.

In order to achieve the biodiversity goals for native vegetation management, application of the Net Gain approach needs to be linked to the conservation significance. The framework provides a strong focus on the protection and net improvement of higher conservation significance vegetation.” Net Gain is an important principle in the implementation of the Grampians Peaks Trail where some clearing may be required in the construction of the trail and infrastructure.

Where the trail passes through areas of high conservation significance, appropriate offsets may be required.

### Grampians National Park Management Plan (2003)

An important condition of the National Parks Act is the preparation of a management plan to guide the management of the park into the future. In 2003, a management plan was completed for the Grampians National Park outlining a range of management zones and special overlays which inform the types of uses and management strategies that apply across the park and provide a basis for assessing future activities and development proposals. Review of these zones and overlays clearly describes the types of activities and developments that are permitted and provides important guidance for the development of the Grampians Peaks Trail.

#### Conservation and recreation zone

This zone protects less sensitive natural environments and provides for sustainable dispersed recreation activities and small-scale recreation facilities without significant impact on natural processes. The Conservation and Recreation Zone represents 59% of the park (99,546 ha).

#### Conservation zone

This zone protects sensitive natural environments by ensuring minimal interference with natural

processes. It allows only minimal impact recreation activities and simple visitor facilities. The Conservation Zone represents 39% of the park (65,500 ha).

#### Special protection area overlay

This overlay protects specific areas with important natural or cultural values where a special management focus is required, including areas of significant flora and fauna, aboriginal cultural heritage or European heritage. Use is restricted to picnicking and bush walking.

#### Reference area zone

This zone protects relatively undisturbed representative land types and associated vegetation by keeping all human interference to the minimum to ensure that only long-term change results from natural processes. This zone represents 1% of the park (1,465 ha).

#### Reviewing the management plan

The 2003 Management Plan requires review. Following a number of significant natural disasters, including three major fire and two flood events, both the natural landscape and Parks Victoria’s asset base have changed substantially. The existing management plan pre-dates the concept of the Grampians Peaks Trail. A review of the existing management plan will need to consider these changes, along with improved natural and cultural values information, changes in visitor needs and Parks Victoria’s management priorities.

View towards Mount Difficult from Barigar Hiker Camp (Day 02 northern segment)





### Remote and natural area overlay

This overlay protects areas with significant remote and natural attributes (as contained in the National Parks Act). Permitted uses are camping, bush walking, bicycle riding, 4WD touring, trail bike riding, rock climbing and fishing. The Remote and Natural Area Overlay represents 19% of the park (32,100 ha). The Victorian Government has recently confirmed that no development will be permitted in this overlay.

### Victoria's nature-based tourism strategy (2008)

This strategy provides a long-term, coordinated approach to policy, planning, sustainable development and marketing of the nature-based tourism sector. The strategy recognises that "Victoria has a lack of real experiential nature-based tourism experiences offering high levels of interpretation, high quality service and accommodation that engage consumers and connect them with the natural environment."

The strategy identifies that "multi-day walking activities with supporting roofed accommodation are more difficult to site outside of parks as many of Victoria's high profile walks are located at a distance from the boundary of the park". In particular, it describes the opportunity to establish the Grampians Peaks Trail "with a high yield, commercially-run walking component with demountable standing accommodation." It notes that allowing a small number of high quality nature-based tourism providers to develop accommodation in or adjacent to parks will create a competitive advantage for Victoria.

The strategy points out that "appropriate nature-based tourism infrastructure needs to respect an area's ecological integrity, manage impacts vigilantly and, most importantly, allow concentration of major visitor activities to areas where impacts can be contained." For projects within the park it recommends that

the environmental impacts "be assessed with rigour and will follow policy and development guidelines related to the design, siting and style of the proposed facility". Proposals are subject to the National Parks Act, and must be consistent with park management zoning, legislation and policy. The strategy also states that the principle of equity of access be maintained, and that national parks remain open to everyone.

### Bushfire management overlay (2011)

Developed after the devastating Black Saturday bushfires, the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) identifies areas where the bushfire hazard requires protection measures in the location, design and construction of any development, to ensure that risk to life and property is managed to an acceptable level. Due to the high bushfire risk, the entire National Park is covered by a Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) under the municipal planning scheme.

All Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure will be subject to the requirements of the BMO overlay, requiring a planning permit to undertake any construction works. More extensive bushfire protection measures may need to be considered, including vegetation removal, creation of defensible space around buildings and access to suitable water supply. It is noted that these requirements may be in conflict with other management requirements contained within the National Parks Act and park Management Plan.

### Unlocking victorian tourism: an inquiry into victoria's tourism industry (2011)

In 2011 the Victorian Government directed the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) to conduct an inquiry into the Victorian tourism industry. The VCEC report identified that certain tourism experiences, such as serviced hiker lodges as part of an overall

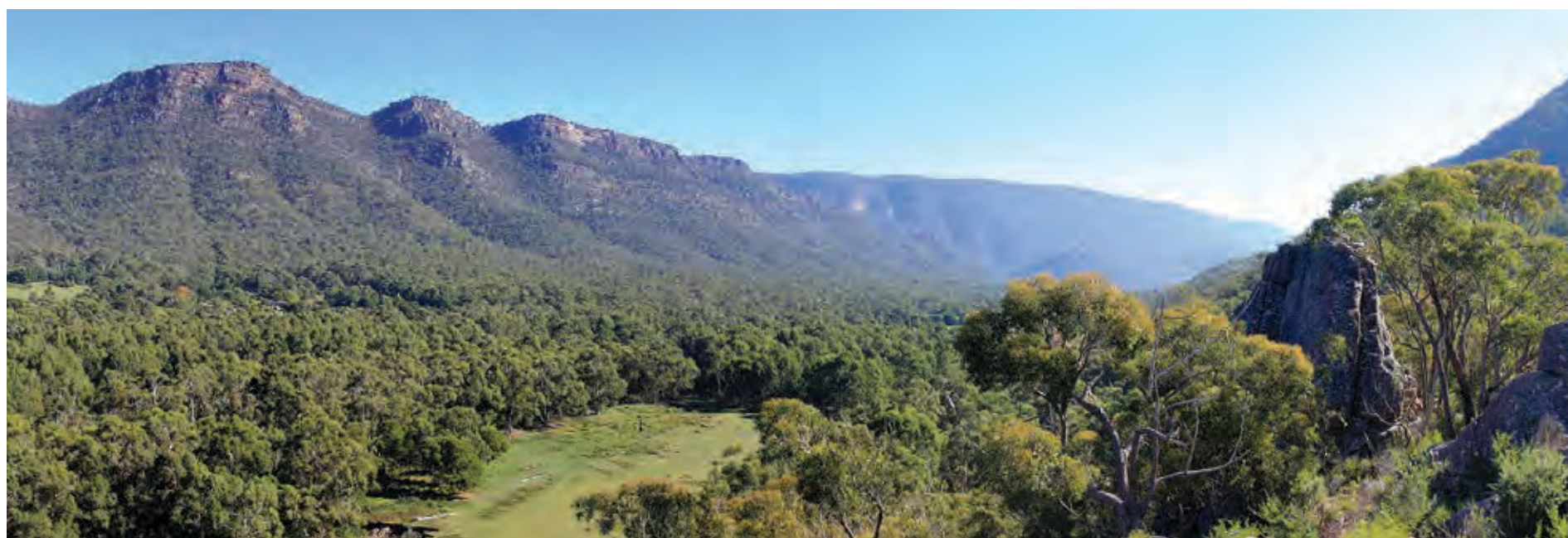
walking package depend "on the visitors directly engaging with the park, perhaps in a way that makes travelling to and from the park impossible or inconvenient." In such circumstances, "private sector investment in sensible and sensitive developments in national parks should be allowed, provided the investment complements environmental, heritage and other values and there is a net public benefit."

### Victorian government response to VCEC final report (2012)

In August 2012, the Victorian Government announced support for the key recommendations of the VCEC report. The Victorian Government indicated that reform will take place to consider appropriate, environmentally sensitive, private sector tourism investment in national parks, and that investment would seek to improve the experience of visitors to Victoria's world class natural assets through contemporary visitor infrastructure which complements natural asset values." This would, in turn, help to "make a positive contribution towards the conservation of environmental and cultural values of natural areas.

In considering such investment proposals, the government will have regard to the relevant park management plans, as well as the net impact of the tourism investment on the environment and other values of the park, and management of the future financial risks and liabilities to government.

Cleared site at the rear of Brambuk with the Wonderland range behind – this is an example of an existing disturbed site within the park boundary.







View north towards the Serra Range from Mount Chistabel (Day 10 southern segment)

## Guidelines for tourism investment opportunities of significance in national parks (2013)

Recognising that some tourism investment opportunities can complement natural values and enhance visitor experiences, the Victorian Government has decided to allow appropriate and environmentally sensitive investment opportunities in national parks. The process for facilitating private investment within the National Park is made clear in the *Guidelines for Tourism Investment Opportunities of Significance in National Parks* released by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. The Government has stated that it will “propose sensible and sensitive development in national parks provided they complement environmental, heritage and other values and generate a net public benefit”.

The guidelines outline a five stage approval process to ensure that proposals provide the greatest net public benefit. This will consider the environmental outcomes (given the primary purpose of national parks is the preservation and protection of the natural environment), the social outcomes (given that parks are also for the use and enjoyment of the public), and the economic outcomes, where proposals may include broader economic benefits for the region. Any investment proposals will be assessed by DEPI against the principles outlined in the guidelines.

## Making a proposal

The Tourism Investment Opportunities of Significance in National Parks, “Making a Proposal” package has been developed to guide potential investors through the process of gaining important approvals and taking their plans to fruition. Both the Tourism Investment Guidelines and the Proposal Package outline the process Government will follow when considering tourism investment proposals in national parks.

The proposal package supports the guidelines and assists potential investors who are interested in developing tourism opportunities of significance in Victoria’s national parks. It applies to proponent-initiated projects and outlines the requirements and approvals process for these projects.

A range of proposals will be considered depending on the site, scale of the proposal and whether the requirements of the legislation and the principles and criteria set out in the guidelines can be met. These could include eco-lodges or other types of commercial accommodation, guided walks with demountable accommodation, or other recreational facilities such as treetop walks or ziplines. Proposals will need to demonstrate the principles of ecologically sustainable development, aim to minimise environmental impacts and be in keeping with the values of the surrounding park. The purpose of any lease must be consistent with the objects of the National Parks Act 1975.

New investment proposals will be considered that meet the objectives and principles of the guidelines, complement and enhance the values of the park and contribute to the regional economy. In addition, a transparent approvals process will apply.

## Other legislation

Other legislation that will also inform the design and implementation of the Grampians Peaks Trail include:

### Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999) (EPBC)

The EPBC Act is the central piece of environmental legislation providing a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places.

### Cultural heritage management plan

In 2006, the Aboriginal Heritage Act was introduced to provide protection for Aboriginal cultural heritage. A requirement of the act is the preparation of a CHMP to identify sites of significance and provide guidelines to the maintenance of important cultural heritage.

### Heritage overlays

Contained within the local council planning scheme, heritage overlays identify and protect places of local heritage significance.

### Local planning scheme

Development of the infrastructure associated with the Grampians Peaks Trail may require planning approval as required by the local planning scheme.

### Native title

The Native Title Act (1993) may require the development of any Grampians Peaks Trail related infrastructure to be publically advertised to ensure that any the rights and interests of any indigenous people are not compromised.

### Traditional Owner Settlement Act

The Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (TOS Act) provides for an out-of-court settlement of native title and delivery of land justice. The TOS Act allows the Victorian Government to make agreements to recognise Traditional Owners and their rights in Crown land, in return for agreement to withdraw all current native title claims and not to lodge any claims in the future. Whilst there is no current native title recognition over the Grampians National Park, the Crown land manager (DEPI) will need to comply with any future Land Use Activity Agreements negotiated with Traditional Owners under this Act.



# 8.3 Environmental principles

## Managing the impacts of the Grampians Peaks Trail

The Victorian Government’s decision to explore the potential for roofed accommodation and hiker camps within the National Park to support the Grampians Peaks Trail is now confirmed. In this respect, the development of the Grampians Peaks Trail must carefully explore opportunities for sensitive, low scale, ecologically sustainable on-walk accommodation that supports the experience of the walk and protects the important natural and cultural values of the park.

In exploring these important opportunities along the Grampians Peaks Trail, it is important that:

- 1. all infrastructure be in accordance with the environmental controls outlined within the National Parks Act and the Park Management Plan;
- 2. all infrastructure avoid disturbance to the environment wherever possible, or where disturbance is unavoidable, provide suitable offsets located elsewhere in the park using established principles of Net Gain management;
- 3. all infrastructure rehabilitate, remove or ameliorate undesirable intrusions in the landscape as seen from key viewpoints, particularly through revegetation of disturbed landscape wherever possible;

- 4. Appropriate monitoring is undertaken of all infrastructure to ensure that visitor impacts are thoroughly understood and appropriate management plans and techniques can be implemented; and
- 5. Educational program for walkers and park visitors are implemented that highlight the impact of increased visitation on the natural and cultural values of the park.

## Management zones & the Grampians Peaks Trail

A review of the Grampians National Park Management Plan provides important guidance on the location and design of Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure. A summary of the relevant zones and overlays and their implications for the Grampians Peaks Trail is provided below.

### Conservation and recreation zone

This zone recognises the importance of recreational activities and experiences within the Grampians and provides the most flexibility for the location of Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure, including hiker camps and hiker lodges.

### Conservation zone

Any development in this zone is more heavily constrained and does not currently allow for the construction of new roads, hiker lodges or related infrastructure.

### Special protection area overlay

Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure could potentially be developed within this zone only where there is no effect on the focus area (including sites with significant flora and fauna or Aboriginal or European cultural heritage).

### Reference area zone

No Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure should be located within this zone.

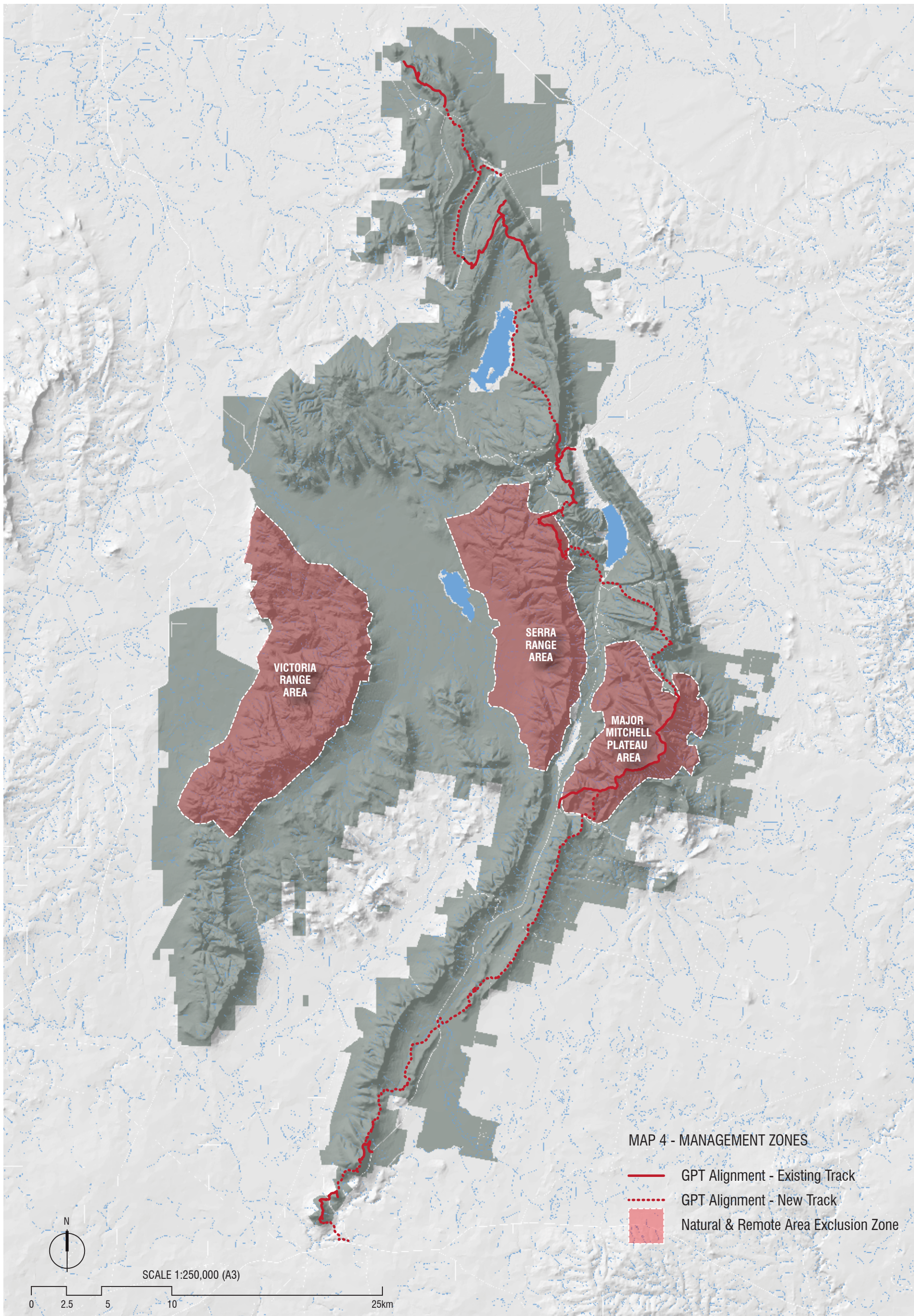
### Remote and natural area overlay

Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure located in this zone should be limited to the upgrade of existing trails, and the upgrade of existing camp sites into low impact hiker camps (with appropriate net gain offsets elsewhere in the park). No new hiker camps or hiker lodges should be located in the zone.

View of Lake Wartook looking west across to Mount Difficult (Day 03 northern segment)









# Chapter 09

## How will the Grampians Peaks Trail be managed?

Walking across the Grampians rock near Mount Rosea Day 06 (Segment C2)



A full-page photograph of three hikers walking away from the camera on a rocky, moss-covered trail. The hiker in the foreground is wearing a dark cap, a green t-shirt, and a large black backpack. The hiker in the middle is wearing a green t-shirt, blue shorts, and a red backpack. The hiker in the background is wearing a yellow high-visibility shirt and a black backpack. The trail is made of large, flat, grey rocks with patches of green moss. The sky is blue with a few white clouds.

To ensure its enduring quality and economic sustainability, the Grampians Peaks Trail must be constructed, maintained and operated to the highest standards under a full cost recovery model and in partnership with the private sector.



# 9.1 Management of the Grampians Peaks Trail

To ensure its enduring quality and economic sustainability, the Grampians Peaks Trail will be constructed, maintained and operated to the highest standards under a full cost recovery model and in partnership with the private sector.

## Management goals

The Grampians Peaks Trail will require significant initial and ongoing management from both the public and private sectors to ensure the success of the walk and promote regional economic benefits. A number of management goals have been identified, including:

### Visitor management goals

- 1. Ensure the Grampians Peaks Trail remains a high quality and memorable bushwalking experience for all;
- 2. Provide appropriate risk management and visitor safety strategies;
- 3. Minimise and manage the overlap between Grampians Peaks Trail and other user groups in the Grampians; and
- 4. Provide a high quality, easy to use and internationally accessible booking and information website.

### Environmental management goals

- 5. Achieve best practice environmental protection and management that showcases the Grampians National Park and manages the impacts of the Grampians Peaks Trail on the environment; and
- 6. Undertake regular monitoring to assess track condition and safety to ensure visitor impacts are understood and to assist with conservation of the environment.

### Asset management goals

- 7. Maintain the walking track and associated infrastructure to a world class standard.

## Operational management goals

- 8. Ensure Parks Victoria retains oversight over all management responsibilities;
- 9. Propose a full cost recovery business model where suitable revenue streams and cost structures provide support for the ongoing management and maintenance of all Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure.
- 10. Provide a booking and registration system (including a ‘walkers pass’) that will help manage walkers, off-trail collection of fees and ensure people at hiker camps are registered users; and
- 11. Encourage the private sector to demonstrate ownership over important park values.

## Financial management goals

- 12. Develop a business model where the Grampians Peaks Trail is managed under a full cost recovery model, with relevant tasks and services outsourced to the private sector where possible; and
- 13. Ensure fees charged for accommodation and track use are commensurate with a full cost recovery business model and consistent with the Government’s Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS).

## Business & tourism development goals

- 14. Encourage private sector investment in a range of products and services that will support the walking experience.
- 15. Work closely with the tourism industry and licensed tour operators to promote the walk and develop suitable walking products, accommodation and services; and
- 16. Ensure the Grampians Peaks Trail is well constructed and maintained to provide surety to attract private investment.

## Preferred business model

The Grampians Peaks Trail financial and business model assumes that the core walk infrastructure, including the trail and hiker camps, will be publicly funded and delivered through Parks Victoria in a staged manner over a number of years. The private sector will provide the products and services, as well as roofed accommodation, to augment the experience and operation of an iconic multi-day walking experience.

In the future, an expression of interest will be undertaken (in accordance with the recently released guidelines for *Tourism Investment Opportunities of Significance in National Parks*, 2013) to determine private sector interest in the ongoing management of the trail and the construction of on-walk roofed accommodation. It is crucial that Parks Victoria has an ongoing regulatory role in coordinating the operation of the Grampians Peaks Trail within the context of the National Parks Act and the Park Management Plan.



Management roles & responsibility

There are a range of roles and responsibilities for both public and private sector agencies and businesses in the implementation and management of the Grampians Peaks Trail.

Grampians Tourism (GT)

Grampians Tourism in partnership with Parks Victoria will lead cooperative marketing and promotion of the Grampians Peaks Trail as one of Victoria’s iconic multi-day bushwalks. GT, in collaboration with licensed tour operators and private businesses, will also assist in the development of appropriate walking products, value-add business opportunities and linkages between the Grampians Peaks Trail and existing and future tourism ventures in the region.

Tourism Victoria (TV)

Tourism Victoria in partnership with Grampians Tourism and Parks Victoria will market and promote the Grampians Peaks Trail as one of Victoria’s iconic multi-day bushwalks.

Parks Victoria (PV)

Parks Victoria will initially undertake the delivery and day to day management of the Grampians Peaks Trail core infrastructure, including the trail and the hiker camps. The Grampians Peaks Trail will require dedicated staff and contractors to service and manage the walk, including

operation managers, visitor information officers, rangers, administration, as well as support staff including maintenance and repair, cleaning (toilets) and rubbish collection.

Department of Environment & Primary Industries (DEPI)

Following the release of the Guidelines for Tourism Investment Opportunities of Significance in National Parks (2013), the Department of Environment & Primary Industries has the responsibility to implement the recommendations contained in the VCEC report (and subsequently endorsed by the government). DEPI will have the primary role in administering how any private sector investment is to occur within the National Park (refer Section 5.4).

Licensed Tour Operators (lto)

The success of the Grampians Peaks Trail is reliant on the development of a full range of guided walking and accommodation packages. LTO’s will play a vital role in developing suitable walking products for the market that will meet demand and expand the quantity and diversity of people walking the Grampians Peaks Trail.

Private sector investors

The success of the Grampians Peaks Trail is reliant on the provision of a wide range of on-park and off-park accommodation options, as well as support services, to be provided by the private sector.

Regional Development Australia / Victoria (RDA/ RDV)

RDA and RDV is a government initiative to promote rural and regional development, with a focus on investment attraction, job creation, exports, creating stronger economies, communities and infrastructure. RDA / RDV will support the Grampians Peaks Trail through the provision of government investment in Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure.

Local Government Authorities (LGA)

LGA’s will be responsible for regional services and planning. In many cases, planning applications will need to be submitted through LGA’s for approval.

Community groups and volunteers

Friends groups, volunteers and students make a valuable contribution to park management and extend the scale and involvement of the community in particular projects. There is an important opportunity to involve community groups within the planning and implementation of the Grampians Peaks Trail to ensure a strong sense of pride and community ownership.

Table 9.1 Grampians Peaks Trail management roles & responsibilities

Description	PV	GT/tv	LTO	OTHER
Design & construction of trail infrastructure	✓			
Design & construction of hiker camps	✓			
Maintenance & management of trail (Initial)	✓			
Maintenance & management of trail (Future)			✓	✓
Construction and management of hiker lodges			✓	✓
Management of online booking & website	✓	✓		
Marketing and branding	✓	✓		
Transportation, shuttle services			✓	
Support infrastructure and tourism packages			✓	



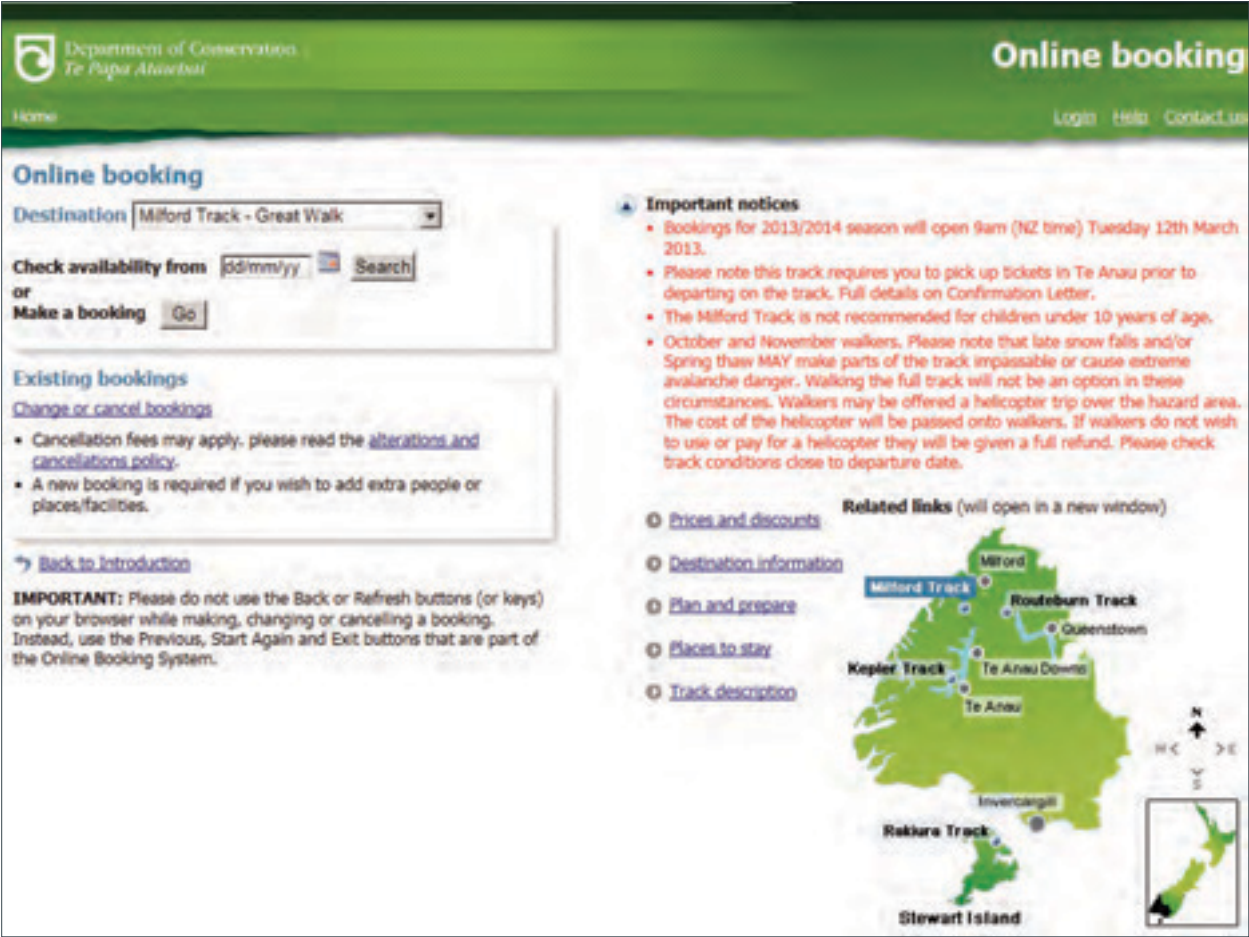
## 9.2 Booking system & fees

The Grampians Peaks Trail will require a dedicated, high quality, ‘real-time’ and easy to use website and online booking system.

### Website & online booking

The Grampians Peaks Trail will require a website and online booking system that becomes a “one stop shop” for all walk information, trip planning, booking and organisation. The benefits of a fully integrated, holistic website and booking system include:

1. Provide all necessary pre-trip planning information including links to commercial and service operators that enables potential users to plan their entire Grampians Peaks Trail walking experience;
2. Identification of the range of different walk options that are available, including number of days, length, costs, experiences, and walk difficulty;
3. Allow users to download detailed Grampians Peaks Trail walk information, including maps and track notes;
4. Provide up to date, seasonal track information including track condition, track closures, safety notices and warnings to better allow visitors to prepare for their walk;
5. Allow potential users to book and pay for the Grampians Peaks Trail in ‘real-time’ from anywhere in the world via the internet. The booking system must ensure that those who have booked the Grampians Peaks Trail are guaranteed a hiker camp site. The booking system must be based on the available number of tent platforms at each hiker camp;
6. Allow users to access, book and pay for pre and post walk accommodation options in the Grampians. Provide links to other services, activities and experiences that will enhance their experience of the walk;
7. Allow the centralised collection of fees with reduced reliance on ranger check ups;
8. Ensure the carrying capacity of the Grampians Peaks Trail is not exceeded by allowing Parks Victoria to better understand, evaluate and monitor the quantity of walkers, the visitor experience and the effect of walkers on the environment;



The Milford Track booking website is a dedicated, easy to use and clear.

9. Provide accurate visitation information to assist the ongoing planning and development of the Grampians Peaks Trail;
10. Assist with risk management and visitor safety by providing accurate information on the quantity and location of walkers on the Grampians Peaks Trail at any given time, in the event of bushfire, extreme weather or emergency; and
11. Integrate with other Grampians National Park sites to allow Parks Victoria to manage visitor numbers and capacity across the entire park.

### Management of booking

Grampians Tourism in partnership with Parks Victoria will market and promote the Grampians Peaks Trail as one of Victoria’s iconic multi-day bushwalks. An integral component will be the day to day management of the website and booking system. This may be undertaken by either Parks Victoria, Grampians Tourism or a suitably qualified third party.

It is important that the booking system links into a broader, ‘whole of park’ booking system for the Grampians National Park. While this whole of park system is yet to be implemented by Parks Victoria, it has been identified as the most useful way to manage all park users. A dedicated ‘help line’ is also required to assist with user inquiries.





The Larapinta Trail website is a good example of a full integrated online booking and management system.

Why charge a fee?

In recognition of the unique and high quality experience offered by the Grampians Peaks Trail, it is proposed that a fee should be charged to walk any overnight or multi-day section of the trail, and to stay at hiker camps or roofed accommodation. The fee is to be charged per tent pad, not per individual. The fee will be determined through application of Parks Victoria’s Regulatory Impact Statement (under revision).

Fees will primarily be collected through the on-line booking system. Fees can also be collected through licensed tour operators (as a component of their package) or through Brambuk. Fees should not be collected when people are on the trail itself. Receipt of the fee could be in the form

of a waterproof ticket to be carried by the walker for the duration of the walk (refer Section 9.3 Visitor Management).

The payment of fees can help to recover costs associated with the provision and maintenance of Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure, in particular the cost of the hiker camps and the need for the track to be financially self-sustaining. Fees also promote greater respect for the National Park and the environment, and help people understand the need to adequately fund the conservation and management of the National Park.

what is a reasonable fee?

There are a number of factors that will determine the appropriate fee to charge for walking the Grampians Peaks Trail, including:

- the willingness of the user to pay for the experience;
- the uniqueness of the product;
- the quality of the facilities along the Grampians Peaks Trail, in particular the hiker camps;
- the comparative costs for other overnight bush walks offering similar levels of service (both locally and internationally);
- ensuring the fee does not inhibit or exclude use by being too expensive;
- ensuring the fee is a round number and easy to pay; and
- different rates for different people seeking a range of experiences.

cost of equivalent walks

In determining an appropriate fee for the Grampians Peaks Trail, it is useful to examine the fee charged to walk comparable, high quality multi-day walks.

Overland Track	\$40 per night
Milford Track	\$43 per night
Great Ocean Walk	\$24 per night
Three Capes (prop.)	\$58 per night
Fraser Island Walk	\$4.50 per night
Thorsborne Trail	\$4.50 per night
Coastal Wilderness	\$30-65 per day



## 9.3 Visitor management

### Managing Grampians Peaks Trail hikers

All visitors should have pre-booked and paid for their walk prior to arrival in the Grampians. Nonetheless, there will always be people who arrive and then decide to undertake a Grampians Peaks Trail walk. In such cases, bookings can still be made over the internet, through licensed tour operators or at Brambuk Visitor Centre. Brambuk will play an important role in orientating visitors upon arrival in the Grampians, and all walkers are encouraged to visit the centre prior to commencement.

#### Managing hiker camps

It will be important to ensure that only those who have booked a tent platform at a hiker camp can stay. Signage at trailheads should clearly state that all overnight walkers intending to stay at a hiker camp need to make a booking prior to departure, or risk not having a tent platform available at day's end. An effective booking and ticketing system will greatly assist the management of the hiker camps and discourage their unauthorised use.

#### Information packs and tickets

Once a booking has been made and payment received, each walker should receive an information pack containing detailed walk information, confirmation of walk dates, and possibly a waterproof 'ticket' that should be carried for the duration of the walk (for example, by attaching to a backpack).

The ticket should clearly state the walk start and finish, walk dates and hiker camp tent platform sites, and will clearly identify those registered walkers should a dispute arise over tent platform priority. The ticket will also become a memento of the walk and should be designed in a durable and engaging manner. The ticket could become a component of a Grampians Peaks Trail walk 'passport' (refer Section 9.4 Marketing) that can be progressively stamped as walkers complete different sections of the walk.

#### Walker sign in / walk departure

The walking 'ticket' may be similar to a ski lift ticket, allowing automatic signing in and

registration at the beginning of each walk through the use of a bar code scanner or similar. The automatic logging of walkers will simplify walk departures, as well as keep track of walkers out on the trail, and will be simpler, faster and more reliable than traditional trip intention forms (which are often ignored). Appropriate scanning devices can be located at major and minor trailheads that can be wirelessly linked to the central booking system.

#### Managing peak times

Popular sections of the trail are likely to be fully booked during peak season, including Christmas and New Year holidays and Easter. An effective booking system will greatly simplify the management of bookings over peak times.

### Managing other activities

Given the length of the Grampians Peaks Trail and the overlap with a range of established activities within the Grampians, a major challenge will be to manage the interface between Grampians Peaks Trail walkers and other activities, to preserve the unique experience of the walk. Other activities include rock climbing, biking, four wheel driving, as well as different types of walking groups, in particular school groups. This issue will become more prevalent in the future as visitation to the park increases, nature-based tourism activities continue to grow and new segments of the Grampians Peaks Trail are opened.

#### Whole of park booking

A 'whole of park' booking system will assist in the management of user conflicts, allowing Parks Victoria more ability to manage the quantity and location of different users throughout the park at any one time. This type of holistic booking system will provide more detailed and accurate information on park usage and visitation that will assist in the management of the park.

The development of a Grampians Peaks Trail booking system should be integrated with this whole of park system, allowing tickets to be issued for a range of activities including hiking, riding climbing, fishing and driving (4WD). The success of a whole of park system relies

in challenging the prevailing attitude that users should have unlimited access to the National Park. In many locations overseas where visitation levels are much higher, issuing tickets for a range of activities has become an accepted methodology.

#### Managing school groups

School groups will be an important user of the Grampians Peaks Trail, providing usage outside of the peak holiday periods. Nonetheless, it is important that all school groups book the Grampians Peaks Trail to allow Parks Victoria the ability to manage different user groups along the trail. Certain sections of the Grampians Peaks Trail (particularly in the north) will be better suited for use by larger school groups. It is also important that there is a clear set of rules and walk etiquette to be adhered to by all walkers.

#### Climbers and walkers

In a number of locations where there is a strong climbing community (including around Mount Stapylton), it may be useful to separate the Grampians Peaks Trail trailhead from existing access paths to popular rock climbing areas. Further investigation is required to understand and evaluate options.

#### 4WD and walkers

To minimise the overlap between walkers and vehicles, the Grampians Peaks Trail should avoid crossing existing tracks and roads wherever possible. 4WD tracks should be located away from the Grampians Peaks Trail, as the noise from vehicles will greatly detract from the walking experience. Particular areas to evaluate include Mount William and Lake Wartook where a number of roads pass close to the trail.

### Risk management & visitor safety

The park's rugged topography, changeable weather conditions on the higher peaks and remote locations present inherent dangers and risks to walkers along the Grampians Peaks Trail. Consequently, the Grampians Peaks Trail will need to be carefully integrated into the Grampians National Park Risk and Emergency Management Plan to ensure the safety of all walkers along the trail. Parks Victoria will be



responsible for a range of risk management issues along the trail. This may involve:

- implementation of a Grampians Peaks Trail booking system that will provide 'real time' information on walker numbers and approximate location;
- emergency evacuation plans in the event of extreme weather or bushfire;
- emergency medical evacuation where walkers have become injured along the Grampians Peaks Trail;
- access to mobile phone coverage and provision of solar powered charge points at hiker camps;
- provision of literature and information signage to increase visitors' awareness of safety issues, track grading and potential hazards;
- continual monitoring and assessment of Grampians Peaks Trail infrastructure to identify and eliminate hazards where practicable; and
- encourage visitors be fully aware and prepared before undertaking a Grampians Peaks Trail walk.

#### Mobile phone coverage

With the proliferation of small, multifunction mobile digital devices, including phones, GPS units and cameras, there is a growing expectation that walkers will utilise these devices on their journey. There is also a duty of care

that both Parks Victoria, licensed tour operators and private walking groups (including schools) have to ensure a safe walking experience. These devices offer greater levels of safety and risk management, particular GPS units which generally operate from satellite rather than the land based networks.

Consequently, it is important to understand what segments of the walk have mobile phone coverage. Substantial areas of the park have limited or no mobile phone coverage, although coverage is better at higher elevations. Discussions should be had with Telstra regarding the Mount William communications tower, which currently does not transmit back into the park, thereby limiting mobile phone coverage along sections of the walk.

#### Disaster management

Much of South Eastern Australia is a bushfire prone landscape with National Parks presenting a higher level of fire risk due to the vegetation types and geographic features. Within the Grampians National Park fire history suggests that significant fires impact on part of the park at 5-10 year intervals, while major fire events occur on average every 40-50 years.

The Grampians National Park is managed in accordance with an approved Emergency Management Plan while a three year Fire Operations Plan provides a framework for managing fuel levels. Parks Victoria staff are

trained in firefighting and systems are in place to close the park during code red fire danger days or when required. These factors significantly reduce the risks to visitors.

The park is also subject to flooding which has the potential to cause land slips and extensive damage to tracks and visitor assets. However, recent events and recovery works, along with the high quality design and construction proposed for the Grampians Peaks Trail will reduce the likelihood and consequences of damage from future events.

Parks Victoria assets are insured against natural disasters and recovery planning aims at reinstating visitor access to significant assets with the minimum inconvenience possible. In the event of a natural disaster, the Grampians Peaks Trail as a major regional asset and economic driver will most likely attract significant support for recovery funding in addition to the insurable cost of the asset. Investors and operators however, will need to plan for such events, build resilience into their business models and if deemed necessary independently insure against personal asset damage or business loss.

Example of a ski pass style ticket attached to pack or clothing, and walking tickets for the Cinque Terre in Italy.





## 9.4 branding & marketing the Grampians Peaks Trail

### Developing a brand

In an increasingly crowded 'icon' walk market, it is critical that a brand is developed for the Grampians Peaks Trail that emphasises the unique qualities of the walk, in particular the strong indigenous heritage embedded within Gariwerd and central to the experience. Branding for the Grampians Peaks Trail should adopt an industry wide approach, where all agencies and businesses support and promote the walk collectively.

### Promoting walk victoria's icons

The Grampians Peaks Trail should be branded as part of Victoria's Walk Icons, which is a group of four multi-day walking products that provide a similar standard of infrastructure and experience, albeit in different environments and unique ways. Developing, enhancing and promoting these icon walks collectively will help drive demand and the creation of an iconic product range.

The Department of Conservation (DOC) Great Walks in New Zealand provides an excellent example of this approach. The Walk Victoria's Icons product will require a similar approach to ensure they are developed in a consistent manner and appear to the consumer as a coherent network. This strategy may also help to prevent one icon walk from competing directly

with another by promoting the differences of each walk, with the idea that people should complete all four walks.

### Merchandising

A range of high quality Grampians Peaks Trail merchandise that celebrates the walk should be developed, helping to provide 'street presence' for the Grampians Peaks Trail away from the Grampians and contributing to the building of lifetime associations with the walk. Merchandising revenue should be reinvested back into branding and marketing of the walk to make it financially sustainable.

### Grampians Peaks Trail passport

A Grampians Peaks Trail 'passport' that progressively gets punched or stamped as walkers complete different sections of the walk could become an important and valued memento of the walk. This concept recognises that many people may walk the length of the Grampians Peaks Trail over a number of trips. The passport may be punched at key milestones along the walk, such as major peaks or features.

### Walking badges and tickets

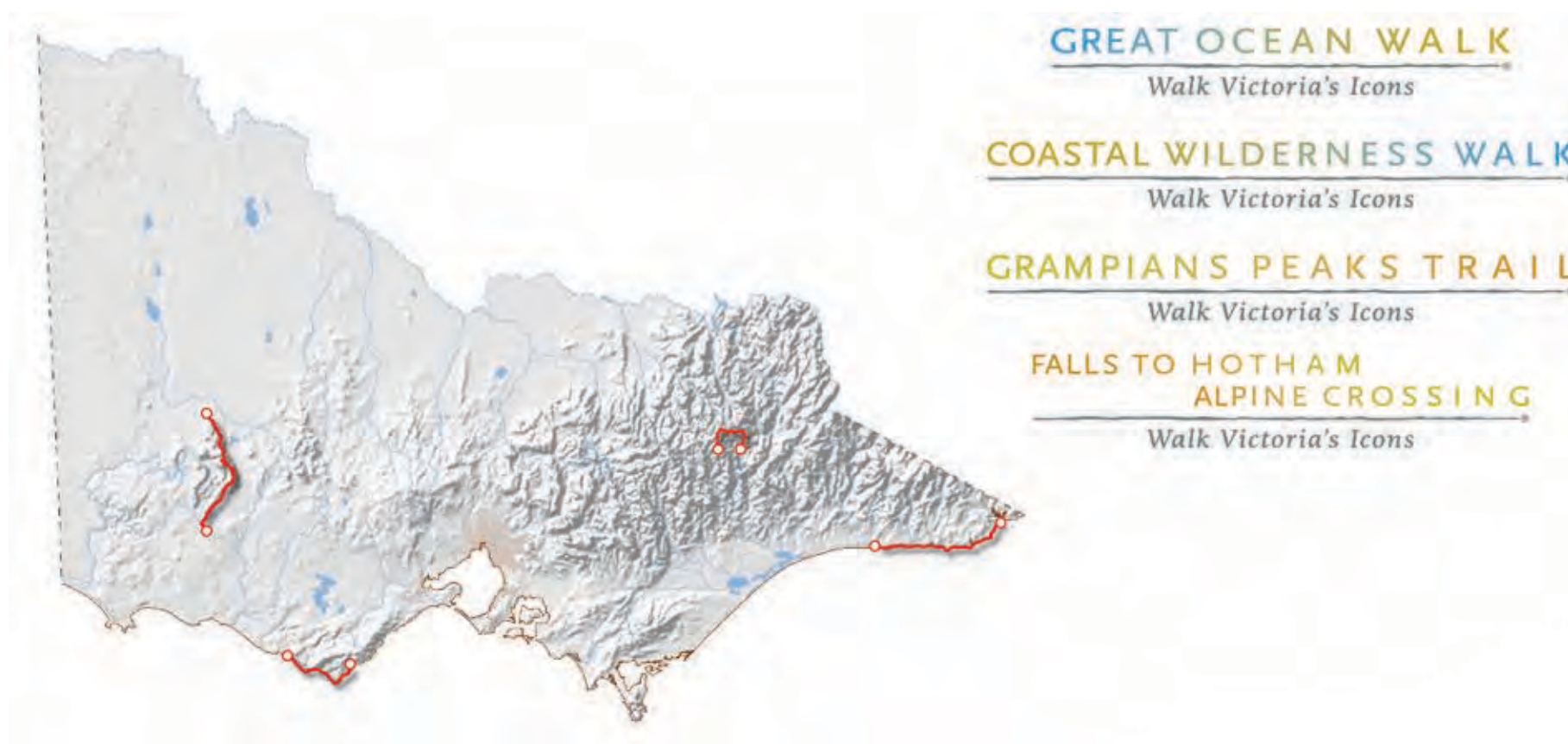
The use of walking badges sewn onto clothing or back packs to denote the places people have travelled is another exciting opportunity. For example, a variety of badges may be available

depending upon which segments of the Grampians Peaks Trail have been walked. A 'gold badge' may be available for the few people who have completed the fabled north-south traverse. Once again, these branding opportunities should be linked to a broader strategy to promote Victoria's Walk Icons as a package.

### Maps & track notes

Good maps and visual representations of 'icon' walks are now considered the norm, with many people wanting to visualise the walk before commencement. This reflects a move away from traditional map reading towards understanding the terrain, elevation and difficulty of the walk in three dimensions. The advent of Google Earth and associated technologies offers great possibilities for the creation of exciting and detailed representations of the Grampians Peaks Trail walk.

A range of Grampians Peaks Trail specific track notes, maps and route planning information should be provided in both hardcopy and digital formats. This information can be tailored to suit people with specific interests, including bird watching, plant identification, bouldering, who may benefit from additional activity-specific information along the walk.





## Marketing the Grampians Peaks Trail

Collaborative marketing of the Grampians Peaks Trail will be critical to its success and will require not only initial investment to stimulate demand but also an ongoing commitment to a sustainable marketing budget. Marketing should be designed to reach the appropriate markets to:

- build identity for and recognition of the Grampians Peaks Trail;
- raise the profile of the Grampians and more broadly Victoria tourism as a destination;
- create differentiation from other products on the market;
- position the Grampians Peaks Trail alongside other well known long distance walks (e.g. Great Ocean Walk);
- reach target markets and build new markets; and
- be cost effective and be consumer focused, and measured against triple bottom line principles for effectiveness and sustainability.

### Understanding the experience seeker

One of the important target markets for the Grampians Peaks Trail is the 'Experience Seeker' (refer Section 3.1). An understanding of the characteristics of this growth market will help identify appropriate methods to communicate about the walk. These people are avid users of technology and well versed in global brand communication, and would expect brand communication and content to be available in a variety of digital formats.

### Developing a strategy

A thorough, holistic, well articulated marketing and branding campaign should be developed for the Grampians Peaks Trail that:

- is presented in a variety of appropriate mediums;
- is supplemented with strong knowledge, experience-based and detailed destination information;
- is interactive, where information is provided

in a variety of digital formats;

- is focused on social media, including Facebook, blog sites, Twitter, Youtube and Pinterest;
- is vibrant and focused on key experiences; and
- is immediate through direct programmes and contact points.

### Marketing partnerships

Collaborative marketing partnerships between regional, state and federal agencies will greatly benefit the Grampians Peaks Trail. Marketing should be conducted in a coordinated way by Parks Victoria, Grampians Tourism, Tourism Victoria, as well as private industry, operators and businesses. Grampians Peaks Trail marketing should include reference to the Great Southern Touring Route, and the Grampians Tourism Destination Plan.



Delivery of detailed track notes and interactive three dimensional maps via hand held mobile devices.



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# Nomenclature

## Grampians / Gariwerd Nomenclature

The ranges were named in 1836 by Surveyor General of New South Wales Sir Thomas Mitchell after the Grampian Mountains in his native Scotland, but they are also known by the name Gariwerd, from one of the local Australian Aboriginal languages, either the Jardwadjali or Djab Wurrung language.

After a two-year consultation process, the National Park was renamed Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park in 1991, however this controversial formality was reversed after a change of state government in 1992. The Geographic Place Names Act 1998 reinstated dual naming for geographical features and refer to Grampians National Park (Gariwerd).

When referring to the National Park as a whole, the master plan uses the name *Grampians*. When referring to the specific mountain range, the master plan uses the name *Gariwerd*.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grampians\\_National\\_Park](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grampians_National_Park)





# Appendices

- 01 Precedent analysis & benchmarking
- 02 Grampians Peaks Trail visitation demand analysis
- 03 Construction cost breakdown
- 04 Track grading description
- 05 Business & tourism planning







# Appendix 01 – Precedents & benchmarking

## Overland Track (Tasmania)

The Overland Track is one of Australia’s most famous bush walks, situated in the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, Tasmania. More than 8000 walkers each year complete the track. Officially, the track runs for 65 km from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair. However, many choose to add the hike along Lake St Clair as a natural extension, bringing the length to 82 km. The track winds through terrain ranging from sheer mountains, temperate rainforest, wild rivers and alpine plains all in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

The track has many huts, enabling hikers to stay indoors every night. There is no booking system for huts, so it is mandatory for hikers to carry a tent in case there is no space available or there is an incident on the track. Commercial groups are not encouraged to use the huts overnight and while one company operates from a set of five private huts, all other operators use the designated group camping areas near each of the main huts.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overland\\_Track](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overland_Track)

### Cradle Mountain huts (private operator)

Cradle Mountain Huts Walk have exclusive use of the only private hut accommodation along the Overland Track. Each hut has been discreetly located off the main trail and offers a hot shower, drying room and twin share accommodation

Price for walk

1 Oct 12 – 31 Dec 12	\$2,850
01 Jan – 31 Mar 13	\$3,050
1 Apr 13 – 1 May 13	\$2,850

<http://www.cradlehuts.com.au/exclusive-accommodation/>

The Overland Track is Australia’s iconic ‘must-do’ long-distance bushwalk. It’s a 65 km, six-day trek through the heart of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, part of the magnificent Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

The stunning scenery and the physical challenge of the Overland Track have secured it a national and international reputation as one of the great wilderness bushwalks.

Length = 6 days

Distance = 65km

Cost = Overland track Fee = \$200

The booking system for the Overland Track is designed to manage up to 60 departures per day during the peak walking season. This includes:

- 34 independent walkers (maximum group size of 8, using the public huts and tent platforms/campsites);
- 13 group members booked to use the group tent platform sites (eg schools and community groups); and
- 13 walkers departing with the commercial tour company (Cradle Mountain Huts) using private hut accommodation.

<http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/index.aspx?base=7771>

## Milford Track (New Zealand)

The Milford Track is a widely known tramping (hiking) route in New Zealand – located amidst mountains and temperate rain forest in Fiordland National Park in the southwest of the South Island. The 53.5 km hike starts at the head of Lake Te Anau and finishes at Sandfly Point on Milford Sound, traversing rainforests, wetlands, and an alpine pass.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milford\\_Track](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milford_Track)

### Summer peak season

During the summer peak season of late October to late April, access to the trail is highly regulated. Walkers must complete the track in four days, travelling only in the northward direction. Camping is prohibited on the trail. Walkers can tramp the track independently, or as part of a more expensive guided walk with a guide company. A maximum of 90 walkers can start the trail per day (40 Independent, and 50 Guided). Usually these 90 places are booked out for many months in advance, despite the high cost of the guided walks.

Due to the one-way ticket system and limited hut capacities, trampers need to keep moving even during bad weather. During periods of especially heavy flooding, the DOC regularly calls in helicopters which fly trampers over flooded sections of the track at no further charge.

## Independent tramping

If hiking independently, each night must be spent in a hut owned and maintained by the Department of Conservation. The huts for independent walkers have basic facilities, which include bunk areas, rest rooms, and cooking facilities; walkers have to carry their own equipment and food.

### Guided tramp

On a guided walk, walkers stay in lodges owned and operated by Ultimate Hikes. These lodges have facilities such as hot showers, catered meals, beds, lounge areas, electric lights, and drying rooms. Guided trampers need only carry clothing, toiletries, their sheets, and lunch while on the trail. Guides walk with trampers, providing as little or as much assistance as required.

Length = 4 days

Distance = 53.5Km

Accommodation = huts only (no camping)

Hurts owned by department of conservation

Cost – hut booking \$54 per night nz

\$162 For 3 nights (all three huts)

Source: <http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/tracks-and-walks/fiordland/northern-fiordland/milford-track/>

## Thorsborne Trail (Hinchinbrook Island, Queensland)

The 32 kilometre Thorsborne Trail, along Hinchinbrook Island’s east coast, is named after the late Arthur Thorsborne. Arthur and his wife, Margaret, shared a lifelong interest in nature conservation that included monitoring pied (Torresian) imperial-pigeons *Ducula bicolor*, which migrate to nest on local islands in summer.

The trail is not a graded or hardened walking track and, in some areas, is rough and difficult to traverse. It is managed under the minimal impact bushwalking and no-trace camping ethics. To help minimise impact and to maintain the wilderness setting, permits are issued for a maximum of 40 people on the trail at any one time. The largest group size is six.

Seven camping areas are accessible from the Thorsborne Trail. Camping permits are



required and fees( [http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/experiences/camping/camping\\_fees.html](http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/experiences/camping/camping_fees.html) ) apply. A maximum stay of two nights is permitted at each camping area, except for Mulligan Falls where the limit is one night. To help minimise impact and to maintain the wilderness setting, permits are issued for a maximum of 40 people on the trail at any one time. The largest group size is six.

The trail is very popular and often fully booked during peak periods and school holidays. Purchasing a permit well in advance is advised to avoid disappointment. Please notify permit offices of any cancellations so other hikers can obtain places on the trail.

Source: [http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/parks/hinchinbrook-thorsborne/about.html#camping\\_and\\_accommodation](http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/parks/hinchinbrook-thorsborne/about.html#camping_and_accommodation)

Length = 4 days (average)

Distance = 32km

Accommodation = camping only (no huts)

Grade – difficult

Booking = essential

LTO'S = yes

### Fraser Island Great Walk (Queensland)

The Fraser Island Great Walk is 90 km long and takes 6–8 days to complete. Visit crystal-clear lakes, vast sand dunes and impressive subtropical rainforest. Most tracks are suitable for reasonably fit people who have some bushwalking experience. The Fraser Island Great Walk is a well-defined sandy track with a generally firm and stable surface. However, there are some sections of soft sand which can make walking slow and tiring.

QPWS provides walkers' camps at Jabiru Swamp, Lake Boomanjin, Lake Benaroon, Central Station, Lake McKenzie, Lake Wabby, Valley of the Giants and Lake Garawongera. All except Jabiru Swamp have access to a toilet, and all have access to platform seats and water (treat before drinking).

Source: <http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-fraser-island/about.html>

Length = 6–8 days (average)

Distance = 90km

Accommodation = camping only (no huts)

Grade – easy – medium

Booking = essential (via dept. Of national parks) must be booked

LTO's = yes (walk it tours, tour fraser island)

<http://www.walkit.com.au/fraser-island.html>

<http://tourfraserisland.bookconfirm.com/>

### Larapinta Trail (McDonnell Ranges, Northern Territory)

Situated in the heart of Central Australia, the Larapinta Trail extends over 223 kilometres along the backbone of the West MacDonnell Ranges. This exciting long distance walking track is divided into 12 sections, each a 1–2 day walk. The Trail encompasses some of the key attractions of the Ranges including Simpsons Gap, Ellery Creek Big Hole, Ormiston Gorge and Glen Helen. The Trail also links in with other walking tracks within the West MacDonnell National Park, allowing side trips to explore more of what the Park has to offer.

Each section is accessible to vehicles (some by high clearance 4WD only), so you can join or leave the Trail at any of the Trailheads. You can tailor your walking experience by choosing sections of interest to you and length of time you have to spend on the Trail. The Trail itself is made up of a range of grades catering for hikers of varying abilities (see walking track grades for the Larapinta Trail). All walkers on the Trail need to have a good level of fitness and must be well prepared and equipped.

Camping out under a sea of stars in the outback is a highlight of the Trail experience. Although they vary, most camp sites offer picnic tables and hardened tent sites – all Trailheads have a water supply and some have free gas barbecues (see the Facilities section for more detail).

Length = 16 days (end to end), many shorter walks possible

Distance = 223km

Accommodation = camping only (no huts), swags

Grade - medium to very hard

Booking = essential (via Dept. of National Parks) must be booked

Fees = no trail fee, only camping fee

LTO's = yes (trek larapinta)

\$3995 For the 16 day trek.

<http://www.treklarapinta.com.au/LarapintaTrailTours/index.html>

### Three Capes (Tasmania)

The proposed Three Capes Track has been developed on a full operational cost recovery business model. The Three Capes Track Business Enterprise will be a legal entity owned by the Crown and run by the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) staff within a government management and staffing structure. The business is a commercial visitor service operation administratively located in Hobart and managed within the Department of Tourism, Arts and the Environment. The Enterprise has supporting staff managing walker departures on the Tasman Peninsula. Importantly, they have the ability to retain revenue collected within the park.

Source: [Three Capes Feasibility, Departments of Tourism, Arts and Environment, Tasmania, 2007](#)



# Appendix 01 – Precedents & benchmarking

## Examples of benchmark on-park accommodation facilities

To help define what suitable on-walk hiker lodge accommodation may be, it is useful to examine benchmark projects that provide lodge accommodation for similar locations within National Parks. These examples help identify the characteristics that on-walk hiker lodge accommodation should possess. Projects include –

1. Forester Beach camp (Bay of Fires walk, Tasmania)
2. Maria Island walk, Tasmania

Furthermore, in considering private investment in the National Park, the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) outlines four examples of suitable development within national parks. These projects clearly indicate the type of accommodation that may be considered along the Grampians Peaks Trail –

3. Karijini eco retreat, Karijini National Park, WA
4. Sal Salis Ningaloo Reef, Cape Range National Park, WA
5. Cradle Mountain Huts, Overland Track, Tasmania
6. Ultimate Hikes, Milford Track, New Zealand

### Precedent 1 – Forester Beach camp, Tasmania

The Forester Beach Camp is privately run (by the Bay of Fires Lodge) and has received special permission to operate within the Mt William National Park. Nestled in a protected dune, the camp has been designed as a demountable seasonal structure. Twin-share rooms with timber floors, canvas roofs and full kitchen facilities provide seclusion in a setting of unspoiled beauty. Private wash areas and composting toilets provide comfort without harming the environment. The camp forms part of the Bay of Fires walk.

### Precedent 2 – Maria Island walk, Tasmania

The Maria Island Walk is located in the Maria Island National Park. The walk is an active but pampered holiday, offering the experience of wilderness, remoteness and tranquility in comfort. The Maria Island Walk is described as “a soft adventure, where the packs are light, the food is gourmet, the wine is Tasmania’s best, and a comfortable bed awaits you each night”. Walking groups are limited to eight with two professional guides, affording a personalised, intimate experience. Unlike more challenging wilderness hikes, this walk is not terribly demanding. Accommodation is in two secluded wilderness camps which are comfortable, aesthetically pleasing and environmentally conscious.

### Precedent 3 – Karijini eco retreat, WA

Karijini Eco Retreat is a privately owned ecologically friendly and environmentally aware retreat with a license to operate within the Karijini National Park. It is a collaboration with the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and the Traditional Owners, to contribute to the management of the environmental, geographical and cultural values of the park. A portion of the revenue goes towards the management and conservation of the park. The retreat caters for guests of all ages and offers a range of accommodation from deluxe ‘eco-tents’ with en suite bathroom through to basic campsites. The retreat includes a restaurant and bar, as well as allowing self catering options.

### Precedent 4 – Sal Salis, WA

Sal Salis is a safari camp hidden in the white sand dunes of Cape Range National Park, part of the World Heritage area of the Ningaloo Coast. The camp respects the fragile environment of the National Park and operates to strict principles of minimal impact and sustainability. All power is solar generated, each en suite bathroom has a composting toilet, water usage is very carefully managed and no waste material escapes into

the surrounding ecosystem. There are nine wilderness tents which are spacious and naturally comfortable – they are not intended to be luxury hotel rooms in the bush and do not offer televisions telephones, minibars or other modern appliances.

### Precedent 5 – Cradle Mountain huts, Tasmania

The Cradle Mountain Huts has operated within the World Heritage Areas in the Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair National Park for over 20 years. Walking groups have exclusive use of private hut accommodation along the Overland Track. Each hut is discreetly located off the main trail and is comfortable, offering a hot shower, drying room and twin share accommodation. Guides prepare a three course dinner each night. Operating in such a delicate environment, Cradle Mountain Huts emphasises the importance on minimal impact track and hut practices. Each hut is designed to be ecologically sustainable, maximize cross flow ventilation and is powered with renewable energy.

### Precedent 6 – Ultimate hikes, New Zealand

Ultimate Hikes offers fully guided treks along the world renown Milford Track and operates the only private hut accommodation along the track. Their wilderness lodges provide comfortable beds, hot showers, flushing toilets, generated electricity until 10pm, drying rooms and a full kitchen and lodge staff.





Forester Beach Camp, Bay of Fires, Tasmania



Karijini Eco Retreat, Western Australia



Cradle Mountain Huts, Overland Track, Tasmania



Sal Salis, Western Australia





# Appendix 01 – Precedents & benchmarking

## Australian Geographic top 10 multi day walks in Australia

### The Larapinta trail (Northern Territory)

- Location: West MacDonnell Range, Northern Territory.
- Length: 16–20 days (including rest days).
- Distance: 223 km.
- Difficulty: Hard.
- Access: One-way walk; good road access along track, including at ends.
- Info: Walking during the cooler months, from April–September, is recommended. Food drops required.

### Thorsborne trail (Queensland)

- Location: Hinchinbrook Island, North Queensland.
- Length: 4–5 days.
- Distance: 32 km.
- Difficulty: Easy–medium.
- Access: One-way; boat transport required at both ends.
- Info: Walking during the cooler months, from April–September, recommended. Permits required; need to be booked well in advance.

### Australian alps walking track (ACT, New South Wales and Victoria)

- Location: High Country of ACT, NSW and Victoria.
- Length: 45–60 days (including rest days).
- Distance: 655 km.
- Difficulty: Hard.
- Access: One-way; road access at both ends.
- Info: Best done in the warmer months. Food drops required.

### Fraser Island great walk (Queensland)

- Location: Queensland.
- Length: 5–7 days.
- Distance: 84 km.
- Difficulty: Easy.

- Access: One-way; boat transport required to island; both ends of the walk accessible by vehicle.
- Info: Walking during the cooler months, from April–September is recommended. Campsite bookings and permits required.

### Wilderness coast walk (Victoria and New South Wales)

- Location: South coast of NSW and Victoria.
- Length: 4–5 days.
- Distance: 61 km.
- Difficulty: Medium.
- Access: One-way; boat transport required at one end, road access at other.
- Info: Permit required, book in advance.

### Overland track (Tasmania)

- Location: Tasmanian highlands.
- Length: 5–8 days.
- Distance: 74 km, plus many side trips.
- Difficulty: Medium.
- Access: One-way; road access and public transport links at both ends.
- Info: Permits required from November to May; walk must be completed north to south during this time.

### Eastern Arthur range (Tasmania)

- Location: Southwest Tasmania.
- Length: 7–9 days.
- Distance: 89 km.
- Difficulty: Hard.
- Access: Return walk. Trackhead accessible by road, with public transport links in summer.
- Info: Steep and dangerous climbing required; summer walking recommended.

### Western Arthur range traverse (Tasmania)

- Location: Southwest Tasmania.
- Length: 8–11 days.
- Distance: 75 km.
- Difficulty: Hard.

- Access: Circuit walk; road access and public transport links in summer.
- Info: Follows a steep and tricky skyline traverse; summer walking recommended.

### Cape to Cape track (Western Australia)

- Location: Southwest Western Australia.
- Length: 6–8 days.
- Distance: 135 km.
- Difficulty: Easy.
- Access: One-way; road access at both ends.
- Info: Spring wildflowers are a highlight; water may be hard to find.

### South Coast track (Tasmania)

- Location: Southwest Tasmania
- Length: 6–9 days
- Distance: 85 km
- Difficulty: Medium
- Access: One-way; charter flight or extra 70 km walk to one end, road access with public transport links at other.
- Info: Walking in the warmer months is recommended.

Source: <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/outdoor/top-10-australian-walks.htm>



## Lonely Planet's 10 best treks in the world

These 10 classic treks are for serious walkers. All of them require a sturdy pair of lungs, fit legs and a good amount of preparation. However, if you choose to go on any of these trails then you will be rewarded with experiences that last a lifetime. In no particular order:

### 1. GR20, France

This demanding 15-day (168km, 104mi) slog through Corsica is legendary for the diversity of landscapes it traverses. There are forests, granite moonscapes, windswept craters, glacial lakes, torrents, peat bogs, maquis, snow-capped peaks, plains and névés (stretches of ice formed from snow). But it doesn't come easy: the path is rocky and sometimes steep, and includes rickety bridges and slippery rock faces – all part of the fun. Created in 1972, the GR20 links Calenzana, in the Balagne, with Conca, north of Porto Vecchio.

### 2. Inca trail, Peru

This 33km (20mi) ancient trail was laid by the Incas and is currently traversed by thousands each year. The trail leads from the Sacred Valley to Machu Picchu winding its way up and down and around the mountains, taking three high passes en route. Views of white-tipped mountains and high cloud forest combine with the magic of walking from one cliff-hugging ruin to the next – understandably making this South America's most famous trail.

### 3. Pays Dogon, Mali

'The land of the Dogon people' is one of Africa's most breathtaking regions. A trek here can last anywhere between two and 10 days, and takes in the soaring cliffs of the Bandiagara escarpment inlaid with old abandoned cliff dwellings. Dogon villages dot the cliffs and are an extraordinary highlight of the journey. The Dogon are known for their masked stilt dancers, intricately carved doors and pueblo-like dwellings built into the side of the escarpment.

### 4. Everest base camp, Nepal

Reaching a height of 5,545m (18,193ft) at Kala Pattar, this three-week trek is extremely popular with those who want to be able to say, 'I've been to the base of the world's highest mountain'. The difficult trek passes undeniably spectacular scenery and is trafficked by Sherpa people of the Solu Khumbu. The heights reached during this trek are literally dizzying until you acclimatise to the altitude, and the continuous cutting across valleys certainly has its ups and downs.

### 5. Indian Himalayas, India

Fewer folk trek on the Indian side of the world's greatest mountain range. So, if isolation's your thing try trekking in Himachal Pradesh. Hardcore hikers can try teetering along the mountain tops for 24 days from Spiti to Ladakh. This extremely remote and challenging walk follows ancient trade routes. The bleak high-altitude desert terrain inspired Rudyard Kipling to exclaim, 'Surely the gods live here; this is no place for men'.

### 6. Overland track, Australia

Tasmania's prehistoric looking wilderness is most accessible on the 80km (50mi, five- to six-day) Overland Track. Snaking its way between Cradle Mountain and Lake St Clair (Australia's deepest natural freshwater lake), the well-defined path (boardwalked in parts) passes craggy mountains, beautiful lakes and tarns, extensive forests and moorlands. Those who want more can take numerous side walks leading to waterfalls, valleys and still more summits including Mt Ossa (1,617m, 5,305ft) – Tassie's highest.

### 7. Routeburn track, New Zealand

See the stunning subalpine scenery of New Zealand's South Island surrounding this medium three-day (32km, 20mi) track. At the base of New Zealand's Southern Alps, the track passes through two national parks: Fiordland and Mt Aspiring. Highlights include the views from Harris Saddle and atop Conical Hill – from where you can see waves breaking on the distant beach. The main challenge for this popular hike is actually securing a place among the limited numbers who are allowed on the track at any time.

### 8. The Narrows, USA

A 26km (16mi) journey through dramatic canyons carved over centuries by the Virgin River, the Narrows in Zion National Park is a hike like no other. The route is the river, with over half of the hike spent wading and sometimes swimming. The hike can be traversed in a day, though some choose to take the hanging gardens and natural springs at a more leisurely pace – spending a night at one of the park's 12 camp grounds.

### 9. The Haute route, France-Switzerland

Leading from Chamonix in France through the southern Valais to Zermatt in Switzerland, the Haute Route traverses some of the highest and most scenic country accessible to walkers anywhere in the Alps. The summer Haute Route walk (which takes a different course than the more famous winter skitouring route) takes around two weeks to complete. It mainly involves 'pass hopping' and demands a high level of fitness, with every section containing a high huff factor.

### 10. Baltoro glacier & K2, Pakistan

This corridor of ice leads to the colossal peak of K2 (8,611m, 28,251ft), the world's second-highest peak. This incomparable trek traverses some of the most humbling scenery on the planet. What begins following icy rivers boldly goes to the guts of the glacier before leading to the granite pyramidal mountains including Paiju (6,610m, 21,686ft), Uli Biaho (6,417m, 21,053ft), Great Trango Tower (6,286m, 20,623ft) and ultimately K2. If the 15 days doesn't floor you, take side trips to more



# Appendix 01 – Precedents & benchmarking

## 100 Classic multi-day hikes

The hikes take place in thirty-six countries on six different continents. Listed alphabetically.

1. Abel Tasman Track, New Zealand
2. Alpine Pass Route, Switzerland
3. Altai Tavan Bogd National Park, Mongolia
4. Annapurna Circuit, Nepal
5. Annapurna Sanctuary, Nepal
6. Batopilas to Urique, Mexico
7. Batura Glacier, Pakistan
8. Bibbulmun Track, Australia
9. Cajas National Park, Ecuador
10. Cape to Cape Walk, Australia
11. Cascade Saddle Route, New Zealand
12. Cerro Chirripo, Costa Rica
13. Cerro Fitzroy, Argentina
14. Chamonix to Zermatt, France / Switzerland
15. Chilkoot Trail, USA / Canada
16. Cinque Terre, Italy
17. Coast-to-Coast Walk, England
18. Colca Canyon, Peru
19. Corcovoda National Park, Costa Rica
20. Cordillera Apolobamba, Bolivia
21. Cotopaxi Circuit, Ecuador
22. Cusarare to Divisadero, Mexico
23. Denail National Park, USA
24. Dientes Circuit, Chile
25. Dusky Track, New Zealand
26. Erg Chigaga, Morocco
27. Fairy Meadow, Pakistan
28. Five Passes Route, New Zealand
29. Fraser Island Circuit, QLD, Australia
30. Freycinet Peninsula, TAS, Australia
31. Ganden – Samye, Tibet
32. Gossaikund / Helambu, Nepal
33. GR20, Corsica, France
34. Half Dome, Yosemite NP, USA
35. Heaphy Track, New Zealand
36. Inca Trail, Peru
37. Jebel Sarhro, Morocco
38. John Muir Trail, CA, USA
39. Jokulsargljufur National Park, Iceland
40. Jotunheimen Traverse, Norway
41. Kerry Way / MacGillycuddy's Reeks, Ireland
42. Khongoryn Els, Gobi Desert, Mongolia
43. Lake Manasarovar Kora, Tibet
44. Lamayuru to Padum, Ladakh, India
45. Langtang Valley, Nepal
46. Lanin National Park, Argentina
47. Larapinta Trail, NT, Australia
48. Lofoten Islands, Norway
49. Long Trail, Vermont, USA
50. Markha Valley, India
51. Milford Track, New Zealand
52. Monteverde Circuit, Costa Rica
53. Tingri – Mt. Everest Base Camp, Tibet
54. Mt. Kailash Kora, Tibet
55. Mt. McGinnis Route, Juneau, Alaska, USA
56. Mt. Taranaki High Level Circuit, NZ
57. Nahuel Huapi Traverse, Argentina
58. Northern Kungsleden, Sweden
59. Northwest Circuit, New Zealand
60. Olkhon Island, Russia
61. Overland Track, TAS, Australia
62. Pacific Crest Trail, CA / OR / WA, USA
63. Padum to Serchu, India
64. Pakora Pass Trek, Pakistan
65. Pindos Horseshoe, Greece
66. Pinnell Mountain Trail, Alaska, USA
67. Puyehue Traverse, Chile
68. Pyrenees High Level Route, France / Spain / Andorra
69. Queenstown – Wanaka, New Zealand
70. Quebrada Honda, Peru
71. Routeburn Track, New Zealand
72. Rush Phari, Pakistan
73. Santa Cruz Trek, Peru
74. Sarek National Park, Sweden
75. Shimshal Pamir, Pakistan
76. Sinforosa Canyon, Mexico
77. Skaftafell Circuit, Iceland
78. Skogar to Landmannalauger, Iceland
79. Slims River West, Yukon, Canada
80. Spiti Valley High Level Route, India
81. St. Paul's – St. Anthony's, Egypt
82. South Coast Track, TAS, Australia
83. Sprinbrook – O'Reilly's, QLD, Australia
84. Tararecua Canyon, Mexico
85. Tatras Mountains, Poland
86. Thorsborne Trail, QLD, Australia
87. Tongariro Northern Circuit, New Zealand
88. Torres Del Paine Circuit, Chile
89. Toubkal Circuit, Morocco
90. Tour de Mont Blanc, France / Switz./Italy
91. Volcan Misti, Peru
92. Wadi Rum, Jordan
93. Waimakariri – Harman Pass Route, NZ
94. West Coast Trail, Canada
95. Western Arthurs Traverse, TAS, Australia
96. West Highland Way, Scotland
97. Wicklow Way, Ireland
98. Wonderland Trail, WA, USA
99. Yakushima Traverse, Japan
100. Yuksom – Goecha La, India

Source: <http://www.thehikinglife.com/journal/100-classic-multi-day-hikes/>



## National geographic's 15 best hikes

Over the past decade, author Peter Potterfield has hiked more than 10,000 miles over six continents to research this list. He here tells us his picks for the world's 15 best hikes, including Patagonia, Tasmania, Newfoundland, and Petra.

Abisko mountain station to the Saami Village of Nikkaluokta Round-Trip: 65 miles, 3 to 5 days

Grand Canyon Hike, Arizona - Rim to Rim to Rim Round-Trip: 44 miles, 4 to 6 days

Everest Base Camp Trek, Nepal Lukla to Everest Base Camp Round-Trip: 70 miles, 16 days

Fitz Roy Trek, Patagonia, Argentina El Chaltén to Laguna Torre to Poincenot Camp to Laguna Eléctrico Round-Trip: 36 miles, 4 to 7 days

Petra Through the Back Door, Jordan Dana Reserve to Petra Round-Trip: 50 miles, 7 days

Grindelwald, Switzerland First to Lake Bachal to Faulhorn Hut Round-Trip: 10 miles if you ride up and walk down, 2 to 3 days

Yosemite Grand Traverse, California, United States Post Peak Pass to Tuolumne Meadows Round-Trip: 60 miles, 6 to 7 days

Chilkoot Trail, Alaska and Yukon Territory, U.S. and Canada Skagway to Bennett Lake Round-Trip: 33 miles, 3 to 5 days

Tonquin Valley, Canadian Rockies, Alberta, Canada Portal Creek to McCarib Pass to Tonquin Valley and Out via the Astoria River Round-Trip: 27 miles, 3 to 5 days

Bay of Fires, Tasmania, Australia Stumpy's Bay to Bay of Fires Lodge Round-Trip: 16 miles, 4 days

Long Range Traverse, Newfoundland, Canada Western Brook Pond to Gros Morne Mountain Round-Trip: 23 miles, 3 to 5 days

Queen Charlotte Track, New Zealand Ship Cove to Anakiwa Round-Trip: 44 miles, 3 to 5 days

Mountains of the Moon, Uganda Central Circuit, Ruwenzori Range Round-Trip: 38 miles, 6 to 7 days

Kalalau Trail, Kauai, Hawaii, United States Ke'e Beach to Kalalau Valley Round-Trip: 22 miles, 3 to 5 days

Croagh Patrick, Ireland Summit Climb, Westport, County Mayo Round-Trip: 8 miles, 1 day

Source: <http://adventure.nationalgeographic.com/adventure/trips/best-trails/world-hikes/>

## Top 10 walking towns of the world

1. Queenstown, New Zealand
2. Huaraz, Peru
3. Namche Bazaar, Nepal
4. Cortina, Italy
5. Chamonix, France
6. Banff, Alberta, Canada
7. Grindelwald, Switzerland
8. El Calafate, Argentina
9. Zermatt, Switzerland
10. Moab, Utah

Source: <http://besthike.wordpress.com/top-10-best-in-the-world/>



# Appendix 02 – Grampians Peaks Trail visitation demand analysis

## Introduction

There is currently very limited information documenting existing numbers of day and overnight walkers within the Grampians, making projections for demand for the Grampians Peaks Trail difficult. Furthermore, because the project will be staged over a number of years, there are numerous factors that will affect the demand for the walk, including construction timetable, level of private investment, and other market forces. The following demand estimates have been developed to assist with the identification of the likely economic benefits should the Grampians Peaks Trail be implemented over the timeframe nominated in the master plan.

## Method 01 – visitation based demand

This method of determining demand is based on an examination of existing visitation data to the Grampians and working out the likely percentage of these people that will use the Grampians Peaks Trail (based on reasonable assumptions). This method was used by Ernst and Young, in their feasibility study for the Grampians Peaks Trail undertaken in 2009.

### Grampians visitation (based on 2007 data)

Total domestic visitors  
1,098,000

Total international visitors  
39,000

Total Grampians visitation  
1,137,000

### Grampians walking activity visitation

% Domestic visitors (walking) 15%  
164,700

% International visitors (walking) 49%  
19,110

Total Grampians walking activity visitation  
183,810

### Grampians Peaks Trail visitation

Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitor nights (49%)  
13,510

Total Grampians Peaks Trail day visitors (51%)  
14,061

Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitation (15% of Gramp. Walking)  
27,571

Therefore, in 2014 (when the report predicted the Grampians Peaks Trail to be fully completed from north to south) 27,571 visitors will use the trail, with 13,510 visitor nights and 14,061 day visitors.

Using the same method, but substituting Parks Victoria’s 2008/09 Visitor Number Monitor (VNM) data, the following visitation estimate is achieved –

### Grampians visitation (2008 vnm)

Total domestic visitors (96.5%)  
967,276

Total international visitors (3.5%)  
35,083

Total Grampians visitation  
1,002,359

### Grampians walking activity visitation

% Domestic visitors (walking) 15%  
145,091

% International visitors (walking) 49%  
17,091

Total Grampians walking activity visitation  
162,182

### Grampians Peaks Trail visitation

Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitor nights (49%)  
11,920

Total Grampians Peaks Trail day visitors (51%)  
12,407

Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitation (15% of Gramp. Walking)  
24,327

### Grampians visitation (2012 gt)

Total domestic visitors overnight  
668,000

Total domestic visitors day  
975,000

Total international visitors overnight  
31,000

Total Grampians visitation  
1,674,000

### Grampians walking activity visitation (2012 gt)

% Domestic visitors (walking) 15%  
246,450

% International visitors (walking) 49%  
15,190

Total Grampians walking activity visitation  
261,640

### Grampians Peaks Trail visitation (2012 GT)

Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitor nights (49%)  
19,230

Total Grampians Peaks Trail day visitors (51%)  
20,016

Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitation (15% of Gramp. Walking)  
39,246

Anecdotal evidence from Parks Victoria staff based in the Grampians suggests that this estimate may be considerably low, based on the number of current walkers utilising the existing trail network within the park. Consequently, a number of alternative visitation estimation methods have been utilised.



## Method 02 – existing walking data

The second method examines existing walking demand within the park. Because the proposed Grampians Peaks Trail alignment incorporates existing sections of trail, there is already a strong existing usage which needs to be acknowledged. This method examines walking track usage information contained in the 2003 Grampians National Park Management Plan, cross referenced against the 2008/09 Grampians National Park Visitor Monitoring Project.

Management plan track usage estimates	
Briggs Bluff	5,000
Flat Rock	10,000
Mount Abrupt	5,000
Mount Difficult	5,000
Mount Sturgeon	5,000
Piccaninny	5,000
Pinnacle	50,000
Rosea	10,000
Sheephills	2,000
Stapylton	10,000
Sundial	10,000
Jimmy Creek	2,000
<b>Total track usage</b>	<b>119,000 visitors</b>

This data includes all existing walks that will form part of the proposed Grampians Peaks Trail. The data is not broken down into day visitors or visitor nights. While the Management Plan gives no indication as to the source of the figures and the data is now significantly out of date, the analysis shows a strong existing usage for sections of the Grampians Peaks Trail.

Source: [Grampians National Park Management Plan, 2003, pg 41/42](#)

## Method 03 – comparative demand

In considering the demand for an iconic multi- day walk in the Grampians, it is useful to compare demand for other similar walks. These include –

### Milford track (3 nights)

Overall visitation	10,000 visitors
Visitor nights	30,000 visitor nights

### Overland track (5 nights)

Overall visitation	8,000 walkers
Visitor nights	40,000 visitor nights

### Three capes (3 nights proposed)

Overall visitation	10,000 walkers
Visitor nights	30,000 visitor nights

### Great ocean walk

Overall visitation	19,350 walkers
Visitor nights (2012)	11,500 visitor nights

If the average length of Grampians Peaks Trail walk is estimated at 3 nights, and similar visitation figures are adopted to the above benchmark walks, the following comparative demand estimate for the Grampians Peaks Trail is achieved –

### Estimated Grampians Peaks Trail (3 nights)

Overall visitation	10,000 walkers
Visitor nights	30,000 visitor nights

## Method 04 – carrying capacity

This method examines the proposed carrying capacity of the Grampians Peaks Trail and applies an estimated occupancy rate across the year to determine Grampians Peaks Trail visitation. The occupancy rate is based on existing evidence gathered by Parks Victoria staff in the Grampians. For a definition and explanation of the carrying capacity of the Grampians Peaks Trail, please refer to the Section 4.3.

Grampians Peaks Trail carrying capacity  
130,305 visitor nights

Occupancy rate goal (40%)  
52,122 visitor nights

## Average of visitation methods

The following is a summary and average visitation based on the different demand estimates previously discussed:

Method 01a	13,510 visitor nights
Method 01b	11,920 visitor nights
Method 01c	19,230 visitor nights
Method 02	n/a
Method 03	30,000 visitor nights
Method 04	50,808 visitor nights
Average	25,093 visitor nights p.A.



# Appendix 02 – Grampians Peaks Trail visitation demand analysis

## Grampians Peaks Trail visitation demand estimate

- For the purposes of the master plan, we have adopted the following low median and high visitation projections for the Grampians Peaks Trail, based on the previous methodology. These projections are based on the following assumptions –
- Average length of Grampians Peaks Trail walk = 3 visitor nights;
  - Typically walkers will arrive a night before the walk, and leave a night after completion = 4.5 visitor nights overall;
  - Day walkers = 1 visitor night. It is assumed that day walkers will require to stay in accommodation for one night;
  - Day visitors account for approx. 60% of all visitation;
  - Estimates assume the entire Grampians Peaks Trail is completed (and not opened in stages).

## Conclusion

For the purposes of calculating of the economic benefits of the Grampians Peaks Trail, the master plan has adopted the median projection of 21,250 people and 49,250 visitor nights (as noted in Table A2.2). As noted previously, this median projection covers the entire Grampians Peaks Trail (northern, central and southern segments).

To account for the likely staging of the project, these projections have been further broken down into visitation associated with Stage 01, 02 and 03, based on the staged construction of the trail. Consequently, in 2015 when the Central Segment opens, 65% of the projected overall visitation (49,250 visitor nights) will occur. Therefore, visitation in 2015 is estimated to be 32,000 visitor nights (refer Table A2.4). These projections are based on a number of assumptions.

## Assumptions:

1. Annual growth of 5% for each stage
2. The 2020 for Stage 02 factors in 5% growth from the original estimate for 2015 (of 4,250 walkers per year).
3. The 2025 for Stage 03 factors in 5% growth from the original estimate for 2015 (of 3,187 walkers per year).
4. Day Walkers = 1 visitor night.
5. Overnight Walkers = 4.5 visitor nights.
6. 65% weight to visitation in Central, 20% in Southern, and 15% in Northern.

## Annual growth

As the Grampians Peaks Trail gains presence and identity within the walking market, it is expected that demand for the walk will increase annually. While very difficult to predict what this growth may be, the master plan has assumed that annual growth in visitation will be between 1% (low end) and 5% (high). This is largely based on the growth estimates contained in the Ernst and Young report (around 1% per annum), as well as estimated growth in international overnight nature-based tourism (as noted in Victoria’s Nature Based Tourism Strategy).

Table A2.1 Grampians Peaks Trail demand estimate – low

Market segment	Low projection	
	Walkers / Year	Visitor nights
Day walkers	10,000 people	10,000
Overnight walkers	6,000 people	27,000
Total	16,000 people	37,000

Table A2.2 Grampians Peaks Trail demand estimate – median

Market segment	Median projection	
	Walkers / Year	Visitor nights
Day walkers	13,250 people	13,250
Overnight walkers	8,000 people	36,000
Total	21,250 people	49,250

Table A2.3 Grampians Peaks Trail demand estimate – high

Market segment	High projection	
	Walkers / Year	Visitor nights
Day walkers	16,500 people	16,500
Overnight walkers	10,000 people	45,000
Total	26,500 people	61,500



Table A2.4 – Grampians Peaks Trail visitation demand estimate accounting for staging of works

Stage	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Stage 01 – cental segment								
Day walkers	8,600	9,030	9,482	9,956	10,453	10,976	11,525	12,101
Overnight walkers	5,200	5,460	5,733	6,020	6,321	6,637	6,968	7,317
Stage 02 – southern or northern segment								
Day walkers						3,400	3,570	3,749
Overnight walkers						2,000	2,100	2,205
Stage 03 – northern or southern segment								
Day walkers								
Overnight walkers								
Total Grampians Peaks Trail day walkers / year	8,600	9,030	9,482	9,956	10,453	14,376	15,095	15,850
Total Grampians Peaks Trail overnight walkers / year	5,200	5,460	5,733	6,020	6,321	8,637	9,068	9,522
Total Grampians Peaks Trail walkers / year	13,800	14,490	15,215	15,975	16,774	23,013	24,163	25,371
Total Grampians Peaks Trail day walker visitor nights	8,600	9,030	9,482	9,956	10,453	14,376	15,095	15,850
Total Grampians Peaks Trail overnight walker visitor nights	23,400	24,570	25,799	27,088	28,443	38,865	40,808	42,849
Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitor nights	32,000	33,600	35,280	37,044	38,896	53,241	55,903	58,698

Table A2.4 – Grampians Peaks Trail visitation demand estimate accounting for staging of works

Stage	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Stage 01 – cental segment								
Day walkers	12,706	13,341	14,008	14,709	15,444	16,217	17,027	17,879
Overnight walkers	7,683	8,067	8,470	8,894	9,338	9,805	10,296	10,810
Stage 02 – southern or northern segment								
Day walkers	3,936	4,133	4,339	4,556	4,784	5,023	5,275	5,538
Overnight walkers	2,315	2,413	2,553	2,680	2,814	2,955	3,103	3,258
Stage 03 – northern or southern segment								
Day walkers			3,200	3,360	3,528	3,704	3,890	4,084
Overnight walkers			2,000	2,100	2,205	2,315	2,431	2,553
Total Grampians Peaks Trail day walkers / year	16,642	17,474	21,548	22,625	23,757	24,944	26,192	27,501
Total Grampians Peaks Trail overnight walkers / year	9,988	10,498	13,023	13,674	14,358	15,076	15,829	16,621
Total Grampians Peaks Trail walkers / year	26,640	27,972	34,571	36,299	38,114	40,020	42,021	44,122
Total Grampians Peaks Trail day walker visitor nights	16,642	17,474	21,548	22,625	23,757	24,944	26,192	27,501
Total Grampians Peaks Trail overnight walker visitor nights	44,991	47,241	58,603	61,533	64,609	67,840	71,232	74,794
Total Grampians Peaks Trail visitor nights	61,633	64,715	80,151	84,158	88,366	92,784	97,423	102,295



# Appendix 03 – Grampians Peaks Trail cost estimate

Table 9.3 – Summary of Grampians Peaks Trail construction costs

Segment	Code	Day	Start	Finish	Track exist	Track new	Length (m)
Northern	N1	01	Mount Zero Car Park	Barigar Hiker Camp	4,628m	4,008m	8,630m
	N2	02	Barigar Hiker Camp	Briggs Bluff Hiker Camp	2,796m	4,770m	7,566m
	N3	03	Briggs Bluff Hiker Camp	Lake Wartook Hiker Camp	5,961m	9,443m	15,405m
	N4	04	Lake Wartook Hiker Camp	Halls Gap Township	5,813m	4,971m	10,784m
Central	C1	05	Halls Gap	Rosea Hiker Camp	8,911m	0m	8,911m
	C2	06	Rosea Hiker Camp	Barbican Rocks Hiker Camp	14,069m	0m	14,069m
	C3	07	Barbican Rocks Hiker Camp	Mount William Hiker Camp	0m	13,434m	13,434m
	C4	08	Mount William Hiker Camp	Stockyard Saddle Hiker Camp	9,047m	0m	9,047m
	C5	09	Stockyard Saddle Hiker Camp	Yarram Gap Hiker Camp (Jimmy's)	2,927m	9,514m	12,441m
Southern	S1	10	Yarram Gap Hiker Camp	Mount Christobel Hiker Camp	0m	10,673m	10,673m
	S2	11	Mount Christobel Hiker Camp	Cassidy Gap Hiker Camp	0m	12,174m	12,174m
	S3	12	Cassidy Gap Hiker Camp	Mount Abrupt Hiker Camp	3,179m	3,697m	6,876m
	S4	13	Mount Abrupt Hiker Camp	Dunkeld Township	4,440m	4,793m	9,233m
Total Grampians Peaks Trail distance					61,765m	77,478m	139,243m

## Appendix 04 – Track grading

### Trail grading system

The Australian Walking Track Grading System benchmarks to Australian Standard 2156.1 – 2001 Walking Tracks – Classification and Signage, such that the nominated grade of the walking track corresponds to the class of track as noted in the standards (for example, a Grade 3 walk equals a Class 3 track).

#### Grade 3 walk

Suitable for most ages and fitness levels. Users need no bush walking experience and a minimum level of specialised skills. Users may encounter natural hazards such as steep slopes, unstable surfaces and minor water crossings. They are responsible for their own safety. Tracks may have short steep hill sections, a rough surface and many steps. Walks up to 20km.

#### Grade 4 walk

Bush walking experience recommended. Users require a moderate level of specialised skills such as navigation skills. Users may require maps and navigation equipment to successfully complete the track. Users need to be self-reliant, particularly with regard to emergency first aid and possible weather hazards. The track may be long, rough and very steep. Directional signage may be limited.

#### Grade 5 walk

Very experienced bush walkers. Users require previous experience in the outdoors and a high level of specialised skills such as navigation skills. Users will generally require a map and navigation equipment to complete the track. Users need to be self-reliant, particularly with regard to emergency first aid and possible weather hazards. Tracks

are likely to be very rough, very steep and unmarked. Walks may be more than 20km.  
[Source: Users Guide to the Australian Walking Track Grading System, Department of Sustainability & Environment & Parks Victoria, 2011](#)



	Existing track upgrade cost	New track cost	New boardwalk cost	New hiker camp cost	New bridge cost	Total cost	Total segment cost
	\$231,089	\$579,996	\$5,500	\$455,000	\$30,000	\$1,301,585	
	\$335,540	\$572,354	\$0	\$455,000	\$60,000	\$1,422,893	
	\$298,072	\$668,090	\$120,000	\$455,000	\$30,000	\$1,571,162	
	\$416,448	\$1,022,857	\$220,000	\$0	\$90,000	\$1,749,305	\$6,044,946
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$455,000	\$0	\$455,000	
	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$455,000	\$0	\$455,000	
	\$0	\$3,303,606	\$55,000	\$455,000	\$420,000	\$4,233,606	
	\$2,261,825	\$0	\$0	\$455,000	\$0	\$2,716,825	
	\$351,258	\$2,794,497	\$400,000	\$455,000	\$60,000	\$4,060,754	\$11,921,186
	\$0	\$2,555,737	\$0	\$455,000	\$0	\$3,010,737	
	\$0	\$640,346	\$800,000	\$455,000	\$30,000	\$1,925,346	
	\$490,861	\$924,176	\$0	\$455,000	\$0	\$1,870,037	
	\$448,740	\$1,276,415	\$140,000	\$0	\$90,000	\$1,955,155	\$8,761,275
	\$4,833,833	\$14,338,074	\$1,740,500	\$5,005,000	\$810,000	\$26,727,407	\$26,727,407

Grade 3



Grade 4



Grade 5



Source: Australian Walking Track Grading System





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