



THE VICTORIAN
GOLDFIELDS
WORLD HERITAGE BID

VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS TOURISM EXECUTIVE AND THE 15
VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

TRANSFORMING LIVES,
THE VISITOR ECONOMY,
AND GROWING JOBS:
THE VICTORIAN
GOLDFIELDS WORLD
HERITAGE MASTER PLAN



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

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Job number 293197

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First Peoples

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians whose Country includes the Victorian Goldfields: the Barengi Gadjin (the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk peoples), DJAARA (Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples), Eastern Maar, Taungurung, Wadawurrung, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Gunaikurnai and Yorta Yorta peoples and their right to self-determination, to 'freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development'*.

We honour their Ancestors and their Elders, past and present, whose connection to their Country, knowledge and wisdom ensure the continuation of culture, law and traditional practices throughout the Victorian Goldfields.

*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid logo incorporates the original artwork 'Murnong Kimbarne Yanabil' (Welcome, visitors, to our Yam Daisy Goldfields) by Dr Deanne Gilson – Wadawurrung artist.



PROJECT TEAM

This Master Plan has been funded by Regional Development Victoria, the partnership of 15 Local Government Authorities & Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive.

Project Sponsor

The Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive (VGTE) on behalf of its partnership with 15 Local Government Authorities.

Project Control Group (PCG)

- Chris Meddows-Taylor (VGTE) - PCG Chair
- Joanna Lyngcoln and Rebecca O'Brien (Heritage Victoria) - World Heritage Team
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- Trevor Budge AM (City of Greater Bendigo) - Project Manager

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Project Steering Committee

Membership of Victorian Goldfields Program Steering Committee consists of the CEOs of the 15 local governments (Ararat Rural City Council, Baw Baw Shire Council, Campaspe Shire Council, Central Goldfields Shire, City of Ballarat, City of Greater Bendigo, Golden Plains Shire Council, Hepburn Shire Council, Indigo Shire Council, Loddon Shire Council, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Mount Alexander Shire Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council and Pyrenees Shire Council) with the Chair of the Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive.

Consultant Team

This Master Plan has been prepared by Arup with project partners TRC, Extent Heritage and Michael Connell & Associates on behalf of the Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive (VGTE).

The final report is a collaborative effort between Arup, the bid team and the partnership.



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STAKEHOLDERS

Transforming lives, the visitor economy and growing jobs: The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan has been prepared with engagement from key stakeholders. The following organisations have been invited to participate through the Master Plan's development:

- Ararat Rural City Council.
- Baw Baw Shire Council.
- Campaspe Shire Council.
- Central Goldfields Shire Council.
- City of Ballarat.
- City of Greater Bendigo.
- Golden Plains Shire Council.
- Hepburn Shire Council.
- Indigo Shire Council.
- Loddon Shire Council.
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council.
- Moorabool Shire Council.
- Mount Alexander Shire Council.
- Northern Grampians Shire Council.
- Pyrenees Shire Council.
- Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.
- Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA).
- Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.
- Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Council.
- Taungurung Land and Waters Council Aboriginal Corporation.
- Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.
- Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.
- Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.
- Australian Government.
- Creative Victoria.
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.
- Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.
- Department of Transport and Planning.
- First Peoples State Relations.
- Heritage Victoria.
- Parks Victoria.
- Regional Development Victoria.
- Visit Victoria.
- Ararat Gallery.
- Sovereign Hill Museum Association.
- Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades.
- Bendigo Regional Tourism Board.
- Ballarat Heritage Attractions.
- Daylesford Macedon Regional Tourism Board.
- Destination Gippsland.
- Grampians Regional Tourism Board.
- Murray Regional Tourism Board.
- Tourism Mid West Visitor Economy Partnership.
- Tourism North East.
- Great Southern Touring Route.
- Sydney Melbourne Touring Route.

FOREWORD



Images (left to right): Pink Cliffs Heathcote, Foundations of the Garfield Water Wheel, Castlemaine Diggings, Maryborough Post Office.

Victoria's Goldfields were fabulously rich. Victoria had the world's largest nuggets and the deepest mines. The scale of mining and the amount of gold found captured everyone's imagination, while the impacts on Traditional Country were profound. Victoria's Goldfields brought hundreds of thousands of people from around the globe to try their luck, many became wealthy almost overnight and others faced untold hardship.

In the nineteenth century gold was found in many places around the world and it built grand cities and new communities. This period of human history has been described as transformative. *"Nothing set the world in motion like gold.... the global rush.... inspired a dramatic burst of movement and energy, affecting the course of world history.... capital, people and raw materials connected distant areas of the world in a spontaneous, contagious search for gold."*¹

Victoria's historic goldfields now stand in stark contrast to all those other places. As the only ones still largely intact, 'Victoria's goldfields are quite simply the most expansive and extensive representation of a nineteenth century goldrush landscape anywhere.'² Scores of historic cities, towns and settlements with their often grand architecture are scattered across a landscape of gold mining sites and relics; there is nothing else in the world to match it.

The global goldrushes occurred on the Traditional Country of First Peoples. The whole Victorian Goldfields region exists on a living cultural landscape of several Traditional Owner groups who are part of the oldest living civilization on Earth. Their Country exhibits significant tangible and intangible Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, together with the varied impacts and features from a frenetic period of settlement. A period when gold was literally found lying just beneath the surface and dug up in vast quantities, turning the landscape 'upside down'.

1 Mountford, B. and Tuffnell, S., Seeking a Global History of Gold, in Mountford, B. and Tuffnell, S., (eds.) (2018) A Global History of Gold Rushes, University of California Press, p.1

2 Barry Gamble (2023), Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The whole of the Victorian Goldfields is dotted with mining relics, alluvial fields, open cuts, deep lead mines and its critical water infrastructure. These together with grand dwellings and large, out of scale, public buildings and works, were built on the back of the wealth from gold. This exceptional urban and rural landscape demonstrates the interplay between diverse cultures; from the First Peoples, many of whom were displaced from their ancient lands, to those First Peoples who actively participated in Victoria's gold economy and the new inhabitants who had travelled from around the world in search of their fortune.

All the components of this region play their distinctive part. But it is the sheer size and scale of the Victorian Goldfields, the sum of the parts, the totality of the collection, the diversity of the experience, which establishes our global importance and prominence. It's a living heritage that commands universal interest and attention and will endlessly reward the visitor.

This extraordinary history and landscape are now being documented. A regionally initiated campaign has gained state government backing for the nomination of the Victorian Goldfields for World Heritage listing.

World Heritage is the designation for places on Earth that are of outstanding universal value to humanity and as such, have been inscribed on the World Heritage List to be protected for future generations to appreciate and enjoy. Places as diverse and unique as the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, Galápagos Islands in Ecuador, the Taj Mahal in India, the Grand Canyon in the USA, or the Acropolis in Greece are examples of the 1199 natural and cultural places inscribed on the World Heritage List to date. (UNESCO)

World Heritage Outstanding Universal Value

According to UNESCO's World Heritage Operational Guidelines, Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) '...means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole'.

Extensive studies and a global comparative analysis (Gamble) has identified that the Victorian Goldfields are proposed to be of Outstanding Universal Value and are unprecedented amongst 19th century goldrush heritage globally.

Pursuing World Heritage Listing for the Victorian Goldfields

A partnership between 15 local governments, the Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive (VGTE) supported by the Victorian Government and partnering Registered Aboriginal Parties is pursuing a UNESCO World Heritage listing. The partnership aims to recognise, leverage and celebrate the history and heritage of the Victorian Goldfields and build more sustainable economies and vibrant communities. The proposed listing is based on the potential global significance of the Victorian Goldfields as the most extensive and best-surviving landscape illustrating the global goldrush phenomenon of the second half of the nineteenth century.

First conceived in the 1980s and following various iterations, the view was formed that no one site was able to represent the scope and diversity of the global gold rush story. What emerged was a cultural landscape serial listing approach pioneered in the copper and tin mining areas of Cornwall and West Devon (UK), which was added to the World Heritage List in 2006. This dispersed model has also proven it can bring significant benefits to local communities.

A long-term strategic approach was agreed and resourced by the partnership with assistance from the Victorian Government, culminating in a whole-of-government commitment to advance a nomination.



15 Local Government Areas are included in the Master Plan: Ararat Rural City Council, Baw Baw Shire Council, Campaspe Shire Council, Central Goldfields Shire Council, City of Ballarat, City of Greater Bendigo, Golden Plains Shire Council, Hepburn Shire Council, Indigo Shire Council, Loddon Shire Council, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Moorabool Shire Council, Mount Alexander Shire Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council, and Pyrenees Shire Council.

The story behind the Master Plan

The Victorian Goldfields group of 15 local governments and the Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive, with funding from Regional Development Victoria, has commissioned Arup to assist in preparing the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan. A large group of regional stakeholders including partnering Registered Aboriginal Parties have supported such a momentous step. It sets out a comprehensive plan for the inevitable increase in visitors and demands on the region's infrastructure, together with the actions that will realise the opportunities for our communities, that global recognition will bring.

The Master Plan builds on extensive studies and research. The Sustainable Tourism Toolkit (TRC 2020) co-designed the Master Plan approach with key stakeholders and community surveys and included tourism market and locality research and initial brand design. Other studies have identified the potential for Victoria's Goldfields to be added to UNESCO's World Heritage List and the benefits it could bring to the region (Gamble, MCA). This approach reflects what we have learnt from World Heritage's first mining cultural landscape (Cornwall-West Devon Mining Landscape), which uses a serial listing approach to capture benefits for their whole region, not just the component areas included in their World Heritage listing.

The Master Plan promotes and advocates for those local government areas and stakeholders who have driven and contributed to it. The Master Plan recognises that the mid-19th century goldrushes and its surviving heritage and complex stories exist in other parts of Victoria, not just a limited few that could reach the high threshold for World Heritage listing. All this heritage underpins the Master Plan's priority actions.

In the journey that has been undertaken to date, it's been learnt that a common approach is to wait until World Heritage inscription is confirmed before preparing such a plan. As a result, many World Heritage places have had to scramble to put a plan together following listing. We have sought to avoid that problem.

The Master Plan recognises and capitalises on the power of a potential Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing to be a major catalyst. Achieving this will increase visitor numbers, create jobs and lift the profile and capacity of many urban and rural communities across an extensive area of regional Victoria – and to do this and fully realise the benefits we need to be World Heritage ready with a plan the encapsulates a sustainable tourism approach.

Find out more www.goldfieldsworldheritage.com.au



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS WORLD HERITAGE MASTER PLAN



Images from left to right: Craig's Royal Hotel Ballarat, Welcome Stranger monument Dunolly, Gold Puddler Whroo Historic Area.

"The Victorian Goldfields represent an unrivalled testament to the global gold rush, standing as the epitome of an extensive and resilient landscape."

This Master Plan aims to elevate the Victorian Goldfields' transformative power, charting a long-term vision for public and private investment.

What is the Master Plan?

This Master Plan aims to elevate the Victoria Goldfields transformative power, charting a long-term vision and road map for public and private investment.

This Master Plan outlines a collaborative agreed long-term plan for investment to maximise the transformational potential of World Heritage designation. It provides clear recommendations and directions for all three levels of government on priority investment and infrastructure priorities including a staged plan and case for progressive investment. It provides a strong rationale and basis for private sector investment to support and cater for an expected major increase in visitor numbers.

Based on extensive analysis and engagement, it has been developed with key stakeholders including Local, State and Australian Governments, Registered Aboriginal Parties, local community, business and industry and builds on the Victorian and Australian government's tourism strategies.

The Master Plan will be a major supporting document for a proposed UNESCO World Heritage nomination. It outlines a plan for the conservation, enhancement and sustainable development of the Victorian Goldfields for the visitor economy and local communities. The Master Plan identifies five themes that underpin the heritage assets of the Victorian Goldfields and presents a strategy of five key moves. These key moves have been crafted to realise the strategic objectives of the Master Plan, while managing major risks and threats. It incorporates local and regional aspirations and is accompanied by an advocacy document.

The Master Plan is a living document

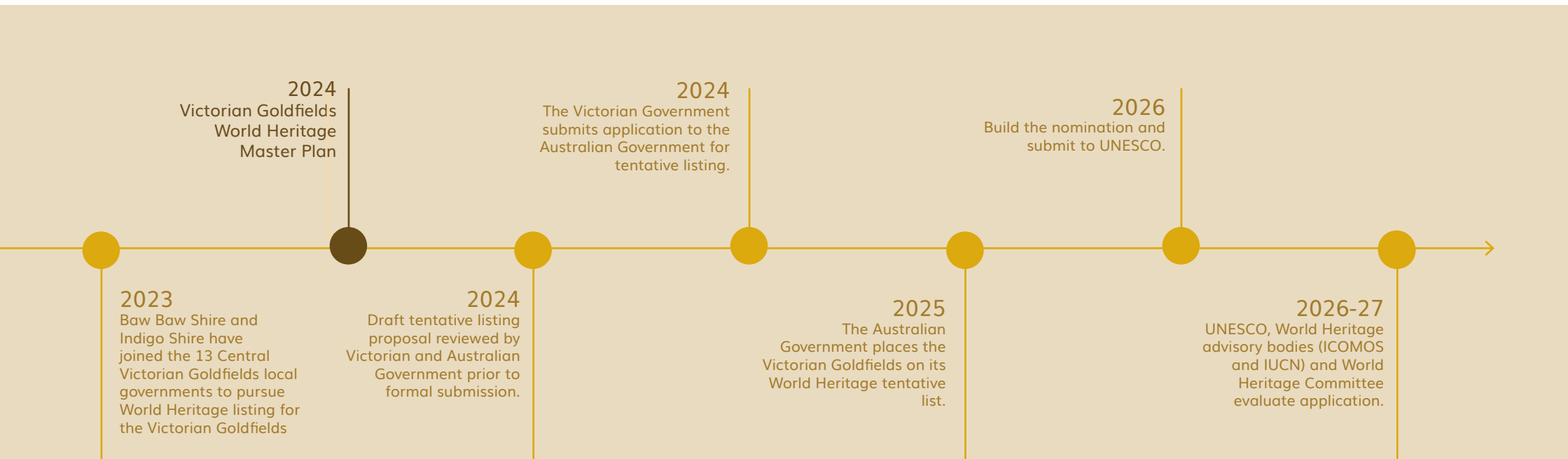
The Master Plan builds on extensive preparatory studies, processes, research (including market research as identified in the Sustainable Tourism Toolkit by TRC)¹, consultation, and the identification of effective ways to work at a whole of region level and advocate to government. The evolving nature of the World Heritage nomination, its continuing refinement as it moves through various stages of development and the assessment processes used by the World Heritage Centre will mean that the Master Plan will be further adjusted and developed over time. It is expected that in or before 2026 the proposed component areas forming the World Heritage nomination will be added to the Master Plan. If the Victorian Goldfields is successfully inscribed on the World Heritage list the Master Plan would be further developed.

The Master Plan also recognises that deeper engagement is required with a wide range of stakeholders at various stages of the Master Plan's ongoing development and delivery. For example, an important component of the Master Plan is integrating the Victorian Goldfields' heritage with the region's existing attractions, amazing natural setting, outstanding food and wine offerings, the work of artisans and the history and heritage of First Peoples – together establishing the whole region as a pre-eminent visitor destination. As such, an important role for the Master Plan is to lift awareness and buy-in to ensure that the region can be as World Heritage ready as possible.

¹ Sustainable Tourism Toolkit 2020 (TRC) and Economic Benefit Assessment 2022, revised 2024 (MCA)

The Master Plan is a vital cornerstone in bolstering the proposed Victorian Goldfields World Heritage nomination, charting a path towards the conservation, enhancement and sustainable development of the Victorian Goldfields for the benefit of the nation, Victoria and the Victorian Goldfields' communities.

Indicative timeframe



MASTER PLAN CONTEXT

What are the Key Challenges Facing the Victorian Goldfields?



Catalysed by World Heritage listing, investment in the Victorian Goldfields can address many of the region's key challenges:



1. The Victorian Goldfields' significant heritage assets are largely unrecognised, under-utilised and under-resourced. This severely limits the full potential of these assets to benefit the entire region.



2. There is pronounced socio-economic disadvantage across some areas of the Victorian Goldfields with pockets of extreme disadvantage and population decline, which embeds vulnerability and impacts resilience, such as making recovery from major disruption difficult.



3. Historically competitive, highly localised and untargeted investment has meant the private sector has not had the level of certainty needed to commit to high impact investment in tourism initiatives.

4. In many parts of the Victorian Goldfields there is a prevalence of poor-quality visitor experiences, products and services that contributes to an unevenness in visitation and severely impacts capacity and attraction.

What are our opportunities?

The objectives of the Master Plan are designed to realise the region's opportunities:

- Build profile and capacity of the Victorian Goldfields to display its extraordinary heritage legacy
- Establish Australia's premier and first series of World Heritage Journeys.
- Elevate under recognised heritage assets
- Provide a global platform for First Peoples to lead the truth telling of their stories and experiences of the global gold rush era and their continuation of caring for Country.
- Attract new and additional international and domestic visitors.
- Drive a major increase in dispersed tourism visitation across the region and throughout the year that 'gives back' to destination communities and supports their heritage, cultural and environmental assets.
- Increase sustainable jobs and new job opportunities, particularly – in areas with lower socio-economic profiles and entrenched disadvantage.
- Provide the rationale and incentive for targeted public and private sector investment which supports tourism, jobs and builds community assets.
- Build social capital, community pride, community confidence and quality of life.

See section 3 - Baseline Analysis

What is UNESCO and how does its work guide the Master Plan?

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. UNESCO's mandate is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international cooperation in education, sciences, culture, communication and information.

UNESCO's initiatives that guide the Master Plan include:

The World Heritage Convention

UNESCO's World Heritage List comprises nearly 1200 places that are important to everyone, no matter where they are located. They are places that have outstanding universal value that transcends the importance they hold for one particular nation. Australia is a signatory to the World Heritage Convention and, as of 2024, had 20 listed World Heritage sites.

World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme

The UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme is a new and innovative approach where planning for tourism and heritage management is integrated at a destination level. This ensures that the natural and cultural assets are valued and protected, and that appropriate sustainable tourism is developed.

World Heritage Journeys Programme

World Heritage Journeys (WHJ) is an initiative by UNESCO, in collaboration with National Geographic and local heritage and tourism managers, to showcase World Heritage destinations and help travellers experience them in ways that protect and support their outstanding value and the local communities that sustain them. This Journeys model shapes Key Move 1 in this Master Plan.

Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape

UNESCO's Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) provides a practical framework for managing heritage in dynamic urban environments, for example, where a World Heritage site is formed by an urban landscape. Its objective is to align socio-economic goals (the drivers of change) with the goals of conservation and quality of life outcomes. The application of HUL extends beyond geographic boundaries, such as World Heritage or other heritage listings, aiming to create a strong virtuous cycle where conservation is embraced fully to deliver benefits to local communities. World Heritage requires periodic reporting on the management of sites, including the application of the HUL.

MASTER PLAN AMBITION

The Master Plan positions the Victorian Goldfields as Australia's foremost World Heritage Journeys destination renowned universally, captivating global audiences and honouring the richness of First Peoples experiences. It cultivates social capital, community pride, confidence and enriches the quality of life for all who call this region home.

Unlocking the Victorian Goldfields' Potential: A 20 year Vision for Jobs and Growth

The Master Plan charts an ambitious course towards World Heritage listing of the Victorian Goldfields. By strategically investing and providing targeted support, we have set the groundwork for a remarkable transformation over the following decade and beyond.

Strategic Focus

The Master Plan's overall strategy is to maximise the benefits flowing to the region from a potential World Heritage Inscription.

Simply pursuing increased visitor numbers and expenditure does not maximise the benefits to geographically dispersed communities, their economies and their visitor attractions. Quality visitor experiences dispersed across the Victorian Goldfields don't just happen, they need to be planned for and resourced. Agreements need to be reached to set the priority investments, initiatives, and actions.

The Master Plan is predicated on three core elements.

- **Encourage and support visitors to travel and explore beyond the existing major hubs and routes:** The Victorian Goldfields has many locations which have the capacity to flourish. Our strategy is to invest in geographically dispersed quality facilities and services, to draw visitors to previously overlooked destinations, disperse the benefits and turn them into sustainable community gains, which in turn, addresses the anticipated congestion at major hubs.
- **Provide for incremental and progressive change and growth:** The Victorian Goldfields comprise many communities, stakeholders and interests. An incremental approach ensures that all places, communities and stakeholders evolve into thriving destinations on their terms, providing for positive sustained growth and change.
- **Support and evolve existing visitor hubs:** The major hubs particularly will receive a surge in visitor numbers and as flagship destinations they will thrive. But they will need to increase capacity and investment in infrastructure and be supported by a network and support structure of visitor information hubs and services across the whole region.

Traditional Owners are invited and supported to lead

The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid acts as a catalyst for exploring significant opportunities for restoring and enhancing the protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, recognising custodial ownership, building awareness, truth-telling and healing. It will provide opportunities for tourism-led sustainable developments, that will create businesses and employment opportunities and build capacity to directly benefit First Peoples.

World Heritage has the potential to bring real and long-lasting benefits that will be shared by First Peoples right across the Victorian Goldfields.

World Heritage is a proven, powerful catalyst with the potential to rejuvenate and transform local communities. As the custodians of Country, the Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) are invited to lead and guide their engagement to ensure their priorities and values – as outlined in their respective Country Plans – are captured in the World Heritage nomination process and in the development of this Master Plan.

The bid is a vehicle for tourism-led sustainable development, from business and employment opportunities to capacity building, that will directly benefit First Peoples. A focus on storytelling will promote understanding and respect for Traditional Owners and continuity of connection to Country.

The bid team is working with a number of Registered Aboriginal Parties and Traditional Owners who are engaging at different speeds in order to take up the challenges and opportunities of the proposed World Heritage Listing and Master Plan.

See section 2 - Introduction

PLAN ON A PAGE

The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan has been encapsulated into a single page. Guided by the overall Vision, the Master Plan framework is based on eleven principles which encompass the way in which quality visitor experiences are to be presented, how cultural heritage is to be conserved, the social, economic, and environmental outcomes that are being pursued and how sustainability underpins the overall approach.



Walhalla
Arup

PLAN ON A PAGE

Vision for the Victorian Goldfields

To share the extraordinary story of the Victorian Goldfields with people across the globe and create social, cultural and economic opportunities for every community and person across the region.



Principles



Elevate First Peoples voices, stories, culture and opportunities



Conserve and celebrate heritage places and the potential OUV



Facilitate layered storytelling



Drive social and community benefit and pride



Promote environmental, social, economic and cultural sustainability



Promote gender equality through elevating the stories of women and children and creating economic and social opportunities for people of all genders.



Elevate Victorian Goldfields' experiences, products and infrastructure to a world-class standard



Maximise economic yield



Disperse visitation, investment and benefits across the region and seasons



Facilitate multimodal movement and mode choice



Adopt an innovative and holistic approach to experience planning



Themes and Stories

Proposed Outstanding Universal Value

The most extensive and best-surviving landscape, anywhere, that illustrates the global goldrush phenomenon of the second half of the nineteenth century

Gold

The Human Story



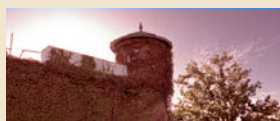
First Peoples

Country and Culture
Truth Telling and Language
Landscape and Cultural Heritage



Gold Miners

Prospecting and Mining
Geology and Landform
Industries and Invention
Men, women and children



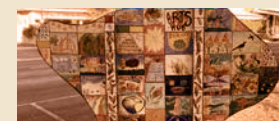
Rebels

Law and Order
Protest and Democracy
Characters and Crime



Migrators

Ancestry
Diversity and Multiculturalism
Settlements and Architecture



Makers

Artisans, Crafts and Lost Trades
Culinary and Cultivation
Creativity and Innovation



Key Moves and Initiatives

Five key moves and associated initiatives are identified to support sustainable tourism across the Victorian Goldfields, managing key risks and celebrating local history, stories and communities.

Key Move 1

Develop a series of World Heritage Journeys



Initiatives

Key Move 2

Support access to and amenity of heritage sites and townships



Initiatives

Key Move 3

Create World Heritage Signature Experiences



Initiatives

Key Move 4

Get World Heritage Ready



Initiatives

Key Move 5

Promote and raise awareness of the Victorian Goldfields



Initiatives

KEY MOVES AND TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS

The Master Plan operates primarily at the levels of vision, policy and strategy. It recognises that to deliver the Plan requires adoption of the key elements, a commitment to work through the detail, then sourcing and allocating funding and lastly delivering on site.

Key Moves

The Master Plan sets out five Key Moves. These are the fundamental steps that need to be taken to ensure that the Victorian Goldfields are best positioned to attract and accommodate a surge in visitors and to realise the benefits that will flow from increased income through visitors to the region. The key moves are not sequential or in priority order; action needs to be taken concurrently on all five.



1 Deliver World Heritage Journeys



2 Support Access to and Amenity of Heritage Sites and Townships



3 Create World Heritage Signature Experiences



4 Get World Heritage Ready



5 Promote and Raise Awareness of the Victorian Goldfields

Delivered together, these five key moves create a rejuvenated region and visitor destination with a higher quality product able to attract more people who will stay longer. The five key moves are designed to:

- lift the capacity of the region to cater for more visitors,
- raise the profile of the region, and
- position the Victorian Goldfields as a world class destination and visitor experience to match an inscription as a World Heritage site
- disperse visitors throughout the Victorian Goldfields so as to benefit all communities.

Transformational Projects

To deliver on these key moves will require a series of projects which implemented together and progressively will be transformational. They can be implemented in partnership with many local initiatives and actions in communities across the region. This transformative approach to tourism is underpinned by the principles of sustainability, cultural appreciation, and regional development. This bold vision of transformation represents a strategic commitment to create an enduring benefit for communities and the economy at large.

The initiatives presented are transformative in that they will:

- help to invigorate regional and local economies,
- create substantial employment opportunities, and
- position the region at the forefront of global sustainability and heritage conservation.

Importantly, transformational projects will bring direct benefits to the more than half million people who live in, and the thousands of businesses that operate, in the region.

See section 4 – Key Moves and Transformational Projects

KEY MOVE 1: Deliver World Heritage Journeys

Underpinning this planned transformation is Key Move 1, a region wide initiative – the progressive development and implementation of World Heritage Journeys. This concept is new for Australia. It places the Victorian Goldfields at the forefront of global tourism developments. Based on an emerging model promoted by UNESCO and National Geographic, it is designed to take visitors to not only the high-profile sites but to destinations and attractions that are less frequented places and on journeys which encourage and support a deeper engagement with local cultures, heritage, and environments. The Journeys concept recognises the needs, expectations, and interests of visitors today and in the future. Moving away from a rigid touring route model that moves people from A-B, this concept enables flexibility for visitors in how they travel and where they travel to. It enables visitors to create and curate a unique journey where the Victorian Goldfields' rich history, culture, landscapes, stories, and communities can be explored and uncovered.

By providing a comprehensive platform and tool for visitors, World Heritage Journeys steers and disperses visitors towards a diverse range of destinations and offers a range of travel options. This key move, detailed in the Master Plan, also supports the progressive, more even, and sustainable distribution of the expected economic benefits from a major growth in tourism.

An Initiative for a More Sustainable Approach to Managing the Growth of Visitor Numbers

World Heritage Journeys prioritises the progressive development of a network of infrastructure projects and service upgrades for road and rail, as well as the further development of the existing extensive network of walking trails and cycling routes, together with visitor facilities. The plan lays the groundwork for a tourism model that supports economic growth while conserving the natural and cultural heritage that will attract visitors.

World Heritage Journeys embrace more sustainable modes of transportation including electric vehicles, bicycles, e-bikes, walking, enhanced public transport network and services, and providing options for people to undertake parts of their visit using sustainable options particularly in local micro-journeys, which is an innovative feature of the Journeys network. These initiatives assist with implementing the commitment of governments to Net Zero and promoting health and wellness through active travel.

This forward-thinking initiative not only enhances the visitor experience but also positions the region as a global leader in sustainable tourism practices.

High Priority Programs:

- Story development and interpretation strategy
- Walking and Cycling Journey Strategy
- Gateways
- Digital experiences and journey app
- Journey development coordination
- Transformative investments – multimodal transport network

Pages 92-107 in Chapter 4: Key Moves and Transformational Projects



Connecting over 25 cities, towns, villages and communities.



A multimodal network of walking, cycling, rail and road journeys.



Significant gateways to create a sense of arrival and identity.



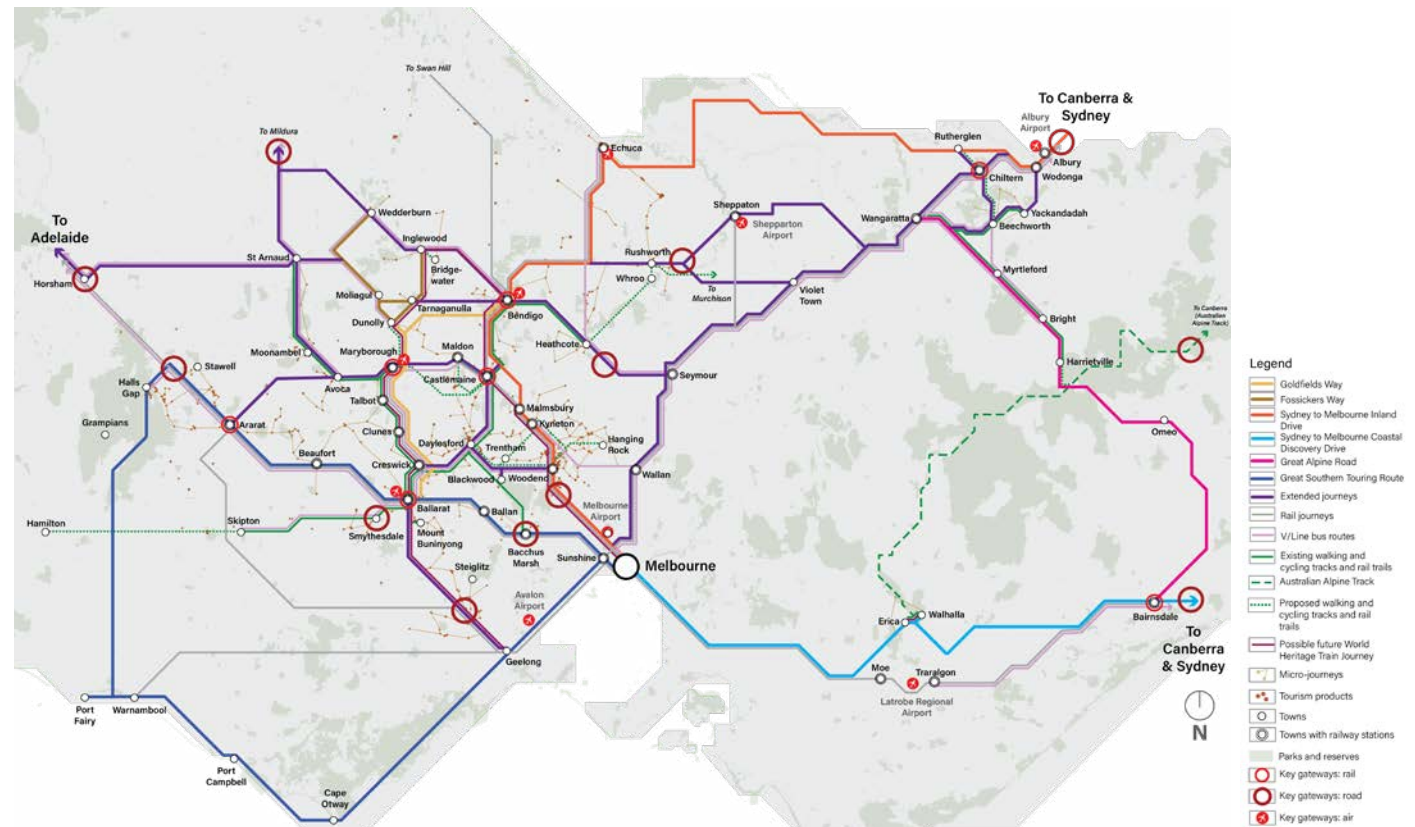
Linking to exceptional experiences across the World Heritage themes.



Encouraging visitors to discover the wider Victorian Goldfields and its attractions.



Connecting clusters of rich experiences (micro journeys).



Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan



KEY MOVE 2 – Support Access to and Amenity of Heritage Sites and Townships

World class access, placemaking, storytelling and infrastructure improvements and conservation works to ensure vibrant, high quality heritage destinations and townships across the Victorian Goldfields and provide world class visitor infrastructure.

Examples of initiatives include:

- improved active transport infrastructure and connections between key destinations
- improved conservation of key heritage places and areas,
- public realm and streetscape improvements
- enhanced/new accessible and inclusive interpretation
- improved access and safety including roads and parking
- address digital connectivity and blackspots
- upgraded facilities and infrastructure including toilets and potable water.

Pages 108-117 in Chapter 4: Key Move and Transformational Projects



KEY MOVE 3 – Create World Heritage Signature Experiences

Signature experiences will create emotional connection and act as key drivers of visitation along the journeys, creating awareness of the Victorian Goldfields, nationally and internationally and supporting local communities.

Initiatives include:

- Co-designed regional and community experiences
- Partnering with and supporting iconic attractions
- Connecting creative regions and communities
- Showcasing hidden gems at historical reserves
- World Heritage Hubs – elevating the experience of place

Pages 118-127 in Chapter 4: Key Move and Transformational Projects



KEY MOVE 4 – Get World Heritage Ready

Targeted capacity and capability building to help local business and industry elevate the quality, consistency and strength of products and services to create world class experience and maximise economic benefits. This includes opportunities to strengthen cultural, community and environmental stewardship.

Initiatives include:

- First Peoples World Heritage Cultural Tourism Development Program
- Product and service quality program
- Accommodation attraction and quality program
- World Heritage guide program

Pages 128-133 in Chapter 4: Key Move and Transformational Projects



KEY MOVE 5 – Promote and Raise Awareness of the Victorian Goldfields

Branding, marketing and events are required to position Victorian Goldfields as an international product for the strength of experience it offers the entire region and to raise awareness of its stories and experiences.

Initiatives include:

- Events and festivals program and strategy
- Market, brand and promote the Victorian Goldfields, including World Heritage Journeys and proposed World Heritage sites.

Pages 134-137 in Chapter 4: Key Move and Transformational Projects

HIGH-PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

There is a strong need for a series of strategic projects in the Key Moves to be delivered early and prior to a potential World Heritage nomination as a catalyst to progressively improve the visitor experience and ensure high quality experiences.

1. World Heritage Journeys Story Development and Interpretation Strategy (pages 106, 145.)

Story Development will catalogue and develop engaging stories under the key themes supported by appropriate promotion and marketing strategies. Curated interpretation will be presented at proposed World Heritage component areas and key destinations across the World Heritage Journeys network and be culturally appropriate and accessible, including for international visitors. The Master Plan presents a thematic framework and concept approach to World Heritage Journeys however further development is required to progress the concepts before interpretation can be delivered on-the-ground. As a cornerstone of the Master Plan, World Heritage Journey development is a priority.

Establishment planning \$500,000

Local & State Government (e.g. Parks Vic, Heritage Vic), RAPs

2. World Heritage Journeys Development and Coordination (pages 107, 145.)

Given the extent and diversity of the region, collaboration, coordination and integration of the World Heritage Journeys will be essential. Detailed design is also required to progress World Heritage Journeys concept plans presented in this Master Plan. Early coordination and sufficient lead time is critical for success.

Establishment planning \$500,000

Tourism Bodies, Local, State & Federal Government, RAPs.

3. Master Plan for First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys (pages 116, 145.)

Led by First Peoples, a series of master plans are required to embed First People's stories, culture and assertions and deliver benefits for First Peoples through the proposed Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing.

Establishment planning \$350,000

Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs)

4. Immediate Infrastructure Improvements and Conservation Works at the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas (pages 116, 145.)

Prior to a World Heritage nomination, immediate improvements and conservation works should focus on the World Heritage sites, including access and safety. To prepare for this, concept plans should be progressed to detailed design to ensure improvements are shovel ready at the time of inscription.

On-the-ground works \$TBC

Local and State Government (e.g. Parks Vic, Heritage Vic), RAPs

5. Service Quality Capacity Building Program (pages 132, 145.)

A targeted capacity and capability program is needed to help local business and industry elevate the quality, consistency and strength of products and services to create world class experiences and maximise economic benefits. Existing programs are in place and could be rolled out at scale to bring immediate benefit.

On-the-ground works \$500,000

Tourism bodies, local and State Government, Industry, RAPs

6. Marketing and Branding the Victorian Goldfields including World Heritage Journeys and the proposed World Heritage Sites' Component Areas (pages 137, 145.)

A marketing and branding strategy needs to be developed to promote the Victorian Goldfields to domestic and international markets with a focus on new World Heritage Journeys, signature experiences and hero sites. Early targeted advertising and promotion that links to key target domestic and international markets will drive awareness and visitation and is required to position the Victorian Goldfields as an international product.

Establishment planning \$300,000

Tourism Bodies, Local and State Government (e.g. Parks Vic), RAPs, Industry

7. Co-design Signature Experience Activation (pages 127, 145.)

While high level options are highlighted in the Master Plan, collaboratively developing signature experience activation with local communities will foster community pride and build support for World Heritage and visitation. Engaging early will help build

partnerships and support. Anchor attractions are a core concept of the Master Plan and are a priority.

Establishment planning \$600,000

Local and State Government (e.g. Parks Vic), Tourism Bodies, RAPs, Industry.

8. Visitor Information, World Heritage Hub Strategy (pages 127, 145.)

There is both an opportunity and a need to transform existing visitor centres across the region to become a network of World Heritage Hubs acting as touch points for information, interpretation, engagement and partnership opportunities with community and heritage specialists as part of the Victorian Goldfields experience. To realise this transformation, a long-term regional approach is required through the development of a World Heritage Hub Strategy as well as preliminary funding to support minor improvements to Visitor Centres to incorporate World Heritage information and experiences in the short term.

Establishment planning \$200,000

Tourism Bodies, Local Government, RAPs

9. Immediate Safety Improvements at Historic Reserves (pages 127, 145.)

Visitor safety is important at mining sites to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience. Pedestrian safety is important in mining sites to ensure a safe experience while enjoying the sites for visitors. Safety improvements, such as appropriate wayfinding, signage and proper pathways, are critical for to minimising hazard risks and ensure visitors can safely enjoy historic sites. This need to be addressed prior to supporting increased visitation.

Establishment planning \$200,000

State Government (e.g. Parks Vic), Site Managers

10. Deliver World Heritage Gateways (pages 106, 145.)

With a serial listing of component areas and the wide distribution of the Victorian Goldfields there are multiple entry points or gateways to the region., Reinforcing arrival points is central to the identity and experience of the World Heritage Journey concept. Delivering gateway infrastructure as a first step will build awareness of World Heritage Journeys and sense of place early.

Establishment planning \$250,000

State Government, Tourism Bodies.

TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS FOR LONGER-TERM ACTION

The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan presents a transformative approach to tourism. It is underpinned by the principles of sustainability, cultural appreciation and regional development. This bold vision represents a strategic commitment to create an enduring benefit for communities and the economy at large.

In terms of specific transformational projects, in addition to and linked with establishing and implementing World Heritage Journeys, the Master Plan puts forward and supports a series of projects which exemplify how World Heritage inscription can be a catalyst for new ways of strengthening the visitor economy and how the whole region can be supported.

These specific transformational projects will generally fall into one of two categories, those project that are:

1. A deliberate planned intervention and an opportunity for investment to stimulate positive change and enhanced community benefits.
2. The obvious outcomes of World Heritage inscription. For instance, the expansion in visitor numbers will demand a response by the region to cater for greater numbers.

Transformational infrastructure projects and regional development opportunities

The Master Plan proposes a major transformative project - The progressive development and implementation of Australia's First World Heritage Journeys. A series of long-term infrastructure development projects can support and elevate the World Heritage Journeys network.

Multimodal Transport Network (supporting Key Move 1)

1. Coordinated Public Transport Services.

The Victorian Goldfields region can lead the way as a pilot program for the state through enhanced timetable and services coordination between trains, regional and local buses and linked to local micro journeys, and the use of cycling, walking and e-bikes. (Page 139).

2. World Heritage Journeys Railway Development

The World Heritage Journeys Railway Development project aims to utilise existing rail corridors to progressively increase passenger rail services across the region. This will provide enhanced access to heritage sites across significant parts of the region including potential World Heritage sites. (Page 139).

3. Expanded Active and Sustainable Travel: Multi-modal travel options with supporting facilities and infrastructure.

The Victorian Goldfields offer an extraordinary opportunity to link key nodes with an existing and expanded range of journey options. Implementation of the Master Plan will progressively expand and broaden this network. (Page 139).

4. Electric Vehicle Charging Network.

The Victorian Goldfields can be the regional visitor services pilot for the rollout of public and privately operated fast EV charging facilities. (Page 140).

5. Erica to Walhalla Connection

This project envisions a series of travel options from Erica to Walhalla, emphasizing sustainable modes of transportation to ensure that increased visitor numbers can be catered for while retaining the integrity and functioning of this remote gold mining settlement. (Page 140).

Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Visitor Interpretation Centres (supporting Key Move 3)

Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Visitor Interpretation Centres: A Vision Unearthed

Imagine places where history comes alive, where the echoes of the past resonate through captivating exhibits and immersive experiences. Welcome to the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Visitor Interpretation Centres. A visionary project both large and small, that celebrates our rich and diverse heritage, educates, and inspires generations to come. Interpretative centres aren't just museums; they are dynamic hubs, large and small, that serves multiple purposes. These centres serve not only as attractions but as educational, research and community engagement hubs, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the region's rich gold era history and the living culture of its First Peoples. (Page 140).

The Master Plan highlights a major regional development opportunity that would support the region to be World Heritage ready

Victorian Goldfields Tourism, Hospitality and Heritage Skills Training Needs (supporting Key Move 4).

The Victorian Goldfields will need a comprehensive examination of its tourism, hospitality and heritage skills training needs in preparation for World Heritage listing. Independent, extensive research has identified that World Heritage listing will produce a sustained surge in visitor numbers. Ten years after World Heritage listing it is estimated that the region is likely to have generated over 4,000 jobs in tourism and hospitality alone, over and above the growth that would have occurred without listing. There are already critical labour shortages in the tourism and hospitality sectors, not only in the Victorian Goldfields, but throughout Australia.

The second workforce shortage which will quickly emerge is tradespeople skilled and experienced in the conservation of heritage building and sites. With World Heritage listing there will be a growth in demand for people trained in relevant heritage crafts and skills. There are shortages already in the region in this employment sector, which is characterised by an aging demographic of practitioners, and which has not attracted young persons to take on apprenticeships in a sustainable way. Traditionally it is not an employment sector that has supported participation by women. That needs to change. (Page 141)

MASTER PLAN OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes from delivering and implementing the Master Plan include:

- revitalisation and dispersal of economic benefits
- social and cultural enhancement for communities
- environmental gains
- improvements in the quality of visitor experiences
- lifting the profile of the whole Victorian Goldfields.

Projects set out in the Master Plan will transform and revitalise the Victorian Goldfields. These projects will assist in catering for an anticipated growth in visitors number which is expected to will see annual visitor numbers to the whole goldfields boosted by around 2.5 million ten years after World Heritage inscription. This will deliver local jobs, boost employment, and strengthen local economies. The economic revitalisation which will flow from this will create around 2,225 new jobs and inject over \$700m into the region over the first ten years following World Heritage inscription.

Substantial social and cultural benefits from celebrating and conserving the richness of the region's multi-layered history – from First Peoples living on Country to the gold rush and subsequent waves immigration from many communities from around the globe who built grand cities and towns on the back of the wealth of gold.

The on-going environmental benefits for the Victorian Goldfields' natural landscapes and ecosystems are that they will be conserved and elevated through investments in sustainable and regenerative activities, tourism and Country-led initiatives.

Sustained growth, greater resilience, and benefits beyond the major Visitor Hubs underpins the Master Plan. While the major tourist hubs will shine brighter, benefits will extend across the whole region and progressively embrace all towns and communities. Visitors and their expenditure will spill into under-visited gems, bringing new life. The Master Plan is positioned so that each community across the region can determine the extent to which they wish to embrace benefits that are offered by World Heritage listing.

In summary, the Master Plan lays the foundations for a holistic, strategic, managed process of change and transformation which enables the region to be elevated to the level of a world class destination offering high quality visitor experiences

Social and Cultural Benefits

The Master Plan celebrates and conserves the richness of the region's multi-layered history – from the First Peoples living on Country to the gold rush and subsequent waves of immigration. Initiatives in the Master Plan will uplift today's communities and seek to align with their aspirations for the future. Delivery of the Master Plan along with a potential World Heritage Listing produces many benefits including significant gains and improvements in:

- Community identity and pride.
- Conservation of heritage.
- Socioeconomic revitalisation.
- Cultural celebration.

Economic Benefits

A potential World Heritage designation will increase attention and visitation to the Victorian Goldfields. If this is adequately supported and leveraged, it will lead to economic benefits for the region's communities, businesses and tourism operators. Benefits include:

- Growth in visitor spend and economic uplift.
- Securing existing jobs, job creation and more sustainable employment.
- Increased economic activity, such as private sector investment in accommodation and visitor services.
- Greater understanding of the benefits of conserving heritage, caring for Country and sharing stories and culture.
- Economic benefits better dispersed across the region that particularly supports disadvantaged communities.

Environmental Benefits

Regardless of whether a place is World Heritage listed or not, natural landscapes and ecosystems are foundational elements of the Victorian Goldfields Their values and can be conserved and celebrated through investments in sustainable, regenerative and Country-led initiatives. Benefits include:

- Caring for Country.
- Protection and conservation.
- Sustainable visitation.
- Healthy places.

Supporting the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Master Plan aspires to address 10 of the 17 SDGs, the UN's benchmark for sustainable development:

- SDG 1: No Poverty
- SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing
- SDG 5: Addressing Gender Issues
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- SDG 10: Reduced inequalities
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 15: Life on Land
- SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals

Supporting the ICOMOS² Sustainable Development Policy Guidelines for Heritage

- SDG 1 - Harness the potential of heritage to eradicate extreme poverty for all.
- SDG 3 – Harness the power of heritage in ensuring healthy lives and the promotion of well-being for all at all ages.
- SDG 5 – Harness the potential of heritage to achieve gender equality, eradicate bias and violence based on sexual orientation, and empower all genders, recognising that heritage is constantly changing and evolving.
- SDG 8 - Harness heritage as a resource for inclusive and sustainable local and regional economic development.
- SDG 9 – Harness heritage for inclusive and sustainable industry and infrastructure, through creativity and innovation.
- SDG 10 – Harness the role of heritage in reducing inequalities and fostering inclusiveness and cultural diversity.
- SDG 11 – Harness the potential of heritage to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable for current and future generations.
- SDG 13 - Harness heritage to enhance the adaptive and transformative capacity of communities and build resilience against climate change.
- SDG 15 - Harness the potential of heritage to promote integrated landscape-based, values-based, and human rights–based approaches for the protection, restoration and sustainable use of ecosystems.
- SDG 17 - Harness the potential of strategic partnerships in heritage processes to foster sustainability-oriented heritage and development policies and practices.

² ICOMOS is the International Council on Monuments and Sites, the peak body for heritage and a World Heritage Advisory Body.

Key Outcomes of a proposed World Heritage Listing and Master Plan delivery include:

- **Economic revitalisation** with targeted investments, based on the Master Plan, will generate up to 4,017 new jobs and bring \$526 million more in visitor spending into our region.
- **Transformational projects** will catalyse change for the Victorian Goldfields, deliver local jobs and boost tourism.
- **Social cultural benefits** celebrating and conserving the richness of the region's multi-layered history and heritage – from the First Peoples living on Country to the gold rush and subsequent waves of immigration.
- **Environmental benefits** natural landscapes and ecosystems will be conserved and elevated through investments in sustainable, regenerative, and Country-led initiatives.
- **Beyond Major Hubs**, the Major Hubs will shine brighter, but the regions and smaller towns will rise too. Visitors will spill into under-visited gems, bringing new life.
- **Laying the foundations** for holistic and strategic transformative change, elevating the region to a 'world-class' destination built upon its World Heritage status.

NOTE Economic impacts are based on 10 years after the proposed World Heritage designation and use a base date of 2019 (pre-COVID), Economic Benefit Assessment Goldfields Mater Plan (Base Case), MCa Michael Connell & Associates, December 2023 & February 2024 (revision).



\$44M

Total project costs for infrastructure across World Heritage Journeys and Sites

Operational Phase



2,125

Additional jobs over 10 years



\$182M

Increase in regional income in 10 years



2.5M

Additional visitors over 10 years



5,237

New rooms required over 10 years

Construction Phase



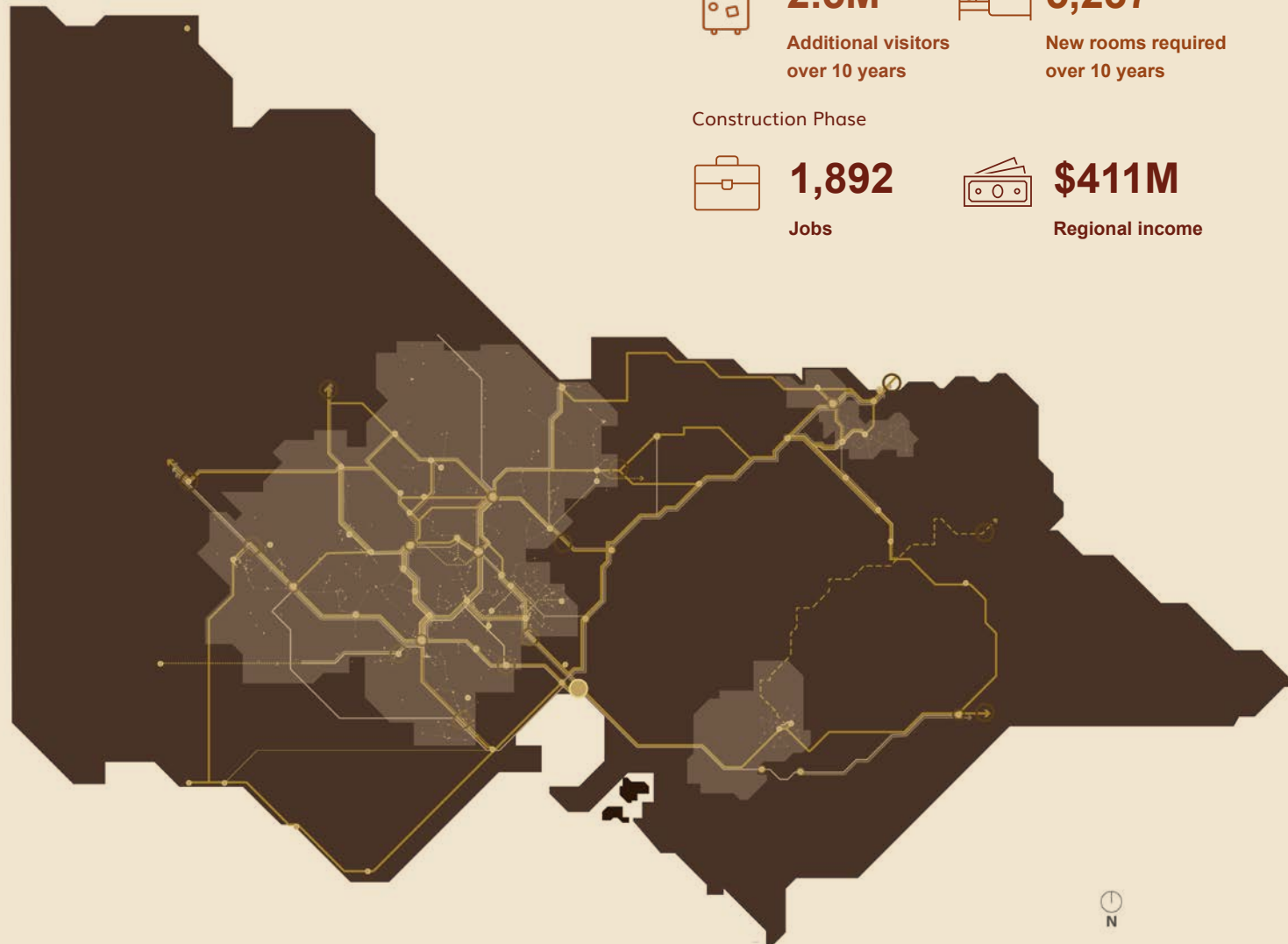
1,892

Jobs



\$411M

Regional income



MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Master Plan's Implementation Strategy sets out the recommended principles for project sequencing, timing and governance to deliver its initiatives and aspirations.

Implementation principles



Mobilise partnership arrangements early

Set up a clear and effective partnership arrangement early to coordinate the delivery of Master Plan initiatives in an integrated, supported and collaborative way. While lessons learned from experiences of World Heritage areas around the world mean that arrangements do not need to be in their ultimate or final form from day one, establishing arrangements, key roles and decision-making processes early will set implementation up for success.



Leverage existing models and structures

Utilise existing Visitor Economy Partnerships and regional tourism boards structures within the region together to plan and develop the World Heritage Travel Journeys and Micro Journeys.



Adopt an incremental growth model

Incremental growth aligns with a sustainable tourism model that will support controlled growth and investment overtime. Acknowledging that World Heritage is forever, growth and investment should be staged to allow space and time to measure, evaluate and adapt initiatives over time.



Prioritise enabling of core initiatives

Lessons learned for World Heritage listings around the world show that visitation can increase significantly immediately following inscription. To proactively get World Heritage ready, enabling infrastructure and core initiatives such as access improvements and experience quality improvements should be prioritised to support safe visitation and to meet quality expectations from day one.



Build off and supplement existing experiences

In the first instance, priority tourism initiatives should focus on supporting industry and local business to elevate their offer and product to a World Class standard. As visitation, awareness and reputation grows, advocate to expand and introduce new experiences.



Prioritise projects that distribute benefits

To realise the objectives of the Master Plan, early investments should aim to distribute benefits across the region such as regional programs and the delivery of World Heritage Journeys rather than large investments in highly localised areas. This approach drives economic and community benefits across the region as a first principle, rather than major investments in specific location



Ongoing management and monitoring

Across implementation of the Master Plan, concerted effort should be given to ongoing management of the proposed World Heritage Site's component areas including visitor management. Monitoring and evaluation of visitor numbers, impacts and benefits and public/ private investment should also be undertaken. This data should inform the ongoing incremental growth and iteration of planning for the Victorian Goldfields.



Prioritise Key Transformative Projects

Develop an agreed short list of transformative projects; public, private and public/private partnerships that will capitalise on the benefits of WH listing of the Victorian Goldfields, support and drive major growth in visitor numbers and disperse benefits across the Victorian Goldfields.

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A Collaborative Partnership Approach

Stakeholder Collaboration

Included within the suite of key moves and transformational projects is a continuing focus on conserving and celebrating the region's cultural heritage, to ensure that economic development does not come at the expense of cultural integrity across the Victorian Goldfields. Central to this vision is the ongoing collaboration between multiple state, regional and local governmental bodies, ensuring that the necessary infrastructure and services are progressively developed to support this sustainable tourism model and regional development.

The state government, along with 15 local governments and respective tourism organisations together with the Registered Aboriginal Parties, will need to continue to actively collaborate and coordinate to bring this vision to life with a whole-of-government approach. For example, departments such as transport and planning, and agencies such as Parks Victoria play a pivotal role, in planning and funding much-needed infrastructure upgrades. Many government departments and agencies will need to be involved as active participants, including those responsible for tourism and events, environment and climate change, jobs, skills, industry, regions, finance, First Peoples, cultural heritage, infrastructure, parks, public transport, regional development, and regional roads.

There is also a need to develop partnerships with a series of initiatives being developed/delivered by private and public stakeholders, for example: First Peoples tourism initiatives, community-driven initiatives and Sovereign Hill's Gold Pavilion.

Coordinated funding and sustained resourcing

As previously highlighted, a coordinated whole-of-government response to delivery and both project funding and recurrent funding will be required. Planning and on-ground work will be needed leading to the nomination as well as the substantial work required post the proposed listing.

See Implementation - Pages 146-147.

Proposed Partnership

A sustainable model for coordinating the delivery of the extensive and complex set of priorities and actions for tourism across a wide area of Victoria over the long-term needs to be developed, nurtured and enabled to deliver the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan. Such a model also needs to be aligned with and support the World Heritage Listing and its heritage conservation goals.

While this Master Plan proposes a suite of new projects and priorities, it also recognises the extensive current and proposed projects led by private and public tourism bodies and other stakeholders across the region, highlighting the need for a mutually beneficial and coordinated approach.

Two case studies are provided in the master plan that demonstrate examples of large-scale successful coordinating partnerships. The lessons from these two example bodies are that it is possible to achieve enrolment in a larger vision and to collaborate and coordinate on a large and diverse geographic area while respecting each stakeholder's interests and focus.

A series of next steps are outlined to enrol stakeholders, identify critical milestones and to develop a successful governance and coordinating model that is fully supported.

See Implementation - Pages 146-147.

INITIATIVE STAGING

Stage 1: 0-3 Years

Activate the World Heritage Journeys



- World Heritage Journey Planning including travel mode options.
- Interpretation Including Branding, Marketing, Story Development, Placemaking and Wayfinding.
- Visitor Information and Experience including integrated digital connectivity.
- First People's Master Plans.
- Capacity building and attract investment.

Stage 2: 4-7 Years

Enhancing the Visitor Experience



- Develop Signature Gateways and strengthen tourism infrastructure, product and experiences in key locations.
- Conservation, revitalisation and visitor safety.
- Develop commercial partnerships in key areas including accommodation.
- Review Travel Journey implementation progress in line with global leading edge developments.

Stage 3: 8+ years

Review and Reset Investment Priorities



- Major hub development.
- Visitor and interpretation centres upgrades to incorporate emerging technologies and engaging experiences.
- Transport and tourism infrastructure investments and new engaging products.

PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK

What First and Why now?

While this Master Plan sets a long term, staged strategic framework for investment across the Victorian Goldfields, amongst the long list of proposed initiatives there are a several immediate projects recommended as a first step.

In the immediate term, there are two categories of initiatives that emerge as a priority:

- Establishment planning: this includes development and coordination activities that will progress key high-level concepts or proposals presented in this Master Plan.
- On the ground works: this includes critical infrastructure or on the ground works that will deliver immediate benefits or impact.

For the priority projects, there are next step actions that cascade out of the Master Plan which are recommended for investment. Indicative costs for each next step action are high-level indicative estimates only.

Prioritising Projects

A framework was developed to prioritise the long list of proposed initiatives. The framework takes a filter approach, with initiatives flagged across three out of the four filters emerging as priority projects.

Framework Filters



Is it critical or would it contribute to the proposed World Heritage nomination?

These would be projects that support the potential World Heritage nomination process including presentation and promotion of heritage values, enhancements to the suitability and capacity of visitor facilities and visitor management planning.



Is it an essential first step for Stage 1 of the Master Plan?

These would be projects that are critical first steps to unlocking broader benefits or to delivering other initiatives within Stage 1 phasing of the Master Plan. These initiatives are also considered enablers, without which, other projects could not progress.



Is it a state wide package of work?

These would be projects that apply across the entire Victorian Goldfields region on the basis that priority projects should drive impact and benefit region-wide in the first instance.



Does it drive an increase in yield or visitation?

These would be projects that are likely to bring an increase in visitation numbers and visitor yield, which is a core objective of this Master Plan to support economic growth, job opportunities and social benefits of the region.

Top Ten Priority Projects (see page 145)

- 1B WHJ Interpretation Strategy and Story Development
- 1P World Heritage Journey Development and Coordination
- 2A Master Plan for First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys
- 2B Immediate Infrastructure Improvements and Conservation Work at World Heritage Sites
- 4D Service Quality Capacity Building Program
- 5A Marketing and Branding the Victorian Goldfields including WHJ and Sites
- 3F Co-design Signature Experience Activation
- 3G Visitor Information, World Heritage Hub Strategy
- 3H Immediate Safety Improvements at Historic Reserves
- 1A Deliver World Heritage Gateways

2. INTRODUCTION

THE VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS

The Victorian Goldfields cultural landscape is the most significant region in the world's goldrush history. It represents the most extensive and best-surviving landscape, anywhere, that illustrates the global goldrush phenomenon of the second half of the nineteenth century¹.

The Victorian Goldfields spans across much of Victoria, Australia. The Western portion covers approximately 17% of the state, spans 40,000 square kilometres and is home to half a million people with the major cities of Ballarat and Bendigo only about one and a half hour's travel from Melbourne, by road or rail. The Eastern portion spans across large areas of the Victorian highlands taking in areas including the state's Northeast centred on Beechworth and Walhalla in Gippsland.

Victorian Goldfields' unique geomorphology formed some 500 million years ago. Tectonic forces, erosion, volcanic activity, climate change and water flows led to the Victorian Goldfields' complex alluvial, deep lead and quartz gold bearing landscapes.

With deep reverence for their Country, First Peoples have been in the region since the beginning of the Dreaming. Before the Goldrush occurred in 1851, pastoralism dispossessed and displaced many First Peoples following the colonisation of Victoria beginning in 1834. The goldrush led to devastating impacts to the landscape – 'a world turned upside down'². Despite this, First Peoples maintain their continuing connection to Country and their culture endures today.

The first gold in Victoria was discovered in Clunes in 1851. The discovery of gold led to a mass migration that increased the population of the colony over the decade from 1851 to 1861 from 77,345 to 540, 332. Miners migrated from around the world, establishing Victoria's multicultural society. Rough temporary settlements sprang up alongside newly discovered

¹ Gamble, 2020.

² Ibid.

³ Australian Heritage Journeys, International Engagement Strategy 2022-2030.



Victorian Goldfields Regional Context.
Source: Resources Victoria.

gold deposits. Some grew into thriving goldrush towns and cities. Today, the landscapes of the Victorian Goldfields continue to reflect Victoria's goldrush history in intact remnants of gold mining and the heritage architecture and streetscapes of the goldrush towns.

Bendigo and Ballarat are two of Victoria's four fastest growing cities and are focal points in the Victorian Goldfields as cultural and economic hubs. While over 50% of visitation is received by these two cities, Victorian Goldfields' many villages and towns

are home to vibrant communities and diverse experiences. Leveraging on the Victorian Goldfields' iconic history as well as Victoria's native and modified landscape, it has attracted domestic and international tourists with its diverse product and experiences offerings including food, heritage, culture, arts and festivals. Key destinations attract significant international visitors such as Sovereign Hill Museum Association, a living museum presenting the story of Ballarat as a goldrush boomtown attracts some 450,000 visitors annually³.

The Victorian Gold Rushes – A frenetic rush across an ancient landscape

Gold rushes around the world in the second half of the nineteenth century were characterised by thousands of prospectors descending on land that was in the possession of First Peoples for thousands of years. The experiences of First Peoples during the global gold rush period were multi-dimensional. Some participated and interacted with the newcomers⁴, whilst some were violently pushed aside and dispossessed in a mad scramble to extract gold, stake claims and build rough settlements. For all, however, their Traditional Country was to be irrevocably changed.

The Californian gold rush of the late 1840s attracted people from around the world including Australia. Edward Hargraves, who had returned from the California gold rushes, claimed the prize on offer from the New South Wales government for the discovery of gold and caused the first rush in Australia in 1851⁵. But it was in Victoria that the rushes really took off as news spread of the rich finds that were being made. Initially gold was found at Clunes in late June 1851. Within quick succession, during the rest of that year, there were rushes to Ballarat, Buninyong, Creswick, Mount Alexander (Castlemaine) and Sandhurst (Bendigo)⁶. The finding of the first gold in the Bendigo Creek was by two women⁷. This exemplified a feature of the Victorian goldfields; the large number of women and children on the goldfields, which contrasted with other goldrushes across the globe.

As each new gold discovery was made in Victoria, particularly during the 1850s, there was a frenetic rush for the alluvial gold, often found literally on the ground or just below the surface and in the local creeks and waterways. The concentration of prospectors, which in some places grew to thousands often with their families in just a few weeks, frequently became the location for more permanent settlements. Almost immediately the Victorian gold rushes dwarfed what was happening in New South Wales. In the 1850s Victoria accounted for more than one third of the world's gold production. The Victorian gold rushes comprised multiple overlapping rushes during the second half of the nineteenth century. It was the only major gold rush that predominantly comprised immigrants from overseas. Over

4.F. Cahir. Black gold: Aboriginal people on the goldfields of Victoria, 1850-1870.

5.<https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/gold-rushes>

6.<https://resources.vic.gov.au/geology-exploration/minerals/metals/gold/gold-mining-in-victoria/gold-mines>

350,000 people came in the first ten years by sea from Great Britain, Ireland, China, continental Europe, the Americas and the Pacific Islands.

The Victorian Goldfields comprise dissected uplands characterised by undulating hills and valleys, areas of granite outcrops, and dormant volcanic cones rising out of a low relief landscape⁸. The extent of the Victorian Goldfields is defined by an underlying geology that formerly hosted veins, or 'reefs', of gold-bearing quartz. These eroded to form ancient alluvial gold deposits in the river valleys. Later, lava flowed into some of these river valleys, capping and sealing the gold deposits with basalt. Gold-bearing alluvium continued to accumulate at the surface levels, and these shallower deposits were those first identified in Victoria by First Peoples and immigrant prospectors during the gold rush. Their discovery also heralded the gold-bearing possibilities of the surrounding landscape. Such geological processes shaped the nature of mining in Victoria and defined its characteristic range of technologies as revealed by surface and shallow lead sites, deep lead landscapes, and quartz mines.

Through the early years of the 1850s there were gold finds and rushes to numerous sites including Avoca, Beaufort, Blackwood, Creswick, Daylesford, Heathcote, Maryborough, Maldon, Moliagul, Rushworth – Whroo, Smythesdale, Stawell, Steiglitz, Talbot, Tarnagulla, Warrandyte and Wedderburn in central Victoria, while in the east of the colony there were major finds at Beechworth, Chiltern, Omeo and Yackandandah⁹. But this early rush wasn't over as later fields were discovered at Ararat, by Chinese miners,¹⁰ Buckland Valley, Dargo, Dunolly, Inglewood, Malmsbury, St Arnaud, Walhalla and Woods Point. Any thoughts that the alluvial gold was exhausted were shattered by the find of the 'Welcome Stranger', still the largest nugget ever found in the world, not far below the surface at Moliagul in 1869¹¹.

7.<https://www.central-deborah.com/about-us/bendigo-s-golden-heritage>

8.B. Gamble – draft statement of Outstanding Universal Value prepared for the Victorian Goldfields Nomination

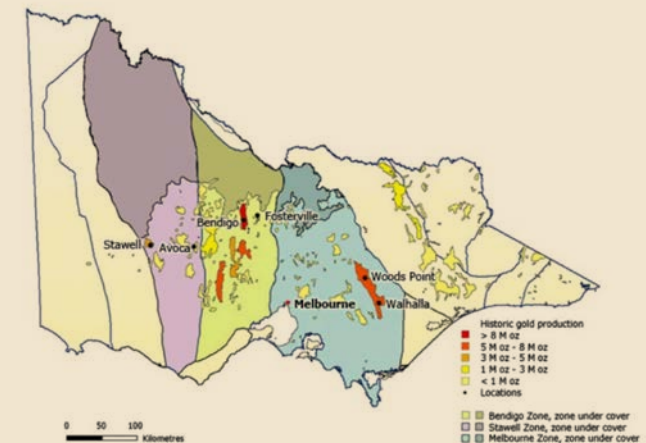
9.<https://resources.vic.gov.au/geology-exploration/minerals/metals/gold/gold-mining-in-victoria/gold-mines>

10.https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0022/512257/Historic-gold-mining-sites-in-the-south-west-region-of-Victoria-Bannear-1999.pdf

11.<https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/3019>

12.<https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/building-amp-planning/documents/cultur1.pdf>

Gold mining became more sophisticated and increasingly based on companies when it was realised that there were vast quantities of gold well beneath the surface in many places. Reef mining became established by the 1860s. Deep leads, which held ancient river beds, formed the basis for much of the mining in places such as Ballarat, north of Creswick¹² and at Chiltern¹³. Quartz reef mining was extensive in Bendigo, Clunes, Maldon and Stawell, with Bendigo boasting the world's deepest mines by the 1870s¹⁴. Hydraulic sluicing was a gold mining technique¹⁵ only suited to areas with assured supplies of water and was largely confined to south of Creswick, Beechworth and, Buckland Valley and south of Heathcote. Open cut mining was used at the Balaclava mine at Whroo near Rushworth¹⁶. Horizontal hard rock tunnelling was used at Walhalla to extract the gold from the fabulously rich Cohen's quartz reef¹⁷. Gold mining in Victoria was at a scale which is still hard to comprehend, with thirteen locations producing over 1 million ounces of gold each. The Bendigo, Ballarat, Castlemaine, Stawell and Walhalla fields were the largest producers¹⁸.



13. https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0022/512266/North-East-Victoria-Historic-Mining-Plots-1850-1982-Historic-Notes-Bannear-nd.pdf

14. <https://resources.vic.gov.au/geology-exploration/minerals/metals/gold/gold-mining-in-victoria/gold-mines>

15. https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0026/512279/Victorian-water-supply-heritage-study.pdf

16. https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/512256/Historic-gold-mining-sites-in-the-Rushworth-Waranga-North-Mining-Divisions-Bannear-1993.pdf

17. <https://www.walhalla.org.au/mine-tour/>

18. <https://resources.vic.gov.au/geology-exploration/minerals/metals/gold/gold-mining-in-victoria/gold-mines>

STUDY AREA

The Victorian Goldfields consists of 15 local government areas (LGAs):

- Ararat Rural City Council.
- Baw Baw Shire Council.
- Campaspe Shire Council.
- Central Goldfields Shire Council.
- City of Ballarat.
- City of Greater Bendigo.
- Golden Plains Shire Council.
- Hepburn Shire Council.
- Indigo Shire Council.
- Loddon Shire Council.
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council.
- Moorabool Shire Council.
- Mount Alexander Shire Council.
- Northern Grampians Shire Council.
- Pyrenees Shire Council.

The Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) within the study area include:

- Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.
- Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.
- Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.
- Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation.
- Taungurung Land and Waters Council Aboriginal Corporation.
- Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.
- Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.
- Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.



Victorian Goldfields Master Plan Study Area

STUDY AREA

The Identification of World Heritage Sites Across the Victorian Goldfields

Areas across the Victorian Goldfields region are under investigation as to whether they might contain the intact and authentic heritage values and appropriate management controls that could collectively be of global significance.

While only a select few will be put forward for World Heritage consideration, all areas across Victoria's extensive Goldfield's landscape are under consideration for their capacity and potential to be incorporated into cross-regional journeys, what is referred to in the Master Plan as World Heritage Journeys. These cross-regional journeys are routes in the Victorian Goldfields cultural landscape that link the primary sites and places. In doing so, they connect the thousands of heritage places into the bigger picture of World Heritage, allowing their stories to be told and enlivening the overall narrative in a way that resonates and has positive impacts locally. These journeys are designed to support visitors who want to explore not only the gold mining heritage but other attractions, features and qualities of the region, routes that will also take them through First Peoples' Country, ancient geology and extensive forests and bushland, places where people from around the globe – California, Cornwall and China and many other places came to find their fortune. These journeys take visitors via services and facilities including accommodation and great food experiences, quality art galleries and museums and some of Australia's leading wellness locations and facilities. The Victorian Goldfields present as a premier Australian destination.

With the aspiration of achieving World Heritage inscription in 2027/28 the region is poised to launch World Heritage Journeys. Journeys that will take visitors to amazing destinations and along rich journeys that will feature the many attractions and great places throughout the Victorian Goldfields but will also link the visitor to the places and buildings that may be designated as World Heritage, sites that are considered to be of global significance and may have the highest international recognition.

How the Master Plan relates to the proposed World Heritage Sites

The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan provides a conceptual, targeted and practically based framework for leveraging the collective qualities of the state's extraordinary gold mining heritage and legacy. This globally recognised heritage is located across an extensive area embracing much of Victoria. With World Heritage inscription the whole region is poised to receive a rush of visitors, both domestic and international to experience and learn about this extraordinary story. The example of other World Heritage designated sites is that in the initial years, visitor numbers will double and then will build further. The Master Plan seeks to provide for that transformation.

Crafted and designed five years before World Heritage designation the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan establishes the credentials of the whole region. It identifies the region's strengths and assets, it designates the shortcomings and weaknesses that need to be addressed and it charts a course of infrastructure improvements that will need to be prioritised and funded. Importantly it identifies the game changing projects that will greatly strengthen the visitor experience, build local economies and jobs and propel the region onto the global stage so that the visitor experience is worthy of World Heritage status. While World Heritage designation of various component areas, places and building across the region will draw attention to these sites the reality is that the power of World Heritage inscription is that the visitor is drawn to the designated name of the whole Site. In this case the Victorian Goldfields. Because the region is so much more than the relatively small number of places and buildings that will be formally inscribed as part of a single World Heritage Site – the Victorian Goldfields, the whole region with its heritage, arts and culture, its First Peoples' Country, the wellness assets particularly being the source of 90% of Australia's mineral water, the natural landscape setting together with its food and wine production, all make for an exciting, diverse and rich visitor experience.

The benefits of World Heritage inscription will be experienced across the whole Victorian Goldfields. If World Heritage inscription is not achieved the Victorian Goldfields Master Plan still forms an essential framework for the continuing development of the region's visitor experiences and to meet the needs of a growing number of people from around the world who want to connect with the Victorian Goldfields. The Master Plan captures the stories that need to be told, the experiences offered by the many places and communities connected to gold and how people can travel the region to maximise their journey.



THE VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS WORLD HERITAGE MASTER PLAN

This Master Plan is based on a comprehensive analysis to establish the proposed structure and early concept development for the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan.

Project Background

The Victorian Government and a partnership with 15 local governments and the Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive are leading a bid to pursue a UNESCO World Heritage listing to recognise, leverage and celebrate the history and heritage of the Victorian Goldfields. The bid is based on the potential Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Victorian Goldfields as the most extensive and best-surviving landscape illustrating the global goldrush phenomenon of the second half of the nineteenth century. See Appendix, Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value. The study area identified for this initial consultancy advice is the Victorian Goldfields region recognising the need to include other significant gold rush sites for subsequent assessment and integration.

The bid seeks World Heritage inscription to recognise and showcase the story of the Victorian Goldfields, from its rich First Peoples cultural history to its natural and historic landscape offerings, putting the Goldfields and Victoria on the global stage.

Recognition of the Victorian Goldfields' international heritage significance will become a catalyst for transformative regional regeneration. It will bring investment and job opportunities and build sustainable economies and communities, particularly to address the ongoing impacts to the visitor economy from major disruptions, such as COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis.

VGTE in conjunction with the local government partnership, has engaged Arup with TRC (Tourism), Extent Heritage (Heritage) and WT Partnership (Cost Management) to prepare Transforming lives, the visitor economy and growing jobs: The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan (the 'Master Plan') for the Victorian Goldfields Heritage Bid.

In November 2023, after the completion of the First Draft of this Master Plan, Baw Baw Shire and Indigo Shire joined the original 13 Central Victorian Goldfields local governments to pursue World Heritage listing for the Victorian Goldfields, making it Victoria's biggest World Heritage proposal to date (for more detail, see Foreword). The Master Plan strategy has since been expanded to cover the entire Victorian Goldfields. Please note that the Baseline Analysis (Section 3) covers the Central Victorian Goldfields area only.

How the Master Plan works

The plan provides the framework for leveraging the transformative power of World Heritage as a catalyst to bring benefits to the entire region, regardless of whether a place has World Heritage or not. If World Heritage is not ultimately achieved, this master plan is the first cross-regional road map for recognising, utilising and resourcing the Victorian Goldfield's significant and unparalleled heritage assets. Its implementation regardless will contribute to socio-economic uplift and visitor experiences across a large part of regional Victoria

Master Plan Purpose

The Master Plan sets out the strategic framework for the Victorian Goldfields and provides:



Engagement of the Victorian Goldfields' local governments, communities, RAPs, industry and other stakeholders.



Clear direction and advice to governments on priority investment and infrastructure priorities, a staged plan/investment schedule and feasibility/business case for their delivery and the expected benefits.



A clear direction to the private sector on investment opportunities.



A framework for the overall development and global, interstate and intrastate marketing of tourism based specifically around the potential World Heritage values and heritage places and experiences in general.



A key document to support the UNESCO World Heritage nomination of the Goldfields demonstrating Sustainable Tourism management.

The objectives of the Master Plan are to:

- Build profile and capacity of the Victorian Goldfields by:



Becoming Australia's premier and first destination to offer World Heritage Journeys.



Elevating the under recognised heritage assets and providing a global platform for First Peoples experiences.



Attracting new and additional international and domestic visitors.

- Drive the increase of:



Dispersed tourism visitation that 'gives back' to destination communities and their heritage, cultural and environmental assets.



Sustainable jobs and new job opportunities, particularly in areas with lower socio-economic profiles.



Public and private sector investment which supports tourism and builds community assets.



Social capital, community pride, community confidence and quality of life.

MASTER PLAN IN CONTEXT

The Master Plan is a significant component in the World Heritage nomination process. This journey to World Heritage listing began more than 35 years ago and has evolved substantially over the years.

World Heritage Journey to Date

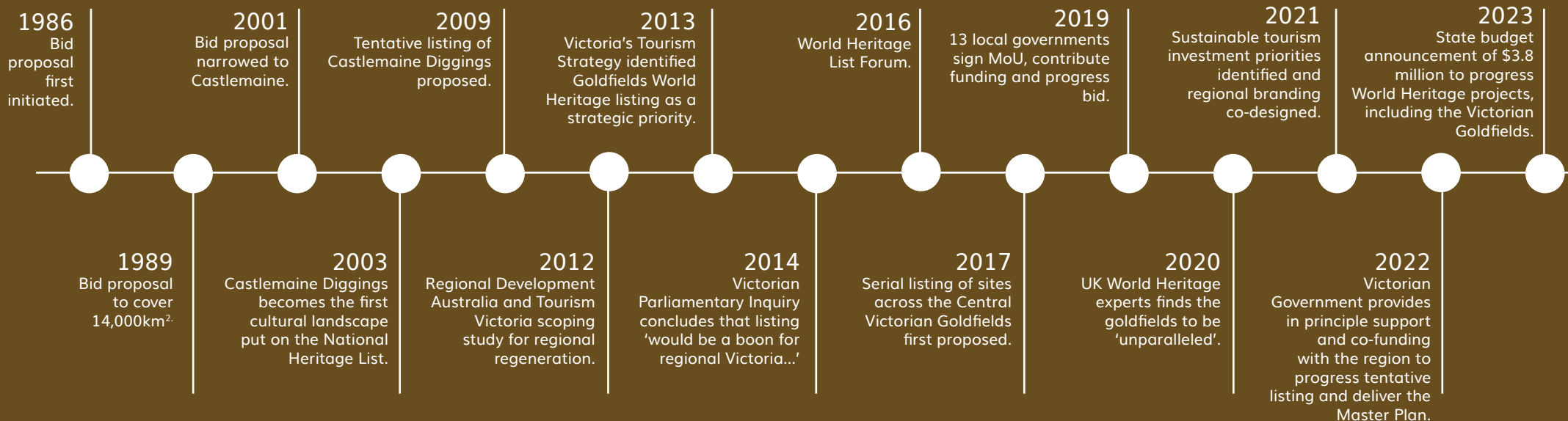
An extensive body of work including heritage, sustainable tourism and economic assessments, engagement, research and plans has been prepared by VGTE and/or the 15 local government partners and other key stakeholders (e.g., the Victorian Government, National Trust of Australia Vic and Federation University Australia) over several decades. The Master Plan builds on and progresses this work.

Becoming the Victorian Goldfields: Baw Baw and Indigo Shires join the World Heritage bid

In November 2023, after the completion of the First Draft of this Master Plan, Baw Baw Shire and Indigo Shire joined the original 13 Central Victorian Goldfields local governments to pursue World Heritage listing for the Victorian Goldfields.

The two shires were identified as needing further investigation by World Heritage experts following an extensive global, national and local comparative analysis.

The Master Plan strategy has since been expanded to cover the entire Victorian Goldfields.



MASTER PLAN IN CONTEXT

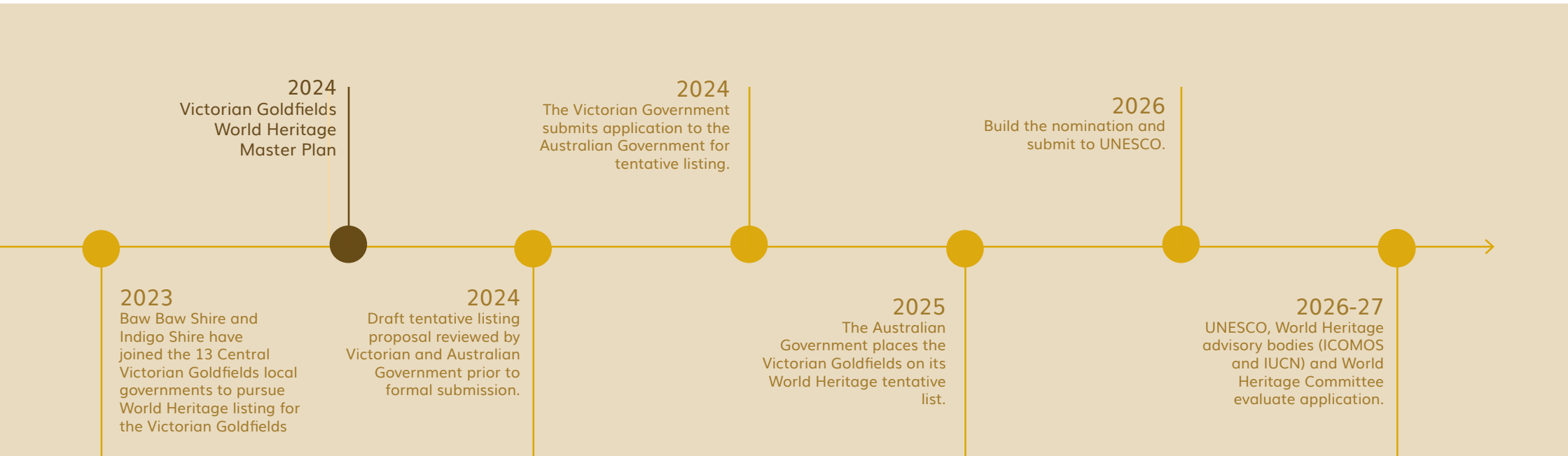
The Master Plan forms part of a wider overarching project being undertaken by the 15 local government partners in partnership with the VGTE and supported by the Victorian Government to secure a UNESCO World Heritage listing for the Victorian Goldfields. This wider overarching project has two key workstreams that are being developed concurrently. The 2023 State budget has allocated \$2 million to progress the bid.

Tentative List Development

Inclusion of the Victorian Goldfields on Australia's Tentative List of potential World Heritage sites is the first step in the World Heritage bid process. A Tentative List submission to the Australian Government for the Victorian Goldfields was drafted development region's 15 local governments for Heritage Victoria by the UK World Heritage expert Barry Gamble and Extent Heritage. The submission will propose a serial listing of multiple component parts from across the Victorian Goldfields that could collectively demonstrate global significance and provide a global comparative analysis that justifies why Victoria's goldfields heritage is unprecedented globally.



Likely Next Steps and Indicative Timeline in the Journey to World Heritage Listing



ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The development of this Master Plan has been based on extensive engagement with stakeholders, community and local industry and site visits to ensure that its initiatives and strategic direction builds on the Region's strengths and is informed by local insights and knowledge.

The Master Plan delivers sustainable tourism investment priorities which were initially co-designed with key stakeholders and informed by community engagement in 2021. It incorporates findings from stakeholders across all phases of the Master Plan's development. Engagement is a critical input and component to developing the Master Plan to support:

- Capturing local knowledge and insights on the various opportunities and perceived challenges associated with the World Heritage bid from the community.
- Empowering and embedding First Peoples sites, stories and journeys as opportunities for visitor experiences informed by the RAPs.
- Testing and shaping emerging opportunities, constraints and ideas with the tourism industry and other stakeholders through co-design to drive unique and innovative future experiences for visitors and the region.
- Building ownership across stakeholder groups and partners on the Master Plan to shape a network of invested relationships and advocates to achieve the successful World Heritage inscription of Victorian Goldfields.

Methodology and Activity Summary

First Peoples Engagement

- A project briefing note was issued to each of the seven RAPs and invitation was extended for engagement to be included into this Master Plan.
- Virtual and/or on-Country preliminary meetings have been held with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.
- Of all invited, to date, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation have taken up the opportunity to review and input into the Master Plan.
- Some RAPs have recommended that the Master Plan be considered a 'living document' with further and ongoing engagement with all to progress the initiatives and opportunities identified within this Master Plan, including working to develop their own individual Master Plans that come out of this Master Plan. This includes embedding RAPs into decision making including codesigning participation. At their request, all concepts and initiatives presented within this Master Plan are considered preliminary and will be refined with further engagement.



35+ Organisations Engaged



394 Community Participants via SocialPinpoint



9 Industry Interviews

Community, Business and Industry Engagement

- Planet Happiness and Imagine survey conducted in 2021 with over 1000 respondents.
- Nominated community group in person meetings and reviews conducted in 2022.
- SocialPinpoint spatial survey launched in March 2023.
- Market and industry sounding interviews in May-October 2023 including Regional Tourism Board (RTB), accommodation, tour operators and State Government.
- Special Interest Group focus groups.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholder Workshop 1 – Objectives and Experiences: a workshop was held in March 2023 to provide an overview and update on the project and to workshop the proposed World Heritage Journeys.
- One-on-one meetings on site: subject to availability, the project team met with several local government representatives for site walks and on-site meetings to discuss opportunities and council priorities.
- Interviews with each Regional Tourism Board.
- Stakeholder Workshop 2 – held in April 2023 to present draft concepts for feedback and input from key stakeholders.
- Interim Master Plan Review – key stakeholder and special interest group review of Interim Master Plan April-May 2023.
- Stakeholder Workshop 3: Present the preferred option for both journeys and site design to the key stakeholders for comments and review.
- Stakeholder Workshop 4: Journey and strategic narrative workshop to expand the region to the Victorian Goldfields.
- Final Master Plan Review – key stakeholder and special interest group review of the Final Master Plan April-May 2024.

Project Control Group (PCG) and Project Steering Committee (PSC) Engagement

- 7 x PCG Meetings and an internal World Heritage Journey (WHJ) Workshop.
- PSC and VGTE Board presentation to present the Master Plans.

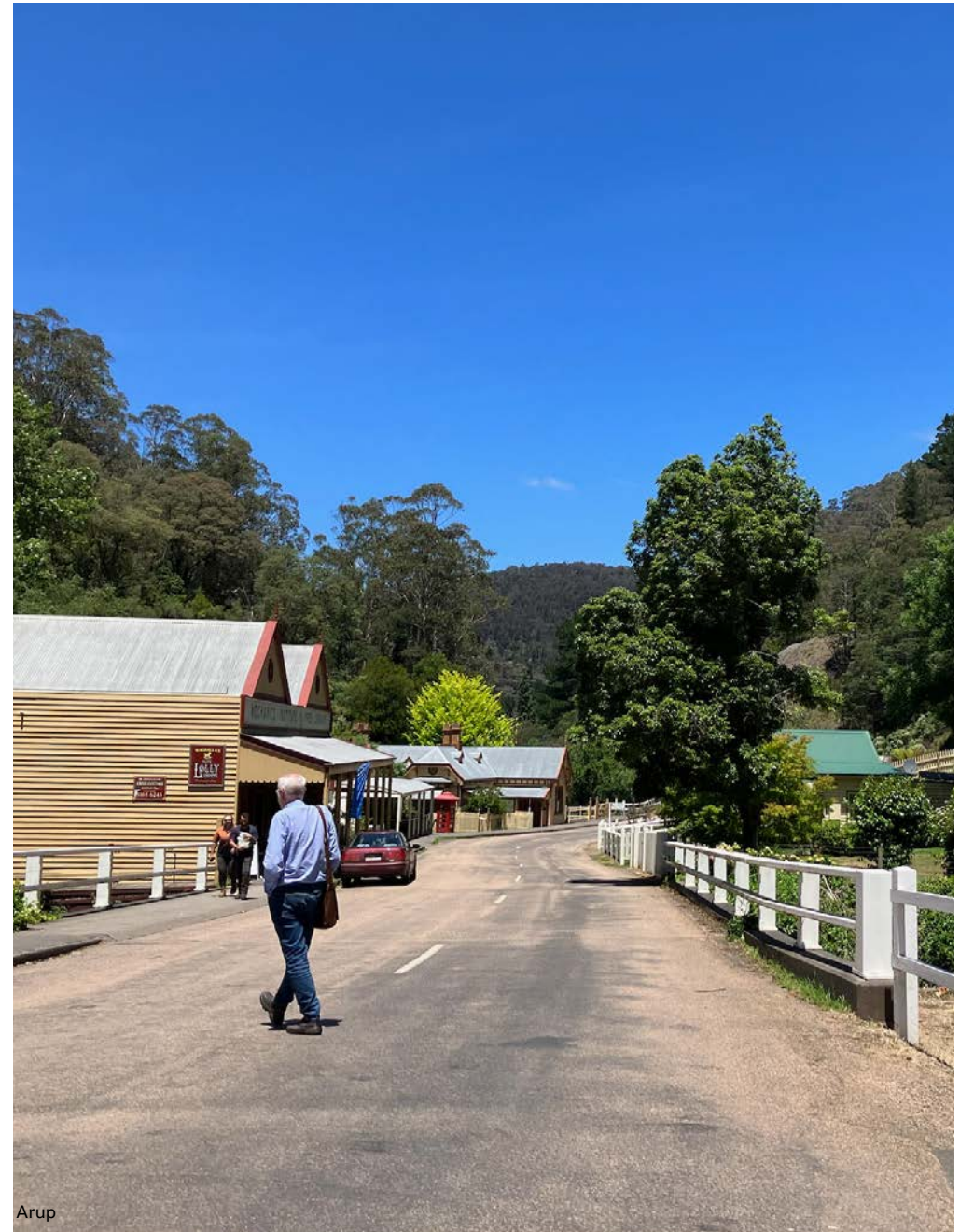
Engagement Findings

Phase	What we heard	How it has informed the Master Plan
Baseline Analysis and Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the Victorian Goldfields, particularly smaller towns are under-serviced in terms of accommodation. • World Heritage is an opportunity to draw new visitor markets to the Victorian Goldfields including nature based and niche markets. • Traditional Owners economic strategies include tourism development. • Quirky stories, history and characters make Victorian Goldfields unique. • Significant growth in Ballarat and Bendigo. • Journeys are a catalyst but are not the whole experience. • Planet Happiness and Imagine Survey outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To test and confirm baseline analysis including council aspirations and priorities. • Traditional Owner aspirations and values to embed within the Master Plan to be confirmed and refined. • Inform the development of Master Plan principles and the strategic framework of the Master Plan. • Identification of World Heritage Journey opportunities at the local and regional level.
Concept and Opportunity Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multimodal travel and accessibility is critical. • Fill the missing links between touring routes. • Strong support for digital and immersive experiences harnessing innovation and new technology. • Enhanced wayfinding, signage and interpretation. • Strengthen and build off local heritage walking and cycling trails. • Facade activation and maintenance of heritage buildings in townships. • Food, wine and farm gate opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of site- or town- specific challenges and opportunities. • Identification of World Heritage Journey Themes. • Identification of infrastructure and access needs. • Embed community aspirations within the draft initiatives and concepts. • Informing governance model development.
Concept Refinement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic Reserves such as Whroo could form a signature experience. • Heritage conservation and management must be emphasised. • Monitoring and evaluation will be important to measure impact. • Need for clearer alignment to UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Toolkit. • Learning from other UNESCO areas, independent trust governance arrangements has merit along with challenges. • Infrastructure upgrades including the re-use of historic buildings, interpretation, tracks and trails were identified by the community. • Importance of truth telling for First Peoples. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional signature experiences explored. • Greater emphasis and guidance on sustainable tourism and Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) within concepts. • Incorporating heritage conservation within initiatives. • Confirming proposed theme framework. • Refinement of proposed site initiatives.
Final Plan and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of recognising the role of First Peoples in the Gold rush. • Clear staging to support an incremental and sustainable model of growth. • Consider site presentation and ongoing management and monitoring. • Connect initiatives to Victoria 2033 Visitor Economy Master Plan. • Strong industry interest in partnership. • Key attractions need support and capacity to partner. • The importance to have First Peoples embedded within the development of the Master Plan which intern provides an authentic Voice representing the First Peoples of Victoria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater definition additional actions for further engagement with RAPs. • Refinements to proposed initiative. • Initiative prioritisation. • Initiative staging. • Benefit analysis. • Informing governance model development. • Attraction partnership and support program development.

Industry Engagement Snapshot

Leveraging off and responding to the needs of industry is critical to ensure that the Master Plan is fit-for-purpose. Interviews with representatives from accommodation, local attractions, arts and tourism industry representatives revealed the following themes and findings:

- Strong support for the bid and excitement for the opportunity it brings to the region.
- The story of First Peoples' involvement in the Goldrush story and history will be critical.
- Appetite for World Heritage local attraction partnerships.
- A sentiment that money is better spent on employing curatorial expertise to provide for these programmed presentations of themes rather than on capital works and bricks and mortar static exhibitions.
- There is existing professional expertise within the region particularly in these larger institutions and these can play a leading role in coordinating regional storytelling.
- Some local attractions/institutions already carry out interpreter and guide training and could play a training service role for the region more broadly.
- Limited awareness of the World Heritage bid in the local community.
- Continued track and trails development is a priority.
- Any raising of the Goldfields profile across potential leisure markets would only assist in drawing more people to the area, which in turn would provide greater demand for accommodation and hospitality services.
- For accommodation providers, maintenance and increasing the labour workforce to support and deliver services will be a challenge of increased visitation.
- Accommodation providers need a solid suite of attractions and activities in the region that guests can participate in during their stay.
- World Heritage Journeys are seen as an opportunity to value add to existing offers.
- The fragmented nature of the goldrush story (outside of Ballarat and Bendigo). Careful curation, innovative ways for engaging storytelling at sites such as digital journeys and interpretation are important.
- Collaboration between organisations and operators is a key ingredient for success.



Walhalla

FIRST PEOPLES VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS WORLD HERITAGE MASTER PLAN ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Further engagement with First Peoples is required to help shape the strategic direction and initiatives proposed within this document.

The Master Plan has been informed by the values, aspirations of First Peoples as set out in their Country Plans and through preliminary engagement with the participating RAPs. The Country Plans are all unique and are a starting point for further engagement and collaboration with RAPs. Further engagement is recommended to refine, expand and progress the concepts set out within this Master Plan.

Engagement Framework

The scope of this engagement framework includes how First Peoples, through self-determination, values and aspirations can develop their association with the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing and consider future economic opportunities in a sustainable manner.

The Master Plan Engagement Framework has adopted the United Nation's World Tourism Organisations (UNWTO) endorsed, World Indigenous Tourism Alliance (WINTA), Larrakia Declaration and Indigenous Tourism Engagement Framework (ITEF) as a best practice, Indigenous developed approach and also takes into consideration;

- The UNESCO policy on engaging with Indigenous Peoples and requirements for engagement with and the consent of Indigenous Peoples outlined in the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention.
- The Victorian Governments Yuma Yirramboi, Aboriginal Employment and Economic Strategy and Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018 -2023.
- Australian Indigenous Design Charter - Communication Design Protocols for sharing Indigenous knowledge in communication design practice.

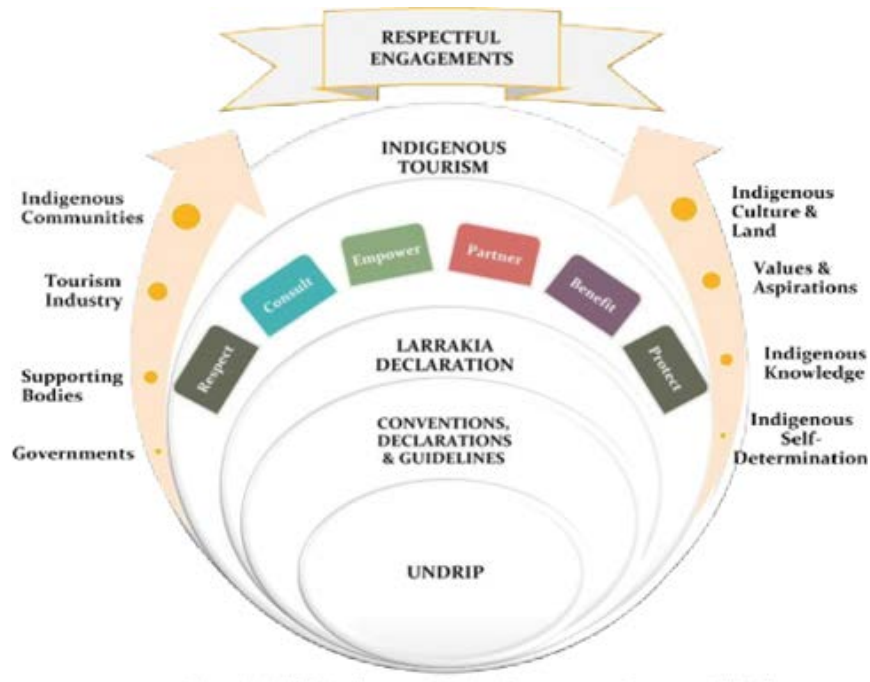
Larrakia Declaration

The World Indigenous Tourism Alliance (WINTA) Larrakia Declaration was recognised by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in its endorsement in 2012. The Larrakia Declaration embraces the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the rights of Indigenous peoples through tourism. The six principles which collectively provide for the protection of Indigenous people's rights through tourism are:

1. Respect: Respect for customary law and lore, land and water, traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions and cultural heritage will underpin all tourism decisions.
2. Consult: That governments have a duty to consult and accommodate Indigenous peoples before undertaking decisions on public policy and programs designed to foster the development of Indigenous tourism.
3. Empowerment: Indigenous peoples will determine the extent and nature and organizational arrangements for their participation in tourism and that governments and multilateral agencies will support the empowerment of Indigenous people.
4. Partnership: The tourism industry will respect Indigenous intellectual property rights, cultures and traditional practices, the need for sustainable and equitable business partnerships and the proper care of the environment and communities that support them.
5. Community Benefits: That equitable partnerships between the tourism industry and Indigenous people will include the sharing of cultural awareness and skills development which support the well-being of communities and enable enhancement of individual livelihoods.
6. Protection: Indigenous culture and the land and waters on which it is based, will be protected and promoted through well managed tourism practices and appropriate interpretation.

Indigenous Tourism Engagement Framework

WINTA's Indigenous Tourism Engagement Framework (ITEF) is based on the principles of the Larrakia Declaration on the development of Indigenous tourism and is also aligned to a range of other international conventions, declarations & tourism industry guidelines.



WINTA Indigenous Tourism Engagement Framework

Victorian Goldfields First People Opportunity Action Plan

The Victorian Goldfields opportunities are uniquely owned and led by First People communities – the holders of more than 60,000 years of Lore, Culture and Creation Stories. This cultural integrity will be the centrepiece of decision-making throughout the next development phase of the project, ensuring the balance is always maintained between culture and business.

Critical to the success of the overall experience, will be the land management arrangements for potential sites and experiences ensuring the model that is developed is accepted across all stakeholders. It is important that the role of the RAPs is determined and agreed during planning and on implementation of the projects. This includes consideration of the role of organisations as land managers, tourism operators, trail managers, training group operators and what is the cost benefit of delivering these roles.

This Action Plan highlights key findings of the stakeholder engagement activities and proposes three objectives to guide the roll out of the projects:

1. Effectively manage First People projects from planning to completion
2. Design and deliver authentic First Peoples Cultural Journeys experiences through a dedicated Journeys experience development plan and capacity building programs
3. Develop a professional marketing strategy and communications plan.

There is growing interest and demand for First Peoples experiences among an increasingly diverse range of traveller and consumer interests. The successful implementation of projects will require commitment and involvement at a Commonwealth, State, regional and local level from both Government and industry, with RAPs and First People communities providing the strategic leadership.

Victorian Goldfields First People SWOT Analysis

The following SWOT analysis identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that arose during the engagement process with First Peoples.

Strengths

- First Peoples ownership and management of cultural sites
- Jobs for the local community
- Economic and business development opportunities for community
- Eco-tourism trained rangers and guides
- Cultural compliance in trained staff
- Cultural education on a world stage

Weakness

- Protecting culture
- Intellectual property
- Difficulties achieving shared policies agreement across organisations
- Lack of understanding on what small business support services are available
- Ensuring the right level of engagement of First Peoples
- Impacts of increased tourism to cultural sites

Opportunities

- First Peoples managed assets
- Truth telling
- Jobs
- Construction Training
- Business Training
- Ranger Programs
- Cultural storytelling
- Accessible walking and riding opportunities
- Position the region as delivering authentic cultural experiences
- Protection and management of cultural landscapes

Threats

- Approvals from land management agencies
- Resources and funding opportunities
- Women and Men's business
- Skilled staff mitigation for Sorry Business obligations
- Cultural asset property rights
- Cultural heritage assessors and monitors

Proposed First People Project Objectives

Three main objectives are proposed to guide the opportunities for First People led projects, future engagement and potential partnership development. Following the Larrakia Declaration guidelines, it is imperative that First People Groups determine the extent and nature and organizational arrangements for their participation in the Victorian Goldfields and provided support by governments and multilateral agencies.

Objective One: Support First Peoples to manage lead projects from planning to completion

Key Actions:

- Deliver a series of workshops with First Peoples to determine RAP resourcing requirements and a future management framework as a key priority to enable the organisations to work collaboratively and develop strategic partnerships to navigate the experience planning, approval and delivery phase
- Prepare an overarching destination and experience development plan should be prepared over the next three years to ensure the visitor experience is world class.
- Engage Project Officers to be funded and recruited to drive cultural experience development activities. Responsibilities will need to include the following:
 - Project Management - drive the experience development approval processes, corporate marketing, workshops and contract management. A strong reporting mechanism to the organisations and funding partners will be required.
 - Partnerships/Networking - encourage community participation and information sharing with a range of organisations and peak body groups as well as partnerships between industry sectors and the tourism industry.
 - Activation – activate experience development plan for attractions, walks and trails for the self-drive markets.
 - Business Support - work closely with a range of organisations and bodies to provide advice, research, representation, quality product development and access to funding support, capacity building and mentoring services
- Lead Capacity Building and Marketing and communications initiatives (objectives 2 and 3).

Objective Two: Support First Peoples to lead the design and delivery of authentic cultural journeys experiences through a dedicated journeys experience development plans and capacity building programs

Delivering an First Peoples cultural experience offering visitors a unique chance to gain a deep cultural immersion and storytelling by the local Traditional Owners will be critical to success in a competitive trail market. This will require an overarching experience development plan which will require engagement with RAPs.

At the present time there is likely to be a gap between the skills in the Community required to manage and deliver all aspects of the journeys experience development and delivery.

Key Actions:

- Prepare an overarching Experience Development Plan that includes consideration of:
 - Attractions - experience development plan.
 - Journeys and Story Trail - experience development plan.
 - Accommodation experience plan will need to be developed as visitors will need to be provided with a range of options that complement the journey story.
 - Overarching multi-day walking experience plan.
 - Land Management Arrangements with Parks etc. – i.e., consider what organisations do on managed lands and what service can they provide.
 - Attraction/Trail construction/maintenance training program.
 - Opportunities for community to develop experiences on the footprint including application for licensing and approval processes.
- Undertake an audit outlining skills and training with local First Peoples communities to inform the development of a capacity building program for construction, operation and broader tourism and land management implementation.
- Prepare a Capacity Building Program that includes consideration of:
 - Sacred sites and cultural heritage protection – i.e., what is cultural capacity who knows best what's on site and can train?
 - Tour guiding and ranger programs.

- Customer Service and Hospitality training.
- Tourism Business Development Program that delivers new, targeted advice and tips to assist to develop, promote and sell their product. For example, a series of workshops could provide the opportunity for accommodation, attractions, tours and activities to get involved. The delivery of workshop programs, in collaboration with key partners will further support development through peer-to-peer mentoring, product familiarisation and networking activities.
- Establish a tour operator membership structure to enable opportunities for community to develop experiences across the footprint including training and application for licensing and approval processes which will lead to improved professionalism, marketing and sales success for business.

Objective Three: Support First Peoples to develop a professional marketing and communication strategy strategies

It will be important to represent First People opportunities in the development phase in a professional manner.

Key Actions:

- Create a First People Marketing Strategy that considers the brand identity, key communications and associated imagery/visual material that recognise the connection to culture.
- Prepare a Communications Plan that includes communications across a website and social media platforms to ensure:
 - Internal and external stakeholders are up to date on design, development and construction activities.
 - Community awareness of employment, training and business development opportunities.
 - Promote Industry Partners Program to attract and engage with corporate sector partners.
- Develop trade ready marketing material showcasing members for distribution to tourism networks and operators will be imperative prior to the journeys commencing. In the first instance, local accommodation providers, airports, mainstream operators and industry bodies should be targeted.
- Prepare a sponsorship prospectus to develop alliances with potential funding partners to establish a strategic funding program for the journeys.



3. BASELINE ANALYSIS

Analysis of the Victorian Goldfields

This section outlines an analysis of the Goldfields today as well as its future opportunities.



What is UNESCO?

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. UNESCO's mandate is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international cooperation in education, sciences, culture, communication and information. UNESCO promotes knowledge sharing and the free flow of ideas to accelerate mutual understanding and a more perfect knowledge of each other's lives. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined in the 2030 Agenda¹.

The UNESCO World Heritage List

UNESCO's World Heritage List comprises more than 1100 places that are important to everyone, no matter where they are located. They are places that have universal value that transcends the importance they hold for one particular nation.

Australia is a signatory to the World Heritage Convention. The Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW) highlights the benefits of being listed including²:

- Cooperation among nations to protect heritage around the world that is of such outstanding universal value that its conservation is important for current and future generations³.

1 <https://www.unesco.org/en/brief#:~:text=It%20contributes%20to%20peace%20and,knowledge%20of%20each%20other's%20lives>

2 <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage/about/world-heritage/implications-world-heritage-listing>

3 <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage/about/world/world-heritage-convention>

- Greatly increased tourist visitation from overseas and within Australia.
- Local communities benefit from possible increases in employment opportunities and income.
 - Improved planning and management of the region.
- Increased Australian Government support by providing resources for strengthening management and improving interpretation and visitor facilities.
- Promotes local and national pride in the property and develops feelings of national responsibility to protect the area.

UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape

UNESCO's Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) is a practical framework for managing heritage in dynamic urban environments. Its objective is to align socio-economic goals (the drivers of change) with the goals of conservation and quality of life outcomes. It outlines steps and tools for shifting cultural heritage from constraint to asset for local communities using a sustainable development and cultural landscape framework, which aligns to the Victorian Goldfields.

The HUL is incorporated in World Heritage guidelines and reporting. Its principles inform the sustainable tourism approach taken for the entire Victorian Goldfields region. As the first local government in the world to join a global HUL pilot in 2013, several of the City of Ballarat's methods have been incorporated into the delivery of this master plan, such as the 'Imagine' participatory engagement social values approach.

UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme

The UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme is a new and innovative approach where planning for tourism and heritage management is integrated at a destination level⁴. This ensures that the natural and cultural assets are valued and protected and that appropriate tourism is developed. The objectives of this Programme are to:

- Integrate sustainable tourism principles into the mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention.
- Strengthen the enabling environment by advocating policies, strategies, frameworks and tools that support sustainable tourism as an important vehicle for protecting and managing cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value.
- Promote broad stakeholder engagement in the planning, development and management of sustainable tourism that follows a destination approach to heritage conservation and focuses on empowering local communities.
- Provide World Heritage stakeholders with the capacity and the tools to manage tourism efficiently, responsibly and sustainably based on the local context and needs.
- Promote quality tourism products and services that encourage responsible behaviour among all stakeholders and foster understanding and appreciation of the concept of Outstanding Universal Value and protection of World Heritage.

⁴ <https://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-669-7.pdf>

Supporting the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Master Plan aspires to address 10 of the 17 SDGs, the UN's benchmark for sustainable development:

- SDG 1: No Poverty
- SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing
- SDG 5: Addressing Gender Issues
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- SDG 10: Reduced inequalities
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 15: Life on Land
- SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals

Supporting the ICOMOS⁵ Sustainable Development Policy Guidelines for Heritage

- SDG 1 - Harness the potential of heritage to eradicate extreme poverty for all.
- SDG 3 – Harness the power of heritage in ensuring healthy lives and the promotion of well-being for all at all ages.
- SDG 5 – Harness the potential of heritage to achieve gender equality, eradicate bias and violence based on sexual orientation, and empower all genders, recognising that heritage is constantly changing and evolving.
- SDG 8 - Harness heritage as a resource for inclusive and sustainable local and regional economic development.
- SDG 9 – Harness heritage for inclusive and sustainable industry and infrastructure, through creativity and innovation.
- SDG 10 – Harness the role of heritage in reducing inequalities and fostering inclusiveness and cultural diversity.
- SDG 11 – Harness the potential of heritage to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable for current and future generations.
- SDG 13 - Harness heritage to enhance the adaptive and transformative capacity of communities and build resilience against climate change.
- SDG 15 - Harness the potential of heritage to promote integrated landscape-based, values-based, and human rights-based approaches for the protection, restoration and sustainable use of ecosystems.
- SDG 17 - Harness the potential of strategic partnerships in heritage processes to foster sustainability-oriented heritage and development policies and practices.

⁵ ICOMOS is the International Council on Monuments and Sites, the peak body for heritage and a World Heritage Advisory Body

Sustainable Tourism Toolkit

UNESCO's World Heritage Centre provides 'How To' guides which makes up the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit. The guides focus on best practice approaches to sustainable economic development⁶ through tourism. It offers direction and guidance to managers of World Heritage tourism destinations and other stakeholders to help identify the most suitable solutions.

The objective of this Toolkit is to stimulate local solutions in communities through capacity-building in best practice. The guides have been structured as a step-by-step process for site managers, which includes:

- Guides 1-4 includes the basic foundations for sustainable tourism (includes guides on understanding, strategy, governance and engagement).
- Guides 5-10 are based on specific issues which may relate to some sites (includes guides on communication, infrastructure, value, behaviour, investment and monitoring).

The proposed initiatives set out within this Master Plan align with the recommendations within these Guides. See Background Analysis Report for a comprehensive review of the Toolkit Guide.

6 Note: In relation to sustainable tourism development, the Operational Guidelines to the World Heritage Convention requires the following: 'States Parties are encouraged to...ensure gender-balanced participation' (Para 12) and have the responsibility to contribute to and comply with sustainable development objectives including gender equality in World Heritage processes...' (Para 15(o)).



UNESCO World Heritage Journey Programme

World Heritage Journeys (WHJ) is an initiative by UNESCO, in collaboration with National Geographic and local heritage and tourism managers, to showcase World Heritage destinations and help travellers experience them in ways that protect and support their outstanding value and the local communities that sustain them.

Case Study: World Heritage Journeys of Europe

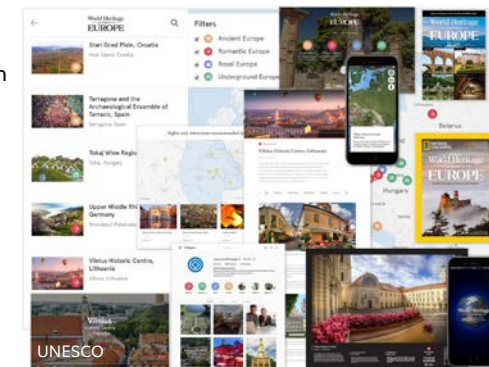
Europe was the first region to develop WHJ which began the programme in 2016. The European Union developed WHJ across four themes including:

- Ancient Europe.
- Royal Europe.
- Romantic Europe.
- Underground Europe.

These WHJ address several objectives including:

- Leverage World Heritage branding and raise awareness of World Heritage sites in the European Union to increase the number of (international) visitors.
- Encourage dispersal of visitors into less visited areas.
- Improve the overall visitor experience in Europe and encourage repeat visitation.
- Support sustainable growth of EU tourism.
- Contribute towards safeguarding the EU's cultural heritage.

The WHJ programme products include a website as well as print publications, videos, photos exhibitions, mobile apps, social media accounts, capacity building workshops, familiarisation trips, marketing strategies and campaigns for World Heritage destinations.



UNESCO Creative City Network

Both Victorian Goldfields' major cities are designated UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN). This network was created in 2004 as part of the cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development and today includes close to 350 cities. Initiatives within this Master Plan should leverage and support this programme.

Victoria is the only state in the world with four UNESCO Creative Cities (Bendigo, Ballarat, Melbourne and Geelong). Together they form the Victorian Creative Cities Network. Importantly, two of the four, Bendigo and Ballarat, are both in the Victorian Goldfields.

Bendigo: Creative City and region of Gastronomy

In 2019, Bendigo was designated as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy. This recognises Bendigo's and its region's offer in food and beverages, culture and sustainability. The gastronomy region covers Bendigo and eight other local government areas and has been recognised for its quality produce, First Peoples food heritage, sustainable agriculture, creative businesses and strong networks of cooperation. The Creative City and region of Gastronomy vision falls under four pillars:

- Celebrate and elevate First Peoples' culture, creativity and knowledge.
- Recognise our creativity, cultural diversity and innovation.
- Improve health and wellbeing particularly through healthy eating.
- Prioritise environmental sustainability, sustainable agriculture and food production as we tackle climate change (and major global events such as pandemics).

Ballarat: Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art

In 2019 Ballarat was designated a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art. The designation focuses on the development of a resilient and sustainable creative sector, with a specific focus on crafts and folk art. Ballarat concentrate upon ceramics, textiles and placing First Peoples first on the retracing of lost skills. The Creative City vision falls under four pillars:

- Creating a new economic heartbeat.
- Celebrating, protecting and reinterpreting the rare and forgotten crafts.
- A welcome platform for newer community members.
- Reinvigorating the skills of First Peoples communities.



MAJOR CATALYSTS

The inscription of the Victorian Goldfields on the World Heritage List would undoubtedly be a powerful agent of change. This catalyst will result in major regional transformation if the opportunities are fully harnessed.

World Heritage Nomination

Extensive research has identified the potential Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Victorian Goldfields as a cultural landscape exemplifying the global goldrushes of the second half of the nineteenth century and the associated social, economic, cultural and environmental changes that resulted. A serial listing of sites for World Heritage nomination is proposed. It would comprise a comparatively small number of separate component sites within the Victorian Goldfields. Each component will be an outstanding and representative example of a specific attribute of the global gold rush, each telling an essential part of Victoria's story. Collectively the components of the series will comprise the cultural landscape nomination and express the breadth and depth of values outlined in the proposed Statement of OUV. World Heritage listing will be a powerful agent for change and transformation and as a catalyst to address the Goldfields key challenges, which are explored in this chapter and include:

- The region's globally significant heritage assets that are largely unrecognised, under-utilised and under-resourced.
- Pronounced socio-economic disadvantage across the region with pockets of extreme disadvantage and population decline which embeds vulnerability and makes major disruption recovery difficult.
- Historically competitive, highly localised and untargeted investment has meant the private sector has not had the level of certainty needed to commit to high impact investment in tourism businesses.
- In many parts of the region, there is a prevalence of poor-quality visitor experiences, products and services that contributes to an unevenness in visitation and severely impacts capacity and attraction.

If successful, World Heritage listing offers the potential to accelerate regional regeneration and recovery and provide long term economic, social and cultural benefits for the Victorian Goldfields. An Economic Benefit Assessment undertaken by TRC Tourism and MCA consultants found that World Heritage listing will grow the region's visitor economy progressively over time, with the return continuing to increase each year. These benefits for tourism and regional income are highlighted in the image below, with social and cultural benefits presented overpage.

Research on World Heritage areas has found that 40% of sites reported an increase in visitation after gaining World Heritage inscription⁷.

A Parliamentary Inquiry in 2014 into Heritage Tourism by Victoria Parliament indicated that World Heritage Listing is a driver of increased tourism if sites are well-managed and possess appropriate supporting infrastructure prior to listing. As such, getting World Heritage ready in parallel to pursuing nomination will be critical to capturing the potential benefits of World Heritage Listing.

⁷ Assessing the economic impact of a UNESCO World Heritage designation, Journal of Heritage Tourism 6(2):143-164, May 2011.



Social and Cultural Benefits of Victorian Goldfields UNESCO World Heritage inscription



UNIQUE & EXCEPTIONAL

World Heritage status will act as a signal of exceptionality – telling the world that Central Victorian Goldfields is newsworthy.



RECOGNITION

Inscription will enable a broader cultural narrative from First Nation communities that residents and visitors can embrace.



CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE

Whilst it is often viewed as a cost rather than an economic benefit, conservation and preservation industries act as a dynamic and employment-generating sector.



REVITALISATION

Significant economic development and community revitalisation will occur as part of the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage inscription.



STRONG IDENTITY & IMAGE

World Heritage status will lead to a powerful new and improved identity for the Central Victorian Goldfields - providing a unified brand identity.



PARTNERSHIPS

Central Victorian Goldfields inscription will enable strong partnerships and a co-ordinated response to community and tourism investment.



CULTURE & CREATIVITY

World Heritage listing will revitalise and strengthen how visitors and residents experience and embrace the culture and creativity of Central Victorian Goldfields.



EDUCATION

The Outstanding Universal Values of the Central Victorian Goldfields provide an opportunity to develop and sell educational products and services that have high demand.



BETTER & NEW SERVICES

The inscription of Central Victorian Goldfields is likely to result in better services for residents and visitors.



QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Central Victorian Goldfields inscription has the potential to improve the quality of community and visitor infrastructure.



QUALITY OF LIFE

There is a powerful socio-economic rationale for investing in the Central Victorian Goldfield communities that have a reputation for high quality of life and a dynamic lifestyle offering.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Central Victorian Goldfields inscription will stimulate investment from the private sector.

A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The Goldfields is a cultural landscape that reflects the entire functional assemblage of one of the world's most significant goldrushes and historic gold-producing areas.

The Victorian Goldfields represents the most extensive and best-surviving landscape, anywhere, that illustrates the global goldrush phenomenon of the second half of the nineteenth century (Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value). The Victorian Goldfields is proposed for UNESCO World Heritage listing as a 'cultural landscape'. A cultural landscape approach recognises that the landscape overall is the outcome of interconnected cultural and natural layers and processes.

Many different historical and cultural processes and diverse heritage values are expressed in tangible and intangible ways in the landscape of the Goldfields. These include the past and continuing associations of First Peoples with Country; geological and environmental processes including water flows; the processes and technologies of goldmining; settlements, infrastructure and communication networks; pastoralism and urbanisation.

A cultural landscape approach goes beyond the narrower understandings of boundaries and views to see the landscape as a whole. The cultural landscape and its attributes (tangible and intangible evidence that 'holds' the OUV) are described in the draft Statement of OUV along with the elements, processes and associations that underpin the authenticity (truthfully and credible expression of OUV) and integrity (the completeness or wholeness and intactness of the attributes of OUV) of the proposed World Heritage site. Maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the serial cultural landscape is essential to maintaining its potential OUV.

What is a cultural landscape?

UNESCO's World Heritage Operational Guidelines define cultural landscape as cultural properties that 'represent the "combined works of nature and of man". They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal'.

Source: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>

Heritage Places

The Victorian Goldfields includes two National Heritage sites relating directly to the global goldrush era: the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park and the Eureka Stockade Gardens that are protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act. There are many thousands of other heritage places across the Victorian Goldfields – in public and private ownership – that are protected through their inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register, the Victorian Heritage Inventory and in local government planning schemes through individual listing of buildings and sites or as part of defined heritage precincts. All Aboriginal cultural heritage is protected under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. However, much of the Victorian Goldfields' significant heritage assets are largely under-utilised and under-resourced.

Local heritage values and places contribute to the World Heritage investigation area and underpin local cultural and community identity and the character and diversity of places and landscape across the goldfields region. There are many other places of value to local communities that are not formally recognised or protected as heritage places.

It is expected that a carefully selected sample of the region's heritage could reach the high threshold required for World Heritage Listing. While not all of the sites or places associated with historic goldmining in the Victorian Goldfields or of significance in the story of the development of the Victorian Goldfields would meet this threshold, these heritage places contribute to the overall significance of the region.



Castlemaine Diggings - Garfield the Water Wheel
Arup

FIRST PEOPLES

The Victorian Goldfields spans the Traditional Country of the Barengi Gadjin (the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk peoples), Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar, Gunaikurnai, Taungurung, Wadawurrung, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Yorta Yorta peoples as well as other Traditional Owners, each with their own unique values and aspirations.

Places of significance to First Peoples communities

The Goldfields includes many places of significance to First Peoples communities. These are protected under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. Places in the Victorian Goldfields of significance to First Peoples communities reflect their past and continuing associations with Country, evidenced in places, stories and landscapes.

First Peoples share the story of the Goldfields landscape and are represented by at least seven RAPs to share this knowledge and have their values and places recognised in the developing narrative of the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage bid.

World Heritage recognition places a strong emphasis on the history, heritage, resilience and story of First Peoples. In respect to the Goldfields, this relates to and is not limited to pre-European settlement and displacement of Traditional Owner lands, the pastoral expansion, the gold era – the creation of ‘upside down country’, the building of cities and towns, agricultural development and the increasing involvement and responsibility of Traditional Custodians for Country sites proposed for the serial nomination.

*Please note that narrative surrounding Traditional Country is subject to First Peoples’ input for incorporation in the proposed OUV.

Traditional Owner Values and Aspirations

Seven RAPs within the Victorian Goldfields have published Country Plans that set out their aspirations and describe their vision for the future of their people and Country*. The following section identifies goals and aspirations within these Country Plans with particular relevance for consideration in the Victorian Goldfields Master Plan. Further engagement with each RAP is required to confirm these aspirations.

* Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation Country Plan is unavailable online.

**Note that the Eastern Maar Country Plan was under review at the time of writing.



Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan - Dja Dja Wurrung Country Plan 2014-2034.

Supplied by DJAARA

Vision: The health and wellbeing of our people is strong and underpinned by our living culture. Our lands and waters are in good condition and actively managed to protect our values and to promote the laws, culture and rights of all Dja Dja Wurrung People. As this Country's First People we are politically empowered with an established place in society and capable of managing our own affairs from a strong and diverse economic base.

- Key goals of relevance:
 - Goal 1: Every Dja Dja Wurrung person is happy, healthy and secure in their identity, livelihood and lifestyle.

Despite the colonial experiences of dispossession that we have experienced as the First People of Djandak and the ongoing challenges we face in many facets of society, we strive for rights recognition and fulfilment of social and emotional wellbeing for our People. This spans providing community support programs for education and support to ensuring that members’ are represented adequately in the implementation of the Recognition and Settlement Agreement and the Registered Aboriginal Party function.

Master Plan alignment:

Acknowledgement of our presence as Traditional Owners before, during and after the gold rush is critical to truth-telling.

- Goal 2: Dja Dja Wurrung customs and practices are alive and respected - keeping us connected to our past, our present and our future.

We aim for the continuation of Dja Dja Wurrung culture through passing stories, ceremonies, language. Recognition of our traditional knowledge and practices in a modern context and for our future generations is a key feature of this goal, including protecting our rights over our Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP) and considering research opportunities to bridge the gap between traditional and Western ways of being and knowing.

- Goal 3: Our cultural heritage is recognised and protected as a celebration of our identity and community.

Protection of our cultural landscapes and the stories that they tell as part of our history is critical. Our cultural heritage across Country is expansive and each piece or location speaks to our ancestors, our customs and the tales of our people into the present.



- Goal 4: Our cultural Country continues to nourish us bush tucker and medicine.

Actively manage Country to provide abundance of food, fibre and medicinal resources. This consists of but is not limited to responsible take and use rights, cultural burning, game management. Our ability to re-establish healthy “plants and animals, cycles and systems” is threatened by the damage to Country by colonial techniques of management, climate and the undocumented Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

- Goal 5: Our rivers and waterways are healthy and meet the needs of our people and land.

Protect our waterways as the significant piece of our cultural identity that they are through creation, cultural heritage and nourishment and strengthen our rights in water governance.

- Goal 6: Our upside-down Country is healthy again.

The impacts of the goldrush and subsequent mining occurring on djandak to present day have caused great disruption to our landscapes, turning them “upside down”. We have a custodial responsibility to see that our soils remediated and restored to health.

Master Plan alignment:

Upside-down Country is a direct consequence of the goldrush and the lands speak to this history today still.

- Goal 7: As our Country’s first people, DJAARA have an established place in society and are empowered to manage our own affairs.

As DJAARA, the Traditional Owners of central Victoria we aim to continue to assert our rights to self-determine decisions regarding our People, lands, waters and skies, through effective priorities, governance structures and meaningful partnership arrangements.

- Goal 8: We have a strong and diverse economic base to provide for our health and wellbeing and strengthen our living culture.

We strive for DJAARA to be economically empowered and to create sustainable intergenerational prosperity through diverse opportunities such as cultural tourism, design works, natural resource management and more through the Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises.

Master Plan alignment:

Immense opportunities of alignment in tourism space with the establishment of the Victorian Goldfields as World Heritage.

- Goal 9: All Crown land on Dja Dja Wurrung Country is Aboriginal Title and we are the sole managers.

Today, six of our parks and reserves on Dja Dja Wurrung Country are under Aboriginal Title. DJAARA hope that through Joint Management we may exert increased decision-making authority for the management of our lands, waters and skies.



Eastern Maar Country Plan**

Vision: We look to a future in which we have secured our rightful place in society and on Country. A future where Eastern Maar citizens are a free people, proud of our heritage and our achievements. Where we are respected as the Traditional Owners of our lands and waters, living in harmony with the rest of society.

Our culture matters. Our Country matters. And in the modern world we live in, financial independence also matters. In our future, we will have built up our economic independence, but not at the expense of our culture or our values. We will remain true to who we are and we will continue to care for the Country that has looked after us for tens of thousands of years... (cont. see Country Plan).

• Key goals of relevance:

- Goal 2: Young people are active and engaged on the path to reaching their full potential.
- Goal 3: Our community is proud of our identity and we are respected as Traditional Owners.
- Goal 4: Our Country is healthy and our natural resources are managed and used sustainably.
- Goal 5: Our unique culture is getting stronger and we keep our Dreaming going.
- Goal 6: Our community is building wealth - creating a future for our young people.



Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan

Vision: We are Gunaikurnai, the First People of our Country. We have survived for tens of thousands of years, often against great adversity. We have looked after our Country and passed on our stories and traditions through countless generations. We continue to survive and thrive, maintaining connection to our Country and to our ancestors.

The future we see is one where Gunaikurnai stands proud and strong, where our people have strong connections to their culture and Country, where our businesses and relationships are based on solid foundations and where we are self-sufficient and highly respected. In our future, our mob is united – the five clans of Gunaikurnai working together to support each other.

• Key strategies as relevant:

- A strong health, happy mob.
- Healthy Country.
- Protecting and practicing our culture.
- Respect as Traditional Owners of our Country.
- The right to use, manage and control our resources.
- Economic independence.
- A strong focus on learning.



Taungurung Country Plan

Vision: Taungurung are proud and respected people who unite in strength and take care of country.

- Key priorities:
 - Identity, Recognition and Rights: Always were and always will be strong, proud Taungurung, connected and caring for our Country, Culture and People.
 - Cultural Heritage: Our knowledge is gathered, protected and conserved.
 - Taungurung Traditional Knowledge: Taungurung knowledge is gathered, shared and protected.
 - Economic Development and Employment: Driving Ethical Economic Development and Employment for Our People and Country. This includes a goal of investigating and establishing cultural tourism opportunities.



Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan

Vision: All people working together to make Wadawurrung Country and culture strong.

- Key values of relevance:
 - Value 1: Wadawurrung culture and people: Wadawurrung are the protectors and carers of their Country and their Country protects and cares for them.
 - Value: 2 Wadawurrung cultural sites and places: Covering both tangible and intangible sites – the Plan establishes a goal for where Wadawurrung people are involved in the management of all known sites.
 - Value 3: Enterprise and employment: Wadawurrung want people to further develop their cultural education, art and tourism businesses.
 - Value 6: Inland Country: seeking to expand the extent of inland Country (inland Country includes western volcanic plains and grasslands).



Growing what is good: Country Plan - voices of the Wotjobaluk nations

Vision: Wotjobaluk Nations working together as custodians of Culture, Country, Heritage, Lore and Language, sharing our values and representing the rights and interests of our People.

- Goals:
 - Strong and Healthy Wotjobaluk culture.
 - An engaged and connected Wotjobaluk community.
 - Recognition and respect.
 - Economic sustainability.
 - A strong voice for Wotjobaluk peoples.



Yorta Yorta Whole of Country Plan 2021- 2030

Vision: Not stated.

- Key strategies as relevant:
 - Assert cultural authority over Country.
 - Protect Cultural heritage and conserve our tangible and intangible cultural heritage and control the sharing of heritage information, data and stories.
 - Gather, safeguard and promote Yorta Yorta knowledge.
 - Economic opportunities based on managing, using resources and presenting Country to visitors.
 - Increase the understanding and respect for Yorta Yorta Country and culture among other people.

LAYERED STORIES, HISTORY AND HERITAGE

The Victorian Goldfield's rich history and heritage can be understood across nine themes based on the area's potential global significance. These themes capture the historic processes which form a strong basis for the Master Plan to respect, celebrate and bring to life the Victorian Goldfields proposed global significance through its proposed initiatives.

Geological features and ecological features

Key concepts: Tectonic forces, erosion, volcanic activity, climate change and water flows led to the region's complex alluvial, deep lead and quartz gold bearing landscapes.

Invasion/colonisation/ dispossession and resistance of First Peoples

First Peoples resisted and survived the invasion and dispossession of pastoralism, the goldrushes, gold mining and settlement. First Peoples journey of resilience - navigating change through time, the adaptation of people and culture.

Key concepts: Invasion and dispossession and the resistance of First Peoples communities; continuity of associations with Country; engagement and agency of First Peoples in the discovery and mining of gold; shared histories of the Victorian Goldfields; First Peoples struggles for and achievement of sovereignty.

First Peoples living on Country

The goldrushes happened on the Country of First Peoples.

Key concepts: First Peoples of the Victorian Goldfields and their Country; cultural knowledge of Country, the environment and resources; associations with places and features; social interaction and ceremony; moving through Country.

Discovery of large accessible gold deposits

Rich and accessible deposits of gold were discovered across Victoria.

Key concepts: histories and people involved in the discovery of gold nuggets and deposits; geological exploration and surveying; the enormous amounts of gold recovered during the goldrushes.

Large scale rapid migration events

The phenomenally rich and easily won alluvial gold deposits sparked mass migration by people with little mining experience or capital.

Key concepts: the rushes were unprecedented in the scale and rapidity of the migration; 'Gold Fever'; the culturally and linguistically diverse people migrated from different places; experiencing arrival in a remote and previously unknown land; initial anarchy of the goldfields; escalation in colonisation and dispossession of First Peoples; expansion in the trade, industry and commerce of the British empire.

Succession and evolution of mining technologies across time and space

Accessing and exploiting the gold deposits required the use and stimulated the evolution of a range of mining technologies.

Key concepts: transition from shallow alluvial mining to deep alluvial and quartz mining; mining processes and technologies developed during the goldrushes; importation and exportation of mining technologies; gold type and source giving rise to the location and shape of settlements.

Rapid environmental and landscape changes

The goldrushes and gold mining impacted and transformed the environments, geomorphology and ecology of the region.

Key concepts: impacts of goldmining on geological, topographical and biogeographical diversity; 'Country turned upside down' for First Peoples; exploitation natural resources including stone, timber, water and animals; sluicing, siltation and sludge.

Growth of ancillary and supporting industries

Gold mining and the rapidly increasing population were supported by industrial and agricultural development.

Key concepts: establishment and growth of small and large-scale industries such as brickworks, foundries and potteries; expansion and diversification of agricultural production and supply of food and goods; diversification of the colonial economy.

Establishment of new communities, networks and political structures

New communities and permanent settlements associated with new social and political structures arose from the transient settlements of the goldrushes.

Key concepts: Gold-inspired optimism as a catalyst for town creation and accelerated town development; establishment and surveying of new towns; miners' ideals of egalitarianism, liberty and a fair go for all; imposition and enforcement of colonial law and order; government administration of a new form of (mineral-based) land settlement; establishment of transport and communication networks.

Evolving cultural identities, social relationships and civic life

New social relationships and the growth of civil society structured the ethnically and religiously diverse communities of the goldfields.

Key concepts: adoption of new social reforms; growth of civic pride and adherence to Middle-class ideals, including education for all; Chinese people and communities; ethnic diversity and histories of minorities; cross-cultural First Peoples and First Peoples relationships, establishment of cultural industries, theatre and the arts; recreation.

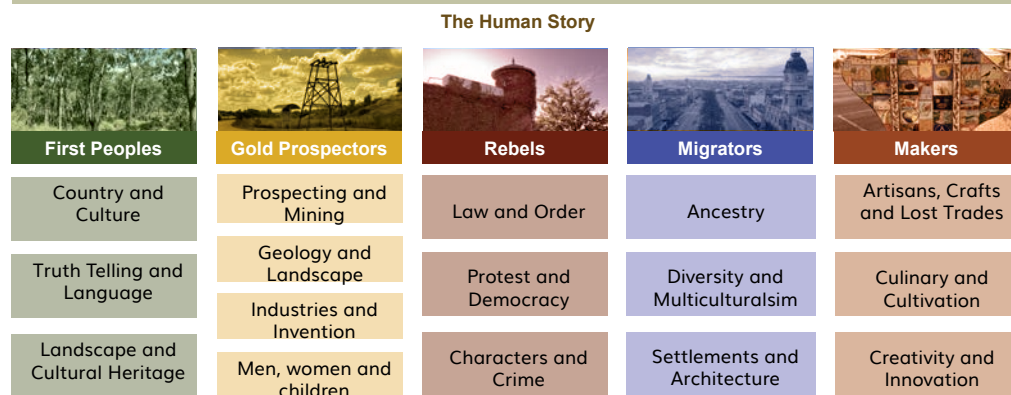
*Please note that these heritage themes are in draft form and are subject to review.

THEMATIC EXPERIENCES AND STORIES

Coordinated and engaging storytelling is a powerful opportunity to bring heritage and the Victorian Goldfields' potential global significance to life.

Building off the heritage themes identified in the previous section, the following theme framework is proposed which sets out the elements for core stories and experiences to link to. This will help drive a consistent and integrated narrative and visitor experience and support destination development of key locations. Currently, these themes and storylines are expressed in a disjointed and highly localised way. Interpretation and experiences of these themes vary in quality. Framed from the lens of the people and characters within these stories, they offer an opportunity for visitors and communities to connect with people as well as places and processes. Each theme and sub-theme are underpinned by the potential OUV and the overarching gold and goldrush story. Individual destinations will have their own rich stories to showcase and contextualise these themes adding to the diversity which they offer. Please note that further engagement with First Peoples is required to shape the sub themes

Potential Outstanding Universal Value
 The most extensive and best-surviving landscape, anywhere, that illustrates the global goldrush phenomenon of the second half of the nineteenth century



COMMUNITIES, SETTLEMENTS AND PLACES

Victorian Goldfields is home to a diverse range of regional cities and townships. Parts of the Victorian Goldfields face pronounced socio-economic disadvantage with pockets of extreme disadvantage and population decline.

Community Aspirations

Happiness Index and Imagine Survey



A total of 1,203 surveys completed.



An average level of happiness of 6.7 on a scale of 10.

The Happiness index is a peer-reviewed and OECD recognised best practice measure of individual and community wellbeing (Planet Happiness 2021). The Happiness Index survey was deployed in April 2021 to provide initial insight to the wellbeing of regional communities and their sentiment toward tourism. The survey also incorporated the City of Ballarat's 'Ballarat Imagine' (Imagine) participatory engagement methodology, which was developed as part of an international UNESCO HUL pilot. Imagine enabled the identification of what's valued by communities today (what we love and want to retain) and captured aspirations regarding future change (what we imagine for the future). The key moves in the Master Plan respond to the results this survey building off the investment priorities as defined in the 2021 Sustainable Tourism Report.

Domains with the highest average scores are Environment (7.8), Psychological Wellbeing (7.4) and Economy (7.4). Conversely, domains with lower mean scores are Government (5.8), Time balance (6.0) and Lifelong learning and culture (6.0).

Key areas of concern raised by community are confidence in government, time balance, health, connection to community and work. Conversely, areas they believe are tracking well are lifelong learning, arts and culture, satisfaction with life, standard of living, psychological wellbeing, environment and social support.

These results inform the development of this Master Plan's overarching principles to:

- Position host community wellbeing as a priority.
- Promote opportunities for developing:
 - Social capital.
 - Community confidence.
 - Quality of life.
 - Foster community pride.

Notably, the recommended initiatives put forward in Section 4 of this Master Plan focus on these outcomes, noting that to support the visitor economy will also strengthen the quality of life of its residents.

Local Government Areas at a Glance

The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage bid and this Master Plan, is a collaborative initiative of fifteen local governments that have come together in a partnership. These local government areas (LGAs) comprise a mix of urban and rural areas. All of some of the fifteen LGAs and parts of the others contain gold mining areas, which together with the cities, towns and settlements created by the wealth of the goldrush, form the Victorian Goldfields. The LGAs that are wholly or generally wholly within the gold producing areas comprise: Ballarat, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Hepburn, Indigo, Loddon, Mount Alexander, Northern Grampians and Pyrenees. The LGAs that have parts of their municipality in the goldfields comprise: Ararat, Baw Baw, Campaspe, Golden Plains, Macedon Ranges and Moorabool.

Population distribution, socio-economic disadvantage and dispersing the economic advantages of tourism

Nearly 600,000 people live in the total area of the fifteen LGAs. In terms of population distribution, about 40% of the population is concentrated in the two major urban areas of Ballarat and Bendigo. About 80% of the Victorian Goldfields' population is living within a 150 -kilometre radius of Melbourne. Many parts of the Victorian Goldfields region have a strong economic base and generally population growth has been strong. However, there are pockets of severe social economic disadvantage, where income levels are low, as are levels of education, qualifications held and workforce participation. In some cases little population growth is occurring. These characteristics are generally concentrated in some of the northwestern parts of the region, particularly in the LGAs of Central Goldfields, Loddon and Pyrenees. Parts of the Ballarat and Bendigo urban areas also have pockets of severe socio-economic disadvantage. Those areas closest to Melbourne have generally been the parts of the Victorian Goldfields that have benefited most from tourism.⁸ Areas such as the Macedon Ranges, Daylesford – Hepburn, Castlemaine – Maldon and Beechworth, as well as Ballarat and Bendigo have positioned themselves as weekend getaways areas. There is a need to address how tourism benefits can be more evenly dispersed. This has been a strong driver behind the goals and content of the Master Plan, which has been designed to ensure that the benefits that come from visitor economy expenditure are experienced by all parts of the Victorian Goldfields.

The Victorian Goldfields region's population is projected to grow by over 100,000 people by 2036.

All parts of the Victorian Goldfields experienced a surge in population due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with people from Melbourne seeking housing away from restrictions in the metropolitan area, cheaper housing options and taking advantage of increased work from home opportunities. This has led to rising housing values, increased numbers of new building approvals and much tighter rental markets in most parts of the Victorian Goldfields. However, there are already signs that these changes have been short lived.

The 2023 Victoria in Future population projections⁹ indicate that by 2036 the total population of the fifteen local areas in the Victorian Goldfields region will have grown from 551,680 persons to a total population of 685,200. However, over 85% of the population is estimated to occur in just six LGAs,¹⁰ four of which (Baw Baw, Golden Plains, Macedon Ranges and Moorabool) are in the Melbourne or Geelong peri urban area and the other two are the Cities of Ballarat and Greater Bendigo. Ballarat and Bendigo will experience about 45% of the total future population growth in the Victorian Goldfields region. Future population growth will therefore generally be a phenomenon largely driven by the growth of Melbourne and Geelong and the two major regional cities. The LGAs of Ararat, Central Goldfields, Loddon, Northern Grampians, and Pyrenees are each likely to have a declining proportion of the region's population in the future. There is a range of factors contributing to this situation including aging population base, limited local employment growth, narrow economic base and distance from growing population centres.

Several areas in the region are nationally ranked as severely disadvantaged

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) developed the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) in 1971 and has subsequently updated the Index for each five-year census.¹¹ Significantly eight of the fifteen (53%) LGAs in the Victorian Goldfields were below the Australian average in the latest census - 2021. All the five LGAs in the western and northwestern area of the Victorian Goldfields are below the Australian Average and are in the lowest 17 of the 79 LGAs in the state of Victoria with Central Goldfields Shire having the second lowest rating of any local government area in Victoria.

A key part of the strategy underpinning the Master Plan has been to identify, document and seek to implement actions which are designed to support a greater dispersal of tourists and visitors and the goods and services they buy to those areas of the Victorian Goldfields that have traditionally not been able to compete for tourist income with those places closer to Melbourne. **Significantly these areas are the same LGAs which the analysis using the SEIFA data has identified as one of the most significant concentrations of low socio-economic ranking in the whole state.** Unless this situation can be redressed, there is likely to be a decreasing economic activity and jobs in these LGAs, while at the same time increasing concentration of economic activity and jobs in the two major regional cities and those areas closest to Melbourne, despite World Heritage recognition of the whole region.

The ABS uses various geographical areas to display data not just LGAs. Statistical Areas Level 2 (SA2) are medium sized general-purpose areas that represent communities that interact together socially and economically. Most SA2s have a population range of 3,000 to 25,000 people. In Victoria there are 79 LGAs and there are 512 geographical areas in the SA2 category.

In the case of the Victorian Goldfields Master Plan area which has 15 LGAs there are 55 geographical areas in the SA2 category. Of these 55 geographical areas there are 14 in the SA2 category that are in the lowest two deciles. Generally rural and regional areas across Australia have a lower rank than metropolitan areas. The SA2 areas in the Victorian Goldfields which are in the two lowest deciles are in parts of the following LGAs: Ararat, Ballarat, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo and Pyrenees. This more fine-grained pattern of measuring disadvantage is shown in the following tables.

In addition to the work of the ABS there are research firms who use a range of methods to map socio economic levels. SGS Economics and Planning produce an annual Cities and Regions Wellbeing Index.¹² The SGS Wellbeing Index is based on seven measures.

- **Economy:** A region's economic output, productivity, and diversity shows how well the local economy is performing.
- **Wealth:** Communities with higher incomes and greater levels of wealth provide greater levels of security, stability and opportunities.
- **Employment, Knowledge and Skills:** Includes levels of education and engagement in the workforce which can contribute to financial and broader personal satisfaction.
- **Housing:** Includes rates of homelessness, affordability, and overcrowding. As shelter is a basic human need, issues around housing access impact wellbeing.
- **Health:** Considers life expectancy and rates of illness, which can be linked to access to healthcare and cultural factors.
- **Equality, Community and Work-life Balance:** Includes volunteer rates, work-life balance, gender and First Peoples equality indicators.
- **Environment:** Assesses a location's risk to environmental hazards and access to national parks, reserves, and protected areas.

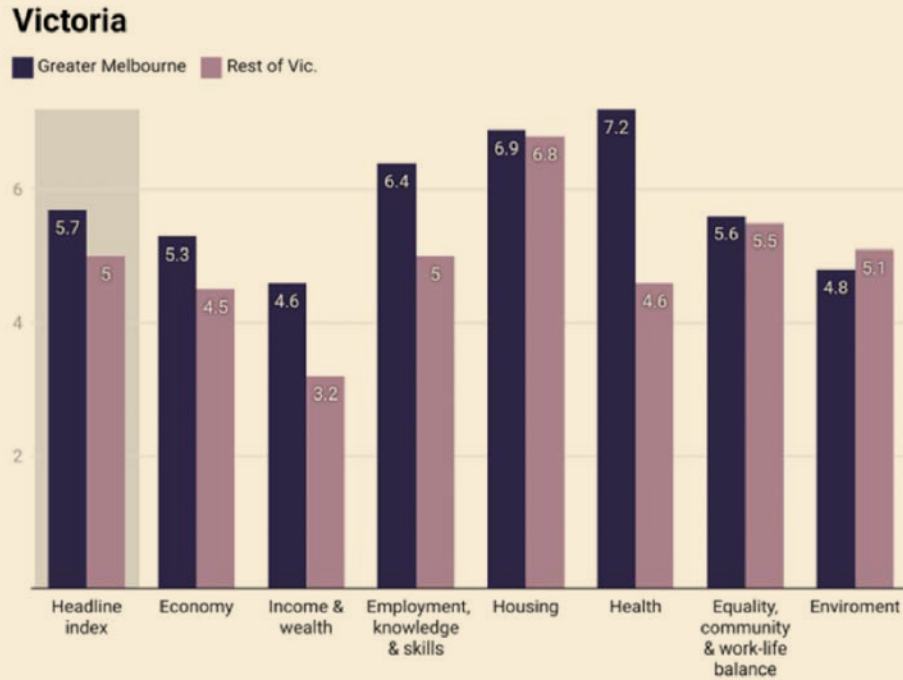
While the SGS Index is in many respects more nuanced than the SEIFA Index, it has been prepared at the local government area level, which tends to mask disparities within large geographical areas with a high population. Such an Index works better with LGAs with a small population base. Many LGAs in the Victorian Goldfields have LGAs with less than 25,000 people: Ararat, Central Goldfields, Golden Plains, Hepburn, Indigo, Loddon, Mount Alexander, Northern Grampians and Pyrenees. The map below shows the comparative Index level for LGAs in Victoria. It reveals that of the LGAs within the central Victorian area of the Victorian Goldfields the following group (Ballarat, Golden Plains, Greater Bendigo, Macedon Ranges and Moorabool), that are each in the Melbourne peri-urban area, have a higher Index level than those that are more distant from Melbourne. As well, the Indigo LGAs is also in the higher Index level.



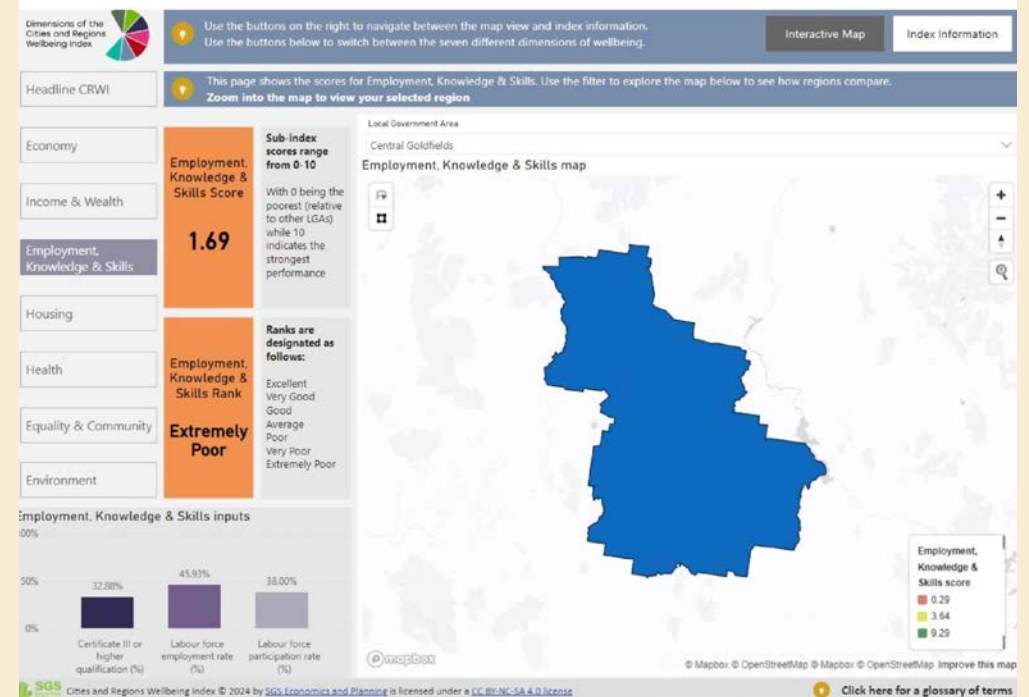
Source: SGS Economics and Planning, 2024

8 Refer to the Economic Impact Assessment report in the Appendices which documents tourism numbers.
 9 https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0022/703453/DTP0552-Victori-in-Future-2023-report.PDF
 10 Ballarat, Baw Baw, Golden Plains, Greater Bendigo, Macedon Ranges and Moorabool.
 11 The SEIFA Index ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. It is based on information from the five-yearly Census. (SEIFA 2021 is based on the Census 2021 data). The Index shown in the table is based on Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD) which has been constructed so that relatively disadvantaged areas have low index values while relatively advantaged areas have high values. The IRSAD is derived from attributes such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, jobs in relatively unskilled occupations and overcrowded dwellings which broadly reflect disadvantage. For LGAs across Australia, the average (population weighted) SEIFA score on IRSAD is 1,000. Therefore, areas with an index above 1,000 are above the Australian average and so relatively less disadvantaged and more advantaged, while index figures below 1,000 indicate areas of relatively greater disadvantage when compared to the nation. The highest Index level in Australia for an LGA is 1093 and the lowest 887.
 12 https://sgsep.com.au/assets/main/SGS-Economics-and-Planning_SGS-Cities-and-Regions-Wellbeing-Index_2024_Website.pdf

The SGS Index also provides a useful comparison between Greater Melbourne and the Rest of Victoria which highlights the significant differences between the two areas against the seven elements that they measure.



The Map below displays the profile for the Central Goldfields Shire in the category of Employment Knowledge and Skills, which indicates severe levels of disadvantage in this category



The SGS report notes that the Greater Melbourne – Rest of Victoria divide was largest in the Health and the Income & Wealth dimensions. They also note that the life expectancy gap is approximately 2.3 years between Greater Melbourne and Rest of Victoria residents, and a higher proportion of rest of Victoria residents living with two or more chronic illnesses. Median household incomes and house values were also markedly higher in Greater Melbourne than in regional Victoria,

The Victorian Goldfields has three of the four LGAs in Victoria with the lowest Wellbeing Index, Central Goldfields, Loddon and Pyrenees. This was generally due to lower scores on the following wellbeing dimensions: employment, knowledge & skills, health and income & wealth.

The SGS Index mapping tool provides read outs for each of the seven Index factors against each local government area and a summary profile to be displayed in map form.

Strategic Investment in tourism can support regional development and regeneration.

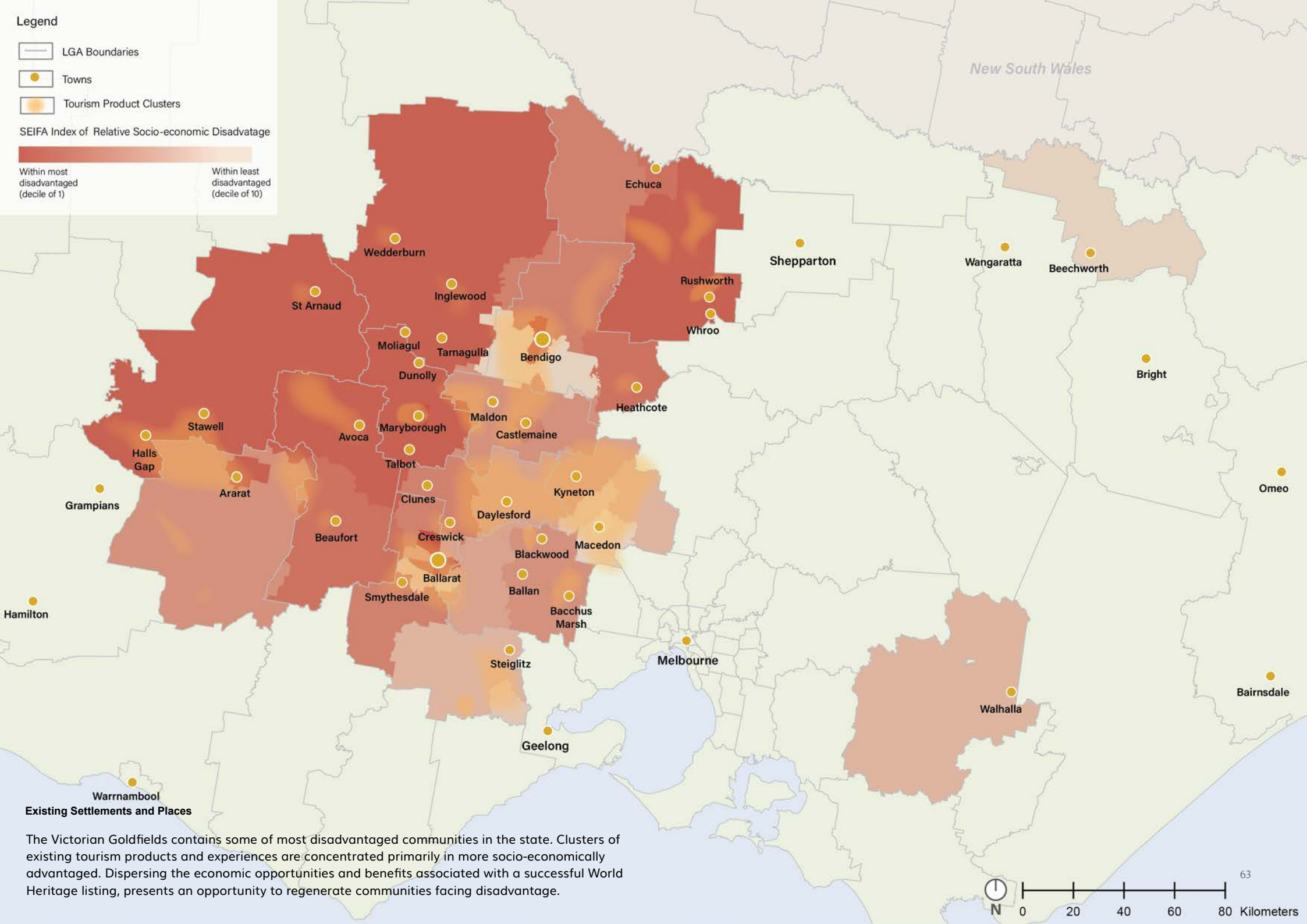
A key part of the strategy underpinning the Master Plan has been to identify, document and seek to implement actions which are designed to support a greater dispersal of tourists and visitors and the goods and services they buy to those areas of the Victorian Goldfields that have traditionally not been able to compete for tourist income with those places closer to Melbourne. Significantly these areas are the same LGAs which the analysis using the SEIFA data has identified as one of the most significant concentrations of low socio-economic ranking in the whole state. Unless this situation can be redressed, there is likely to be an increasing concentration of economic activity and jobs in the areas of the Victorian Goldfields closer to Melbourne, despite World Heritage recognition of the wider region. The strategy is to focus marketing and promotion across the whole Victorian Goldfields, but particularly strengthen the visitor economy infrastructure in those parts of the Victorian Goldfields where facilities and services are needed to attract more tourists. This will use the designation of World Heritage and the identification and promotion of World Heritage Journeys as a catalyst. It will focus on the placement of new and expanded Visitor Gateways, Hubs and Information to encourage and support more tourists to explore the whole Victorian Goldfields so as to raise the socio-economic ranking of all areas. It will focus on investment and jobs in those areas of the Victorian Goldfields that are further away from Melbourne.



Talbot Market Square
Arup

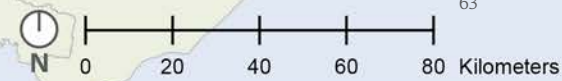
LGA	Main Townships	Population 2021	Population Forecast 2036*	SEIFA Index
Ararat City Council	Ararat, Armstrong, Dunneworthy, Lake Bolac, Moyston, Pomonal, Streatham, Tatyoon, Wickliffe and Willaura	11,880	12,160	4
Baw Baw Shire	Drouin, Erica, Longwarry, Neerim South, Noojee, Omeo, Rawson, Trafalgar, Walhalla, Warragul, Yarragon.	57,620	79,130	7
City of Greater Bendigo	Bendigo, Axedale, Elmore, Goornong, Heathcote, Marong and Raywood	121,270	149,490	6
Campaspe Shire	Echuca, Kyabram, Rochester, Rushworth, Lockington and Tongala.	38,560	40,820	4
Central Goldfields Shire	Maryborough, Bealiba, Carisbrook, Dunolly, Talbot.	13,390	14,400	2
City of Ballarat	Ballarat, Learmonth, Buninyong, Miners Rest, Cardigan Village	113,500	144,730	6
Golden Plains Shire	Bannockburn, Smythesdale, Batesford, Scarsdale, Cape Clear/Illabarook, Rokewood, Dereel, Haddon, Inverleigh, Lethbridge, Linton, Meredith	24,890	34,040	9
Hepburn Shire	Daylesford, Hepburn Springs, Creswick, Clunes, Trentham, Glenlyon	16,490	18,710	8
Indigo Shire	Beechworth, Chiltern, Rutherglen, Yackandandah	17,250	19,540	9
Loddon Shire	Boort, Bridgewater on Loddon, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Serpentine, Tarnagulla, Wedderburn.	7,600	7,890	3
Macedon Ranges Shire	Gisborne, Kyneton, Lancefield, Macedon, Malmsbury, Mount Macedon, New Gisborne, Riddells Creek, Romsey and Woodend.	51,600	64,950	10
Moorabool Shire	Bacchus Marsh, Ballan, Blackwood, Gordon.	37,910	56,750	9
Mount Alexander Shire	Castlemaine, Campbells Creek, Chewton, Guildford, Harcourt, Maldon, Newstead, Taradale.	20,110	22,780	8
Northern Grampians Shire	Stawell, St Arnaud, Stuart Mill, Glenorchy, Great Western, Halls Gap, Marnoo, Navarre,	11,890	11,570	4
Pyrenees Shire	Beaufort, Avoca, Lexton.	7,620	8,240	4
Total		551,680	685,200	-

Table 1 Local Government Area (LGA) SEIFA Summary
SEIFA figures shown are based on Deciles - groupings of 10% with 1 meaning that a Local Government Area is grouped in the lowest 10% in terms of relative socio-economic disadvantage of all LGAs in Australia. Source: Socio-Economic Indexes for Australia (SEIFA), 2021 <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/socio-economic-indexes-areas-seifa-australia/latest-release>.
2021 Population and 2036 Population Forecasts are based on Victoria in Future 2023 Population and household projections to 2051 November 2023. Source: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/data-and-insights/victoria-in-future>



Existing Settlements and Places

The Victorian Goldfields contains some of most disadvantaged communities in the state. Clusters of existing tourism products and experiences are concentrated primarily in more socio-economically advantaged. Dispersing the economic opportunities and benefits associated with a successful World Heritage listing, presents an opportunity to regenerate communities facing disadvantage.



Settlements and Places

Bendigo and Ballarat are two of Victoria's four largest and fastest growing regional cities and lie at the heart of the Victorian Goldfields. These cities are prosperous hubs of cultural and economic activity. They currently receive the majority of visitors, visitor spend and investment in the region. The Victorian Goldfields also has many smaller cities, towns, communities and places, each with their own strengths to be enhanced, reinforced and supported.

Key Gold Heritage Towns and Places



ARARAT
A vibrant rural city and gateway to the Grampians surrounded by plentiful wineries, eateries and tourist attractions.



AVOCA
A rural town at the gateway to the Pyrenees offering food and wine, events and bushwalking.



BALLARAT
Major goldrush city home to Sovereign Hill Museum and the Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades, grand architecture and significant goldrush history.



BEAUFORT
Rural township with historic architecture, scenic walking trails and Beaufort Lake.



BEECHWORTH
North-east Victoria's major gold producing area. An outstanding and largely intact main street with extraordinary public buildings within a bush setting.



BENDIGO
Major goldrush city and home to Central Deborah Gold mine, Chinese Gardens and Golden Dragon Museum.



BLACKWOOD
Small township known for its thriving goldmining history and surrounded by Lerderberg State Park and the Wombat State Forest.



CASTLEMAINE
Vibrant city with a strong creative scene and historic architecture including the Old Castlemaine Goal.



CASTLEMAINE DIGGINGS NATIONAL HERITAGE PARK
The largest historic mining landscape in Australia set within Box-Ironbark woodlands.



CHEWTON
Charming historical town with site of the protest Monster Meeting and near the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park.



CLUNES
Gold was first discovered here and it's known as the 'First Gold Town' in Victoria along with its annual International Booktown event.



CRESWICK
A historic town with intact heritage streetscapes located near the Buried Rivers of Gold heritage trail.



DAYLESFORD
A thriving historic gold town and popular visitor destination known for its natural mineral springs, food scene and vibrant community events.



DUNOLLY + MOLIAGUL
Historic town of Dunolly. Moliagul has the Welcome Stranger Monument, celebrating the discovery of the world's largest gold nugget.



HEATHCOTE
Goldrush town in bush setting beside the McIvor and McHarg ranges with several breweries, wineries and local producers.



KYNETON
A picturesque service town for the goldfields known for shops, food, wine and ferments, the outdoors and the arts.



INGLEWOOD
Well conserved goldrush village part of the Golden Triangle of gold mining towns. Important producer of eucalyptus oil.



MALDON
Goldrush township with an intact historic streetscape that includes boutiques, shops, cafes, antiques and local art displays.



MARYBOROUGH
Goldrush city at the heart of the goldfields with grand historic buildings including the civic centre and Maryborough Station.



OMEO
Gold rush era town on the Great Alpine Road set high in the Great Dividing Range.



RUSHWORTH + WHROO
The small goldrush township of Rushworth neighbours Whroo, a now deserted township that supported the Balaclava mine.



SMYTHESDALE
The town's historic precinct is known for legal history. It connects to many nature-based and recreational activities.



ST ARNAUD
Rural service town with a well conserved historic streetscape. Located in agricultural district.



STAWELL
Historic gold mining city in close proximity to and a key commercial centre for the Grampians National Park.



TALBOT
A small gold rush village with several intact historic buildings. Known for its farmers market and Arts and Historical Museum.



TARNAGULLA
Goldrush town with over 30 historic buildings including the 1853 Victoria Hotel and Theatre.



WALHALLA
One of Victoria's major gold producing towns. Set in an iconic narrow alpine valley with Victoria's largest single gold producing mine.



WEDDERBURN
Gold mining history where nuggets can still be discovered. Bush and agricultural setting with a strong walking path and track network.

Parks and Reserves

There are extensive parks and reserves throughout the Victorian Goldfields, most managed by Parks Victoria. Greater Bendigo National Park, the Kara Kara National Park, Hepburn Regional Park and Paddy's Ranges State Park are jointly managed by the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and Parks Victoria. Parks and reserves within the Victorian Goldfields have diverse offerings from a range of geological landscapes and native flora and fauna including the Box-Ironbark forests and Hanging Rock as well as places with a strong goldrush link such as the Pink Cliffs Geological Reserve at Heathcote, Castlemaine Diggings Heritage National Park and Whroo Historic Reserve.

The diverse offerings of the parks and reserves at Victorian Goldfields reveal the opportunity for nature-based tourism as part of the World Heritage Journeys where visitors can learn about the modified landscape through its past natural imprint whilst enjoying Victoria's native flora and fauna as a way to learn about First Peoples connection to land. Ensuring visitor safety (such as addressing illegal behaviour) will be essential in realising the tourism potential of these parks and reserves.



Arup

HEATHCOTE PINK CLIFFS GEOLOGICAL RESERVE
A geological reserve with mini gorges of pink clay, formed by early gold-mining activities including sluicing work in the 1880s.



MOLIAGUL HISTORIC RESERVE
The site of the Welcome Stranger Monument, Moliagul Historic Reserve is a peaceful site surrounded by Box Ironbark forest.



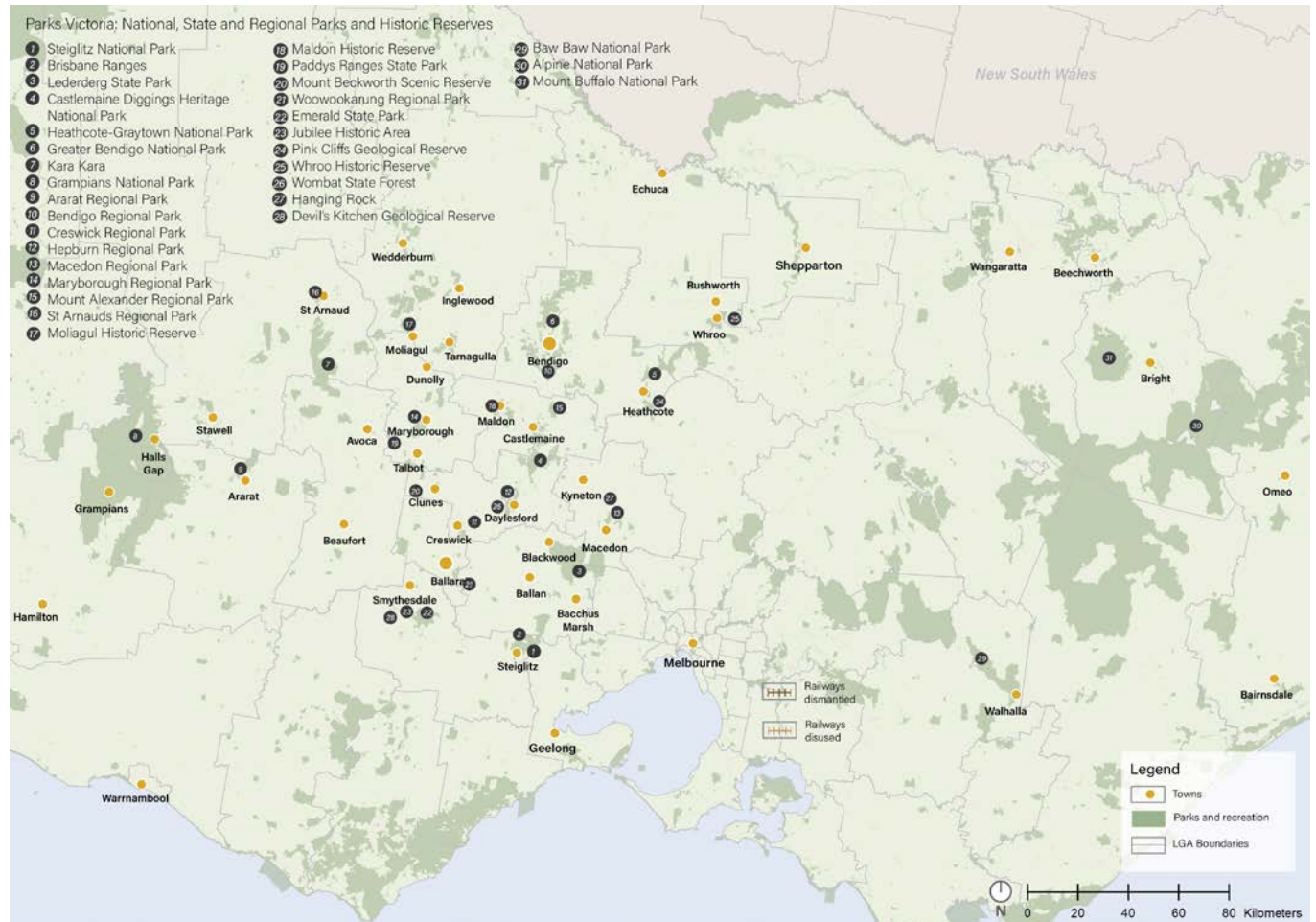
Parks Victoria

GREATER BENDIGO NATIONAL PARK
A national park containing extensive alluvial mining sites filled with diverse native flora and fauna including the Box-Iron forests and Swift Parrots.



Arup

WHROO HISTORIC RESERVE
A historic reserve that contains a number of key mining sites including an open cut mine that were active during the goldrush period.



National, State and Regional Parks, as well as Historic Reserves managed by Parks Vic in the Victorian Goldfields

First Peoples Places of Significance

There are many sites of cultural significance for First Peoples across the Victorian Goldfields that are important for their cultural connection, wellbeing, identity and heritage. Ongoing engagement with the RAPs is ongoing to identify cultural significant places and explore opportunities to protect, enhance and share the stories of these places as determined by and led by First Peoples. Noting this is a guide only and should not replace First Peoples engagement, sites may include sites of significance identified within each RAP's Country Plan as follows:



Brian Dowie Conservation Park, Carisbrook - Goldfields Guide

Dja Dja Wurrung Nation

The Dja Dja Wurrung peoples have secured freehold title and are caretakers to three sites including Yapeya (Mt Barker), Carisbrook and Franklindon. One of the actions going forward include undertaking a feasibility study into introducing commercial activity such as tourism.



Campaspe River - Visit Macedon Ranges

Taungurung Nation

Many of the significant sites for the Taungurung Peoples listed in their Country Plan are outside of the Victorian Goldfields. Those are within the Victorian Goldfields include the Great Dividing Range and the Campaspe River.



Mount Hope Conservation Reserve - Bendigo Tourism

Yorta Yorta Nation

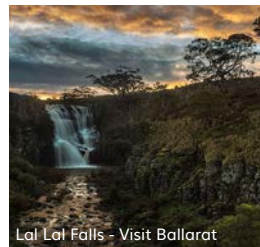
Yalka (lower Campaspe River) runs from the Murray River, passing Elmore to Lake Eppalock, Upper Gunbower and the broader Hungulla (Murray River) corridor and Ghow (Kow) Swamp and connection to Mt Hope Creek (Lower Bendigo Creek).



MacKenzie Falls, Grampians National Park - Visit Victoria

Eastern Maar

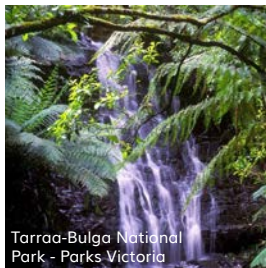
The Grampians is a significant place for the Eastern Maar peoples as it is the location of where Bundjil stand high and look over his creation. Other significant sites include Framlingham (near Warnambool), with the Framlingham Aboriginal Forest and cemetery as well as Swan Reserve (Warnambool), a sacred place for Maar peoples to be protected from the persecution of people in town.



Lal Lal Falls - Visit Ballarat

Wadawurrung Nation

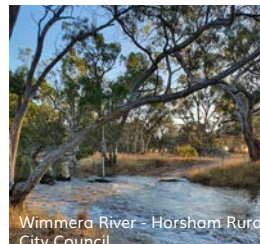
Lal Lal Falls (near Ballarat), a waterfall where Bundjil, the Wedge Tail Eagle, created the waterways and Kirrit Barrett (Black Hill, in Gordon), where Bundjil created the first Wadawurrung peoples.



Tarraa-Bulga National Park - Parks Victoria

Gunaikurnai Nation

In their Country Plan, the Gunaikurnai tell us that all of their Country is important. They make special mention of national and state parks in terms of joint management and cultural significance, such as Tarraa-Bulga National Park, The Knob Reserve and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park, among others. They speak of Sea Country (Brayakaulung, Brabralung Krauatungalung and Tatungalung Country), Greater Alpine National Parks (Brabralung, Brataualung, Brayakaulung and Krauatungalung Country and Far East (Krauatungalung Country).



Wimmera River - Horsham Rural City Council

Wotjabaluk Nation (Wotjabaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Peoples)

Most of the significant sites identified by the Wotjabaluk Nations are outside of Victorian Goldfields. Adjacent sites close to the Victorian Goldfields include Goyura (Hopetoun), a significant site with scar trees and other sites of significance along the nearby Yarriambik Creek and Barengi Gadjin (Wimmera River Catchment) (Horsham) provided water and abundant food for the Wotjabluk Peoples.

Other Traditional Owners

This master plan recognises that the Beechworth area does not have one group who speaks for Country at this time. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this Country and look to update this plan as and when it becomes possible.

TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY

Victorian Goldfields' location and extensive road and rail network is a unique strength to leverage and strengthen. This attribute, alongside stronger active transport connections and well-defined gateways, creates an opportunity for an integrated network that supports seamless, safe and sustainable journeys.

Road

Victorian Goldfields' road network covers much of the region and connects major towns and destinations. There are two freeways, the Western Freeway (1.5 hours Melbourne to Ballarat) and the Calder Freeway (2 hours to Bendigo) from Melbourne. State Highways include the Midland Highway, Glenelg Highway, Pyrenees Highway and Sunraysia Highway that connects Bendigo and Ballarat with other towns such as Creswick, Ararat, Avoca, Maryborough and Daylesford and to areas beyond the region. As shown on the maps overpage, the Victorian Goldfields contains four existing regionally supported touring routes. There is a significant opportunity to build off, connect and fill missing links to create a multi modal ecosystem and new opportunities that drive dispersal:

- The Great Southern Touring Route is a Visit Victoria funded route that connects a number of Southwest Victoria's major towns and attractions including the Great Ocean Road.
- The Sydney Melbourne Inland Drive is a Visit Victoria supported touring route connecting Sydney and Melbourne through Canberra and Bendigo
- The Goldfields Way Touring Route runs between Ballarat and Bendigo, covering heritage sites, natural attractions and surrounding historic townships.
- Fossickers' Way connecting Dunolly, Moliagul, Tarnagulla, Inglewood and Wedderburn.

Public Transport

Rail

- Passenger rail services run throughout much of the region as part of the V/Line network.
 - Ballarat and Bendigo are serviced by the V/Line rail network that offers many daily services from Melbourne direct to both cities and numerous other destinations in the goldfields including, Castlemaine, Kyneton, Beaufort, Ararat and Maryborough.
 - Many small towns are also serviced via V/Line including Creswick, Clunes, Talbot, Kyneton and Malsbury.
- Capped fares at \$10.60 to regional areas means that regional rail travel is attractive and affordable.
- The Australian and Victorian governments have invested more than \$4 billion in the Regional

Rail Revival program which is delivering improvements to V/Line services including Ararat stabling upgrades, track upgrades to Maryborough, an additional 135 extra services weekly to Ballarat line, faster and more frequent services to Bendigo and Echuca and three new stations north of Bendigo.

- Historic tourist rail services run at Daylesford, Castlemaine and Maldon. Many rail stations are historic buildings which add to the experience of visiting the Goldfields.

Bus and Coach

- Regional V/Line coach services operate from Ballarat. The Geelong to Mildura via Ballarat services and connects towns including Clunes, Creswick, Talbot, Maryborough, Dunolly, Avoca, St Arnaud. The Melbourne to Ouyen via Ballarat V/Line coach services Beaufort, Ararat and Stawell.
- Regional V/Line coach services also operate from Bendigo, including the Melbourne to Sea Lake via Bendigo V/Line coach servicing Wedderburn and Inglewood and the Melbourne Daylesford via Woodend V/Line coach servicing Daylesford and Woodend.
- Local bus services operate in Ballarat, Bendigo, Ararat, Beaufort and Stawell. Service frequency is a key challenge in some of these locations.

Air

Bendigo and Ballarat are the main airports within the Victorian Goldfields. Bendigo has scheduled daily passenger flights to Sydney. A successful UNESCO listing will present a highly valuable inbound passenger market for airlines at these locations. Other airports include Echuca airport which is currently undergoing a major upgrade, Maryborough aerodrome and a range of small airports at St Arnaud and Stawell, as well as the nearby Shepparton and Echuca airport. These smaller airports are unlikely to accommodate significant inbound passengers. Melbourne and Avalon airports are the major international gateways to the Victorian Goldfields.

Walking & Cycling

The relative proximity of several towns and destinations brings an opportunity to promote walking and cycling journeys. There are range of existing walking and cycling tracks and trails that connect the region, many passing historical small townships with scenic landscapes and waterways, such as the Goldfields Track. However, the quality of infrastructure, safety and amenity of these existing routes vary. New investments in cycling are underway including world class mountain bike infrastructure at Creswick and various rail trails from Murchison to Rushworth, the Kyneton Rail Trail, while a feasibility study is nearing completion for the Castlemaine to Maryborough Rail Trail. Many towns also offer localised walking trails including heritage walks and public art walks.

Gateways

The Victorian Goldfields lacks a unified identity and arrival experiences. There is significant opportunity to strengthen gateway experiences to promote a sense of place and arrival to the Victorian Goldfields, assist wayfinding and navigation, share stories of the region and enhance the visitor experience. Opportunities to create enhanced gateways exist at major vehicle entry points, airports and rail stations. This should link to surrounding towns and major destinations beyond the Victorian Goldfields.

Existing Transport and Access

The Victorian Goldfields has a well-established and connected road, rail and active transport network which can be built on and strengthened to enable World Heritage Journeys.



New South Wales

To Canberra
(4 hours from Beechworth)

To Sydney
(6 hours from Beechworth)

To Mildura
(3.5 hours from St Arnaud)

To Adelaide
(5 hours from St Arnaud)

To Beechworth
(2 hours from Rushworth)

To Adelaide
(5 hours from Stawell)

To Walhalla
(2.5 hours from Melbourne)

To Canberra
(5.5 hours from Bairnsdale)

To Sydney
(9 hours from Bairnsdale via coastal route)

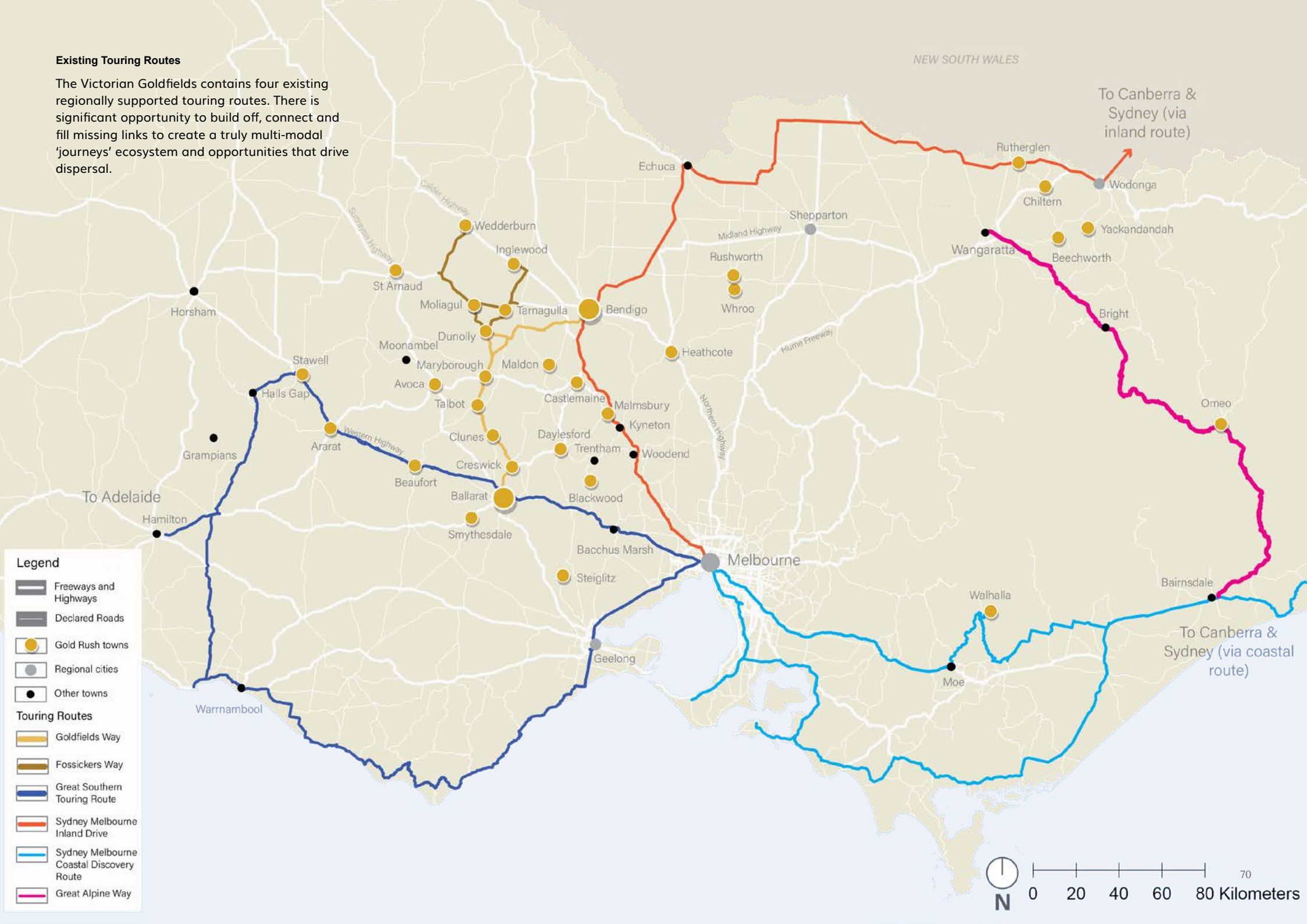
Legend

	Declared Roads - Freeway & Arterial Highways		Rail Corridors
	Regional bus route		Train stations
	Goldfields Track		Passenger train (V/Line)
	Walking & cycling trails		The Overland (Melbourne to Adelaide)
	Airports		Existing railway tracks (not operational for passenger services)
	Landing Strip		
	Gold Rush towns		
	Regional cities		
	Other towns		
	Parks and recreation		



Existing Touring Routes

The Victorian Goldfields contains four existing regionally supported touring routes. There is significant opportunity to build off, connect and fill missing links to create a truly multi-modal 'journeys' ecosystem and opportunities that drive dispersal.



NEW SOUTH WALES

To Canberra & Sydney (via inland route)

To Canberra & Sydney (via coastal route)

To Adelaide

Legend

- Freeways and Highways
- Declared Roads
- Gold Rush towns
- Regional cities
- Other towns
- Touring Routes**
- Goldfields Way
- Fossickers Way
- Great Southern Touring Route
- Sydney Melbourne Inland Drive
- Sydney Melbourne Coastal Discovery Route
- Great Alpine Way

Scale: 0 20 40 60 80 Kilometers

North Arrow: N

PLANNING AND POLICY



Policy across all levels of government and within several key stakeholders supports regional development, the growth of authentic experiences and sustainable tourism that drives economic, cultural, community and heritage benefits.

Tourism Policy and Plans

The Master Plan directly aligns with international (e.g., UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit), national (e.g., THRIVE 2030), state (DJSIR Visitor Economy Master Plan and Recovery and Reform Plan, Experience Victoria 2033), regional and local strategic tourism plans. Key directions include supporting heritage and cultural tourism, developing First Peoples-led tourism, achieving digital excellence, increasing industry capability, more effective stewardship and storytelling to build a strong understanding and value for heritage, as well as ensuring tourism experiences are accessible for all ages and abilities. Realising a World Heritage inscription has been referenced and promoted in a series of regional and local strategies over the last decade.

The Master Plan also aligns with Experience Victoria 2033 which aims to stimulate and guide investment in high-quality products and experiences across five product priorities: Wellness, Arts and Culture, First Peoples-led experiences, Food and Drink and Nature. It focuses on key priorities that will support the tourism industry to deliver service excellence including workforce and skills shortages, investing in new and innovative tourism products and engaging local communities. Victoria's other World Heritage sites and UNESCO Creative Cities are also recognised in Experience Victoria 2033.

THRIVE 2030 (The Re-Imagined Visitor Economy) - The Australian government's strategy for visitor economy recovery and return to sustainable growth - 2022 to 2030

THRIVE 2030 identifies the economic importance of visitors to Australia and highlights the importance of the visitor economy to regional Australia.

"Australia's visitor economy plays a critical role in driving our economy, wellbeing and sense of national identity. It generates jobs, trade, investment, and creates opportunities in cities and regions. It also contributes to communities by driving socioeconomic development and inclusive growth – providing diversity in employment, opportunities for innovation, supporting the arts, culture and sport, and delivering amenities that benefit local populations as well as visitors. The visitor economy is important for regional communities, generating jobs and providing services and infrastructure. It contributes 3.4 per cent to gross domestic product (GDP) in the regions, compared to a 1.6 per cent contribution to GDP in capital cities."

It is within this broader context and the key elements of THRIVE 2030, that the Victorian Goldfields have assessed the significance of World Heritage listing for the visitor economy. That assessment has indicated that there is no other apparent initiative currently on the books or conceived as an idea in Victoria, that can have a bigger impact on Victoria's contribution to national recovery of the visitor economy or have such a lasting impact in terms of sustainable growth of the tourism industry. Progressive implementation of the Victorian Goldfields Master plan will deliver on the outcomes sought for the visitor economy that are set out in THRIVE 2030.

THRIVE 2030 vision is focused on:

- Providing world leading services
- Delivering benefits to the Australian community
- A sustainable approach to growth
- Diversification
- Modernisation
- Collaboration.

The Strategy focuses on three key groups: Visitors who seek quality experiences, Businesses which are globally competitive and pursue sustainable growth, and Australian communities which benefit from and are enriched by the jobs, growth and amenities the visitor economy provides. The Strategy identifies seven priorities that industry and governments will work on together to deliver its vision. The priorities align with the Strategy's vision elements of collaborate, modernise and diversify.

Collaborate

1. Deliver success through comprehensive collaboration
2. Improve data and insights

Modernise

3. Grow a secure and resilient workforce
4. Embrace leading-edge business practices
5. Enhance visitor infrastructure

Diversify

6. Build markets and attract visitors
7. Grow unique and high-quality products, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences.

The THRIVE principles inform and guide the vision and overall direction of the Strategy. They embody a focus on delivering high-quality visitor experiences through innovation, and doing so in a sustainable way that engages and respects local communities and their environments. The way in which the proposed Victorian Goldfields World Heritage listing embodies the principles and how our Master plan will implement THRIVE 2030 are set out in the following table:

The THRIVE principles Include:	How the proposed World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields Embodies each principle	How the Victorian Goldfields Master plan will implement THRIVE 2030
The visitor comes first – we can deliver world-leading visitor experiences.	World Heritage is said to be the world’s most recognisable cultural tourism brand. An expert global comparative analysis has found that the Victorian Goldfields is the pre-eminent global example of a nineteenth century gold mining landscape.	The Master plan is premised on a progressive, staged development of world class visitor experiences supported by Australia’s first multi-modal World Heritage Journeys, linked to outstanding product.
Head for sustainable growth – we pursue sustainable growth.	UNESCO requires World Heritage Listed sites to conclusively embrace and demonstrate a sustainable approach to managing tourism and visitors.	The Master plan has been specifically prepared to deliver against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and UNESCO’s sustainable tourism frameworks, to sustainably manage tourism and its impacts, and to ensure that the benefits are dispersed across diverse communities
Research guides decisions – we rely on relevant, robust and timely research.	In many instances World Heritage Listing is a proven generator of international and domestic visitors. The economic impact to the region has been documented and it forms part of the region’s long-term plan.	The Master plan documents the staged approach required to capture the benefits of World Heritage Listing. When implemented, growth in visitor numbers will generate nearly 2,000 jobs and over \$500M of private sector investment in the first ten years after Listing.
Improve capability and increase innovation – secure a high-quality workforce and innovative businesses.	World Heritage Listing’s capacity to increase visitor numbers seeking high quality authentic experiences demands increased workforce capabilities and responsive innovative businesses.	The Master plan includes plans and actions to grow the workforce and its capacity to meet new demands and to support new businesses with improved public infrastructure and visitor services.
Expand visitor markets – pursue high-yield visitors from more diversified international markets and encourage Australians to experience and spend more domestically.	The potential World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields provides an unparalleled opportunity to attract high-yield visitors looking for new globally significant experiences. It repositions much of regional Victoria as major national destination.	The Master plan is framed to provide a high quality globally significant product based on the unique features of the Victorian Goldfields. Just as Thrive 2030 highlights Geotourism as an emerging global tourism product so too does the Master plan. The whole Victorian Goldfields can be a Geotourism destination which tells of a complex and diverse First Peoples, natural, rural and urban cultural landscape , contributing to the world’s best surviving 19th century goldfield.
Embedding First Peoples cultures into the visitor economy	The Victorian Goldfields is a product of its diverse geology, geography and cultural heritage. First Peoples’ cultures are embedded in their Country and in the history of the gold mining era and beyond.	The Master plan is built on deep respect for First Peoples and for Country. It fosters a genuine, collaborative and continuing partnership with First Peoples with truth-telling and the story of resilience pivotal to the stories told about the discovery of gold, its exploitation and impact.

Experience Victoria 2033

In May 2023 Victoria launched Experience Victoria 2033, the state's vision and strategy to grow its tourism industry and create jobs over the next 10 years. The strategy sets out to support and grow experiences in 5 key pillars:

1. First Peoples-led experiences
2. Wellness
3. Arts and culture
4. Food and drink
5. Nature.

The plan is designed to provide long-term direction to industry and tourism investors to keep the visitor economy competitive and resilient. It encourages new and innovative tourism opportunities and seeks to engage with local communities. A major focus of the plan is to grow a highly skilled local workforce.

The Victorian Goldfields – a major new visitor product with global recognition and appeal

Recognition of the Victorian Goldfields' outstanding qualities through World Heritage listing will provide the state with a major new visitor product that has global recognition and appeal. There is no other initiative currently on the books or conceived as an idea in Victoria, that can have a bigger impact on Victoria's contribution to recovery of the visitor economy in regional Victoria or have such a lasting impact in terms of sustainable growth of the tourism industry in Victoria. Embracing an extensive area of regional Victoria, the goldfields are a series of urban and rural sites that are being nominated for World Heritage Listing – the most recognised cultural tourism brand in the world. It's an unparalleled opportunity that will add much to the state's capacity to strengthen Victoria as a national and international visitor destination.

Each of the five priority areas in Experience Victoria 2033 relate to key elements of the stories and features of the Victorian Goldfields.

- First Peoples-led experiences: World Heritage listing tells the story of First Peoples' occupation since the Dreaming. First Peoples are leading their participation, and their story

is integral to telling the full story of the Victorian Goldfields

- Wellness: Daylesford – Hepburn is in the heart of the goldfields; it is one of Australia's nationally renowned wellness and spa centres.
- Arts and culture: The Victorian Goldfields are alive with outstanding nationally recognised art galleries and active communities celebrating a creative heritage linked to the diversity of nationalities from Europe, North America, China and elsewhere that were attracted by gold.
- Food and drink: The Victorian Goldfields embrace many of the state's specialist gourmet and artisan food growing areas, with well-established trails through leading wine regions, including the UNESCO Creative City for Gastronomy, Bendigo and surrounds.
- Nature: Victoria's goldfields are a product of an extraordinary landscape, most of the alluvial gold was found in forests and bush settings which is now serviced by a network of constructed and linked, walking, cycling and rail trails through outstanding National Parks and State Forests.

Experience Victoria 2033 sets out an ambitious strategy to develop Victoria as Australia's number one state for domestic and international visitors by 2033. This won't be achieved without new product based on getting more world recognised product and the settings right. World Heritage designation of the Victorian Goldfields will be a key element in delivering that outcome. It will drive major additional demand, capitalise on our great regional transport connections and product, facilitate major public and private investment, and enhance digital connectivity and visitor servicing.

The Master plan builds on Victoria's visitor attractions. Victoria is a compact diverse state where there is easy access to great regional destinations and journeys.

In a significant innovation the Master plan develops Australia's first World Heritage Journeys, a product modelled on an initiative developed by UNESCO in association with National Geographic magazine. World Heritage Journeys provide a comprehensive, multi-modal visitor experience which takes the traveller to destinations, attractions, and all the places, communities and experiences that tell the outstanding story

of our goldrush heritage. World Heritage Journeys link to Victoria's other nationally recognised touring routes; the Great Ocean Road and the Sydney to Melbourne inland and coastal routes. World Heritage listing of the Victorian Goldfields is a game changer not just for regional Victoria. Dramatically it places Victoria's extraordinary story of gold discovery on the global stage. An influx of visitors across an extensive area of the state will bring sustainable jobs, new private sector investment in accommodation and services and grow community pride and engagement. Victoria's Goldfields story has a strong First Peoples focus and respect for Country and truth telling. It is a story of people from many parts of the world flocking to what were the world's richest and deepest gold mines. The outstanding universal value of what thousands of people created will be celebrated on the global stage. The Master plan has been specifically developed to ensure that tourism product and the visitor experience meets UNESCO's requirements for social, economic and environmental sustainability and that it delivers on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The Plan focuses on diversifying the benefits across the goldfields region to ensure that not only all communities benefit, but they can frame their participation on their terms. The Master plan showcases the Victorian Goldfields under five major themes:

1. First Peoples - Country and Culture, Landscape and Truth Telling
2. Gold Mining – Prospecting, Geology, Invention and Men, Women and Children
3. Rebels – Characters, Crime, Protests and Democracy
4. Migrants – Diversity, Multiculturalism, Cities, Townships and Architecture
5. Makers – Artisans, Craft, Culinary, Creativity and Innovators

The Victorian Goldfields Sustainable Tourism Master plan is designed to make a major contribution to Victoria's visitor economy, through driving economic growth, jobs and investment, providing real value to communities while respecting their unique individual qualities, having a strong First Peoples' focus, and is sustainable, inclusive, and welcoming.

A comprehensive table showing how World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields will provide the state with a major new visitor product and how the Victorian Goldfields Sustainable Tourism Master plan will help to deliver Experience Victoria 2033 is provided in the Appendix.

Cultural Policy

In addition to the Country Plans outlined previously, the Master Plan aligns with the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples to enable the right to self-determination of First Peoples. It also aligns with Pillar 2 of Revive, Australia's Cultural Policy - reflecting the breadth of our stories and the contribution of all Australians as the creators of culture.

State and Regional Policy

Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) and Growth Plans establish strategic directions as follows:

- Loddon Campaspe REDS: Cultural tourism, heritage and food and gastronomy will shape the tourism industry, providing opportunities to showcase the region's unique experiences, including First Peoples culture and knowledge, local creativity and natural landscapes.
- Central Highlands REDS: Home to historic gold towns, natural attractions and the burgeoning Ballarat creative precinct, the region is poised to take advantage of its proximity to Melbourne and other regional centres to capitalise on overnight visitation and support inclusive employment in the visitor and creative economy.
- Wimmera Southern Mallee REDS: The region's diverse natural landscapes, First Peoples heritage and cultural offerings, in addition to agritourism, offer significant opportunities to build its brand and grow the visitor economy.

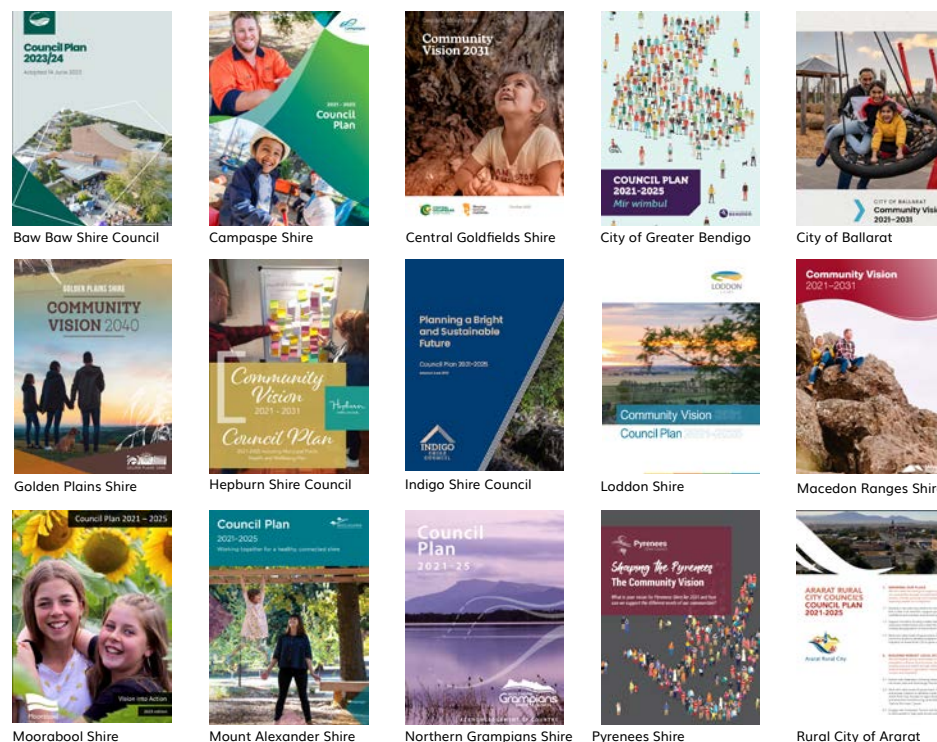


Daylesford Post Office
Arup

Local Planning Policy

The Master Plan supports and aligns with relevant council objectives, policies and provisions relating to the use, development, protection and conservation of land in their local government areas. A local planning policy and Council Plan reviews across the region identified the following as consistent themes in Council planning schemes:

- Continue to focus growth in regional centres as regional hubs.
- Maintain non-urban breaks between settlements.
- Maintain the individual character of settlements while supporting growth and incremental change.
- Protect the environmental, cultural, social and economic values of significant landscapes.
- Protect, manage and enhance existing biodiversity values and riparian zones to provide habitat.
- Protect, conserve and enhance areas, features and sites of historic, natural and First Peoples cultural heritage significance.
- Achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.
- Promote walkability and encourage active lifestyles through continuous streetscape improvements and expansion of the pedestrian and cycle path network.
- Encourage the development of community infrastructure within regional city centres and small towns to meet the needs of the community.
- Use existing infrastructure capacity including road and rail facilities and facilitate the development of new infrastructure in a timely manner.
- Support key businesses, industries and tourism experiences.
- Ensure new investment in community infrastructure, interpretation and story-telling builds community confidence and social capital.
- Support and develop emerging and potential growth sectors such as tourism, renewable energy, resource recovery and other green industries.
- Ensuring the urban realm contributes to a high-quality visitor experience.
- Facilitate tourism opportunities in appropriate locations near heritage places and natural environments.
- Facilitate development that supports arts and cultural activities and events.
- Skills development and capacity building for local industries and business.



Sample of local policies reviewed

Additionally, the Master Plan supports and contributes to the reactivation of the visitor economy to align with the Federal Government's Visitor Economy Partnerships Re-alignment: Thrive 2030, noting that the Victorian Goldfields plays a significant part in Victoria's tourism industry and the visitor economy.

Please refer to the Background Analysis Report for comprehensive policy review.

Initial discussions with the state government have identified that World Heritage listing could be included in state, regional and local policies to support sustainable tourism and embrace heritage conservation.

MARKET AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITY

With an increasing demand for tourism and an expected annual growth in the number of visitor arrivals to Victoria, there is no doubt that tourism has the potential to be a major driving force of the regional economy.

The proposed Victorian Goldfields World Heritage listing adds a new dimension to the state's overall appeal as a destination and considerably strengthens the prospects for increased visitor numbers, length of stay and visitor expenditure across the region. Presented as the world's best example of a 19th century gold rush landscape uniquely positions Victoria and Australia on the global stage.

The Visitor Economy

Tourism is a driving force for regional economic growth

The regional Victorian visitor economy continues to deliver strong results, with domestic overnight spend in regional Victoria up by 35% at \$9.6 billion in 2021, representing a significant increase from \$7.1 billion in the year ending September 2019.

There are significant opportunities to attract intrastate and interstate markets and to increase regional Victoria's share of international travellers.

Day Visitors Dominate

Most visitors to the region are day visitors (6.492 million in 2021) followed by domestic overnight visitors (2.797 million). Total domestic visits to the region represent approximately 17.4% of total visitation to Victoria. International visitors made up a small proportion of visitors in previous periods (104,000) in YE Dec 2019 (4yr average). The region receives 3.6% of all State international visitors¹.

Increasing length of stay is the key to economic growth

Total expenditure by visitors to the region was approximately \$1.8 billion annually YE Dec 21 (compared to approx. \$2.3 billion in YE Dec 19). Of this total, \$701 million was spent by day trip visitors (38%), \$1 billion by overnight visitors (62%) and in YE 2019 \$80 million by international visitors.

¹ Tourism Research Australia data

International visitation is starting to recover, but more needs to be done

Tourism Research Australia's International Visitor Survey data compares the March Quarter 2019 (pre-covid) with the March Quarter 2024 and the 2019 Year with the 2024 Year, the purpose of travel divided between holiday - leisure visitors, visiting friends and relatives, and business and for overnight visitors in terms of Melbourne and Victoria's Regions – defined only by specific locations rather than tourism regions. Destinations included in the data release that include all or parts of the Victorian Goldfields are limited to:

- Ballarat (including Sovereign Hill)
- Bendigo
- Daylesford, Hepburn Springs, Macedon
- Victorian Snowfields

In summary the key findings from the data are:

- Generally, the 2024 figures show that the visitor economy has 'just' recovered to the levels at 2019 - pre-covid figures.
- Generally, the 2024 figures show that several regional destinations (including those in the goldfields) have not recovered as strongly as Melbourne.
- Generally, international visitation has been slower to recover than domestic visitation with little difference between the level of recovery for Melbourne or regional destinations.

There are significant opportunities to attract international visitors to the region with a potential Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Listing.

World Heritage is a proven tourism brand and has the demonstrated potential to attract higher spending visitors

Importantly visitors to the region who enjoy arts and heritage spend on average per trip (total trip spend \$633) than those visitors who enjoy nature and the active outdoors (\$480). The opportunity to increase tourism expenditure across the region from this market is significant, particularly through the development of World Heritage products and experiences. Residents of Victoria are a significant market for cultural tourism. The most popular activity (51%) for all cultural visitors is to visit a heritage building, site or monument, followed by 47% visiting a museum or art gallery. 42% of Victorians who went on an arts day trip went to Melbourne, 7% went to Ballarat and 7% went to Bendigo, the three most-visited regions in the state for Victorian cultural day-trippers. The majority of domestic day trippers are from Melbourne.

Existing Tourism Product and Experiences

The region is known for its rich history and gold rush heritage, offering a diverse range of tourism products and experiences. Some of the region's assets include natural features like national parks, some are cultural and heritage assets including museums, galleries and mining sites. Others are created or are activities based on these assets e.g., events, entertainment, nature-based activities such as bush walking and biking. There are critical components that are essential for a quality experience. The infrastructure, services and amenities must exceed the basic needs of visitors and make it easy to get around and be accessible. The retail and food offering, along with accommodation make it enjoyable. It is the supporting and signature experiences of the region that create emotional connection and act as key drivers of visitation, creating awareness of the region, nationally and internationally. With a World Heritage listing it is critical that venues offer world class facilities and services to match a global branding of product.

Most attractions (when reviewing Australian Tourism Data Warehouse information) are clustered in and around Beechworth, Bendigo, Ballarat, Macedon Ranges, and Daylesford/Hepburn. The listing suggests that the region has a strong mix of natural and cultural attractions including over 50 museums and galleries, more than 40 National, State and Regional parks and around 22 general attractions such as wildlife parks, adventure parks and sport and recreation attractions. Craft and makers attractions include high quality workshops and classes, including Australian Centre for Rare Trades and Forgotten Arts, distilling experiences and other connections to makers of the region. The Australian Tourism Data Warehouse also shows that the region has more than 220 food and beverages attractions, with over 17 breweries, over 77 wineries and over 30 food producers.²

The region can excel in offering a nationally competitive cultural heritage product. Cultural and creative tourism experiences are some of the largest and fastest-growing global tourism markets and they are increasingly being used to promote destinations and enhance competitiveness and attractiveness. The region's nature-based tourism offering is also an important aspect for visitors and when combined with the cultural attractions on offer, the region is a compelling destination. This project has the capacity to significantly broaden the tourism offerings for the region and the state, together with growing the international reach and creating a compelling visitor destination particularly when combined with other iconic attractions.

² The Australian Tourism Data Warehouse is the 'go to' database for tourism product. Care should be taken when relying on this data as it does not contain the total statistics for the region.

Economic Impact Assessment Summary – Victorian Goldfields Master Plan

The proposed World Heritage designation economic impact assessment (MCa Michael Connell & Associates December 2023 & February 2024) uses a base year of 2019 (pre- Covid) and has been calculated on the impact ten years after World Heritage Listing. In summary the findings from the Assessment are:

- Total visitor numbers would have increased in year 10 by around 2.5 million persons from the base year (from 10.7 million to 13.2 million).
- Total regional visitor spending in year 10 would be around \$526 million higher than the base year (from \$1,807 million to \$2,333 million).
- Total regional income in year 10 would be around \$182.2 million higher than the base year (from \$655.3 million to \$837.5 million).
- The increase in visitors and their spending will lead to a progressive increase in regional tourism jobs, in year 10 there would be around 2,125 additional jobs (from 7,669 to 9794).
- The investment in new accommodation over the 10-year period to accommodate the growth in visitor numbers would be a total of 5,237 rooms. The economic impacts of the construction of additional visitor accommodation were modelled and job impacts, and income impacts estimated. Total jobs generated by construction activity over the 10-year period are 1,595 FTE (1,329.2 direct jobs and 265.8 indirect/induced jobs).
- Total regional income generated over the 10-year period is \$411 million (\$343 million direct income and \$68 million indirect income).

*Source: Economic Benefit Assessment Goldfields Master Plan (Base Case)
MCa Michael Connell & Associates December 2023 & February 2024
A full copy of the Assessment is presented in the appendix.*



Visitor Forecasts

Solid growth is forecast to persist for overnight trips, day trips and visitor nights as Australians draw on savings and recreational leave accumulated during the pandemic.

The overall growth outlook for tourism in Victoria in the next 5 years is positive, with strong growth expected from the international sector. Moderate growth is forecast in the domestic sector as tourism trends normalise after a surge in domestic travel in 2022 post-pandemic.

Total visitors to or within Victoria are projected to reach 111.8 million in 2028. Visitors are expected to return to pre-pandemic levels by 2025, slower than the pace of recovery in spend. Domestic visitors are projected to continue to account for the largest share of visitors in Victoria with an estimated 75.1 million domestic daytrip visitors and 32.3 million domestic overnight visitors expected in 2028. International overnight visitors to Victoria are forecast to reach 4.4 million in 2028.

Total spend in Victoria is forecast to reach \$53 billion in 2028. Visitor spend in Victoria is projected to be 63% above the pre-pandemic level by 2028 generating an additional \$20.5 billion in spend in the state, up from \$32.5 billion in 2019. The international sector is forecast to generate 44% of overall spend growth from 2023 to 2028, with the domestic overnight sector expected to account for 38% of spend growth in the forecast period.

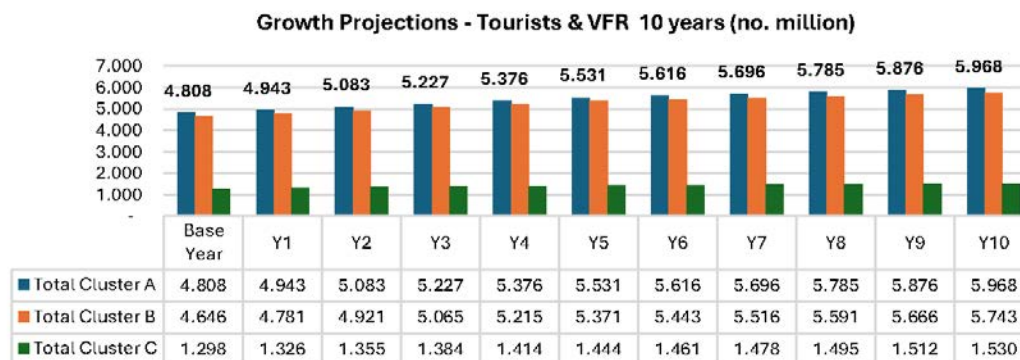
With coordinated and concentrated investment in projects identified by the stakeholders across the region, significant growth in tourism is estimated to occur annually over the 10 years following inscription. World Heritage inscription will generate progressive growth in visitor numbers and this will be reflected in increases in spending, jobs and regional income.

It is estimated that by 10 years after inscription on the World Heritage List the Victorian Goldfields will attract around an additional 2.5 million new visitors, with spending \$526 million above 2019 levels*. While growth will continue to occur in the major tourist centres with significant heritage assets, such as Ballarat and Bendigo, growth will also be experienced in other centres across the region. This growth has the potential to drive investment in new accommodation and visitor facilities and services. The analysis shows that total investment in accommodation alone, to meet visitor demand across the region, would be in the order of \$721 million over 10 years.

*The modelling of tourism growth is based on LGA visitor data for 2019 – the last full year before Covid 19 restrictions. Using 2019 as the base year, annual projections were developed for a 10-year period. The estimates assume that World Heritage Inscription has occurred. It is recommended that these estimates be revised once tourism to the region reaches 2019 levels.

By 10 years after inscription, the projected growth in visitors will lead to an increase of around 2,125 jobs in the major tourist areas and smaller centres across the region. Total regional income is estimated to be \$182.2 million higher ten years after inscription compared with before inscription. (Source: Victorian Goldfields UNESCO World Heritage Economic Benefit Assessment, Revision May 2024).

The critical question is how can we design experiences which align with World Heritage values that meet visitor expectations and grow the visitor economy?



Victorian Goldfields – Projected Visitor Growth Projections post a World Heritage Listing and targeted investment . Cluster A = Bendigo, Campaspe, Mount Alexander and Macedon Ranges LGAs. Cluster B = Ballarat, Central Goldfields, Hepburn, Moorabool, Golden Plains, Pyrenees, Ararat, and Northern Grampians LGAs. Cluster C = Baw Baw and Indigo LGAs.

Source: MCA modelling & analysis, Revised May 2024



Designing experiences that meet the needs of future visitors

Today's visitors increasingly want to travel and experience the destination like a local, have more meaningful experiences and immerse themselves getting to know the culture and people of the destination.

Whilst there's a general shift in travel towards experiential travel, adoption of new trends is generally being driven by millennial visitors, who are digitally savvy, demanding in their expectations and in search of fulfilment. Millennial travellers are heavily influenced by peers; they want to discover a destination through social recommendation and look to experience it like a local would - or, better yet, get to know it better than a local. Millennial travellers are overwhelmingly independent travellers and so want to discover the destination in their own way, at their own pace and around their own interests, influenced by peers.

Millennial visitors are also unique in that the interests which align them, motivations for travel and characteristics can no longer be defined so easily according to market but more according to interests. Trends that need to be consider include:

- **Sustainability** is front and centre of global change, shaping demand for low carbon footprint travel experiences that benefit places and communities. It is about regenerating what is lost and deeply honouring what is left. There is a growing desire amongst global travellers to get closer to culture and community when traveling, with 45% believing that protecting and learning about local cultures is part of sustainable travel.
- **Food and Drink:** There is a stronger focus on enjoyment via good food and drink, sightseeing and culture. The multiple wineries each with their distinctive offering across the region, along with other locally grown produce is a significant opportunity. Experiences that celebrate the culture of the region and fuse art, music, food, drink, history and people

together in beautiful settings are highly desirable. The rise of agritourism is helping to give visitors an authentic taste of locally sourced and sustainable produce.

- **First Peoples Tourism:** First Peoples tourism opportunity for the region will provide authenticity and firsthand experiences of First Peoples culture of connection to place and, cultural language, lore and cultural practice and customs. Lead by TO groups, visitors experience the region and understand a different perspective of Country and the full Goldfields story.
- **Digital, Virtual and Metaverse:** Travellers expect technology as invisible, seamless, but still powerful. High-tech solutions that help them make better decisions, track their footprints and give a layer of extra knowledge and information when needed - and only when needed.
- **Wellness and wellbeing** are the megatrend of post pandemic times. This trend is forecast to continue and people are looking for experiences that nourish their body, mind and soul to starve off burn out and fatigue.
- **Accessible travel** is growing, driven by changing consumer demographics with a fifth of the world having access needs. Accessibility needs have a significant influence on all aspects of travel choice with the biggest impact on the choice of the destination, transport and activities and experiences undertaken. It is critical that the region amplifies this focus to ensure its products and services are accessible to all people, regardless of physical and other limitations, disabilities or age.

So, considering this shift, creating unique experiences across the World Heritage region is all about supporting a new kind of visitor, one that is more demanding and more in search of depth in their experiences – through stories, culture, connections, locally sourced food and drink and travel options that are sustainable and inclusive. Self-discovery is critical and there are several ways this type of travel can be supported.

A Framework for Investment

A new tourism investment Framework will connect regional development needs with outstanding visitor experiences that support the region.

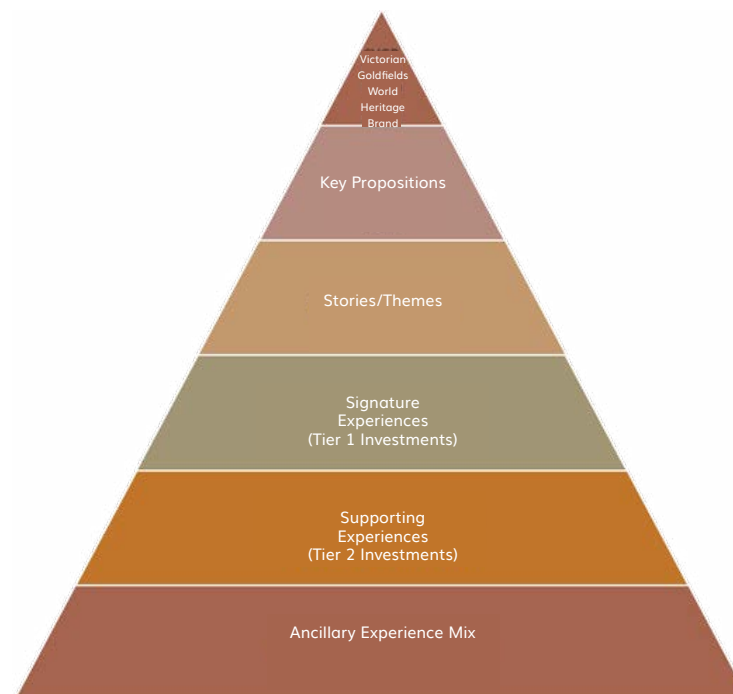
The goal of the strategic investment framework for the Victorian Goldfields is to create shared value by investing selectively in areas that are high priority for both government, communities and industry and that make good business sense for the World Heritage region. The framework aims to generate greater economic diversification, jobs, investment and tourism and raise the socio-economic profile and outlook of the region's cities, towns and local communities. Investment is required to:

- Bring the Victorian Goldfields proposed World Heritage Brand, characteristics and attributes to life.
- Conserve and promote the Victorian Goldfields potential global significance.
- Address product gaps relative to the themes of the region (e.g. First Peoples cultural experiences, accessible infrastructure at heritage sites).
- Promote business development opportunities for First Peoples enterprise.
- Disperse visitors across the region benefiting communities that experience a low number of visitors such as Central Goldfields, Ararat, Loddon, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Campaspe and Western Region of Hepburn Shire such as Creswick and Clunes and supporting those communities to manage high levels of visitation in peak season.
- Address deficiencies relative to changing consumer expectations (e.g., presentation of towns and villages, visitor interpretation, visitor information services and the quality and quantity of accommodation).
- Enhance and connects key themes and existing products of the region (e.g., arts and culture, food/wine/produce, nature and wellbeing).
- Build capacity of industry to become World Heritage Ready with improvements in service quality, accessibility and diversity, storytelling, sustainability and digital bookability and capability.

Builds community awareness and understanding about World Heritage and the opportunity it presents for them and their community.

The Investment Pyramid (below) presents the critical components that are essential for a quality experience in the Victorian Goldfields. Each component is an equally important aspect of the overall experience. For example, the infrastructure, services and amenities meet the basic needs of visitors and make it easy to get around. The retail and food offering, accommodation make it enjoyable. It is the supporting and signature experiences that create emotional connection, and act as key drivers of visitation, creating awareness. Signature experiences are important as a drawcard for the region, but they must be supported by other visitor experiences and foundation services to meet basic needs and expectations of visitors and extend stay. Tier 1 Investments or Signature Experiences are regionally significant investment opportunities that deliver on the World Heritage brand and support the socio-economic regeneration of Victorian Goldfields communities. They serve as a motivator for domestic and international visitors and of a scale that includes more than one experience and usually a combination of experiences. They are capable of increasing dwell-time and/or driving economic benefit.

Tier 2 Investments or supporting experiences are also aligned to, and deliver on, the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Brand. They 'stand up' or bring the Signature Experience to life. Individually these investments would generally not motivate the international visitor in their own right, but they are key to immersing the visitor in the overall signature experience of the region.







4. KEY MOVES AND TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS







To share the extraordinary story of the Victorian Goldfields with people across the globe and create social, cultural and economic opportunities for every community and person across the region.

MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan sets out the strategic framework for the Victorian Goldfields and provides:

-  Engagement of the region's local governments, communities, RAPs, industry and other stakeholders.
-  Clear direction and advice to governments on priority investment and infrastructure priorities, a staged plan/investment schedule and feasibility/business case for their delivery and the expected benefits.
-  A clear direction to the private sector on investment opportunities.
-  A framework for the overall development and global, interstate and intrastate marketing of tourism based specifically around the potential World Heritage values and heritage places in general.

The objectives of the Master Plan are to:

- Build profile and capacity of the Victorian Goldfields by:
 -  Becoming Australia's premier and first destination to offer World Heritage Journeys.
 -  Elevating the under recognised heritage assets and providing a global platform for First Peoples experiences.
 -  Attracting new and additional international and domestic visitors.
- Drive the increase of:
 -  Dispersed tourism visitation that 'gives back' to destination communities and their heritage, cultural and environmental assets.
 -  Sustainable jobs and new job opportunities, particularly in areas with lower socio-economic profiles.
 -  Public and private sector investment which supports tourism and builds community assets.
 -  Social capital, community pride, community confidence and quality of life.



MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLES

A series of 11 overarching principles guide decision making, initiative development and prioritisation.



Elevate First Peoples voices, stories, culture and opportunities

Raise the profile, recognition and awareness of First Peoples people, culture and history. Support the self-determination of Victorian Goldfields's First Peoples and promote opportunities for First Peoples-led experiences, businesses and opportunities.



Conserve and celebrate heritage places and the potential OUV

Interpretation, development and tourism planning must recognise, conserve and promote the values of the relevant attributes in the proposed serial World Heritage nomination. Consider any potential impacts - direct and indirect - on attributes, authenticity and integrity.



Facilitate layered storytelling

Recognise and celebrate the layered stories and themes of Victorian Goldfields' past, present and future. Ensure stories of the Victorian Goldfields are clearly communicated, coordinated and at the forefront of experiences. Storytelling and narratives should recognise the multi-faceted nature of these stories and themes.



Drive social and community benefit and pride

Consider and maximise benefits for local communities across the Victorian Goldfields. Prioritise and promote opportunities for developing social capital, community confidence, quality of life and foster community pride.



Promote environmental, social, economic and cultural sustainability

Support sustainable outcomes using a quadruple bottom line model of sustainability that includes the environmental, social, economic and cultural dimensions of sustainability.



Promote gender equality

Promote gender equality through elevating the stories of women and children and creating economic and social opportunities for people of all genders.



Elevate Victorian Goldfields' experiences, products and infrastructure to a world-class standard

Raise the quality and standard of products and infrastructure across the Victorian Goldfields to support world class experiences. Take a coordinated and pro-active approach to upgrades and capacity building to support this.



Maximise economic yield

Consider and maximise commercial opportunities within proposed World Heritage experiences, projects and products to promote sustainable jobs, economic benefits and opportunities.



Disperse visitation, investment and benefits across the Victorian Goldfields

Encourage a broader and more even distribution of visitation, spend and investment beyond the existing cities and major visitor hubs of Ballarat and Bendigo. Facilitate more sustainable visitation patterns and disperse benefits to all communities.



Facilitate multimodal movement and mode choice

Leverage and strengthen existing infrastructure to support visitors and communities to choose how they move across the Victorian Goldfields. Encourage more sustainable transport options including public transport, cycling and walking.

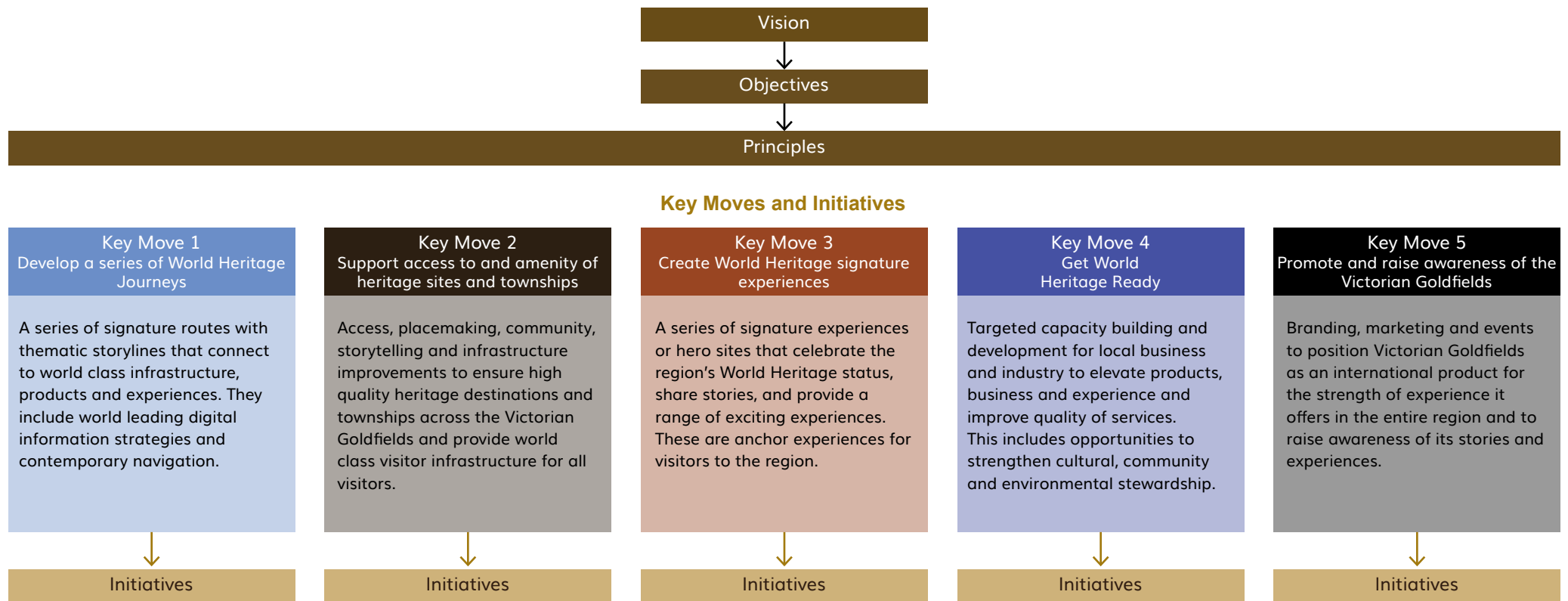


Adopt an innovative and holistic approach to experience planning

Take a whole-of-journey approach to visitor experience planning that considers pre-planning through to post-visit. Harness new and emerging technologies to create immersive and innovative experiences and meet visitor needs and expectations.

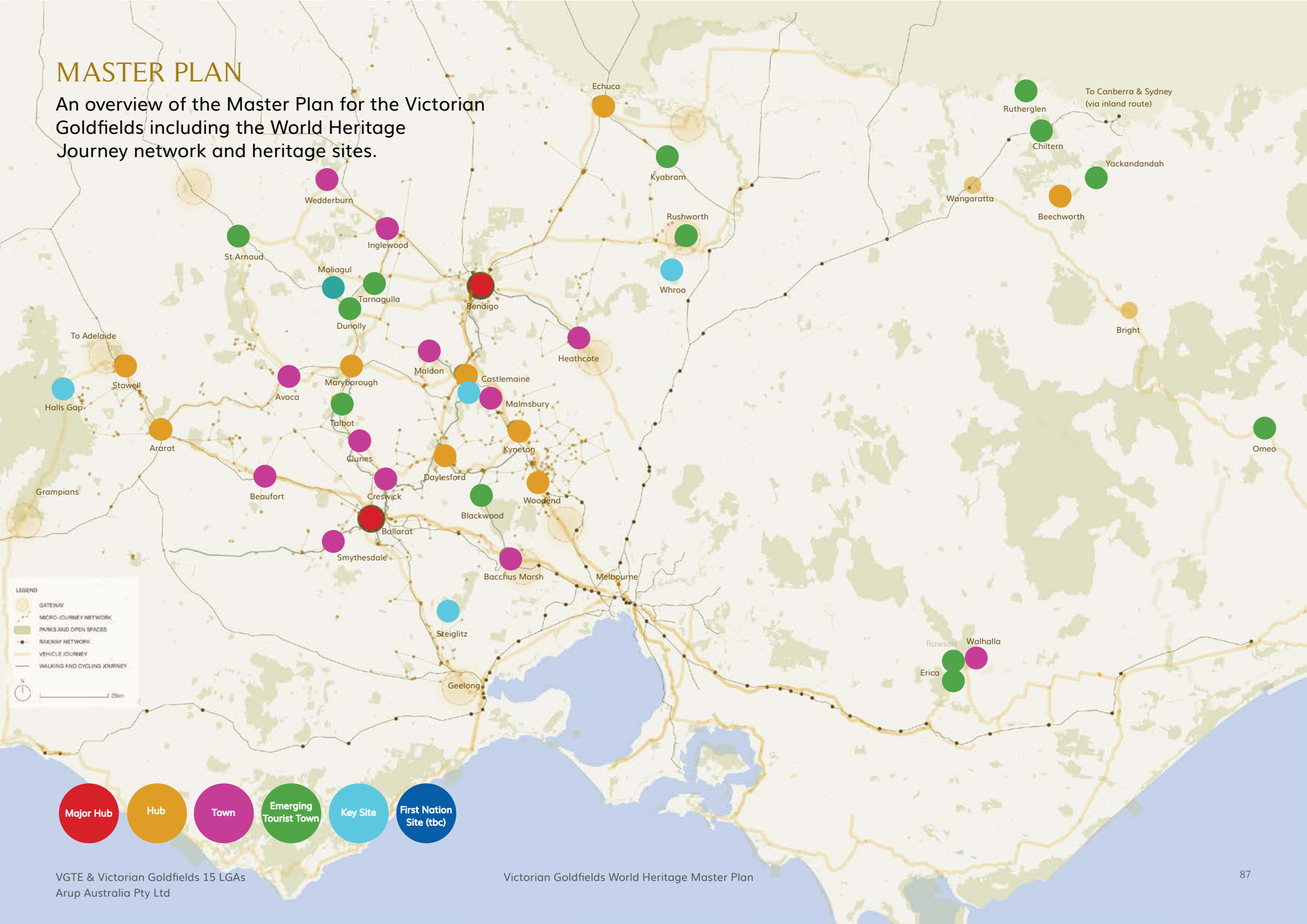
KEY MOVES

This Master Plan proposes a range of initiatives within five key moves to realise its vision and objectives.



MASTER PLAN

An overview of the Master Plan for the Victorian Goldfields including the World Heritage Journey network and heritage sites.



LEGEND

- GATEWAY
- MICRO-JOURNEY NETWORK
- PARKS AND OPEN SPACES
- RAILWAY NETWORK
- VEHICLE JOURNEY
- WALKING AND CYCLING JOURNEY

N

0 25km

Major Hub
 Hub
 Town
 Emerging Tourist Town
 Key Site
 First Nation Site (tbc)

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

World Heritage Journeys are an integrated network that offer a unique and immersive way to experience and appreciate the richness and diversity the Victorian Goldfields and the cultural identity of each of its communities. By taking a World Heritage Journey, visitors can gain a deeper understanding of the history, traditions and creative expressions that shape the Victorian Goldfields.

World Heritage Journeys represent a way to organise stories and experiences which are unique and supportive of the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage brand. They will:

- Be multi modal: vehicle, rail, walk, cycle and virtual.
- Promote and celebrate the potential OUV and significant sites, local culture, heritage and arts landmarks, attractions, public art installations, museums, galleries, historic sites and other points of interest.
- Provide a well-defined pathway for residents and visitors to explore and engage with the cultural fabric of the communities in the Victorian Goldfields incorporating various forms of expression, such as visual arts, performing arts, literature, music, architecture, culinary traditions and more.
- Foster a sense of pride in local heritage, stimulate tourism and economic development, encourage community engagement and conserve and protect cultural assets.
- Include both known and lesser-known sites, these journeys will enable people to explore, see and experience the Victoria Goldfields' heritage and other tourist product from a new and exciting perspective and to 'travel differently, travel deeper' within the region.
- Align, connect, extend and further develop existing touring routes into multi-modal journey, product offerings and infrastructure investments that drive dispersal.

The concept of the journeys and cultural trails can also be localised or micro journeys - designed with pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, such as walking routes or bike lanes, to enhance accessibility and encourage active exploration. They can be established in urban areas, connecting train stations and bus stops and cultural districts, or they can traverse both the Victoria's native landscape and modified landscape of the goldfields, linking significant sites of cultural or historical importance.

Why are World Heritage Journeys Important?

The journeys provide an extended journey through unique landscapes linking key destinations or major cities (gateways) and disperse visitors into less visited towns.

- The journeys offer experiences and products that can be marketed nationally and internationally and are of local and regional importance.
- The journeys have the potential to sit alongside the world's great travel experiences.
- The journeys align with the destination marketing and experience plans.
- The journeys provide a driver for increased length of stay and increased yield.
- The journeys avoid duplication or having to return on the same path.
- The journeys have supporting infrastructure to enable increased visitation and standards aligned to the experience being offered.
- The journeys incorporate nature tourism offering across the Victorian Goldfields including parks and recreation.
- The journeys offer potential for outstanding design features to highlight the striking elements of the potential World Heritage values and adds to the experience for visitors.

The Benefits

World Heritage Journeys:

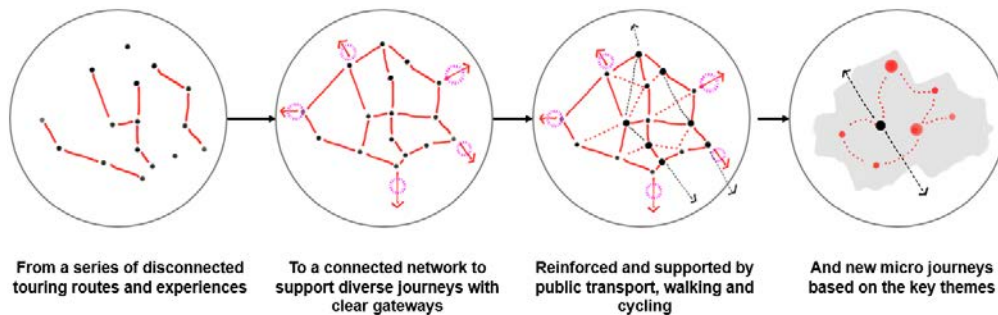
- Drive growth in visitor numbers, tourism revenue and associated tourism employment in the regions.
- Shift some parts of the region from a day trip destination (from Melbourne) to a destination which attracts international and domestic overnight visitors.
- Enable the development of world class visitor experiences across the cultural landscape and disperse visitor traffic by encouraging the exploration of both the well-known attractions and lesser-known sites and experiences (hidden gems).
- Are a catalyst for an increase in collaboration between destinations, industry providers and communities along the routes.
- Reinforce the particular strengths and characteristics of the heritage sites, towns and communities along the routes (while at the same time offering the visitor one overarching compelling reason to visit).
- Connect the components of the proposed World Heritage nomination and significant locations with other experiences and products developed by Visitor Economy Partnerships, Regional Tourism Boards and key Touring Route organisations.
- Foster community identity and pride.

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Journey's will offer a constellation of experiences for a range of visitors with different needs and interests and linking to multiple themes.

Journey Approach

The proposed WHJ concept takes an integrated network approach that can scale up to the regional level and zoom in to the micro journeys that link to clusters of experiences. As summarised below, this approach builds off existing infrastructure and movement networks including the four existing touring routes, state declared roads and public and active transport links. By filling in the gaps and reinforcing these existing routes, the journeys can operate across strong and connected networks to support diverse experiences and visitor needs. The proposed WHJ concept will connect not only the World Heritage sites but also related sites not included in the serial listing.



The Journeys concept recognises the needs, expectations and interests of visitors today and in the future. Moving away from rigid touring routes that move people from A-B, this concept allows visitors flexibility in how they travel and where they travel to form unique journeys where Victorian Goldfields' rich history, culture, landscapes, stories and communities can be explored and uncovered.

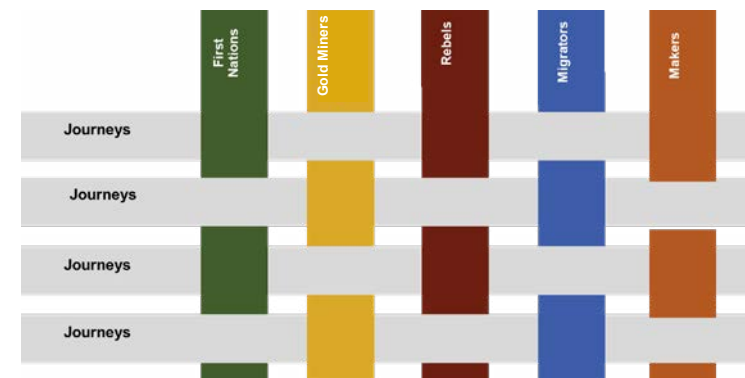
Journey Themes

The World Heritage Journeys will adopt and link to the Victorian Goldfields Theme Framework shown below. Due to the interconnected nature of the Victorian Goldfields' themes and in order to appeal to a wide market, each Victorian Goldfields WHJ will connect to multiple themes and sub-themes. This will allow visitors to drill down to their individual interests across the Victorian Goldfields. The experiences within each theme will appeal to a broader range of audiences – at every touch point in the Victorian Goldfields. This approach will leverage the existing strengths of each Tourism Region and LGA without duplicating or competing with them. Please note that further engagement with First Peoples is required to shape the sub themes of First Peoples and how they intersect with other themes and sub-themes

Potential Outstanding Universal Value: The most extensive and best-surviving landscape, anywhere, that illustrates the global goldrush phenomenon of the second half of the nineteenth century

Gold				
The Human Story				
First Peoples	Gold Miners	Rebels	Migrators	Makers
Country and Culture	Fossicking and Mining	Law and Order	Ancestry	Artisans, Crafts and Lost Trades
Truth Telling and Language	Geology and Landscape	Protest and Democracy	Diversity and Multiculturalism	Culinary and Cultivation
Landscape and Cultural Heritage	Industries and Invention	Characters and Crime	Settlements and Architecture	Creativity and Innovation
	Men, women and children			

Victorian Goldfields Theme Framework



Each WHJ will connect to multiple themes and sub-themes



CONNECTING
THEMES
ACROSS KEY
ATTRACTIONS
AND
EXPERIENCES

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Road Journeys

The proposed road journeys build off the existing base of touring routes, filling missing links and expanding connections and coverage of the Victorian Goldfields.

The proposed network of road journeys shown on the adjacent diagram are designed to:

- Disperse visitors across the Victorian Goldfields, particularly to the north, northwest and south which have significant opportunity for regeneration.
- Fill the gaps and enhance connectivity between existing touring routes to support more flexible and integrated journeys.
- Connect to smaller villages and towns across the Victorian Goldfields that contribute to the potential OUV of the Victorian Goldfields.
- Connect into existing hubs of Ballarat and Bendigo.
- Link to the wider context, drawing in visitors from nearby regional towns, cities, Melbourne and interstate.
- Elevate existing touring routes by adding new elements specific to the Goldfields history, heritage and stories.

Together they form a connected network of road journeys that provides an opportunity for each town to showcase their individual and unique experiences and stories.

The proposed expanded journey network connects with and leverages six existing touring routes:

- Goldfields Way (from Ballarat to Bendigo).
- Fossickers Way (passing Dunolly, Moliagul, Tarnagulla, Inglewood and Wedderburn).
- Sydney Melbourne Inland Drive (from Melbourne to Echuca connecting north to Sydney).
- Great Southern Touring Routes (from Melbourne to Halls Gap).
- Sydney Melbourne Coastal Drive (Melbourne to Canberra and Sydney via Walhalla).
- Great Alpine Way (from Wangaratta to Bairnsdale)



Goldfields Way



Fossickers Way



Sydney to Melbourne Inland Drive



Great Southern Touring Route



Sydney Melbourne Coastal Drive






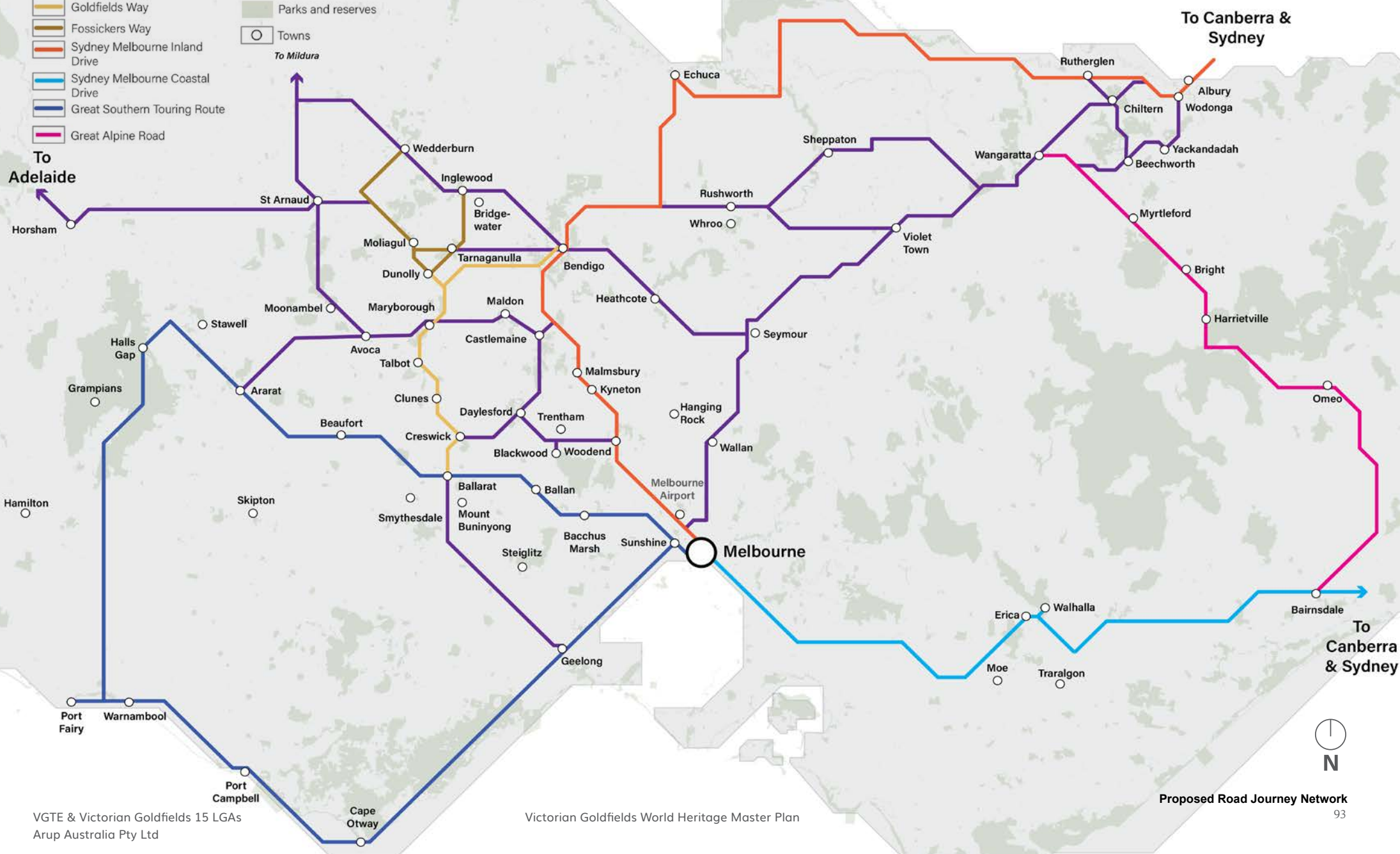
Great Alpine Way

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Legend

-  Goldfields Way
-  Fossickers Way
-  Sydney Melbourne Inland Drive
-  Sydney Melbourne Coastal Drive
-  Great Southern Touring Route
-  Great Alpine Road

-  Extended journeys
-  Parks and reserves
-  Towns



KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Public Transport Journeys

The public transport network is a unique strength of the Victorian Goldfields and will form an important role in the World Heritage Journey network.

The public transport network, including rail and bus routes form part of the World Heritage Journey network. It supports; more sustainable and efficient transport choices, different markets to travel through the Victorian Goldfields, including those who do not or prefer not to drive and is a means for visitors to engage with Victorian Goldfields' rail history and storylines.

The proposed rail journey network links to Ballarat and Bendigo are significant public transport hubs serviced with existing V/Line rail network that offers frequent train services, with over 20 trains daily direct from Melbourne to Bendigo, Ballarat, Castlemaine, Maryborough and Ararat.

Many smaller towns are also serviced via the V/Line, including:

- Ararat Line: services Beaufort.
- Maryborough line: services Creswick, Clunes and Talbot via Ballarat.
- Bendigo line: services Castlemaine, Kyneton, Malmsbury and Woodend.
- Albury line: services Wangaratta and Chiltern from Melbourne to Albury.
- Bairnsdale line: services Moe and Traralgon from Melbourne.
- Other than rail, existing V/Line bus routes connect smaller towns to each other, as well as to major cities such as Sydney, Canberra and Adelaide through interstate coaches.

Other rail services include the heritage steam train from Maldon to Castlemaine and the NSW Trainlink: Sydney to Melbourne journey via Albury.



Public Transport Victoria

Ballarat Station

Rail connections will be fundamental journeys and gateways for the Victorian Goldfields, connecting major hubs and small towns within the region and to and from Melbourne. While the Australian and Victorian governments are investing in regional rail infrastructure through the Regional Rail Revival program on the Ballarat Line and Bendigo to Echuca Line, existing rail connections can continually be improved to ensure the region is World Heritage ready and are capable to accommodate increased visitor numbers.

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Walking and Cycling Journeys

The relative proximity of townships and heritage sites, scenic landscapes and existing active transport infrastructure create an opportunity for walking and cycling World Heritage Journeys.

Long treks and walking journeys are a strong part of the Victorian Goldfields' story. Many diggers and migrants trekked long distances to access the goldfields and diggings. Walking and cycling journeys offer visitors an opportunity to connect with these stories and expands Victorian Goldfields' offer of nature-based activities.

The proposed walking and cycling journeys build on a range of existing tracks and trails in Victorian Goldfields' centre and east including the Goldfields Track, Skipton-Ballarat Rail Trail, Ballarat to Maryborough Rail Trail and the O'Keefe Rail Trail from Bendigo to Heathcote to form a holistic walking and cycling journey network. Other tracks and trails are proposed within each relevant local government area including the Digger's Track from Maldon to Castlemaine, Daylesford to Woodend, Kyneton and Hanging Rock, from Heathcote to Rushworth and extensions to the Skipton Rail Trail. Over at the east and Murray to Mountains Rail Trail provides walking and cycling trail, passing through Beechworth from Wangaratta to Harrietville. The Great Walhalla Alpine Track starts at Walhalla and continues as the Australian Alpine Track, a hiking track that finishes at Canberra. Other rail trails include the Walhalla Rail Trail from Erica to the former Thomson rail station which joins the restored Walhalla railway, as well as the 31km Beechworth to Yackandandah Rail Trail.

All the existing tracks and rail trails are accessible by road and many by rail journeys, enabling multi-modal journeys and allowing for visitors to fully experience the Victorian Goldfields in several ways.



Arup
Goldfields Track



Visit Ballarat
Ballarat-Skipton Rail Trail



Castlemaine-Maryborough Rail Trail
Castlemaine to Maryborough Rail Trail



Parks Victoria
Lerderderg Track



Visit Melbourne
Great Walhalla Alpine Track / Australian Alpine Track



Ride High Country
Murray to Mountains Rail Trail

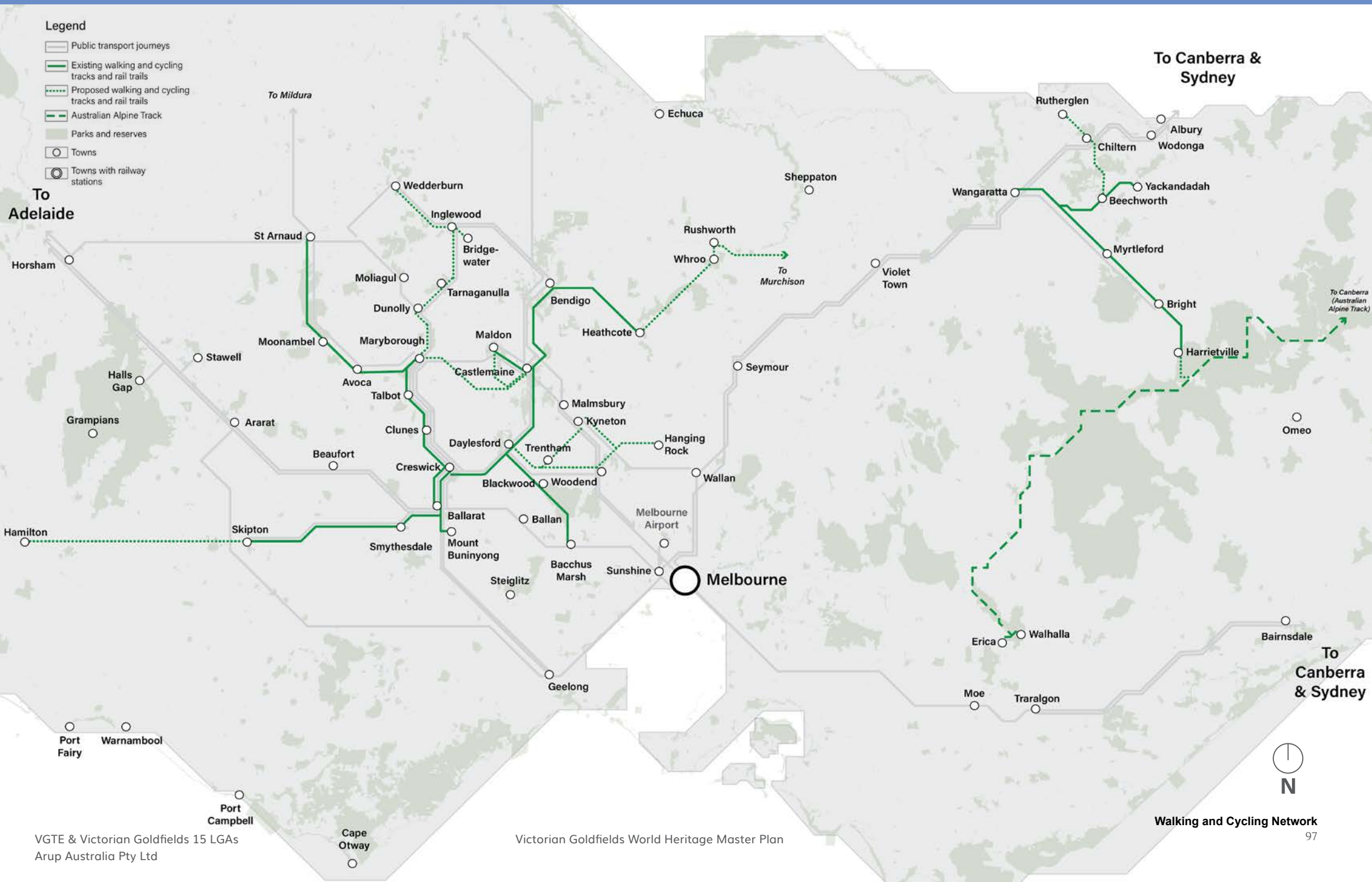
Walking and cycling journeys provide a unique travelling experience, many through national parks such as the Castlemaine Diggings or following the old rail trails such as the Ballarat to Maryborough rail trail. These journeys are significant for visitors to experience the goldfields landscape and its cultural and pre-and post-contact historical significance.

Further investigation and a detailed active transport strategy is required to identify the specific upgrades and new infrastructure required across the proposed WHJ network.

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Legend

-  Public transport journeys
-  Existing walking and cycling tracks and rail trails
-  Proposed walking and cycling tracks and rail trails
-  Australian Alpine Track
-  Parks and reserves
-  Towns
-  Towns with railway stations



KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Micro Journeys

Micro journeys provide a framework to zoom in to the rich clusters of experiences across the Victorian Goldfields and encourage extended, meaningful visitation.

The proposed micro journey framework is supported by visitor hubs that create their own constellation of smaller journeys that build on the individual strengths and opportunities. Micro journeys are unique to each town or hub, each with their own individual experiences, stories and product offerings to reinforce community identity and pride.

Micro journeys are bespoke and scalable. For example, the UNESCO Creative Cities of Ballarat and Bendigo may create art and gastronomy micro journeys that link to local producers, wineries, galleries and artisans. Smaller villages or towns may create a coordinated collection of heritage walks, art trails, cultural tours, nature-based experiences linked to parks and reserves, bush walks or other immersive experiences to share their towns story, history and unique character.

These micro journeys will align with the proposed themes and sub themes listed in Section 2 to support a cohesive narrative and interconnected storylines across the Victorian Goldfields. Each collection of micro journeys can touch upon multiple themes, recognising that each town has their own layered stories and experiences to showcase.

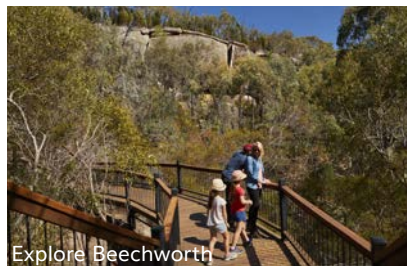
Micro Journey Case Study: Smythesdale Historic Centre

A cluster of experiences at Smythesdale could be further developed and elevated to showcase a range of Goldfields Experience Themes and create engaging itinerary of activities and experiences for visitors to explore deeper, engage with local communities and experience the authentic Victorian Goldfields. This cluster of experiences could include:

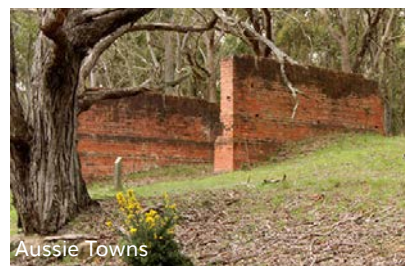
- Cycling the Skipton Rail Trail.
- Discovering the Historic Jubilee Mine Site accessible via the Rainbow Bird Trail.
- Take a tour from the Woody Yaloak Historical Society.
- Learning about the Goldfields at the Brooke Street Church Site.
- Taking a self guided audio trail of the Historical Precinct (Including Historical Court House, 3 Cell Bluestone Lock Up, Police Stables and Original gallows from the Ballarat Gaol).
- Explore the Smythesdale Country Market which features stalls, live music, guided tours of the precinct.



Bendigo Tourism
Tiny Towns Art Trail at Maryborough and surrounds.



Explore Beechworth
Yeddonba Aboriginal Cultural Site Walk, Chiltern.



Aussie Towns
Jubilee Mine Site, Smythesdale.

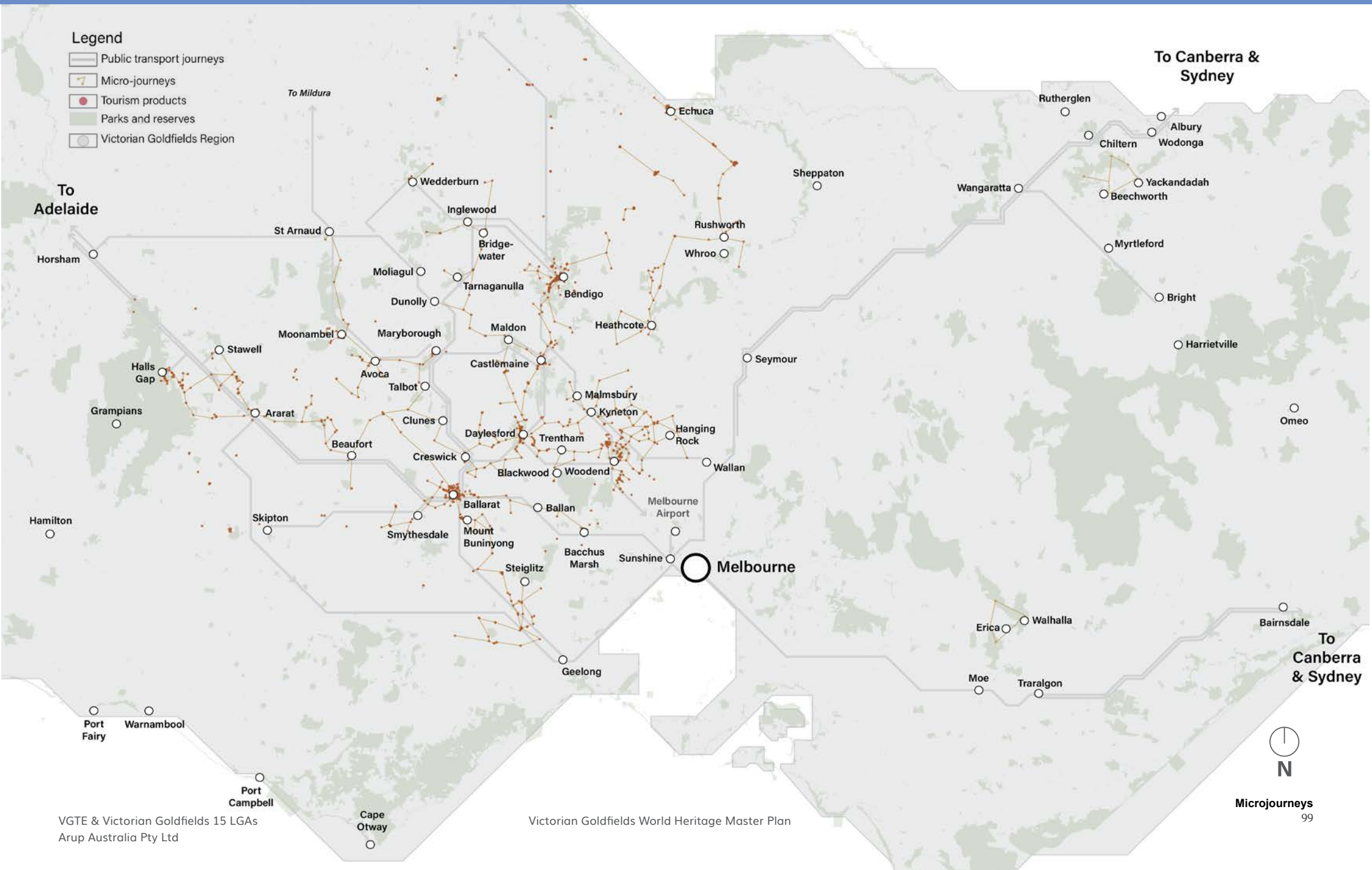


Walhalla Goldfields Railway
Walhalla Goldfields Railway

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Legend

-  Public transport journeys
-  Micro-journeys
-  Tourism products
-  Parks and reserves
-  Victorian Goldfields Region



KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Case Study: Indigo Gold Trail 2.0

Indigo Gold Trail 2.0 will deliver a comprehensive plan to uplift the existing offering to create a best-in-class visitor experience, showcasing the gold rush heritage of Indigo Shire and leveraging the opportunity of the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage listing bid.

40 significant heritage locations link landscapes to historic townships by the common thread of gold. IGT2.0 will transform the experience suite, including content enrichment, contemporising visitor experience assets and infrastructure scoping and design; including delivery of feasibility and concept scoping of brand-leading walk experiences to iconic IGT locations, with Beechworth Gorge Walk progressed to shovel-ready, detailed design.



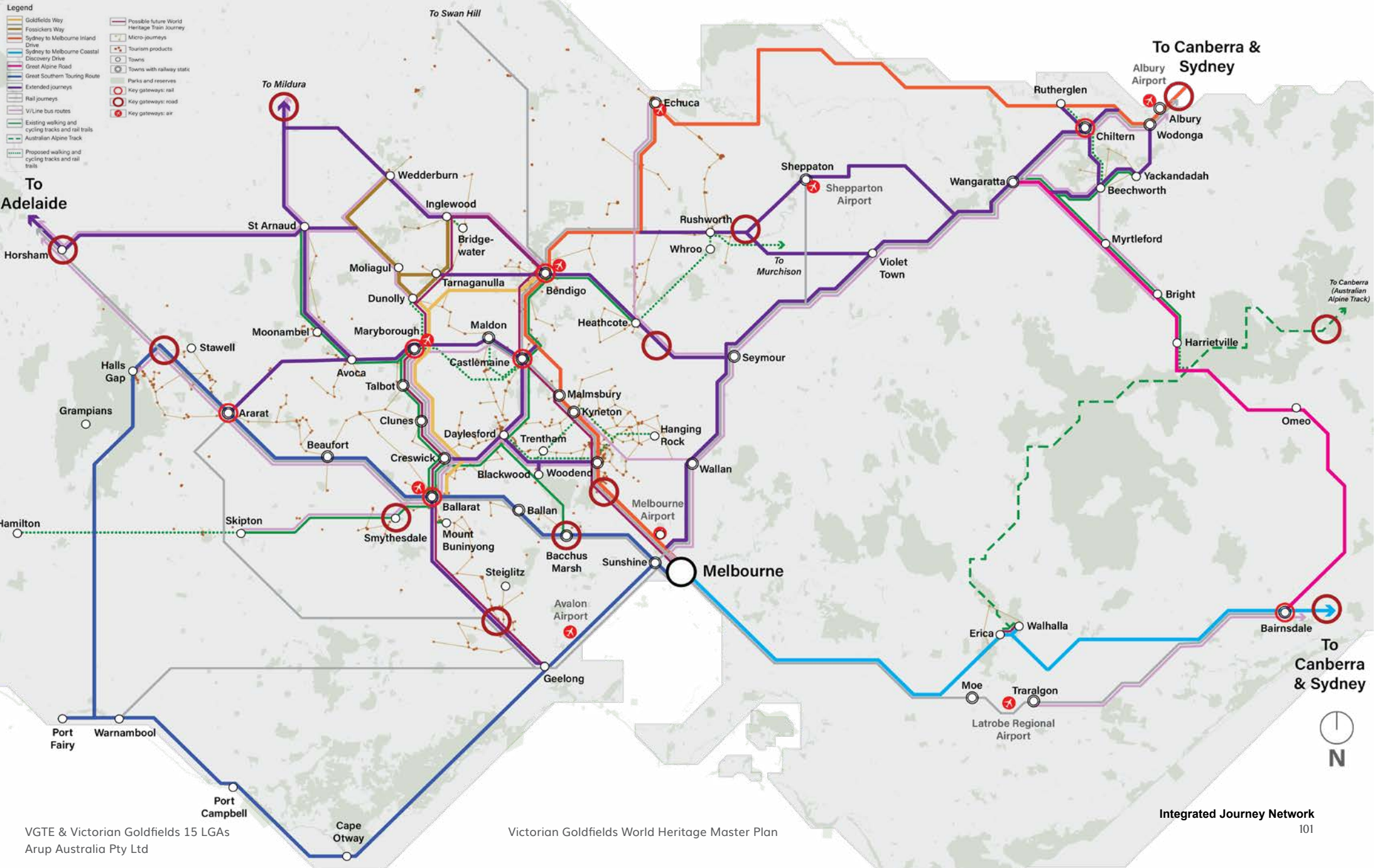
Barry Gamble
Beechworth

Integrated Journey Network

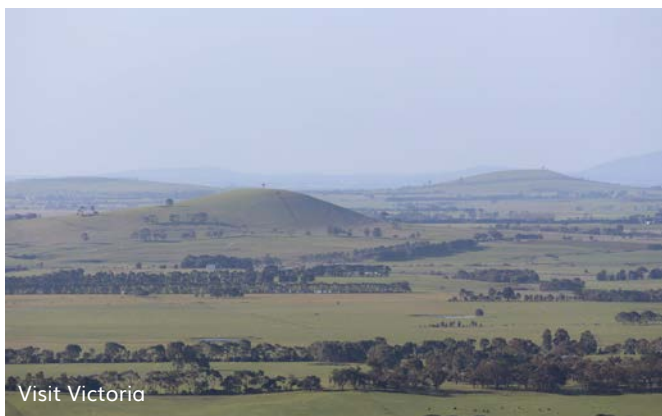
Together road, rail, walking and cycling journeys with micro journeys create a holistic and connected network to support visitors to move across the Victorian Goldfields and embark on World Heritage Journeys connected to Victorian Goldfields' rich history and diverse experiences.

The integrated network of journeys connects and expands key experiences and provides a flexible framework for visitors to shape their own journeys based on their individual needs and interests. The proposed network reinforces connections from major hubs to smaller villages and destinations across the Victorian Goldfields, dispersing visitation, economic growth and community benefits throughout, particularly to areas of the Victorian Goldfields facing socio- economic disadvantage.

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS



KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS



Geotourism in the Goldfields

Geotourism is an internationally accepted concept that spans the entire concept of place and landscape. It is tourism focused on geology, physical geography, landscape, ecology and culture for the purpose of providing place-based visitor engagement, learning, enjoyment and authentic experiences.

World Heritage signature experiences as well as micro-Journeys and site interpretation provide great opportunities for Geotourism. This will also support fossickers, prospectors, students and all travellers, with or without an interest in geology, to learn more about the landscape and natural environment of the Victorian Goldfields.

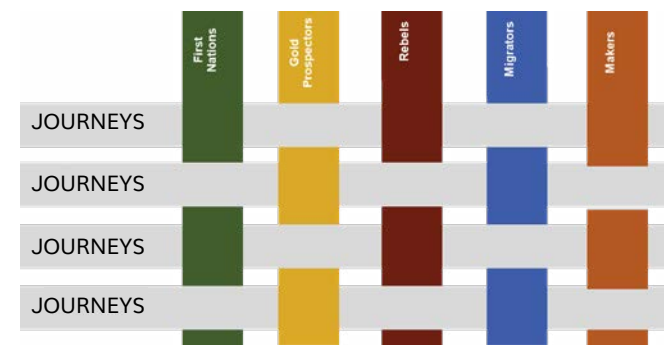
A Geotourism approach adds considerable content value to traditional nature-based tourism as well as to cultural tourism, inclusive of First Peoples tourism. Geotourism offers the potential for new businesses and employment opportunities through the development of major projects in regional Australia such as the World Heritage listing of the Victorian Goldfields.



Connecting regional tourism product offerings

The World Heritage Journeys connect and provide a platform to bring together each region's unique strengths including product offerings and branding. As outlined in each region's destination plans and strategic plans, regional themes and experience offerings include:

- Daylesford-Macedon: Food and Drink, Escape and Rejuvenate, History and Culture, Arts and Artisans, Mineral Water and Spa Country.
- Grampians: Nature-based, Arts and Culture, First Peoples, Self-drive, Family, Food and Wine.
- Murray Region: Nature, First Peoples, History and Heritage, Arts and Culture, Road and River experiences.
- Bendigo Region: Gold History and Heritage Cities and Towns, Arts and Culture, Nature Based Tourism and Adventure Sports, Cycling, Food and Dining, Wine, Cider and Breweries, Business and Conferencing, Retail, Festivals and Events.
- Tourism Midwest Victoria: Cultural and Creative, Contemporary Heritage, Food and Drink, Sporting and Active, Accessible Facilities, Accommodation, Touring Routes, Retail, Nature and Sustainability, Events, Rare Trades Centre and Gold Rush Collection Centre.
- Tourism North East: High Country, Gold Mining Heritage Towns and Villages, World - Class Wines, Snow Sports, Cycling - Rail Trails, Bushranger Country – Ned Kelly, Arts, Gourmet Food Trails, Fine Dining and Regional Produce.
- Destination Gippsland: Diverse Natural Experiences - Glistening Lakes, Dramatic Coastline, Snowy Peaks and Emerald Rainforests, Gold Mining Heritage, Beaches, Gourmet Food and Wine, Water Sports and Alpine Trails.



Connecting themes across the World Heritage Journey Network

Existing experiences and destinations across the WHJ network are detailed by location in the table overpage. These experiences and destinations were analysed to understand their alignment to the World Heritage Theme Framework. This theme analysis is preliminary, further engagement with First Peoples is required to confirm and identify the strength of sub themes of First Peoples and how they intersect with other themes and sub-themes. This preliminary theme analysis shows:

- The First Peoples theme is underrepresented and a core gap. Future product development should focus on strengthening this theme.
- There is significant opportunity to strengthen the Rebel theme, particularly in smaller towns.
- All themes are strongest in Major Cities. Future investment should prioritise bringing these themes to life in towns, villages and other sites across the network.
- Destinations and experiences at each location can link to at least one theme and contribute to the overarching thematic experiences of the World Heritage Journeys.

There is strong opportunity to partner with and support several of these destinations and attractions as World Heritage signature experiences which can act as destination anchors for the World Heritage Journeys. Signature experiences opportunities are detailed in Key Move 3 of Section 04.

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Location	Key Attractions and Experiences	Strength of current offer by theme				
		First Peoples*	Gold Miners	Rebels	Migrators	Makers
Ararat	Brambuk, Gateway to the Grampians, Wineries, Goal and Aradale Asylum Tours, Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre, Railway Heritage Museum, Halls Gap Zoo, Ararat Regional Art Gallery.					
Avoca	Pyrenees Wine Region, heritage buildings, Chinese Gardens, lock up and police residence.					
Ballarat	UNESCO Creative City, Historic streetscape, heritage tours, Sovereign Hill Museum Association, Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades (CRAFT), Eureka Centre, Hidden Histories: The Wadawurrung People virtual tour, The Goldfields Track, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Her Majesty's Theatre Ballarat, National Centre for Photography, Festivals, events, markets and workshops, Wine region, Ballarat Botanical Gardens, Dining experiences, Ballarat Tramway Museum, Kryal Castle, Ballarat Wildlife Park, Old Cemetery.					
Beaufort	Pyrenees Wine Region, Antiques and collectables, forest and hiking.					
Beechworth	Murray to Mountains Trail, Historic town centre, Beechworth Historic Park, One Tree Hill Lookout.					
Bendigo	UNESCO Creative City, Historic streetscapes, Victoria Hill, Central Deborah Gold Mine, Bendigo Art Gallery, Wonyotjarrapil, Lawcourts-Bunjil, Golden Dragon Museum, Govhub-circle of Elders Bendigo Pottery, Discovery Science & Technology Centre, Bendigo Soldiers Memorial Museum, Bendigo Tram, Bendigo creek frog pond, The Great Stupa, Dining experiences, Old Police Barracks, Tram Museum.					
Blackwood	Jacksons Gully Gold Discovery Monument, Police Stables Museum, wombat-Lederderg National Park, Great Dividing Trail, Blackwood Wood Chop and Easter Carnival, Blackwood Mineral Springs, Restaurants, camping and glamping					
Castlemaine & Castlemaine Diggings	Abandoned mines and settlements, cycling, mining relics and gold prospecting, Victorian Goldfields Railway, Castlemaine Art Museum, The Mill – creative hub – vintage stalls and fresh product, Castlemaine Botanical Gardens, Harcourt apples and cideries, Old Castlemaine Gaol,					
Clunes	Clunes Booktown Festival, Clunes Museum Historic Streetscape, gold prospecting, South Clunes mine.					
Creswick	Anderson's Mill Heritage site, Creswick Museum, Creswick Woollen Mills, Creswick Chinese Cemetery Monument, Historic streetscape, Goldfields Track, Buried rivers of gold trail, Australasian first and second Gold Mines, State Gold Battery, Mountain biking.					
Daylesford	Hepburn Bathhouse & Spa, Cellar doors, gin, wineries and breweries, Mill markets and farm gates, Daylesford Museum – paranormal tours, Wombat Hill Botanical Garden, Convent Gallery, Boutique shops / galleries/ artisan / vintage hunting, Mineral springs and lakes, Aboriginal Self Drive Tour.					
Dunolly	Dunolly Cycle Tracks, Historic streetscapes, Goldrush festival, courthouse and lock up, Women's historical art trail.					
Heathcote	Heathcote wine region, Handcrafted beers and local produce, pink cliffs.					
Inglewood	Historic streetscapes, Antiques and collectables, Eucalyptus distillery, Kooyoora State Park.					
Kyneton	Fairs and festival, Kyneton Mineral Springs, Galleries, Hanging Rock, Wineries, Turpin's Falls, Caroline Chisolm house.					
Maldon	Victorian Goldfields Railway, Maldon Dredge and Dragline, Beehive Chimney, Carmens Tunnel, Maldon Vintage Machinery Museum, Castlemaine Maldon Rail Trail, Retail, collectables.					
Maryborough	Historic railway station – art, wine centre, bars, collectables, Aboriginal rock water wells and canoe tree (Wells Track), Art galleries, Visitor Experience Centre.					
Moliagul	Welcome Stranger monument.					
Newtown-Smythesdale	Devils Kitchen Geological Reserve – historic mine site, basalt columns.					
Rushworth and Whroo	Balaclava Mine, Flax Oil Farm, Gold detecting, Ngurai-illam-wurrung rock wells, historic streetscapes, Whroo cemetery.					
Stawell	Boroka Lookout, Grampians National Park / Grampians Rail Trail, Stawell Railway Gallery.					
St Arnaud	Golden Triangle, St Arnaud heritage and art, Historic streetscapes, the Grampians Way, railway hub.					
Talbot	Talbot Arts & Historical Museum , Niche shop and collectables, Winery, Farmers markets.					
Walhalla	Walhalla Goldfields Railway, Great Walhalla Alpine Track / Australian Alpine Track, Long Tunnel Extended Gold Mine.					
Wedderburn	Gold fossicking, Christmas Reef Gold Mine, The Coach House Museum, General Antiques and collectables, produce.					

*Draft only. To be determined by RAPs.

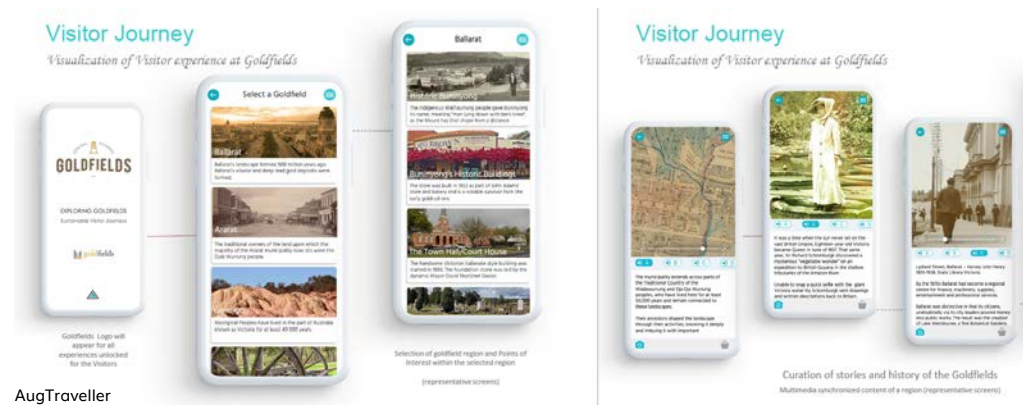
KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS



Gateways

Gateways are entry points to the region giving visitors a sense of arrival to the Victorians Goldfields area. Through physical signage or other installations, coherent and consistently branded gateways strengthen the sense of identity, support visitor navigation and help foster community pride. While all gateways should recognise and celebrate Traditional Country and World Heritage, gateways across the WHJ network can look different depending on their location and the type of gateway, for example:

- **Airport gateways:** gateway signage and/or gateway art and sculpture can be introduced at key airports within and nearby the Victorian Goldfields. Melbourne and Avalon airports are the primary international arrival airports. Digital signage can also be displayed at airports.
- **Road gateways:** road gateways can be physical signage or art/sculpture adjacent to the road. Due to road safety, road gateways should be designed to convey a sense of arrival without additional information that would require visitors to stop. This could create a safety hazard or and traffic bottleneck.
- **Rail gateways:** rail gateways can be introduced at key passenger rail stations across the network. These gateways may provide additional detail such as wayfinding or interpretation to encourage visitors to dwell, learn and explore deeper.
- **Active transport gateways:** these gateways can be located at key trail heads. Similarly, to rail gateways, may provide additional detail such as wayfinding or interpretation to encourage visitors to dwell, learn and explore deeper.



Digital Journeys

Visitors today use and expect digital platforms for trip planning, sharing and experiencing destinations. A Goldfields World Heritage app would enable exciting and seamless digital journeys from pre-planning to post-trip. Key sites, gateways, interpretation signage can be overlaid with a digital experience by incorporating a QR code or aligning with the app. These digital platforms and experiences are emerging around the world including authentic historical tours of the World Heritage Sites and self-guided trails and heritage walks in India through AugTraveller. Not only are digital experiences innovative and engaging for visitors, but they also enable interpretation and experiences that touch the earth lightly for minimal physical impact on sites.

The app could include:

- Journey planning and navigation:
 - Information on key attractions, destinations and micro journeys.
 - Digitally generated itineraries responding to local events calendars and personal needs.
 - Showcasing local business through marketing and platform links to TripAdvisor (or similar).
 - Wayfinding information and WHJ maps.
- Journey sharing and awareness raising:
 - Links to social media to share experiences.
 - Virtual tours of heritage sites that can be accessed online.
- Commercial components that directly contributes to the Sustainable Livelihoods to the Local Communities:
 - Booking platform for tours and World Heritage experiences.
 - Online marketplace for local businesses.
- Digital experiences:
 - Immersive augmented reality that brings themes and history to life.
 - Audio guides or podcast storytelling and interpretation.
 - Self guided journey and audiotrails.

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Roadside Rest Stops

VicRoads has a network of rest areas along the major highways in the Victorian Goldfields including the Western, Calder and Sunraysia highways. The Victorian Rest Area Strategy aims to address driver fatigue by providing safe places for drivers to stop and refresh. In-town facilities, major service centres and roadside rest areas contribute to this network of rest stops. Of these the in-town facilities and roadside rest areas are relevant to the Goldfields.

The Strategy encourages the use of in-town facilities in regional Victoria to maximise benefits of travellers to the regional economy. Within the Goldfields roadside stops are minor rest areas or truck parking bays. Major stand-alone rest stops are not required in the Victorian Goldfields because of the short distances between towns.

These existing sites in the Victorian Goldfields and other locations on minor roads managed by local government have the potential to provide for visitors to the Victorian Goldfields. These should be assessed for their relevance to the outstanding universal values. They may be near points of interest or be viewpoints where visitors can orient themselves in the landscape.

All existing and proposed roadside rest areas in the Victorian Goldfields should meet the VicRoads standard and also include WH interpretation relevant to the locality. Each site should provide visitor information about other listed sites in the locality as well as about those places which are linked by similar themes and stories.

The role of each site needs to be considered both in terms of its contribution to the values as well as its contribution to the visitor journey.

Planning for these investments should categorise each town, village and remote site based on its appropriate level of contribution and provide for a consistent level of service for each category. A simplified example of a categorisation system is shown in the table to the right which highlights recommended facilities at rest stops by typology/role of rest stop.

Category	Food and beverage	Visitor information	Interpretation	Amenities
Major Hubs and Hubs	Yes, provide a consistent service for 3 meals a day, 7 days	Yes, provide a manned service every day of the year (except on significant public holidays)	Comprehensive WH themes and stories	Public toilets and picnic facilities, self-guided walks
Towns	Yes, provide a consistent service over 7 days, daytime only	Yes, provide a manned service where possible during busy times, otherwise provide static displays	Substantial WH themes and stories relevant to the locality	Public toilets and picnic facilities, self-guided walks
Emerging destinations	Yes, may be a seasonal food van	Yes Static displays	Substantial WH themes and stories relevant to the locality	Public toilets and picnic facilities, self-guided walks
Key sites (including First Peoples)	No	Yes	Site specific WH stories	No
Roadside sites	No	Yes Static displays	Site specific WH stories	Picnic facilities, public toilets depending on distance to towns



Interpretation at rest stops vary in quality and lacks a consistent narrative and brand.

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

Proposed World Heritage Journey Initiatives

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Key Partners
1A	<p>Deliver World Heritage Gateways Detailed design and delivery of arrival infrastructure for road gateways, rail gateways and airport gateways to support a unified identity and visitor navigation.</p>	Critical to developing a regional identity, support visitor orientation, promote World Heritage Journeys and encourage the dispersal of visitors.	Department of Transport and Planning, local government, state and regional tourism bodies
1B	<p>Develop a World Heritage Journey and Story Development and Interpretation Strategy Curate interpretation to present at World Heritage sites and key destinations across the WHJ network. This should include engaging and innovative digital interpretation opportunities. Ensure interpretation is culturally appropriate and accessible, including for international visitors. Story Development will catalogue and develop engaging stories under the key themes supported by appropriate promotion and marketing strategies including subsequent digital development including augmented and virtual reality.</p>	A regionally coordinated and curated approach to interpretation is important to share Victorian Goldfields' stories in a clear and consistent way. Further work is required to develop and catalogue stories to be shared across the physical and digital World Heritage Journeys.	Registered Aboriginal Parties, Local community, local and State government, Heritage Victoria, Parks Victoria, state and regional tourism bodies
1C	<p>Develop orientation infrastructure along routes Detailed design and delivery of wayfinding and signage across the WHJ network at strategic locations and at passenger rail stations. Develop trail head and wayfinding signage along cycling trails and tracks that form part of the WHJ network. It should also include key information such as travel distances, conditions to be aware of and level of difficulty.</p>	Clear physical markers supported by digital navigation tools are essential to promote seamless visitor journeys and to improve the visibility and awareness of the proposed World Heritage area. Existing signage along cycling routes varies in quality and is inconsistent. Upgraded and new signage will improve the safety, perception and amenity of active transport infrastructure.	Department of Transport and Planning, local government
1D	<p>Create digital experiences and an app for World Heritage Journeys. An app that supports trip planning, navigation, orientation, interactive interpretation and experiences.</p>	Visitors today use and expect digital platforms for trip planning, sharing and experiencing destinations. A dedicated app would enable exciting and seamless digital journeys from pre-planning to post-trip.	Local and State government, local communities and business, state and regional tourism bodies
1E	<p>Deliver physical interpretation signage Detailed design and delivery of World Heritage interpretation that explains the local stories, history and heritage of place at critical locations along the journey network.</p>	Physical interpretation will bring the WHJ themes to life, create a sense of place and support more meaningful experiences of destinations and communities.	Registered Aboriginal Parties, Department of Transport and Planning, local government, Parks Victoria, state and regional tourism bodies
1F	<p>Upgrade roadside rest areas Undertake upgrades to existing roadside rest areas to elevate facilities to a world class standard and increase the amenity of these locations. These should include day use facilities and integrate WHJ branding, interpretation and stories.</p>	Poor quality of existing facilities that are not up to World Heritage standard. This creates an opportunity for wayfinding and storytelling which may encourage visitors to stay longer in the Victorian Goldfields.	Registered Aboriginal Parties, Department of Transport and Planning, local government, state and regional tourism bodies
1G	<p>Micro Journey Coordination and Promotion Establish a program to support local townships and visitor hubs to create their own package of micro journeys that connect with the proposed theme framework and potential OUV. This initiative aims to coordinate and promote micro journeys. This should involve agency coordination across local government, regional tourism organisations and Parks Victoria.</p>	Current tourism product and services are disjointed, highly localised and do not speak to the potential OUV and wider goldfields story at a regional scale. This initiative would provide guidance for local products to integrate with the World Heritage Journeys.	Registered Aboriginal Parties, local and State government (including Visit Victoria), local community and business state and regional tourism bodies

KEY MOVE 1: WORLD HERITAGE JOURNEYS

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Key Partners
1H	Google Map upgrades Upgrade Google Maps and Apple Map software to incorporate WHJ, information and key sites.	Most visitors navigate using existing GPS and map applications. WHJ must be incorporated into these for easy navigation.	-
1I	Develop a regional walking and cycling strategy This strategy should recognise existing cycling strategies and activities and bring them together, along with identifying any new cycling and walking infrastructure or upgrades to existing infrastructure needed to deliver enable the proposed Walking and Cycling journey network for the Victorian Goldfields.	Need to fill gaps in the current walking and cycling journey network and upgrade facilities to accommodate people of all ages and abilities. Tracks and trails are a key strength of the Victorian Goldfields that should be built upon although further analysis and a detailed audit of cycling strategies and actions that gaps in these as well as infrastructure is required to specify works required.	Department of Transport and Planning, local and State Government, Registered Aboriginal Parties state and regional tourism bodies.
1J	Advocate to upgrade telecommunication and ICT networks coverage Advocate to upgrade networks to address mobile coverage black spots that exist in many places across the Victorian Goldfields.	Mobile coverage is essential to support an international visitor market and to support digital infrastructure and experiences.	State government, private sector, telecommunication providers and NBN state and regional tourism bodies.
1K	First Peoples partnership and continued engagement Continue to work with RAPs to facilitate opportunities for First Peoples stories and interpretation as determined by First Peoples. Partner with RAPs to deliver these opportunities and initiatives.	Ongoing engagement is required to shape up the scale of opportunity to incorporate First Peoples stories, values and create economic and cultural opportunities for First Peoples through the World Heritage Journeys.	Registered Aboriginal Parties.
1L	Introduce electric car charging stations In addition to the proposed EV charging stations in (Key Move 2), build new EV charging stations at key visitor hubs across the World Heritage Journey network. While a new EV charging station is underway in Clunes, gaps are identified at Maldon, Wedderburn and St Arnaud. Additionally, explore opportunities to advocate for more sustainable vehicle technology including hydrogen.	World Heritage Journeys that support EV charging will promote more sustainable travel and will encourage the adoption of zero emissions vehicles. Providing EV charging facilities will help position Victorian Goldfields as a more sustainable region and appeal to a wider market of travellers.	Department of Transport and Planning, local and State Government, local business and industry.
1M	Visitor Information Centre Upgrades Delivery of preliminary improvements to Visitor Information Centres to elevate the quality of existing facilities in line with modern visitor needs and embed WH stories and information.	Until World Heritage Hub models are defined and implemented, preliminary improvements can be made to existing visitor centres within the Victorian Goldfields to address needs in the short term.	Local councils, state and regional tourism bodies.
1N	Advocate for rail upgrades and enhanced services Advocate for rail upgrades and enhanced services including fast tracking the Geelong Fast Rail from Melbourne, to enable easier access from Geelong to the wider region including Ballarat and Ararat.	Support and advocacy of this rail investment based on the increased need for rail access improvements following World Heritage inscription.	Department of Transport and Planning, local councils.
1O	Commercial Operator Partnership Partner with and encourage commercial operators to deliver commercial tours and experiences across world heritage journeys.	Will support new and existing businesses to provide high quality experiences that are consistent with and link to the potential OUV. Supporting local jobs and economic growth across goldfields communities.	Private sector and industry.
1P	World Heritage Journey Development and Coordination Undertake planning and development of WHJ to progress the concepts presented in this Master Plan into detailed plans in collaboration with key stakeholders and partners.	The World Heritage Journeys presented in this Master Plan are conceptual in nature and will need further development to determine final alignments, detailed design of infrastructure such as gateways, signage and rest stops and content curation.	State and regional tourism bodies, major touring route organisations, Department of Transport and Planning, State and local government.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

World class access, placemaking, storytelling and infrastructure improvements are required to ensure vibrant, high quality heritage destinations and townships across the Victorian Goldfields and provide world class visitor infrastructure for all visitors.

SITE TYPOLOGIES

Key towns and heritage sites can be classified into six typologies to inform Victorian Goldfield's regional strategy. Classification has taken into consideration key characteristics such as population, transport connections, visitor facilities and attractions. From each of the typologies, one-three example sites have been selected as representative for that typology. The following section outlines components and example sites.

Typologies are as follows:

- First Peoples Sites: First Peoples sites of significance.
- Major Hub: Primary economic, cultural and social centres.
- Hub: Secondary economic, cultural and social centres.
- Towns: Tertiary economic, cultural and social centres.
- Emerging Tourist Towns: Town or villages with emerging opportunity for visitor economy growth.
- Key Sites, Parks and Reserves: Significant heritage and tourism destinations outside of towns and villages.
- World Heritage Sites (Future typology)



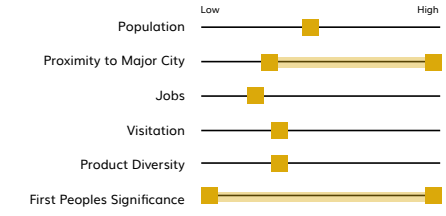
Location: Ballarat*, Bendigo*



Location: Castlemaine + Castlemaine Diggings*, Beechworth*, Daylesford, Ararat, Kyneton, Maryborough*, Stawell, Woodend.



Location: Maldon*, Clunes*, Creswick*, Heathcote, Inglewood, Wedderburn, Beaufort*, Avoca, Smythesdale*, Walhalla*.



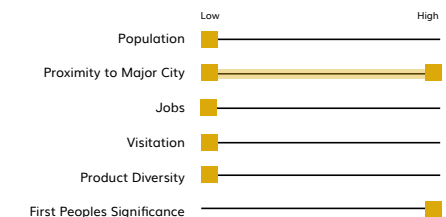
Location: St Arnaud*, Dunolly*, Tarnagulla*, Rushworth*, Talbot, Blackwood*, Kyabram, Chiltern Yackandandah, Rutherglen, Erica, Rawson, Omeo.



Location: Devils Kitchen Newton Smythesdale*, Steiglitz, Whroo*, Moliagul*.



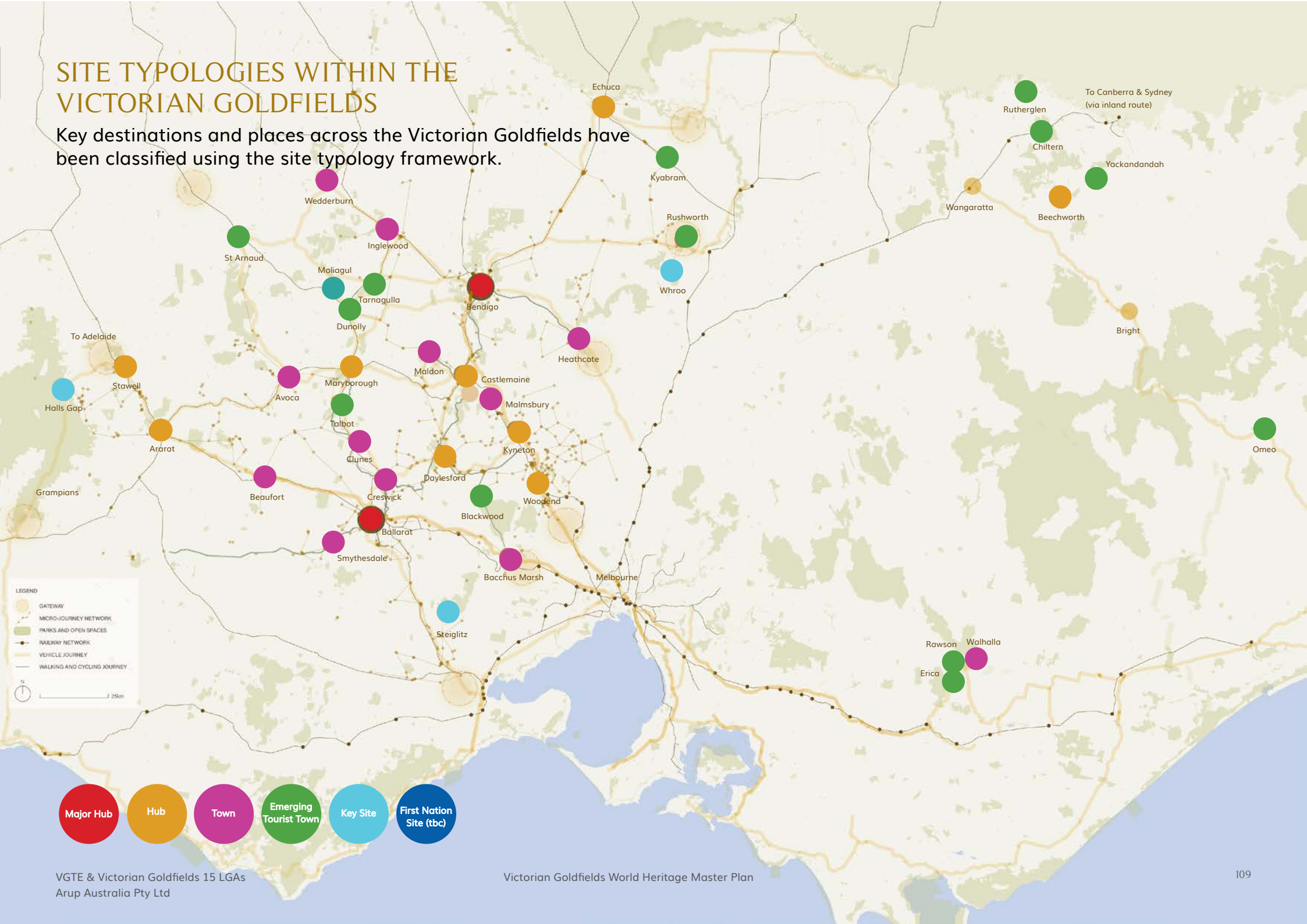
Location: TBC.



* Example sites explored in the following section.

SITE TYPOLOGIES WITHIN THE VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS

Key destinations and places across the Victorian Goldfields have been classified using the site typology framework.



Major Hub Hub Town Emerging Tourist Town Key Site First Nation Site (tbc)

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

SITE COMPONENTS

A number of components that will unlock the potential of the Victorian Goldfields have been identified, as shown on the table below. These components form the basis of the initiatives for each of the example sites. The following section outlines the components in further detail and how they apply to the sites.

A Access		
Vehicles	A1	Access roads
	A2	Parking + accessible parking
	A3	EV infrastructure
Public Transport	A4	Public transport
	A5	Coach parking
Pedestrian	A6	Pedestrian and hiking paths
	A7	Pedestrian and hiking supporting infrastructure
Bicycle	A8	Cycle paths
	A9	Cycle Supporting infrastructure
B Facilities		
	B1	Toilets
	B2	Picnic Tables
	B3	Shelter
	B4	BBQs
	B5	Playspaces
C Infrastructure		
	C1	Electricity
	C2	Water
	C3	Telecommunications/Internet
	C4	Emergency management
	C5	Climate change management

D Streetscape / Town Centres, Landscape and Access		
	D1	Public realm improvements
	D2	Façade improvements
	D3	Public art
	D4	Planting and landscape works
	D5	Ecosystem restoration
	D6	Vacant shopfront activation
	D7	Heritage conservation
	D8	Safety improvements
	D9	Mine rehabilitation
E Experiences		
	E1	Goldfields Experience Centre
	E2	Travelling exhibitions and events
	E3	Upgrade existing visitor centre
	E4	Interpretation
	E5	Wayfinding
	E6	Lighting
	E7	Art installations
	E8	Digital
	E9	Festivals and events
	E10	Town Centre liveability program

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS



A. Access – Vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians



Landezine

Bungarribee Park, NSW

A1. Access Roads (Vehicles)

New or upgraded roads to sites to support safe access for visitors. Depending on the anticipated volume of users and location, road surfaces can be sealed or gravel.



Buckford Illumination Group

Penguin Parade, Phillip Island

A2. Parking and accessible parking (Vehicles)

Sufficient car parking for visitors and residents are required at key sites and townships. Car parking should be located to support universal access to sites while minimising their visual impact.



CarExpert

A3. EV infrastructure

Infrastructure to support and encourage the use of Electric Vehicle (EVs) including chargers at site parking and are near community hubs and visitor centres.



WE-EF Live

Penguin Parade, Phillip Island

A4. Coach parking

Coach parking provision at key destinations and visitor attractions. Adequate space for coach parking and movement will support tour operators to access sites while protecting the site amenity and infrastructure.



Visit Victoria

Grampians

A5. Pedestrian and hiking routes

Pedestrian and hiking routes to encourage walking journeys and nature-based activities. Routes should have universal design principles where they are safe, accessible, legible and supported by wayfinding. The ongoing maintenance of pedestrian paths and hiking routes should be considered.



Bushwalk

Grampians

A6. Pedestrian and hiking supporting infrastructure

Pedestrian and hiking routes should be coupled with supporting infrastructure such as drinking fountains and shelter areas with seating and shade to allow for users to rest and enjoy their journey. Infrastructure should have universal design principles where it is safe and accessible for all users.



Bendigo Tourism

O'Keefe Trail

A7. Cycle paths

Cycle paths needs to be safe and accessible with cycling options for cyclists of all ages and abilities. Cycle path design should respond to user needs of recreational cycling and/or cycling for transport. Where possible off-road paths should be provided however, on-road infrastructure may be appropriate within townships.



Washcoopenhouses

A8. Cycle supporting infrastructure

Supporting infrastructure includes secure bicycle parking, drink fountains, rest stops, end-of-trip facilities and service points at convenient locations along cycle paths. These facilities help make cycling journeys comfortable, convenient and attractive.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS



B. Facilities



Public Toilets of Victoria
Agnes Falls, Gippsland

B1. Toilets

Sites should incorporate high quality public toilets facilities at convenient locations. Toilet facilities in remote locations such as National Parks should include their own off-grid sewage and solar lighting systems.



Visit Werribee
Werribee Zoo

B2. Picnic tables

High quality picnic tables should be provided at sites and in scenic locations to allow for social activities and resting for both tourists and residents. These areas should include rubbish bins to prevent litter.



Trip.com
Toorourrong Reservoir, Whittlesea

B3. Shelters

High quality shelters provide rest areas and weather protection for visitors. The location and design of shelters should be appropriate and considered to the context of the site. Consider architectural elements and opportunities to incorporate storytelling.



Renovation Insider
Toorourrong Reservoir

B4. BBQs

Coach parking provision at key destinations and visitor attractions. Adequate space for coach parking and movement will support tour operators to access sites while protecting the site amenity and infrastructure.



Landezine
Grampians

B5. Playspaces

Playspaces support recreation for families with young children. Playspaces should be appropriate to the context of the site and can include nature play and sensory play experiences that help tell the story of the Victorian Goldfields and accommodate a range of age groups and abilities.



C. Infrastructure



Zoo.org.au
Healesville Sanctuary

C1. Electricity

Electricity will be required at site to power lighting, digital displays and charging stations. Sustainable and low environmental impact sources such as solar power should be encouraged.



Kingspan Water Tanks
West Gippsland

C2. Water and sewerage

Water and sewerage provision are critical for the operation of tourism and services at sites. In remote locations, low impact, off-grid, self-sufficient systems should be considered.



C3. Telecommunications

Telecommunications should be reliable, with no blackspots, for communication, navigation and emergency purposes.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS



D. Streetscapes, Town Centres and Landscape



Geelong

D1. Public realm improvements

Public realm improvements include landscape integration such as street trees and planters and providing shelter areas and seats. These improvements should enhance the attractiveness and amenity of streetscapes and public places.



Maldon

D2. Façade improvements

Façade improvements of historical buildings to help conserve, enhance and/or restore the heritage characteristics of the streetscape or individual properties.



Goanna Ground by Diana Nikkelson

D3. Public art

Public art should engage local community and tell the stories of place and the diversity of communities. Public art should be community driven where possible and evoke a sense of community pride, identity and ownership.



Geelong

D4. Planting and landscape works

Landscape improvements to streetscapes, public realm and at sites provides environmental benefits and enhances the attractiveness of places. Where possible native and/or low maintenance vegetation should be considered.



Ballarat

D5. Ecosystem restoration

Ecosystem restoration varies in scale, including rewilding, tree planting, restoring waterways and green space creation. Ecosystem restoration is important for ecosystem services as well as contributes to the wellbeing of residents.



Newcastle

D6. Vacant shopfront activation

Activating vacant shopfronts make use of vacant and underutilised space to encourage increased pedestrian activity and add to the attractiveness of a place. Activation can include digital interactions, art installations and pop-ups of local crafts, adding civic pride to a place.



The Bank, Vaughan

D7. Heritage conservation

Heritage conservation includes conserving cultural heritage landscapes, as well as heritage characteristics of a building. Conservation works can include façade improvements to heritage buildings or continuing cultural practices and management of culturally significant landscapes.



Black Hill Reserve, Ballarat

D8. Safety Improvements

Pedestrian safety is important in mining sites to ensure a safe experience while enjoying the sites for visitors. Appropriate wayfinding, signage and proper pathways are components to minimise hazard risks and ensure visitors can safely enjoy the site.



Murrin Murrin Mine, Western Australia

D9. Mining Rehabilitation

Mining rehabilitation is establishing a sustainable ecosystem or alternative vegetation post-mining use. Rehabilitation can include ecosystem restoration, presence of native species and establishing a physical environment to sustained flora and fauna populations.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS



E. Experience



WordPress.com

Stonehenge Visitor Centre, UK

E1. Experience Centres/Hubs

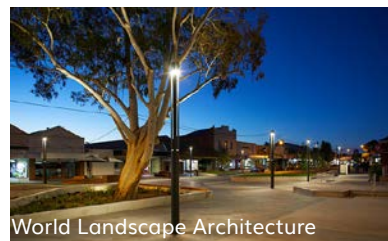
Goldfields Experience Centres/Hubs bring the goldrush and First peoples stories and Victorian Goldfields experience themes to life and are hubs for research, education, conservation and visitor servicing. An innovative and sustainable model for delivering World Heritage Centres/Hubs are explored further in Key Move 3.



Geelong Gallery

E2. Travelling exhibitions and events

Travelling exhibitions and events are beneficial for communities to take part and be involved in national and international culture scenes. This increases community's access to art and events and can help drive community pride and interest in World Heritage.



World Landscape Architecture

Kerang

E6. Lighting

Lighting is required to support visitation across times of the day and year. It should be appropriately designed to enhance the atmosphere of experiences and safety while minimising light pollution.



StreetArtNews

Geelong

E7. Art

Art is an engaging storytelling tool to highlight the town's history and communities. Art includes public arts and installations, performance, workshops, travelling and permanent exhibitions. The implementation of art can increase community empowerment and identity.



Puffing Billy Visitor Centre

E3. Upgrade existing visitor centre

Upgrading existing visitor centres to expand their offer and encourage a deeper connection with the Victorian Goldfields. Visitor centres can be coupled with travelling exhibitions as well as providing spaces to showcase local producers and makers.



Time Out

Sovereign Hill Museum Association

E8. Digital

Embedding digital technologies is an interactive way to engage residents and visitors. Digital technologies include digital exhibitions, visual and lighting projections and virtual reality



Visit Victoria

Murrup Laar Ancestral Stones, Ballarat

E4. Interpretation

Interpretation is an important means to connect people to place and encourage meaningful visitation. Interpretation can include engaging story panels and signage, audio tours, walking tours and digital displays. Interpretation provides community ownership and add community empowerment to an area.



Beat Magazine

Clunes

E9. Festivals and events

Festivals and events bring community together and provide a sense of community ownership, while attracting visitors to visit the hosting towns. Festivals and events can include music festivals, food and culinary events as well as something unique to the identity of the town, like Clunes Booktown.



VGTE

Ballarat

E5. Wayfinding

Wayfinding and signage at strategic locations will help visitors navigate through the region. Wayfinding includes physical signage, landmarks and digital tools.



Visit Ballarat

E10. Town centre liveability

Town liveability program can include pop-up markets, streetscape activation, makers markets and farmer's markets. While liveability programs attract visitors, they foster a sense of community, encourage community empowerment and civic pride.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

THE EXAMPLE SITES

This section provides an appreciation of how selected towns feature within and contribute to the Victorian Goldfields story. The proposals and initiatives that have been put forward are not meant to be definitive, rather they are illustrative of opportunities that need to be reviewed locally and within the context of existing plans and projects.

Details of the example sites are provided in the Appendix.

Major Hub



Arup

Bendigo



Arup

Ballarat



Arup

Maryborough



Arup

**Castlemaine and
Castlemaine
Diggings**

Hub



Ararat Regional City Council

Ararat



Arup

Beechworth

Town



Arup

Maldon



Arup

Creswick



Arup

Clunes



VicScreen

**Smythesdale
& Linton**

Emerging Tourist Town



Travel Victoria

St Arnaud



Arup

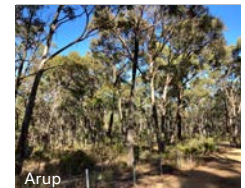
Dunolly



Goldfields Guide

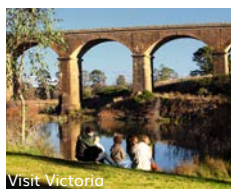
Blackwood

Key Site



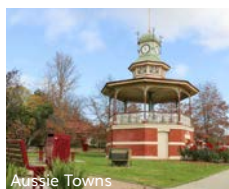
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Visit Victoria

Malmsbury



Aussie Towns

Beaufort & Avoca



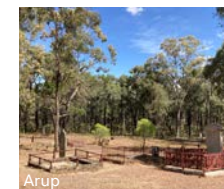
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Walhalla



Peter Weaving

Tarnagulla



Arup

**Rushworth
& Whroo**

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

FIRST PEOPLES SITES

Typology - First Peoples Site

Engagement with RAPs is in preliminary stages in relation to the Master Plan. Further engagement with First Peoples is necessary to develop concepts and initiatives for the First Peoples Site typology in line with the Engagement Framework set out in the Introduction Section.

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Key Partners
2A	<p>Develop Master Plans for First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys Provide funding to each RAP to develop Master Plans for the 'First Nation Sites'. These will outline aspirations for these sites and priority investments. These Master Plans should also link to World Heritage Journeys and investments required to deliver First Peoples experiences and micro journeys. To note: sites will be determined by First Peoples site prior to the development of the Master Plans.</p>	<p>Further engagement and detailed planning are required to identify and develop the First Peoples Sites, experiences and World Heritage Journeys. Dedicated Master Plans are recommended for each RAP.</p>	<p>RAPs, Industry</p>
2B	<p>Immediate Infrastructure Improvements at World Heritage Sites Detailed design and delivery of critical infrastructure upgrades across the World Heritage Sites (to be determined in tentative list stage). This should include the access, safety works, public toilets, wayfinding and interpretation. (See Key Move 2 for concept plans by site).</p>	<p>The World Heritage Sites on the tentative list are expected to receive increased visitation immediately after listing. Infrastructure improvements are essential here to address critical gaps to support safe access to sites and positive visitor experiences.</p>	<p>Council, Regional Tourism Bodies, Parks Victoria</p>



Mount Franklin
Barry Gamble

Case Study: Lalgambuk (Mt Franklin) Experience

Dja Dja Wurrung People have been connected to Lalgambuk (Mt Franklin) since the dreamtime, for many thousands of years. For us, Djandak (Country) is more than just a landscape, it is more than what is visible to the eye – it is a living entity, which holds the stories of creation and histories that cannot be erased.

We have a deep, ongoing connection to this landscape. Our peoples witnessed the last eruption of Lalgambuk (Mt Franklin). Then European settlement saw DJAARA's strong culture threatened and our last known ceremony took place at Franklinford. Today, we have returned our culture to the area, we proactively manage the landscape and hold ceremonies and visitors can appreciate DJAARA-fied landscaping, shelter and signage.

The depths of our shared history and the profound connections to Djandak (Country) that extend far beyond what meets the eye will astound visitors. An important cultural site to Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples, the Lalgambuk area would be established as a major tourist destination, for visitors and locals alike.

The premier attraction would be walking tours with knowledgeable DJAARA guides of varying lengths, to immerse visitors in Lalgambuk's pre-colonial history. Visitors would discover the significance of the site and deepen understandings of the Dja Dja Wurrung landscape, where transformations to visitors' hearts and minds would take place as they walked with DJAARA.

Oral stories, handed down through generations, would be woven into the shared yarns and the richness and depth of DJAARA's care for Djandak (Country) would leave visitors with deeper understandings of one of the world's longest surviving cultures.

The geomorphological significance of the site would be celebrated through stories about the volcanic eruption. Hands-on elements and artefacts would give visitors a first-hand understanding of this significant site.

Like across so much of Djandak (country), visitors would have opportunities to appreciate Djandak (Country), to bird-watch, take reflective walks and generally appreciate the beauty of this long cared for and unique environment, rich with cultural significance.

A DJAARA-fied camp would accommodate those keen to spend more time in the area and would feature campsites and facilities, which would complement the existing landscape. Visitors would be encouraged to other culturally significant sites within the area, such as Franklinford (where the last recorded Cultural DJAARA ceremony took place in 1843) and Larni Barramal Yaluk (home of the emu creek).

Supplied by DJAARA

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN (ESD) PRINCIPLES

The following Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles have been developed to inform the next phase of delivery of site concept designs presented in this Master Plan.

Component	Circular Economy	Climate Resilience and Adaptability	People, Place and Culture	Environmental Integrity	Integrated Water Management
A. Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient design to minimise materials Restore existing elements Optimise the use of recycled and reused materials: i.e. recycle gas sand, crumb rubber, reclaimed asphalt pavement + recycled aggregate Locally sourced materials Modular paving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permeable surfaces Low solar reflective index for hardscape Electric powered vehicles Electric vehicle charging spaces Promote active, public and low carbon transport network Road design to projected temperature range within life span 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous pedestrian + bicycle links Universal design DDA requirements Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Improve night time vulnerability and safety with lighting End of trip facilities Shading and seating along walkways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native planting to increase biodiversity Street canopies for shading and cooling Fallen trees for habitat Ecological corridors/fauna crossings Fire breaks and revegetation design Traditional land management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using alternative sources to potable water in construction and operations activities Water sensitive roadside design Erosion and sediment control
B. Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart bins that compact waste reducing collection frequency Food /green waste facilities and management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electric BBQs Solar PV panels across roof Lighting sensors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal design DDA requirements Communal spaces Shading and seating at playspaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located away from sensitive habitats Native planting to increase biodiversity Fallen trees for habitat Fire breaks and revegetation design Traditional land management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water efficient fittings and fixtures Water tanks Greywater systems Waterless toilets
C. Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient design to minimise materials Restore existing elements Optimise the use of recycled and reused materials: i.e. recycle gas sand + recycled aggregates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Microgrids Critical infrastructure not located in flood prone areas Renewable energy sources Underground services Reporting on energy and carbon management performance Fire resistant materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public WiFi and NBN connection Water fountains with dog water bowls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mine closures Traditional land management Climate Resilience Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measuring, reporting and disclosing water performance Drainage design to accommodate anticipated additional flows Rainwater harvesting Water tanks
D. Streetscape + Landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart bins that compact waste reducing collection frequency Food /green waste facilities and management Locally sourced materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase canopy cover of street trees Green walls, roofs façades Low solar reflective index for hardscape LED streetlights Lighting sensors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPTED Community awareness initiatives Sustainability learning trail Improve night time vulnerability and safety with lighting Partnerships with Traditional Owners Shelter areas and seating Local artists and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire breaks and revegetation design Ecosystem restoration and regeneration Native planting to increase biodiversity Dedicated a portion of the site area for vegetation Ecological corridors Erosion management Heritage conservation and protection Adaptive reuse of historical buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rain garden, bioswales, rainwater harvesting Passive irrigation Water efficient landscaping with native planting selections Traditional and historical water management approaches
E. Experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circular economy initiatives, programs and partnerships e.g. ASPIRE - online marketplace that trades waste as a resource Restore or reuse historical materials Modular timber buildings Conveniently located recycling facilities Green waste disposal facilities Prioritise local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrification: electric for all heating, hot water + cooking PV across roofs and green roofs Improved thermal performance + glazing for buildings Efficient HVAC systems Façade improvements of historical buildings in line with Heritage Victoria Climate Change Guidelines LED streetlights Lighting sensors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships with Traditional Owners Develop a visitor management system that minimizes negative impacts and enhances the visitor experience Local food production Active frontages Reduce harmful indoor pollutants by encouraging use of materials with low and non-toxic chemicals. Sustainability learning trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information boards in areas prone to climate change risks i.e. bushfires/floods Information boards on native fauna/flora to be protected Conserve, enhance and restore heritage characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise on-site re-use of stormwater Water sensitive urban design

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

Signature experiences create emotional connection and act as key drivers of visitation along the journeys, creating awareness of the proposed World Heritage area, nationally and internationally and supporting local communities. Signature experiences should be the unification of local people and key places of the Victorian Goldfields.

The strength of World Heritage Journeys is the ability to bring businesses and community together working collaboratively through the regional tourism boards and major touring routes which represent them to collaborate where they would have been unlikely to do so otherwise to create new, unique and unconventional experiences to take their own offer further.

Co-designing Experiences with Victorian Goldfields Communities

Designing the process of product pairing requires good partnerships with a wide range of tourism stakeholders operating across the Victorian Goldfields region including local businesses and entrepreneurs, a willingness to not only include the traditional tourism industry and an openness to bespoke creative thinking around how different experiences can come together. Effective strategic alignment and coordination across the region and the World Heritage Travel Journeys will provide added opportunity to leverage and cross-promote these experiences.

Some of the most unique experiences are when two or three businesses collaborate to create paired experiences. For example, every community and village are an experience hub with story tellers shaping community and experiences.

Commissioning street art projects will focus on the communities with interest and capability, particularly located on journeys away from the most popular destinations. Furthermore, it shapes and define the sense of community and stories of the place.

This activation strategy can also be supplemented with sculptures and other installations that can be moved around the region.

Connecting Creative Regions and Communities

The region's rich heritage has resulted in an extraordinary array of creativity. Rare crafts, fine skills and artisanal experiences are all part of the offering. Ballarat was designated a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art in 2019 and this important designation creates a significant opportunity for the region. By tapping into the creative resources of the region visitors will be able to actively participate in the local culture, heritage and artistic practices. The focus is on hands-on experiences that allow visitors to learn new skills, express their creativity and gain a deeper understanding of the local culture. This could involve participating in workshops, art classes, cultural festivals, or interacting with and purchasing from local artists and artisans across the region.

Throughout the region there is significant opportunity to identify and showcase local creativity encouraging local artists, artisans and creative professionals to display their work through exhibitions, festivals, or public installations. Facilitating collaborations between local artists and visitors creates the opportunity for visitors to actively engage with the creative scene in the towns and villages and earn from local experts along their World Heritage Journey.

Creating dedicated spaces, such as art districts, cultural centres, or creative hubs, where artists and tourists can gather, collaborate and showcase their talents, display and sell their work through exhibitions, festivals or public installations. These spaces can serve as vibrant cultural hubs and foster a sense of community and offer creative workshops and classes for residents and visitors.

Organising and supporting cultural festivals and events that celebrate local traditions, arts, or creativity will also attract both domestic and international visitors, boosting the region's creative tourism appeal. Effective cross-regional coordination of this event planning and scheduling is required to support this as discussed further in Key Move 5.

Community Ambassadors Program

Fostering local ambassador relationships are key for powerful authentic brand storytelling. Ambassadors might be notably famous and help create large-scale awareness for the region, but they might also be locally known, bringing a strong connection to the theme, such as a well-known local chef. Work with ambassadors as key partners, to co-create journeys, experiences and events.

Cultural Ambassadors Program

As per above with On Country Experiences with First Peoples. This initiative is a preliminary concept and would require further engagement with First Peoples.

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES



Images from left to right: Bendigo Art Gallery, Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre Ararat, Sovereign Hill

Partnering with and Supporting Iconic Attractions

Building off the existing strengths of the Victorian Goldfields, partnering with existing major destinations is an opportunity to bring more awareness to World Heritage and bring together a network of exceptional signature experiences.

Existing attractions are a touchstone for many visitors to the Victorian Goldfields and presents a significant opportunity to draw visitors further into the Victorian Goldfields and support World Heritage Journeys. Potential iconic attraction partners are at various stages of readiness. Some are award winning destinations, while others will need support to elevate their products and services to a world class standard and build their capacity.

Beyond partnership, support is required to assist these attractions to incorporate World Heritage themes and experiences within their organisation and continue to strengthen and grow their tourism offering.

Attractions recommended for partnership and to invest will include but are not limited to:

- Iconic Regional Galleries including the Ararat Gallery (Textile and Art Museum Australia), Art Gallery Ballarat, Bendigo Art Gallery, Castlemaine Art Museum, Railway Gallery, Convent Gallery, Central Goldfields Art Gallery, St Arnaud Raillery.
- Sovereign Hill Museum Association.
- Centre for Rate Arts and Forgotten Trades.

- Eureka Centre.
- Central Deborah Mine.
- Victoria Hill.
- Golden Dragon Museum.
- Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre.
- Chinese Gardens.
- Brambuk - Grampians National Park and Cultural Centre.
- Old Castlemaine Gaol.
- Victoria Goldfields Railway.
- Beechworth Historic Precinct (which includes the Old Beechworth Gaol), Beechworth Gorge and Powder Magazine.
- Walhalla Goldfields Railway.
- Long Tunnel Mine.
- Key museums including the Creswick Museum, Talbot Arts and Historical Museum, the Coach House museum.
- Iconic local Makers and Creators, Food and Wine, Accommodation.
- Other Regional Tourism Board signature experiences.

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES



Archlovers



ArchDaily



Divisare

Benchmark: Path of Perspectives, Innsbruck, Austria. This architectural intervention blends seamlessly into this spectacular landscape, offering visitors an opportunity to experience the staggering vistas of the World Heritage cultural landscape from different perspectives.



Arup



Pinterest



ArchDaily



Contemporist



ArchDaily

Infrastructure Initiatives - Showcasing the Hidden Gems at Historic Reserves

Opportunities exist to develop a new range of experiences based on the World Heritage sites (to be identified) and showcase historic reserves across the region. Possible initiatives could include:

- **The Welcome Stranger** – Showcasing the location of the biggest alluvial gold nugget that has ever been found - Moliagul Historic Reserve – links to Dunolly and Wedderburn and St Arnaud.
- **Castlemaine Diggings** – Showcasing the protected historic heritage cultural landscape in Australia – Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park – links to Castlemaine and Maldon.
- **The Beehive Chimney** – stands out against the skyline – 30 meters high, it is the only one of its age and size still standing in Victoria. Links to Maldon.
- **Whroo Historic Reserve** – Showcasing the Balaclava open cut mine as a spectacular example of early quartz reef mining. Puddling machines and the remnants of areas of quartz reef and shallow alluvial lead mining areas can be found throughout the historic township site.
- **Pink Cliffs Geological Reserve, Heathcote** – Once a hydraulic sluicing site, mining activity in the late 19th century washed away the top layer of earth and revealed the dramatic, colourful cliffs on display today.
- **Red Knob Mining Landscape, Vaughan** – Roadside lookouts to see the stunning red landscape known as Red Knob. These dramatic cliffs are the result of hydraulic sluicing operations in the mid-20th century.
- **Jubilee Historic Area, near Newtown** – Jubilee Company Quartz Gold Mine include battery foundations, engine beds, a water race, old mine shafts, surface workings, cyanide plant, tailings, old house site.
- **Gorge Walk Beechworth** – including the Powder Magazine exhibition and interpretation, walking infrastructure, flying through the gorge, road and bridge upgrades and interpretation.
- **Long Tunnel Extended Gold Mine** – enhancing and diversifying the experience for visitors who come to tour 150 metres below the surface and 300 metres into the hillside.

See Key Move 2 in Section 04 for examples of infrastructure initiatives.

A sustainable tourism approach requires the assessment and management of the impacts of any tourism developments on the heritage values of the Victorian Goldfields. Please see Conservation Management within Key Move 4 of Section 04 for further details.

Precedent images of architecturally designed lookouts and infrastructure.

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

World Heritage Hubs - Elevating the experience of place

Existing Visitor Centres

There are currently twenty one visitor information centres and visitor centres in the Victorian Goldfields as follows:

1. Avoca and Pyrenees Visitor Information Centre
2. Bacchus Marsh Visitor Information Centre
3. Ballarat Visitor Information Centre
4. Beaufort Resource Centre and Library (Visitor Information Centre function)
5. Beechworth Visitor Information Centre
6. Bendigo Visitor Centre
7. Castlemaine Visitor Information Centre
8. Central Goldfields Visitor Centre at Maryborough
9. Clunes Visitor Information Centre
10. Creswick Visitor Information Centre
11. Daylesford Regional Visitor Information Centre
12. Grampians and Ararat Visitor Information Centre
13. Heathcote Visitor Information Centre
14. Kyneton Visitor Information Centre
15. Loddon Visitor Information Centre
16. Maldon Visitor Information Centre
17. St Arnaud Visitor Information Centre
18. Stawell and Grampians Visitor Information Centre
19. Trentham Visitor Information Centre
20. Wedderburn Visitor Information Centre
21. Woodend Visitor Information Centre



Creswick Visitor Information Centre



Avoca and Pyrenees Visitor Information Centre



Central Goldfields Visitor Centre



Castlemaine Visitor Information Centre



Bendigo Visitor Information Centre



St Arnaud Visitor Information Centre

Each visitor centre plays an important role in providing information on attractions, accommodation and other services for visitors. The scale and size of each centre varies depending on the location's characteristics, such as tourism demand, available space and resources available for operation. The major hubs and towns such as Ballarat and Bendigo have large visitor information centres offering a range of services with some combining the service with a museum, art gallery and café.

While the existing Visitor Information serve their local needs, none are at the scale, quality, facilities and services which equate with a World Heritage listing. A comprehensive strategic approach is needed across the Victorian Goldfields to meet the needs of much larger domestic and international visitor numbers seeking information and interpretation.

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

Benchmark Projects

The following are benchmark projects with project costs that are provided in order to illustrate the potential scale of investment. Benchmark projects are escalated and reported in current day costs.

Co-designing Experiences with Victorian Goldfields Communities



Benchmark Project: Cornwall Engine Man

The Man Engine a twelve metre tall mechanical puppet (replicating parts of the mining process) made a pilgrimage across Cornwall Mining landscape, visiting former mining sites, towns and villages as an act of community remembrance, spatial identity and celebration.

Indicative Benchmark Cost: \$2.4M.

Showcasing the Hidden Gems



Benchmark Project: Scenic Lookout Lake

Path of Perspectives, Innsbruck, Austria. This architectural intervention blends seamlessly into this spectacular landscape, offering visitors an opportunity to experience the staggering vistas of the World Heritage cultural landscape from different perspectives.

Indicative Benchmark Cost: \$1M

World Heritage Hub



Benchmark Project: Maryborough Rail Station Visitor Experience Centre

Maryborough Railway Station was recently redeveloped with a new visitor centre providing a gateway to visitors looking to explore region. The Visitor centre features digital storytelling of the towns goldrush past and the development also includes a large studio for creatives to work and deliver exhibitions, a sculpture garden, the reopening of the Railway Café and Tracks Bar and improved facilities for passengers.

Indicative Benchmark Cost: \$6.1M

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

Visitor Servicing

As outlined in Section 03, the future traveller will require information in different formats than currently provided by the extensive network of visitor centres across the region. Innovation in visitor information involves implementing creative and forward-thinking approaches to provide relevant, engaging and easily accessible information. In response visitor centres will need to leverage technology, design and interactive experiences to enhance the visitor experience and deliver information in new and exciting ways.

To ensure this crucial aspiration can be achieved, facilities, funding, staffing, visitor and operator requirements will need to be substantially reviewed.

Some organisations responsible for World Heritage sites establish a purpose-built World Heritage Centre, which acts as a central hub for interpreting the values of the WHA and providing information to visitors. This approach has merit where the World Heritage area contains a main feature or attraction to which most visitors wish to experience.

In contrast the Victorian Goldfields is made up of many individual sites across a broad cultural landscape with a network of existing visitor centres which support the dispersal of visitors across the region. Some centres also employ several staff and volunteers providing local identity and an important touch point for visitors who want to meet the local community.

Rather than investing in a new purpose-built World Heritage Centre, the existing network of visitor centres have the potential to be transformed to become World Heritage Hubs for visitors and community – a place for information, stories, cultural exchange, creativity, learning, research, collaboration and empowerment. This will require all existing visitor information centres across the region to adapt to current visitor needs and incorporate World Heritage experiences in response to advancements in technology and shifts in visitor preferences. This approach has the potential to create inclusive, sustainable and enriching experiences for visitors and for the local community, fostering a sense of pride, ownership and stewardship for the Victorian Goldfields.

Transformation of the existing network of Visitor Information Centres across the region supports the implementation of the Victorian Goldfields Master Plan principles as follows:

- Disperse visitation, investment and benefits across the region
- Elevate First Peoples voices, stories culture and opportunities
- Facilitate layered story telling
- Drive social and community benefit and pride
- Whole of journey approach to visitor experiences

Transitioning to World Heritage Hubs

World Heritage Hub Objective:

Transforming all existing visitor centres across the region to become a network of World Heritage Hubs acting as touchpoints for information, interpretation, engagement and partnership opportunities with community and heritage specialists as part of the World Heritage experience.

Transformation of visitor centres to World Heritage Hubs will require a strategic approach to support the transition. It will involve:



KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

Creating interactive information and orientation

Develop engaging and informative exhibits that showcase the community's link to the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage stories and themes for both visitors and community. This can include artefacts, photographs, interactive displays, audio-visual presentations and storytelling elements. Work with local historians, curators and experts to ensure accuracy and authenticity in the interpretation of the heritage assets.

- **Mobile Heritage Programs:** The concept of Heritage Hubs also provides for mobile heritage programs that can travel to different communities within the Victorian Goldfields. These programs can include mobile exhibits, workshops, cultural performances and educational activities. Bringing the heritage experiences directly to the communities can overcome the challenge of geographic dispersion and build sense of identity and pride.
- **Online Platforms and Virtual Engagement:** Utilize digital technologies and online platforms to create virtual heritage hubs. Develop interactive websites, virtual tours and online exhibitions that allow dispersed communities to explore and learn about the Victorian Goldfields remotely. This approach can help bridge the geographical gaps and engage community members who are unable to physically visit a centralized heritage hub.

Local Community Engagement

Enable collaboration with local artisans, experts and cultural groups to host demonstrations, workshops, or performances that highlight the community's heritage to foster a sense of pride and ownership among the community members while providing an authentic experience for visitors.

Programming and Events

Plan and organise a diverse range of programming and events to attract visitors and engage the local community. This can include guided tours, workshops, cultural performances, craft demonstrations, heritage festivals, lectures, or temporary exhibits. Collaborate with local artists, artisans and cultural groups to provide authentic and dynamic experiences.

Connectivity and Networking

Establishing communication channels across the network of World Heritage Hubs will ensure cohesive messaging and collaboration on events (see above) and information sources. This fosters a sense of unity and coordination in promoting the Victorian Goldfields and engaging stakeholders.

Collaborative Partnerships

Establish local partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including local authorities, heritage organisations, tourism bodies, educational institutions and community groups. This approach will enhance the resources, expertise and outreach, strengthen the Heritage Hub concept and promote shared responsibility for the Victorian Goldfields.

Community Documentation and Oral History Projects

Encourage community members and visitors to actively participate in documenting their own heritage. Facilitate oral history projects, storytelling initiatives and community-led research to collect and conserve local knowledge and traditions and share visitors. This not only promotes community engagement but also enriches the overall understanding and interpretation of the Victorian Goldfields.

Capacity Building and Training

Provide capacity-building programs and training opportunities for community members in heritage management, interpretation, tourism and related skills. Empowering individuals within the dispersed communities can foster a sense of ownership and enable them to actively contribute to the heritage initiatives.

Educational Outreach

Establish educational programs and initiatives to involve schools, colleges and youth groups. Offer educational tours, workshops, or curriculum-linked activities that promote awareness and understanding of the community's heritage. Encourage the participation of young people in heritage conservation and interpretation efforts.

Marketing and Promotion

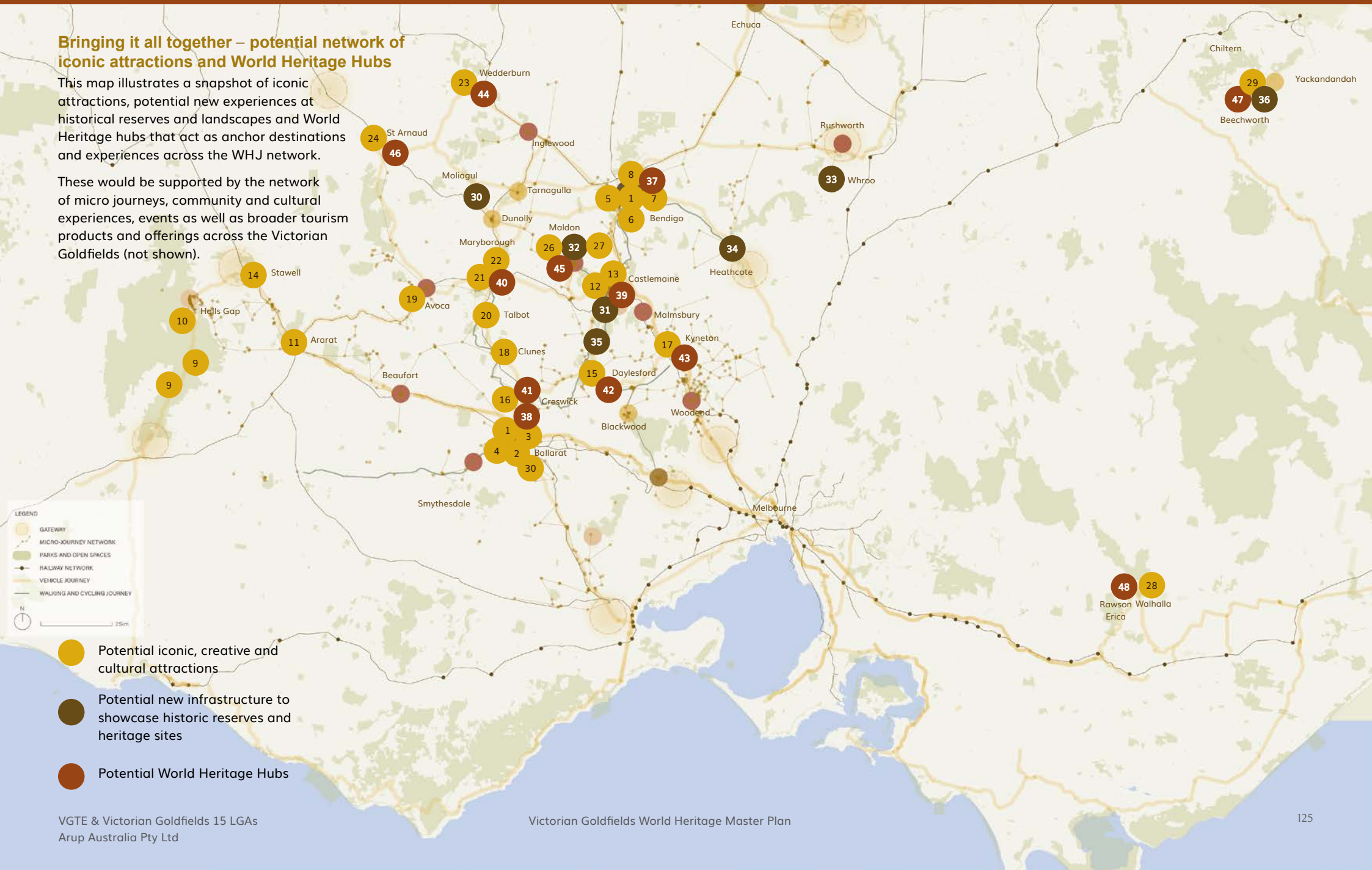
As part of the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage marketing and promotion strategy, raise awareness about the Heritage Hubs across the region. Utilize various channels such as social media, local publications, tourism websites and community networks. Collaborate with tourism organizations, travel agencies and local businesses to attract visitors to the Heritage Hub. See Key Move 5 in Section 04 for further details on marketing, promotion and branding.

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

Bringing it all together – potential network of iconic attractions and World Heritage Hubs

This map illustrates a snapshot of iconic attractions, potential new experiences at historical reserves and landscapes and World Heritage hubs that act as anchor destinations and experiences across the WHJ network.




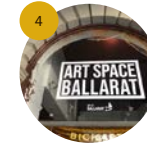



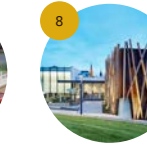
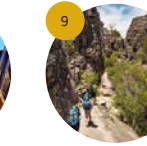


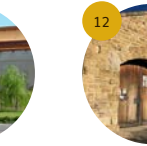




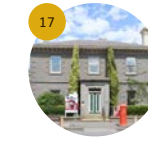
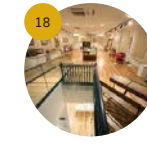
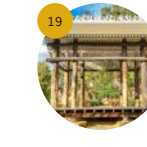

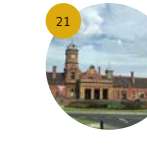
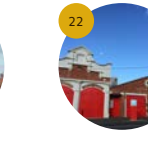
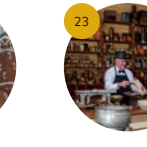
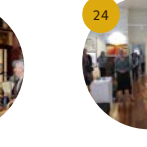

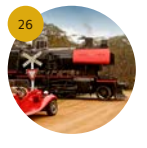
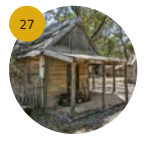
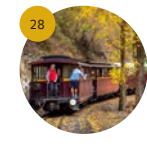


These would be supported by the network of micro journeys, community and cultural experiences, events as well as broader tourism products and offerings across the Victorian Goldfields (not shown).



- Potential iconic, creative and cultural attractions
- Potential new infrastructure to showcase historic reserves and heritage sites
- Potential World Heritage Hubs

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

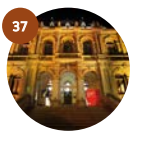

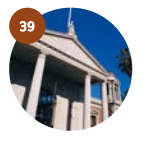

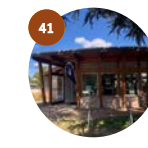

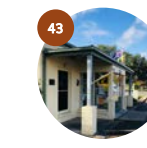
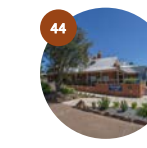
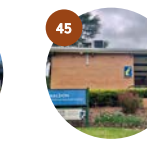
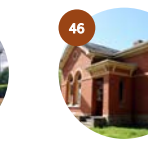
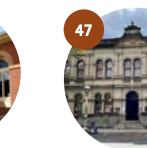
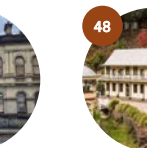
Potential iconic, creative and cultural attractions

- 1  Celebrating City of Crafts
- 2  Sovereign Hill Museum Association
- 3  Eureka Centre
- 4  Art Gallery Ballarat
- 5  Victoria Hill
- 6  Central Deborah Gold Mine
- 7  Golden Dragon Museum
- 8  Bendigo Art Gallery
- 9  Grampians and Grampians Peaks Trail
- 10  Brambuk the National Park & Cultural Centre
- 11  Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre
- 12  Old Castlemaine Gaol
- 13  Castlemaine Art Museum
- 14  Stawell Railway Gallery
- 15  Convent Gallery
- 16  Creswick Museum
- 17  Kyneton Museum
- 18  Clunes Museum
- 19  Avoca Chinese Gardens
- 20  Talbot Arts and Historical Museum
- 21  Maryborough Historic Rail Station and Visitor Centre
- 22  Central Goldfields Art Gallery
- 23  The Coach House Museum
- 24  St Arnaud Railyway Hub and Silo Art
- 25  Cultural and Community Events and Festivals
- 26  Victorian Goldfields Railway
- 27  Porcupine Village
- 28  Walhalla Goldfields Railway and Long Tunnel Mine
- 29  Beechworth Gaol
- 30  Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades

Potential new infrastructure to showcase historic reserves and heritage sites

- 30  The Welcome Stranger
- 31  Castlemaine Diggings
- 32  The Beehive Chimney
- 33  Whroo Historic Reserve
- 34  Pink Cliffs Geological Reserve
- 35  Red Knob Mining Landscape
- 36  Gorge Walk Beechworth

Potential World Heritage Visitor Hubs

- 37  Bendigo World Heritage Hub
- 38  Ballarat World Heritage Hub
- 39  Castlemaine World Heritage Hub
- 40  Central Goldfields World Heritage Hub
- 41  Creswick World Heritage Hub
- 42  Daylesford Regional World Heritage Hub
- 43  Kyneton World Heritage Hub
- 44  Loddon World Heritage Hub
- 45  Maldon World Heritage Hub
- 46  St Arnaud World Heritage Hub
- 47  Beechworth World Heritage Precinct Research and Education Centre
- 48  Walhalla / Erica World Heritage Hub

KEY MOVE 3: CREATE WORLD HERITAGE SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

Proposed Signature Experiences and Hero Site Initiatives

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Key Partners
3A	Community Ambassador Program Work with ambassadors as key partners, to co-create journeys, experiences and events.	Fostering local ambassador relationships are key for powerful authentic brand storytelling.	Regional tourism boards, major touring route organisations, local government and other stakeholders
3B	Cultural Ambassadors Program Work with Cultural ambassadors as key partners, to co-create journeys, experiences and events. Engagement with RAPs is required to co-design this program.	Fostering local ambassador relationships are key for powerful authentic brand storytelling.	Registered Aboriginal Parties, Local community, local government, Regional tourism boards and major touring route organisations
3C	Infrastructure upgrades at Experience Hubs. This may include Castlemaine Diggings, Moliagul, Beehive Chimney and various key historical reserves. Improve and expand experience offer at World Heritage Sites to showcase hidden gems, share the potential OUV and stories of the Goldfields and create unique signature experiences. Please refer to Key Move 2 for an example of site-specific initiatives.	Improve and expand experience offer at World Heritage Sites to showcase hidden gems, share the potential OUV and stories of the Goldfields and create unique signature experiences. Please refer to Key Move 2 for an example of site-specific initiatives.	Parks Victoria, Heritage Victoria, Registered Aboriginal Parties, Local community, local government, State Government
3D	Continued engagement to identify future experience hubs This will include continued engagement with stakeholders, cultural and community ambassadors to identify further opportunities for hero sites and signature experiences.	While preliminary opportunities for experience hubs have been identified within this Master Plan. Continued engagement is required to establish a future pipeline of potential experience site investments as visitation increases.	Industry, local business and community, local and State government, Registered Aboriginal Parties
3E	Form and Support Attraction Partnerships Form partnerships with existing attractions such as Sovereign Hill Museum Association, Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades, Bendigo Heritage Attractions, local galleries and museums to promote World Heritage Journeys and experiences.	Leverage and build off existing major destinations to enhance regional anchor attractions. Sovereign Hill Museum Association is an Australian tourism icon and a winner of major tourism awards, Sovereign Hill Museum Association attracts some 450,000 visitors annually.	Regional tourism boards and major touring route organisations, Private Sector
3F	Co-design signature experience activation Engage collectively with Visit Victoria, regional tourism boards, major touring route organisations as well as local business and communities to co-design signature experiences and activations linking to the World Heritage themes.	Signature experiences collaboratively developed with local communities will foster community pride, creativity and build support for World Heritage and visitation. These experiences play to the strength of local communities and will create authentic, memorable experiences for visitors to enjoy.	Local community, local government
3G	World Heritage Hub Strategy and Feasibility Assessment Develop a strategy to transform the existing Visitor Information Centres across the Victorian Goldfields to adapt to visitor needs today and incorporate World Heritage experiences. This should also include an initial investment in minor upgrades to existing visitor information centres to support their transition in the short term.	Visitor information services will need to change to address their value proposition for visitors in response to advancements in technology and shifts in visitor preferences. A strategic and regional approach to this transition is required. While the transition to an experience centre or hub approach may take time, support should be given to begin to incorporate World Heritage stories and experiences in the interim.	Regional tourism boards, major touring route organisations, local government, UNESCO.
3H	Undertake immediate conservation and safety improvements at historic reserves Undertake a safety risk assessment and implement upgrades at key historic reserves and sites to support safe and sustainable visitation.	Stakeholders have identified safety issues (such as illegal behaviour across public land) as a key concern at historic sites and reserves. Safety improvements must be addressed prior to supporting increased visitation.	Parks Victoria, State Government

KEY MOVE 4: GET WORLD HERITAGE READY

Targeted capacity and capability building for local business and industry are required to elevate the quality, consistency and strength of products and services to create world class experience and maximise economic benefits. This includes opportunities to strengthen cultural, community and environmental stewardship.

Capacity Building

Tourism Product and Service Quality

High quality product and services are essential to maximise the benefit of tourism, meet visitor expectations and support economic growth and prosperity of Victorian Goldfields businesses and communities. Fundamental to this is investing in people and capacity building to help improve their profitability, productivity and effectively leverage the World Heritage listing. As identified in previous studies, most of the tourism business are micro or small businesses. This restricts their capacity to engage with internal training, development and review compared to larger enterprises¹. Training, resources, incentives and support for local business is required to help upskill tourism businesses and improve the quality of product and services on offer in the Victorian Goldfields. This support should focus on elevating customer services quality, extending and coordinating hours of operation and the development of world class product suitable for emerging markets.

Digital Capability

The ability to leverage online platforms and where possible operate online is essential for local businesses, particularly in a post-lock down economy. Research shows that the quality of customer's online engagement experiences is critical to the success of tourism operators considering that²:

- 85% of travellers use mobile devices.
- 74% of travellers use social media while travelling.
- Approximately 75% of travel followers are likely to take action on videos they see.

¹ Sustainable Tourism Investment Priorities 2021.

² The Tourism Industry Business Capability Development Program, QLD.

Stakeholders have highlighted a lack of digital capability as a barrier to local business and economic growth and meeting visitor expectations. Support for businesses to harness digital technology and navigate the online world including social media marketing, website design, online booking systems, search engine optimisation, e-commerce and publishing trading hours and information online will support local businesses to grow and maximise the benefits from increased visitation following World Heritage listing.

Conservation Management

Heritage places may have multiple heritage values that range from community values to potential World Heritage values. The fabric of heritage places and their associated values - tangible and intangible - may be fragile and potentially impacted by tourism developments and increased visitor numbers. Developments proposed to support access to and amenity of heritage sites and townships such as conservation works to and maintenance of heritage places and their environs; visitor facilities; infrastructure; tracks and pathways; signage; and tourism events require assessment for their potential impacts to heritage sites and values at their planning stage, prior to developments commencing. Impacts to the heritage values of places may occur as a direct result of a development, during and/or following construction. Impacts to heritage values may include impacts on the ability to appreciate or experience a place, on the 'sense of place', on sight lines or views to and from the site and on community access to and use of places.

The heritage values of many goldfields places are protected under local planning regulations and through their inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register and the Victorian Heritage Inventory. All Aboriginal cultural heritage is protected under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. All places that have legal protection for their heritage values require permits for works that may impact the heritage values of the place. The management of potential impacts to the heritage values of historic heritage places should be underpinned by a Conservation Management Plan (CMP).

KEY MOVE 4: GET WORLD HERITAGE READY

CMPs articulate the significance of a heritage place to help protect its significance, define the kinds of changes that can be made without compromising the heritage significance of the place and inform approval authority decision making on planning applications. Cultural Heritage Management Plans under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 will likely be required for proposed infrastructure development. A future World Heritage nomination for the Victorian Goldfields will include a management plan for each component of the serial site as a basis for managing impact to the potential OUV of the site.

Potential impacts should be assessed for all the heritage values a place may have, from key attributes that hold potential World Heritage values to community values. Places of no known heritage values and/or without legal heritage protection contribute to the cultural landscape of the Victorian Goldfields and may have heritage significance for local communities. Assessment of the heritage values of these places should also be considered prior to any tourism developments.

Heritage Buildings and Streetscape Conservation

As identified within Key Move 2, heritage conservation, facade and streetscape improvements are required in towns across Victorian Goldfields to improve the presentation and enhance the heritage values of historic areas. The establishment of a regional grants program would support property owners to carry out essential conservation works. This could include public infrastructure works including verandah reinstatement, facade restoration, upper story activation, roof, lantern and other water ingress repairs and DDA access enhancements.

Re-Use of Historic Buildings

The sustainable use of built heritage can be harnessed to get WHJ ready, drive added economic benefits through tourism and facilitate regional development. To support the re-use of built heritage, grants program should be considered at a regional/State level. A model could be an RDV administered program funding \$30 million worth of up to \$2m grants accessible to 15 participating LGA with applicant contribution \$1:\$1 to \$1:\$4 using RDV standard investment criteria.

Case Study: Maryborough Railway Station Redevelopment

Maryborough's historic rail station is undergoing a redevelopment into a modern hub with more attractions for visitors, contemporary co-working spaces, and improved facilities for commuters. The redevelopment of the 1890s building includes an upgraded Visitor Information Centre which will feature interactive digital storytelling screens that will include stories about the region's role in the Victorian Goldrush. It also includes refurbishments to the existing cafe and bar, DDA improvements to make the station accessible for people of all abilities, parking improvements, sculpture courtyard.

Benchmark current cost: \$6 million.



KEY MOVE 4: GET WORLD HERITAGE READY

Accommodation

Accommodation supports visitors to stay longer, extending their trip and maximising their spend in the region. Forecast visitor numbers provide a strong case for investment in new accommodation. However, new accommodation is not the only investment required to get World Heritage ready. UNESCO's Sustainable Tourism Toolkit highlights that 'the ability to secure the maximum benefit from tourism in a destination is inextricably tied to the quality of product'¹.

Sustainable Tourism — Accommodation Principles

- **Minimises its ecological footprint** – employ best practices in maintenance, services, logistics, products and supplies to minimise environmental impact surrounding water, renewable technologies and food and waste management.
- **Protect the heritage from irresponsible development** – all plans for developing accommodation within or adjacent to World Heritage sites need to be based on a deep respect for and understanding of, the World Heritage site. Planning controls and decision making should ensure the accommodation proposals do not detract from the potential OUV.
- **Retain the sense of place and authenticity** – encourage accommodation that retains and celebrates the distinctiveness and authenticity of the destination, local area and its stories.
- **Drive benefits for local communities** – encourage accommodation that creates a positive impact for local communities such as commissioning local producers and craftspeople as well as working collaboratively with local communities.
- **Make sustainable practices visible** – encourage accommodation to publicise sustainability commitments and energy reductions to support positioning of Victorian Goldfields as a sustainable destination and meet new trends in visitor expectations.

Accommodation Quality Improvement Program

Improving the quality of existing accommodation stock is critical to supporting a world class experience and to secure maximum benefit from tourism. Poor quality accommodation limits the economic potential of visitors. An Accommodation Quality Improvement Program that supports and incentivises existing accommodation businesses is a key opportunity to raise the standard of accommodation products and services.

'The more visitors to stay in your destination that stays in good quality accommodation, the greater their spending.'

UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Online Toolkit – Guide 6.

1 UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Toolkit – Guide 6 Managing the development of tourism infrastructure.

Attracting New Accommodation to Meet Demand

Encourage the private sector to develop accommodation to meet forecast demand. Economic modelling of the potential impacts of World Heritage Listing undertaken by MCA in 2024 highlights the potential increase in accommodation demand in the CVG alone. This is modelled across three clusters of LGAs which broadly relate to travel routes and proximity to main centres. Analysis of accommodation demand modelling forecast potential for investment in an additional 1,708 rooms in Cluster A and 1,153 rooms in Cluster B and 281 rooms in Cluster C over a 10-year period².

The analysis shows that total investment in accommodation alone, to meet visitor demand across the region, would be in the order of \$682.5 million over 10 years.

Source: Victorian Goldfields UNESCO World Heritage Benefits Report (Revised 2024)

² Sustainable Tourism Toolkit 2020 (TRC) and Economic Benefit Assessment 2022, revised 2024 (McA) <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/heritage/about/world/world-heritage-convention>
The Australian Tourism Data Warehouse is the 'go to' database for tourism product. Care should be taken when relying on this data as it does not contain the total statistics for the region.
Cluster A = Bendigo, Campaspe, Mount Alexander and Macedon Ranges LGAs. Cluster B = Ballarat, Central Goldfields, Hepburn, Moorabool, Golden Plains, Pyrenees, Ararat, and Northern Grampians LGAs. Cluster C = Baw Baw and Indigo LGAs.

KEY MOVE 4: GET WORLD HERITAGE READY



Food and Beverage

Gastronomy, the quality and diversity of food, wine and beer is a core attribute of the proposed Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Brand with links to the culinary and cultivation sub-theme in the World Heritage theme framework. An analysis using the Sustainable Tourism and Value Creation Toolkit: Supply and Demand Tool (TRC and WolfPeak) shows there is considerable clustering of food, drink and produce in the two regional cities and other communities in the eastern part of the region. Leveraging Bendigo and the surrounding area's status as a UNESCO's Creative City and Region of Gastronomy and the region's existing diverse food and beverage offerings including the wineries at Pyrenees and Daylesford, there is an opportunity to enhance these product strengths. Food and beverage enhancement opportunities include:

- Support food and beverage at key sites and/or visitor centres to provide visitor serving and support revenue generating activities.
- Encourage extended and consistent opening hours of traders during the week, weekends and public holidays.
- Investigate how to improve cellar door experiences for visitors to enhance their experiences.
- Support the creation of culinary experiences and tours that brings the World Heritage sub-theme of culinary and cultivation to life. Examples include farmers markets, food festivals and tours, wine tastings and cooking classes.
- Encourage training and workforce development within the hospitality industry to support local businesses to meet customer expectations, generate income and encourage entrepreneurship. Training is not only limited to food handling, but also can include business management and marketing.
- Advocate for housing affordability measures that ensure the hospitality work force has access to local affordable housing.

For example, the Food Fossickers Network is a membership-based network of local producers, food manufacturers and restaurants which seek to build a stronger, independent local supply chain and showcase the region's local produce to visitors. There is significant opportunity to support and expand networks such as this and grow its tourism role through the development of food experiences, regional packaging and greater alignment with winemakers' groups for regional food and wine marketing.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Carrying Capacity and Visitor Numbers

The monitoring of visitation and the carrying capacity of destinations is critical to ensuring tourism is sustainable within the Victorian Goldfields and that the potential significance is conserved. Carrying capacity generally refers to the number of people an area can accommodate without causing degradation of the natural and sociocultural environment, infrastructure and overall visitor experience. Visitor numbers should be measured and monitored over time to ensure infrastructure, programs, product and services are fit-for-purpose and that the quality of life, outstanding universal value and amenity of places across the Victorian Goldfields can be maintained. Monitoring of visitation can also provide an evidence base to support additional investment in the future.

Engage and Monitor Community Sentiment

Income generated from both domestic and international tourism contributes significantly to the socioeconomic and cultural development of many communities around the world. However, the Victorian Goldfields community acknowledge the potential challenges of tourism including overcrowding, increased pressure of infrastructure and services and a potential impact on the cost of housing, cleanliness and safety. While community engagement has informed the development of this Master Plan, ongoing monitoring and understanding the real-time currents of perception and community priorities about tourism and its impact on quality of life will provide key insight into how Victorian Goldfields is marketed and managed as a destination. This could be achieved through ongoing application of the Planet Happiness Survey Tool and Imagine methodology and/or SocialPinpoint, an online engagement tool.

KEY MOVE 4: GET WORLD HERITAGE READY

Proposed Initiatives

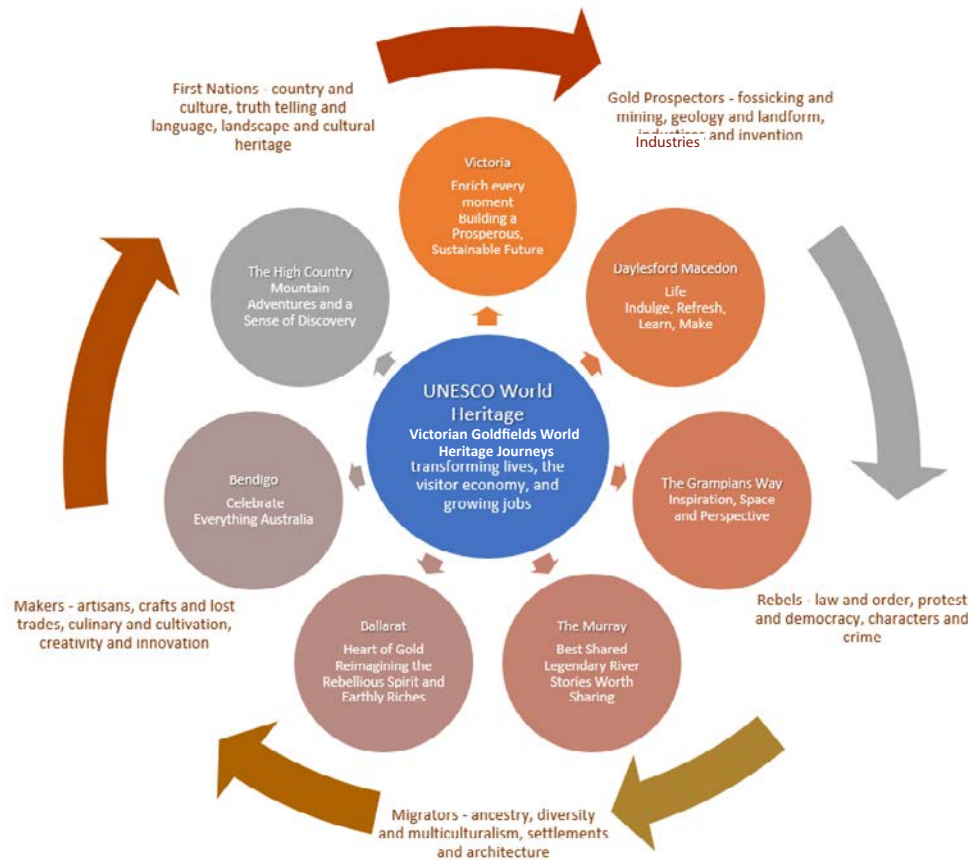
No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Key Partners
4A	<p>Pursue a sustainable destination accreditation Work with site managers and tourism boards to seek destination sustainable tourism accreditation through EcoTourism Australia. The accreditation process includes a communication strategy, branding and marketing guided by EcoTourism.</p>	Promote and incentivise sustainable tourism in alignment with the Victorian Goldfields International Engagement Strategy.	EcoTourism, regional tourism boards and major touring route organisations.
4B	<p>First Peoples Cultural Tourism Development Program Develop a program to promote business development opportunities for First Peoples enterprise through the World Heritage sites. Support and promote on Country experiences with First Peoples.</p>	Supporting First Peoples-led business and tourism experiences is a key focus of many economic development and tourism strategies and Country Plans. It will also support authentic and meaningful visitor experiences.	Registered Aboriginal Parties, local business, local and State Government
4C	<p>Community Story Development Program Storytelling and genealogical connectors, linking Historical Societies and Museums to tell the story of each community and how they fit together across the Victorian Goldfields. This will be linked and aligned with the development of the overall suite of themed regional stories.</p>	Current storytelling and experience are disjointed. Builds on the strength of local communities and organisations. Opportunity to build on the strong sense of community pride.	Local government, local communities, local business, special interest groups, Registered Aboriginal Parties.
4D	<p>Service quality capacity building program Deliver a regional program to support local businesses and tourism businesses to improve the reliability and availability of services. This may roll out existing programs at scale and should include business mentoring and product development support.</p>	Current tourism and visitor services vary quality and availability including opening hours and days operating causing a poor visitor experience.	State government, local government, industry and business
4E	<p>Operationalise WH governance model Operationalise a regional sustainable tourism governance model to coordinate activities and oversee delivery of benefits and other applicable activities in this strategy The proposed governance model is set out in the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan.</p>	Coordinated governance across levels of government and stakeholders is required for a successful implementation of this Master Plan.	Heritage Victoria, Australian Government, State Government, local government.
4F	<p>World Heritage Guide Program Program to introduce local guides that operate across the Victorian Goldfields to potential WH OUV, themes and experiences (e.g. WHJ), share stories of the region and facilitate guided experiences. This can include local community and industry.</p>	Enables more meaningful engagement with the Victorian Goldfields area, creates jobs and opportunities for local communities, heritage societies and industry.	Local and State government, Heritage Victoria, local communities
4G	<p>Attract High Quality Accommodation Investment Develop a strategy to promote and encourage private accommodation investment and upgrades that align with accommodation best practice principles set out in this Master Plan.</p>	Undersupply of accommodation in smaller townships and in peak periods. Changing consumer expectations for accommodation. Ensuring high quality development that aligns with sustainable tourism principles is critical.	Private sector, State government, local government
4H	<p>Accommodation Quality Improvement Program Develop an incentive program to support and encourage existing accommodation businesses to raise the quality of their facilities and services.</p>	Standard of accommodation varies in the region. Poor quality accommodation limits the economic potential of visitors. This program is recommended after visitation increases.	Private sector, State government, local government

KEY MOVE 4: GET WORLD HERITAGE READY

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Key Partners
4I	<p>International Tourism Training and Product Development Support Program Training and capability building program to support local businesses and industry to elevate the quality of product and service to meet international markets and appeal to a wide range of visitors.</p>	Upskilling is required to support tourism business and local business to maximise benefits and appeal to a wider market. Capacity building is a core priority identified in many regional economic and tourism plans and strategies.	Private sector, State government, local government, regional tourism boards, Australian Tourism Export Council
4J	<p>Run a digital capability program Region-wide program to train and support local businesses to harness digital tools and social media marketing.</p>	Low uptake of digital tools and marketing strategies for local businesses was identified in some areas of the Victorian Goldfields including smaller townships.	Private sector, State government, local government, regional tourism boards
4K	<p>Develop Conservation Management Plans (CMP), Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMP) and implement associated actions Prepare CMPs and/or CHMPs for World Heritage sites to identify conservation and restoration works required.</p>	Heritage sites require careful and ongoing management, maintenance and conservation and they will be at risk with increased visitation. Landowners may require support to implement the actions set out in CMPs.	Land managers including Parks Victoria, Registered Aboriginal Parties.
4L	<p>Heritage Building Re-Use Grants Program Establish grants program to facilitate sustainable use and reuse of built heritage with the primary objective of supporting World Heritage Journeys and World Heritage experiences. There is an opportunity to fund \$30 million up to \$2m accessible to 15 participating LGAs each allocated as a grant with applicant contribution \$1:\$1 to \$1:\$4 using RDV standard investment criteria.</p>	Establish grants program to facilitate sustainable use and reuse of built heritage with the primary objective of supporting World Heritage Journeys and World Heritage experiences. There is an opportunity to fund \$30 million up to \$2m accessible to 13 participating LGAs each allocated as a grant with applicant contribution \$1:\$1 to \$1:\$4 using RDV standard investment criteria.	Heritage Victoria, public land managers, State government, local government
4M	<p>Establish a Conservation Grants Program Establish a funding program for heritage conservation works to assist site owners to implement relevant recommendations in the CMPs including essential initial and ongoing conservation works and undertake historic streetscape improvements. This program should include projects such as veranda reinstatement and façade restoration, upper story activation, disability access and public infrastructure works.</p>	Support is required for owners to undertake conservation works and implement CMP. Some councils such as Ballarat have existing conservation grants, however, the scale of improvements required means further support is needed to protect and celebrate Victorian Goldfield's built heritage.	Heritage Victoria, State government, local government
4N	<p>Undertake Monitoring and Evaluation Measure and monitor visitor numbers and benefit assessment. Advocate for suitable questions to be included in the TRA National Visitor Survey and International Visitor Survey to provide access to data for the Victorian Goldfields.</p>	Monitoring is essential to maintain the carrying capacity and sustainability of tourism activities.	Industry, local and State government, regional tourism boards
4O	<p>Monitor Community Sentiment Commission a periodic community and local business perception survey and communications effort to deepen engagement with communities.</p>	Community support and championship will be critical to the success of the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Journeys and experiences. Monitoring community sentiment will help to ensure that community benefits are being realised and that any tourism growth is sustainable.	Local community, local and State government, Planet Happiness
4P	<p>World Heritage Research Strategy Develop a World Heritage Research Strategy to establish a plan for World Heritage research and capacity building for the following potential listing.</p>	A strategy is required to determine future research needs to support the management of World Heritage in the Victorian Goldfields including the identification of how and where research should be undertaken.	UNESCO, research institutions, Heritage Vic

KEY MOVE 5: PROMOTE AND RAISE AWARENESS OF THE VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS

Branding, marketing and events are required to position Victorian Goldfields as an international product for the strength of experience it offers the entire region and to raise awareness of its stories and experiences.



Regional Tourism Brands and alignment of the Victorian Goldfields

LEVERAGING THE WORLD HERITAGE BRAND

The strength and positive associations of the UNESCO World Heritage brand will benefit all tourism regions in Victorian Goldfields. The regional tourism organisations each have their own brand propositions as shown in the table overpage. They are generally homogeneous and speak to the values of the broader region. They are mainly targeting the same customer segments and aim to capture market share by offering comparable alternatives.

An overarching Victorian Goldfields World Heritage brand has the potential to encompass and represent all the regional tourism brands. The initial brand strategy was prepared to support the World Heritage nomination process in 2021. The brand can be used by regional tourism organisations and industry to augment their existing communications and promotional collateral by including the Goldfields logo.

It is anticipated that the initial strategy will be further refined and that all offerings within the World Heritage region would be linked by a common brand identity that respects the existing brand positioning of the various tourism sub regions.

The value of this approach and further refinement of the Victorian Goldfields brand strategy includes:

- **Single Overarching Brand Name:** The Victorian Goldfields has a single brand name across all of its sub-regional brands. To create a consistent and recognisable brand identity.
- **Brand Equity:** The focus is on building and leveraging the proposed overall UNESCO World Heritage brand equity and reputation rather than individual sub-brands.
- **Brand Consistency:** There is a strong emphasis on maintaining consistency in brand elements, such as logo design, visual identity, messaging and brand voice. This helps to reinforce the brand's identity and create a cohesive brand experience.
- **Cross-Promotion:** The proposed overarching proposed UNESCO World Heritage brand allows for cross-promotion and cross-selling of different experiences across the world heritage region. The positive perception and trust associated with the UNESCO World Heritage brand can extend to new offerings, increasing their chances of success.
- **Streamlined Marketing Efforts:** Marketing efforts across the region can be streamlined and focused on building and strengthening the overall Victorian Goldfields World Heritage brand. The resources and efforts put into brand awareness, positioning and messaging benefit all offerings across the region.
- **Cost Efficiency:** A strong World Heritage brand can result in cost efficiencies in marketing and advertising as each regional tourism organisation can leverage it and promote new experiences in association with it.

KEY MOVE 5: PROMOTE AND RAISE AWARENESS OF THE VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS

Key actions

- Review the initial brand strategy and refine the Brand Essence:** Determine the essence of the brand that represents the collective identity of the destinations and villages across the Victorian Goldfields and World Heritage journeys. This should include the overarching value, emotion, or promise that captures the spirit of the Victorian Goldfields and resonates with visitors.
- Develop Victorian Goldfields WHA Brand Positioning:** Based on the identified common themes and the brand essence, craft a unique positioning statement that elevates the Victorian Goldfields and sets it apart from other destinations. Highlight the collective strengths and offerings of the destinations (including towns and villages), emphasising what makes the Victorian Goldfields an outstanding and distinctive choice for visitors.
- Create a Brand Identity:** Build on the existing visual identity to enable each destination within the region to showcase their individual identities.
- Establish Key Messaging:** Develop key messages that communicate the UNESCO's brand's value proposition and the unique experiences visitors can expect across Victorian Goldfields. These messages should be tailored to different target markets and effectively convey the brand essence and positioning based on the stories and themes of the master plan.
- Implement Integrated Marketing Communications:** Create a comprehensive marketing communications plan that outlines how the brand will be promoted across various channels. This includes traditional advertising, digital marketing, public relations, social media, content marketing and partnerships. Ensure consistency in messaging, visuals and tone of voice across all touchpoints.
- Collaborate and Engage with Regional Partners:** Foster collaboration among the Victorian Goldfields stakeholders and local communities. Encourage them to actively participate in promoting the UNESCO World Heritage brand in a way that respects the positioning of each destination.
- Monitor and Adapt the Brand:** Continuously monitor the performance of the Victorian Goldfields brand strategy, gather feedback from visitors and stakeholders and assess the impact on tourism growth and perception. Make necessary adjustments and refinements to the proposed Victorian Goldfields World Heritage brand strategy based on insights and market trends.

Regional Brand Propositions - Victorian Goldfields

Tourism Region	Brand Position	Vision / Other
Victorian Goldfields	Australia's premier and first destination to offer World Heritage Journeys	Share the extraordinary story of the Victorian Goldfields with people across the globe and create social, cultural and economic opportunities for every community and person across the region
Victoria	Enrich every moment Highlights our unique point of difference	We will work together to make Victoria a leader in the delivery of exceptional, diverse and connected experiences for visitors. We will invest in bold, innovative and inspiring tourism products and experiences that attract more visitors to come to Victoria, stay longer and spend more. We will ensure Victoria maximises the social and economic benefits of domestic and international tourism. We will – by creating a strong, resilient visitor economy – build a prosperous, sustainable future for Victoria
Daylesford and Macedon Ranges (Macedon Ranges Shire Council Moorabool Shire Council Hepburn Shire)	Daylesford Macedon Life Brand pillars: Indulge (food and drink), Refresh (escape and rejuvenate), Learn (history and culture), Make (art and artisans)	Savvy travellers looking for unique and stylish accommodation, memorable dining experiences, worldclass produce, classes and experiences, happening venues, local events, retail therapy and interesting activities
Grampians (Ararat Rural City Council and Northern Grampians Shire Council)	The Grampians Way	Essence: inspiration, space and perspective the Grampians Way. Brand platform is designed to connect with audiences on a deeper emotional level as well as the rational.
Murray (Campaspe Shire Council)	The Murray – best shared	Essence: Legendary River Stories Worth Sharing. Because the best things in life are better when they're shared.
Goldfields (Central Goldfields Shire, City of Ballarat, Golden Plains Shire Council, Loddon Shire Council, City of Greater Bendigo Pyrenees Shire Council and Mount Alexander Shire)	Heart of Gold (Visit Ballarat) Celebrate everything Australia (Bendigo)	A city re-imagining the rebellious spirit and earthly riches that first put it on the map Made of Ballarat marketing campaign USP Reflect on our past, revel in our present and imagine our future.
Gippsland (Baw Baw Shire Council)	The gateway to Gippsland	Offers the perfect family adventure, active expedition or carefree escape. Head off the beaten track and explore more of wonderful Baw Baw.
Victoria's High Country (Indigo Shire Council)	This is a place far away from the everyday	Positioning Victoria's High Country as Victoria's playground for epic adventures, unparalleled scenery and exceptional epicurean experiences.

KEY MOVE 5: PROMOTE AND RAISE AWARENESS OF THE VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS

Events and Festival Program

Events and festivals are an existing feature of many townships across the Victorian Goldfields. Community and stakeholder engagement show the social and economic value that these events bring to communities. Existing events and festivals range in scale and awareness, from highly local markets to large signature events that help brand a town. Together these deliver increased visitor numbers and spending and quality experiences for local communities and visitors alike.

These events and festivals have largely developed organically, however, there is a strong opportunity to take a more coordinated approach that brings together well-considered strategic planning, incubation, development, curation, investment and promotion that can help deliver events and festivals that support the Victorian Goldfields' brand, create new businesses and jobs and improve the quality of life for local communities.

A dedicated, region-wide Events and Festivals Program would support the strategic coordination, development and delivery of events across the region leveraging them to increase awareness of Victorian Goldfields, its stories, history, heritage and promote visitation through the World Heritage Journeys and World Heritage sites. New events that build on the existing events and festivals in the region should focus on bringing to life the World Heritage theme framework. The program would also ensure a strong cadence of events and festivals across the seasons, times of day and year and unlock the full potential that these events and festivals can bring.



Bendigo Tourism
Easter Festival Bendigo



Amicus Exchange
Sovereign Hill Museum Association Winter Wonder lights (Sovereign Hill Museum Association 2022)

Case Study: Gold, Glitz and Grit Exhibition



Museums Victoria has announced the acquisition of the State of Victoria Gold Jewellery Collection, now standing as one of the most significant public collections of Victorian goldfields jewellery. There is strong opportunity to collaborate with exhibitions such as this to embed World Heritage stories and drive an increase in visitation.

This collection, consisting of nearly 400 pieces sourced and smithed from across the state, offers a glittering panorama of over 100 years of pivotal moments in Victorian history. It encompasses over 130 years of Victorian history and explores themes and stories of migration, the gold rush, colonisation, federation, WWI and WWII, design, the Great Depression, women's rights, industry, and the environment. It covers the breadth of the state, with items of jewellery made and worn across Greater Melbourne and Victoria's major regional centres including Ballarat, Geelong, Sale, Bendigo, and Wangaratta, as well as smaller towns including Jeparit, Daylesford, Rochester, Beechworth, Clunes, Beulah and Woorak.

Gold, Glitz and Grit was a pop-up exhibition of fifteen highlights from the newly acquired State of Victoria Gold Jewellery Collection, on display at the Melbourne Museum in 2024. The gold rushes lured over half a million people to Victoria as they sought their fortunes on goldfields across the colony. Those who were lucky enough to strike it rich sometimes immortalised their success in jewellery. They also invited communities to share their story and promote their organisation.

KEY MOVE 5: PROMOTE AND RAISE AWARENESS OF THE VICTORIAN GOLDFIELDS

Proposed Initiatives

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Key Partners
5A	<p>Marketing and Branding for the Victorian Goldfields, WHJ and sites. Develop a marketing and branding strategy to promote the Victorian Goldfields to domestic and international markets with a focus on new World Heritage Journeys, signature experiences and hero sites. This should pitch Victorian Goldfields as a sustainable and safe destination.</p>	Targeted advertising and promotion that links to key target domestic and international markets that bring the World Heritage brand, characteristics and attributes to life. Further work is required to build on existing branding.	Local Government, Regional Tourism Boards, Industry, Visit Victoria, Touring Route Organisations
5B	<p>Sustainable Destination Messaging and Alignment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Develop messaging to ensure the region's commitment to sustainability and overall positive cultural, social and environmental impact is visible in all awareness raising activities.</p>	Address visitor and community expectations of sustainability and sustainable tourism. Sustainable development is a core priority for government and stakeholders. Aligning and positioning Victorian Goldfields with UN SDGs provides a clear framework to communicate this.	Regional Tourism Boards, Local Government, Industry, Visit Victoria
5C	<p>Events and Festival Program and Strategy Work with regional tourism boards and major touring routes to develop and coordinate a program of World Heritage Events and Festivals that coordinate and link to the existing events and festivals in the region such as the Tiny Town and CresFest.</p>	Events can drive significant awareness and visitor spend in the region which building awareness and support for the World Heritage region and Victorian Goldfields. Supports community pride and identity.	Creative Victoria, Visit Victoria, Local Community and Business, Local Government, Regional Tourism Boards
5D	<p>Community and Local Business Advocacy and Education Advocacy and education to build community awareness and understanding about World Heritage and the opportunity it presents for them and their community including identifying community needs and aspirations. This could be a rotating activation or event that moves through communities.</p>	Community support will be critical to the success of the UNESCO nomination and driving benefits to Victorian Goldfields' communities. The education component is also critical as many people are not aware of what a UNESCO World Heritage listing is and what it can mean for them.	Local Community and Business, Local Government, Tourism and Events and Parks Victoria from State Government
5E	<p>Pursue Australia's World Heritage Journeys Pursue elevating the region through introduction of 'Australia's world heritage journeys' program, spearheaded by Victorian Goldfields WHJ.</p>	In line with the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage International Engagement Strategy.	UNESCO, Australian Government

TRANSFORMATIONAL APPROACH

The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan presents a transformative approach to tourism. It is underpinned by the principles of sustainability, cultural appreciation and regional development. This bold vision represents a strategic commitment to create an enduring benefit for communities and the economy at large.

The initiatives presented in this plan are transformative; they will invigorate local economies, create substantial employment opportunities and position the region at the forefront of global sustainability and heritage conservation efforts.

By steering travellers towards less frequented destinations and encouraging deeper engagement with local cultures and environments, the World Heritage Journeys concept of the master plan promises to redistribute tourism's economic benefits more evenly and sustainably throughout the Victorian Goldfields.

By prioritizing infrastructure projects like road and rail infrastructure and service upgrades, as well as the development of walking paths, cycling routes and visitor facilities, the plan lays the groundwork for a tourism model that supports economic growth while conserving the natural and cultural heritage that attracts visitors in the first place.

Moreover, the push towards more sustainable modes of transportation, including electric vehicles including e-bikes and an enhanced public transport network, aligns with the Government's commitment to Net Zero and promoting health and wellness through active travel. This forward-thinking strategy not only enhances the visitor experience but also positions the region as a leader in sustainable tourism practices.

Furthermore, the initiative's focus on conserving and celebrating cultural heritage—through projects like World Heritage Visitor Interpretation Centres—ensures that economic development does not come at the expense of cultural integrity. These centres serve not only as attractions but as educational and engagement hubs, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the region's rich history and the living culture of its First Peoples.

Central to this vision is the collaboration between multiple governmental bodies and local and regional authorities, ensuring that the necessary infrastructure and services are developed to support this sustainable tourism model and regional development.

The state government, along with 15 local governments and the Regional Tourism Boards/Visitor Economy Partnerships, must actively collaborate to bring this vision to life.

Departments responsible for transport and planning play a pivotal role, overseeing much-needed infrastructure upgrades.

Several other government departments are also involved, including those responsible for environment and climate, jobs, skills, industry and regions, treasury, First Peoples, cultural heritage, infrastructure, parks, public transport (rail and bus), regional development, regional roads and tourism and events.

TRANSFORMATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

This plan proposes a major transformative project - The progressive development and implementation of Australia's First World Heritage Journeys. A series of long-term infrastructure development projects can support and elevate the World Heritage Journeys network.

Multimodal Transport Network (supporting Key Move 1)

1. Coordinated Public Transport Network

The following initiatives will not only enhance travel experiences but also contribute to sustainable regional growth:

- **Enhance public transport connections:** The Victorian Goldfields should lead the way as pilot program for the state through enhanced coordination between trains, regional buses and local buses. While there's reasonable current alignment between regional rail and bus services, this can be further improved.
- **Marketing and Support:** Promote and support seamless connections between different modes of public transport.
- **Optimised Services:** The Ballarat and Bendigo lines already offer 191 and 158 services respectively each week from Melbourne. Let's capitalise on this foundation and create a truly integrated public transport network.

2. World Heritage Journeys Railway Development

The World Heritage Journeys Railway Development project aims to revitalise passenger rail services across the region with the following routes:

- **Melbourne to Geelong:** Strengthen existing passenger rail services.
- **Geelong to Ballarat:** Restore passenger rail connections.
- **Ballarat to Maryborough:** Link with the existing passenger rail services.
- **Maryborough to Inglewood to Bendigo:** Revive Maryborough to Inglewood to Bendigo passenger services.
- **Bendigo – Castlemaine – Melbourne:** Complete the loop by connecting to strengthened existing passenger rail services from to Melbourne.

This comprehensive World Heritage Journeys Railway Development service not only benefits travellers but also supports the communities along its route. Importantly, it could directly link potential World Heritage sites.

3. Expanded Active and Sustainable Travel: Multi-modal travel options with supporting facilities and infrastructure.

There is a global shift to healthy travel options that have a lighter touch on the planet. The Victorian Goldfields offer an extraordinary opportunity to link key nodes with an existing and expanded range of journey options including walking trails, off road cycling routes and constructed rail trails connected to public transport services and facilities. These trails and routes take visitors through goldmining landscapes and historic towns, forests and wine country, all connected to visitor services and accommodation. Implementation of the Master Plan will progressively expand and broaden this network, activate and develop more extensive support facilities, strengthen the capacity of trails to support e-bikes with charging and other facilities, develop the public transport nodes and coordinated timetabling of services and integrate the whole active sustainable network with expanded electric vehicle charging facilities.

4. Electric Vehicle Charging Network

Australia's transition to electric vehicles (EVs) is gaining momentum. McKinsey estimates that by 2030, we'll have approximately 3 million EVs on our roads, necessitating a whopping 2.8 million charging points. However, as of 2022, Australia lags behind Europe, with fewer than 2,500 public charging stations.

While privately operated fast EV charging facilities will proliferate, publicly funded charging stations remain crucial. Over time, government subsidies for this private service may wane, except in remote locations. These charging stations will transition to privately provided services.

There is a window in the next few years to get publicly funded charging facilities. A concept like World Heritage Journeys provides a justification, particularly in small towns, to provide such services. Given that the Victorian Goldfields will be the only region in Australia with World Heritage Journeys, there is an opportunity to set this up as a sustainable development initiative, which of course has considerable advantages for local communities.

5. Extend the Walhalla Goldfields Railway to Erica

This project envisions seamless travel from Erica to Walhalla, emphasizing sustainable modes of transportation. The proposed components include:

- **Parking and Accommodation:** Enhancing facilities at Rawson and Erica.
- **Bus Service:** Connecting Erica to Thomson.
- **Train Service:** Extending the journey from Thomson to Walhalla.
- **Rail Trail Development:** Creating a scenic rail trail with e-bike facilities between Erica and Thomson, continuing onward to Walhalla. Restricting vehicle access by tourists to Walhalla will encourage longer-staying visitors.

Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Visitor Interpretation Centres (supporting Key Move 3)

Imagine places where history comes alive, where the echoes of the past resonate through captivating exhibits and immersive experiences. Welcome to our Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Visitor Interpretation Centres—visionary projects, large and small, that celebrate our rich and diverse heritage, educates and inspires generations to come.

Interpretative centres aren't just museums; they are dynamic hubs, large and small, that serves multiple purposes:

- **Public Engagement:** Curating a diverse range of materials, catering to both visitors and tourists. From rare artifacts to interactive displays, the goal is to ignite curiosity and foster a deeper understanding of our region's legacy.
- **Family Histories:** Assisting genealogists, researchers and families in unearthing their past and discover the untold stories that shaped the region.
- **Academic Exploration:** Scholars, historians and students will find a treasure trove of resources here. The collections will encourage academic research, shedding light on the economic, social and cultural dimensions of the Victorian Goldfields.
- **First Peoples-led interpretation centres** would be entirely developed, curated and staffed by Traditional Owners. Visitors will hear firsthand accounts and immerse themselves in the living culture of the region's First Peoples.

This ambitious endeavour would be a phased process:

- **Testing Ideas:** Feasibility studies and business plans.
- **Embedding the Idea:** Part of the strategic plan.
- **Government Commitment:** Secure government backing—a commitment that sets the wheels in motion.
- **Land Acquisition:** Initial grants to help acquire suitable land for large scale centres and develop new experiences at VICs for small scale.
- **Design and Construction:** In stages, create landmark buildings and new engaging experiences, seamlessly blending heritage and modernity.
- **Ongoing Operation:** Funding for day-to-day operations ensure sustainability.

This plan highlights a major regional development opportunity that would support the region to be World Heritage ready

Victorian Goldfields Tourism, Hospitality and Heritage Skills Training Needs (supporting Key Move 4)

The Victorian Goldfields will need a comprehensive examination of its tourism, hospitality and heritage skills training needs in preparation for World Heritage listing. Independent, extensive research has identified that World Heritage listing will produce a sustained surge in visitor numbers. Ten years after World Heritage listing it is estimated that the region is likely to have generated over 4,000 jobs in tourism and hospitality alone, over and above the growth that would have occurred without listing.

There are already critical labour shortages in the tourism and hospitality sectors, not only in the Victorian Goldfields, but throughout Australia. Much of the industry, particularly in regional areas, is characterised by casualised, part time, low income and poor career development jobs. These impacts are often greatest on women.

Faced with the prospects of thousands more visitors each week, the sector will need more trained people. There is a lead time of 3 to 4 years after World Heritage Listing before the surge in associated visitor numbers will be felt.

The second workforce shortage which will quickly emerge is tradespeople skilled and experienced in the conservation of heritage building and sites. With World Heritage listing there will be a growth in demand for people trained in relevant heritage crafts and skills. There are shortages already in the region in this employment sector, which is characterised by an aging demographic of practitioners, and which has not attracted young persons to take on apprenticeships in a sustainable way. Traditionally it is not an employment sector that has supported participation by women. That needs to change.

The impacts of workforce growth in these two sectors across the Victorian Goldfields urgently requires a comprehensive examination of the capacity of the existing labour market and the education and training that will be needed to meet it. The scale of the demand means that merely adding capacity to the limited number of programs currently offered in the region will not be sufficient. It will require a collaborative and comprehensive approach by relevant government agencies, the various industry sectors, employers and employees, and existing and potentially new education and training providers.

Gender and tourism

- International evidence shows that jobs created in the tourism sector are of particular importance for women, young people and migrant workers, who make up a large share of workers in the sector. 60-70 per cent of workers in the hotels, catering and tourism sector are women.
- Women make up 54% of the tourism workforce worldwide but are concentrated in lower-skilled, lower-paid and often informal employment. Women also perform a large amount of unpaid work in family tourism businesses (UN tourism).
- Accommodation and food services also tend to be female dominated. These jobs often include irregular working hours, and precarious casual employment.

Australian Centre for Rare and Forgotten Trades

The Australian Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades was established in Ballarat in 2022 as a place dedicated to the conservation and perpetuation of rare skills, knowledge and practice to ensure the language of 'making' in Australia is not lost to history and remains alive and accessible for future generations.

The Centre's success to date highlights the appeal of rare trades to a diverse range of people.

<https://www.raretradescentre.com.au>

5. IMPLEMENTATION



Maldon

Arup

VGTE & Victorian Goldfields 15 LGAs
Arup Australia Pty Ltd

Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This Implementation Strategy sets out the recommended principles for project sequencing, timing and governance to deliver this Master Plan.

Implementation Principles



Mobilise partnership arrangements early

Set up a clear and effective partnership arrangement early to coordinate the delivery of Master Plan initiatives in an integrated, supported and collaborative way. While lessons learned from experiences of WH areas around the world mean that governance arrangements do not need to be in their ultimate or final form from day one, establishing arrangements, key roles and decision-making processes early will set implementation up for success.



Leverage existing models and structures

Utilise existing Visitor Economy Partnerships and regional tourism boards structures within the Victorian Goldfields together to plan and develop the World Heritage Journeys and Micro Journeys.



Adopt an incremental growth model

Incremental growth aligns with a sustainable tourism model that supports controlled growth and investment overtime. Acknowledging that World Heritage is forever, growth and investment should be staged to allow space and time to measure, evaluate and adapt initiatives over time.



Prioritise enabling of core initiatives

Lessons learned for World Heritage listings around the world show that visitation can increase significantly immediately following inscription. To proactively get World Heritage ready, enabling infrastructure and core initiatives such as access improvements and experience quality improvements should be prioritised to support safe visitation and to meet quality expectations from day one.



Build off and supplement existing experiences

In the first instance priority tourism initiatives should focus on supporting industry and local business to elevate their offer and product to a World Class standard. As visitation, awareness and reputation grows, advocate to expand and introduce new experiences.



Prioritise projects that distribute benefits

To realise the objectives of the Master Plan, early investments should aim to distribute benefits across the Victorian Goldfields such as regional programs and the delivery of World Heritage Journeys rather than large investments in highly localised areas. This approach drives economic and community benefits across the Victorian Goldfields as a first principle, rather than major investments in specific locations.



Ongoing management and monitoring

Across implementation of the Master Plan, there should be concerted effort for the ongoing management of the World Heritage Sites including visitor management. Monitoring and evaluation of visitor numbers, impacts and benefits and public/private investment should also be undertaken. This data should inform the ongoing incremental growth and iteration of planning for the Victorian Goldfields.



Prioritise Key Transformative Projects

Develop an agreed short list of transformative projects; public, private and public/private partnerships that will capitalise on the benefits of WH listing of the Victorian Goldfields, support and drive major growth in visitor numbers and disperse benefits across the Victorian Goldfields region.



Delivering benefits without World Heritage

The master plan is designed to address several key challenges facing the Victorian Goldfields. Even if World Heritage never progressed, the master plan provides the first cross-regional road map for recognising, utilising and resourcing the Victorian Goldfields' significant and unparalleled heritage assets. Its implementation regardless will contribute to socio-economic uplift and visitor experiences across a large part of regional Victoria.

PRIORITY PROJECTS AND STAGING PLAN

Staging Periods

Master Plan Initiatives have been staged into three phases:

- **Stage 1 (0-3 years):** These are critical and quick win projects that should be undertaken in the short term. These initiatives focus on building momentum towards and awareness of World Heritage while expanding on the capacity and capability of local business and communities. They also fill in critical gaps in knowledge and infrastructure.
- **Stage 2 (4-8 years):** These are projects that can follow on from potential World Heritage inscription in line with anticipated listing in 2026. These projects may require more lead time to coordinate and deliver and may have interdependencies with World Heritage listing.
- **Stage 3 (8+ years):** These are longer term projects that expand the offer and experiences of the Victorian Goldfields. Due to the incremental, sustainable growth model that this Implementation Strategy adopts, projects within this stage are subject to review and should be revisited following inscription onto the World Heritage list and monitoring and evaluation has taken place.

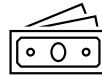
Staging Methodology and Criteria

The staging approach has been designed to progress across all key moves, but in a logical and coordinated way to ensure that investment maximises impact. Initiatives within this Master Plan are staged by a scoring process based staging criteria. The following criteria are in descending order of their relative weighting:



Enabling Projects vs. Expansion Projects

Whether the initiative is critical to the success of the Key Move and/or Master Plan objectives. Enabling initiatives are prioritised in the short term with initiatives that build on or expand opportunities in the medium to long term.



Value for money

The ratio between an initiative's economic benefits and the scale of investment it requires. Initiatives with better value for money are prioritised to maximise the impact of upfront investments.



Alignment with principles

To what extent the initiative delivers on and supports the strategic aspirations of this Master Plan. Initiatives that align with multiple Master Plan principles should be prioritised first.



Deliverability

A measure of how easily and efficiently an initiative can be undertaken relative to each other. Initiatives with higher deliverability are prioritised to target easy early wins. For example, strategies and programs are considered high deliverability whereas major works and infrastructure delivery are considered low deliverability.



Alignment with community aspirations and priorities

To what extent an initiative aligns with the aspirations and priorities of local communities in the region, as per the Planet Happiness recommendations. Initiatives with higher alignment to the 12 Planet Happiness recommendations are prioritised to ensure investments in the Victorian Goldfields benefit communities and address their needs.

The scoring results were reviewed by a qualitative sense check with logical adjustments made to establish the final staging of initiatives shown overpage.

Ongoing Stage 0-3

- 1K First Peoples Partnership and ongoing engagement
- 4C Community Story Development Program
- 4N Undertake Monitoring and Evaluation
- 4O Monitor Community Sentiment

Stage 1 (0-3 years) Delivery

- 1D World Heritage Journeys Story Development and Interpretation Strategy
- 1E Create digital experiences and an app for World Heritage Journeys
- 1I Develop a regional walking and cycling strategy
- 1F World Heritage Journey Development and Coordination
- 2A Develop Master Plans for First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys
- 2B Immediate Infrastructure Improvements and Conservation Works at the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas
- 3G Visitor Information, World Heritage Hub Strategy
- 4A Pursue a sustainable destination accreditation
- 4B First Peoples Cultural Tourism Development Program
- 4D Service quality capacity building program
- 4E Operationalise WH governance model
- 4G Attract High Quality Accommodation Investment
- 4F World Heritage Guide Program
- 4H Accommodation Quality Improvement Program
- 4I International Tourism Training and Product Development Support Program
- 4J Run a digital capability program
- 5A Marketing and Branding the Victorian Goldfields including World Heritage Journeys and the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas
- 5C Events and Festival Program and Strategy
- 5H Undertake immediate safety improvements at historic reserves

Stage 2 (4-7 years) Delivery

- 1A Deliver World Heritage Gateways
- 1C Develop orientation infrastructure along routes
- 1E Deliver physical interpretation signage
- 1G Micro Journey Coordination and Promotion
- 1M Visitor Information Centre upgrades
- 1N Advocate for rail upgrades and enhanced services
- 1J Advocate to upgrade telecommunication and ICT networks coverage
- 1O Commercial Operator Partnership
- 2 Hub Sites
- 2 Town Sites
- 2 Key Sites
- 3A Community Ambassador Program
- 3B Cultural Ambassadors Program
- 3E Form and Support Attraction Partnerships
- 3F Co-design signature experience activation
- 3H Immediate safety improvements at historic reserves and sites
- 4L Heritage Building Re-Use Grants Program
- 4P World Heritage Research Strategy
- 5B Sustainable Destination Messaging and Alignment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- 5D Community and Local Business Advocacy and Education
- 5G Pursue Australia's World Heritage Journeys

Stage 3 (8+ years) Delivery

- 1F Upgrade roadside rest areas
- 1H Google Map upgrades
- 1L Introduce electric car charging stations
- 2 Major Hubs
- 2 Emerging Tourist Towns Sites
- 3C Infrastructure upgrades at Experience Hubs. This may include Castlemaine Diggings, Moliagul, Beehive Chimney and historical reserves.

Initiate Design and Planning for Stage 2

Initiate Design and Planning for Stage 3



BUILDING
COMMUNITY
PRIDE
AND WELLBEING
ACROSS THE
VICTORIAN
GOLDFIELDS

Ararat
Arup

VGTE & Victorian Goldfields 15 LGAs
Arup Australia Pty Ltd

Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan

QUALITATIVE BENEFITS ASSESSMENT

Economic Benefits

A World Heritage designation will increase attention and visitation to the Victorian Goldfields region, which if adequately supported and leveraged, will lead to economic benefits for the region’s communities, businesses and operators.

The following economic benefits are relevant to the Key Moves.

Growth in visitor economy

This master plan helps to boost the recovery of Victoria’s regional tourism sector from the impact of major disruptive events by leaning into trends like increased traveller interest in cultural, sustainable and nature-based experiences.

Job creation

Investing in the Victorian Goldfields will generate new jobs at multiple project stages, including design and planning, construction and delivery and operations. This job growth is especially important for many of the towns in the Victorian Goldfields which rely on tourism as a key source of employment.

Increased economic activity

The combination of increased tourism and job growth will collectively uplift local economies by increasing:

- Economic participation of regional communities
- Foot traffic in regional Victoria
- Business revenue and tax
- Productivity and prosperity
- Employment and wealth generation

Dispersed economic benefits

It is critical that investment is distributed equitably across the Victorian Goldfields and that traditionally underserved towns, regardless of their individual World Heritage status, receive enough economic benefits to improve their communities’ quality of life and prosperity. As these communities are all part of the potential OUV narrative and journeys experience, investing in these communities will elevate the collective quality and experience of the region.

The table below captures the scale of impact each Key Move may have on these benefit areas.

	Growth in visitor economy	Job creation	Increased economic activity	Dispersed economic benefits
World Heritage Journeys	● ● ●	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Support access to and amenity of heritage site and townships	● ● ●	● ●	● ●	● ●
Create World Heritage experiences based on potential OUV and ‘Hero’ sites	● ●	● ● ●	●	● ●
Get World Heritage Ready	● ● ●	● ●	● ●	● ● ●
Raise awareness	● ● ●	● ●	● ●	● ● ●



QUALITATIVE BENEFITS ASSESSMENT

Social and Cultural Benefits

The proposed initiatives celebrate and protect the richness of the region’s multi-layered history – from the First Peoples living on Country to the gold rush and subsequent waves of immigration. At the same time, initiatives should also uplift today’s communities and align with their aspirations for the future.

The following social and cultural benefits are relevant to the Key Moves.

Community identity and pride

By investing in historically under-appreciated towns and elevating Victoria on the world stage, this master plan solidifies the region’s identity as a rich World Heritage destination. This identity will in turn help build community pride and wellbeing.

Conservation of heritage

Several of the initiatives within this master plan help to fulfil the obligations of governments and councils to protect, conserve and rehabilitate World Heritage sites and to sustainably manage the impacts of tourism and development. These conservation efforts will help future generations appreciate and understand the region’s cultural and historical significance.

Socioeconomic revitalisation

Many towns within the Victorian Goldfields have historically been under-served and have not been able to provide residents sufficient access to areas like social infrastructure and public transport. Recognising that all communities within the Victorian Goldfields are part of the regional World Heritage narrative, this master plan strives to equitably distribute benefits across the Victorian Goldfields to uplift the socioeconomic condition and quality of life of these communities, regardless of their individual World Heritage status.

Celebrate culture

A primary goal of this master plan is to spotlight the region’s diverse and unique cultures, which span from the First Peoples to the diverse communities who came during the goldrushes, through to today’s artists and artisans. A World Heritage designation will be an unparalleled platform to bring the region’s cultural narratives to the global stage.

The table below captures the scale of impact each Key Move may have on these benefit areas.

	Community Identity and Pride	Conservation of heritage	Socioeconomic Revitalisation	Celebrate Culture
World Heritage Journeys	● ● ●	● ●	● ● ●	● ●
Support access to and amenity of heritage site and townships	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Create World Heritage experiences based on potential OUV and ‘Hero’ sites	● ● ●	● ●	● ●	● ● ●
Get World Heritage Ready	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Raise awareness	● ● ●	●	● ●	● ● ●



QUALITATIVE BENEFITS ASSESSMENT

Environmental Benefits

Natural landscapes and ecosystems are foundational elements to the Victorian Goldfields' heritage value and can be protected and celebrated through investments in sustainable, regenerative and Country-led initiatives.

The following environmental benefits are relevant to the Key Moves.

Protection and conservation

Several of the initiatives within this master plan help to fulfil the obligations of governments and councils to protect, conserve and rehabilitate World Heritage sites. This master plan recognises that conservation of historic mining and heritage sites can co-exist with environmental conservation and that conservation efforts for both will help future generations appreciate and understand the region's built and natural significance.

Sustainable visitation

Tourism growth poses the risk of over-visitation, especially to structurally, environmentally or culturally sensitive sites. This master plan seeks to mitigate this risk by encouraging dispersed visitation throughout the region and remaining sensitive to the holding capacity of each location.

Healthy places

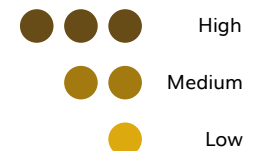
This master plan helps to elevate the Victorian Goldfields' sustainability credentials and reduce the environmental impact of the region's tourism sector. Relevant initiatives range from installing renewable energy sources to enabling more active and less carbon intensive modes of transport.

Caring for Country

First Peoples communities across Australia have been conserving and caring for Country for thousands of years, using traditional techniques still used today. Ongoing engagement with RAPs and the development of The First Peoples Master Plans will further support these traditional management practices and embed caring for Country perspectives in the planning and management of the Victorian Goldfields.

The table below captures the scale of impact each Key Move may have on these benefit areas.

	Protection and conservation	Sustainable visitation	Healthy places	Caring for Country
World Heritage Journeys	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	●
Support access to and amenity of heritage site and townships	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	● ● ●
Create World Heritage experiences based on potential OUV and 'Hero' sites	● ●	● ●	●	● ●
Get World Heritage Ready	● ●	● ● ●	● ●	● ●
Raise awareness	●	● ●	●	●





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CONSTRUCTION PHASE ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The construction phase of the Master Plan is estimated to generate significant economic impacts of approximately:



1,892

Jobs



\$411M

Regional income

The initiatives under the Key Moves have been modelled to quantify their potential economic benefits to the Victorian Goldfields during the proposed construction of new accommodation, physical infrastructure and assets. Physical assets include but are not limited to walking and cycling infrastructure, public realm improvements, wayfinding and interpretation signage, shopfront activations and electric vehicle (EV) charging facilities.

Overall, the construction phase is forecast to generate significant economic benefits for the region including the creation of around 297 jobs during the delivery of the Master Plan and 1,595 further jobs during the delivery of the extra accommodation required. During this time, the construction phase is forecast to generate \$411 million in income for the region's skilled workers and tradespeople. Regional income is the total net income generated from the activity and covers wages and salaries of employees and profits of businesses within the region. It includes income generated directly within the business and indirect income, which is generated in other regional businesses (wages and profits) from the multiplier impacts of employee spending in the region. In the modelling of income generated, income tax and GST on spending are both treated as leakages from the region.

Stage 2 (Years 4 to 7) construction benefits

A total of **137 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs** is forecast to be generated during the construction projects of Stage 2. 114 of these would be direct jobs associated with construction activities and 23 would be indirect/induced jobs which produce the goods and services needed during the construction phase.

A total of **\$35.4 million in regional income** (\$2023 prices) is forecast to be generated during Stage 2 construction – \$29.5 million in direct income and \$5.9 million in indirect/induced income.

Stage 3 (Years 8+) construction benefits

A total of **160 FTE jobs** is forecast to be generated during the construction projects of Stage 3. 133 of these will be direct jobs and 27 would be indirect/induced jobs.

A total of **\$41.5 million in regional income** (\$2023 prices) is forecast to be generated during Stage 3 construction – \$34.6 million in direct income and \$6.9 million in indirect/induced income.

Accommodation construction benefits

A total of **1,595 FTE jobs** is forecast to be generated during the construction and delivery of the 5,237 new rooms required. 1,329 of these jobs will be direct jobs and 266 would be indirect/induced jobs.

A total of **\$411 million in regional income** (\$2023 prices) is forecast to be generated in this time – \$342 million in direct income and \$69 million in indirect/induced income.

Note: the above figures are based upon preliminary and indicative cost estimates and their validity may change as costs are refined in future stages.

OPERATIONAL PHASE ECONOMIC BENEFITS

With targeted investment and support as outlined in this Master Plan, in the ten years after the Victorian Goldfield's World Heritage inscription (operational phase), the Victorian Goldfields is forecast to see an additional:



The coordinated and staged implementation of initiatives under the five Key Moves will uplift the quality of the Victorian Goldfields' tourism offering and elevate the region's status as a world-class destination. These initiatives will help to unlock greater prosperity and further economic development opportunities for communities throughout the Victorian Goldfields.

With targeted investment and support as outlined in this Master Plan, in the ten years after the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage inscription visitation, visitor spending, jobs and regional income is forecast to grow significantly.

The Master Plan adopts an incremental and dispersed approach to growth. In line with current growth trends, the Victorian Goldfields' Major Hubs will receive a considerable increase in visitor numbers. The Victorian Goldfields' Hubs will also receive a significant boost to their historical tourism levels as visitors spill out across the region into previously under-visited locations.

The region's Towns and Emerging Tourist Towns will build up their capacity and establish themselves as tourism destinations during these first ten years and will expect to see similar trends in growth beyond.

The economic benefits which this master plan helps to unlock include increased visitor numbers and spending and growth of regional jobs and income.

Visitor numbers

Post World Heritage inscription, the total number of visitors to the Victorian Goldfields is forecast to increase by **1.59 million over 5 years** and **2.5 million over 10 years**. Around 64% of these new visitors are expected to be day visitors, 35% overnight domestic visitors and 1.4% international visitors.

Visitor spending

Visitor spending modelling shows that:






Note: the above figures are based upon preliminary and indicative cost estimates and their validity may change as costs are refined in future stages.

- Compared with the Base Year 2019, total spending is up around **\$343 million by year 5** and **\$526 million by year 10**.
- Spending in the Major Hubs was up \$127 million over 5 years, with an increase of \$191 million over 10 years.
- Spending in the LGAs with Hubs was up around \$92 million over 5 years and \$149 million over 10 years.
- Spending in the LGAs with Towns and Emerging Tourist Towns was up a combined \$193 million over 5 years and around \$300 million over 10 years.

Most of the growth in spending is generated by domestic overnight visitors (intrastate and interstate) and day visitors. Overnight visitors visit the region for short break visits and while staying in accommodation in Major Hubs and Hubs, may travel during the day to adjacent sites and townships as part a World Heritage Journey or other tourism experience. Day visitors are also an important component of visitor spend and encompass visitors who, for example, may stay in Melbourne but take a day trip to the closer destinations for the Goldfields Experience.

Jobs

After World Heritage inscription, total jobs in the Victorian Goldfields is forecast to increase by around **1,354 over 5 years** and around **2,125 over 10 years**. Key sectors for growth are as follows:

-  The food and beverage sector will contribute the highest portion of these jobs (29%).
-  Followed by accommodation (22%),
-  Recreation and other services (22%),
-  Transport (11%) and
-  Retail (9%).

Regional income

In the ten years post World Heritage inscription, total regional income is forecast to increase by around **\$182 million**. This growth can be unlocked through the coordinated implementation of the initiatives presented in this master plan. Most of this ten-year growth is expected in the Major Hubs.

Cost-benefit analysis

This Master Plan delivers significant benefits to the region. The public investment in the identified projects delivers a strong return in terms of a major boost in regional income, as reflected in the Benefit Cost Ratios (BCRs).

An indicative benefit cost analysis of the proposed projects showed a BCR of 2.1 at a 3% discount rate, 1.8 at a 7% discount rate and 1.6 at a 10% discount rate. This means that for example, for a 7% discount rate, every \$1 spent on projects delivers a return of \$1.80 to the region.

INVESTMENT CASE

Stage 1 (0-3 years)

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Cost Level	Cost Type	Benefit	Deliverability
1B	World Heritage Journeys Story Development and Interpretation Strategy	A regionally coordinated and curated approach to interpretation is important to share Victorian Goldfields' stories in a clear and consistent way. Further work is required to develop and catalogue stories to be shared across the physical and digital World Heritage Journeys.	Medium	Program	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy	High
1D	Create digital experiences and an app for World Heritage Journeys.	Visitors today use and expect digital platforms for trip planning, sharing and experiencing destinations. A dedicated app would enable exciting and seamless digital journeys from pre-planning to post-trip.	Low	Program	Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Increases economic activity Facilitates sustainable visitation Disperses economic benefits	High
1I	Develop a regional walking and cycling strategy	Need to fill gaps in the current walking and cycling journey network and upgrade facilities to accommodate people of all ages and abilities. Tracks and trails are a key strength of the Victorian Goldfields that should be built upon although further analysis and a detailed audit of cycling infrastructure is required to specify works required.	Low	Program	Grows the visitor economy Facilitates sustainable visitation Fosters healthy places	High
1P	World Heritage Journey Development and Coordination	The World Heritage Journeys presented in this Master Plan are conceptual in nature and will need further development to determine final alignments, detailed design of infrastructure such as gateways, signage and rest stops and content curation.	Medium	Program	Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Increases economic activity Facilitates sustainable visitation Disperses economic benefits	High
2A	Develop Master Plans for First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys	Further engagement and detailed planning are required to identify and develop the First Peoples Sites, experiences and World Heritage Journeys. Dedicated Master Plans are recommended for each RAP.	Low	Program	Uplifts community identity and pride Helps to conserve regional heritage Celebrates regional culture Disperses economic benefits Helps to protect and conserve the environment Facilitates sustainable visitation Fosters healthy places Helps to care for Country	Medium
3G	World Heritage Hub Strategy	Visitor information services will need to change to address their value proposition for visitors in response to advancements in technology and shifts in visitor preferences. A strategic and regional approach to this transition is required. While the transition to an experience centre or hub approach may take time, support should be given to begin to incorporate World Heritage stories and experiences in the interim.	Low	Program	Helps to conserve regional heritage Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Increases economic activity Facilitates sustainable visitation Disperses economic benefits	High

Stage 1 (0-3 years)

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Estimated Cost	Cost Type	Benefit	Deliverability
4A	Pursue a sustainable destination accreditation	Promote and incentivise sustainable tourism and in alignment with the Victorian Goldfields International Engagement Strategy.	Medium	Program	Helps to conserve regional heritage Grows the visitor economy Helps to protect and conserve the environment Facilitates sustainable visitation Fosters healthy places Helps to care for Country	High
4C	Community Story Development Program	Current storytelling and experience are disjointed. Builds of the strength of local communities and organisations. Opportunity to build on the strong sense of community pride.			Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy	High
4D	Service quality capacity building program	Current tourism and visitor services vary in quality and availability including opening hours and days of operating causing a poor visitor experience.			Uplifts community identity and pride Grows the visitor economy Creates jobs Disperses economic benefits Facilitates sustainable visitation Fosters healthy places	High
4B	First Peoples Cultural Tourism Development Program	Supporting First Peoples-led business and tourism experiences is a key focus of many economic development and tourism strategies and Country Plans. It will also support authentic and meaningful visitor experiences.	Low	Program	Uplifts community identity and pride Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Increases economic activity Helps to care for Country	High
4F	World Heritage Guide Program	Enables more meaningful engagement with the proposed World Heritage area, creates jobs and opportunities for local communities, heritage societies and industry.	Low	Program	Helps to conserve regional heritage Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy	High
4G	Attract High Quality Accommodation Investment	Undersupply of accommodation in smaller townships and in peak periods. Changing consumer expectations for accommodation. Ensuring high quality development that aligns with sustainable tourism principles is critical.	Low	Program	Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Grows the visitor economy Increases economic activity Disperses economic benefits Facilitates sustainable visitation Fosters healthy places	Medium
4H	Accommodation Quality Improvement Program	Standard of accommodation varies in the region. Poor quality accommodation limits the economic potential of visitors. This program is recommended after visitation increases.			Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Grows the visitor economy Creates jobs Increases economic activity Facilitates sustainable visitation Fosters healthy places	High

Stage 1 (0-3 years)

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Estimated Cost	Cost Type	Benefit	Deliverability
5A	Marketing and Branding the Victorian Goldfields including WHJ and Sites	Targeted advertising and promotion that links to key target domestic and international markets that bring the World Heritage brand, characteristics and attributes to life.	Low	Program	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Increases economic activity Disperses economic benefits	High
5C	Events and Festival Program and Strategy	Events can drive significant awareness and visitor spend in the region which building awareness and support for the World Heritage region and Victorian Goldfields. Supports community pride and identity.	Low	Program	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Increases economic activity Disperses economic benefits	High

INVESTMENT CASE

Stage 2 (4-7 years)

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Estimated Cost	Cost Type	Benefit	Deliverability
1A	Deliver World Heritage Gateways	Critical to developing a regional identity, support visitor orientation, promote World Heritage Journeys and encourage the dispersal of visitors.	Low	Construction	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy	High
1C	Develop orientation infrastructure along routes	Clear physical markers supported by digital navigation tools are essential to promote seamless visitor journeys and to improve the visibility and awareness of the Victorian Goldfields. Existing signage along cycling routes varies in quality and is inconsistent. Upgraded and new signage will improve the safety, perception and amenity of active transport infrastructure.	Low	Construction	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Fosters healthy places	High
1E	Deliver physical interpretation signage	Physical interpretation will bring the WHJ themes to life, create a sense of place and support more meaningful experiences of destinations and communities.	Low	Construction	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy	High
1G	Micro Journey Coordination and Promotion	Current tourism product and services are disjointed, highly localised and do not speak to the potential OUV and wider goldfields story at a regional scale. This initiative would provide guidance for local products to integrate with the World Heritage Journeys.	Medium	Program	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation	High
1M	Visitor Information centre upgrades.	Until World Heritage Hub models are defined and implemented, preliminary improvements can be made to existing visitor centres within the Victorian Goldfields to address needs in the short term.	Low	Construction	Grows the visitor economy Uplifts community identity and pride	Medium
2 Hub	Hubs	Investment is required into facilities, streetscapes, infrastructure and experiential offerings of select hubs in the Victorian Goldfields in order to elevate access, placemaking and storytelling.	Medium to High	Construction	Uplifts community identity and pride Helps to conserve regional heritage Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Creates jobs Disperses economic benefits	Low
2 Towns	Towns	Investment is required into facilities, streetscapes, infrastructure and experiential offerings of select hubs in the Victorian Goldfields in order to elevate access, placemaking and storytelling.	Medium to High	Construction	Uplifts community identity and pride Helps to conserve regional heritage Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Creates jobs Disperses economic benefits	Low
2 Key site	Key Sites	Investment is required into facilities, streetscapes, infrastructure, and experiential offerings of select sites in the Victorian Goldfields in order to elevate access, placemaking and storytelling.	Medium	Construction	Uplifts community identity and pride Helps to conserve regional heritage Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Disperses economic benefits	Low

Stage 2 (4-7 years)

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Estimated Cost	Cost Type	Benefit	Deliverability
3A	Community Ambassador Program	Fostering local ambassador relationships are key for powerful authentic brand storytelling.	Low	Program	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Creates jobs	High
3B	Cultural Ambassador Program	Fostering local ambassador relationships are key for powerful authentic brand storytelling.			Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Creates jobs Helps to care for Country	High
3F	Co-design signature experience activation	Signature experiences collaboratively developed with local communities will foster community pride, creativity and build support for World Heritage and visitation. These experiences play to the strength of local communities and will create authentic, memorable experiences for visitors to enjoy.	Medium	Program	Uplifts community identity and pride Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Increases economic activity	Medium

Stage 3 (8+ years)

No.	Initiatives	Rationale	Estimated Cost	Cost Type	Benefit	Deliverability
1F	Upgrade roadside rest areas	Poor quality of existing facilities that are not up to World Heritage standard. This creates an opportunity for wayfinding and storytelling which may encourage visitors to stay longer in the region.	Medium	Construction	Grows the visitor economy Promotes sustainable visitation Fosters healthy places	Low
1L	Introduce electric car charging stations	World Heritage Journeys that support EV charging will promote more sustainable travel and will encourage the adoption of zero emissions vehicles. Providing EV charging facilities will help position Victorian Goldfields as a more sustainable region and appeal to a wider market of travellers	Medium	Construction	Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Grows the visitor economy Helps to protect and conserve the environment Facilitates sustainable visitation Fosters healthy places	Medium
2 Major hub	Major Hub	Investment is required into facilities, streetscapes, infrastructure and experiential offerings of select hubs in the Victorian Goldfields in order to elevate access, placemaking and storytelling.	Medium	Construction	Uplifts community identity and pride Helps to conserve regional heritage Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Creates jobs Disperses economic benefits	Low
2 Emerging tourist town	Emerging Tourist Town	As visitation grows, emerging tourist towns can become a focus to expand world heritage experiences across the Victorian Goldfields. As current offer may be limited, moderate-high investment may be needed to get elevate experiences and products to a world class standard.	Medium to High	Construction	Uplifts community identity and pride Helps to conserve regional heritage Contributes to socioeconomic revitalisation Celebrates regional culture Grows the visitor economy Creates jobs Disperses economic benefits	Low

PRIORITY PROJECTS AND INDICATIVE COSTS

Ten immediate actions are recommended in the short term to progress critical establishment planning and delivery core on the ground works.

What First and Why now?

While this Master Plan sets establishes a long term, staged strategic framework for investment across the Victorian Goldfields, amongst the long list of proposed initiatives there are a several immediate actions recommended as a first step.

In the immediate term, there are two categories of initiatives that emerge as a priority:

- Establishment planning: this includes development and coordination activities that will progress key high-level concepts or proposals presented in this Master Plan.
- On the ground works: this includes critical infrastructure or on the ground works that will deliver immediate benefits or impact.

For the priority projects, there are next step actions that cascade out of the Master Plan which are recommended for investment. Indicative costs for each next step action are identified overpage. Please note these costs are high-level indicative estimates only.

Prioritisation Framework

A framework was developed to prioritise the long list of proposed initiatives. The framework takes a filter approach, with initiatives flagged across three out of the four filters emerging as priority projects.

Framework Filters



Is it critical for or contribute to the World Heritage nomination?

Initiatives that support the World Heritage nomination process including potential OUV presentation and promotion, enhancements to the suitability and capacity of visitor facilities and visitor management planning.



Is it an essential first step for Stage 1 of the Master Plan?

Initiatives that are critical first steps to unlocking broader benefits or to delivering other initiatives within Stage 1 phasing of the Master Plan. These initiatives are also considered enablers, without which, other projects could not progress.



Is it a statewide package of work?

Initiatives that apply across the entire Victorian Goldfields on the basis that priority projects should drive impact and benefit region-wide in the first instance.



Does it drive an increase in yield or visitation?

Initiatives that are likely to bring an increase in visitation numbers and visitor yield which is a core objective of this Master Plan to support economic growth, job opportunities and social benefits of the region.

Applying these filters, 10 priority projects emerge, as outlined overpage.

TOP TEN PRIORITY PROJECTS AND INDICATIVE COSTS

No.	Type	Initiative	Why Now?	Next Step	Next Step Indicative Cost
1B	Establishment planning	World Heritage Journeys Story Development and Interpretation Strategy	The Master Plan presents a thematic framework and concept approach to World Heritage Journeys however further development is required to progress the concepts before interpretation can be delivered on the ground. As a cornerstone of the Master Plan, World Heritage Journeys development is a priority.	Commission the development of a strategy to guide consistent and cohesive World Heritage Journeys interpretation, linking to themes and including overarching narrative principles, language and accessibility principles as well as location and format planning. Undertake World Heritage Journeys story development in line with the interpretation strategy.	\$500,000
1P	Establishment planning	World Heritage Journeys Development and Coordination	Spanning across the region, significant coordination and integration activities are essential to delivering the World Heritage Journeys. Detailed design is also required progress World Heritage Journeys concept plans presented in this Master Plan. Early coordination and sufficient lead are critical for success.	Undertake World Heritage Journeys coordination activities and commission World Heritage Journeys detailed design to confirm network alignments, signage, wayfinding and marketing strategy.	\$500,000
2A	Establishment planning	Master Plans for First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys	Placeholders have been identified to embed First Peoples' stories, culture and assertions and delivery benefits for First Peoples. However, this must be led by First Peoples and they should be supported to lead this. While all RAPs were contacted, not all were available to meet. Further work is required to fill these gaps.	Provide funding to RAPs to lead the development of First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys Master Plans. The format, content and focus of these plans should be determined by the RAPs.	\$350,000
2B	On the ground works	Immediate infrastructure improvements and conservation works at the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas	Once the tentative list is finalised, immediate improvements and conservation works should focus on the World Heritage sites. To prepare for this, concept plans should be progressed to detailed design to ensure improvements are shovel ready at the time of inscription.	Prepare detailed designs of infrastructure improvements at World Heritage Sites.	TBC
4D	On the ground works	Service quality capacity building program	Local tourism business service quality development is essential to getting World Heritage ready and maximising visitor yield. Existing programs are in place and could be rolled out at scale to bring immediate benefit.	Develop and roll out a program that supports local businesses to increase service quality and capacity building.	\$500,000
5A	Establishment planning	Marketing and Branding the Victorian Goldfields including World Heritage Journeys and Sites and the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas	Early targeted advertising and promotion that links to key target domestic and international markets will drive awareness and visitation and is required to position the Victorian Goldfields as an international product.	Engaging with local councils and tourism boards, develop a marketing and branding strategy that links to bring the World Heritage brand, characteristics and attributes to life.	\$300,000
3F	Establishment planning	Co-design signature experience activation	While high level options are highlighted in the plan, collaboratively developed with local communities will foster community pride and build support for World Heritage and visitation. Engaging early will help build partnerships and support. As anchor attractions are a core concept of the Master Plan and are a priority.	Establish and run a co-design process to build partnerships and collaboratively design signature experiences of the Victorian Goldfields working with regional tourism boards, council, industry and local communities.	\$600,000
3G	Establishment planning	Visitor Information, World Heritage Hub Strategy	Visitor information services will need to change to address shifts in visitor preferences and incorporate World Heritage experience. A regional approach is needed and a transition to an experience centre or hub may take time. As such early investigation and planning is a priority.	Develop a strategy to transform the existing Visitor Information Centres across the Victorian Goldfields to adapt to visitor needs today and incorporate World Heritage experiences.	\$200,000
3H	On the ground works	Immediate safety improvements at historic reserves	Stakeholders have identified safety issues as a key concern at historic sites and reserves. Safety improvements must be addressed prior to supporting increased visitation. Therefore safety and risk investigations of key sites are recommended in the immediate term.	Undertake a safety risk assessment to determine actions for improved safety at key sites. This work should identify and detailed design of any infrastructure required to enhance safe access to the site ready for delivery.	\$200,000
1A	On the ground works	Deliver World Heritage Gateways	Reinforcing arrival points are central to the identity and experience of World Heritage Journeys concept. Delivering gateway infrastructure as a first step will build awareness of World Heritage Journeys and sense of place early.	Commission the detailed design and construction of WHJ gateways for road, rail and airport network arrival points.	\$250,000

CROSS-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The Cross-Regional Partnership for the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan seek to ensure that:

- World Heritage listing realises the tourism, community, regional regeneration and economic benefits and opportunities that are unleashed by a UNESCO designation.
- Opportunities and investment are dispersed and realised across the whole region.
- All stakeholders are represented and their voice is heard including local governments, Registered Aboriginal Parties, Visitor Engagement Partnerships/Regional Tourism Boards, Visit Victoria, relevant state government departments and agencies, tourism operators, the private sector that relies directly on tourism.

There are two aspects of sustainability relating to partnership – sustainability in governance and governance for sustainability. A key challenge in governance for sustainability is ensuring sustainable and fair use of resources. This will require a structure that will support:

- Political advocacy to generate support and funding.
- Strategic planning, policy design and implementation, performance monitoring and policy adjustment.
- A long-term focus, engaging with changes that will take several generations to see through – for example, the transition to the carbon-neutral energy system that ultimately will be required to address climate change.
- Structuring engagement as a learning process, so that governments and other stakeholders can acquire experience, experiment with options, draw lessons from failure and learn how more sustainable social practices can be generalised.
- Strengthening resilience and capacity to adapt successfully in response to pressures and unexpected shocks.

World Heritage status does not in itself guarantee automatic funding from any public or private organisations at an international, national or regional level. The acquisition of funding and resources and sustained investment is a perennial challenge. The financial input from tourism can help to pay part of the funds required for the creation and maintenance of the facilities and services required by tourists but there will need to be a substantial injection of public funds for new infrastructure. This needs to be targeted to maximise local economic and social development, through business income and job creation.



Images (left to right): Goldfields Branding, Gold Partners, Co-Patrons The Hon John Brumby AO and The Hon Dr Denis Napthine AO

Branding and Communications

World Heritage status has an established value in terms of the authenticity and integrity of the heritage on display and is a strong brand in tourism marketing.

Managing the brand needs to be a well-established part of the coordination of tourism marketing and promotion. It needs to be based on portraying a distinctive and appealing image to target audiences and is important for attracting investment, businesses and visitors.

Generally, in Australia (and internationally) World Heritage managers do not specifically undertake tourism marketing and promotional activities. The latter activities are usually undertaken by government or industry bodies in conjunction and consultation with relevant local authorities. The Victorian Goldfields area includes several tourism regions, and a coordinated approach to tourism marketing, promotion and investment will be necessary to ensure consistent branding and marketing of World Heritage and World Heritage Journeys across the whole region. This will need a structure and ongoing processes in place for media management, stakeholder communication, branding and brand promotion to be able to coordinate these industry bodies and communicate effectively with its intended audiences.

Advocacy and Community Engagement

Advocacy is required to facilitate decisions within political, economic and social institutions to influence public policy, laws and budgets. Partnership models that coordinate the input of stakeholders, community participation and are focused on generating benefits for local communities are now seen as essential for the management of tourism in World Heritage areas. The most progressive World Heritage areas have tourism management structures and governance that are extremely open and inclusive. This diversity of involvement can bolster decision making by providing a broader range of inputs of local knowledge, community and First Peoples understanding beyond the traditional government and expert involvement.

A Collaborative Partnership Approach

Included within the suite of key moves and transformational projects is a continuing focus on conserving and celebrating the region's cultural heritage, to ensure that economic development does not come at the expense of cultural integrity across the Victorian Goldfields. Central to this vision is the ongoing collaboration between multiple state, regional and local governmental bodies, ensuring that the necessary infrastructure and services are progressively developed to support this sustainable tourism model and regional development.

The state government, along with 15 local governments and respective tourism organisations together with the Registered Aboriginal Parties, will need to continue to actively collaborate and coordinate to bring this vision to life with a whole-of-government approach. For example, departments such as transport and planning, and agencies such as Parks Victoria play a pivotal role, in planning and funding much-needed infrastructure upgrades. Many government departments and agencies will need to be involved as active participants, including those responsible for tourism and events, environment and climate change, jobs, skills, industry, regions, finance, First Peoples, cultural heritage, infrastructure, parks, public transport, regional development, and regional roads.

While this Master Plan proposes a suite of new projects and priorities, it also recognises the extensive current and proposed projects led by private and public tourism bodies and other stakeholders across the region, highlighting the need for a mutually beneficial and coordinated approach. For example, First People's tourism initiatives, Sovereign Hill's Gold Pavilion, Geo-Tourism initiatives, Lydiard Street upgrades, and township/community-driven initiatives.

Coordinated funding and sustained resourcing

As previously highlighted, a coordinated whole-of-government response to delivery and both project funding and recurrent funding will be required. Planning and on-ground work will be needed leading to the nomination as well as the substantial work required post the proposed listing.

Proposed Partnership

The Master Plan's World Heritage Listing framework requires a high level of strategic alignment and collaboration by all stakeholders to ensure effective coordination, agreed priority setting and to maximise advocacy and implementation opportunities.

A sustainable model for coordinating the delivery of an extensive and complex set of priorities and actions for tourism across a wide area of Victoria over the long-term needs to be developed, nurtured and enabled to deliver the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan. Such a model also needs to be aligned with and support the World Heritage Listing and its heritage conservation goals.

- UNESCO in fact supports World Heritage Sites having and implementing a sustainable approach to tourism, including: Promoting broad stakeholder engagement in the planning, development and management of sustainable tourism that follows a destination approach to heritage conservation and which focuses on empowering local communities.
- Providing World Heritage stakeholders with the capacity and the tools to manage tourism efficiently, responsibly and sustainably based on the local context and needs.
- Promoting quality tourism products and services that encourage responsible behaviour among all stakeholders and foster understanding and appreciation of the concept of Outstanding Universal Value and conservation of World Heritage.

Next steps:

1. Bring together key stakeholders to enrol them on the benefits of World Heritage Listing and the commitment, collaboration and coordination required to achieve these.
2. Identify the critical milestones in the journey towards World Heritage Listing and the sustainable tourism and marketing action trigger points in that journey including the investment required at each stage.
3. Utilise this critical path to develop an evolving governance and coordinating model which is fully supported, effectively aligning visitor economy activity with key World Heritage developments.
4. Deliver a World Heritage Master Plan 'guidebook', quality assurance framework and implementation tools to ensure stakeholders can be World Heritage ready.

Case studies

The following two case study provide examples of large-scale successful coordinating partnerships. While they are based on a nature conservation platform, as distinct from a tourism agenda, they each have a focus on a broad agenda for collaborative regional actions, coordination, advocacy and marketing. The Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan is focused on similar principles; a coordinating partnership which is informed by providing a seat at the table for all stakeholders either directly or through representation and an approach which is looking to achieve connectivity at scale.

Great Eastern Ranges – connecting people to connect nature

Vision: Well connected, resilient and thriving communities, landscapes and natural systems across 3,600km of eastern Australia.

Role: Provide the bold vision that inspires people to get involved; Fill the gaps in resources, capacity, capability and knowledge; provide best practice connectivity science and translate it into on-ground action; support connectivity planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation; build diverse networks that facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing; and influence and advocate for key policy change.

Source: <https://ger.org.au/>

Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative – go on forever

Yellowstone to Yukon uses a partnership-based approach to collaborate with hundreds of community partners, including conservation groups, local landowners, businesses, government agencies, Indigenous governments, people and organizations, scientists and others to protect habitat along the spine of the Rocky Mountains. They've worked with more than 700 partners, building a movement that unifies voices and people who support large-scale land conservation. They advance their work using best available information and ensuring a supporting policy framework, from global to national and regional to local. With the support of science and Indigenous knowledge, they collaborate with and empower communities and decision-makers to create impact across the Yellowstone to Yukon region.

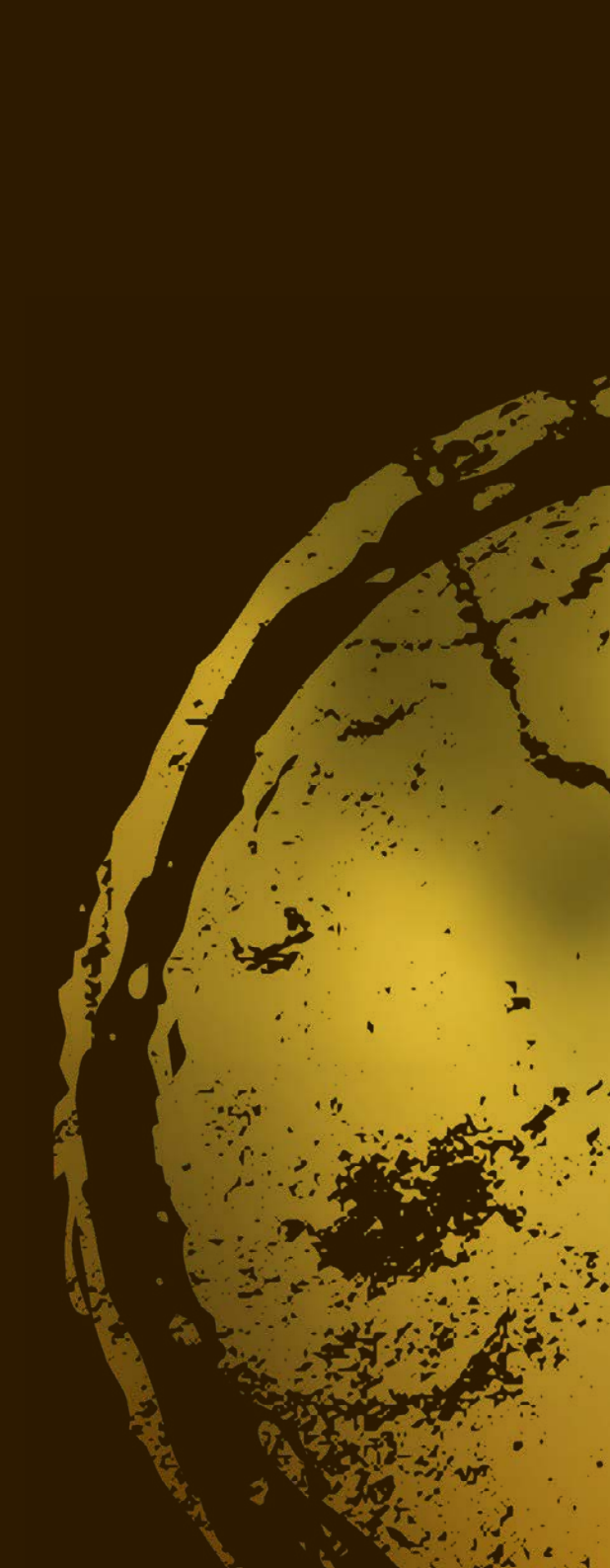
Source: <https://y2y.net/>

The lessons from these two example bodies are that it is possible to achieve enrolment in a larger vision and to collaborate and coordinate on a large and diverse geographic area while respecting each stakeholder's interests and focus.

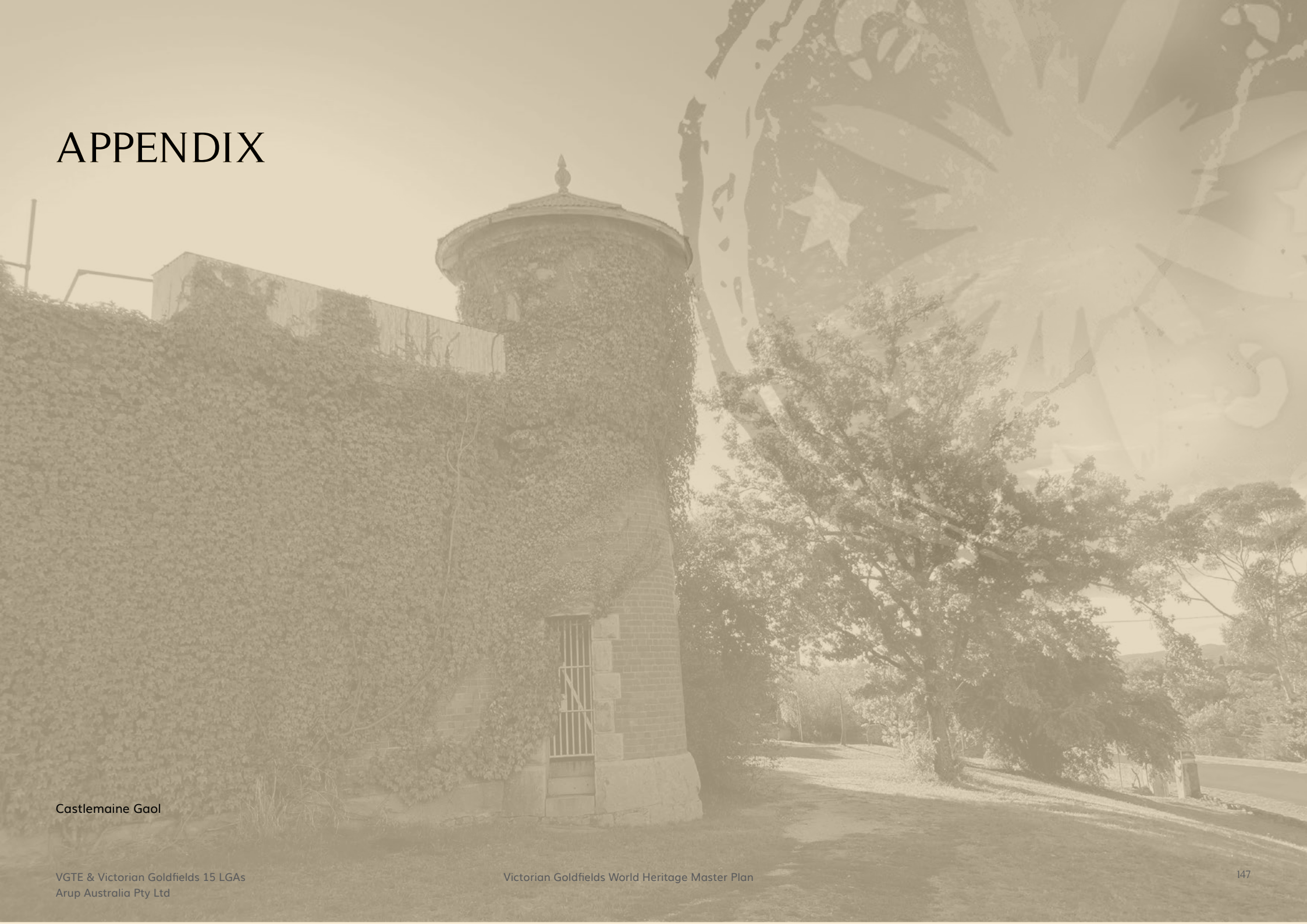
Stakeholder Category	Key Move 1: World Heritage Journeys	Key Move 2: Support access to and amenity of heritage sites and townships	Key Move 3: Create World Heritage Signature Experiences	Key Move 4: Get World Heritage Ready	Key Move 5: Promote and Raise Awareness of the Victorian Goldfields
Local Government Councils	●	●	●	●	●
Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP)			●		
Creative Victoria			●		
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.	●			●	●
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	●			●	●
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions				●	
Department of Transport and Planning.	●	●			
First Peoples State Relations			●	●	
Heritage Victoria		●	●	●	
Parks Victoria		●		●	
Regional Development Victoria		●	●		●
Visit Victoria				●	●
Australian Government					●
Regional Tourism Boards					●
Major Touring Routes	●				●
Industry			●	●	●

Stakeholder Category	Priority Projects									
	1B: World Heritage Journeys Story Development and Interpretation Strategy	1P: World Heritage Journeys Development and Coordination	2A: Master Plans for First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys	2B: Immediate Infrastructure Improvements and Conservation Works at the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas	4D: Service quality capacity building program	5A: Marketing and Branding the Victorian Goldfields including World Heritage Journeys and the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas	3F: Co-design signature experience activation	3G: Visitor Information, World Heritage Hub Strategy	3H: Immediate safety improvements at historic reserves	1A: Deliver World Heritage Gateways
Local Government Councils	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		
Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP)			●							
Creative Victoria					●		●			
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.		●	●	●					●	
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions					●					
Department of Transport and Planning.		●								●
First Peoples State Relations			●							
Heritage Victoria	●			●						

Stakeholder Category	Priority Projects									
	1B: World Heritage Journeys Story Development and Interpretation Strategy	1P: World Heritage Journey Development and Coordination	2A: Master Plans for First Peoples Sites and World Heritage Journeys	2B: Immediate Infrastructure Improvements and Conservation Works at the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas	4D: Service quality capacity building program	5A: Marketing and Branding the Victorian Goldfields including World Heritage Journeys and the proposed World Heritage Sites' component areas	3F: Co-design signature experience activation	3G: Visitor Information, World Heritage Hub Strategy	3H: Immediate safety improvements at historic reserves	1A: Deliver World Heritage Gateways
Parks Victoria	●			●		●			●	
Regional Development Victoria		●			●		●			
Visit Victoria						●	●			
Australian Government										
Regional Tourism Bodies		●		●		●	●	●		
Major Touring Routes						●		●		
Industry					●	●	●			



APPENDIX



Castlemaine Gaol

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MAJOR HUB: BENDIGO



Bendigo, with its rich gold rush heritage, magnificent Victorian-era architecture, conserved mine sites and museums, has the potential to attract many international and domestic visitors to the WHA. Among its attractions is one of Australia's oldest and largest regional galleries, the Bendigo Art Gallery. In 2019 Bendigo joined with nearly 300 cities around the world as part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. The gastronomy region covers Bendigo and eight other local government areas and has been recognised for its quality produce, agriculture, creative businesses and strong networks of cooperation. Celebrating this story, preserving and maintaining the heritage components of buildings and streetscapes and connecting places with way finding and First Peoples stories will enhance the offering of this outstanding city and will be an anchor point for visitors to commence their World Heritage Journey in this outstanding community.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BENDIGO



Arup
A. Access

Strengths

- 2 hours train ride from Melbourne.
- Heritage Tram service connects historical city centre.
- Many tracks and trails choices throughout the city centre (e.g. Bendigo Creek trail) and beyond (e.g. Goldfields Track).
- EV charging is present at public spaces including nearby visitor centre.
- Sufficient parking at Victoria Hill.

Challenges

- Pall Mall forms a barrier between the city centre and Rosalind Park.
- Lack of cycling facilities and paths to travel within the city centre.



Arup
B. Facilities

Strengths

- Public facilities such as public toilet, library and visitor centre are all in proximity to each other.
- Victoria Hill has picnic tables, shelters and toilets.
- Sufficient seating, play spaces and shelters throughout the cities' public spaces such as Rosalind Park, Yi Yuan Chinese Garden and Lake Weeroona.



Arup
C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Well-serviced internet / 4G network throughout the city centre.
- Various community and health infrastructure are present throughout the city centre.



Arup
D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Unique and intact heritage streetscape as an opportunity for historical story-telling and wayfinding within the city centre.
- Activated streetscapes, with various retail and food and drink options, as well as public spaces such as Rosalind Park and art gallery forecourt as place of gathering.
- Mature tree canopy coverage within the centre with paved footpaths.



Arup
E. Experience

Strengths

- Strong goldfields history with intact remnants of the mining landscape.
- Leveraging on public spaces such as visitor centres to showcase the gastronomy culture of the city.
- Strong immigration story with key museums such as the Golden Dragon Museum and festivals including the Easter Festival.
- Unique activities, such as gold prospecting.
- Central Deborah Gold Mine.

Challenges

- Limited wayfinding and signage throughout the city centre.
- Lack of First Peoples storytelling and tourism experiences.
- Accessibility issues with navigating key sites such as Victoria Hill, may hinder the goldfields experience.
- Opportunity for digital storytelling.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MAJOR HUB: BENDIGO

Proposed Initiatives



A6. Improve pedestrian access across Pall Mall.



E4. Opportunity for First Peoples storytelling.



A7. Improve cycling infrastructure within the city centre and connections between key tourist destinations, the station, Historic Urban Centre and Victoria Hill.



E6. Improve wayfinding between key visitor attractions.



D7. Conserve and maintain heritage components of buildings and streetscapes.



E9. Digital storytelling for the historic centre and Victoria Hill.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



World Heritage Hub



Activations at Bendigo Art Gallery, Central Deborah Gold Mine and the Golden Dragon Museum.



World Heritage Interpretation and Activation at Victoria Hill.



Partner with UNESCO Creative City program and initiatives.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BENDIGO

Improve cycling infrastructure within the city centre and connections between key tourist destinations, the station, Historic Urban Centre and Victoria Hill.

Improve pedestrian access across Pall Mall.

Improve wayfinding between key visitor attractions.

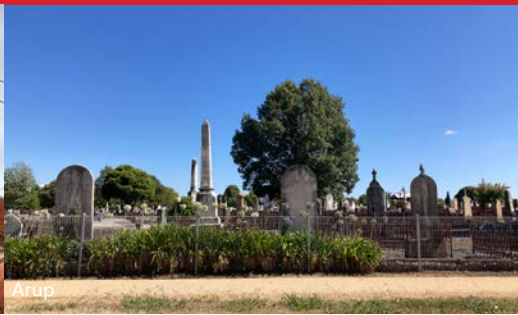
Opportunity for First Peoples' storytelling.

Conserve and maintain heritage components of buildings and streetscapes.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MAJOR HUB: BALLARAT



Ballarat is a grand rural city and centre for heritage and art with numerous significant attractions that contribute to the WH story. These include Sovereign Hill Museum Association, the Centre for Rare Arts and Forgotten Trades and the Eureka Centre as well as the Art Gallery and several museums. A strong festival and events program attracts visitors year-round. It is a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Art and has a significant creative sector, with a specific focus on crafts and folk art, ceramics, textiles and placing First Peoples people first on the retracing of lost skills. Many of the existing attractions are international ready products and experiences and these combined with the local services make it a compelling destination for WH visitors. Linking the cities creative and gold heritage stories, as well as public realm improvements that elevate the heritage features of the city, improved way finding and interpretation will strengthen its position as an anchor for visitors.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BALLARAT



A. Access

Strengths

- 1h40min train ride from Melbourne.
- The town is easily accessed by vehicles.
- Trails and tracks are connected to other adjacent towns, with walking trails available in the city centre such as the Lake Wendouree walk.
- EV chargers are available throughout the city centre.

Challenges

- Limited cycling paths within the city centre.
- Walkability issues. For example, key sites are not within easy walking distance, there are busy road crossings, deep bluestone gutters and poor-quality footpaths.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Attractions and facilities such as libraries, visitor centres and art galleries are in proximity of each other.
- The Eureka Centre is an established centre with community facilities such as playground, cafes and public toilets.

Challenges

- Limited facilities at Black Hill site.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Well-serviced internet / 4G network throughout the city centre.
- Various community and health infrastructure are present throughout the city centre.

Challenges

- Internet / 4G network coverage is an issue in the wider Ballarat region.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Conservation of heritage buildings and streetscapes.
- Activated streetscapes, with many emerging food and cuisines.

Challenges

- Lydiard streetscape has limited rest areas – and is dominated by vehicle parking.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Key sites can be experienced by different modes of transport such as the presence of mountain bike trails in Black Hill Mining.
- Showcasing local producers and makers within visitor information centre.
- Ballarat's goldrush mining and alluvial landscape is an opportunity for the goldrush experience.
- Major tourism attractions such as Sovereign Hill Museums Association and proposed investment projects (i.e. Gold Pavilion)

Challenges

- Limited storytelling about the significance of key sites, including the Old Cemetery and the Black Hill Mining/Lookout.
- Limited First Peoples perspectives and storytelling at key sites and throughout the city centre.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MAJOR HUB: BALLARAT

Proposed Initiatives



A1. A7. Improve cycling infrastructure within the city centre and connections between key tourist destinations, the station, Historic Centre, Black Hill and the Botanic Gardens.



D7. Conserve heritage components of buildings and streetscapes.



B2. Improve facilities at Black Hill with picnic shelters and toilets.



E4. Opportunities for digital interpretation and storytelling, including First Peoples' stories.



D1. Public realm improvements to Lydiard Street to improve public amenity.



E4. Upgrade interpretation

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



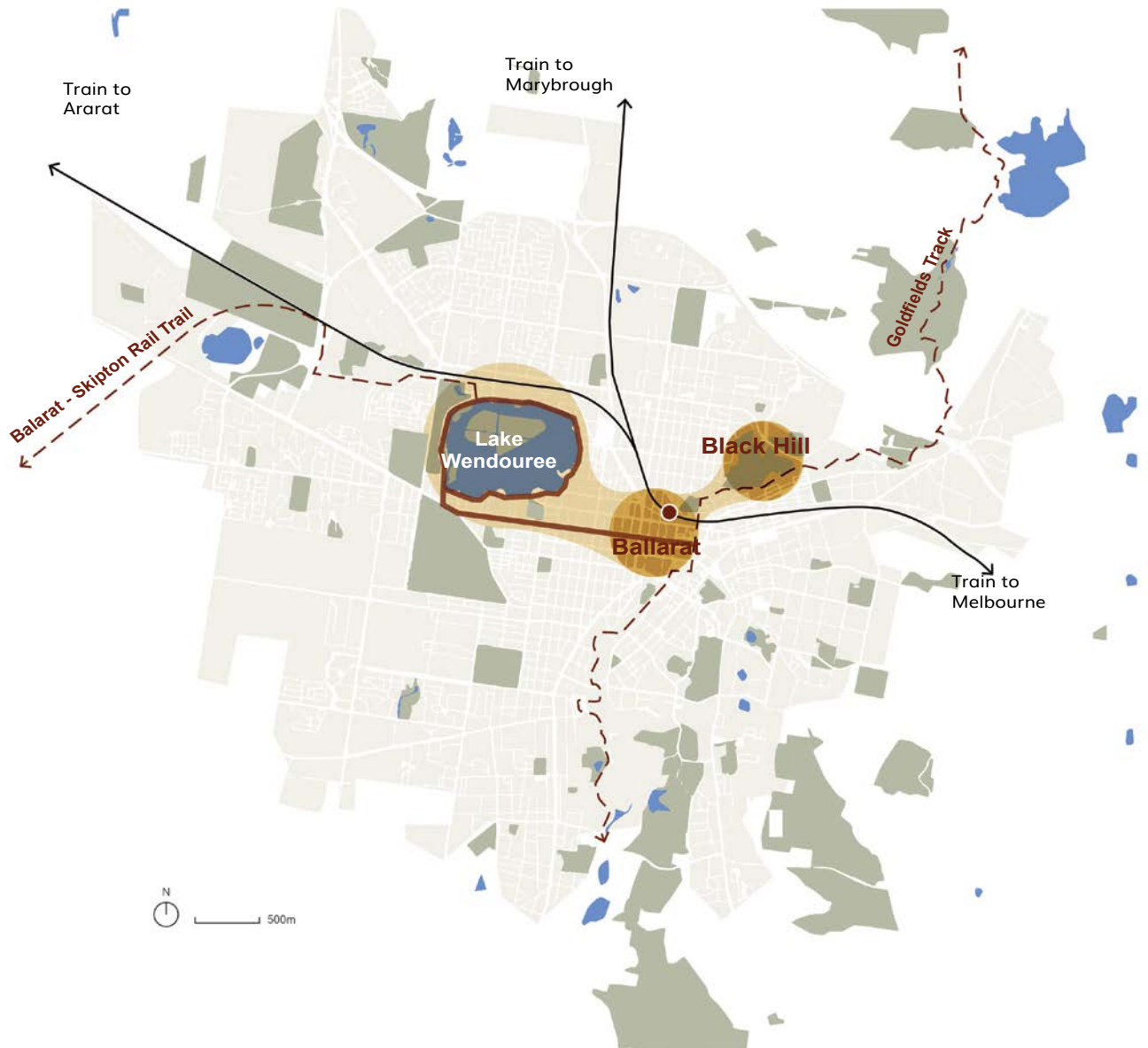
World Heritage Hub.



World Heritage Interpretation and Activation at Sovereign Hills Museum Association, Eureka Centre and Art Gallery Ballarat.



Partner with UNESCO Creative City program and initiatives.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BALLARAT



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

HUB: CASTLEMAINE & CASTLEMAINE DIGGINGS



Castlemaine is rich in history, artistic endeavours, festivals, contemporary food and natural beauty and is central to the goldfields. Its heritage streetscapes and converted historical places host galleries, food and drink producers and artisans and a great stopping point for exploring the World Heritage Journeys. The nearby Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park conserves much of the rich evidence of the gold rush including abandoned mines, remnant structures and settlements and significant historic sites such as the Monster Meeting Site. The Park contains the Goldfields track and numerous walking, cycling and drive tour opportunities. Improved wayfinding, storytelling and connections between cultural attractions will greatly improve the destination.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

CASTLEMAINE & CASTLEMAINE DIGGINGS



A. Access

Strengths

- Well connected to Melbourne by vehicle (Calder Freeway) and rail.
- Wide streets, accommodating vehicles movement and parking.
- Castlemaine Diggings as a starting point for the Goldfields Track.
- Recently upgraded areas such as the Garfield Water Wheel.

Challenges

- Limited accessibility to the Castlemaine Diggings.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Attractions and facilities such as libraries, visitor centres and art galleries are in proximity of each other.
- Repurposing of historical sites such as the Old Castlemaine gaol as an exhibition space.

Challenges

- Limited facilities at the Diggings sites.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Well-serviced internet / 4G network throughout the city centre.
- Various community and health infrastructure are present throughout the city centre.

Challenges

- Infrastructure needed to improve facilities at Diggings.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Well conserved heritage streetscapes and significant buildings.
- Activated streetscapes, with various retail shopfronts.
- Wide streets with places of rest and amenity.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Engaging goldrush storytelling with First Peoples interpretation at Castlemaine Diggings and the Monster Site delivered by Parks Victoria together with the RAPs.
- Extensive First Nation Cultural information within the selected landscape.
- Strong arts and culture story, with the Castlemaine Art Museum and the Mill as creative hubs.
- Intact heritage building and streetscapes as a place for goldrush settlement.
- Castlemaine Diggings as a natural site of landscape remnants during the goldrush.
- Permanent First Peoples exhibition, Boorp Boorp Boondyil, that shares the stories and teachings of the DJAARA people.

Challenges

- Limited storytelling within the city centre.
- No 'arrival moment'.
- Limited of wayfinding and signage around the town centre.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

HUB: CASTLEMAINE & CASTLEMAINE DIGGINGS

Proposed Initiatives



Improve access to the Castlemaine Diggings. In particular:

- A1. Access Roads.
- A2. Parking and accessible parking.
- A4. Coach Parking.
- A5. Pedestrian and cycling paths.



- B1. Toilets.
- B2. Picnic Tables.
- B3. Shelter.
- B4. BBQs.



Improve infrastructure at key diggings visitor sites with:

- C1. Water.
- C2. Electricity.



D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.



E5. Improve wayfinding between key visitor attractions.



E4. Digital storytelling for the historic centre and Castlemaine Diggings.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



World Heritage Hub



World Heritage Interpretation and Activations at key attractions such as Castlemaine Gallery, Old Castlemaine Gaol and the Victoria Goldfields Railway.



Iconic infrastructure improvements to showcase the protected heritage and cultural landscape of the Castlemaine Diggings.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

CASTLEMAINE & CASTLEMAINE DIGGINGS



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

HUB: MARYBOROUGH



Maryborough, developed during the goldrush, has a well-conserved commercial streetscape along High Street, iconic public buildings including the post office in Clarendon Street and the grand railway station. It is a base for gold prospecting tours and exploring goldrush remains in nearby Paddys Ranges State Park. It's a thriving town and a great base for visitors exploring the World Heritage Journeys, supported by a thriving community. Goldfields could be enhanced through improved signage and wayfinding around the main centre, streetscape and shopfront activation.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MARYBOROUGH



A. Access

Strengths

- Well-positioned between the two major hubs of Bendigo and Ballarat, with one hour drive from Ballarat and Bendigo.
- Multiple modes of transport options available including rail and vehicle access, with rail trail from Ballarat available.
- EV charges available.

Challenges

- Lack of cycling paths and facilities throughout the town.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Co-location of transport infrastructure with community facilities such as art studios, co-working space and digital exhibition space.
- Newly upgraded Visitor Information Centre and highly engaging interpretation on the goldrush.
- Basic facilities include public toilets, library, medical centre and art gallery are available in the town centre.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Limited powerlines on streets adds to the historical streetscape.

Challenges

- Tourism infrastructure is limited, with accommodation being at capacity and short opening hours of food and drinks options.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Well conserved heritage streetscapes and significant buildings with a prominent civic square with significant building including the post office, courthouse and town hall.
- Variety of retail offerings, especially in its vintage and antique stores.

Challenges

- Lack of signage and wayfinding around the main centre.
- Lack of streetscape and shopfront activation.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Intact streetscape reveals the story of the gold-rush settlement.
- Rich First Peoples stories of the DJAARA people within its landscape of quarries, forests and rock wells.
- Emerging arts and culture opportunity with the readaptation of the fire station into the art gallery and new arts studio at the train station.
- Emerging First Peoples interpretation with the Indigenous Garden under construction.
- Emerging digital technology storytelling at the train station.

Challenges

- Lack of signage and storytelling about the town.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

HUB: MARYBOROUGH

Proposed Initiatives



A6, A8. Improve cycling and pedestrian paths.



E6. Upgrade wayfinding.



D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.



E8. Digital storytelling.



E4. Visitor interpretation.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



Integrate World Heritage Interpretation at the Centre at Maryborough Historic Rail Station and Visitor Centre.



World Heritage Interpretation and Activations at key attractions such as the Central Goldfields Art Gallery.



Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Master Plan

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MARYBOROUGH

Improve cycling access within town centre.

Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

HUB: ARARAT



Ararat, in the foothills of the Grampians, is a captivating town blending history, nature and culture. The town is renowned for its historical significance, housing the notorious J Ward Gaol and the Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre, celebrating the town's Chinese heritage. The town is known for being the gateway to nearby wine regions and houses the renowned Ararat Gallery Textile Art Museum. Ararat boasts a vibrant arts scene with galleries and cultural events. Visitors can savour local cuisine in charming eateries and explore its well-conserved heritage buildings.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

ARARAT



A. Access

Strengths

- A stop over town driving from Melbourne to Adelaide or Ballarat to the Grampians on the Western Highway.
- Cycling paths on Barkley Street and High Street.
- Various walking journeys around town including One Tree Hill and Ararat Hills Regional Park.

Challenges

- Access to nearby attractions such as One Tree Lookout and Ararat regional park is by vehicle and could be improved.
- Approximately 2.5h train ride from Melbourne and 1h from Ballarat. There are currently 8 services running from Melbourne to Ararat, which makes it difficult for a day trip from Melbourne on the weekend.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Facilities available including public toilets, supermarkets, parks and reserves with BBQs and playspaces at Alexander Gardens are all in proximity to each other.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Free public Wi-Fi at public spaces around Ararat township.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Impressive heritage façades line and planting create a unique character.
- Activated streetscapes with retail shopfronts and shelters.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Town's strong goldrush history and Chinese Heritage.
- Ararat Art gallery and emerging arts and creative scene. The Gallery is co-located with the visitor information centre.
- First Peoples storytelling through the Langi Morgala Museum.
- Variety of tourism experiences including natural offerings e.g. Ararat Regional Park.
- Many community events and festivals including the Ararat farmers Market at Alexander Gardens, Ararat Winterfest, Ararat Tulip Festival and Jailhouse Rock Festival.
- Other tourism experience includes its culinary offerings and wineries.

Challenges

- Limited storytelling within the town centre.
- Limited wayfinding within the town centre.
- Limited hospitality and food and beverage offering in town.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

HUB: ARARAT

Proposed Initiatives



A8, A9. Improve cycling access with supporting infrastructure to Ararat Hills.



E1, E2. Support the town's existing cultural hubs and attractions to embed World Heritage and goldfields story.



D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.



E4. Improve visitors interpretation of gold mining and migration story.



E5. Improve wayfinding throughout the town and to key attractions.



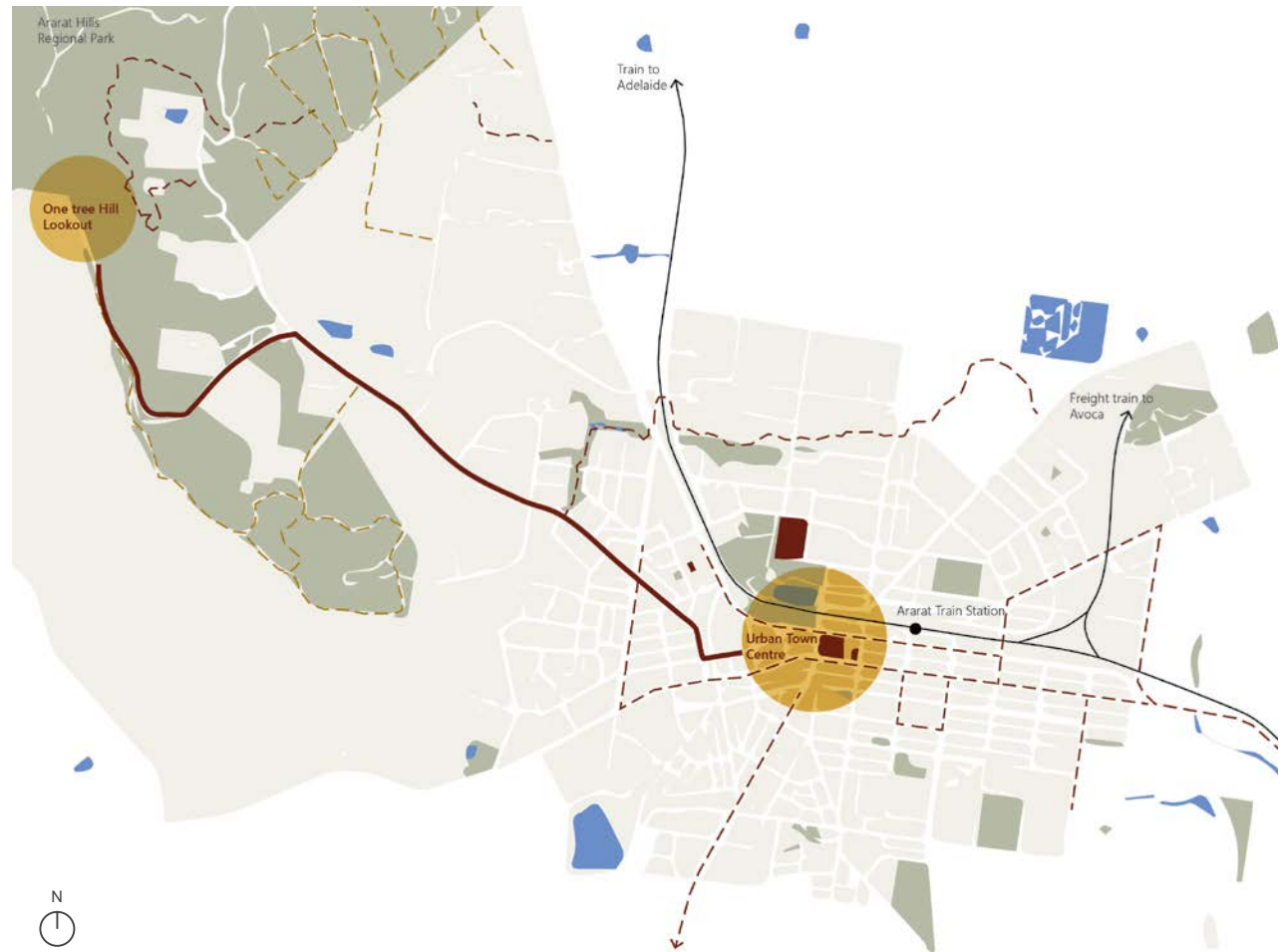
E9. Showcase the town's culinary experiences through festivals and events from its nearby wineries within the Pyrenees region.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



World Heritage Interpretation and Activations at key attractions such as the Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre and Ararat Gallery TAMA.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

ARARAT

Support the town's existing cultural hubs and attractions to embed World Heritage and Goldfields story.

Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.

Showcase culinary experiences through festivals and events from its nearby wineries within the Pyrenees region.

Improve visitors interpretation.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

HUB: BEECHWORTH



Beechworth is a beautifully conserved goldrush town, celebrated for its exceptional wines, gastronomic offering and abundant natural beauty. The town offers a rich historical experience, tracing its origins from the area's Traditional Owners, gold-seeking pioneers to its and Australia's infamous bushrangers. Its streets are lined with well-maintained historic buildings. Beechworth's vibrant food scene is marked by local wineries, craft breweries, and eateries that showcase regional flavours. Nearby, Yackandandah is tucked away in the lush valleys of the Stanley State Forest— a picturesque township, home to makers, bakers, artisans and distillers. Yackandandah is known for its creative community and scenic natural swimming spots. Rutherglen offers a gourmet experience with its renowned wineries and local produce. Chiltern is a charming small town, distinguished by its perfectly conserved historic streetscapes. It boasts a rich bird-watching scene and is enveloped by the Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park that has several mining sites. The region is connected by a network of diverse cycling and walking trails that connect with the towns and villages.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BEECHWORTH



A. Access

Strengths

- Beechworth is 20 minutes from the Hume at Chiltern and 30 minutes from Wangaratta.
- Extensive cycling network connected by the Murry to Mountains Rail Trail.
- Network of local walking paths.
- Significant mine sites in close proximity.

Challenges

- Region is self-drive with limited public transport access, as the only rail station is at Chiltern.
- Many walking paths are in poor condition and a number are currently closed by Parks Victoria awaiting infrastructure repairs.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- The town centre has visitor information centre, public toilets, picnic areas and parks, close to key attractions including Burke Museum, Old Beechworth Goal, Beechworth Court House and Beechworth Asylum.
- Private sector investment and World Heritage ready operators.

Challenges

- Beechworth lacks accommodation of scale.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Beechworth, Yackandandah, Chiltern and Rutherglen have adequate water, electricity and sewage infrastructure.

Challenges

- Region is self-drive with limited public transport access, as the only rail station is at Chiltern.
- Need to additional EV charging infrastructure.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Historic and well conserved town centres and main streets.
- Adjacent walks and landscape including the Beechworth Historic Park and Gorge.

Challenges

- Need to improve access to mining sites and walking tracks.
- Limited links to First Peoples sites.



E. Experience

Strengths

- A number of existing festivals that celebrate art, cycling, community and wine.
- Strong mix of accommodation and attractions, food and beverages and historical features.
- Strong trail offering and cycling events.

Challenges

- Need to improve wayfinding, signage and digital and develop an integrated approach.
- Limited First Peoples interpretation despite being a place of First Peoples significance with cultural significant places including the Yeddonha Aboriginal Cultural Site and Lake Moobadeerie in the area.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

HUB: BEECHWORTH

Proposed Initiatives

- 

A4. Improve bus connections between Rutherglen, Chiltern, Beechworth and Yackandandah.
- 

A6. Reopen and upgrade closed walking paths to Goldfields sites in the National Park and lookouts.
- 

A6, A8. Develop integrated walking and cycling experiences.
- 

A9. Provide a bike hub and wayfinding at Yackandandah.
- 

A3. Provide additional EV infrastructure.
- 

B5. Deliver the Chiltern Destination Playground.
- 

B. Develop Rutherglen destination and Silo Arts precinct.
- 

B. Deliver the Goods Shed Project in Beechworth.
- 

B. Support the investment in Beechworth Information Centre.
- 

B. Deliver the Beechworth Historic Precinct Master Plan.
- 

Improve facilities at key walking and mining sites.
- 

Improve First Peoples interpretation.
- 

Support sustainable tourism initiatives in town centres with industry.
- 

Support new events and action of the Historic Main Street.



Signature Experience Opportunities

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



World Heritage Hub including research and education centre



World Heritage Interpretation and Activations at key museums including Burke Museum and Beechworth Gaol.



Deliver iconic attraction at Gorge Walk Beechworth including Powder Magazine and consider opportunities to open up the tunnels to events or walking tours.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BEECHWORTH

Improve bus connections between Rutherglen, Chiltern, Beechworth and Yackandandah.

Integrated walking and cycling experiences.

Support new events and action of the Historic Main Street.

Conserve heritage components of buildings and streetscape.

Support new events and action of the Historic Main Street.

Walking tours of the tunnels and events



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: CRESWICK



Creswick, developed during the goldrush, has a well-conserved historic urban centre with notable institutional and commercial goldrush buildings. The town is well known for its walking and cycling trails, pubs, restaurants and cafes. To the south and west of Creswick are extensive shallow leads and sluicing landscapes with important water management systems.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

CRESWICK



A. Access

Strengths

- Multiple cycling and walking trails within the town and to adjacent towns with the Goldfields track.
- New mountain biking trails including the Creswick Trails Network and Hammon Park Trailhead.
- EV chargers are available, nearby the visitor centre.

Challenges

- Lack of cycling paths in the town centre.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Facilities such as public toilet, libraries and visitor centre are in proximity to each other.

Challenges

- Facilities including the visitor centre is dated, with low visitation numbers.
- Limited food and drinks options.
- Limited opening hours.



C. Infrastructure

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Conservation of heritage buildings and streetscapes.

Challenges

- Lack of wayfinding and signage around the town centre.
- Lack of streetscape activation with vacant retail shopfronts.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Various tracks and trails that showcases the goldrush history, including the Buried Rivers of Gold attraction.
- Community markets and events including Creswick Farmers Market and the CresFest.

Challenges

- Lack of historical storytelling.
- Limited digital experiences and infrastructure.
- Limited First Peoples cultural heritage and storytelling.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: CRESWICK

Proposed Initiatives

A5. Upgrade pedestrian and cycling infrastructure between key attractions.

A8. Cycle support infrastructure for mountain bike trails.

C3. Upgrade internet infrastructure.

D6. Explore opportunities for vacant shopfront activation.

E3. Visitor Information centre upgrade.

E4. Visitor interpretation.

E6. Upgrade wayfinding.

E8. Digital storytelling.

E9. Festivals and events (CresFest)

Potential Game Changers

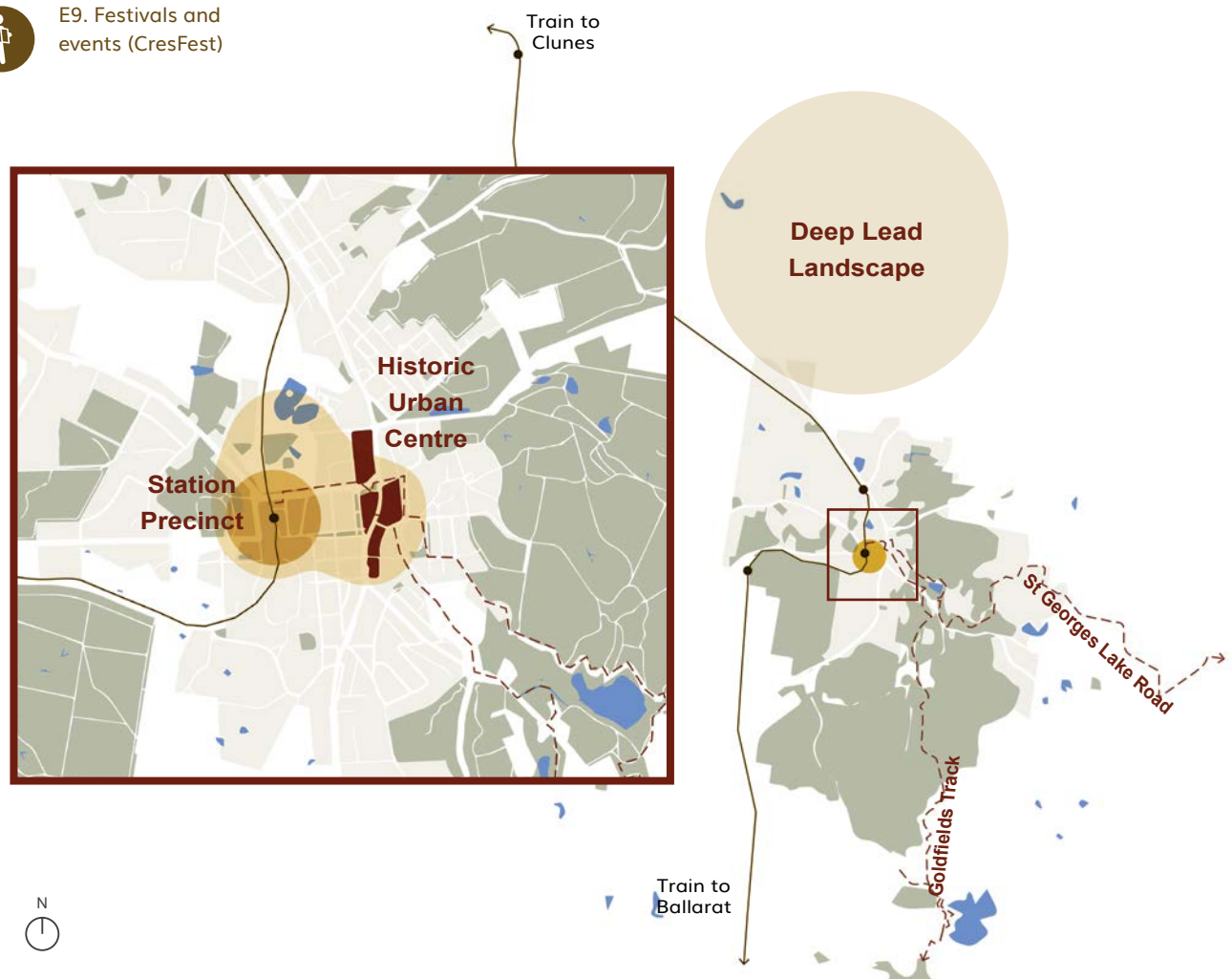
Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



New World Heritage Interpretation at Creswick Visitor Centre.

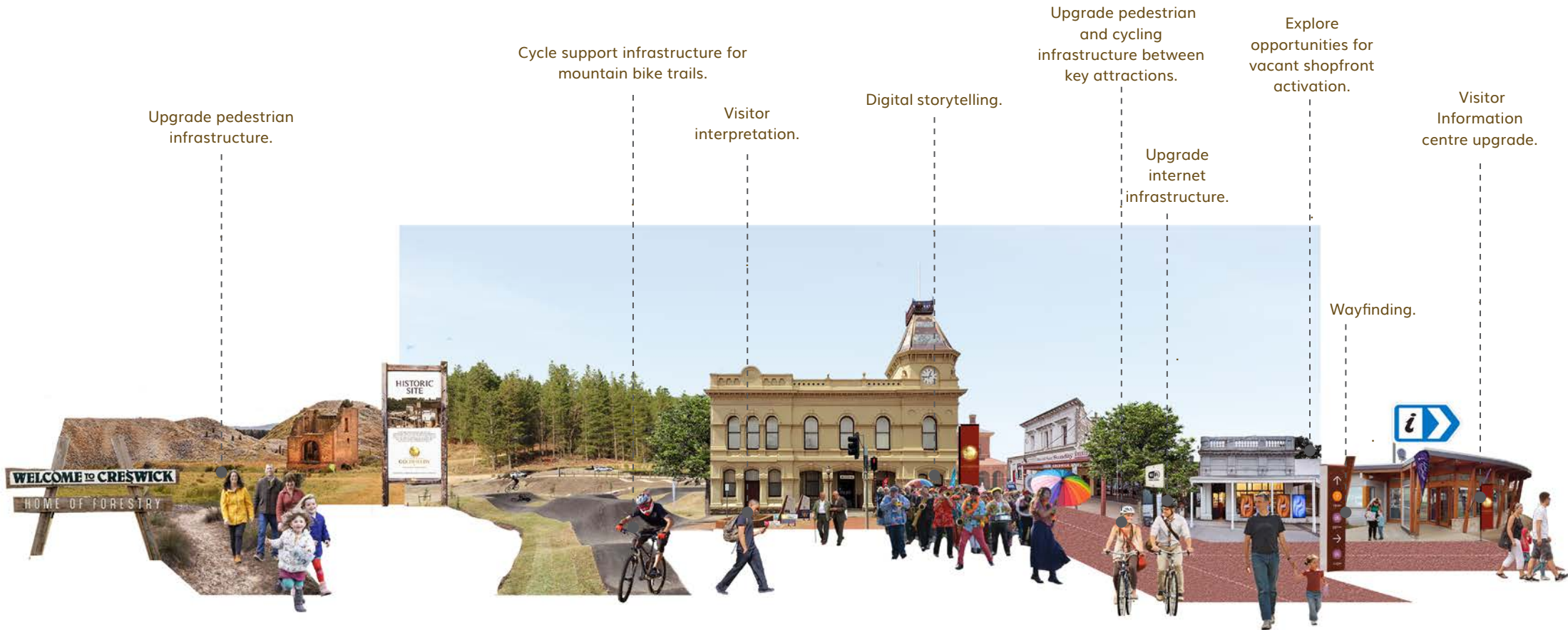


World Heritage Interpretation and Activations at key museums and attractions such as CresFest and Creswick Museum.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

CRESWICK



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: MALDON



Maldon, a charming village with a strong historical heritage and natural beauty is known for its well-conserved Victorian-era architecture and heritage buildings. It is a delightfully conserved piece of Gold Rush history, Australia's first notable town boasts a thriving arts and food scene and a strong community. There is a significant opportunity to highlight the town's history and showcase its beautiful heritage streetscapes through shopfront activation, improved signage and interpretation to educate visitors about Maldon's gold rush era and the significance of the region.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MALDON



A. Access

Strengths

- 15 minutes drive from Castlemaine, bus service to Castlemaine and V/Line Bus connects to Ballarat.
- Wide pedestrian footpaths with weather projection.
- Surrounding tracks and trails to surrounding towns and lookouts including the Maldon to Castlemaine rail trail.

Challenges

- Limited integration between cycle and pedestrian paths.
- No Vline Rail connection, limited public transport options.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Art galleries, public toilets, visitor centres and community centres are in proximity to each other.
- Basic facilities and amenities such as pharmacy, newsagent and supermarket are available.
- Shelters and seats are dispersed throughout the town.

Challenges

- Limited opening hours for local business.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Limited powerlines on streets adds to the historical streetscape.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Intact heritage buildings and streetscape.
- Mature street tree canopies.
- Activated streetscapes with active retail shopfronts, boutiques and various food and drinks options.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Historical streetscape serves as the gold-rush era experience.
- The Victorian Goldfields steam train experience from Maldon to Castlemaine.
- Rich First Peoples story within its cultural landscape.
- Local markets including the Maldon Market, Maldon Easter Fair and Maldon Folk Festival to experience community events.
- Lack of local wayfinding and signage throughout the town.

Challenges

- Missing goldrush storytelling and wayfinding.
- Lack of First Peoples storytelling and interpretation.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: MALDON

Proposed Initiatives



A4. Improve bus connections.



E6. Upgrade wayfinding.



D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.



E9. Digital storytelling.



E4. Visitor interpretation.



E9. Events and Festivals.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



New World Heritage Interpretation at Maldon Visitor Centre.



World Heritage Interpretation and Activations at key attractions such as Porcupine Village and the Victorian Goldfields Railway.



Iconic infrastructure to showcase the Beehive Chimney.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MALDON

Improve cycling paths.

Repurpose railway station as a creative space.

Update wayfinding.

Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.

Improve pedestrian infrastructure.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: CLUNES



Clunes, nestled in a scenic valley, is known as the site of Victoria's first gold strike in 1851. Clunes was once the fifth largest town in the colony and remains, architecturally, one of the most intact gold towns in Victoria. Its attractive streetscape has been the setting for movies and advertisements. It makes for an outstanding stopover for visitors exploring the Victorian Goldfields. On a hillside overlooking the town centre are number of old gold mining sites including the Port Phillip Mine. Shopfront activation, improved wayfinding and interpretive information would enhance the visitor experience.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

CLUNES



A. Access

Strengths

- Wide streets that are easily accessible by vehicles.
- Wide footpaths for pedestrian access with shading.
- Rail trails available, as part of the Ballarat to Maryborough Heritage Trail.

Challenges

- Key sites, like Port Phillip Mine, is only accessible by private vehicles and with limited parking.
- Lack of cycling paths and infrastructure within the town centre.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- A public square with community facilities such as library, picnic area, Wi-Fi and public toilets.
- Readapting aged building stock as a newly renovated community townhall.
- Basic facilities: supermarket and pharmacy are available.
- Emerging co-working spaces.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Wi-Fi availability.
- Underground powerlines add to the historical streetscape.

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.
- Limited tourism infrastructure such as accommodation and food and drink options.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Intact heritage buildings and streetscapes.
- Presence of a public square, nearby community facilities such as library with Wi-Fi access and shelter.

Challenges

- Vacant retail shops.
- Lack of rest-areas throughout the streetscapes.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Strong First Gold and Book town story, with town signage at the entrance of town and key museum, Clunes Museum.
- Conservation of mining landscape and First Gold Town monument at Port Phillip Mine adds to the gold-rush experience.
- Strong book town identity with Clunes Booktown and shopfront branding.
- Emerging arts culture with the Tiny Arts Trail.

Challenges

- Lack of First Peoples storytelling and interpretation.
- Information boards at key sites, including Port Phillip Mine, can be improved to incorporate the World Heritage Goldfields Story.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: CLUNES

Proposed Initiatives

- 

A4. Improve public transport connections.
- 

D3. Explore possibilities for temporary installations of public art.
- 

E4. Visitor interpretation.
- 

A6, A8. Improve cycling and pedestrian paths.
- 

D6. Vacant shopfront activation.
- 

E6. Upgrade wayfinding.
- 

C3. Improve internet access.
- 

D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings, including ensuring that infrastructure does not impact the historic look and feel of Fraser Street.
- 

E9. Digital storytelling.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



New World Heritage Interpretation at Clunes Visitor Centre.



World Heritage Interpretation and Activations at key attractions and festivals such as Clunes Museum and Clunes Booktown Festival.



Iconic infrastructure to showcase the Port Phillip Mine.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

CLUNES



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: SMYTHESDALE (SMYTHESDALE-LINTON CORRIDOR)



Smythesdale, in the Smythesdale-Linton Corridor, is the perfect blend of history, natural beauty and small-town charm. Nestled amidst picturesque landscapes, visitors can explore its rich gold rush heritage through well-conserved buildings and museums, offering a glimpse into the region's past. The town offers opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts, with nearby parks and reserves providing hiking and nature experiences. Smythesdale's welcoming community and local shops and cafes make it an ideal stop for those seeking a tranquil escape from city life and following the gold rush trails.

A short drive away is the town of Linton. The legacy of gold mining is still evident, with historical sites, remnants of mining infrastructure and heritage buildings serving as reminders of the town's illustrious past. While commercial gold mining may no longer be as prominent as it once was, the history of gold mining remains an integral part of Linton's identity and heritage.

As testament to this the Linton community are in talks to start an annual Linton Gold Festival and regularly operate tours of the Chinese section of the Linton Cemetery to pay homage to multicultural history of mining in the region. This includes attraction of tourists from mainland China.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

SMYTHESDALE (SMYTHESDALE-LINTON CORRIDOR)



Visit Melbourne

A. Access

Strengths

- Vehicle access only 20 minutes drive from Ballarat.
- Street parking available in town centre.
- Various walking trails within and surrounding town centre including the Skipton Trail, Jubilee Walk, Rainbow Bird Trail and Woody Yaloak River Trail.

Challenges

- No rail journeys.
- Limited V/Line bus service.



Goldfields Guide

B. Facilities

Strengths

- Basic facilities and amenities include pharmacy, grocers and parks and reserves.
- Smythesdale Garden is popular for caravan and RVs campers, with facilities such as public toilets, playground, BBQ and undercover picnic areas.
- Co-working space (The Well) in conjunction with a community hub is available for local residents as well as tourists and historical information for visitors.



The Well

C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Wi-Fi available at the co-working space.

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.
- Limited tourism infrastructure such as accommodation and food and drink options.



VicScreen

D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Intact heritage buildings and streetscapes.
- Contemporary design of The Well fits with the existing streetscape,

Challenges

- Limited street trees and canopy throughout town centre.



The Courier

E. Experience

Strengths

- Strong goldrush identity revealed in the conservation of historic buildings constructed during the Goldrush period. e.g. The Courthouse Hotel (1850).
- Strong goldfields history with intact mining landscape and historic precinct as well as infrastructure including the Nimons Bridge.
- Opportunity to leverage on existing public art (including the Chinese Miners sculpture) and memorial park to emphasise on the goldrush story.
- Emerging arts culture with Smythesdale Arts and Music Fiesta, a festival for local artists and community to come together.

Challenges

- Lack of First Peoples story-telling and interpretation.
- Lack of wayfinding throughout the town centre.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: SMYTHESDALE (SMYTHESDALE-LINTON CORRIDOR)

Proposed Initiatives



A8. Extension of the Skipton Ballarat rail trail to Hamilton.



C3. Improve internet access.



E. Opportunities to leverage Ballarat events and festivals as an alternative place to stay.



A8. Improve access to Nimons Bridge, Jubilee Mine Site and Devils Kitchen.



D1, D4. Improve public realm through landscape and planting works.



E5. Improve signage for Ballarat-Skipton Rail Trail.



A7, A9. Safety improvements to the Rainbow Bird Trail to the Jubilee Mine Site and maintenance of Devils Kitchen.



D3. Opportunity for art to connect to the goldrush story.



E9. Support community events such as markets and fairs and embedding them within the World Heritage and goldfields stories at the event.



B. Improve facilities including public toilets and shelters for the Skipton Ballarat rail trail.



E5. Improve wayfinding in connecting attractions.



E1. Adapt existing historical buildings into new contemporary use, including an experience or interpretive centre.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



World Heritage Interpretation and Activations at Smythesdale Historic Precinct and in nearby Linton.



Showcase the Jubilee Historic Area and other historical infrastructure such as Nimmons Bridge.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

SMYTHESDALE (SMYTHESDALE-LINTON CORRIDOR)

Improve access to Nimmons Bridge, Jubilee Mine Site and Devils Kitchen.

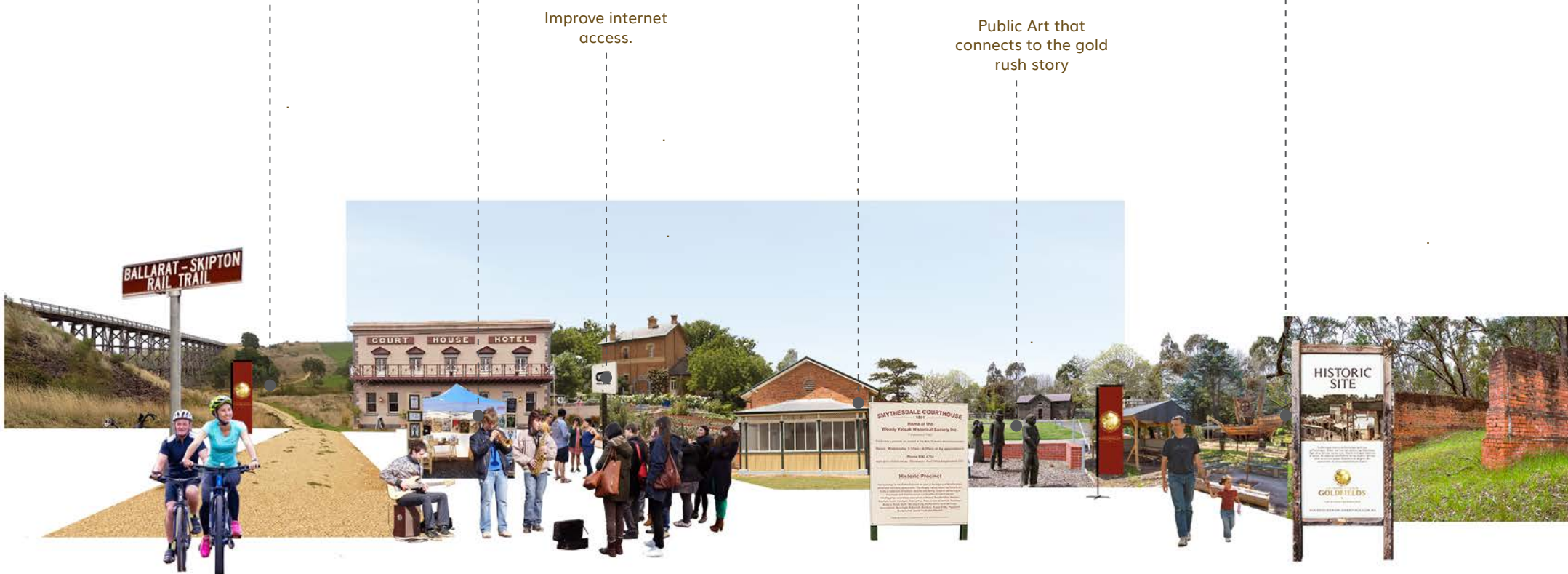
Support community events such as markets and fairs.

Adapt existing historical buildings into new contemporary use, which could include an experience or interpretive centre.

Improve wayfinding and connect key attractions.

Improve internet access.

Public Art that connects to the gold rush story



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: MALMSBURY



Malmsbury is steeped in history and natural beauty. The town is renowned for its iconic bluestone viaduct, a marvel of 19th-century engineering and Malmsbury Botanic Gardens, a tranquil oasis featuring a diverse range of plant species. Visitors can explore the historic streets adorned with heritage-listed buildings, offering a glimpse into the past. The nearby Malmsbury Reservoir provides opportunities for picnicking and water activities. With its blend of historical landmarks, botanical delights and a serene atmosphere, Malmsbury offers a perfect escape.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MALMSBURY



Flickr

A. Access

Strengths

- One hour drive from Melbourne.
- Rail access (1 hour 20 minutes V/Line ride from Melbourne) with 18 services per day.
- Various walking tracks and trails within the town including the botanic gardens to the viaduct (Malmsbury Reservoir walk) and the self-guided heritage walk.

Challenges

- Lack of cycling paths and infrastructure within the town centre.



Macedon Ranges Shire Council

B. Facilities

Strengths

- Malmsbury Botanic Gardens has picnic tables, public toilets, shelters & BBQs, information signs and playground.
- Other facilities include sports ground, botanic gardens, primary school, mechanics institute, police station and town hall.



Macedon Ranges Shire Council

C. Infrastructure

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.
- Limited tourism infrastructure such as accommodation and food and drink options.



VieScreen

D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Heritage conservation and bluestone architecture of the streetscape contributes to the identity of the town.
- Town is surrounded by natural and rural landscape with Coliban River bypassing the town.



Daylesford Macedon Life

E. Experience

Strengths

- Conservation of railway viaduct and the town's architecture reveals the town's history and development as a goldrush town.
- Well conserved heritage architecture of antique shops and retail, provides a historical story of the gold mining town.
- Community events include the Malmsbury Village Farmers and Arts Market.
- Emerging arts community from the Tin Sheds Gallery.

Challenges

- Lack of First Peoples story-telling and interpretation.
- Lack of wayfinding and signage throughout town centre.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: MALMSBURY

Proposed Initiatives



A6, A8. Improve cycling and pedestrian connection between key attractions, town centre and train station.



E9, E10. Support town community markets, events and businesses as key attractions for visitation.



C3. Improve internet access.



E5. Upgrading wayfinding.



D6. Improve and upgrade streetscape and façades in town centre.



D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



Support key community events such as the Malsbury Farmers Market.



Iconic infrastructure to showcase the historical Railway Viaduct.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

MALMSBURY

Support town community markets, events and businesses as key attractions for visitation.

Improve cycling and pedestrian connection between key attraction, town centre and train station.

Upgrading wayfinding.

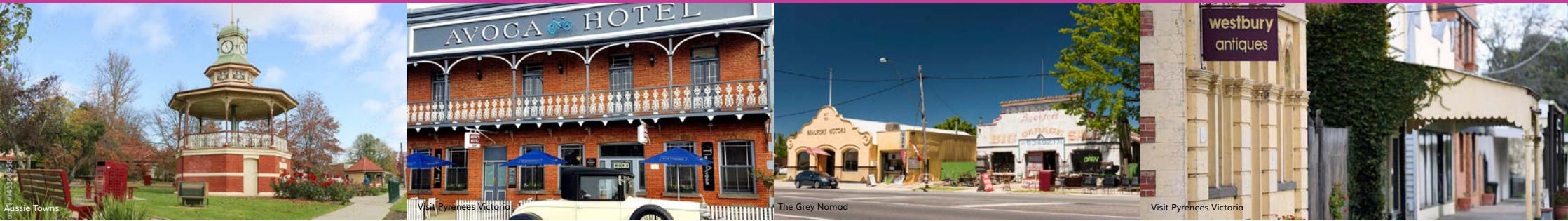
Improve internet access.

Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: BEAUFORT & AVOCA



Beaufort is a picturesque town known for its blend of natural beauty and historical charm. Situated amidst rolling hills and close to the idyllic Lake Beaufort, the town offers outdoor enthusiasts a haven for fishing, boating, and picnicking. Beaufort's historic streets are lined with well-conserved heritage buildings, including the grand Beaufort Manor, providing a glimpse into its rich past. Visitors can explore local shops, cafes and art galleries, immersing themselves in the friendly community atmosphere.

Avoca is a significant goldrush era town. It includes the Percydale shallow alluvial diggings and the Pyrenees Ranges National Park. It provides the gateway into the Pyrenees wine region. Avoca is in the Central Victorian Goldfields and is an entry point to Victoria's central-west goldfields region. Like Beaufort, it is part of the Pyrenees Shire.

Avoca is recognised as being an important micro journey location for the World Heritage Journeys Program. Proposed initiatives for Avoca include improvement plans for:

- Implementation of streetscape plans
- Development of heritage rail/art precinct
- Pedestrian access connections
- Heritage walk interpretation/signage
- River flat precinct to cater for overnight visitors and campers
- Improving cellar door experiences for visitors (Pyrenees Wine Region).

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BEAUFORT



A. Access

Strengths

- A stop over town driving from Melbourne to Adelaide or Ballarat to the Grampians on the Western Highway.

Challenges

- Lack of cycling paths and infrastructure within the town centre.
- Rail access (2 hours V/Line), with four services per day on a weekday and three services per day on weekends.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Visitor information centre is available with public toilets.
- Camp Hill Reserve features picnic area, a BBQ shelter and lookout to the town centre.
- Beaufort Lake has picnic areas and caravan parks for campers.
- Facilities such as supermarket, hospital and community hall are available.



C. Infrastructure

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Conservation of heritage cottages and buildings.
- Wide footpaths with weather protection and street trees

Challenges

- Limited seats and shelters within town centre.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Conservation of key heritage buildings such as the Court House, Memorial Rose Garden and the Band Rotunda reveals the town's development due to the goldrush.
- Strong First Peoples story with the Koori Art trail at Beaufort Lake with its First Peoples artwork that depicts the native flora and fauna of the area and the annual Rainbow Serpent Festival.
- Emerging art scene of the town: Koori Art Trail, Angela Gerrard Art and Imperial Egg Gallery.

Challenges

- Lack of wayfinding and signage throughout town centre.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: BEAUFORT

Proposed Initiatives



A6. Improve walking trail and access to lake and lookout.



E5. Provide signage and branding of the Goldfields region as a gateway to the goldfields.



C3. Improve internet access.



E3. Visitor centre upgrades.



E2, E7. Support existing art trails, events and programs as part of the World Heritage story.



E5. Upgrading wayfinding.

Potential Game Changers

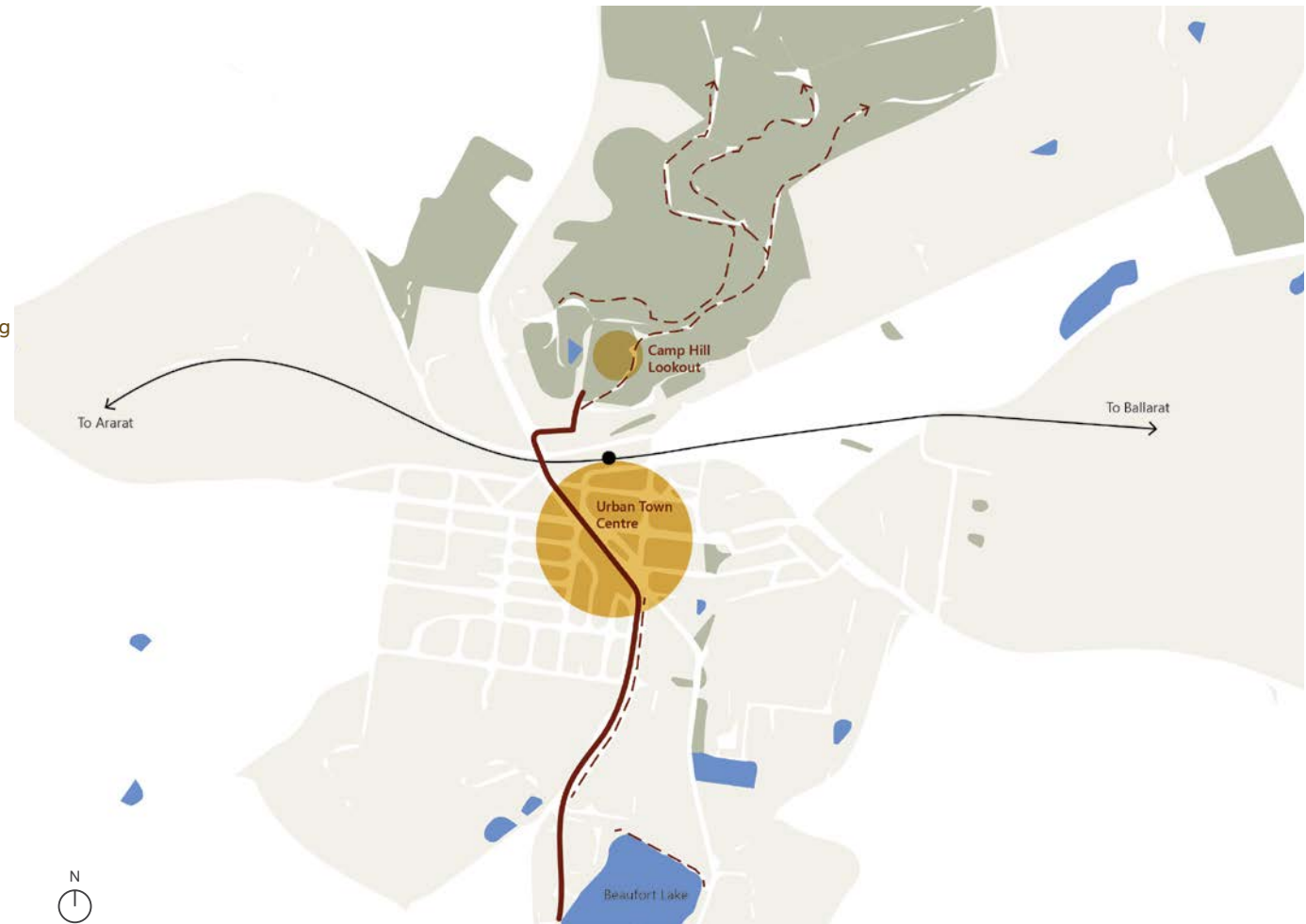
Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



New World Heritage Interpretation at Beaufort Visitor Centre.



Iconic infrastructure to showcase the Koori Heritage Trail.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BEAUFORT

Support existing art trails, events and programs as part of the World Heritage story.

Improve walking trail and access to lake and lookout.

Provide signage and branding of the Goldfields region from the Grampians region.

Visitor centre upgrades.

Support existing art trails, events and programs as part of the World Heritage story.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: WALHALLA



Walhalla is a historic and picturesque town known for its gold mining heritage and stunning natural landscapes, with 75 Victorian Heritage Database listed places within the town. Nestled in the Victorian Alps, it offers visitors a step back in time with its well-conserved 19th-century architecture and gold mining relics. Visitors can explore the Long Tunnel Extended Gold Mine, ride the Walhalla Goldfields Railway, or stroll along the charming main street. The town is surrounded by lush forests, making it a haven for hikers and nature enthusiasts.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

WALHALLA



A. Access

Strengths

- EV charging available at Star Hotel.
- Proximity to Erica and Rawson which can serve as gateway towns
- Historic railway access.
- Several walking tracks and trails including the Australian Alps Walking Track.

Challenges

- Highly constrained access with one road entry and exit which is windy and narrow.
- Lack of cycling paths into town.
- Historic railway is disconnected from neighbouring townships and destinations.
- Accessibility issues throughout Walhalla, particularly due to steep gradients and narrow footpaths.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Public facilities including toilet and visitor centres.
- Picnic tables and seating available at Ned Stringer's Park and along Stringers Creek.

Challenges

- Insufficient provision of public toilets and spaces for shelter.
- Limited basic services including general provisions and medical services.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Internet and phone coverage.

Challenges

- Flooding and drainage issues associated with Stingers Creek.
- No town-wide sewage management system.
- Lack of independent power supply.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Well conserved historical precinct with intact heritage streetscape.
- Public art integrated into streetscape.

Challenges

- Narrow footpaths in varying condition.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Interpretation at historical attractions at key destinations.
- Unique, well-established and community-led experiences including Walhalla Goldfields Railway and the Long Tunnel Extended Gold Mine.
- Historical attractions such as the Walhalla Band Rotunda, Masonic Lodge, Old Fire Station Museum, Chinese Garden, Cemetery and more.
- Natural surrounds and remote location.

Challenges

- • Lack of co-ordination amongst tourism operators.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TOWN: WALHALLA

Proposed Initiatives

-  A2, A5. Improve and expand car and coach Parking on arrival.
-  A6. Complete footpath and accessibility improvements through town.
-  A2. Introduce park and ride at entrance of town to reduce congestion and manage visitor numbers.
-  A. Explore micro-mobility within township.

-  A4. Railway extension to Erica. Park and ride at southern end for the short term.
-  B1. Improve public toilet provision.
-  D1. Public realm improvements including new seating and shelter.
-  D7. Conserve heritage components of buildings and streetscape.

-  E1 Goldfields experience centre at rail gateway.
-  E4. Update visitor interpretation.
-  E5. Implement wayfinding strategy.
-  E6. Reinststate historic street lighting.
-  E9. Introduce innovative digital storytelling.

Potential Game Changers

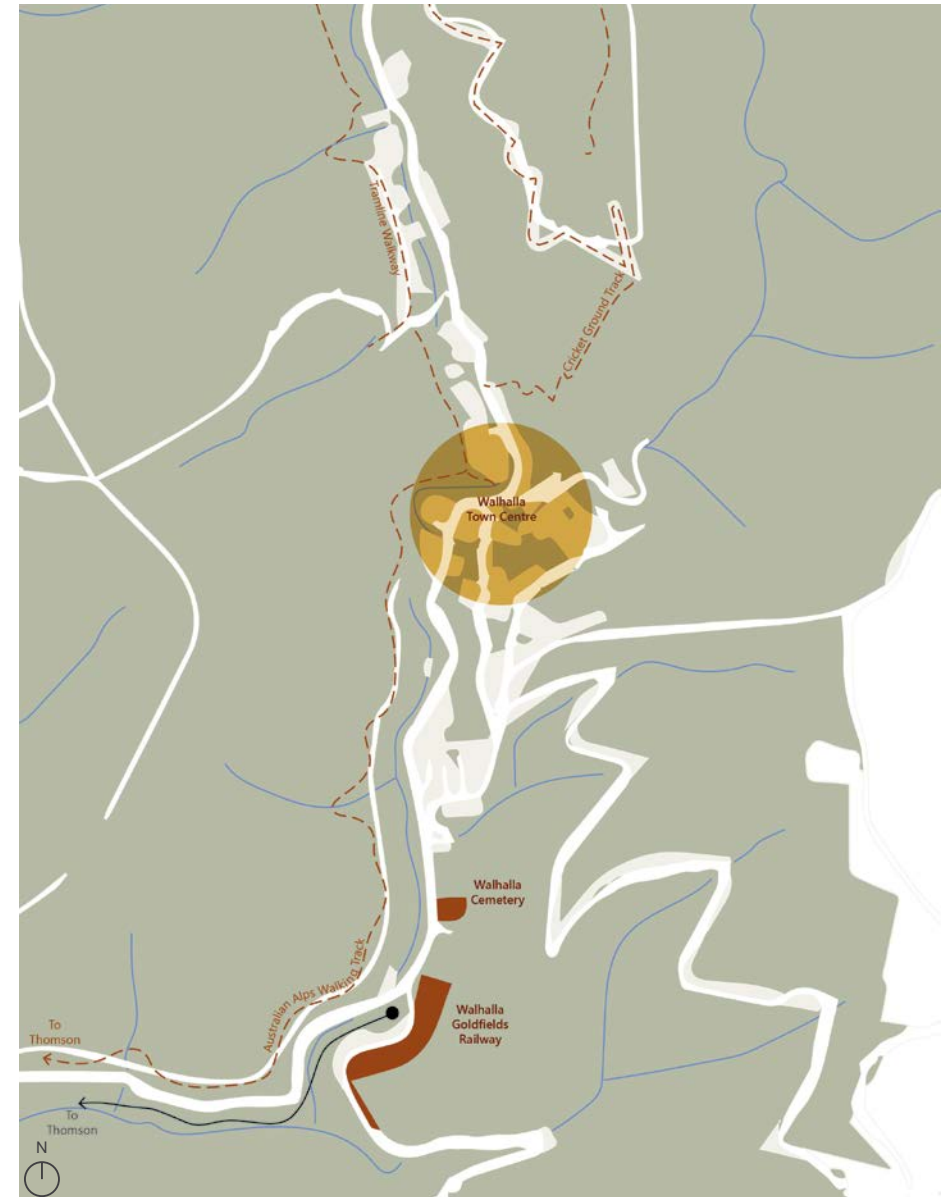
Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



Extend the Walhalla Goldfields Railway to Erica.

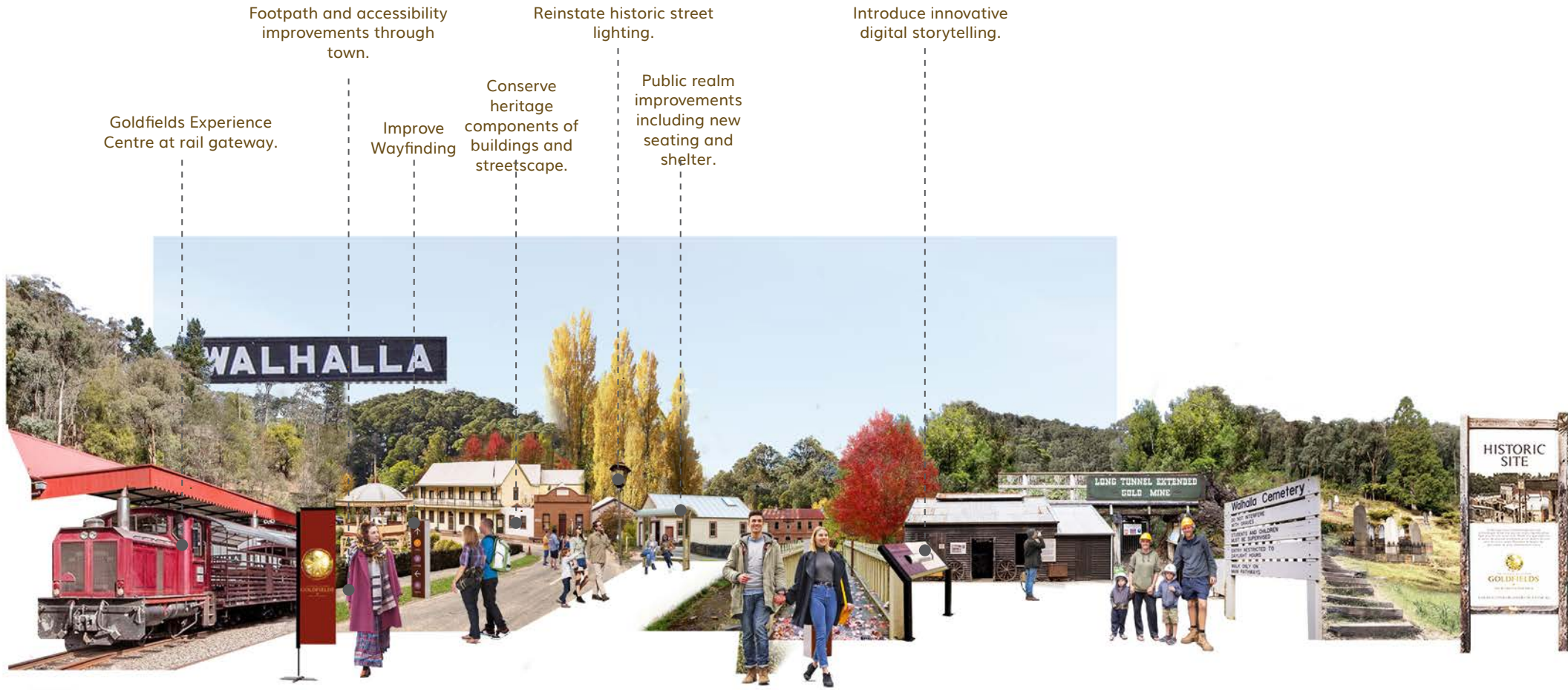


Create a Walhalla / Erica World Heritage Hub



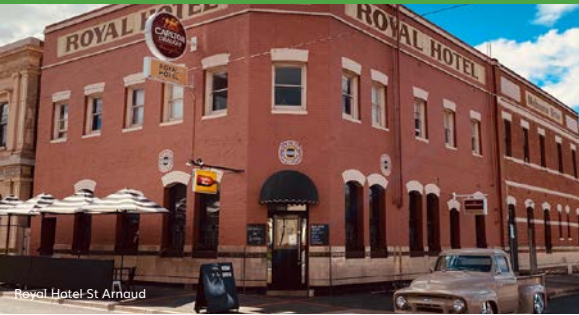
KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

WALHALLA



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: ST ARNAUD



St Arnaud sits on the edge of the open Mallee plains at the north-western extent of the Goldfields. The town centre features many well-conserved historic buildings and a generous number of pubs in its main thoroughfare of Napier Street, many with wide verandas and ornate cast-iron lacework. Both the reserves adjacent to town and parks further to the south contain gold mining remnants. It makes for an outstanding stopover for visitors exploring the World Heritage region with a strong and connected community. Interpreting the history of this gold mining precinct would enhance St Arnaud's connection to the Goldfields story, together with wayfinding and potential hub for regionally focussed events.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

ST ARNAUD



A. Access

Challenges

- Limited access by rail and walking and cycling tracks, with vehicle access as the only option.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Re adapting rail station as a creative space and art gallery.



C. Infrastructure

Challenges

- Blackspot and internet issues.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Well conserved historic building and streetscape.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Wayfinding and storytelling are strong on specific historical buildings including the Court House and Post Office.
- Conservation of Lord Nelson's mine provides a lookout to the town.
- Emerging arts hub and creative scene with the Silo Art attraction and creative hub, Raillery Hub.

Challenges

- Goldrush story is missing and not evident.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: ST ARNAUD

Proposed Initiatives



A3. EV infrastructure



A4. Improve public transport connections.



B. Re-purpose railway station as a creative space.



D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.



E6. Upgrade wayfinding.



E9. Digital storytelling.



E10. Opportunity for a heritage festival linked across the region.



E4. Visitor interpretation.

Potential Game Changers

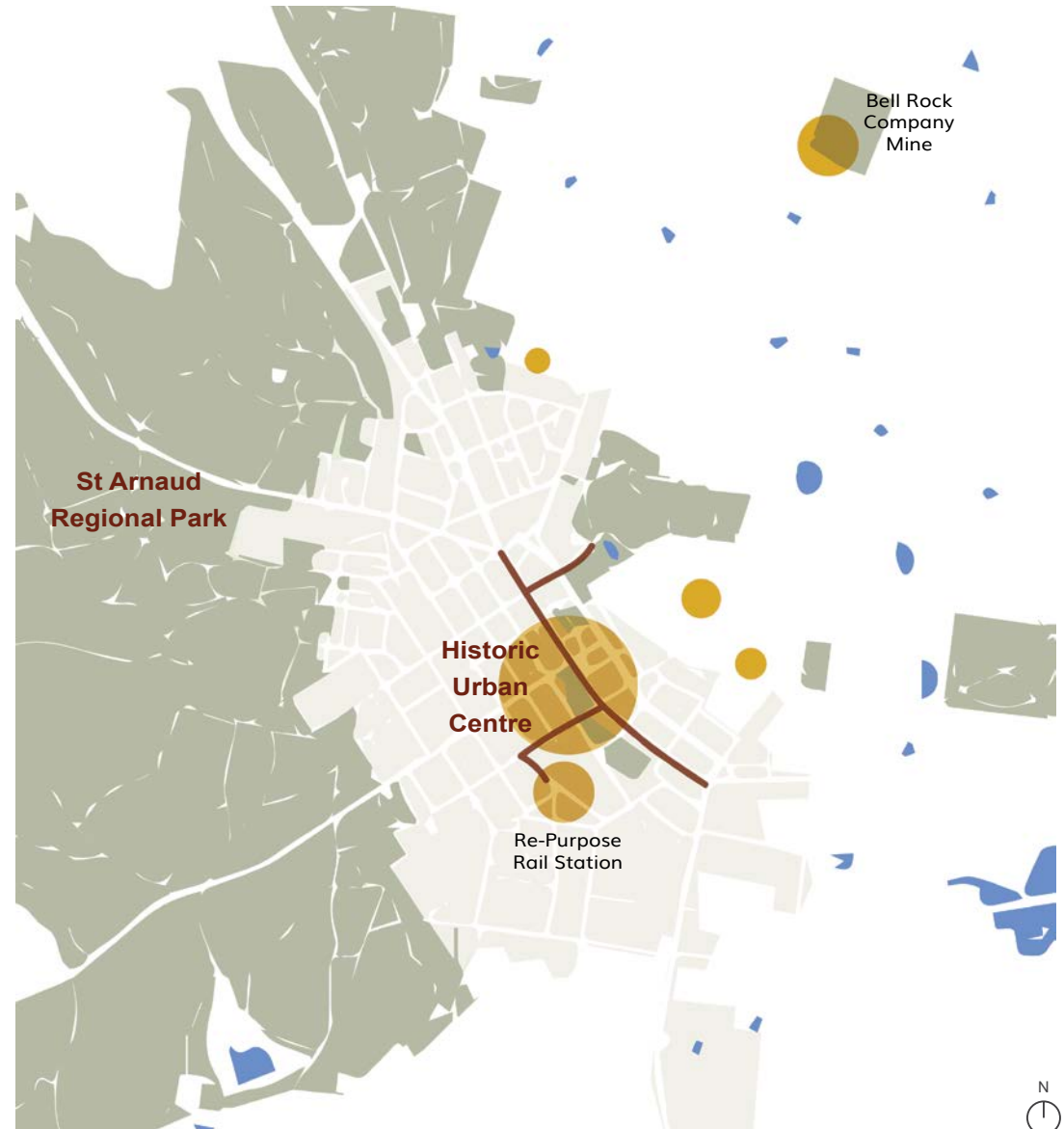
Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



New World Heritage Interpretation at St Arnaud's Visitor Centre.



World Heritage Interpretation and Activations St Arnaud Gallery and Silo Art Trail.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

ST ARNAUD

Repurpose railway station as a creative space.

Improve wayfinding.

Improve public transport.

Improve cycling and pedestrian paths.

Opportunity for a heritage festival linked across the region.

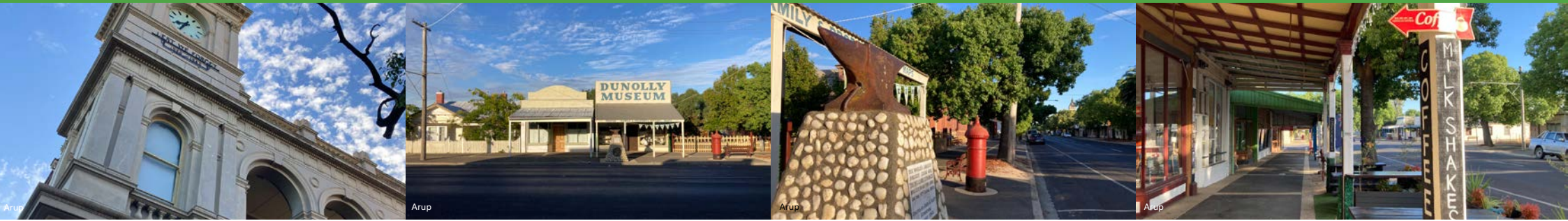
Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.

EV infrastructure.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: DUNOLLY



Dunolly is within the "Golden Triangle", the area where more gold nuggets were discovered than anywhere else in Australia. This attractive village has an active community providing services and experiences for visitors including self-guided and hosted tours and heritage venues. Improved and updated wayfinding and interpretive information would enhance the visitor experience.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

DUNOLLY



A. Access

Strengths

- Wide footpaths throughout the shopping strip, with shade.
- Council driven walking trail initiative: Dunolly Town Trail.
- Dunolly cycle tracks to surrounding towns including Moliagul and the Welcome Stranger site.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Variety of community facilities including library, tennis courts, public toilets and visitor centres.
- Public parks and streets have seating and picnic tables.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Limited powerlines on street enhances the heritage streetscape.
- Public parks and streets have seating and picnic tables.

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Activated shopfront with exhibited relics and antiques from the gold-rush era.
- Intact heritage buildings and streetscapes.
- Wayfinding and signage to showcase the towns offerings throughout the streetscape of the town.
- Community public sculptures present within streetscape.
- Mature street tree canopies.

Challenges

- Vacant shops, with limited variety of retail offerings.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Strong Goldrush story, with its identity known as the 'World's Largest Gold Nugget' town.
- Wayfinding and storytelling of the town's history are available for specific buildings to showcase significant stories
- Emerging community-driven trails such as Women in History trail.
- Emerging arts trail and culture, with independent art gallery, Puzzleflat Artworks and Tiny Towns Arts Trail.










Challenges

- Fist Nations interpretation and storytelling.
- Opportunity to update interpretation.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: DUNOLLY

Proposed Initiatives

-  A3. EV infrastructure
-  D6. Vacant shopfront activation.
-  A6,7. Connect pedestrian and cycling paths.
-  D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.
-  C3. Upgrade internet infrastructure.
-  E4. Visitor interpretation.
-  D3. Public Art.
-  E6. Upgrade wayfinding.
-  E9. Digital storytelling.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



Iconic Infrastructure to showcase the location of the biggest alluvial nugget at Welcome Stranger site.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

DUNOLLY



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: BLACKWOOD



Blackwood boasts a rich gold rush history, evident in its well-conserved architecture and historical sites. Visitors can enjoy the charm of local cafes and shops while immersing themselves the tranquil riverside atmosphere. Whether it's outdoor adventures - Blackwood is a haven for bushwalkers, historical exploration, or simply unwinding amidst natural beauty, Blackwood provides a peaceful retreat in the Victorian countryside.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BLACKWOOD



Google Street View

A. Access

Strengths

- Vehicle access with one hour drive from Melbourne and 30 minutes' drive from Bacchus Marsh.
- Various walks, tracks and trails surrounding the town including the Simmons Reef Road and Mountain Bike Rides (Tunnel Point Loop).

Challenges

- No rail or bus connections.
- Limited pedestrian access and infrastructure.
- Some roads are only for 4-wheel drive vehicles, including Golden Point Road.



Goldfields Guide

B. Facilities

Strengths

- Basic facilities and amenities include public toilets, reserves and parks at the town centre.
- Blackwood Mineral Springs Reserves has a selection of picnic areas, shelters and BBQ for campers.

Challenges

- Limited food and drink options.
- Facilities are typically at capacity during festivals.



Travel Victoria

C. Infrastructure



Visit Melbourne

D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Conservation of historical cottages and buildings including the Garden of St Erth adds to the charm of the town.
- Mature street trees as part of the streetscapes.



ExploreOz

E. Experience

Strengths

- Strong goldrush identity with remnants of goldrush past such as the Blackwood Cemetery with graves of Chinese miners, a Miners Hut dating back between 1855 and 1864 and mining remnants at Jack Cann Reserve.
- Strong base for bushwalking and camping activities with many accommodation near Lerderberg State Park including camping and caravan parks.
- Public art (six stamper battery sculpture) showcasing the town's goldrush identity.
- Many community festivals including the Blackwood Wood Chop & Easter Carnival, Gold Panning Festival, festivals and events at St Martin's Chapel Arts Hub and the Blackwood Music Festival of Music and Culture.

Challenges

- Lack of First Peoples storytelling and interpretation.
- Information boards can be better connected to the overall World Heritage and goldfields story.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: BLACKWOOD

Proposed Initiatives



A8. Improve cycling connection between town centre and key attractions.



E9. Support existing music and arts festival to emphasise on the town's strong music identity.



D6. Explore opportunities for main street beautification and heritage interpretation.



E5. Improve wayfinding in connecting attractions.



E4. Visitor interpretation



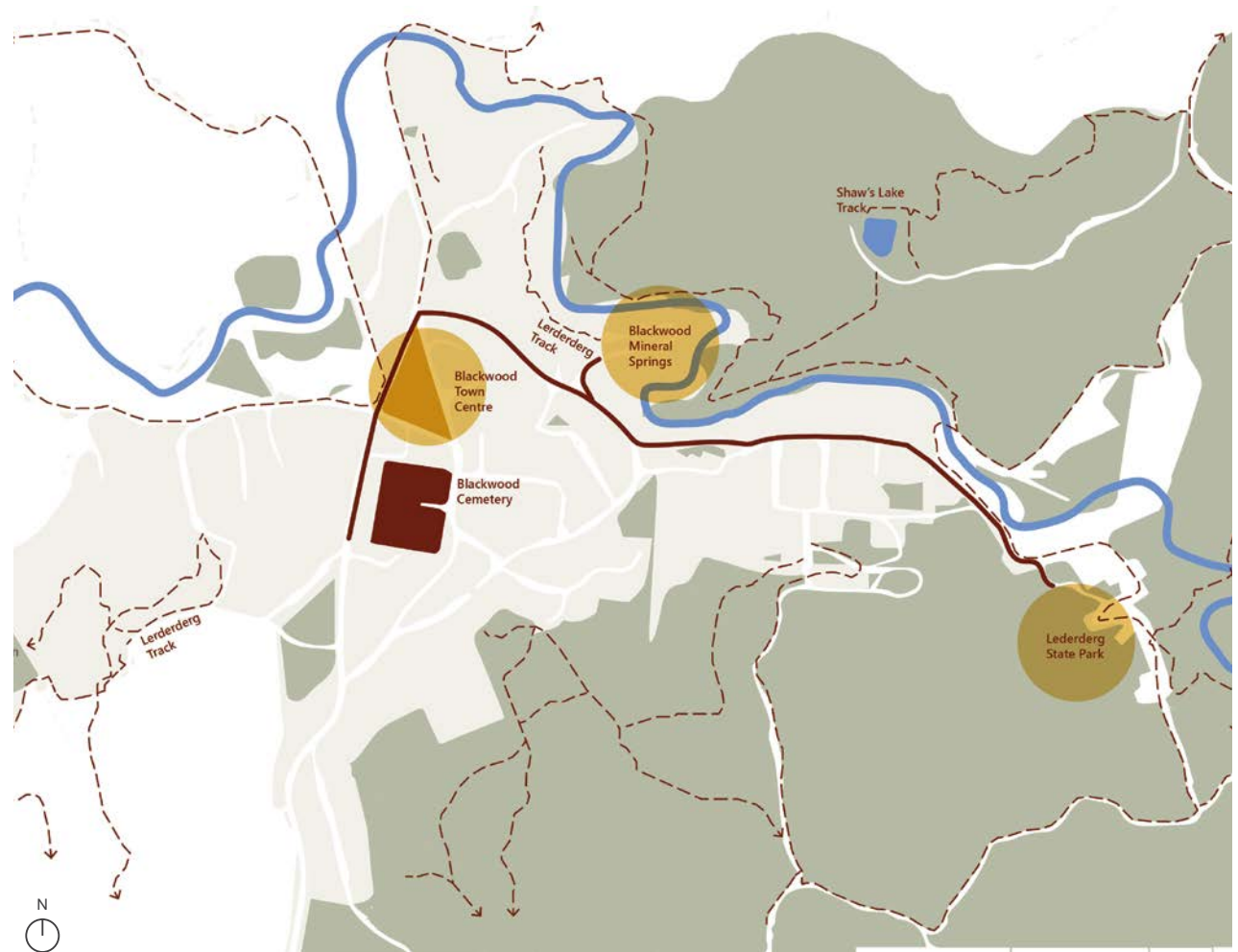
E4. Support the Blackwood Heritage Walk with interpretation and linking of 56 locations of historical interest throughout the village.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



Iconic infrastructure to showcase Blackwood Mineral Springs and Lederderg State Park.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

BLACKWOOD

Support existing music and arts festival to emphasise on the town's strong music identity.

Improve cycling connection between town centres and key attractions.

Improve wayfinding in connecting attractions.

Opportunities for vacant activation.

Visitor interpretation.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: TARNAGULLA



Tarnagulla is a hidden gem for history enthusiasts and nature lovers alike. This historic gold rush town boasts well-conserved 19th-century architecture, including the iconic Tarnagulla Post Office, providing a captivating glimpse into the past. The surrounding natural beauty offers opportunities for bushwalking and birdwatching in the nearby Tarnagulla Nature Conservation Reserve. While it may be a small town, Tarnagulla's rich history and tranquil surroundings make it a charming destination for those seeking a chance to step back in time to the gold rush era.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TARNAGULLA



A. Access

Strengths

- Only with 25 minutes' drive from Bendigo.
- Wide pedestrian paths with weather protection.
- Various walking and mountain bike trails around and surrounding the town, including to Dunolly.

Challenges

- No rail access.
- Limited V/Line bus services, with only two per day during weekdays and one per day during weekends.
- Lack of cycling paths and infrastructure within the town centre.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Tarnagulla Recreation Reserve Camping provides showers, toilets and playground for visitors and campers.

Challenges

- Limited food and drink options.



C. Infrastructure

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.
- Insecure power and water infrastructure.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Streetscape is well conserved with a mix of veranda-fronted buildings.
- Wide pedestrian paths with street trees and seats.
- Victoria Hotel and Theatre has an engaging history with Dame Nellie Melba and Lola Montez performing here during the goldrush era.
- Over 30 historic buildings in town.

Challenges

- Streetscape and buildings in need of an upgrade.
- Lack of seats and shelters at the town centre.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Conserved heritage building and streetscape reveals the town's past as a gold rush settlement as well as the conserved remnants of the Wesleyan Methodist Church (shown).
- The Victoria Hotel and Theatre is adored by the local community and hosts regular opera and entertainment in the restored hall.
- Strong goldrush story with remnants of mullock heaps, the Poverty mine monument, the Waanyaara ancient cemetery and the Tarnagulla Recreation Reserve.
- Surrounded by natural landscape of Box-Ironbark forest and local tracks and trails to Dunolly.





Challenges

- Lack of storytelling and interpretation of the town.
- Lack of First Peoples storytelling.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: TARNAGULLA

Proposed Initiatives

-  A8. Improve cycling connection between town centres and key attractions.
-  A8, A9. Improve trail and track access and connection to Dunolly, including renewal of the Fossickers' Way that links Wedderburn, Inglewood, Dunolly and Moliagul
-  C3. Improve internet access
-  Support the improvement of:
 - C1. Electricity
 - C2. Water

-  D7. Conserve heritage components of streetscapes and buildings.
-  D6. Explore opportunities for streetscape and shopfront activation.
-  E4. Improve visitor interpretation to emphasise on the town's golden triangle story.
-  D6, E7. Opportunities for art installations and program for streetscape activation.



Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



Iconic infrastructure to showcase key attractions such as the Wesleyan Methodist Church and Poverty Reef.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

TARNAGULLA



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: RUSHWORTH/WHROO



Rushworth and Whroo are twin towns that offer a unique blend of history and natural beauty. Rushworth, steeped in gold rush heritage, features well-conserved historic buildings and a Gold Heritage Walk showcasing its mining history. Nearby, Whroo boasts the intriguing Whroo Goldfields Historical Area, home to remnants of an old gold rush township and an abandoned mine. Both towns provide access to stunning natural landscapes, including Waranga Basin, a haven for birdwatching and water activities. Whether exploring the past or enjoying the outdoors, Rushworth and Whroo offer a captivating mix of history and nature, making them a hidden gem for visitors.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

RUSHWORTH/WHROO



A. Access

Strengths

- One hour drive from Bendigo to Rushworth.
- Whroo is a ten-minute drive from Rushworth.
- Pedestrian access throughout the town centre of Rushworth.

Challenges

- No rail access.
- Limited V/Line bus services, with one per day during weekdays and weekends.
- Lack of cycling paths and infrastructure within Rushworth's town centre and poor connection to Whroo



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Whroo Visitor Centre and Picnic Area has camping area with facilities such as shelter, picnic tables, information signs and public toilets.

Challenges

- Limited food and drink options.
- Limited accommodation.



C. Infrastructure

Strengths

- Internet availability.

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- Heritage conservation of buildings and the streetscape of Rushworth.

Challenges

- Vacant retail shops.
- Lack of street trees and canopy.
- Lack of shopfront and street activation.



E. Experience

Strengths

- Conserved heritage building with plaques reveals Rushworth's past as a gold rush settlement.
- Conservation of goldrush history, evident through the Whroo cemetery, Aboriginal Rock Walls (water hole), Puddling Machine and Balaclava Mine.
- Rushworth State Forest and Whroo provides bushwalking and camping experience with native landscape offerings of Box ironbark Forest.

Challenges

- Lack of signage and wayfinding within Whroo cemetery and forests.
- Interpretation and storytelling of Whroo Historic Area can be better connected to the gold rush story.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

EMERGING TOURIST TOWN: RUSHWORTH/WHROO

Proposed Initiatives


- 


A1. Road improvement and maintenance.
- 

A7, A9. Enhancing track connection and facilities between Rushworth and Whroo.
- 

D8. Ensure safety and access improvements around Balaclava mine site.
- 

A8. Improving track links to Heathcote, by extending Rushworth-Whroo track to Heathcote.
- 


C1, C3. Improve internet access and electricity at Whroo forest.
- 

E5. Improve wayfinding and signage at Whroo forest.
- 

A9. Improve bushwalking and mountain bike facilities around Whroo Forest.
- 

D2. Upgrade façade of buildings in Rushworth town centre.
- 

E4. Improve visitor interpretation.
- 

D6. Explore opportunities for streetscape and shopfront activation.
- 

E4. Opportunities for digital interpretation.

Potential Game Changers

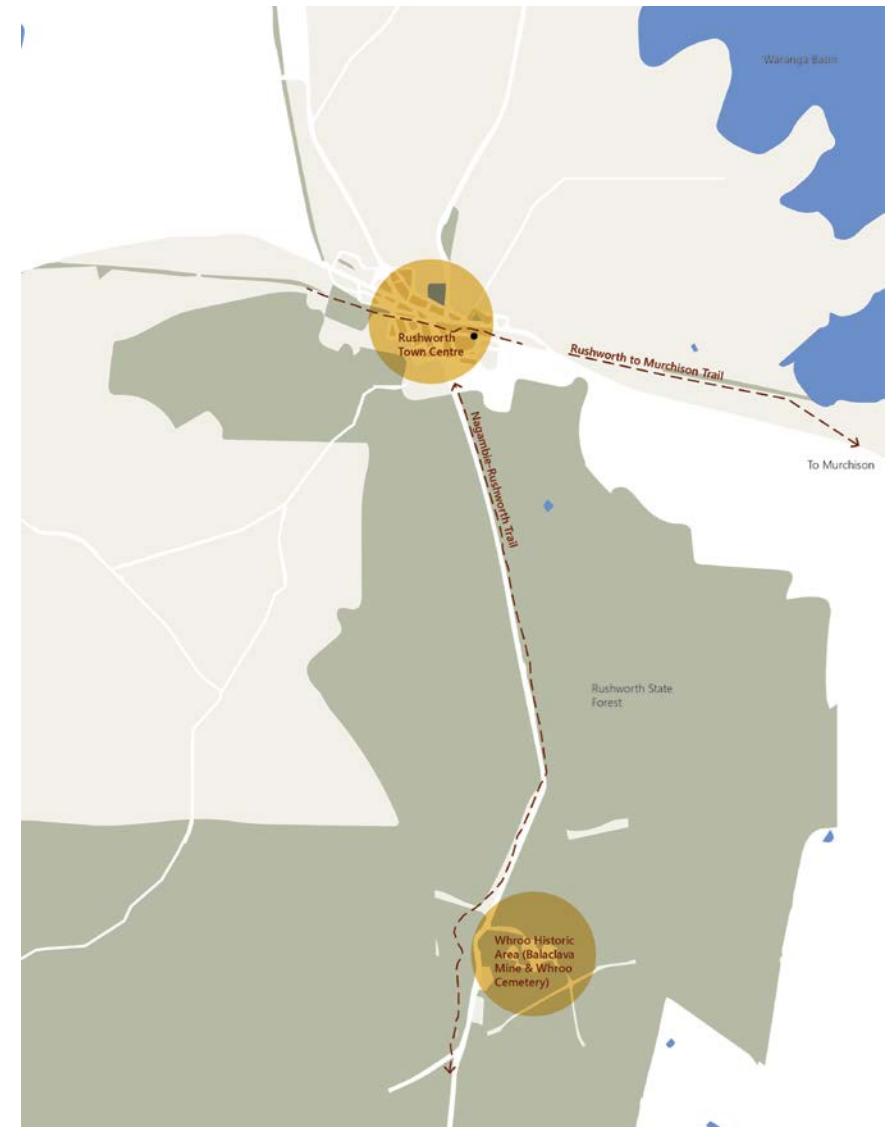
Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



Iconic infrastructure to showcase the Balaclava open cut mine as a spectacular example of early quartz reef mining at Whroo Historic Reserve.



Support the Rushworth-Murchison extension.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

RUSHWORTH/WHROO

Expand on the new
Rushworth to Murchison
Rail Trail.

Upgrade façade of
buildings in Rushworth.

Streetscape and shopfront
activation.

Improve wayfinding and
signage at Whroo Forest.

Improve visitor
interpretation.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

KEY SITE: WELCOME STRANGER MONUMENT, MOLIAGUL



The Welcome Stranger Monument in Moliagul Historic Park celebrates the discovery of the biggest alluvial gold nugget ever found. The area has a basic shelter, some interpretive signage and the monument and a short walk through the heavily mined landscape. The significance of the site to the Goldfields story would be enhanced by better access and visitor facilities and an increased range of interpretive walks at the site.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

WELCOME STRANGER MONUMENT, MOLIAGUL



A. Access

Strengths

- Cycling tracks and trails pass the site, including the Dunolly Cycling Track and the Gold Discovery walking loop.
- Parking spaces are available.

Challenges

- Road in is poor quality.
- Lack of signage and wayfinding to the monument.
- Monument is only accessible by car.



B. Facilities

Strengths

- Picnic tables, shelter, public toilets and camping grounds are available on site.

Challenges:

- Picnic areas are limited and under maintained.



C. Infrastructure

Challenges

- Blackspots and internet issues.
- No toilets.
- Tank water.
- No lighting.



D. Streetscape / Town centres & Landscape

Strengths

- NA

Challenges

- NA



E. Experience

Strengths

- Strong goldrush story, with the historic artefact, laid exactly where the gold nugget was found.
- Conservation of both the Australian native landscape with the modified nature of the landscape due to the goldrush adds to the goldrush story.

Challenges

- First Peoples interpretation and storytelling.
- Information board does not stand out and is not engaging.

KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

KEY SITE: WELCOME STRANGER MONUMENT, MOLIAGUL

Proposed initiatives



- A1. Improve access roads.
- A2. Improve parking.
- A5. Coach Parking.
- A6. Implement tracks and trails within and to the site.



- C1. Electricity.
- C2. Water.
- C3. Internet.



- E4. Interpretation and storytelling components such as signage.
- E6. Wayfinding including trail heads, safety and wayfinding signage.



- E6. Wayfinding including trail heads, safety and wayfinding signage.



- B1. Toilet upgrades.
- B2. Picnic facilities upgrade.
- B3. Shelter.



- D. Ecosystem restoration.



- E7. Lighting.
- E8. Digital.
- E9. Events and festivals to enhance experience.

Potential Game Changers

Refer to Chapter 3 for more details.



Interpretation and Activation to showcase the biggest alluvial gold nugget found at Moliagul Historic Reserve.



KEY MOVE 2: SUPPORT ACCESS TO AND AMENITY OF HERITAGE SITES AND TOWNSHIPS

WELCOME STRANGER MONUMENT, MOLIAGUL



