



Hobart Wheelers-Dirt Devils Inc
GPO Box 1888
HOBART TAS 7001

14 August 2020

Attention:

Adam Muyt and The Project Team

Glenorchy Mountain Bike Park Masterplan Submission

The Hobart Wheeler Dirt Devils (the Club) are pleased to provide feedback on the Draft Glenorchy Mountain Bike Park Masterplan.

The Club has a long history of involvement at the Park having run numerous races and other events since the Park's inception. We were also instrumental in securing the grant that allowed Council to fund the development of the Masterplan.

Our overarching comment is a strong, general endorsement of the Draft Master Plan – we support the concepts and principles behind each of the proposed elements.

Beyond our overall endorsement of the Draft Master Plan we offer a set of observations and suggestions for consideration in the development of the final version of the Plan. A summary of our feedback along with more detailed Strategic and Trail comments are provided below.

We would like to thank the Council officers and elected officials, along with Dirt Art, who through this plan have together laid the conceptual foundations of a bigger and better Park which will strongly benefit the Glenorchy and wider communities.

The Club appreciates the Council's commitment to consult with the Club and other stakeholders; and we remain very keen to help the Master Plan be finalised and implemented.

Summary

The Club supports the Draft Master Plan – it provides a sound template for the renewal and improvement of Glenorchy Mountain Bike Park. That said, we think the Master Plan could be even better and would like the final version of the Plan to include:

- A more ambitious and wider vision. The Club believes the Park could become a major cycling hub of national significance; the Tolosa Precinct has the potential to become the centre-piece of Australian cycling. The Park could also become an outdoor sports and recreation activity hub of regional significance in the areas of trail running, orienteering, hiking, bird watching, etc.

- Recognition of the possibility and desirability of a velodrome within Tolosa Park (East of the proposed area) which would see another Olympic cycling discipline included within the precinct
- A road cycling closed loop circuit (longer and in addition to the criterium track)
- A dedicated cyclocross circuit of UCI standard (3 to 3.5 km in length) to provide a Tasmanian base for a growing cycling discipline
- A dedicated cross-country (XC) circuit of Olympic standard (this would mainly incorporate several trails within the current and proposed network – but the club would like to see an integrated XC course designed into the Master Plan)
- The addition of one or two more black rated trails – which would facilitate the running of Gravity-Enduro events (the most popular cycling discipline) within Greater Hobart and more fully meet the wishes of strong intermediate and advanced riders

Strategic Comments

The Club generally agrees with Dirt Art’s assessment of the value and potential benefit of Glenorchy Mountain Bike Park (GMBP) to the mountain biking and related communities. However, we make the following strategic observations:

GMBP is the logical base for the entire Wellington Park mountain bike trail network – this means renewal of GMBP will bring substantial benefit to Glenorchy, as well as Greater Hobart and Tasmania.

- Benefits of the mountain biking elements of the Park include: better opportunities for the existing Southern Tasmanian cycling community - racing and recreational riders as well as support industries – bike related sales and repairs, trail builders, coaches, etc; increased awareness of mountain biking in the Glenorchy community – which will increase participation which brings major health and wellbeing benefits; increased tourism and hospitality activity and employment
- The Draft Plan somewhat under-plays the potential importance of the Park as part of a cycling hub. We agree that the Park is vital for the mountain biking and BMX communities – the precinct could also become a major hub for road, cyclocross and track riding.
- The potential to serve every cycling discipline in a single precinct is unique in Australia – and could pave the way for Tolosa to become the home of Australian Cycling – which would bring major benefits to the Glenorchy area and Tasmania more broadly
- The scope of the Park to become the key base for Wellington Park activity-based recreation could be more strongly emphasised. Tolosa is an ideal base for mountain bikers and bmxers – but also trail-runners, long range hikers, bird-watchers, dog-walkers and the like. 60% or more of Australians are less active than needed for basic health. Investment in the Park will encourage more activity and yield health benefits that far outweigh the investment cost.
- A complete cycling hub would be more expensive – but it would also be an excellent candidate for State and Commonwealth grants. Accordingly, we encourage the Council to be

bold. The Club is available to help with discussions with AusCycling and other relevant bodies.

- A complete cycling hub would include an: Olympic standard cross-country course; a national level DownHill course (already largely in place); Gravity-Enduro runs, a UCI standard cyclo-cross loop; a high quality criterium track, a closed loop road cycling loop and a velodrome
- The trail network proposals are largely aimed at recreational riders - from beginners through to advanced riders - although the Plan clearly includes a DownHill race track. The Club does not wish to reduce opportunities for recreational riders. However, we would like to see the final version of Master Plan to increase its attention on racing - hence our proposals for the race courses listed above. While racing numbers are slightly down in recent years (although in Gravity Enduro, numbers are very high)
- In the event that a staged implementation process is required, the Club urges Council to prioritise the renewal of existing trails and the development of new trails rather than prioritising complementary infrastructure such as car-parks.

Trail comments

- We suggest that a Olympic standard XC loop is incorporated within the trail design/network. This would largely make use of existing and proposed trails – but an explicit XC course would add value and appeal to the Park and provide greater scope for events
- We suggest that a cyclo-cross course should be incorporated within the trail-network. Cyclo-cross is a growing discipline that works for elite racers and families alike. A course would be used by the club and very likely attract national level events.
- Cherry Lane trail, proposed trails that intersect this trail be rerouted to avoid conflict (see Attachment A). Cherry Lane be refurbished and maintained so that intersecting trails align in part to maintain complementary alignment where possible. The club welcomes the introduction of new trails and feels that existing trails should also be preserved and upgraded wherever possible to ensure that as wide a trail experience as possible can be created. This trail is high up in the proposed park area and provides a shorter trail option for riders who may not have the physical ability to climb to the higher trail heads.
- Existing trails;
 - Overall concept for trails is generally accepted by the club. We do suggest that for blue and black rated trails a number of features and design considerations be adopted (see trail map Attachment A).
 - Blue Trails
 - Flow trails provide tabletop style jumps that meet the rating, these may be on a secondary trail line that runs parallel or in conjunction with the main trail alignment. This type of feature allows for progressive riding and

presents challenges at level. It also expands the trail experience, presenting varied options for the rider.

- Black Trails
 - Incorporate secondary lines to expand the trail offering on the one trail. This may include a shorter steeper trail on the inside of corners but separate from the main trail line, or a technical feature, such as drop, jump or rock garden.
 - Add another 1 or 2 black trails to the network – this would be welcomed by the riding community and allow the Club to hold Gravity Enduro events at the Park (Gravity Enduro being our most popular form of racing)
- Priest Fire Trail upgrade for vehicle access, this be maintained on a more regular basis to avoid degradation and allow for service and event vehicles, with possible private operator access.
- DH track – reroute and rebuild from road crossing on high side of pine trees plantation
 - The lower section from the road gap jump feature prior to the area of pine trees has presented some challenges with surface and lying water across the track in some regions. We would welcome the reroute of this section along with the rebuild of the lower berm and jump sections of the track which have seen erosion and age deplete the standard of a long period of low maintenance.
 - The reroute would provide an opportunity for new features that provide an A line advantage and the option for a distinct B line be included. This would overall improve and maintain the race specific aspect of this track.
 - Trail building should be undertaken by a professional builder with experience in racing to ensure that the track development is of the highest standard. The club would appreciate direct consultation on the development and maintenance of the track to ensure that it meets the highest safety and race standard for a national level DH racetrack. We see this as an important aspect of this track due to its significance as the premier DH track in Tasmania and wish this to continue for future local and potential National level events.
- General trail upgrade to raise standard to meet IMBA trail classification
 - As part of the trail and park plan the club feels that the maintenance provided in recent times has not been adequate to ensure that the standard and safety aspects associated with the trail ratings has been adequate.
 - We request that maintenance be undertaken on a scheduled basis and tracks be regularly inspected to facilitate planning and budgetary forecasting. By doing this the Council will be able to enlist local volunteers and formulate a plan that involves community engagement and a sense of pride and ownership within the community.

- We note that E-bikes are becoming increasingly popular. They provide the opportunity for less-fit riders to ride further and harder than they otherwise would and are helping to drive uptake of mountain biking in general. This trend is positive – however e-bikes are harder on trails with their increased power, higher weight, grippier tyres and higher climbing speeds. Trails need to be designed, and a maintenance schedule designed, with this use in mind.

- Dual slalom
 - We strongly support the conversion of 4 cross track to a dual slalom. It has been unused for many years and believe that this style of track provides an essential trail experience. This form of track lends itself to being extremely versatile. Dual slalom allows riders to progress their skills and develop bike handling skills due to the track design. It also allows riders to test their skills against other riders. This track will provide riders a dual-purpose experience, skill advancement and opportunity for clubs and organisations to hold training, lessons and race events.

- Pump track
 - In general we welcome this concept and suggest that the track be designed as multipurpose. The track should be a large track to cater to all riders in a social aspect, but also be designed to facilitate head to head challenge events. We support the sealing of the track (s) as bitumen also providing for low maintenance.
 - The inclusion of lights would enhance the appeal of the pump track and could also provide a great social venue for junior riders.

- Dirt Jumps & Skills Park
 - We would like to see a variety of options here, junior through to advanced as this will provide the best facilities and options for riders and allow training, coaches and competencies to be developed.
 - Junior skills development area could be incorporated into the area leading from the proposed club rooms. This area is well protected from wind and can provide a more private option for riding and junior skill lessons and coaching.

- Trail works
 - Trail works are tendered to trail building companies that have experience in particular style of trails, this may assist to ensure that the highest quality trail for each purpose is developed. Taking this approach can be of benefit as it will provide a variety of trail builds as different building styles may be evident, trail builders will part their specific expertise, creating a unique and varied rider experience.

Proposed club rooms

- Under the plan the repurpose of the building as club rooms would be welcome. When looking at the overall design of where the BMX track and trails will lead from, it is not as ideally positioned for the user groups. that is MTB, BMX and Road. It certainly would provide adequate usability if a wide corridor was present that allowed traffic flow of walkers and cyclists from the trail-head Zone side toward the criterium and BMX track area.
- The alternative would be to utilise the area proposed for the Commercial operation on the Criterium track to be proposed for Club Rooms, as this would provide the closet location for both MTB, Road and BMX tracks (see map Attachment B).

Criterium track re-route

- We support the proposal that the criterium track be modified so that it removes conflict with cars in Tolosa Park. This will provide the option for riders to train at higher realistic speeds which is not available on the current speed limited loop.
- However, the proposed reroute may result in a shortening of the track and also reduce the flow of the track due to the requirement to sharpen corners. As a result it is suggested that the track be extended using as much available length as possible. See attached Road Map for reference.

Potential road circuit (see Attachment C & Road Map)

- Although the plan specifically deals with mountain biking, as we noted in our strategic comments, there is a major opportunity for multiple cycling disciplines to integrate in the proposed site usage. This is demonstrated by including the BMX track and rerouting the criterium track.
- As our roads become more and more congested, road riding and particularly racing faces significant challenges from a safety perspective and places restriction on junior development and participation for all age groups. The ability to introduce an isolated or controlled riding and racing environment has the potential to overcome these specific issues.
- We propose that the plan be extended to cater for if not in the initial development stage, but later stages an extended road track using pre-existing fire trails.
- We propose that the plan include the sealing of fire trails adjoining the criterium track along Tolosa street extending to Tolosa Fire trail, turning back onto Park fire trail and then back into Tolosa Park down to join the criterium track. The proposal would see the existing trails upgraded and sealed in these sections of fire trail to establish an extended road loop off.
- The suggestions that we have provided will allow Criterium racing (that is road racing on a short loop over a specific time + a set number of laps) to continue and the site. The suggested additions provide additional loops and will open up the option of Kermesse style racing which is an alternative to traditional road racing. At present the Club from a road racing perspective has struggled as noted above due to the increase in traffic volumes in recent years to find suitable locations to race on in a reasonable distance from Hobart.

- Other capital cities have closed circuit courses which road races are held on. This allows for the competitive side of road cycling to grow despite their even greater challenge of traffic.

Potential Velodrome

- Southern Tasmania does not have a velodrome and the one in Launceston does not meet Olympic Standards. We request that the Master Plan clearly identifies the potential for a velodrome to be built within Tolosa Park (in the areas below the GMPB precinct). This would meet a cycling need and allow the Tolosa precinct to become Australia's home of cycling.

We thank Glenorchy City Council, Dirt Art and the Expert Panel for their work in developing this plan.

The journey to this point started with this Club approaching council to discuss the issue of maintenance as raised above and to seek approval to stand up volunteer maintenance similar to what had taken place on the Meehan Range. The Club initially met with a council representative and was pointed in direction of local MPs to seek funding due to a lack of funding available within council. We were fortunate to be able to help secure a grant which has helped fund the proposal here.

This comprehensive plan which would involve relocation of the Sporting Shooters Club and Southern City BMX and significant trail and building works may take several years to implement. The issue of a volunteer working group to assist with maintenance of existing trails and working with commercial track builders where required could be resolved in the very near future. We look forward to working with GCC on both the establishment of volunteer groups and the broader plan.

Yours faithfully,

Adam Christopher

President

Hobart Wheelers / Dirt Devils Inc.

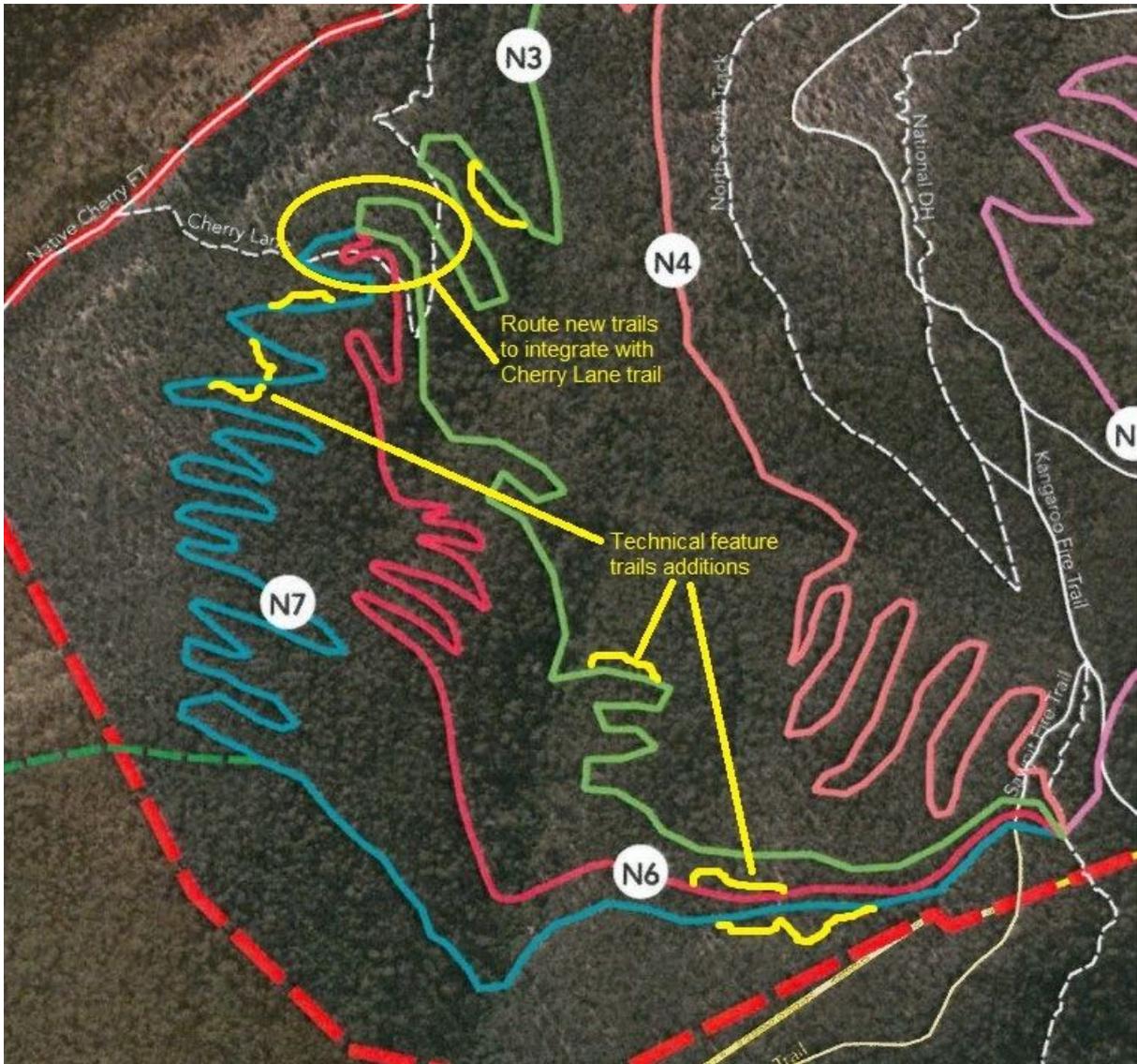
president@hobartwheelers.com.au

0429 908 730

www.hobartwheelers.com.au

www.dirtdevilsmtb.com

Attachment A



Attachment B



Attachment C

A1

Sealed road following the existing Tolosa Fire Trail onto Park Tire Trail and re-entering Tolosa park to re-join the criterium track.

A1 Link

This is a link for A1 if A2 is not developed or an option to run a short circuit on A1.

If A1 and A2 are developed, then several additional circuit options become available. These options allow for a shorter section of the criterium and direction change to facilitate different course routes.

A2

This provides an extension to lengthen A1. Also provides a short circuit A2 using A1 link.

Existing Criterium Reroute

Propose that this be extended to maintain as close as possible the existing length of the track. The track should be extended on the downside of the track to the lower end of track to make a long round corner all the way to the road to maximise the length. This will provide for the longest route and maintain the track length to a similar distance as is current.

C1

Longer term proposal to develop a longer criterium track, for the most part surrounding the boundary of the decommissioned water reservoir.

Road Map

