

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
RAA 3801

Esplanade to Visitor Centre Shared-use Track Project

Freycinet National Park &
Coles Bay Conservation Area



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Executive Summary

The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS), a division of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE), proposes to construct a new pedestrian and cycling (shared use) track linking the Coles Bay township to the Freycinet National Park Visitor Centre. PWS will implement the actions associated with this project as provided for in the Coles Bay Visitor Services Zone of the Freycinet National Park and Wye River State Reserve, Management Plan 2000. The project is also one of a number of key initiatives identified in the Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan June 2019.

Freycinet National Park and Wye River State Reserve, Management Plan 2000 was prepared in accordance with the requirements of Part IV of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1970.

The objectives for the project are to reduce crowding, provide a more tranquil experience, reduce visitor risk and minimise impacts on the environment.

The project has received \$400,000 of funding by the Commonwealth Government through the National Tourism Icons Program. This funding includes the planning and construction costs for the track within the scope of the project area. The project is to be completed within the 2021-22 financial year. Construction is expected within the second half of the year and will be staged to minimise impacts to visitors.

The proposal features a new shared-use track, including elevated walkways, connecting Coles Bay Esplanade East to the existing Visitor Centre as well as providing stairs to the walking track link to Richardsons Beach. Appropriate signage alerting visitors to the shared-use configuration of the new track will also be included.

An ecological survey, cultural heritage survey, coastal hazards assessment and engineering designs have been completed for the proposal. An Emergency Response Plan along with a Construction Environmental Management Plan will be developed prior to construction. An annual post-construction weed and disease monitoring plan will be implemented.

Construction has the potential to impact on one vulnerable vegetation community listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC) and has the potential to impact on two threatened vegetation communities listed under Schedule 3A of the *Nature Conservation Act 2002* (NCA).

The infrastructure design and alignment has been modified to minimise the impacts on these communities. A permit under the *Threatened Species Protection Act* will be required prior to construction if impacts are unavoidable.

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) concludes that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on Matters of National Environmental Significance listed under the EPBC therefore PWS will not refer the proposal to the Commonwealth for assessment under this Act.

Construction materials and components have been selected to blend into the local environment. Visitors will be expecting this level of infrastructure within the Visitor Services Zone.

The proposal will not significantly alter the current recreational opportunities, or numbers, within the Freycinet National Park or Coles Bay Conservation Area. Rather it will improve pedestrian and cycling access to the National Park which will enhance the visitor experience.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) is proposing to construct a shared-use track between Coles Bay Esplanade East and the existing visitor centre. This project is one of a number of key initiatives identified in the Freycinet Master Plan 2019 (which can be viewed at https://dpiwwe.tas.gov.au/Documents/Freycinet%20Master%20Plan_2019%20July%202022_electronic%20version.pdf) and is a key component to achieve the vision of the master plan, addressing particularly “the need to reduce crowding and provide a more tranquil experience”. The master plan recommends a shared-use track providing a link between the town and attractions within the Park.

Funding is now allocated through the National Tourism Icons Program with planning taking place in the first half of 2021-22 financial year with construction to be completed by 30th June 2022.

The jewel in the crown of Tasmania’s East Coast, the Freycinet Peninsula is a unique and special place. It is a rich and complex environment formed by significant natural values, spectacular and grand landscapes and a long history of human habitation extending over 35,000 years. The Freycinet Peninsula is both an important place for Tasmanians and one of the major destinations for visitors to the State.

Over 300,000 people visit the Freycinet National Park per year, hoping to experience what makes the place so special. The Wineglass Bay lookout and track in the Freycinet National Park is the major attraction with approx. 200,000 walkers annually or 65% of visitation to the Park, giving visitors an opportunity to experience what Tasmania does best: its natural environment. This track will provide an alternative linkage to the Park and compliment the recently completed shared-use track between the visitor centre and Wineglass Bay trail-head.

Tasmania as a visitor destination has emerged on a global scale and the past few years have seen unprecedented growth in tourism. No other place in Tasmania demonstrates this more than the Freycinet Peninsula, which has seen an increase in visitor numbers exceeding 9 per cent per year for the last five years. Long-term expectations for growth in visitor numbers to the Freycinet Peninsula is around 3.5 per cent per year.

There are challenges that this growth brings, particularly managing the peninsula’s complex range of environmental, cultural and social values, local community and industry concerns along with visitor experience expectations.

1.1.1 Esplanade to Visitor Centre Shared-use Track

It is proposed to construct a new shared-use track including elevated track, gravel track and a short bridge as well as linking to the existing walking track at the northern end of Richardsons Beach. The infrastructure materials and design are described in section 2.2.

The shared-use track will connect Coles Bay Esplanade East to the existing Visitor Centre descending from the end of the esplanade to and along the western side of Mosquito Creek then crossing east over Mosquito Creek and marsh then south connecting to the existing Freycinet visitor centre tracks. The scope of the project will include upgrading the existing track from Coles Bay Esplanade East and creating a new track across the Mosquito Creek Marsh to link into the existing track network around the Visitor Centre.

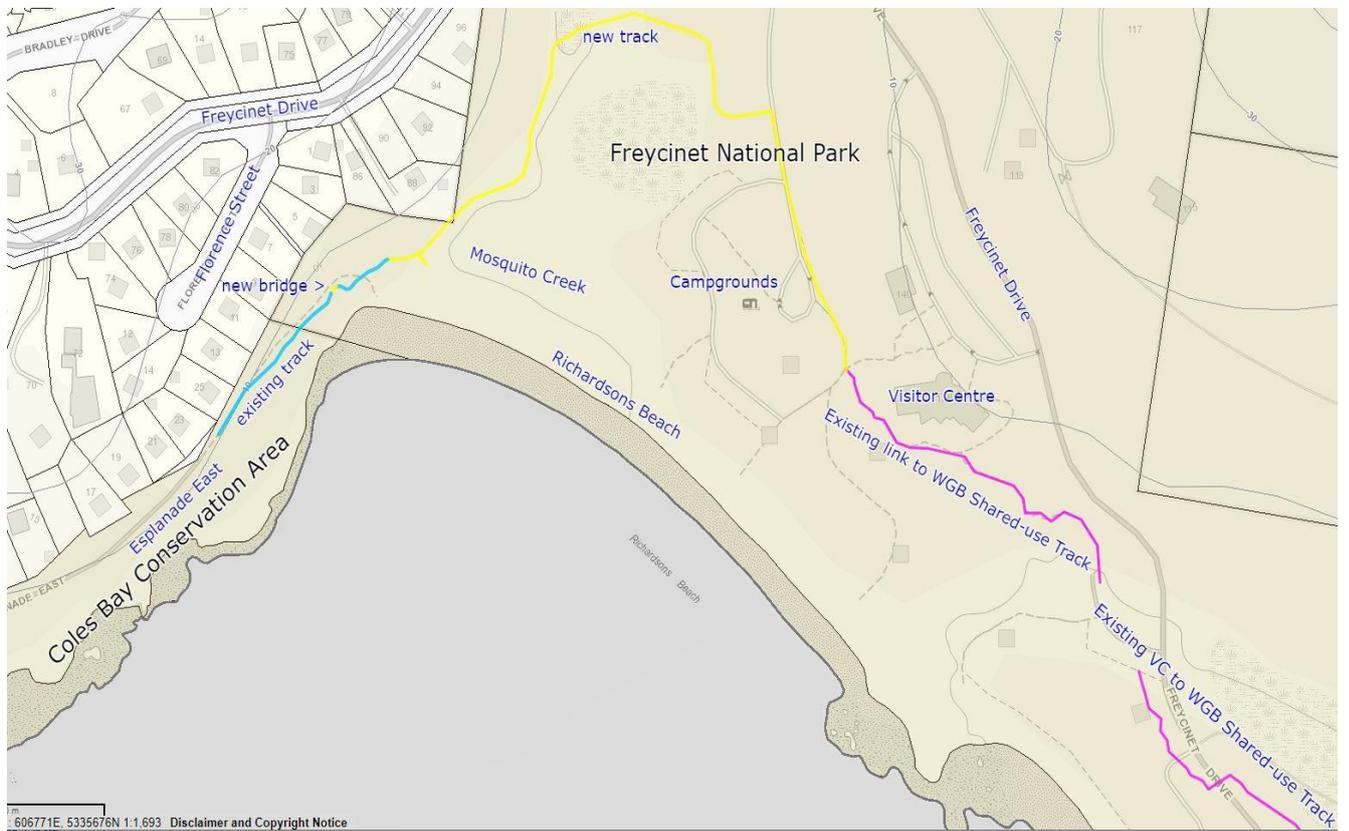


Figure 1.1: Esplanade to Visitor Centre Shared-use Track location



Figure 1.2 Aerial photo view

1.2 Project Objectives and Outcomes

The Project has a number of objectives including:

1. To link the future Coles Bay Foreshore Trail via Coles Bay Esplanade East through to the existing Visitor Centre and Wineglass Bay carpark shared-use track by providing a new shared-use track between the esplanade and visitor centre via Mosquito Creek.
2. To provide a more tranquil visitor experience.
3. The protection and maintenance of the natural and cultural values of the area while providing for ecologically sustainable recreation consistent with conserving those values.
4. The reduction of visitor risk by providing appropriate pedestrian and cycling access from the Coles Bay township to the National Park.

The outcomes targeted by the Project are:

1. Sustainable management of visitor impacts in the Freycinet National Park visitor services zone.
2. Improved visitor experience by keeping foot and bike traffic off busy Freycinet Drive.
3. Improved infrastructure consistent with relevant track class prescriptions and current building standards.

1.3 Current Status of the Proposal & Approvals

To implement the project PWS has identified controls to avoid or ameliorate impacts on special values on site. PWS engaged several specialised consultants to conduct extensive surveys of the proposed site to identify any potential impacts on reserve values.

Table 1.1 Current Status of the project and relevant approvals

Approval or Permit	Agency or Authority	Documentation and process	Status
Aboriginal Heritage	AHT	<p>Consultants were engaged to survey and report on Aboriginal Heritage and to recommend controls for this project. (Appendix A)</p> <p>The report will be referred to AHT to determine if the activities can proceed subject to management recommendations listed in this assessment document being complied with. AHT recommendations to be added following internal referral process (Appendix B)</p>	Complete
Natural Values Survey	NCH	<p>Consultants were engaged to undertake a Natural Values survey and report for the project activities (Appendix C).</p> <p>Survey identified potential impacts and threats to the natural values within the activity areas and the report recommends mitigation measures that are included in this EIA and have resulted in the trail being micro-sited to avoid values.</p>	Complete
Visual Analysis	PWS	Not required	Complete
Track Alignment	PWS	Investigation and values surveys undertaken for shared-use track route options. PWS and consultants refined options based on feasibility and consideration of natural and cultural values of the site.	Complete

Engineering	PWS	Concept site planning, engineering levels and coastal vulnerability assessments were completed by consultants and a preferred route identified. Final designs have been refined by PWS engineers.	Complete
Impact Assessment	PWS	Surveys, reports and plans obtained to: - describe the proposed development, - address relevant legislation, and - assess potential impacts and proposed management.	Complete
Advice on EIA	PWS	Seek internal / specialist advice and public comment regarding proposal and impact assessment.	Current
External Approvals Permission	PWS	Development proposal and management controls are refined in EIA. Permission granted to seek external approvals.	Not commenced
Planning Permit	Glamorgan – Spring Bay Council	A discretionary development application is required to assess the proposal for compliance with <i>Glamorgan – Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme 2015</i> .	Not commenced
Bushfire Risk	PWS	Operations on this project are a HIGH RISK HAZARD ACTIVITY for wildfire ignitions. Contractors are to ensure operations are SUSPENDED IMMEDIATELY once the Forest Fire Danger Index is calculated as equal to/or greater than HIGH 20, or the relative humidity is equal to or less than 30%. Contractors should not undertake hot works* in reserves until the Forest Fire Danger Index has dropped below High 20 or the relative humidity risen above 30%. Hourly weather observations should be taken at the site of the works as directed by the supervisor. Adequate and operational firefighting equipment will be maintained onsite and any wildfire ignitions extinguished immediately. * Hot works includes the use of grinders, welders, brush cutters, chainsaws, earth moving equipment and other tools and equipment likely to create sparks.	During construction
Certificate of Likely Compliance	Building Surveyor	Building Surveyors are the delegates under the <i>Tasmanian Building Act 2016</i> for assessing building designs to ensure compliance with National Construction Code (NCC), Australian Standards (AS) and the Act. As the structures do not form part of a building this certificate is not required.	Not required
Building Permit	Glamorgan Spring Bay Council	Glamorgan Spring Bay Council are the permit authority under the Building Act 2016 would issue a Building Permit, on receipt of the Certificate of Likely Compliance from the Building Surveyor. As structures do not form part of a building this permit is not required.	Not required
EIA Final Recommendations	PWS	Following the receipt of external permits and approvals, EIA is finalised with any additional conditions / commitments. Final conditions developed. Proposal accepted or not accepted by delegated officer. If accepted, proposal progresses.	Not commenced

1.3.1 Legislation

Table 1.2 Relevant legislation for the project

List Acts and Regulations	Permit/ Approval required	Permit/ Appr may be required	No permit required	Details
<i>National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002</i>			✘	Note: at the time of this document the advice in this table is to the best advice available. This proposal is consistent with the Freycinet National Park / Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000, Freycinet National Park Management Plan 2004 (Altering the Freycinet National Park, Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000), Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan June 2019 and the Statutory management objectives listed in Schedule 1 of the Act . See 3.1.3 PWS is the managing authority under the Act.
<i>National Parks and Reserves Management Regulations 2019</i>	✘			Authority required to disturb natural conditions within the Freycinet National Park as described in the regulations. Subject to approval the PWS is acting on behalf of the managing authority inherent in the Act.
<i>Nature Conservation Act 2002</i>			✘	The proposal is consistent with the Purposes for reservation for reserved land classed as National Park listed under Schedule 1 of the Act . See 3.1.2 There are two threatened native vegetation communities onsite listed under Schedule 3A - Threatened native vegetation communities namely Eucalyptus globulus dry forest and woodland (DGL) and Eucalyptus viminalis and Eucalyptus globulus coastal forest (DVC). Impacts are expected to be low with the ability to microsite the alignment to avoid mature trees and clearing a narrow (2.4m wide) strip of understorey and ground cover to install the boardwalk and trackwork.
<i>Crown Lands Act 1976</i>				Not Crown Land managed under this act.
<i>Threatened Species Protection Act 1995</i>		✘		Any impact on threatened species listed under the TSPA will require a 'permit to take' from the Policy and Conservation Assessments Branch (PCAB) of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania. No threatened flora species are known to be directly impacted by this proposal. Disturbance to an active natal den of a Tasmanian devil or quoll will be avoided by the preferred alignment. A permit is required if active dens cannot be avoided.
<i>Water Management Act 1999 / State Policy on Water Quality Management 1997</i>			✘	Applies to surface, coastal and ground waters within the State. The proposal will comply with the purpose and objectives of the Policy.

List Acts and Regulations	Permit/ Approval required	Permit/ Appr may be required	No permit required	Details Note relevant section/s of the Act and explain why the activity complies, potentially complies, or does not comply with the Act/Regulation. If it is potentially compliant, state what is required (approval, permits, authorities are required) to make it compliant.
Fire Service Act 1979			✘	The Parks and Wildlife Service is responsible under the <i>Fire Service Act 1979</i> and the <i>Fire Service (Miscellaneous) Regulations 1996</i> for all aspects of fire management within the reserve system, including prevention and suppression, subject to the Inter-Agency Protocol 2007.
Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975		✘		The preferred track alignment avoids all known Aboriginal heritage. Under the Act, Aboriginal relics must be declared if found and provision for protection made. A permit will be required if the relics are to be disturbed. Should any such site be discovered during construction the guidelines detailed in AHT Unanticipated Discovery Plan will be implemented. Contractors will ensure a copy of the UDP is kept on site.
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999			✘	One vulnerable vegetation community listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 was identified on the preferred route. Saline sedgeland /rushland – ARS TASVEG unit is aligned with the Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh ecological community listed as Vulnerable by the Commonwealth EPBC. No significant impacts are expected with raised boardwalk proposed over a very short section of this community (does not require clearing of vegetation, avoids larger areas of the community and does not impede natural drainage or saline uptake).
Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993			✘	No planning permit is required for the project as it is classed exempt development under clause 4.2.7 of the Tasmanian Planning Provisions in that the provision of a footpath/cycle path by or on behalf of the Crown or a State Authority is deemed minor infrastructure.
Work Health and Safety Act 2012		✘		Risk Assessments, Job Safety Analysis, policies and guidelines will be conducted / referred to and a WHS Plan developed and approved prior to operations commencing. Approved WHS Plan to be followed during the project.
Weed Management Act 1999			✘	The Act provides management measures in relation to Declared Weeds and places obligations on landowners for the control of those weed species. One species listed as a 'declared weed' under the Weed Management Act 1999 was recorded - Bridal creeper <i>Asparagus asparagoides</i> The Management Plan for bridal creeper <i>Asparagus asparagoides</i> identifies Glamorgan Spring Bay Local Government Area as Zone A which aims for eradication. The further colonisation of bridal creeper in the area presents a serious threat to the natural integrity of forested areas in the National Park. Bridal creeper has been previously identified in the Coles Bay township but these records represent the first occurrence in Freycinet National Park.
Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994			✘	Ongoing requirement under s23A of the Act to take practical and reasonable steps to prevent harm caused by the activity.
Forest Practices Act 1985			✘	Obligations under this Act have been met based on assessment reports undertaken.
Building Act 2016 and Regulations			✘	Regulates the construction and management of buildings. Building permits will not be required for elevated track and bridge/s.

1.3.2 Policies and Plans

In formulating the EIA the following policies and plans have been considered. A summary of the application of each in relation to the project is provided in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Policies and plans relevant to the project

Policy or Plan	Application to the Project
Freycinet National Park Management Plan 2004 (altering the Freycinet National Park , Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000)	The Management Plan is a statutory plan. The activities proposed in this project must comply with the plan. MP contains provision for the construction and operation of the activities outlined in this EIA following project planning, and assessment, to ensure that all identified negative impacts can be adequately avoided or mitigated prior to approval and implementation.
Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan 2019	A strategic planning document to guide the future direction for the Peninsula which is supported by detailed design processes for each of the key and supporting initiatives. The master plan recognises that the Esplanade to Visitor Centre shared-use track is an important connecting link for foot and bike traffic. This project is a priority initiative of the Master Plan.
PWS Strategic Plan 2018-2021	The project aims to meet a strategic plans goal to inspire visitor enjoyment of PWS reserve land by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Plan strategically for sustainable recreation and visitor experiences.</i> 2. <i>Manage assets for quality and safe visitor experience.</i> 3. <i>Provide services that enhance visitor experiences.</i>
Walking Track Management Strategy for TNPR 2011-2020	The vision of this Strategy is to ensure the continued availability of world-class recreational walking opportunities across Tasmania's reserve system, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural, cultural and wilderness values of these areas. The Strategy also identifies for appropriate long-term management of the track and infrastructure.
Reserves Standards Framework	The RSF integrates risk management, visitor management and finance management and will provide a reference for the planning and management of this project. Existing RSF classifications and proposed changes are outlined in s3.1.4.

1.4 Public Consultation

This project will implement the relevant recommendations from the Freycinet National Park / Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000, Freycinet National Park Management Plan 2004 (Altering the Freycinet National Park, Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000) and the Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan June 2019. An extensive public consultation process was undertaken during the development of these plans. Major stakeholders, general public and relevant agencies provided feedback influencing the desired outcomes for which this project is delivering.

To ensure current project awareness, PWS has developed a Communications Plan to inform all major stakeholders of project status and ongoing updates.

Formal public representation will be sought as part of the approvals process. The level 3 EIA process requires a period of public review and any representations received will be considered in the final EIA documentation.

An Aboriginal Heritage report has recommended this proposed alignment as the preferred route to avoid impacts on known Aboriginal heritage sites.

The report will be referred to Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania (AHT) to determine if the project can proceed provided all works are strictly guided by the AHT Unanticipated Discovery Plan. (refer s3.2.6.1)

2 Proposal Description

2.1 Proposal Outline

The Esplanade to Visitor Centre shared-use track project will create a link between Coles Bay Esplanade East through to the existing Visitor Centre via Mosquito Creek linking the proposed future Coles Bay Foreshore Trail and the completed Visitor Centre to Wineglass Bay carpark shared-use track.

These works will minimise impacts on sensitive natural values whilst reducing crowding and provide a more tranquil visitor experience overall.

2.1.1 Esplanade to Visitor Centre Shared-use Track

It is proposed to construct a new shared-use track consisting of sections of elevated track, a short bridge, gravel track and a landing and steps connecting to the existing track to the beach.

The shared-use track will connect the Esplanade and the existing infrastructure at the Visitor Centre, descending down the existing track from the esplanade to, along and across Mosquito Creek through to the existing Visitor Centre infrastructure.

The proposed alignment takes advantage of higher ground within the Mosquito Creek marshland.

Appropriately located signage will be required on the shared-use track.

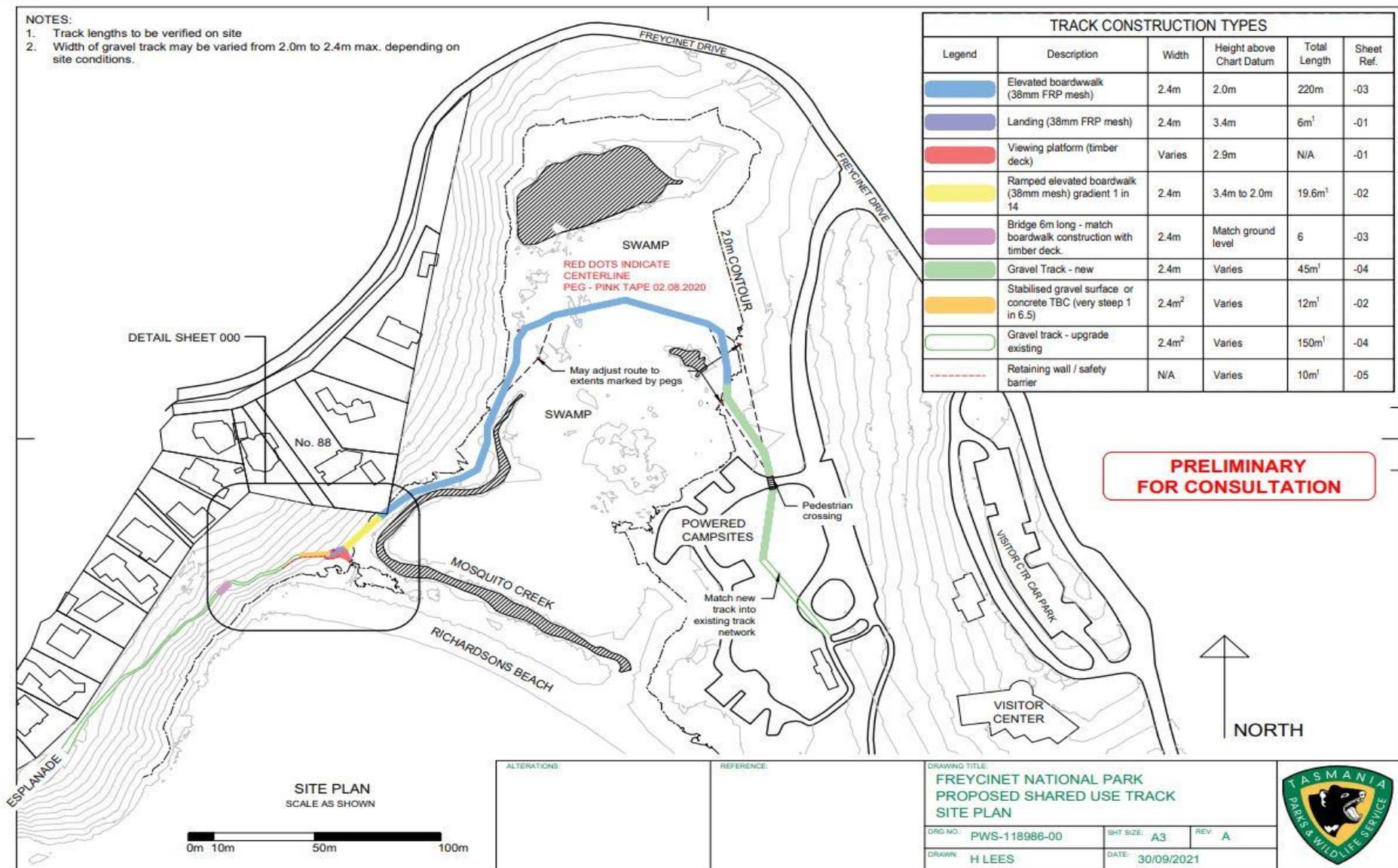


Figure 1.3 Proposed shared-use track site plan and design components

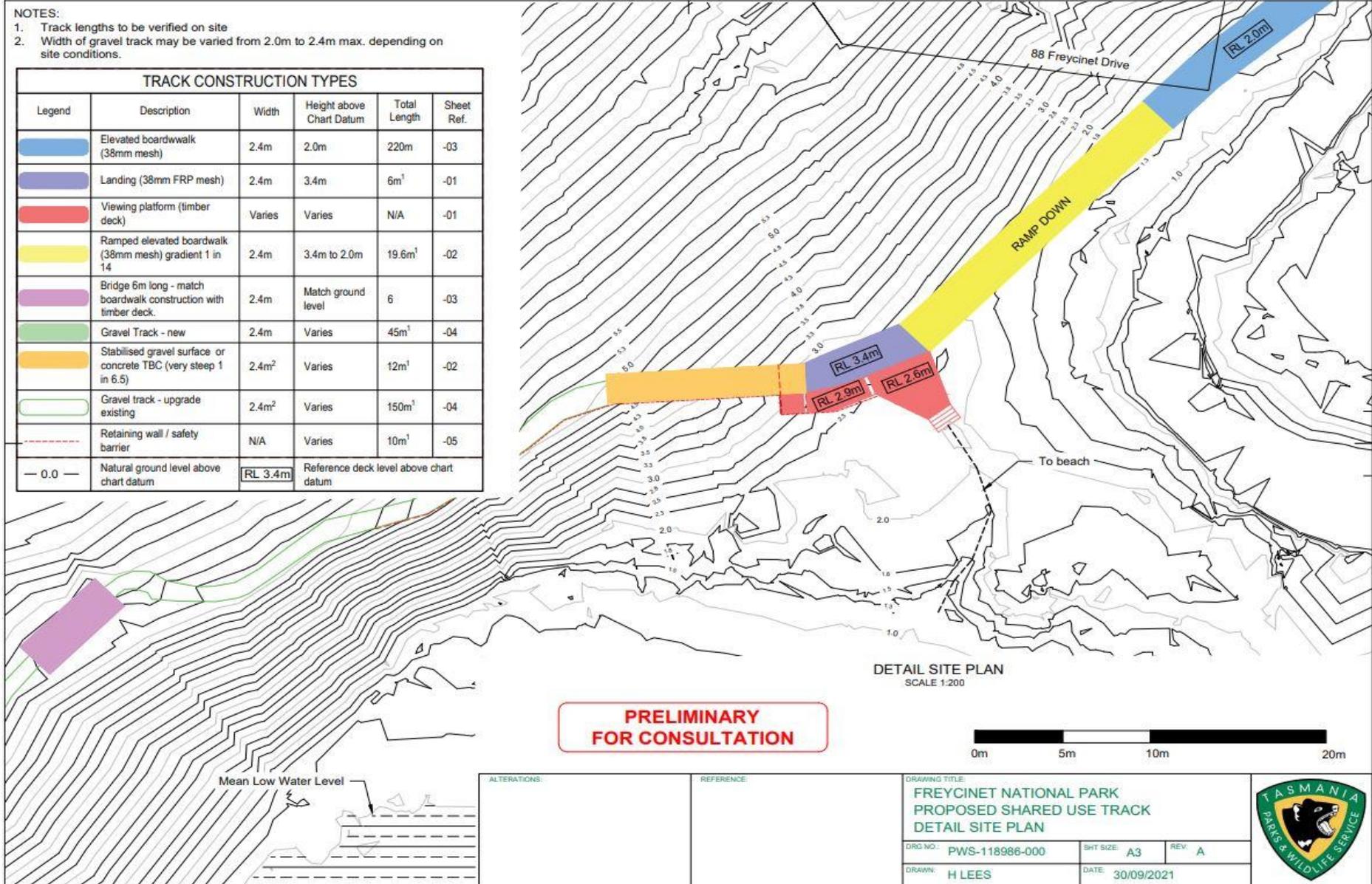


Figure 1.4 Proposed shared-use track detail site plan beach connection

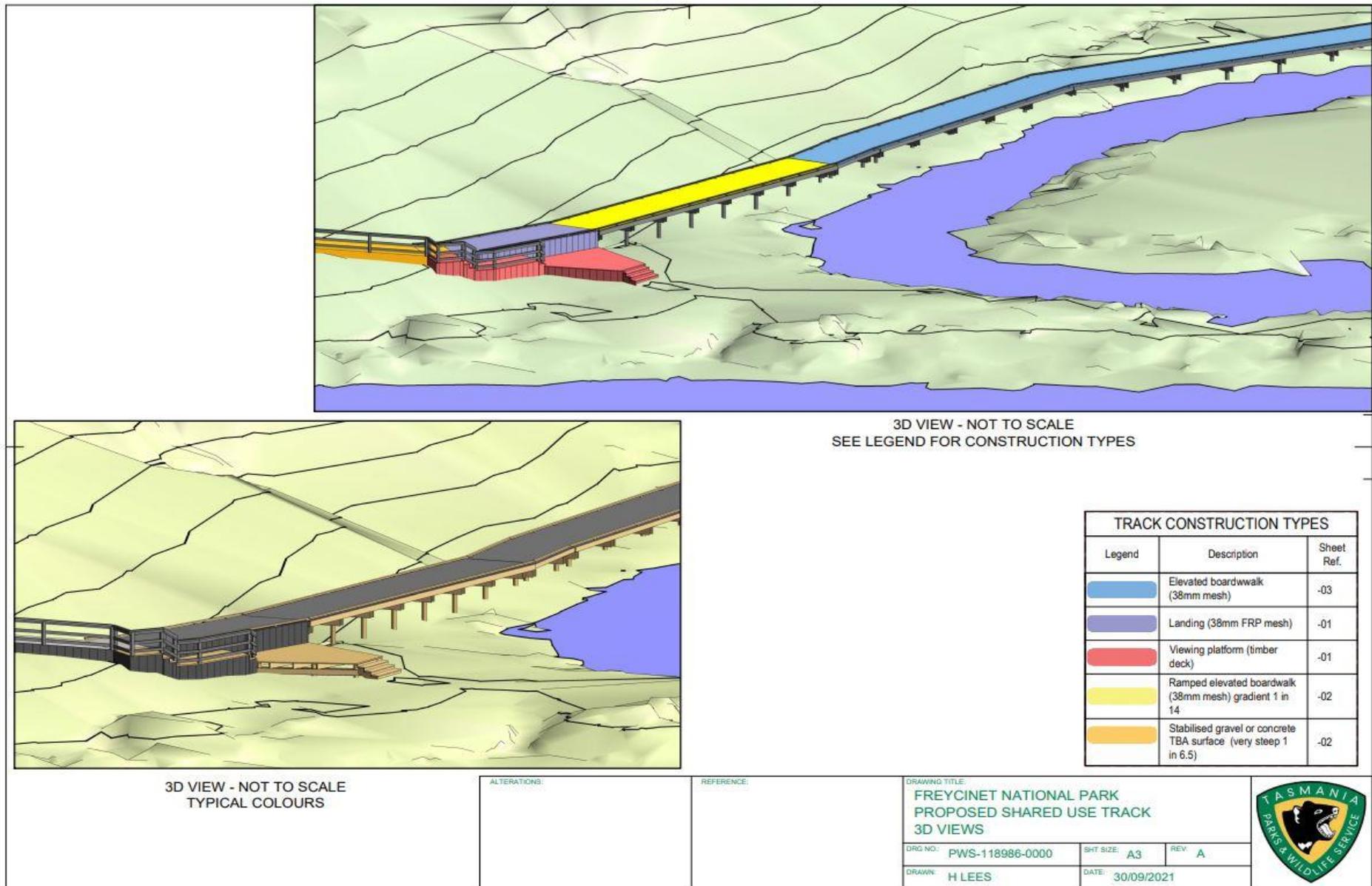


Figure 1.5 3D views of proposed elevated structures

2.2 Infrastructure Materials and Design

2.2.1 Overview

This project aims to build infrastructure that minimises its visual and environmental impacts on the surrounds while increasing the asset life and reducing maintenance costs. PWS has chosen designs, products and construction techniques that will ensure the infrastructure has a long lifespan, minimises impacts on the natural values at the site and on visual amenity from and to the site.

The design and materials have also been selected to retain no-shoe/soft shoe access from the Esplanade down to Richardson’s Beach. This will maintain the existing amenity of the site while the new sections of boardwalk will cater for bicycle access.

2.2.2 Shared-use track structures

2.2.2.1 Elevated track

The majority of the new trail will be 2400mm wide elevated track constructed using treated posts, bearers, joists and kerbs with 38mm thick Mini Mesh ultraviolet (UV) stabilised FRP decking which is finished in a dark grey colour to blend in to surrounding environment.

A short section of ramped elevated track will be constructed using similar methods. This construction type is the same as the boardwalks on the Visitor Centre to Wineglass Bay trailhead shared use track but have been made wider following user feedback. Detail as per below.

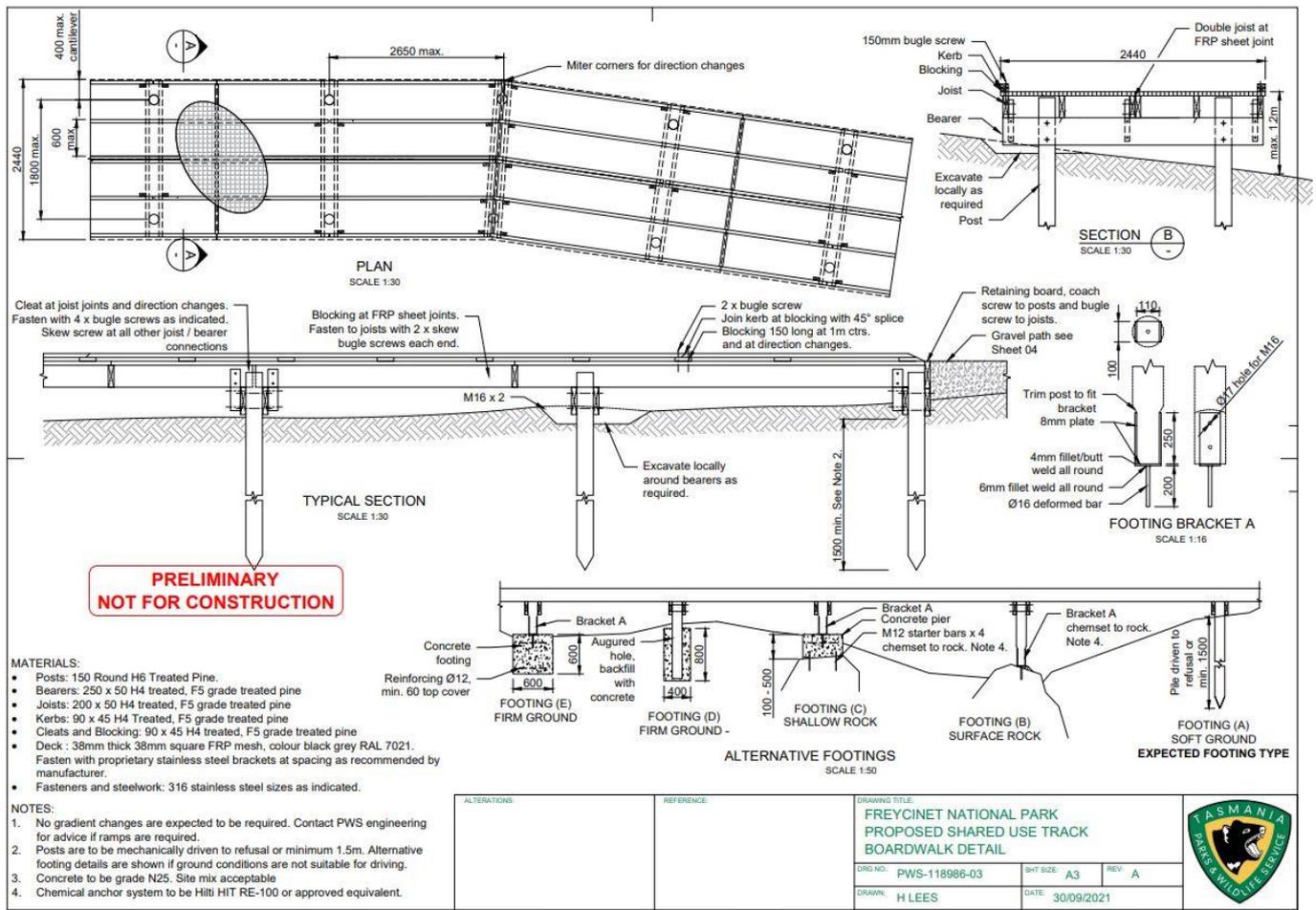


Figure 1.6 Proposed elevated track detail

2.2.2.2 Bridge over small watercourse at Esplanade East

There is currently a small timber bridge over the water course on the existing Esplanade Track. A new bridge will be required to allow the appropriate width for cycling and pedestrian access. The bridge is to be constructed using the same building techniques as the elevated track however it will have a timber deck to retain the no shoe/soft shoe amenity of the existing track.

2.2.2.3 Stabilised gravel or concrete track

A steep 12m long section 2400mm wide stabilised gravel or concrete path including a retaining wall, drainage and safety barriers where required will be constructed on the downhill approach to Richardsons Beach walking track.

This section of track will use Geohex or similar gravel containment system if not concreted.

Locally sourced *phytophthora* and weed free gravel will be used.

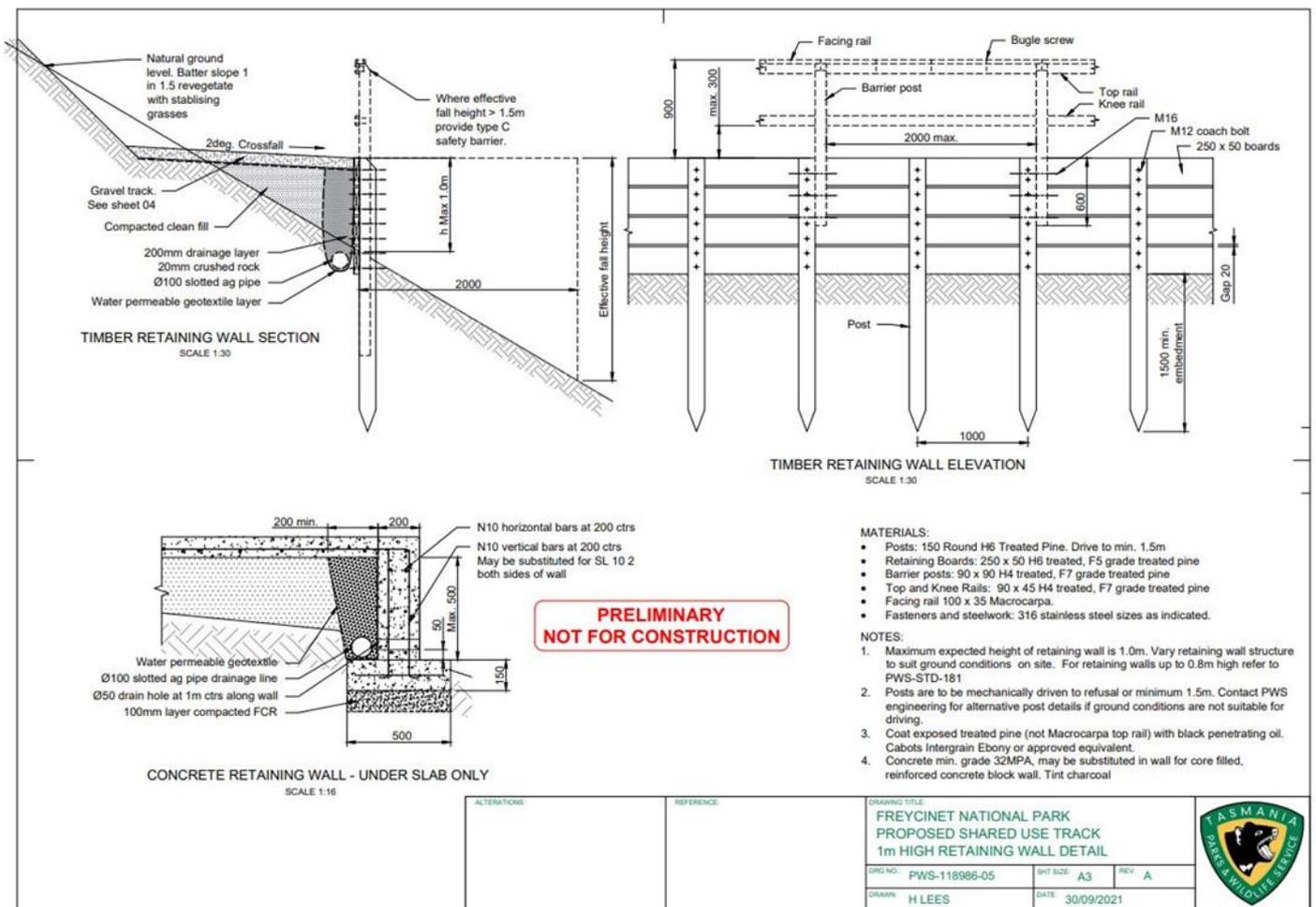


Figure 1.7 Stabilised Gravel or concrete track detail

2.2.2.4 Access to Richardsons Beach

A dressed timber deck and steps will be constructed to link to the beach access track at the northern end of Richardsons Beach. Treated timber Type C safety rail will be provided where fall protection is required. Detail as per below.

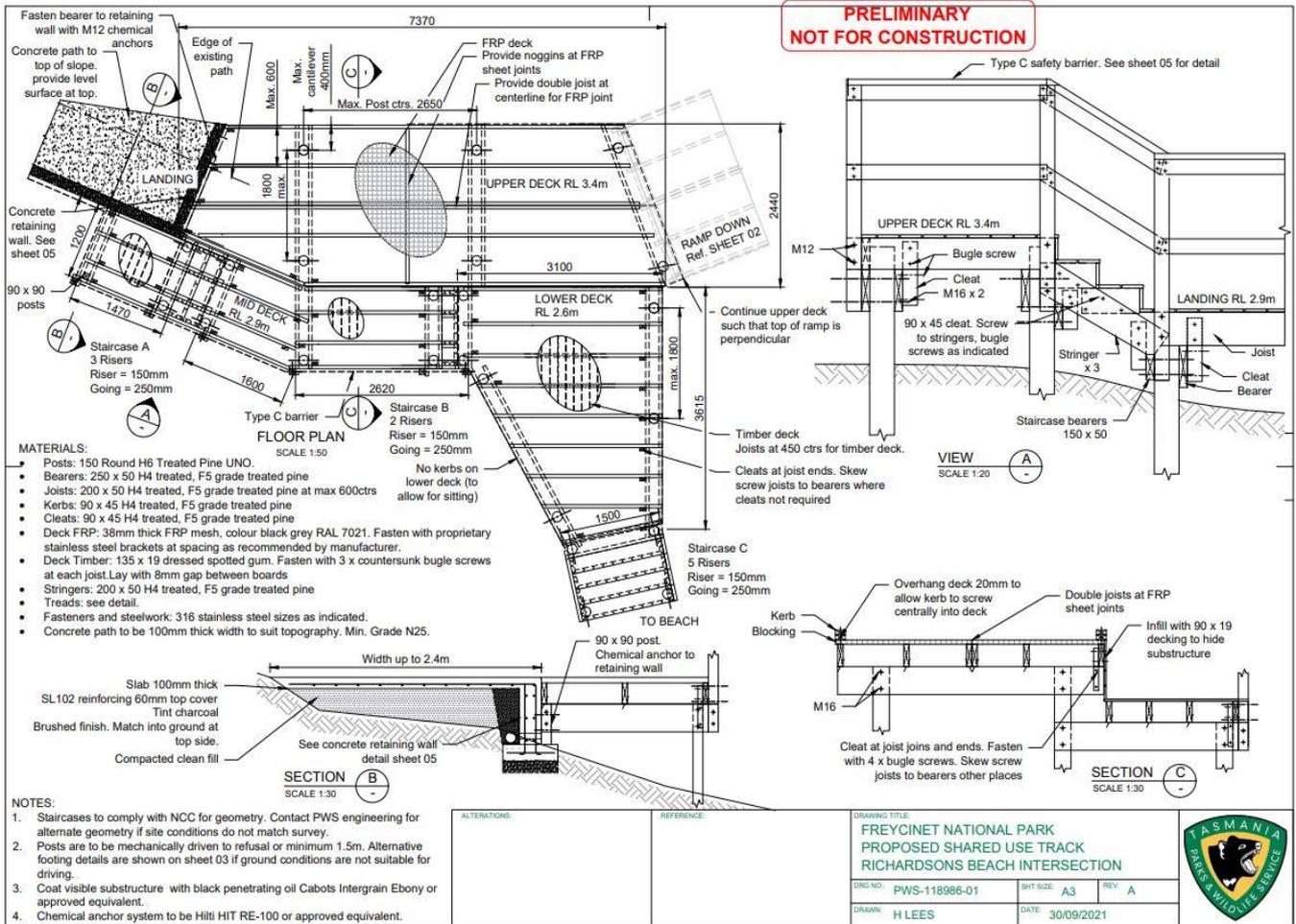


Figure 1.8 Deck and steps detail

2.2.2.5 Gravel track

New gravel track 2400mm wide and 45m long will be constructed on the eastern side of Mosquito Creek marsh near the campgrounds. Construction methods are shown below.

Approximately 150m of existing gravel track along Esplanade East and at the campsites will be upgraded to between 2000mm wide to a maximum of 2400mm wide depending on site conditions.

Locally sourced *phytophthora* and weed free gravel will be used.

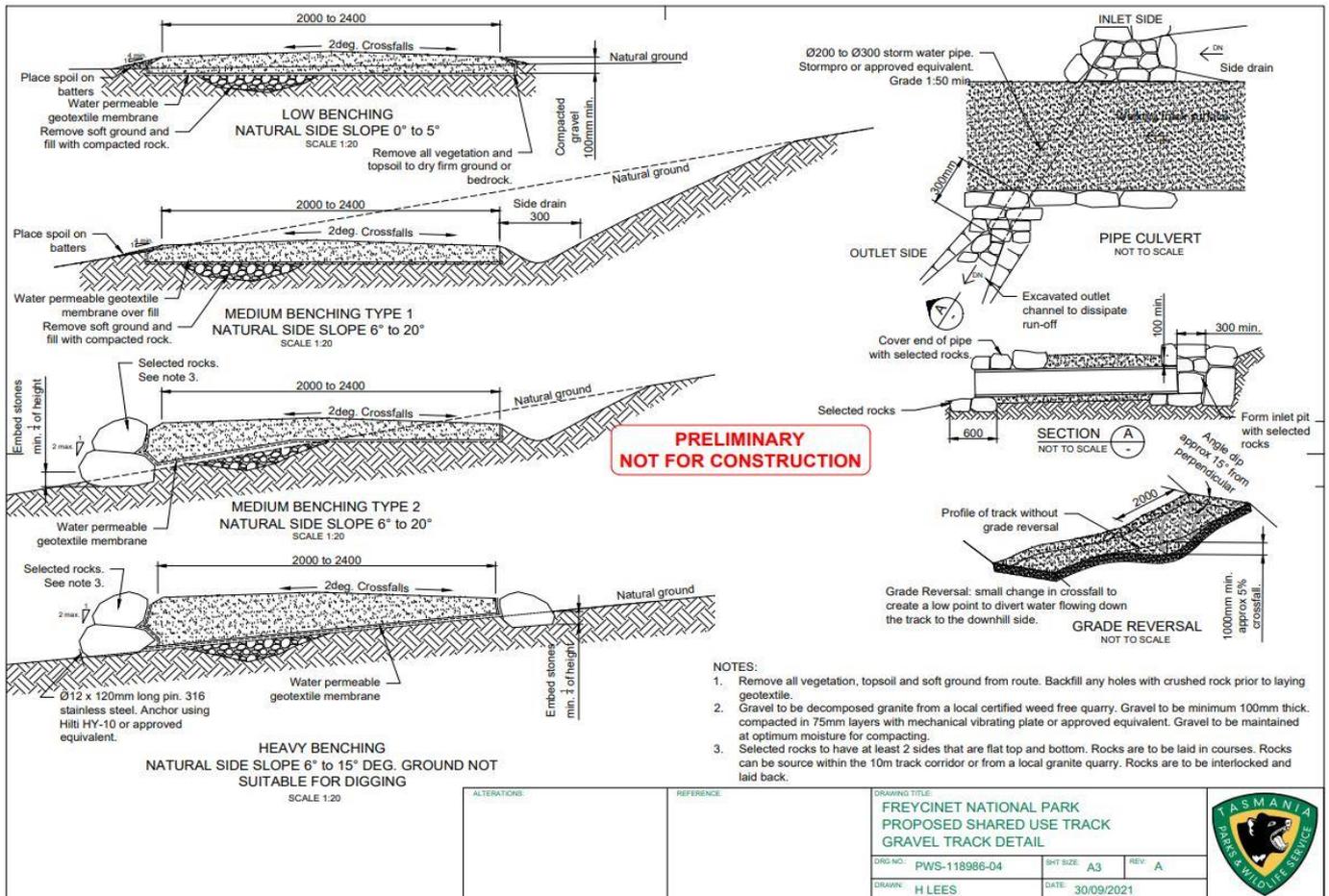


Figure 1.9 Gravel track detail

2.3 Alternatives

Table 2.1 Alternatives considered for the project

Alternative	Description and comments
Do nothing	Existing facilities provide insufficient capacity for current visitor numbers. Congested roads within Coles Bay and Freycinet National Parks will remain with no improvement to visitor experience and the objectives of the Freycinet Master Plan will not be met.
Direct walkers and riders along busy roads	This would not meet one of the primary objectives of reducing crowding or providing a more tranquil experience for visitors. Safety concerns and conflicting user types will not be addressed.
Restrict visitor numbers	The existing track from Esplanade East already provides access so it is not feasible to restrict visitor numbers. Redirecting visitors to other sites when overcrowding occurs would create issues at other sites not designed or resourced for increased visitation.
Redirect users along Richardsons Beach	Will result in adverse impacts on soft coastal sands, stream banks, Aboriginal Heritage sites and other beach users.
Alternative locations	Several locations were considered for the shared-use track. Several criteria were taken in to consideration for the location of the track: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental – location of threatened flora and fauna species or habitat was considered (which significantly informed the potential route of the shared-use track). • Coastal erosion and inundation hazards
Decking options	Consideration of use of FRP instead of treated timber decking on elevated structures. Benefits of FRP in marine environment include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength-to-weight ratio is high, lighter than timber and has benefits for construction manual handling. • Dimensionally stable meaning it will not change shape as timber does. • Distribute impact load to prevent surface damage and will not permanently deform. • Low life cycle costs. • UV resistant. • Low water absorption.

3 The Existing Environment

3.1 Planning

3.1.1 Location and Regional Context

Freycinet National Park is located on the east coast of Tasmania, stretching from Bicheno in the north to Schouten Island in the south. The Park includes impressive granite peaks, forested hills, spectacular cliffs and long sandy beaches.

The Park combines a coastal location with significant environmental values, scenic beauty, accessibility, pleasant weather and a wide range of recreational opportunities. Consequently, Freycinet National Park is a key element of the tourism industry in the east coast region.

3.1.2 Freycinet National Park / Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000

The management plan provides for conservation of the values of the Park and the Reserve. The plan also provides for visitor access and facilities. The intent of the Management Plan is to:

- Zone the Park and Reserve to take account of different features and values and direct and manage visitor activities and impacts;
- Focus on conservation of threatened and priority flora and fauna species and communities;
- Protect Aboriginal and historic heritage features and values;
- Give priority to improving visitor facilities and services; and
- Promote the Park as an important visitor destination on Tasmania's East Coast.

The Management Plan identifies three zones:

- Visitor Services Zone
- Recreation Zone
- Conservation Zone

The proposed Esplanade to Visitor Centre shared-use track is largely within the Coles Bay Visitor Services Zone which is identified as the principal visitor services area in the Park and is most heavily used by visitors. The Zone is also the main location for management facilities and services. The concentration of development and use in this zone minimises impact in more sensitive areas of the Park. The priority for the Zone is to provide a range of high quality visitor services and facilities while minimising impacts on the area's values.

(p.14 FNP/WRSR MP 2000)

3.1.3 Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan June 2019

The Master Plan identifies and supports a network of experience nodes. These experience nodes are supported by the Transport Strategy providing for linkages between each experience node. The proposed shared-use trail is part of the proposed transport strategy between the township and the Park. The Esplanade to Visitor Centre shared-use trail implementation provides a transport connection but will also be designed to provide an experience in itself, slowing the visitor down to enjoy all the area has to offer.

(p.111 FPMP June 2019)

The Freycinet National Park, Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000 takes precedence over the Master Plan. The vision and directions proposed by the Master Plan are consistent with the Management Plan.

3.1.4 PWS Walking Track Classification System & Reserve Standards Framework

All walking tracks are classified and managed according to a PWS Walking Track Classification System. The system is set out in the Walking Track Classification Policy (https://parks.tas.gov.au/Documents/Walking_Track_Classification_Policy_.pdf). The system assigns physical characteristics and infrastructure standards to each track type. The Walking Track Management Strategy for Tasmania’s National Parks and Reserves (2011-2020) is a comprehensive state-wide track strategy for reserved land and provides guidance for the management of walking tracks in the TWWHA.

The Reserve Standards Framework (RSF) integrates risk management, visitor management and finance management. The RSF categories provide for appropriate standards of risk management and level-of-service delivery. Existing RSF classifications and proposed changes are outlined in the table below.

Table 3.1 Existing and proposed changes to RSF classifications

RSF Category: Day Use Get Away (B) Moderate - to - Day Use Comfort (Complex)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Esplanade East existing trail to be slightly realigned / upgraded to W2 class within Coles Bay Conservation Area
RSF Category: Day Use Get Away (B) Substantial - to - Day Use Comfort (Complex)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing trail to be slightly realigned / upgraded to W2 class within Freycinet National Park
RSF Category: Not Managed for Visitor Services (NMVS) Severe - to - Day Use Comfort (Complex)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New W2 class shared-use trail through Mosquito Creek area of Freycinet National Park • New W2 class elevated walkway landing and steps to walking track to Richardsons Beach within Freycinet National Park
RSF Category: Day Use Comfort (Visitor Centres)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New W2 class shared-use trail through Freycinet Visitor Centre and Nature Trail precinct within Freycinet National Park
RSF Category: Easy Access Camping (Complex)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New W2 class shared-use trail through Richardsons Beach campsites precinct within Freycinet National Park

3.1.5 Glamorgan Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme 2015

The planning scheme sets out the requirements for use or development of land in accordance with the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 (the Act). For land in the Freycinet National Park this in addition to the requirements of the Management Plan.

This project was exempt under Part B Administration - 5.0 Exemptions - Table 5.2 Exempt infrastructure use or development - 5.2.10 minor infrastructure: Provision, maintenance and modification of footpaths, cycle paths, and the like by, or on behalf of, the Crown, a council or a State authority.

The project was within two Zones of the The Glamorgan Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme 2015:

- **Zone 29.0 Environmental Management.**
- **Zone 12.0 Low Density Residential**

The **Environmental Management Zone** purpose is:

- To provide for the protection, conservation and management of areas with significant ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic value, or with a significant likelihood of risk from a natural hazard.
- To only allow for complementary use or development where consistent with any strategies for protection and management.
- To facilitate passive recreational opportunities which are consistent with the protection of natural values in bushland and foreshore areas.
- To recognise and protect highly significant natural values on private land.
- To protect natural values in un-developed areas of the coast.
- To recognise and protect reserved natural areas as great natural assets.

The associated project infrastructure is permitted within this zone only if a reserve management plan applies (Freycinet National Park / Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000 applies)

The **Low Density Residential Zone** purpose relevant to this project is:

- To provide for non-residential uses that are compatible with residential amenity.

Use of land within this zone for associated infrastructure such as a footpath or cycle path is deemed Utilities (minor utilities) which is a No Permit Required Use Class.

The project was within four Codes under the The Glamorgan - Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme 2015:

- **E1.0 Bushfire Prone Areas Code – does not apply**
- **E11.0 Waterway and Coastal Protection Code – within 20m of a stream**
- **E15.0 Inundation Prone Areas Code – engineered to comply**
- **E16.0 Coastal Erosion Hazard Code – engineered to comply**

Code E11.0 triggered the need for a discretionary planning permit under the Glamorgan Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme 2015 and would have been applied for after the draft EIA was finalised.

GSBC has since received a notice from the Tasmanian Planning Commission that in accordance with section 51(3AB) of the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act (LUPAA) as of Monday 14th February 2022 the Tasmanian Planning Scheme (TPS) including the draft Local Provisions Schedule (LPS) will be required to be used to assess any application lodged from that date.

Any application not validly made before Monday 14th February will be assessed against the TPS and LPS.

GSBC now considers that the proposed works would be exempt development under clause 4.2.7 of the TPP's in that the provision of a footpath/cycle path would be minor infrastructure by or on behalf of the Crown or a State Authority.

PWS therefor will not lodge a Development Application and are satisfied that adequate public consultation has been completed through the FNPMP 2000, FPMP 2019 and the Draft EIA 'Have your say' consultation processes.

3.2 The Environment

3.2.1 Climate

Freycinet National Park lies in the State's rain shadow and is correspondingly mild and dry most of the year.

The annual average rainfall recorded in the Park at the ranger station since 1985 is 730 mm, though very high rainfall in 1985 and 1986 may have inflated this figure.

The prevailing winds are generally from the north-west from October to March, and from the north-east from April to September.

Bureau of Meteorology records from Swansea show the temperature in January, the warmest month, ranges from a mean daily maximum of 22.2°C to a mean daily minimum of 11.3°C. In July, the coldest month, temperatures range from a mean daily maximum of 13.0°C to a mean daily minimum of 3.4°C.

3.2.2 Flora

3.2.2.1 General

Freycinet National Park is important for the conservation of Tasmania's dry sclerophyll plant communities on granite and dolerite, and the conservation of a range of rare and endemic plant species.

Over 500 native higher plant species have been recorded within the Park, nearly one-third of the Tasmanian higher plant flora.

Several communities and species are of high conservation value, including many endemic species of restricted distribution and conservation status. At least 83 species of Tasmanian native orchids are recorded within Freycinet National Park which is considered a valuable refuge for orchids.

The flora of the Park includes species listed in the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* (TSPA) and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC).

The PWS engaged a consultant to undertake an assessment of the ecological values associated with this project to ensure that identified ecological values were taken into account during project planning and managed appropriately (Appendix C).

3.2.2.2 Vegetation Communities

The vegetation mapping on TASVEG Live (TASVEG is a Tasmania-wide vegetation map available on the LIST: <https://www.thelist.tas.gov.au/app/content/home>) indicates the project area to be dominated by *Eucalyptus tenuiramis* forest and woodland on granite (DTG) grading to *Eucalyptus ovata* forest (DOV) on the Coles Bay foreshore and Freshwater

aquatic sedgeland and rushland (ASF) - the two largest open patches in the Mosquito Creek marsh.

Recent surveys indicate that the mapping within the study area as depicted by TASVEG Live is entirely incorrect.

The surveyed vegetation communities for the project area are:

- Eucalyptus globulus dry forest and woodland - DGL
- Eucalyptus viminalis and E. globulus coastal forest - DVC
- Eucalyptus amygdalina coastal forest – DAC
- Saline sedgeland /rushland – ARS
- Extra-urban miscellaneous - FUM

Saline sedgeland /rushland – ARS TASVEG unit is aligned with the Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh ecological community listed as Vulnerable by the Commonwealth EPBC.

Eucalyptus globulus dry forest and woodland – DGL and Eucalyptus viminalis and E. globulus coastal forest – DVC is listed as threatened native vegetation communities on Schedule 3A of the Nature Conservation Act 2002.

The construction types and alignment of the track has been determined to minimise impact to these communities.

3.2.2.3 Threatened Flora

No threatened flora species listed under the TSPA or the Commonwealth EPBCA occur within the project area.

3.2.3 Introduced plants and Plant pathogens

Eighteen naturalised introduced plants were documented. Most of these occur in the bushland at the Coles Bay end where they have spread from the neighbouring residences.

3.2.3.1 Declared weeds

One species classified as a 'declared weed' under the Tasmanian *Weed Management Act 1999*:

- Bridal creeper *Asparagus asparagoides* – This is the most significant weed within the study area. Two plants were identified at separate locations. It is likely that more plants occur at low densities in the surrounding bushland. Glamorgan Spring Bay is designated Zone A for bridal creeper which prioritises the species for eradication. The further colonisation of bridal creeper in the area presents a serious threat to the natural integrity of forested area in the National Park. Bridal creeper has been previously identified in the Coles Bay township but these records represent the first occurrence in Freycinet National Park itself.

3.2.3.2 Environmental weeds

Four environmental weeds were identified within the project area:

- Cabbage palm *Cordyline australis* - Single specimen emerging from scrub north of Route 4.
- Sweet pittosporum *Pittosporum undulatum* - Several small seedlings (pulled on site) and a few larger semi mature bushes. This is recognised as moderately serious environmental weed and there are other previous records in the vicinity.

- Passion vine *Passiflora* sp. - Garden escape in bushland in Coles Bay Conservation Area.
- Panic veldt grass *Ehrharta erecta* - This under prioritised and highly invasive grass can form dense infestations that crowd out all other ground covers. Much of the bushland at the end of Esplanade Road East is infested with this and it is threatening to spread into the National Park.

3.2.3.3 Plant pathogens

There are no records of cinnamon root rot fungus, *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (PC), in the immediate vicinity of the study area although it is known from other locations. PC has a significant presence in Freycinet National Park and presents a very serious threatening process to many of the important native flora.

No evidence of plant disease *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (PC) root-rot fungus was detected from the project area.

3.2.4 Threatened Fauna

3.2.4.1 Potential and Known Habitat

Potential habitat is present for several State and Commonwealth-listed fauna species with known sites or specific habitat features (e.g. dens, foraging habitat and habitat) requiring special management. The track has been aligned to avoid known habitat features.

Chaostola skipper

Potential habitat is present for the Chaostola skipper (*Antipodia chaostola* subsp. *leucophaea*) – listed as endangered under the Threatened Species Protection Act 1995 (TSPA) and the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBCA). The skipper has not been observed during surveys onsite but as the site is close to known locations and contains the habitat plant, adult skippers may visit the site and it is possible that the species will colonise the site in the future.

Tasmanian devil and Spotted-tailed quoll

The proposed works are within the habitat range of the Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisii*) – listed as endangered under the TSPA and the EPBCA – and the Spotted-tailed quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*) – listed as rare under the TSPA and vulnerable under the EPBCA. Known and potential devil dens have been avoided by the preferred track alignment.

White-bellied sea-eagle

There are three White-bellied sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) nests recorded within 1 km of the proposed track. The White-bellied sea eagle is listed as vulnerable under the Threatened Species Protection Act 1995 (TSPA). Construction activity within 500 m or 1 km line-of-sight of an active nest will be avoided during the breeding season (July to January). Construction works are proposed to be completed by the 30th June 2022. Due to the current level of disturbance of the surrounding area (between the nests and the proposed track) the ongoing use of the path is not considered to be introducing a disturbance that will impact eagles.

3.2.4.2 Animal disease

- ***Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (Chytrid fungus)** causes infection affecting Tasmania's native amphibians. The fungus infects the skin of frogs destroying its structure and function leading to possible death.

Small pools and channels may provide suitable habitat although water is likely to be too overly saline to be suitable habitat.

3.2.5 Geology and Topography

This project is located within the slightly elevated dry forest margins of the Coles Bay foreshore, Mosquito Creek marshland and Richarsons Beach campgrounds on granite derived soils and sands.

The proposed development is not situated on any geo-conservation sites listed on the Tasmanian Geoconservation Database.

3.2.6 Cultural Heritage

3.2.6.1 Aboriginal Heritage

The Freycinet Peninsula and surrounding areas have been used by Tasmanian aboriginal people for over 35 000 years. The region is in the territory of the Oyster Bay nation which consisted of 10 clans with an estimated 600 - 700 people, and whose territory extended from the Derwent estuary up the east coast to the Fingal Valley and westward towards the Midlands. The Freycinet Peninsula and Schouten Island area supported the *Toorernomairremener* clan.

The Aboriginal Heritage of the Park has a strong and continuing significance to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. Significant Aboriginal sites are found along the coastlines, dunes and estuaries. This heritage includes shell middens, rock quarries, rock shelters, stone artefacts and other significant sites.

The western and eastern sections of the route follow existing walking paths or roads, thereby minimizing the risks of impacts to any undetected Aboriginal cultural materials. The route is aligned to traverse low lying creek margins, away from the foredunes area where a known site is located. This further reduces the potential impacts to Aboriginal cultural values. This route does not impact on any known Aboriginal heritage sites, and as such there are no permitting requirements.

If previously undetected archaeological sites or objects are located during the course of the proposed track construction works, the processes outlined in the Unanticipated Discovery Plan will be followed. A copy of the Unanticipated Discovery Plan will be kept on site during all ground disturbance and construction work. All construction personnel will be made aware of the Unanticipated Discovery Plan and their obligations under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975.

3.2.6.2 Historic Heritage

Since the early years of European settlement, whaling parties, tin and coal miners, and pastoralists are among those that have lived and worked on the Freycinet Peninsula. Old mine shafts, abandoned farmers' huts and the remains of whalers' camps form part of the cultural heritage of the Park. By the 1900s the Peninsula was a popular holiday destination. The area was reserved as a national park in 1916, making it the oldest national park in Tasmania, alongside Mount Field National Park.

There are currently no historic heritage sites listed on the Tasmanian Heritage Register near the project site.

3.2.7 Natural Hazards

3.2.7.1 Fire

The Freycinet National Park is a Fuel Stove Only Area (with the exception of the powered campsites at Richardsons Beach, where campfires are permitted in designated areas) and it is historically very dry and vulnerable to fire. No fires are allowed in the National Park. Bushfire ignition due to use of tools / machinery on exposed granite or within vegetation during high fire danger days would have significant impacts on the natural values, infrastructure and visitor safety at this iconic destination.

3.2.7.2 Coastal Vulnerability

For the majority of the route the proposed deck level is at 2.0m AHD this is 0.2m above the 2050, 1 in 50 probability wave run up. The design life of the structure is approximately 30 years. There is some risk that the structure will be inundated at times before the end of its design life. There is also some risk that from time to time the structure will be inundated as a result of flood water backing up against tide in the mosquito creek area, this was not modelled in the coastal vulnerability report. The structure has been designed to withstand low velocity inundation.

The natural beach access tracks will be vulnerable to storm damage

3.3 Socio-Economic

3.3.1 Recreational values and established uses

The walk to the Wineglass Bay Lookout is the most popular walk in Freycinet National Park for visitors and is valued alike by locals. Visitors come to Freycinet as individuals, couples or small groups, while others come in large tour groups or as outdoor education groups with schools or other organisations.

The proposal will result in an improvement by providing an alternative access link from Coles Bay township to the existing visitor centre and shared-use track to the Wineglass Bay trailhead.

The quality of the visitor experience will be greatly improved if a shared-use track link is developed to keep walkers and bikes off the busy and narrow entrance road into the National Park.

3.3.2 Economic benefits

Tasmanian suppliers and contractors will be used where possible. Analysis by the ABS indicates that approximately \$500,000 in construction investment directly supports one full-time equivalent construction job for a year.

A high-level cost –benefit analysis of the Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan June 2019 initiatives indicate that for every dollar spent in implementing the master plan there will be a return of between \$3.05 and \$4.10. It also indicates that an increase of visitor spending of \$10.7 million per year (modelled to be realised in ten years) would support approximately 53.5 FTE jobs in the services sector if the proposed Freycinet Gateway experience initiatives can be delivered.

This project along with other key initiatives identified in the Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan June 2019 will provide a base for sustainable increased visitation and spend.

4 Potential Impacts and their Management

4.1 Biodiversity

4.1.1 Performance Requirements

Key performance criteria when considering effective mitigation and avoidance of potential impacts of the proposal on biodiversity will be drawn from the applicable legislation and management plans.

The legislated management objectives aligned with biodiversity (Schedule 1 of the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*) are:

- to conserve natural biological diversity (1a);
- to preserve the quality of water and protect catchments (1c); and
- to protect the national park against, and rehabilitate the national park following, adverse impacts such as those of fire, introduced species, diseases and soil erosion on the national park's natural and cultural values and on assets within and adjacent to the national park (1g).

The Commonwealth EPBC provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places - defined in the EPBC as *Matters of National Environmental Significance*. Approval is required for activities with significant impact on listed species, communities or places.

This project will not have significant impact on listed values and as such will not require referral to the Federal government.

Sections 3 and 4 of the Freycinet National Park / Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000 also support the objectives listed above.

4.1.2 Potential impacts and mitigation measures

4.1.2.1 Flora

Works will result in minimal impacts on native vegetation.

Management controls:

- Wherever practical, individual trees (Eucalyptus species) will be protected from disturbance.

4.1.2.2 Fauna

Potential habitat is present for *Sarcophilus harrisii* (Tasmanian devil), *Dasyurus maculatus* subsp. *maculatus* (spotted-tailed quoll), *Dasyurus viverrinus* (eastern quoll), and *Antipodia chaostola* tax. *leucophaea* (chaostola skipper).

The proposed track has been aligned to avoid known habitat features and the scale of works is such that no significant impact on potential habitat is likely.

Management controls:

- Impacts to dense patches of Chaostola skipper habitat (*Gahnia radula* or *Gahnia microstachya*) will be avoided through minor route adjustments and these areas will not be utilised as laydown areas.

- A potential devil den (D5) is located 2m from the proposed works. This potential den will be monitored and managed in accordance with the Tasmanian Devil Survey Guidelines and Management Advice for Development Proposals available at <http://dpiipwe.tas.gov.au/conservation/development-planning-conservation-assessment/survey-guidelines-for-development-assessments> .
- Construction activity within 500 m or 1 km line-of-sight of an active eagle nest will be avoided during the breeding season (July to January).

4.1.2.3 Weeds, Pathogens and Diseases

The project sites are free from weeds and diseases so keeping these out will be a high priority.

The vegetation in Freycinet National Park is susceptible to PC with sections of the park already impacted by the disease. The ecological assessment (Appendix B) found no signs of PC in the area where the proposed works will be conducted, however as there is already PC present within the park there is a significant risk that PC could be introduced to the project area through infected shoes, clothing, vehicles and machinery.

PWS proposes to develop and implement a strict weed and disease hygiene management plan to minimise the likelihood of diseases and weeds being introduced or spread further into the Park as per Section 4 of the [DPIPWE \(2015\) Weed and Disease Planning and Hygiene Guidelines - Preventing the spread of weeds and diseases in Tasmania](#).

Existing weeds nearby should be removed or treated prior to works where practicable or works staged to prevent further spread of known weeds.

Management controls:

- Removal of Bridal creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*) within the National Park should be implemented prior to construction.
- Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania Weed and Disease Planning and Hygiene Guidelines will be followed during all works (a copy of which can be found here: <https://intranet.nre.tas.gov.au/Documents/Weed%20%20Management%20and%20Hygiene%20Guidelines.pdf>)
- Develop and implement a strict weed and disease hygiene management plan as per Sections 4 - 6 of the Weed and Disease Planning and Hygiene Guidelines to minimise the likelihood of diseases and weeds being introduced or spread further into the Park.
- All construction personnel will be inducted around the management concerns with respect to PC (and weeds), native vegetation, including information on field symptoms and hygiene protocols;
- Application of strict machinery, vehicle and personnel hygiene protocols for all construction activities, which includes spraying work boots with Phytoclean™ prior to leaving the car park;
- Gravel and rock will be sourced from a quarry recently certified as PC and weed free;
- Form compacted track surfaces such that pooling of water on the track surface and adjacent to the track is minimised (such pooling should be the subject of regular inspections and fixed if observed) and soil will not be shifted from one section of track to another;
- Water will be directed across granite exposures (if practical) rather than into adjacent vegetation downslope of the track;
- Audit for compliance with biosecurity controls during works; and
- Undertake post-installation monitoring by suitably qualified personnel in the spring months following installation.

4.2 Geo-heritage

4.2.1 Geo-conservation sites

None listed in the project area.

4.3 Visual Impact

4.3.1 Overview

An evaluation of the potential visual impacts of the proposed development is considered not required as the track will be partially screened, at least, by surrounding vegetation from elevated points and lookouts on the track network.

Over-all potential visual impact is expected to be low and the magnitude of change is expected to be minor. Visitors will be expecting this level of infrastructure within the National Park as part of the visitor experience.

Management controls:

- No significant vegetation removal around the infrastructure (to minimise visual intrusion of the project).
- Use of materials that blend with the environment such as treated timber posts and joists for the elevated track structures. Walking track surfaces made of dark charcoal RAL 7039 FRP or gravel.
- Timber safety rails and retaining walls will be coated with a dark coloured oil to blend in with the environment.

4.4 Natural Areas

4.4.1 Overview

Freycinet National Park contains large relatively undisturbed areas with topographic and catchment integrity where natural processes continue largely unmodified by human intervention. A large portion of the Freycinet Peninsula and all of Schouten Island has been assessed as an indicative area of National Estate value as a wilderness area (Tasmanian Public Land Use Commission, 1997). Virtually all of the Park has National Estate values as a natural landscape and, for most of the peninsula, as an undisturbed catchment.

This proposed track is within the Visitor Services Zone where infrastructure is expected and provides connectivity between the town, the Visitor Centre, Wineglass Bay trailhead, campgrounds, beaches and other accommodation nodes.

The proposed works are designed to provide connectivity for visitors that wish to walk or ride and to reduce congestion on the narrow roads in the area.

The proposal will have a minimal impact on current natural quality whilst also reducing existing visitor impacts.

4.5 Historical and Cultural Heritage

4.5.1 Performance Requirements

In Tasmania, the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975* (the Act) is the primary Act for the treatment of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The Act is administered by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs through Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania (AHT) in the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania.

Under the EPBC Act, actions that have, or are likely to have, a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance require approval from the Australian Government Minister for the Environment (the Minister).

The Freycinet National Park and Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000 provides for conservation of the values of the Park and the Reserve. To this end, one of the Management Plans aims is to protect Aboriginal and historic heritage features and values.

The Management Plan objectives are to, in cooperation with the Aboriginal community:

- Identify and record Aboriginal heritage;
- Protect and conserve Aboriginal heritage; and
- Interpret Aboriginal heritage.

4.5.2 Potential impacts and mitigation measures

There are no known aboriginal sites within the footprint of the Esplanade to Visitor Centre Shared-use Track preferred alignment (refer Appendix A).

There is one known site to the south of the proposed works that will not be impacted on.

General management controls:

- Please be aware that all Aboriginal heritage in Tasmania is protected under the Act. There are requirements under the Act to report Aboriginal heritage and not to impact Aboriginal heritage without a permit granted by the Minister. The Unanticipated Discovery Plan should be kept on hand during all ground disturbance and construction works. If at any point you or your works personnel suspect Aboriginal heritage, the process described within the Unanticipated Discovery Plan is to be immediately implemented.
- PWS are to ensure that all works personnel are briefed and understand the process outlined within the Unanticipated Discovery Plan and their obligations under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975 prior to works commencing. PWS should also ensure that all works personnel are briefed about the cultural sensitivity of the Freycinet area and the potential for unanticipated discoveries.
- Information sheets about the type of Aboriginal heritage found in the surrounding area (stone artefacts and shell middens) are to be distributed to works personnel to assist them in recognising these site types.
- The proposed track alignment was highlighted by the Aboriginal heritage consultants as the preferred option due to the reduced likelihood of undetected Aboriginal heritage being found. Any major re-alignments will require further advice prior to construction.

4.6 Waste and Hazardous Materials

4.6.1 Fuels and Dangerous Substances

The construction component of the project will require the storage of small amount of fuels and oils for the operation of generators and equipment. These substances pose a risk of environmental harm in addition to a risk of explosion and/or fire if stored and handled incorrectly.

Management controls:

- All fuel storage areas will be approved by PWS with enough overflow containment for stored fuel quantities.
- The handling and storage of all fuels and any other dangerous substances will be required to be in accordance with the Dangerous Substances (Safe Handling) Act 2005 and the relevant Australian Standards.
- All contractors will be required to submit to PWS for approval a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that will detail fuel and dangerous substances requirements and storage and handling measures.

4.6.2 Waste

The construction component of the project is expected to produce waste material. Waste material has the potential to contaminate soils, can have a visual impact and spread wider into the National Park. All waste will be contained on site in storage bins and removed to a waste disposal centre during or on completion of works. A high percentage of waste is likely to be FRP products and small metal produced during construction of the project components. Waste will be minimised by design and use of pre-cut lengths and pre-fabricated materials where possible.

Management controls:

- The handling of waste will be required to be detailed in a CEMP and performance requirements will require a final site clean up to the satisfaction of PWS.

4.7 Health and Safety

4.7.1 Fire Management

The primary aim of fire management for the Freycinet National Park and the Recreation Zone, in particular, is to exclude fire due to concerns about both environmental values and visitor risk.

The Bushfire Risk Assessment Model indicates a high to extreme risk for the area.

Operations on this project are deemed HIGH RISK HAZARD ACTIVITY for wildfire ignitions if conducted during the summer period.

Management controls:

- Contractors are to ensure operations are suspended immediately once the Forest Fire Danger Index is calculated as equal to or greater than HIGH 20, or the relative humidity is equal to or less than 30%. Contractors should not undertake hot works* in reserves until the Forest Fire Danger Index has dropped below High 20 or the relative humidity risen above 30%. Hourly weather observations should be taken at the site of the works as directed by the supervisor.

- * Hot works includes the use of grinders, welders, brush cutters, chainsaws, earth moving equipment and other tools and equipment likely to create sparks.
- Adequate and operational firefighting equipment will be maintained onsite during construction and any wildfire ignitions extinguished immediately.
- Schedule construction work during winter season to minimise potential for hot works issues.

4.7.2 Emergency Response

Emergency response procedures will be developed for staff and contractor safety in the event of a high risk incident occurring within the project site or surrounding areas. The document will outline procedures that responsible staff and contractors can follow to ensure persons working on the project will be responded to in the event of an emergency.

Management controls:

- An Emergency Response Plan will be developed including:
 - Evacuation from a remote area in the event of injury, death or threatening circumstances.
 - Early warning systems for unstable weather, wildfires etc.
 - Emergency contact details.
 - Emergency Meeting Points
 - Setup communication systems and process between remote parties and field centre.

4.7.3 Hazard Analysis and Risk Assessment

PWS will work with project contractors to identify all risks related to the project activities. Risk assessments will be completed on all project tasks and mitigating processes and procedures will be adopted to remove or reduce the risk to personal.

Management controls:

- Project inductions for contractors will be delivered by PWS staff to ensure awareness of all safety risks and actions required to reduce risk.
- Job Risk Analysis (JRA) will be completed and signed by all project persons for compliance undertaking risk based tasks.
- Visitor safety will be addressed around the construction sites across the reserve with advance warnings, signage and closed off construction areas.
- Contractors will be asked to provide an approved Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to address hygiene risks and handling of dangerous chemicals on site.
- PWS will monitor fire weather days and enforce bans on the use of hot work equipment (eg. motor based devices) during days over the PWS fire danger rating level.
- Communication plans will be developed to address remote area works and ensure the use of satellite devices for internal contacts.

4.8 Road Traffic

4.8.1 Road Traffic

This project requires materials to be transported to lay down areas cordoned off within the campgrounds or carpark on the eastern side of the trail. Suitable vehicles will be used to transport materials and equipment to the lay down area close to construction site. Roads into the Park are very busy and lay down areas will be chosen to minimise impacts of transport.

5 Monitoring and Review

To monitor the compliance of the project during the construction and operational phase the following key monitoring and review measures are proposed.

5.1 Social, Recreational and Economic Monitoring

The master plan review scheduled in 5 years will assess which elements of the plan, including this project, have achieved their stated objective. In addition, PWS will monitor visitor and stakeholder feedback following completion of the project.

5.2 Environmental and Cultural Monitoring

An annual post-construction weed and rehabilitation monitoring program will be implemented for a minimum of 5 years post construction. At the completion of the five-year period results will be reviewed and if rehabilitation or weed control are not considered adequate then ongoing works will be programmed into the Field Centres Weed Strategy.

The management of unanticipated discoveries of Aboriginal relics will be undertaken in accordance with the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975* and the Unanticipated Discovery Plan as prescribed by Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania.

5.3 Construction Phase Monitoring

The Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will incorporate all measures designed to mitigate impact of construction including:

- On-site construction waste management.
- Fuel and dangerous substances requirements and storage and handling measures including bunding, signage, staff training and provision of spill kits.
- Strict machinery and personnel hygiene protocols established
- Weed management and hygiene plan
- Erosion and sediment control plan including daily monitoring of controls.
- Public access management for park users during works including construction fences and signage.

6 Commitments

The key commitments of the project are outlined below.

Table 4.1 Commitments summary

No.	Commitments	Project Phase
	<i>Pre-Construction Commitments</i>	
1	A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be prepared prior to works by successful contractor and submitted to PWS for approval.	Pre-Construction
2	A Communications Plan, including visitor safety during construction, will be approved prior to commencement of works.	Planning & Pre-Construction
3	Contractors will be briefed about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The location of vegetation to be managed during works and use of laydown areas; - Management concerns with respect to PC (and weeds), including information on field symptoms and hygiene protocols; - Content of Unanticipated Discovery Plan and their obligations under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975</i>; and - Awareness of all safety risks and actions required to reduce risk. 	Pre-Construction
4	An Emergency Response Plan will be developed including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evacuation in the event of injury, death or threatening circumstances; - Early warning systems for unstable weather, wildfires etc.; - Emergency contact details; and - Setup communication systems and process between parties and the field centre. 	Pre-Construction & Construction
5	Weed removal or treatment prior to construction or staged construction to prevent spread of known weeds.	Pre-Construction & Construction
6	Job Risk Analysis (JRA) will be completed and signed by all project persons for compliance undertaking risk based tasks.	Pre-Construction & Construction
	<i>Construction Commitments</i>	
7	All vegetation clearance will be limited to the identified development footprint and kept to a minimum. Construction equipment, laydown areas and storage will be contained within the footprint.	Construction

8	<p>Contractors are to ensure operations are suspended immediately once the Forest Fire Danger Index is calculated as equal to or greater than HIGH 20, or the relative humidity is equal to or less than 30%. Contractors will not undertake hot works in reserves until the Forest Fire Danger Index has dropped below High 20 or the relative humidity risen above 30%. Hourly weather observations will be taken at the site of the works as directed by the supervisor.</p> <p>Adequate and operational firefighting equipment will be maintained onsite during construction.</p> <p>Schedule construction work during winter season to minimise potential for hot works issues.</p>	Construction
9	Management of unanticipated discoveries of Aboriginal relics undertaken in accordance with the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1975</i> and the Unanticipated Discovery Plan as prescribed by Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania.	Construction
10	Use of materials that blend with the environment such as treated timber posts and joists for the elevated track structures. Walking track surfaces made of charcoal grey FRP or gravel. Timber safety rails and retaining walls will be coated with a dark coloured oil to blend in with the environment.	Construction
11	Local rock plus gravel from recently certified PC / weed free quarries will be utilised to construct new tracks.	Construction
12	Application of strict machinery, vehicle and personnel hygiene protocols for all construction which includes spraying work boots with Phytoclean™ daily.	Construction
13	PWS Audit for compliance with biosecurity controls during works will be carried out.	Construction
14	Visitor safety will be addressed around the construction sites across the reserve with advance warnings, signage and closed off construction areas.	Pre-Construction & Construction
<i>Post Construction Commitments</i>		
15	Final site clean up to the satisfaction of PWS.	Post-construction
16	New interpretive signage will be placed at key locations to advise shared-usage of track and for awareness of any road crossings.	Operation
17	An annual post-construction weed and rehabilitation monitoring program will be implemented for a minimum of 5 years post construction. At the completion of the five-year period results will be reviewed and if rehabilitation or weed control are not considered adequate then monitoring and control program will be extended.	Operation

7 Conclusion

The proposal is located within the Recreation Zone and Conservation Zone of the Freycinet National Park and Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000. The facilities and track work have been designed to manage the growth in visitor numbers to the Freycinet National Park while minimising the impacts.

The proposal has been assessed against the provisions of the Management Plan and subsequent alterations thereto and has been found to be acceptable subject to the mitigating measures outlined in Section 6.

The proposed works are in accordance with the relevant provisions of legislation, plans and policies including:

- *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*
- Freycinet National Park Management Plan 2000 and subsequent alterations thereto
- Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan 2019

The proposed facilities will achieve the objectives and desired outcomes of the project including:

- Sustainable management of visitor impacts in the Freycinet National Park recreation zone.
- Improved infrastructure consistent with relevant track class prescriptions and current building standards.

The majority of the management controls are related to managing construction methods and minimising the impacts of the works footprint. These will be integrated into a CEMP and works will be supervised by the PWS Project Officer.

8 Glossary and abbreviations

AHT – Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania

CEMP – Construction Environmental Management Plan

NRE – Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania

EPBC – Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act

FRP – Fibreglass Reinforced Plastic

JRA – Job Risk Analysis

NCA – Nature Conservation Act

PWS – Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service

TSPA – Threatened Species Protection Act

UDP – Unanticipated Discovery Plan

EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment – formerly known as Reserve Activity Assessment (RAA)

TPP's – Tasmanian Planning Provisions

TPS – Tasmanian Planning Scheme

9 References

Freycinet National Park / Wye River State Reserve Management Plan 2000

Freycinet National Park Management Plan Alterations 2004

Freycinet Peninsula Master Plan June 2019

Tasmanian Reserve Management – Code of Practice 2003

Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service – The Reserves Standards Framework (RSF) Policy

Glamorgan – Spring Bay Interim Planning Scheme 2015

NRE Weed and Disease Planning and Hygiene Guidelines

10 Appendices

This EIA relies upon the following Appendices provided as separate documents.

Appendix A – Aboriginal Heritage report

Appendix B – AHT review and recommendations (to be added following internal referral process)

Appendix C – Natural Values survey report

<https://parks.tas.gov.au/be-involved/have-your-say/shared-use-track-freycinet>

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