SITE PLAN 2010

Mount Field National Park
Russell Falls Visitor Services Zone
Russell Falls Visitor Services Zone – Site Plan 2010

This site plan applies to the Russell Falls Visitor Services Zone in Mount Field National Park. This zone encompasses the majority of visitor facilities which are located at the entrance to the park. It was prepared as a requirement of the Mount Field National Park Management Plan 2002 to provide direction for the next 10 years.

A draft site plan was released for public comment between 18 July 2009 and 24 August 2009 with a number of other opportunities for input also provided to groups and individuals associated with the park. Feedback, information and ideas were considered and where appropriate, incorporated into this site plan.

The Russell Falls Visitor Services Site Plan 2010 has been approved and will be adopted and implemented subject to the limitations of funds, staff and resources.

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## Contents

The Plan – In a Nutshell ........................................... 1

Background ......................................................... 2

The Big Picture ..................................................... 9

The Details .......................................................... 12

  Landscape Values .............................................. 12
  Geoheritage ...................................................... 13
  Flora Values ...................................................... 14
  Fauna Values ...................................................... 15
  Aboriginal Heritage Values ................................. 16
  Historic Heritage Values ..................................... 16
  Interpretation and Education ............................... 17
  Events ............................................................. 18
  Fire ................................................................. 19
  Safety and Risk Management ............................... 20
  Access and Circulation ....................................... 22
  Roads .............................................................. 22
  Walking Tracks .................................................. 23
  Disabled Access ................................................ 25
  Visitor Centre ................................................... 25
  Campground ..................................................... 26
  Parking ............................................................ 29
  Toilets ............................................................. 30
  Picnic Areas and the Oval ................................... 30
  Water and Wastewater ....................................... 31
  Accommodation ............................................... 31
  Planning and Design for Future Development ........ 33

Monitoring .......................................................... 34

  Review ........................................................... 34
  Performance Indicators ....................................... 35

Appendices ........................................................ 36
The Plan – In a Nutshell

The entrance to Mount Field National Park, the area around Russell Falls, is Tasmania’s third most popular national park destination.

It has played an important role in the history of the idea of protected natural areas in Tasmania. It has also provided a place to play and recreate for Tasmanians and visitors for well over a hundred years. It could rightfully be called the birthplace of Tasmania’s reserve system.

Mount Field National Park is distinctive amongst Tasmania’s national parks for its combination of history, recognition as an outstanding national park to visit and its proximity to Tasmania’s largest population centre – Hobart.

Building on this, there are two visitor groups the site plan seeks to more fully support and engage in the zone.

- Tasmanian residents (especially from southern Tasmania), through providing a venue for valuable informal and formal activities and events of educational, social and cultural importance.
- Visitors to the state, by building on Mt Field’s advantage of being close to Hobart, supporting quick stop visitors and for Hobartians who want to bring interstate and international visitors somewhere close by for a taste of Tasmania’s national parks and natural environments.

The site plan proposes three key actions to increase the value to these visitor groups:

- Reinvigoration of camping and day use precincts;
- Building greater depth to the visitor experience through improved walking and viewing infrastructure; and
- Supporting social and cultural experiences in the zone.
Background

Introduction

The area covered by this site plan is located in Mount Field National Park. The Russell Falls Visitor Services Zone (VSZ or the zone) receives the highest level of visitation in the park.

The concentration of development and use in this zone minimises impact in more sensitive areas. The Mount Field National Park Management Plan 2002 recognises it as the appropriate place for focusing visitor activity, especially in the areas that have been cleared of native vegetation. The zone provides orientation, information and education services and facilities, enabling large numbers of people of different interests, backgrounds and abilities to gain an appreciation of the park, and Tasmania’s natural areas in general.

The area needs to be carefully planned in order to retain the low-key nature of the zone, minimise impacts on the environment and enhance the experiences of visitors.

The Parks and Wildlife Service is keen to provide the best possible management of the area. Preparing this site plan is an important step towards this.

Where is it?

The zone encompasses the entire entrance area of Mount Field National Park. Map A shows the zone in detail as well as its location relative to Hobart.

The zone is specified in the Mount Field National Park Management Plan 2002 (the management plan). For the purposes of the site plan the zone boundaries are fixed by the management plan.
What will the plan do?

The purpose of the site plan is to detail:

• how and where future development of visitor service facilities will occur;
• how visitor activities will be accommodated; and
• how the values of the area will be protected and presented.

It is intended to be a guide for the next ten years, by which time it is likely to need reviewing (if not before).

It does not replicate information or policies and actions already in the management plan and needs to be read in the context of the management plan.

The actions proposed in this site plan will occur in stages and only if funding is allocated to them. This will be subject to the determination of funding priorities.

Who is this plan for?

The site plan is for the community, including, community groups, local residents, Parks and Wildlife Service staff, designers and planners, and potential business partners.

It is a record of agreed actions and considerations for management and guidelines for any development to occur in the zone.

What’s so special about Russell Falls Visitor Services Zone?

Mount Field is one of Tasmania’s most diverse national parks and one of the oldest reserves in Australia.

It includes all the hallmarks of a classic national park landscape with waterfalls, forests, mountains and lakes, all serviced with facilities to make viewing and experiencing these places easy and accessible to a wide range of people.

It is an easily accessed area of exceptional natural beauty and heritage for Tasmanians and visitors seeking a variety of outdoor experiences just over one hours drive from Hobart.

The zone covers approximately 280 hectares (ha) of Mount Field National Park, (about 1.7%). Of this 280 ha, about 35 ha is cleared or heavily disturbed land. The remainder is native forest, including about 70 ha of forest mapped as old growth.

Social Values

• The zone is the birthplace of protected areas in Tasmania as it is the site of the first reserve in Tasmania to protect a natural area. The oval has a long history of informal sporting use.
Russell Falls Reserve was established in 1885 to protect the scenery around the falls then in 1916, it became part of the first national park declared in the state.

- The area has a long history of association with Tyenna Valley residents as a place to picnic and have social events such as family gatherings and end of year school events.
- Russell Falls has a long history as one of Tasmania’s top scenic destinations.
- The expansive grass areas are a sheltered and beautiful setting for picnics and family activities.
- Easily accessible walks are also located in the area, such as the wheelchair grade walk to Russell Falls, the most popular track in the park.
- Tent and caravan sites are provided in the privately operated campground.

**Natural Heritage**

- The area in general is important and valued because it is highly picturesque, natural and unique.
- The area has a number of scenic waterfalls including Russell Falls, one of Australia’s most famous waterfalls.\(^1\)
- Tall wet eucalypt forests of outstanding display value are found around Russell Falls.
- The area provides a wonderful interpretation opportunity for Tasmanians and visitors to learn about Tasmanian geoheritage, flora and fauna.
- It provides great wildlife viewing opportunities.

**Cultural Heritage**

- The park is Tasmania’s oldest national park and also one of the oldest reserves in Australia.
- The zone contains significant cultural heritage fabric including large stumps with shoe marks as visible reminders of past logging and the original Belcher’s Track to the ski fields.

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\(^1\) Listed as number eight of Australia’s top ten waterfalls on website World of Waterfalls http://www.world-of-waterfalls.com/top-10-australia-waterfalls.html
• The entrance area of the park has a long and varied history of use and has been identified as a historic cultural landscape. There are a variety of historical sites including those associated with early recreational use in the nineteenth century and agricultural activities in the Old Farm area.

Challenges

The zone has a number of significant management challenges. These include:

• Providing for heavy visitor use of the area in a way that does not cause overcrowding or degrade the values of the zone.
• Meeting the wide range of demands visitors have for activities in the zone, in particular providing value for money for short stop visitors.
• Coordinating service provision by commercial lessees and the Parks and Wildlife Service.
• Ongoing problems at the camping area, including the danger of falling tree limbs, the erosion of the riverbank and the degradation of the surface.
• Tall tree management, especially disease, compaction, and visitor risk issues.
• Preserving an ageing cultural landscape while providing a fresh visitor experience.

Visitation

Mount Field National Park is one of eight Parks and Wildlife Service reference sites in popular reserves, where visitor numbers are regularly counted. Data is estimated from vehicle counts and bus passengers (and some tourist trains).

Comparing the two sets of data (see graph above) it is interesting to note that...
generally Mount Field numbers have kept step with the eight reference sites. The up and down trends tends to reflect tourism activity in general.

However around 2001 there was a significant decline in the relative contribution of Mount Field visitors to the total for the reference sites. This has not changed since.

A possible reason for this is that it was the year the Tahune Airwalk opened (in July 2001) which suddenly provided an alternative forest / mountain day trip for visitors to Hobart.

The percentage of Mount Field’s total contribution to visitation at the eight PWS reference sites and the overall decline in its relative significance.

In 2003 the Parks and Wildlife Service finalised a report Forestry Tasmania / Parks and Wildlife Service, Visitor Monitoring Program: Site 1: Mount Field. This estimated that 82% of visitors walked to Russell Falls. It was also estimated that overall, 27% of visitors were Tasmanian, 54% were from the mainland and 19% from overseas. Of the Tasmanian visitors, 95% were from the south and of these, 83% were from urban Hobart.

The survey also found that there was ‘strong evidence’ that the proportion of Tasmanians visiting the park had decreased since a 1999 survey. (The proportion of Tasmanians had halved although differences in methodology meant that it could not strictly be compared.)

As well as general visits, the campground provides a specific experience for a group of travellers. In recent years the campground demand has seen significant changes. Most notably has been the rise of the ‘grey nomad’ sector which is increasing demand for powered sites. This trend is predicted to increase as the baby boomer generation retires. In addition to increasing numbers they will be wealthier and are expected to have higher demands in terms of services and quality of facilities. This includes increased demand for powered sites and on-site vans or cabins.  

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2 eg. see p 137 Understanding the Caravan Park Industry in WA: A consultancy project for Tourism Western Australia and Tourism Research Australia Report by TNSTM Social Research May 2007
Regional Context

Russell Falls is one of Tasmania’s iconic visitor destinations. It is a highlight for many visitors to the Tyenna and Derwent Valleys and acts as a vital drawcard to the area making a significant contribution to the local economies. A visit to the falls and or Mount Field National Park is often included in round state drive trips between Hobart and the west coast. This has the effect of drawing many visitors into the Tyenna Valley that would not have otherwise visited, providing vital support to local businesses.

Other emerging destinations in the Tyenna Valley and beyond are the tall forests of the Styx and Florentine and the Maydena Hub. An initiative of Forestry Tasmania, the Hub is being developed in Maydena and is intended to act as a coordinating point and catalyst for forest based adventure tourism experiences in the surrounding area. It also includes the development of the Eagles’ Eyrie on the range above Maydena. This development is likely to lead to increased visitation to the valley. Visitation to Russell Falls is not likely to be greatly affected as the experiences on offer in the zone will remain a must-do and can easily fit in any other visit to the area, rather than acting as a substitute experience. This is particularly the case for Russell Falls which can be visited in a relatively short time (less than a 30 minute visit).

The Derwent Valley railway line still exists, and runs between Hobart and Maydena. The line is being maintained for use by trains to the village of National Park. The Derwent Valley Railway organisation is in the process of reinstating a passenger service between Hobart and National Park and expects the service to resume in the coming years. The service would provide a distinctive new way to arrive at and visit Russell Falls and environs.

Visitor Facilities

The zone includes a classic suite of facilities and services that a visitor would expect in a national park.

Visitor facilities include:

- Visitor centre
- Interpretation displays
- Visitor information desk
- Café
- Gallery / shop
- Toilets (in two locations)
- Playground
- Carpark
• Picnic shelters
• Barbeques (electric in shelters and wood fired in open locations)
• Picnic areas and tables
• Grassy oval
• Powered and unpowered campsites
• Campground amenities block
• Campground kitchen shelter
• Walking tracks
• Viewing platforms

These are in addition to recreational opportunities provided by the natural features such as the river, creeks, and forest.

The majority of these facilities are located around the day use / camping area, with two secondary concentrations around Russell Falls and the Tall Trees Walk.
The Big Picture

Vision

In 10 years time the zone is a place;
• Rich in experiences engaging Tasmanians and visitors in Tasmania’s natural and cultural heritage,
• Actively creating new meaning and value for Tasmanians through the educational, social and cultural events and activities it hosts.
• Satisfying regional recreation and tourism needs.

In 2016;
• Mount Field will be celebrating its centenary as a national park;
• Tasmania will celebrate its centenary of national parks; and
• Russell Falls will be the grand old lady, being Tasmania’s and one of the world’s oldest nature reserves as it celebrates 130 years since its first reservation.

This plan and the improvements it proposes have been developed in part as a celebration of this heritage.
Atmosphere

The site plan is aiming to build on the unique atmosphere of the zone;

Natural, Accessible and Enjoyable.

Natural: A place where the natural features and wonders set the distinctiveness of the experience.

Accessible: It is easily accessible from Hobart, but also within the park, the features and activities are accessed with simple and clear facilities.

Enjoyable: It is a place of playful recreation, rejuvenation and inspiration. A place to discover simple pleasures.

Goals

How does this vision look in 2020:

• Visitor numbers have grown with the proportion of interstate and international visitor numbers remaining in line with 2003 levels relative to total visitation to state.

• Visitation from Tasmanians has grown by 30% on the 2008 levels.

• The zone hosts at least four social or cultural events a year that are appropriate to the Atmosphere and Vision.

• The campground has been reinvigorated with new facilities and a greater range of camping opportunities.

Objectives

The objectives for the Russell Falls Visitor Service Zone Site Plan are to:

• Provide new facilities that increase the range of experiences available for visitors.

• Improve the range and quality of camping experiences.

• Provide facilities for social and cultural events that are relevant to Tasmanians.

• Retain the natural and cultural heritage of the area.
### The Visitors Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Visitor</th>
<th>The experience we are planning for</th>
<th>The facilities required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitor / travellers</td>
<td>A variety of high quality experiences</td>
<td>Numerous short walk options (up to three hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being touched and inspired by nature</td>
<td>Interactive interpretive facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A distinctive and encompassing experience of Tasmania’s natural values</td>
<td>Staff and information service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides value for money</td>
<td>Food and souvenir service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest groups (eg schools, field naturalists, artists)</td>
<td>Safe and easy accessibility to natural setting</td>
<td>Easy access and navigation around site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An inspiring destination</td>
<td>Carparking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unique and invigorating break</td>
<td>Sizable shelters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnickers / players</td>
<td>Safe and family and children friendly</td>
<td>Picnics - tables and barbeques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleasant park-like setting</td>
<td>Playground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoors and natural</td>
<td>Toilets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheltered and scenic locations</td>
<td>Oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campers</td>
<td>Caters for campers travelling with a diversity of equipment</td>
<td>Toilets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relatively low cost</td>
<td>Showers and washing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has a wide range of facilities</td>
<td>Defined sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An element of privacy</td>
<td>Fireplaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides a unique connection with place</td>
<td>Drinking water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Access to river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group campers</td>
<td>Has a high level of facilities</td>
<td>Group sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Otherwise as above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Master Plan

Much of the site plan is encapsulated in Maps A - F at the back of the plan. MAP B is an overall master plan for the zone, MAP C provides more details for the concentration of visitor facilities around the visitor centre, day use area and campground.
The Details

Values Protection

Landscape Values

The zone has outstanding natural scenic qualities. In particular Russell Falls is one of Tasmania’s most iconic scenic features. The area is heavily treed with many spectacular specimens across the site providing considerable visual and landscape interest.

A key aspect of the zone is the limited viewfield. There are only a few locations with limited views to the forested range on the opposite side of the Tyenna River. Otherwise the overwhelming landscape experience of the zone is one of intimate views enclosed by forest and trees. In many places the sky itself is largely obscured by the tree canopies.

The main open area of the zone was previously mown, and is now gradually being reclaimed by more natural vegetation. This has caused some concern that an important social resource and cultural landscape is being lost. The area is also important in providing the one place where some views outside of the immediate location allows for sense of orientation, contrast, and possibly for some visitors, a sense of safety.
**Strategies and Actions**

- All development in the zone will protect the key landscape values of the area.

**Key landscape values**

- Tall forests with hidden waterfalls
- A forest-enveloped, relaxed, traditional family picnicking and camping area
- Inviting open space between the forest and trees
- Close and easy access to natural running streams.

**Geoheritage**

The three main waterfalls of the zone, Russell, Horseshoe and Lady Barron are all composed of marine Permian siltstone and faced by retreating sandstone layers. They are all outstanding examples of this type of waterfall, especially Russell Falls with its distinctive two tiers. They also provide a glimpse of the underlying geology in a heavily forested area where the geology is otherwise hidden beneath vegetation and soils.

The banks of the Tyenna River receive intense trampling in locations near the picnic and camping areas and are subject to some bank erosion.

Bank erosion needs to be controlled to prevent loss of river bank stability and biological values. Controlling access to prevent erosion should be used where monitoring shows unsustainable degradation. Access control can be through providing hardened access, vegetative screening, tracks that direct visitors away from trampled areas and in some cases, use of fencing. Fencing should be used as a last resort and in conjunction with a long term plan to establish and utilise vegetation screening and hardened access alternatives.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Undertake a geomorphological assessment of the Tyenna River banks to determine appropriate treatments and areas for protection if necessary.
- Fence areas of riverbank and provide strategically located river viewing spots.
- Consideration could also be given to one or two viewing platforms especially if combined with platypus viewing interpretation.
Flora Values

The forest located in the zone predominantly comprises tall wet forest dominated by swamp gum *Eucalyptus regnans* and/or stringybark *E. obliqua*, with a wet understorey characterised by musk, *Olearia argophylla*. There is also some rainforest or mixed forest, with the rainforest element dominated by myrtle *Nothofagus cunninghamii* and sassafras, *Atherosperma moschatum*. Man ferns or fern trees are also a notable feature of the forests around the zone, particularly in the sheltered gullies below the falls.

The park itself has a much greater diversity of vegetation types and the zone is an ideal location to interpret this range, especially in the visitor centre.

At present there is no record of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in the park.

A significant feature of the flora in the zone are the tall trees. The zone includes the Tall Trees Walk, a joint initiative of Forestry Tasmania and the Parks and Wildlife Service to provide an accessible opportunity to present the significance of Tasmania’s tall eucalypt forests to visitors.

The main threat to vegetation in the zone at the moment is the impact of trampling around the tall trees and the need to remove trees for visitor safety. The management plan requires that only those trees that are assessed as ‘potentially hazardous’ can be removed in order to maintain habitat.

Trampling around large trees next to walking tracks needs to be monitored. The combination of compaction and disturbance can lead to the destruction of surface roots increasing the trees vulnerability to drought. It can also act as vector for disease. In some cases consideration should be given to either exclusion of visitors with fences or the creation of raised walkways to protect roots. Older *Nothofagus cunninghamii* (myrtle beech) are particularly vulnerable to disturbance of roots or branches which can lead to Myrtle Wilt, a common disease in Tasmanian rainforest.

Weeds are a threat to the integrity of the native vegetation in the area. They can also compromise the experience of visitors by leaving the site looking unkempt or degraded.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Maintain the extent and quality of native vegetation and forest in the zone by concentrating development in areas that are already cleared.
• Any new track works or other infrastructure that involves disturbance of native vegetation will be preceded by an on-ground survey to assess presence of threatened species and other flora values that might be impacted.

• Prepare a succinct tall tree conservation plan that includes:
  » assessing tall trees in the zone for Giant Tree status;
  » monitoring compaction around all tall trees in vicinity of walking tracks; and
  » providing further protection measures such as permeable decked access to the base of some tall trees and/or signage near others to indicate that visitors should not walk off tracks around trees as it may lead to tree stress and possible death.

• Assess the risk of all new track work and future track maintenance work to ensure that tall trees and their roots are not damaged and that hydrology is not significantly changed.

• Maintain the zone as a focus for interpretation and presenting the World Heritage value of Tasmania's tall wet eucalypt forests.

• Use only local provenance plants for revegetation.

• Control weed species in line with current best practice including eradication of any outlying or fringing infestations.

### Fauna Values

Many endangered and/or endemic Tasmanian animals can be seen within the zone. Species easily seen in the park include the echidna *Tachyglossus aculeatus*, platypus *Ornithorhynchus anatinus*, eastern barred bandicoot *Perameles gunni*, the Tasmanian native hen *Gallinula mortierii*, the black currawong, *Strepera fuliginosa*, and the elusive pink robin *Petroica rodinogaster*.

The Tyenna River and Lady Barron and Russell Falls Creeks are good platypus habitat which requires careful management to protect this habitat and provide an opportunity for the patient visitor to see this elusive species.

Female platypus create burrow networks that extend up to 25 metres from the waters edge to hold their young. This occurs during the months of December to May.

Ground-breaking activities within this area runs the risk of damaging the burrows and loss of young platypus. Before undertaking earthworks within 25 metres of these waterways, detailed planning, including obtaining specialist advice is required.

The protection of this platypus habitat could be improved by undertaking the bank protection and revegetation activities described in the geoheritage section above.
Strategies and Actions

• Interpret the wildlife of the surrounding forests.

• Before conducting any linear excavations (such as strip footings, roadworks involving excavations or service trenches) within 25m of the riverbank especially during December to May, have a platypus specialist survey the adjoining banks to determine the possible presence, or not, of platypus nesting burrows and adjust any planned excavation to ensure nests are not disturbed.

• Prevent excess silt and sediment entering the streams through best practice erosion control during all works in the zone.

• Maintain a patchwork of areas that are planted with understorey species and appropriate canopy trees to support the presence and movement of fauna through the visitor hub.

Aboriginal Heritage Values

Limited archaeological surveys in the park have shown that Aborigines used the land and waters of the park. More extensive surveys of the nearby Florentine Valley have shown Aboriginal occupation of over 30,000 years.

No Aboriginal sites have been identified around Russell Falls, although no systematic archaeological surveys have been conducted in the park.

It has been suggested that the park fell within the territory of the Big River people, who occupied territory ranging from the Great Western Tiers to Mount Wellington. The Pangerninghe band located at the junction of the Derwent and Clyde Rivers near the present-day township of Hamilton, were the closest band to the park area.

Strategies and Actions

• Use the zone to interpret Aboriginal heritage and maintain cultural values in partnership with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

Historic Heritage Values

The zone is a unique national park landscape. Not only does it have the natural values for which it was first protected, but it is an important historic landscape that preserves and tells the story of the idea of the national park as it has developed both in Tasmania and around the world.
The park, declared in 1916, was the first national park in Tasmania. The area around Russell Falls already had a thirty-year history as a scenic reserve having being declared a reserve in 1885 (under the Wastelands Act 1863) only 13 years after the declaration of the first national park in the world, Yellowstone National Park in the USA.

The zone was home to the first national park ranger appointed in Tasmania, the local resident Bill Belcher, who took up his position in 1917 and served the park and its visitors until shortly before his death in 1934.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Undertake any changes and maintenance of cultural plantings and landscapes consistent with the *Mount Field National Park Management Plan 2002*.
- Restore the section of Belcher’s Track between the visitor centre and the Tall Trees Walk to a usable standard. Include suitable interpretation.

**Presentation**

**Interpretation and Education**

The visitor centre at the entrance of the park provides information on walks as well as comprehensive interpretation of the history, geology, plants and animals of the park. Interpretation is provided through static displays, a staffed counter and through a touch screen monitor.

The zone is suitable for facilitated interpretative experiences, with several venues including the Fagus meeting room in the visitor centre, sections of the café, and several sheltered outdoor areas. Combined with the close proximity and easy access to the surrounding natural areas the zone is ideal for interpretative events.

The Tall Trees Walk is the key destination in the Derwent Valley for tall tree interpretation, enabling visitors to experience an outstanding feature of World Heritage significance for which the nearby Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area was declared. Both Forestry Tasmania and the Parks and Wildlife Service contributed to the development of this walk. The current walk interpretation is showing its age and is in need of updating.

The zone is nominated in the *Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan 1999* as a Visitor Services Site for presenting and interpreting World Heritage values, including tall tree values.
The main proposals of this site plan are conducive to maintaining and improving the suitability of the zone for interpretation.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Prepare centennial interpretative materials and programs around the history of the Mount Field National Park and integrate that into any centennial related developments (especially the Belcher’s Track renewal).
- Upgrade the interpretation for the Tall Trees Walk.
- Develop interpretation for the zone using the following three topic areas:
  - A window to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area;
  - Diverse vegetation communities in the park – wet and dry forest to alpine;
  - The first natural area scenic reserve and one of the oldest national parks in Tasmania.

**Events**

The zone presents a unique opportunity for hosting social and cultural events. It has good facilities, in a natural setting, is easily accessible from Hobart, and located in a national park.

While such activities might not be expected (or feasible) in many national park locales, the Russell Falls VSZ is distinctive in having both the facilities to support events, and a long history of hosting a range of cultural and social gatherings. These events are part of what has made Mount Field special to many Tasmanians and they will be an important part of making the park relevant to a broad cross-section of Tasmanians in the future.

Such activities could include, educational trips, club and special interest gatherings, meetings, workshops, conferences, family events (including reunions and weddings) and performing and visual art events (e.g., Ten Days on the Island events).

The facilities that will support these activities include the oval, the sheltered picnic sites, the carparking (both formal and informal), the visitor centre, including the Fagus meeting room and the café. This plan also proposes facility improvements that would enhance the ability of the zone to host such events, in particular the development of the function space outside the visitor centre. (See maps C and E for details).

**Strategies and Actions**

- Provide for appropriate social and cultural events in the zone.
- Events will be conducted in such a way so they do not restrict public access to the park or the majority of the facilities in the zone while being conducted.
- Construction of permanent infrastructure associated with events will not be permitted.
- Events will be of a nature, and conducted in a manner, that is in sympathy with the Atmosphere (p. 10) of the zone.
Management

Fire

The Russell Falls VSZ has been assessed to be in a high to extreme fire risk category with staff, visitors and built and natural assets at risk from wildfire. Several of the buildings in the VSZ are considered to be vulnerable to bushfire attack and may need remedial works to improve their resilience.

The busiest seasons for camping are summer and autumn. These seasons coincide with the riskiest time for escaped fires as surrounding vegetation is drier and more flammable. In addition, the campground is located near an area of higher fuel loads and campfires can pose a risk to other campers’ property.

Due to these factors, the campground is a ‘fuel stove only’ area. While campfires are not permitted in the campground, informal campfires are occasionally lit close to individual campsites. While the majority of campers are equipped with stoves and prefer to use them instead of cooking over an open fire, they still enjoy having a campfire for ambience and as a place to socialise. To minimise late-night disturbance to other campers, four designated fireplaces have been provided just outside the campground.

In the day use area, the provision of wood-fuelled fireplaces along the river next to the oval is considered a safe option given the low fuel loads along the river and the relative safety afforded by the gravel road, river and oval. Some campers also make use of these fireplaces but it is not ideal because of the distance from the campground.

Consequently, it is preferable to provide campfire opportunities at a few strategic locations in the campground for the odd camper needing a cooking fire or for campers to socialise around as an alternative to the informally constructed fireplaces.

Collecting fallen twigs and branches to feed campfires can reduce fuel loads. In recent years, following the removal of a number of fireplaces, woody debris has built up around the day use area and campground. Conversely, the collection of wood from the surrounding bush can degrade vegetation and habitat if excessive.

Strategies and Actions

• Maintenance of the VSZ should include removal of woody debris from specified areas and mowing of specified grassed areas (e.g. the oval p. 30) and firebreaks.
• A limited number of well designed fireplaces may be installed in the campground at well protected, central locations including near the food preparation area.
• Fireplaces should be designed to limit the size of fire that can be built and the likelihood of fire escaping. Firewood should be removed when fire restrictions are in place.
• Restrictions on campfires should be implemented in certain conditions.
• Assess existing buildings in the VSZ for their resilience to bushfire attack then identify, prioritise and implement tasks to reduce vulnerability.

• New buildings should be designed and located to be consistent with the relevant building codes and Australian Standards. (p. 29).

• Prepare a staff and visitor safety plan for fire emergencies.

• When needed, provide regular updates to visitors about the local fire risk and the fire safety plan.

**Safety and Risk Management**

Currently all visitor tracks and facilities in the zone are in Reserve Standards Framework sites with an acceptable risk level of Neutral. This rating is based on recognition that many users of the zone will have little or no experience of the type of risks that might be present and have a reasonable expectation that risks will be managed for them.

Most of these risks in the area are managed through the development of appropriate facilities that meet acceptable standards. The one significant risk that cannot be managed in the zone through facilities alone is the risk of falling limbs and trees. This has the potential for fatal consequences. To date there has been one injury of a person by a falling branch.

Arborists have assessed that there is no safe way to effectively trim all unsafe branches from the tall trees in the zone. Their great age makes them unpredictable. As a result it is not possible to completely remove this risk.

Other options such as removing the trees altogether or closing areas to public access are not considered suitable. The trees are intrinsic to the visitor experience being sought and the area has high levels of public awareness and interest.

The best way to manage this risk is continually under review, including taking in new information and ideas following incidents elsewhere in the state and nationally. Because of this, management practices will change from time to time.

Trees are also a considerable safety hazard in the campground. The level of threat is considered to be higher as campers spend much longer periods of time under the trees and therefore increase the risk. In addition the widespread impact of camping on soil and roots is more likely to lead to tree disease or illness which can weaken the trees. In the case of the campground, this site plan proposes that all trees be assessed and trees that are potentially hazardous should be removed entirely.

Amenity to the campground provided by the trees will then need to be provided through new plantings of more appropriate species and...
better located specimens. This can also be enhanced by planting vegetation on the river reserve on the opposite side to the campground. This will ensure that the campground area maintains screening from the village in the long term.

An additional area of risk is the use of trees for shade. It is possible through the use of shade ‘sails’ to provide alternative shade for picnickers that this will also provide some protection from smaller tree limbs while not creating the degree of separation from the outdoors that a more heavily constructed shelter might.

There is a need to consider providing an alternative walk on the site that is not vulnerable to tree limb hazards in high wind conditions. It is suggested in this plan to develop a circuit track along the rivers edge around the day use area.

The waterfalls present a hazard, especially where people attempt to explore around slippery rocks and high drops. The approach has been to ensure that walkways and access are suitably fenced and located to ensure that people are not tempted or able to access unsafe areas of waterfalls.

At the same time there needs to be recognition that the streams of the zone provide significant opportunities for people to directly touch and explore natural waterways. Away from waterfalls and cliffs, fencing should be limited to that required for environmental protection purposes.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Provide a circuit walk around the day use area as an alternative walking opportunity when it is deemed unsafe for visitors to enter the forests.
- Remove potentially hazardous trees from the campground and replace with plantings of indigenous species that provide screening.
- Revegetate river reserve opposite the campground and picnic areas preferably as trees are removed from the campground to provide landscape amenity.
Visitor Facilities and Activities

Access and Circulation

The zone is first accessed by all visitors, over the bridge across the Tyenna River. Most visitors arrive by road and come from the direction of Hobart. A smaller number will arrive from the direction of Maydena or after visiting Lake Dobson.

When the Derwent Valley railway line is operating there will also be a small number of visitors arriving by rail. These visitors will follow a walking track from the station to the zone.

Roads

The main road through the site, the Lake Dobson Road, is maintained by the Department of Infrastructure Energy and Roads. Other roads are maintained by the Parks and Wildlife Service.

The access point to the Tall Trees Walk on the Lake Dobson Road has a number of safety risks. There is a need to provide some additional traffic calming in the precinct.

The bridge and entrance road under the trees are narrow. The bridge is a single lane. Bridge widening...
would entail considerable expense. The narrow bridge has the effect of slowing down all traffic entering the zone, which is beneficial for safety. To this end it is considered best to retain the current one lane bridge.

Likewise, the avenue of poplars and plane trees constrains the entrance drive to a single lane. Occasionally large buses will come close to the branches, and buses have little room to manoeuvre off the road if they meet oncoming traffic. However the trees themselves have significant heritage value and any road widening would likely damage them. The narrow road also contributes to the slowing down of traffic adding to the sense of arrival in a place of significance, and improving the safety of the many pedestrians in the vicinity.

The road along the river provides vehicle access to all picnic sites. While this provides a high level of convenience, it also creates some problems. Parking of cars under and near trees contributes to compaction of soil affecting riverside trees. There are some areas where cars are at risk of becoming stuck in drains. Vehicles moving over large areas of the site also increases pedestrian safety risks.

A preliminary assessment of road and drain improvements was completed in 2004. This report needs to be reviewed and actions prioritised. A new campground would possibly entail new roads being constructed in the vicinity.

Strategies and Actions

• Manage risks associated with the access point to the Tall Trees Walk on the Lake Dobson Road to improve pedestrian safety.
• Review, prioritise actions, then implement the Russell Falls VSZ Road and Drainage Assessment Report (2004).
• Provide alternative tracks for pedestrians and cyclists to reduce safety risks associated with vehicles including a cycle/walk loop around the day use area and the Belcher Track proposal (Map E & p. 24).

Walking Tracks

The zone has a variety of walking tracks. They are a significant visitor facility providing access to the zone and park’s features.

The walks incorporate three of the state’s Great Short Walks; Russell Falls, Lady Barron Falls circuit and the Tall Trees Walk.

Russell Falls are especially accessible, and can be reached in an easy ten minute stroll from the carpark. The track follows level ground and is sealed, making it suitable for wheelchair use.

The Russell Falls experience could be further enhanced by reinstating the bridge near the visitor centre and increasing the loop options. This would provide easy access to the water and forest edge.
for visitors unable to walk to Russell Falls. A platform which provides views of the middle waterfall would also enhance the experience.

The Tall Trees Walk is a relatively short and level walk although from a separate carpark. It can also be walked from the visitor centre by either walking up or down the Lake Dobson Road or along the Lady Baron Falls circuit.

Longer walk options include doing a circuit of Russell Falls and the Tall Trees Walk (and back down the road) or the full Lady Baron Falls circuit. This circuit includes all the features available in one walk and can take about 2 – 4 hrs.

Walkers regularly walk down the road between the Tall Trees Walk and the visitor centre as it provides for an intermediate length circuit walk option between the longer Lady Barron Falls circuit and the short Russell Falls circuit. It is however an unsafe option. The road is unsealed and narrow with traffic passing through and no footpath.

An alternative is to create a walking track link between the Tall Trees Walk and the visitor centre. There is the remains of a historic track, Belcher’s Track, that runs between the two. This was the original track cut to the alpine areas and used for skiers and walkers before the road was built. It would be possible to restore this track. This would be done by removing fallen vegetation and adding a gravel layer to protect the historic fabric including the remains of cording from the original track.

Reopening this track would improve safety, add significant (and safe) variety to the walk options from the visitor centre, and provide a very real interpretative opportunity to link visitors with the early days of Mount Field National Park.

The Lady Barron Falls circuit was altered in 2008 as the section along the river past the campground was deemed unsafe due to large loose hanging rocks. A new section of track involving a long steep climb up stairs was constructed. The walk also includes a sloping section through dry stringybark forest that is a distinct new accessible vegetation type in the vicinity of the visitor centre. There has been some concern that the new track is harder to walk due to the climb over the ridgeline and lacks some of the charm of the old riverbank walk. However geo-safety assessments considered there was no economical way to make that track safe from rockfall.

See Map B for details.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Maintain a variety of walking tracks for different levels of difficulty and interpretation.
- Restore Belcher’s Track between the Tall Trees Walk and the visitor centre to a class 2 (shoe standard) walking track.
- Consider reinstating the bridge across the Russell Falls Creek and an extension of the Russell Falls circuit to the visitor centre.
- Consider creating a distinctive and safe viewing platform which provides views of the middle falls.
Disabled Access

Disabled access is currently available for the visitor centre, café, toilets and the Russell Falls track.

The main visitor area of the zone has considerable scope to provide more disabled access to facilities and experiences. This is not always the case in national parks and therefore this area provides a good opportunity to create a widely accessible range of national park experiences.

Strategies and Actions

• Ensure the following are developed in such a way as to be easily accessible to people with disabilities; new campground amenities and many of the campsites, riverside viewing platforms / areas, additional access to Russell Falls Creek from the visitor centre, and new picnic areas.

Visitor Centre

The visitor centre was opened in 2001. It is a large building that incorporates the offices of the Parks and Wildlife Service field centre for Mount Field National Park, the Waterfall Café and shop, a walk through interpretation display and the Fagus meeting room. In addition the main walk to Russell Falls is designed to start with a walk through the centre of the building.

The building was designed to combine a number of different functions that were previously in different buildings. It allowed a concentration of key visitor services under one roof. It provides a central and logical place for visitors to orientate and receive key information, as well as paying park entry fees, purchasing food and drinks and using amenities, before exploring the park.

The café and Parks and Wildlife Service information counter are open nearly every day of the year. However it is not possible to provide these services at all times. This means that at some times, especially during summer when days are long and visitors are active over a longer period, the building will be closed and visitors are unable to access services.

Strategies and Actions

• Maintain the visitor centre as the key arrival and service provision point for all visitors to the zone and national park.
• Allow for future modifications and expansion of the café towards the
proposed public function space (MAP C) which may provide visitor services such as food and drink, interpretation and use as a sheltered function space.

- Provide clear signage and a touch screen or other interactive information service at the visitor centre for after hours visitation.
- Regularly review and update interpretation in display area.

**Campground**

The campground has 16 powered sites, about 30 unpowered sites, a toilet and shower block with coin-operated washing machines and clothes driers and a communal cooking shelter with free electric barbeques and a sink with hot water.

The campground is leased. Any future development of the campground is also likely to be undertaken by a lessee.

The main amenities block has been in its current form for many years now. It is ‘tired’ and in need of updating, although it is still functional.

There are ongoing problems at the campground, including the danger of falling tree limbs and some degradation of the riverbank and the surrounding area. In addition the site is low lying and parts are vulnerable to flooding. In winter the ground can be waterlogged and muddy.

It has been suggested that a campground be considered on the river reserve on the village side of the river, to increase the area available for day use functions. However, there is ample space for day use functions in the park and the river reserve is narrow and difficult to access compared to the current campground location. The reserve partially screens the village buildings from the campground.

Demand for camping is changing. The campground is used by a variety of user groups. These include: people travelling with campervans and the occasional caravan who are generally looking for a powered site; families and large groups looking for a summer camping experience with space to play and large accessible sites with or without power; and cyclists and campers with small tents who prefer small private unpowered sites.

Increasingly, there is traveller interest in on-site cabins for the extra shelter, privacy and a level of cleanliness they provide. This can be particularly appealing for families with younger children and other campers in bad weather, or as a change from tent-based camping during a trip.
Overall demand for camping, including powered sites and cabins is predicted to grow in the foreseeable future.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Review, prioritise actions, then implement the Russell Falls VSZ Road and Drainage Assessment Report (2004). Make improvements to campground drainage by simple remedial actions where possible.
- Restrict car movement and access in riverside campsites.
- Investigate vegetation re-establishment on the river reserve opposite the campground and picnic areas to provide landscape amenity.
- Provide a range of camping opportunities including unpowered sites, group sites, campervan / powered sites, and possibly, a limited number of simple cabins with basic facilities or safari style tents.
- Camping options will be priced at budget, family-friendly rates.

- The campground may be expanded only to the extent shown on the map (Campground Extent and Zones) above. A campground extension would enable more facilities to be provided, a greater diversity of campsite types, campsite resting, more privacy and appropriate visual screening. Map D Indicative Campground Layout, (at rear of this plan) is for illustration purposes only. To fully develop the campground would require major investment in hardening, landscaping and drainage.
- The following prescriptions will apply to each of the above campground zones:
  A. Cabins and/or safari style tents are only allowed within Zone A.
A can also be used for powered and unpowered sites. Will be visually screened from Zone F through screening vegetation in Zones A and B.

B. Can be used for powered and unpowered sites. Will be screened from oval with vegetation thickening along the row of poplars (while maintaining poplars as distinct cultural heritage feature).

C. Riverfront is kept primarily for access by campers and people exploring the area on foot. Can include limited numbers of walk-in campsites, but these and any screening must not restrict movement of people through the area. Areas vulnerable to flooding to be kept clear of flood vulnerable infrastructure.

D. Can be used for unpowered individual and group sites during busy periods. Will include minimal infrastructure so as not to interfere with viewfields from oval. Will be partially visible from oval and Lake Dobson Road. See F for more screening details.

E. Gateway area. To be managed and presented as the gateway to campground.

F. Not for camping. Will include some additional planting. Planting will be placed so as to provide some screening of the campground, but not a solid screen. The effect is to maintain the current landscape character of the oval with its edges of grassed areas receding back under a treed canopy.

G. River reserve to be planted with local native species to provide screening of campground from village and vice versa. The planting will also provide the sheltered treed ambience that will necessarily be compromised through removal of trees in campground for safety reasons.

• Cabin development will be screened with vegetation from the rest of the campground and also from the Lake Dobson Road. The intention of this is to maintain the integrity of the open space and simple natural character as viewed from the day use area and visitor centre.

• A cabin or safari style tent development proposal will need to consider the current capacity of the existing water and sewerage system, potential shortfalls due the proposal and the proponent’s contribution to the works required to provide an adequate system.

• Cabin or safari style tent development will also meet the following criteria:
  » Their primary function is to provide travellers and campers with a comfortable shelter from which to enjoy and explore Mount Field National Park and environs.
  » They will provide a family-friendly and relatively low cost accommodation option.
  » There will be up to a maximum of 12 cabin and/or safari tent style units (duplex cabins will count as two) located in Zone A.

• Cabin development will meet the following criteria:
  » Cabins will be small scale accommodation units providing clean and basic
facilities which may include showers and kitchenettes.

- Cabins (and any other building e.g. amenities) will be designed and located to comply with the Building Code of Australia and in accordance with the offsets afforded by Australian Standard (AS 3959-2009) ‘Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas’.

- Cabins will be made of materials and colours (including the use of some natural materials in external finishes) that are consistent with the character and atmosphere of the VSZ. The cabins will draw design inspiration and direction from other buildings and finishes in the national park.

- Cabins will be built to a high standard of energy efficiency in construction and use.

- Cabins will be located and landscaped in a way that conveys a strong sense of place, including the extensive use of indigenous vegetation of local provenance.

- Cabins will be designed and located to provide a measure of privacy.

- Cabins will have an average floor space of no more than 50 m$^2$ and no cabin will have a floor space of greater than 60 m$^2$. This space will include covered verandas, but exclude uncovered decks.

- Cabins will be single story and a maximum height of 4 m from natural ground level.

**Parking**

There is currently parking for about 50 cars and 3 buses in the formal carpark at the visitor centre. This is often full during busy times in peak visitor months. In particular additional buses can take up many car spaces. This occurs when cruise ships visit Hobart (now reaching twenty times a year in the summer months) and particularly around morning tea times when different tour companies offering similar trips all arrive.

There is considered to be a need for expanded car parking. The site plan has identified two areas for this to occur. The intention is to encourage all visitors to park so that they need to visit or at least walk past the front of the visitor centre. This assists with communicating key safety and visitor information and raising the levels of park entrance fee compliance. The areas identified for possible expansion are suitable because they are close to the existing carpark and visitor centre and are dry, flat, unvegetated and receive little use.
There are other areas of parking in the day use area around the picnic areas that are accessed from unsealed roads off the main access road. These are currently considered adequate.

Informal parking also occurs under the trees opposite the visitor centre. This is problematic as the trees are a safety risk and it encourages visitors to spend long periods of time under these trees.

There is also a small but adequate carpark at the Tall Trees Walk.

There are times when parking for bicycles and motorbikes causes problems, for example bicycle riders will park in pedestrian areas in front of the visitor centre to ensure that their bike is easily seen from inside. Some well located dedicated parking for this use is needed near the entrance to visitor centre.

**Strategies and Actions**

- New parking, if required, is to be located in areas as shown on Map E.
- Install bollards to restrict parking under trees opposite visitors centre as shown on Map E.
- Provide parking for bicycles at the entrance to the visitor centre.
- Undertake a detailed assessment of alternatives, including shuttle buses and/or parking outside in the village of National Park, when considering new car parking.

**Toilets**

Toilets are provided at the visitor centre, campground and in the day use area. Day use area toilets are available for all visitors 24 hours a day. Day use area toilets have been in place for many years now and are considered to be in need of an upgrade.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Ensure sufficient, appropriate and maintained toilet facilities are provided.
- Review suitability of day use toilets, including engineers report, and upgrade as necessary in the life of this plan.

**Picnic Areas and the Oval**

Picnicking is a key visitor experience in the zone. Several generations of Tasmanians have enjoyed picnics here and consequently the area has developed significance to many Tasmanians because of this. The extensive...
park-like picnicking area on the edge of natural vegetation in a large national park is unique in Tasmania. The oval, which is adjacent to the picnic areas, provides an opportunity for social sports to be played.

The day use area provides a range of picnicking opportunities including sheltered sites, barbeques, picnic tables and grassy areas under trees and alongside the streams and oval. These are suitable for a wide range of groups. Reeds have reestablished on the fringes and the playing field of the oval, reducing its size.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Provide a mix of picnicking opportunities in the day use area including formal sheltered sites, barbeques, picnic tables and suitable grassy areas.
- Limit the access of vehicles to some of the picnic sites through appropriate controls (see Map E).
- Develop a detailed layout for the riverside picnic area which considers:
  - undertaking a geomorphological assessment of the riverbanks to determine appropriate protection measures (p. 13);
  - formalising a number of sheltered picnic locations to the south of the bridge (similar to those to the north);
  - install bollards to restrict parking;
  - fencing areas of riverbank (p. 13); and
  - providing strategically located river viewing spots or platforms with platypus viewing interpretation, that are accessible to the disabled (p.13 & p. 25).
- Maintain the oval as an open playing field through mowing and control of vegetation regrowth. Identify the boundary of this area.

**Water and Wastewater**

Toilets and washing facilities in the zone generate wastewater that is piped to a treatment lagoon.

Water is supplied to the zone through an off-take point on the main Lake Fenton waterline to Hobart. While the supply of water is large, there are limits to the amount of water that can be drawn through existing pipes and valves. Any future increases in use will need careful assessment and consideration of new infrastructure to meet demand safely and reliably.

**Strategies and Actions**

- Any major new works for this zone which are likely to need additional water supply or wastewater treatment will require a comprehensive engineering assessment of existing infrastructure and capacity.

**Accommodation**

The management plan specifically excludes new commercial accommodation from all management zones except the Russell Falls Visitor Services Zone.
In section 5.5.4 Old Farm Area, the management plan does note that the Old Farm area was ‘previously identified’ as a preferred site for the development of accommodation as it is cleared and lacks park values.

In assessing the merits of using this location further, as part of the site planning process, the following considerations have been raised:

• There is a large area of private land in the adjoining village of National Park that is suitably zoned to provide visitor accommodation. It is also better located for access to the visitor centre of Mount Field and the facilities of the village.

• The Old Farm area does not have any distinctive scenic qualities or other amenities that would support visitors choosing this location over other nearby private land locations.

• It has poor access, being further by road than any of the private land in the village from the main park entrance and visitor centre.

• The area includes a large sewage treatment facility and several Parks and Wildlife Service operational buildings and sheds. These would significantly detract from the visitor experience and attractiveness of any accommodation. While this could be partially rectified with landscaping or relocation this would add major development costs.

The combination of these factors leads to the conclusion that the Old Farm area does not provide any significant advantage or attraction for either the government or a commercial provider to utilise it for accommodation.

The main limiting factor on the development of accommodation in the village of National Park would be the lack of a reticulated sewerage system. Any development would need to consider the development of either a septic tank or an aerated wastewater transfer system.

The village of National Park provides a range of possible solutions to future visitor demands on the zone and national park if the village and zone were integrated through coordinated planning. This could be considered if future growth in demand or interest in development warrants. Such a planning process would provide the best chance of creating a total visitor destination that best protects and presents the values of the national park while capitalising on the opportunities for development in the village.

**Strategies and Actions**

• Continue to use the Old Farm area as a site for management facilities only.

• The area will not be used for visitor facilities in the foreseeable future.

• Support development of visitor accommodation in the village of National Park through development of pedestrian connections between the visitor centre and village centre.

• Provide for limited camping style cabin accommodation in the campground.
**Planning and Design for future development**

This plan outlines a number of possibilities for future development and improvement of visitor facilities in the zone. Depending on the level of development proposed it is possible that these activities will require additional planning, design and public consultation. This table provides a guide for when this should occur:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development proposed</th>
<th>Planning required</th>
<th>Public consultation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of existing facilities</td>
<td>Generally no planning required</td>
<td>No public consultation required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard works such as installing barriers, signage, rehabilitation, upgrading, or actions to protect values or assets that are degrading, threatened or being damaged, in line with this site plan.</td>
<td>Monitoring and recorded results to justify actions.</td>
<td>Generally if the change will impact on an existing legitimate use (eg closing an existing walking track) then a public notice of intention to change should be made and comment appropriately considered. Otherwise no consultation will be required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New facility developments or changes consistent with this site plan, including upgrading of campsites, installing new buildings, designating campsites, or creating new walking tracks.</td>
<td>Landscape planning / design, RAA and possibly DA.</td>
<td>Public comment if required through RAA / and or DA process. Recommended to share plans and designs with interested users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major new facility developments or changes that are not consistent with this site plan,</td>
<td>Develop new site plan, plus associated landscape planning / design and RAA / DA.</td>
<td>Will require community engagement including both informal and formal consultation periods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Monitoring

This plan is a road map for action. It is to direct improvements in how the zone is managed, used and enjoyed.

The Parks and Wildlife Service is committed to a system of adaptive management. Preparing a plan is just one step in a cyclic process of good reserve management.

The system is intended to be simple and flexible. It is focused on achieving results.

The adaptive management cycle

A key ingredient to this site plan is monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plan. For this, two reviews are committed below.

Review

• The plan is to have an interim evaluation after five years. This evaluation will be a check on the performance indicators by collating relevant data, reviewing progress and making recommendations as appropriate for any adjustments in management. An informal public feedback process may also be run at this time.

• The plan will be fully reviewed in 10 years time. The plan has not been written to work beyond 10 years without a thorough review and evaluation of its effectiveness and the currency of its objectives and vision. This review will require full public consultation and engagement.

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### Performance Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Visitors are attracted to the zone ²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measure</strong></td>
<td>Visitor numbers for Mount Field National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Great result</strong></td>
<td>Average visitor numbers are 30% above 2008 level for three years running relative to total Tasmanian visitation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptable</strong></td>
<td>Average visitor numbers are 10% above 2008 level for three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Failure</strong></td>
<td>Average visitor numbers are below 2008 levels for three years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Values are protected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measures</strong></td>
<td>Health of tall eucalypts (&gt; 1.5m Ø) within ten meters of walking tracks in zone against control areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptable</strong></td>
<td>Rate of tree death is comparable to control (± 10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Failure</strong></td>
<td>Rate of tree death is greater by track than in control area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Site plan guided management actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measures</strong></td>
<td>Campground renovation complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Great result</strong></td>
<td>Campground renovated by 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptable</strong></td>
<td>Campground renovated by 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Failure</strong></td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Visitor numbers for any year are adjusted for total visitation for Tasmania. E.g. in the measured year, if visitation to the state is 10% higher than in 2008, the 2008 visitation for Mount Field NP would also be adjusted by 10% before comparing the figures. This is to give some indication of the relative popularity of Mount Field to other destinations in Tasmania.
## Appendix 1 – PWS Action summary

The following is a table showing main actions for the site plan. Priorities were determined by the contributions to visitor experience, visitor safety and values protection of the action. They do not reflect the relative costs of the action which could well alter the priorities. Top priorities are listed as A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepare a succinct tall tree conservation plan. (p. 15)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrade the interpretation for the Tall Trees Walk (p.18)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control vegetation on the oval to maintain open playing field. (p.31)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove potentially hazardous trees from campground. Replace with plantings of indigineous species that provide screening. (p.21)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Install bollards to restrict parking under trees opposite visitors centre. (p.30)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review suitability of day use toilets, and upgrade as necessary. (p.30)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelop the campground. (p.27)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review then implement the assessment report on drains and roads (p. 23 &amp; 27)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make improvements to campground drainage by simple remedial actions. (p.27)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide after hours info (possible touch screen) at visitor centre. (completed)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare centennial interpretative materials and programs including history and Belcher’s Track. (p. 18)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop interpretation for the zone using the three topic areas. (p. 18)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore the Belcher’s Track from visitor centre to Tall Trees Walk (p. 24)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a detailed layout for the riverside picnic area (p.31) which considers:</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>» undertaking a geomorphological assessment of the riverbanks to determine appropriate protection measures (p. 13);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>» formalising a number of sheltered picnic locations to the south of the bridge;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>» install bollards to restrict parking;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>» fencing areas of riverbank (p. 13); and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>» river viewing spots or platforms with platypus viewing interpretation, that are disabled accessible (p13 &amp; 25).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central fireplace in the campground at a few well protected location.s (p.19)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create circuit walk and cycle loop around the day use area. (p.23)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide parking for bikes at entrance to visitor centre. (completed)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revegetate river reserve opposite the campground and picnic areas, preferably as trees are removed from the campground. (p.21 &amp; 28)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage risks associated with the access point to the Tall Trees Walk on the Lake Dobson Road to improve pedestrian safety. (p. 23)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a distinctive and safe viewing platform of the middle falls. (p.24)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTACT DETAILS

Parks and Wildlife Service
Hobart
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