

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Grampians Peaks Trail
Autumn 2020



Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Grampians Peaks Trail® Community Update. In this issue you will be able to see the hiker camp designs, learn more about the cultural heritage assessments process for the trail alignment, and get an update on how construction is progressing.

The fourth and longest walk in the Walk Victoria's Icons series, the Grampians Peaks Trail will provide a world-class walking experience of 160kms that can be experienced in sections, or as one 13-day journey.

By 2025, up to 34,000 walkers are set to experience the wonders of Gariwerd, generating significant economic benefit and tourism development opportunities locally and to the region. The GPT is funded by contributions from the state and federal government.

Hiker camp designs are here!

Stage 1 of the GPT provided the new Bugiga hiker camp and 16km of new trails in the central Grampians, near Halls Gap.

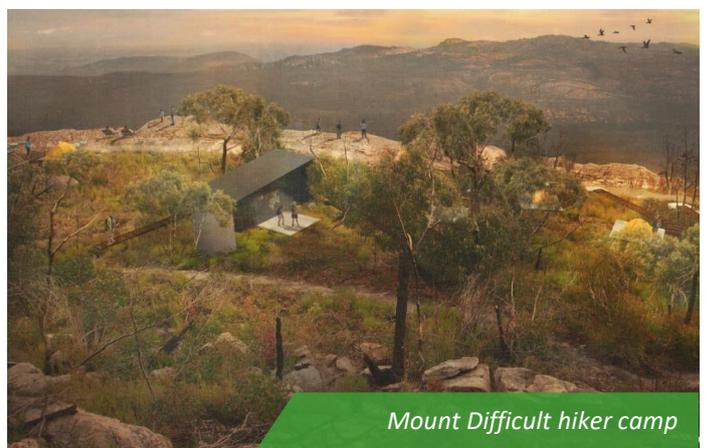
GPT Stage 2 will provide another 11 camps and 144km of trails which, when completed in December 2020, will deliver the total 12 camps and 160km of trails for the overall project.

Each of the new hiker camps has been designed to sit discreetly in the environment, and are being built following extensive cultural heritage and environmental assessments, in accordance with statutory obligations.

The camps comprise of a main shelter for gathering and meal preparation, a separate toilet building, up to 12 tent pads, boardwalks, and internal tracks positioned to minimise environmental impact.

Ten of the camps are to be available for general use and one camp is intended for groups, especially schools.

Some of the camps are in remote locations and only accessible by walking, while others have road access for four-wheel drive management vehicles.



Mount Difficult hiker camp

Above: Illustrative design of Mount Difficult hiker camps, with communal shelter, tent pads and connecting trails. The design is indicative of the other new GPT hiker camps.



Above: Illustrative design of communal shelter.

How are cultural heritage assessments for the GPT done?

All the intended project works for the GPT have been subject to an extensive cultural heritage assessment process in accordance with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.

This includes the new walking trail, camps, bridges, helipads, trail heads, carparks, and vehicle access tracks.

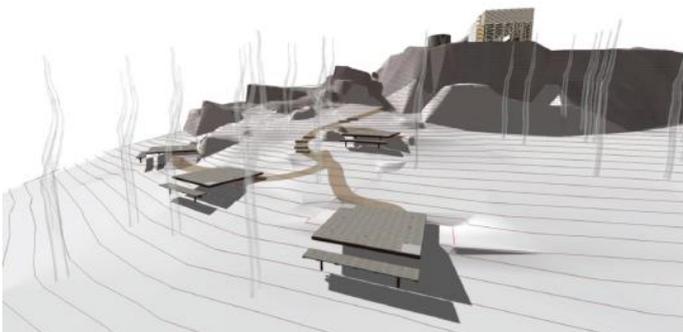
The main Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) was approved by Aboriginal Victoria in May 2018, while a second plan has been prepared to ensure that necessary changes during the project, such as minor trail deviations, are also appropriately assessed.

Assessments for the GPT have included:

- Detailed consultation with the three relevant Traditional Owner organisations: Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, and Baringi Gadjin Land Council. This involves site inspections, discussions and review of draft reports.
- For the main trail, a 10-metre-wide corridor was assessed for cultural heritage to enable small deviations during construction. If the trail needs to be rerouted outside of the 10m corridor, then this is been included in the second CHMP.
- As part of the assessments several Aboriginal cultural heritage sites have been rediscovered. The management of these sites is being determined in full collaboration with the Traditional Owners. For some sites this has involved relocating works to protect the cultural heritage values.



Above: Illustrative design of raised timber tent pads.



Above: 3D model of tent pads and communal shelter.

View these designs at

<https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects/grampians-peaks-trail>

Construction update

Track clearing and construction is progressing on schedule with crews working in various locations. The current focus of works is in the south, near Dunkeld and Mt Abrupt.

Hiker camp construction began in November 2019, with Cassidy Gap, Mt Christabel, Stockyard Saddle and the updated Stony Creek Group camp currently underway.

During the construction of Stony Creek camp, visiting groups are being directed to a nearby bush camp that is suitable for larger numbers.

Following construction of the camp facilities, further infrastructure will be installed including signage and other associated items before we can safely open tracks and hiker camps to the public.

Some existing tracks will need to be closed throughout 2020 as hiker camp construction progresses. The local community and visitors will be advised of these via the Parks Victoria website, Visitor Information Centres, the Brambuk The National Park and Cultural Centre in Halls Gap, and Licensed Tour Operators.

Although some trails may appear finished there are more elements to be added, for example, signage for wayfinding, safety and emergencies. Trails will remain closed for safety of park visitors, workers and staff until ready to be used. There are trail closure signs installed at all access points and all park users are requested to comply with closures.

Want to know more? Come and say 'hi'

Come along to a community information drop-in session to receive an update on the Grampians Peaks Trail. Join Parks Victoria staff to learn more about recent progress and to discuss any questions.

Dunkeld Visitor Information Centre

Parker Street, Dunkeld
Wednesday 11 March 2020
4.30pm to 6.30pm

Halls Gap Visitor Information Centre

Grampians Road, Halls Gap
Thursday 12 March, 2020
10.00am to 12.00pm

Grampians Store - Pomonal

Ararat-Halls Gap Road, Pomonal
Saturday 14 March, 2020
10.00am to 12.00pm

The Wander Inn

Northern Grampians Road, Wartook
Friday 20 March, 2020
4.00pm to 6.00pm



Above: Visitors are asked to observe closure signs.

Stay up to date

Parks Victoria provide updates and information, regarding track closures to allow works to be completed safely. Visit Parks Victoria's website for the latest conditions in the Grampians National Park.

You can also contact us at 13 19 63.

To learn more about the Grampians Peaks Trail visit www.grampianspeakstrail.com.au

Grampians Landscape Management Plan

In September 2019, Parks Victoria held six workshops, a drop-in and five listening posts, where community members could provide their ideas and feedback on the future management of the landscape. Altogether over 270 people attended across the 12 events. Parks Victoria is very thankful to everyone who participated and provided their ideas for the future of this highly valued landscape.

If you are interested in learning more about the project you can visit [Engage Victoria](#). On the website you can see a video of the workshop presentations, read the discussion papers and register for updates. There will be further opportunities to provide feedback on the draft Plan in 2020.