

# ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES REPORT

WESTLEIGH PARK MOUNTAIN BIKE  
TRAIL NETWORK

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HORNSBY SHIRE  
COUNCIL



**Date**  
15/08/2022 – v2

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# 1. BACKGROUND

## 1.1 CONTEXT

Hornsby Shire Council (Council) is located in the Upper North Shore of Sydney. It has a population of 152,419, forecast to grow to 179,582 by 2036. Council is responsible for managing 2,000 hectares of bushland, primarily situated within the Berowra Valley National and Regional Park.

As the population of Hornsby Shire grows, there is an increasing need for green spaces and outdoor recreation areas. To address this need, Council prepared the draft Westleigh Park Master Plan.

The draft Master Plan was prepared following an extensive community engagement program. The Plan aims to generate opportunities for community recreation activities including community-based sport, bushwalking and mountain biking.

The draft Plan also details the creation of new outdoor recreation areas suitable for a range of activities. This plan has received widespread community support, with 81% of residents believing that the plan adequately balances environment protection concerns in the Shire and opportunities for recreational use.

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF ENGAGEMENT

Between February and June 2022 Hornsby Shire Council deployed a targeted Community Engagement Plan to better understand the perspectives of stakeholders with an interest in the current and future use of the bushland at Westleigh Park.

This need for further and targeted engagement came about following community engagement during the development of the draft Master Plan, which revealed philosophically opposing views between the mountain biking community, environment representatives and some local residents about the future vision for Westleigh Park.

In order to better understand and potentially mediate this conflict, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan was developed with the objective of generating a co-designed concept plan of mountain bike trails at Westleigh Park to balance recreational utility and environment protection.

The primary objective of the engagement was to attempt to reach a consensus between the two stakeholder groups on a formalised mountain bike trail network at Westleigh Park.

# 2. ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

## 2.1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

A detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan was developed to support Council's existing Community Engagement Framework for the project.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan was developed following inception meetings with Council's project team and informed by background information and additional research.

A very specific approach to engagement was outlined in the Plan, with initial activities designed to allow all interested parties to participate and have their say and to ensure all perspectives could be heard and captured.

These initial engagement activities were designed to identify the commonalities and differences between the values, priorities and concerns of the two stakeholder groups. The activities also sought to lay the groundwork for a constructive co-design process based on shared values and principles.

The latter stages of engagement centred around a series of co-design workshops with a narrower and more specific group of stakeholder representatives. The reason this approach was necessary was due to the complexity of the issues being discussed and the finite brief of designing a formalised mountain bike trail network.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan was presented to Councillors at a briefing on 17 February 2022. Councillors provided some suggestions on the proposed Plan which were accepted and incorporated. Council gave support to the proposed Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

## 2.2 ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

A range of engagement activities were deployed to ensure that key stakeholders were reached and that ample opportunity was provided to share information and listen to community feedback. The table below outlines the engagement activities during this project.

### Engagement Activities and Purpose

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE
1 on 1 telephone calls	<p>Council's project team and Councillors identified a number of key stakeholders for the project.</p> <p>These key stakeholders included leaders of local community organisations and active community members with a direct interest in the project.</p> <p>Key stakeholders were called directly to gain direct insight on the various perspectives and sentiment across stakeholders.</p> <p>The purpose of this engagement activity was to open a dialogue with key stakeholders, understand their position and establish how they would like to be engaged.</p> <p>The calls were also an opportunity to learn about developments among the community since the previous engagement and to seek further information on submissions and other background material.</p> <p>During the calls the stakeholders were asked about their preferences for engagement activities and given an opportunity to give feedback on the proposed engagement approach.</p>
Councillor presentations	<p>Over the course of the project there were a series of presentations to Councillors to seek input into the engagement approach and update Councillors on the progress of engagement activities.</p> <p>Councillors were given the opportunity to provide input, ask questions and seek clarification where required.</p> <p>The project team placed great emphasis on ensuring Councillors were kept informed of the engagement approach throughout the project along with opportunities for input and to adjust the approach as required.</p>

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE
Stakeholder workshops	<p>Four stakeholder workshops were held across March. The workshops each had similar structure, however they were advertised targeted towards the two stakeholder groups being the mountain biking community and local environment interest groups.</p> <p>We aimed to engage the two stakeholder groups in separate workshops in the first instance to provide participants a chance to share their issues, concerns and priorities of each group in a less confrontational environment.</p> <p>The key goals of these workshops were to identify shared values and differences between the two stakeholder groups. The workshops also served to develop a set of principles that guided the philosophical approach to the co-design workshops.</p>
Webinar	<p>A live webinar was delivered on Zoom and uploaded to the project website. The webinar had the purpose of providing detailed information about the project.</p> <p>The webinar featured Professor Catherine Pickering from Griffith University, Phil Downey, a local mountain biking representative and Steve Federow, Hornsby Shire Council's Community and Environment Division Director.</p> <p>The webinar aimed to share information rather than be an interactive engagement activity. As such, public commenting and the chat function were not available for participants during the webinar.</p>
Co-design workshops	Three co-design workshops were held in June 2022. Full details about the purpose, structure and outcomes of these workshops is outlined in Section 4 of the report.

## 2.3 COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

The following communication materials were developed to support the engagement activities and ensure stakeholders were kept informed about project news.

### Communication Channels and Purpose

CHANNEL	DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE
On-site signage at Westleigh Park	On-site signs were placed at Westleigh Park to notify regular park users about upcoming community engagement activities.
Project page on Hornsby Shire Council Website	The existing Westleigh Park Master Plan page on the Hornsby Shire Council website was utilised as the central point of information for the project.  Through the engagement program the website contained information and outcomes of engagement activities, served as the hub to register expressions of interest for the co-design workshops and provided general and background information about the project.
Direct email	Those who expressed an interest in the project were kept informed by direct email about upcoming engagement activities including the stakeholder workshops, webinar and the expression of interest process for the co-design workshops.
Hornsby Shire Council Facebook Page	Information regarding the project was posted on the Hornsby Shire Council Facebook page. This also directed users to further information located on the Westleigh Park Master Plan page.

**Figure 1 – Images of signage and screenshot of project website**



## WESTLEIGH PARK MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL NETWORK

### SEEKING COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Hornsby Shire Council is seeking further community feedback to assist in the design of formal mountain bike trail network at Westleigh Park. If you have experience in planning, designing or using mountain bike trails, your input will be highly valued throughout this process!

A series of workshops will be held in the coming months to assist in the design of a formal mountain bike trail network at Westleigh Park. If you have experience in planning, designing or using mountain bike trails, your input will be highly valued throughout this process!



To be involved in shaping the future of this space please register your interest at [bit.ly/3L8ajOj](http://bit.ly/3L8ajOj)

**Westleigh Park**

**Co-design workshops scheduled for June 2022**

We have now moved to the next phase of engagement where a group of people will work closely together to co-design and recommend an appropriate network of mountain bike trails while protecting the high-value biodiversity at Westleigh Park.

The sessions will be held online via Zoom, with opportunities for participants to meet with stakeholders, groups and communities interested in the project.

Please note: participants are required to be available to attend all the sessions as the activities are progressive.

The sessions will be held:

- Friday 24 June at Westleigh Park from 10am - 4pm (in the event of rain, workshop will be postponed to Sunday 12 June)
- Tuesday 21 June at Penrith Hills Bowls Club, 8:30 - 9pm
- Thursday 23 June Hornsby RSL, 5:30 - 8pm

Expressions of interest are now closed.

Successful participants will be notified by Friday 20 May.

**Project documentation**

**Frequently asked questions**

**Image gallery**

**Background information**

**Westleigh Park Draft Master Plan**



[Westleigh Park Master Plan Summary Document](#)

Westleigh Park Mountain Bike Trail Network – Fact Sheet and Q&A

 Watch on [YouTube](#)

Westleigh Park Webinar Recording

**Information webinar**

On Wednesday 23 March we hosted a webinar to share some information relevant to the Westleigh Park Mountain Bike Trail Network community engagement process.

We heard from Professor Catherine Pfeiffer from Griffith University on the research and evidence base for mountain bike trails and the potential environmental impacts that renovation can have on biodiversity and Phil Drury, a local mountain biking representative from Sydney North Off Road Club (SNORC) presenting his local experience and the value of the trails to the community.

Steve Falzon, Director Community and Environment also presented on the history and context of the project as well as the scope of engagement for the co-design and future approval pathways, for a formalised trail network at Westleigh Park.

[View the recording here](#)

# 3. ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

## 3.1 ONE-ON-ONE TELEPHONE CALLS

The one-on-one phone calls proved to be an extremely effective way of connecting with key stakeholders. While these calls were initially intended to be a single interaction, many of the stakeholders we contacted reached out by phone several times throughout the project.

This continuous engagement with key stakeholders enabled the project team and facilitators to keep people informed throughout the project, and adapt engagement techniques and approaches to best meet stakeholder needs.

The calls were with leaders of local community organisations and groups that spanned across all interests. These relationships also helped minimise social media activity (to an extent) while the engagement activities were taking place.

## 3.2 COUNCILLOR PRESENTATIONS

The Councillor presentations in February and March provided Councillors an opportunity to provide input into the stakeholder engagement approach, ask questions about the planned activities and seek clarification where required.

Ensuring Councillors were kept informed of the ongoing engagement activities and given an opportunity to observe as the community provided feedback was a key factor in ensuring the activities were delivered successfully.

A final Councillor briefing to provide an update on engagement outcomes is planned for 17 August 2022.

### 3.3 STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS



A series of workshops were held to ensure all interested stakeholders had an opportunity to provide feedback on mountain bike riding at Westleigh Park. The workshops were advertised through the project website, Council's Facebook page and existing contact lists.

The workshop invitation stated the workshops would be focusing on mountain bike riding at Westleigh Park as opposed to the broader draft Master Plan for the site.

The stakeholder workshops were targeted towards the two separate stakeholder groups to provide participants a chance to share their issues, concerns and priorities of each group in a less confrontational environment.

In the initial call for expressions of interest to attend a workshop there were over 350 people who expressed an interest.

Once the workshop dates were announced Council received a total of 125 registrations for the workshops, with 82 people ultimately attending one of the four workshops. Of these attendees, 52 attended the workshops targeted at mountain bike stakeholders, with 30 attending the environment and other stakeholder workshops.

The following workshops were held:

- Workshop 1 - Environment/other stakeholders: 10 March 2022, 5.30pm – 8.30pm
- Workshop 2 - Mountain bike stakeholders: 14 March 2022, 5.30pm – 8.30pm
- Workshop 3 - Environment/other stakeholders: 15 March 2022, 5.30pm – 8.30pm
- Workshop 4 - Mountain bike stakeholders: 22 March 2022, 5.30pm – 8.30pm

The key objectives of these workshops were to identify shared values and differences between the two stakeholder groups. The workshops also served to develop a set of principles that guided the philosophical approach to the co-design workshops in the second stage of engagement.

#### Workshop Activities

The following activities were utilised during the stakeholder workshops. The activities were implemented and adapted across the workshops, and in some workshops all or some of these activities were used.

The description and purpose of these activities have been included to provide context for the verbatim responses provided in the Appendices.

### Workshop Activities and Purpose

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE
Your Story, Your Connection	<p>An activity where stakeholders described a memorable day that they had at Westleigh Park.</p> <p>This activity is designed to understand stakeholders' personal connections to Westleigh Park and identify commonalities between the two stakeholder groups.</p> <p>This was followed by a storyboarding activity where stakeholders accompanied their stories with visual descriptions, to gain further insights into their connections with Westleigh Park.</p>
Understanding opinions and concerns	<p>An activity where stakeholders voted on a 5-point Likert scale ("strongly agree" to "strongly disagree") on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A formalised Westleigh Park mountain bike trail network can adequately balance environment protection concerns and opportunities for recreational use</li><li>• A formalised mountain bike trail network will minimise impacts to the local environment</li><li>• A variety of recreation activities can take place at Westleigh Park whilst minimising impacts to native flora and fauna</li></ul> <p>This activity sought to identify stakeholders' opinions regarding the relationship between formalised mountain bike trails and environmental protection at Westleigh Park.</p>
Key issues and concerns  What do you want out of this process?	<p>These were two similar activities that sought to understand stakeholders' key priorities and concerns and the overall engagement process.</p> <p>These activities called on stakeholders to write down their key issues and concerns regarding and to further establish what they wanted to get out of this process of engagement.</p>

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE
Visioning the future	<p>An activity where participants, as a table group, visualised their ideal 'future state' for Westleigh Park, then worked backwards to the 'current state' of the park. Participants identified key transition steps to bridge the gap between the current and future state of Westleigh Park.</p> <p>The purpose of this activity was to understand the stakeholders' visions for Westleigh Park, as well as key transition steps that they deemed important for the development of mountain bike trails in Westleigh Park.</p>
Our principles	<p>As a table group, stakeholders were tasked to decide on five key principles to guide the co-design process.</p> <p>The purpose of this activity was to get participants to think about how they would like to engage with those with conflicting views to their own, and to establish a set of agreed Principles to ensure a constructive and respectful co-design process.</p>

## Workshop 1 – Environment and other stakeholders

The first environment stakeholder workshop was held on Thursday 10 March between 5.30pm and 8.30pm at the Hornsby RSL Club. Seventeen people attended the session.



### Workshop 1 Outcomes

The following table provides a high-level summary of workshop outcomes. A detailed list of verbatim feedback can be found in the Appendices of this report.

THEME	DESCRIPTION
Key values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Quietness &amp; serenity</li><li>- Protecting flora &amp; fauna</li><li>- Preserving the unique nature</li><li>- Heritage</li><li>- Environment education &amp; science</li></ul>
Key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Development adversely affecting the natural environment and the local flora &amp; fauna</li><li>- Damage to bushland caused by bike riders including erosion &amp; habitat loss</li><li>- Mountain bike riders not following rules - riding e-bikes, night riding, wet weather riding</li><li>- Heightened traffic from mountain bike riders being attracted from outside Hornsby Shires</li><li>- Biodiversity loss</li></ul>
Key priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Preservation of flora &amp; fauna (e.g. powerful owls &amp; rare plant communities)</li><li>- Maintaining natural value for future generations</li><li>- Management &amp; rule enforcement regarding mountain bike riding</li><li>- Monitoring of the environment - decision-making backed by science &amp; data</li></ul>
Quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- “A rule is only a rule if it gets enforced” (regarding mountain bike use of trails)</li></ul>

## Workshop 2 – Mountain Biking Stakeholders

The first mountain bike stakeholder workshop was held on Monday 14 March between 5.30pm and 8.30pm at Pennant Hills Bowling Club. Thirty people attended the session.

### Workshop 2 Outcomes

The following table provides a high-level summary of workshop outcomes. A detailed list of verbatim feedback can be found in the Appendices of this report.

THEME	DESCRIPTION
Key values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Enjoying nature</li><li>- Spending time outdoors with family</li><li>- Outdoor recreation &amp; exercise</li><li>- Seeing the local fauna</li><li>- Social connection</li><li>- Education &amp; access to environment</li><li>- Local recreation areas</li></ul>
Key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lack of maintenance (safety issue + erosion)</li><li>- No amenities</li><li>- Potential trail loss</li></ul>
Key priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Preservation &amp; expansion of mountain bike trails</li><li>- Accessibility – adequate ‘green’ trails for kids &amp; beginners</li><li>- Trails for a range of skill levels (including black trails &amp; features e.g. jumps &amp; pump tracks)</li><li>- Safety &amp; trail quality – formalised maintenance</li><li>- Westleigh H2O and Hornsby OMV connected</li><li>- Continuous flow between trails</li><li>- Dedicated amenities for the trails (toilets, bike wash stations, etc.)</li><li>- Trails designed with enviro protection in mind</li><li>- Opportunities for events and competitions</li><li>- Value of local expertise in mountain biking trail design – ongoing involvement and collaboration with community</li></ul>
Quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- “Trails connect people”</li><li>- “Nowhere else for kids to mountain biking in the Shire”</li></ul>

### Workshop 3 – Environment Stakeholders

The second environment stakeholder workshop was held on Tuesday 15 March between 5.30pm and 8.30pm at the Pennant Hills Bowling Club. Thirteen people attended the session.

### Workshop 3 Outcomes

The following table provides a high-level summary of workshop outcomes. A detailed list of verbatim feedback can be found in the Appendices of this report.

THEME	DESCRIPTION
Key values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Quiet &amp; peaceful atmosphere</li><li>- Enjoying nature</li><li>- Unique flora &amp; fauna</li></ul>
Key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Habitat loss</li><li>- Mountain bike riding causing stress to animals &amp; disrupting natural behaviour (implications for breeding success &amp; conservation)</li><li>- Increased traffic</li><li>- Removal of trees to widen tracks + damage to roots</li><li>- Associated facilities e.g. toilets, parking, viewing platforms will further damage the park</li><li>- Loss of tranquillity – reduced utility for bushwalkers &amp; negative impacts on local fauna</li><li>- Mountain bike riders not respecting the natural environment or following rules</li></ul>
Key priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Keeping trails as a perimeter around bushland</li><li>- Preserving Westleigh park bushland &amp; fauna habitat - high-value &amp; contains endangered species</li><li>- Rule enforcement regarding mountain bike trail use &amp; construction – no riding on wet tracks, no DIY trail expansion, no night riding</li><li>- Removing mountain bike trails from areas containing critically endangered ecological communities (e.g. Blue Gum High Forest) &amp; threatened species</li><li>- Remediated bushland environment</li><li>- Consultation with environment experts</li></ul>
Quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- “The flora is unique &amp; there are endangered species there. Once they are gone, they are gone.”</li><li>- “Keep environment protection at the forefront of all decision making.”</li></ul>

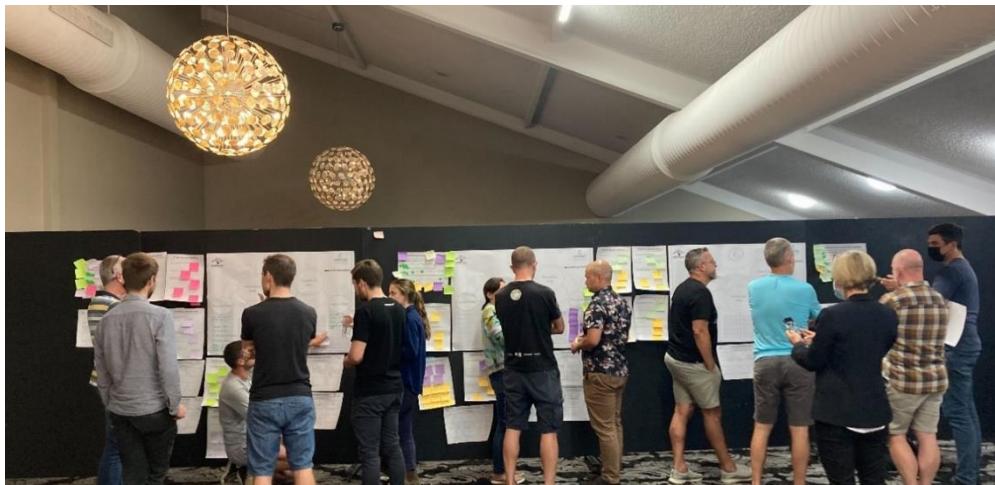
## Workshop 4 – Mountain Bike Stakeholders

The second mountain biking stakeholder workshop was held on Tuesday 22 March between 5.30pm and 8.30pm at the Pennant Hills Bowling Club. Twenty-two people attended the session.

### Workshop 4 Outcomes

The following table provides a high-level summary of workshop outcomes. A detailed list of verbatim feedback can be found in the Appendices of this report.

THEME	DESCRIPTION
Key values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Spending time outdoors with family</li><li>- Teaching kids to appreciate the environment</li><li>- Outdoor recreation &amp; exercise</li><li>- Enjoying nature</li><li>- Sense of community</li></ul>
Key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Concern about reduction of trail length &amp; diversity in difficulty</li><li>- Local riders being barred from bush-care &amp; trail maintenance</li><li>- Loss of beginner trails &amp; jumps loops</li><li>- Lost opportunities for kids &amp; families to mountain bike locally</li><li>- Concern development will be slow-moving</li></ul>
Key priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Maintenance of the current riding experience</li><li>- Accessibility – ensuring there are enough green trails for beginner riders &amp; kids</li><li>- Hornsby OMV to H2O trail link</li><li>- Community input into trail maintenance – ongoing engagement &amp; collaboration</li><li>- Improved facilities – bike cleaning, parking, toilets, water stations</li><li>- Trail diversity (e.g. adequate trails for every skill level) &amp; formalised features – e.g. jumps, drops, rock gardens, pump tracks</li><li>- Environment education signage</li><li>- Local trail builders to be involved in design &amp; construction process.</li></ul>
Quotes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- “I ride here all the time, I love the track here and have taught my kids to ride there.”</li><li>- “Council wants to exclude mountain bikes from the forest that is deemed CEEC, but doesn’t want to look at other case studies e.g. Bantry Bay, Maydena (Tas) &amp; Thredbo, all of which have trails running sustainably through EEC/CEEC.”</li></ul>



### **Stakeholder Workshop Observations**

Across the four stakeholder workshops it was evident that there are common shared values across all participants; namely the enjoyment of the natural environment and native fauna and flora.

The majority of participants across all workshops, including mountain bike riders, expressed a desire to reduce the impact of mountain bike riding on the natural environment.

Workshops targeted at environment and other stakeholders generated sentiment indicating formalised mountain bike trails will not necessarily lead to lessened environment impact.

Participants in these workshops also expressed a desire for less or no mountain bike trails in critically endangered and ecologically sensitive areas at Westleigh Park.

It was also expressed that continued use of the Westleigh Park for mountain bike riding will degrade the natural environment and threaten endangered species and that even if the trails are formalised that enforcement of illegal activity is unlikely.

Sentiment received during the mountain bike stakeholder workshops reflected that trails can be constructed in a sustainable manner and children should have the opportunity to appreciate the environment through outdoor recreation such as mountain bike riding.

The mountain bike participants expressed that it was the place itself, Westleigh Park, that made riding so special, and some participants noted a long history with the site. General sentiment demonstrated a willingness to explore options for a formalised trail network, even if it meant some changes to the existing trail – as long as it remained within the bushland at Westleigh Park.

Finally, it was evident from the workshops that some participants held very firm positions on the future use of Westleigh Park, with some of these positions in direct opposition.

## **3.4 WEBINAR**

The webinar was held over zoom from 12pm to 1pm on 23 March with 64 attendees joining the session live. The webinar was posted on the project webpage on 28 March for those who couldn't attend live.

The webinar featured three presenters:

- Professor Catherine Pickering from Griffith University
- Phil Downey, local mountain biking resident, Sydney North Off Road Club (SNORC)
- Steve Federow, Community and Environment Division Director, Hornsby Shire Council

Although the webinar was intended as an information sharing mechanism rather than a feedback-seeking activity, a number of unsolicited submissions were received from the public following the webinar.

Sentiment in the submissions primarily focused on the arguments provided from the academic research perspective including the impacts of mountain bike riding and other recreation activities on bushland.

## 4. CO-DESIGN WORKSHOPS

The second stage of engagement was deliberately more targeted to provide a select group of representative stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the mountain bike trail network in greater detail.

An Expression of Interest (EOI) process was held with the objective of bringing together a group of people to represent the various positions that were put forward in the first stage of engagement.

People wishing to nominate to be part of the second stage of engagement were made aware it would consist of three co-design workshops:

- Sunday the 5th of June - 10am-4pm at Westleigh Park and Pennant Hills Bowling Club
- Tuesday the 21st of June - 5.30-8.30pm at Pennant Hills Bowling Club
- Thursday the 23rd of June - 5.30-8.30pm at Hornsby RSL Club

The EOI process was open for two weeks, with 34 applications submitted. Following a selection process and with Councillor input, a final panel of 15 members were selected.

Between the announcement of the panel and throughout the 3 co-design workshops some participants were unable to attend due to personal reasons including Covid-19. In all instances where this occurred, the project team liaised with Councillors to make recommendations of replacements where appropriate.

At all times having a representative group of participants in the co-design workshops was at front of mind.

The following section outlines the activities carried out across the three co-design workshops. These workshops were facilitated by Captivate, with support from Council's project team, and Dirt Art, the mountain bike trail consultant engaged by Council.

**Dirt Art – Trail Concept Overview Map – Initial Draft**

Trail design experts Dirt Art were commissioned to help design an initial draft trail network based on feedback received in the first co-design workshop. The principles behind the initial draft ‘Trail Concept Overview Map’ included:

- Large area of high value biodiversity avoided (with no tracks)
- Additional trails to offset loss of trails
- Avoidance of trails where threatened species mapped.
- Identification of numerous ‘hubs’ where trails and loops start and finish.

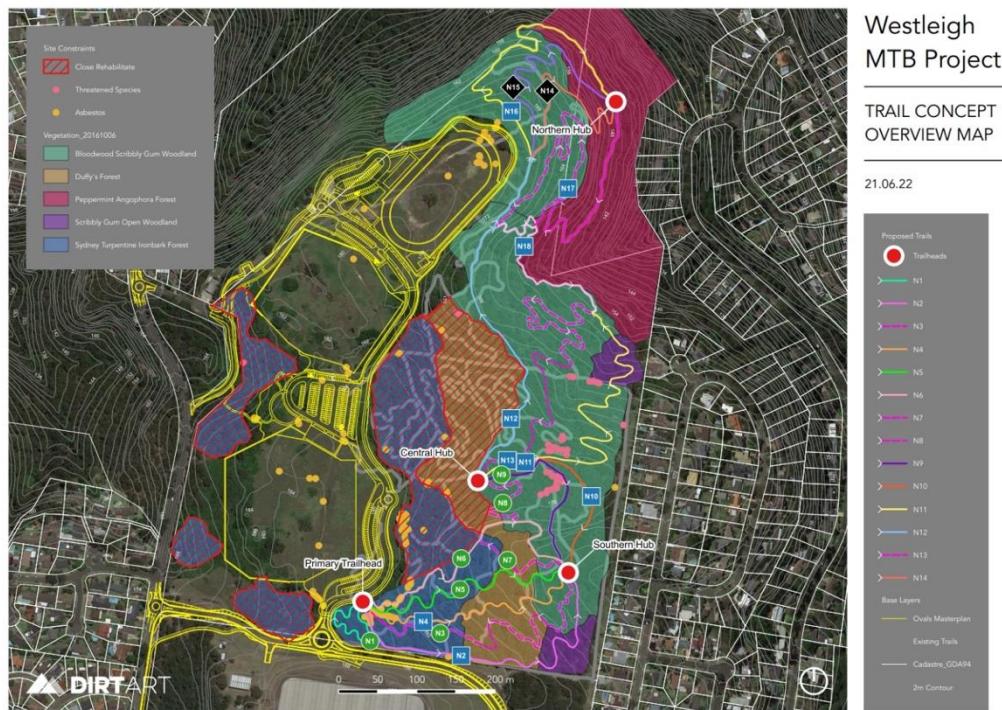


Figure 3 – Dirt Art proposed trail network

## Workshop Activities

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE
<b>WORKSHOP 1 – 5 June 2022</b>	
Guided walk around Westleigh Park	<p>Co-design participants were taken on a guided site visit through bushland at Westleigh Park. The route focused on mountain bike trails identified as key areas of interest during the early engagement process.</p> <p>Council and project representatives spoke about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity, site history, site condition, flora and fauna.</li> <li>• Site-related issues including vegetation removal, erosion and a study discussing elements of good track design and rehabilitation.</li> <li>• The practicalities of the mountain biking track including constraints, contamination, accessibility and maintenance.</li> </ul> <p>During the walk participants asked questions, shared their experiences at Westleigh Park and made observations about the current state of the site.</p> <p>These activities were designed to give participants a greater understanding of the practical and environmental considerations associated with the trail design, and to outline the used to guide the co-design process.</p>
Review of options	<p>Participants were presented with maps of mountain biking trail options that had been previously proposed for Westleigh Park.</p> <p>They were divided into groups and given an opportunity to mark up the maps and comment on preferences and issues regarding trail design.</p> <p>This was followed by a facilitated Q&amp;A to discuss groups' preferences and ideas.</p> <p>Through this exercise it was evident that there were vastly differing levels of familiarity with the site across the participants. As such, many participants had extensive questions about the maps and the site that required further information to be provided.</p> <p>At the end of this workshop it was agreed that Dirt Art would prepare a concept for discussion at the next workshop.</p>

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION & PURPOSE
<b>WORKSHOP 2 – 21 June 2022</b>	
Discussion circle	An informal discussion was held with participants to re-cap the site visit, participant recruitment and co-design processes. The purpose of this was to give participants a direct outlet to share their personal perspectives on the project with the rest of the group.
Presentations	Dirt Art and Council's project team made presentations to participants on recent ecological assessments and management strategies and mountain bike trail case studies and exemplars. Dirt Art tabled an initial draft 'Trail Concept Overview Map'.  Participants had an opportunity to ask questions and seek further clarification on the presentations.
Connection to co-design principles	Dr Joel Fredericks led a design activity to further inform participants about co-design principles.
<b>WORKSHOP 3 – 23 June 2022</b>	
Final Group Discussion	The stakeholders participated in a final group discussion to talk about the trail design options and come to a consensus, based on the work done in the prior two workshops.  Due to the challenges of varying levels of familiarity across the group with mountain bike trail design, a draft mountain bike trail concept design for Westleigh Park was presented by Dirt Art.  Participants were asked to give feedback on the Dirt Art's concept and to come up with alternatives if they did not agree with elements of the design.  The purpose of this activity was to allow participants to come to an agreement regarding the final co-designed concept plan for the Westleigh Park mountain biking trails.  Ultimately, participants chose to separate into two groups and provide two separate recommendations to Council, which are outlined in the following section.

## Outcomes

Ultimately, the co-design participants did not come to a consensus regarding the trail design but did reach agreement on many key principles relating to mountain bike riding at Westleigh Park. The participants reached consensus on the following points:

- We value and care for the natural environment at Westleigh Park
- Seeking a great outcome for the Westleigh community and surrounding area
- Council is taking considerable effort to address the needs, wants and aspirations for the Westleigh area
- Council is attempting to address community need at Westleigh Park
- We want a positive outcome for the environment and local community
- We have majority agreement to move the trail head from existing location
- We are in agreement that tracks outside of the ecologically sensitive areas are not the key issue

Dirt Art, the mountain bike trail consultant engaged by Council, was contacted due to participants' desire for a professionally designed mountain biking trail, to conceptualise a potential option for stakeholders to deliberate on. Participants were in full agreement of the professional advice provided by Dirt Art that stated:

- It is very difficult to design a functional mountain bike network without traversing Sydney Turpentine and Ironbark Forest (STIF) and Duffys Forest (DF) areas of Westleigh Park

Participants also listed the following non-negotiables, but it must be made clear that there was not a consensus on these non-negotiables, and in some cases strong opposition:

- No reduction in green trails – no reduction to distance (green trails)
- Overall length of trail should be the same – with the exception of entry points
- Seeking a continuous ride
- No tracks in STIF and DF areas
- No N1 trail as proposed by Dirt Art
- Don't move trails outside of the Westleigh area (bushland)
- Tracks should move away from threatened species
- No night riding
- Tracks should be shut down until a formalised plan is created

## Options

In coming to a final recommendation, instead of coming to a consensus, participants choose to form two separate groups. This section outlines the position of each group, and their proposed mountain biking trail network designs. It also outlines the initial draft of a 'Trail Concept Overview Map' tabled by mountain bike trail consultants Dirt Art.

### Group A

- Spread the load and minimise the impact on the CEEC and EEC areas
- Brief Dirt Art to incorporate more green trail in the central area as per the Mountain Bike group proposal
- Utilise the existing access paths as much as possible within STIF and DF
- Utilise, incorporate, and upgrade existing trail where possible
- Do not close the trail network before the finalised mountain bike track is approved
- Improved environmental and trail experience outcomes
- H2O group wish to maintain the trail again with permission from Council and resources.

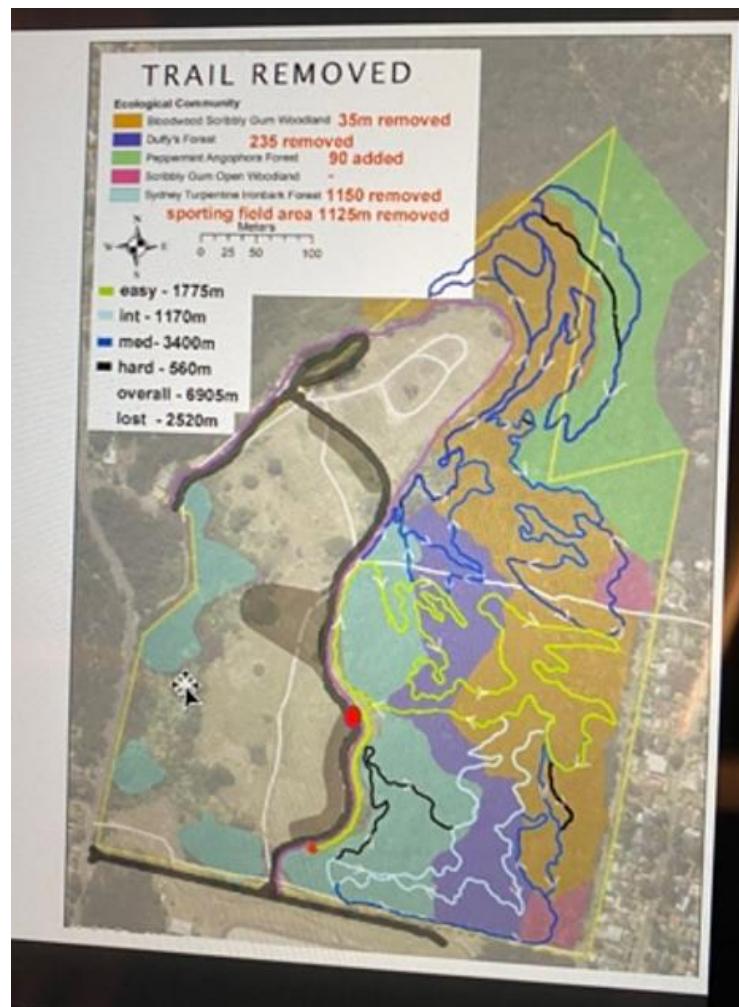


Figure 2 - Group A proposed trail network with new location for trail head (hand-drawn in red)

**Group B**

- STIF and DF no go zones (it's an EEC and CEEC vegetation 'community')
- Kids Green Tracks cannot go into the CEEC, EEC so be better elsewhere
- Move the Primary Trail Head so trails don't start at the STIF
- No night riding because of the impact on fauna with agreed operating hours
- Any tracks should be sustainable and well maintained
- The current illegal and informal tracks should be closed asap as approaching ecological threshold
- Need fauna assessment before the area is reopened to the public
- Need to provide walking areas as well as mountain biking tracks

*Group B did not propose a trail network on a map.*

# 5. CONCLUSION

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan addressing a formalised mountain bike trail network at Westleigh Park was delivered between February and June 2022.

The Plan intentionally set out to reach key stakeholders, provide opportunities for everyone with an interest in the project to participate and ultimately attempt to reach a consensus on a preferred trail network through a co-design process.

The response to the stakeholder workshops and attendance at the webinar demonstrate a strong indication of the passion felt in the community about Westleigh Park. Participants were keen to express either their love or disapproval for mountain bike riding in bushland at Westleigh Park.

Providing participants the opportunity to voice their perspectives in a non-confrontational setting generated personal and insightful input (as evidenced in the verbatim responses found in the Appendices of this report).

The approach of initially separating opposing stakeholder groups paid dividends in the quality and depth of feedback received from participants. This feedback re-affirmed to Council the differing sentiment across segments of the community.

The challenging component of stakeholder engagement was always going to be bringing people with differing views together to understand each other's perspectives and find common ground.

Ultimately, the co-design process, delivered over several weeks and allowing for deliberation, did provide an opportunity for participants to agree on some common values. These included a love for Westleigh Park, a desire to minimise impacts to fauna flora and an acknowledgement that people weren't opposing mountain bike riding as an activity – just the location where it may be occurring.

The co-design process provided an opportunity for participants to come together and attempt to agree on a formalised trail network, however the divergence in philosophies and perspectives between the stakeholder groups meant this was not able to be achieved.

Rather, the co-design participants respectfully chose to present two options to Council for consideration, which are put forward in Section 4 of this report.

Based on the outcomes of the engagement activities, the following recommendations are proposed for Council:

- Continue to inform all stakeholders who have participated in the engagement process on project news and progress
- Council to consider the feedback outlined in this report as a basis for decision making on a formalised mountain bike trail network at Westleigh Park.
- Thoroughly consider the feedback proposed by both groups and ensure that the final trail design adheres to community needs within project constraints.

# 6. APPENDICES

## WORKSHOP 1 – ENVIRONMENT AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

10 March 2022, 5.30pm – 8.30pm

### Activity 1 - Your Story Your Connection

#### Group 1

What is your connection with Westleigh Park and Why do you visit Westleigh Park?	Opportunity for recreation using the bike trails, which is a unique space in Hornsby Shire.  I use many of the other bush tracks in the Hornsby Shire.  Mostly quiet.  A space to walk that has interesting things to see (new plants).  It is a doable walk that can be factored into our day and it is nearby.  Quiet at the times I walk.  The rare turpentines, orchids, frogs.  The frogs, flora, fauna, quietness wildness.  An island of nature in an ocean of suburbia.  That angophora that looks so different, but always so beautiful in each light.  It's so peaceful I feel I am in nature.  Exciting moments as I see a plant, a bird, a wallaby, hear the wildlife.  Accessible bushland that can be enjoyed.  Potential for recreation in a pleasant environment.  Mix of nature and recreation.  Blue gum forest – it is majestic and the changing creatures that inhabit different parts of the park.
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	<p>The serene walking trails providing an escape from urban life and time for reflection.</p> <p>Escape from crowds where small groups of walkers can enjoy the nature environment without disturbance.</p> <p>It's reliably peaceful and the dog enjoys a walk.</p> <p>It's reliably peaceful and the dog enjoys a walk.</p> <p>I am very interested in the environment standards of all native parks.</p> <p>I have visited Westleigh Park to have a look at the environment there.</p>
What sparked your interest about this project?	<p>A blank canvas to design some new and innovative uses with purpose.</p> <p>An opportunity to deliver something for many community users, particularly families and disadvantaged users.</p> <p>I want the project to consider the area's sensitivity.</p> <p>I hope that being involved in something that is obviously going ahead that we can get the best from the development that we can.</p> <p>A good outcome for a place we love.</p> <p>For 32 years I have walked on this land collecting memories leaving no footprints.</p> <p>Potential for high quality sport and recreation facilities in an environmentally responsible and sustainable way.</p> <p>Risk of strong and divergent opinions compromising what could be a great outcome.</p> <p>My home is in Sefton Road and is likely to be impacted by access arrangements to Westleigh Park.</p> <p>Need to avoid opportunity for unsocial use of the park.</p> <p>I am an environmentalist and am very concerned about protecting native environments.</p>
Why are you passionate about flora and fauna?	I enjoy all the flora and fauna in the Hornsby Shire but believe we need to balance protecting nature with progress.

	<p>The beauty.</p> <p>The calmness on people that it creates.</p> <p>Healthy environment, healthy people.</p> <p>The Bonnet Orchids, Angophoras, Sun Orchids, Bearded Orchids, Frogs, Spinebills, Hooded Orchids.</p> <p>Westleigh is a beautiful area with its natural bushland and it would be terrible to lose this.</p> <p>The natural environment is under increasing pressure from development, the park will provide a refuge.</p> <p>The forest provides habitat for threatened species such as Powerful Owls, the habitat needs protecting.</p> <p>I am passionate about Flora and Fauna because it is being adversely impacted by development.</p>
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### Group 2

What is your connection with Westleigh Park and Why do you visit Westleigh Park?	Lovely place to walk and spot wildlife x4  Relaxing walking environment x4  Like to birdwatch x4  Take quiet walks in the bush x4  Rare plant communities x3  Easy access to Hornsby Lived in Hornsby Shire for 68 years
What sparked your interest about this project?	Damage caused by bike riders x3  Conserving bushland, especially the EECs x4
Why are you passionate about flora and fauna?	Impacted by development

### Group 3

<p>What is your connection with Westleigh Park and Why do you visit Westleigh Park?</p>	<p>A place to enjoy being outdoors in nature To observe biodiversity, ecological communities.</p> <p>Meet with friends and do recreational activities Interest in native vegetation &amp; natural environments X3.</p> <p>Connection to place ongoing – spend time with mum, dog walking, son trains with RFS.</p> <p>Unique features. Trees, wildlife, geology X2 Away from noise.</p> <p>Topography/ elevation Environment and heritage value for future generations.</p> <p>Access for all groups of people.</p>
<p>What sparked your interest about this project?</p>	<p>Work for NPWS on Mountain Biking management, engaging.</p> <p>Work with Hornsby to collaborate across landscape approaches to managing Mountain Biking.</p> <p>Interested in process of creating a solution that provides multiple use of land and maintains environment values</p> <p>Work for NPWS, investigate sustainable management solutions for unauthorized mountain bike trails in Sydney North area.</p> <p>Local resident, member of Bushcare. Don't want to see destruction of environment – degraded land nearby which would be more suitable for trails rather than destroying virgin bush.</p>
<p>Why are you passionate about flora and fauna?</p>	<p>Unique flora and Fauna must be preserved for future generations x2.</p> <p>Basis of sustainability is the conservation of biodiversity.</p> <p>Love the bushland and need to protect it x4.</p> <p>Wareemba Avenue backyards.</p> <p>Loss of biodiversity in Sydney due to recreational activities, development and urbanization – want to prevent this happening more.</p> <p>Complexity of ecology and interactions between flora, fauna and other organizations</p> <p>Cultural connectedness with aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities X2.</p>

	Connectivity to BVNP and protecting integrity of reserve/ health of bushland.
	Head of catchment so impacts on water quality will affect natural values across the region.

### Activity 2 - Understanding Opinions and Concerns

*NOTE: Numbers in the table reflect the number of votes for each option within the denoted group.*

A formalised Westleigh Park mountain bike trail network can adequately balance environment protection concerns and opportunities for recreational use

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Group 2</b>					<b>4</b>
<b>Group 3</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	

A formalised mountain bike trail network will minimize impacts to the local environment

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Group 2</b>					<b>4</b>
<b>Group 3</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	

A variety of recreational activities can take place at Westleigh Park whilst minimising impacts to native flora and fauna

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>		
<b>Group 2</b>					<b>4</b>
<b>Group 3</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	

### Activity 3 - Key Issues and Concerns

#### Group 1

- Management
  - Decisions will be made from a point of knowledge
  - Control of the area, rule is only a rule if it gets enforced
  - Measurements and accountability
  - Park users can be comfortable in the knowledge the area will be protected
- Change is inevitable but should be improvement on what exists now or it is not change for the better
- Riders sticking to the rules and keeping to the designate areas
- Use of the park by Mountain Bikers needs to be managed and controlled without being overbearing
- Roots of native plants being damaged and left exposed by mountain bikes
- Environment damage – tracks erode the soil
- There must be no unplanned or un-consulted scope creep in trails
- Users must respect the other users of the park
- Severe environmental damage

#### Group 2

- Mountain bike destroying bushland/ removing habitat X26
- Mountain bike causing erosion which impacts waterways X2
- Mountain bike makes walking dangerous X4
- Associated infrastructure of Westleigh park i.e. lighting/ traffic and cars/ fake grass will impact native fauna
- Assumption that mountain biking is the only use of the land/ people needing areas for passive recreation X3
- Mountain bike not following rules i.e. riding e-bikes, night riding, riding trails during wet weather X3
- Mountain bike trails not maintained despite promises from community
- Mountain bikers come from outside Hornsby shire

#### Group 3

- Managing conflict where particular locations are high in Mountain bike values and also have ecological values
- Funding to build tracks ‘properly’ and then maintain them to a high standard
- Shared understanding of bushland health – what causes impact and how to be responsible together
- Adaptability/ reversibility of tracks/ trails. Closure if assessment shows impacts
- Authorising/ formalising tracks will not reduce unauthorised track building X2
- Use of dirty landfill
- Land not available for general public
- Building advocacy for bushland in younger groups – allowing youth spend time away from screens, with more time “in reality.”
- Constant/ ongoing demand for more/ new/ challenging experiences
- Finding balance for all the demands for green space – opportunity for future
- Introduce weeds

- Machinery to make tracks destroy bushland
- Land not fit for purpose of mountain bike
- Lose quiet amenity
- Fauna affected
- Lack of trails for walking compared to mountain bike
- Potential for sacrificial sites that could be rehabilitated but are identified for Mountain bike use
- Signage for where to ride/ not ride must be very clear
- Part of enjoyment for mountain bike riders is in the act of constructing trails and features, hence illegal trails will continue to be built
- Regular assessment to monitor health of bush and support for action
- Impact on environment
- Managing new bike technologies into the future
- Council needs to regulate 'trailforkes' app – take ownership of removing mapped illegal trails
- Loss of Duffy's Forest
- Council not taking opportunity to make trails on degraded land which could be rehabilitated
- Maintaining value for future generations

#### Activity 4 - Visioning the Future

##### Group 1

Current state	<p>Mountain bikes who have taken over the land and not managed it</p> <p>Degraded forest x2</p> <p>Threatened fauna and flora</p> <p>Poor council consultation in developing the masterplan</p> <p>Land that is being used without any regulation or consideration for the local community</p> <p>An aggressive minority have a disproportionate voice about the use of the land</p> <p>A beautiful area that is lovely to walk when not interrupted by the mountain bikers</p>
Transition step	<p>Eucalypts that are food for koalas are planted</p> <p>Development of an effective compliance system</p> <p>Further consultation by council for a holistic view of Westleigh Park</p>

Transition step	The community is educated about the diversity of the environment and how sensitive it is  Family focus
Transition step	Implement an effective compliance system  Waterboard allow the reservoir to be covered in solar panels
Future state	No synthetic surfaces  Conservation of natural and stormwater fed waterways  Eucalypts trees  Environment issues are ranked highly against other issues  No night lighting  Night photography to monitor wildlife  Fauna and flora protected and enhanced  Mountain bikers are moved to a non-sensitive site and no tracks in bush  Raise ecological awareness

## Group 2

Current state	Riddled with bike tracks  Degraded bushland  Old rubbish, including asbestos  Weedy in places  Walking only possible during week. Weekend mountain bikers take over
Transition step	<b>Funding</b>  Close mountain bike tracks repeatedly  Restore bushland using bush regeneration  Minimal walking

	Tracks not through EEC
Transition step	<p><b>Provide alternatives</b></p> <p>In degraded non-bushland area, i.e.: quarries, old farmland, old landfill</p>
Transition step	<p><b>Education</b></p> <p>Everyone to value the bushland</p> <p>To protect habitat</p>
Future state	<p>All bushland with a few walking tracks</p> <p>Bushland restored to a healthy state</p> <p>EEC's fully protected</p> <p>Fauna abundant</p> <p>Bush not fragmented</p> <p>Bush not eroded</p>

### Group 3

Current state	<p>Tracks support foxes</p> <p>Small site for no. of users/ tracks</p> <p>Lots of trails and switchbacks</p> <p>Unmanaged/ unregulated</p> <p>Safety issues/ disregard</p> <p>Everyone imposing own desires</p> <p>Self-centered/ entitled</p> <p>Anonymous/ escape without rules</p> <p>Challenge/ times/ victory</p> <p>Impact to bushland especially edge and weeds</p> <p>Wood collection</p>
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	Boggy sections/ modifying and waterways
Transition step	<p>Develop a management plan – agreed to/ formal adoption</p> <p>Recognition of values and actions required to protect them</p> <p>Education (initial/ widespread)</p> <p>Signage/ compliance</p> <p>Access for other users to learn about place and values</p>
Transition step	<p>Implementation of management plan and actions</p> <p>Education and compliance (new users/ updating/ new learnings)</p> <p>Building shared caring for place/ advocacy</p> <p>Respect for place and people in it</p> <p>Community protective and proud of the space</p>
Transition step	<p>Monitoring management plan/ adaption – change based on results and learnings</p> <p>Education and compliance – improving/ bringing new users along</p> <p>Engaged group of people who ‘protect’ the place and its natural values strong volunteer groups</p>
Future state	<p>In a perfect world for someone who loves the bush in a pristine state:</p> <p>Mountain biking trails specifically in degraded areas, without impacting bushland</p> <p>Changing behaviour and values from mountain bikers to respect perspectives from a range of user groups</p> <p>Reduction of threats to endangered species</p> <p>Quiet. Allowing a space for the bush to be quiet, peaceful in a natural state</p> <p>The ‘experience’ of the reserve is to enjoy the bush, not race through the bush looking for thrills and good times on Strava</p>

	<p>Human, financial resourcing to manage the asset, maintain it and improve it.</p> <p>Includes compliance/ volunteers/ maintenance</p> <p>Environment monitoring and auditing to measure improvement metrics</p>
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### Activity 5 - Our Principles

Group 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Sympathetic to the character of the existing natural environment</li><li>2. Enhances and benefits the amenity and use of the local community</li><li>3. Respects the environment</li><li>4. Change will unite the community</li><li>5. The change promotes a change for the better</li></ol>
Group 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Codesign will incorporate a Regional Plan for mountain biking</li><li>2. Mountain biking allocated land for activities that is NOT bushland</li><li>3. Bushland must be protected for future generations</li><li>4. Bushland must be protected for flora and fauna</li><li>5. No further fragmentation of bushland</li></ol>
Group 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Recognition and protection of ecological, natural, cultural values 'recognition of values'</li><li>2. Every community member needs to be considered: disabled, dog walkers, bird watchers, school groups, elderly. 'access for everyone'</li><li>3. Preference to develop mountain bike trails on lower ecological land value. Prioritising EECs</li><li>4. Make use of sustainable/ natural resources for building e.g. Recycled materials, low maintenance. Low impact design</li><li>5. Underpinning decision making with 'science' and looking to constantly learn, educate, improve Westleigh Park management.</li></ol>

## WORKSHOP 2 – MOUNTAIN BIKE STAKEHOLDERS

14 March 2022, 5.30pm – 8.30pm

### Activity 1 - Your Story Your Connection

#### Group 1

About your day – who, where, why and when?	<p>Before work. With 3 friends. Mountain biking and enjoying nature. Riding without fear of road traffic. Riding distance from home. Great variety of trails</p> <p>4 years ago when my son was 10 years old. With mum and 10yr old son, 11yr old nephew and 12 year old niece. I was trying to teach my very anxious and nervous son how to ride the green trails. He was scared and lacked confidence.</p> <p>I chose H2O because it has some easy beginner trails that I knew my son could eventually conquer</p> <p>3 years ago. My son and daughter and I. Went for an off-road cycling explore. It was a sunny cool day. Got a nice photo of the three of us</p>
What did you do on this day?	<p>Enjoying time with friends.</p> <p>Enjoying nature. Having so much fun on my mountain bike. Explored all the trails</p> <p>I saw people and talked to them. Home at 8:30 am and went to work</p> <p>Seeing an echidna and watching the kids' faces. Watching my niece and nephew encouraging their cousin to try an obstacle and the sense of achievement that my son felt when he did it! There for about 2 hours.</p> <p>Explored mainly greens and definitely the jumps line.</p> <p>Saw many families riding that day and chatted.</p> <p>Had a very happy bunch of kids and I absolutely loved getting them out into nature.</p> <p>There for 2 hours. We rode the entry, exit, all green trails and the blue returning to jumps loop.</p> <p>Spoke to some other families. Went home and cleaned and polished our bikes.</p>

Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	Getting out in nature is so important to me and to be able to do this with my friends and have fun is critical to my wellbeing.  It's where I share my love of riding in the bush with my family.  Trails connect people.
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**Group 2**

About your day – who, where, why and when?	Winter 2021 with my young sons. Riding the green and blue trails for the first time with my kids during Covid lockdown. We went because my kids' skills progressing and them riding some of the more technical features for the first time. We could ride them from my house.  2016 – visiting the site the day the park was purchased for a photo opportunity H2O Mountain biking. We (multiple sporting clubs) met at the park to kick the football around the park.  Summer 2015. With 5 YO daughter. Mountain biking in the bush. Close to home. Beginner Trails. Standout moment was daughter's first single track, mid ride.  The day we formed the Sydney North Offroad Club. Now 14 years on. This was circa 2008. Me: the SNORC mountain bike club president. We were talking about the need of forming a mountain biking club to legitimize our community and to be able to speak w/ council as a formal body. Back in 2008 there wasn't as many places to ride. H2O is a key mountain biking infrastructure for this Hornsby region. Everyone present on that day was in agreeance and the club was born.
What did you do on this day?	There every second day during Covid lockdown for 1-2 hours. Saw multiple groups, spoke to most of them.  Setting up the afternoon photoshoot and having 20 young kids involved with the photo shoot. Kids. Fun. Sport. Wow opportunity for the whole community. There for a couple of hours. We walked the mountain bike trails. There were about 25 people at the event. We packed up and went home. I live 200m from the park.  2 hours. Tracks were sin city and 3 amigos. We saw other families. Spoke to everyone. New skills learned. Family happy.  2-3 hours. Explored all the tracks. Saw other people and spoke to them. Packed the car, headed home feeling excited about the future of mountain biking in our region.

Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	<p>I chose this day as it illustrates what a valuable resource the existing trail network is for young kids and their families.</p> <p>It was the start of the Westleigh Water Board Alliance and the need to have the whole community included with the design of the park.</p> <p>Strong and happy family memory.</p> <p>Because it was essential to the story of mountain biking in our region. Mountain biking is my chosen sport and that's why Westleigh is important to me and many others.</p>
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**Group 3**

About your day – who, where, why and when?	<p>Sons' first night-time mountain bike ride at ages 6 &amp; 8 years old. Green beginner track. Mountain bike riding, searching for wildlife. Westleigh has the only mountain biking trails that accommodate this age group (6-8) in the area and North Shore. The kids' excitement at feeling they're in the middle of nowhere i.e. the sense of excitement discovery and exploration.</p> <p>During lockdown 2021. Just me going for a ride. Nice weather, plenty of time and needing to clear my head The ability to leave all thoughts behind and just focus on the ride.</p> <p>Summer holidays. Going for a ride with a couple of boys from my school. Good weather. The day just worked for me and the other people I was riding with.</p>
What did you do on this day?	<p>We didn't see anyone. Went straight home afterwards.</p> <p>1.5 hours. Yes, probably saw other people and said hello. Rode home after a good ride, feeling much better.</p> <p>I stayed ahead of someone I'm usually slower than. There for around 2 hours. I did some of the outer loops.</p>
Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	<p>Both my sons learnt how to ride their mountain bikes at H2O.</p> <p>Actually, I have many similar days at H2O but always leave surprised at how much better I feel.</p> <p>I got to ride with some people my own age.</p>

**Group 4**

About your day – who, where, why and when?	<p>Late 2021, at night. Riding full loop. To escape lockdown. Stand out moments of the day were crashing.</p> <p>2019, when I first moved to Sydney. With myself and the local mountain biking club. Exploring trails close to home. Went there because the group ride was heading there. Catching up with people I had not met riding trails that were new.</p> <p>Lockdown 2020. Myself and a friend. I was completing an adventure race which got cancelled due to Covid so I ran my own version around the local area. It was within my local area (5km, LGA).</p>
What did you do on this day?	<p>Spent 1 hour riding the tetanus, blue loop, and black loop Didn't see any other people walked out up the fire-road 2 hours riding all open saw other people. Went to café for lunch.</p> <p>1.5 hours. Completing the 50km ride (at 11pm) after 10km paddle, 28km road ride and 28km run we explored all tracks, 2x laps of the trails and 1 x short loop.</p> <p>We didn't see any others as it was already dark when we arrived (9pm). Rode home and slept!</p>
Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	<p>Spent more time in hospital than riding. My first time at the trail. The most physically challenging day on the trails there.</p>

**Group 5**

About your day – who, where, why and when?	<p>8 years ago. We were riding different locations every weekend. It was about 4 weeks since we last been there.</p> <p>At night and by myself, riding with lights during the night, new experience, exciting challenge, 1 and a half hours.</p> <p>2021 Autumn, 1.5 hours.</p> <p>2020 Lockdown, me and three sons under 12 years, took my kids for a mountain bike ride, we needed to get outdoors and spend some time on a physical activity, about 90 mins.</p> <p>Summertime, my family, mountain biking, wanted to get out of the house and exercise, seeing the kids' confidence growing riding and enjoying outdoors, 1.5 – 2 hours.</p>
What did you do on this day?	<p>Exercise and the fun of mountain biking.</p> <p>Flying down the same line and finding it had been changed since our last visit to committed to stop, thankfully kept it together.</p> <p>We did 2 full circuits, so probably about 1 and a half hours. We saw others but mainly while passing, so didn't talk.</p> <p>Sat in the sun discussing how much fun we had going around.</p> <p>Parked at Ruddock Park, rode into H20 mountain biking, to go on a ride, riding the black trail for the first time. Realistically I wasn't as fit as my friend.</p> <p>The joy of kids riding carefree around the tracks and progressing their skills with no stacks!</p>
Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	<p>Closest I've come to having a major stack at Westleigh, huge adrenaline rush, good company.</p> <p>Highlights the variety of things that can be done at Westleigh. I have spent a lot of time there with my son, his mates and their dads.</p> <p>It involved a mate, a challenge and fun natural environment. All elements of a good time.</p> <p>It was one of the first rides off-road with all 3 of my boys and came at a pretty bad time in the world.</p> <p>Not just family, but also an escape from work stress.</p>

**Group 6**

About your day – who, where, why and when?	<p>Early 2022 – Myself, my husband and my two sons. My kids, like many, started riding a lot more during the Covid-19 lockdowns. My youngest learnt to ride without training wheels during lockdown 1 and by the start of this year I decided he was finally ready to give H2O a go. I love riding at H2O and I've told my kids how fun it is. I'd taken my older son for his first ride there last year and his little brother was really keen to give it a go as well. We live in Westleigh so it is just up the road. We didn't see too many other people as it was a weekday. One other family group with older kids and a couple of middle-aged men were there. We greeted people and got the kids to pull over so they could get past.</p> <p>Weekend, from morning to lunchtime. Family and friends were there. Went there for family time, mental health day and exercise. Sharing the moment with the kids, connection with nature, feelings of achievement after a hard ride. Spend 3 hours there, went to Minimoo, Inner loop, Outer loop and Tranquilizer. We saw other people – met with one friend and one group of 4 I know.</p> <p>2010, early morning in winter, cold, misty, quiet. Me and a Wallaby. I go into the bush somewhere every day – that day it was Westleigh. Went because it was a busy day &amp; Westleigh is close &amp; I can be a million miles away in 10 minutes. Just went on my way to work. Not a soul was there, just me and Mr Wallaby.</p> <p>Weekend, sunny afternoon/sunny morning. Friends, family and family of friends. Chose that day because of availability, convenience, proximity and weather. We engaged with others on trails &amp; at Ruddock Park.</p> <p>Sunny Sunday afternoon in the middle of Covid 2021 with 5 mountain biking friends and a park full of kids, mums &amp; dads. Went because of the quality of and the variation of the H2O trails. We saw heaps &amp; heaps of other people all enjoying the trails. Trailhead was great for chit-chat between laps.</p>
What did you do on this day?	<p>Seeing both my kids, who are typically quite risk-averse, cruising confidently around the winding track at Sin City. Spent 45mins-1hr, went via Push It Up as it wasn't busy that day and took a shortcut to get to Sin City. We did two loops of Sin City before calling it quits and leaving the regular way. At the end of the day my youngest had a big spill, but after a few cuddles I enticed him back onto his bike and he finished the track with pride. I was really proud of his resilience.</p> <p>Mountain biking, experiencing the Australian bush and relaxing. My family met up at the track head &amp; spoke with some friends.</p> <p>A stand-out moment was when I spotted Mr. Wallaby. Little fella was just standing there, looking at me. Then he hopped off.</p>

	<p>Spent about 30mins there, maybe an hour. Can't remember what tracks I explored on that day. I normally do the same loop that covers all of them, but they weren't all there in 2010. The trails all had different names then. The spot I saw Mr Wallaby. Then I was off to work. The life slowly draining from me until home time when I get to do more riding to get home.</p> <p>Going for a mountain bike ride with mates, followed by less confident extended family, followed by coffees &amp; cake. Standout moments were regathering after the ride + sharing each other's ride experiences. And the coffee. Spent 3-4 hours including coffee time &amp; Ruddock Park. We explored all of the tracks – for mates the emphasis was on blue/black, for fam/beginners green + blue. The day ended with coffees, camaraderie, chilling out &amp; catching up.</p> <p>Mountain biking on the trails of H2O. The standout moment was seeing the disparate age groups &amp; people – young kids, boys &amp; girls, mums &amp; dads and older riders like me enjoying the trails. Spent 3 hours there. Went to mountain bike tracks Tetanus, Sin City, Inner &amp; Outer Loop &amp; of course Minimoo. At the end of the day – exhausted, rode home to Hornsby. Be great to be able to join H2O and OMV.</p>
Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	<p>I really want my kids to enjoy time outdoors in the bush. We go bushwalking and camping, and mountain biking is another way to enjoy nature. My kids are cautious by nature and not sporty, so it's great to see them excel at a physical skill activity.</p> <p>It was the weekend Sunday – we wanted to get out as a family.</p> <p>Riding bikes at Westleigh keeps me sane &amp; alive because of experiences like this one.</p> <p>The 'day' is a quintessential memory. H2O exists because of a concerted effort to facilitate these types of activities in a concentrated area. The fondness of the memory is the compilation of the success of all the parts. Any diminishment or undercutting of these facilities will see the area morph into something else, perhaps more or less.</p> <p>A lover of the outdoors, walking or mountain biking.</p>

### Group 7

About your day – who, where, why and when?	<p>Christmas Day 2021. My daughter. Riding the single track with my eldest. Mountain bike riding. Normally having Christmas lunch with my Mum and Dad. Not this year.</p> <p>August 2021. With a few friends. Riding the trails – upgraded to a new dual suspension ☺</p>
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	<p>2021. Myself and my husband. Headed to Westleigh for a ride with a group of mates, just for fun and to practice Westleigh has a good mix of beginner and more difficult trails that cater for a mixed group of riders – I was the beginner!</p> <p>2018. The old blokes (6 of us). First Wednesday arvo ride. After most people's work, everyone met at Westleigh, my first day meeting all the old blokes, beers and cheers</p> <p>28<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Night riding, training for the races. Great distance, varying difficulty for perfect training conditions. Personal best times riding at night. Hitting the jumps on tetanus shot at night using torches. Spending time riding with great mates</p> <p>Sometime around 2017-2018 (pre Covid!). Myself, my brother my (now) wife and two other friends.</p> <p>Mountain biking! We were showing our friends the trails and practicing the beginner jumps loop. We also had a bike race (fun race) coming up and wanted to get some km riding in. Bec also hadn't ridden much, so she was learning on the beginner trails and learning on the small jumps. It was sunny, a weekend and we had the day free.</p>
What did you do on this day?	<p>Sharing something I love doing with a loved one. 1 ½ hours. Mostly top single trail/ tracks. Being Christmas day, track to ourselves which is unusual. Christmas dinner with family after</p> <p>Hitting jumps and features that I had been too nervous [to hit] on the old hard trail. About 1.5 hours. Rode nearly all of them. Saw plenty of other people, of nearly all ages, made some small talk and encouragement and laughs. I bumped into friends I hadn't seen in years while at the cars. Had a great catch up. Felt fit and happy!</p> <p>I was gaining my confidence doing the jumps at the starting track and was hitting them well! But then I stacked it because I got a bit too confident! Maybe 2 hours? Rode most of the trails. The tracks were pumping that day. In particular there were lots of kids, most of them hitting the jumps better than me! I stacked it and cut my knee, but kept riding until we were all tired and then headed home.</p> <p>2 hours. Rode the tetanus, outer loop, inner loop. Everything. Didn't see another soul, best way to get out into nature. End of day was beer o'clock.</p> <p>3-4 hours. Explored every track on the side (better for training). Saw a small group as we rode in (3 people), a quick hello and</p>

	<p>how are the trails. Our group spent 30-40 minutes chatting and catching up at the end of the day.</p> <p>Bec did her first jump! Me doing the pipe-feature. Tim and I doing 3 hot laps. Meeting others and sharing tips for our friends on technique. There was a huge community spirit, it was awesome. Kids everywhere, so much encouragement.</p> <p>3-4 hours? Rode all of them, green 4-5 times and outer loop 3 times. Bec did jumps loop and forest a few times Met lots of people, chatted at trail head and did a loop with some others. Helped a group with the drop on the outer loop, they were stoked! Rode back to the cars, drove down to the shops and grabbed burgers and drinks before heading home.</p>
Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	<p>I ride a lot. Every day is a great ride. This was different and very special.</p> <p>I chose this day because it was just really enjoyable on the new bike and improving on my local tracks.</p> <p>It was a day that I gained a lot of confidence in my riding, but I also had my first big stack which taught me that it was ok to stack it!</p> <p>Social connections kept me sane through some time off work (the exercise didn't hurt either).</p> <p>I grew up in the area and loved it then. I would love to be able to teach my kids there.</p> <p>I grew up in west ... When I learnt to drive, I could get out to trails – Westleigh was my local 'trail' that isn't fire roads. I've developed my riding here, stayed fit and encouraged others. I chose this day, amongst many others (including night rides, solo rides etc.) as it shows the variety of people, experiences and joy of riding here.</p>

### Activity 2 - Understanding Opinions and Concerns

*NOTE: Numbers in the table reflect the number of votes for each option within the denoted group.*

A formalized Westleigh Park mountain bike trail network can adequately balance environment protection concerns and opportunities for recreational use?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>6</b>				
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>4</b>				
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>3</b>				

<b>Group 4</b>	<b>4</b>				
<b>Group 5</b>	<b>5</b>				
<b>Group 6</b>	<b>5</b>				
<b>Group 7</b>	<b>6</b>				

A formalised mountain bike trail network will minimise impacts to the local environment

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>6</b>				
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>4</b>				
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>3</b>				
<b>Group 4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>			
<b>Group 5</b>	<b>5</b>				
<b>Group 6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Group 7</b>	<b>6</b>				

A variety of recreational activities can take place at Westleigh Park whilst minimising impacts to native flora and fauna

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
<b>Group 1</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>4</b>				
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>3</b>				
<b>Group 4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Group 5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>			
<b>Group 6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>			
<b>Group 7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>		

#### Activity 4 - What do you want out of this process?

##### Group 1

- Demand is huge. Build more trails in the Hornsby Shire
- Nowhere else for kids to mountain bike ride in the Shire
- Keep the easy,, green trails

##### Group 2

- Mountain biking tracks fully endorsed and built before the end of 2022
- Agreement on the design and timeline for the Westleigh Park mountain biking track
- Maintain an existing valuable resource for kids to be able to exercise and get out into the bush
- Include difficult/technical trails to allow people to progress with their mountain biking skills
- Access to the park formalised and built
- A start to Westleigh Park in 2022

- Keep the trails “Sin City” and “3 Amigos” open, and keep jump loop open
- Have beginner and intermediate trails Hornsby Shire Council can be proud of
- To genuinely have our input considered
- Site remediation. Process starts in 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2022. Completion at the end of 2022
- Balance mountain biking trails and environment outcomes
- Westleigh to become formalised trail network that protects the environment and holds its value as a trail system

### Group 3

- To keep the only mountain bike trails within 30 mins drive that enable children to learn to mountain bike
- For the mountain biking community to have a say
- For green trails to be kept and expanded
- Not just maintain and keep existing trails, but expand them
- To see well documented reports on impact on walking and riding in the area
- To take advantage of the geographical opportunity the Hornsby Shire has to be a mountain biking hub/centre for all Sydney
- Take advantage of the global mountain biking boom and establish the area as a state leader e.g. Dungog expansion, Derby in Tasmania
- To have a balanced outcome
- I want the trails to be for everyone

### Group 4

- Toilet Blocks
- Established challenging trails. More black trails
- More kid friendly trails
- Fix all the unsafe, rickety, broken bridges
- Linkage to Old Man’s Valley (OMV)
- Decent length of trails
- More mountain bike trails
- Connecting trails to OMV Hornsby
- Jumps area for improving skills
- Formalised trail network for all abilities
- More optional challenging features to ride
- Education that mountain biking is a social and inclusive sport

### Group 5

- Greatly improved trail standard and expanded trail network
- Greater focus on mountain biking compared to established sports
- Grow the sport and attract people to the area
- At least maintain the existing Mountain bike trails
- A formal Mountain bike park that is recognised as world class and attracts riders
- More trails for Mountain biking and catering for all skill levels
- Formalised Mountain bike tracks with a diversity of skill level

- A balanced and fair outcome of keeping, improving and expanding the existing trails to cater for all skill levels of mountain bike riders and keep the family friendly trails and natural beauty of the network.

### Group 6

- Child-friendly beginner trail to be retained x2
- Formalised and recognised bike trails x2
- Improve trail infrastructure
- Trails with a range of skill levels
- Understanding of council's commitment to the scale + reach of the site
- Walk trails to be retained
- Seek integration of purpose-built road cycling facilities
- What are the other sport options? – commitment
- A fully functional mountain bike trail network for all ages
- A connection between Westleigh H2O trails and Hornsby OMV trails
- Protection of threatened ecological communities
- A clear understanding of track loss compared to track gained + gradings – less is not more
- I want continued access to a natural environment. I want as much nature AND as much access to that nature as possible.
- A clear & transparent co-design process.

**Group 7**

- More A line, B line combinations (in mountain biking, the “a-line” is a main line while a “b-line” is an alternate, non-main line)
- Link to OMV X2
- Formal features and proper ab/b lines
- Maintain a spectrum of difficulty in trails (not all easy trails)
- Reduction of AstroTurf
- Ability to get lost in nature (not right next to a bunch of screaming kids)
- Child friendly loops
- End of trip facilities (water, toilets etc.)
- Waste management
- Toilets
- Trail signs
- Link trail for mountain bikes to Old Man’s Valley
- More tourism (see Dungog for example)
- Slight reduction in scope of proposed fields (two fields is enough!)
- Trail markers (formal)
- A mini road circuit would be a safe space for kids, club junior training and club criterion needs (see Stromo for example)
- Retaining a good combination of trails at Westleigh that represent all skill levels and are no shorter than the existing trail. There should be long easy trails for kids and beginners all the way up to black runs with jumps
- Facilities = toilets, water, parking, bike wash station, bins, trail markers
- Local businesses who rely upon Westleigh as an introductory mountain bike area don’t suffer (Giant Thornleigh, GG bikes, cycle sport)
- Safer parking and traffic management
- More varied trails suiting different abilities
- Retention of natural hand-built trails – not machine built (except jumps loop)
- Shelter and BBQs
- Events (races)
- Continuation of a trail network that has progression from beginner to advanced riders.

## Activity 4 - Visioning the Future

### Group 1

Current state	<p>Scope of discussion is too narrow</p> <p>Hugely valued mountain bike trails</p> <p>Request from community in the Master Plan Consultation was 'more mountain biking opportunity'</p> <p>CEEC is thriving despite little help from Council</p> <p>Small network of trails used by thousands of people who value them highly</p>
Transition step	<p>Broaden scope of discussion</p> <p>Mountain biking needs to be part of the master plan discussion</p>
Transition step	<p>An 'enabling mindset' from council employees to mountain bikers being part of the master plan</p> <p>Council to look for ways to increase mountain bike opportunities in the Shire</p> <p>Recognition from Council that mountain biking is a valid recreation</p>
Transition step	<p>Increased awareness within voters that unfortunately a vote for the greens is a vote against mountain biking</p>
Future state	<p>Ability to hold event</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Trail networks linking facilities by creating trail to open missing links in fire trail networks</p> <p>Provide jumps loop</p> <p>Provide asphalt pump track</p> <p>Replace lost green trail with fresh green trail</p> <p>Council employees are conditioned to hate on mountain biking</p> <p>Link between Westleigh and OMV trails</p> <p>International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) standard trails</p> <p>10 km min distance</p> <p>Jump lines</p> <p>Retain as much green trail as possible</p>

### Group 2

Current state	<p>Loved facility from the mountain bike network</p> <p>Unsanctioned high-quality trail network</p> <p>Well maintained trails and strong community</p> <p>Green trails</p> <p>Black Trails</p> <p>Blue trails</p> <p>Great fun for all ability of rider</p>
Transition step	<p>Track maintenance for trails</p> <p>Sydney North Off-road Riding Club (SNORC) engaged by council to run &amp; maintain trails</p> <p>Approve co-design</p>

	Mountain bike consultants engaged by council
Transition step	Building trails Community trail building company engaged by Council Link OMV H20 trails
Transition step	Mapping of the region for tourism Continued view of trail network linking within shire
Future state	H20 trails becomes an integral part of a region and state trail network Well-designed trails to coexist with ecological sensitive areas for the benefit of all IMBA rated trails 600 rating Free track for mountain bike community Events – national and local Fundraisers

**Group 3**

Current state	Unsanctioned Unmaintained Good range of trails
Transition step	Team building with local input and support Classes workshops to educate wider/ non-mountain biking community members Look to volunteers as part of the trail building process to fully grasp maintenance needs
Transition step	Look for state and national govt support (sport, environment)
Transition step	Enhance good will and volunteers in mountain bike community Looking beyond Australia for success stories and what works (Dungog, Derby)
Future state	Connection to Old Man's Valley Trails to be sanctioned Expansion of trail network Maintain diversity in trails (i.e. skills) Continuous flow (i.e. not stop start)

**Group 4**

Current state	Small pockets of local trails – makes them easier to access for youth/people who cannot drive/those in lockdown Buried rubbish Asbestos Rusting metal Tracks which are accessible to local community
Transition step	Engage youth – What do they want in the space? Need more 'A' line (main line) features parallel to main trail

	Design/ maintain a range of tracks (for all skill levels) that fit with the topography and the environment
Transition step	Community participation to clean and develop trails
Transition step	Develop accurate trail map Decision making – where to put trails Fun development features – wall rides, see saws, drops, beams to ride etc.
Future state	Club nights with BBQs using community spaces Trail markings including the distance of loops and areas Green trails around the fields, with dirt base not concrete footpaths Trails with bush surrounding them Rocky trail event held there by 2025 Pump track and or modular pump track for events Multiple uses in one area

**Group 5**

Current state	Unsanctioned trials No amenities Low maintenance Lack of close parking Minimal features Industrial waste
Transition step	-
Transition step	-
Transition step	Council recognition of trails funding for trail maintenance Contract pro builders & maintenance providers Economic business case
Future state	Sanctioned and signed trails catering for all skills levels Extended and expanded network including OMV and beyond Improved digital tech Amenities such as washdown, parking, toilet and retail Co-existing with other sporting and equity with other sports High quality trail standard / design appropriate features for varying skill levels Trail design that protects and enhances enjoyment of environment Cross country trail and races network

**Group 6**

Current state	Functional trails In nature
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	<p>Carparking not formalized Lacking amenities + water Extensive Diverse range of skill levels Enough space for everyone Recognised tracks that are currently in place</p>
Transition step	<p>Analysis of current tracks (green/blue/black) Remediation Accurate data on usage Better understanding of potential use</p>
Transition step	<p>Planning &amp; consultation with mountain bike parties for final decision Consultation Funding Recognition of the environment educational value of mountain bike activities i.e., connecting kids &amp; adults with nature</p>
Transition step	<p>Erosion control Professional track design Community support/volunteerism</p>
Future state	<p>Good integration of supporting facilities. Like STROMO Jumps Hand-made style track Connectivity Protection of the environment Safety Balance of sports in the area with no overcrowding Current track (blue + green + black) – same amount or more than New track measurement Beginner level Good accessibility</p>

### Group 7

Current state	<p>All skill levels 15 km existing trails Jumps loop No facilities No formal maintenance No formal access Legacy of trails Heavily impacted by weather (small amounts of rain close trails)</p>
Transition step	<p>Design of new trails Consultation of local clubs with council Engagement of local trail builders A consultation with other sport facilities Staged construction plan to keep existing trails open Community Education Impacts of poorly designed trails</p>

Transition step	Funding for community education: Benefits of mountain biking flora and fauna environment concerns Best practice trail design, construction and maintenance Ongoing management plan for mountain biking with annual budget for maintenance and upkeep Protection of flora and fauna whilst maintaining current trail network
Transition step	Drainage management Signage for trails (Bike Walk etc.) Environment management plan finalized Council/club run workshops to implement best practice trail building Use of local trades etc. for building of entire facilities Track sponsors
Future state	All skill levels! 30km of trails Jumps and skills park Integration of bike trails and other sporting facilities Formalized maintenance with community involvement Facilities (toilet, waste management, bike wash) Link to OMV mountain bike park Events and competitions

### Activity 5 - Our Principles

Group 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognition of the vast number of riders who currently ride at Westleigh</li> <li>2. Trail network linkages (H2O, OMV)</li> <li>3. Inclusive and diverse inputs into design activities</li> <li>4. Open and enabling mindset, proactive and positive approach</li> <li>5. Determination to provide the future state outcomes. Build it now for future populations</li> </ol>
Group 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community driven</li> <li>2. Fair and honest</li> <li>3. Balanced/compromise</li> <li>4. Open minded</li> <li>5. Results time bound</li> </ol>
Group 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Worthwhile destination for all mountain bike skill levels</li> <li>2. Recognizing the growing nature that mountain biking is globally!</li> <li>3. Every sport has an equitable increase of facilities and infrastructure</li> <li>4. Improved mountain bike trails and increased number of trails with environment sustainability an ongoing focus</li> <li>5. Give younger generations increased access to the environment</li> </ol>
Group 4	Group 4 did not develop any principles

Group 5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Catering for all skill levels</li><li>2. Trail building that protects the environment</li><li>3. High quality trail design.</li></ol>
Group 6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Maintaining a variety of track to cater to all skill levels</li><li>2. Maintaining a critical mass for size so it's worth visiting and doesn't get overcrowded</li><li>3. Quality trails – variation and build quality</li><li>4. Striking a balance between environment protection and recreation</li><li>5. Value local experience &amp; expertise</li></ol>
Group 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Planning and management of the different stages. How do we access (even if partially) during a long build process?</li><li>2. Respect to current users, to legacy of the site (always been biking), collaboration – not us vs them</li><li>3. Equitable outcomes – yes there are some mountain bike trails in the LGA but there are not certain styles, types, features, facilities in the LGA. E.g. Road circuit, bike events – whereas there are already lots of ovals and fields that could be better utilized</li><li>4. Connection to nature (we also love the environment)</li><li>5. Education of all parties, us included, throughout the process</li></ol>

## WORKSHOP 3 – ENVIRONMENT AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

15 March 2022, 5.30pm – 8.30pm

### Activity 1 - Your Story Your Connection

#### Group 1

<p>What is your connection with Westleigh Park and Why do you visit Westleigh Park?</p>	<p>The 10-acre part that is bush in relatively good condition. I love walking there and admiring and leaning about the special plants. During the week, the bush there is very peaceful and calming. I often walk in adjoining Berowra Valley which I love too but the Westleigh Park bush is very different due to being ridge top on different soil; this leads to different plant associations than exist in the national park. I love learning about the plants.</p> <p>It is so very close to my house, about 2 streets away. I do choose to (only) go during the week though because I am afraid of getting skittled by bikes on the weekend when it can get very busy.</p> <p>Native bush, few people (until recent years), open space. Quiet environment with undisturbed trees, bushland. Occasional dog walking in bush - cannot walk dog in national park.</p> <p>It is accessible to the community, to all ages, and has diversity within it that should be shared.</p> <p>I walk, jog and ride with my children in Westleigh Park. We observe the flora and fauna, particularly the echidnas, wallabies and goannas. It brings us back to be in the bush while riding.</p>
<p>What sparked your interest about this project?</p>	<p>I saw the unique bush in Westleigh Park with its endangered rare plant associations and wanted to learn about it and to protect it and stop the damage that has already been done.</p> <p>I wanted to do all I could to protect these very special plant assemblages. There is so little of it still around. Settlers Green, a Hornsby development across the road used to be covered with beautiful stiff forest, but it all went.</p> <p>Close to home, few people, walk in native bush Non-bike issues! Noise and lights from OVALS.</p> <p>Local resident, concern over quiet enjoyment.</p> <p>Noise, damage to environment if removal of trees, traffic, increasing visitors to our quiet environment.</p> <p>My son wanted to ride in the bush at Westleigh Park 5 years ago. I wanted to ensure his safety so I rode with him. That sparked is</p>

	<p>interest in the bush, and he has gone on bushwalks, abseil and canyon around NSW because of Westleigh Park. He is also a regular Mountain bike rider at Westleigh, now aged 11 years old.</p>
Why are you passionate about flora and fauna?	<p>The flora is unique, there are endangered species there. Once they are gone, they are gone.</p> <p>I have been bushwalking for a long time. I have realized that places unimpacted by man are extremely important for mental health. It is not all about men and their needs other species deserve to survive too.</p> <p>There are so many other places of less natural value where bike riding can take place. This bush is of particular value.</p> <p>Lifetime love of natives and knowing of loss throughout.</p> <p>Sydney, isolate + cover contaminate Preservation of dense bush, population local wallabies, quiet enjoyment for locals.</p> <p>We need to preserve it, but we need to share it to ensure preservation. Closing it off removes the opportunities for others to be appreciative of the need to conserve it.</p>

## Group 2

What is your connection with Westleigh Park and Why do you visit Westleigh Park?	<p>Peaceful place to get away from the noisy world, beautiful trees, bird song, magical bushland.</p> <p>Lots of natural environment that looks beautiful, bushland so close to suburbia but feels remote, chance to spot wildlife.</p> <p>Provides an undeveloped buffer free of residences and development, source of bird life and creatures which move around our residential area, perfect habitat which enriches all of Westleigh.</p> <p>I don't regularly attend the area. Live in the vicinity, am not a bike rider, I've occasionally wandered the area, but actually thought I was trespassing.</p> <p>A tranquil environment, a peaceful natural environment we can walk through. There is an abundance of bird life and wallabies.</p> <p>This is a quiet space close to Quarter Sessions Rd. There is a peaceful atmosphere.</p> <p>Peaceful natural environment – greenery, clear air, birdsong, waterways a place where you can escape the built environment, noise, heat, traffic, hustle and bustle.</p>
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	<p>A safe haven for wildlife to live and breed.</p> <p>As project officer for powerful owl project, [Westleigh park is] an area that holds a breeding territory for the powerful owl – a threatened species.</p> <p>I have been once to visit the breeding area with volunteers to understand learn which parts of the bushland are important to the owls. Our volunteers visit the area regularly, but for recreation and to monitor the breeding activity of the owls.</p> <p>The wildlife – birds, wallabies, echidnas, the flora – trees wildflowers and orchids, lack of development which has kept all these things safe.</p> <p>I live further along the road. I love my surrounding bushland and wildlife. I have seen wallabies and echidnas along that section of road. They live in the bush.</p>
What sparked your interest about this project?	<p>Concern that all this will be lost. SO much could be destroyed in order to include everything that is proposed.</p> <p>The overall Westleigh Park development has significant potential to have negative impacts on Westleigh Park amenity.</p> <p>Changed + improved traffic flows in and through the Westleigh developments.</p> <p>A genuine concern about the overdevelopment of sporting fields on the site at the expense of the tranquil environment residents enjoy, a concern for the environment – native trees will be removed, impacting the ecosystem.</p> <p>A desire to protect Westleigh Park and the amenity of residents, e.g. changes/noise from traffic using sports fields.</p> <p>There are powerful owl breeding territories in the park and I am here to speak to what the likely effects this project may have on their breeding success.</p> <p>I am concerned about increased traffic along Q.S road which will endanger our local walkers and the wildlife. Any development of this site will force our wildlife to move further into the bush for their own safety, meaning we will no longer see them around Westleigh. The mountain bike club members don't respect the bush, the wildlife and the flora. Large daytime sporting groups will litter the area and ruin our bushland suburb.</p>
Why are you passionate about flora and fauna?	So much of it is now endangered by so much overdevelopment, turpentine forest very special, hollow trees.

	<p>35 years as an environment safety manager ensuring projects have positive legacy and no adverse impacts.</p> <p>Flora and fauna within the area significantly enrich the whole of Westleigh.</p> <p>We pay our respects to our first Australians, yet we are prepared to sacrifice flora and fauna to build structures that will detract from their precious land.</p> <p>It is essential we preserve the natural environment. Decisions have been made to develop the site, planning commercial decisions above consultation with local stakeholders.</p> <p>We all deserve a place on this earth, animals and plants are fascinating and entertaining, we can't live without a healthy environment, interacting with flora and fauna reminds you that we are all connected. Flora and fauna exist in the natural environment and spending time in the natural environment is good for physical and mental health.</p> <p>We are very lucky to have this natural bushland around us. My daughter in law lives in Bankstown and she loves visiting Westleigh to see our colourful and musical birds. Our bushland is Australian bushland, not the imported weeds and shrubs.</p>
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### Group 3

What is your connection with Westleigh Park and Why do you visit Westleigh Park?	<p>My wife and I have walked to Westleigh Bushfire Brigade from Valley Rd Hornsby. We are totally amazed at the beautiful blue gum trees (hopefully preservation of this area is highest priority).</p> <p>The entire area has a wonderful 'feel'. Great care has to be taken to hold this atmosphere.</p> <p>I am concerned about the national values associated with the vanishing native bushland around the suburban fringes, particularly the introduction of weed and wildlife disturbance, particularly in endangered Blue Gum High Forests. I have no undue concerns regarding the development of sports ground in the reclamation of the tip areas at the Quart Session Rd level.</p> <p>The naturalness and additional bird species complement the northern region.</p> <p>The rare critically endangered forest and threatened species within the Park.</p> <p>Seeing the flora and fauna through the various seasons.</p>
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What sparked your interest about this project?	<p>If there must be a bike track – please do a perimeter track and not infringe on the high-quality forest – I suggest hugging the high-quality forest – because the walkers need space!</p> <p>I am witnessing the destruction of more and more habitats for wildlife and precious forested areas and someone needs to start advocating for it. The decision makers are not listening to communities – special interest groups and developers seem to have a lot of sway yet the community voice is muffled.</p> <p>Concern that introduction of said pathogens endangering the native flora e.g. Plytophesa Connomoni, myrtle must.</p> <p>I've been involved in protecting the critically endangered ecological communities since the Hornsby Quarry project started. My interest then morphed into Quarry / Westleigh when the State Government provided the \$90 million funding for the two projects, and it was discovered that unsanctioned mountain bike tracks had been illegally built through the CEEC on that site as well.</p>
Why are you passionate about flora and fauna?	<p>Please no more destroying of the beautiful bushland – maybe use existing walking tracks. All take tracks around the perimeter or around the edges.</p> <p>I am a wildlife rescuer and have seen first-hand the impact of encroachment of wildlife habitat. The Garden Shire is fast becoming a Concrete Jungle and the formalizing of bike tracks concerns me that our wildlife will be driven away from habitats that belong to them. Walking does not impact the wildlife in the same way. CEECs should never be impacted for this activity.</p> <p>I have been an avid bird water for over 40 years and have seen a gradual decline of nature's birds in the Hornsby Valley. I have also been a very keen bush regeneration since early 1990s.</p>

## Activity 2 - Understanding Opinions and Concerns

*NOTE: Numbers in the table reflect the number of votes for each option within the denoted group.*

A formalised Westleigh Park mountain bike trail network can adequately balance environment protection concerns and opportunities for recreational use?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Group 1	1	1	1	1	
Group 2			2	3	
Group 3					3

A formalised mountain bike trail network will minimise impacts to the local environment?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>	
<b>Group 2</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Group 3</b>				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

A variety of recreational activities can take place at Westleigh Park whilst minimising impacts to native flora and fauna

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>Group 2</b>				<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Group 3</b>				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

### Activity 3 - Key Issues and Concerns

#### Group 1

- Removal of trees to widen tracks
- Quiet environment for residents
- Increased visitors to quiet suburbs
- Disturbing wildlife such as wallabies
- Damage to dense bushland
- Traffic levels; Drawing more traffic to streets
- High use of tracks in good bush
- Whether more riders will flock to the area if it is further advertised, and more pressure will be put on the bush
- Whether if there are controlled conditions for bike users, will they be monitored i.e. how to stop hoons with no consideration for protecting the bush
- Noise [related to] bikes and riders
- Plants being damaged more by more riders
- Walking trials need to be embedded but to the exclusion of riders. Hornsby has 100s of kilometres of walking tracks but only 20km of Mountain bike trails.
- Where is the data that clearly shows mountain bike tracks built to Australian standards damage native flora?
- The turpentine as not been shown to have suffered from mountain biking, why close it off to riders?
- If we close the green trails or significantly reduce them, we are effectively locking out or excluding children from learning to ride and appreciate the bush at Westleigh Park.

#### Group 2

- Reduced habitat - in particular, for a wide range of birdlife that enrich Westleigh

- Traffic impacts of overall Westleigh Park development. No confidence council can develop meaningful projections
- I lack confidence in Hornsby Council delivering a decent result for the Westleigh community based on Chilves Duffy and esplanade Yarra traffic planning
- Noise and lighting from park impacting wildlife and residents
- Key concern that sports oval planned close to residents' homes
- Information from council regarding buffer of vegetarian FAQ on website says 150meter buffer – plan says only 70 meters.
- South oval is a raised piece of land – noise will impact all around Westleigh. Mountain biking is quieter and more suitable close to home
- Increased traffic from sports
- Mountain bike trails open up the bushland for increased visitation by walkers and dogs which stresses owls and can increase mortality in juvenile owls
- Mountain bike riders whooshing past spoils the relaxed environment for walkers.
- Mountain bike riders cut down trees and move soil which disrupts plants and leads to increased erosion
- Mountain bike riders disrupt the natural behaviour of powerful owls, especially in breeding season
- Mountain biking close to nest trees causes stress to powerful owls. It's a known trigger for reactive behaviours.
- Impact of lighting on nocturnal birds and animals
- Mountain biking deviating from sanctioned tracks in endangered bushland
- No bike tracks in endangered turpentine forest
- Loss of large trees/bushland during construction
- Formalised tracks would encourage people from outside Westleigh to use the tracks. Outsiders bring trouble when they find a new meeting place
- Additional traffic along quarter sessions road
- Formalized tracks could endanger wildlife
- No timely consultation with residents for draft or for these workshops – had to find out about it by chance.

### Group 3

- If the biking is formalized this would mean additional facilities such as toilets, parking, viewing platforms – which will further damage the parks
- Introduction of social packages
- I believe mountain biking is a lovely activity, but it must not be allowed in areas of critical environment significance.
- Native animals and birds at risk
- Mountain bikers tend to like making their own trails - what limitations and controls will be in place to mitigate the spread?
- Around the bike track – weed control, loss of atmosphere amongst the blue gum, impossible to clean out all rubbish.
- The damage done by bikes to these roots can be devastating and kill trees in the immediate area but also spread to surrounding areas.

- Loss/deterioration of tranquillity of bushland experience
- Very uncomfortable - bikes/people/animals/birds together
- Critically endangered forest should not be made vulnerable to further extinction because of damage caused by bikers
- What fines will be put in place, and will they be enforced when people break the rules?
- Tendency for some bikers to make additional tracks
- If we must have bike tracks, circumnavigate the beautiful areas (align near property)
- The impact of the bikers on the wildlife will be significant and damaging. Wildlife will flee the areas which is part of the reason others
- I have concerns that the tracks will not be properly supervised and the damage to the environment will go unchecked
- Objection to the opening up/widening of trails
- Excess public use will result in the introduction of noisy miners which are very territorial and chase many native birds away from the area
- Mountain biking is a dangerous sport and the parks do not allow easy access for ambulances
- Disturbance to native birds and animals, which include injuries and death to some.
- If we must have a bike track, circumnavigate the sensitive area!
- Mountain bikers build tracks in critically endangered ecological communities (CEECs) and next to threatened species at Westleigh Park
- Damage being done to tree root systems, understory vegetation and mycorrhizal systems
- Bikers ride wet tracks. Even when signs are posted asking riders to not ride in wet weather, they're ignored
- Bikers cut corners and make shortcuts to reduce their Strava times
- Bikers cut down CEEC vegetation under the guise of pruning
- Damage is being done to riparian zones and waterways
- Switchbacks greatly increase the area of damage
- Every track has an area of 'edge effect' on each side. The more tracks and the closer together the tracks, the greater the edge effects of erosion, weed growth, additional light encouraging non-endemic species, rubbish
- Native fauna is being driven off
- Night riding drives of nocturnal fauna including Powerful Owls, a threatened species
- Bikers claim they are 'environmentalists' but have no idea of the damage they are causing
- Bikers are aggressive towards those that want to conserve the area, calling them anti-mountain bikes, we're not, we're pro-conservation
- Council reports state that: the extent of tracks has significantly increased since Council purchased the site, yet bikers deny this. The damage caused by bikers is risking the CEEC status
- There has been no compliance action against bikers that cause damage, even when they lop or remove threatened species

- The bike tracks MUST be removed from the areas containing Critically Endangered Ecological Communities and Threatened Species.
- It is a furphy that mountain bikers have nowhere to ride - they are allowed to ride on 30,000km of maintenance trails in National Parks in NSW alone (Source: NSW NPWS Draft Cycling Strategy and Policy)

#### **Activity 4 - Visioning the Future**

##### **Group 1**

Current state	Degraded & polluted land, over-utilized tracks in good bush Damaged and endangered bush Currently the 10 hectares of bush are not in too bad condition, but it is cut by tracks – there is dumped material in places Used by families for recreation, despite being unsanctioned and in places is dangerous because of past uses Bushland is educational and appreciated
Transition step	Remove toxic materials Determine from quantitative data and validated mountain bike track construction processes how the track variety can be built alongside the bush for presentation Remove asbestos and rubbish Allow tracks to return to bush
Transition step	Replant trees Remediate the areas where mountain biking tracks should be removed, while co-designing new trails to ensure riders can appreciate the variety of bushland Propagate the relevant plant species from the area and plant them
Transition step	Protect environment Perhaps allow sensitively located walking tracks so people can appreciate that bush, no dogs. Plan the maintenance of sanctioned tracks and preserved bushland, e.g.: bush care, so the mountain biking community have responsibility for the trails with council
Future state	Mountain biking trails used by families of all mountain biking abilities, from beginners to advanced riders Remediated, preserved bushland appropriately open for mountain biking for families Reduced bike tracks Remediated bush environment Have the whole bush returned to its original state Open tree parkland, no bikes in original forest

##### **Group 2**

Current state	It is a natural habitat for birds and animals
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	<p>Plants and trees are growing well, tranquil area and healthy environment</p> <p>Powerful owls successfully breeding in the park</p> <p>Hornsby is the bushland shire. We like it that way</p>
Transition step	<p>Powerful owl project and Council consult so that impacts of the project on the owls are understood, and councils ensures that the owls are protected</p> <p>Remediate and replace current bike tracks</p>
Transition step	<p>Council commits to protecting the powerful owls' territories</p> <p>Keep some trails open for bikes but maintain them</p> <p>Re-route mountain bike tracks, away from endangered bushland</p> <p>Reduce overdevelopment of the site</p>
Transition step	<p>Adequately fund staff to monitor compliance with sanctioned bike tracks</p> <p>Adequately fund protecting bushland</p>
Future state	<p>Remain a good habitat for Australian native birds and animals</p> <p>Be a safe place to protect and enhance critically endangered bushland</p> <p>Replanting for future generations.</p> <p>Powerful owl territories are protected and bike trails are kept in a separate part of the park.</p> <p>Hornsby should still be the bushland shire in years to come.</p> <p>Westleigh to be an enhancement of the current tranquil environment that supports flora and fauna and a peaceful neighbourhood - privilege the environment</p>

### Group 3

Current state	<p>The current conservation status of the critically endangered Blue Gum High Forest should remain unattended and not fragmented in any way.</p> <p>Mountain Bike Tracks should not be permitted at all in this area</p> <p>Blue Gum High Forest is critically endangered and it is estimated only 140 hectares exist in this world. It must be preserved</p> <p>Critically endangered Forest is habitat for wildlife including threatened species and our fauna is struggling. Mountain bikes will not respect the areas</p> <p>Already have walking tracks – do nothing except repair</p>
Transition step	<p>Proper policing of the parks and recreational areas to ensure the tracks and forests are preserved and not damaged</p> <p>Maintenance is crucial</p> <p>Formalising Bike Tracks will be a step towards further mammal and species extinctions. Bikes kill the tree roots and surrounding vegetation</p> <p>Support obtained from mountain bike groups for the new site</p> <p>Assessment of various public and private properties that would be available</p>

Transition step	Keep the existing walking track only Co-design of new bike park on another site with stakeholders Purchase of appropriate site using the \$3.6 million grant funds that are separate to the \$40 million allocated for the sporting facilities at Westleigh Government approval for funding to go towards the new site
Transition step	I believe there should be family recreation areas but they should be away from the forests which are dwindling Foot-track improve – member only should be permitted No mountain bike trails should be permitted through the Blue Gum High Forest New bike park opens Remediation of bike tracks at Westleigh as part of \$40 million Government grant Closure of all mountain bike tracks at Westleigh Construction of new bike park
Future state	The Garden Shire Now and Then My ideal would be an area where our wildlife and CEECs are preserved as fully as possible. Community voices are respected, and bike recreation areas are kept separate. We in Hornsby have very little high-quality environment, MUST KEEP IT ALL The future state should remain as close as possible to the current therefore no transitional steps should be contemplated Multiple use of activities in sensitive bushland areas will cause a deterioration in its natural values such as a reduction in number of bird and animal species No mountain bikes in CEECs or near threatened species, either on the Westleigh site or through the link track A mountain bike park with a criterium, pump track, technical tracks, beginners' track, facilities and car parking area, that is on ANOTHER SITE

### Activity 5 - Our Principles

Group 1*  *Two sets of principles were agreed upon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with local stakeholders, the people used to living in Westleigh's quiet environment</li> <li>Think outside the square, alternative solutions e.g. putting mountain bike trails in an adjacent part of the park, or out of the bush – sacrifice one of the ovals?</li> <li>Using present as a mountain biking area rather than oval</li> <li>Consider remediating unofficial mountain bike tracks back to bush, to provide safe breeding areas for wildlife.</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusion of the mountain biking community as a cross-section</li> <li>Broaden the design process with appropriate professionals in mountain biking trail design and ecology to consider what</li> </ol>
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	<p>Westleigh park can provide, in the context of what Hornsby shire currently provides</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Stage the design process – use data to validate decision making of protected bushland</li> <li>4. Include references to co-maintenance with council of the facility</li> <li>5. Prove the design against existing example sin Australian locations.</li> </ol>
Group 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Before doing anything – consult wildlife authorities concerning protected and endangered species of birds and animals located at this site. The same applies to critical endangered bushland from gum trees down to orchids</li> <li>2. Powerful owl breeding territory to be protected and bike trails to be kept in a separate part of the park with an appropriate distance between the bike trails and the edge of the territory</li> <li>3. Keep environmental protection at the forefront of all decision making.</li> <li>4. Keep the tranquil nature of the neighbourhood as an element to maintain in a co-design. This means thoroughly consulting on traffic impacts for all activities in the park</li> <li>5. Ensure that Council and the trail designers consult the neighbours and local stakeholders about the development (which will impact on nearby residents in particular.)</li> </ol>
Group 3*  *One individual worked alone	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give prime consideration to designing a bike park that is on a site that is NOT the Westleigh site, utilising the \$3.6 million State Government funding, given that Hornsby Council officers have confirmed with the State Government that those funds can be applied to any site within the Hornsby Shire</li> <li>2. Design and construct tracks that are not in or adjacent to any ecologically sensitive areas, particularly critically endangered (Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest) or endangered (Duffys Forest) ecological communities, nor near to any flora or fauna threatened species or habitat of threatened species</li> <li>3. Provide a range of bike tracks from beginners to technical but with a particular emphasis on trails for family groups as that is the concern most often raised by mountain bikers in relation to closing Westleigh tracks</li> <li>4. Bike trails for families must not be in, or adjacent to, any environmentally sensitive areas</li> </ol>
Group 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The critically Endangered BGHF areas and the areas used by threatened species, especially the powerful owls, must not be involved in the recreational projects. They must be preserved.</li> <li>2. The park must be properly policed, with proper deterrents put in force to ensure the site is used and maintained properly. A full-time ranger and proper signage listing fines and expected behaviour must be part of the ongoing plan.</li> <li>3. Limit the number of people and activities in the most sensitive natural areas - parking and toilets to be located in suitable areas, away from these same areas.</li> </ol>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Serious offences must be enforced for the illegal construction of bike tracks</li><li>5. All bike tracks should only be built in the perimeter areas and allow the walkers their own peaceful environment.</li></ul> |
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## WORKSHOP 4 – MOUNTAIN BIKE STAKEHOLDERS

22nd March 2022, 5:30pm – 8:30pm

### Activity 1 - Your Story Your Connection

#### Group 1

About your day – who, where, why and when?	Many days - kids learning to ride, destressing by riding lap after lap. The tracks and the bus are involved in my story. I have been riding there for nearly 20 years and can see the tracks almost without looking. I just had to go. My daughter doing the black loop for the first time is one of the standout days.
	Friday afternoon in summer or Sat/Sun arvo in Winter. Sunny day, needed to de-stress and do some exercise. Went riding for 2 hours out at the trail which are 300 m from my house. With friends, who I rang to see if they were up for a ride with our kids. We also ran into others we know, who happened to be down there, and bumped into people we didn't know and talked with them. I needed a break to relax and focus on fitness as well as just socialize with people I would not normally talk to in my day-to-day life.
	On an average school holiday, when I had some time off work. With me, and my 3 daughters. Progressing the kid's cycling skills, riding over obstacles and following the trails... bonding in a family activity. It is a safe place to ride and develop skills for kids and is an amazing natural environment. Stand out moments of the day were seeing my kids getting self-confidence, building self-esteem by overcoming challenges and sharing an adventurous activity.
	When I complete the entire trails technically perfectly, preferably with mate(s). Myself, fellow riders. Family – when I come home happy. I go [riding at Westleigh] a few times a week. Stand out moments of the day were the relaxing atmosphere of the bush, the freed-up mindset I get during and after the ride.
	Any given summer (except wet 2022). Myself, random riders and my girlfriend. Riding the blacks while GF rides the greens. Free time and great weather.
What did you do on this day?	2 hrs. Explored all the tracks. Saw other people but probably didn't talk to them. I rode home.
	I was riding for exercise and to relax. I love the bush and find it very relaxing. I love the birds, wallabies and the flora. The nature, length and variety of trails keep me coming back. Stand out moments were sunshine and nature and trail condition. I rode 20km experiencing all trail saw wallabies and wildflowers. I did all of them, but more beginner and intermediate trails. Saw

	<p>lots of people, spoke to those at the trail head - families with young children (parents taking turns), older and younger riders. Everyone was socially interacting within groups. I rode home, taking a photo of the sunset.</p> <p>Around 2 hours. Explored all the green trails (easy trails). We engaged with other cyclists and shared a few laughs. At the end of the day, the kids expressed their desire to do it again! Getting exercise on a mountain bike and doing some maintenance on trails. Teaching some kids riding techniques.</p> <p>Around 1.25 hours each ride. Explored all trails at Westleigh H20 and surrounding roads. Usually see many other riders, some walkers. Yes – always chat or offer support. I always feel great, even if I have an accident. I note any need to buy bike parts from local shops to clean my bike – I am proud of my mountain bike.</p> <p>Stand out moments of the day were nailing the back loop and the flow into Minimoo. Spent a few hours at Westleigh. Explored all the tracks. Always see other people, stop and have a chat, show newbies where to go.</p> <p>Drove home, got Maccas on the way home.</p>
Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	<p>I didn't choose a particular day, Westleigh Park is part of many days.</p> <p>I live next to it. I love it and I love the bush. I ride these 4 times a week when possible.</p> <p>Family is the most important aspect to me, within the natural environment. H20 has been incredibly pivotal in my engagement with community and family in my journey to contribute to the formalization of the trails.</p> <p>This is a typical day I visit the bush.</p> <p>It's a good memory and my GF enjoyed her first Mountain bike experience.</p>

## Group 2

About your day – who, where, why and when?	<p>Saturday morning, 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday every month</p> <p>With all my best riding buddies. Riding my mountain bike.</p> <p>Saturday is my riding day, [Westleigh is the] best mountain bike</p>
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	<p>track in the area, within distance from house; don't have to drive to get there.</p> <p>Late afternoon spring, coming into summer. Myself and my best friend riding mountain bikes. Went there after work, great weather.</p> <p>2018 with 1<sup>st</sup> Cherrybrook scouts – around 20 scouts from the group with parents and leaders. Introducing everyone to mountain biking in a safe and controlled environment. It is accessible to beginners but challenging enough to have fun and experience mountain biking.</p> <p>Stand out moments were seeing multiple people do their first drops.</p> <p>Late 2020. With myself, son and youngest daughter riding our mountain bikes. We really love being able to ride there as it caters to all skill levels. Stand out moments of the day were seeing the smiles on my children's faces and the laughs that we had.</p>
What did you do on this day?	<p>Stand out moments were keeping up with my mates, doing the downhill section on the outer loop and nailing the stepping-stones.</p> <p>There for approx. 1 hr. Explored all the tracks. Always people there. Say hello as you pass and small talk at the trail head. Always have a coffee and or cake at the local café.</p> <p>Stand out moments were nailing the outer loop climb. There for 2 hours. Explored all tracks, especially outer loop multiple times. Saw other like-minded riders, walkers, stopped and had a nice chat. Went home exhausted and happy. Rode the stress of work away.</p> <p>There for 2 hours. Explored green and blue with a leader ride on black afterwards We saw other people and talked to them - mountain biking is very social. At least 5 of the scouts now ride with friends and to school.</p> <p>There for around 2 hrs. Explored mainly the green trails with my daughter, then some solo laps of the whole park while my son looked after his younger sister. Saw lots of other people and talked to them. Had a coffee and drink and food at the local shopping village afterwards with my children.</p>
Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	Close to home, regular riding spot. Can access with minimal road riding.

	<p>I ride here all the time, I love the track here and have taught my kids to ride there. This day stands out as my family was able to share an activity we love with others.</p> <p>It was my daughter's first time there but have been riding there for quite a number of years.</p>
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### Group 3

About your day – who, where, why and when?	<p>Weekday afternoon, school holidays with self and bunch of schoolboys. Walking, photographing nature fauna and flora (intended) but the school kids were seeing how high they could get on the jumps so with their permission I took action shots instead. Free time, good weather. Stand outs of the day were good photographs and meeting people several generations removed.</p> <p>I've been there 1000s of times, very hard [to choose a favourite day]. 2006 with me and my sons Reece and Myles. We were playing chasings through the trails. We go there almost every weekend. You know when your kids are absolutely loving an experience. The bush, the activity, the challenge and the continual pursuit of improvement.</p> <p>First time I went was over a decade ago. A friend from work took me after work, there were not many riders then. Friend from work rode there regularly. Most of my mountain biking experience had been on fire-trails so this was my first time riding narrow, technical tracks.</p> <p>My friend suggested it as we rode home from work.</p> <p>Beautiful sunny day, 22 degrees C, slight breeze. Dry trails. Just me. Many other riders of all ages including family groups. Excellent weather and trail conditions.</p> <p>Weekday – sunny weather. With riding/work mates. Mountain biking. Close to home, safe from motor vehicles, bushland, fun to ride, great exercise.</p>
What did you do on this day?	<p>3 hours. Explored jumps loop, mini moo, mosquito coast Saw other people and talked to them. At the end of the day I posted photos.</p> <p>2 ½ hours. Explored the green trail area. Saw other people. Having a chat with other people, walkers or riders, always happens. Exhausted at end of day.</p> <p>Stand out moments were the peacefulness of no other riders so no pressure in doing the laps and technical features. Spent about 1 hour there. Unknown which tracks we explored. Saw no other people. Rode home at the end of the day.</p>

	<p>I was doing a few full laps of all trails on my mountain bike. Really enjoyable riding on all types of trails - initial jumps, green flow trails and challenging rocky sections Enjoyable seeing of lots of other people enjoying themselves.</p> <p>There for 2.5 hours. Explored every single track three times. Saw lots of other riders including people of all levels, fitness and family groups. Yes, I spoke to a few people. I went home and relaxed.</p> <p>A good workout, revitalization being in the bush, being active and healthy. Spent 3 hours, explored all of the tracks. Saw other people, casual greetings only.</p> <p>At the end of the day we all went back to our respective lives.</p>
Why did you choose this day to reflect upon?	<p>Just one of many pleasant days there.</p> <p>Something to do with the joy of childhood.</p> <p>Just because it was first ride in the early days.</p> <p>Everything about it was a positive experience.</p> <p>Bushland and a beautiful place to mountain bike.</p>

## Activity 2 - Understanding Opinions and Concerns

*NOTE: Numbers in the table reflect the number of votes for each option within the denoted group.*

A formalised Westleigh Park mountain bike trail network can adequately balance environment protection concerns and opportunities for recreational use?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>5</b>				
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>4</b>				
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			

A formalised mountain bike trail network will minimise impacts to the local environment

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>5</b>				
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>4</b>				
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>			

A variety of recreational activities can take place at Westleigh Park whilst minimising impacts to native flora and fauna

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>			
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>		

### What do you want out of this process?

#### Group 1

- The overall experience [of mountain bike riding] will be degraded.
- Issue - When council wants to exclude mountain biking from the forest that is deemed CEEC, but doesn't want to look at other case studies e.g. Bantry Bay, Maydena (Tas), Thredbo etc. all of which have trails running sustainably. Through EEC/CEEC.
- Concerned that we will have less variety & distance of mountain bike trails - we need more variety and levels of trail challenges.
- Mountain biking [infrastructure] being further reduced as popularity increases.
- Concerned we will lose access to mountain bike trails during park development.
- Impact on women's riding and families.
- Losing the trails and having less places to ride
- Dumbing down the riding experience, and length of trail available to each user type
- Trail maintenance and sustainability has dropped since council ownership. As trails cannot be maintained.
- Loss of green level trails.

- Reduction of trails currently enjoyed
- Maintaining current trails
- Parking and access
- Ideology over community needs
- After formalization, the trail design will not give the adequate experience of nature
- Local riders will not be able to be involved in bush-care and maintenance.
- Parking and access

### Group 2

- Can council develop sporting fields on the site? Will the cost be prohibitive like the Brickpit Park? Too expensive to do? Losing green trails due to sports fields.
- Losing trails for children to learn
- Hornsby to H2O link trail not happening?
- Losing trails – could move trails to back? Especially through ‘weed’ areas
- That some/most of the Mountain bike trails will be closed off
- The hard work of the people and community input into trying to make the trails/park work for everyone, to make this place a great facility, will go in vain.
- That even if this passes, unhappy locals will sabotage some of the trails
- Not being able to take my family somewhere local where we can all ride
- That council is anti-mountain bike and this is a forgone conclusion that mountain biking is bad
- That the track will be ruined and made pointless by making it straight lines
- That one of the few mountain biking tracks will be lost to cater for other activities that have other options
- I have lots of places to hike, but few places to ride
- That the original track design – which will not work will be used.
- Any mature native forest trees must be preserved
- Preservation of existing native vegetation
- The trail will need adequate funding for maintenance.
- Concerns that the trail will be ‘sanitized’ so that it is ‘safe’
- Fear that the mountain biking trail will be too small/ not enough variety
- Fear that other stakeholders will prevail and the mountain bike trail will be scrapped

### Group 3

- Want a basic skills area
- Want trail link from H2O to OMV
- More Mountain bike parks in Hornsby and join them together
- Loss of beginner trails and jumps loops
- Traffic management and parking – qtr. sessions rd.
- Loss of native fauna feeding areas on flat grass area
- Removal of hazardous material

- Insufficient local input to trail design
- Create more places to ride - it will lessen the impact of the trail by reducing congestion
- Concerned that the re-design process creates a white elephant. The network must improve.
- Concerns that Council's process will make this last 10 years
- Concerned that Council has already determined we have to keep out of EEC rather than co-exist with EEC
- Why don't we work on developing other areas?
- Concerned that we will lose some of our trails
- Concerned that the linking trail between H20 and OMV will not be done.
- I hope we don't lose opportunities for kids and families to mountain bike in Cherrybrook.

#### Activity 4 - Visioning the Future

##### Group 1

Current state	No regular trail maintenance No bush-care by council Volunteers unsupported All skill levels Unsatisfactory access and parking prior to oval level Unmaintained trails and bush Good variety of trails and nature to support all skill levels Insufficient trails for demand Proper consultation with different rider levels
Transition step	Have constant trail and bush care program with club and council Plan to be approved via co-design Continued consultation with stakeholders
Transition step	Emergency services input Integration with broader Westleigh Park development Options for OMV connections
Transition step	Formalize a trail plan and focus on improved experience Establish a club that works with council on funding management of trails
Future state	Trail with varied skills catered to Pump track Clubhouse for raising funds for council Fully established and sign posted trails Access for emergency services Connection to old man's valley with via western side of Quarter Sessions Facilities OMV integrations Regular maintenance and bush-care

	<p>Engagement in local bike club to help maintain trails and rejuvenate bush</p> <p>School sports - using the site mountain bike trail as an alternative to traditional ball sports</p> <p>Access points for ease of access to different parts of surrounding suburbs</p> <p>Improved trail head and bike cleaning and parking facilities and place for people to sit and talk</p> <p>Sustainable trails immersed in the bush</p>
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**Group 2**

Current state	<p>Accessible mountain bike trail</p> <p>Overused trail</p> <p>Ban on maintenance</p> <p>Lots of different grades of difficulty</p> <p>Some really fun features</p> <p>No facilities e.g. water, toilets</p> <p>Parking facilities/options dangerous</p> <p>Difficult entry/exit</p> <p>Used by all levels/skills of riders</p> <p>Track allows for riders to progress their skills</p>
Transition step	<p>Council and 'environment' groups agreeing that mountain biking can be incorporated without overly impacting on natural environment</p> <p>Understanding of current environment status – scientific evidence, not anecdotal</p> <p>Rehabilitate the degraded 'bush' i.e. remove pivot/lantana</p> <p>What we're doing now – workshops consultation etc.</p>
Transition step	Professional design
Transition step	Fully funded and supported by council Volunteer group for trail maintenance
Future state	<p>Legal trail</p> <p>Fully supported and maintained trail</p> <p>More fun features – jumps, drops, rock gardens, natural features being used, A+B lines for skill progression etc.</p> <p>Signage – directional – trail etiquette</p> <p>Parking, toilets, water</p> <p>Easier access to trail</p> <p>Park benches</p> <p>Pump track – see-saw, skinnies, progressive drops</p> <p>Trail retained in natural bushland setting</p>

**Group 3**

Current state	<p>Not quite enough trail - would be better with more</p> <p>Lack of parking</p>
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	<p>Valuable and enjoyable bushland with an awesome mountain bike trail Caters for the beginner and intermediate, not enough black trail Lack of toilets and drinking water Good mountain bike and walking tracks for range of abilities</p>
Transition step	<p>Compliant with standards Protects endangered flora and fauna Locally designed Signage – trail etiquette Directions map Interpretive (history, fauna and flora) Water tap Intermediate mountain bike association guidelines for trail design and facilities</p>
Transition step	<p>Toilet block Safety/ standards compliance Protects bushland Local trail builders involved in design</p>
Transition step	<p>Identify trail standards Identify ways to protect vulnerable flora Identify trail that balances enjoyment with ecology Easy access for all Hornsby Shire Council residents to mountain bike trail. Good connections of existing fire trails enabling paths to mountain bike specific trails More metrics visitors Healthy environment Fewer injuries Disruptions: lack of funds, sporting field creep, car parking creep</p>
Future state	<p>Toilets Drinking water Café Picnic area Skills area for beginner riders near trails Dedicated mountain bike trail from H20 to OMV with a suspension bridge across the steep section All weather sections of trail Parking signage Trail head facilities Environment education signage</p>

### Activity 5 - Our Principles

Group 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and improve the current riding experience for all skill levels</li> <li>Enhance and rejuvenate surrounding bushland to improve our riding environment</li> <li>Establish a collaborative partnership with Council</li> </ol>
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Mountain bike trail head facilities such as notice boards, trail openings, site maintenance plans</li><li>5. Open and transparent design and implementation process</li></ol>
Group 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Respect each other's views and be prepared to compromise</li><li>2. Keep everything in balance (fun, links, length, environment, other users, community needs etc.)</li><li>3. Mountain biking (and cycling) as a sport and active transport is booming (and is desirable)</li><li>4. Cater for a wide range of skills, abilities (and ages)</li><li>5. Vision for future growth and catering for massive population growth in the shire and surrounds</li></ol>
Group 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Better trails and environment</li><li>2. Cater for all levels</li><li>3. Fact based decision making</li><li>4. Phased development – trails first</li><li>5. Shared facilities</li></ol>