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## 1. What is the project?

Located on the site of an old sawmill, we are planning to upgrade the site known as 'The Mill'.

The project will define individual camping sites, and will improve site layout and facilities to accommodate visitors. Project upgrades include the removal of non-native vegetation, removal of hazardous native vegetation to reduce the risk of personal injury, revegetation works, construction of a unisex toilet, installation of picnic tables and signage, and improvements to the vehicle entrance to increase safety.

## 2. Why was the site chosen for upgrades?

The project will upgrade the current camping site and improve site layout, safety and facilities and will accommodate increased visitors. The site provides easy access to the Mitta Mitta River, is popular with visitors and links to existing walking tracks.

Improved facilities will also encourage more people to visit Mitta Mitta and Upper Murray communities, which will boost the local economy.

## 3. What are some of the benefits of the site upgrade?

The upgraded camping and day use area will be more accessible to many types of users, and more frequently patrolled. This will reduce unwelcome behaviour from users. This has been evident at other upgraded DELWP recreation sites.

The site will attract more day and overnight visitors to Mitta Mitta, which will support local businesses, in peak and off-peak periods. The site will also ease pressure at crowded campsites in Mitta Mitta, like Katie Peter's reserve.

The upgraded facilities, like a toilet and defined camping areas, will reduce pollution at the site.

In the future, the site will support mountain bike users of the trailhead.

## 4. What consultation and engagement will take place?

Due to Coronavirus restrictions face-to-face engagement has been limited. We sought seek your feedback on concept designs for the site via an online survey during May 2021. Key stakeholders were invited to walk through the site to discuss the upgrades. In May we also held public drop-in sessions in Eskdale and Mitta Mitta as a way to promote the online survey and answer detailed questions about the project. All of this feedback will help to inform the final site design. As the project progresses, DELWP will

provide community updates in the Bush and Bulldust newsletter, on local community noticeboards and online [www.engage.vic.gov.au/victorias-great-outdoors-mill-mitta-mitta](http://www.engage.vic.gov.au/victorias-great-outdoors-mill-mitta-mitta)

## **5. Why is the non-native vegetation being removed at the site?**

As part of the upgrade, we plan to remove non-native and invasive vegetation at the site. Invasive weeds out compete and displace native vegetation which reduces essential habitat for native wildlife species.

## **6. Why is some native vegetation being removed at the site?**

As part of the upgrade, we will remove hazardous native vegetation at the site to reduce the risk to visitors. This practice is a risk management approach common to all designated campgrounds and day visitor areas on Crown land. Trees and vegetation are assessed by an independent arborist prior to any removal.

## **7. How much native vegetation is being removed?**

The only native vegetation being removed is vegetation identified as hazardous by an independent arborist.

Hazard tree assessments will assess the whole tree. DELWP will retain native vegetation wherever possible. For example if the tree is deemed dangerous due to a single limb, only the limb will be removed.

## **8. What plants are you revegetating the site with?**

As part of the upgrade, we will revegetate the site with mostly native vegetation. The plant species will be selected by biodiversity and landscape specialists. Revegetating the site with native species will allow nature to sustain itself and create important habitat for native animals.

## **9. When will stage 3 and 4 of the Mill site be upgraded?**

It is unknown when stage 3 and 4 will go ahead, as these upgrades are not currently funded. DELWP will seek funding opportunities to implement these stages over the next 10 or more years.

## **10. Will rubbish bins be provided at the site?**

No rubbish bins will be provided at the site, due to people using these bins as a point to dump rubbish that will not fit in council bins, including mattresses and other household rubbish. It is the responsibility of site visitors to take their rubbish home. DELWP will support messaging of responsible camping, including taking rubbish home, through

signage and other communications.

Additionally DELWP is liaising with Towong Shire about this issue, and it is not unique to Mitta Mitta.

## **11. Why not have a day visitor site instead?**

The current site already caters for day visitors who use the mountain bike trailhead or walking trail. It currently has a small number of camping areas. Camping in the Mitta Valley is increasingly popular with nearby DELWP-managed campgrounds experiencing high numbers of visitation throughout the year. Improving camping capacity and amenity at the Mill will complement the nearby recreation offer.

## **12. Who will maintain the site?**

Forest Fire Management Victoria are part of DELWP and have the responsibility to manage the site. Management includes maintenance works, mowing, invasive species removal, native revegetation works and rubbish removal.

## **13. Does DELWP have the capacity to manage and maintain the Mill site once it is upgraded?**

DELWP routinely manages its recreation sites. Additionally, DELWP regularly partners with local community groups to assist with the site management. For example at Avondale Gardens DELWP has partnered with the 'Friends of Avondale Gardens' to assist in site management.

## **14. Who is responsible for managing bad behaviour by campers at the site?**

If it is an emergency people are urged to call 000 and ask for police, followed by the DELWP customer service centre (136 186) and DELWP compliance team.

## **15. Will this new site have an impact on local accommodation providers?**

Key accommodation providers have been engaged and are supportive of the project. The Mill currently has a small number of campsites, however, this project aims to improve facilities and access which may lead to increased visitation over time. Accommodation options at the Mill are limited and are designed to complement local accommodation options, not detract from the local accommodation offer.

## **16. This project will encourage more tourists in peak periods, which could overwhelm local businesses. How will DELWP manage this?**

Key local businesses that will be impacted by the project proposal have been engaged within Mitta Mitta and are supportive of the project.

**17. The access road to the Mill is dangerous. How are DELWP mitigating this?**

The access road is being upgraded a part of the site upgrades, to improve the safety of users. This will include widening the entry and improving line of sight. We are also discussing the possibility of reducing the speed limit past the entrance with VicRoads.

**18. Has DELWP considered the impact of flooding at the Mill site?**

The North East Catchment Management Authority have conducted a site visit and endorse the project. The natural site drainage will be maintained.

If a significant flooding event is predicted, the campsite will be closed by DELWP.

**19. What will happen to the wetland area at the site?**

Vegetation removal in the wetland area will be informed by DELWP's biodiversity specialists. We will take a staged approach to vegetation removal to reduce impacts on sensitive areas.

**20. Will the toilet impact on the river?**

The toilet will be at least 50m away from the waterway and comply with regulations.

**21. How will this project be funded?**

This project is part of Victoria's Great Outdoors program, a \$105.6 million investment by the Victorian Government into better forests, parks, campgrounds, caravan parks, tracks and outdoor facilities: [www.vic.gov.au/victoria-great-outdoors](http://www.vic.gov.au/victoria-great-outdoors)

**22. What is the aim of the Great Outdoors Program?**

The Victoria's Great Outdoors (VGO) program is designed to enable more Victorians, from all walks of life to get out and explore the great outdoors and experience the benefits of spending time in nature.

The program also aims to boost regional economies through the delivery of grant initiatives, infrastructure upgrades and creation of new camping opportunities in parks and State forests.

One of the key components of the VGO program is the focus on new and upgraded: camping grounds, 4WD tracks and walking trails.

**23. How can I stay informed about the project?**

If you would like to be notified of project updates please register your interest by emailing [uppermurray.victoriangreatoutdoors@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:uppermurray.victoriangreatoutdoors@delwp.vic.gov.au) or visit [www.engage.vic.gov.au/victorias-great-outdoors-mill-mitta-mitta](http://www.engage.vic.gov.au/victorias-great-outdoors-mill-mitta-mitta)