

Yarra Ranges Council

Operations Environmental
Management Plan (OEMP)
Warburton Mountain Bike Destination
(Southern Network)

Audit Report
BENV_REP_YRC005
June 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Build Enviro Consulting Group (Build Enviro) was engaged by Yarra Ranges Council (YRC) to conduct an audit of the Operations Environmental Management Plan (OEMP), Warburton Mountain Bike Destination (Southern Network). This audit is a requirement under section 9.2 of the OEMP.

Build Enviro Principal Consultant, Chris Sprott conducted the audit on 3 and 10 June 2026, with key personnel.

No non-conformances were identified at the time of the audit.

There were 4 minor opportunities for improvement identified during the audit. These opportunities relate to including further detail into the site induction slides, as required by the OEMP. It is recommended that Yarra Ranges Council amend the site induction slides to include all requirements detailed in the OEMP document.

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1 Introduction

Build Enviro Consulting Group (Build Enviro) was engaged by Yarra Ranges Council (YRC) to conduct an audit of their Operations Environmental Management Plan (OEMP), Warburton Mountain Bike Destination (Southern Network), Revision 5, January 2025. The OEMP was endorsed by the Minister for Planning on 21 April 2025 and is the primary mechanism for environmental management during operation of the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination (the project). This audit is a requirement under section 9.2 of the OEMP.

2 Site and project information

The project is a proposed world class mountain biking destination centred around Warburton, approximately 70 kilometres east of Melbourne. The project consists of:

- Approximately 123 kilometres of mountain bike trails.
- 57 trails.
- 2 trail heads: Wesburn Park and Mount Tugwell.
- 1 major bridge: Old Warburton Road.
- 17 small bridges to protect waterways.
- 35 sections of boardwalk.
- Average trail width of 2.3 metres.
- 11 kilometres of existing mountain bike trails to be merged into the network.
- Approximately 2 kilometres of existing vehicle track merged into the network.

The southern section of the trail network is located to the south of the Warburton Highway within the Yarra State Forest (see Figure 1 below).

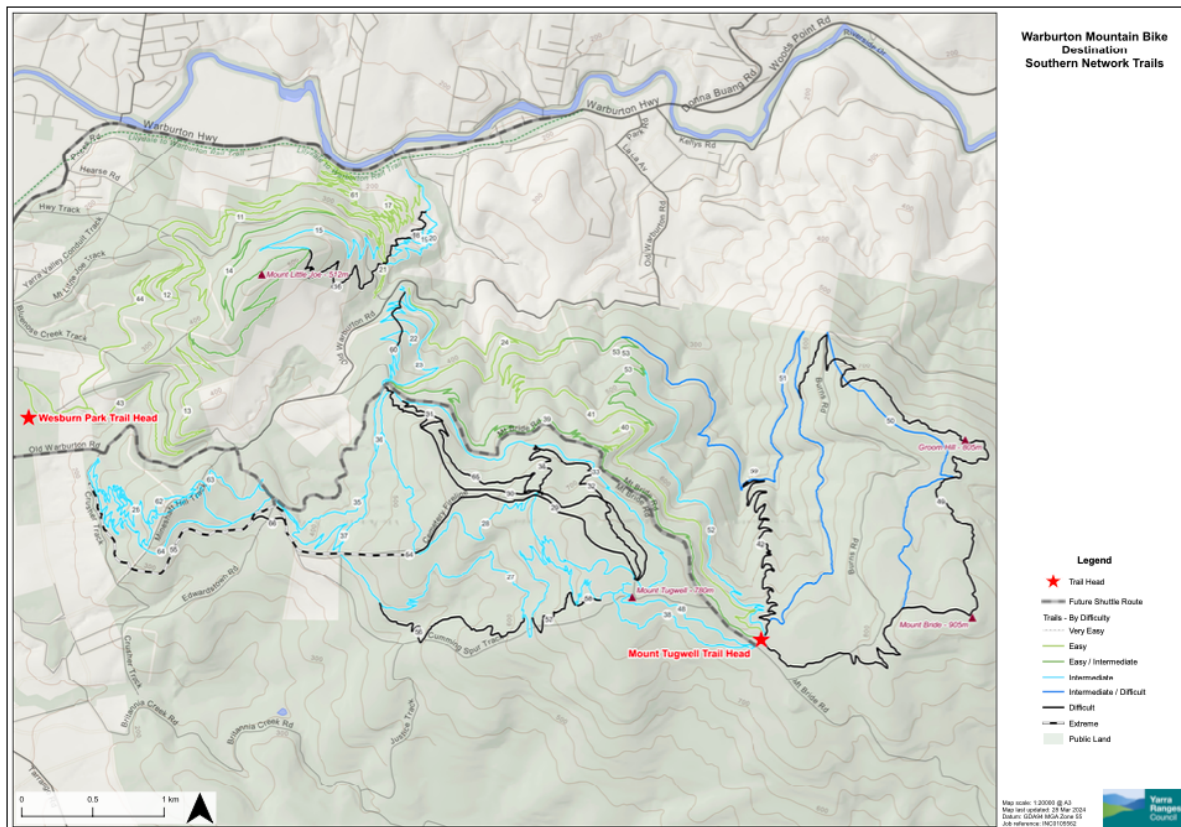


Figure 1: Warburton Mountain Bike Destination, Southern Network Trails [source: Yarra Ranges Council]

3 Audit scope

Section 9.2 of the OEMP requires YRC to have the OEMP verified through periodic independent environmental audits. The scope of this audit is to verify that all relevant environmental/social documentation and approvals are in place for operations, as per the requirements of section 9.2 (below).

9.2 Independent audit

Compliance with the OEMP would be verified through periodic independent environmental audits coordinated by Yarra Ranges Council. **An audit would be conducted at the commencement of operations to verify all relevant environmental/social documentation and approvals are in place for operations.** Audits would be conducted at least annually thereafter by suitably qualified and experienced environmental auditors that are otherwise not involved in the project's construction and operation.

4 Methodology

4.1 Audit checklist

An audit checklist was developed primarily against Section 6.0 of the OEMP: 'Environmental management measures', which describes the environmental measures identified through the EES and proposed monitoring and reporting mechanisms to be implemented during the construction phase, as well as relevant sections of the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination Project (Southern Network) Incorporated Document 2023 and the Notification of approval decision (EPBC 2019/8605), issued by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, 17 July 2024.

Environmental and social aspects covered within section 6.0 of the OEMP and included in the development of the audit checklist include:

- 6.1 Biodiversity
- 6.2 Surface water, groundwater and geotechnical hazards
- 6.3 Heritage
- 6.4 Transport
- 6.5 Land use, noise, air quality and visual
- 6.6 Socio-economic
- 6.7 Bushfire and Emergency Management
- 6.8 Waste

4.2 Document review

A document request list was submitted to the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination team, for review by the auditor against the relevant sections of the OEMP, the Incorporated Document and EPBC 2019/8605.

4.3 Office visit/audit

Chris Sprott, Principal Consultant of Build Enviro, conducted the audit at YRC Lilydale office on 3 June 2026 and on site on 10 June 2026, with key project personnel; David Bartlett (Recreation & Active Living – Project Officer), Scott Chancellor (Project Manager) and Angus McLarty (Maintenance Coordinator, YRC).

4.4 Interviews

Interviews were conducted while at the YRC office, with the above-mentioned YRC staff. Relevant systems and documents were also reviewed during the course of the interviews.

4.5 Close out and follow up

A close out meeting was held with key YRC staff on 10 June 2026, where a summary of findings was presented by Build Enviro to the Warburton Mountain Bike Destination team. Any outstanding documents identified during the site inspection were requested during the close out meeting. Subsequent documentation was submitted by YRC following the meeting.

5 Findings

5.1 General Findings

The Warburton Mountain Bike Destination OEMP is a comprehensive document, that sets out the environmental risks of the project and their planned management. Construction of the first stage of the project (Stage 1A) was completed in 2025. Stage 1B and 1C of the project was completed in early 2026 and opened to the public in April 2026. Stage 1D of the project is currently under construction.

All relevant environmental and social documentation and approvals were found to be in place for operations, including:

- Comprehensive GIS mapping;
- Yarra Ranges Environmental Weeds handbook;
- Pest Animal Adaptive Management Plan;
- Site Induction Slides;
- Daily Inspection Checklists;
- Emergency Management Plan; and
- Integrated Operations Traffic Management Plan.

5.2 Non-Conformances

There were no non-conformances identified during the audit.

5.3 Opportunities for Improvement

There were a total of 4 opportunities for improvement identified during the audit. These were all of a minor significance. All four related to minor omissions from the induction slides.

The full findings of the audit are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Warburton Mountain Bike Destination OEMP Audit Findings

Document Ref		Requirement	Finding	Opportunity for Improvement	Reference	Status
OEMP 6.1.4	Table 6-2 BM50	Operation phase staff trained as part of site induction to identify GDEs, seeps / springs and associated vegetation communities / species.	Seeps/springs included in site induction slides. However GDEs not mentioned in induction slides.	Recommend site induction slides are updated to include identification of GDEs.	OI-1	Open
OEMP 6.1.4	Table 6-2 BM64	Operation phase staff informed as part of site induction regarding potential presence of significant flora species (including epiphytic / lithophytic species) in order to minimise risk of damage to species or suitable habitat.	Significant flora species mentioned in site induction slides. However epiphytic/lithophytic species not specifically mentioned.	Recommend site induction slides are updated to include epiphytic/lithophytic species.	OI-2	Open
OEMP 6.1.4	BM78	Operation phase staff trained as part of site induction to identify signs of native fauna habitation including, but not limited to: 1) Lyrebird display mounds 2) Roosting or nesting sites for forest owls 3) Platypus burrows 4) Habitat indicators for Curve-tail Burrowing Crayfish and Tubercle Burrowing Crayfish 5) Burrows used by ground-dwelling fauna e.g. wombats. Training will include	Lyrebird display mounds mentioned, but not how to identify signs of habitation. Forest owl nests/roosts mentioned, but not how to identify signs of habitation. Platypus mentioned, but now how to identify signs of habitation. Curve-tail Burrowing Crayfish and Tubercle Burrowing Crayfish mentioned, but not how to identify signs of habitation.	Recommend site induction slides are updated to include identification of signs of habitation of Lyrebird display mounds, roosting or nesting sites for Forest Owls, Platypus burrows and Curve-tail Burrowing Crayfish and Tubercle Burrowing Crayfish.	OI-3	Open

		distribution of fact sheets including notes and photos.				
OEMP 7.0	Induction and Training	Key items within the project induction will be: • Project location – review the location of the trails to be maintained • Project scope of works – review the scope of works, including schedules, resources, equipment, container/compo und locations, days/hours of work, productivity targets, reporting milestones etc. • Discussion of key environmental issues and procedures for monitoring and control, including (but not limited to): - Legal and environmental approvals obligations • Field identification of flora species and the mechanisms to avoid impacts on key species, including fact sheets of significant flora and weed species	Field identification of significant fauna and flora species not included in site induction slides.	Recommend site induction slides are updated to include: • Field identification of flora species and the mechanisms to avoid impacts on key species, including fact sheets of significant flora and weed species • Field identification of significant fauna species and habitat and the mechanisms to avoid impacts on key species, including platypus, threatened crayfish, and Leadbeater's Possum.	OI-4	Open

		• Field identification of significant fauna species and habitat and the mechanisms to avoid impacts on key species, including platypus, threatened crayfish, and Leadbeater's Possum. • Locations of listed heritage sites, areas of archaeological potential and identification of historic heritage features • Locations of areas of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage and identification of cultural heritage sites • OEMP requirements for environmental management • Health and Safety Management Plan (including key project contacts, evacuation plan, Safe Method Work Statements)				
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6 Conclusion and recommendations

The Warburton Mountain Bike Destination OEMP is a comprehensive document, that sets out the environmental risks of the project and their planned management. Construction of the first stage of the project (Stage 1A) was completed in 2025. Stage 1B and 1C of the project was completed in early 2026 and opened to the public in April 2026. Stage 1D of the project is currently under construction.

No non-conformances were identified at the time of the audit.

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