

FORREST MOUNTAIN BIKE DETAILED DESIGN PROJECT



Project Update

Following the community consultation phase and trails auditing, Dirt Art Pty Ltd have delivered their ideas about the Forrest MTB Trail Network structure. Their plan addresses Forrest's MTB offering, recreational opportunities for the township, all user safety and network functionality.

Council and Dirt Art Pty Ltd will be presenting the proposed plans for the network at the 'Forrest Open Day' which is being held at the former DELWP Depo on the 19th October 10:00am - 2.30pm. For those that can't attend Saturday's activities the updates below provide a summary of the design plan.

Project One: Detailed Design of the Boundary Road Traffic Treatment

Dirt Art in conjunction with One Mile Grid have produced a concept for the crossing point over the Forrest-Birregurra Road to Boundary Road. The design proposes to reducing the speed limits on the Forrest-Birregurra Road, removal of existing roadside vegetation to improve sightlines and signage to make the existing crossing safer for all users.

To create safer passage for users, the crossing will link to two new trails that will ascend and descend to and from the Yaugher Trail Head. The ascending trail will be a beginner dual use and direction trail, and the descending trail will be an exciting one-way flow style intermediate rated MTB trail.

Project Two: Schematic Drawing and Detailed Design for the Forrest MTB Trails

Together the auditing and engagement processes has enabled us to understand what work is required to make Forrest's MTB network nationally significant.

The project engagement process provided a valuable insight into what the community wants to see at Forrest. Following engagement, the project's direction was altered to allow for additional community and recreational facilities, better signage and safer access nodes throughout Forrest and the trails network.

Dirt Art's auditing process also assisted with refining the project's scope. All current trails were rated against the following criteria; sustainability, environmental experience, rider experience, broad market appeal, environmental compatibility, social compatibility, heritage compatibility, life cycle cost rating and emergency access. The trail rating assisted Dirt Art to formulate design recommendations for each alignment.

Dirt Art's plan is to rework the southern network so that the trails are accessible all year around and regarded as Forrest's signature offerings. The following upgrades will assist to achieve this vision.

- The 'Forrest Loop' will remain a dual use and directional trail, however, some minor features will be added for skill progression opportunities for youth riders and to create safer access for incumbent riders and walkers.
- The 'Red Carpet' is one of Forrest's classic trails. The trail will be resurfaced and upgraded so that it's open all year around; additionally, a new 'A line' flow trail has been proposed alongside the existing alignment.
- The 'Rollercoaster Trail' will undergo a significant redesign and be made into one of Forrest's hero offerings. The (green rated) trail will be reversed so it becomes an extension of the skills park. This purpose-built descent trail will deliver a more enjoyable ride for youth riders and create an accessible trail for incumbent riders.
- 'Third Time Lucky' requires surfacing and drainage work; once upgraded the trail will become the logical skills progression point from the 'Rollercoaster'.
- Trail 6 'Follow the Dog' will also be redesigned and retain its black diamond status. To improve rider experience and to create more options, the trail will be reformatted into two challenging stacked loops.
- Two new flow trail alignments will also be added to Forrest's southern network.
 - The first 1.6km trail will be a beginner level flow trail featuring gently rolling terrain, large berms and small jump opportunities.
 - The second 1.2km alignment is proposed as a progressive intermediate jump/flow trail. The trail will provide one of Victoria's best intermediate jump experiences and arguably the best place in the state for riders to progress their jumping ability.
 - To create a closed circuit a beginner rated ascending trail has also been proposed.

The key consideration for the Yaugher network is how to make an easy to maintain network which delivers consistent rider experiences, easy navigation and facilities for multiple user groups?

Dirt Art's designs proposals fulfil all of the above objectives, plus, they've explored additional elevation opportunities and closed loop systems which will make Yaugher's good trails even better.

- The Yaugher Trailhead will be reworked so it becomes an access node to almost every trail in the network. Parking amenities and landscaping will be improved and the addition of an entry archway will assist to celebrate Yaugher's recreational trail offering.
- Three designated horse and walking trails will be added to the Yaugher system. While some short trail sections will be shared, predominately horse riders and walkers will have

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uninterrupted trails which will assist in creating a safer network for all users.

- ‘Grass Trees’ will be made into a closed loop and a direct access trail to the Trailhead will be added. This access trail has some great elevation points which will make Trail 8 an even more thrilling black diamond run.
- A new 7.km (blue) eastern loop trail (next to Trail 8) has been proposed, this loop can easily link to the Trailhead and potentially provide the best gravity fed opportunity at Yaugher.
- ‘Marriners Run’ is one of Forrest’s signature black rated trails; the trail will also be upgraded and formatted into a closed loop with direct link (that will capitalise on more elevation opportunities) from the Trailhead.
- The proposal for ‘Foxtail’ is to make two closed loops. A green trail will make an easy loop ride from the Trailhead and a connected blue loop will be created from a section of the super loop to make a fun intermediate trail alignment.
- ‘J2’ will undergo similar treatment – a section of the ‘super loop’ will be used to create a closed loop and some of the fall lines will be rationalised so the trail is easier to maintain and the ride quality is enhanced.
- ‘Casper Black’ will be reformatted into a black diamond closed loop trail system; this will improve the trail’s consistency and functionality. The trail will also be one of four new loops at the south western side of Yaugher.
- ‘Barre Warre’ will be reformatted to create a complete green circuit to and from the Trailhead. The flatter sections of the trail will be shifted east to areas with greater cross slope. Ultimately this will make the trail more sustainable. The old alignment will still be available for horse riders and walkers.
- Three new blue loops will be created from ‘The Vista’. The first loop will be a logical progression from Trail 14. The second trail will take in the great views and the third trail will be another fun blue loop. The reworked trails won’t involve the steep and degraded sections of the current trail.
- The ‘Yo Yo’ and ‘Super Loop’ alignments didn’t rate well in the auditing process. A recommendation has been made to keep the Yo Yo open for local riders, however, not promote the trail via the formal network. The Super Loop will also not be promoted as part of the MTB Trail Network; the alignment with other sections of network will assist us to create a horse and walking trail for community and visitors.

Project Three: Forrest Trailhead Precinct Masterplan

Feedback regarding the Forrest Trailhead Precinct and architectural design by Dirt Art has been overwhelmingly positive and the Schematic Masterplan for the site is currently in development. Key improvements include:

- A landscaped precinct that celebrates mountain biking and Forrest’s native environment with BBQs and picnic spaces that can be used by visitors and the community.
- Additional MTB infrastructure i.e. drinking water, wash downs and coin operated showers.
- An expanded and more weather durable skills park and jump track for a greater range of riders. The design includes an asphalt pump track for local and visiting skateboarders and scooter riders.
- Better provisions and amenities for the Forrest MTB Club at the old DELWP camp site.
- Increased parking amenities, more shelter and educational and interpretive signage.
- Better and safer connections to the town and trail network.
- A future location for the Forrest community cross fit gym; which could also be used as a health and wellbeing space.

Project Four: Pre-Planning Studies

The Project Team will now look to progress Native Vegetation Assessments and Cultural Heritage Management Plans for all proposed work in and around Forrest. Everyone involved in the project is committed to ensuring a high degree of analysis is undertaken to limit the risk to our natural and cultural environments. While native vegetation offsets will be required for new trails, rehabilitating areas of the network no longer required for recreational use will be investigated.

To keep up to date with progression of the Forrest MTB Detailed Design Project please contact Adrian Healey via phone or email.

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