



Mt Buller Master Plan Report

Volume One
October 2010



Version Control Table			
Version Number	Date of Issue	Amendment	Authorised
4.0	October 2010	Finalised and adopted plan	Paul McNamara
4.1	July 2011	Minor amendments	Paul McNamara
4.2	October 2014	Update to Native Vegetation Guidelines - page 11 Fire and Emergency Management Plans referenced - page 15	Paul McNamara



Mt Buller Alpine Resort is set in a distinctive environment where magnificent forests, expansive vistas, seasonal climate, long cultural heritage and rare flora and fauna combine to offer an exceptional and precious experience. In the context of the continent of Australia dominated by dry lowlands and coastal environments, these Alpine and sub-alpine environments represent a very small area.

It is recognised that Mt Buller must meet the challenges of climate change, continue the management of its unique environment and maintain its commitment to social issues. With clear changes in market expectation, limited land availability and the need for environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development, the Mt Buller Master Plan is seen as a blueprint for coordinated improvements to services and facilities and future development on the Mountain.

In response to this pristine and biodiverse environment, the Master Plan for the mountain must acknowledge and honour this very special environment in which it is a privilege to ski, walk, cycle, stay and own a business. The plan has, at its core, this philosophical basis which flows through to design, construction and operation of every element.

The Master Plan represents an opportunity to reimagine Mt Buller and plan for the next 20 years of growth and change.

Mt Buller Master Plan Report

Project Team

Steering Committee

Mt Buller & Mt Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board

Buller Ski Lifts Pty Ltd

Tourism Victoria

Regional Development Victoria

Mt Buller Chamber of Commerce

Design Team

Cox Architecture

Master Planners



Brent Harley and Associates (Vancouver)

Ski Resort Advice



Arup

Traffic and Civil Engineers



Oculus Landscape and Urban Design

Landscape Architects



Davis Langdon

Statutory Planning Review

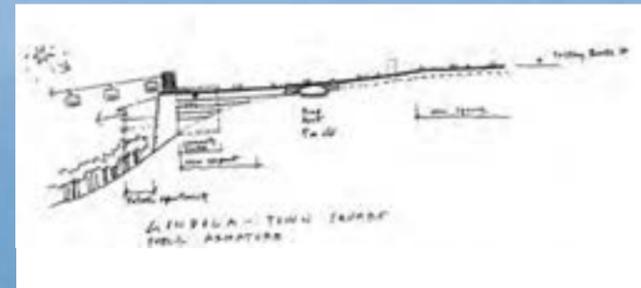
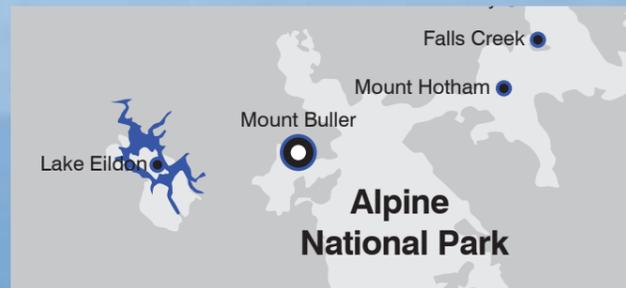


SGS Economics and Planning

Preliminary Economic Assessment



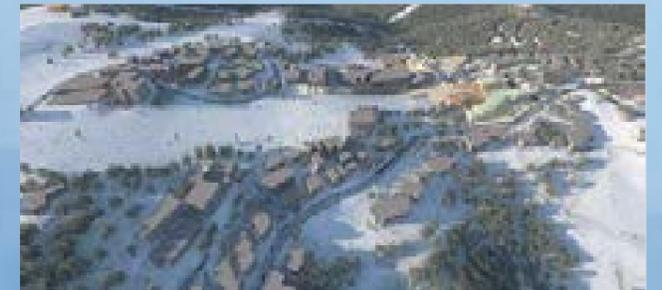
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1.1 Mt Buller – More Than A Mountain

Mt Buller was initially founded by people's desire to ski and access the snow. It has grown from the community's desire to enjoy, live and work in the site's remarkable alpine environment. From a handful of lodges built by members in the 1950's, it has grown to be a major resort and summer and winter attraction.

The Mt Buller Master Plan aims to be a catalyst not only for the ongoing winter growth of the resort but in the development of a sustainable year-round economy.

It is recognised that Mt Buller must meet the challenges of climate change, continue the management of its unique environment and maintain its commitment to social issues. With clear changes in market expectation, limited land availability and the need for environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development, the Master Plan is seen as a blueprint for coordinated improvements to services and facilities and future development on the Mountain.

In response to this pristine and biodiverse environment, the master plan for the mountain must acknowledge and honour this very special environment in which it is a privilege to ski, walk, cycle, stay and own a business. The plan has, at its core, this philosophical basis which flows through to design, construction and operation of every element.

The Resort Master Plan is a jointly funded by the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board (ARMB), Buller Ski Lifts (BSL), Regional Development Victoria and Tourism Victoria. The funding support of Tourism Victoria and Regional Development Victoria is in recognition of the significant contribution of Mt Buller to Victoria's economy.



1.2 The Need For A Master Plan

The Victorian State Government manages and supports the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling resort areas, through the Alpine Resort Management Board. Both the Government and the private sector have made and continue to make considerable investments in maintaining this extraordinary place and its surrounds and creating opportunities to live, work and play at Mt Buller and its sister mountain, Mt Stirling.

The aim of the Mt Buller Master Plan is to provide a blueprint for cohesive, economically feasible and environmentally sustainable development that will position the Mt Buller Resort beyond 2020. It will provide a blueprint and incentive for government, business and private investors to continue to invest in Mt Buller in the future.

In preparing for the Master Plan, five broad objectives were identified:

- * Improve visitor amenity and commercial offer of the Mt Buller Village
- * Improve visitor access to, from, and within the Mt Buller Village
- * Improve the interface between the Mt Buller Village and activity areas (existing and proposed)
- * Improve access to Mt Buller and tourism links between Mt Buller and Mt Stirling area
- * Develop the required activity infrastructure to support year round visitation and further development and investment.

The Mt Buller Master Plan identifies development options within a social, economic and environmental/ecological framework to ensure sustainable development that protects the unique cultural, environmental and heritage values of Mt Buller.

The Master Plan is in line with the Victorian Government's Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy (2004), which underpins the ARMB's commitment to optimise winter use and build summer visitation to establish a sustainable year-round economy at Mt Buller.

1.3 The Master Plan

The Master Plan identifies a new consolidated and coordinated direction for future development of Mt Buller. It specifically does not prescribe fixed solutions but instead creates a road map for development over the next decade and beyond.

Key projects and priorities for the mountain are identified and the scope and direction of future works and studies are outlined and prioritised. Each of these elements will need to be developed further in the future as funding and opportunities arise.

The Master Plan ensures that future development at Mt Buller proceeds within a clear and supported framework. It provides certainty for stakeholders and confidence for Government that Mt Buller's future is coordinated and sustainable.

The list of projects is for further investigation only and does not constitute approval. All projects will be required to undertake all necessary studies and comply with all relevant State and Commonwealth legislative and policy requirements.

Road Map Diagram

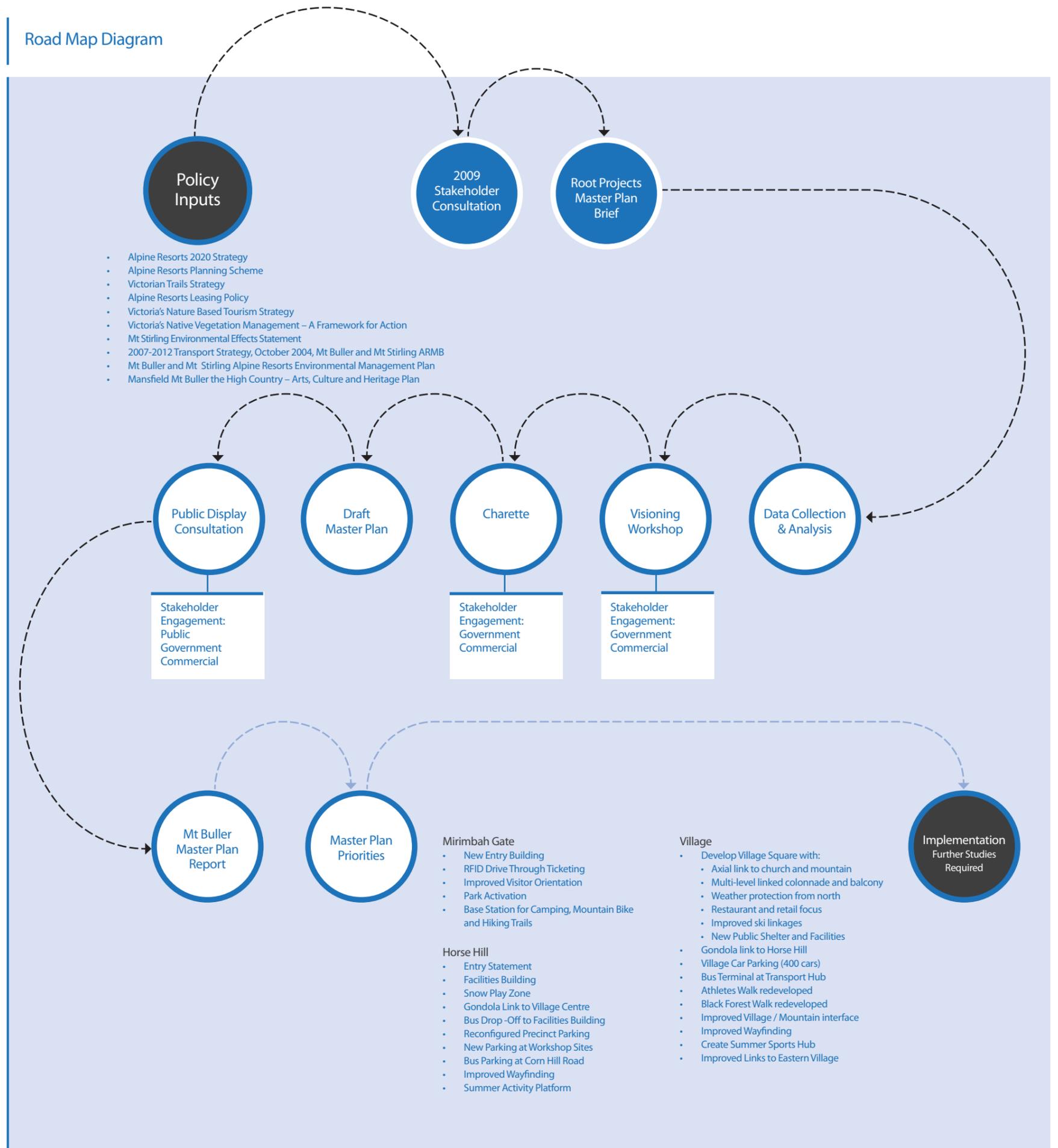


Figure 1.1 - Planning Road Map

2.1 Site and Context

Mt Buller Alpine Resort is located some 250 kilometres north east of Melbourne and is one of the largest of Victoria's six alpine resorts. The resort, located on the Great Dividing Range with a summit elevation of 1,804 meters, includes approximately 2,300 hectares of Crown Land, which is managed by the ARMB pursuant to the Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997. The significance of the region's environmental and cultural values has recently been recognised by its inclusion on the National Heritage Register.

Mt Buller Village and ski infrastructure occupy 850 hectares of the Resort, including 180 hectares of ski trails and open space above the tree line and 300 hectares of skiable terrain.

The centre of the Village was a highland grazing campsite prior to the mid 1960's and aboriginal artefacts have been documented in this area.

The distinctive character of the Village has developed over the years in response to its topography and uses. It has an hourglass plan-form, narrowing at the centre of the 'saddle' between Baldy and One Tree Hill. The Village accommodates over 7,000 visitors per night during the snow season.

The ski fields lie to the west of the Village Centre with the main ski run, Bourke Street, running into the Village. The ski fields naturally developed in areas with the best snow and offer a range of runs suited to all levels of skiers and boarders.

To the east and adjacent to the Bourke Street spur, residential lodges and hotels are set below the tree line within sub-alpine woodland vegetation.

It is home to approximately 50-100 permanent residents year round.



Figure 2.1 - Mt Buller Location Plan

2.2 Land and Property Ownership

Mt Buller Alpine Resort comprises Crown Land permanently reserved under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. In accordance with the Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997, the ARMB has the power to grant leases on any land within the Resort.

Leasing policy is crucial to the management, operations and financing of the Resort by the ARMB. Leases are granted for varying periods of up to 51 years for substantial investments.

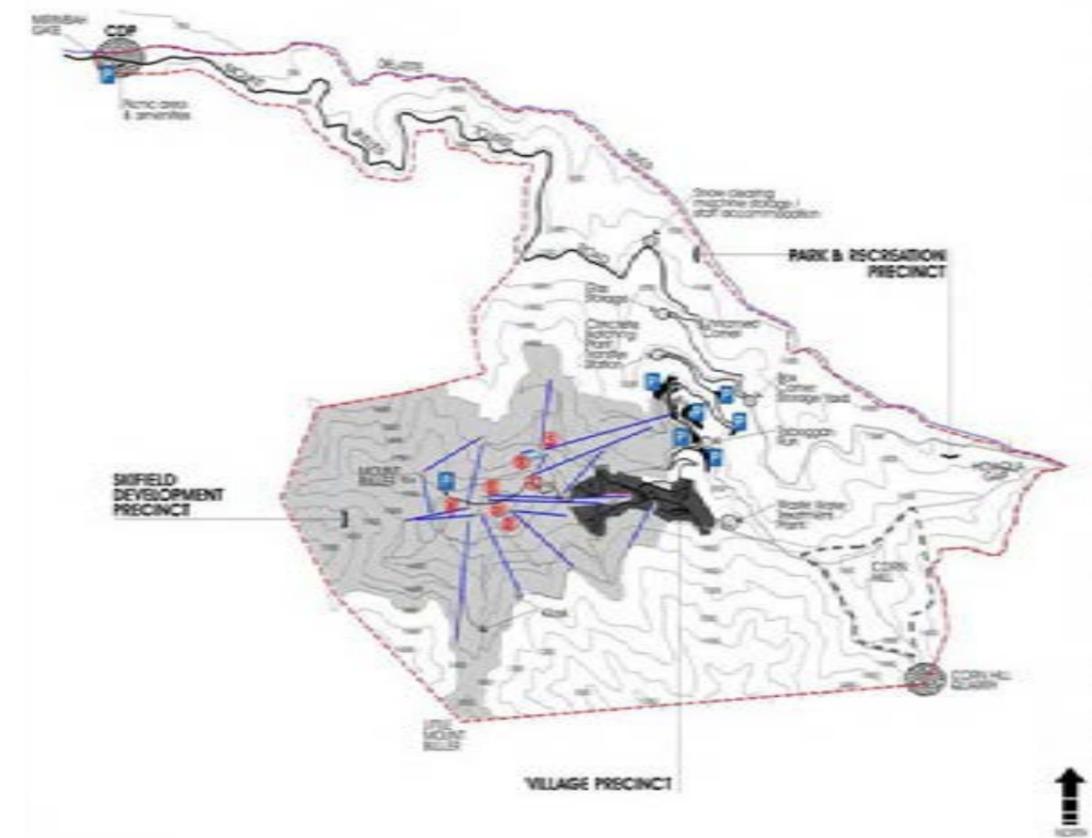


Figure 2.2 - Mt Buller Resort Precincts

2.3 Cultural Heritage

The Taungurung

Before the arrival of Europeans, the land around Mt Buller was the country of the Taungurung aboriginal tribe, one of the five groups from the Kulin Nation language group. The tribe was comprised of nine clan groups and it was the Yowung-illam-balluk clan who inhabited the area along the Goulburn River as far as Alexandra, through to the Howqua, Delatite and Jamieson Rivers and the mountains like Mt Stirling and Mt Buller that shed their waters into those rivers.

The high mountain region was not only a source of food such as the Bogong moths that migrated to the area in summer, but also a location for ceremonies and meeting of the Taungurung clans.

Descendants of the Taungurung people are looking to strengthen their ties with their traditional country and the ARMB is looking to create employment opportunities on the mountain through arts and cultural programs.

European arrival, logging and grazing

European explorers Hume and Hovell first sighted the mountain (known as Marnong by the Aborigines) in 1824. The surveyor Major Thomas Mitchell bestowed the name of the British colonial official Charles Buller on the mountain in 1836 while the German botanist Ferdinand von Mueller was the first European to ascend the mountain in 1853.

The post-contact settlement of Mt Buller commenced following early explorations by squatters and cattle graziers. These high country cattlemen constructed a number of alpine huts for shelter and refuge during mustering.

Development of the winter resort

In the 1890s European miners are thought to have crafted skis from fence palings and schussed down the mountains, cutting a trail for recreational skiing. In 1913, the Klingsporn family, who had improved the track leading to Mt Buller to make it more accessible for cattle grazing, was granted funds for improved access by the Victorian Government.

The ski industry proper began in 1924 after the Ski Club of Victoria presented a promotional brochure including a photograph of a snow capped Mt Buller at its inaugural meeting. In 1929 the first chalet was built at Horse Hill.

Helmut Kofler, a pioneer of Victorian skiing, made Mt Buller his home in 1938 and, with wife Peggy Wylkes, was responsible for the Resort's early development. In 1946 a road was built to reach the fledgling Mt Buller Village. By 1948, the Mt Buller Alpine Reserve Committee of Management was in control of tourism, quickly developing the area with a number of ski lodges and downhill ski runs, including the first tow on Mt Buller in 1949. The first Doppelmayr double chairlift opened on Bourke Street in 1964.

The development of Mt Buller as a tourist resort was accompanied by the eventual phasing out of summer grazing in the 1970s.

In 1997, the first World Cup Aerials were held on Mt Buller and in the same year the Alpine Resorts Commission was replaced by individual Resort Management Boards, and the Alpine Resorts Coordinating Council.

In 2004, then Minister for the Environment, John Thwaites, announced the abolition of the Mt Stirling Resort Management Board and the creation of the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Alpine Resort Management Board.



2.4 Environmental Management

Mt Buller Alpine Resort is part of the unique alpine environment containing rare flora, fauna and geology.

The Mt Buller/Mt Stirling region is the location of six nationally significant endangered species of fauna: the Caddisfly; Mountain Pygmy-Possum; Alpine Bog Skink; the Stonefly; the Barred Galaxias; and the Alpine Stonefly. These species are protected pursuant to the Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC).

The ARMB's Environmental Management Plan states that 38 rare or threatened vascular plants and two threatened plant communities have been recorded within the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling resorts. The Plan notes that the status of rare or threatened plants within the Resorts is not well known. Future environmental management actions are designed to increase the ARMB's knowledge and understanding of these plants and plant communities.

Development within the Resort must take account of, among other things, the Mt Buller Environmental Management Plan as well as the directions under Victoria's "Permitted clearing of native vegetation - Biodiversity assessment guidelines" which replaced the old "Native Vegetation Management - A Framework for Action in December 2013.

Development must comply with relevant legislation including the State Flora & Fauna Guarantee Act.

The natural environment and landscape is the key attribute of the Mt Buller Resort and is key to its appeal for visitors year round, although it is the snow cover that remains the biggest attraction.

2.5 Transport and Access

Winter transport and parking

Mt Buller is approximately three and a half hours drive from Melbourne and is the most accessible of the major Victorian alpine resorts. Access to the Resort is critical to its operation during the declared snow season.

Entry to the Resort during the snow season is controlled at the Mirimbah gate where visitors arriving by car pay a per vehicle entry charge based on the intended duration of their stay in the Village. Bus passengers are charged on a per person basis.

Currently the only access route to Mt Buller is via the Mt Buller Tourist Road – a winding 16km road rising from Mirimbah to Mt Buller Village. All overnight visitors to the Village are required to carry chains and in extreme weather conditions visitors to the mountain are required to fit chains as a condition of Resort entry in response to road conditions. The two-way single-lane road has a series of chain fitting bays between Mirimbah and the Horse Hill carpark however there are no overtaking lanes.

Visitors can access the mountain during winter in three ways:

- * Bus transport, mostly from Melbourne, to Mansfield, and on to Mt Buller
- * Park off the mountain in Mansfield or at the Mirimbah gate and be transported by bus to the Village
- * Drive to the short or long-term car parks located at points along the Mt Buller Tourist Road

During the winter season, ARMB provides a free day shuttle service for day visitors between the car parks and the Village. The carpark to Village shuttle service does not cater for luggage so overnight visitors are required to use the mountain taxi service to transport their luggage and equipment to their ski lodge, apartment or hotel at an additional charge. Within the Village, a free shuttle bus operates from 8am-6pm during winter. There is no public transport outside of the snow season. A school bus operates year round based on resident student demand.



A limited amount of public car parking is available within the Village and private car parking is also available in association with accommodation. The ARMB controls parking within the Village during the ski season through a paid permit system, available only to 4WD vehicles. ARMB's policy is to encourage off street parking within the Village and discourages unnecessary driving of vehicles within the Village.

There is a clear need to improve and streamline the journey to the resort such that bottlenecks, danger, indeterminate waiting and discomfort are eliminated while value for money (paid for entry and transit) is provided in the form of a smooth, seamless journey terminating in a welcoming sense of arrival in the Village.

Non-winter access

Outside of the snow season, there is no entry fee for access to the Resort and private vehicles are free to enter the Village and park at kerbside parking zones. The winter day and overnight parking areas have limited use during the non-winter months.

Streets, tracks, ski trails and walking trails in the Resort are used as walking and bicycle trails and there are links to further trails on Mt Stirling and beyond.

There are plans, subject to additional government funding and planning approval, to construct a 2WD link road between Mt Buller and Mt Stirling, to create a touring route that links Mt Buller Village with the surrounding high country via a through route and provides alternative emergency access.



Pedestrians and skiers in the Village

During winter the circulation of Village traffic, pedestrians and skiers is managed by a range of measures including the provision of a free intra-Village shuttle bus service, the limiting of private vehicles by the issue of permits, and the marking out of specific paths and routes for pedestrians and skiers. Bourke Street, the main beginner and ski school area gets congested and there is an unsatisfactory mixing of pedestrians, skiers and snow players.

Ski fields are accessible via the Village or direct from day carpark by quad chair from the Horse Hill lift station.



2.6 Community and Social Context

Residents and year-round workers

Mt Buller is home to a small year-round community of permanent residents however the population swells in winter when the snow season workforce adds a further 2,000 to the population. Many who make a living on Mt Buller all year round live in the surrounding district travelling to the mountain from Sawmill Settlement, Merrijig and Mansfield.

Visitors – the tourist market

Mt Buller, in its current form, exists to serve the tourist market. The Village has the capacity to accommodate approximately 7,500 people overnight in a variety of modes from backpacker beds through club and commercial ski lodges to hotels, private apartments and staff accommodation.

The mountain has existing infrastructure in place to cater for an additional 10,000 visitors on any given day. It is able to sustain these levels for two to three consecutive days however core services such as water supply and sewerage treatment require several days to stabilise between major weekend peaks.

Along with ski field infrastructure and accommodation, the tourist market is also served by a range of retail and hospitality businesses.

The challenge lies in reducing the seasonal off-peak troughs through extending the winter season and increasing summer visitation.

Winter

Mt Buller's key strength is its proximity to Melbourne, enabling snow enthusiasts to head for the mountain in response to a good snowfall. The influx of day visitors in such circumstances (up to 5,000 additional visitors on a busy weekend in July or August) and the logistical effort required to handle the influx of the additional visitors is a key issue to be addressed in the Mt Buller Master Plan.

The ski season sees a dramatic increase in the resident population and Mt Buller has a winter community of people who return each year with the arrival of the snow. These are lodge members and apartment owners who have made a commitment to this Resort over its competitors. Many are Melbourne residents however when at Mt Buller, there is a sense of community particularly within club ski lodges, the Buller Race Club and around the primary school.

Summer

While the summer tourist market is expanding - winter visitors total almost 300,000 people while summer visitation is approximately 72,000 - it lags behind winter in visitation and spend. Vehicle counters at Mt Buller and Mt Stirling shows that visitation between November and May peaks at Easter, Labour Day and January school holidays.

Currently Mt Buller does not have a summer attraction equivalent to winter snow, however there has been considerable effort made to develop activities and events that will attract consistent visitation during the non-winter period. In particular, in recent years there has been investment by the ARMB and partners in walking tracks, mountain bike trails and events which have produced encouraging results.



2.7 Planning Framework

Statutory and Policy Context

Governance

Mt Buller and Mt Stirling are designated Alpine Resorts under the Alpine Resorts Act 1983, along with Mount Hotham, Falls Creek, Lake Mountain and Mount Baw Baw.

The Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997 established separate governing authorities for each of the resorts, and the ARMB has been appointed by the Victorian Government to manage the Mt Buller Alpine Resort in the manner of a local council.

The ARMB acts on behalf of the Crown, accepting directions or guidelines from the Minister for Environment and Climate Change (Department of Sustainability and Environment) regarding its performance and the discharge of its functions, duties and powers.

The planning authority for all of the Victorian Alpine Resorts is the Minister for Planning.

Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy

The Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy (under review in 2011) sets out a framework for the long term planning and development of all the Alpine Resorts. The document includes six strategic directions for Resort development:

- * A commitment to snow tourism
- * The Resorts should provide high quality visitor experiences
- * The Village(s) will have distinct character and sense of place, and be ecologically sustainable
- * The Resorts will be vibrant economic entities
- * The framework for management and development will be ecologically sustainable
- * The ARMB's key role is in the stewardship of public land for community benefit.

In addition to these strategic directions, the 2020 Strategy identifies key opportunities for Mt Buller in:

- * Further consolidation of the ski field
- * Development of the snowmaking system
- * Redevelopment of accommodation within the Village limits, including the provision of a variety of type and quality of accommodation and with improved energy efficiency
- * Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)
- * Development of a walking and ski touring route to Mt Stirling

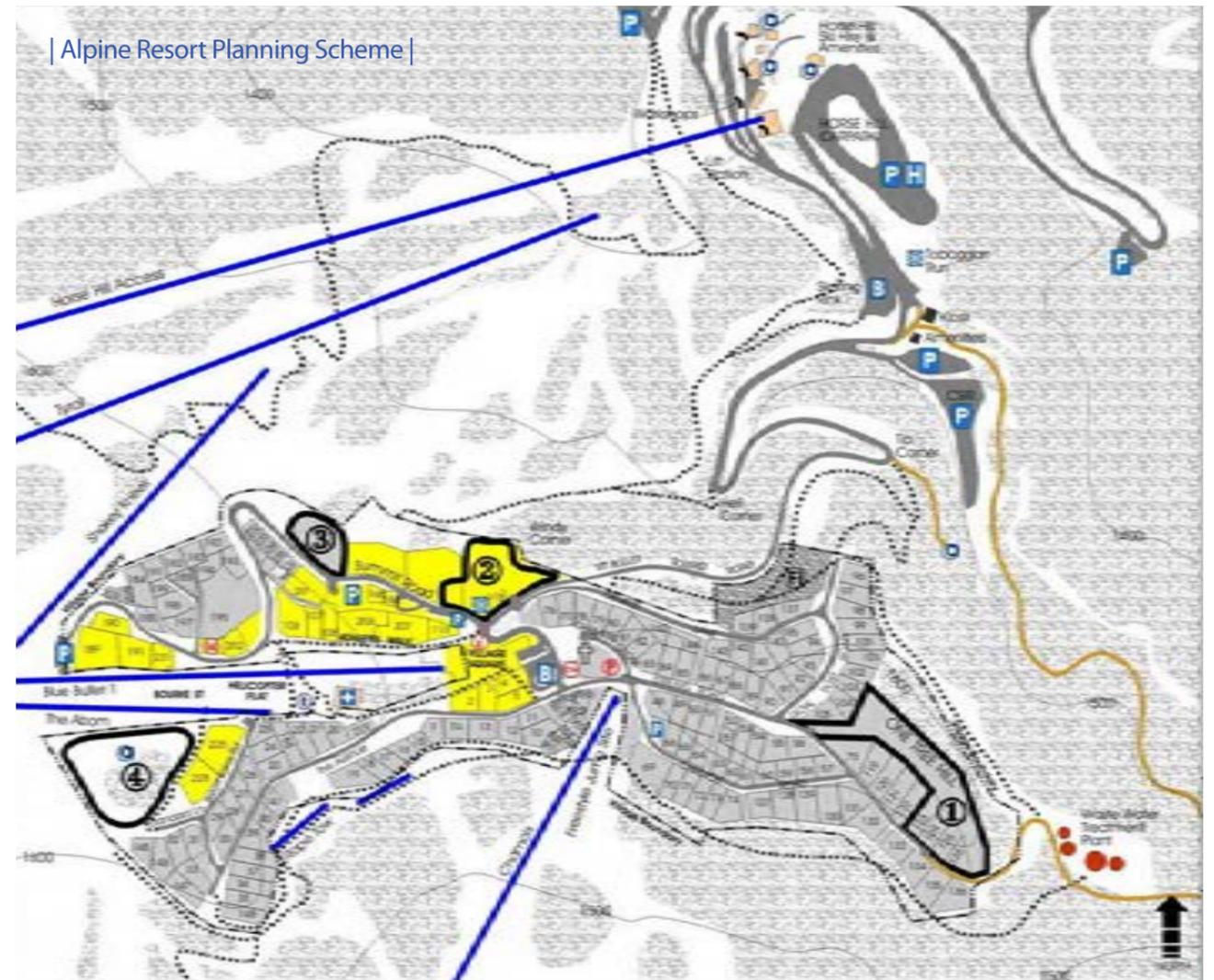


Figure 2.3 - Mt Buller Strategic Land Use Framework Plan

- * Upgrade of the Corn Hill Road
- * Enhancement of Village character with the emphasis on non-winter
- * Provision of incentives for non-winter business operation
- * Further development of conference facilities, adventure tourism, educational products and ecotourism
- * Marketing of Mt Buller as a non-winter destination

Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme (ARPS)

The ARPS sets out the policies and controls for the development and protection of land within the Alpine Resorts. Within the ARPS, the Mt Buller Strategic Statement describes the vision and key issues specific to Mt Buller while the zones control development including buildings, works and land uses.

The principal zones within the Mt Buller Alpine Resort are:

- * Comprehensive Development Zone 1: Village (CDZ1)
- * Comprehensive Development Zone 2: Skifield (CDZ2)
- * Public Park and Recreation Zone
- * Road Zone

Within CDZ1, the planning scheme identifies four key sites for future development as Comprehensive Development Areas potentially subject to a Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). Mirimbah Gate is also identified as a potential Comprehensive Development Plan Area.

The ARPS details particular requirements for development within specific zones through the following overlays:

- * Environmental Significance
- * Design and Development
- * Erosion Management
- * Wildfire Management Overlay

The ARPS includes Strategic Land Use Framework Plans for the Resort, the Village, the ski field, and the Village Centre. These plans identify particular land use outcomes along with development opportunities and constraints.

Land Use Zoning

The Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme (ARPS) identifies one Comprehensive Development Zone with two schedules that control land use and development in the Mt Buller resort. These are CDZ1 the Village Precinct and CDZ2 the Skifield Development Precinct. Within CDZ1 the Village

Precinct Plan (Figure 2.3) identifies the following key areas:

- * Commercial area
- * Residential area
- * Potential future residential areas
- * Areas where a Comprehensive Development Plan should be prepared to facilitate future development
- * The boundary of the Village and its interface with the ski field.

Only two areas are listed as Comprehensive Development Areas and subject to detailed development plans - the Gateway site and One Tree Hill. These are covered by the schedule of Clause 81.01 of the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Design and Development Overlays (DDO)

The ARPS has one DDO with two schedules that apply to Mt Buller. DDO1 applies to development within the Mt Buller Village and DDO3 applies to development within the Mt Buller ski field. The Schedules to the DDOs set out development controls such as building height, mass, appearance and construction materials.

Heritage Overlay

A Heritage Overlay is applicable to all Scheduled heritage items in Victorian Alpine Resorts however there are no scheduled items at Mt Buller.

Environmental Significance Overlay

An Environmental Significance Overlay applies to land within CDZ2 for the purpose of protecting the Mountain Pygmy-Possum and its habitat.

Erosion Management

An Erosion Management Overlay applies to land within all Victorian Alpine Resorts. The overlay is designed to protect areas that are prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development.

Wildfire Management Overlay

In July 2014, the Wildfire Management Overlay was replaced by the Bushfire Management Overlay which prioritises the protection of life in the development of land. This objective is achieved through the resorts' fire and emergency management plans which are reviewed and updated annually. Namely the:

- * Mountains Emergency Management Plan
- * Integrated Fire Management Plan
- * Community Bushfire Emergency Management Plan
- * Village Design Guidelines

Alpine Planning Information Kit

The Department of Planning and Community Development's Alpine Planning Information Kit provides a general summary of the planning permit application and assessment process as it applies to all of Victoria's Alpine Resorts in general, including Mt Buller and Mt Stirling.

Ski Area Master Plan

Prior to the development of the Resort Master Plan brief, BSL commissioned NBA Group Pty Ltd to assist in the completion of a Ski Area Master Plan as required by the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme. This has not yet been completed or approved and it is anticipated that the Mt Buller Master Plan will allow further development of the Ski Area Master Plan as a separate study.

Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)

The ARMB strives to ensure that the management and development of the resort is undertaken within an ecologically sustainable framework.

Future development must be in accordance with the latest sustainable design principles. Future policies will ensure consistent application of these principles and provide guidance on a range of active and passive ESD requirements.

State Services Authority Review

In October 2007, the Minister for Environment and Climate Change requested that the Authority undertake a Review of the Alpine Resorts Coordinating Council and five Alpine Resorts Management Boards. The Review examined the effectiveness of the institutional and governance arrangements of Victoria's Alpine Resort areas.

The final report was presented to the Minister on 30 June 2008 and made public in June 2009. A 'Framework for Discussion' paper has been released to guide feedback around the Minister's 8 goals.

- * Protecting our unique alpine environment
- * Driving financial efficiency and sustained contribution to regional economies
- * Building resilience to climate change
- * Providing access to the alpine environment for all Victorians
- * Increasing community satisfaction and participation in the resorts
- * Ensuring integrated and transparent planning and leasing processes
- * Strengthening the market position of the resorts
- * Ensuring sound governance and clear roles and responsibilities

rev 4.2



The master plan process has, in reality, been underway for a number of years. From the beginning of this process, work has been focused on earning community support through a commitment to full involvement and consultation. Commenced in 2007, the process has involved a number of clear steps that have led to the development of this master plan.

3.1 Mt Buller Brand Audit – 2007

In 2007, a joint committee of ARMB and Buller Ski Lifts Pty Ltd (BSL) commissioned Traffic Pty Ltd to provide insights and recommendations to address the revitalisation of the Mt Buller brand. Central to this strategy was a Brand Audit, the key findings of which determined that:

- * Crowding is a major issue with lifts, location of ski school, beginner areas, snow play and visitor areas
- * It is a "hassle" to get from Mirimbah gate, to car parking, to the shuttle, to the Mt Buller Village
- * Insufficient dedicated areas for visitors seeking a snow 'experience', including snow play, tobogganing, etc.
- * Limited entertainment, food and beverage and retail shopping options

The process also undertook a redefinition of the Mt Buller brand and identity. This very successful identity and image making process developed a new graphic identity and logo based on the mountain, sky and snow. The migration of all marketing and identification collateral is well underway and has been successful in the repositioning of Mt Buller.

3.2 Stakeholder Consultation – 2009

Preliminary stakeholder consultation conducted by Root Projects in 2009, involved a total of 16 focus groups and 15 one-on-one meetings amongst 140 Mt Buller stakeholders identified by the Project Steering Committee. It was given a high priority in order to achieve the following objectives in a relatively short period of time:

- * Introduce the Master Plan project to a broad set of stakeholders
- * Encourage stakeholders to engage in positive support for the planning process
- * Gain relevant information from key stakeholders to inform the Master Plan brief
- * Gain insight into the long-term vision for Mt Buller of stakeholders,

Four questions were put to the focus groups for comment:

- * Q1. What do you like about Mt Buller?
- * Q2. What would you change about Mt Buller?
- * Q3. What kind of place do you imagine Mt Buller to be in 2038?
- * Q4. What are the major obstacles blocking such future developments?

Most importantly, stakeholders were assured during consultation that their continued input would be sought and appreciated during the Resort Master Plan project.

This initial consultation provided significant insight into stakeholders' attitudes and opinions. It revealed a high degree of agreement across all stakeholder groups regarding major themes and the key messages to be addressed in the Master Plan. These themes were:

- * The unique and fragile environment
- * The value and appeal of snow
- * Proximity to Melbourne
- * Build on the sense of community
- * Better transport and access
- * Improved day visitor experience
- * The need for year round activity
- * An active and connected Village centre
- * Affordability and accessibility to a wider demographic

3.3 Mt Buller Beyond 2020

ARMB have identified a range of new attractions at Mt Buller that may appeal to public and private investment and build towards a vision for Buller beyond 2020. A number of themes were identified:

- * Mt Buller as a vibrant mountain village – A village of national renown, supporting a substantial community who live and work there year round.
- * Snow play and stay - Activities for visitors to enjoy when snow cover is light.
- * A summer retreat from the city - Build on Mt Buller as a year-round destination.
- * The Mountain Artist - An artist in residence program, studio access and a gallery for local, regional and other artists.
- * Children's village – A unique outdoor and indoor playground.
- * Buller Base Camp - A place to stay and to participate in eco-adventure and education activities in a way that honours the pristine nature of the surrounding landscape.

3.4 The Mt Buller Master Plan – 2010

The final stage of the process has been the development of the Master Plan itself.

For this stage, a Project Steering Committee that included representatives of the ARMB Board, Buller Ski Lifts (BSL), the Mt Buller business community and the State Government was established to guide the development of the Master Plan. The Project Steering Committee also included representatives of Regional Development Victoria and Tourism Victoria who were funding partners of the project.

Cox Architects and Planners were appointed in May 2010 to develop a plan that built on previous consultation and sought through a workshop process to develop a plan with full community support.

The Consultation Strategy was developed to achieve three key aims:

- * To assemble site information and identify design constraints and parameters
- * To achieve buy-in from stakeholders
- * To assist in the eventual approval of the Master Plan.

The aim was not to simply inform key stakeholders of the project outcomes, but to actively seek their input in the design and to earn their support of the final outcomes. The consultation process aimed at creating a sense of ownership of, and support for the final plan by key stakeholders, user groups and the Mt Buller community as a whole.

The steps undertaken included:

- * One-on-one consultations and interviews
- * Preparatory meetings,
- * Targetted workshops

- * Individual and group briefing of results
- * Drop-in information sessions and public displays.

The Master Plan will also reference and respond to the results of community consultation undertaken in early 2009, which involved representative stakeholders from the following list developed by the Project Steering Committee:

- * Indigenous representatives (Taungurung)
- * Transport operators
- * Tour operators
- * Accommodation providers
- * Real estate agents
- * Developers
- * ARMB Board members and staff
- * BSL management and staff
- * Food and beverage operators
- * Mt Buller retailers
- * Educational institutions
- * Emergency and public service providers
- * Tourism and community user groups (ski clubs, bushwalkers, cycling groups, etc)
- * Lodge and apartment owners
- * Part-time and full-time residents on Mt Buller
- * Victorian and local government, including:
 - * Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE)
 - * Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD)
 - * Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development (DIIRD)
 - * Parks Victoria
 - * Tourism Victoria
 - * Mansfield Shire Council







The Charette Process

A process was developed which drew on the knowledge and experience of as wide a range of participants as possible. Consultation was organized over a number of months in different forums.

			Steering Group	ARMB Board	BSL Board	Stakeholders	Community
Vision Workshop	12 July 2010	Mt Buller	✓			✓	✓
Design Charette	14-16 July	Melbourne	✓			✓	
Key Directions Review	6 August 2010	Melbourne	✓				
Draft Master Plan Presentations	17-27 August			✓	✓	✓	
Community Presentation	12 September	Mt Buller					✓
Community Presentation	14 September	Melbourne					✓
Draft Master Plan Display	16 September-6 October	Mt Buller					✓
Master Plan Completed	31 October		✓				

Vision Workshop Mt Buller 12 July 2010

The Vision Workshop brought together a wide range of stakeholders and Government and agency representatives. Some 49 participants were involved.

Prior to the workshop, the design team spent the weekend on the mountain in very poor weather observing the different aspects of operations and experiencing the issues bad weather brings out on the mountain. Time was also spent meeting key stakeholders and discussing individual perspectives on Mt Buller.

An all-day session was held at the Buller Community Centre on the following Monday. The room was split into 6 tables on which a mix of stakeholders with common interests were grouped. After a session to develop a shared vision for the Master Plan and the Mountain, the tables were asked to review, comment on and amend two sets of data:

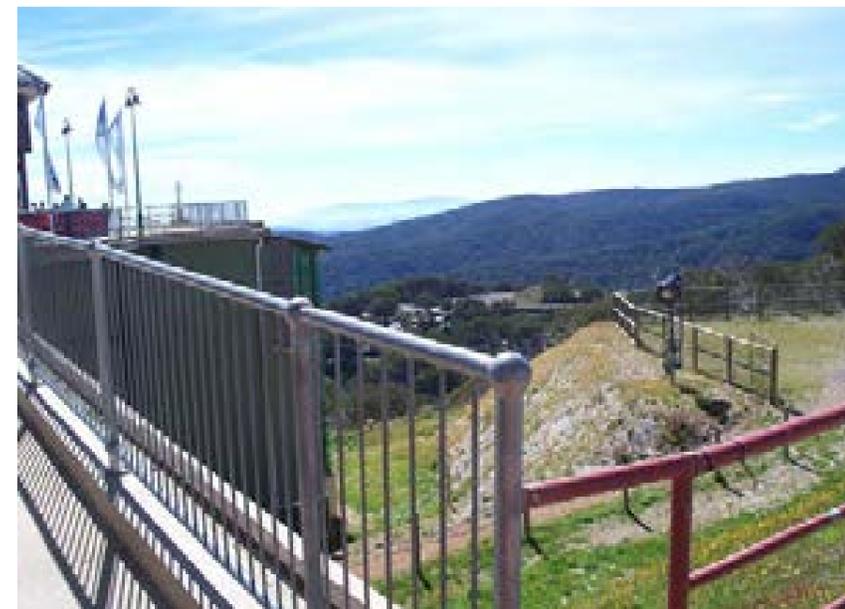
- * Performance Standards - these were policies and objectives that relate directly to Mt Buller
- * Numeric Standards - a collation of areas and figures and initial assumptions about growth potential.

The workshop ended as each table outlined what they identified as issues and opportunities on the mountain.

There was clear consensus across the group with regards the extent and nature of issues identified during the workshop. These issues were largely grouped into access and arrival concerns and comments on the Village facilities and operation.

Arrival Issues

- * Mirimbah Gate congestion
- * Exposed bus drop-off
- * Congestion
- * Insufficient and labour intensive parking
- * Poor visitor amenity
- * Poor sense of arrival
- * Pedestrian / skier / vehicle conflicts
- * Little connection to snow
- * Lack of intuitive circulation
- * Poor linkages and flow



Village Issues

- * Poor sense of place
- * Dispersed summer activity
- * Congested transport interchange
- * Lack of legibility
- * Poor visitor amenity
- * Lack of weather protection
- * Poor visual connection to mountain areas
- * Insufficient snow play areas
- * Difficult pedestrian connections
- * Bourke St bottle neck
- * Insufficient beginner ski area

The opportunities review identified the key objectives for future planning:

Mountain

- * Take Mt Buller to the next level
- * Outline 20 year expectations
- * Reinforce identity and character
- * Identify real outcomes
- * Develop a clear implementation strategy
- * Access
 - Upgrade arrival experience
- * Gondola from Horse Hill
- * Streamline Village access flow
- * Improved sense of arrival
- * Resolve pedestrian conflicts

Activity

- * Manage snow use interface
- * Improve Mountain/Village relationship
- * Establish iconic snowplay experience and facilities
- * Widen year-round attractions
- * Facilities
- * Establish stronger connections to snow

Design Charette Melbourne – 14-16 July

Following the Vision Workshop, a smaller, more focused group spent three days in the COX office in Melbourne where the options were investigated and the plan was effectively drawn.

The three days were split into half-day sessions where groups explored specific areas of concern. Outside the workshop meetings, the COX team further developed the design and drawings. The plans were consolidated on the last day into a draft plan for Mt Buller.

The output from the Charette was a consolidated plan that addressed the issues of the wider stakeholder group and Charette. Major proposals fell into three key areas:

Access

- * A new Mountain Gateway at Horse Hill
- * Gondola access between Horse Hill and the Village
- * Bus drop off at Horse Hill
- * Shuttle buses eliminated from the Village centre
- * Bus parking moved to Corn Hill Road
- * New all season access link to top of Horse Hill chair
- * New shelters to be built at long-stay parking areas for taxi waiting

Facilities

- * New guest facilities at the Village Centre
- * New facilities at Horse Hill
- * Upgraded water storage for snow making

Activity

- * New expanded snow play at Horse Hill
- * Widening of Bourke Street
- * New summer activities such as sports, cultural events, conferences and weekend escapes

Key Directions Review – 6 August 2010

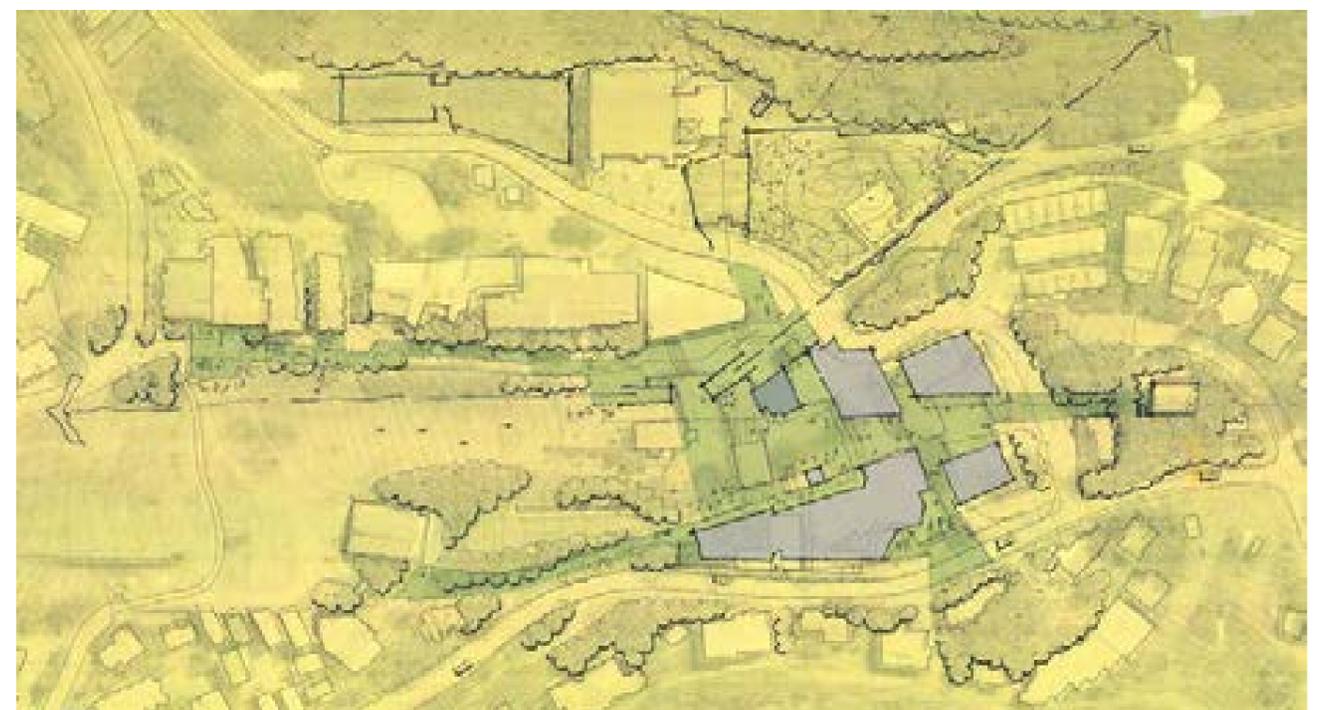
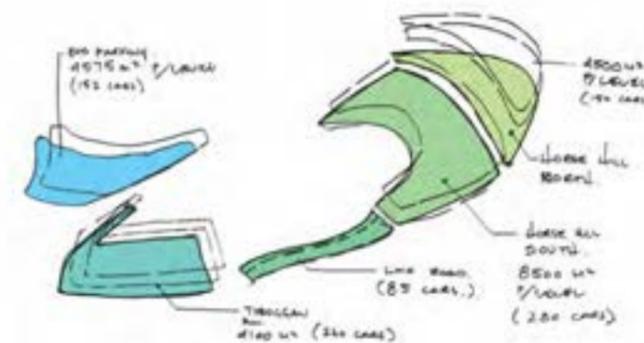
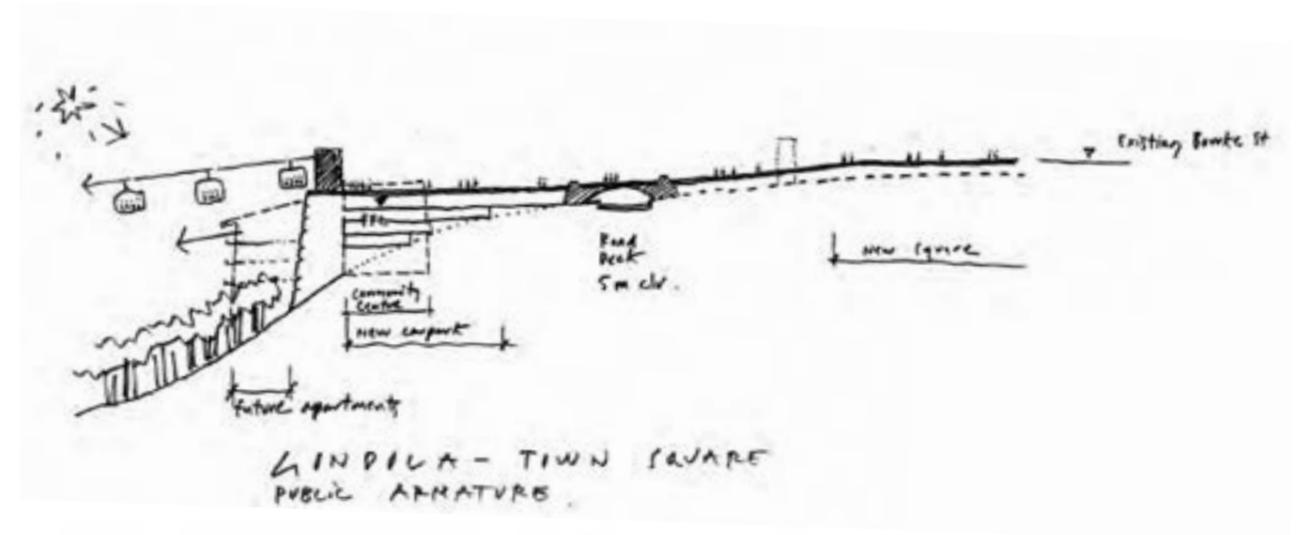
Following three weeks of design development, a workshop with the Steering Committee reviewed progress and fine tuned elements of the plan. The approved changes formed the basis of material prepared for presentation to the stakeholders through August and September.

Draft Master Plan Presentations – August-September 2010

A series of briefings to stakeholders were undertaken in mid August after refinement of the Plan. The ARMB and BSL boards were briefed separately, and community presentations were held in Mt Buller and in Melbourne to ensure that stakeholders had adequate opportunities to attend.

During September, a number of briefings with Government departments were held.

Follow up meetings with key stakeholders were held in Melbourne and Mt Buller.



Master Plan Response

The plan has responded to most of the concerns raised during the exhibition phase. Specific areas of concern addressed are:

Beginner Areas

The lack of or fragmented beginner terrain and difficulty in getting to ski school was a common concern. It was decided that while the ski school could not be relocated, improved access is possible. Better access to and use of the slopes at Spurs (together with additional snowmaking) is seen as assisting beginner skiers. The reactivation of ski area on the flat terrain around Baldy was considered however better access to the slopes at Spurs will more comprehensively alleviate beginner crowding on Bourke Street.

The snowplay area at Horse Hill will significantly improve new visitor experiences and help draw competing activity away from the main slopes

Pedestrian circulation

Pedestrian walkways/access between accommodation, village and ski area – particularly the eastern village – is acknowledged as an issue. The planning of the Village Centre as well as work on Black Forest and Athletes Walks seek to better integrate east and west areas and draw activity in the Village centre closer to residential areas.

Future work by ARMB will examine possible upgrades as well as better use of existing infrastructure such as the Home Trail from the Village to Horse Hill. Skier access from the Village centre will be maintained and skiways south of the YHA and Kooroora sites will be formalised.

The extent of new F+B space and retail space Throughout the planning process, the on-going viability of existing retail and F&B tenants has been identified as a priority. New opportunities do, however, exist in the expanded Village Centre and at Horse Hill.

Planning has been careful to control the extent of any new retail and F&B and this has been reflected in the plans. The final configuration and areas will be subject to detailed design.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding and communication throughout the mountain (both vehicular and pedestrian) is acknowledged as an issue. This is as much an issue at the entry to the mountain as it is in the Village and in the design of new elements such as the from the Gondola to ski hire outlets.

The preparation of a new wayfinding strategy is identified as a priority.

Village Design

More detail that illustrates village redevelopment was requested. The plan sets out key principles:

- * Activation of the ground level is essential.
- * Preferred sites for the location of a nightclub
- * Provision of locker facilities as well as other amenities.
- * Indicative retail and F&B areas
- * Massing to ensure good solar access to the main square.
- * Spaces for snow play in the Village centre.

The final plan, as well as the final scale and massing, will be developed in detailed proposals. The redevelopment of both the YHA and Kooroora Hotel sites have been considered in the Master Plan and will be subject to detailed design and the preparation of appropriate controls.

While the Village upgrade is planned to directly improve facilities for the day visitor, the improved environment and experience will help activate the centre longer into the evening for the enjoyment of overnight visitors.

Carparking and Access

More detail was requested to illustrate how new parking was to be integrated. The final Master Plan identifies staging and reallocation of parking across the mountain.

- * An overpass to improve pedestrian access from CSIR to Horse Hill
- * Links to Horse Hill from new parking at Workshop and Walkers.
- * The relocation of workshop facilities will be coordinated with stakeholders on the mountain.
- * A new 400 car parking structure east of the BCC to reduce traffic pressures with the Village.

The provision of loop roads and tunnels were examined however the cost and the impact on a “walking” Village were felt to be too high.

The centralising of core commercial services (eg. staff accommodation, laundry, storage and delivery depot away from premium/retail space) to improve efficiencies and affordability will be examined as the Village is developed in detail.

The Arlberg to Spurs Link

A possible all-season road link between Spurs and Arlberg will allow shuttle bus and service access to the beginner slopes at Spurs. It has been identified as a valuable addition to the mountain that will move beginner skiers off Bourke Street and to the more suitable slopes at Spurs.



The link however, will need careful design to avoid environmental and ski run impacts. It will be subject to cost benefit assessment.

Traffic at Horse Hill

Proposals for revised traffic around Horse Hill and along Corn Hill Road have been developed to improve access and minimise the impact of buses at the gateway to the mountain. Proposals include a roundabout adjacent to Skating Rink, a new vehicular link on the north side of Horse Hill and bus parking and a bus turn on Corn Hill Road.

In the short term, Skating Rink will be used as overflow parking with pedestrian movements carefully controlled

Snowplay Areas

The creation of a new larger snowplay area at Horse Hill is planned to significantly improve the snowplay experience and to reduce pressures on the ski slopes. The snow play area is on the south side of Horse Hill. Snow making and a better aspect will improve the experience for snow play visitors.

Concerns about the toboggan area being too remote and not in the Village, will be addressed by the construction of the Gondola which will deliver day visitors to the centre of the Village.

Subject to the development of a detailed staging plan, a staged relocation may be required. A temporary toboggan area on the west side of the BCC will allow construction of the new parking structure on the existing site.

Medical Centre

A possible relocation of the Medical Centre from Bourke Street to the Village Centre would locate medical services in the heart of the Village. This may occur in late stages of the plan, however the existing facility works now and the scale of investment means that relocation is not a priority in the initial phases.

Concerns have been raised about the additional skier traffic generated by an emergency facility on the Village centre however, the provision of a small, complementary health facility in the Village may be possible.

Activities

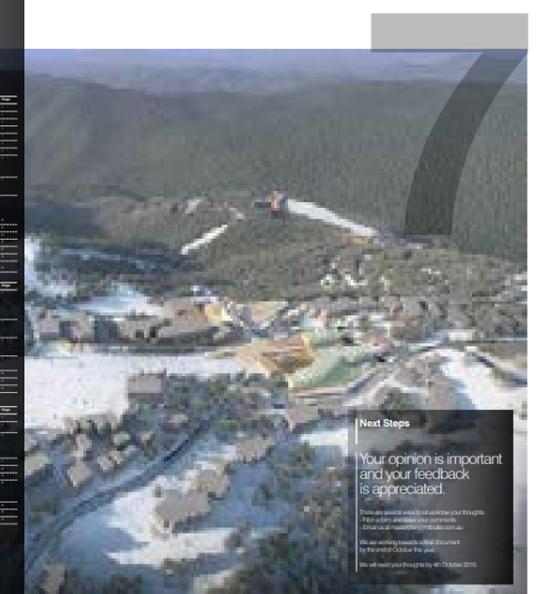
The Master Plan identifies the need to develop a range of summer and winter activities. These include:

- * A covered playground to the west of the BCC
- * A possible winter skating rink in the Village
- * A variety of bike tracks (new and old) for different skill levels subject to environmental review and approval
- * New walking tours
- * Additional summer sports activities such as a high altitude oval
- * Summer cultural events.

The aim of the plan is to improve the winter experience and to further activate the Village in summer to help spread the economic and social activity across the year. This is reflected in the range, scale and timing of activities proposed.

Implementation

Overall	Year	Cost	Revenue	Net
Year 1	2015	100	0	-100
Year 2	2016	100	0	-100
Year 3	2017	100	0	-100
Year 4	2018	100	0	-100
Year 5	2019	100	0	-100
Year 6	2020	100	0	-100
Year 7	2021	100	0	-100
Year 8	2022	100	0	-100
Year 9	2023	100	0	-100
Year 10	2024	100	0	-100
Year 11	2025	100	0	-100
Year 12	2026	100	0	-100
Year 13	2027	100	0	-100
Year 14	2028	100	0	-100
Year 15	2029	100	0	-100
Year 16	2030	100	0	-100
Year 17	2031	100	0	-100
Year 18	2032	100	0	-100
Year 19	2033	100	0	-100
Year 20	2034	100	0	-100
Year 21	2035	100	0	-100
Year 22	2036	100	0	-100
Year 23	2037	100	0	-100
Year 24	2038	100	0	-100
Year 25	2039	100	0	-100
Year 26	2040	100	0	-100
Year 27	2041	100	0	-100
Year 28	2042	100	0	-100
Year 29	2043	100	0	-100
Year 30	2044	100	0	-100
Year 31	2045	100	0	-100
Year 32	2046	100	0	-100
Year 33	2047	100	0	-100
Year 34	2048	100	0	-100
Year 35	2049	100	0	-100
Year 36	2050	100	0	-100
Year 37	2051	100	0	-100
Year 38	2052	100	0	-100
Year 39	2053	100	0	-100
Year 40	2054	100	0	-100
Year 41	2055	100	0	-100
Year 42	2056	100	0	-100
Year 43	2057	100	0	-100
Year 44	2058	100	0	-100
Year 45	2059	100	0	-100
Year 46	2060	100	0	-100
Year 47	2061	100	0	-100
Year 48	2062	100	0	-100
Year 49	2063	100	0	-100
Year 50	2064	100	0	-100
Year 51	2065	100	0	-100
Year 52	2066	100	0	-100
Year 53	2067	100	0	-100
Year 54	2068	100	0	-100
Year 55	2069	100	0	-100
Year 56	2070	100	0	-100
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Year 63	2077	100	0	-100
Year 64	2078	100	0	-100
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Year 67	2081	100	0	-100
Year 68	2082	100	0	-100
Year 69	2083	100	0	-100
Year 70	2084	100	0	-100
Year 71	2085	100	0	-100
Year 72	2086	100	0	-100
Year 73	2087	100	0	-100
Year 74	2088	100	0	-100
Year 75	2089	100	0	-100
Year 76	2090	100	0	-100
Year 77	2091	100	0	-100
Year 78	2092	100	0	-100
Year 79	2093	100	0	-100
Year 80	2094	100	0	-100
Year 81	2095	100	0	-100
Year 82	2096	100	0	-100
Year 83	2097	100	0	-100
Year 84	2098	100	0	-100
Year 85	2099	100	0	-100
Year 86	2100	100	0	-100
Year 87	2101	100	0	-100
Year 88	2102	100	0	-100
Year 89	2103	100	0	-100
Year 90	2104	100	0	-100
Year 91	2105	100	0	-100
Year 92	2106	100	0	-100
Year 93	2107	100	0	-100
Year 94	2108	100	0	-100
Year 95	2109	100	0	-100
Year 96	2110	100	0	-100
Year 97	2111	100	0	-100
Year 98	2112	100	0	-100
Year 99	2113	100	0	-100
Year 100	2114	100	0	-100



Feasibility

Concerns were expressed that the plan is too grand and that site outgoings will increase to cover the cost of implementation. The plan recognises that realising all elements may take 20 years and expenditure over that period is not excessive and is achievable.

The report includes a financial plan that examines the costs, funding and staging of elements in the plan. It justifies for each initiative in the context of broader policy objectives.

Environment

Above all, Mt Buller is committed to the environment. The mountain experience is anchored on the quality and uniqueness of the alpine environment.

Protection of important environmental communities will continue, and the Master Plan calls for more energy efficient buildings through the development of new Environmentally Sustainable Design controls.



More than a Mountain. Mt Buller is a welcoming and accessible Australian alpine village. It's unique environment, history and its sense of community create great mountain adventures and experiences all year round.

4.1 The Successful Resort

While a visit to Mt Buller is an escape from the realities of day-to-day life, the resort remains part of wider changes and pressures that have a direct impact on how the mountain grows and changes. At a global level, six areas of change have been identified:

- * Change and Choice - There is now competition for everything and realising potential depends on carefully assessing options and making difficult choices
- * Fundamental Shifts in Perception - Tourism has applied the industrial model to its development, growth and delivery. That model is proving less effective and is showing internal vulnerabilities
- * Biophysical Challenges - Pressure will come from society for resorts to play their part in reducing emission and to live in greater balance with nature. The challenge is to decouple growth from waste, pollution and overuse and to adjust to climate change.
- * Impacts on Connectivity - Transparency and reputation are increasingly important. All products and places are constantly being reviewed and rated by consumers who wield more influence as their networks expand and expectations rise.
- * Changing Sources of Wealth - Wealth is increasingly being created from ideas, creativity, concepts and services, and is less tied to geography. These fast-changing demographics are increasingly made up of active seniors and multi-sport families that are interested in authentic leisure experiences
- * Contradictions - As we become more connected, we are more isolated; we have more time saving devices, but less time; the more we are online, the more we crave a real, authentic community; the more globally connected we are, the more we want to buy local, to stand out and be unique.



In this context, successful resorts must constantly change and evolve to meet a changing market and changing expectations. This leads to a series of common elements that underpin successful resorts:

- * Affordability and resident housing is a critical problem
- * Sustainability initiatives are critical to ongoing ability to attract tourists
- * Need to establish and maintain excellent relationships with adjacent communities
- * Shoulder season periods are a significant untapped opportunity
- * Aging resort population has significant impact on housing, affordability and service
- * NIMBYs limit implementation of solutions
- * Recognize valuable attributes and protect them
- * Use large scale events as an economic generator and marketing tool

- * Establish and maintain "dedicated" funding sources for the consistent upgrade and reinvestment in the attraction
- * Diversify the economic base to sustain the economy and expand the texture of the offering
- * Fragmented development leads to a lack of cohesion and under-realization of the benefits of new development
- * Strive to achieve Sustained Prosperity

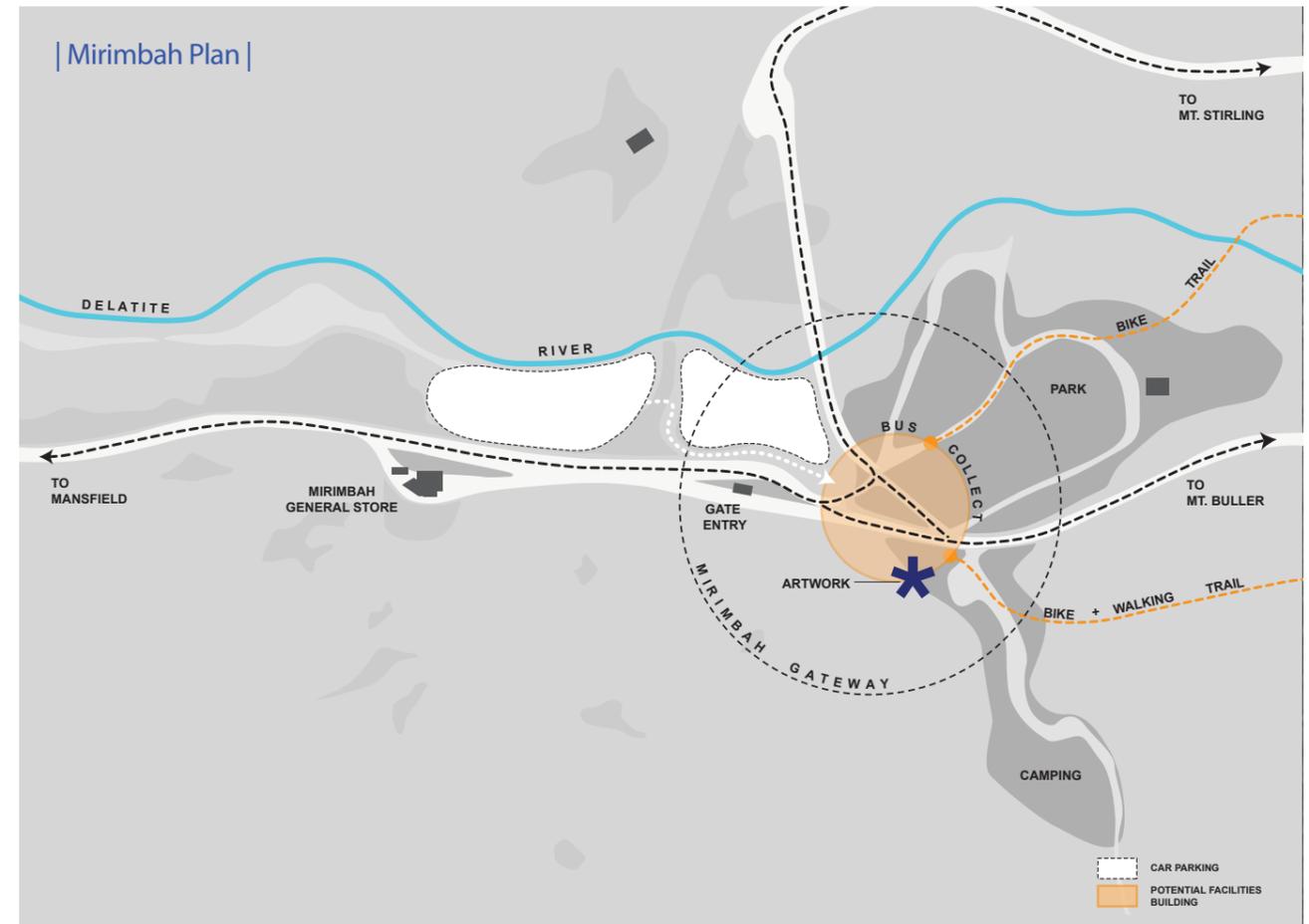
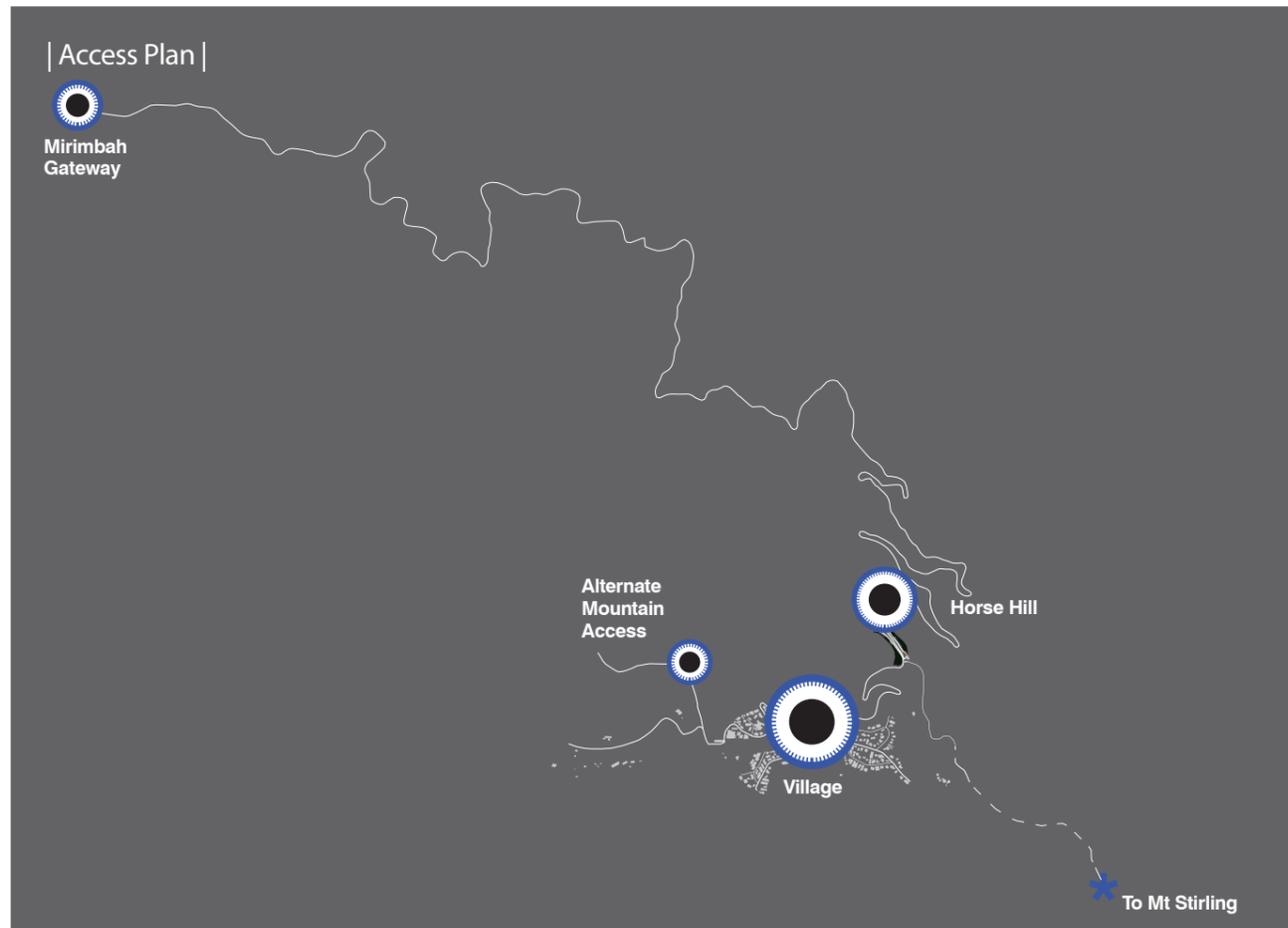
Sustained Prosperity

In sites as fragile and as constrained as mountain villages and resorts, it is important to recognise that there are limits to growth. It is premised on the assumption that the resort or the community has the goal to be prosperous, where the definition of prosperity is "the state of being not only economically successful, but to be happy and healthy".

Sustained Prosperity is defined as:

"The steady state condition, where the Resort has achieved, and is able to maintain, ongoing economic well being without requiring the continued land development and physical growth that will ultimately compromise the unique attributes which make up the social, cultural and natural environments that are the cornerstone to its character, success and experience offered"

To sustain prosperity it is essential not to spoil or compromise the environment – Mt Buller's most important asset. Managers, operators and residents must approach everything that they do with this goal in mind, such that it achieves a balance that strives to be economically, environmentally, socially and culturally successful.



4.2 The Master Plan

The Master Plan has been developed to establish a long term plan for Mt Buller and identify immediate opportunities on the mountain within the framework of Sustained Prosperity.

These initiatives have been developed within a structure that honours the pristine and biodiverse setting and the special environment.

The Master Plan recognises Mt Buller as a unique and biodiverse environment and responds to the site by creating a carefully crafted and environmentally responsive event platform.

The Master Plan seeks to be a considered and appropriate response to this unique and special alpine habitat.

The Master Plan is underpinned by five key elements:

- * Accessibility
- * Community
- * Amenity
- * Activation
- * Sustainability

Accessibility – The Connected Mountain

The Master Plan seeks to reinforce the sense of arrival and the sense of place at Mt Buller. The first portal is at Mirimbah at the foot of the mountain. The experience continues up the spectacular mountain road until reaching the new portal at Horse Hill which unambiguously marks the arrival point at Mt Buller itself.

The development of the new Horse Hill Gateway allows the integration of access across the whole mountain. Key to this is the construction of a Gondola link between Horse Hill and the Village.

Several initiatives underpin the strategy:

- * An upgrade of the gateway at Mirimbah
- * The Gondola link between Horse Hill and the Village Centre providing access for day visitors from the new snowplay areas on Horse Hill
- * An upgraded Horse Hill chairlift providing access to a Spurs skier portal

A possible extension of the road from Arlberg to the Spurs ski area will complete the circuit between Horse Hill, the skier portal and the Village itself.

Mirimbah Gate

As the first point of entry to Mt Buller, the Mirimbah Gate marks the start of the journey into the mountain. Issues identified at Mirimbah include:

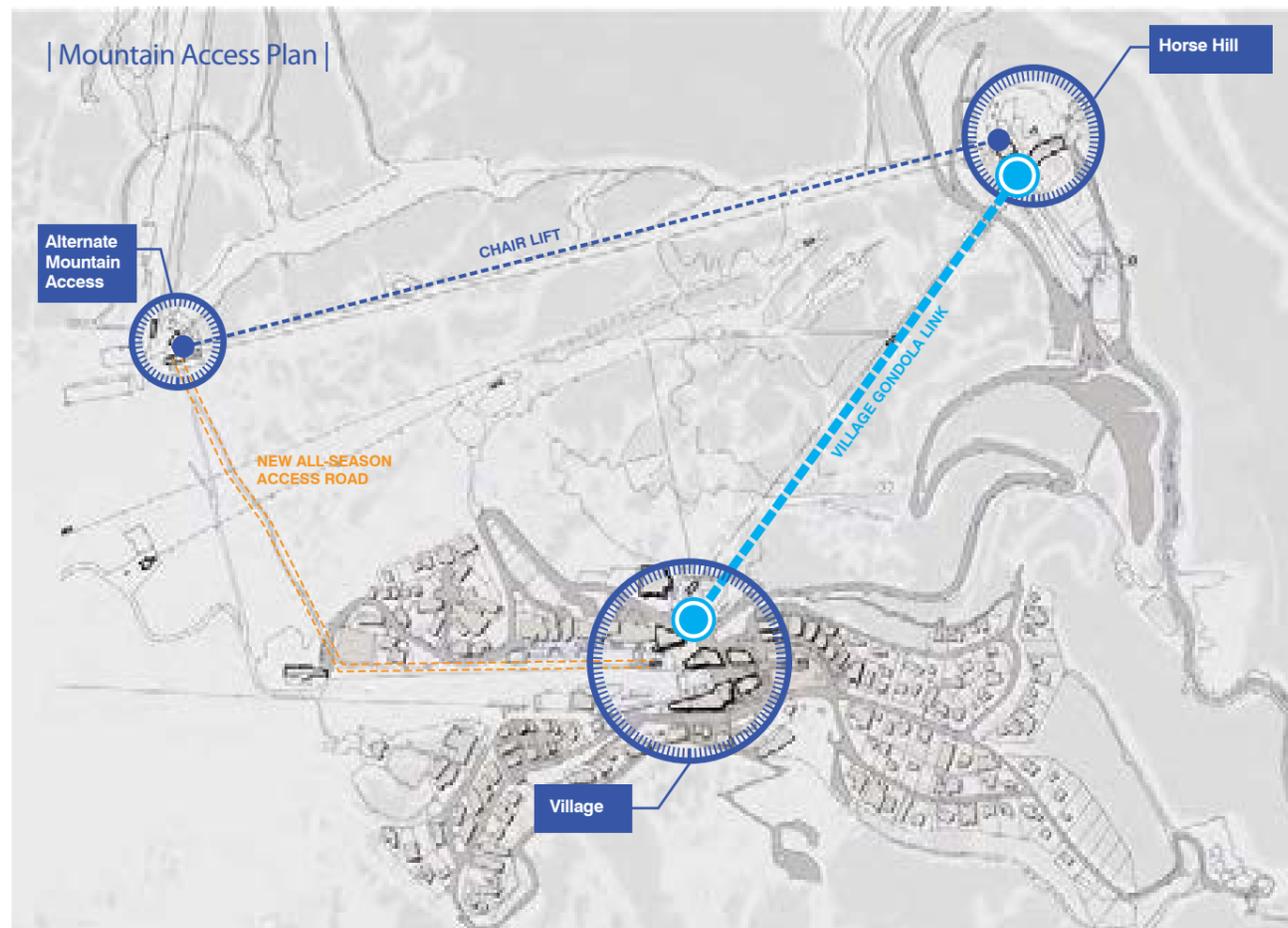
- * Long queuing at entry gate
- * Poor sense of arrival
- * Underutilised assets
- * Lack of orientation

Re-engineering the arrivals process includes a new entry building, improved visitor signage and orientation and amenities

RFID drive-through ticketing (currently under investigation and part of a State grant funding programme) and a system to pre-pay entries are aimed at speeding up the arrivals experience.

Mirimbah is under used and there is an opportunity to activate the zone in summer and winter as a stop on the journey and base station for camping and for bike and hiking trails.





The Horse Hill Gateway

The Horse Hill area is one of the most highly disturbed areas at Mt Buller.

The establishment of Horse Hill as a gateway to the mountain and the Village reorganizes how the mountain operates and how the mountain is perceived. The new Horse Hill Gateway will become the Day Visitor's main access point for the mountain. In a restructuring of the existing parking and tobogganing area, Horse Hill will incorporate:

- * A new Snow Play zone
- * A new bus dropoff
- * Restructuring of parking
- * Consolidation of Day Visitor parking around the new Gateway
- * Amenities building with toilets, lockers, seating, ski hire and a café
- * Gondola and chairlift terminal

As a major retail and services zone, the role of the Village Centre has been acknowledged in these initiatives. There will be limited retail and food offerings at Horse Hill and the free gondola will attract day visitors to the Village.

The potential extension of shuttle bus services to the skier portal at Spurs would improve accessibility back into the Village and allow easy access to beginner areas.

The Village Gondola

One of the most significant elements will be the construction of a gondola from Horse Hill to the Village. Previous proposals of a gondola from Mirimbah to the Village have not been feasible and failed to address snow play and beginner access.

This shorter, more easily realised project will replace the fleet of buses that crawl up the mountain between Horse Hill and the Village. The elimination of these shuttle buses from Horse Hill and the Village, frees areas for civic and facility improvements and will improve the resorts environmental performance.

The Gondola will be free and operating hours will be extended to help spread the afternoon peak as people return to buses and cars.

The Gondola will incorporate a mid-station that will service summer activities such as lift serviced mountain biking, a luge and flying fox.

The Horse Hill Chairlift

An upgrade of the Horse Hill chairlift will further integrate the chairlift into the Horse Hill Gateway. The eastern station of the chairlift can be raised to the new level of the Gateway building to allow seamless connection to the chair and from the bus dropoff, carparking and the new Gondola.

The Chairlift will continue to operate during summer to service downhill mountain biking.

The Spurs Link

The possible extension of the new Summit Road from Arlberg to Spurs completes circulation around the north of the mountain. Served by the shuttle, the link opens up the beginner areas at Spurs while maintaining activity in the Village Centre.

An all-season road would allow direct deliveries in winter to the Spurs restaurant.

Where the road crosses ski runs – Shaky Knees and Tirol – the road would need to be covered to maintain skier access down the slopes. Detailed design must address all environmental and operational issues.





| The Village |

Gondola Station

Guest Facilities

Pedestrian Link

Skier Link

Community - The Village Heart

The redefinition of the Village Centre requires a solution that maintains the scale and character of Mt Buller Village while creating a place that is both a platform for summer and winter events and a public focus for the Mountain.

The existing square is dislocated and lacks a real sense of place. Development on key sites on the south side of the square has been delayed while decisions on future directions are agreed.

The removal of Horse Hill buses will allow the redevelopment of land on the bus parking area and draws activity back towards the residential areas in the east of the mountain.

New visitor facilities built across the northern edge of the Village Square to block winds and the plaza is extended to the east to create a secondary square and views to the church.

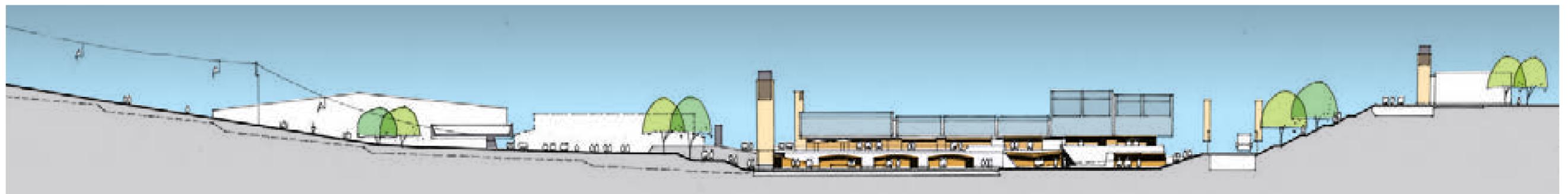
The concept embodies a number of elements:

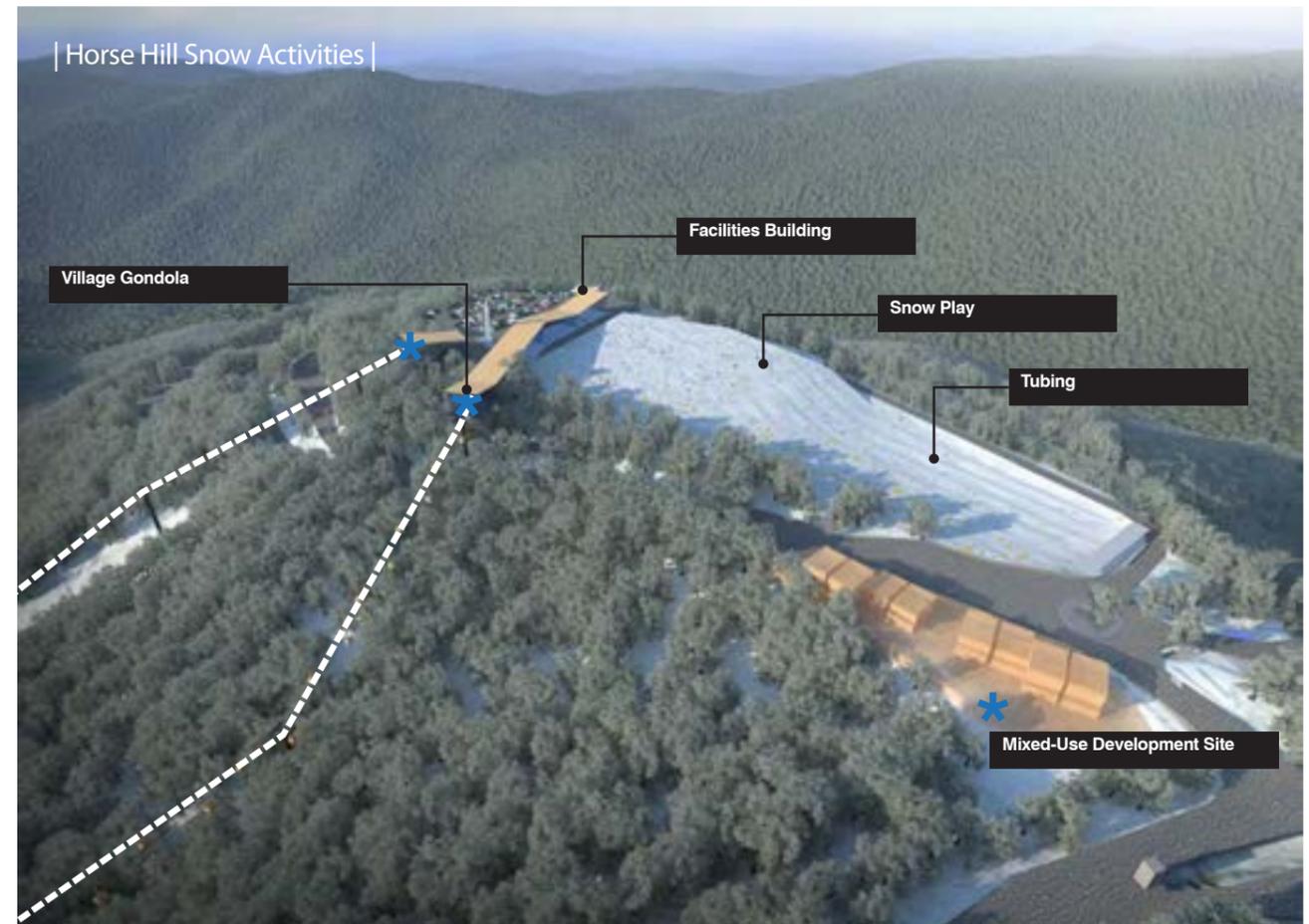
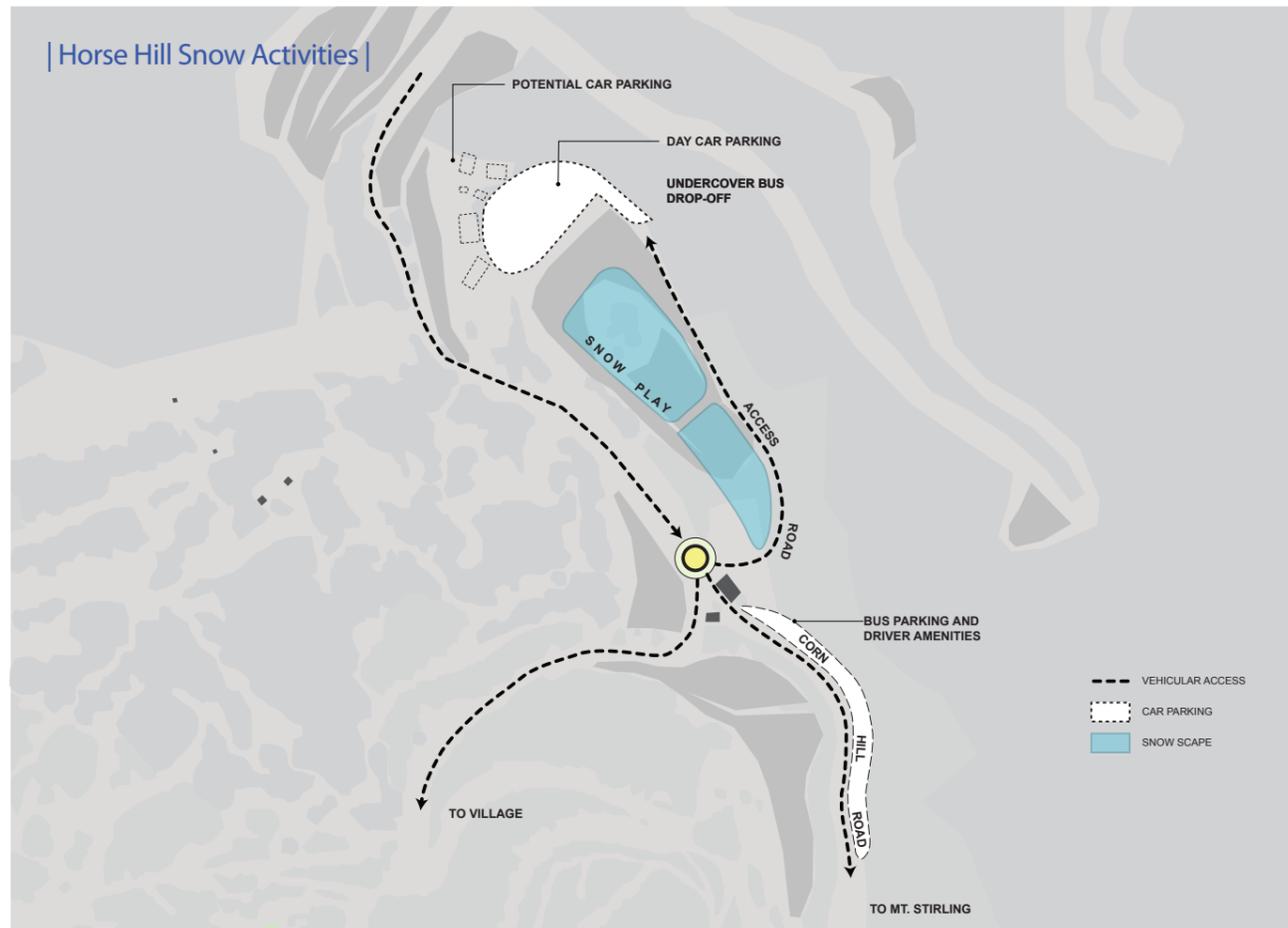
- * Mixed use buildings surrounding the plaza with active edges during day and night, summer and winter.
- * Views open up to the church on the hill to the east
- * New links through the Village Centre at a number of levels – a plaza at existing ground level and new terraces and bridge connections at the Blue Bullet level.
- * Maintain the character and scale of the Village Centre with setbacks for levels above two storeys.
- * Ensure solar access by limiting heights on the north side of the square to two storeys.
- * Development in the Village centre no higher than 5-6 storeys.
- * New buildings are not to overwhelm views to the Village.

Most importantly, the Village Centre has been conceived as an events space both summer and winter. The predominant two storey scale will be fringed by active uses and terraces that will be busy during the day but most importantly into the evening.

Maintaining the scale and character of Mt Buller is essential. While the plan builds on the existing Village framework to achieve a new reading and identity for Mt Buller Village, redevelopment must manage transitions in scale between new and existing buildings.

Currently, the maximum height permitted is 4 storeys. The built form of the Village Centre will be carefully sculpted to optimise solar access, maintain views and develop an appropriate scale. The final form will subject to further studies and planning approval.





Amenity – The Complete Experience

Amenity on the mountain is reflected in different priorities for different users. The Master Plan reinforces ARMB’s commitment to improving the experience and enjoyment of everyone at Mt Buller.

The Snowballer

Through climate change, the snow season is predicted to shorten and resorts at lower elevations such as Lake Mountain and Mount Baw Baw are expected in future years to struggle for snow cover. If this is the case, Mt Buller becomes the closest resort with reliable snow.

There is an increasing market for those interested in snow play rather than skiing. This market is strongly represented by ethnically diverse groups and is different to the traditional skier market.

This growing sector has been identified as important not only in terms of ensuring equity and accessibility to the mountain but as a base for future skiers and mountain users.

Current facilities – both on the snow and support services - have been acknowledged as being inadequate. In bad weather, Cow Camp in the Village Centre is clearly undersized and there are insufficient toilets.

The Skier and Boarder

The problem of snowballer and toboggan impacts on the busy runs at Lower Bourke Street and access to suitable beginner terrain were key issues raised during the consultation process.

The introduction of a new snow play zone with snow making capability on regraded south facing slopes at Horse Hill and better access to beginner slopes at Spurs will free up areas dedicated to skiers where conflicts currently exist.

The expansion of snow making is particularly

important as the winter season becomes increasingly reliant on man-made snow. The construction of additional water storage on the mountain is critical for the implementation of this expansion.

With the adoption of the Master Plan, BSL has indicated that its own skifield master plan can be progressed.

The Family

A mountain visit in winter is not always about skiing and in summer there is more to the family experience than mountain bike riding.

The Master Plan acknowledges that there needs to be complementary uses on the mountain to provide diversity summer and winter.

Key initiatives include:

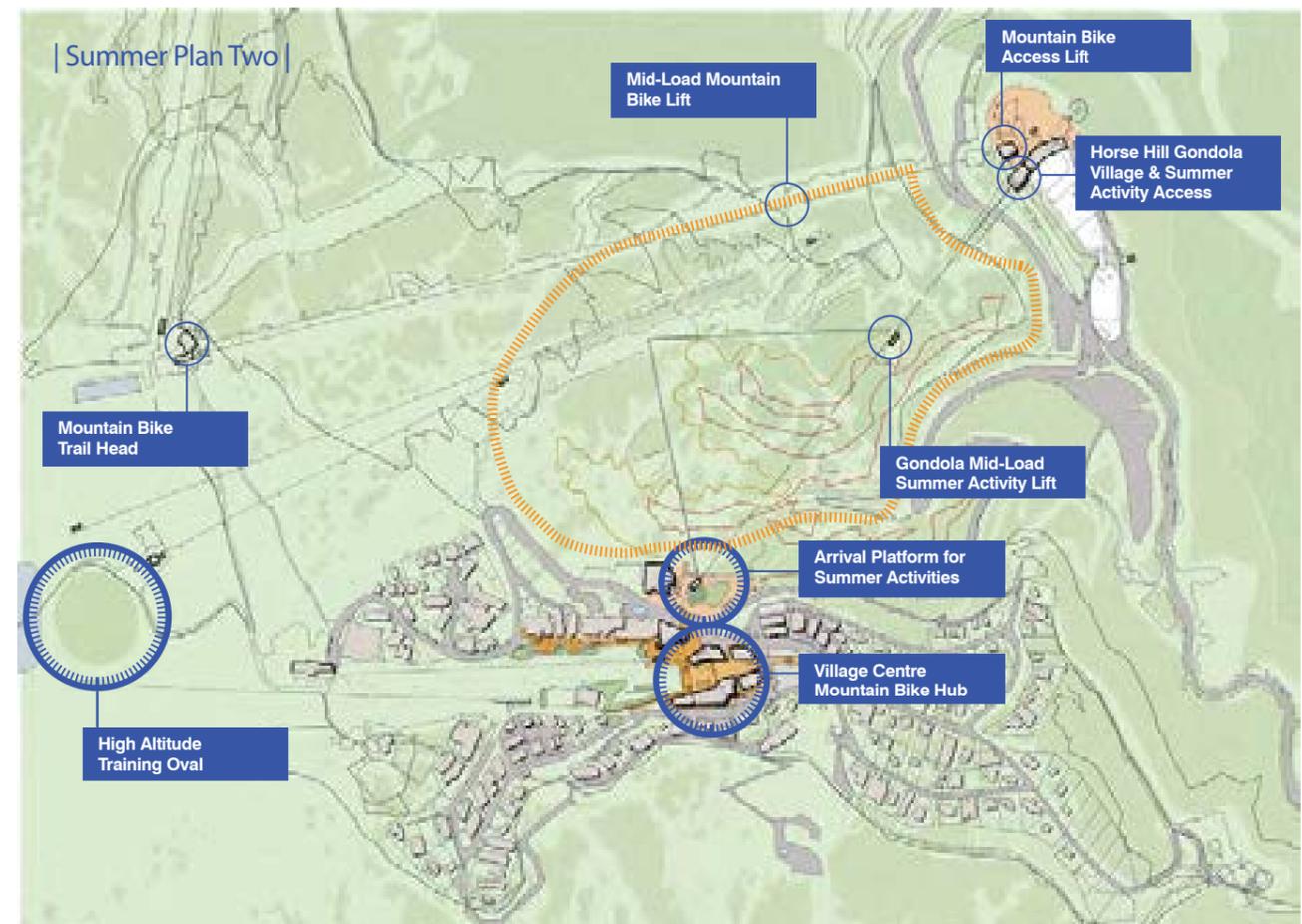
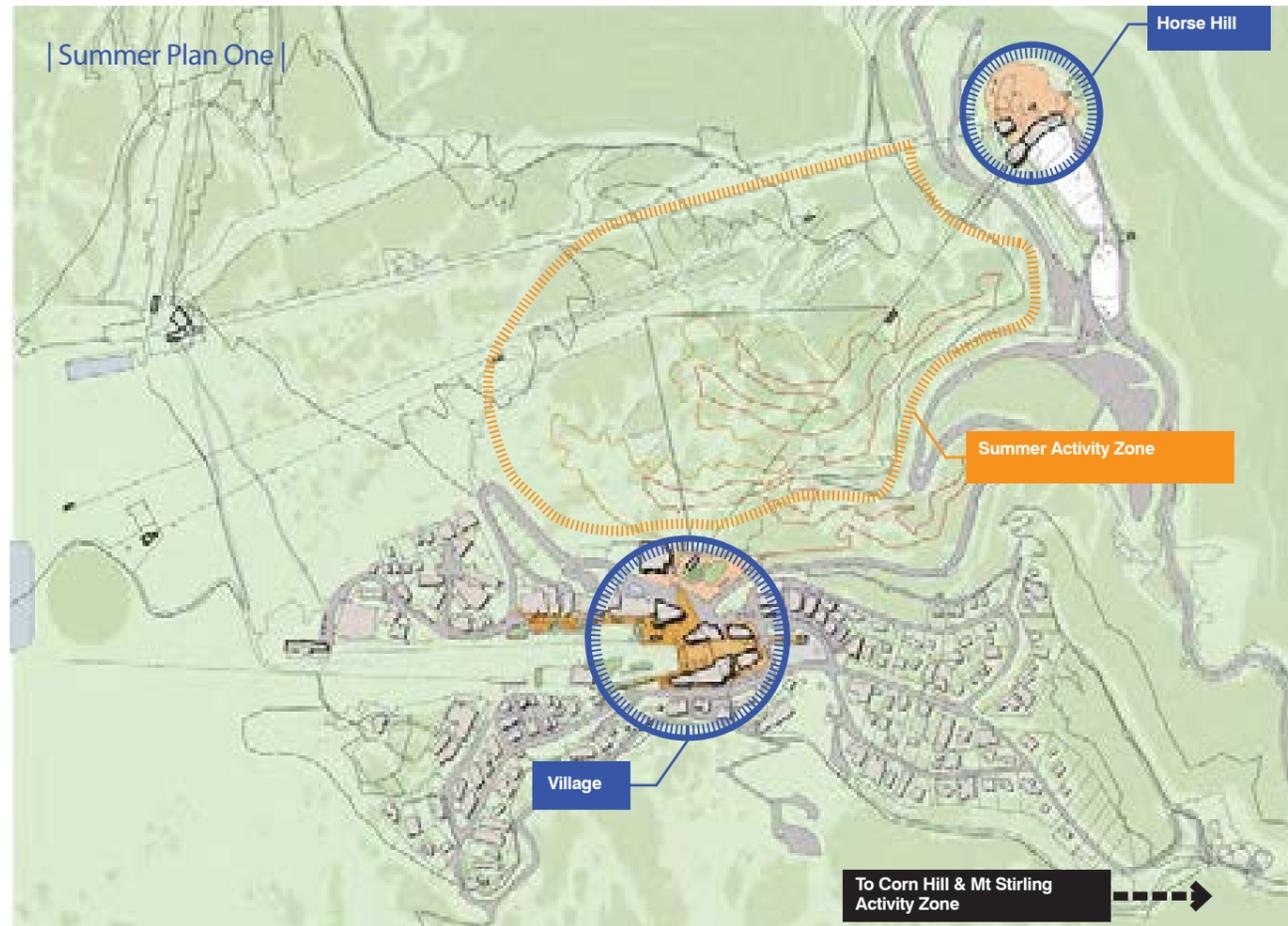
- * The Village Square – new food and beverage and entertainment venues clustered around the new Square

- * The Adventure Playground – a new indoor/outdoor play area at the Buller Community Centre (BCC)
- * Walking trails

The Youth Market

The development of a vibrant nightlife at Mt Buller is important. Staging of the Kooroora site redevelopment must maintain a large nighttime venue at each stage of development. New, smaller entertainment and food and beverage opportunities in the Village Centre will add activity to the heart of Mt Buller.





Activation - The Active Destination

Creating activity throughout the year requires both a program of events and most importantly suitable spaces that can successfully host events across the mountain.

Events

Events bring direct economic benefits through expenditure at local businesses immediately before and after functions and increased visitation to the mountain at other times as a result of the increased profile. A calendar of regular and iconic events is essential to activate Mt Buller, to create the awareness of Mt Buller as a destination summer and winter.

Mt Buller already has a well structured program in both winter and summer to attract visitors. In winter, the snow ensures steady occupancies, however in summer, the challenge is to achieve more even patronage that will sustain the opening of hotels and services rather than one-off events.

A program based on seasons, holidays and annual celebrations creates a wide range of different activities that appeal to different sectors of the community.

Summer Activities

Australian ski resorts struggle with activation through the summer months and while all have small permanent communities, the creation of a sustainable summer economy and activity has proven difficult.

Mt Buller however is unique in that it is only 3 hours from Melbourne and easily accessed by the day or weekend visitor. While Mt Buller is part of a wider regional offering, there is an acknowledged need to develop a range of summer season attractions and events that create a critical mass of visitors that is steady across the warmer months.

The aim will be to introduce a range of low cost attractions that cater for a wide range of users with different skill and fitness levels. It is as important to create opportunities for both the first time users as it is the expert.

The Village will be the start point for activities that include:

- * Mountain Biking
- * Bushwalking
- * Luge
- * Flying Fox
- * Oval for high altitude training

The Gondola will be a key element in these activities with the Horse Hill facilities being a base station for downhill sports and a gateway to Mt Stirling.

An Epic Bike Trail from the top of the mountain to Mirimbah has been previously proposed and will be subject to environmental review and approval.

The new snow play area at Horse Hill forms a natural amphitheatre that will suit summer performances, movies, festivals and events.

A series of guided and self-guided tours can be developed that look at different aspects of Mt Buller. Potential tours can feature:

- * Indigenous heritage
- * European history
- * The natural and built environment
- * Food and entertainment.

Aboriginal stories and explanations of the environment and landscape are fundamental elements in the character and identity of the Village.

Orientation Centre

A central information point in the heart of the Village would serve not only as a tourist information centre, but a starting point for school tours, guided walks and can house purpose built displays. The Alpine Museum should be more accessible for summer and winter visitors.

A series of possible displays have been canvassed:

- * Water recycling and purification
- * Indigenous history
- * Environmental displays

The centre should have a small auditorium, audio-visual displays and maps and information about Mt Buller.

The opportunity exists to relocate the Alpine Museum to the Village Centre.

Local Produce

The sale of local food, wine and crafts can add to the authenticity of the Mt Buller experience. The providers' offering needs to be carefully positioned with on-going management to ensure quality is maintained and the niche market is protected.

- * Food and crafts from the district around Mt Buller showcases the region as a whole and the year-round availability of fresh, wholesome food would have a direct spin-off to Mt Buller's permanent retail outlets and restaurants.
- * The Craft Market – drawing on the creative skills of Mt Buller and Mansfield residents, would showcase arts and crafts from across the region.
- * Arts program – an art gallery associated with arts initiatives and artists in residence as well as a program of sculpture in the Village will be developed

Sustainability

Sustainability addresses a wide context that considers environmental, commercial and community issues. The Master Plan acknowledges these three important elements that underpins a truly sustainable and comprehensive response.

The pristine environment at Mt Buller is fundamental to the summer and winter experience. The existing environmental framework is well defined and well managed. Future development is important on the mountain however important bio-systems must be protected and preserved.

The commitment to Environmental Sustainability is paramount and is addressed in a number of areas:

- * Protection of areas of ecological significance
- * The increased use of green services and energy generation
- * New development that incorporates sustainable design principles

Commitments to biodiversity and sensitive site protection are already in place and a new Ecologically Sustainable Design (ESD) policy will be developed to ensure new development reduces its carbon impacts. Clear guidelines for design and construction will be put in place.

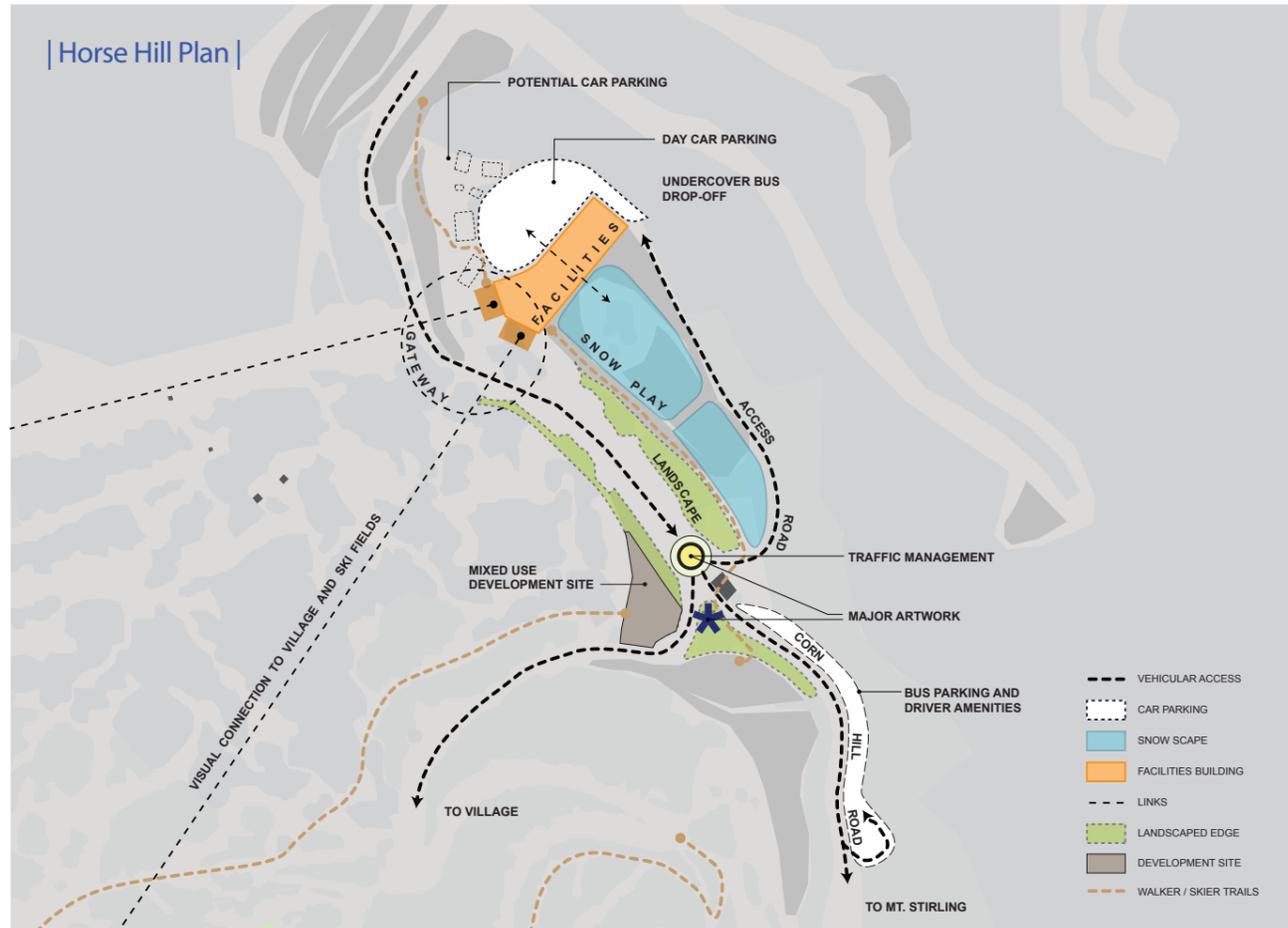
Mt Buller is also committed to Social Sustainability and equity of access is an important element in the plan. An increasing number of visitors to Mt Buller are new and first generation Australians. These people are seen as important to the future of the mountain and ensuring good quality experiences increases the potential for return visits and long term association with Mt Buller. Multilingual signage, improved public areas and shelters and appropriate dining opportunities are aimed at making the mountain accessible to a wider demographic and socio-economic spread.

An Affordable Housing Strategy for workers is to be developed so that live/work opportunities on the mountain can be increased subject to the management of bushfire risks.

Economic Sustainability acknowledges the importance of development where the community as a whole can enjoy the economic benefits of careful growth. This is more than the profit made by a company or organisation - it extends to the impact a project has on the local economy where development can benefit the community as a whole.



| Horse Hill Plan |



| Horse Hill |



4.3 Horse Hill Gateway

The development of Horse Hill as a gateway to the Mountain and its proposed expanded snow play facilities, unlocks improvements across the Mountain and creates a gateway to the resort in both summer and winter.

The car park areas on the south side of Horse Hill which receive less direct sun and hold snow longer, will be reconfigured and re-graded to create a new expanded south-facing snow play area.

A new Horse Hill complex that includes new guest facilities, ski and clothing hire, retail, a small café and seating areas will open out onto the snow play areas. New lockers, toilets and change facilities will be provided.

These new facilities will improve the experience for a wider and more diverse range of visitors.

Key to this development will be the Village Gondola that links Horse Hill directly to the Village. The lower station will be integrated into the new facilities building which will accommodate future lifting of the Horse Hill chairlift to this upper level.

Car and bus access will be moved to the eastern edge of the hill to allow safer and more efficient parking and bus access. Buses will drop passengers and proceed to new bus parking areas on Corn Hill Road. Bridge links from CSIR will connect these zones directly into the Snow Play zone.

Detailed plans of Horse Hill will be developed during implementation stages. A preliminary brief outlined in Table 4.1 outlines a preliminary development profile for the facility.

The highly disturbed nature of the existing site means that there will be minimal environmental impact compared to other options.

Element	Brief	Assumed Existing Area (m ²)	Total Area Proposed in Charette (m ²)	Suggested Area based on Mountain Capacity of 10,000 (m ²)	Target Areas (m ²)
Horse Hill	Outdoor Plaza	-	400	600	600
	Public Shelter / Snack food offer	150	600	700	550
	Ski Hire / Shop	200	300	550	350
	Retail	-	200	300	300
	Locker/Change	-	400	200	200
	Toilets	160	300	400	240
	Information Centre	-	-	200	100
Totals		510	2200	2350	1740
Horse Hill Total	Gondola and Chairlift Loading Area	200	1000	1000	1000
		710	3200	3350	2740

Table 4.1 - Horse Hill Design Brief

4.4 Valley North Development

The Valley North Site (known previously as the Gateway Site) lies immediately to the east of the Buller Community Centre opposite the existing Village square. The site falls away steeply to the north from the New Summit Road and it is currently used for snowplay and tobogganing. As a major attraction for day visitors, snowmaking equipment has been installed to maximise snow cover.

As a snowplay area however, it is not ideal. The site is separated from the village by the busy New Summit Road, it is north facing and exposed to strong winds and the area is constrained.

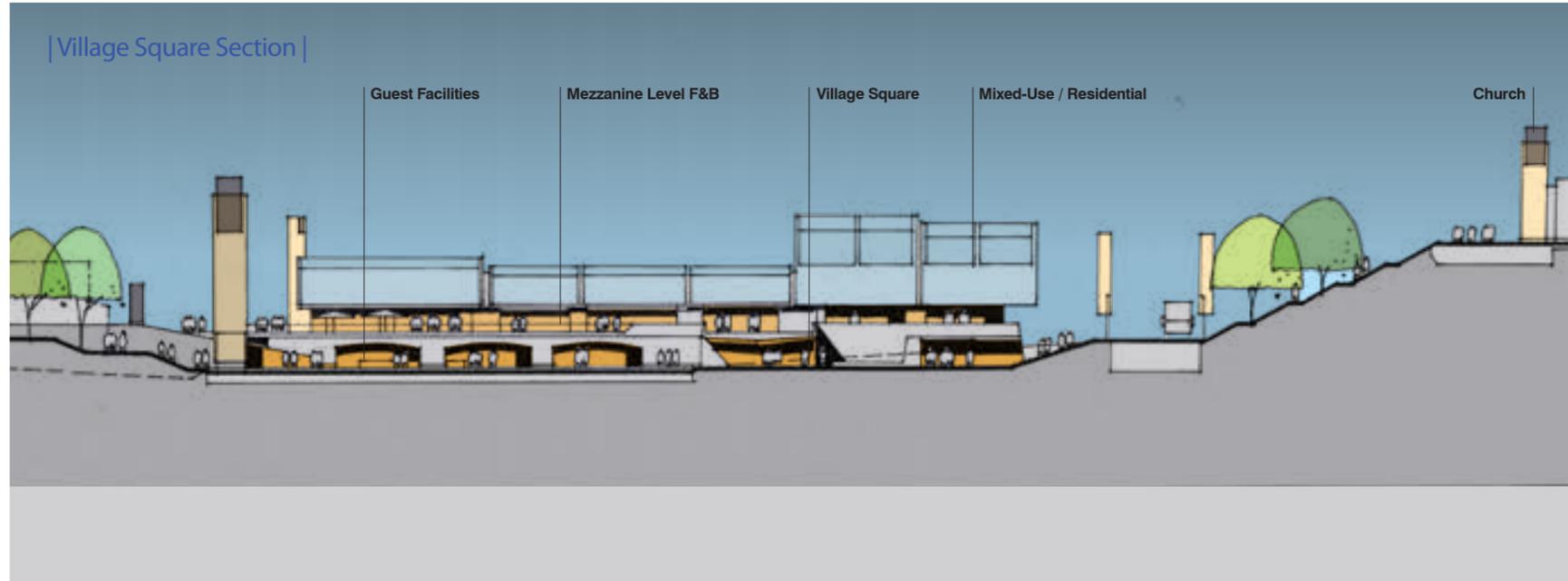
Proposals to relocate snowplay to Horse Hill will free up this land and allow redevelopment. A detailed concept for the site has proposed 400 car spaces in a structure that steps down from the road and preserves views to valley in the north from the Village Square.

The extension of this concept in the master plan sees the site delivering:

- * 400 car spaces
- * a terminal for the Gondola
- * bus interchange at the top level
- * an events platform for summer sports.

The final design must maintain views from the Village Square, integrate with the BCC and create an active rooftop that has a direct interface with New Summit Road. Active edges will screen the carpark and minimise the impact of the structure.





4.5 The Village Centre

The Master Plan seeks to create a protected Village Square that is visually connected to the mountain in the west and the Church tower in the east. New retail, cafes, restaurants and music venues will reinforce the Village Centre as the heart of the Mountain. A two-storey base with extensive decks at first floor level is extended around the plaza to create activity and continuity with the ski slopes at Blue Bullet.

The concept features a number of elements:

- * Improved year round Visitor Information Services
- * An expanded Village Square
- * Multi-level linked colonnade and balcony
- * Weather protection from north
- * Restaurant and retail focus
- * Active events platform
- * Axial link to church and ski fields
- * Improved ski linkages
- * Enhanced Village /Mountain interface at bottom of Blue Bullet
- * Kooroora and YHA site redevelopment

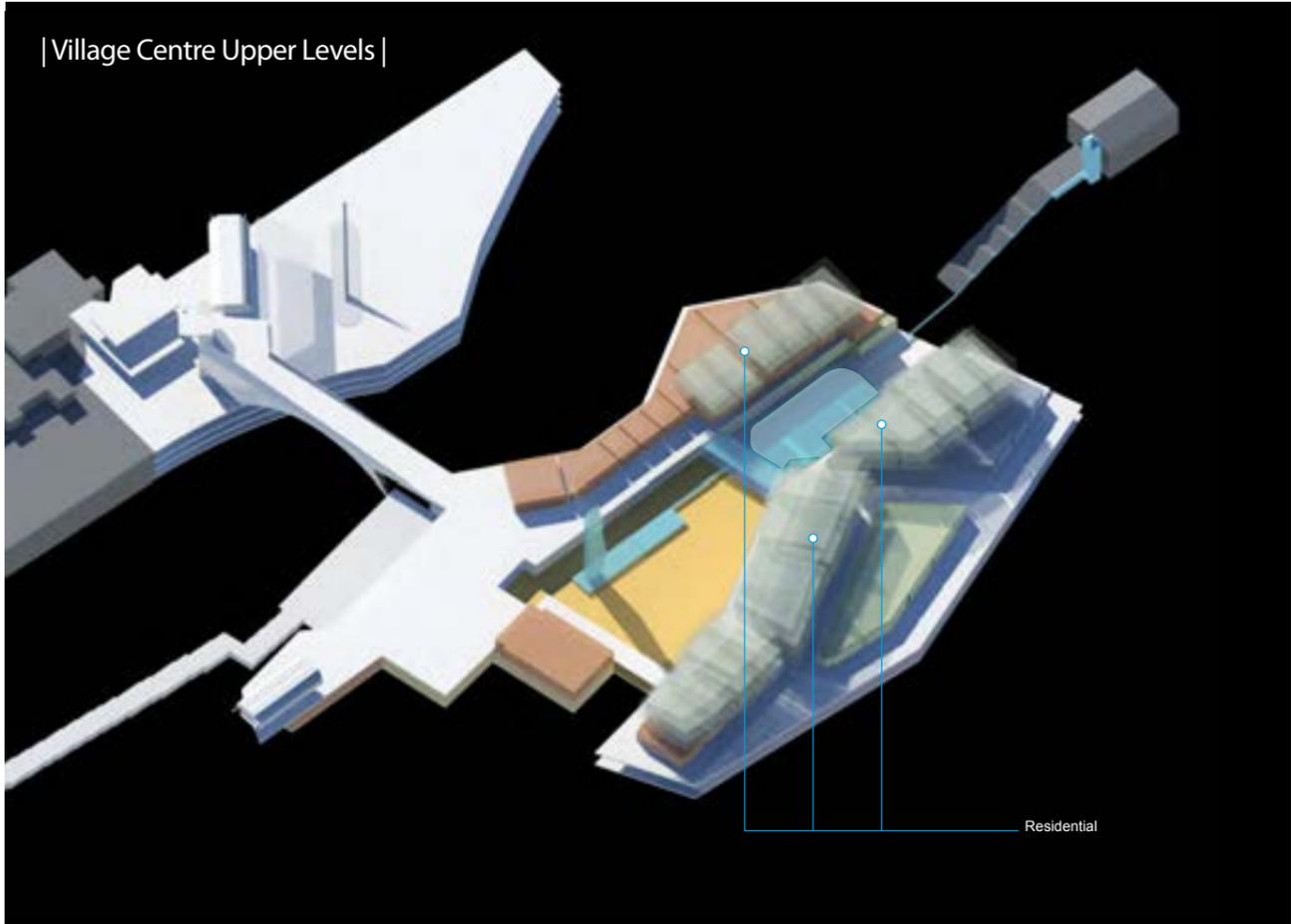
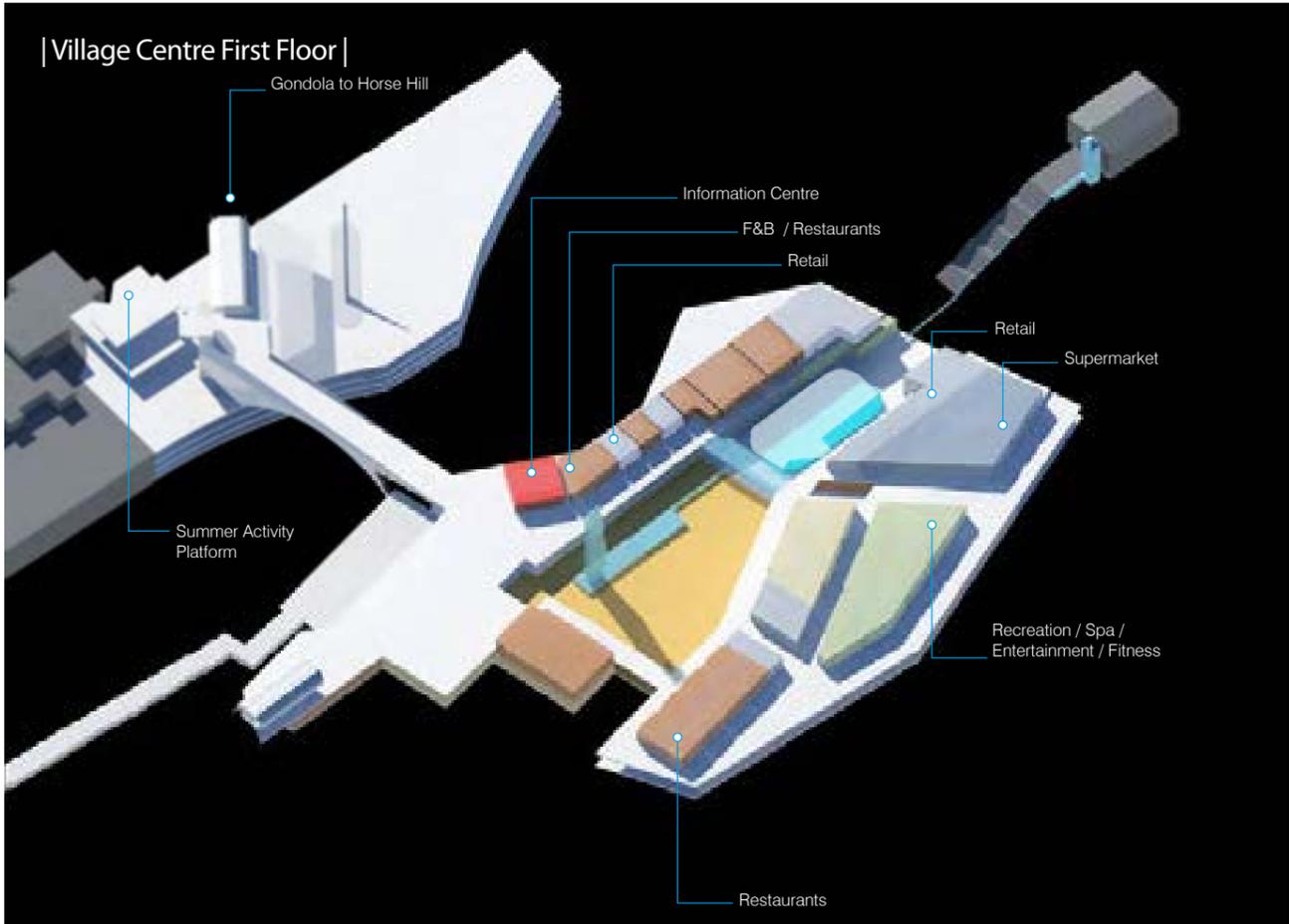
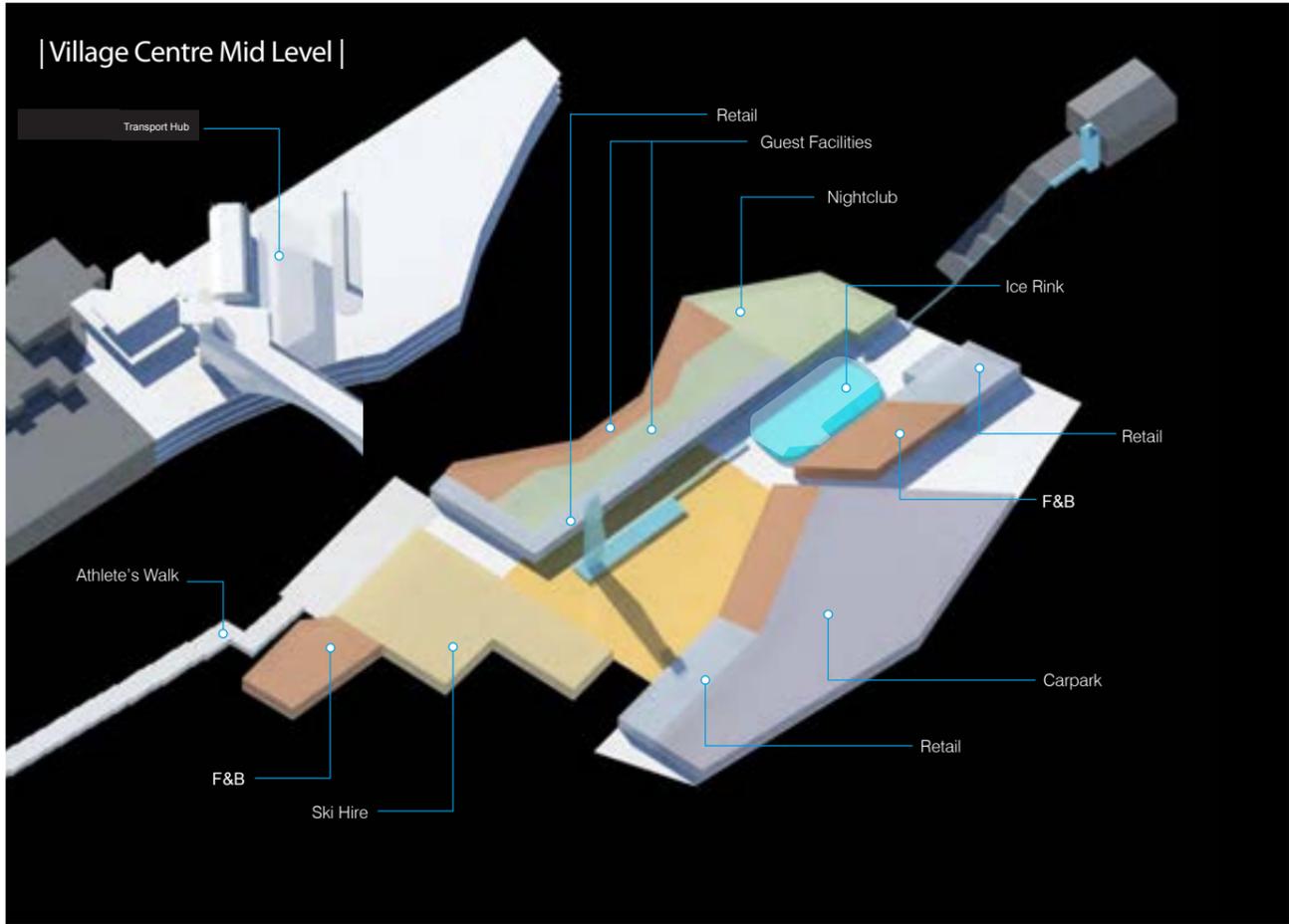
New guest facilities are built in a two-storey building along the northern edge of the plaza with views down the valley to the north. The base of Blue Bullet will be reconfigured to create additional food and beverage opportunities and the redesign of Athlete's Walk and the Ski School path will complete the snow frontage.

The plan will be developed to allow delivery in discrete stages will be sized to allow completion over a single summer. Mixed use redevelopment on the YHA and Kooroora sites, as well as a new site on the existing bus area, can proceed independently.

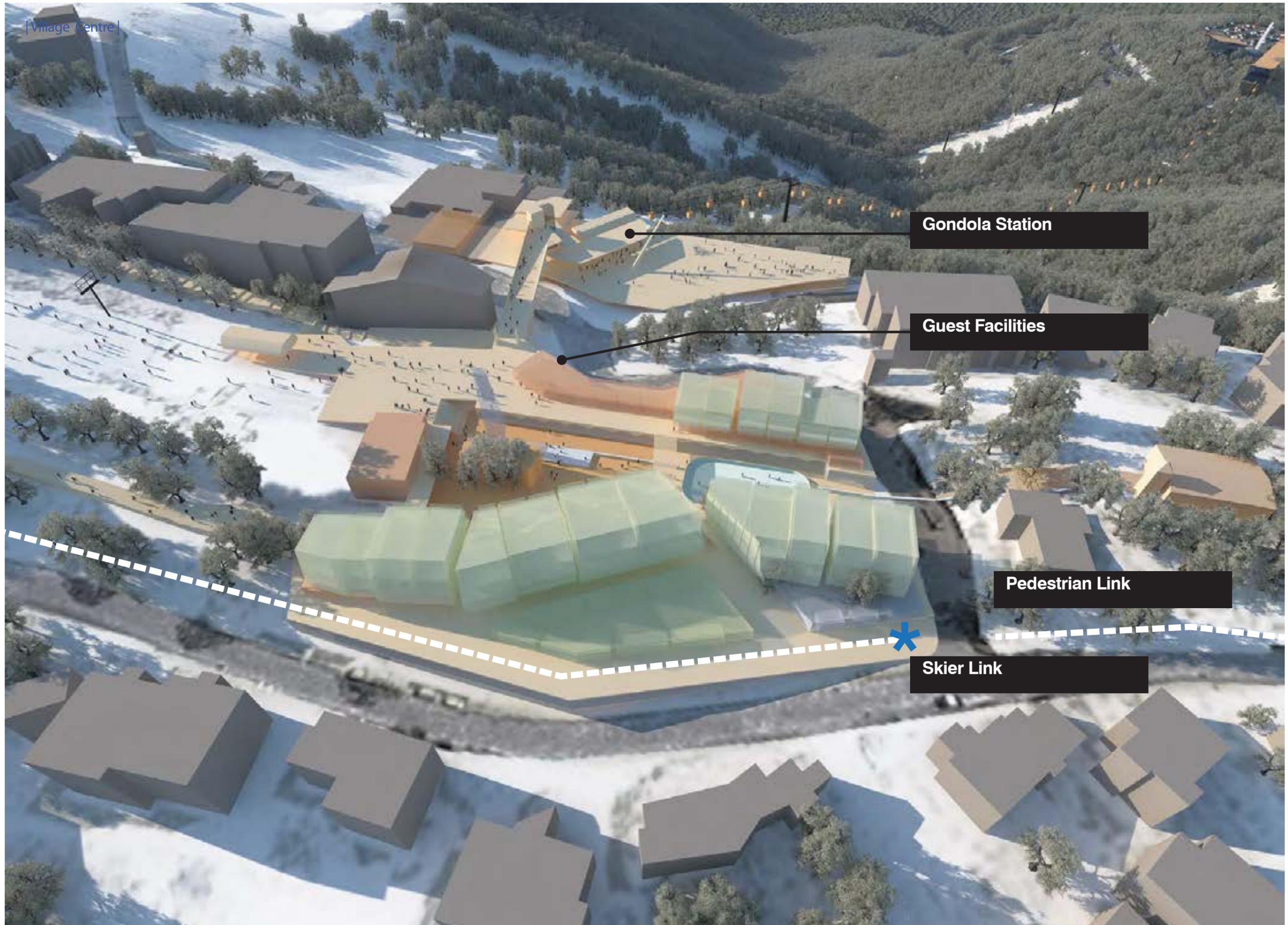
Indicative Spatial Modelling*					
Element	Brief	Assumed Existing Area (m ²)	Total Area Proposed in Charette (m ²)	Suggested Area based on Mountain Capacity of 10,000 (m ²)	Target Areas (m ²)
Village Facilities	Outdoor Plaza	400	1200	1000	1030
	Public Shelter Food Hall	600	1000	1200	1030
	Buller Central Ski Hire	900	200	1200	1260
	Buller Central Ski Retail	300	300	300	300
	Cow Camp Ski Retail	460	460	500	500
	Locker/Change	50	500	500	350
	Toilets (Village and Mountain) Information Centre	50	150	400	300
Totals		2860	3910	5200	4870
Village / Mountain Interface	Outdoor Plaza	-	700-	900	900
	Cattleman's Café	300	300	300	300
	New F & B Offer	-	300	1000	1000
Totals		300	1300	2200	2200
Mixed Use	Retail	200	300	650	880
	Supermarket	300	400	400	540
	Residential	-	-	TBC	
	Nightclub	400	600	600	630
	Destination Services		-	400	0
	Spa/Fitness		-	650	570
	Community Health		150	150	310
	Bakery		50	50	50
	Chemist		50	50	50
Newsagent		50	50	50	
Restaurants		300	300	600	
Totals		900	1900	3300	3680
Village Total		4060	7110	10700	10750

Table 4.2 - Village Centre Design Brief

* Subject to feasibility study



[Village Centre]



Gondola Station

Guest Facilities

Pedestrian Link

Skier Link

4.6 Athlete's and Black Forest Walks

The closure of the old Summit Road adjacent to Bourke Street and the reconfiguring of access to the rear of sites have allowed the development of Athlete's Walk as a pedestrian zone. In its current form as a closed road however, the space is used by toboggans and for snow play in winter. Its high gradient makes the space dangerous particularly in icy conditions.

The Athletes Walk landscaping has been identified as one of the first projects to be undertaken upon completion of the Master Plan.

The steep grades and the icy conditions sometimes found along Athlete's Walk are exacerbated by the use of the zone by tobogganists. Speeding down the slope and often out of control, they present a real danger to those walking below.

Redesign of the space needs to meet the following objectives:

- * Safer pedestrian access along Athlete's Walk through the creation of a series of platforms and level changes that eliminates tobogganing.
- * Better integration between lodge entries and Bourke Street.
- * Improved interface from the Ski School to Abom to meet the needs of children leaving the slopes at the Ski School for lunch.
- * Better transitions between the higher zones on Bourke Street to Athlete's Walk.

Planning has an opportunity to create an integrated pedestrian zone that connects Athlete's Walk with the bottom of Bourke Street around at the Blue Bullet base station and extending around into Black Forest Walk.

These pedestrian zones will link through the Village Centre to reinforce the connections to the eastern Village.

The future replacement and realignment of the Blue Bullet lift may see it moved to the northern side of the run to open up Bourke Street. Some snow gums along Athlete's Walk may be impacted in this process.

4.7 The Wider Village

Growth in the wider Village must continue to be carefully managed and controlled. As the expectations of visitors change and the demand for different accommodation models evolve, there will be a process of renewal and redevelopment through the Village.

The preservation of scale, materials and character is essential if the identity and sense of place in the Village is to be maintained.

The consolidation and redevelopment of sites will continue however may be at the expense of affordability. An affordable housing and accommodation policy has been identified as a step in ensuring that the widest range of visitors possible can enjoy a mountain stay and that a reasonable amount of on-mountain accommodation for workers at Mt Buller can be provided.

Emergency Services

The current medical centre is separated from the skifields by the new Summit Road and while the location and the operation are suitable, direct access off the slopes would be preferred.

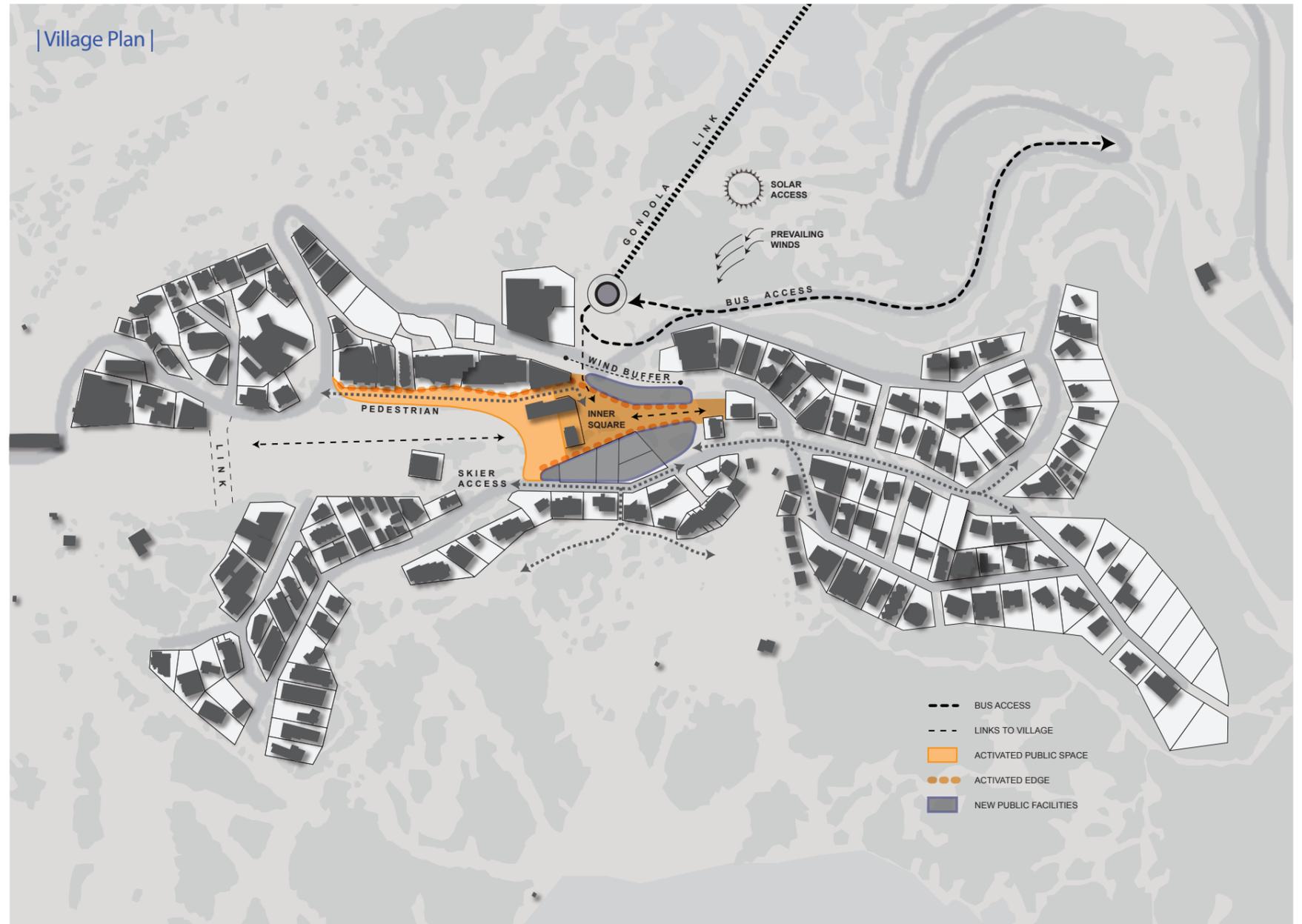
Two options have been identified during planning

- * Relocate the road to the north of the centre and rebuild facilities closer to the Bourke Street run. This higher cost option could be offset by the release of land to the north of the road for development.
- * Relocate the medical centre in new development in the Village. While this would encourage a full time medical presence in summer, the location may increase congestion at an already busy area.

The CFA occupies a site just below the Church that is strategically related to the south, north and east Village. A review of its location that is based on summer and winter operational is to be undertaken in development of the Master Plan.

The Police Station will need to be relocated during the Village Centre development. Input by the Police on operational needs, location and space requirements will be undertaken in future studies.

While there will not be significant growth in the Village population, bushfire is an acknowledged risk and all planning will be developed in the context of the Wildfire Management Overlay.





| Village Centre |

Terraced Pedestrian Walkway

Expanded Ski Fields

Relocated Blue Bullet

Buller Community Centre
 - Foyer
 - Interpretive & Heritage Centre

4.8 Connections

The ability to move around the village, summer and winter, is essential.

Gondola

The construction of the Gondola will revolutionise access at Mt Buller. The existing bus shuttle system is efficient but uncomfortable and inconvenient. They will be used as a backup in winter in the event that the Gondola cannot run.

Shuttle Bus

The extended road network from Arlberg to Spurs will allow the extension of the intra-Village bus service from the heart of the Village to the new beginner slopes at the top of the Horse Hill Chairlift.

Taxis

Taxis will continue to be an important component in the Village access plan. The change from Land Rovers to adapted vans will improve the experience. Most significantly, a new base away from the Village will free up areas in the centre for new development and public spaces.

Pedestrian

A limited pedestrian network already exists through the Village and the topography however the scale of the overall Village means that movement from one end to the other relies on the shuttle bus.

In response to feedback, upgrading of the pedestrian network around Athlete's Walk and Black Forest Walk will help better integrate the centre of the Village.

The Village Centre is made the clear focus of east and west villages and improved pedestrian links means that it becomes more accessible and better integrated.

Skiways

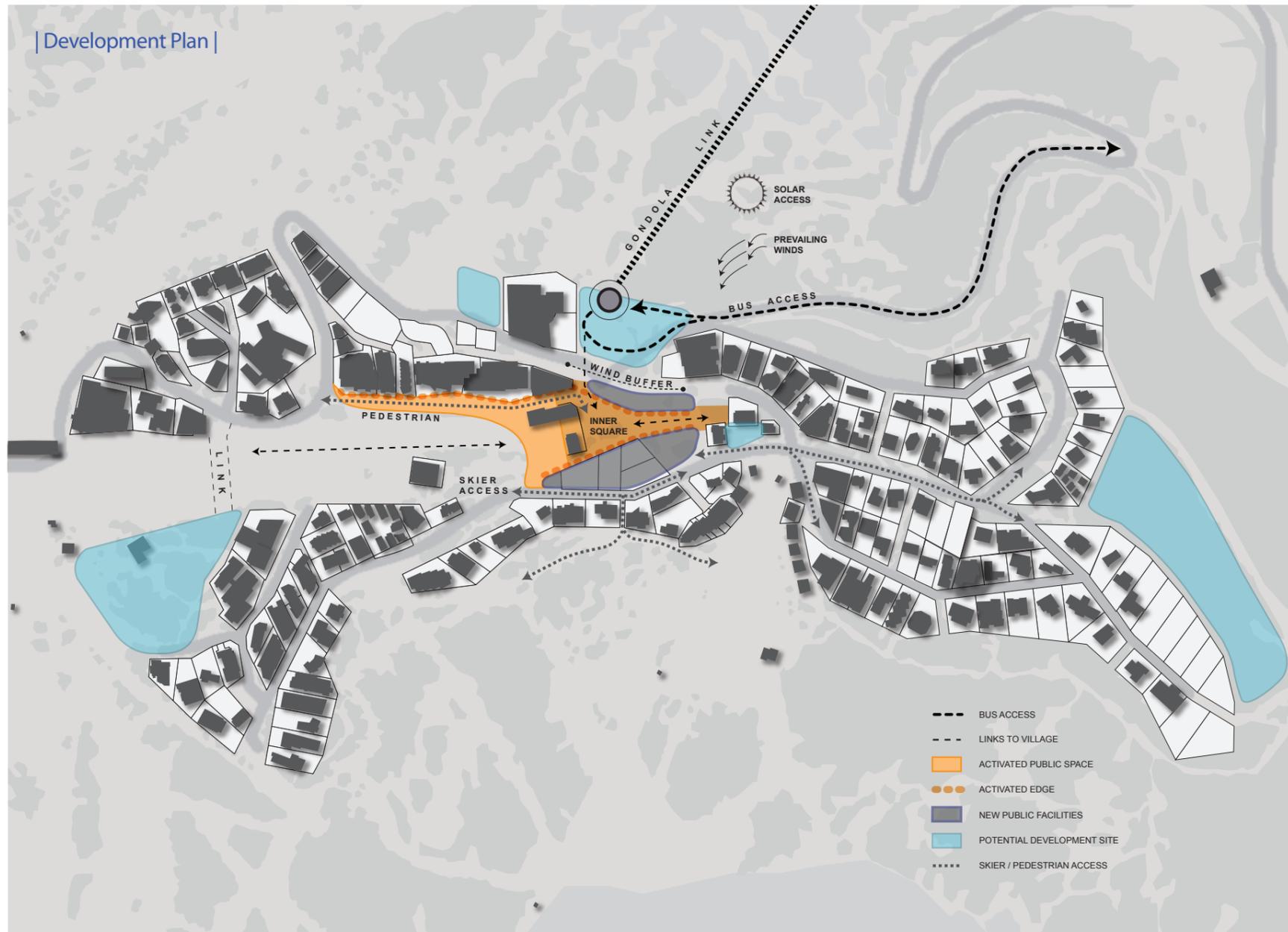
Access to ski slopes to the north and south of the Village are to be maintained. A skiway along the south edge of the YHA and Koorora Hotel sites (not an active frontage to the Avenue) will extend the run home for skiers in the east Village and help with access to the southern bowl ski runs.

The Home Trail on the north side of the village will be upgraded to improve access down to Horse Hill both summer and winter.

Transport Linkages

Two new road links are proposed:

- * The Mt Stirling link will not only create a summer tourist link but will also provide an alternative emergency egress from Mt Buller in the event of the closure of the main mountain road from Mirimbah
- * A new link between Arlberg and Spurs would improve access to underutilised beginner slopes at Spurs through the winter and improve emergency access. Given that this linkage would cross areas of ski runs, the use of initiatives such as ski-ways, bridges and slope treatments would need careful consideration along with environmental impacts and potential use of low impact vehicles.



4.9 Development Opportunities

Within the Master Plan framework, new development is introduced in areas that preserve skifield access and the scale and character of Mt Buller.

A process of renewal and consolidation is expected to continue throughout the Village and a number of development sites are under consideration:

- * One Tree Hill – a major zone in the east of the Village. Planning controls have been prepared for the site
 - * Fawley Towers – this large site to the west of Pension Grimas is constrained by access issues. Redevelopment may require a tunnel link below the Bourke Street run.
 - * Site 237- the site has approval but remains undeveloped.
 - * Skating Rink – Reconfiguring of parking at Horse Hill may allow redevelopment of Skating Rink for mixed use development.
 - * The development of the Village Centre is to be coordinated and design guidelines for these critical sites - Koorora Hotel, YHA and the bus station site - will be developed in the next phase of planning.
 - * Redevelopment opportunities eg. the Whit (SCV) site
 - * Infill opportunities on other sites through the Village.
- All development is to be considered in the context of potential bushfire and impacts on native vegetation.



4.10 The Skifields

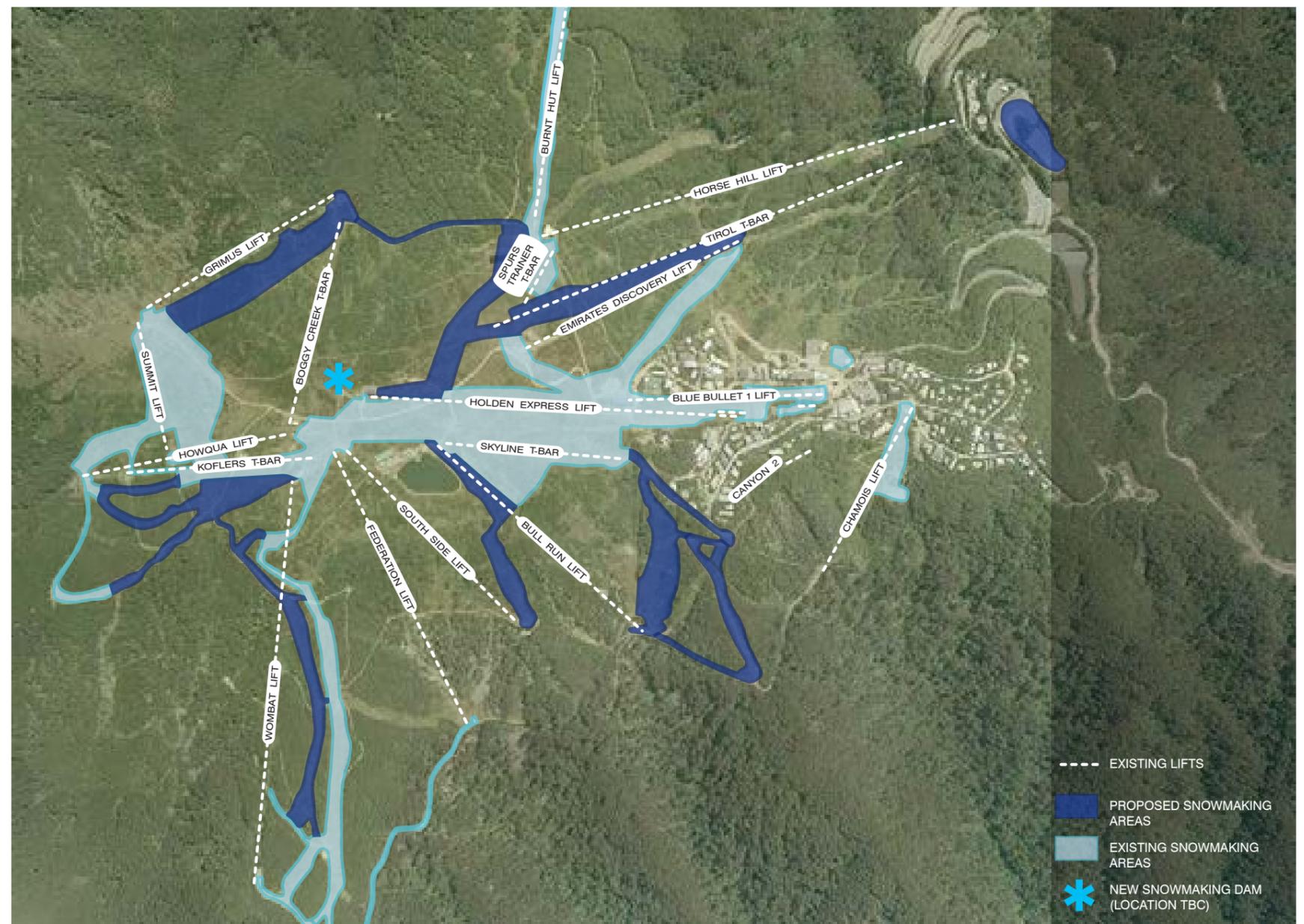
Buller Ski Lifts has indicated that subject to additional water storage and availability, snow making will be significantly increased on the mountain. With an increasing reliance on snow making in reducing seasons, this has a significant impact on the success of businesses at Mt Buller.

Additional snow making is planned for areas off the central spur to the north (Summit Slide, Spurs and Tirol) and south (Family Run, Little Buller Spur and around Bull Run Lift). The need for increased water storage area has been identified and studies will be undertaken to identify an appropriate location.

Initial studies suggest that there may be sufficient water for a new dam within the catchment however while the snow created is unlikely to be an issue, any future dam will be subject to an impacts assessment and mitigation requirements.

The creation of the new snow play at Horse Hill and the possible linking of Spurs by road will allow the expansion of beginner areas that will be served by the expanded snowmaking. First time skiers and boarders can get their first taste of snow away from Bourke Street at Horse Hill and graduate to the slopes at Spurs which will be served from the Village by bus and from Horse Hill by chairlift.

A master plan for lifts on the mountain had previously been commenced but not completed or approved, and will proceed based on the new Master Plan.



5.1 Access Principles

During the public consultation process, a series of clear transport objectives for the master plan were identified:

- * To develop a multi-faceted transport system that ensures a high level of accessibility to the Village.
- * To provide an efficient, affordable, convenient, reliable and safe public transport system to meet the needs of visitors.
- * To ensure safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and skiers throughout Mt Buller, particularly within the Village.
- * To improve non-vehicular movement within the Village and particularly along Athletes Walk and Black Forest Walk.
- * To provide off-street public and private car parking to meet the needs of existing and planned visitation levels for Mt Buller.
- * To provide vehicular, pedestrian and skier links from Mt Buller to Mt Stirling and the surrounding Alpine National Park to optimise year round visitor experiences, provide alternative access routes and improve safety.
- * To provide appropriate access and facilities for emergency services.
- * To achieve balance between the demands of vehicle transport and both pedestrian and skier movement.
- * To ensure that the pedestrian feel and environmental qualities of the Village are enhanced.
- * To provide developments and infrastructure that facilitate snow farming and efficient access for snow clearing.
- * To ensure that the built environment is legible addressing issues of wayfinding for vehicles, skiers, cyclists and pedestrians.

5.2 Parking

The provision of sufficient and well located parking is critical in the operation of the mountain.

The two main components of car parking at Mt Buller are parking for day visitors and overnight car parking. Depending on conditions, day visitors may be required to carry chains. All overnight visitors must carry chains.

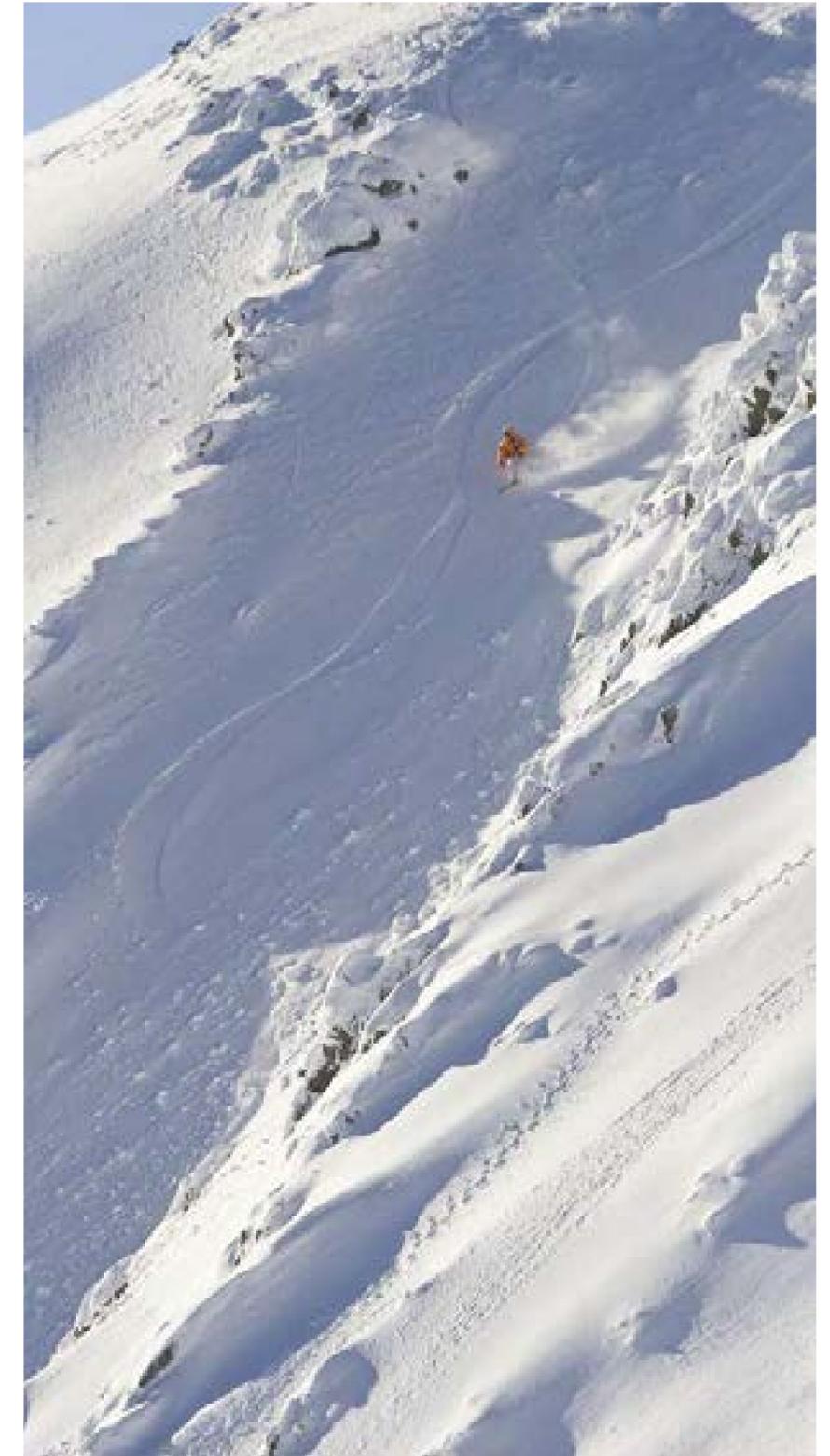
Vehicles are manually directed to parking to maximise yields. Snow accumulation may affect the parking supply from time to time.

Flat land is at a premium on the mountain and existing parking is spread over 15 sites. A high number of vehicles are parked on the approach roads to the Village.

Car Parking Supply

Roadside below Andrews	50	
Andrews	60	
Roadside Andrews to Caravan	40	
Caravan	70	
Roadside Caravan to Chalet	60	
Tyrol	560	
Chalet	180	
Walkers	100	
Roadside Tyrol to Skating Rink	80	Total Day Parking 1,410
Horse Hill	850	
Roadside Corn Hill Road	320	
CSIR Lower	160	
CSIR Upper	330	
Roadside CSIR to Hell Corner	80	Total Overnight Parking 1,590
Roadside Hell Corner to Tip Corner	60	

Table 5.1 - Existing Car Parking Supply



With the development of Horse Hill as a hub for day visitors and the construction of 400 spaces in the Village at the site adjacent to the Buller Community Centre, there is new flexibility to reorganize parking on the mountain.

The key elements associated with conceptual arrangements are:

- * An increase in day car parking supply is provided to allow for growth in day trip visitation to Mt Buller.
- * Overnight car parking is rebalanced to facilitate an increase in day car parking supply and better reflect the existing demand (maximum of 970 spaces during 2009). The proposed overnight parking supply of 1,380 spaces continues to accommodate the maximum demand, whilst allowing flexibility for snow clearing, growth in overnight visitation without regularly relying on on-street car parking to meet the peak demands.
- * The existing overnight car parking that is located in reasonable proximity to Horse Hill is converted to day car parking (Chalet, Walkers and CSIR Upper).
- * New car parking facilities are established at the Skating Rink and the existing Workshop site where facilities would need to be relocated.

- * The reliance for overflow day car parking along Corn Hill Road is removed which facilitates the potential relocation of bus storage to Corn Hill Road (including turnaround area near existing mountain bike skills park). Corn Hill Road will be widened to accommodate the buses.
- * Additional pedestrian linkages would be required to connect Skating Rink, Lower CSIR, Upper CSIR, Workshop, Chalet, Walkers to Horse Hill. These linkages may be in the form of at-grade, overbridge or lift assisted options (eg magic carpet).
- * The supply of car parking at Horse Hill car park is reduced to facilitate the creation of a bus interchange, snow play area and amenities building at Horse Hill. Additional car parking supply may be accommodated through decking.
- * Additional overnight car parking is created off-street within the Village. This additional car parking should be provided at the periphery of the Village (eg proposed Gateway Site on Mt Buller Road at site of existing snowplay area) to minimise the need for additional vehicle movements through the Village.
- * Flexibility under day to day operations, it is expected that the car parking will be utilised as day or overnight car parking depending of the peak requirements of the day.

Overall changes to parking are:

Day Parking	Existing Supply	Master Plan Supply	Change
On-street	400	80	-320
Off-street	1,010	1,600	+590
Sub-total	1,410	1,680	+270
Overnight Parking			
On-street	290	290	0
Off-street	1,300	1,090	-210
Sub-total	1,590	1,380	-210
Total	3,000	3,060	+60

Table 5.3 - Car Parking Changes

5.3 Interchange

The concept of interchange is common to the experience within any Alpine environment and particularly at Mt Buller as visitors, residents, staff and other members of the Mt Buller community transfer between riding chair lifts, being pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, taxi passengers, bus passengers, skiers etc. Based on the existing conditions, the key locations of interchange movements are:

Mirimbah:

- * Car to bus for travel between Mirimbah and the Village.

Horse Hill:

- * Car to bus for travel between Horse Hill and the Village
- * Car to chairlift for access to the ski area via Horse Hill chairlift
- * Bus to chairlift for travel between Horse Hill and either the Village or Skating Rink via Horse Hill chairlift.

Skating Rink:

- * Bus to bus for Melbourne to Mt Buller bus passengers interchanging to Mt Buller Village buses to access Horse Hill or the Village

Mt Buller Village Bus Interchange:

- * Skiers and pedestrians interchanging to and from Village-Horse Hill buses.
- * Skiers and pedestrians interchanging to and from the intra-Village buses.

Overnight car parking:

- * Car- taxi for travel to the Village from the overnight car parking areas.

A number of opportunities for improving interchange movements have been identified in the Master Plan:

- * Consolidate interchange movements to key locations (eg Mirimbah, Horse Hill and Village) to provide efficient and comfortable interchange between the various modes of transport.
 - * Improve the waiting facilities at all points of interchange within the transport system (eg Skating Rink, overnight car parking, Village Bus Interchange). This can be achieved through the provision of weather protection, amenities, transport information etc.
 - * Minimise the need for interchanging passengers to cross the paths of vehicles. This is particularly relevant for access from the Horse Hill car park to Horse Hill chairlift as well as for bus passenger interchanging between Melbourne-Mt Buller buses and Village bus at the Skating Rink.
 - * Improve the capacity of the transport link between the Village and Horse Hill and the Mt Buller to Melbourne bus interchange (currently at Skating Rink). The current bus interchange operation does not accommodate the demand for passengers leaving the Village in the PM peak period with significant queuing observed.
 - * Improve the delineation of the differences between Village to Horse Hill buses and intra-Village bus services as they are commonly confused by waiting passengers.
- The Horse Hill Gateway is focused on Day Visitors and while additional spaces for 4WD vehicles will be built adjacent to the BCC, the current system of taxi shuttles for overnight visitors will be retained for most overnight visitors. Improvements to the vehicles used (modified mini buses rather than Land Rovers) and the construction of shelters that allow operations similar to long term parking at airports will markedly improve the visitor experience.

Car Parking Supply

Roadside below Andrews	50	
Andrews	60	
Roadside Andrews to Caravan	40	
Caravan	70	
Roadside Caravan to Chalet	60	
Tyrol	560	
Chalet (day parking)	180	
Walkers (day parking)	100	
Roadside Tyrol to Skating Rink	80	
Horse Hill (- 200 spaces)	650	
Roadside Corn Hill Road (-320 spaces)	0	Total Day Parking 1,680
CSIR Lower	160	
CSIR Upper (day parking)	330	
Workshop (new)	70	
Skating Rink (new)	110	
Roadside CSIR to Hell Corner	80	
Roadside Hell Corner to Tip Corner	60	Overnight Parking 1,380
Off-street parking in Village (new)	400	

Table 5.2 - Proposed Car Parking Supply

6.1 Sustainability Strategy

Mt Buller has a stated commitment to sustainable practices as part of the resort's operation and development. As stated in the Mt Buller Resort Guide 2010;

"Mt Buller is committed to preserving our precious alpine environment and maintaining its beauty for generations to come. We support, promote, and engage in resource conservation, renewable energy use, recycling, composting, and other forms of waste reduction, native fauna and flora habitat preservation and environmental education."

This commitment is consistent with Victoria State Government policy as outlined in the Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy;

"The Victorian Government has a commitment to environmentally sustainable development in our alpine resorts whilst maintaining them in full public ownership. This Strategy seeks to secure the long term viability of the resorts by providing for long term sustainable growth within an environmentally friendly management framework."

The resort environment is particularly challenging. Isolation, difficult terrain and the seasonal nature of many resorts present particular challenges. These challenges however can be seen as heightening the need for more sustainable outcomes. A review of resorts, both national and international, highlights a series of best-practice sustainability initiatives that have been achieved in an alpine resort context.

These initiatives can be seen across five sustainability themes:

- * Site and outdoor space
- * Water management
- * Built environment energy use
- * Materials selection
- * Waste management



Site and outdoor space

- * Green Ski Lifts
- * Sustainable Construction Techniques
- * Summer Activity: Mountain Bike Park
- * Summer Activity: Hiking Paths, Ecology Tours, Rock Climbing
- * Gondola

Water management

- * Natural run-off mitigation
- * Wastewater treatment
- * Treated recycled water for snowmaking
- * Centrifugal compressors
- * Low-flow water equipment

Built environment energy use

- * On-site wind power
- * Hydro power
- * Solar power
- * Geothermal heat pump
- * Biomass district heating plant
- * Heat re-use
- * Lighting retrofitting
- * General green building design
- * Building management systems
- * Small off-peak generator

Materials selection

- * Locally sourced products
- * Recycled material
- * Material re-use
- * Low VOC materials
- * FSC timber or substitute timber use
- * Prefabricated construction materials

Waste management

- * Recycling facilities
- * Construction waste management
- * Waste incineration facility
- * Composting facility
- * Wastewater treatment for toilet flushing

6.2 Built Form

The character of Mt Buller is very much determined by the built form and materials used throughout the Village. In terms of scale, there are specific controls across a number of sites that limit height, overshadowing and scale of development, and planning controls specify materials that:

- * use natural alpine colour tones
- * achieve a minimum 15% of facades using local natural stone
- * building exteriors in timber, stonework or rendered finishes.

The predominantly grey and green expression is similar to those used in alpine resorts throughout Australia.

The Master Plan nominates two main development zones at Horse Hill and in the Village Centre. Each zone will have its own specific response and both will respond to the function requirements and be designed to capture the sun, wind and water. Materials appropriate to climate and the sense of place at Mt Buller will be used.

The Master Plan does not set envelopes and footprints – these will be confirmed in later studies – but the creation of truly iconic forms that integrate with the existing Village character are required. A richer palette of materials and colours will help define these anchor projects and reinforce their role in the new organisational framework of Mt Buller.

New residential types are encouraged in the Village Centre as a means to activate this public focus and offer new mountain experiences for overnight visitors. The scale of this new development will be subject to future massing studies and assessment of view and amenity impacts in the Village. An appropriate scale of new development around the new heart of Mt Buller will deliver the activity and excitement needed on the mountain.

The development of parking structures at Horse Hill and at the Buller Community Centre (BCC) site must be carefully handled. Facades that hide the cars behind will minimise their visual impact and reduce the impact of any lighting. They are conceived as “landform structures” that in essence will rebuild the hill at Horse Hill and create the cliff edge at the BCC site.

The principles relative to material selection, procurement and construction will emphasise responsible Environmental Resource Management of water, land, stone and minerals, as well as a consideration of the ecological sensitivity of the context. Material selection should consider a wide range of initiatives that include but are not limited to:

- * Resource conservation. Ensure material selection manages the use of resources by prioritising:
- * Recycled, re-used and sustainable materials;
- * Environmentally preferable materials;
- * Low Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) materials;
- * Bushfire resistant materials.
- * Sustainable procurement;
- * Locally sourced product;
- * Prefabricated construction.

Development must address bushfire risks and comply with the Wildfire Management Overlay.



6.3 Landscape Response

Landscape Context

Mt Buller Alpine Resort is part of the unique alpine environment containing rare flora, fauna and geology. The Mt Buller/Mt Stirling region is the location of six nationally significant endangered species of fauna: the Caddisfly; Mountain Pygmy-Possum; Alpine Bog Skink; the Stonefly; the Barred Galaxias; and the Alpine Stonefly. These species are protected pursuant to the Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC).

The ARMB's Environmental Management Plan states that 38 rare or threatened vascular plants and two threatened plant communities have been recorded within the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Resorts. The Plan notes that the status of rare or threatened plants within the Resorts is not well known. Future environmental management actions are designed to increase the ARMB's knowledge and understanding of these plants and plant communities.

Development within the resort must consider the Mt Buller Environmental Management Plan as well as the directions under Victoria's "Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action" which will establish the principles of 'net gain' in native vegetation when considering the possible expansion of the resort and the existing precincts. Both environment and landscape are key attributes of the Mt Buller Resort and have a key appeal to visitors year round, although it is the snow cover that remains the biggest attraction.

Mt Buller is a unique alpine place with a distinctive landscape character. It is well loved by local residents and appreciated by visitors and these elements are to be maintained and/or strengthened in the proposed Landscape Response.

Principles

The Landscape response is a key element in the Mt Buller Master Plan and confirms the high-level themes from Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy:

- * Improved visitor amenity and local and regional access;
- * The further development of all year round, diverse and high-quality active and passive recreational opportunities;
- * Protection and promotion of biodiversity;
- * Representing Mt Buller Alpine Resort through a consistent and iconic landscape image; and
- * Utilising resident consultation and education opportunities.

Mt Buller currently has a high standard of facilities and amenities. New amenity will be provided with a contemporary design utilising many of the same materials to complement and key into some of the other Alpine Resort features and materials. Opportunities exist for new interpretive installations that provide a means of enhancing the 'Mt Buller experience', and provide an arrival point for visitors. The Landscape Response, seeks to:

- * Provide increased amenity and accessibility whilst protecting and conserving areas of existing vegetation and significance;
- * Generate a sense of arrival by reinforcing place and exploring thresholds;
- * Increase year round activation with landscape;
- * Improve visitor orientation through visual and physical connections;
- * Create an improved interface with snow areas;
- * Reduce conflict between snow play and skier/boarders, through improved wayfinding, better connections and enhanced outdoor amenity.

Landscape Strategy

A number of key issues and opportunities were identified through the design charette, key directions workshop, the community presentations, field investigations and background research. The issues have been grouped into four categories. Each category includes a description of the key issues, a discussion of the opportunities and a set of recommendations, forming a basis for the development of the Landscape Response. The four issue categories are:

- * Open space hierarchy;
- * Pedestrian/skier and boarder access;
- * Materials;
- * Vegetation and environmental considerations.

Open Space Hierarchy

Issues Identified

- * A poor sense of place, a lack of legibility, poor visitor amenity, a lack of weather protection and poor visual connection to snow areas and insufficient snow play areas;
- * No defined sense of arrival to the precinct;
- * A diffuse sense of civic heart, with poor spatial definition of communal and event spaces;
- * Ambiguous relationship between public and private / semi-public spaces, creating anxiety about permission, ownership and use.

Recommendations

- * Create a three-tier special hierarchy for Mt Buller consisting of :
 - * Clearly defined communal and civic hubs
 - * Clearly defined long views articulating lift and ski areas, creating visual connections between hubs and within the precinct

- * An enhanced series of connected tertiary paths and tracks that meander through the landscape
- * Develop Village Square as the clear civic and event heart of Mt Buller
- * Develop Village Active events platform as a focus for programmed and ephemeral events;
- * Develop a summer sports hub
- * Develop Horse Hill as a year round gateway to the Mountain and proposed, expanded snow play facilities
- * Increase a unified public realm to connect between facilities and to make way finding easier
- * Upgrade and enhance existing open spaces to reiterate the sense of place
- * Develop hard-paved spaces and seating opening out onto the snow play areas. Seating creates an invitation to linger, occupy and

- be spectators. These areas should be of a consistent design and material selection that is complimentary to the existing facilities but which has its own singularity and legibility;
- * Investigate the opportunities along pedestrian and recreation pathways for thematic interpretive material that can be installed in areas of ecological /biodiversity interest. Increased awareness of the biological diversity of the site will foster a sense of collective responsibility for its longevity.
- * The landscape spaces are to maximise solar orientation where possible and avoid hidden spaces and corners that could reduce the presence of real or perceived threats to personal safety. The open space design provides amenity, creates a sense of place and will therefore increase the perception of safety in the Village centre.



Pedestrian Access

Issues Identified

- * A lack of legibility, poor visitor amenity, difficult pedestrian connections, movement bottlenecks and the need to reduce snowplay/skier conflict.

Recommendations

- * Create axial links between the church and ski fields. Axial links create clear views both to and from destinations as well as minimising conflicts through considering long and medium range views;
- * Improved summer trails;
- * Identify plan to improve pedestrian and skier access from east Village to Village square
- * New pedestrian links from CSIR to Horse Hill snow play and from workshop/walkers to Horse Hill snow play;
- * Manage all pedestrian and snow play access to minimise conflicts between other users of the resort;
- * Improved wayfinding and signage - the legibility and safety of the landscape design will be engineered through improved signage and surface material transitions to indicate to both pedestrians and skiers/boarders their intended direction of travel and changing conditions.

Materials

Issues Identified

Pavements, walls and furniture elements will incorporate materials carefully selected in consideration of sustainable principles, the materials employed across Mt Buller and the value they bring to reinforcing place, and their comfort and durability properties.

Recommendations

Materials such as the natural stone and timber used in the construction of a number of the existing landscape elements provide strong design elements that can be utilised in new landscape features and furniture, resulting in a cohesive design language for Mt Buller.

Careful consideration should be given to the use of a distinct and singular material in the key civic hub spaces, particularly those linked to and including the Village Square. Such a material definition will help establish an open space hierarchy and function as a passive way finding device linking key public and recreational venues in the precinct.

The DDO may be updated to reflect the developed public domain material palette.



Vegetation And Environmental Considerations

The recommendations outlined below are intended to provide pragmatic improvements to the visual and physical amenity of the Mt Buller Alpine Resort, whilst maintaining the existing feel and character of the resort and its relationship to the broader natural and cultural landscape of Mt Buller and Mt Stirling. Development and public domain proposals must comply with all relevant legislation including the requirements of the EPBC and FFG Acts.

As a baseline for future development, a Biodiversity Precinct Structure Plan will be prepared for the resort.

Recommendations

- * Use of vegetation to reinforce the sense of place and the open space hierarchy for Mt Buller.

- * Use of vegetation to reinforce a sense of arrival, ideas of invitation and occupation, park and edge activation, visitor orientation and a sense of play.
- * Retention of snow gums will be maintained wherever possible.
- * Ecologist to undertake a Flora and Fauna Assessment.
- * Ecologist to review the "Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Alpine Resorts: Environmental Management Plan" based on above assessment.
- * Ecologist to Produce a Net Gain Offset Management Plan (if necessary) and Ecological Landscape Rehabilitation Plan with preferred locations for development and location offsets.
- * Australian Standard tree protection management policies to be developed and maintained to ensure the protection of native vegetation during the construction period.

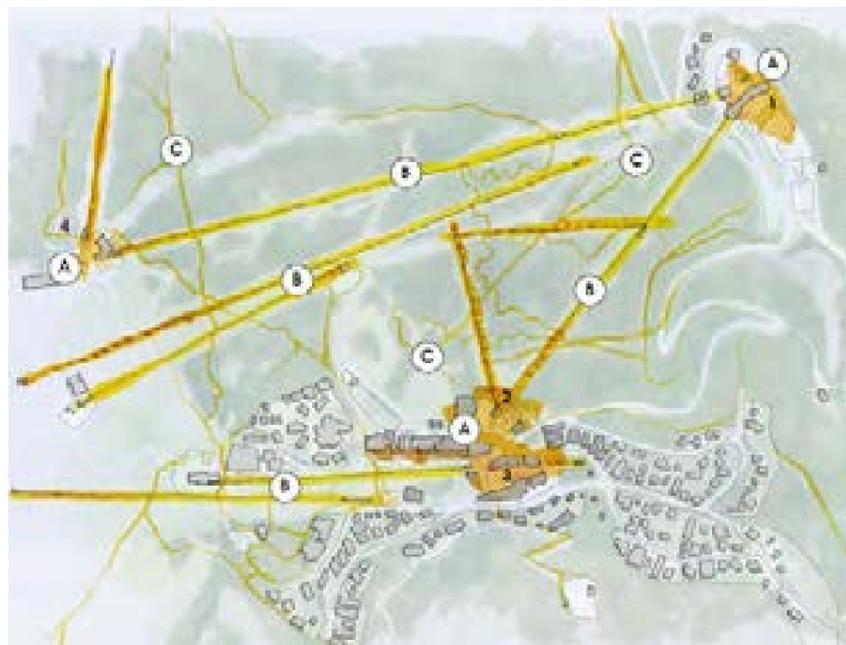
- * Rehabilitation of native vegetation to aid bank stabilisation, where appropriate.
- * Minimise impacts on significant areas of landscape habitat and habitat corridors for indigenous fauna.
- * Preserve and enhance Pygmy possum habitat.
- * Maintain natural rates of change in relation to proposed species.
- * Programs for limiting the extent and spread of all non-indigenous flora.
- * Vegetation retention, planting and rehabilitation to aid the reduction of lands slips.
- * Maintain and enhance environmental and landscape values.
- * Prevent the destruction and fragmentation of landscapes. Where vegetation is to be removed, avoid the creation of individual or isolated trees.
- * Maintain fire protection objectives.

- * Character analysis of natural and constructed elements (including geological and geomorphological features and vistas) to ensure the protection and enhancement of views and vistas.
- * Removal of vegetation to facilitate new development to be minimised.
- * Incorporate interpretive information relating to the natural environment, eg the sensitivity of the Alpine Ecology and biodiversity, geological and geomorphological features.
- * Build resilience to, rather than mitigation of climate change.



Landscape Structure

- * Reinforce Mt Buller as a welcoming and accessible Australian alpine village
- * Achieve vision through sustainable principles and landscape practices
- * Focus and showcase best environmental practice and local biodiversity
- * Cater for a diversity of year round recreational and social activities



Open Space Hierarchy

- * Create a three-tier open space hierarchy consisting of:
 - * Clearly defined communal and civic hubs - A
 - * Clearly defined long views articulating lift and ski areas and creating visual connections between hubs and within the precinct - B
 - * An enhanced series of connected tertiary paths and tracks - C



Impacts on Existing Vegetation

- * Minimise removal of existing vegetation
- * Retain snow gums wherever possible
- * Impacts on fauna habitat and habitat corridors to be minimised
- * Possum habitat to be preserved
- * Incorporate interpretive information

Landscape Implementation Strategy

Further investigation, design and documentation will be required prior to the construction of the elements outlined in the Landscape Response. Steps needed to realise the Master Plan include (but not limited to) the following:

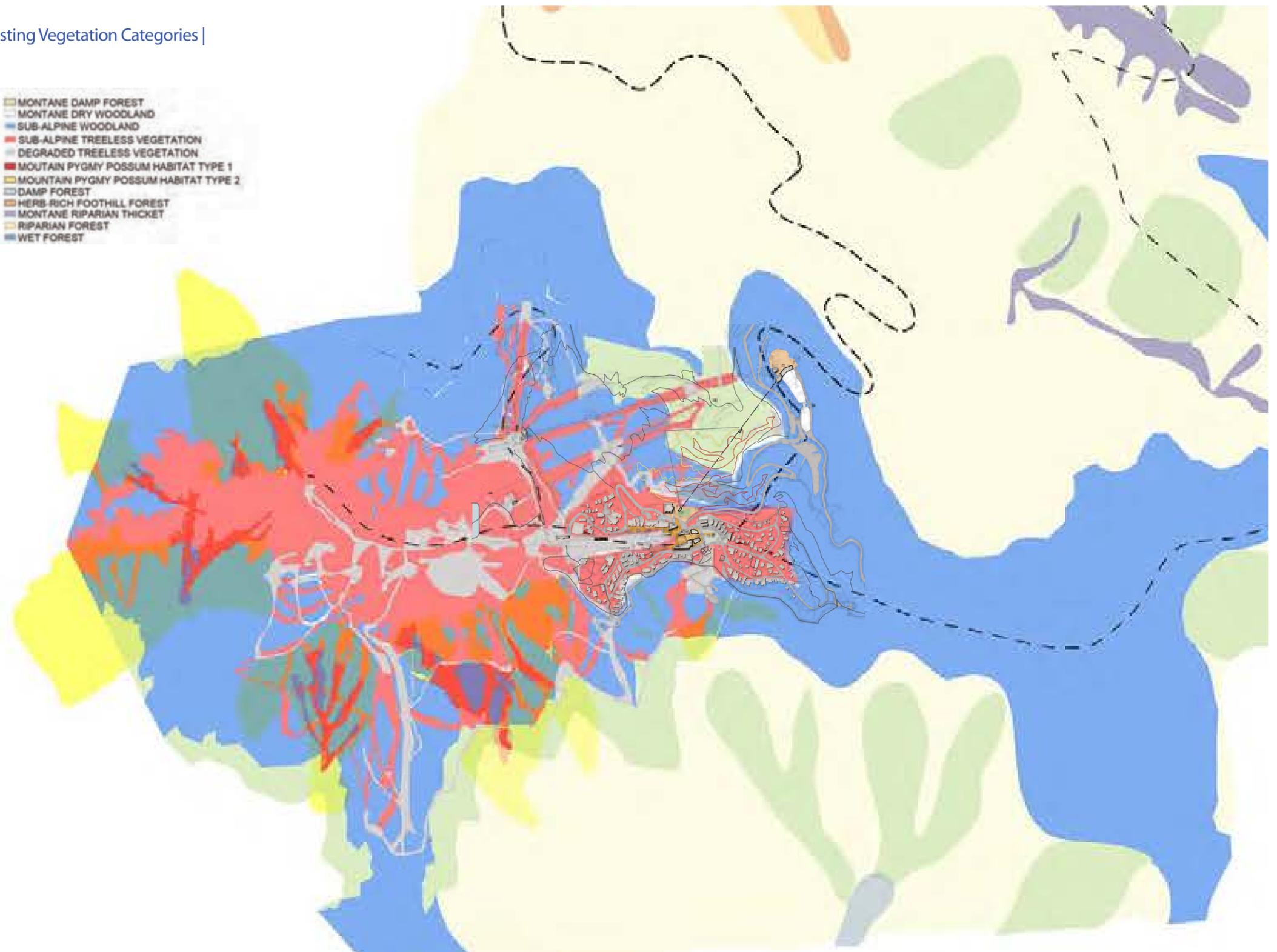
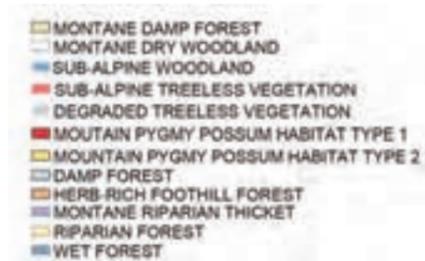
- * A detailed Flora and Fauna Assessment.
- * A review and update of the Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Alpine Resorts: Environmental Management Plan and the Recovery Plan for the Mountain Pygmy-Possum on Mt Buller, Victoria.
- * A Net Gain Offset Management Plan and Ecological Landscape Rehabilitation Plan.
- * A reassessment of the Bushfire Assessment and Strategy.
- * A geotechnical survey.
- * A feature survey.
- * Detailed design and documentation of new landscape elements and facilities.

The staging of recommendations should be based on the funding, available budget, and project priority.

Pre-Construction Activities

- * Ecologist to undertake a Flora and Fauna Assessment
- * Ecologist to review the "Mt Buller and Mt Stirling Alpine Resorts: Environmental Management Plan" based on above assessment.
- * Ecologist to Produce a Net Gain Offset Management Plan (if necessary) and Ecological Landscape Rehabilitation Plan.
- * Ecologist to review and update the "Recovery Plan for the Mountain Pygmy-Possum on Mt Buller, Victoria" Archaeologist to assess cultural heritage values and devise a Cultural Heritage Plan where necessary.
- * Undertake a feature survey of Mt Buller.
- * Undertake a geotechnical survey of the main development areas.
- * Undertake detailed design and documentation of the recommended works presented in the Mt Buller Master Plan, including management and establishment and maintenance.
- * Develop an estimate of probable costs for works.

Existing Vegetation Categories



7.1 Implementation

The Master Plan seeks to set a framework for growth and specify programs for the sustainable development of Mt Buller as the initiatives are delivered over time. The plan is for all stakeholders, public private and community and is intended to be bold, challenging and forward looking to establish the economic strategy to underpin the future prosperity of Mt Buller.

This 20 year program of regeneration will be managed by instigating a number of important initiatives, each of which will spawn or support important projects. The implementation strategy outlines the scope, phasing, cost and funding strategies necessary to initiate the projects or to effect collaboration with public and private stakeholders.

The key elements that underpin the implementation strategy include:

- * Community Support
- * Partnerships and Whole of Government participation
- * Management
- * Public Sector Investment
- * Private Sector commitment
- * Incentives

Management

As the responsible land manager at Mt Buller, leadership by ARMB is imperative to achieving the outcomes of the plan. The Master Plan creates a clear framework for future investment and with responsibility lying with ARMB for many of the elements leadership by the Board will be essential.

Mt Buller has benefitted from an efficient and effective program of annual expenditure by

ARMB. The Master Plan however identifies a range of projects and studies that will largely be initiated by ARMB:

- * the allocation of annual expenditure for key projects
- * the sale or lease of existing land to fund civic improvements and projects
- * funding of initiatives through grant funding sources
- * State or Federal Government grants for community projects.

A number of wider strategies and studies will need to be undertaken. Buy-in by partnering authorities and departments can also have significant benefits at the policy level.

Community Support

The ability to harness the political resolve and community support is founded on a clear message and a long term communication strategy that keeps stakeholders and the community engaged and informed.

A clear and consistent message is not only important for the community but also for potential investors who will deliver most of the urban renewal in this precinct.

Partnerships

Many of the strategies identified during development of the planning structure involve at the very least approval and in some cases support from government agencies or authorities. The cooperation and commitment by all government departments to the vision of a new and energised Mt Buller will be a key element to the success of the mountain.

ARMB will identify a programme of ongoing commitments by State Government departments and investigate development of a whole of Government approach for the ongoing growth of Mt Buller.



Private Sector Investment

Success will only come with investment and participation by landowners, developers and other key stakeholders who will deliver the infrastructure, retail, hospitality and residential projects that are essential for the sustained prosperity of Mt Buller.

Coordinating public domain upgrades and initiatives with development staging is essential and must be seen in the wider context of public policy and market realities.

The potential for joint ventures on selected projects with Government or ARMB may be considered.

Incentives

Mt Buller's marketing strategy should be matched by a series of incentives that stimulate growth and investment. Additional floor space is not always the most appropriate mechanism and other options need to be reviewed and adopted as part of a coordinated approach to facilitate investment. Options may include:

- * streamlined assessments
- * deferred rates
- * reduced contributions
- * partnering opportunities

Mechanisms to facilitate initiatives such as affordable housing and projects that have a wider benefit for the mountain need to be identified.

Initiatives such as the simplification of planning controls and the exemption of minor works and those works "generally in accordance" with an approved plan (where all environmental requirements are met) could be reviewed with government in streamlining approvals.



7.2 Project Priorities

A number of priority projects have been identified across the mountain. A clear sequence of delivery and commitments has been identified so that change can proceed with confidence.

These projects fall into a number of categories:

* Short Term Projects – projects that can start immediately

* Public Realm and Infrastructure Initiatives - These elements will create the public realm and sense of place that will underpin this strategy.

* Projects for Investigation – studies and feasibilities that should begin immediately

Also included are a number of studies and policy initiatives that are needed to create a framework for development or for further activation of Mt Buller. These studies include the development of a Sustainability Policy and updating of the planning framework for the Village.

The list of projects is for further investigation only and does not constitute approval. All projects will be required to undertake all necessary studies and comply with all relevant State and Federal legislative and policy requirements.

Mountain

Element	Brief	Lead Organisation	Category
Biodiversity Precinct Structure Plan	Overall review of resort-wide flora and fauna communities	ARMB	Short Term
Planning Process Review	Reflect Master Plan/Streamline approvals	ARMB	Short Term
Design Guidelines Review	Reflect Master Plan	ARMB	Short Term
Affordable Housing Strategy	Identify policy adjustments	ARMB	Short Term
Sustainability Policy	Identify policy adjustments	ARMB	Short Term
Signage upgrade	Dynamic signage system	ARMB	Short Term
Water Storage Expansion	Additional Water Storage Facility (Potable & Snowmaking)	ARMB	Short Term
Carpark Shelters	Shelter structures at overnight carparks	ARMB	Short Term
Recreation Facilities Stage 1	Expand summer activities: * Downhill Bike (lift serviced) * Bike Skills Park * Bushwalking Trails * Cross Country Biking	ARMB	Public Realm/Infrastructure
Arts Strategy	Identify Cultural initiatives * Art displays at Village Centre * Art competitions * Summer Artists in Residence	ARMB	Short Term
Recreation Facilities Stage 2	Expand summer activities: * Flying Fox * Helipad * Luge * Oval * Tennis * Playground(s)	ARMB	Public Realm/Infrastructure
Gondola	Link Horse Hill to Village	ARMB	Public Realm/Infrastructure
High Altitude Oval	Summer training oval	ARMB	Investigation
Mirimbah Gate upgrade	New facility with RFID Tag	ARMB	Public Realm/Infrastructure
Relocate Taxi parking	Identify options	ARMB / MMBL	Public Realm/Infrastructure
Relocate on-road parking	Subject to Horse Hill project	ARMB	Public Realm/Infrastructure
Recreation Facilities Stage 3	Activation of Village Centre	ARMB	Public Realm/Infrastructure

Table 7.1- Implementation Strategy: Mountain





Horse Hill

Element	Brief	Lead Organisation	Category
Guest Facilities	2,000m2 * F&B – 750m2 * Ski Hire – 750m2 * Locker/Change/Toilets 350m2 * Retail – 100m2 * Driver lounge 50m2 * Playground	ARMB	Short Term
Snow Play	10,000m2 * Earthworks * Power/Water * Snowmaking * Magic carpet/tows	ARMB	Short Term
Corn Hill Road	Integrate with Mt Stirling Access Road * Buses 1 side * Road upgrade * Turnaround	ARMB	Short Term
Parking Stage 1	* Access Road/Earthworks * Bus drop off * Decked parking over existing	ARMB	Short Term
Parking Stage 2	Additional decked parking if required	ARMB	Investigation
Horse Hill Chair upgrade	Lift Base station to Facilities level	BSL	Public Realm/Infrastructure
Mixed Use Skating Rink	Define brief/Feasibility	ARMB	Investigation

Table 7.2- Implementation Strategy: Horse Hill

Village

Element	Brief	Lead Organisation	Category
Athletes Walk Upgrade	Improve pedestrian interface between accommodation and Bourke Street	ARMB	Short Term
Resort Reception and Interpretive Centre	Extension to BCC 200m2	ARMB	Short Term
Valley North Parking Structure	400 Cars on existing toboggan site	ARMB	Short Term
Guest Facilities	2,500m2 * Plaza * Food Hall/Dining – 1000m2 * Ski Hire – 300m2 additional * Locker/Change/Toilets 600m2 * Retail – 400m2	ARMB	Short Term
Blue Bullet Frontage	Seating /F and B	ARMB	Public Realm/Infrastructure
Blue Bullet relocation	Adjust alignment to north. Smaller base station structure	BSL	Investigation
Kooroora Redevelopment	Mixed Use * Retail * Supermarket * Residential * Entertainment	BSL	Investigation
YHA Development	Retail/Residential	Developer	Investigation
Opportunity Sites	Retail/Residential/Entertainment	Developer	Investigation
Bourke St Upgrade	Bourke Street widening	BSL	Investigation

Table 7.3- Implementation Strategy: Village

7.3 Project Viability

A preliminary economic assessment of the evolving Mt Buller Master Plan has been carried out by SGS Economics & Planning Pty Ltd (SGS) based on the high level, long term vision for the mountain. At this level, there is an inherent uncertainty about elements and details, however the evaluation has undertaken the assessment using 'reasonable' assumptions.

Two forms of preliminary economic assessment have been performed, both from a whole of mountain perspective and both reflecting the differences brought on by Master Plan implementation compared with business as usual operations. These include:

1. Cost benefit assessment: Incremental economic, social and environmental benefits that can be monetised less implementation costs.
2. Economic impact assessment: Incremental level of local economic activity due to Master Plan implementation (eg incomes and jobs).

Capital works (\$000)	Business as usual		Master Plan implementation	
Total	\$13,720		\$48,420	
By 2020	\$7,720		\$42,420	
By 2030	\$13,720		\$48,420	
By 2040	\$13,720		\$48,420	

Visitor Numbers (000)	Winter*	Summer	Winter*	Summer
Current	245	71	245	71
By 2020	257	88	263	95
By 2030	264	97	284	128
By 2040	264	97	303	165

Daily Visitor Spend (\$2010)	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer
Current	\$270	\$33	\$290	\$66
By 2020	\$299	\$41	\$320	\$82
By 2030	\$330	\$50	\$354	\$100
By 2040	\$365	\$61	\$391	\$122

Table 7.4- Key Assumptions

Key Assumptions

Assumptions surrounding the cost and timing of capital works, and enhanced visitation levels and visitor spending drive the estimates generated. Length of stay enhancements have been incorporated into visitor spending assumptions.

Estimates are in 2010 dollars and all budgets include all relevant feasibilities and studies as well as vegetation offset costs.

Key assumptions are as follows:

Key Results & Sensitivity

The results of each of the assessment frameworks are presented in the table below, i.e. under what has been labelled the 'most likely' scenario. The sensitivity of these results to changes in the underlying assumptions are also summarised with the:

- * 'Worst case' scenario assuming capital costs blow out by 30% and visitation growth under Master Plan implementation is only 75% of the most likely scenario. Visitor spending is assumed to remain equivalent to that realised under the most likely scenario.
- * 'Best case' scenario assuming that capital costs are 10% less and visitor spending yields are 25% better than what is forecast under the most likely scenario. Visitation levels are assumed to equate with those forecast under the most likely scenario.

Scenario		Most Likely	Worst Case	Best Case
Cost benefit assessment				
• Capital costs (\$000)	PV @7% real	\$27,706	\$36,018	\$24,935
• Recurrent costs (\$000)	PV @7% real	\$4,122	\$4,122	\$4,122
• Other costs	Not quantified	Not quantified	Not quantified	Not quantified
• Enhanced visitor experience (\$000)	PV @7% real	\$53,010	\$38,645	\$53,010
• Economic uplift (\$000)	PV @7% real	\$13,937	\$11,225	\$13,937
• Avoided recurrent costs (\$000)	PV @7% real	\$89	\$89	\$89
• Other benefits	Not quantified	Not quantified	Not quantified	Not quantified
Net Present Value (\$000)		\$35,208	\$9,820	\$37,979
Internal Rate of Return (%)		16%	9%	18%
Benefit Cost Ratio		2.11	1.24	2.31
Economic impact assessment				
Local economy				
• Income (\$000 p.a.)	30 yr average	\$25,182	\$19,251	\$24,983
• Value added (\$000 p.a.)	30 yr average	\$14,618	\$12,890	\$14,516
• FTE jobs supported	30 yr average	163	167	162
Victorian economy				
• Income (\$000 p.a.)	30 yr average	\$40,150	\$32,308	\$39,696
• Value added (\$000 p.a.)	30 yr average	\$18,093	\$14,193	\$17,900
• FTE jobs supported	30 yr average	216	164	214

Table 7.5- Development Scenarios

The most likely results indicate that Master Plan implementation:

- * Is estimated to generate benefits that outweigh costs by more than a factor of 2 when quantified economic and social benefits are incorporated into the analysis. This suggests that public subsidisation of the Master Plan may well be warranted.
- * Generates significant economic activity for both the local (Mansfield Shire) and Victorian economy over the long term.

Public Funding Programs

All funding will need to align with the objectives of the Hume Regional Development Committee's priorities, which are yet to be enunciated but which are likely to echo the priorities stipulated in the Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities.

The most relevant of these themes and the Master Plan components with greatest alignment include:

Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities Theme	Master Plan Project
• Healthy, vibrant and resilience communities – strengthening communities, increasing resilience and enhancing liveability	Recreation facilities Stage 1 Recreation facilities Stage 2 Recreation facilities Stage 3 Day facilities – Horse Hill Day facilities - Village
• A thriving and dynamic economy – facilitating research and innovation in tourism, manufacturing and industry to encourage new and evolving business.	Gondola Snow play High altitude oval
• An efficient and sustainable pattern of urban and rural land use and development – maximising use of existing infrastructure and services and facilitating strategic investment in future infrastructure and services.	Parking stages 1 & 2 Gateway site parking structure Cornhill Road

Table 7.6- Hume Regional Development Strategies

Assistance from government is important. Some projects may be undertaken as seed funding to help create certainty and to attract private funding.

These programs (such as the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund) have capital project categories that include sustainable industries, industry investment and development, tourism, transport and access, and community and cultural infrastructure.

Project Funding Areas	Master Plan Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Industries: energy, resource and water supply and efficiency infrastructure projects that improve the productivity, sustainability and competitiveness of regional industries and communities. 	Water storage expansion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry Investment and Development: Infrastructure projects that facilitate new investment, job creation and retention, industry development and business expansion or relocation in regional Victoria. 	Gondola Snow play High altitude oval
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism: new tourism assets and redevelopment of existing key tourism assets with a focus on nature-based tourism infrastructure to develop key regional areas as world-class tourist destinations. 	Recreation facilities Stage 1 Recreation facilities Stage 2 Recreation facilities Stage 3 Day facilities – Horse Hill Day facilities – Village Gondola Snow play

Table 7.7 - Project Funding Areas



7.4 Statutory Framework

A clear regulatory framework for Mt Buller is essential however the current planning process is perceived as impacting growth at Mt Buller. The Master Plan seeks to provide strategies and a framework going forward that aims to streamline existing planning processes and regulations to ensure planning certainty. A number of planning issues currently affect development at Mount Buller:

- * Vision – create a shared strategic vision for the Mountain
- * Timing – reduce the length of time needed to obtain planning approvals
- * Controls – investigate means to increase flexibility
- * Carparking and traffic flow – management and operational considerations
- * Vegetation – identification of offsets for new development
- * Biodiversity – the balancing of growth and development with the stewardship of biodiversity
- * Bushfires – the balancing of new bushfire attack risk controls assessment with the need to retain vegetation where possible
- * Aboriginal cultural heritage – the preparation and approval of Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMP) for greenfield sites and those in “medium-high” sensitivity areas can slow the process.

The Master Plan acknowledges the unique natural assets of Mount Buller, which are a primary attraction for visitors, whilst providing further development opportunities to enhance the Mount Buller experience for visitors whilst respecting the unique environmental setting.

Ultimately, the planning framework is the tool to implement the Master Plan through:

- * Clear guidance and direction for land use and development for the ARMB and the Minister for Planning (as the Responsible Authority) as well as residents, developers and visitors to the Mountain.
- * Flexibility whilst ensuring they provide certainty and faster turnaround times.
- * Longevity and provision of a strategic framework for future development.
- * Practical, realistic and can implement outcomes the Master Plan seeks to achieve.

* Facilitate future development by commissioning studies on planning controls that delay development applications prior to lodgement. In particular, there needs to be a focus on:

- * Native Vegetation removal and offsetting requirements;
 - * Wildfire Management; and
 - * Aboriginal Cultural Heritage (under the Aboriginal Heritage Act).
- * Able to drive development for both private and public sector in an expedited manner.
- * Remove obsolete or repetitive controls.
- * Remove unnecessary “hurdles” or obstacles controlling development (where possible).

The bushfire strategy and emergency plan (including the human element of fire management) will be addressed under the Wildfire Management Overlay.

The Way Forward - Key Recommendations

The role of the Master Plan is to provide a vision for Mt Buller and in effect, provide guidance as to any changes in planning instruments that are necessary to facilitate this vision. It has been assumed that the existing environmental control framework on the land will be retained in order to protect the environmental significance of Mt Buller, however the Master Plan should act as a catalyst for clarifying, updating or removing existing planning instruments relating to the land as appropriate.

In the statutory framework, the Master Plan is seen as a Reference Document however in the long term, it may be preferred to have the Master Plan adopted and incorporated into the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme. A coordinated “Whole of Government” approach would ensure a consistent and sustainable outcome is achieved.

In order to have the Master Plan adopted, a series of steps will be necessary.

The Master Plan provides a framework for Mount Buller to improve its attractiveness as a year round tourist destination. All future projects will normally require detailed design and supporting study investigations in order to determine its feasibility as well as potential environmental and social impacts. For example, projects such as the gondola can only be undertaken after a more developed proposal is prepared and the environmental impacts appropriately assessed and managed.

A number of background studies can be

undertaken at a “whole of village” level, as the studies may provide the background for future development applications and assist in the delivery of infrastructure and facilities.

The range of studies required includes:

- * Vegetation assessment including advice regarding offset requirements as a result of any proposed new development. This should include development of a vegetation offset strategy and management plan.
- * Fauna and biodiversity review to identify any significant habitat and threatened species and management strategies.
- * Review of aboriginal cultural heritage (particularly Horse Hill and greenfield sites such as the proposed gondola route).
- * Bushfire risk assessment strategy/plan.
- * Economic impact assessment to justify the uses required and associated space needed.
- * Geotechnical preliminary assessment of proposed development sites to identify risks and issues at this early stage.
- * Review the capacity of existing infrastructure and identification of infrastructure upgrades that will be required to accommodate new development.

- * Traffic impact assessments to confirm carparking requirements and proposed access arrangements from designated carparking areas to and around the village.
- * Clarification from ARMB and DSE in regards to their ability to operate as a public land manager and whether the uses proposed at Horse Hill would breach their role (ie. food and drink premises).

Master Plan Refinement

- * Update as required based on findings from the above reports.
- * Identify built form outcomes for specific sites (ie. preferred heights and setbacks which can then be translated into the planning scheme).
- * Develop “visions” for specific areas to guide development.
- * Development of vegetation precinct plans and identification of areas for offsets within and beyond the resort.

Planning Control Changes

- * The Master Plan will guide changes in the strategic statements, local planning policies and DDO provisions for Mt Buller. As such the Master Plan should become a Referenced Document of the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme for each updated policy/provision.
- * Update the existing local planning policies and implement new planning policies to reflect key issues and objectives/visions identified within the Master Plan such as Sustainable Development and built form.
- * Revise the existing Schedule to the Design and Development Overlay for the Village to ensure key visions of the Master Plan are acknowledged and addressed.
- * Implement a new Schedule to the Design and Development Overlay to guide development on Horse Hill.
- * Rezone the land known as Horse Hill to Comprehensive Development Zone 2 – Alpine Recreation.
- * Remove superseded and controls which duplicate existing controls or conflict with new controls such as the Comprehensive Development Plan for the Gateway Site.

Government Engagement

Consultation with key State Government Departments was undertaken as part of this process with feedback provided throughout the process both formally and informally.

Moving forward, continuing discussions with State Government Departments including the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) are essential to ensure the ongoing support of the Master Plan and future development. Whole of government support for the Master Plan will help identify issues early and reduce risk associated with the delivery of new facilities and new development.

