

## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The idea for a Centenary Trail in Canberra arose from community submissions received in 2009 as part of the Canberra 100 call for Centenary projects. The Trail is intended to be a showcase of Canberra, taking users on a seamless journey between urban and rural environs and incorporating the ACT's iconic sites and hidden treasures.

This study, undertaken for the Parks and Conservation Service, a branch within the ACT Government Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS), assesses the feasibility of the proposal in terms of estimated costs and predicted benefits.

The project team is comprised of representatives from range of professional and recreational disciplines including CB Richard Ellis, Cox Architecture, Tract Consultants, World Trail, Day and Hodge Associates, the Australian Bicentennial National Trail, Swell Design Group and the Wren Partnership.

This team has worked with TAMS, ACT Government and key stakeholders to investigate the feasibility of the Centenary Trail.

The feasibility study identifies a preferred alignment of the Trail in order to determine whether there is sufficient justification in terms of value to money for the community to make recommendations for its implementation.

The study does not determine the final alignment of the Trail as this will be subject to necessary ground truthing (walking or riding the Trail to identify possible issues and allow refinement of the alignment), environmental and other investigations in the field.

This report draws the following conclusions:

1. The total budget estimate for the Centenary Trail project is \$4.5 million.
2. Recognising that the costs and benefits identified in this report are preliminary estimates only, development of the Centenary Trail is considered feasible when the broad range of benefits are considered.
3. The ambition needs to be to deliver a world class facility.
4. The Centenary Trail needs to have a strong brand that goes beyond the typical TAMS walking trails. It needs an independent identity and an energy that piques interest and drives promotion.
5. The proposed alignment cannot visit all of the points of interest in the ACT, but it can provide a trunk trail with options for visitors to make their journey longer or shorter to suit their ability and available time.
6. The timeframe to open the Trail by Canberra's Centenary in 2013 will be tight but should be achievable.
7. To be successful, the Centenary Trail will need appropriate levels of support from the ACT Government in terms of both financial and in-kind commitment. If the level of support is not sufficient and the Trail is not adequately resourced in the first instance, then it may not meet the targeted measures of success.
8. Expenditure that encourages the community to enjoy active and healthy lifestyles is increasingly being recognised as preventative health expenditure.
9. The benefits of the Trail would be shared across a broad section of the community.

10. There is already strong community support for the development of the Centenary Trail.
11. The Centenary Trail concept would be readily accessible to the Canberra community, providing easy access and raising awareness of the other nature based recreation opportunities that are available.
12. There is a significant opportunity to grow tourism to the ACT through the promotion of nature based tourism experiences. The Centenary Trail could be the catalyst for a significant refocus in the Territory's tourism marketing approach.
13. The strength of the ACT as a nature based tourism destination lies in the potential for the development and expansion of the soft-nature product where participants can experience nature safe in the knowledge that support and services are never far away.
14. The Centenary Trail has potential to provide for ecotourism, adventure tourism and wildlife tourism to some extent.
15. Based upon utilisation rates of comparable trails in Australia the Trail could expect to attract 18,000 tourist visitor days per annum, bringing additional revenue into the ACT. The Trail will also capture discretionary local expenditure that might otherwise be spent outside the ACT.
16. The Centenary Trail would offer a unique and intimate experience of Canberra and would appeal to tourists in the lucrative Experience Seeker category, with the potential to attract the revenue and word of mouth promotion this demographic could provide.
17. The broader promotion of opportunities for nature based recreational in the ACT will be important to the success of the Centenary Trail and provides a great opportunity for the ACT as a whole.
18. Canberra already has an enviable nature based recreation and sporting events calendar. The Centenary Trail has the opportunity to both benefit from and contribute to this schedule of events.
19. The value of events should not be underestimated in terms of their ability to raise awareness of the Trail and to contribute to maintenance costs through entry fees.
20. The potential benefits of the Trail to the community and the level of support of the Trail concept show that the project is a worthwhile undertaking.