

FALLS CREEK RESORT **MASTER PLAN** **2016**



FORWARD

As a planning document, the *Falls Creek Resort Master Plan 2016* is a distillation of existing management plans and new ideas. It is not intended to provide detailed site design or to define every site use or commercial opportunity that the Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management or tourism development industry may ultimately realise. The scale and schematic nature of the concepts provided reflects this approach.

The Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board has however collaborated with stakeholders, evaluated trends and contemplated solutions to long standing challenges.

This Masterplan is an amalgamation of historic interpretation and contemporary solutions. The key element driving this Masterplan is integration- of our activities, our land, our logistics and our community.

The Board intends for this Masterplan to remain a living document. As such, it will be subject to regular review, consultation and development. A dedicated Masterplan page on the Falls Creek website will also be established to provide stakeholders with an opportunity for continuous feedback as well as progress updates on implementation.

The Masterplan aims to progressively support stakeholder investment while drawing strong visitation well into the future.

A plan for generations.

Stuart Smythe

CEO

Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management

Mark Anderson

Board Chair

Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Report Authors

This report has been prepared by Tract Consultants Pty Ltd (Landscape Architects, Urban Designers, Town Planners), working in association with Essential Economics (Economic Consultants), TTM Consulting (Traffic Engineering) and Capire (Consultation) under the management of the Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management (FCRM) Board.

Previous Report Authors

The Falls Creek Village Masterplan references a number of existing technical, strategic and masterplan reports relating to the Falls Creek landscape and related projects. We acknowledge and thank the authors of that work for their contribution.

DISCLAIMER

In the course of preparing this report, analysis, estimates and projections have been prepared on the basis of assumptions described in the report. It is possible that some of the assumptions underlying these projections and professional judgments may change over time. Professional judgments are made to provide a basis for estimates, projections and project recommendations. Tract Consultants and its project sub-consultants do not accept any liability for the use of this material.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		04	PART THREE - MASTERPLAN	24	PART FOUR - TECHNICAL SYSTEMS	45
THE FALLS CREEK VILLAGE MASTERPLAN - WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?		08	FALLS CREEK VILLAGE MASTERPLAN	26	TRANSPORT & ACCESS INTEGRATION	46
PART ONE - BACKGROUND		10	THE ‘NEW’ GULLY GATEWAY	28	ACTIVITY SYSTEMS	50
THE STRATEGIC SETTING		11	THE VILLAGE BOWL	30	INFRASTRUCTURE & FUTURE SKI FIELD PLANNING	52
STRATEGIC VISION & MISSION		12	VILLAGE HEART	32	CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY	59
DISCUSSION PAPER		12	TOWN CENTRE & MAIN STREET	34	FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	60
CONSULTATION FEEDBACK		13	TRANSIT HUB	36	URBAN DESIGN	62
LOCATION, SETTING & EXISTING CONDITIONS		14	WINDY CORNER NORDIC CENTRE	37	PLANNING & GOVERNANCE	64
PART TWO - STRATEGIC APPROACH		17	THE NORDIC BOWL	38	NATIVE VEGETATION PROVISIONS	66
FALLS CREEK STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN PRINCIPLES		18	LAKESIDE	39	GEOTECHNICAL SUMMARY	68
THE MASTERPLAN APPROACH		20	SERVICES CENTRE	40	PART FIVE - APPENDICES	70
REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTERPLAN		20	HOWMANS GAP	40	APPENDIX A - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	71
THE BIG IDEAS		21	IMPLEMENTATION & INVESTMENT STRATEGY	41	APPENDIX B - MARKET ANALYSIS	74
					APPENDIX C - ACTIVITY SYSTEMS	79
					APPENDIX D - SKI-IN / SKI-OUT PLAN	80
					APPENDIX E - NATIVE VEGETATION PROVISIONS	81

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Falls Creek Village “Masterplan” has been prepared as an outcome of the Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012 which required each of the major Victorian alpine resorts to prepare masterplans outlining a clear direction for a viable and sustainable future.

This Masterplan strategy has been prepared by Tract Consultants, in collaboration with the Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management team (FCRM), together with significant input from village stakeholders and visitors to Falls Creek through an extensive consultation process facilitated by Capire. The Masterplan is a culmination of extensive review of previous masterplans, on-going consultation with the Falls Creek “community” and implementation of the 2013- Falls Creek Strategic Plan -‘A Pathway to the Future’.

Underpinning this Masterplan, FCRM seeks to build upon the strategic vision for Falls Creek as;

a vibrant and distinctive village offering Australia’s most memorable alpine experiences.

The “Vision” promotes Falls Creek as:

- an intimate and authentic alpine village community
- a community of invested stakeholders – generally small business operators
- a destination offering experiences focused on repeat visitation
- an escape, an adventure or simply a place to relax

One of the key objectives and greatest challenges of the Vision and the Masterplan is the need to establish a long-term, sustainable and ‘integrated’ village solution for Falls Creek. Stemming from the articulation of a strategic vision was:

- the need for the development of a ‘compelling offer’
- the FCRM Board’s commitment to address the impact of current tourism trends
- to ensure the future vision aligns with relevant regional state and local policies

Importantly the Masterplan must be deliverable and have relevance for the stakeholders and business operators of Falls Creek.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

One of the core objectives driving the development of the 2016 Falls Creek Masterplan is the creation of a vision (and document) that provides a prospectus for potential future investment.

FCRM principally views its role as the facilitator of future Village and Resort development. This is likely to include coordination, support and joint investment in civic infrastructure developments.

Projects will be coordinated and supported through the Alpine Resorts Coordinating Council (“ARCC”) and these projects can also be presented as public/private initiatives. FCRM is actively working with the ARCC to prioritise and develop Phase One Priority Projects for funding.

Separate to infrastructure funding opportunities, the Masterplan is intended to provide FCRM, existing stakeholders and potential investors with an overarching vision for the future of Falls Creek as well as to identify specific projects for investment/funding support. In this regard, FCRM will coordinate opportunities through a number of channels including but not limited to local investor funds, private equity markets, public partnership funds and potential offshore investment markets.

In the coming months, a more detailed implementation plan is intended to be developed. This Plan will provide additional depth of detail to support site precinct/specific investment opportunities.

The Masterplan has been developed to generate excitement and confidence in the future of Falls Creek. As an existing stakeholder or future stakeholder of Falls Creek, the Masterplan is the blueprint for future investment in our Village/Resort.

MASTERPLAN STRATEGY CONTEXT

Falls Creek is Victoria’s largest alpine resort, bounded on all sides by the Alpine National Park and set adjacent to the Rocky Valley Lake. Set on steep terrain at the base of a natural bowl supported by “progression perfect terrain”, it has spectacular views and northern aspect to the surrounding Bogong High Plains. The village itself is compact and intimate and provides winter visitors with a unique ski-in/ski-out experience. In the green season, it takes advantage of the cooler climate for an expanding variety of nature based tourism, alpine recreation, sports training and events that capitalise upon the natural setting and terrain.

The winter ski-season will continue to be the ‘engine-room’ for Falls Creek. To this extent there are significant enhancements that can be made to Falls Creek Village, to improve its winter operations, enrich the visitor experience and drive future tourism.

The key challenge however remains; to develop and foster a triple bottom line, sustainable village, with year-round atmosphere and a viable commercial nucleus, which will support a permanent population and expand green season visitation.



FIG 01. INTEGRATION - THE FALLS CREEK ‘BIG IDEA’ IS BASED AROUND AN AUTHENTIC ALPINE VILLAGE WITH INTEGRATED OFFERINGS

While continuing to explore future tourism opportunities to expand year-round visitation, there are at present several design, transport and access related issues, that impact upon the function of Falls Creek Village. Challenges addressed as part of this Masterplan include:

- Provision of a “compelling offer” to generate additional streams of visitation
- Improving access arrival and orientation for visitors
- Identifying the “heart” of Falls Creek and defining the “Village centre”
- Improving the safety and management of the ski-in/ski-out model
- Enhancing the visitor experience through improved village amenity and public realm
- Addressing issues surrounding housing affordability
- Addressing existing safety issues related to ad-hoc parking in the village and along BHP Road.

This Masterplan report outlines the need for Falls Creek to build upon its competitive points of difference and foster a true year-round alpine community that will in turn generate further commercial investment in the village/resort.

The Masterplan provides the framework and initiatives to build an ‘**activity-focused alpine community**’ and enhance Falls Creek as an ‘**authentic alpine village**’. These concepts provide significant opportunity for future investment in the affiliated activities of; health and wellness tourism, spa retreat and altitude sports training facilities, that will support year-round visitation. The natural alpine setting and environment will also continue to inspire nature-based visitation and educational tourism. Existing and expanded offerings at Falls Creek will invariably showcase the village’s already well entrenched food, wine and culture.

A common theme throughout the Masterplan process was the desire to provide visitors with a ‘**seamless and integrated**’ experience of Falls Creek; the mountain and the village.

The purpose of this Masterplan report is to summarise the process that was undertaken by FCRM, in conjunction with the consultant team, the community and stakeholders of Falls Creek, in order to provide a recommendation and implementation strategy for the future. The Masterplan outlines a range of staged investment initiatives and projects that seek to improve the visitor experience and “liveability” of Falls Creek. These initiatives include:

- Improved arrival experience at Falls Creek through infrastructure and management enhancements to improve the arrival, parking and transport
- the establishment of the Gully as the true gateway entry to Falls Creek
- the definition of a Falls Creek “Town Centre” and Main Street with capacity for significant investment in multi-purpose; health tourism, wellness and sport-training services and associated facilities
- The re-establishment of the Village Bowl as the family, entertainment and event hub of Falls Creek on a 365 day basis
- The establishment of a majority of one way winter loop roads to improve the ski-in/ski-out experience and village transport and logistics. Parking on Village roads to remain in the green season
- Opportunities for improved seasonal and long-term housing options
- A focus on “community building” and public realm enhancements including a pedestrian spine, creation of public spaces and overall amenity improvements.



1. THE NEW GULLY GATEWAY

- Falls Creek arrival and day parking orientation point
- Day Centre, information, interpretation & museum
- Look-out
- Affordable accommodation
- School group arrival and orientation
- Public Transit stop
- Gondola access from the Gully Gateway

2. THE VILLAGE BOWL

- Pub, food & entertainment
- All-season event staging
- Family play, shelter & toilets
- Snow play hub, playground & skate park
- Extreme mountain biking centre
- Site-related staff & general accommodation
- Integrated retail
- Climbing wall

3. VILLAGE HEART

- Snow free pedestrian spine
- Primary school
- Library and community centre
- Traffic free village plaza
- Future public transport and walking hub
- Visual marker e.g. clock tower
- High quality urban design, feature landscape, lighting, public art and street furniture
- Secondary retail

4. SERVICES CENTRE

- Consolidation of Waste Water Treatment Plant (W.W.T.P)
- House waste transfer services
- Co-location of infrastructure and back-of-house services
- New internal loop road

5. TRANSIT HUB

- Accommodation Transfer Services
- Public Transit Station
- Coach arrivals & departures
- Temporary parking and drop-off
- Guest lounge
- Ticketing
- Freight distribution
- Community petrol station

6. TOWN CENTRE & MAIN STREET

- Key civic public plaza
- Green space & children's play
- Year-round retail
- Gateway for overnight visitors
- Undercover car parking
- Information centre
- Multi-purpose facility with opportunities for conference & functions
- Possible health tourism / spa facility
- Altitude sports hotel
- Emergency services centre & heliport

7. WINDY CORNER NORDIC CENTRE

- Nordic Trail Head & information
- Parking for Nordic & day skiers
- Improved shelter & facilities
- Back country information / registration hub

8. THE NORDIC BOWL

- Cross-country events & training
- Altitude training
- Improved shelter & facilities
- Establish synthetic grass flat summer training ground

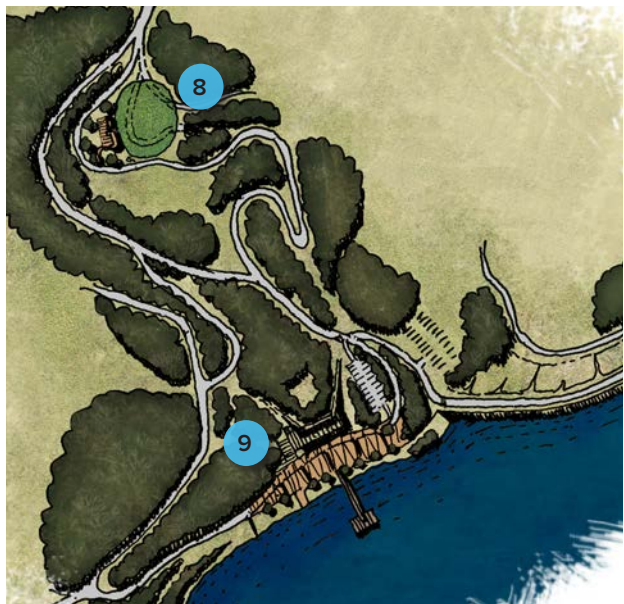
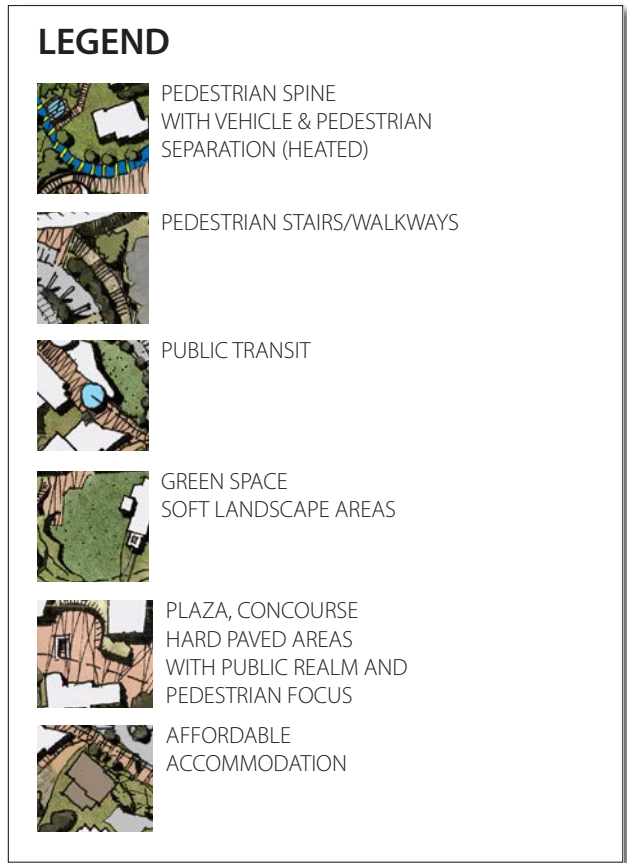
9. LAKESIDE

- Green season leisure activities including beach-side recreation
- A summer kiosk and equipment hire
- Summer arrival and orientation point
- Rehabilitation & re-vegetation
- Shelter & BBQ facilities
- Gateway marker (from Omeo approach)

10. TRANSPORT & ACCESS INTEGRATION

- Village walking spine
- Village ring road (White season only)
- Funicular Public Transit system
- Gully Gondola
- Net increase in car parking (Refer Table 1 on Page 07)

FIG 02. FALLS CREEK VILLAGE MASTERPLAN



INSET A

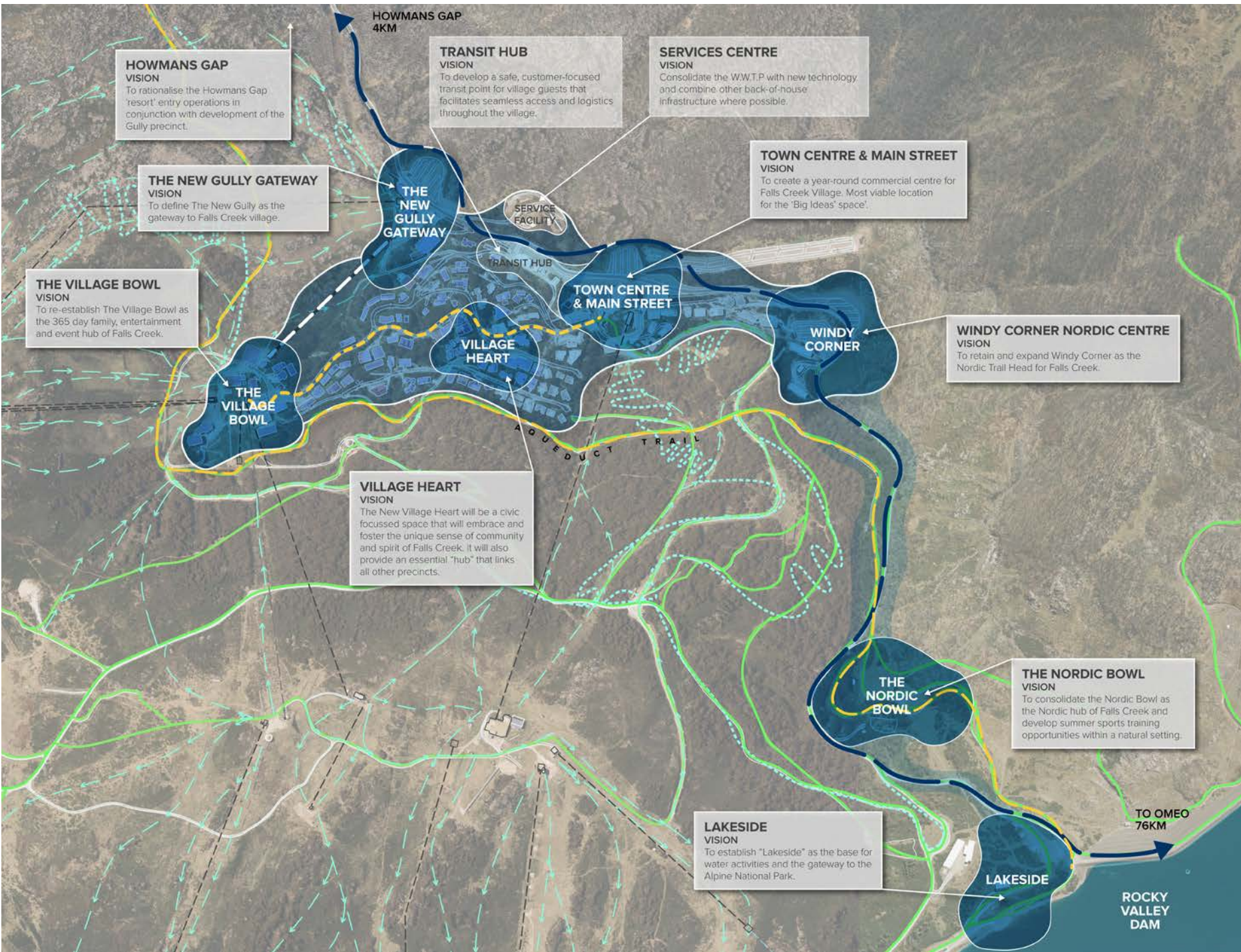


FIG 03. FALLS CREEK VILLAGE PRECINCT PLAN

TABLE 01. CAR PARKING ESTIMATES (WINTER)

	Proposed Design	Proposed Design + 1 Level	Proposed Design + 2 Levels	Existing Parking
Windy Corner Nordic Centre	225 - 252 (28-25 m2)	-	-	160
The New Gully Gateway	107 - 120 (28-25 m2)	-	-	131
Town Centre Car Park	710 - 796 (33-30 m2)	710 - 796	1065 - 1194	150
Lower Slalom Car Park	500 - 560 (33-30 m2)	1000 - 1120	-	459
Sub Total	1542 - 1728	2042 - 2288	2397 - 2686	900
BHP Road Parking	458	458	458	458
Total	2000 - 2186	2500 - 2746	2855 - 3144	1780

THE FALLS CREEK VILLAGE MASTERPLAN - WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?

COMMERCIAL OPERATORS

- Improved arrival experience, ATS transport and visitor services to streamline the visitor arrival experience
- The one-way winter loop road will enhance the ski-in/ski-out experience for visitors, improve village safety, assist in the retention of snow cover on the village roads and enable better logistics (movement of passengers, luggage and freight)
- Improved access around the village with less reliance upon oversnow transport via an integrated transport solution including enhancements to pedestrian networks to make getting around easier and more convenient
- Realigned Eagle Chairlift will relieve the pressure of first time skiers having to funnel down to Slalom Plaza each morning and afternoon
- Streamlined access to the Village Bowl and realignment of the Eagle Chairlift provide improved access to the ski school
- A reinvigorated Village Bowl with a family, snow play, event and entertainment focus operating 365 days a year
- Flexible “Big Ideas” space provides a compelling offer to drive new streams of visitors to Falls Creek year round (supporting utilisation of existing commercial beds)
- Net gain in car parking and arrival options designed to simplify and improve options for all users
- Improved village amenity through public realm enhancements
- Streamlined freight and logistics operations through improvements to transport & infrastructure efficiency
- Expanded visitor markets through an improved overall experience on the mountain and leveraging off the unique attractions of Falls Creek, integration with a regional events calendar and expanded offerings in the green and white seasons
- Development vision designed to enhance asset investment

SKI CLUB MEMBERS

- Enhance the compact village form that is unique to Falls Creek through public realm improvements and better accessibility
- Improved access and amenity to Clubs making them more desirable to visitors

- Year round offerings to enhance visitation in the green season
- Enhanced ski-in/ski-out product and safety around the village through increased separation of vehicles and people
- Reduced waiting times due to less reliance on the Falls Express Chairlift
- Improved Gondola access to the Village Bowl
- Improved skier circulation in the Village Bowl

SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Improved visibility and access due to increased pedestrian activity and enhanced public spaces
- Streamlined freight and logistics operations through improvements to transport & infrastructure efficiency
- Opportunities to be part of pop-up, seasonal retailing
- Expanded consumer markets through the capturing of passing traffic, integration with a regional events calendar and expanded offerings in the green and white seasons
- Streamlined transport and visitor services to enhance and improve visitation

INVESTORS

- An integrated village with supporting activities offering a genuine point of difference as a tourism destination.
- Establishment of creative investment opportunities across a range of potential activity, services, community and affordable housing options.
- Capability of generating increased visitation streams all year round supporting occupancy levels of existing bed numbers
- Increased bed utilisation supports improved financial performance which in turn stimulates higher investment returns

APARTMENT OWNERS

- Streamlined transport and visitor services to enhance and improve visitation
- Enhanced ski-in/ski-out product and safety around the village through increased separation of vehicles and people
- Improved amenity for your guests through lighting and public realm enhancements

- Improved access to apartments via an integrated transport solution including enhancements to pedestrian networks to make getting around easier
- Streamlined freight and logistics operations through improvements to transport & infrastructure efficiency
- Expanded visitor markets through an improved overall experience on the mountain and leveraging off the unique attractions of Falls Creek, the capturing of passing traffic, integration with a regional events calendar and expanded offerings in the green and white seasons

LOCALS, SEASONAL & PERMANENT RESIDENTS AT FALLS CREEK

- Staged introduction of affordable housing and upgrades to facilities to improve the viability of a permanent population and its associated amenities
- Increased opportunities for business and employment as Falls Creek evolves to become a true “year-round” village
- Improvements to amenity of the village including lighting, signage, streetscape etc.
- Improvements to safety and noise through reduction in snow mobile and restricted vehicular activity
- A multi-purpose community centre to support an increased permanent population
- Community spaces/uses offering options for relaxation other than bars and pubs

FAMILIES & “3-GEN” SKIERS

- Consolidated and improved snow play area in the Village Bowl
- Dedicated activity space in the Village Bowl during the green season
- Enhanced family facilities throughout the village
- Increase in family oriented games and events and a wider variety of activities for all ages and abilities year round
- Improved safety around the village through increased separation of vehicles and people
- Improved access to lodges via an integrated transport solution including enhancements to pedestrian networks to make getting around easier

- Improved Gondola access to the Village Bowl
- Public transport system designed to support vertical elevation through and across the village
- Clear and safe pathways designed to support families as well as an aging visitor base to accommodate three generations of skiers (“3-Gen skiers”)
- Beginner friendly access to the Falls Express Chairlift via an improved pedestrian network
- Streamlined access to the Village Bowl and realignment of the Eagle Chairlift provide improved access to the ski school
- Safer roads, enhanced ski in/ski out and trail access to the village through the separation of vehicles and skiers at Ory’s Trail and Wombats Ramble

DAY VISITORS

- Purpose built day centre facilities to make your visit comfortable and enjoyable
- Increased Site interpretation and information
- Simplified car parking arrangements
- Enhanced access to snow play and beginner, intermediate and advanced trails through implementation of an integrated transport solution (transit hub, one way loop road, separation of vehicles and people, public transit, snow-free pedestrian walkways and gondola for improved access to the Village bowl)

SKIERS & SNOWBOARDERS

- Enhanced ski-in/ski-out product and safety around the village through increased separation of vehicles and people
- Improved snow conditions throughout the village by having less vehicular traffic
- Reduced waiting times due to a reduced reliance on the Falls Express Chairlift
- Improved Gondola access to the Village Bowl
- Improved skier circulation in the Village Bowl and access to Cloud Nine through the realignment of the Eagle Chair
- Removal of risks by the creation of a vehicle tunnel under Wombats Ramble at Slalom Plaza

NORDIC SKIERS

- New Nordic skiing hub for training, lessons and events
- Improved access and safety on trails in and around the Resort
- Direct access for Nordic skiers (including beginners) from the Nordic Centre to the Aqueduct Trail (even-grade trail)
- Improved lighting on the Aqueduct Trail
- Enhanced Nordic Centre offering public facilities, cafe, change areas, landscaped outdoor areas and wax room in Windy Corner

MOUNTAIN BIKE RIDERS

- Increased trail access and movement around the village and mountain
- Specialised training/ service centre for extreme mountain biking in the Village Bowl
- Event focus in the Village Bowl
- “Pump Track” (modular beginner training track) and training area for children and beginners in the Village Bowl

BUSHWALKERS

- Improved trail access and signage
- Regional food and wine offerings
- Increased interpretation and information points
- Improved shelter and facilities
- Green season focal point in the Lakeside precinct

ATHLETES & SPORTING TEAMS

- A genuine point of difference altitude training destination comparable (if not superior) to many locations around the world
- State of the art facilities that support the needs of a contemporary athlete
- Contemporary facilities that allow “weekend warriors” or health conscious lifestyleers to utilise the training environment of the elite

HEALTH TOURISM PROVIDERS

- Development of world class facilities that leverage Falls Creek’s unique natural (and built form) points of difference

- Ability to drive inbound tourism over time
- Facilities that support both the professional sector and a wide range of user groups
- Facilities designed to support a wide range of users with ample car parking for conferences and events.

SCHOOL GROUPS

- Simplified arrival experience for School Groups
- Easier access to all activities including skiing, snowboarding, Nordic and snow play
- Community facilities designed for flexible use by School Groups
- Easier logistic for bus arrivals and departures
- Improved Green season offerings to accommodate school camps

REGIONAL TOURISM BODIES & NEIGHBOURING LOCAL SHIRES

- Enhancements to the regional events calendar
- Employment opportunities e.g. Mount Beauty ‘Park and Ride’
- Increased visitation through leveraging off events and activities held in Falls Creek i.e. the Peaks Challenge
- Streamlined access and improved accessibility from Mt Beauty to Falls Creek Village
- Unique alpine experiences including improved year round events and activities, and a higher level of customer service
- Enhanced access to the Alpine National Park

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, PARTNERS & AGENCIES

- Delivery of more sustainable, efficient and accountable resort services
- Best practice in environmental management, infrastructure services and emergency management
- Opportunities for joint-partnership developments such as the Rocky Valley ‘Around the Lake’ Trail (subject to further planning and statutory approvals).

PART ONE

BACKGROUND

THE STRATEGIC SETTING

The Masterplan sits underneath a range of policies that have historically influenced the direction for the village/resort. These include:



STRATEGIC VISION
& MISSION

DISCUSSION
PAPER

STRATEGIC VISION

Within the context of the Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012, the Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board, has defined the shared vision for Falls Creek as:

A vibrant and distinctive village offering Australia’s most memorable alpine experiences

The Vision promotes Falls Creek as;

- an intimate and authentic alpine village community
- a community of invested stakeholders – generally small business operators
- a destination offering experiences focused on repeat visitation
- an escape, an adventure or simply a place to relax.

One of the key objectives and greatest challenges of the Vision and the Masterplan is the need to establish a long-term, sustainable and ‘integrated’ village solution for Falls Creek.

Stemming from the articulation of a strategic vision was;

- the need for the development of a ‘compelling offer’,
- the FCRM Board’s commitment to address the impact of current tourism trends
- to ensure the future vision aligns with relevant regional state and local policies

There are two key documents which have guided the Falls Creek Resort Master Plan 2016;

- Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014 Discussion Paper
- Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014 Discussion Paper Consultation Feedback Summary Report

The Discussion Paper stipulated that the Masterplan must consider:

- The historic precedent of work including previous masterplans, specialised reports and studies carried out in previous years by FCRM.
- Collected data on tourism, visitation, relevant precedents around the world, resort assets and operations.
- Evaluation of external factors including climate considerations, environmental sensitivities, snowfall data and bush-fire risk
- Relevant local, regional, State and Federal policies related to tourism, population development and infrastructure
- Framework documents that provide governance and direction for Falls Creek

The Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014 Discussion Paper;

- Launched a public consultation process seeking a response to several ‘big ideas’ that could be used to guide the future direction of the resort and stimulate additional streams of visitation.
- Intended to inspire debate around issues that impact the future of Falls Creek

Included in the paper were “5 bones of contention issues” to provide a foundation for the discussion about how Falls Creek should look and feel. These issues were:

1. **Activities**
Considering changing tourist demands and challenges to traditional alpine recreation, what activities does Falls Creek need to offer to be a compelling destination? What are the emerging domestic and international recreational trends?

2. **Finding the Front Door (The Arrival Experience and Car Parking)**
The topographic situation of Falls Creek has been a challenge to defining a single entrance to the Village. Additionally, parking and access requirements change seasonally. How might these be configured so visitors have a positive and uncomplicated arrival experience? Can access from car parks to the Village be improved?
3. **Village Access and Circulation**
Circulation around the village has caused safety and orientation issues. What will make getting around the resort easier and safer? The design of the road and walkway network will influence all seasons use and is a critical link in ensuring the Village functions efficiently. Are the road and pedestrian networks adequate? The efficiency and journey to Falls Creek also need to be considered as part of the Falls Creek experience. Are there better options for transport to Falls Creek from key locations?
4. **Infrastructure, Essential Services and Back of House**
Falls Creek must be in a position to provide adequate essential services and ensure that its infrastructure and back-of-house services meet visitor and stakeholder expectations and requirements in an integrated way. What infrastructure does Falls Creek need to ensure it delivers a contemporary and consistently high tourism experience? Do we want to hide back of house services from village guests? Can services be combined?
5. **Community Assets, Public Space, Amenity, Heritage and Character**
The appearance and social functioning of the Village is essential to the success of Falls Creek as a place to visit, live and work. What community facilities are missing in Falls Creek and where should they be located? Opportunity exists to review and develop improvements required to support the community, better integrate the Village with its surrounds and to reinvigorate the look and feel of the Village. How should the built form of the Village look and feel?



CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management (FCRM) consulted with the community and interested groups to obtain feedback on the challenges facing Falls Creek and the possible future direction of the village. Extensive consultation was also undertaken with Falls Creek Ski Lifts (FCSL), Tourism North East, The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), the Falls Creek Strategic Stakeholder Group (SSG), and the Falls Creek Alpine Association (FCAA). All feedback was reviewed and used to prepare the Masterplan for Falls Creek Alpine Village.

A two-phase community consultation approach was designed to enable a broad range of voices to contribute to discussions about the future of Falls Creek Alpine Village. This consultation was designed to hear from the Falls Creek community as well as the wider user groups, partners, visitors and interested parties.

Stage 1: Consultation with the community and stakeholders about the Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014 Discussion Paper extended over a four week period.

Stage 2: Consultation with the community on the Draft Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014 for two weeks prior to the production of the final Masterplan.

These results are captured in Appendix A.

Stage 1

The first stage of consultation was a four-week engagement program capturing the responses to the Discussion Paper, which concluded in September 2014. The outcome of the first stage of community engagement is the Draft Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014.

The purpose of this stage was to understand:

- the key issues facing Falls Creek Village
- how the community and stakeholders would like Falls Creek Village to look and feel in the future.

A summary of key quotes, paraphrasing of feedback and ‘ideas’ has been included as an Appendix to this report. It has been used to inform initiatives presented in the Falls Creek Resort Master Plan 2016.

Below are the key messages drawn from all the engagement activities:

The Falls Creek Resort Master Plan 2016 should preserve;

- the current market of Falls Creek and its core offerings - snow related activities
- the existing assets and unique offerings of Falls Creek such as the unique ski-in/ski-out product by having snow covered roads throughout the village for the entire snow season

The Falls Creek Resort Master Plan 2016 should enhance;

- the public space and day-to-date amenity in the Village including renewing the village heart, improving the sense of arrival and the physical layout of the village
- Falls Creek by building a multi-purpose facility that operates as a flexible space that can be used throughout the year by a range of stakeholders, community members and visitors.
- the transport facilities and the accommodation transfer services during the white season
- the Village appearance in the green season by having businesses open during the summer months and better summer offerings and programming of activities
- visitation to Falls Creek by creating a seamless and integrated customer experience both on and off the mountain
- the Village by addressing housing affordability for residents and workers
- Falls Creek by increasing the permanent residential population

The Falls Creek Resort Master Plan 2016 should remove;

- the high costs associated with visiting the resort
- the high costs associated with doing business within the village

Further to this (and as stated in the 2013 Strategic Management Plan), existing accommodation should be optimised, prior to further expansion in commercial bed numbers in line with the local business community expectations.

Please refer to Appendix A for further information regarding Stage 1 and 2 Consultation feedback.

LOCATION, SETTING & EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Approximately 350km from Melbourne (4.5 to 6 hrs, seasonally dependent) and 130km from Albury / Wodonga Falls Creek is both a day trip destination and a multi-day destination for guests from metropolitan Melbourne and interstate.
- Sydney to Falls Creek via Albury Airport and coach transfer is approximately 3 hrs.
- Falls Creek and the surrounding Alpine National Park is set on the edge of Victoria's Bogong High Plains, at altitude ranging from 1,210 to 1,850 metres.
- The Resort is accessible year-round from Mt Beauty via the Bogong High Plains Rd, and in Summer via Omeo and Bairnsdale. The current entry point is located at Howmans Gap approximately 4kms from Falls Creek Village.
- The Village has approximately 5,100 available beds of which approximately 4,100 are available for visitors and the balance permanent residential and staff accommodation.
- The total resort area is approximately 1,500 hectares with 450 hectares of developed skiable terrain. Uniquely Falls Creek and the surrounding National Park features approximately 65km of "Roman Style" aqueducts and the resort boundary includes the banks of the Rocky Valley Lake – the highest substantial body of water at altitude in Australia (at approximately 1,700 metres above sea level).
- Mt McKay – now the highest public point a vehicle can drive in Australia (1,850 metres above sea level) is the highest peak in the resort.

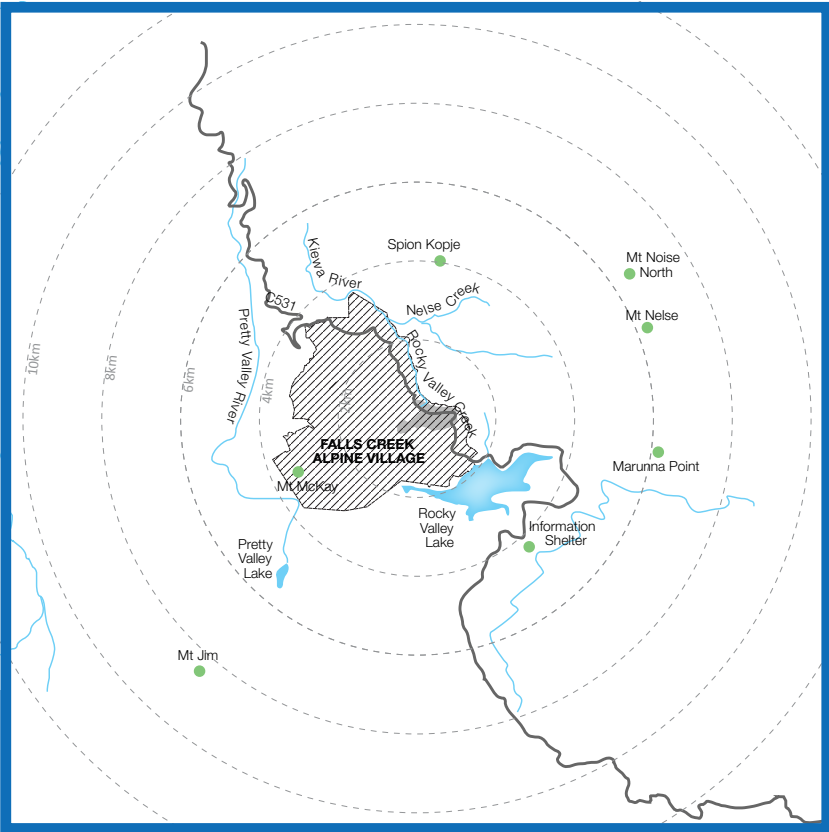


FIG 04. FALLS CREEK RESORT AREA

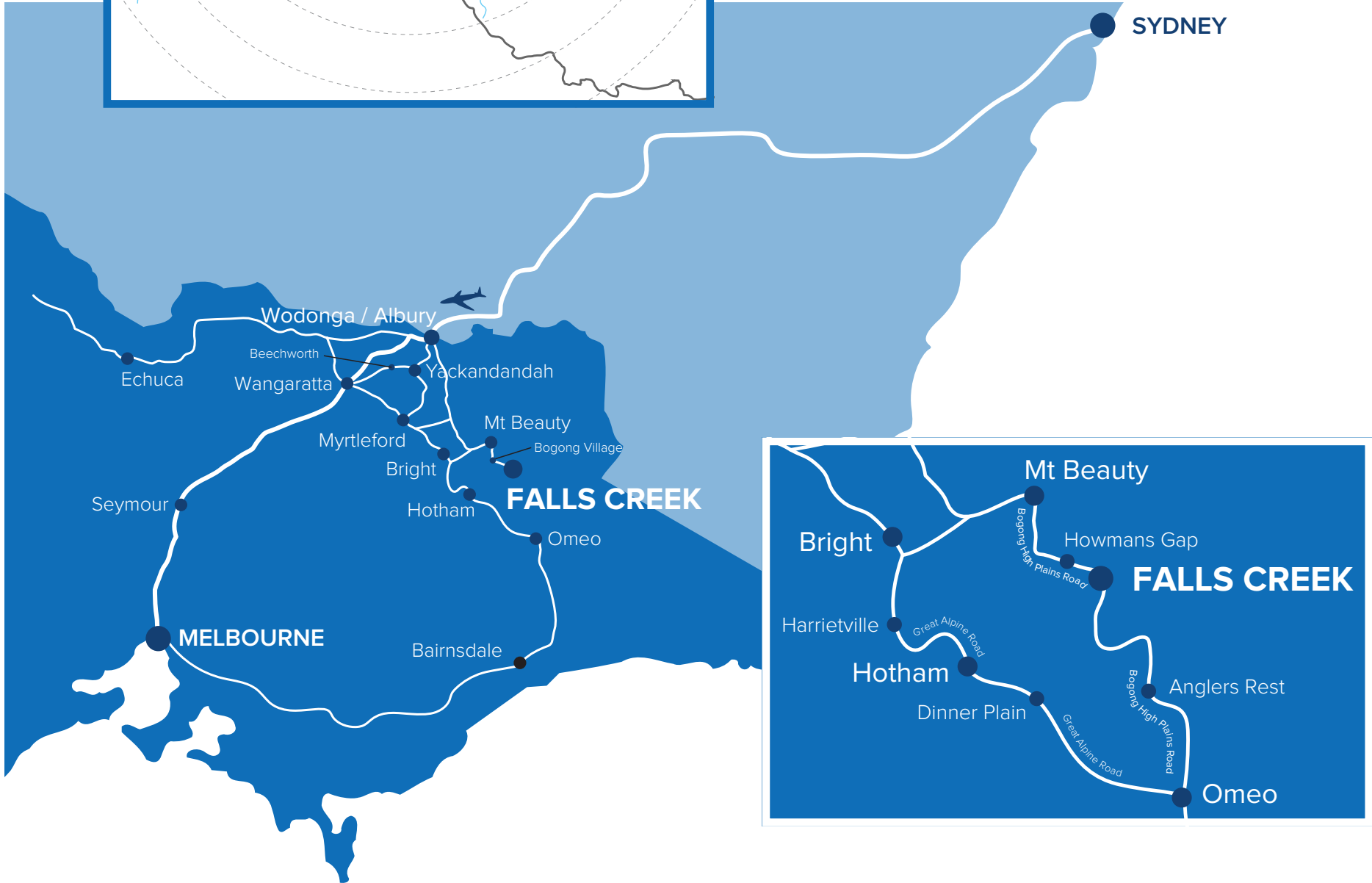


FIG 05. CONTEXT PLAN

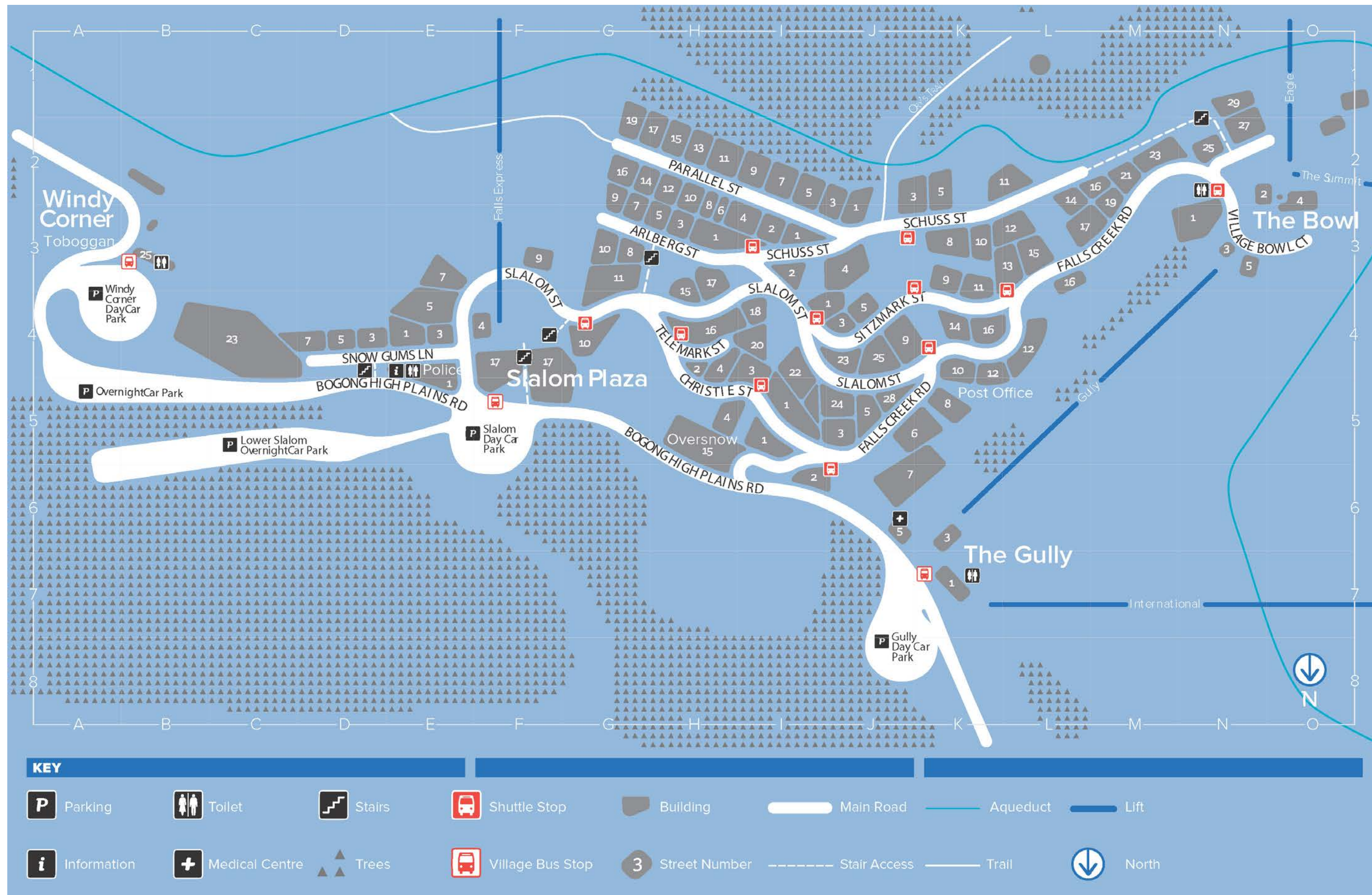


FIG 06. EXISTING CONDITIONS - VILLAGE PLAN



FIG 07. EXISTING CONDITIONS - VILLAGE AERIAL (2014)

PART TWO **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

FALLS CREEK STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN PRINCIPLES

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- Falls Creek should be about the total visitor experience, not just snow based activity
- Community is the driver of change and long term civic and commercial sustainability. A robust community can adapt to change and support commercial and leisure activities
- Regional connections and networks of places and activities are potentially an important feature of the visitor experience

SITE PLANNING CONCEPTS

- Develop a specific land use and civic focus for precincts within the Falls Creek Village. Each precinct will provide specialist leisure uses and support functions that best suit the nature of each physical setting and related visitors. Precincts will complement each other, not compete for similar recreation or commercial uses. Precincts will also act as ‘hubs’ that generate visitor movement and different activities within the village.
- New site planning elements will help to establish a neighbourhood structure within the Village
- New land uses and facilities will support both winter and summer markets and complement existing operations
- Site planning and design will be used to establish a unique visual identity for the Village
- The precinct based site planning framework will provide a range of adaptable places and facilities that serve many different needs throughout the day/night. Places within the village will be capable of a range of adaptive uses to meet the needs of individuals and the special needs of events and temporary uses
- A more visually engaging arrival experience that is shaped by the structure of the Village rather than by signage and ‘add on’ features
- Use the form of the Village to inform location rather than relying upon signage
- Adopt a ‘highest and best use’ principle for making decisions on preferred land uses within critical Village locations. Land use decisions will be evaluated against the principle of sustainable design (environmental, social & economic), by the degree to which the proposed development matches the Masterplan objectives for key locations, and the degree to which the proposal results in beneficial infrastructure development or provides a catalyst to other beneficial development.

- Site planning decisions, as well as being underpinned by sound ecologically sustainable principles identified in the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme, should adhere to the Aboriginal Heritage Act (2006) and be integrated with the Falls Creek Community Bushfire Emergency Management Plan (2014)
- Use the interface between indoor and outdoor to create new use areas that have both summer and winter functions
- Value communal activity, places that support adaptive or secondary uses
- Value visual amenity and scenic quality by minimising building and infrastructure clutter

COMMERCIAL LAND-USE CONCEPTS

- Increased commercial diversity – different offers for different markets + more visitor choice in upgraded key activity settings
- Leverage off the Resort’s key points of difference
- More seasonal uses that use the climate and physical aspects of the alpine setting
- Build flexibility into the Club Lodge ownership structure to encourage higher occupancy rates, product range and affordability in the non-peak periods
- Create more ‘shared’ locations which provide both commercial and social opportunities
- Develop more links to established regional products, tourism and events networks
- Develop opportunities to become a regional ‘exemplar’ for food, wine and craft
- Develop a new summer lake edge (water based activities) and trail activities focal point
- Develop the Nordic Bowl as a focal point for summer events and sports training activities

ACTIVITY SYSTEMS

- Develop more events, temporary uses and cultural based uses
- Develop more activities for children and non-skiers
- Develop initiatives that support a growth in both winter and summer activity
- Develop activities that relate specifically to the Alpine setting and environment
- Design for a range of activities that appeal to a wide market and demographic and provide “Access and Equity”

TRANSPORT PLANNING CONCEPTS

- Maximise the separation of people and vehicles
- Maximise pedestrian connectivity and minimise vehicle use within the Village
- Make infrastructure fit land use, not land uses fitting around infrastructure
- Develop an integrated transport system that includes new transport modes, including walking and public transport options, to fit visitor needs and reduce pressure on oversnow transport system
- Develop an integrated ticketing / integrated transport functions
- Develop a more legible parking system with specific visitor parking destinations
- Develop management measures to deal with some vehicle conflicts caused by servicing including time restrictions and service zones
- Develop new road connections, including loop road connections that allow the centre of the site to take on a greater pedestrian and civic focus
- Develop new grade separation features to allow the separation of service vehicle access and major skier movements

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS CONCEPTS

- Develop Falls Creek with a focus on pedestrian safety and amenity
- Separation of vehicles & pedestrians and pedestrian priority areas
- Develop more pedestrian meeting places & special activity areas
- Develop snow free pedestrian connections in key locations, more shared use spaces and pedestrian priority areas
- Create barrier free movement across the site (minimal road crossings)
- Create easy day and night pedestrian movement
- Develop lighting for safety and pedestrian orientation

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- Falls Creek Village and its wider setting must demonstrate the highest standards of environmental management leveraging FCRM’s 2011 Biodiversity Management Strategy
- No development in environmentally sensitive areas
- Development of Site Plans in precinct locations will not impact on areas of environmental significance or create fragmentation of key habitats within or adjacent to the Village
- Utilise “brown” and under utilised sites for infill development
- Utilise sustainability principles in design for resource conservation and enhanced environmental outcomes

- Rehabilitate and enhance degraded areas to improve the amenity of the village in the green season

COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Future development initiatives should provide community benefit and enhance the building of a permanent population
- Create opportunities for affordable seasonal and permanent accommodation within the Village
- Build upon the school as a nucleus for community activity
- Create a multi-purpose space to support the community
- Establish a recognised community heart for Falls Creek Village

BUILT FORM

- Maintain Village scale, character and authenticity
- Improve built-form character through the implementation of built-form and urban design guidelines for all building renewal and new development projects
- Encourage active ground level building frontages to public spaces

INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

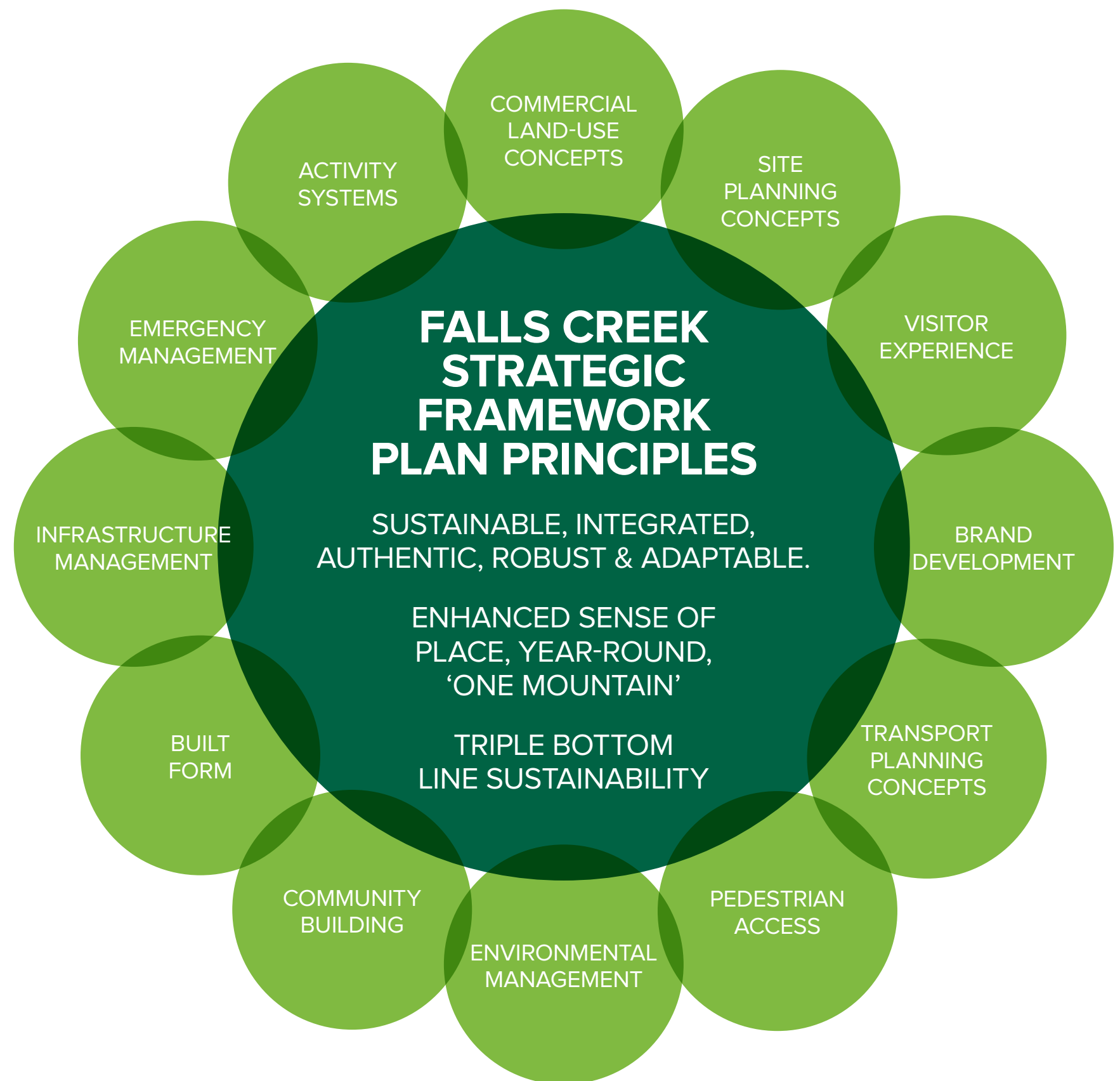
- Infrastructure services must meet contemporary design standards and be rationalised to minimize their impact on amenity and safety.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- Falls Creek Village and the wider Alpine National Park must conform to regulation and provide emergency management systems to meet the needs of the local community and visitors in all seasons

BRAND DEVELOPMENT

- Falls Creek must be represented by a unified Brand which recognises the relationship between all elements that make the 'Place' – the special qualities of the environment, the Village and the people who each contribute to the character of Falls Creek
- The experience and the brand should reflect the "One mountain" philosophy of a unified mountain with a shared purpose and direction for Falls Creek.



THE MASTERPLAN APPROACH

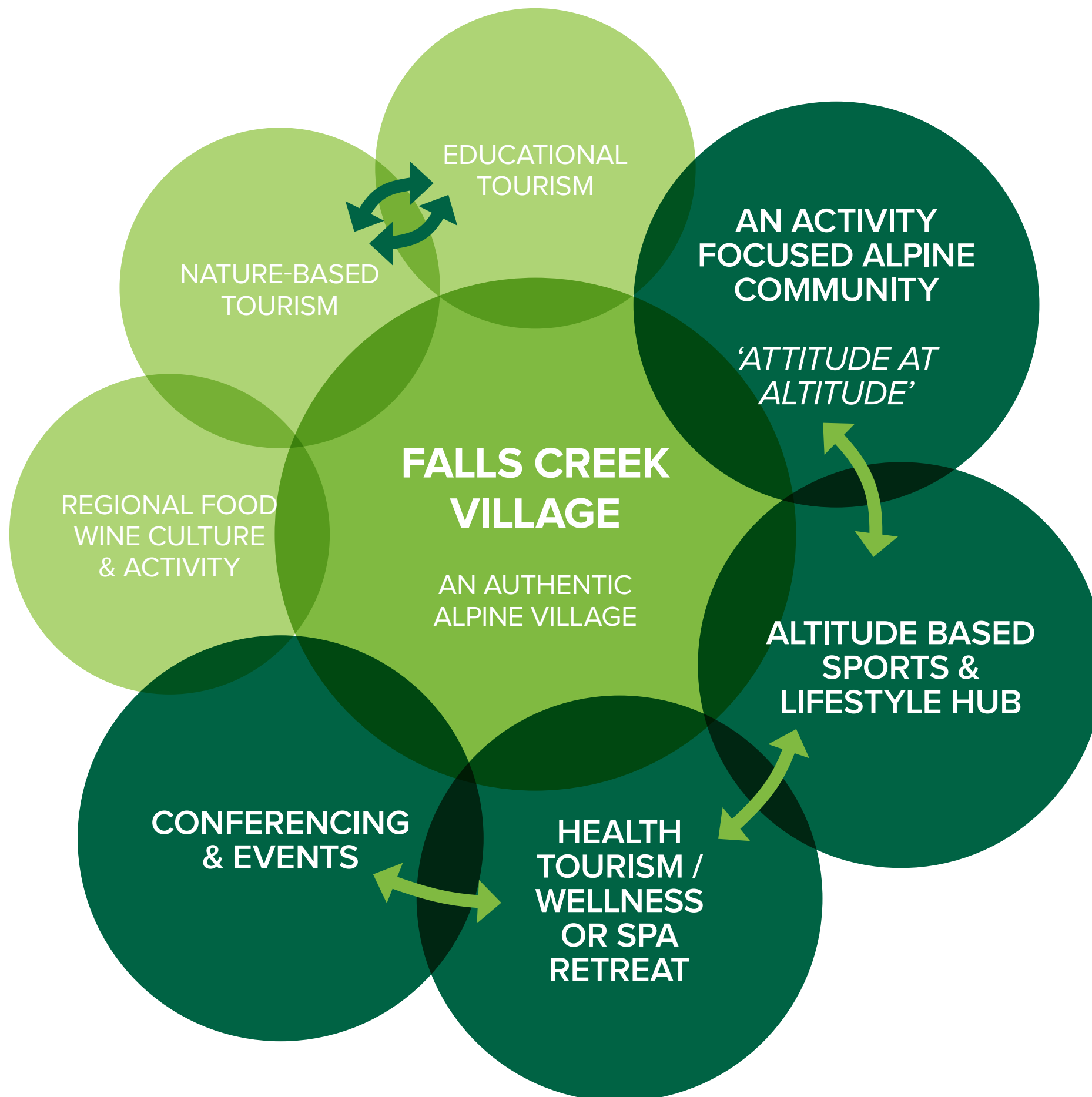
The Masterplan approach is guided by the following:

- The key principles outlined in the Victorian Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012. This was further refined by a Masterplan framework document developed through the Alpine Resorts Coordinating Council in 2013
- Meet the requirements addressed in the Project Brief from FCRM, Board direction and Discussion Paper
- Address the feedback provided by stakeholders during the consultation process
- Shape the site plan and design approach to meet current needs and contemporary urban design standards rather than historical development patterns
- The Masterplan must engage the local Falls Creek community as well as commercial stakeholders and encourage their participation and ‘buy in’ to the Masterplan approach.
- The community will drive long term change at Falls Creek
- The Masterplan must seamlessly integrate past and future development

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTERPLAN

Key requirements:

- The Masterplan will enhance and capitalise on the key points of difference which are represented within the Falls Creek Village and the broader Alpine National Park setting, including:
 - an authentic compact village
 - utilisation of the Rocky Valley Lake Precinct
 - access to a high quality water supply that can be directed to a range of uses
 - diversity of terrain and experience and
 - 65km of at-grade and accessible Aqueduct trail system
- The Masterplan should result in the development of a special place which generates a unique visitor experience and engages people from their first point of contact. The place should also encourage repeat visitation
- The Masterplan concept must be based on authentic, place specific qualities which are unique to Falls Creek, its alpine setting and the wider region
- The Masterplan must identify the necessary catalysts for the growth of a vibrant “year-round” village, with a permanent population that can support and provide an expanded range of services, facilities and experiences.
- The Masterplan must establish a compelling offer that underpins year-round visitation and return visitation
- Establish new streams of visitation through the development of a compelling offer. The compelling offer will create new attractions whilst leveraging existing Resort activities and assets.
- Identify initiatives that lead to a streamlined arrival experience and clearer definition and legibility of the Falls Creek Village
- Improve the overall amenity of the Village; the quality of open space, streetscapes, plazas, built form excellence and ease of pedestrian movement
- Protect and improve the quality of native vegetation and ecological habitats throughout the village and links to surrounding natural areas.
- Provide for efficiencies in access, circulation and logistics systems, to improve village safety, the visitor experience and stakeholder operations, particularly during the winter season
- The Masterplan must define and provide further improvement to the ski-in/ski-out access model through design and management measures that improve safety and minimise skier and vehicle interaction
- Generate a clear direction and confidence, that guides the long-term sustainability and community building of the Falls Creek Village
- The Masterplan must build upon relationships and linkages with Mount Beauty and other local communities
- The Masterplan must build on existing site characteristics and land uses through the development of a ‘precinct’ based land use and development model. This model will create a diverse range of commercial and leisure settings within the village that provide a range of different commercial opportunities – different places to go and different visitor experiences. Precincts will complement each other and add to the attraction of the place. New business will be attracted to individual precincts on the basis of the particular nature of the setting, leisure activities and the related market. Precincts will not directly compete for the same market.



THE BIG IDEAS

INTEGRATION

The Falls Creek 'Big Idea' is based around an authentic alpine village with integrated offerings. The 'Big Ideas' complement the Winter season and snow-related activities as the core drivers of Falls Creek.

Falls Creek Village will develop as a unique place that supports year round activities. These activities and facilities will be integral to the Falls Creek community and include a range of nature based leisure activities, events, and specialist commercial uses that are linked to the unique environmental attributes of the Falls Creek landscape.

The 'Big Ideas' complement the Winter season and snow-related activities as the core drivers of Falls Creek.

New activities such as conferencing, health tourism based services and altitude based training facilities will fit seamlessly into the functions of the Falls Creek Village. They will be used in different modes across all seasons by both visitors and Falls Creek residents.

Other development themes such as regional food, wine, nature based tourism activities and education and training related activities and events will fit in and around the major commercial offers and support the concept that Falls Creek is a place that supports a wide range of interests, activities and commercial opportunities.

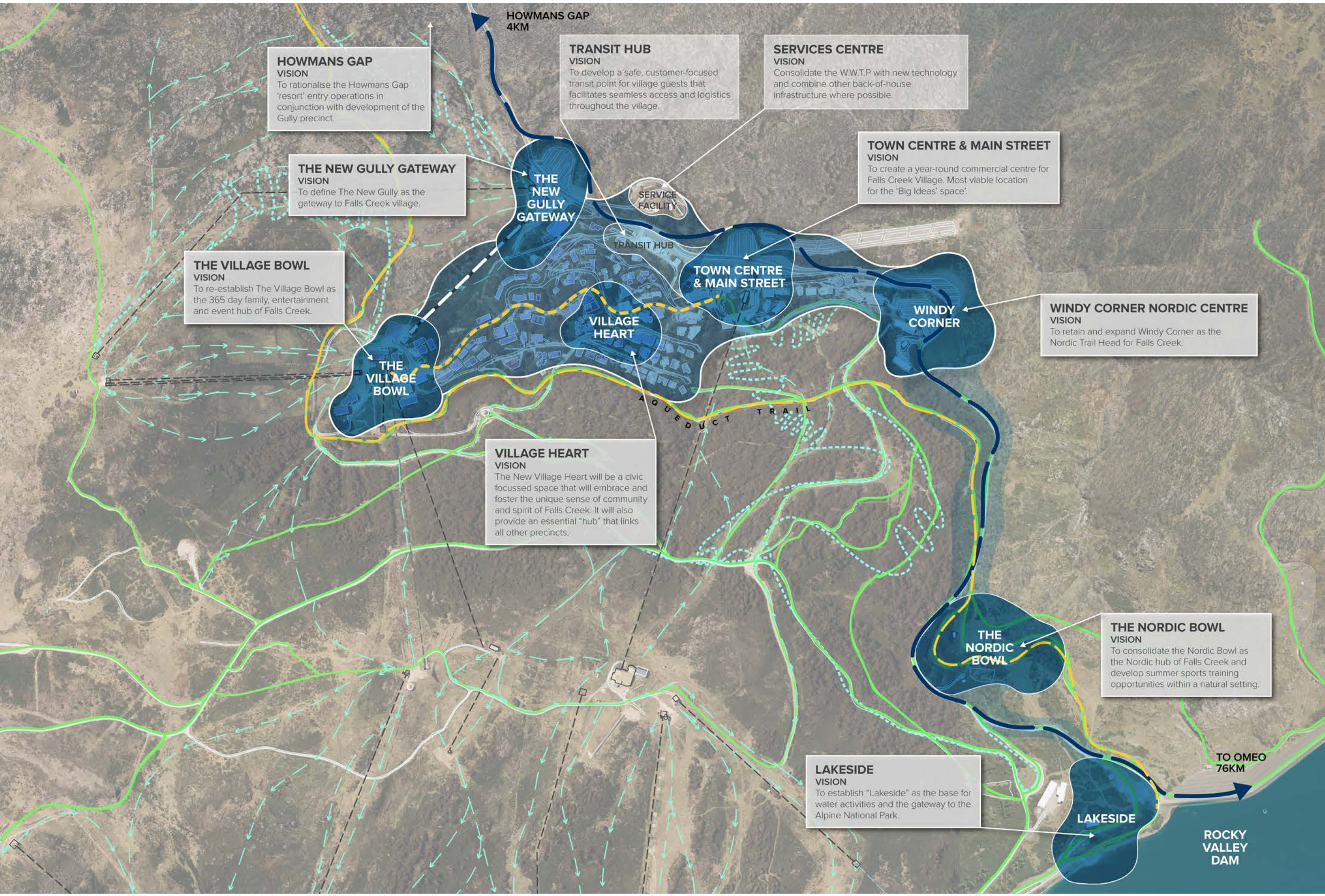


FIG 08. FALLS CREEK VILLAGE PRECINCT PLAN

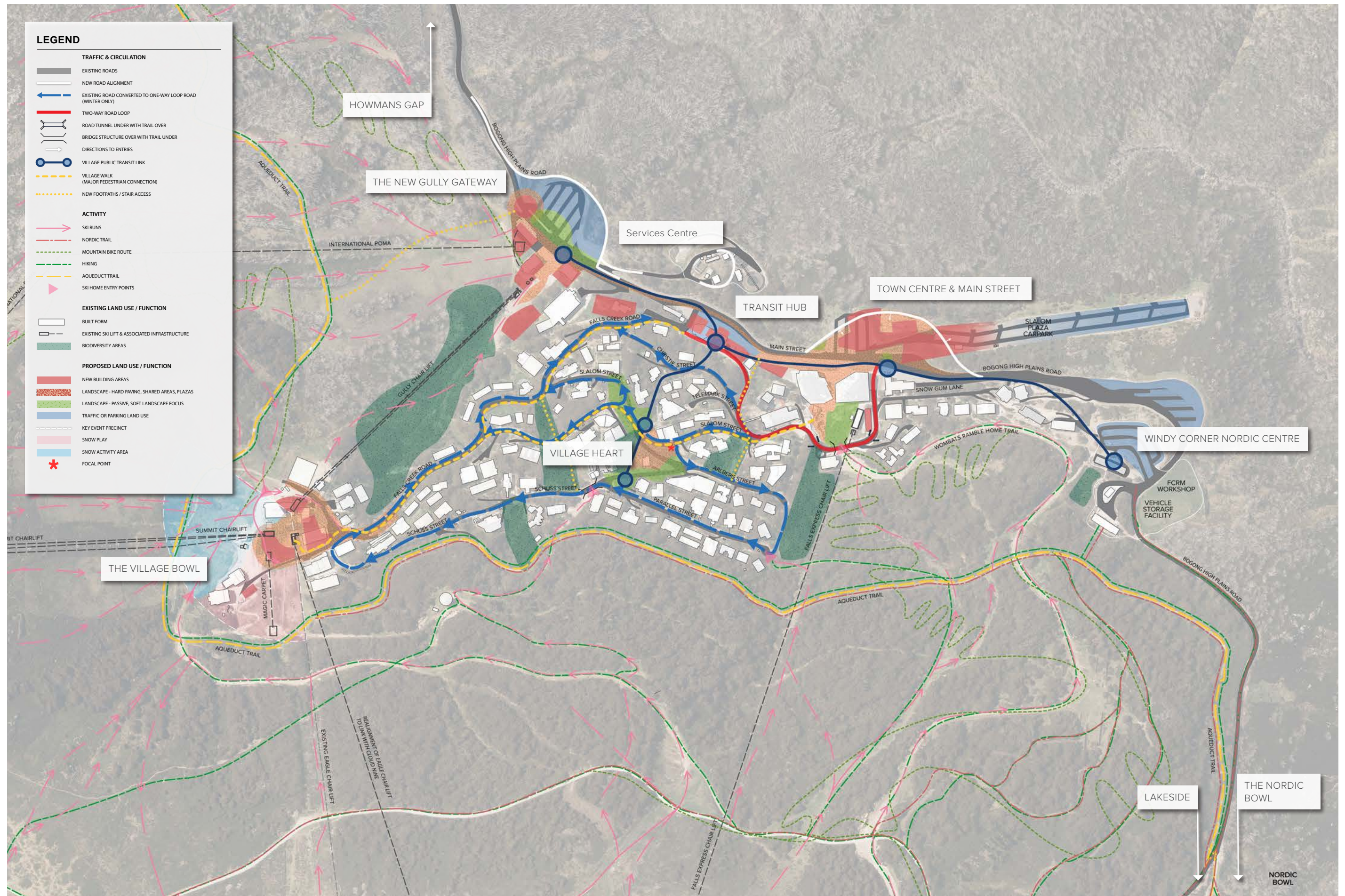


FIG 09. FALLS CREEK VILLAGE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLAN

PART THREE **MASTERPLAN**

FALLS CREEK VILLAGE MASTERPLAN

Key Features include;

- **Entry Experience**
An improved entry experience, through a redefined Gully Gateway to Falls Creek, incorporating day facilities and Gondola conversion of the Gully Chairlift
- **Village Transfer**
A redeveloped Transit Hub, with improved vehicle entry/egress, separation of passenger and freight services and the opportunity for a 'funicular-style' public transit with Village connections, reducing reliance upon the oversnow and shuttle services
- **Integration of Access & Movement**
A designated one-way winter loop road to improve oversnow transport movement through the village and improve freight logistics, pedestrian and skier safety and public space
- A new snow-free pedestrian spine between the Town Centre and Village Bowl, to improve pedestrian access and circulation around the Falls Creek Village
- **Renewed Village Bowl**
With a family, event, entertainment and snow-play activities focus 365 days a year plan and accommodation redevelopment opportunities
- **A Defined Town Centre**
A new Town Centre, public plaza and Main Street with opportunities for co-located health tourism/wellness and altitude training facilities, an indoor multi-purpose community space, commercial activities and under-cover car parking
- **Community-focused Village Heart**
With pedestrian friendly civic spaces and landscape features with an emphasis on communal and village- based activities community space, winter market, civic feature, fire pit etc.
- **Nordic Bowl**
An enhanced Nordic Bowl offering world class Nordic facilities, event space and summer altitude training opportunities
- **Lakeside**
A new lake edge setting to support summer trail and water-based activities, along with special events and activities hosted by Falls Creek
- **Windy Corner Nordic Centre**
A reconfigured Windy Corner setting allowing day parking, Nordic skiing activities and new rationalised workshop facilities
- **Services Centre**
A new consolidated Services Centre including waste, equipment and materials and service- related parking

LEGEND

PEDESTRIAN SPINE
WITH VEHICLE & PEDESTRIAN
SEPARATION (HEATED)

PEDESTRIAN STAIRS/WALKWAYS

PUBLIC TRANSIT

GREEN SPACE
SOFT LANDSCAPE AREAS

PLAZA, CONCOURSE
HARD PAVED AREAS
WITH PUBLIC REALM AND
PEDESTRIAN FOCUS

AFFORDABLE
ACCOMMODATION

THE NEW GULLY GATEWAY

- Falls Creek arrival and day parking orientation point
- Day Centre information, interpretation & museum
- Look-out
- Affordable accommodation
- School group arrival and orientation
- Public Transit stop

THE VILLAGE BOWL

- Pub, food & entertainment
- All-season event staging
- Family play, shelter & toilets
- Snow play hub, playground & skate park
- Extreme mountain biking centre
- Site-related staff & general accommodation
- Integrated retail
- Climbing wall

FIG 10. FALLS CREEK VILLAGE MASTERPLAN



SERVICES CENTRE

- Consolidation of Waste Water Treatment Plant (W.W.T.P)
- House waste transfer services
- Co-location of infrastructure and back-of-house services
- New internal loop road

TRANSIT HUB

- Accommodation Transfer Services
- Public Transit Station
- Coach arrivals & departures
- Temporary parking and drop-off
- Guest lounge
- Ticketing
- Freight distribution
- Community petrol station

TOWN CENTRE & MAIN STREET

- Key civic public plaza
- Green space & children's play
- Year-round retail
- Gateway for overnight visitors
- Undercover car parking
- Information Centre
- Multi-purpose facility with opportunities for Conference & Functions
- Possible Health Tourism/ Spa facility
- Altitude Sports Hotel
- Emergency Services Centre & Heliport

WINDY CORNER NORDIC CENTRE

- Nordic Trail Head & information
- Parking for Nordic & day skiers
- Improved shelter & facilities
- Back country information / registration hub

LAKESIDE

- Green season leisure activities including beach-side recreation
- A summer kiosk and equipment hire
- Summer arrival and orientation point
- Rehabilitation & re-vegetation
- Shelter & BBQ facilities
- Gateway marker (from Omeo approach)

VILLAGE HEART

- Snow free pedestrian spine
- Primary School
- Library and Community Centre
- Traffic free village plaza
- Future public transport and walking hub
- Visual marker e.g. Clock tower
- High quality urban design, feature landscape, lighting, public art and street furniture
- Secondary retail

THE NORDIC BOWL

- Cross-country events & training
- Altitude training
- Improved shelter & facilities
- Establish synthetic grass flat summer training ground



THE 'NEW' GULLY GATEWAY

PRECINCT VISION STATEMENT

To define the New Gully as the gateway to Falls Creek Village.

To establish an entry point that provides:

- Falls Creek arrival and orientation
- Day parking/ school group parking
- Day Centre information & interpretation & museum
- Gondola access to the Village Bowl
- Look-out, views & walks starting point
- Possible affordable accommodation
- Toilets / showers
- Ticketing
- Absorb the necessary entry functions of Howmans Gap in the long term
- School and group arrivals & orientation

ACTIVITIES

WHITE

Existing to be enhanced

- Alpine skiing access
- Day skier and snow play access to Village Bowl

New Opportunities

- Tourism and regional and site interpretation
- Snow play access point

GREEN

Existing to be developed

- Views and Walks starting point
- Mountain Biking access point

New Opportunities

- Tourism, regional and site interpretation

PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

- Day Centre including Orientation, Information, Interpretation & Museum facilities
- Gully Chairlift upgrade to a covered gondola model
- Look-out and elevated walkway structure
- Affordable accommodation
- Day parking
- Toilets
- Public 'green' space
- Count-down signage elevation and distance markers on approach to Falls Creek
- Future Public Transit stop



FIG 11. THE 'NEW' GULLY GATEWAY SKETCH



FIG 12. THE 'NEW' GULLY GATEWAY PRECINCT

THE VILLAGE BOWL

PRECINCT VISION STATEMENT

To re-establish the Village Bowl as the 365 day family, entertainment and event hub of Falls Creek.

To undertake redevelopment that accommodates;

- Pub, food & entertainment
- Integrated retail
- All-season event staging
- Accommodation
- Family play, shelter & toilets
- Snow play hub of Falls Creek
- Secondary 'Beginners' Ski-School (inclement weather)
- Advanced skier access
- Mountain biking (Extreme MTB Centre)
- Affordable worker housing
- Climbing wall

ACTIVITIES

WHITE

Existing to be developed

- Alpine skiing access
- Snow play and tobogganing

New Opportunities

- Family focused entertainment activities
- Sculpture Walk
- Rock Climbing
- Winter school expansion in conjunction with Alpine Academy and Race Club

GREEN

Existing to be developed

- Active Recreation 'skate park'
- Mountain biking

New Opportunities

- Family focused entertainment activities
- Adventure Playground
- Events staging
- Volleyball
- Pump track
- Sculpture Walk

PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

- Event staging facilities
- Redeveloped accommodation
- Adventure playground
- Upgrades to public shelter and public toilets
- Extension and upgrade to the Gully Chairlift
- Skate plaza
- Start for illuminated Aqueduct Trail to Nordic Bowl
- Pipe and cover Aqueduct Trail for improved safety and improved access to the Nordic Bowl

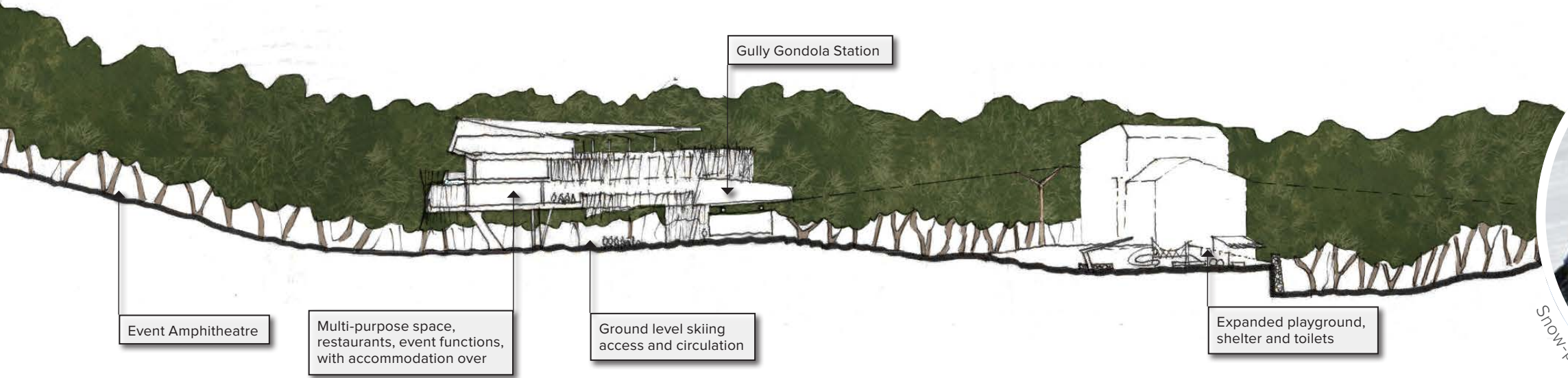


FIG 13. THE VILLAGE BOWL SECTION



FIG 14. THE VILLAGE BOWL PRECINCT

VILLAGE HEART

PRECINCT VISION STATEMENT

The New Village Heart will be a civic focused space that will embrace and foster the unique sense of community and spirit at Falls Creek.

It will evolve over time to consolidate and include:

- Snow free pedestrian spine
- Summer School
- Library and Community Centre with information, games, multi-media, communication services
- Traffic free village plaza
- Future public transport and walking hub
- Visual marker e.g. clock tower
- High quality urban design, feature landscape, lighting, public art and street furniture
- Secondary retail
- Meeting & gathering place
- Pedestrian friendly streets
- “Third Place” an alternative activity centre to “pub/bars”
- Key node to access village restaurants

ACTIVITIES

WHITE

Existing to be developed

- Community focus
- Street party / Night market
- “The Spoke”

New Opportunities

- Expansion of education facilities
- Indoor Yoga/ Ping-Pong/ Games in multifunctional space
- Community gathering, rest, meeting people

GREEN

New Opportunities

- Walking and passive recreation
- Orientation
- Expansion of education facilities
- Indoor Yoga/ Ping-Pong/ Games in multifunctional space
- Community gathering, rest, meeting people

PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

- Multi-functional community space
- Split level pedestrian plaza areas
- Fire pit and public seating
- Snow free pedestrian link connecting the Village Bowl and Slalom Plaza
- Future Public Transit stop



Pedestrian focused, community gathering space

Multi-functional community centre

Fire pit

Split level public space

FIG 15. VILLAGE HEART SKETCH



FIG 16. VILLAGE HEART PRECINCT

TOWN CENTRE & MAIN STREET

PRECINCT VISION STATEMENT

To create a year-round commercial centre for Falls Creek Village.

It will provide a place that will include

- Visual marker & “Town Centre”
- Key civic public plaza
- Green space & children’s play
- Year-round retail
- Gateway for overnight visitors
- Undercover car parking & public transport pick up
- Expanded Slalom Plaza and Main St
- Information Centre
- Multi-purpose facility opportunities for conference, cinema and community use
- Health tourism centre – spa retreat, gym
- Altitude Training Facility
- Chapel
- Exhibition space
- Key Viewing nodes
- Key regional restaurant food & wine
- Streamlined access to Transit hub & ticketing and accommodation touch-point
- Skier access to Cloud Nine & beginner & intermediate skiing
- Village administration
- Medical centre/pharmacy
- Net gain in car parking
- New accommodation over multi-deck car park

ACTIVITIES

WHITE

Existing to be enhanced

- Community gathering
- Specialty industry events & launches
- Weddings and functions
- Gym
- Spa/Sauna
- Cinema

New Opportunities

- Children’s play

GREEN

Existing to be developed

- Gym
- Events, Weddings and functions
- Conferences

New Opportunities

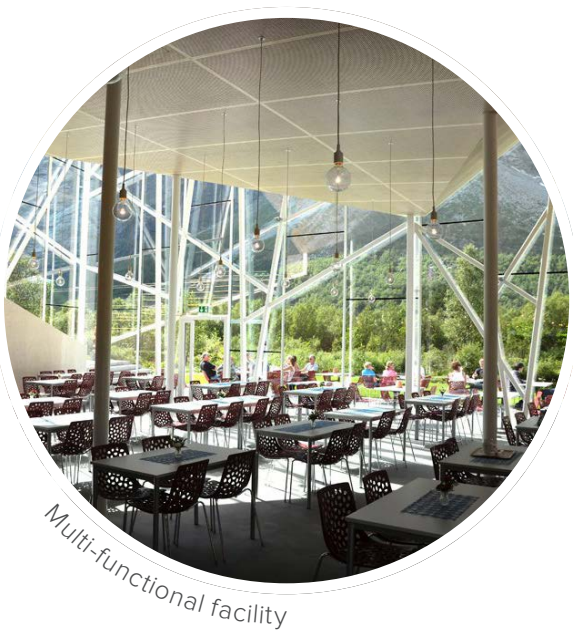
- Motorbike & touring vehicle ‘pit stop’
- Road Cycling event HQ
- Markets & Regional Festival ancillary events
- Health tourism
- Altitude Training
- Conferences
- Pop-up retail

PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

- Expanded public plaza and main street
- Year-round retail
- Undercover car parking
- Information Centre
- Multi-purpose facility opportunities for conference, functions, cinema and community use
- Health Tourism Centre – wellness / treatment focused
- Chapel
- Altitude Training Facility
- Exhibition Space
- Children’s playground
- Key regional restaurant food & wine
- Future Public Transit stop
- Medical Centre and Heliport relocation



Commercial centre and main street



Multi-functional facility



Potential health tourism or Altitude Training Facility



Covered walkway linking Transit Hub

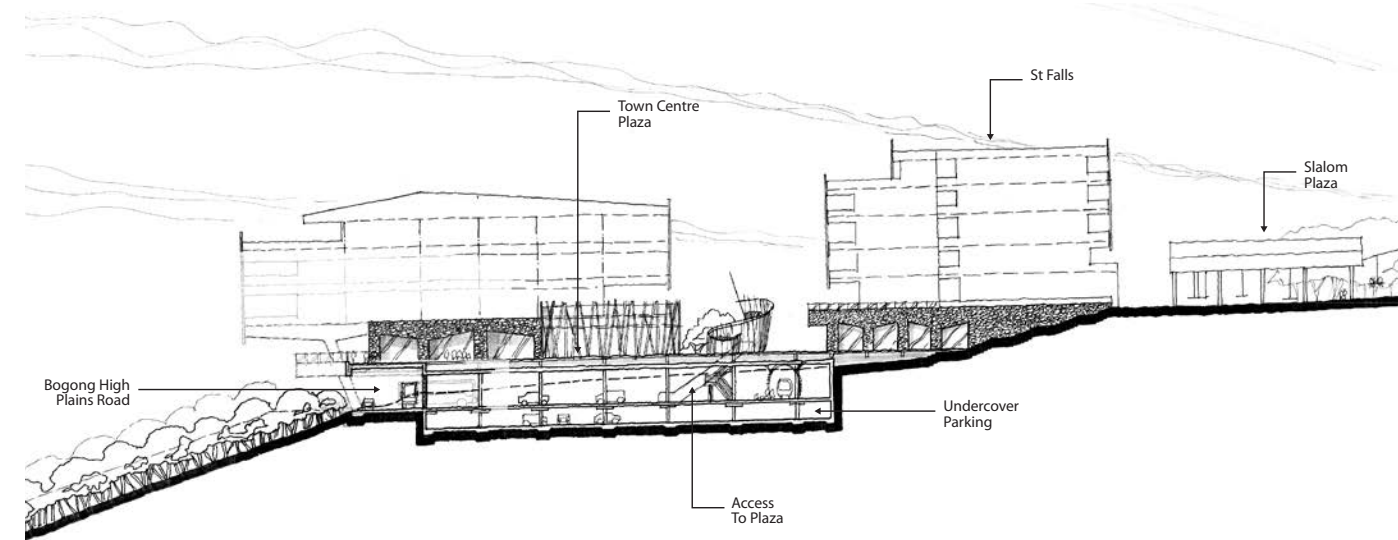


FIG 17. TOWN CENTRE SECTION

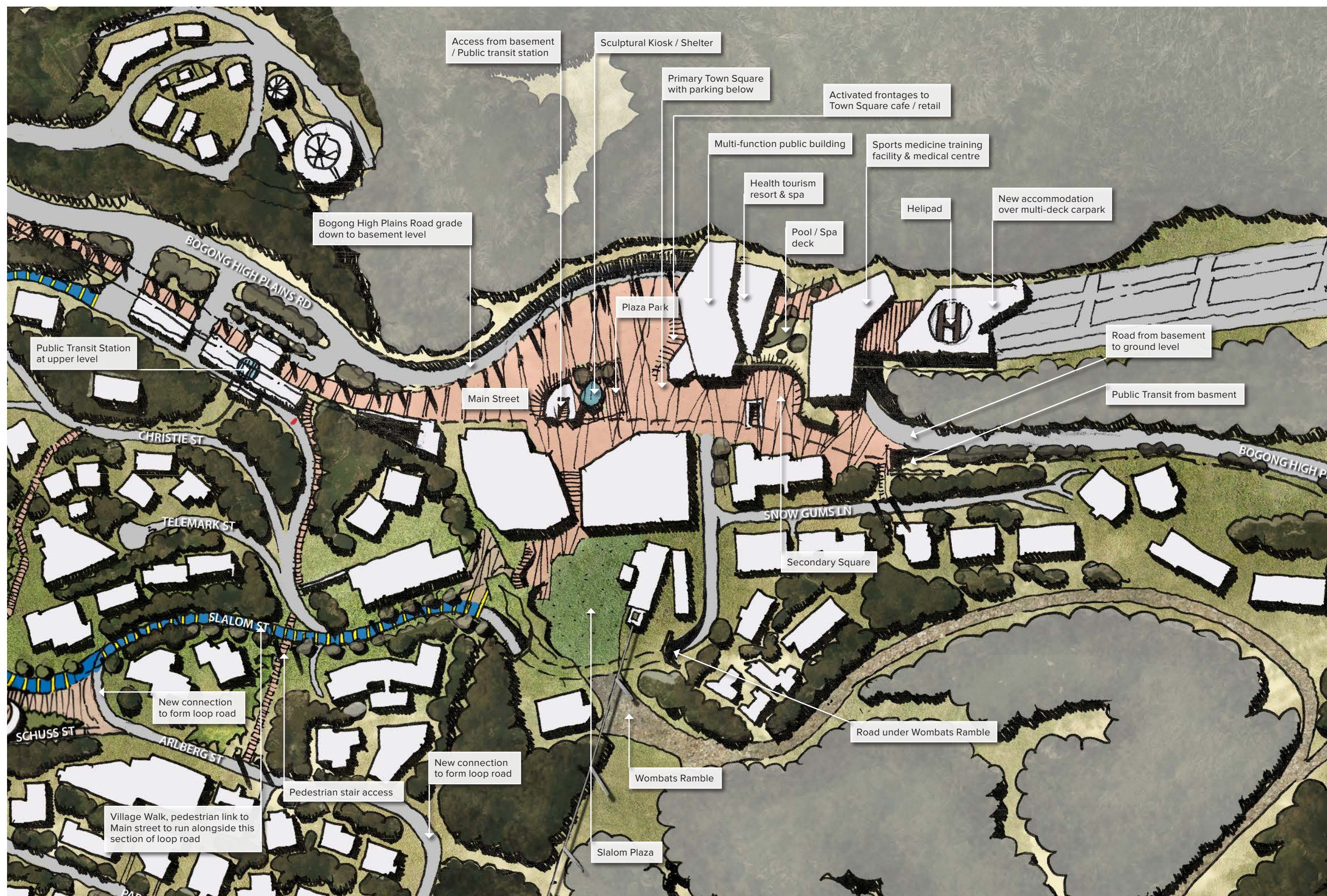


FIG 18. TOWN CENTRE & MAIN STREET PRECINCT

TRANSIT HUB

VISION STATEMENT

To develop a safe, customer-focused transit point for village guests that facilitates seamless access and logistics throughout the village.

PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

The redeveloped Transit Hub will incorporate;

- Accommodation Transfer Services
- Provision for future Public Transit station*
- Coach arrivals & departures
- Temporary parking and drop-off
- Guest lounge
- Ticketing
- Freight distribution
- Community petrol station

The proposed form of public transit will be an environmentally friendly, driver-less, tracked rail system, with pre-programmed card entry for Resort visitors.

It would be similar to a gondola pod and would be capable of transporting visitors and their luggage to several points within the Village.

It would allow visitors to move between the Transit Hub and the Village without relying upon over-snow or shuttle services.

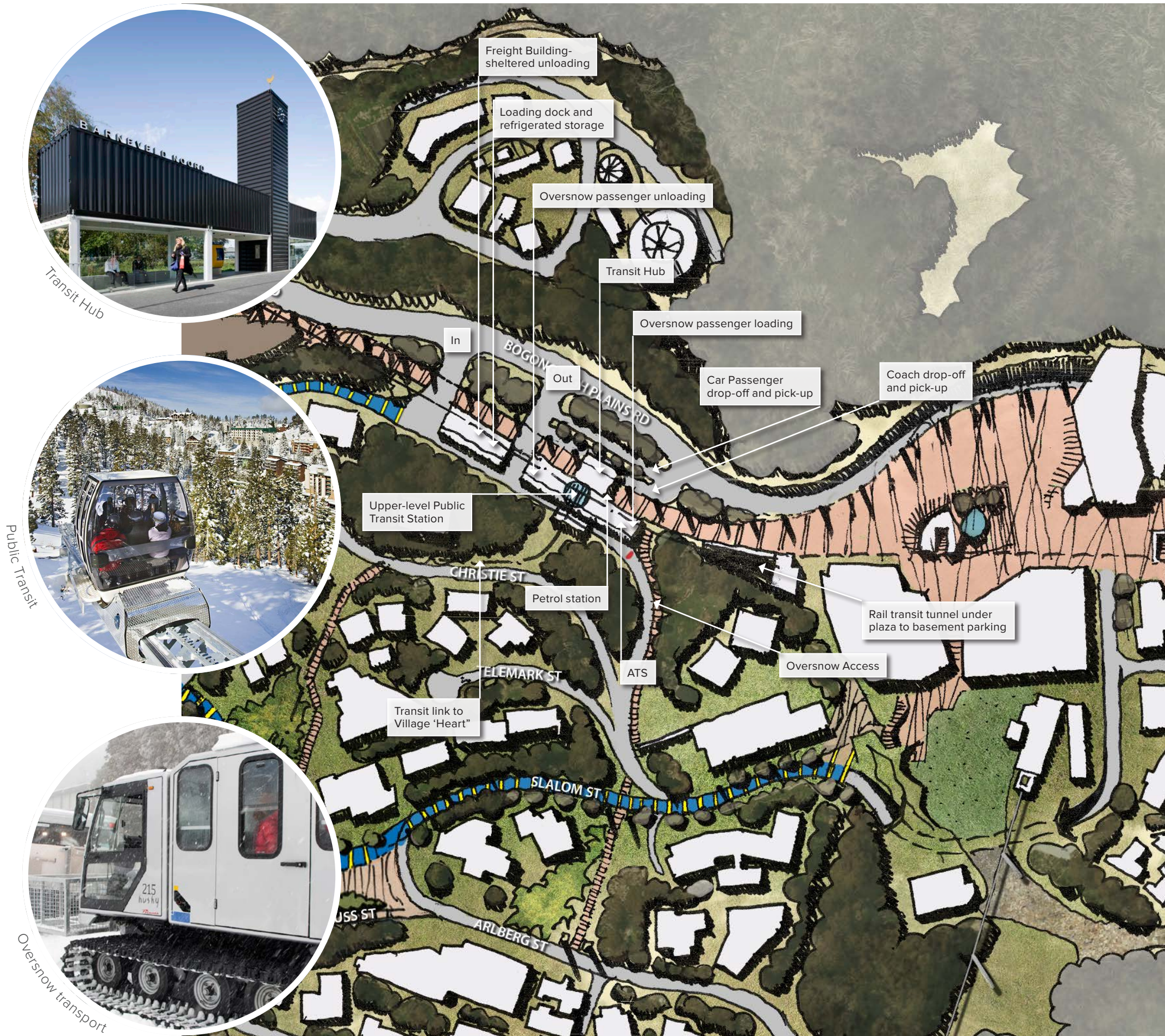


FIG 19. TRANSIT HUB



WINDY CORNER NORDIC CENTRE

PRECINCT VISION STATEMENT

To retain and redefine Windy Corner as the Nordic Centre and Trail Head for Falls Creek.

It will include;

- Nordic Trail Head & information
- Parking for Nordic & day skiers
- Improved shelter & wax room
- Food & beverage
- Improved access to Aqueduct Trail
- Upgraded and illuminated Aqueduct Trail
- Enhanced connections to Town Centre & Main St
- Winter access to the Alpine National Park
- Consolidated Workshops and Operations
- Possible overnight parking for RV's (Summer)
- Back country information / registration hub
- Repositioning of snow play and tobogganing to the Village Bowl

ACTIVITIES

WHITE

Existing to be developed

- Nordic Skiing
- Snowshoeing

GREEN

Existing to be developed

- Nature walks
- Trail running

PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

- Enhanced Public shelter, wax room, Information area and toilets
- Parking for Nordic & Day Skiers
- Food & Beverage Cafe
- Future Public Transit Stop
- Consolidated Workshops and Operations
- Possible overnight parking for RV's in secure area
- Net gain in car parking

FIG 20. WINDY CORNER NORDIC CENTRE PRECINCT

THE NORDIC BOWL

PRECINCT VISION STATEMENT

To consolidate the Nordic Bowl as the Nordic skiing hub of Falls Creek and develop summer sports training opportunities within a natural setting.

- It will continue to foster world class;
- Cross-country lessons and training
 - Cross-country events
 - Altitude training;
- It will;
- Include improved shelter & facilities
 - Establish a flat green season training ground/ events space
 - Involve minimal intervention

ACTIVITIES

WHITE

- Existing to be enhanced
- Nordic skiing, events & training
 - Snowshoeing
 - Improved access to Aqueduct and Village Bowl

GREEN

- Existing to be developed
- Summer events
 - Mountain Bikes
 - Walking
 - Trail running
- New Opportunities
- Football, soccer, athletics and summer recreation
 - Altitude training

PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

- Enhanced Public shelter, Information area, toilets and change rooms/showers
- Food & Beverage
- An artificial turf grassed oval for green season sports training with laned running track
- Illumination of the Nordic Bowl to create a loop and allow night time Nordic activities
- 'Pipe' and cover of Aqueduct to improve safety and access
- Lighting of Aqueduct Trail



Altitude training



Nordic skiing events



Summer hiking



FIG 21. THE NORDIC BOWL & LAKESIDE PRECINCTS



Lakeside cycling



Boat storage facility



Floating pontoon

LAKESIDE

PRECINCT VISION STATEMENT

To establish “Lakeside” as the base for ‘green season’ leisure activities, water activities and the gateway to the Alpine National Park.

It will host:

- Boating activities
- A Summer kiosk and equipment hire
- The stepping-off point for the Bogong High Plains wilderness & the Alpine National Park
- Summer arrival to Falls Creek from Omeo with gateway signage
- Rehabilitation & re-vegetation
- Shelter, BBQ facilities & beach
- An Indigenous Reference Centre and Information Space for Parks Victoria
- Walking Trail Access points to the Alpine National Park & ‘Around the Lake’ Trail (subject to further planning and statutory approvals).

ACTIVITIES

WHITE

Existing to be developed

- Nordic Skiing
- Alpine walking
- Snowshoeing

GREEN

Existing to be developed

- Segway access
- Road and Mountain Bikes
- Walking
- Trail Running
- Boating and events
- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Fishing
- Swimming

New Opportunities

- Stand up Paddle Boarding
- Paddle boats

PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

- Enhanced Public shelter, BBQ facilities, Information area and toilets
- Kiosk (Summer Only)
- Beach recreation area
- Boathouse / boat storage facility
- Landscaped area for public events
- Floating pontoon and enhanced boat launch area
- Count-down signage to Village and distance markers
- Car parking/Bus turnaround

SERVICES CENTRE

VISION STATEMENT

Consolidate the Waste Water Treatment Plant (W.W.T.P) with new technology and combine other back-of-house infrastructure where possible.

- Review consolidation of W.W.T.P through adoption of new technology
- House waste transfer services
- Investigate co-location of other infrastructure and back-of-house services as space permits
- Develop loop road to improve circulation and access

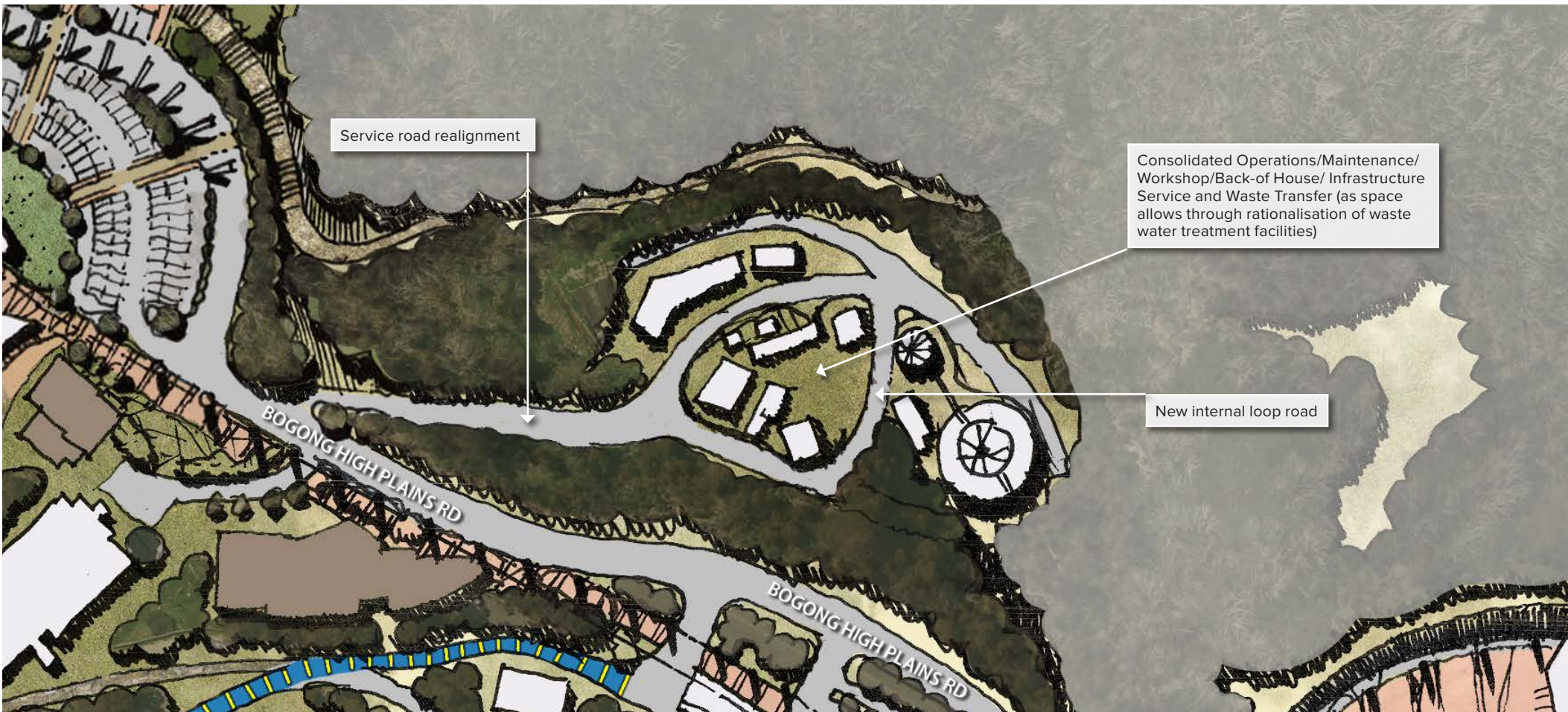


FIG 22. SERVICE CENTRE

HOWMANS GAP

VISION STATEMENT

Rationalise Howmans Gap ‘resort’ entry operations in conjunction with development of the Gully Precinct. It will;

- Retain essential snow clearing and road-safety operations
- House a site for the future gas tank relocation
- Require rationalised entry and ticket operations as new technology is adopted
- Remove roadside car parking



FIG 23. HOWMANS GAP



IMPLEMENTATION & INVESTMENT STRATEGY

DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT PATHWAYS

The Masterplan seeks to establish a multi-faceted framework to support visitation growth, economic viability, business diversification and community building. These objectives provide the basis for attracting investment and securing the long term sustainability of Falls Creek.

The Masterplan has been designed to speak to all stakeholders including private operators, club lodges and the permanent community. The Masterplan is intended to provide a creative but achievable vision for the future. The plan provides opportunities for individual business development initiatives as well as community based projects. Investment opportunities are designed to enhance Falls Creek as a place to work and live as well as galvanising the Resort's reputation as a unique visitor destination.

This minimum 10 year program of economic regeneration includes new projects, refurbishment of existing assets and qualitative changes to the public realm. The implementation strategy outlines the scope, phasing, indicative cost and funding strategies necessary to initiate associated projects or to establish collaboration between public and private stakeholders.

MANAGEMENT

The Masterplan creates a clear framework for future investment with FCRM principally defining its role as the facilitator and coordinator of change. The Falls Creek Resort Management will provide leadership and support to ensure this vision is able to come to fruition.

Development and implementation of the Falls Creek Village Masterplan will require:

- The allocation of annual expenditure by FCRM for key project scoping, business case evaluation and identification of grant funding opportunities
- The possible lease of existing land to fund civic improvements and projects
- Review of brownfield development sites
- Private investment and where possible public-private partnerships
- State or Federal Government grants for a range of project types
- Review of management practices/policies that continue to incentivise investment opportunities and the cost of doing business in the Resort.

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

Many of the elements envisaged in the Masterplan will involve support from Government/Government Agencies. Support required is likely to extend to a range of associated approvals as well as potential funding strategies. The cooperation and commitment of all relevant Government Departments with the support of FCRM will be key elements to securing the long term success of Falls Creek as a major tourism destination. This collaboration will in turn need to be supported by all stakeholders – commercial operators, club lodges and residents.

Community Support

In essence, universal support to the Masterplan vision by the broader community is seen as an integral element to the delivery of key projects/initiatives.

In this regard, the ability to harness political and community support will be important. There must be a collective sense of purpose and shared interest as well as considerable personal initiative, if the Masterplan outcomes are to be achieved.

A clear and consistent message is not only important for the community. It is equally important for potential investors (including Government) who will

deliver most of the urban renewal/infrastructure upgrades.

Strategies to Support Development

The Masterplan vision calls for creative solutions and community support. During Phase 1 consultation, stakeholders expressed their desire that FCRM and Government review business operations to assist in improving the cost of doing business in the Alps. To this extent, FCRM intends to continue to review its operating structures and strategies to assist in stimulating business investment.

A range of options may need to be reviewed and adopted as part of a coordinated approach to facilitate appropriate investment. Options may include:

- Project facilitation and complementary works
- Deferred site rental and service charges, reduced contributions or other financial incentives
- Joint funding opportunities such as public/private investment
- Commercial Partnerships
- Mechanisms to facilitate initiatives such as affordable housing and projects that have a wider benefit for the Village
- Initiatives such as regulatory reforms extending to the simplification of planning controls could be reviewed with Government to assist in streamlining approvals.

PROJECT PRIORITIES

A number of priority projects have been identified for Falls Creek. An indicative sequence of delivery and commitments has been identified so the vision can come to fruition.

Priority projects fall into a number of categories:

- Short, medium and long term projects designed to support new business and community development
- Public Realm and Infrastructure works required to support the overall Masterplan

FCRM will continue to review and refine these priority projects to ensure a logical pipeline of funding opportunities is presented to Government.

Project sequencing will also be important to ensure delivery of foundation works as a means of supporting associated enhancements.

Priority projects will also take into account community need and improvements to the visitor experience as key considerations.

FUNDING SOURCES

Private sector investment

Successful delivery of the Masterplan will depend on attracting sufficient investment and participation from existing private sector stakeholders, developers and new business operators. FCRM envisages actively promoting the Masterplan vision with a wide range of potential private sector investors who see long term opportunities for Falls Creek.

This includes discussion with both the big and small end of town. Coordinating public domain upgrades and initiatives with development staging will be essential to deliver the linkages required to maximise the potential of the village (and surrounds).

The potential for joint ventures on selected projects with Government will be a primary focus for FCRM

FCRM investment

The Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board has spent a considerable amount of time and effort over the last two years restructuring itself into a “fit for purpose” organisation. This initiative was a critical step in the masterplanning process to ensure FCRM was capable of delivering the Resort vision.

FCRM is working towards a financial model that will enable it to support key infrastructure and community building projects with true “skin in the game” i.e. community equity. This is viewed by Government as an essential element in attracting grant funding support.

Additionally, FCRM may also become a partner in projects that are primarily funded or managed by the private sector.

Government grants

Assistance from government will be critical in delivering the Masterplan vision. Accordingly, a number of projects will be identified for Government funding under a number of State and Federal Grant Schemes.

FCRM intends to actively engage with all levels of government to seek support at all staging levels from scoping and establishment of “shovel ready status” to development and implementation. Grant funding might also be required as a step towards attracting private investment. Relevant State and Federal grant schemes may provide capital works funding that support a range of projects including but not limited to sustainability initiatives, industry investment and development, tourism, transport and access, community and cultural infrastructure.



Item	Description of Work	Stage				Funding Source		
		1	2	3	4	FCRM	Private	Public / State
Precinct Based								
Village Bowl								
	Develop snow play hub, inc shelter, playground							✓
	Kids pump track and skate park							✓
	Realign Eagle Chairlift					✓	✓	✓
	Develop Village Bowl commercial hub- Food & beverage, Pub, retail and hire, accommodation over					✓	✓	
	Rebuild Summit Station, in conjunction with commercial hub						✓	
	Relocation of worker housing and Lift Admin						✓	
WWTP & Service Hub								
	Internal loop road					✓		
	Relocate Waste Transfer and affiliated Back-of-House to Service Hub from BHP Rd					✓		✓
	Consolidation of Waste Water Treatment Facility							✓
Transit Hub								
	Redevelop Transit Hub, inc separate freight and oversnow tranfer, drop-off and pick-up, passenger lounge, community petrol bowser, capacity for future public transit over					✓		✓
Windy Corner Nordic Centre								
	New Nordic Shelter, Commercial Kiosk, wax room and stair/ramp access to Aqueduct Trail					✓		✓
	Expanded parking on current workshop site, post relocation of Toboggan area					✓		
Nordic Bowl								
	Construct synthetic grass oval and perimeter running track, inc all grading and drainage					✓	✓	✓
	New Nordic Shelter, Event Staging Facility and storage					✓	✓	✓
	Miscellaneous upgrades					✓		
	Install lighting to Nordic Bowl					✓	✓	
	Install lighting to Nordic Bowl-Lakeside Loop					✓	✓	
Lakeside								
	Construct Summer Kiosk on ANARE site					✓		✓
	Lakeside Shelter and picnic facilites					✓		✓
	Jetty and Pontoon					✓		✓
	Trailer ramp and Boat Launch					✓		✓
	Rehabilitation of degraded areas					✓		✓
	Gateway marker from Omeo approach					✓		
Village Heart								
	Develop 'Village Heart' plaza and streetscape improvements					✓		✓
Town Centre								
	Construction of road deck and realignment of BHP Road and construction of 2 decks of undercover parking					✓	✓	✓
	General retail, conference facility, health/Spa, Sports medical and possible accommodation						✓	
	Main Street and Plaza, inc all infrastructure and streetscape elements					✓		
	Relocate Medical Centre					✓		✓
	"Green space" and childrens playground					✓		
	Relocated Helipad					✓		
The New Gully Gateway								
	Upgrade Gully Chair to Gondola, inc extension at Village Bowl					✓	✓	✓
	Falls Creek "Gateway" Building and carpark					✓		✓
	Viewing platform, lookout and Trail Head					✓		✓
	Gateway plaza and green space					✓		✓
	Realignment of BHP Road					✓		✓
	Worker Accommodation Precinct							✓
Howmans Gap								
	Removal of gateway and resort entry ticketing point					✓		
	Evaluate ticketing system							

Item	Description of Work	Stage				Funding Source		
		1	2	3	4	FCRM	Private	Public / State
Village Infrastructure								
Planning Scheme Amendments								
	Develop snow play hub, inc shelter, playground					✓		
Worker Housing								
	Sites identified and developed on a needs basis					✓	✓	
Loop Road Construction								
	Parallel-Alberg St Connection					✓		✓
	Schuss St Ext to Falls Creek Road, inc relocation of existing stair access					✓		
	Cut and Cover to Slalom St at Wombat's Ramble					✓		✓
	Road Bridge over Orys Trail at Schuss St					✓		✓
	Additional road work to complete one-way loop and create vehicle free "Village Heart" , inc Slalom St realignment and Schuss St removal					✓		✓
Pedestrian Spine-Walk								
	Commencement of 'snow-free' pedestrian path from Salom Plaza to Village Bowl					✓		✓
Operations / Workshop								
	Relocate operations and workshop/s from Windy Corner to consolidated compound on current toboggan site					✓		
Village Streetscape								
	Multiple stages upgrade existing streetscapes including: formalisation of pedestrian footpaths, replacing asphalt surfacing with concrete, upgrades to subsurface infrastructure as needed					✓		✓
	Multiple-stages- installation of streetscape lighting, furniture and signage					✓		✓
Aqueduct Trail								
	Aqueduct Trail widening to 6-8metres, in key areas- Pipe, cover and lay compacted gravel surface. Lay conduit, for future lighting					✓		
	Install lighting to Aqueduct trail from Parallel St to Nordic Bowl					✓	✓	
	Install lighting to Aqueduct trail from Village Bowl to Parallel St					✓	✓	
Public Transit								
	Install Stage One rail/funicular link from Transit Hub to Parallel St					✓	✓	✓
	Install Stage Two rail/funicular link from Gully to Town Centre					✓	✓	✓
	Stage Three rail/funicular link from Town Centre to Windy Corner					✓	✓	✓
Immediate Initiatives / Miscellaneous "Quick Wins"								
	“Countdown” signage for cyclists on BHP Road (Eg 1200m elev- 5 kilometres to go)					✓		
	Upgrade to Orys Trail and Schuss St intersection to improve skier safety					✓		
	Signage audit							
	Evaluate Masterplan projects scoping and business case							

Stage				Indicative Timing of Implementatioin
1	2	3	4	
				1 - 3 Years
				3 - 6 Years
				6 - 9 Years
				10 Years

PART FOUR

TECHNICAL SYSTEMS

TRANSPORT & ACCESS INTEGRATION

The background and consultation to the Falls Creek Village Masterplan identified several key access and movement issues associated with arriving at Falls Creek, transferring to accommodation and in the logistics of moving passengers and goods “oversnow”, particularly during peak winter periods. This has a significant impact upon visitor experience, stakeholder operations, resort management and the ski-in/ski-out experience at Falls Creek.

Problems

- Lack of choice in mode of transport / minimal use of off-site transfer
- High cost / safety issues with current parking arrangement
- Lack of coordination between modes / time coordination
- Expense / value for money
- Safety related to vehicles mixing with pedestrians
- Visual intrusion / chaotic visual environment that affects visitor experience
- Pedestrians moving around at night / safety / way-finding
- Efficiency of pedestrian movement in snow / need for snow free alternative

KEY MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

- Development of a fully integrated transport system that avoids the delays between transport modes
- Development of off-site shuttle transport which reduces congestion within the Village
- A redeveloped Transit Hub, with improved vehicle entry/egress, separation of passenger and freight services and connection to the proposed rail based public transport system
- A designated one-way winter loop road to improve over-snow transport movement through the Village and improve freight logistics, pedestrian/ skier safety and public space
- A reduced reliance upon over-snow and shuttle services on Village roads during winter
- An enhanced visitor arrival and passenger transfer experience
- Maintenance of the unique Falls Creek ski-in/ski out experience, but with greater safety resulting from a major reduction in conflicts between skiers, pedestrians and over-snow vehicles
- An improved level of pedestrian legibility and orientation within the Village
- A new snow-free pedestrian path (Village Walk) between the Town Centre and Village Bowl, to improve pedestrian access and circulation around the Falls Creek Village
- Better public transport system to take pressure off parking capacity & over-snow transport
- Rail based system that links strategic locations throughout the Village
- Improved Mt Beauty based bus transfer system that coordinates with over-snow transport

ENHANCING THE ARRIVAL EXPERIENCE

Key elements:

- A coordinated Falls Creek ticketing system, incorporating village entry, parking & Accommodation Transfer Service (ATS)
- Removal of Howmans Gap gateway function
- An improved Gully Gateway arrival experience
- Clearly defined pre-paid parking locations
- An improved “off-mountain” coach transfer system with streamlined ATS transfer, to reduce reliance upon private vehicles and carparking
- An upgraded ATS Transit Hub with visitor lounge
- An upgrade of the Gully Chair to a Gondola to improve access to the Village Bowl and allow visitors the choice to transfer by this mode rather than via the oversnow or shuttle services
- Incorporate a funicular style public transit link from the Transit Hub to the top of the Village, to reduce reliance upon oversnow and shuttle services
- Reducing the visual dominance of car parking and improving the car parking experience by the removal of car parking on Bogong High Plains Road and redesigning the at-grade car parking in the Village to be more pedestrian focused with connections to undercover walkways and Public Transit.
- An opportunity for future undercover carparking in the development of the facilities in the New Town Centre

FIG 24. CAR PARKING ESTIMATES (WINTER)

	Proposed Design	Proposed Design + 1 Level	Proposed Design + 2 Levels	Existing Parking
Windy Corner Nordic Centre	225 - 252 (28-25 m2)	-	-	160
The New Gully Gateway	107 - 120 (28-25 m2)	-	-	131
Town Centre Car Park	710 - 796 (33-30 m2)	710 - 796	1065 - 1194	150
Lower Slalom Car Park	500 - 560 (33-30 m2)	1000 - 1120	-	459
Sub Total	1542 - 1728	2042 - 2288	2397 - 2686	900
BHP Road Parking	458	458	458	458
Total	2000 - 2186	2500 - 2746	2855 - 3144	1780



ENHANCING THE PEDESTRIAN AND SKIER EXPERIENCE AT FALLS CREEK

Key elements:

- Designated one-way winter loop road to separate oversnow vehicles from skiers and improve pedestrian and skier safety
- A clearly defined snow-free, East-West pedestrian spine (Village Walk) linking the existing Slalom Plaza and new Town Centre, with the Village Bowl
- Additional grid-mesh walkways and stair connections linking to the pedestrian spine
- Pedestrian orientated and community-focused Village Heart
- Future provision for funicular style Public Transit linkage through the village, to reduce reliance on village oversnow and shuttle services
- Better lighting and improved winter and summer orientated, Village signage
- More North-South stairway cross links
- Improved signage for shuttle stops, with improved signage and electronic notification; “next shuttle arriving in....mins”
- Reduce the reliance upon commercially operated snow mobiles, through additional management and incentives for operators (continued free freight delivery to commercial operators)

IMPROVING THE ATS AND OVER-SNOW EXPERIENCE

Key elements:

Designated one-way winter loop road to separate oversnow vehicles from skiers and improve pedestrian and skier safety. To facilitate this, new winter connections will be required between:

- Arlberg and Parallel Streets
- A new road connection between the Schuss St extension and Falls Creek Road, which will involve the relocation of the existing pedestrian stair access
- An upgraded connection from the rear (southside) of the existing ATS building to Christie St
- A proposed road tunnel (cut and cover) of Slalom St at the base of Wombat's Ramble

Other elements:

- Schuss Street - road bridge over Orys Trail entry to Village
- A redeveloped, co-located Freight Terminal and ATS Transfer facility, with improved access and egress movement freight, coaches, private vehicles and oversnow transport
- Separation of oversnow vehicles
- Improved drop-off and pick-up vehicle circulation
- Passenger lounge
- Improved coordination of coach arrivals and from regional transfer locations (Mount Beauty and Albury etc.)

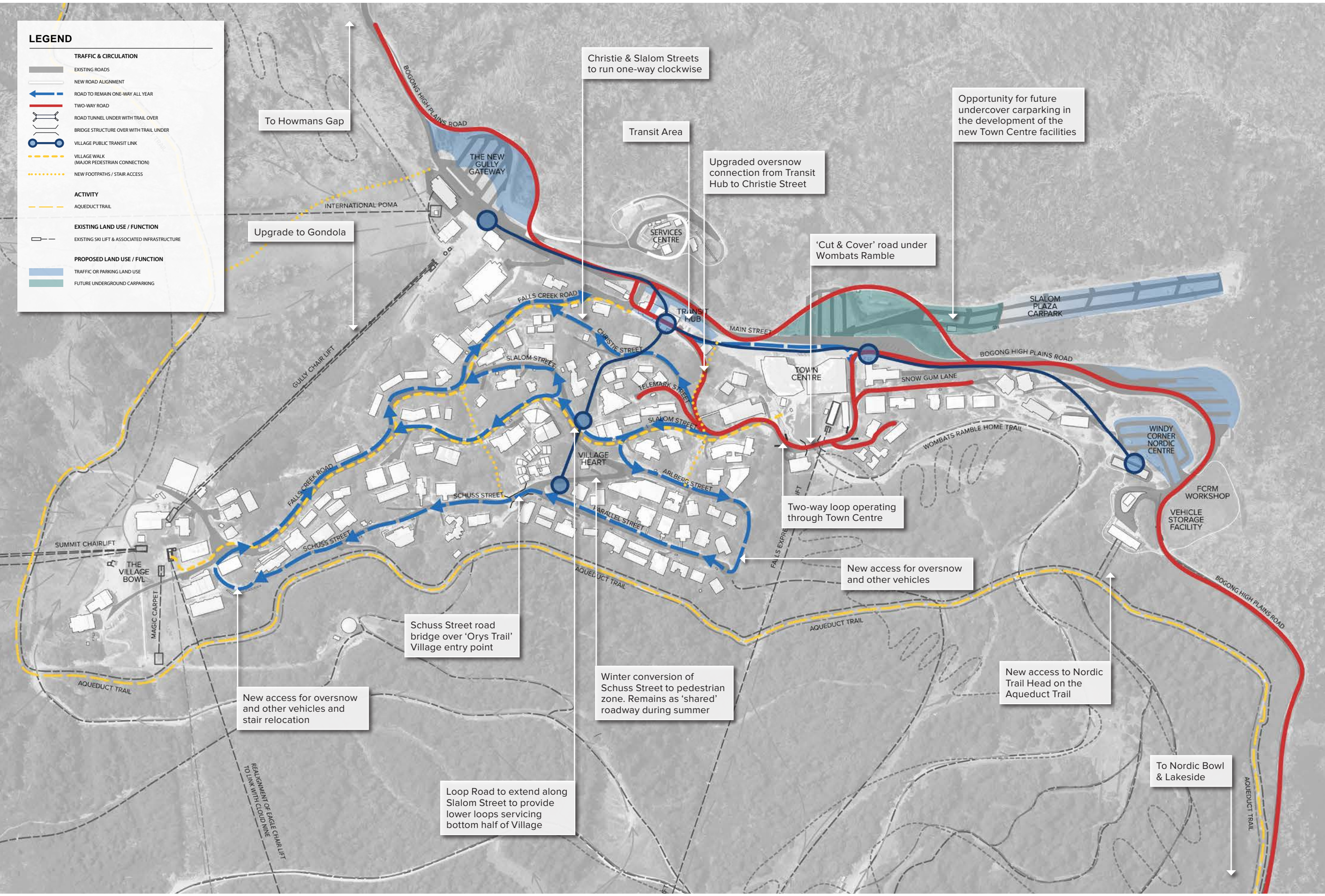


FIG 25. TRANSPORT & ACCESS OVERLAY - WINTER ROAD OPERATION

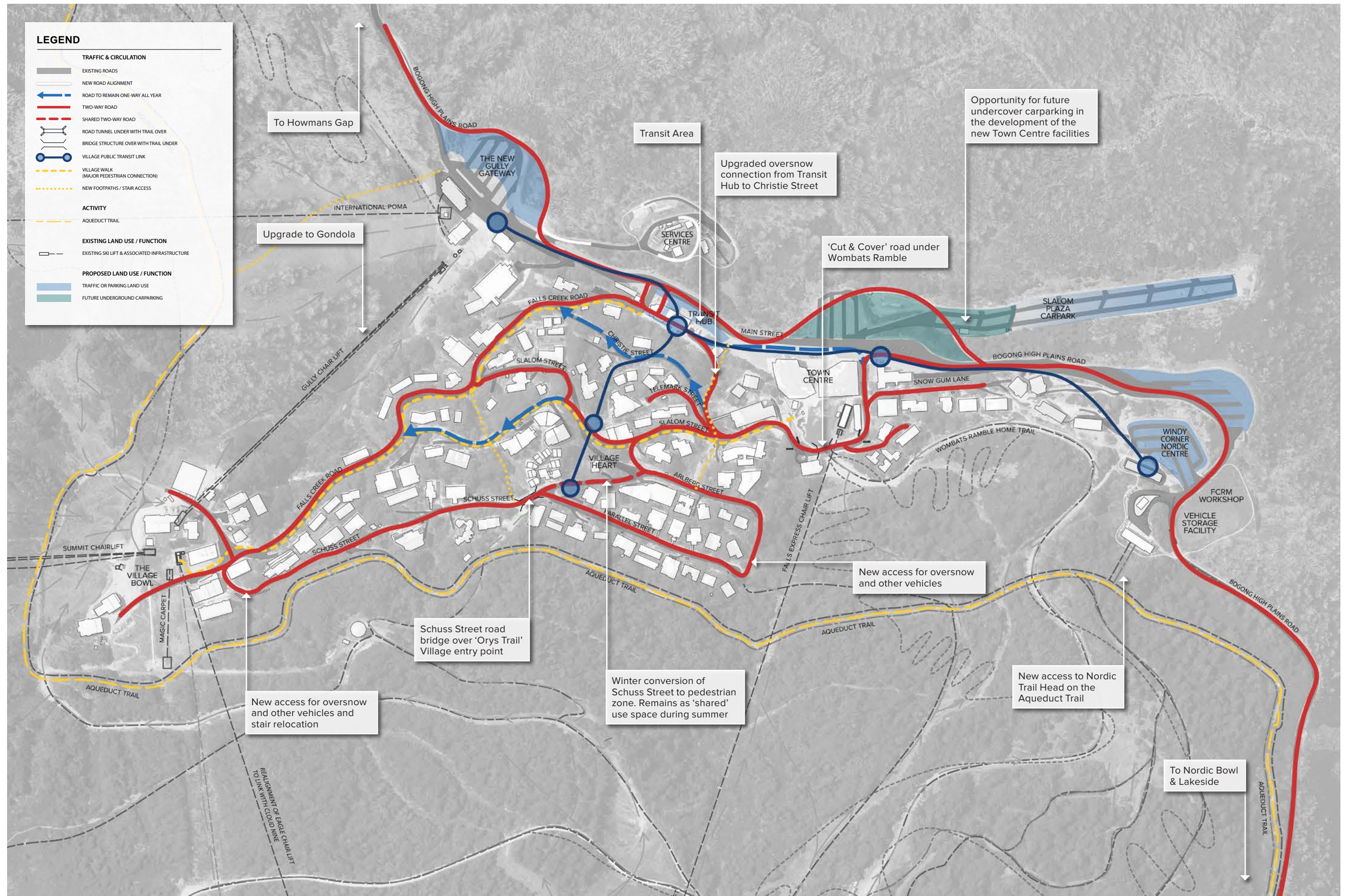


FIG 26. TRANSPORT & ACCESS OVERLAY - SUMMER ROAD OPERATION

ACTIVITY SYSTEMS

Developing a compelling activity base is fundamental to the future of Falls Creek.

The terrain, surrounding landscape and natural environment have already been identified as the cornerstones of Falls Creek’s “points of difference”.

A well established suite of winter activities combined with a growing collection of summer activities is seen as essential in order to grow visitation.

Changing tourist demands and emerging recreational markets continue to challenge traditional snow-based alpine recreation.

Primarily known as a winter resort, the reputational strength of the Resort is in alpine sports such as skiing, snowboarding and cross country skiing. The emergence of passive snow play options targets increased visitation through new market development.

More recently, Falls Creek has developed a credible reputation as a green season destination offering activities including altitude training, road cycling, mountain biking and nature based tourism. Considerable capacity and market opportunity exists to further develop the events calendar in Falls Creek during the Green season.

Potential clearly exists to expand the activity base in both the Green and White seasons through the identification and development of new markets. These have been outlined in the Masterplan precinct plans.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

White Season

- expand passive snow activities and consolidate tobogganing and snow play in the Village Bowl
- Potential for ‘Nordic night skiing’ along the illuminated and widened Aqueduct Trail and around the Nordic Bowl area

Falls Creek hosts a number of significant events during the White season that provide international and domestic exposure:

- The International Kangaroo Hoppet (cross-country skiing)
- Style Wars – snowboarding
- Falls Creek Village Sled-Dog Trials

These should be leveraged to provide an expanded repertoire of associated events to attract increased visitation. Current White Season offerings are diagrammed in Appendix C.

Green Season

- Development of an Extreme Mountain Biking Centre and enhancements to facilities to accommodate mountain bikers
- Expand altitude training through provision of Green season training oval and potential specialised training facility in the Town Centre
- Development of the Lakeside precinct to better facilitate beach side recreation and water sports

Falls Creek also hosts a number of significant Green season events including the Peaks Challenge (road cycling) – now recognised as one of the top ten day ride events in the world, the Mountain Raid (multi-discipline adventure race) and the Mile High Dragon Boat Festival.

These should be leveraged to provide an expanded repertoire of associated events to attract increased visitation.

Current Green Season offerings are diagrammed in Appendix C.



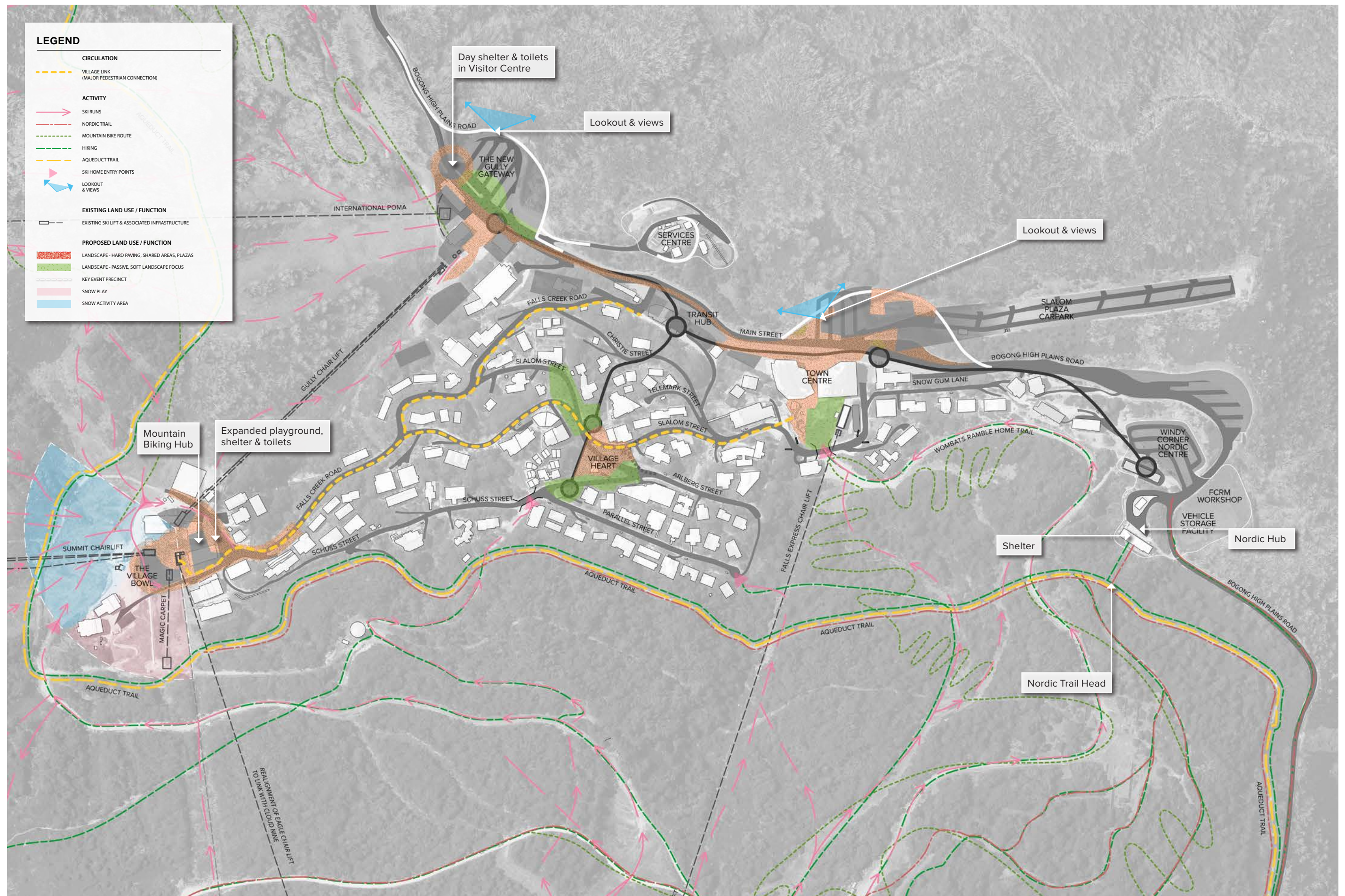


FIG 27. ACTIVITY SYSTEMS OVERLAY

INFRASTRUCTURE & FUTURE SKI FIELD PLANNING

The Falls Creek Village Masterplan seeks to implement key improvements to infrastructure as well as essential and back-of-house services in order to improve operations and enhance the authentic alpine village feel of Falls Creek. At a minimum Falls Creek must be able to provide adequate water, power, waste disposal and telecommunications to ensure that its variety of infrastructure and back-of-house services meet visitor and stakeholder expectations in an integrated and sustainable way.

Falls Creek has access to 500ML of surface water under a current licence with Goulburn-Murray Water. This is extracted from Rocky Valley Lake under an agreement with AGL Hydro. The current consumption levels per year are approximately 160ML and projected increases in visitation would not exceed licence constraints and would have no impact to the current storage capacity in Rocky Valley Lake which is approximately 28,000ML

During winter the generation of hydro power by AGL is at its lowest. Actual usage for snowmaking is seasonally dependent and can range from 100ML to 300ML, of which the current storage capacity can exceed considerably.

No additional water storage facility is planned as part of this masterplan.

Increased gas consumption would require more frequent filling of the main gas tank. During winter peak this is currently filled 2 times per week and as such may need to increase to 3 times per week. This is a matter for Elgas who own this infrastructure, however there are no current indications of planning to expand this storage capacity to meet a short term peak when the remainder of the year refilling occurs on a monthly basis. As a result FCRM must ensure the village roads are open and safe for deliveries during winter.

Falls Creek has 100% redundant dual power feeds to the village to allow continued full operation in the event of an outage on one of the lines. If the power consumption was to increase beyond the current line ratings, both lines could be used for supply during peak periods marginally reducing the redundancy level.

The current processing capacity for the Waste Water Treatment Plant is 1.5ML/day. Current peaks in winter are 1ML/day. FCRM are currently working on some efficiency projects which will further increase the system capacity to around 1.8ML/day. It is unlikely that major investment in the WWTP will be required to address Masterplan capacity.

Four principles will guide infrastructure decision making;

- 1. A move towards best practice and a contemporary design standard**
Falls Creek’s unique location and interface with the Alpine National Park requires best practice environmental standards and consideration of more sustainable methods of service delivery. Existing energy, waste, water treatment technology and telecommunications should be evaluated. Where new technologies exist services should be upgraded in line with the principles outlined in this Masterplan. This includes a streamlined service in regards to ticketing, public transit and transport around the Village.
- 2. Reconciliation of existing assets and a move to co-locate services**
The protection of the Alpine environment must remain a priority. Therefore new development should not expand outside the current “Village” boundary. Solutions should be sought on ‘brownfield’ sites inside the Village for accommodation and housing and where possible, existing assets should be reconciled into key areas. The areas identified for the reconciliation of assets are:
 1. The Services Centre
 2. Windy Corner Nordic Centre
 3. Howmans Gap
- 3. Elimination of unnecessary infrastructure**
The ad-hoc nature of development at Falls Creek further complicated by the legacy of management and operations structures has allowed for inefficiencies and redundant infrastructure. This includes signs, storage, tracks and sheds that remain underutilised or duplicated throughout the Resort. The Masterplan proposes an Infrastructure Asset Audit where all unnecessary infrastructure can be identified for removal or consolidated into the key locations identified in this Masterplan.

- 4. Visual impact**
Currently the essential and back-of-house services of Falls Creek are located in areas of high visibility along the Bogong High Plains Road. The Masterplan proposes that all back-of-house services as well as high visual impact infrastructures such as the car parks, be relocated or reconfigured to be less visually dominant in the landscape. Methods such as screening, surface treatments, relocation and in some cases road reconfiguration are proposed to minimise the visual impact of services and improve the amenity of the Village.

Ski-field Management

In developing the Masterplan, FCRM has consulted extensively with Falls Creek Ski Lifts Pty Ltd (“FCSL”) regarding future planning of the ski fields. As an overriding consideration, FCSL currently views the capacity of Falls Creek’s ski fields to be adequate. Accordingly, existing ski field terrain will support the needs of the Resort in the short to medium term. This does not rule out consideration of additional terrain in the future but any review will be based on demand/need analysis.

In terms of future planning considerations, FCSL has directed FCRM to rely on the key principles outlined in the Falls Creek Ski Fields Masterplan prepared by Ecosign Mountain Resort Planners in 2007. Accordingly, FCSL will continue to review potential:

- Upgrading of snow making capacity and infrastructure
- Upgrading existing lifting infrastructure
- Continued customer service improvements
- Continued technology improvements in terms of ticketing and support services.
- Rationalisation of plant and potential shared services with FCRM

The most significant planning considerations in terms of ski field and lifting infrastructure management are:

- The proposed development of an enclosed Gondola servicing the Gully Gateway to Village Bowl precincts. This project is likely to be a public/private partnership development.
- The proposed reconfiguration and upgrade of the Eagle Chair to principally support the movement of beginner skiers/snowboarders.

The Eagle Chair is proposed to be redirected closer to the existing Ski Patrol Base. The proposed development of a magic carpet from the Eagle Chair will provide beginner skiers/snow boarders with easy access to Cloud Nine Ski School. Accordingly, this is intended to significantly relieve the traffic and “bottlenecks” that currently exist at the Falls Creek Express Chair (mornings and afternoons).

Additionally, the upgrade of the Eagle Chair is considered an important feature in restoring the accommodation appeal and convenience of the Village Bowl precinct.

Changes proposed to the Village Bowl precinct will not impede existing ski terrain on the Summit or access to lifting infrastructure.

Additionally, redevelopment of the Gully Gondola and Eagle Chair will provide a more convenient and accessible “hub” for skiers, snow boarders and mountain bikers to access lifting infrastructure and resort amenities.

Existing FCSL staff accommodation will be relocated to alternative housing precincts identified in the Masterplan.

Figure 29 – Eagle Realignment Plan. Relocation of the top station of Eagle Chair will provide direct access from the village to the beginners area, ski school and intermediate terrain in the Sun Valley area. This will significantly ease pressure on the village transport system in peak times when skiers/boarders are accessing the ski school and beginner areas.

Figure 30 – Dispersal of skiers/boarders at the top station of the realigned chairlift will be unimpeded for access to all areas. Access to the ski school and beginner areas will be:

- To the east, either via a shallow gradient or continued lifted access on the proposed carpet;
- To the south to access areas in the Sun Valley bowl; and
- To the north to re-enter the village.

There is suitable and unimpeded terrain to facilitate the smooth flow of all skiers/boarders during peak times.

Figure 31 – Ingress to the bottom station of the realigned Eagle Chair will be improved through more appropriate gradient from the bottom terminal of the Summit Chair and a more clearly defined and graded route from the top of the Gully Chair. This will markedly improve skier/boarder satisfaction and reduce the skier/boarder/vehicle interface in the Village Bowl. Relocation of the bottom station will provide more space for the management of the lift queue and open space for additional snowplay activities.

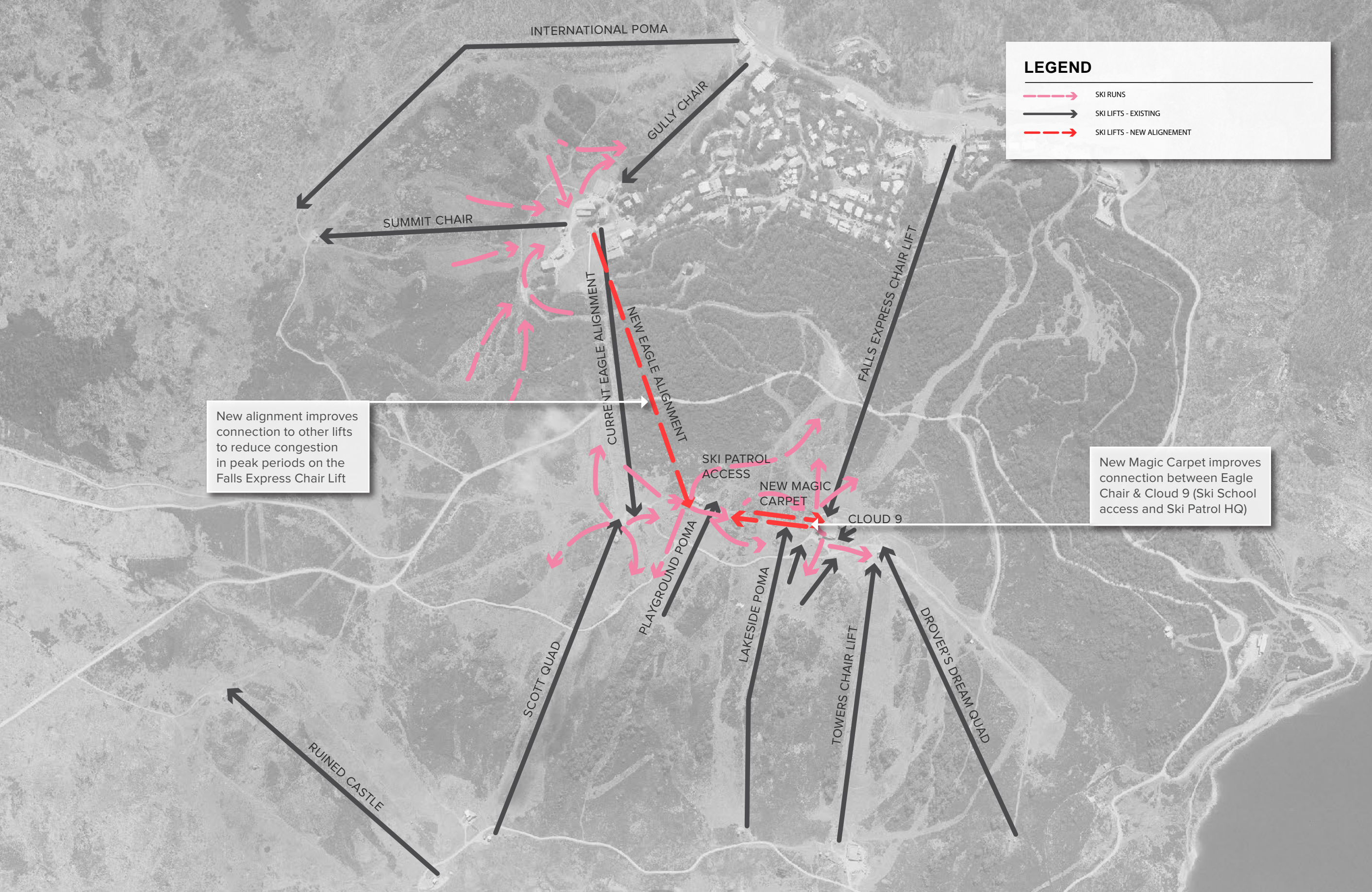


FIG 28. SKI LIFT INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

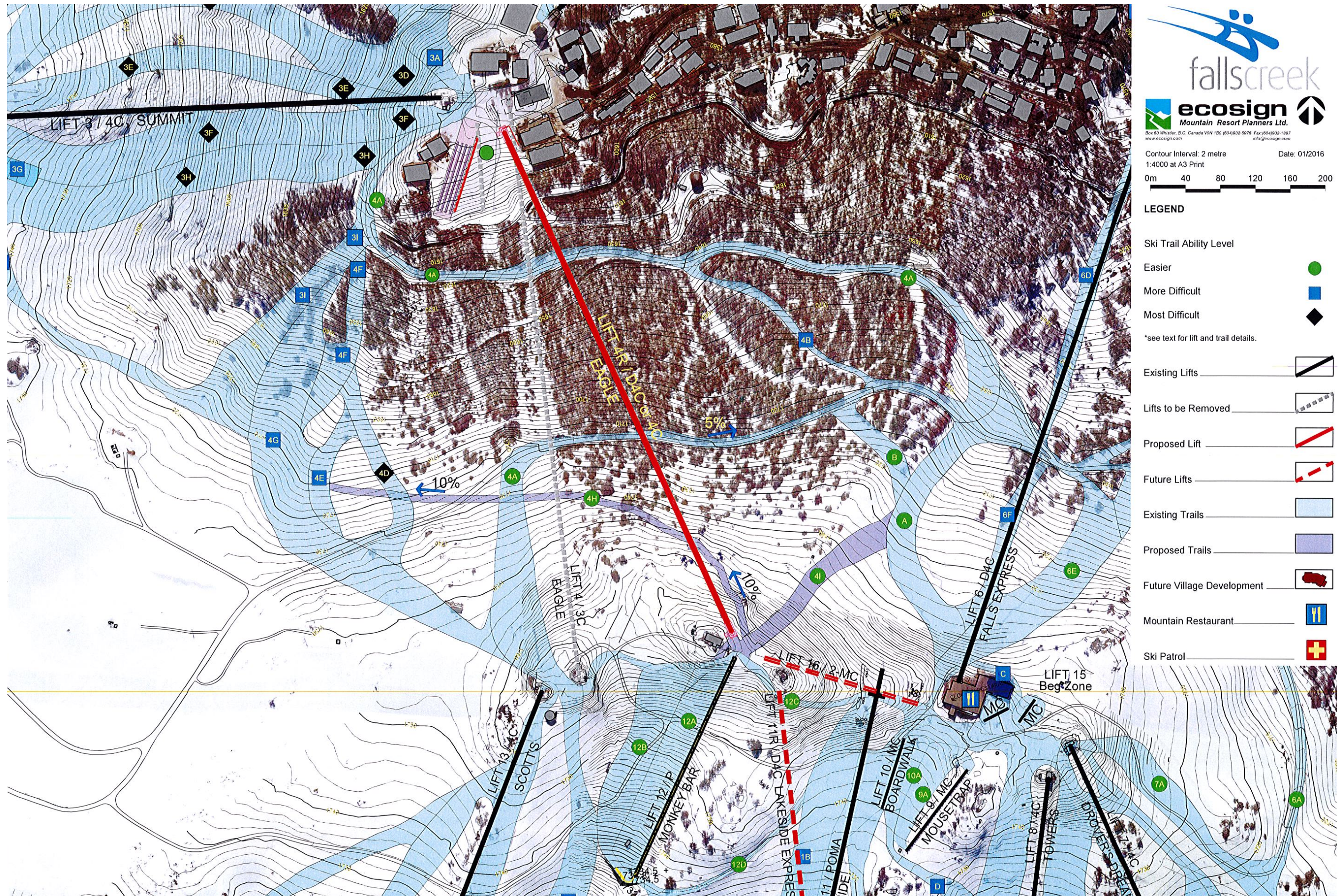


FIG 29. EAGLE CHAIR REPLACEMENT - SKIER CIRCULATION

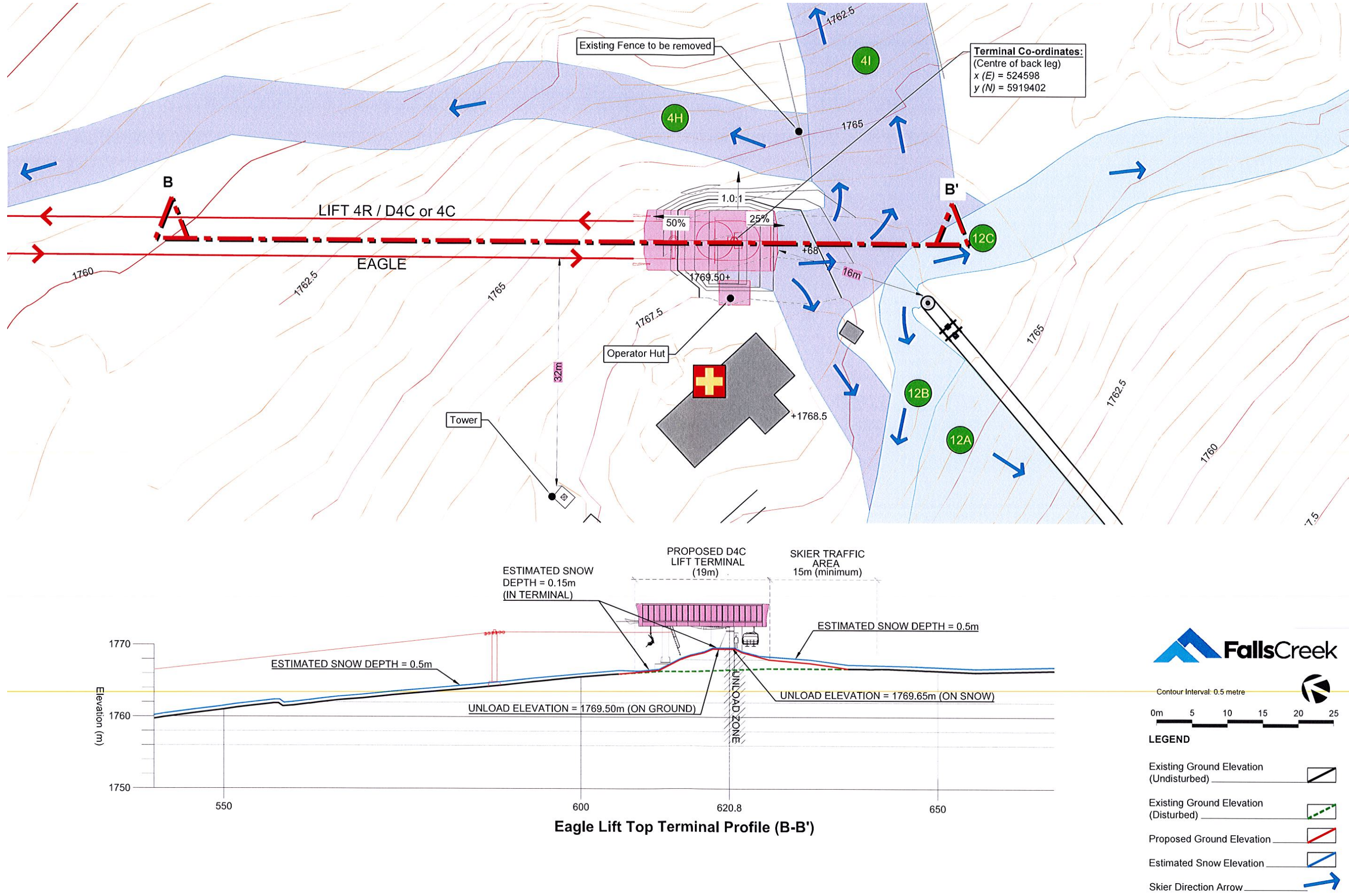


FIG 30. EAGLE LIFT TOP TERMINAL PROFILE

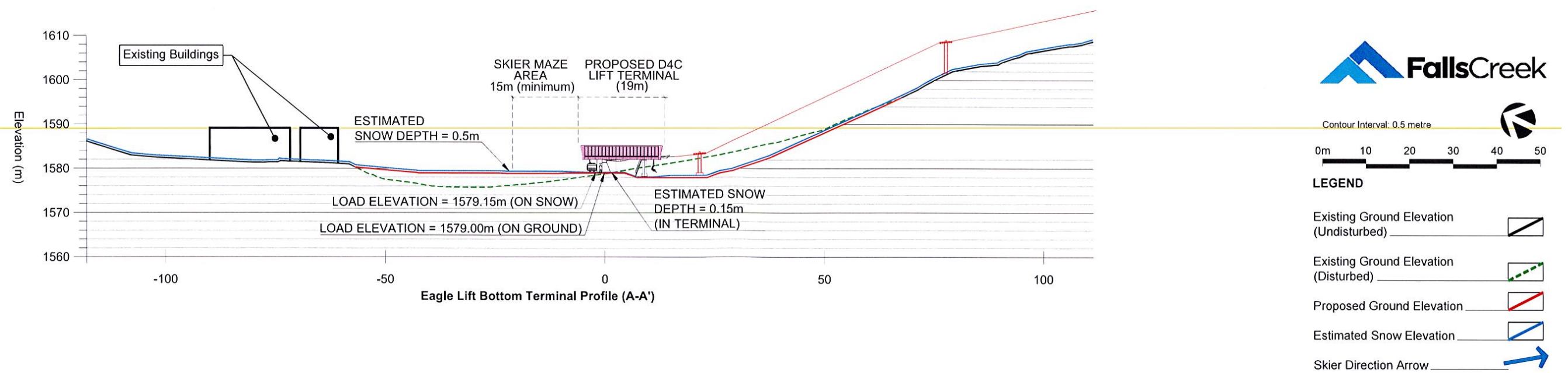
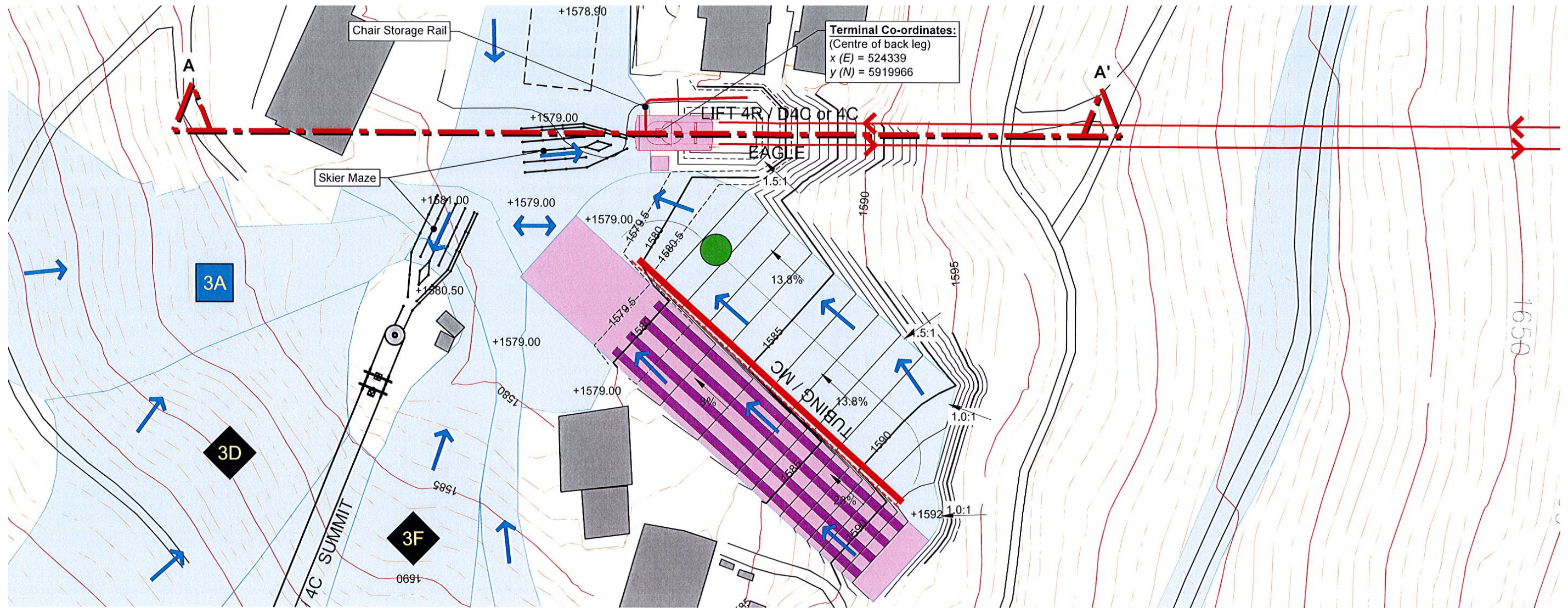


FIG 31. EAGLE LIFT BOTTOM TERMINAL PROFILE

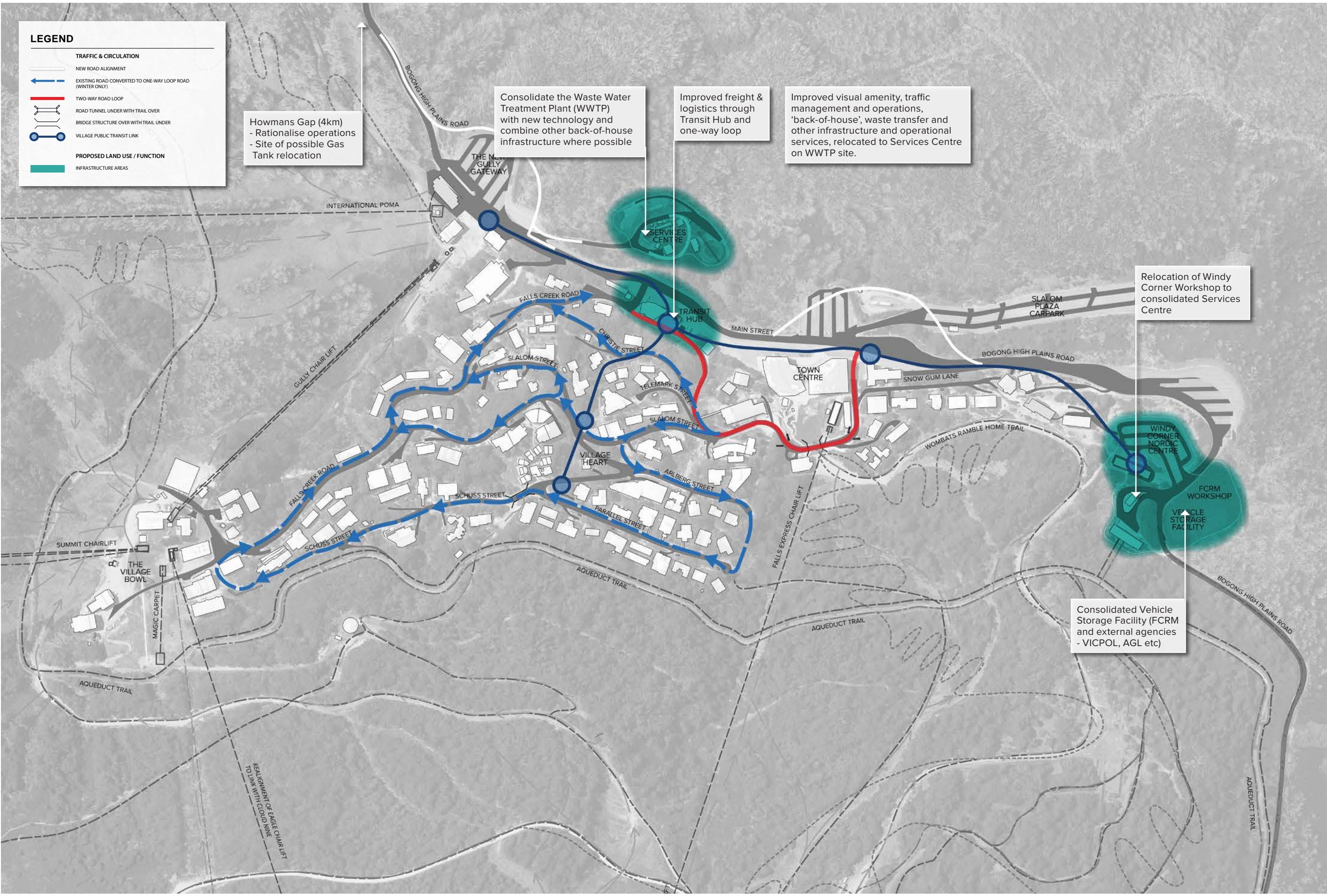


FIG 32. INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS OVERLAY



CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY

ADAPTABILITY & RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Falls Creek is building resilience to climate change through strengthening the winter market and the development of new and existing summer markets.

The findings of the report titled *Climate Change Impacts on Snow in Victoria*, (The Centre for Australian Weather and Climate Research ,2012,) indicates that peak snow depths and length of snow throughout the winter season will decrease over the course of this masterplan. While there is significant variability built in each of the models developed in this report the over-riding message for Victorian Resorts is that there will be less natural snowfall in the future.

To offset the impact of this, Falls Creek will continue to invest in artificial snowmaking in winter and the development of new markets that will drive additional resort income through summer.

Further refinement and improved efficiency of the existing snowmaking infrastructure will provide supplementary snowmaking to support any long-term decline in natural snowfall. Supported by a large adjacent reservoir, Falls Creek has a no volume restrictions of water supply for snowmaking. Current snowmaking operations consume between 100-300ML per year. All of this water is taken directly from Rocky Valley Storage.

Rocky Valley Storage has a capacity of 28,000ML with a considerable excess flow that is regulated by AGL Hydro. Access to snowmaking water from Rocky Valley Storage is facilitated through a licence agreement between Falls Creek Ski Lifts and AGL Hydro.

Further improvements in snow farming and the continued implementation of the *Falls Creek Summer Slope Grooming Plan*, (FCSL. 2006), will continue to maximise the skiable terrain through the retention of natural and man-made snow.

The current storage of Rocky Valley Lake is sufficient to supply water for all of Falls Creek's current and future snowmaking requirements, as well as meeting the town potable and emergency water requirements.

Falls Creek is well placed to develop a sustainable non-winter tourism trade that leverages the landscape to provide facilitated activity.

The development of mountain bike trails and walking trails within the resort and an extensive walking trail and mountain bike touring trail network in the adjacent Alpine National Park will provide the foundation for Falls Creek to be recognised as an attractive off-road cycling location. The Bogong High Plains Road from Mt Beauty through to the Mitta Valley has provided significant road cycling opportunities since it was sealed in 2009.

Falls Creek has a well established reputation as Australia's premier altitude training destination with endurance athletes using the village as a base since Ralph Doubell used it for acclimatisation prior to the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games. Approximately 65km of flat aqueduct trails combined with moderate altitude ranging between 1,600 – 1,800m provides a low cost alternative to training overseas for local athletes and provides an attractive out-of-season location for northern hemisphere athletes.

Plans to provide a multi-use sports field in the Nordic Bowl, formalisation of the foreshore/boat ramp area and the development of a multi-use gym/ medical/sports centre in the Village are well documented and are a priority for this masterplan. These facilities will provide support for water sports and skills-based sports teams to utilise Resort during the non-winter period.

Additional development of non-winter events, such as The Peaks challenge cycling event and the Mountain Raid Adventure Race, is seen as critical for the continued success of the Resort. The facilitation of cycling, running and adventure style competitions will provide market exposure and resort use that is critical to activating a sustainable summer market.

FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

Emergency management in Victoria is currently undergoing substantial change following the tragic events of the Black Saturday bushfires in 2009.

This event, and several other like fires, has dramatically reshaped the way we as individuals and the community now view Emergency Management as well as the responsibilities of individuals, communities, and government agencies (Local, State and Federal).

Falls Creek has experienced its share of incidents over the past ten years. Many of these incidents have resulted in the immediate response of several agencies to ensure the safety of residents, stakeholders and guests. On a number of occasions it has also resulted in the engagement of local, regional and state assistance to allow the Resort to respond. This ensures we remain a strong and vibrant community that is resilient to adversity.

Falls Creek has over the past decade undertaken several measures to ensure the community, is prepared to respond to, and recover from, key hazards. These measures have been identified as part of a mandatory Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) process.

Working under the direction of Emergency Management Acts (1986 & 2013), as well as the recently re-formed Emergency Management Victoria (EMV), Falls Creek has developed a specific Municipal Emergency Management Plan. The plan provides guidance and directional actions for the members of the Emergency Management Team during the planning, response and recovery phases of an event.

These plans are regularly reviewed and tested to ensure they are reflective of the needs of the community. They are also designed to ensure we can respond and recover from any event or hazard. All processes are updated to reflect the feedback from each event.

FALLS CREEK EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT VISION STATEMENT

To proactively plan and prepare for all potential hazards with robust and well tested response and recovery plans.

CURRENT STATUS

The Falls Creek community is fortunate to have a strong volunteer base that supports a number of agencies all year round. Representation is provided from CFA, SES and community search and rescue groups as well as Ambulance and police presence during the winter. As such Falls Creek has the ability to respond to all types of emergencies with speed and efficiency. These resources are backed up with extensive training and plans.

Please note the following:

- The Community Bushfire Emergency Management Plan (CBEMP) is now an approved document
- The Fire Preparation Plan & Township Protection Plan will be superseded by the CBEMP and a revised Fire Preparation Plan which will incorporate vegetation management.
- The Fire Preparation Plan will be guided by the outcomes of the recently initiated Fire Behaviour Analysis (FBAN) process for Falls Creek Village. This process will be undertaken over winter 2015 and will generate modelled fire risk categories for all Village properties. These risk outcomes will then be used to target specific areas of the village which require further mitigation from a fire event which will include vegetation management, fire break creation, hydrant/suppression system upgrades or recommended fire resistant construction techniques.

FUTURE STRATEGIC FOCUS

To ensure Falls Creek can continue to plan and prepare for all hazards, we must continue to invest time and money in all necessary resources, people, equipment and infrastructure.

Items of infrastructure identified for upgrading or creation include:

- Upgrade to the existing medical centre to improve our ability to cater for patient load during peak times of the snow season.
- Location of Medical Centre to be centralised in the Town Centre to improve ease of access for all stakeholders and guests.
- Combined, central facility for major Emergency Service Organisations (ESOs) to operate including space for each agency as well as a central incident control centre.
- Upgrade and expansion of existing ESO on-mountain accommodation facilities to better meet specific requirements
- Consolidation of ESO and infrastructure owner equipment into a single machinery shed with access to the snowfields.
- Ensuring emergency vehicle access and egress is to be optimised
- Creation of Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP)/Community Fire Refuge within the village to provide shelter during a bushfire event and provide specific capability to operate as a Relief Centre for recovery operations.
- Ongoing upgrades to firefighting assets within the village and around key items of infrastructure
- Ongoing training to staff and community members involved with EM practices or agencies
- Establishment of emergency relief stores depot to cater for periods of time when the Village may be cut off from the rest of the state.

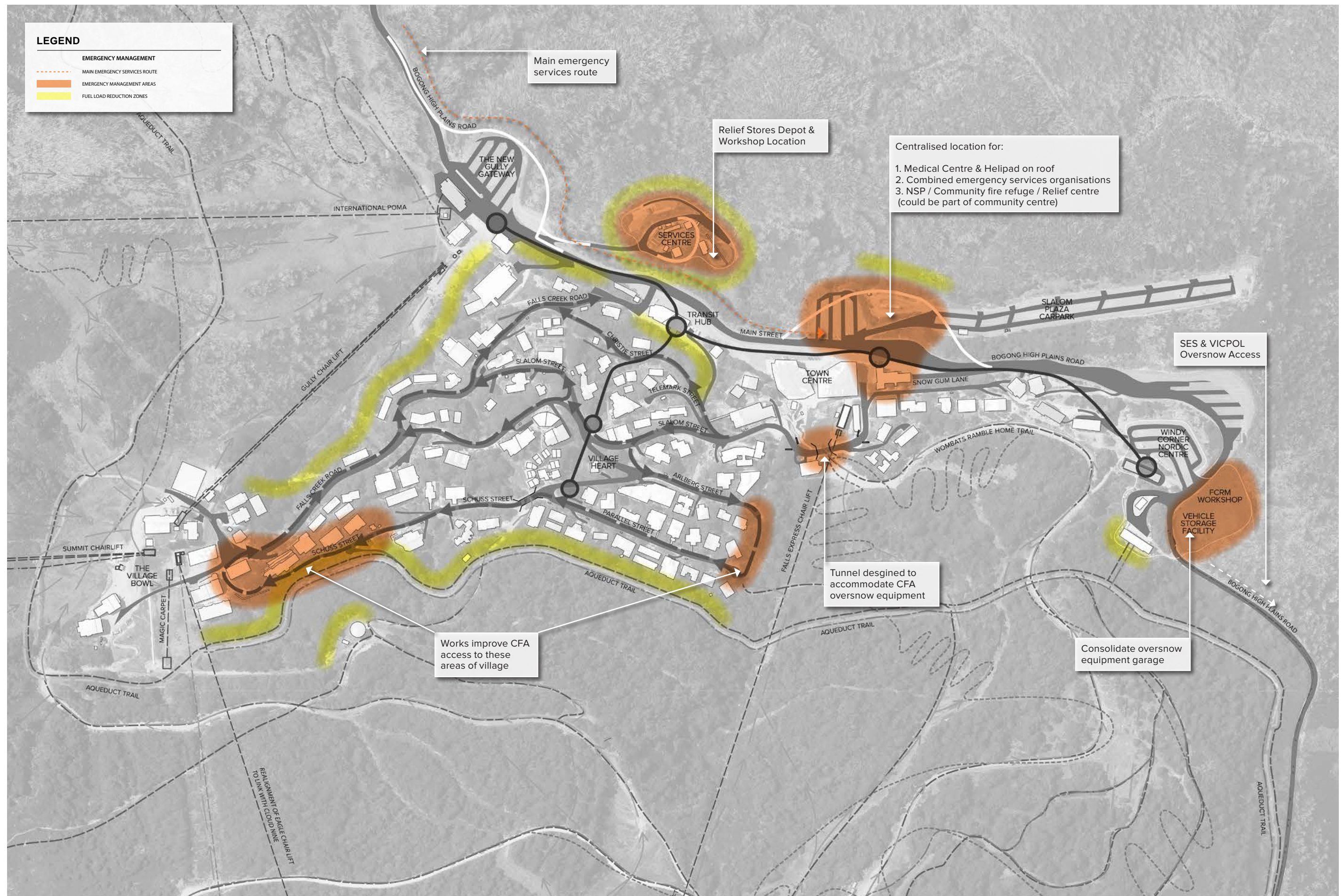


FIG 33. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERLAY

URBAN DESIGN

URBAN DESIGN - PUBLIC REALM & OPEN SPACE

Falls Creek is widely viewed as an “intimate” alpine village. It has evolved incrementally up a steep slope, adjacent to the Bogong High Plains Road, on the site of an original infrastructure settlement. Overtime it has developed into an eclectic mix of built form with varying architectural styles. The natural setting, snow gum canopy, use of local stone and the more recent implementation of design guidelines has established a village that is “generally cohesive” and provides Falls Creek with its unique character. Certain areas of the village however have begun to look tired and are in need of upgrading.

The slope of the village, the limited amount land available for development and incremental growth over the past sixty years has largely shaped the layout and infrastructure of Falls Creek. Overtime, this has highlighted a number of key urban design issues namely;

- Poor sense of arrival and lack of “centre” to the Falls Creek Village- “The I am here moment”
- A lack of road hierarchy and the meandering access roads creates poor village legibility and orientation. First time visitors struggle to understand the layout and orientate themselves
- Reliance upon oversnow transport in winter for accommodation transfers
- Lack of pedestrian infrastructure and general lack of public realm spaces within the village – places where the local community can meet and share activities

The Town Centre Plaza is located to capitalise on its impressive views across the Valley and its orientation ensures it receives maximum sunlight. The Town Centre Precinct extends and consolidates the existing role of Slalom Plaza as the Main Street and centre of commercial activity in the Village due to the location of several key facilities here.

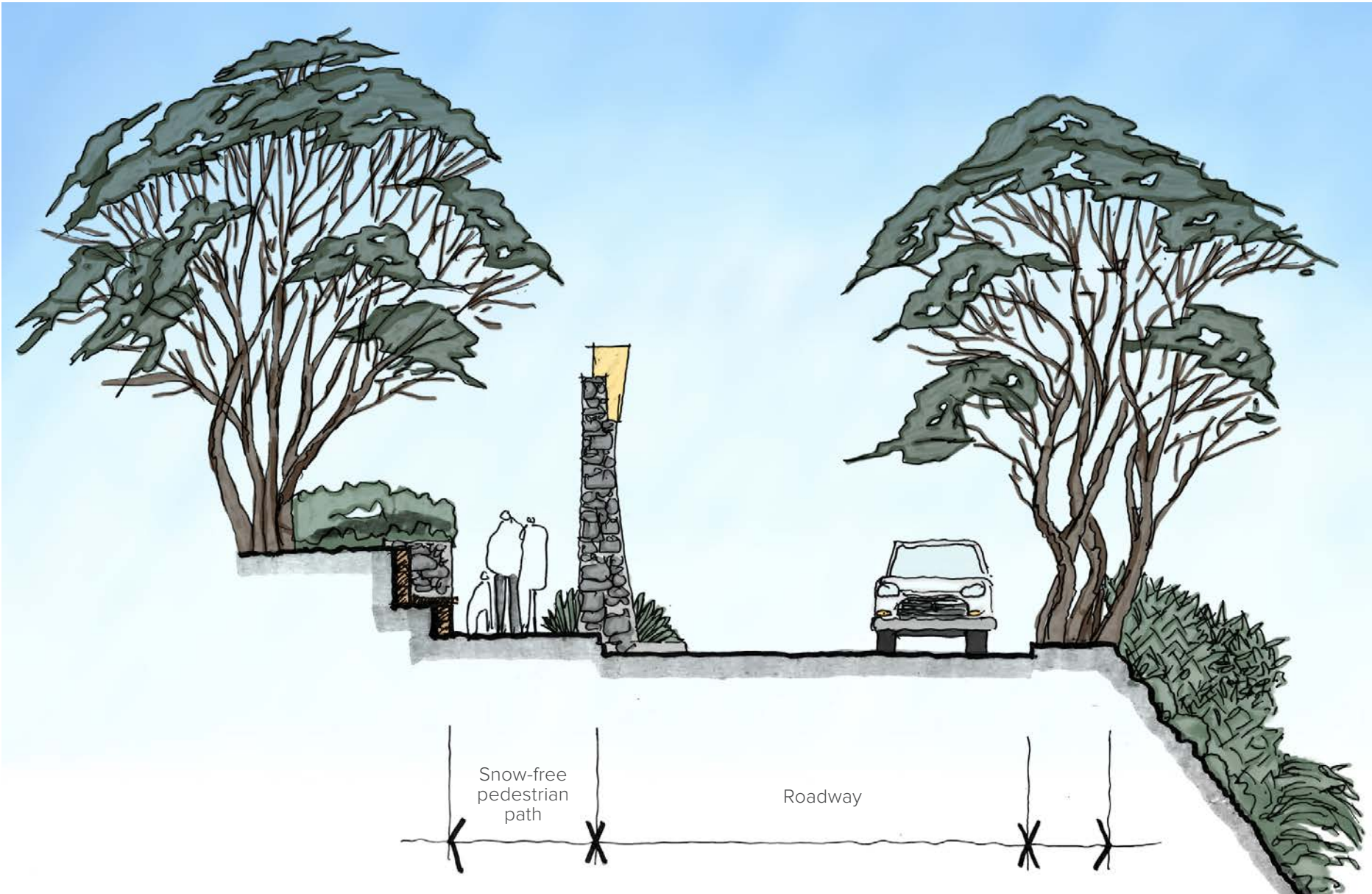


FIG 34. TYPICAL 'VILLAGE WALK' SECTION



The Town Centre precinct is complemented by the use of a secondary smaller, quieter, pedestrian friendly and community precinct, the Village Heart. Being along the key pedestrian route ensures that the Village Heart becomes a mid-way 'stop off', a non-commercial oriented, small scale public space for the community and for visitors traveling between the family focused, day visitor and large-group oriented 'Village Bowl' Precinct and the rest of the Village.

The Falls Creek Village Masterplan seeks to implement a number of initiatives that will continue to build the characteristics of a functioning year-round, village and alpine community, encourage repeat visitation and support growth in the permanent population. Significant Masterplan actions include:

- A clearer village 'structure' where key activity locations (precincts) are supported by appropriate infrastructure
- Establishing a sense of arrival at the Gully and defining a "Town Centre" based around Slalom Plaza
- Defining a Village "heart" with a community and public realm focus
- Using the Village "heart" as a "spoke" to connect all other village precincts
- Making the road arrival experience a 'wow' factor
- Defining a road hierarchy, through the implementation of a "winter loop" road
- Separating pedestrians and vehicles and addressing existing safety problems
- Creating a pedestrian spine linking Slalom Plaza with the Village Bowl- maintained snow free in winter
- Creating a more pedestrian friendly and communally focused village
- Reducing the functional and visual impact of 'back of house' services and infrastructure. The Village, the people and the landscape are the qualities which will define the visitor experience within the Village.

A key driver of the Masterplan is to improve public realm focus and pedestrian priority, creating another "layer" to Falls Creek that will make it a "great place" to live and visit throughout the year. In support of this, future development at Falls Creek should seek to:

- Create a more pedestrian friendly environment and reduce the reliance upon vehicles within the village- pedestrian priority, additional paths, stairs and ramp access
- Create a range of visually cohesive and physically "linked" public spaces of varying sizes (seating nodes, small gathering spaces, informal plaza areas, green spaces etc) to encourage interaction and communal activity
- Ensure that the public realm interface is addressed in all new development or redevelopment of existing facilities- ensure active frontages, streetscape activation, accessibility, surveillance etc.
- Design to take advantage of key view-lines to the surrounding natural setting
- Ensure that future development improves village legibility and orientation
- Reinforce the use of a consistent palette of built-form materials, to provide visual cohesion throughout the village- Glenrowan granite, galvanised and stainless steel, cohesive use of colour
- Taking into account snow-shed, encourage private realm verandas, patios and decks to overlook the streetscape and public realm spaces to improve activation
- Avoid visual clutter- minimise unnecessary elements and signage within the public realm
- Reinforce the public realm and new public spaces through the use of a cohesive and robust range of street furniture, landscape elements and lighting
- Review of the existing design and siting guidelines should be undertaken to ensure that they have been successfully implemented and reflect current best-practice

PLANNING & GOVERNANCE

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Falls Creek was established as an Alpine Resort under the Alpine Resorts Act 1983.

Under the Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997, the responsible Minister (currently the Minister for Energy, Environment & Climate Change) appoints the Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Board (the Board) who in turn is responsible for the operation, administration and promotion of the Resort.

Falls Creek Resort Management (FCRM) is the business entity of the Board and is responsible for carrying out the day to day operation of the Resort and delivering the strategies of the Board.

FCRM is responsible for delivering and maintaining core Resort services and infrastructure including water, waste, waste water and the maintenance and development of local government assets such as roads, car parks and environmental assets. FCRM is responsible for monitoring water quality and geotechnical stability.

Additionally FCRM is responsible for the provision of a range of services necessary to operate, maintain and develop the alpine resort including Ski Patrol, the administration of approximately 110 Crown Leases, multiple licenses and permits, snow clearing, cross country grooming, transport, destinational marketing and web site management.

The Alpine Resorts Coordinating Council (ARCC) is a statutory authority also defined under the Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997. The ARCC reports directly to the Minister for Energy, Environment & Climate Change.

- The ARCC is responsible for a range of functions including but not limited to:
- planning for and facilitating the establishment, development, promotion, management and use of alpine resorts
 - undertaking research into alpine resort issues
 - liaising with and encouraging the co-operation of all State and local government authorities, industries, communities and other persons involved in the development, promotion, management and use of alpine resorts
 - co-ordinating, in conjunction with Tourism Victoria (established under the Tourism Victoria Act 1992) the overall promotion of alpine resorts
 - attracting investment for the improvement of alpine resorts

FCRM works closely with a number of State Government Departments and agencies including The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEJTR), Parks Victoria and Regional Development Victoria.

DEJTR are the responsible planning authority for developments within the Resort. DEJTR authorise planning and development through the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme. FCRM operates as a referral authority in this regard.

FCRM had a range of responsibilities in relation to the development of the Masterplan. These responsibilities include setting the strategic direction of the plan, risk management and development of an appropriate framework to support facilitation of future public and private investment.

PLANNING FOR FALLS CREEK

- The Falls Creek Resort Master Plan 2016 has been prepared with regard to the background policy and planning controls of the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme. In order to ensure that the key initiatives and strategies of the Masterplan are delivered in a timely manner, the key policies and planning controls will require relevant modifications and updates, in particular:
- Amendments are required to the Falls Creek Strategic Statement to reflect key issues and objectives identified within the Masterplan.
 - Revisions are required to the existing Schedule to the Design and Development Overlay to ensure that the key visions of the Masterplan are acknowledged and addressed.
- The Masterplan will be included as a reference document to the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme to provide a strategic framework for the future planning and development of the Falls Creek Village and related precinct.
- The list of projects discribed in this masterplan are subject to further investigation only and their inclusion in this masterplan 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.



FALLS CREEK PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The planning approvals system at Falls Creek operates within the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme controls.

Individual land use and development proposals must be prepared to address the key policy, zone and overlay planning controls.

At present the planning controls at Falls Creek comprise; a planning policy Vision statement, the 2004 Falls Creek Village Strategic Framework Plan, Schedule 1 to the Comprehensive Development Zone and a series of planning overlays addressing design, environment and bushfire permission requirements.

In Clause 21.02-2 of the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme, the current Vision for Falls Creek has been established through the 2009-2012 'Falls Creek Alpine Resort Management Corporate Plan'. The vision is to achieve 'Australia's most enjoyable and environmentally responsible all season alpine resort'. A series of aims and objectives, as well as the 2004 Strategic Framework Plan, detail how this will be achieved.

The 2016 Falls Creek Masterplan has been prepared to review and refresh the long term vision for Falls Creek in accordance with the Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan 2012. Once approved it will inform any subsequent planning scheme amendment to update the current Falls Creek planning vision statements and the 2004 Strategic Framework Plan. The specific content of the amendment will include text updates to current policy provisions as well as updates to the current plans.

A key requirement to implement the 2016 masterplan will be the preparation and public consideration of an amendment to the current planning scheme. Accordingly the text and plans in clause 21.02-2 need to be updated to guide the staged achievements of the revised strategic outcomes.

In particular the modified text and plans will establish the new vision and provide clear guidance to subsequent staging and individual planning decisions.

In regard to the existing Comprehensive Development Zone Schedule 1 controls, these are necessarily broad and enable a wide range of proposals to be considered. It is unlikely that specific land use changes will be required to the current controls; however this can be assessed in detail through the preparation of the amendment to the current controls. In relation to the current Design and Development Overlay controls, they will need to be reviewed to ensure the vision of the approved masterplan can be appropriately delivered through future development proposals.

As with the current planning controls, any future amendment to update them should set the vision and guide how it will be achieved, rather than setting specific criteria or caps on activity in each of the key precincts.

In regional locations such as Falls Creek, it is important to ensure that the planning system is robust, but not so restrictive as to limit future proposals which will support the vision to achieve an active and vibrant year round tourism focussed resort.

Planning schemes can also address potential funding sources. This is usually done by way of development levies or contributions attributable to new growth or uses of greater intensity. Area wide schemes to assist with funding key infrastructure are usually created through rating, leasehold or body corporate mechanisms to ensure the required infrastructure can be delivered to achieve the longer term strategic aims and vision for key areas and activities.

This masterplan recommends that the Board further examine the funding opportunities through both the planning scheme processes and the leasehold rates and charges system.

NATIVE VEGETATION PROVISIONS

Nestled within the Bogong High Plains Alpine National Park, Falls Creek Alpine Resort hosts significant ecological values for species and communities contiguous across the Bogong High Plains.

Management of environmental assets is prioritised through the operational and strategic planning for resort operations.

In 2012 the FCRM released a groundbreaking Biodiversity Management Strategy (“BMS”) for the Resort, the first of its kind for a Victorian Government Agency.

The BMS provided the first detailed quantification and qualified assessment of all environmental assets and values within the Resort. The BMS references the significant values against the operational and development needs of the Resort in a detailed risk matrix which provides a prescriptive management action table and Key Performance Indicators to monitor long-term variation.

On a landscape scale the Resort has 29% of vegetation communities existing above the treeline which are classified as true alpine ecosystems.

The Falls Creek BMS identifies 19 Ecological Vegetation Classes (“EVC”), of which three are listed under the Environmental Protection for Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (“EPBC”) and two under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (“FFG”). A further 10 have rare or threatened conservation status.

The Resort has 80% of the EVC communities described for alpine Victoria.

These EVC provide habitat for:

- 2 EPBC/FFG listed mammals
- 2 EPBC/FFG and 2 FFG listed reptiles
- 1 EPBC/FFG listed Tree Frog (not observed within the Resort)
- 2 FFG listed stoneflies

Additionally the Resort has 42 rare or threatened vascular plant species which comprise:

- One EBPC listed species
- Three FFG listed species
- 38 species on the DELWP Advisory List.

The habitat hectare method is a site based assessment which measures the condition of native vegetation with reference to a benchmark for the same vegetation type. The condition combines with the area, to determine the amount of habitat hectares in a patch of vegetation.¹

The overall health of the EVC’s in the Resort is 0.89 Habitat Hectares (“Hha”) using the assessment criteria from Permitted Clearing of Native Vegetation: Biodiversity Assessment Guidelines, DELWP. This assessment indicates that ski field development has had a measurable, though not significantly deleterious, effect on the key environmental values in the Resort.

The removal of native vegetation in the Resort is subject to approval by DELWP under the provisions of the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme and the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. Additionally removal of native vegetation identified in the Environment Protection for Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 is controlled by the Federal Department of Environment.

Development proposals involving the removal of native vegetation must comply with policy requirements and planning approvals as required by State and Federal legislation.

The risk of spreading weeds and pathogens throughout the Resort through the development of the Masterplan will be minimised through the monitoring and assessment cycle of the Biodiversity Strategy and development and adherence of appropriate Site Environment Management Plans in accordance with the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme. Strict protocols on the movement of soil and vehicle hygiene will be continued to be managed through the Falls Creek Hawkweed Soil Movement Policy.

Ongoing management of weeds will be managed through compliance with statutory obligations in the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994, the North East Regional Catchment Strategy and the local Biodiversity Strategy.

Key Partnerships with adjacent land authorities including Parks Victoria, the Alpine Shire and North East Catchment Management Authority will continue to underpin bioregion responses to the eradication and control of key environmental weeds.

ASSESSMENT OF THREATS & PROTECTION OF VALUES

Masterplan impacts on the environment are delineated into two broad areas:

- Operational impacts for services delivered from existing and future infrastructure
- Implementation impacts for the development of future infrastructure

Negative impacts on environmental values may include habitat fragmentation, introduction and migration of weeds, soil movement and sedimentation, introduction of pathogens, access vectors for feral animals and pollutants.

The development of the native vegetation component of the Falls Creek Resort Master Plan 2016 has been a three step process:

1. Quantification of environmental assets and values
2. Assessment of key risks and threatening processes
3. Planning of future infrastructure to minimise impacts on key environmental values

Two broad environmental areas provide the foundation principals for long-term planning in the resort:

- Areas of EPBC Act communities and species – these areas will be excluded from development within the Resort
- Areas of FFG Act communities and species – these areas will be treated as environmentally significant. Any future development plans will weigh the quality and extent of the area against the impacts of operation or development. These areas are defined on the map Flora & Fauna Guarantee Areas and Environmental Protection for Biodiversity Conservation Area, refer to Appendix E, Figures 39-41.



Within the Village these areas are mapped in the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme as Environmental Significance Overlays (“ESO”) Schedules 1 & 2. Accordingly controls over the planning and development within the ESO areas are subject to the permitted uses and regulation under the Scheme.

A foundation principal for any development located in the Village is to avoid all areas identified in the ESO (Appendix E, Figure 39)

NATIVE VEGETATION PRECINCT PLAN & RESORT OFFSET STRATEGY

The development of a Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (NVPP) is a natural progression for managing the Resort’s ecological continuity and strategic planning. Offset areas will be determined based on the location and extent of future developments in the Masterplan and conversely areas for native vegetation removal will be informed by areas available for offsetting.

Proposed areas requiring native vegetation removal have been identified in Appendix E, Inset to Figure 41.

Areas for native vegetation retention in the Village have been informed through habitat identification mapping for species and communities in the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme. Additionally areas of stream complex and degraded alpine bog have also been included for areas of retention.

Native vegetation identified for removal has been identified as EVC 43: Snow Gum Woodland through a study of the vegetation of the CDZ1 area in 2001 completed by Ecology Australia Pty Ltd.

Offsetting species in EVC 43 will be delivered through the development of a Resort Offset Management Plan that is currently under development in partnership with DELWP.

Securing native vegetation offsets within the Resort has proved challenging following reforms to the Permitted Clearing of Native Vegetation Guidelines, DELWP, 2013.

Solutions are currently being developed to provide a mechanism for securing offsets both within the Resort and outside the Resort through delivery by a third party agency.

The implementation table (refer table in Implementation & Investment Strategy) outlines the priority and timing of development to ensure offset provision caters for the most important or urgent developments.

On assessment, some proposed developments may not progress due to their environmental or biodiversity impact.

Proposed developments may result in the need for vegetation removal and if approved, native vegetation offsets will be required. These offset requirements will be determined based on the location and extent of future developments proposed in the Masterplan.

The proposed developments have not yet determined these offset requirements and one of the factors in determining if they are able to proceed will be (amongst other factors) the ability to source required offsets.

The identification of an area that provides an internal solution is indicated in map Internal Offset Area, refer to Appendix E ,Figure 41

Securing gains in this area has been assessed against the following criteria:

- Like-for-like species and communities for high risk pathway values under the assessment guidelines
- Strategic location of gains in proximity to other key environmental areas, such as the Alpine National Park
- Likelihood for development of the area in the very long-term.

Further quantification of offset value will be undertaken once a mechanism for utilisation is developed.

¹ The State of Victoria, DELWP, *Habitat Hectare Assessment Fact Sheet*, Melbourne, 2014

GEOTECHNICAL SUMMARY

In accordance with ensuring the Resort is both safe for guests and development, Falls Creek has a mature geotechnical programme.

The geotechnical programme at Falls Creek, as with all Victorian Alpine Resorts, resulted from the tragic landslide in Thredbo Village in 1997.

Following this event the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (SMEC) was commissioned to undertake a detailed geotech risk assessment for Falls Creek, which was based primarily on existing ground water and slope gradient. The resulting report categorised all areas of the Village into risk zones and actioned a Monitoring and Works Programme to be established in 2000.

As a result of the SMEC assessment every location in the Village was categorised as very low, low, medium, high or very high in terms of latent geotechnical risk shown in map Fig.28 – Geotechnical Risk Categories.

The Works Programme sequentially works through a prioritised list of projects to reduce the risk in key locations throughout the Village. The works programme has been delivered annually since 2000 and is funded by the State Government of Victoria.

The Monitoring Programme ensures that latent risk and fluctuations in ground water are incorporated into strategic works planning to further mitigate risk through the monitoring of over 60 horizontal bores that record both the volume and rate of groundwater flow throughout the Village.

Additionally all Resort building developments incorporate appropriate risk mitigation measures in accordance with the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme. All developments include site specific geotechnical assessment incorporating quantified risk against development proposals.

Proposed Masterplan developments have been placed to ensure that the geotechnical risk will be managed to ensure the safe development and operation of the Resort.



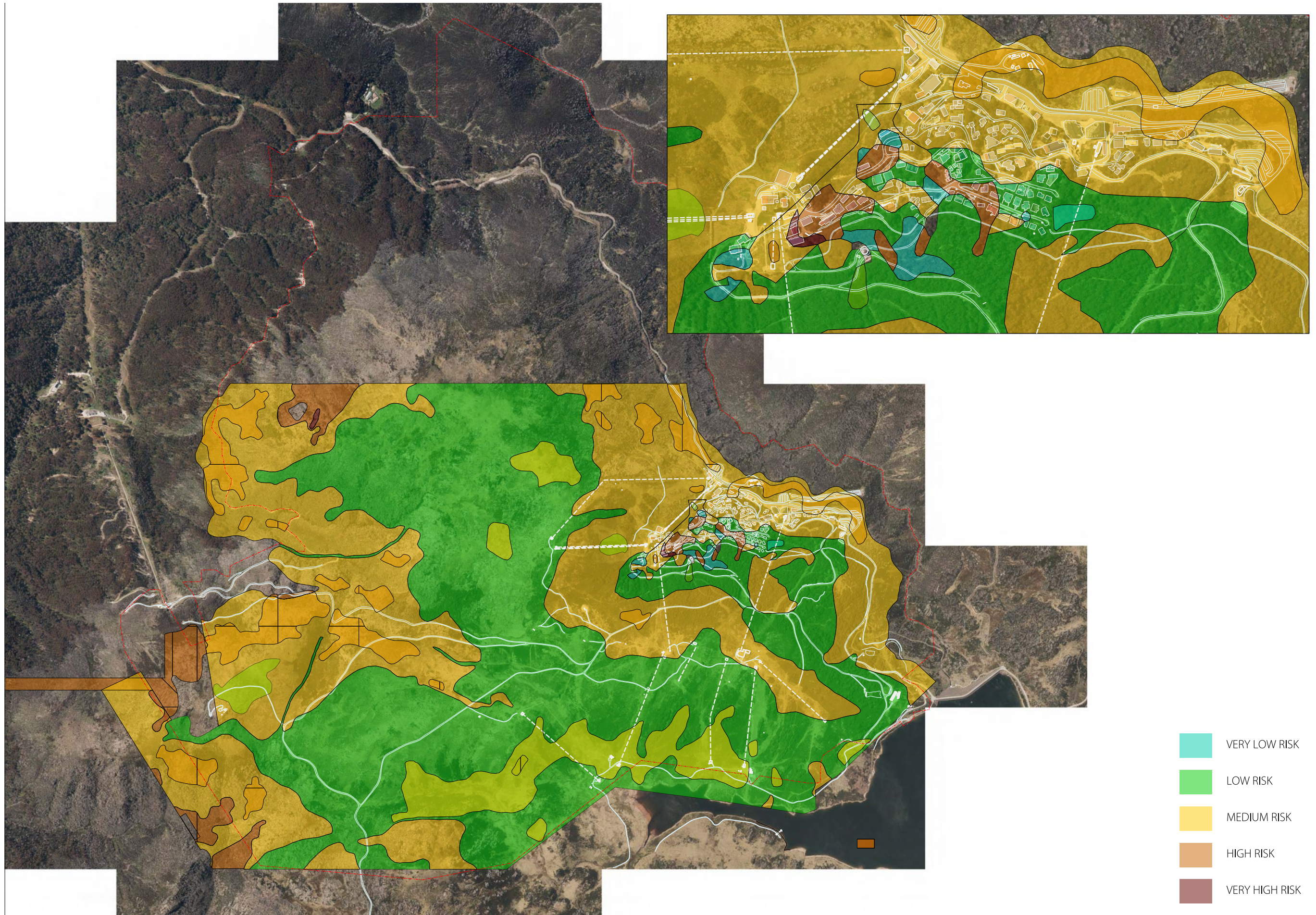


FIG 35. GEOTECHNICAL RISK CATEGORIES

PART FIVE
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

The following quotes and paraphrasing are provided to share some of the feedback from the consultation and help define the key issues and approach to the Masterplan:

STAGE 1 CONSULTATION FINDINGS – AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2014

Activities

- Grow visits and have more businesses open during the summer months
- ‘we have to look like a summer destination and not a winter resort in the summer’ (resident, workshop).
- Better summer offerings and programming activities
- Build stronger relationships with the Alpine National Park
- ‘build community development and have a town square, affordable housing, car parking, and services’ (resident, workshop) to assist in ‘increasing the number of permanent residents and making Falls Creek more attractive as a place to live’ (resort partner, written feedback).

Finding The Front Door

- Improve and celebrate the sense of arrival
- ‘combine a day shelter, toilets, café, information, perhaps a gallery and museum, to become a focus for visitors directly from Bogong High Plains road’ (visitor, written feedback)
- ‘we need to provide a sense of arrival to the village for guests with very clear and concise signage with clear and easily understood parking options, whether you are an alpine skier arriving for the day or a family arriving for the week’ (business owner, email)
- ‘improve parking and the ease of access and arriving and leaving’ (visitor, workshop)
- ‘develop an appropriate street hierarchy for the village’ (business owner, workshop)

Village Access & Circulation

- Resolving the safety and snow quality issues with ski-in/ski-out while retaining a point of difference
- ‘do not take the snow off the roads, it’s one of the villages best features’ (resident, written feedback)
- ‘the ski-in/ski-out product needs a rethink, there is a very significant safety issue which requires segregation’ (employee, workshop)
- ‘the Oversnow transport which is usually a confused mass of people and baggage carts and involves large waiting times in uncomfortable conditions’ (visitor, written feedback)
- the resort can already not accommodate enough vehicles during peak times, particularly for the growth day/off mountain visitors, increased parking spaces or alternative transport arrangements are needed’ (employee, online forum).

Infrastructure, Essential Services & Back Of House

- The physical layout of the village needs strategic direction and planning
- ‘we need simple land use planning, the village is poorly laid out for refuse, waste and transport’ (business owner, workshop),
- ‘remove the “fractions” it should be one mountain, one vision’ (business owner, workshop),
- ‘we need more integration for services such as for lift passes and transportation’ (employee, drop in) and ‘we must have a seamless guest experience’ (employee, workshop).
- ‘we must focus on guest retention’ (business owner, workshop) and ‘the guests are number one and without them we wouldn’t be here, if they don’t have a good experience they won’t come back’ (resident, drop in).

Community Assets, Public Space, Amenity, Heritage & Character

- More public space and day-to-date amenity is required
- Perceived lack of community facilities and multi-functional spaces
- ‘we must have a Community Centre or a Village Centre’ (business owner, workshop)

- ‘we need a big, covered multi-functional space’ (business owner, stakeholder dinner)
- ‘more public open space and a green area of flat space’ (visitor, drop in),
- the village ambiance needs improvement such as ambient lighting, rock-walling and footpaths, all these things have to be continually developed’ (business owner, stakeholder dinner).
- ‘focus on improving the architecture and urban design of the village’
- ‘there are two hearts in the village, the bowl is for the night-time and Slalom Plaza and QT is for the daytime’ (resident, workshop).
- ‘reinvigorate the village bowl to encourage traffic and relevance’ (employee, workshop),

STAGE 2 CONSULTATION FINDINGS – NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2014

Observations

Outlined below are the observations from the Stage 2 consultation period.

- Overall participants appeared generally supportive of the Draft Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014.
- In particular there was common support from participants for the proposed changes to the Village Bowl, the decision to not increase commercial bed numbers and the shared walkway on Falls Creek Road.
- Participants were commonly concerned with the proposed one way winter loop road impact, in particular the impact it is perceived to have on noise and amenity within the village.
- Participants were also concerned with the road creating more traffic and increasing travel time.
- Participants were concerned with the two-week consultation period and felt that it was insufficient time to adequately review and provide meaningful feedback on the Draft Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014.
- A letter of general endorsement for the Draft Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014 was received from Falls Creek Ski Lifts Pty Ltd. This letter was posted prominently on the public engagement website on 28 November, two days after the formal launch. Analysis of website traffic indicates that over 365 visitors would have had direct access to this prominent document on the landing page. No written submissions referred to the letter or its endorsement.

Key Findings

Outlined below is a summary of the key findings from the two-week consultation period.

The key findings have been grouped into key themes representing the ideas and issues that received the majority of feedback.

Falls Creek Village

Overall participants appeared supportive of the Draft Falls Creek Village Masterplan 2014.

Participants’ feedback on the master plan frequently stated their support for the plan to build upon the existing community of Falls Creek Village in particular the concepts of an activity focused alpine community and enhancing Falls Creek as an authentic alpine village.

Feedback included: ‘the Master Plan will create a village with all the ingredients of a small town, where the village community will thrive and will be enticed to live there throughout the year’ (submission); and ‘support in principle the framework and initiatives to build an activity focused alpine community and enhance Falls Creek as an authentic alpine village’ (submission); and support for the Master Plan ‘particularly its focus on leveraging its assets to attract the nature-based, health and wellness and the education tourism market’ (submission).

One participant wrote ‘we appreciate the analysis and foresight that are evident in the Master Plan 2014 document. We regard it as an important step in developing a sensible plan for a functional and sustainable resort that is able to serve the interests of the many stakeholders that make up the Falls Creek community’ (submission).

Participants were commonly supportive of the decision to not increase commercial bed numbers.

Participant’s comments included ‘I am impressed with the concept and design of the proposed Master Plan, particularly the agreement to not increase the built footprint and instead to concentrate on improving what we have (submission); and ‘the capping of the resorts bed numbers is prudent and an approach we support’ (submission).

The Master Plan Response

Consultation comments relating to the Falls Creek Village Masterplan were positive and did not require any changes to the overall approach to long term Village development.

The Village Bowl

In particular participants repeatedly expressed support for the vision to re-establish the Village Bowl as the day family, entertainment and event hub of Falls Creek.

Some comments included ‘the village bowl concept is wonderful. ‘A rethink of this area into an amphitheatre and a snow play is wonderful’ (submission); ‘re-invigoration investment of the village bowl precinct to include a family activity based focus’ (submission); and one participant commended the Master Plan saying ‘the re-invigoration of the village bowl in the Draft Master Plan. This is a matter that we have raised for many years and we support’ (submission).

Additionally participants often had some suggestions for improving the Village Bowl, these included: ‘some small children learn to ski areas as this would be beneficial as it is one of the few sheltered places on terrible days. It is easy and safe to get to in inclement weather and parents don’t need to battle a chairlift’ (submission); and ‘the bowl needs a viable attraction and cafes, shops open all year round’ (online forum).

The Master Plan Response

Consultation comments were overwhelmingly positive. Suggested additions are consistent with the Master Plan approach and are already included in the design and development concept. No change to the Master Plan is required.

Road Linkages

The proposal of a one way winter loop road was often mentioned in participant’s feedback.

In particular participants felt that the traffic using the loop would impact on noise and amenity within the village. Specific feedback included ‘the alignment of the proposed loop road concept, particularly the proposed connection between Schuss Street and Falls Creek Road will impact on traffic, noise, amenity and safety of vehicles in close proximity to our accommodation building’ (submission); and concern that the road joining Arlberg Street to Parallel Street will result in ‘substantial increase in oversnow transport traffic immediately adjacent to our lodge, with a consequent negative impact on residents due to vehicle noise and headlights’ (submission).

Participants were also concerned that the one way winter loop road results in more traffic and additional travel time.

One participant said ‘the one way road system causes more traffic because it sends even the shortest journey completely around the village’ (online forum) and another commented ‘every trip in the village, be it ATS, shuttle or private vehicles will result in a journey of about two kilometres i.e. the entire loop, even though one’s destination might only be going a small distance away’ (online forum).

The Master Plan Response
The Final Master Plan has addressed many consultation concerns about the effects of a one way access system on travel time by adopting a modified approach to the one way access concept. Changes to the proposed design include:

- Developing a two way road loop around the town centre to simplify traffic movement in the highest use area and eliminate general traffic movement through the town centre pedestrian plaza.
- Retaining the Slalom Street connection in the Village Heart area to allow an ‘upper’ and ‘lower’ loop access system and for smaller clockwise loops in the lower village area. This will significantly reduce travel distances / times for most village locations and improve the simplicity and legibility of the network.

Comments relating to the effects of proposed access links on specific locations (Arlberg and Parallel Streets and between Schuss Street and Falls Creek Road) have been considered, but no changes to the Master Plan concept have been made, on the basis that these are critical links in any new one way access system, and that the overall long term benefits of the one way system outweigh the site specific effects. These benefits include:

- Significantly improved safety for vehicles and pedestrians
- The creation of a major snow free pedestrian link through the village connecting major activity areas and allowing safe day and night movement. This path system is made possible by the reallocation of road space.
- The creation of the Village Heart setting that will support community use and special seasonal activities.

Shared Walkway on Falls Creek Road

Participants frequently provided feedback on movements in the village.

Suggestions were made to improve pedestrian walkways with feedback including ‘extend the pedestrian shared walkway down Falls Creek Road to meet BHP Road’ (briefing) and ‘continue the pedestrian strip for the entire Falls Creek Road as this would assist pedestrians getting to their accommodation, particularly at the lower end’ (submission).

It was also suggested that the shared walkway on Falls Creek Road would need extra lighting and ‘additional walkways would be necessary to connect the affordable and employee housing in the Gully and encourage more of a connection with the rest of the village otherwise these proposed housing areas become somewhat segregated from the rest of the village’ (submission).

The Master Plan Response
Comments suggest an extension of the major pedestrian walkway system to link the Transit Area and Gully Gateway precincts with the Village Bowl Precinct via Falls Creek Road. This suggestion has been incorporated into the Final Master Plan concept on the basis that it:

- Is consistent with the Master Plan objective to maximise pedestrian access and safety (day and night) within the village.
- Improves access to employee and affordable housing areas and safety for late night movement related to Village employees working in the various commercial and activity hubs.

APPENDIX B

MARKET ANALYSIS

TOURISM TRENDS

Tourism trends arguably provide the greatest level of significance in determining the future of Falls Creek and its 2014 Masterplan.

Existing visitation of approximately 500,000 people per annum appears sound with winter being the engine that drives the economy of the resort, supported by a growing green season market.

Analysis of tourism trends (particularly over the last decade), indicates a seismic shift in visitation habits, customer preferences and consumer behaviour. These trends have redefined tourism generally with specific impact on a tourism experience in the Victorian Alps.

For Falls Creek, the shift in tourism trends has had three key impacts on our trading environment:

- We operate a destination based business model in a short stay market paradigm
- Our market is supplemented by a small but potentially viable local market of day trippers
- Our core industry – snow sports is classified globally as mature, if not in slight decline

Studies undertaken by FCRM over the last five years have demonstrated a decline in the average per night stay in winter from 4.95 nights to approximately 3.65 nights. This trend has followed hand in hand with the growth in internet use, the rapid emergence of online bookings, consumer demand linked directly to visible snowfall and competitive domestic and international tourism product.

Several studies and strategic documents provide considerable insights and guidance for Falls Creek in terms of tourism trends; most notably:

- Victoria's Regional Tourism Strategy 2013-2016 and
- Tourism North East Destination Management Plan 2013

From FCRM's perspective, prevailing tourism trends establish a platform for optimism and long term sector growth. In considering tourism trends, the following key statistics are considered valuable:

- The current bed utilisation rate in the North East of Victoria is approximately 38% on a per annum basis. By comparison, Falls Creek is running at approximately 22% (estimated) utilisation. The Falls Creek trend is naturally skewed by a compact (high density) winter period and therefore there is a major opportunity to increase occupancy over the remaining 8 months of the year. As an example, it is understood the SCODY 3Peaks Challenge (long weekend) now delivers close to 3% of total occupancy for some Resort stakeholders.
- Tourism Victoria reports the average length of stay for domestic visitors is approximately 3 nights.
- Regional Victoria attracts 70% of its visitors between the ages of 25-44 (35%) and 45-64 (35%).
- Lifestyle Leaders account for 33% of domestic overnight leisure visitors to Regional Victoria. Lifestyle Leaders are defined by their desire to experience new things. They generally decide between multiple destinations when they consider taking a short break. There is a strong ability to influence them with focused and motivating marketing communication.
- Similarly, a market sector known as the "Habituals" are travelers who come to North East Victoria each year, sometimes many times a year. They tend to return to a consistent location and often travel with the same group. This segment makes up approximately 28% of existing visitors to the region. Both Lifestyle Leaders and Habituals are primarily self-drive markets.

Findings from the Tourism North East 2013 product lifecycle analysis, trends and market research established the following destination management strategies:

- Maintain and grow the snow market
- Grow cycle tourism to a sustainable ownership position
- Maintain yield from food, wine and beer while rejuvenating or creating niche offers
- Grow facilitation and yield from nature based experiences

- Reinvent cultural heritage experiences to meet visitor expectation
- Investigate ability to develop more multi-faceted tourism product experiences
- Maximise visitor information servicing through digital excellence
- Develop international ready product and maximise connection to Australian Alps National Landscapes program
- Change accommodation profile in demand
- Ensure visitor servicing remains relevant in a changing environment

Tourism Victoria has noted that domestic visitors frequently "travel for their passions" – skiing, cooking, cycling, nature based experiences etc.

Tourism is a significant industry for Regional Victoria, generating \$10.9 billion to the economy and employed over 109,000 people in 2011-12 (including both direct and indirect impacts).

Regional Victoria is more reliant on tourism than Melbourne, contributing 13.9 per cent of total Gross Regional Product (GRP) and 12.8 per cent of employment, compared to 3.2 per cent and 4.5 per cent respectively for Melbourne. The Victorian Alps contribute \$650 million in revenue to the State economy, employ 6,500 people and are considered a major regional market sector in its own right.

Tourism has strong links to other sectors in the economy and has helped fuel investment in new infrastructure and attractions in regional Victoria and provides opportunities for regional areas to diversify their economies and generate new skilled employment prospects.

Tourism generally is becoming reliant on online research, bookings and information. The influence of the internet in terms of information gathering and content booking is now arguably the most significant factor driving visitation.

Customer expectation now combines the need for tourism locations to deliver a defined level of service/experience as well as value for money. Key tools such as Trip Advisor have become the "real time" score cards that drive repeat and new visitation.

In light of prevailing tourism trends, it is undeniable that the traditional 5, 7 or 14 day snow holiday is a thing of the past”. We must all embrace the changing dynamics of the industry in order to develop a new model for success.

In the context of Falls Creek’s destination driven location, the need for the development of a “Compelling Offer” becomes significant. In considering the impact of these trends the following comments are considered relevant:

- “Ski and Snowboard Resorts industry is highly vulnerable not only to spending patterns but also climate change. The industry is also recognizing that there must be a response to new tourism where the behaviour and values of their customers are changing”
- “If we are to re-attract the destination visitor, we have to consider the shift in expectations and prevailing trends.”
- “Expectations of the new visitor include a different level of access and trust of information in an online world, demand ready access to mobile technology, less inclined to accept mass accommodation with a clear preference for personal facilities, expect additional/value added activities, are multicultural and multigenerational...”

GENERAL LEISURE TRENDS & OPPORTUNITIES

Existing and potential markets for Falls Creek include active sports participants, health and wellness tourists, nature-based, drive tourists and educational tourists.

Issues and trends relevant to Falls Creek from the ABS surveys include the following:

- Ice/Snow Sports ranks 26th in terms of overall participation, with an estimated 138,700 participants in 2011-12. The number of local participants declined by 10.1% between 2005-06 and 2011-12, in keeping with world-wide trends which show snow sports are mature or in decline.
- By contrast, Fitness/Gym (3,089,300 participants), Cycling / BMX (1,366,100) and Jogging / Running (1,360,370) are very large and expanding markets.

- Canoeing / Kayaking have slightly more participants (141,000) than Ice/ Snow Sports, but is also increasing rapidly.
- Other outdoor activities including Bushwalking (436,500) and Fishing (247,200) are much larger markets than Ice / Snow Sports, but in decline.

While the dominant organised winter team sport in Victoria (Australian Rules football) is declining, the number of participants Australia-wide (241,500) exceeds Ice/Snow Sports by more than 100,000.

Specialised health and wellness activities, namely Yoga (349,100) and Pilates (190,600), are both larger markets than Ice/Snow Sports, and experienced substantial growth between the two surveys.

With traditional winter markets mature or in decline, a clear focus for future growth at Falls Creek is non-winter activities. The natural attractions of Falls Creek are well-suited to a wide range of active outdoor pursuits in spring, summer and autumn.

The market for nature-based and educational tourism is well-established. As noted in Table 1, Bushwalking is the 10th most popular physical recreation in Australia, more than three times larger than Ice/Snow Sports. In this context, Falls Creek offers a diversity of alpine environments, it is the gateway to the Bogong High Plains, and has an established village which is an ideal place to launch independent or guided walking trips.

In addition to outdoor activities, the alpine environment of Falls Creek is potentially well-suited to more relaxing and leisurely pastimes such as spa therapies, recovery, detox and rejuvenation. The popularity of Yoga and Pilates, as demonstrated in Table 1, is part of an overall trend towards healthier lifestyles.

Several reports have concluded that the market in Australia for health and well-being tourism, although small, is expanding. For example, “Health Tourism in Australia: Supply, Demand and Opportunities” (Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre 2010) estimated that, nationally, 590 Wellness Centres serviced 2.2 million clients, 57% of whom were tourism clients.

At present, the vast majority of Australian health and wellness tourists live in Australia, but nearby Asian countries with rapidly growing middle classes represent a significant market opportunity for the right health and wellness product.

THE STRATEGIC VISION

The Falls Creek Resort Management Board has defined the shared vision for Falls Creek as:

‘A vibrant and distinctive village offering Australia’s most memorable alpine experiences’

The Vision promotes Falls Creek as:

- An intimate and authentic alpine village community
- A community of invested stakeholders – generally small business operators
- A destination offering experiences focused on repeat visitation
- An escape, an adventure or simply a place to relax

KEY DIRECTIONS

The Vision and future economic sustainability will require a place specific approach to management, site planning and business development. This approach will be shaped by a range of factors:

Competition for the leisure market. Falls Creek Resort exists within a competitive and constantly changing leisure and tourism market. It cannot be all things to all people. It must have a point of difference and place special value on businesses and activities that utilise the unique attributes of the Falls Creek setting and the community.

Changes in community perceptions and tourism preferences. Tourism and leisure markets increasingly want a more diverse range of experiences and activities that cater for a range of individual preferences and needs. Generic ‘industry standard’ responses are likely to come under increasing pressure.

The value of authenticity. Unique places and site specific experiences are attractive to contemporary visitor markets and can sustain visitor interest in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

Environmental sustainability. Falls Creek tourism depends on environmental quality and visual amenity. Development must that anticipates environmental and climate change

Social sustainability. Falls Creek is a community as well as a physical setting. The community provides a unique, place specific element that adds to the attraction of the resort and has the potential to a residential environment as well as support four seasons business opportunities and events.

Social change. The Victorian community and the wider tourism population is changing with greater personal wealth, leisure time, changing age and ethnicity profiles, different leisure patterns, expectations for better standards of facilities and services etc. New ideas and creative business concepts will be needed to meet those expectations. Flexibility and changing business models will be a key.

Better connection to regional places. Leisure markets increasingly look for ‘layers of experience’ and connections to the culture of places and regions that are linked to those places.

Staff needs. Alpine resort based employment is a competitive global market. Falls Creek Village must provide a mix of services and facilities (particularly accommodation) to meet a diverse range of market needs and expectations.

Off season tourism. Business development within Falls Creek must recognise the opportunities provided by four seasons tourism and by activities that are linked to the wider Alpine Park setting and the region.

Dedicated funding. Consistency of funding will be important to support consistent upgrading and reinvestment in the attraction.

Economic sustainability. There is a need to diversify the economic base of Falls Creek to sustain the economy of the place and expand the range and texture of the commercial offering. Commercial development in this context

is not driven by volume, but rather by the quality and diversity of commercial activity and the way in which those activities contribute to the social, cultural and natural environment of the place which are essential to its character, the quality of the visitor experience and long term financial success.

IMPERATIVES

The imperatives arising from the vision and strategic goals for Falls Creek include:

1. Creating long-term sustainability for Falls Creek Village as a ‘Place’ through improving the quality of the village infrastructure, developing the sense of community, enhancing its existing operations and establishing a ‘Compelling Offer’, capable of driving new streams of visitation.
2. Moving towards best practice in customer service, safety, environmental management, and logistics.
3. Addressing community needs and values, building a sense of common purpose, and driving business confidence.
4. Developing a significant year-round visitor destination, at least maintaining levels of winter activity and substantially expanding the levels of overnight visitation in non-winter periods.
5. Developing a place where businesses, FCRM and Government can invest with confidence.
6. Developing a town in its own right, with a permanent population of around 400 people or more.

KEY FUTURE USES

Specific initiatives to attract these markets include:

Altitude Training

A key initiative in the master plan is to establish altitude training facilities catering to the needs of professional/amateur sports, community sporting clubs, and the general public interested in improving overall levels of fitness.

The benefits of altitude training are well-researched; however, it is envisaged that Falls Creek should also be marketed as a ‘training getaway’, different from any other training centre in Victoria. Additionally, Falls Creek presents as an ideal altitude training location for Northern Hemisphere athletes/team seeking ‘out of season’ destinations.

After extensive research and consultation with sporting bodies, an altitude training centre has been included in the Master Plan, possibly in dedicated facilities located near Slalom Plaza. This facility could incorporate:

- A four-lane 25-metre swimming pool
- A fully-equipped gymnasium and multi-use sports hall
- Fitness testing equipment/sports medicine facilities
- Altitude hotel/associated treatment facilities
- Massage and recovery rooms
- Meeting rooms with AV capabilities.

As well, the Master Plan has future provision for a flat, open space in the Nordic Bowl to be developed into a small oval with an athletics track. The field would also be widely used during winter for cross country ski events, providing an international standard start/finish line.

No additional accommodation on the mountain is at present planned under this initiative.

The existing features of Falls Creek include road and mountain bike trails and running tracks over varied terrain. These features already attract professional and semi-professional cyclists, mountain bike enthusiasts, and distance/ cross-country runners. Teams from the AFL, NRL and Rugby Union have periodically conducted week-long training camps at Falls Creek as part of pre-season preparations.

However, for Falls Creek to become a training venue of choice for high level sporting groups, facilities must be more sophisticated. A new dedicated training centre should fill the gap in that offer at Falls Creek.

While professional and semi-professional sporting groups have the potential to generate strong revenue streams, these higher-level groups alone will not be enough to support a dedicated altitude training centre. Altitude training at Falls Creek must also have a broader appeal to community sporting clubs, schools and the general public. These groups usually have fewer financial resources, so affordability will be a key to success.

Accordingly, altitude training at Falls Creek should be marketed and targeted towards:

- AFL and other football codes at all levels as part of pre-season preparations.
- Cyclists, including road and mountain bikers. Cycling events around Falls Creek can play a significant role in attracting athletes to dedicated altitude training facilities.
- Runners and tri-athletes. Organised events at Falls Creek will be important to ensure regularity of events and committed participation.
- Rowers, canoers and other water sports, who can also engage in on-water activities on the Rocky Valley Lake.
- During winter, promoting use of the pool and gym to skiers and snow-boarders will be needed to supplement non-winter revenue streams. Additionally, the sports hall could also be used for a range of purposes such as a cinema, display space and community hall.

Key risks to the success of an altitude training centre at Falls Creek include:

- The distance from Melbourne, around 4 ½ hours by car in summer.
- Significant competition in the form of local gyms, pools and sports grounds, which are already in plentiful supply in cities and towns.
- Potentially high costs relative to other training options because of travel costs and facility use costs.

Even in the face of significant competition, a modern and sophisticated altitude training centre at Falls Creek can be successful in increasing non-winter visitation, and contributing to Falls Creek becoming a year-round destination. Targeted marketing and keen pricing will be essential considerations in the planning and operation of an altitude training centre.

Health Tourism and Wellness

Another major initiative incorporated into this master plan is a health tourism and wellness centre, possibly located near Slalom Plaza. The direction of FCRM thinking is towards a centre focusing on ‘improving wellness’ rather than ‘curing illness’.

A health tourism and wellness centre at Falls Creek would build on European and North American trends, where similar facilities are frequently located in alpine areas, taking advantage of the clean air and pristine nature.

The facilities that could be incorporated into a health tourism and wellness centre may include:

- Body and facial beauty treatments (e.g. facials, body wraps)
- Water-based and sweat bathing treatments (e.g. steam baths, spas, whirl pools)
- Salt treatment rooms
- Manual pressure-based therapies (e.g. Swedish, Thai, hot stone massage)
- Manipulative/adjustment-based therapies (e.g. chiropractic, osteopathic)
- Movement therapies (e.g. swimming, aerobics, yoga, pilates, Tai Chi)
- Energy therapies (e.g. healing touch, reiki)
- Meditation (e.g. transcendental, vipassna)
- Nutrition-based (e.g. cooking classes, organic)
- Consultation, diagnostics and treatment rooms
- Counselling and group therapies (e.g. stress management, life coaching)
- Study and learning (e.g. Buddhism)

The competition for this general market in Victoria is significant, comprising spa and health retreats mainly in the Daylesford region and the Mornington Peninsula, as well as a proliferation of small centres in Melbourne. Notwithstanding this competition, these concepts align with the Victorian Government’s tourism focus in the health and wellness space as well as the Department of Health’s plan to restore Victoria to the market leader in Australian health care.

For a health tourism and wellness centre in Falls Creek to be successful, it will need a clear, well-defined and differentiated market positioning. The Resort’s exceptional quality ground water is likely to support this point of difference.

In addition, private sector investment and management expertise will be critical to the success of a health tourism and wellness centre. A possibility is the active involvement of private health insurance, a strategy that is popular and successful in the USA.

The health tourism and wellness centre could also incorporate MICE facilities, and depending on the business model adopted, may include some overnight accommodation, however, with a plentiful supply of accommodation already available at Falls Creek, extra accommodation is unlikely to be required.

Finally, while not to be viewed as a primary goal, long term opportunities to develop an in-bound health tourism market from countries in Asia, the Sub-Continent and the Middle East, should not be ignored.

On initial consideration, the fundamentals for a health tourism and wellness centre at Falls Creek are sound, and have the potential to contribute to increased visitation, particularly in summer. However, these fundamentals need to be tested in a detailed business case/feasibility study. The ultimate test will be the ability of a proposal to attract private sector interest.

Nature-Based and Educational Tourism Hub

As noted earlier, Falls Creek’s natural environment, biodiversity, walking tracks, its gateway location into the Bogong High Plains and established village make it a highly attractive base for nature-based and educational tourism in non-winter periods. This strategy will be underpinned by the development of iconic walks such as the proposed Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing (2015).

Falls Creek already has most of the physical infrastructure to cater for independent or guided nature-based and educational tourism in the summer months. Ample accommodation exists in commercial and club lodges. Existing retail facilities are currently adequate.

The main challenge is to activate market demand in summer to an extent that supports successful trading of accommodation and commercial entities. Nature-based and educational tourism alone will not meet this challenge, but has the potential to contribute positively to the viable, year-round operation of these entities.

With regard to initiatives in the master plan, a community centre to be located in the new pedestrian-friendly Village Heart will assist nature and educational tourism. Library facilities, exhibition spaces and interactive displays can create a central point of interest for tourists in general, and nature/education based tourists in particular.

A potential growth market that Falls Creek could pursue is guided and fully-catered walking tours of the Bogong High Plains, starting and ending in the Falls Creek Village. This style of outdoor experience is increasingly popular in New Zealand with less experienced campers and trekkers.

A nature based focus aligns well with the Parks Victoria Management Plan.

Authentic Australian Alpine Village

Falls Creek is already a compact and intimate village, unlike any other in Victoria's alpine regions. Many of the initiatives in this master plan are to enhance the alpine village experience, particularly in the snow season.

Master plan elements designed to enrich visitor experiences include:

- Revising the role and purpose of Howmans Gap by adopting modern ‘whole of resort’ ticketing technology.
- Streamlining arrival and departure, particularly at peak times, by building a new Transit Hub.
- Improving parking solutions, including replacing open road-based parking with decked undercover parking.
- Creating a new day visitor centre at The Gully Entry, with enhanced access to lifts and snow play areas in a redeveloped Village Bowl.
- Redeveloping the Village Bowl to become a centre for events in summer.

- Creating a Village Heart, including, potentially, a multi-purpose community centre.
- Creating a pedestrian-friendly spine through the entire Village.
- Improving mobility and circulation for skiers, walkers and vehicles.
- Preserving the unique ski-in/ski-out character of the village.
- Centralising commercial/retail activities in a new Town Centre at Slalom Plaza.
- Consolidating cross-country activities at Windy Corner.

These improvements to the Falls Creek Village will enhance the Village in winter, provide a superior customer experience, and encourage repeat visitation.

In non-winter periods, the Village has an entirely different feel. The new commercial Town Centre at Slalom Plaza, the new community-based Village Heart and the redeveloped Village Bowl will create coherent focal points for summer activities.

CONCLUSION

The Master Plan for Falls Creek builds on many years of accumulated experience in operating a highly successful snow-based winter holiday destination. In the face of mature or declining winter markets and an uncertain climate, the significant challenge is to shift the effort towards making Falls Creek a sustainable year-round tourism destination.

The Master Plan is essentially a physical response to market and community requirements. If Falls Creek is to become a thriving year-round tourism hub, the Master Plan will need to be supported by an active and highly strategic events and marketing program - defined by the Board as the ‘Compelling Offer’. Professional and highly-competent operations staff will also be needed to ensure enduring and satisfying customer experiences.

The Master Plan elements, if well-executed and supported, have the potential to achieve the goal of Falls Creek becoming a successful and sustainable year-round destination.

The views expressed in this document are necessarily broad in nature and will need to be tested by detailed business cases and commercial feasibility studies. Ultimately, the success of various projects will depend on the ability to attract private, FCRM or Government investment.

DISCLAIMER

This section provides economic comment and input on the projects described in the Falls Creek Draft Master Plan.

The document does not provide a detailed economic assessment of the likely impacts, nor does it contain in-depth commercial feasibility assessments, however, a range of supporting studies have been referenced, and the views expressed are also informed by discussions with FCRM, Tract Consultants and an intensive two-day workshop at Falls Creek held on 14th and 15th October 2014.

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material and the integrity of the analysis presented, Essential Economics Pty Ltd accepts no liability for any actions taken on the basis of the contents of this paper.

The information in this report has been prepared specifically for the Draft Falls Creek Master Plan 2014. This document should not be used or replicated in any way by any other party without first receiving written consent from Essential Economics Pty Ltd.

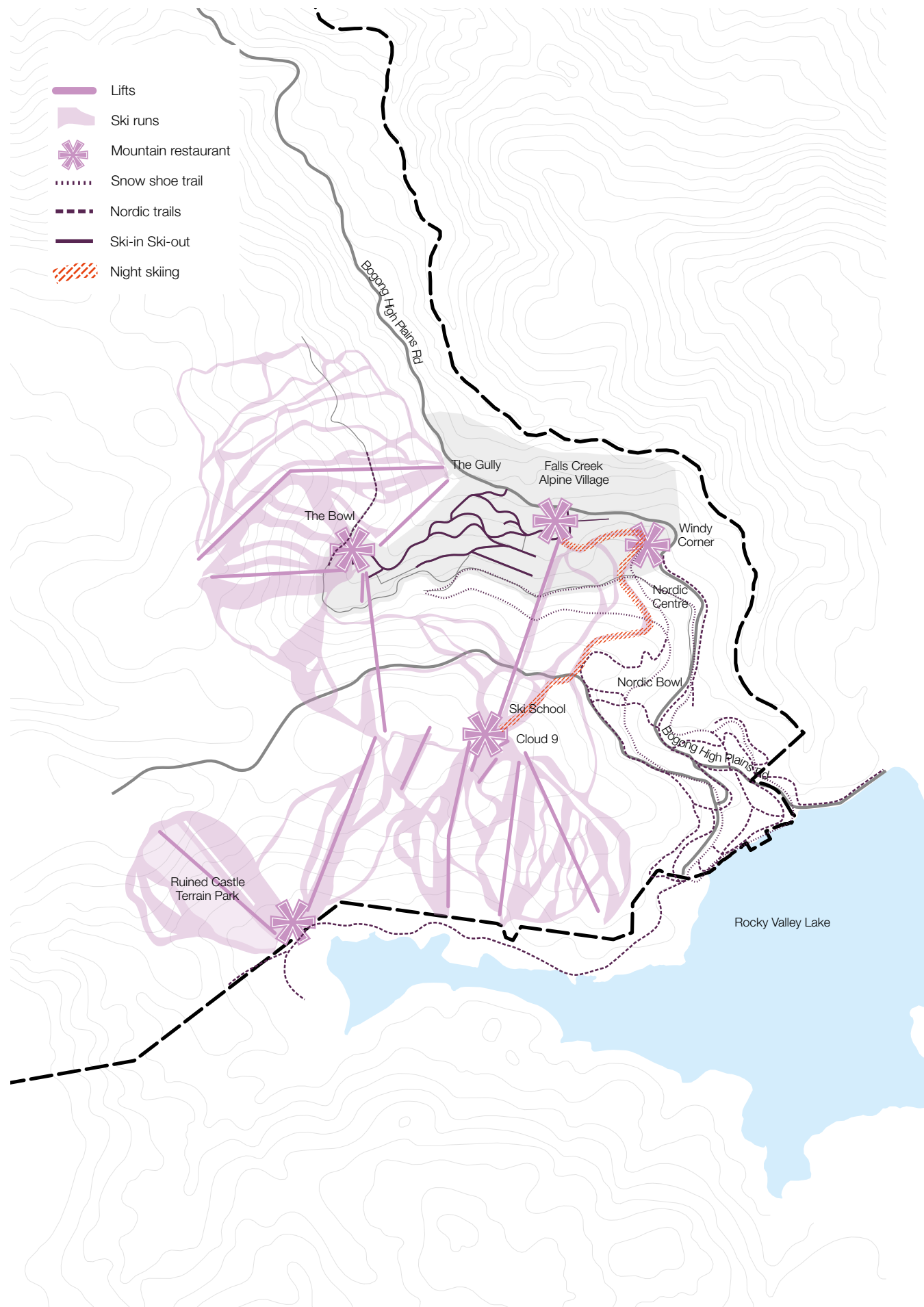


FIG 36. WHITE SEASON EXISTING ACTIVITIES

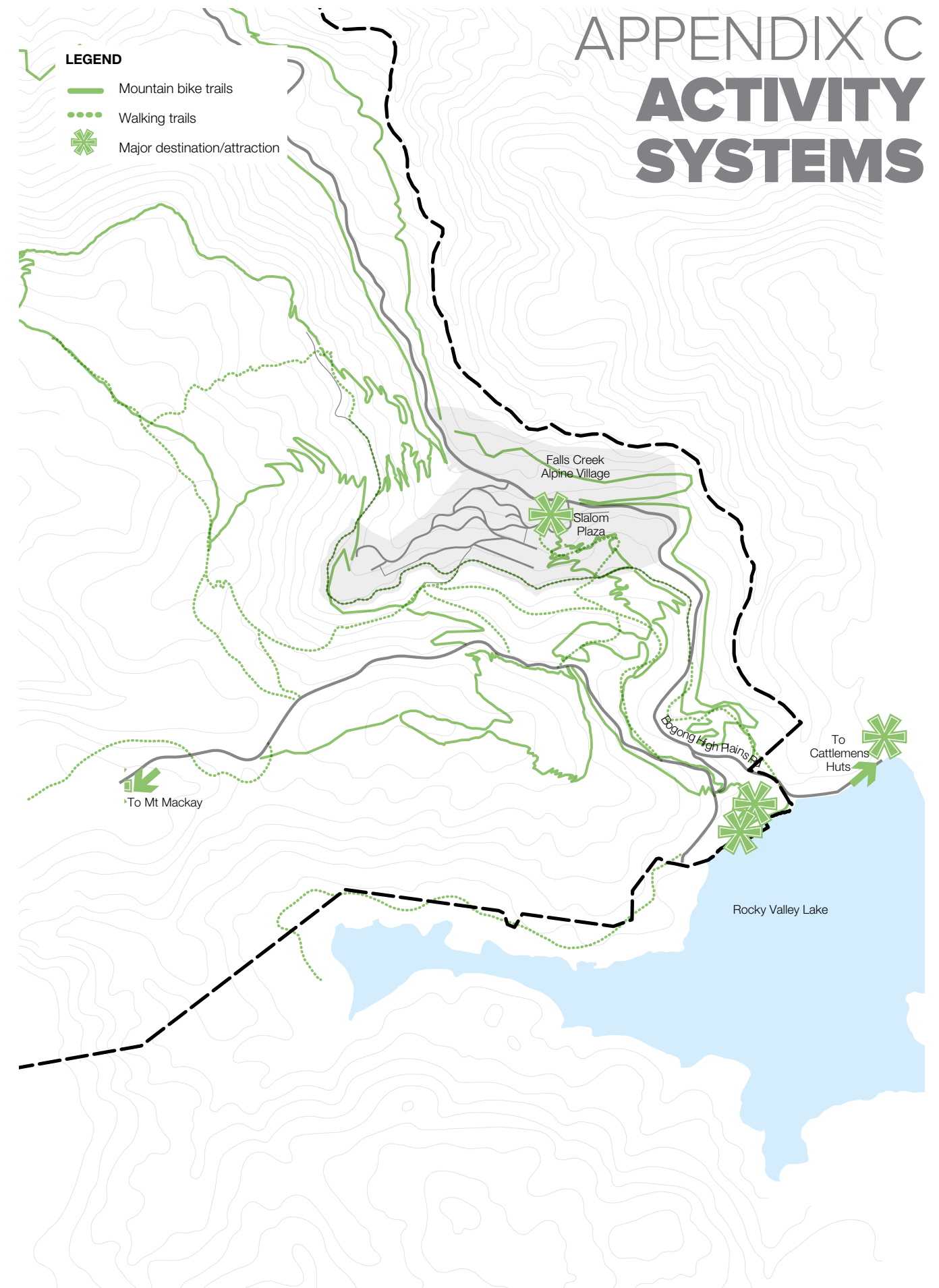


FIG 37. GREEN SEASON EXISTING ACTIVITIES

APPENDIX D SKI-IN / SKI-OUT PLAN

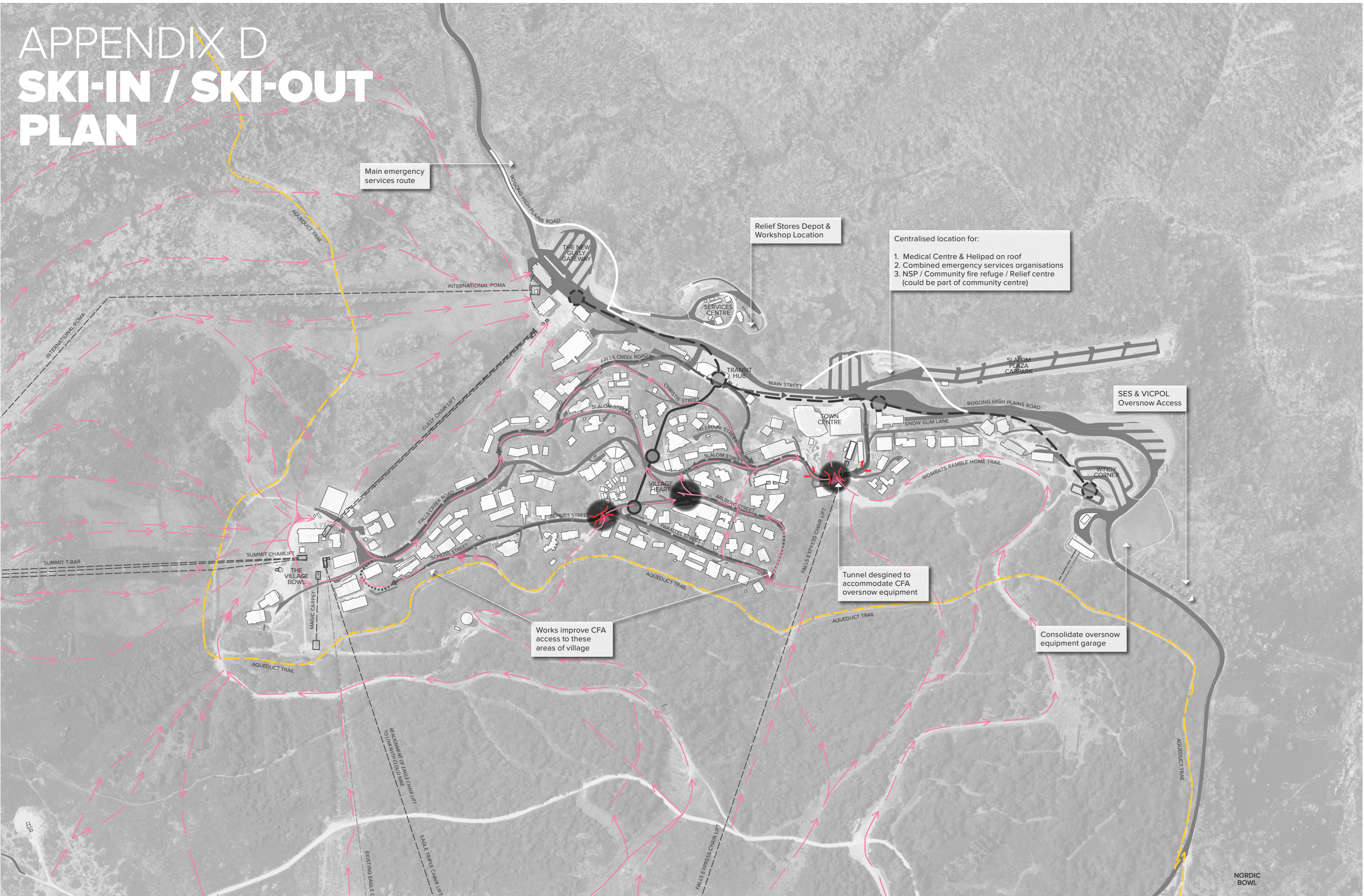


FIG 38. SKI-IN/SKI-OUT OVERLAY

APPENDIX E
NATIVE
VEGETATION
PROVISIONS

Risk Assessment to Represent Key Ecological Values. ASNZS 4360-1999 Australia/New Zealand Risk Management Standard

Value		EPBC							FFG									
		Mountain Pygmy Possum (endangered)	Alpine She-oak Skink (endangered)	Alpine Bog Skink (endangered)	Alpine Tree Frog (critically endangered)	Broad-toothed Rat (endangered)	Shining Cudweed (vulnerable)	Alpine Bogs and Associated Fens (endangered)	Snow patches (vulnerable / endangered)	Alpine Short Herbfield (vulnerable)	Silky Snow Daisy (listed)	Stoneflies (listed)	Alpine Water Skink (critically endangered)	Guthega Skink (critically endangered)	Mountain Daisy (listed)	Buffalo Leek-orchid (listed – data poorly known)	Other Treeless Alpine & sub-alpine EVC’s	Treed EVC’s
Threats	Weeds	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate	Extreme	Extreme	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High	Moderate	Moderate	Very High	Very High	High	Moderate
	Pest Animals	Extreme	High	High	High	Extreme	Moderate	Very High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	Moderate
	Climate Change	Extreme	Very High	Very High	High	High	Moderate	Very High	Extreme	Very High	Very High	High	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High	High	Moderate
	Existing Development	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate
	Erosion & Sedimentation	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate	Very High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low
	Introduced Pathogens	Moderate	Low	Low	Extreme	Moderate	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
	Pollutants	High	Low	Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
	Habitat Fragmentation	Extreme	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Low	Very High	Very High	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

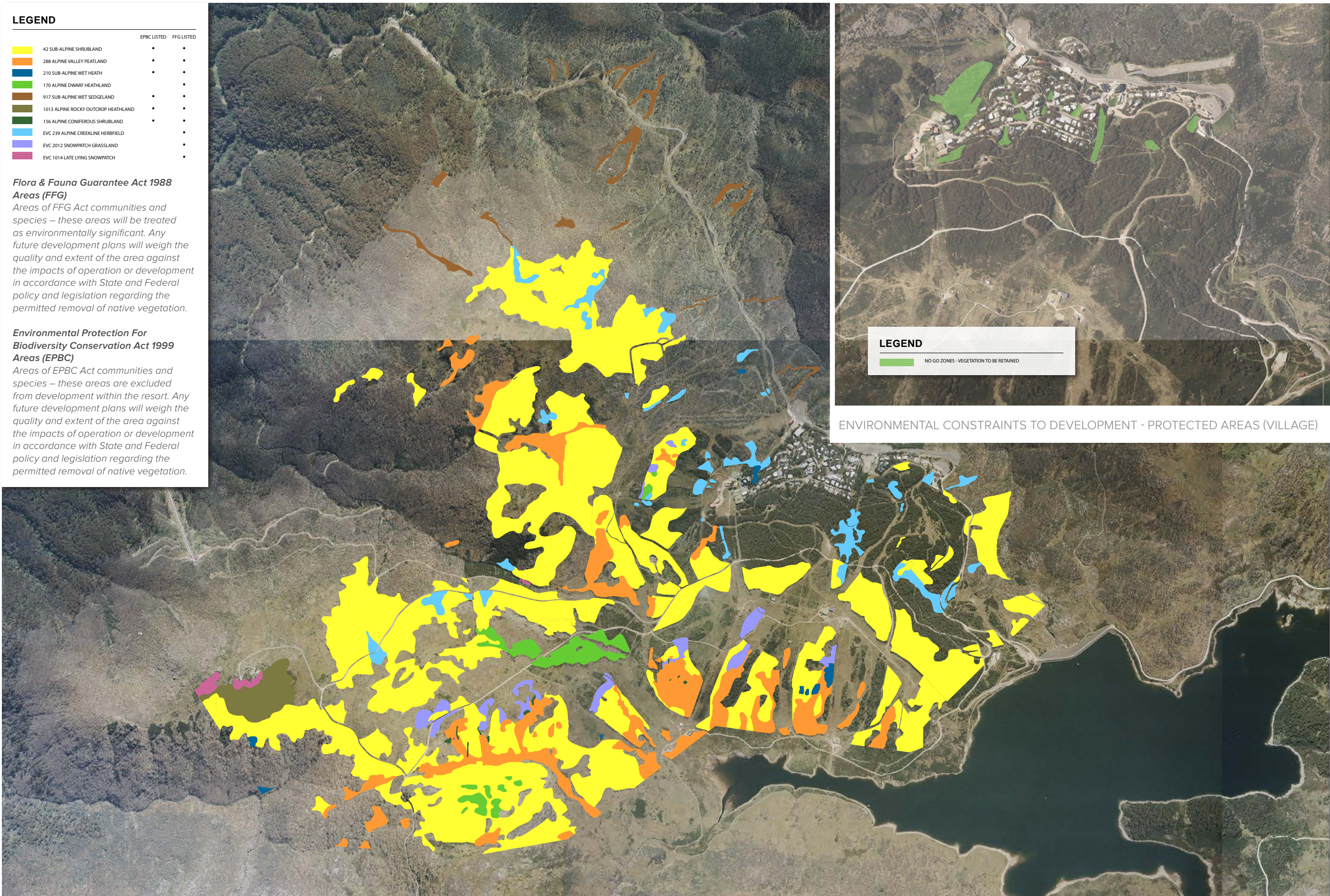
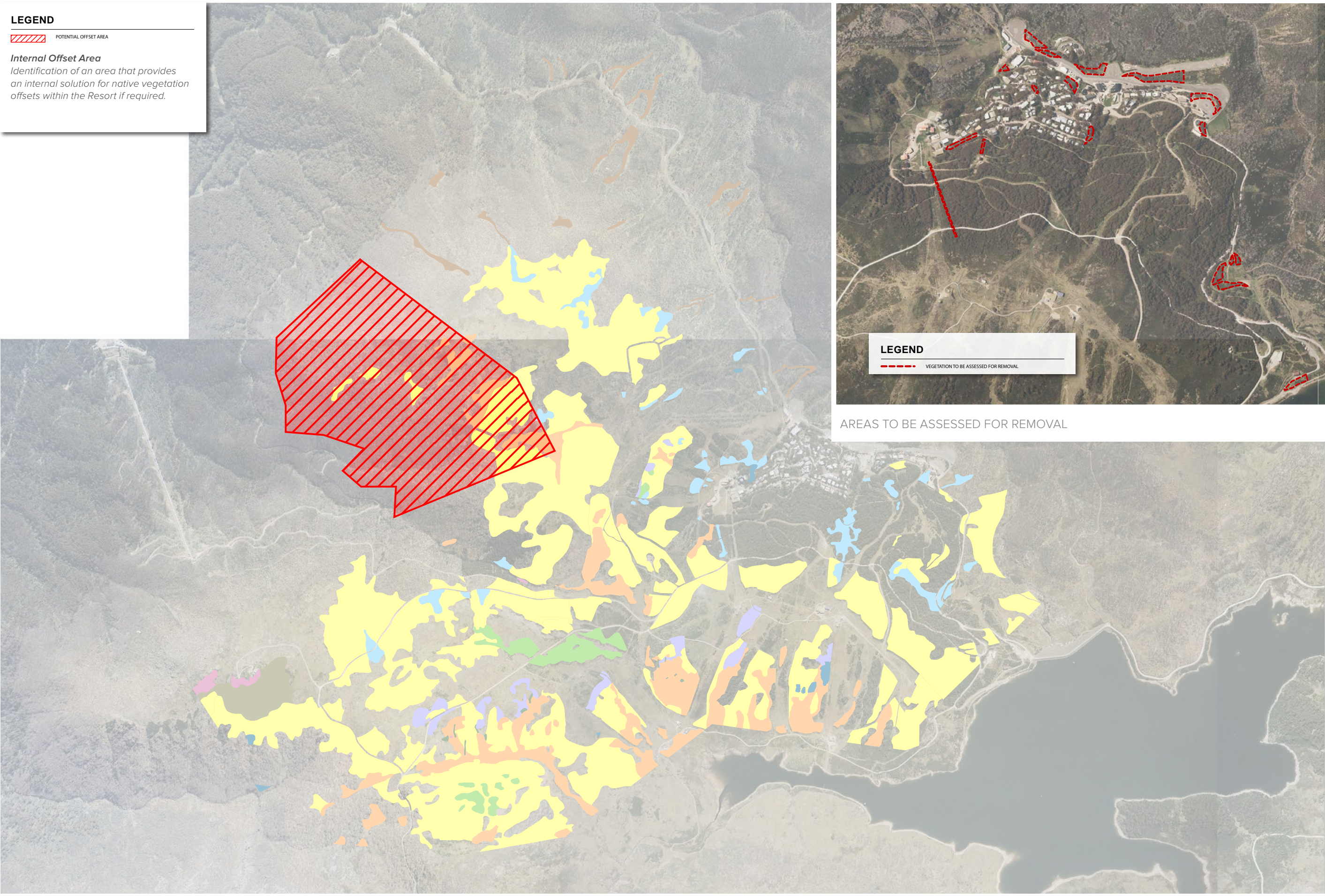


FIG 39. FLORA & FAUNA GUARANTEE AREAS (FFG) & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AREAS (EPBC) (RESORT WIDE)



FIG 40. VILLAGE ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY



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