



Central
Coast
Council

MOUNTAIN BIKE FEASIBILITY STUDY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

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Prepared by
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[in conjunction with World Trail]





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1. Introduction

This report outlines the community engagement undertaken to develop the mountain bike feasibility study draft discussion paper. To prepare the discussion paper a range of community engagement activities were undertaken.

This included the following:

- Community Survey
- Engagement with the Mountain Bike industry and key stakeholders
- Engagement with Environmental Conservation Groups
- Stakeholder Consultation including:
 - Forestry Corporation
 - National Parks and Wildlife
 - Department of Premier and Cabinet
 - Traditional Custodians of the land



2. Community Survey

A survey was developed to seek the community's feedback on mountain biking on the Central Coast. The aim of the survey was to understand community views, participation and demand, current riding locations and the opportunities and risks for mountain bike riding on the central coast.

A total of 1949 responses were received to the survey. Out of these 1590 (81.58%) currently participated in mountain biking within the Central Coast. A series of questions were asked of both riders and non-riders to gather more information. An overview of the responses is outlined below.

2.1 Mountain Bike Riders Information

Riding Characteristics

Over 50% of the current mountain bikers would rate their ability as intermediate with only 8% indicating they are a beginner. Approximately 60% of respondents were also riding two or more times a week with the most popular times being Saturday and Sunday morning followed by Friday afternoons.

Table 1: Survey Result – How would you rate your ability?

How would you rate your ability?	
Beginner	8.03%
Intermediate	53.11%
Advanced	38.86%

Table 2: Survey Result – How often do you go mountain biking?

How often do you go mountain biking?	
Three or more times a week	27.91%
Twice a week	32.28%
Once a week	20.51%
Once a fortnight	8.87%
Once a month	9.39%
Once a year	1.03%

Table 3: Survey Result – What day and time do you normally go mountain biking?

What day and time do you normally go mountain biking?	What day and time do you normally go mountain biking?			
	Morning	Lunch time	Afternoon	Night
Monday	47.94%	21.01%	56.61%	15.98%
Tuesday	45.17%	19.31%	59.85%	17.37%
Wednesday	39.00%	19.76%	59.62%	20.79%
Thursday	37.55%	20.33%	56.96%	26.01%
Friday	44.56%	19.56%	62.07%	15.82%
Saturday	77.05%	35.70%	46.85%	5.90%
Sunday	76.04%	37.20%	48.57%	5.40%



Over 90% of respondents are spending between 1-4 hours mountain biking and generally riding with friends. The responses indicate that just over half ride between 1-2 hours which would indicate a high degree of recreational riding on locally accessible trails. Riders are more likely to travel to a destination if there is more than 2 hours' worth of riding. This is supported with the proportion of rides on weekday mornings and afternoons, indicating shorter duration recreational riding at local destinations.

Table 4: Survey Result - Length of time mountain biking

How long do you usually undertake the activity for?	
Less than 1 hour	1.42%
1-2 hours	51.26%
2-4 hours	42.67%
4-6 hours	4.20%
More than 6 hours	0.45%

Table 5: Survey Result – Who do you ride with?

When you go riding, who do you ride with?	
Alone	20.80%
With friends	61.17%
With family	11.27%
With a club	1.22%
With an organized group (but not part of a club)	5.54%

Significantly only 25% of respondents were members of a mountain bike club. This means that self-directed, recreational riding is a dominant motivation and that competition is not a significant driver of participation.

Table 6: Survey Result – Are you a member of a mountain bike club?

Are you a member of a Mountain Bike club?	
No	75.24%
Yes	24.76%

Trail Preferences

Trail riding (76.84%) was the type of trail most ridden followed by cross country (67.16%), however this could reflect the availability of trails as opposed to the preference of riders. When asked their preferred trail to ride, a much greater proportion indicated a desire to ride flow trails (47.10%), which supports the assumption this is an unmet need and that there is lack of diversity in the current trail network.



Table 7: Survey Result – What type of trails do you ride?

What type of trails do you ride on the Central Coast	
Trail Riding	76.84%
Descent / Gravity	51.94%
Cross Country	67.16%
Flow Trail	58.32%
Fire Trails Only	17.55%
Other	4.19%

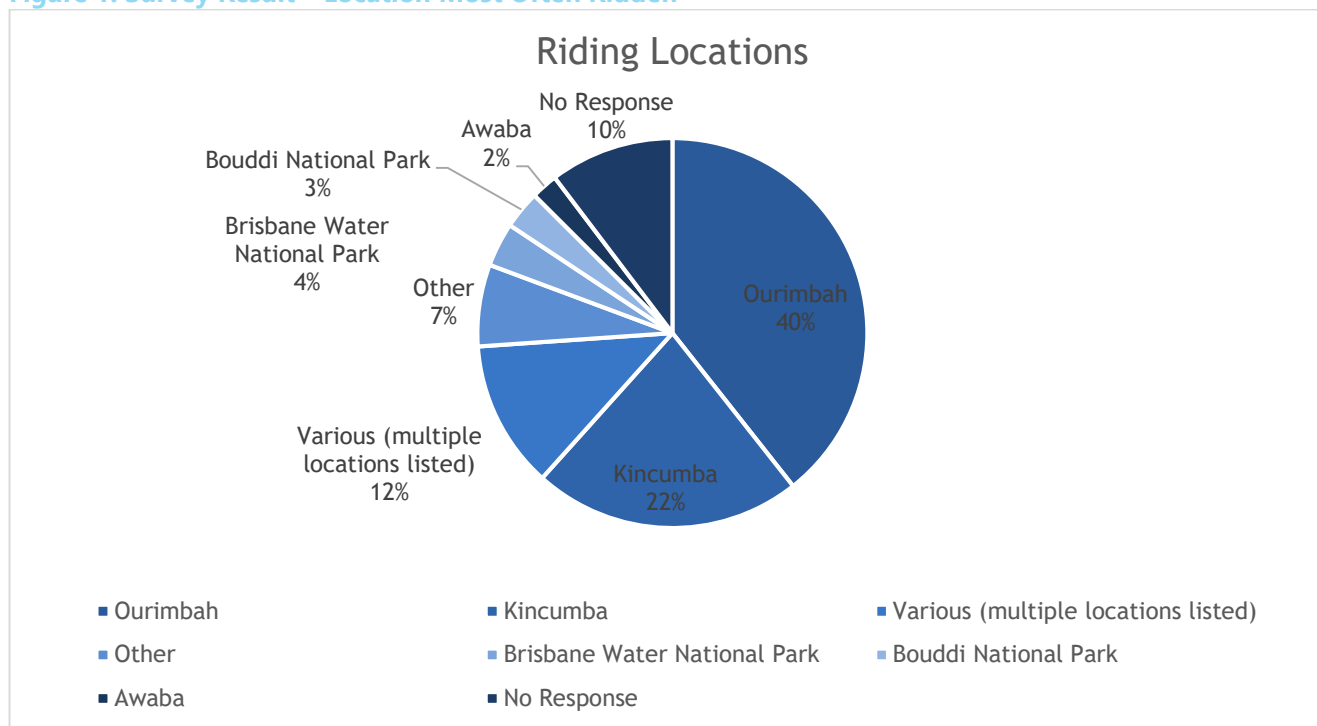
Table 8: Survey Result – Preferred trail

What is your most preferred trail to ride?	
Trail Riding	44.71%
Descent / Gravity	40.06%
Cross Country	39.42%
Flow Trail	47.10%
Fire Trails Only	7.16%
Other	2.58%

Riding Locations

The most popular location for mountain biking on the Central Coast was Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park (40%), followed by Kincumba Mountain Reserve (22%). Approximately 12% of respondents listed multiple locations across the Central Coast.

Figure 1: Survey Result – Location Most Often Ridden





When asked to explain location preference, the main reason for Ourimbah was the trail network / trail diversity and options (66%). The location / access and proximity scored next highest with 19%.

However, at Kincumba 54% of respondents identified that the main reason for this location preference was the location / ease of access and proximity. The trail network / trail diversity scored next highest at 28%.

Figure 2: Survey Result – Why do you ride Ourimbah State Forest

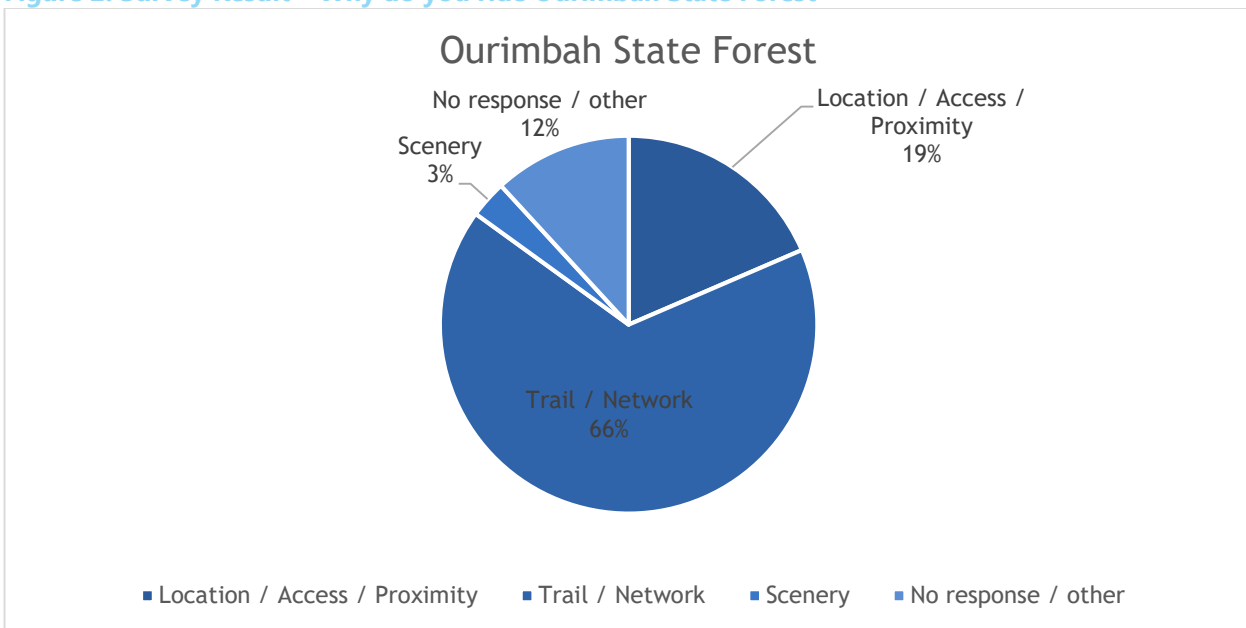
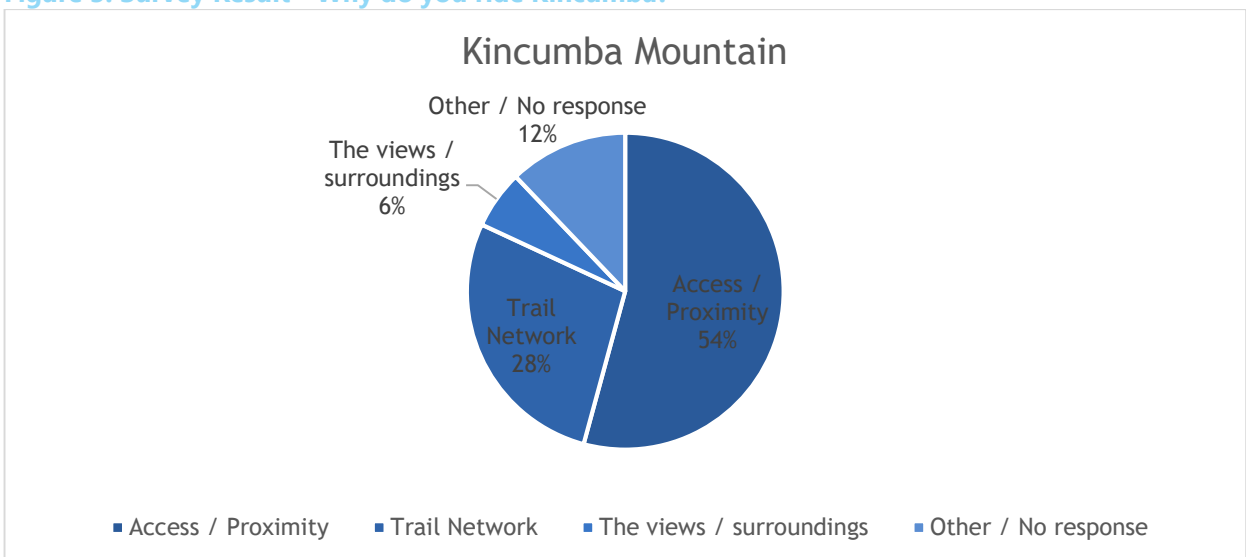


Figure 3: Survey Result - Why do you ride Kincumba?





Essential Facilities and Priorities for Preferred Locations

Trail signage (80.10%), car parking (67.65%) and water (61.18%) were considered the essential facilities that should be provided at mountain biking locations, followed closely by toilets (56.75%) and site information (55.84%). Respondents were also asked what facilities are required at their preferred location with 45% of respondents indicating toilets and water were the highest priorities at Ourimbah.

At Kincumba, trail improvements/sanctioned trails were the highest priority (39%).

Table 9: Survey Result – Essential Facilities Required

What do you think are the essential facilities that should be provided at mountain biking locations?	
Car parking	67.65%
Public Transport	4.57%
Trail Signage	80.10%
Toilets	56.75%
Seating	9.28%
Water	61.18%
Site Information	55.84%
Fencing to protect	35.65%
Other	9.14%

Travel Time and Use of Multiple Locations

Over 65% of respondents are travelling 30 minutes or less to their most frequently used mountain bike location. This aligns with proximity being a key factor in the location chosen for a majority of respondents. Approximately 65% of respondents also ride in other locations.

Table 10: Survey Result – Travel Time

How long does it take to travel to this location?	
Less than 15 minutes	30.28%
15-30 minutes	35.07%
30 minutes – 1 hour	20.21%
1-2 hour	12.29%
More than 2 hours	2.15%

Table 11: Survey Result – Other locations for mountain biking

Is there another location on the Central Coast you frequently use for mountain biking?	
No	35.11%
Yes	64.89%



Unauthorised Trails and Other Outdoor Recreation

Over 70% of respondents are aware that unauthorised mountain bike trails have been constructed and the majority of respondents attributed this to a lack of authorised trails. A secondary motivating factor was the convenience of a local option (location / proximity) as sanctioned trails were too far away to be accessible for some respondents.

Table 12: Survey Result – Unauthorised trails

Are you aware that some unauthorised mountain bike trails have been developed on some Council reserves?	
No	29.70%
Yes	70.30%

Approximately 85% of respondents also visit other bushland or natural reserves on the Central Coast with over 50% of respondents indicating that they undertake bushwalking, hiking and walking in these areas.

Table 13: Survey Result – Bushland Reserves

Do you visit any bushland or natural reserve areas on the Central Coast?	
No	15.34%
Yes	84.66%

2.2 Non-Riders

There were 350 respondents who did not currently ride mountain bikes. These were asked a series of questions regarding their thoughts on mountain bike riding, current activities and any concern regarding mountain biking on the Central Coast. Out of the non-riders, approximately 46% indicated that they would consider mountain biking if formal trails were provided.

Table 14: Survey Result – Would you consider mountain biking?

Would you consider mountain bike riding if formal trails were provided in some natural areas	
No	39.49%
Yes	46.31%
Unsure	14.20%

Non-Rider Outdoor Recreation Activities and Locations

The most popular activity undertaken by non-riders was bushwalking with over 68%.



Table 15: Survey Result – Recreation activities undertaken by non-riders

What activities do you do?	
Bushwalk	68.89%
Picnic	1.85%
Photography	2.96%
Art	0.74%
Relaxation	7.78%
Other	17.78%

There was a diverse range of preferred locations provided, with Bouddi National Park, Kincumba, Rumbalara and Wyrabalong all proving popular. Close to 50% of respondents indicated they would visit their preferred location once a week or more.

Activity Frequency

Frequency of participation in outdoor recreation activities was more evenly distributed than for riders. Riders appear to be participating more frequently than non-riders, with nearly 60% of riders using reserves twice a week or more compared with only 28% of non-riders.

Table 16: Survey Result – Frequency of visits to bushland reserve

How often do you visit this location?	
Three or more times a week	14.01%
Twice a week	14.01%
Once a week	20.62%
Once a fortnight	12.06%
Once a month	31.91%
Once a year	7.39%

2.3 All Respondents – Views and Attitudes Towards Mountain Biking

All respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their level of support for a range of strategies towards mountain biking. There was strong support evident, with over 90% of all respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing to allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use. Over 85% agreed with development of new shared trails that would allow for mountain biking as well, while approximately 87% agreed with the development of limited mountain bike trails in suitable locations. Over 75% of respondents also indicated that they are concerned about the lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorised.

When reviewing the responses it is important to remember that overall 18.4% of respondents were not Mountain Bike riders and 81.6% were. Responses to the following issues were not reflective of these proportions, indicating that riders share many concerns about non-sanctioned and unplanned trails for mountain biking and conversely that non-riders were not necessarily unsupportive of developing sanctioned trails for mountain biking. A breakdown of responses for riders and non-riders has been provided to illustrate these responses.



Table 17: Survey Result: Mountain Biking Strategies (all responses)

Participation in mountain biking is increasing in many areas. This increases demand for mountain bike riding trails. What strategies do you support to respond to this demand? Please indicate your level of support.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue to allow mountain bike riding where currently allowed (on some existing fire trails as shared use)	78.90%	16.57%	2.67%	1.86%
Allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use	74.32%	16.50%	5.52%	3.66%
Development of new shared trails which allow mountain biking as well	70.66%	15.14%	8.12%	6.08%
Development of limited mountain bike only trails in suitable locations	67.31%	19.93%	7.63%	5.13%
Lease specific areas to clubs to provide mountain bike trails	53.87%	24.44%	13.42%	8.26%
Only State managed areas such as State Forests and National Parks should provide mountain bike trails	4.38%	8.64%	46.20%	40.77%
Council should not provide any mountain bike trails	3.37%	3.14%	16.92%	76.57%

Table 18: Survey Result: Mountain Biking Strategies (non-riders responses)

Participation in mountain biking is increasing in many areas. This increases demand for mountain bike riding trails. What strategies do you support to respond to this demand? Please indicate your level of support.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue to allow mountain bike riding where currently allowed (on some existing fire trails as shared use)	39.87%	46.08%	7.84%	6.21%
Allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use	29.37%	29.04%	24.09%	17.49%
Development of new shared trails which allow mountain biking as well	26.58%	20.27%	26.58%	26.58%
Development of limited mountain bike only trails in suitable locations	35.10%	35.76%	13.58%	15.56%
Lease specific areas to clubs to provide mountain bike trails	22.48%	27.85%	24.16%	25.50%
Only State managed areas such as State Forests and National Parks should provide mountain bike trails	7.28%	15.23%	48.68%	28.81%
Council should not provide any mountain bike trails	12.13%	10.16%	41.64%	36.07%



Table 19: Survey Result: Mountain Biking Strategies (Riders Responses)

Participation in mountain biking is increasing in many areas. This increases demand for mountain bike riding trails. What strategies do you support to respond to this demand? Please indicate your level of support.				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Continue to allow mountain bike riding where currently allowed (on some existing fire trails as shared use)	87.34%	10.18%	1.56%	0.92%
Allow mountain bike riding on all fire trails as a shared use	83.92%	13.82%	1.55%	0.71%
Development of new shared trails which allow mountain biking as well	80.07%	14.04%	4.18%	1.70%
Development of limited mountain bike only trails in suitable locations	74.19%	16.55%	6.36%	2.90%
Lease specific areas to clubs to provide mountain bike trails	60.51%	23.72%	11.15%	4.62%
Only State managed areas such as State Forests and National Parks should provide mountain bike trails	3.76%	7.23%	45.67%	43.33%
Council should not provide any mountain bike trails	1.48%	1.63%	11.59%	85.30%

Table 20: Survey Result: Concern Regarding Bushland Reserves (all responses)

Are you concerned about the following?		
	Yes	No
Behaviour of some mountain bike riders on shared trails?	30.12%	69.88%
Allowing mountain bikes in nature conservation reserves?	29.51%	70.49%
Construction of unauthorised mountain bike tracks?	51.94%	48.06%
Construction of unauthorised walking tracks?	45.21%	54.79%
Lack of proper / authorized trails for mountain bike riders?	86.66%	13.34%
Lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorized?	75.29%	24.71%
Increasing numbers of mountain bike riders in Council managed reserves?	25.06%	74.94%

Table 21: Survey Result: Concern Regarding Bushland Reserves (non-riders responses)

Are you concerned about the following?		
	Yes	No
Behaviour of some mountain bike riders on shared trails?	69.74%	30.26%
Allowing mountain bikes in nature conservation reserves?	70.30%	29.70%
Construction of unauthorised mountain bike tracks?	86.80%	13.20%
Construction of unauthorised walking tracks?	71.62%	28.38%
Lack of proper / authorized trails for mountain bike riders?	75.42%	24.58%
Lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorized?	87.75%	12.25%
Increasing numbers of mountain bike riders in Council managed reserves?	61.79%	38.21%



Table 22: Survey Result: Concern Regarding Bushland Reserves (Riders responses)

Are you concerned about the following?		
	Yes	No
Behaviour of some mountain bike riders on shared trails?	21.58%	78.42%
Allowing mountain bikes in nature conservation reserves?	20.71%	79.29%
Construction of unauthorised mountain bike tracks?	44.40%	55.60%
Construction of unauthorised walking tracks?	39.50%	60.50%
Lack of proper / authorized trails for mountain bike riders?	89.06%	10.94%
Lack of clarity regarding which mountain bike trails are authorized?	72.06%	27.38%
Increasing numbers of mountain bike riders in Council managed reserves?	17.20%	82.80%

There were a range of concerns outlined by respondents regarding mountain biking. These concerns have been grouped into a number of different themes and these have been detailed in the table below along with a selection of the responses.

Table 23: Survey Result: Specific concerns about mountain biking

Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
The need for an appropriate trail network	32.22%	<p>'Appropriately constructed and well managed trails enhance rather than detract from the environment. Building proper trails will provide a mechanism for self-regulation and will stop additional trails being built. I have found the mountain biking community in general to be very environmentally conscious and willing to behave appropriately provided the infrastructure is in place.'</p> <p>'Too many riders and not enough trails'</p> <p>'By having professionally constructed mountain bike specific trails in the reserves, it will prevent illegally built trails in sensitive areas and trespassing on private land.'</p> <p>'Variety and level of trails are important but need to manage these with sacred sites and make sure these are identified and separated.'</p>
Concerns about the damage to the environment	15.67%	<p>'Mountain bike riders need to respect the full range of values of public land and desist from constructing tracks without consent of the land owner.'</p> <p>'Destruction of native/endangered species and disturbance to wildlife areas.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Very concerned about the impact that mountain bike riding can have on our natural environment, especially in areas with fragile environments'</p> <p>'If done properly, the bush should be there for us all to share'</p> <p>'I think you'll find that most mountain bikers are nature lovers, many of whom would be receptive to education about the sensitive areas in which they ride but who may be unaware of the damage it may cause or causes'</p>
Healthy and Active Sport	11.76%	<p>'I am a citizen who is always very conscious and concerned about our natural spaces and our care for flora and fauna. So therefore, environmental protection is my top priority. But at the same time, I believe that the more we get people participating in activities in natural spaces, the more there is a chance they will value our resources and help to protect what we have. So I think it's fantastic that mountain biking is a fast growing sport/leisure activity. It's also great for our nation's fitness'</p> <p>'Healthy outdoor activities should be encouraged'</p> <p>'Mountain bike riding can be a healthy, adventurous exercise but like many 'sports' or activities it can be detrimental to the environment unless it is properly controlled.'</p> <p>'I don't understand why walking trails are ok but bikes are not encouraged'</p> <p>'Great activity for kids and families and we have so much available land and space'</p> <p>'It's important to encourage our youth to exercise and enjoy our magnificent bushlands'</p> <p>'MTB should be encouraged as another form of managing our increasing obesity, cardiovascular, diabetes, mental health issues. It also helps social interaction.'</p> <p>'It's a growing Olympic sport and recreation activity that offers significant social and economic benefits to residents and the region'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
Conflict between users	8.85%	<p>'Safety when walking on narrow mixed-use trails. accidents between bush walkers and bikes'</p> <p>'My only concern is that if Council was to leave the trails open to walkers and runners as well you will then have a safety issue'</p> <p>'Concerned about bikes and walkers together. 90% of both are good, but there are 10% of walkers and riders who make it dangerous for the other.'</p>
Signage	6.82%	<p>'There is not even signage to advise where the bikes are permitted.'</p> <p>'Risk of inexperienced riders on unauthorised unmarked trails putting themselves in danger riding behind their ability'</p> <p>'Better signage of routes'</p> <p>'More signage and information about where you can and can not ride. It is very to start riding in areas not allowed if there is no information.'</p> <p>'Just the need to provide clear signage and public information awareness about shared trails to limit conflict between walkers and mountain bikers.'</p> <p>'This could include online resources such as maps and entry points, track lengths, difficulty etc.'</p> <p>'Where shared walking and biking zones are established wayfinding and signage should be created at tight corners or limited sight zones to avoid clashes between walkers and mountain bikers.'</p> <p>'Lack of signage is dangerous for everyone'</p>
Safety Concerns	5.08%	<p>'Safety such as maintenance needed on a lot of local trails'</p> <p>'People sabotaging trails and putting riders at risk'</p> <p>'My concern is park rangers trying to block tracks with fences and branches. This creates dangerous hazards and often leads to a lengthening of the trail to avoid the blockage so it does more harm than good'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Attempts by people to sabotage the mountain bike trails'</p> <p>'Disgruntled people deliberately putting obstacles across trails which can cause dangerous accidents not only to bike riders, but to the public in general.'</p> <p>'Concerned about liability and reliability/maintenance of constructed trails'</p> <p>'More authorised trails means better safety for other users of the trails'</p>
Tourism opportunities	4.79%	<p>'council should provide well designed official trails to cater for this hugely popular recreation and tourism activity.'</p> <p>'Massive tourism boost.'</p> <p>'CC is so lucky to have the terrain and hills to provide the perfect areas to promote legal and sanctioned trail riding. It is an untapped goldmine for locals an tourists to utilize these potential trails.'</p> <p>'Setting up more purpose built MTB trail areas will enhance tourism and reduce the number of unsanctioned trails being built.'</p> <p>'Mountain biking has been shown to bring revenue into local communities if good quality trails are provided (look at Derby in Tasmania). This would benefit council.'</p>
Partnerships	4.50%	<p>'Would like to see a partnership between council / clubs and local riders where sustainable trails are built, maintained and monitored'</p> <p>'Council should work with local mtb clubs and experienced trail builders to provide a challenging but safe network of trail.'</p> <p>'a proactive and cooperative partnership'</p> <p>'The council should take a proactive approach to MTB in the community and engage with locals to develop a plan for areas where trails have already been built, legally or not.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Only that if a plan is not in place and communicated effectively to all, then minority groups from each side (pro and anti mtbking) will continue to act irrationally and without thought/consideration for others and fuel the unnecessary negative sentiment that creates angst and division.'</p> <p>'You will not beat the Trail builders. You need to work with them'. If suitable trails (including technically challenging ones) are provided, an other areas are marked off limits, (due to eco reasons, or Aboriginal significance), then most people will respect that.'</p> <p>'I believe Council has to negotiate with riding groups and clubs particularly in regards to Mtb trail building and ongoing maintenance. It seems to me that if a blanket ban on Mtb specific trails continues then illegal Mtb trails will continue to be built despite all the fences etc. This presents a range of issues but most importantly ones of safety. If there was genuine negotiation and sanctioned trails along with the appropriate facilities and signage then I see it as a boon for our community on so many levels.'</p>
Erosion	3.34%	<p>'There is a potential for increasing erosion and drainage problems'</p> <p>'There are some natural areas where erosion and encroaching on the reserves is already a problem'</p> <p>'Main problem is unauthorised construction of trails in erosion prone areas leading to gully erosion even in National Parks'</p> <p>'I am both pro mountain biking and pro nature conservation. I think that the development of the trails needs to be done in a way that has minimal environmental impact. For example, professionally built with good drainage systems to reduce erosion and constructed using primarily natural materials with minimal vegetation removal.'</p>
Cost and financial considerations and concerns	1.74%	'How the potential increase in trail maintenance will be funded'



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Lack of funds from Councils for the upkeep of the trails that are currently provided to the public'</p> <p>'There is a significant cost in establishing and more importantly maintaining mountain bike trails to an acceptable standard'</p> <p>'Who would be tasked with trail maintenance'</p> <p>'I would like to see Council put some real funding into mountain biking'</p> <p>'With adequate funding to the existing clubs to expand and maintain their allocated space, there would be limited unsanctioned trail development'</p>
Education	1.45%	<p>'Public information awareness about shared trails to limit conflict between walkers and mountain bikers'</p> <p>'Online resources such as maps and entry points, track lengths, difficulty etc.'</p> <p>'A lack of education among the general community, coupled with the entrenched beliefs of more "traditional" nature users, leads to continued conflicts between mountain bikers and hikers'</p> <p>'Lack of General public knowledge of riding etiquette'</p> <p>'A bit of education for everyone wouldn't go astray'</p>
Enforcement	1.45%	<p>'More vigorous monitoring of correct trail use'</p> <p>'there should be penalties (which are enforced and backed up by camera monitoring) for riders who deliberately move into non-trail areas'</p> <p>'Should be more policing'</p> <p>'As part of managing it you should have ranger presence and enforce rules'</p>
Illegal Trail Construction	1.16%	<p>'Illegally constructed trails. Uncertainty about which trails are legal.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Riders need to keep to defined trails and not make unauthorised modifications to tracks to make them more "exciting".'</p> <p>'Impacts on sensitive ecological areas, building of unauthorised trails'</p>
Litter	1.16%	<p>'My concerns are about the rubbish left by some MTB riders'</p> <p>'There is quite a bit of rubbish at mtb trails in the area.'</p> <p>'As long as no rubbish is left behind I have no issues'</p> <p>'litter control. Maybe have signs saying take "your rubbish with you!"'</p>

Respondents were asked for any other comments regarding mountain biking in the Central Coast Region. Similar to the previous question there was a range of thoughts provided, these have been outlined in the table below along with some of the responses received.

Table 24: Survey Result: Any other Comments

Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
Support for Mountain Biking	24.37%	<p>'I support responsible mountain bike riding respecting other users. All users should have equal rights and responsibilities to ensure a safe and pleasant experience for all'</p> <p>'They are fine to do it, but only where allowed!'</p> <p>'If Council provided specific, exclusive trails for mountain biking, everyone wins because we elderly bushwalkers can walk with on our trails with confidence.'</p> <p>'I agree that it is important to allow people to undertake this type of activity as it is great for physical health and provides other positive health outcomes and so understand we need a strategy that enables mtb in the area. BUT we need to prioritise reserves for important habitat for local native species.'</p> <p>'Purpose built tracks in suitable areas.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'As a regular user of Kincumba Mtn Reserve, I come across many Mountain Bikers daily. They all display respect towards the environment and also others users of the space. The more people getting outdoors and making use of the wonderful reserves and spaces council and the earth has to offer the better! Whether they are on foot or on a mountain bike.'</p> <p>'Central coast is a growing community and it needs to support mountain bikes along with all outdoor recreation'</p> <p>'I am not interested in mountain biking but if people are, then we have a lot of land available for them to enjoy their hobby.'</p> <p>'generally people including those riding mountain bikes and good people, and are considerate of those around them and the environment they enjoy riding in.'</p> <p>'There should be some designated trails for biking, as these people deserve their share of the bushland'</p> <p>'Strongly feel there should be more areas open to mountain biking. Anything to encourage younger people to appreciate the natural environment.'</p> <p>'My group of mtb riders are mostly in their 70's and very respectful of the environment, So it is not only tearaways that use these trails'</p>
Tourism Opportunity	19.75%	<p>'Growing sport with a good economic record, chance to capitalise on an already great tourist area. We regularly travel with friends and family and spend dollars in other local economies to go riding. From my experience, MTBers are very keen to look after the bush and be responsible, that is one of the reasons we ride.'</p> <p>'Mtn biking is a huge industry and could be a large tourist draw card for the coast if properly organised with purpose built trails designed by bikers and track building specialists.'</p> <p>'We have fantastic locations and terrain for mountain biking trails on the Central Coast. There is plenty of</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>demand already and the sport is only growing, it would be an opportunity missed to not capitalise on what we have. It can only benefit the community and local businesses if well managed.'</p> <p>'Mountain biking is an exponentially growing sport, Council has a small window of opportunity to take management of the local trails and upgrade them to make them more fun and safer and maintain them throughout use. This will not only keep mountain bike groups from clearing native bush land, but will also attract central coast tourism and generate more money into local businesses and the community.'</p> <p>'the potential for increased business and employment due to MTB tourism is significant. Comparisons should be made to other regions where initiatives have been implemented.'</p> <p>'Improved trails and more around would be fantastic for tourism on the central coast it's a great place to explore'</p>
Healthy and active sport	18.03%	<p>'Mountain biking is a joyous way of staying physically and mentally fit.'</p> <p>'We need council to invest, as other areas have done. There are social, health & economic advantages.'</p> <p>'Mountain bike riding is a healthy sport and riders need land especially designated for this activity'</p> <p>'Its great to see young people getting out and about and exercising - please don't put limitations and costs on this exercise, rather work with them to develop more recreation areas'</p> <p>'It is a good activity that promotes a healthy lifestyle along with enjoying our beautiful surrounds on the central coast.'</p> <p>'Great family activity that keeps people active and improves health, happiness and wellbeing.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'My primary school aged kids are starting to enjoy MTB riding and I think it's a healthy and social sport for them to pursue.'</p> <p>'The idea that people are getting exercise in a public reserve should be celebrated and not restricted.'</p> <p>'I just had the best morning ever mountain biking with my five-year-old daughter- just wish there were more opportunities to bring our family together doing things like that'</p> <p>'People exercising and enjoying the outdoors should never be discouraged'</p> <p>'It is a great sport for so many people. Mountain biking is so much fun, I do it with my son and daughter and its one of the few sports you can actively do together. Its also great to get kids active and parents active and away from screens and being sedentary. This sport should be actively promoted by council for healthy lifestyles'</p>
Need more trails	10.42%	<p>'love to see more of it in future'</p> <p>'Make more trails'</p> <p>'There needs to be more venues to cater for the growing number of riders'</p> <p>'More family friendly and beginner tracks for learners and younger children that have a central trail head to enable safe supervision of children.'</p> <p>'It's a sport that is growing so fast. We need more trails to keep up with demand'</p> <p>'I personally enjoy where I ride and only ride on legal trails operated by clubs. It would be nice to have more of this type of riding available on the Coast.'</p> <p>'The continued population growth will see continued demand for MTBing, especially since the topography is so suited. Proactive steps will see good results rather than trying to fix things at a later date'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'Mountain biking is only going to get bigger and more popular. If councils can do there best to provide appropriate trails for the community, then I believe it will bring revenue and more people into the community. The council needs to make sure there are a range of different tracks to suit all riding types eg. Downhill, trail, XC, Dirt jumps and freeride tracks.'</p>
Opportunity	3.99%	<p>'There is a huge opportunity for the CC to become a MTB centre. It is close to Sydney and has a diversity of landscapes. Using a collaborative approach that is considerate and respectful of the full range of values that land has a regional plan that provides for the full range of MTB experiences in locations that don't impact on cultural sites and heritage values, ecological and environmental values, social values, other public land users etc the CC could see the development of a lucrative MTB industry'</p> <p>'the Central Coast has a massive opportunity to capitalise on its natural beauty by utilising areas such as Mount Kincumber as 'active adventure playgrounds'. We have a huge and available tourist market in Sydney that can be tapped into.'</p> <p>'We have fantastic locations and terrain for mountain biking trails on the Central Coast. There is plenty of demand already and the sport is only growing, it would be an opportunity missed to not capitalise on what we have. It can only benefit the community and local businesses if well managed.'</p> <p>'Fantastic opportunities for Council, the local residents, as well as visitors. With the provision of suitable trails (for beginners as well as advanced), the significant areas (Aboriginal & ecological) can be avoided and preserved. There needs to be a suitable alternate however, otherwise the continuation of illegal trails will continue. The majority of people will respect the significant areas if there is information and alternatives provided'</p> <p>'Creating formal shared trail routes and construction and rehabilitation is a good opportunity to also re-establish original natural ecosystems within these areas.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'This issue should be seen as an opportunity for environmentally sustainable economic development for our region.'</p> <p>'Real opportunity exists for the Central Coast region to become a MTB mecca, bringing significant tourism \$ and providing locals with sport (Olympic and professional pathway), recreation and business/employment opportunities. Please don't let this opportunity pass by.'</p> <p>'There is a huge opportunity to showcase our beautiful region.'</p>
<p>Locations with mountain biking provided as an example</p>	<p>3.44%</p>	<p>'Mount Stromlo in the ACT and Hornsby have great facilities'</p> <p>'look at other areas where communities have thrived with appropriate facilities. E.G Mt Stromlo in Canberra, Mt Annan, Awaba, Glenrock, and Wingello in NSW. Derby in Tasmania, etc'</p> <p>'Have travelled to Tasmania, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Snowy Mtns, Victoria etc etc. where managed trails are providing human, environmental and economic benefits. The Central Coast has so much to offer.'</p> <p>'Mountain Bike riding is huge in the USA, Canada, Europe and NZ. That comes from properly built, maintained and financially backed trails.'</p> <p>'Other councils around New South Wales and other states have already realised that mountain biking provides a good safe exercise for the public and also generate a lot of revenue for local businesses. my friends and I already plan trips to Canberra Thredbo Tasmania Queensland just to ride mountain bike trails built by councils in those areas'</p> <p>'There are many examples in adjoining local government areas (Hornsby for example), in the ACT (Stromlo, Majura Pines) NSW, Victoria (Bright) , Tasmania (Derby, Maydena) and internationally where high quality, professionally constructed networks of trails have been built in consultation with relevant</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>stakeholders with great success. We could do this here and add another attraction to the coast.'</p>
Partnerships	3.08%	<p>'The only way to succeed is to create a culture of collaboration between all stakeholders and user groups.'</p> <p>'The trail system is loved and well maintained. Extra support from council in any capacity would be greatly appreciated'</p> <p>'Assist the clubs and volunteers financially to develop the trails'</p> <p>'Council should liaise with mountain bike organisations to get their support for a joint strategy'</p> <p>'The mtb community is eager to work with council, as we have been for a long time, to find mutual agreement.'</p> <p>'engage with the MTB community and build designated trails. Most MTB riders will be respectful of these trails BUT it needs to be done in collaboration with bike riders to ensure the best possible outcome for the COS sites and all users'</p> <p>'A strong relationship with local clubs and riders could see a healthy partnership develop and allow for shared responsibility and care /maintenance/planning of tracks.'</p> <p>'All interest groups need to work collaboratively to develop trails that minimize impact on the natural environment and respects and preserves culturally significant areas/sites'</p>
Investment and financial considerations	2.99%	<p>'It appears one major problem is the lack of adequate funds for upkeep. If any mountain bike trails are built where will the funds for their upkeep come from?'</p> <p>'Increase funding as it's great for the whole family and keeping fit is fun'</p> <p>'I would like to think the council will put more money into trails and encourage more young people to this healthy sport.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'The sport is rapidly growing and any investment into new trails and facilities would be a worthy investment for our community.'</p> <p>'MTB has a great community benefit and professionally built authorised trails that would be of advantage to everybody. I would liken it to the council investing in skate parks.'</p>
Controls and restrictions	2.81%	<p>'The sport should be restricted to areas under private commercial management, with public liability insurance'</p> <p>'It has to well-managed though and not in sensitive areas. Riders need to respect walkers in shared paths.'</p> <p>'Needs to be restricted and strictly monitored'</p> <p>'Mountain bike riding should not be encouraged as an appropriate recreational activity on the Central Coast. Like speedway racing it should be restricted to a designated area on degraded land. Council should not encourage the further destructive of our natural environment.'</p> <p>'Should be restricted to minimize damage to our open spaces.'</p>
Damage to the environment	2.54%	<p>'It's fine unless it causes environmental issues like littering, soil erosion etc.'</p> <p>'Council should provide tracks so they don't destroy the national parks'</p> <p>'I have watched the enjoyment which trails riders can get from their sport & feel that it is important for them to have venues in which to ride. I feel that it's even more important for our remaining natural environment, fauna & flora to have protection from encroaching damage, degradation & destruction'</p> <p>'MBR should not be allowed in COSS lands or Council reserves with high biodiversity values, because it allows weeds, diseases and pests to invade the forest, and disrupts the peaceful enjoyment of the reserves by others.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'I recognise this is an area of sporting interest for some and that it is an Olympic sport also. However without careful management this sport leaves our natural areas open to increased bush fire risk, severe erosion, degradation through littering and the incursion of weeds carried in on the treads of the bikes. Overall this leads to further degradation of habitat and increased species loss. The cost to our environment should not be ignored at the prospect of a few extra tourist dollars for the region'</p>
No trails developed in sensitive areas	2.54%	<p>'I do not think that these bike trails should be in Reserves or National Parks as these fragile areas which can easily be damaged.'</p> <p>'MBR should not be allowed in COSS lands or Council reserves with high biodiversity values, because it allows weeds, diseases and pests to invade the forest, and disrupts the peaceful enjoyment of the reserves by others.'</p> <p>'Conservation of our natural areas must be the number one priority. If bike trails are to be developed it must not be in environmentally sensitive areas which these days is most of the Central Coast'</p> <p>'I agree that it is important to allow people to undertake this type of activity as it is great for physical health and provides other positive health outcomes and so understand we need a strategy that enables mtb in the area. BUT we need to prioritise reserves for important habitat for local native species.'</p> <p>'I think it is important that council provide mountain bike riders with places to ride safely on authorised tracks but have major environmental concerns about any plans to create new tracks, negatively impacting our local ecosystems.'</p> <p>'Purpose built tracks in suitable areas.'</p> <p>'It has to well-managed though and not in sensitive areas'</p> <p>'The COSS lands are there primarily to preserve our environment. They benefit all residents not just</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>specific users like mountain bikers although mountain biking if well managed can certainly coexist with our natural areas.'</p>
Safety Concerns	1.27%	<p>'Please maintain the safety of walking trails as this should be the primary activity in nature reserves'</p> <p>'Safety for all natural resource users is paramount'</p>
Education and information	1.18%	<p>'council should educate riders about the damage they do when they go making illegal tracks'</p> <p>'There is limited information reaching many community / resident groups to encourage greater awareness of issues. Central Coast has a network of groups who can disseminate and encourage public participation'</p> <p>'There is way too little information given to people about what species and what ecologies live in bushland.'</p> <p>'education programs addressing the damaging impact of unauthorized track development in environmentally sensitive areas'</p> <p>'Put on some education sessions on site regarding the ecosystems, erosion and conservation areas for mountain bikers and the public. There is a definite need for properly designed and maintained tracks which can be achieved. There may also be scope to provide user pays tracks to assist with a revenue stream to help maintain trackers etc. Council needs to discuss and network with clubs other councils and interested stakeholders to see how other areas are doing this successfully. Mountain biking is not going away.'</p> <p>'More info about what areas are available to mountain bike in'</p>
Enforcement	1.18%	<p>'If it should exist it needs very close supervision.'</p> <p>'There should be strict policing to ensure proper use only & limit damage to the environment. Understand younger generation need some space but can they/do they respect these areas.'</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		<p>'I would like to see some sort of policing of mountain bike riders in national parks'</p> <p>'Council need to increase compliance in COSS reserves to ensure illegal bike trails are not constructed in the bush.'</p> <p>'As well as having regulations about mountain bike riding there needs to be some way for it to be policed and delinquent riders fined otherwise they will take no notice.'</p>
Maintenance considerations	1.09%	<p>'Council must build and manage the trails (with volunteer help perhaps). This would avoid or at least reduce the building of illegal trails.'</p> <p>'I don't think we should be actively trying to promote and increase the number of mountain bikers in the Central Coast region without more resources than we currently have to manage reserves'</p> <p>'In many of the parks and reserves we bushwalk the trails already degraded through lack of maintenance and erosion.'</p> <p>'We need better managed areas and trails'</p> <p>'Just need regular maintenance to mountain bike trails'</p> <p>'Better consultation between registered clubs and council regarding the construction and maintenance of trails'</p>
Signage	1.00%	<p>'Clear signage and encouraging clubs to police their own members is a vital part of keeping trails safe for others and protecting the natural environment.'</p> <p>'Safe, well-signposted trails will encourage more people out to see our beautiful local environment'</p> <p>'I think there should be signs advising riders which tracks they are permitted on and a list of prohibitions (littering, illegal construction/alterations within bushlands), and general courtesy information (give way to bushwalkers, slow down on bends, respect the</p>



Key Theme	Percentage	Example Comments
		natural flora and fauna by not destroying the natural environment).' 'Would be great to have more trails marked and maps available of the trails as well as beginner trails available and marked as beginner trails with progression trails also available'
Should not be restricted	0.36%	'Don't ban/restrict it. It's not going to go away. Embrace it' 'Legitimate activity that should be encouraged and facilitated.'

2.4 Survey Demographics

The large majority of survey respondents (80.78%) were male.

Table 25: Survey Results: Gender

What gender do you identify as?	
Male	80.78%
Female	17.38%
Non-Binary	0.36%
Prefer not to say	1.48%

Respondents were located across a range of suburbs, with Terrigal being the highest at 4.33%. Interestingly 18.76% of respondents came from outside of the Central Coast region. The following table outlines the suburbs and the respective response rates.

Table 26: Survey Results: Suburb

What suburb do you live in?		
Suburb	Percentage	Ward
Alison	0%	Wyong
Avoca Beach	3.51%	Gosford East
Bar Point	0%	Gosford West
Bateau Bay	2.01%	The Entrance
Bensville	1.38%	Gosford East
Berkeley Vale	1.82%	The Entrance
Blackwall	0.69%	Gosford West
Blue Bay	0.06%	The Entrance
Blue Haven	0.38%	Budgewoi
Booker Bay	0.50%	Gosford West
Bouddi	0.44%	Gosford East



What suburb do you live in?		
Box Head	0.06%	Gosford East
Budgewoi	0.63%	Budgewoi
Budgewoi Peninsula	0%	Budgewoi
Buff Point	0.38%	Budgewoi
Bushells Ridge	0.06%	Wyong
Calga	0.25%	Gosford West
Canton Beach	0%	Budgewoi
Cedar Brush Creek	0.06%	Wyong
Central Mangrove	0.06%	Wyong (part), Gosford West (part)
Chain Valley Bay	0%	Budgewoi
Charmhaven	0.13%	Budgewoi
Cheero Point	0.06%	Gosford West
Chittaway Bay	0.19%	The Entrance
Chittaway Point	0.25%	The Entrance
Cogra Bay	0%	Gosford West
Colongra	0%	Budgewoi
Copacabana	2.70%	Gosford East
Crangan Bay (part)	0%	Budgewoi
Daleys Point	0.13%	Gosford East
Davistown	1.44%	Gosford East
Dooralong	0.06%	Wyong
Doyalson	0.19%	Budgewoi
Doyalson North	0%	Budgewoi
Durren Durren	0%	Wyong
East Gosford	0.82%	Gosford West
Empire Bay	0.69%	Gosford East
Erina	1.88%	Gosford East
Erina Heights	0.19%	Gosford East
Ettalong Beach	0.82%	Gosford West
Forresters Beach	1.25%	The Entrance
Fountaindale	0.19%	The Entrance
Frazer Park	0%	Budgewoi
Freemans	0%	Budgewoi
Glenning Valley	0.31%	The Entrance
Glenworth Valley	0.13%	Gosford West
Gorokan	0.63%	Budgewoi (part), Wyong (part)
Gosford	0.88%	Gosford West
Green Point	2.07%	Gosford East
Greengrove	0.06%	Gosford West
Gunderman	0%	Gosford West
Gwandalan	0.38%	Budgewoi
Halekulani	0.19%	Budgewoi
Halloran	0.06%	Wyong
Hamlyn Terrace	0.63%	Budgewoi (part), Wyong (part)
Hardys Bay	0.31%	Gosford East



What suburb do you live in?		
Holgate	0.44%	Gosford East
Horsfield Bay	0.19%	Gosford West
Jiliby	0.50%	Wyong
Kangy Angy	0.06%	Wyong
Kanwal	0.69%	Budgewoi (part), Wyong (part)
Kariong	1.13%	Gosford West
Kiar	0%	Wyong
Killarney Vale	1.07%	The Entrance
Killcare	0.82%	Gosford East
Killcare Heights	1.32%	Gosford East
Kincumber	3.95%	Gosford East
Kincumber South	0.06%	Gosford East
Kingfisher Shores	0%	Budgewoi
Koolewong	0.19%	Gosford West
Kulnura	0.19%	Wyong (part), Gosford West (part)
Lake Haven	0.69%	Budgewoi
Lake Munmorah	1.00%	Budgewoi
Lemon Tree	0.13%	Wyong
Lisarow	1.25%	Wyong (part), Gosford East (part)
Little Jiliby	0%	Wyong
Little Wobby	0.06%	Gosford West
Long Jetty	0.82%	The Entrance
Lower Mangrove	0%	Gosford West
MacMasters Beach	2.01%	Gosford East
Magenta	0.19%	Budgewoi (part), The Entrance (part)
Mangrove Creek	0%	Gosford West
Mangrove Mountain	0.31%	Gosford West
Mannering Park	0.38%	Budgewoi
Mardi	1.07%	Wyong
Marlow	0%	Gosford West
Matcham	0.82%	Gosford East
Moonee (Part)	0.06%	Budgewoi
Mooney Mooney	0.13%	Gosford West
Mooney Mooney Creek	0%	Gosford West
Mount Elliot	0.19%	Wyong
Mount White	0%	Gosford West
Narara	1.32%	Wyong
Niagara Park	0.31%	Wyong
Norah Head	0.44%	Budgewoi
Noraville	0.13%	Budgewoi
North Avoca	1.94%	Gosford East
North Gosford	0.56%	Wyong (part), Gosford West (part)
Ourimbah	1.38%	Wyong (part), The Entrance (part)
Palm Grove	0.06%	Wyong
Palmdale	0.25%	Wyong



What suburb do you live in?		
Patonga	0.19%	Gosford West
Pearl Beach	0.50%	Gosford West
Peats Ridge	0.06%	Gosford West
Phegans Bay	0.19%	Gosford West
Picketts Valley	0%	Gosford East
Point Clare	1.57%	Gosford West
Point Frederick	0.06%	Gosford West
Point Wolstoncroft	0%	Budgewoi
Pretty Beach	0.38%	Gosford East
Ravensdale	0.06%	Wyong
Rocky Point	0.06%	Wyong
San Remo	0.19%	Budgewoi
Saratoga	1.51%	Gosford East
Shelly Beach	0.50%	The Entrance
Somersby	0.25%	Wyong (part), Gosford West (part)
Spencer	0.06%	Gosford West
Springfield	0.88%	Gosford West (part), Gosford East (part)
St Huberts Island	0.31%	Gosford East
Summerland Point	0.19%	Budgewoi
Tacoma	0%	Wyong
Tacoma South	0.06%	Wyong
Tascott	0.13%	Gosford West
Ten Mile Hollow (Part)	0.06%	Gosford West
Terrigal	4.33%	Gosford East
The Entrance	0.44%	The Entrance
The Entrance North	0.13%	The Entrance
Toowoan Bay	0.06%	The Entrance
Toukley	0.44%	Budgewoi
Tuggerah	0.19%	Wyong (part), The Entrance (part)
Tuggerawong	0.25%	Wyong
Tumbi Umbi	0.88%	The Entrance
Umina Beach	3.01%	Gosford West
Upper Mangrove	0%	Gosford West
Wadalba	0.38%	Wyong
Wagstaffe	0.13%	Gosford East
Wallahah	0.06%	Wyong
Wamberal	3.32%	Gosford East (part), The Entrance (part)
Warnervale	0.19%	Wyong
Watanobbi	0.25%	Wyong
Wendoree Park	0%	Gosford West
West Gosford	0.38%	Gosford West
Wisemans Ferry (Part)	0%	Gosford West
Wondabyne	0%	Gosford West
Woongarra	0.69%	Budgewoi
Woy Woy	0.94%	Gosford West



What suburb do you live in?		
Woy Woy Bay	0.25%	Gosford West
Wybung	0%	Budgewoi
Wyoming	1.32%	Wyong
Wyong	0.82%	Wyong
Wyong Creek	0.13%	Wyong
Wyongah	0.31%	Wyong
Yarramalong	0%	Wyong
Yattalunga	0.13%	Gosford East
Outside Central Coast	18.76%	NA

The large majority (47.52%) of survey respondents were aged between 35-49, 12.53% of respondents were aged 60 years or older.

Table 27: Survey Results: Age

How old are you?	
15-19	4.61%
20-24	2.13%
25-29	5.44%
30-34	9.57%
35-39	14.07%
40-44	17.97%
45-49	15.48%
50-54	11.58%
55-59	6.62%
60 years and over	12.53%

A large majority of respondents were employed in full time work (72.27%), followed by not seeking work (retired, unable to work) at 10.01%, and then part time work at 8.95%.

Table 28: Survey Results: Employment Status

What is your employment status?	
Full-time	72.27%
Not seeking work (eg retired, unable to work)	10.01%
Part-time	8.95%
Student	4.32%
Casual	3.32%
Seeking work	0.71%
Carer	0.41%

Over 40% of the survey respondents identified having an income of \$104,000 or more.

Table 29: Survey Results: Income

What is your annual income?	
Negative income	1.22%
Nil income	4.56%
Less than \$10,400	2.31%



What is your annual income?	
\$10,400 – \$15,599	1.48%
\$15,600 – \$20,799	1.16%
\$20,800 – \$31,199	3.15%
\$31,200 – \$41,599	2.57%
\$41,600 – \$51,999	4.69%
\$52,000 – \$64,999	6.93%
\$65,000 – \$77,999	10.21%
\$78,000 – \$103,999	21.69%
\$104,000 or more	40.05%



3. Key Stakeholder Meetings

3.1 Mountain Bike Industry

A focus group was held with mountain bike riders on the Central Coast. This included representatives from the local mountain bike club, bike shops and riders. The following provides a summary of the key discussion points.

- The Central Coast Mountain Bike Club operate from Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park in the Ourimbah State Forest which is managed by the Forestry Corporation with the club having a permit to operate. There is potential to expand at this location. The Club currently has gravity and cross-country trails and any new developments need approval from Forestry. The Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park is currently run by Club members (volunteers) with free access to the mountain bike community/ general public. They have large use on the weekends and around 20km of trails but believe there is the ability to have 85km of trails.
- There is high demand for mountain biking reported from local bike shops, approximately 85% of sales are in mountain bikes.
- Number of Sydney residents also coming to Central Coast as it is only an hour away and there are limited facilities in Sydney.
- There is a significant risk with the current network of trails as there are limited trail markings and signage.
- Kincumba is a popular spot as it has multiple entry points, in a central location and allows a quick ride with good elevation.
- There is a limited relationship with Council, previous proposals to develop mountain biking have not been supported.
- Opportunity for the Mountain Bike Community to work as a group with Council, they have a desire for good quality trails to be built and to achieve this without impacting the environment or heritage sites. Support for proposed dual use trails on climbing trails.
- Desire of the mountain bike community to have a trail network but trails that are built are blocked by Council and new trail alignments occur as a result, they are just told there is no opportunity for trails to be built and therefore illegal trails are being developed. There is a financial opportunity for tourism and healthy living in supporting the industry. A willingness of the group to see positive changes and be part of the solution.

3.2 Environmental Conservation Group

A workshop was held with representatives from environment and conservation groups. A summary of the key points is provided below:

- Overall there was a significant concern regarding the damage that unauthorised mountain bike trails could have on the environment. This includes erosion, spreading of weeds, impacts to flora and fauna as well as damage to cultural heritage sites.
- There was concern around locations where mountain bikers are riding and in particular COSS land. The COSS land has a particular value that should be protected.
- There was a general agreement that mountain biking on fire trails is acceptable, however it was acknowledged that a majority of mountain bikers prefer single track riding.



- There was a general agreement that mountain biking is an active and healthy pursuit and can be provided for in the right location.
- That unauthorised trails in high value land should be closed and revegetation should be undertaken.
- Some concern around the conflict between users, particularly walkers and mountain bikers
- A discussion and request for successful dual use trails found in other locations (examples have been provided in the case studies – see Smithfield and Atherton).

3.3 Forestry Corporation of NSW

The Central Coast Mountain Bike Club have a Forest Permit with the Forestry Corporation of NSW. This permit is issued under the Forestry Act 2012 and comes with a designated parcel of land and a set of conditions and an annual fee. The permit area is audited every year or as needed to determine if the area is being managed accordingly. The Club (permittee) has various responsibilities under the conditions, including maintenance of the trails. There is currently a network of approximately 18km of mountain bike trails including Downhill, Cross Country and a children's development area with a few others approved including a second Downhill, flow/gravity and a pump track. In total there are 26 trails (9 green, 12 blue, 1 black).

Should the club wish to develop infrastructure on the site, they may seek permission in writing from Forestry NSW. The Club is required to obtain any relevant approvals such as environmental assessment and any local government approvals. As the area is a timber reserve FCNSW will communicate with the club in advance if the timber needs to come out of the Club's permit area.

FCNSW has had issues with unauthorised trails being built but not just in relation to mountain biking, with trail bikes, horse riding and 4wd as well. Engagement with the Mountain Bike Club and auditing process under the permit has assisted to reduce this. There has been an increase in demand for trails across NSW over the past few years with about 15 approved mountain bike parks across the State and other agreements on State Forests in NSW. Demand has also increased for commercial operators to offer experiences and products such as events, shuttle services, tours and skill clinics. Each commercial operator requires their own Forest Permit and also permission from the Club to operate within the Mountain Bike Park.

Mountain bike riding is allowed in State Forests on formed roads. There is approximately 60,000km of formed roads within NSW State Forests. Designated and purpose-built mountain bike single trails must be under a Forest Permit to ensure due diligence, trail ownership/accountability and communication. Single trails not managed under a Forest Permit are considered unauthorised.

3.4 National Parks & Wildlife

Discussions with National Parks and Wildlife staff around mountain biking in the region indicated that there was a mix of sanctioned and unauthorised trails in National Parks. Key points from the discussion are provided below:

- Bouddi National Park has an estimated 15-20km of trails.
- There are also trails located within Brisbane Water National Park however the extent of the trail network is unknown.
- Unauthorised trail building has increased in the past couple of years, causing damage to some environment and heritage sites.
- MTB Events have also been held without any approvals.



3.5 Department of Premier and Cabinet

Mountain Biking was discussed with a Senior Project Officer within the Department of Premier and Cabinet. A summary of the discussion is outlined below:

- A NSW Mountain Biking Strategy is currently being prepared.
- Some cross-agency networks have recently been established in Northern Sydney. Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai and Northern Beaches Councils are working together with National Parks and other state land managers to look at ways to respond to the rising demand for mountain biking.
- Hornsby Shire Council have developed a network of trails at Old Mans Valley. This has been built and managed by Council with 30km sanctioned and 150km unsanctioned trails.
- Rider numbers are certainly increasing, and the issue of unauthorised trails being built is one that is happening across the state.
- There are some examples of private developments coming in to try and target mountain biking as well. However, this is a pay for use situation.
- Glenworth Valley – is expected to have 15km of trails by the end of the year, with a view to a much bigger network over time.

3.6 Traditional Custodians of the land

A meeting was held with representatives from Darkinjung local Aboriginal Council. Darkinjung have concerns with unauthorised trails being built through land they own which is also causing damage to cultural heritage sites (in particular at Kincumba). Development of any trail network (if it is on their land) needs to be approved at a board level.



4. Written Submissions

A number of written emails and submissions were also received from stakeholders during the preparation of the report. These have been summarised below:

4.1 Mountain Biking Interest Groups

Submissions from several mountain bike stakeholders have been summarised below:

- There is a desire for mountain bikers to be working together. A new Facebook page called Central Coast MTB Trail Advocacy was launched which attracted a large amount of interest from the mountain bike community.
- There is a high level of demand for mountain biking not just from residents on the Central Coast but also from Sydney and Newcastle residents.
- There is significant demand at Kincumba and Ourimbah which are both busy throughout the week. On the weekend stakeholders are reporting increased visitation from Sydney residents as well.
- Ourimbah is extremely popular with riders from the northern end of the Coast and people from Northern Sydney.
- The primary spot on the southern end of the Coast is Kincumba Mountain. Kincumba is surrounded by residential development so there is a significant population accessing the trails by simply riding in.
- Mountain biking trails can assist with tourism especially during the winter months when business are typically quiet.
- Mountain biking is a family sport and should be promoted accordingly, there are not many sports that family groups can enjoy together.
- Central Coast Mountain Bike Club needs financial support to ensure that they can maintain their existing trails.
- The Central Coast has the perfect environment for mountain bikers.

4.2 Environmental Conservation Interest Groups

Submissions from the environmental interest groups and stakeholders are summarised below:

- Mountain bikers have a legitimate right to use public open-space areas.
- There needs to be an enforcement component to prevent additional illegal tracks from being built. This can include procedures for early detection, closure and rehabilitation.
- Mountain bikers need to respect the environment they use by remaining on the designated tracks, not taking short cuts which can cause damage to plants and start erosion.
- The mountain bike club should assist with appropriate education programs.
- Some areas of COSS land are fragile and need protection.
- Any tracks should be closed after periods of heavy rain, similar to sporting fields.
- Tracks where mountain bike riding is permissible should be clearly sign-posted.



- Areas should be patrolled, with rangers issuing fines for inappropriate use.
- Bike tracks should not be permitted in locations with highly erodible soils.

4.3 General Feedback

Some general feedback was also received throughout the engagement phase. This included a submission outlining the opportunity to develop a multi-use trail link across the Central Coast that would be suitable for walkers, horse riding and mountain biking.



5. Warranties and Disclaimers

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their own experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.