

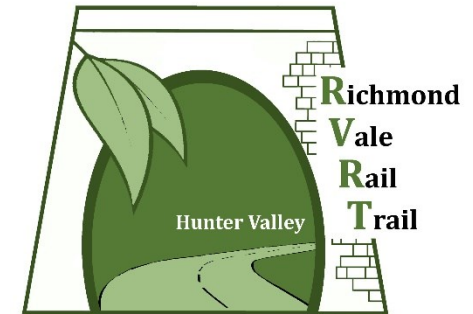
Facebook Post – November 27th 2023:

<https://www.facebook.com/richmondrailtrail/posts/pfbid02EK3qXGJDG6UekoWgf4R79PFvYrTFiwDZ81ybLS4QCEKxik5dNRLAZ7ZcnAdeUBH1I>

From Terry J. Lewin (RVRT Inc. Vice-President - RVRT Supporters' Group)

Recent RVRT Ministerial Visit and *Shiraz to Shore* Update: Highlighting Coastal Wetlands and Kau-Ma Park Panorama

Last Thursday (23/11/2013) another opportunity arose for a brief visit to the RVRT (and the broader *Shiraz to Shore* Trail) by two Federal MPs – Kristy McBain (MP for Eden-Monaro, and the Federal Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government) and Meryl Swanson (MP for Paterson).



A substantial portion of the RVRT runs through Meryl Swanson's electorate and she has been a long-standing and strong RVRT supporter. Likewise, Kristy McBain is well aware that trails bring economic and social benefits to regions, as the sub-alpine Tumbarumba to Rosewood (Riverina Highlands) Rail Trail runs through her electorate. We thank both MPs for their enthusiastic visit and their acknowledgement of the substantial amount of trail planning that has already been undertaken.

On this occasion, we decided to highlight the 'Coastal Wetlands Zone' segment of the trail by meeting at **Kau-Ma Park in Fletcher** – a location that has also been documented in our recent Facebook Posts:

<https://www.facebook.com/richmondrailtrail/posts/pfbid037cUeJ1VXLGyapSCMvUuYvmxmf3wXn5vNJoGe4FF9C82uCLHhVEsajzW5eJSo5U7ql>

Pictures 1 to 8 present a mix of photos taken during the visit and contextual information about the RVRT's Coastal Wetlands Zone, relative to the Fletcher Hub and Kau-Ma Park. As it turns out, this was an excellent location from which to describe the trail's multi-layered elements, together with its historical timelines, including: the extent and character of the Hunter Wetlands and Estuary; the area's indigenous heritage, particularly for the Awabakal nation and the Pambalong Clan (e.g., Wedge-tail Eagle totem, Rocky Knob, local Nature Reserves); the area's coal and rail heritage (e.g., steam trains ran from Hexham to Minmi/Stockrington from the 1860's to the 1980's); and the newish residential estates that now border the Wetlands, together with the need for thoughtful, attractive community connections and social infrastructure.

Picture 9 was included as a reminder of our recent visit/walk through part of the 'Sugarloaf Range' RVRT segment with local MPs and Councillors.

Picture 10 provides an overview of the broader *Shiraz to Shore* Trail, together with a brief update about the Hunter Joint Organisation of Council's (Hunter JO's) recent planning activities and stakeholder engagement. **Pictures 11 and 12** break the trail into two broad segments (Wine Country to Kurri Kurri, and Kurri Kurri to Newcastle), with **Picture 12**, in particular, highlighting the overlap with the RVRT (here, identified as Sections 4 and 5a of the *Shiraz to Shore* Trail).

It should be noted that these are **Preliminary/Draft Materials Only**, and that the adjustments that we have made to these Figures are for Discussion Purposes Only. **Picture 13** further illustrates the 'Sugarloaf Range and Coastal Wetlands' RVRT segment within the *Shiraz to Shore* Trail.

It also needs to be emphasised that these images are designed to provide a broad overview of the Trail – the 'spine or backbone', if you like. There will be many other links that can be identified, including a Cessnock/Abermain/Nulkaba Loop (using existing and proposed Cessnock shared pathways) and a Two Cities Loop (using existing and proposed pathways within Lake Macquarie and Newcastle LGAs, such as the Fernleigh Track and its extensions).

A growing theme emerging from the trail planning work is the need to provide a **diversity of user experiences** (e.g., walking and cycling trails, mountain biking, shared pathways, gravel and road cycling) that value add to the region's existing experiences and attractions. **Trail governance and maintenance** arrangements are also emerging as important topics for discussion, as we move forward to seek trail funding.

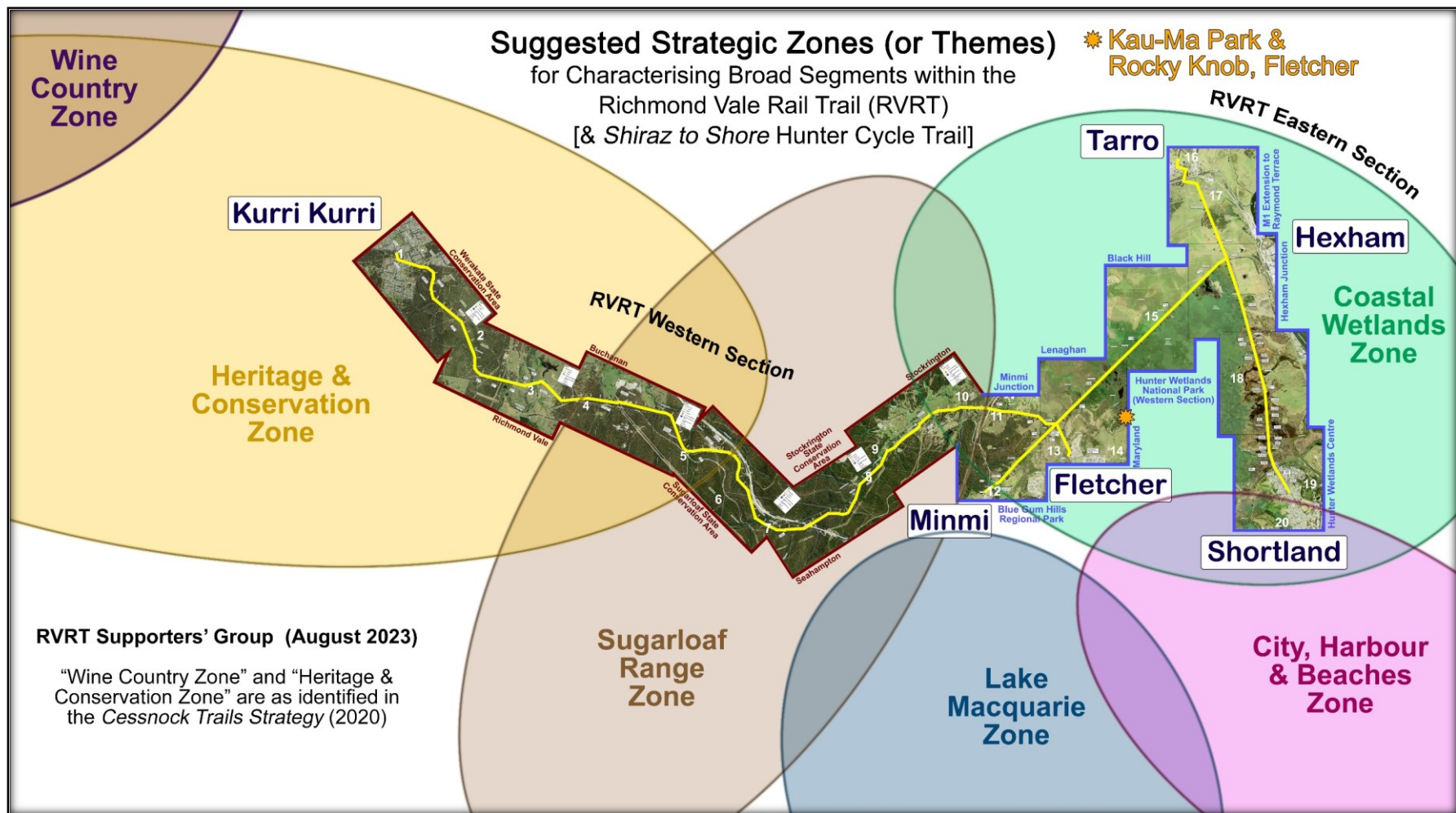
Thanks to all of our RVRT supporters.

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK WELCOME.

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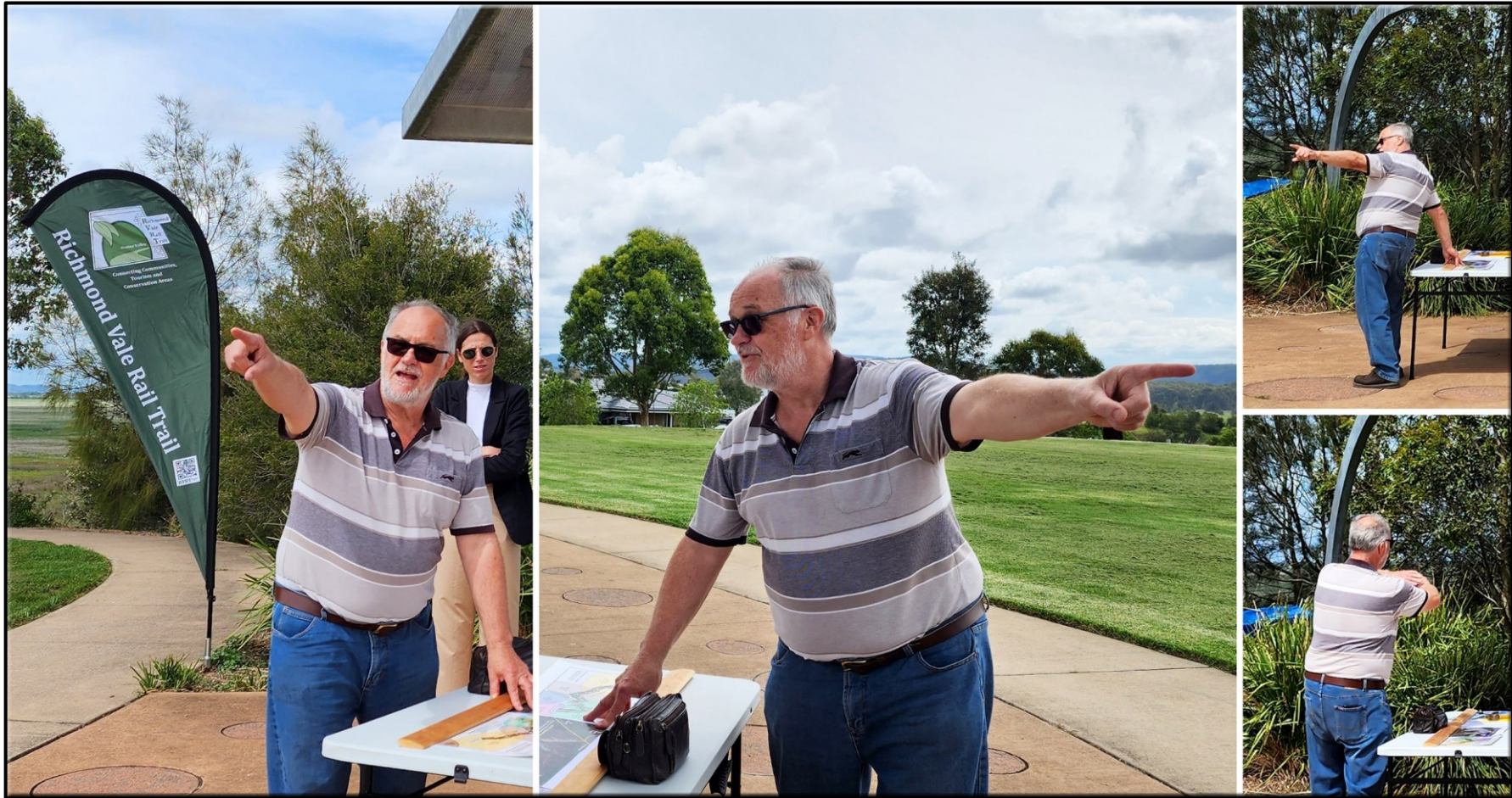
Picture 1. Federal MPs Kristy McBain and Meryl Swanson, with Terry Lewin, near the '*Eagle Shelter*' in Kau-Ma Park, Fletcher (23/11/2023). Leigh Gibbens was the other RVRT Supporters' Group Committee member who greeted the MPs.



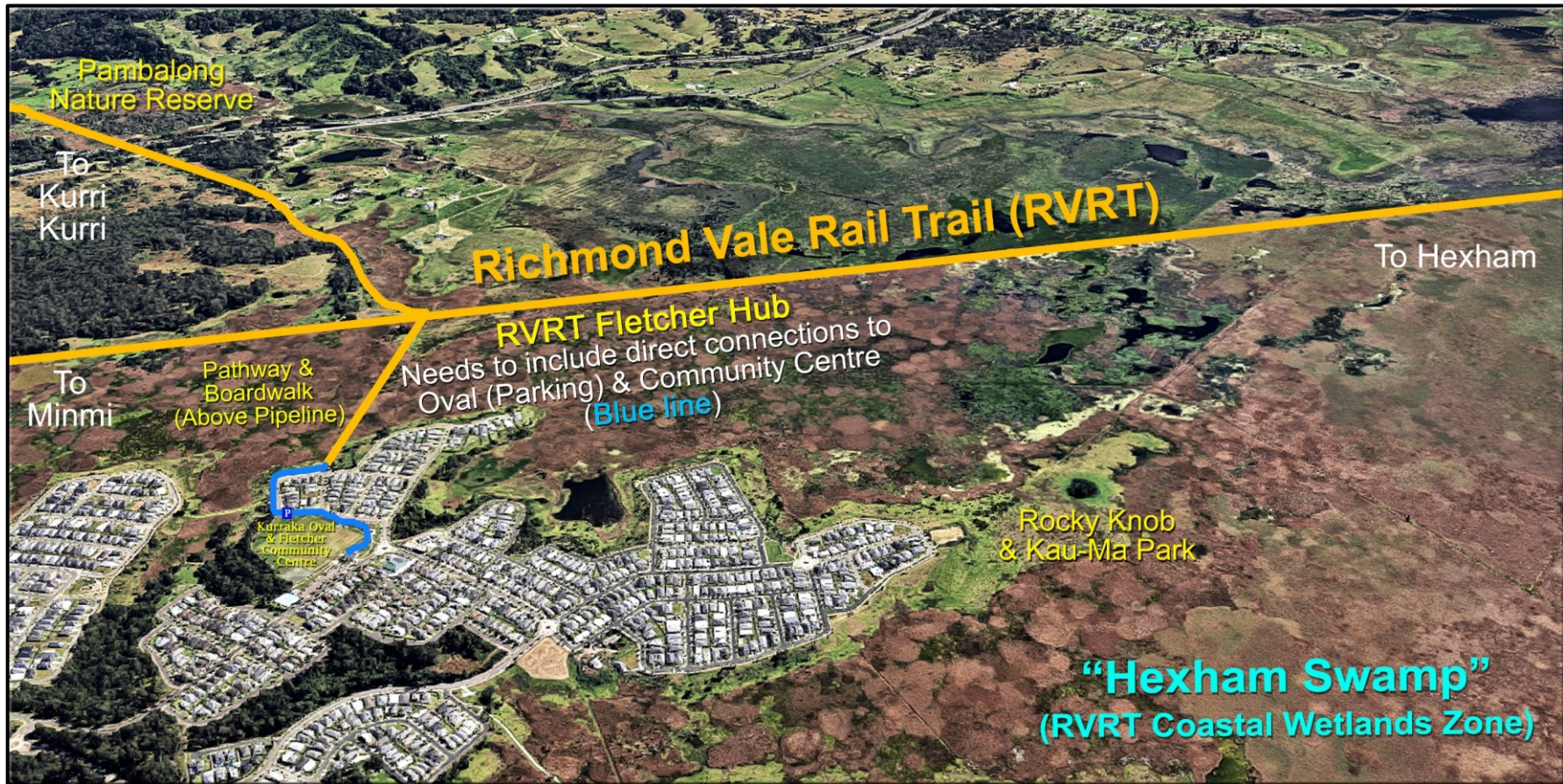
Picture 2. Overall Richmond Vale Rail Trail (RVRT) Route [32+ km from Shortland to Kurri Kurri], Suggested Strategic Zones, and Kau-Ma Park Location.



Picture 3. Looking Towards Coastal Wetlands from Kau-Ma Park, Fletcher; Extracted 'Little Planet' View from Bill Landenberger's Recent 360Cities Drone Panorama (18/11/2023), with Rocky Knob in the Centre. Relative Altitude of 23 Metres: <http://www.360cities.net/image/kau-ma-park-drone-panorama>
As shown in this image, there are existing shared pathways around most of the Wetlands border within Fletcher.



Picture 4. Terry Lewin (RVRT Supporters' Group Vice-President) Demonstrating that he can Point in Every Direction! [Whilst Highlighting Relevant RVRT (and *Shiraz to Shore* Trail) Points of Interest for our Visiting Federal MPs (Kau-Ma Park, Fletcher, 23/11/2023)].



Picture 5. Fletcher Hub and Surrounding Wetlands – Illustrating Proposed RVRT Links and Kau-Ma Park Location (Overlooking Rocky Knob).



Picture 6. View through the 'Eagle Shelter' in Kau-Ma Park, Fletcher – Looking Towards the Shortland to Tarro [Pipeline] RVRT Segment (23/11/2023).



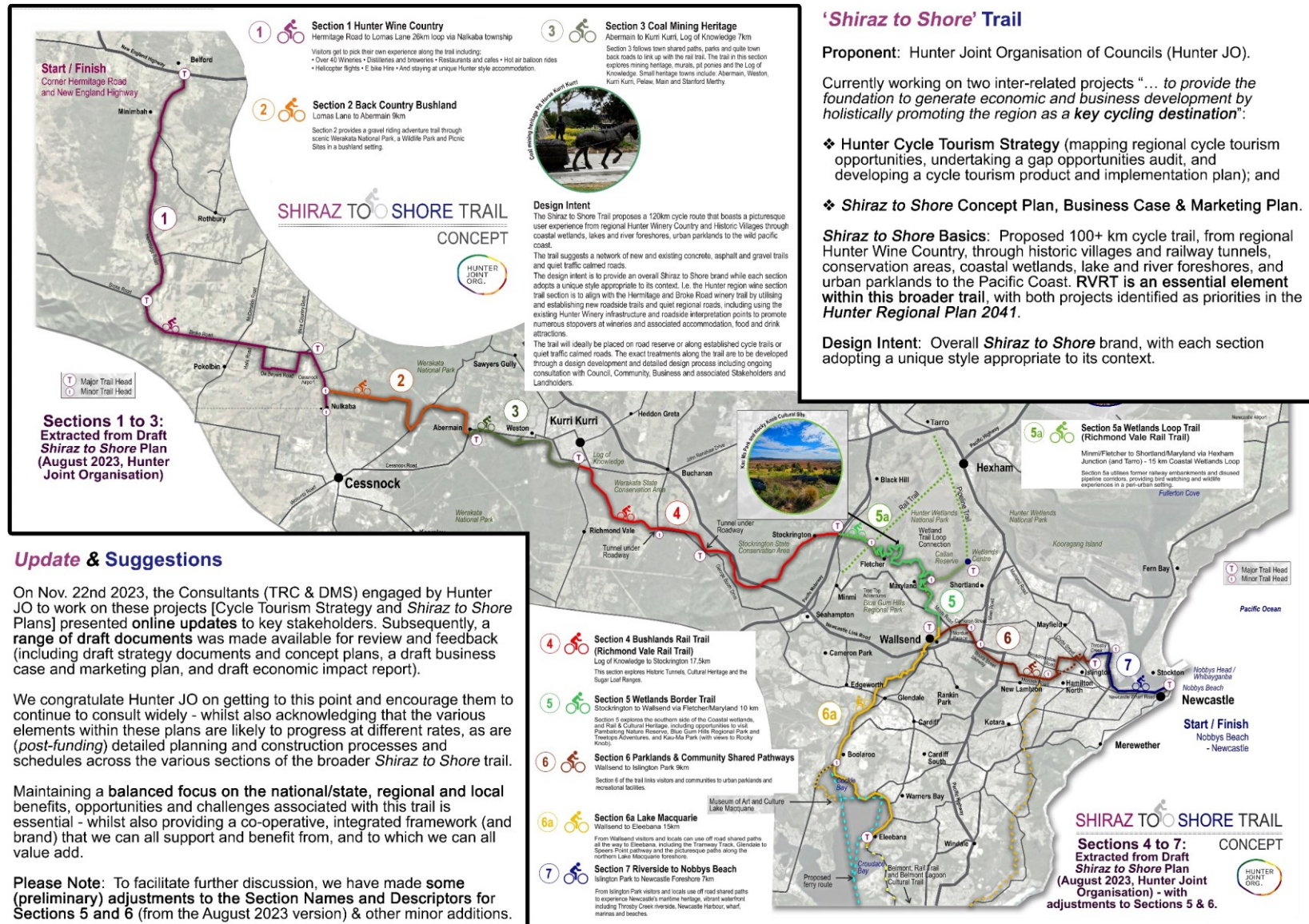
Picture 7. Federal MPs Kristy McBain and Meryl Swanson, with Terry Lewin, near the ‘*Three Canoes*’ Artwork in Kau-Ma Park, Fletcher (23/11/2023).



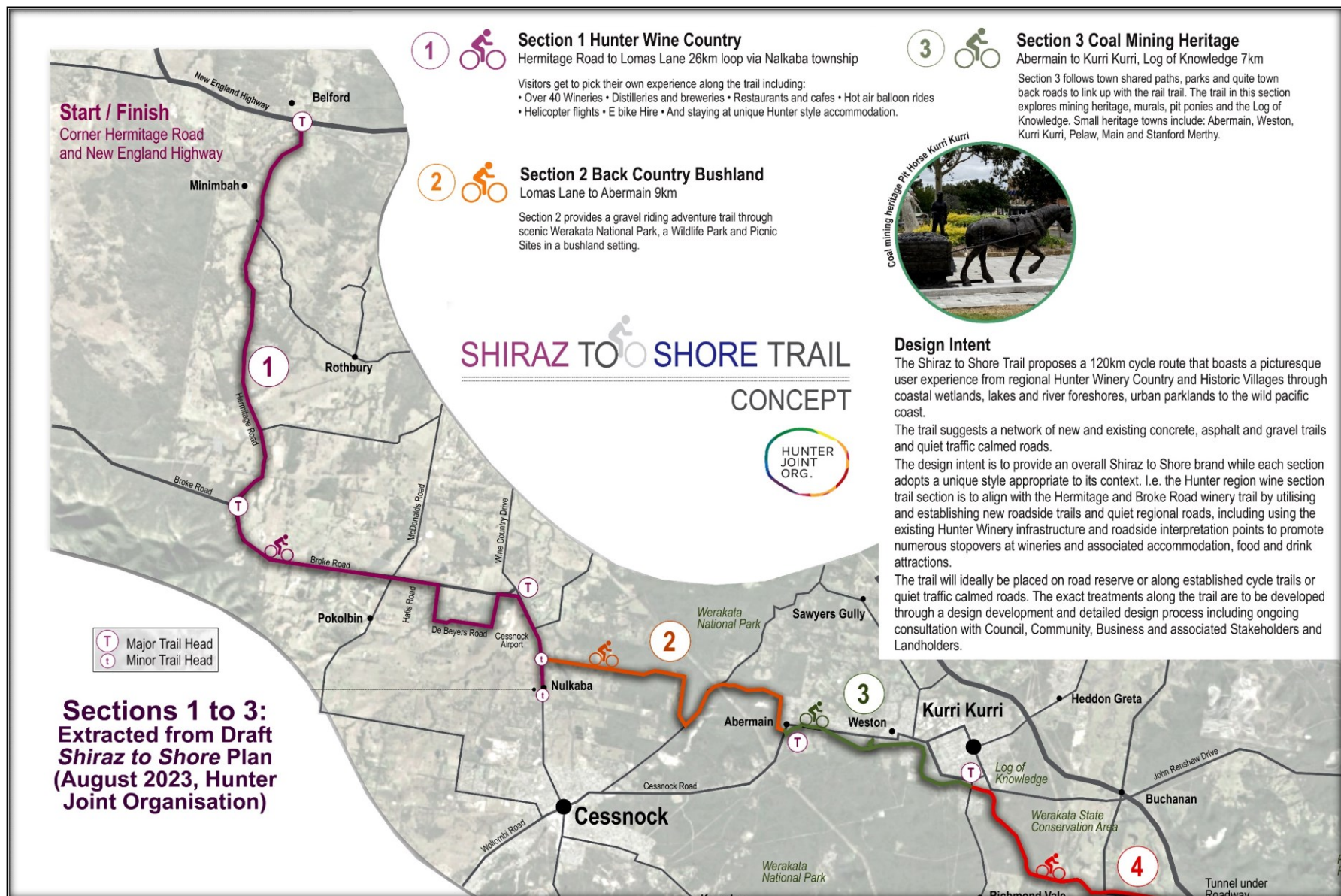
Picture 8. Federal MPs Kristy McBain and Meryl Swanson, with Terry Lewin, experiencing the '*Three Chairs*' Artwork in Kau-Ma Park, Fletcher (23/11/2023).



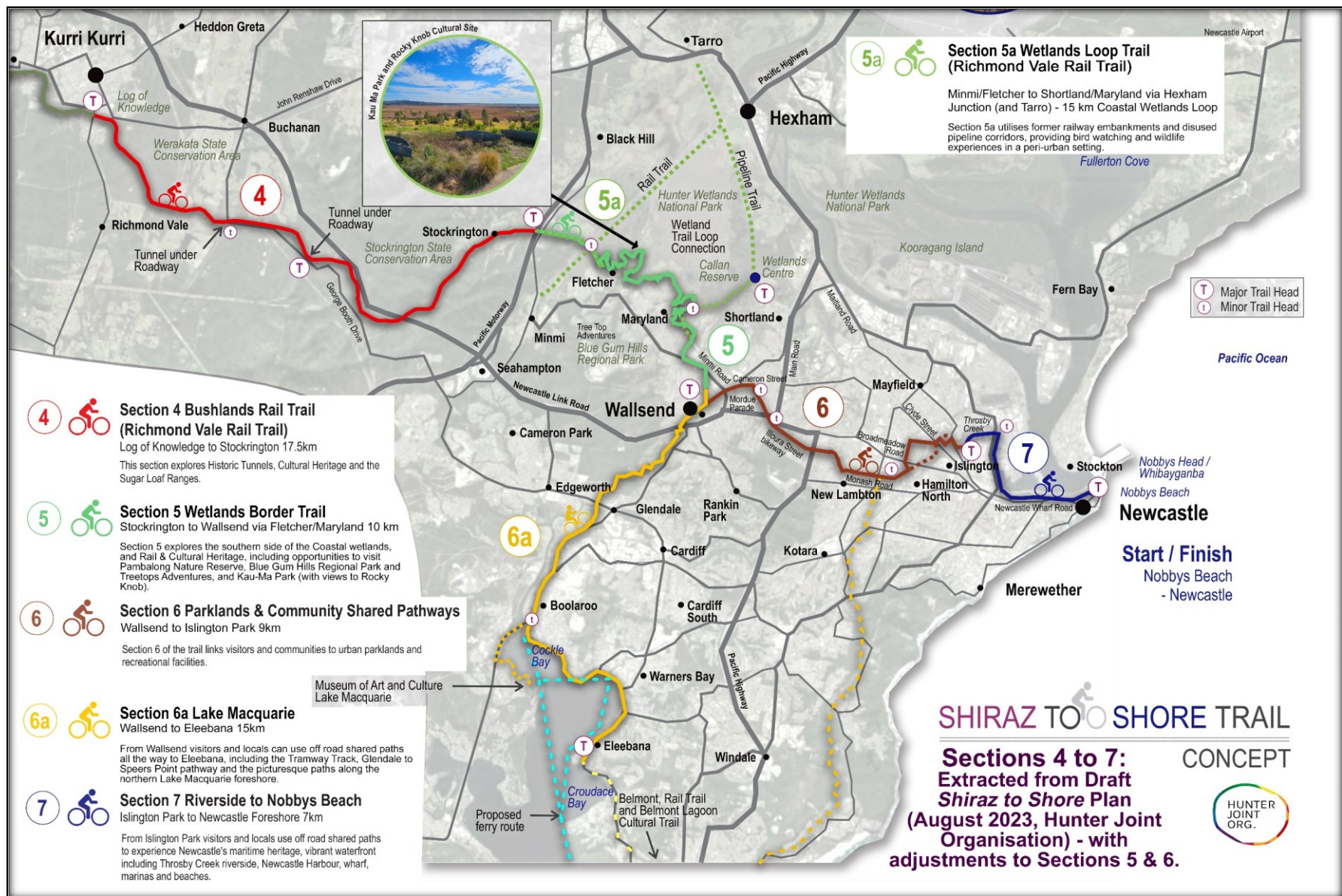
Picture 9. Recap – We Visited the ‘Sugarloaf Range’ RVRT Segment with a Small Group of Federal MPs and Cessnock Councillors on 29/9/2023;
Link: <https://www.facebook.com/richmondrailtrail/posts/pfbid034VdENPejx9DP1jji2DNU9p9QTYaevjkXq69qmWas23TZyU2sJRAsFCEDXxBTFZsul>



Picture 10. Overview of *Shiraz to Shore* Trail, Recent Developments, and Stakeholder Engagement – Preliminary/Draft Materials Only (for Discussion).



Picture 11. Wine Country to Kurri Kurri Segment (Sections 1 to 3) of Proposed 100+ km *Shiraz to Shore* Trail – Extracted from Updated Draft Concept Plan (August 2023, Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils).



Picture 12. Kurri Kurri to Newcastle Segment (Sections 4 to 7) of Proposed 100+ km *Shiraz to Shore* Trail – Modified Version of Updated Draft Concept Plan (August 2023) – Highlighting RVRT (Sect. 4 & 5a), Coastal Wetlands (Sect. 5/5a), and Kau-Ma Park (Overlooking Rocky Knob).



Picture 13. Illustrated ‘Sugarloaf Range and Coastal Wetlands’ RVRT Segment of the *Shiraz to Shore* Trail; See **Pictures 10 to 12** for further details.