

Extracted from RVRT Inc. **Facebook Post** – July 8th 2023:

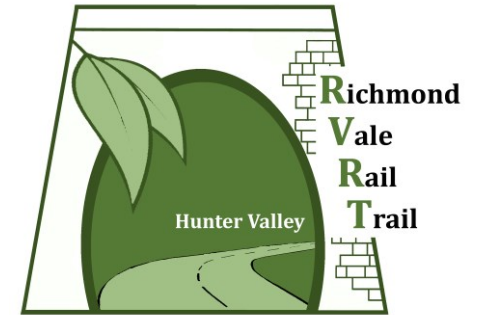
<https://www.facebook.com/richmondrailtrail/posts/pfbid02ty3yq2cQy9Q1fiUvLRqscDd4grg87xpthySxqk4nUVWY5nwNKtCtmestfJ6zjh46l>

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

RVRT Snapshot & Points of Interest – July 2023

Unique Features of the RVRT:

- The RVRT will comprise a 32+ km continuous off-road shared pathway, running from Shortland (near the *Hunter Wetlands Centre*) to Kurri Kurri (*Log of Knowledge Park*) and connecting four LGAs - Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Cessnock and Maitland. The trail runs primarily along the former Richmond Vale railway alignment (a private coal line that closed in 1987), as well as utilising Hunter Water Corporation pipeline corridors.
- Currently, five local community hubs are planned – at Shortland, Tarro, Fletcher, Minmi and Kurri Kurri – and, to date, 27.5 km of the RVRT has received initial (concept-level) planning approval: approx. 13 km within Newcastle LGA (on 6th December 2021); and 14.4 km within Cessnock LGA (on 17th May 2023).
- The RVRT will support a broad range of user groups and deliver a cost-effective array of life-changing benefits, including: community access and connection; health and lifestyle benefits; environmental and heritage appreciation; economic and tourism; as well as cycling-specific safety and commuting benefits.
- Importantly, the RVRT will also uniquely link metropolitan and rural communities and attractions, and facilitate access to multiple previously inaccessible high conservation value areas (e.g., Hunter Wetlands National Park, Pambalong Nature Reserve, Stockrington and Werakata State Conservation Areas).



- The RVRT will also be an essential element within the proposed 100+ km broader ‘*Shiraz to Shore*’ Hunter Cycle Trail, an initiative of the Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils; and both projects are now identified as priorities in the Hunter Regional Plan 2041 (December 2022).
- We also need to ensure that other shared pathways (within each of the local hubs) are carefully designed and inter-connected with the RVRT – facilitating improved and safer linkages between local schools, parks, recreational facilities, and shopping centres – contributing to increased patronage and optimising the RVRT’s local and regional benefits and sustainability.

Potential Points of Interest:

- It is useful to view the RVRT as having Western and Eastern Sections. The 17+ km Western Section (Cessnock & Lake Macquarie LGAs) runs through the Sugarloaf Range and largely rural areas, while the 15+ km Eastern Section (Newcastle LGA) traverses coastal wetlands and triggers different planning legislation. The accompanying updated images highlight **10 Points of Interest** within each of these two RVRT Sections.

Current RVRT Supporters’ Group Activities:

- Trying to ensure that the whole of the RVRT is genuinely ‘*shovel ready*’ as soon as possible (e.g., encouraging Councils to complete remaining basic approvals for the short RVRT sections within Lake Macquarie LGA and across the Hunter Wetlands National Park; promoting integrated planning for other key connections).
- Fostering ongoing community and stakeholder engagement and support – including progressively working through the various issues, options and opportunities already identified (e.g., during the RVRT concept-design stage) – which will improve the quality of the end product and help to speed up the detailed design and construction phases.
- Advocating for establishment of an active and representative Regional RVRT Planning and Management Committee, drawing representation from Newcastle, Cessnock, Lake Macquarie and Maitland LGAs – with a focus on integrated

regional RVRT development, resolving issues, identifying construction segments and priorities, securing funding, and optimising the trail’s longer-term benefits for both local communities and the overall Hunter Region.

- Encouraging our Local, State and Federal elected representatives to work together to accelerate the RVRT’s development – including securing the required infrastructure funding to deliver on these highly valued community- and wellbeing-enhancing regional priority projects.
- Engaging with related initiatives (e.g., NPWS/RVRT Landcare Group; local shared pathways, cycleways and active transport initiatives; Hunter Cycle Trail and Cycle Tourism initiatives).

Thanks to all of our RVRT supporters!

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK WELCOME.

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Western Section of Richmond Vale Rail Trail (RVRT)

Ten Points of Interest* (July 2023)

Cessnock and Lake Macquarie LGAs

8. Stockrington State Conservation Area (2,2050ha) and proposed Mid-trail Precinct
9. Former Stockrington underground coal mines (mining and railway heritage)
10. Pambalong Nature Reserve and access to eastern section of RVRT

5. Access point to ridges within western Stockrington State Conservation Area
6. Sugarloaf State Conservation Area
7. Historic brick Railway Tunnels #1 & #2 (Lake Macquarie LGA), The Jewboy Cave, Burrenjam Dam, and Hunter Expressway bridges (overhead)

1. **Kurri Kurri Hub:** Log of Knowledge Park - local history & mining heritage; access to Kurri Kurri CBD, murals, sporting precincts and other attractions, and current & future Cessnock trails
2. Werakata State Conservation Area (NE) – local Indigenous information/heritage
3. Proposed Wallis Creek RVRT bridge (70m single-span)
4. Historic brick Railway Tunnel #3 and proposed Surveyors Creek RVRT bridge (15m two-span)

* The 14.4 km section within Cessnock LGA received concept-level approval on May 17th 2023

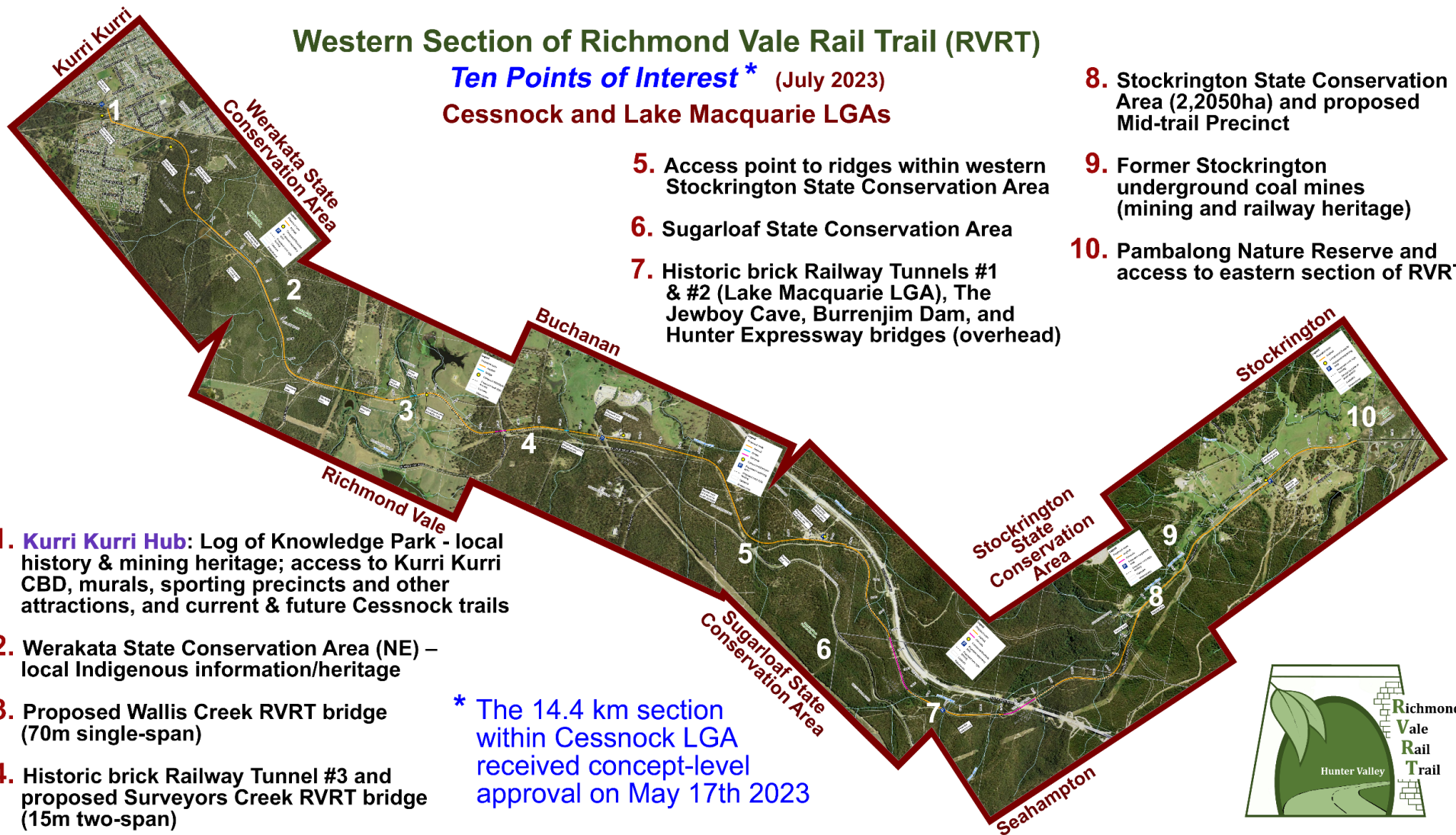


Image 1: Western Section of Richmond Vale Rail Trail (RVRT) – Stockrington to Kurri Kurri - Ten Points of Interest (Updated, July 2023).

Base images extracted from *Review of Environmental Factors*, Figures 3-1a to 3-1f (GHD Pty. Ltd.).

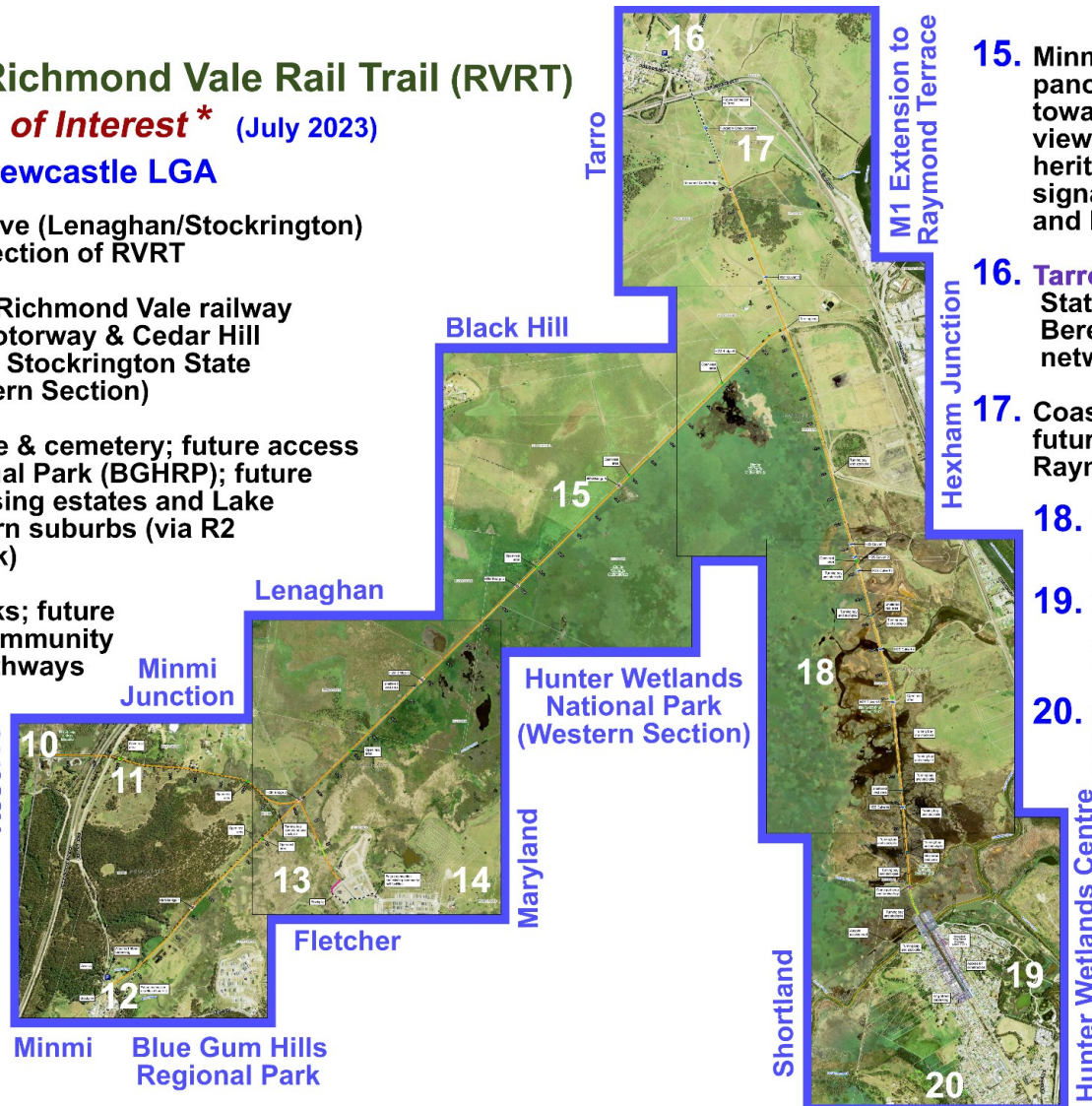
Eastern Section of Richmond Vale Rail Trail (RVRT)

Ten Points of Interest* (July 2023)

Newcastle LGA

10. Pambalong Nature Reserve (Lenaghan/Stockrington) and access to western section of RVRT
11. Road tunnels protecting Richmond Vale railway alignment - M1 Pacific Motorway & Cedar Hill Drive; Tank Paddock and Stockrington State Conservation Area (Eastern Section)
12. **Minmi Hub:** Minmi village & cemetery; future access to Blue Gum Hills Regional Park (BGHRP); future access to proposed housing estates and Lake Macquarie's north-western suburbs (via R2 Principal Bicycle Network)
13. **Fletcher Hub:** Boardwalks; future links to Kurraaka Oval, Community Centre, and Maryland pathways
14. Future links to Wallsend, Lake Macquarie and Newcastle (via R6 Principal Bicycle Network)

* 13 km of the Newcastle LGA section received concept-level approval on December 6th 2021



15. Minmi Junction to Hexham Junction - panoramic views across wetlands and towards Newcastle & Mount Sugarloaf; viewing platforms for selected rail heritage items; and interpretative signage, including Indigenous culture and history (e.g., Rocky Knob)
16. **Tarro Hub:** Tarro Park facilities & Tarro Station; future shared pathway links to Beresfield, Thornton & Maitland networks
17. Coastal wetlands (Hexham Junction), future access to M1 Extension to Raymond Terrace & on-road cycleways
18. Hunter Wetlands National Park (HWNP) - Western Section
19. Hunter Wetlands Centre, Tuxford Park, Ironbark Creek bridge, Fishery Creek, and boardwalks
20. **Shortland Hub:** future connections to University and wider Newcastle Cyclesafe Network

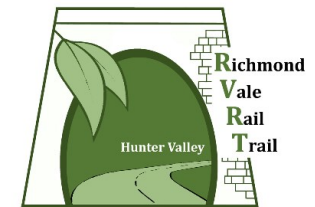


Image 2: Eastern Section of Richmond Vale Rail Trail (RVRT) – Shortland to Tarro, Minmi/Fletcher and Lenaghan (Pambalong Nature Reserve) – Ten Points of Interest (Updated, July 2023). Base images extracted from *Environmental Impact Statement*, Figures 3-1a to 3-1g (GHD Pty. Ltd.).