



Cairns - Destination Mountain Biking

Supporting a growing tourism economy and a healthy, active community.

Mountain bike (MTB) tourism is a high yielding segment of the tourism market with significant potential for domestic and international growth. In 2021, Tourism Tropical North Queensland commissioned tourism consultancy Tourism, Recreation and Conservation (TRC) to undertake market analysis of the mountain bike tourism sector and identify growth opportunities.

The resulting Tropical North Queensland Mountain Biking Market Analysis report highlights the potential for the region to generate an additional \$95 million per annum in visitor spend from mountain biking related tourism.

With mountain biking an Olympic sport in 2032, there is also opportunity for the

region to support a positive pre and post Games mountain biking legacy through Olympic training and development programs as well as Games visitation. Key actions to unlock this opportunity include:

- Expansion of the trail network at the Smithfield (Cairns) MTB Park to provide the critical trail mass needed to compete with national and international mountain biking destinations.
- A parking solution at the southern trailhead of the iconic Wangetti Trail to facilitate effective and efficient trail utilisation.
- Continued attraction and long-term retention and growth of mountain biking events, including the iconic Crankworx Cairns.

At a glance

- State commitment of **\$14 million** to deliver an expanded trail network at the Smithfield Mountain Bike (MTB) Park.
- State commitment to deliver a parking solution for the Wangetti Trail Southern Trailhead.

Electorate:

Located in Barron River but benefits all of Cairns /FNQ



The Smithfield Mountain Bike Park Expansion Project has the potential to deliver significant economic benefits to the region*

DURING CONSTRUCTION

46

FTE jobs

\$5.9

million GRP

DURING OPERATION

566

FTE jobs

\$53.7

million annually GRP

INCREASED VISITOR EXPENDITURE

\$140

million annually

PROJECT BENEFIT TO COST RATIO

2.16 at a 7% discount rate

*Based on economic modelling by AEC Group

Vision

Smithfield MTB Park - trail network expansion

The Smithfield MTB trail network is well established and has played host to numerous world class MTB events including the UCI MTB World Championships in 2017 and the UCI MTB Masters World Championships in 2024. The Smithfield MTB Park is also home to the iconic Crankworx Cairns event. Hosted in Cairns since 2022, Crankworx Cairns is part of the Crankworx World Tour, a multi-stop series of MTB festivals that brings together elite-level competitors. It is the largest MTB tour event in the world with festivals taking place in Rotorua (New Zealand), Whistler (Canada), Innsbruck (Austria) and Cairns.

In 2022, the Department of Tourism Innovation and Sport funded concept design work for the proposed expansion of the Smithfield MTB Park trail network. The resulting Smithfield Mountain Bike Park Expansion Concept Report (the Concept Report) proposed an expansion of the trail network from 30 kilometres to 82 kilometres with the expansion capable of being delivered on a staged basis. Economic modelling by independent advisory firm AEC Group confirms project viability with a benefit to cost ratio of 2.16 at a 7% discount rate.

The estimated capital cost of the expansion is \$14 million (ex GST) based on the Concept Report (indexed for inflation). State agencies, Council, the Cairns MTB Club and other stakeholders are already working collaboratively to investigate and identify the most appropriate model to support trail operation and ongoing maintenance.

Wangetti Trail

The Wangetti Trail will be Queensland's first purpose-built dual use walking and mountain biking track in a national park and one of Australia's leading adventure-based ecotourism experiences, attracting visitors on an international scale. Linking Palm Cove to Port Douglas, the trail is in close proximity to and complements the Smithfield MTB Park. With the trail scheduled for completion in 2026, a parking solution is needed at the southern trailheads in Palm Cove and Ellis Beach to facilitate efficient and effective trail access.

Timeline

- 2022**
Smithfield MTB Park Expansion Concept Report and associated economic analysis completed
- 2023**
Construction begins on the iconic Wangetti Trail project
- 2024**
Collaborative investigation of Smithfield MTB Park trail operating and ongoing maintenance models
- 2024 - 2026**
Smithfield MTB Park expansion project - approvals, detailed design/planning
Wangetti Trail scheduled completion
- 2026 - 2028**
Smithfield MTB Park expansion project - project delivery and implementation



Community benefits

Expansion of the trail network at the Smithfield MTB Park and completion of the Wangetti Trail project will deliver a range of economic and social benefits for the community. These include:

- 1** Building the region's reputation as an international mountain biking destination, thereby delivering jobs and economic growth through tourism and visitation.
- 2** Enhanced health and wellbeing outcomes delivered through increased participation in mountain biking.
- 3** Enhanced liveability which positively contributes to workforce attraction and retention.
- 4** Increased amenity for users of the Smithfield MTB Park.
- 5** Improved environmental engagement by the community through increased participation in nature-based outdoor activities.
- 6** Expansion of the trail network also supports broader regional mountain bike tourism and participation through links with existing and planned significant trail networks in the Cassowary Coast, Mareeba and Tablelands local government areas.