

**BUSINESS CASE
KEY SUMMARY**

LUNA

LIGHT UP NATURE
INTO ART

Background

The Light-Up Nature into Art (LUNA) project provides an opportunity to develop a new and exciting night-time tourism experience within the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges (YV&DR) Tourism region. This new series of events will assist in the dispersal of daytrip visitors to off-peak and overnight visitation, generate additional length of stay and higher visitor expenditure, and upgrade and activate important community assets.

LUNA is designed to bridge the product and experiential space between tourism, nature, art, food, and wine. LUNA is different. It prioritises First Nations led curatorial principles, environmental and sustainable practices immersed in nature, and local creative engagement.

Yarra Ranges Tourism appointed Urban Enterprise, in collaboration with Little Projector Company, GML Heritage and This Undercurrent, to develop a business case for the Light-Up Nature into Art project within the region. The Business Case is supported by the Victorian Government through the Enabling Tourism Fund (2021-22).

This business case has examined the need for the LUNA project, assessed a range of sites and activation options, recommended a preferred concept and organisation to take the project forward, and estimated the operational and economic outcomes of the project.

The project has been developed in collaboration with a Project Governance Group (PGG), whose members include representatives from Yarra Ranges Tourism, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, Yarra Ranges Council, Wurundjeri Woi-wurring Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, Yarra Valley Small Wineries and representatives from the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Tourism networks.



Test Projections of artwork on the Dam Wall.
'wurundjeri man' by Corree Thorpe

What are the tourism investment drivers for LUNA?

1 Tourism is a critical sector of the regional economy, including as a major employer and driver of economic output. There is opportunity for LUNA to enhance the performance and sustainability of the region's visitor economy, providing opportunities for investment and jobs creation.

2 The Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges has the lowest average expenditure yield per visitor of any of Victoria's tourism regions, driven by the disproportionate number of daytrip visitors to overnight visitors. There is a need to disperse visitation into the night-time economy and increase overnight visitation relative to daytrip visitation. This will drive greater yield per visitor and assist in managing daytrip visitation.

3 Daytrip visitation to the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges region is forecast to double by 2032 under a business as usual approach. A pro-active approach needs to be taken to managing visitation, which includes dispersing visitation to mid-week and off-peak seasons and converting daytrip visitors to overnight stays.

4 There is a need to deliver products, experiences and investment that respond to the region's brand promise.

5 There is a need to build on what the region offers to create change. This includes adding value to and filling night-time tourism, arts and cultural product gaps in the region. LUNA can bridge the product and experiential space between tourism, nature, art, food, and wine.

6 There is a need to target visitor market segments that present strong candidates for overnight stays, have higher discretionary spending and value experiences like LUNA. Targeting these markets will drive overnight stays, yield and the achievement of broader tourism objectives.

7 LUNA can be complementary to other planned and proposed investments across the region. This includes catalysing private sector investment in accommodation, dining and other night-time products and experiences and building the critical mass of products and experiences required to drive change.

8 Linking with and supporting the region's Destination Management Plan ten year strategy. Contributing to the development of a more mature tourism ecology, capacity, infrastructure and business environment conducive to overnight stays and longer visitation.

Why consider a night-time light experience?

Night-time light experiences have proven to be an effective tool in promoting tourism and economic development outcomes for cities and regional economies. For example, Parrtjima – A Festival of Lights in the Northern Territory, attracted close to 25,000 visits over 10 nights in 2022, generating an estimated \$14.7 million in expenditure for the Northern Territory economy; or the Moama-Lights experience, which attracted 25,000 visitors in 2022, generating an economic impact in the order of \$11 million.

Primary market research suggests that there is a significant market opportunity for the delivery of night-time light experiences and activations in the

Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges. It is estimated that there are around 2.4 million people within metropolitan Melbourne market alone that would be interested in a night-time light experiences in the region, and that if delivered, would provide motivation for people to both visit the region and stay overnight.

LUNA aims to leverage this market opportunity through the creation of new night-time immersive art, light and sensory experiences, which are economically sustainable, enhance the region's arts, cultural offerings including First Nations experiences, and leverage and revitalise existing sites.





What sites were investigated and why?

The LUNA project explored a range of publicly owned and managed sites for their potential to be utilised for immersive night-time light experiences, including Maroondah Reservoir Park, Alfred Nicholas Memorial Gardens, Grants Picnic Ground, Burkes Lookout and the Olinda Park precinct.

Sites were identified by Yarra Ranges Tourism in conjunction with the PGG as sites that possessed potential to host a LUNA experience and leverage other projects including ngurrak barring (Ridgewalk).

The strategic opportunity was identified that a project such as LUNA could provide the catalyst to revitalise the infrastructure of currently daytime only sites, significant to the region's community and economy in their own right.

An iterative site assessment process was undertaken which included site visits, consultation with stakeholders and community, technical site reports, assessment against criteria, activation and concept scoping and on-site testing of conceptual activations.

Maroondah Reservoir Park emerged as the preferred site for the LUNA project, acknowledging its magnificent features for experiential activations, its location and capacity, its support from project stakeholders to see it activated and revitalised, and its potential to offer a site response experience, leveraging its history, cultural landscape and unique environment.

Alfred Nicholas Memorial Gardens was also considered in detail as a candidate site. However, site testing and engagement with the community made it apparent that at present Alfred Nicholas Gardens poses challenges for the delivery of a LUNA experience.

Why Maroondah Reservoir Park?

41 metre high dam wall, providing a giant canvas for immersive artistic projections. Other unique site features include waterfalls, heritage structures and gardens.

Natural landscape, large amphitheatre set against the Dam Wall.

Close proximity to Healesville and Yarra Valley tourism infrastructure, accommodation, dining.

An established Park that has undergone several permutations since 1927.

Opportunity for site responsive storytelling.

Opportunity to revitalise the site for community and longer term activation.

Who was consulted?

Engagement with stakeholders and the community was critical in the development of the business case and in informing the ultimate concept. Stakeholders include Yarra Ranges Tourism, Yarra Ranges Council, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, Dandenong Ranges Tourism Network, Tourism Network Yarra Valley, Grants on Sherbrooke, Trenerry Property Group, Yarra Valley Small Wineries Association, Burrinja Cultural Centre, Wine Yarra Valley and Yarra Valley Arts.

Community engagement included an online survey that attracted over 1,000 responses, and community drop-in sessions held in both Healesville and Ferny Creek. The online survey was promoted on YRTs website with an FAQ, distributed via letter drop to approx. 4,000 local residents around each of the key investigation sites and advertised in both local and social media. Several key local organisations and 'Friends of' groups were represented at the drop-in sessions and also made direct submissions via email.

What is LUNA?

Light Up Nature into Art (LUNA) is a region wide bi-annual nocturnal light, art and cultural event.

Occurring across two flagship light events at Maroondah Reservoir Park in Autumn and Spring, LUNA immerses visitors in impactful landscapes and in layers of sensory experience (art, light, sound, cultural expression, history, food and wine).

Flagship events are complemented by a series of satellite bespoke experiences and programs that expand into a festival offering throughout the region.

LUNA champions First Nation's culture and the arts. It is a naturally, culturally and socially aware experience, fundamental to the sustainability of the region's economy, tourism sector and cultural identity.



LUNA is..

- LUNA is a sensory immersion Lighting Up Nature into Art - telling the stories of our lands and waters.
- LUNA is a regenerative tourism catalyst for delivering cultural, environmental and economic sustainability.
- LUNA is a region wide cultural identity fostering cross pollination partnerships throughout the region, interstate, and internationally.
- LUNA is a 5 - 10 year plan to reinvigorate the cultural landscape of the region through seasonal after sensory dark experiences. This is not a one off event.
- LUNA is a web of regenerative tourism woven by community, artists, businesses, and tourists.
- LUNA is a framework for delivery of night time events sensitive to environment, community and site.

Key Themes

Immersion in art and landscape.

Champions First Nations artistic and cultural expression.

Place based storytelling and site responsiveness.

Layers of sensory experience.

Revitalisation of significant regional assets.

Contributes to and builds on regional identity.

A showcase of creative sector output.

Opportunity for growth in impact through seasonal programs, and satellite offerings.

Environment as a focus of program.

LUNA is envisaged to grow over time, from one flagship light experience in Autumn, to a regional scale festival offering and identity, with bespoke satellite experiences and programs. Staging affords LUNA the potential to grow and build organisational and regional capacity, as well as the opportunity to grow the brand, market awareness, and a diversified funding, supporter and partner base.

LUNA Autumn

Maroondah Reservoir Park will be activated through a 30-night flagship light, art and cultural event, including self-guided experiences of light projections and installations in key activation zones (focusing on the Dam Wall, spillway and rose steps).

Event specific programming included such as food and beverage, performances and supporting programs). The event will focus on the use of eco-aware red-shift lighting.

LUNA Spring

Building on from the Autumn, event, Maroondah Reservoir Park will once again be activated through the second annual flagship light, art and cultural event.

LUNA Satellites

LUNA Satellite will expand the LUNA offering to include programmed bespoke regional satellite experiences and partner events, geographically dispersed in the region across flagship Autumn and Spring events. Satellite experiences and programs will be dependent on the funding, resources and number of interested partners wishing to partake in the delivery of the experiences.

Examples may include:

- Burnham Beeches Mansion and/or Alfred Nicholas Gardens
- Puffing Billy's Train of Lights
- Light installations and packages at partner wineries.
- Olinda Park Light Trail.
- Community organisation events.
- Performance and live music at cultural venues and across private businesses.
- Township activations.

Phase 1
(1-2+ years)

Phase 2
(3-5+ years)

Phase 3
(6+ years)

LUNA Autumn

LUNA Spring

LUNA Satellites

Where will flagship Experiences be held?

Maroondah Reservoir Park will be upgraded and enhanced as a venue for LUNA events.

The site will include programmable landscape lighting, with capacity to expand into projection units and lighting units for events, popup pre-show activations, and bi-annual eco-aware light festivals activating the dam wall, landscape and trees of the site.

Through LUNA, there is the opportunity to revitalise the infrastructure and assets of Maroondah

Reservoir Park, enabling the realisation of LUNA at the site, as well as benefiting the community and day-time visitors.

The site infrastructure and facilities will need upgrading, including roads, pathways, car park/bus drop off, grounds lighting, toilets and kiosk. Preliminary estimates suggest that capital investment needs could range between \$6-11 million (subject to the preparation of a masterplan for the site and capital works costed by a quantity surveyor).

What creative opportunities are possible?

A number of creative opportunities are identified and explored in detail by the Business Case, along with the curatorial framework developed for LUNA. Key among these concepts is Wurundjeri story-telling.

Wurundjeri

An immersive multi-sensory light festival showcasing Wurundjeri and Coranderrk stories that celebrate the past, present, and future of Wurundjeri culture. Large format projections illuminating the dam wall and steep landscape areas as well as extensive ground lighting. An immersive light trail with soundscape platforming First Nations story telling along the open areas of the park, with preshow pop-up activations including a Welcome To Country, campfire cooking experiences, instagrammable photo opportunities, and live dance and musical performances.



Test Projections of artwork on the Dam Wall.
'wurundjeri man' by Corree Thorpe

Who will manage LUNA?

The delivery and success of the LUNA concept is contingent on the formation of a suitable organisation that can take the project forward.

It is recommended that a NFP organisation is established that would become the steward of LUNA. In the initial stages, this is envisaged to function as a subsidiary of Yarra Ranges Tourism, with representation and partnerships with key stakeholders and proponents.

Over time, there would be opportunity for the organisation to become independent, pending its growth, success, and ability to attract people with the right expertise and skills to oversee its delivery.

The LUNA organisation would work with a range of partners including local, state, and federal government, site managers, industry partners, donors and philanthropists.

What are the financial and economic outcomes?

The project's economic viability has been tested under low, mid and high range scenarios. This includes operational performance, economic impact and cost benefit. Under all scenarios the project is estimated to be economically feasible, with anticipated project benefits exceeding anticipated project costs. These results are summarised below. Full economic modelling is provided in the business case.

Autumn and Spring Events (Total)

Operational Performance	Low	Mid	High
Visitation	60,000	70,000	80,000
Revenue (\$m)	\$2.38m	\$2.95m	\$3.82m
Expenditure (\$m)	\$2.22m	\$2.55m	\$2.89m
Gross Profit / Loss (\$k)	\$161k	\$407k	\$929k
Regional Expenditure Impact			
Direct Visitor Expenditure (\$ p.a.)	\$9.0m	\$10.4m	\$11.9m
Economic Impact (Operational)(Direct + Indirect)			
Output (\$m p.a.)	\$24.3m	\$28.3m	\$32.4m
Employment (Jobs FTE p.a.)	124 jobs	146 jobs	166 jobs
Wages (\$m p.a.)	\$6.6m	\$7.5m	\$8.6m
Value-Added (\$m p.a.)	\$11.9m	\$13.6m	\$15.5m
Economic Impact (Construction)(Direct + Indirect)			
Assumed Capital Investment (\$m)	\$6m	\$8m	\$11m
Cost Benefit (Discount Rate 7%)			
Net Present Value (\$m)	\$22.2m	\$25.2m	\$27.3m
Benefit Cost Ratio	2.4	2.3	2.1



What makes LUNA different?

LUNA is not like most light experiences. It is differentiated by the following features.

First Nations

- First Nations curatorial principles established.
- First Nations artworks and concepts scoped, tested, documented, and proposed through the business case.
- Unique on country experiences centring First Nations culture.
- Representation by Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung in the LUNA organisation

Environmental Experiences

- Creative concepts highlighting existing natural assets - 'Nature into Art'.
- Utilising the natural environment as canvas
- - Red Shift lighting, low impact, dark skies.
- Collaboration with Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water to meet the emerging environmental need of the LUNA sites.
- Sustainable economic, cultural, and environmental model.

Advocating for flagship site infrastructure upgrades

- Assessing and scoping site infrastructure upgrades at Maroondah Reservoir Park.
- Upgrading and renewing accessibility, walking paths, car parking, toilets, lighting, safety, shelters and more.
- Advocating for local heritage values.
- Fostering community pride and ownership.

Local Creative Engagement

- Celebrating local Narratives.
- A flagship platform for regional artists.
- Focus on place based storytelling and site responsiveness.
- Strengthening the sustainability of the local creative economy.

Focus on sensory immersive on Country experiences

- Sublime visual art including projection art, lighting, lights sculptures, AR/VR.
- Connected soundscapes and music.
- Tantalising regional food and beverage options.
- Engaging environmental encounters led by knowledgeable local guides.



What other benefits could LUNA provide?

The potential benefits of the project are significant and include but are not limited to:

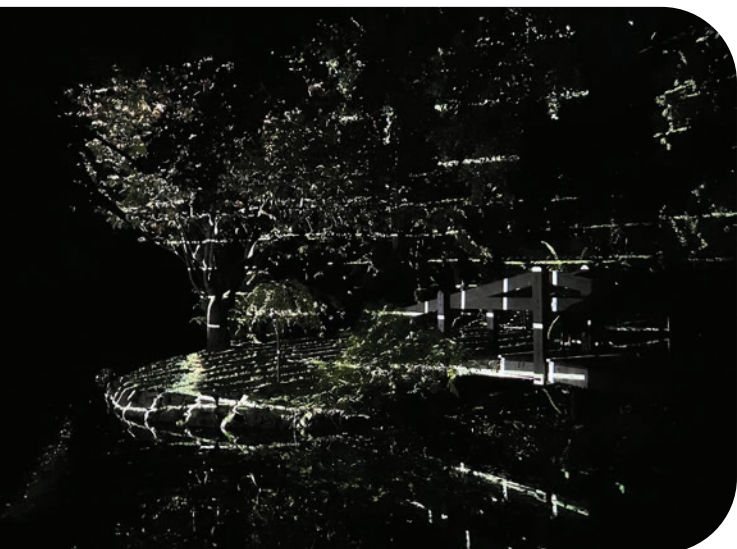
- High levels of alignment with state, regional and local strategy, including Experience Victoria 2033 (2023), Creative State (2025), Yarra Valley & Dandenong Ranges Destination Management Plan (Draft, 2023), Yarra Ranges Economic Development Strategy (2022) amongst others.
- Tourism and economic benefits, including attracting visitors in off-peak seasons, mid-week, encouraging overnight stays and additional expenditure.
- Championing First Nations culture embedded in the project's Curatorial Framework, showcasing First Nations artists and creatives.
- Supporting the regions tourism brand, and growing its standing as an arts, cultural and night- time destination.
- Contributing to the creative and cultural identity of the region, and creating pathways for emerging artists, creatives and technicians.
- Revitalising aging community assets and visitor amenities, building community support for tourism and encouraging social license in the community and across sectors.



What is needed to take the project forward?

To be made possible, the project will require:

- Enabling investments in infrastructure, facilities and utilities at Maroondah Reservoir Park. A Masterplan for the site is required to guide its upgrade, led by Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water and Yarra Ranges Tourism.
 - Estimated cost \$100k-\$150k. Masterplan, technical, statutory & heritage requirements and upgrade cost estimates by QS.
- Project advocacy across all key stakeholders including land managers and owners, all levels of government and the community.
- Establishment of the LUNA organisation to oversee and deliver on the project's strategic objectives.
- Approvals and agreements with landowners (including through a Memorandum of Understanding with Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria).
- Establishment of strategic partnership with local and state government, land managers, First Nations, commercial sponsors, donors, creative organisations (regional and national), and tourism organisations, and business.
- Ongoing engagement with the community.
- Funding for capital works, the LUNA organisation and planning and delivery of events.





The Business Case is supported by the Victorian Government through the Enabling Tourism Fund (2021-22).

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Bunurong and Taungurung peoples of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters of the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges on which

we live, work and play and pay our deepest respect to Elders past and present.

This document is a key summary of the complete LUNA Business Case authored by Urban Enterprise and associates for Yarra Ranges Tourism. The complete Business Case and Appendices are available upon request from Yarra Ranges Tourism.



YARRA RANGES TOURISM

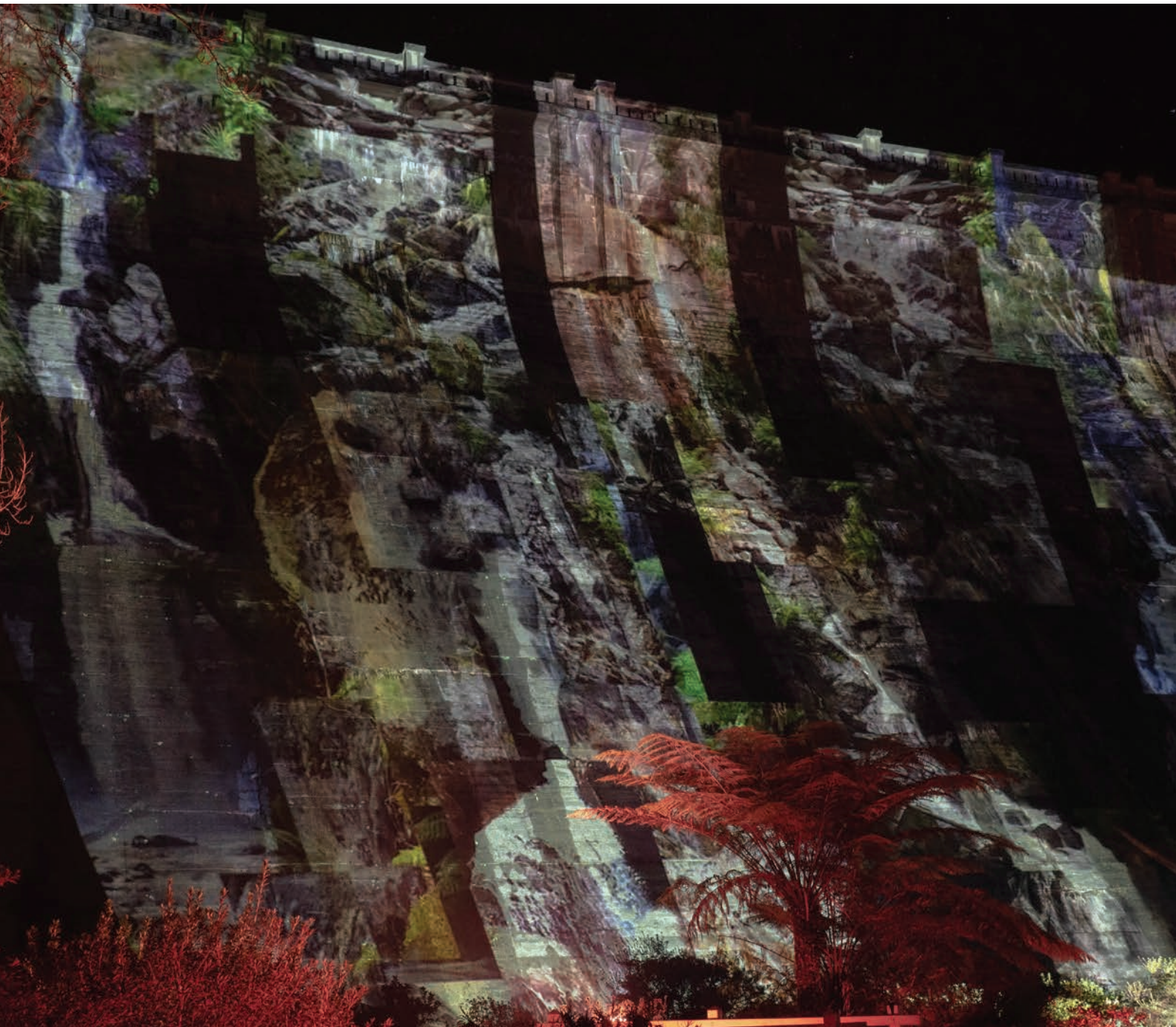
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urban planning
economics+tourism
enterprise

GNL
HERITAGE

**Little
Projector
Company**

thisundercurrent



For more about the LUNA business case
visityarravalley.com.au/yarrarangestourism/about-1/light-up