

Queensland's Outback, Gulf and Western Downs Tourism Opportunity Plan





DISCLAIMER

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Executive Summary

Windemere Station, Winton

Purpose

The purpose of this Tourism Opportunity Plan (TOP) is to provide direction for the sustainable development of tourism in Queensland's Outback, Gulf and Western Downs over the next five years. The TOP aims to:

- Identify new and upgraded **tourism product** that meets future visitor expectations and demands;
- Identify the need for new investment in **infrastructure** that supports the ongoing development of tourism;
- Provide relevant **research based** information on tourism supply and demand; and
- Provide an agreed focus and mechanisms for **engagement** with the tourism industry, infrastructure providers and private investors.

The audience of the TOP includes Local, State and Federal Government agencies, regional economic development agencies, regional and local tourism organisations, investors and developers and tourism industry operators.

For the purposes of this TOP, Queensland's Outback, Gulf and Western Downs will be referred to as '**the Region**' incorporating the following six distinct Tourism Precincts:

- Gulf of Carpentaria;
- North West Outback;
- Central West Outback;
- South West Outback;
- Far West Outback; and
- Western Downs.

Each precinct has its own distinct character and experiences and therefore its own tourism development and investment needs.

This TOP does not purport to canvass all possible projects for the Region. Recommendations made in this TOP following initial stakeholder consultation have been developed through an assessment of projects based on an agreed set of criteria:

- Meets the **needs of target markets**;
- Capitalises on a particular **destination attribute** that creates appeal;

- Has the potential to **stimulate growth** in the Region over the next 10 years;
- The development of **new products compliments** and does not unnecessarily compete with existing products;
- There is a **strong level of interest** and support from local stakeholders;
- Is aligned with the vision for the region and **community aspirations**;
- The **likely net benefits** span social, environmental and/or economic outcomes;
- **Aligns with Local/State/Federal Government priorities** and is likely to gain political support.

Catalyst Projects

The top 23 catalyst tourism projects identified from across the Region's six precincts are listed below. These projects are considered to be the marquee projects that represent the character and appeal of the Region and which will drive ongoing growth and development of tourism across the region:

1. Lawn Hill / Riversleigh Tourism Master Plan
2. Normanton Monsoon Centre
3. Karumba Barramundi Discovery Centre Extension
4. Mount Isa Rodeo Hall of Fame
5. Julia Creek 'At the Creek' Stage 2
6. Porcupine Gorge National Park Experience
7. Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways Upgrade
8. Australian Age of Dinosaurs Stage 3
9. Qantas Founders Museum Expansion
10. Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame Expansion
11. Barcaldine Tourism Precinct Expansion including Tree of Knowledge and the Australian Workers Heritage Centre
12. Regional Indigenous Story
13. Blackall Tambo Heritage Tourism
14. Bedourie Dust Storm Centre
15. Great Desert 4WD Journey
16. Birdsville Big Red Sand Dune Walk
17. Burke and Wills Dig Tree Strategic Plan



Spectators at the races, Dirt n Dust Festival, Julia Creek

18. Eromanga Outback Gondwana Dinosaur Attraction
19. Cosmos Centre Expansion
20. Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Accommodation
21. Roma Big Rig Expansion
22. Nindigully Precinct Preservation
23. Lake Coolmunda Master Plan

Region-Wide Projects

The following 14 region-wide projects have also been identified and are expected to address issues that are relevant across the entire Region and act as enablers for further investment and development opportunities:

1. Touring Market and Themed Routes
2. Integrated Camping and Caravan Strategy
3. Voluntourism and Guiding Tour Development Strategy
4. Coordinated Events Strategy
5. Paddock to Plate Strategy
6. Outback Historical Sites Tourism Plan
7. Outback Birding Opportunities
8. National Park Ecotourism Opportunities
9. Visitor Information and Weather Reporting Program
10. Backpacker Market Potential
11. Town Character Themeing
12. Energy Efficiency Program
13. Accommodation Needs Analysis
14. Industry Story-Telling Workshops

Precinct Projects

In addition to the Catalyst and Region Wide projects a suite of precinct tourism projects have been identified for the six Region precincts and these are outlined further in the report. These projects are considered important to the tourism growth of their precincts and as drivers for a range of other investment, marketing and product development opportunities.

Implementation

The Region's peak tourism organisations and Tourism Queensland working in partnership with local governments and the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games (DTESB) will take a lead role in advocating and driving implementation of TOP projects. Effective and timely implementation of projects within the TOP will require leadership and resources from Local, State and Federal Governments, regional economic development agencies, regional and local tourism organisations, investors and developers and tourism industry operators.

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Gulflander Train, Normanton

Acronyms

DTEB	Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games
GRP	Gross Regional Product
IVS	International Visitor Survey
LGA	Local Government Area
LTO	Local Tourism Organisation
NVS	National Visitor Survey
OQTA	Outback Queensland Tourism Association
SWL	Savannah Way Limited
QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services
RTO	Regional Tourism Organisation
SQCT	Southern Queensland Country Tourism
TQ	Tourism Queensland
VIC	Visitor Information Centre

1 Context

Porcupine Gorge National Park, Near Hughenden

1.1 What is a Tourism Opportunity Plan?

The purpose of this Tourism Opportunity Plan (TOP) is to provide direction for the sustainable development of tourism in the Queensland's Outback, Gulf and Western Downs.

The TOP aims to:

- Identify new and upgraded tourism product that meets future visitor expectations and demands;
- Identify the need for new investment in infrastructure that supports the ongoing development of tourism;
- Provide relevant research based information on tourism supply and demand; and
- Provide an agreed focus and mechanisms for engagement with the tourism industry, infrastructure providers and private investors.

In November 2006, the Queensland Government delivered the Queensland Tourism Strategy, a 10-year vision for sustainable tourism. To achieve this vision, Tourism Queensland (TQ) and the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) in partnership with the then Department of State Development developed six key themes.

Under Theme Two 'Investment, Infrastructure and Access' Tourism Queensland in partnership with the Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) was responsible for preparing Regional Tourism Investment and Infrastructure Plans (RTIIPs) for each tourism region across Queensland. The TOP is the new name for the RTIIP, a title that is considered to better represent the content and intent of the document.

The audience of the TOP includes Local, State and Federal Government agencies, regional economic development agencies, Regional and Local Tourism Organisations, investors and developers and tourism industry operators.

The development of the TOP has been based on extensive research as well as consultation with a diverse range of regional and external stakeholders including government agencies, tourism industry, tourism stakeholders, developers and investors. Hundreds of stakeholders were consulted throughout this project, through one-on-one interviews, attending council meetings, hosting interactive stakeholder forums and extensive feedback on the draft TOP.

The TOP provides a platform which focuses specifically on tourism product, investment and infrastructure needs that are critical to the future growth and development of tourism in the Region.

1.2 The Region

For the purposes of this TOP Queensland's Outback, Gulf and Western Downs will be referred to as '**the Region**'. The Region is comprised of the following six precincts as depicted in Map 1 on Page 5.

The Gulf of Carpentaria

The Gulf Savannah is 186,000 square kilometres of vast golden savannah grasslands abounding with wildlife, endless bushland and wide open spaces, spectacular flora and fauna, changing landscapes, World Heritage fossil fields, historic towns, Aboriginal rock art, gemstones and gold.

It has some of the best fishing in the world and the natural phenomena of meandering river systems, hot springs, lava tubes and deep gorges full of wildlife. The Gulf extends west of the Atherton Tablelands from Mount Garnet to Burketown and is made up of the six shires of Etheridge, Croydon, Carpentaria, Burke, Mornington and Doomadgee.

North West Outback

Deep in dinosaur fossil country the North West region covers over 206,000 square kilometres. Stretching as far as the eye can see, the beautiful Mitchell grass open plain landscapes will amaze visitors as well as the many stunning hidden lakes and dams. The North West Outback region is home to 5 of Queensland's 13 bioregions. Visitors can delve underground on a working mine tour, trek to breathtaking gorges or try their hand at fossicking.

The North West region encompasses the Local Government areas of Mount Isa, Cloncurry, McKinlay, Richmond and Flinders.

Central West Outback

Central West Queensland is the 'heart of the Outback' and extends over 240,000 square kilometres. It is where visitors can experience the heritage and cultural history that has shaped the nation. Visitors to the Central West can learn about the pioneering years through innovative museums, attractions and exhibitions and see not only

where the legend of the stockman started, but also where Qantas carved its name in the history, where our pastoral industry began, where dinosaur fossils have been uncovered, and where Banjo Patterson drew his inspiration for the infamous Waltzing Matilda ballad.

The Central West includes the Local Government areas of Longreach, Winton, Barcaldine and Blackall-Tambo.

Far West Outback

Covering an area of 219,000 square kilometres, Far West Queensland is always abuzz with events to keep any traveller entertained. Including everything from fishing competitions, Ute and Wagon Musters and Car Rallies to bronco branding or the famous camel races and Birdsville Cup, there is something for everyone in Far West Queensland. The Far West region includes the three Shires of Boulia, Diamantina and Barcoo.

South West Outback

Stretching from Morven in the east, to the South Australian border in the west, Queensland's South West Outback region covers a landscape of 232,000 square kilometres and includes the four shires of Murweh, Paroo, Quilpie and Bulloo.

The South West is a fusion of stunning red sand hills, abundant wildlife and magnificent flora and fauna with picturesque bushwalking trails and unspoiled wilderness. Visitors to the South West can fish in the many billabongs, rivers and lakes, or enjoy hot artesian springs and natural mud baths.

Western Downs

The Western Downs takes in the townships of Tara, Miles, Goondiwindi, Chinchilla, Wandoan and extends as far as St George, Surat, Roma and Carnarvon Gorge. Underpinned by productive agricultural land, innovative manufacturing industries and abundant natural gas and thermal coal reserves, the region is thriving with energy and opportunity.

The Western Downs is the gateway to the Outback, so visitors should expect to get a taste of outback hospitality, classic pubs, open roads and great fishing and birdlife. The region incorporates the Local Government Areas of Balonne, Goondiwindi, Maranoa and Western Downs.

Table 1. The Region's Local Government Areas

Gulf	North West	Central West
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Burke Shire ■ Carpentaria Shire ■ Croydon Shire ■ Etheridge Shire ■ Mornington Shire* ■ Doomadgee Shire* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mount Isa City ■ Cloncurry Shire ■ McKinlay Shire ■ Richmond Shire ■ Flinders Shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Longreach Region ■ Winton Shire ■ Barcaldine Region ■ Blackall Tambo Region
South West	Far West	Western Downs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Murweh Shire ■ Paroo Shire ■ Quilpie Shire ■ Bulloo Shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Boulia Shire ■ Diamantina Shire ■ Barcoo Shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Balonne Shire ■ Goondiwindi Region ■ Maranoa Region ■ Western Downs Region

* Self Governed Aboriginal Shire Council

The 26 Local Government Areas (refer to Table 1) combine to cover almost half of the total area of Queensland or approximately one million square kilometres but only 1.2% of the State's population. Over the five years to 30 June 2006 this population has decreased by 1.0%, compared with a 2.4% average annual population increase for the State.

Despite its population, the Region plays an essential role in Queensland's economic growth and Gross Regional Product with a predominant farming and agricultural industry (\$2.5 billion), supported by a fast growing mining and resources industry.

With such rapid growth in the mining sector over the past decade, the tourism industry in the Region has faced increasing competition as a priority for economic development in the Region. On the other hand, the mining boom has also resulted in rapid development and infrastructural growth for many towns across the Region, providing necessary support infrastructure to support future tourism development.

Tourism in the Region is a partnership between the following organisations to promote and develop the true Queensland experience including:

- Tourism Queensland (TQ)
- Outback Queensland Tourism Association (OQTA)
- Southern Queensland Country Tourism (SQCT)
- Savannah Way Limited (SWL)
- Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ)
- Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games

1.3 Tourism in the Region

How has tourism in the Region changed over the last ten years?

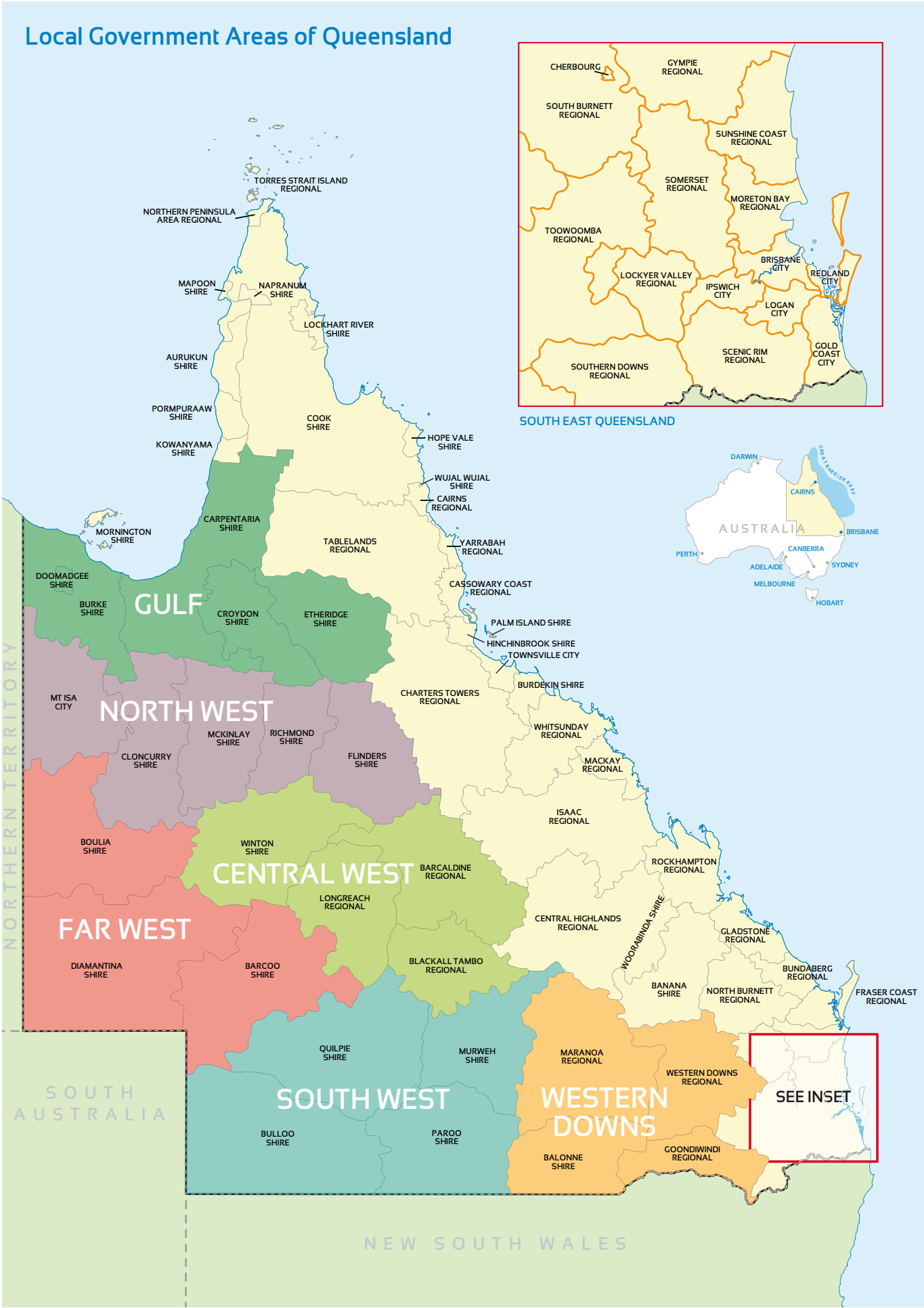
In Australia the 'outback' is a place that is synonymous with Australian spirit, culture and heritage. The Region is home to many of the places and characters that embody this outback experience. The Region has always been part of the fabric of Queensland's past and current heritage, with its diverse Indigenous, European and pioneering history, stories of hardship and triumph throughout the rugged landscape, and its friendly towns and heroes of the bush.

Over the last decade, the Region has been exploring its ancient past, aiming to effectively position and develop a unique 'Australian outback' identity.

As described in the 2012 'Outback, Gulf and Western Downs Destination Tourism Strategy', people are striving to achieve an emotional or personal achievement on their holidays; therefore, the region needs to differentiate their holidays by providing experiences that fulfil that desire. The 2011 Experiences Development Strategy identified the key points of difference and uniqueness of the individual areas across the Region. In doing so, the strategy helped to define a vision which captures what the Region strives to be – 'Famous for its characters, culture, history and ancient landscapes where visitors feel the genuine Aussie embrace of a vast network of welcoming communities'.

Specific opportunities for the Region to renew its magnetism and appeal as a world-class destination lie within the promotion of specific attributes that visitors found to be the most important experiences. The strong selling points for the Region include;

Map 1. The Outback, Gulf and Western Downs Region



- Real Australian characters
- Attractions relating to Australia's pioneering heritage
- Australian wildlife and geography
- Events and entertainment
- Pristine, safe 'old world' towns
- Other 'quirks'

What is the current tourism profile of the Region?

Attracting 1-2% of the total Queensland tourism market, the Region is considered an 'emerging' destination. Significant opportunities remain in the domestic market (which accounts for 93% of visitation) where three in every four Queenslanders are aware of the Region but only 6% nominated it as their first or second favorite destination.

Recent anecdotal feedback suggests that visitation trends to the Region have been positive. This may be due to the high level of visitation that the Region receives from niche markets, such as weekend fishing trips, bird-watching and gem fossicking, activities through which the visitor may not consider themselves on 'holiday'.

Domestic visitation to the Region is currently a 50/50 split between intrastate and interstate travel. The Intrastate market originates predominantly from the South East Corner. The interstate market originates from New South Wales and Victoria. Business travel also accounts for a large proportion of travel and the importance of this sector is vital during low peak visitor season.

In comparison, the international market, which only accounts for 7% of total visitation, is predominately a holiday visitor market, with New Zealand and Europe as key source markets. While international visitation to the Region is currently low, the average length of stay has increased highlighting the opportunity for regional dispersal and up-selling of complimentary experiences and activities.

Between 2006 and 2010, visitors to the Region participated in a range of activities with the most popular types of experiences being National Parks and bushwalking along with cultural activities. International visitors were more likely to engage in Indigenous experiences and attend festivals, fairs or other cultural events. Australian visitors have increasingly been attracted to cultural activities and nature-based activities over the past 10 years. Niche markets such as fishing, camping, and four wheel driving have also attracted recent attention.

Road travel is the primary transport mode across, in and around the Region with highway networks accessible 90% of the year. A number of themed highway routes have also been developed to help market and promote the towns and experiences on a driving holiday in the Region and to target the touring market.

Rail services into the Region from the east coast include three destinations, being Charleville, Longreach and Mount Isa. Air access is becoming a competitive sector in regional Queensland with the introduction of regular routes and services to major centres. Continued airport upgrades across the Region have been driven mostly by the demand of mining and business travel.

In 2009/10 visitors to the Region spent over \$217 million (Tourism Research Australia). While the tourism industry is still only a relatively small sector for the Region (1.6% of Queensland GRP) in comparison to the mining and agricultural sectors, it is seen as a more sustainable long-term option in ensuring a diversified and vibrant economy. In 2007-08 tourism directly accounted for 1,600 jobs across the Region.

What will the next ten years of tourism in the Region hold?

Faced with increasing competition from other Australian outback destinations and alternative holiday types, the Region will need to identify new and innovative ways to compete as a preferred holiday destination. In addition there are a number of consumer and market trends that are likely to influence the future development and marketing of tourism in the Region. A summary of the range of trends and influences are outlined below:

Global Consumer Trends

- Increasing use of the internet and social networking
- Improved access and affordability of air travel
- Value for money is critically important
- Destination 'brag-ability' is increasingly important
- Visitors seeking more 'meaningful' experiences
- Growth in 'voluntourism', community oriented-tourism and 'off-the-beaten track' travel

Figure 1. Activities participated in on last trip to Queensland Outback (representative of the wider Region)

Activity*	Domestic Visitors		International Visitors	
	Qld Outback	Australia	Qld Outback	Australia
National Park and Bushwalking Activities	10%	16%	85%	56%
Cultural Activities	12%	7%	62%	31%
Festivals / Fairs / Cultural Events	<2%	3%	26%	11%
Indigenous Experiences	<1%	0.45%	56%	12%
Heritage Attractions / Experiences	7%	4%	60%	31%
Other Activities	97%	99%	100%	100%

Source: NVS / IVS data

*Note: Activities participated in refers to those undertaken on the respondent's last trip, which included Outback Queensland

Australian/Queensland Market Trends

- ▶ A strong exchange rate and access to low cost air travel is making it easier for Australians to travel overseas.
- ▶ People are striving to achieve an emotional or personal achievement on their holidays; therefore, Queensland needs to differentiate their holidays by providing experiences that fulfil that desire.
- ▶ Australia is an expensive holiday destination relative to many of its key competitors and therefore needs to focus on providing quality experiences and service and not on price.
- ▶ There is a trend for shorter holidays with shorter booking lead times.

Region Trends

- ▶ Visitors to the Region enjoy **long holidays** and value being able to take their time
- ▶ Visitors enjoy **discovering / exploring** new things on holiday
- ▶ Visitors are **realistic in expectations** about service and luxuries; however
- ▶ Visitors are also **looking for 'delighters'** – both tangible and intangible unexpected experiences and interactions

Over the next ten years, visitation to the Region will also be influenced by a wide range of external factors that will impact not only on visitation to the Region but to Queensland and Australia as a whole. Provided below is a summary of the Tourism Forecasting Committee forecasts for future tourism demand to 2018 in Australia and Queensland.

Domestic Trends and Forecasts

- ▶ **Stable numbers** of domestic trips
- ▶ **Increased domestic visitor nights** in Queensland
- ▶ Slight **decline in domestic VFR** in regional Queensland

International Trends and Forecasts

- ▶ Recovery of Australia's **inbound tourism market**
- ▶ **Increased seat capacity** into Australia
- ▶ **Growth** in overall international **visitor numbers**
- ▶ Increase in **average length of stay**
- ▶ **Increase in international VFR** in regional Queensland



2 Methodology

Couple on Big Red Sand Dunes, Near Birdsville

2.1 TOP Development Methodology

The methodology undertaken to develop the Outback, Gulf and Western Downs TOP included the following key steps:

- ▶ Review of existing background research, reports and literature with relevance to tourism in the Region;
- ▶ Consultation with a wide range of stakeholders throughout this project through one-on-one interviews, attending council meetings, hosting interactive stakeholder forums and receiving extensive stakeholder feedback on the draft TOP;
- ▶ Analysis of key tourism product gaps and opportunities for the Region;
- ▶ Prioritisation of tourism product opportunities against agreed criteria; and
- ▶ Review of proposed projects with key stakeholders to develop final plan.

Stakeholders consulted throughout the project included representatives from:

- Federal Government
- State Government
- Local Government
- Regional Tourism Organisations
- Tourism Associations
- Local Tourism Organisations
- Tourism operators

2.2 Project Assessment Criteria

A wide variety of projects have been identified as part of the Region's TOP process. In order to undertake an initial assessment of the feasibility of these projects a set of assessment criteria were developed in consultation with key stakeholders. The agreed criteria for the assessment of the identified TOP projects were:

- ▶ **Target Market Aligned** – does the project meet the needs of growth target markets for the Region?
- ▶ **Destination attributes** – does the project capitalise on a particular destination attribute that would stimulate destination appeal and visitor interest?

- ▶ **Regional Growth** – does the project have the potential to stimulate growth in the Region over the next 10 years?
- ▶ **Value Added Experiences** – does the development of new products compliment rather than unnecessarily compete with existing products?
- ▶ **Stakeholder Support** – does the project have a strong level of interest from local stakeholders and is the project aligned with the vision for the Region and community aspirations?
- ▶ **Sustainability** – do the likely net benefits of the project span across the social, environmental and/or economic outcomes for the Region?
- ▶ **Strategic Alignment** – does the project align with Local, State or Federal Government priorities and is it likely to gain support from the decision makers?

Based on the agreed set of assessment criteria, the identified projects for the Region's TOP have been classified into one of the following categories:

- **Catalyst Projects** – These are the top 23 catalyst tourism projects identified from across the Region's six precincts and are considered to be the marquee projects that represent the character and appeal of the Region and which have the greatest potential to drive ongoing growth and development of tourism.
- **Region-Wide Projects** – These Region-wide projects are tourism investment or infrastructure projects which address identified Region wide issues and are expected to act as enablers for further investment and product development opportunities.
- **Precinct Tourism Projects** – These projects are tourism investment or infrastructure projects that are a priority for each of the Council Areas across the Region. These projects are expected to act as drivers for a range of other investment, marketing and product development opportunities for the Region.

3 A Vision for The Outback, Gulf & Western Downs

3.1 Vision and Themes

The Region will be famous for its characters, culture, history and ancient landscapes where visitors feel the genuine embrace of a vast network of welcoming communities

The goals underpinning this vision include:

1. To increase the Region's **total visitor expenditure** through a combination of:
 - Attracting the most profitable visitor segments
 - Reducing seasonality of visitation
 - Increasing repeat visitation
 - Attracting new market segments
 - Increasing visitor length of stay
2. To attract **strategic tourism investment** and operators to the Region;
3. To improve **target market awareness** of the Region and increase holiday visitation to the destination; and
4. To **up-skill, train and retain** a quality tourism workforce across the Region.

Based on desktop research, field observations and an extensive stakeholder consultation process the following themes have been identified as core elements that should be considered as central to delivering the Region's experience and tourism vision.

Theme 1 – Local Characters and Lifestyle

Local characters of the Region, their friendliness, genuine 'Aussie' service, relaxed **country lifestyle**, quirky towns and welcoming pubs.

Theme 2 – European History

Rich **European history of the Region** including cattle, sheep, mining and **pioneering heritage**.

Theme 3 – Natural Landscape

The unique **natural landscape of the Region**, 'big sky country' with its contrasts of sand dunes, flat channel country, rich red dirt, spinifex, savannah, waterways, spectacular mesas and buttes, plus the wildlife, flora, geology, dinosaurs and stunning night skies.

Theme 4 – Transportation

Transportation, including road trains, rail and air and the importance of these to the everyday **life and history** of the Region.

Theme 5 – Water

Water, including the **Great Artesian Basin** and its importance to the **story and survival** of the Region.

Theme 6 – Indigenous Stories

The **Indigenous story** of the Region **past and present**.

3.2 Target Markets

Traditional methods of market research have defined consumers by demographic and life-stage variables that assume everyone in the same age group or with the same income act in a similar way. In order to better understand consumer needs and wants, maximise the impact of development and marketing dollars and communicate more effectively with the consumer, Tourism Queensland has adopted a needs-based segmentation approach for identifying both domestic and international target markets. This approach is similar to the experience-based segmentation adopted by Tourism Australia for targeting international markets.

Domestic Visitor Segments and Target Markets

Tourism Queensland's segmentation model is a result of research of some 6,000 Australian consumers, looking to understand the emotional drivers for their ideal holiday experience. Based on the results of this research the consumer groups best suited to the Region are:

- Connectors** who see holidays as a chance to connect with the people they care most about, often compromising their own preferences in terms of activities to ensure everyone has a good time. Connectors:
- Are more likely than other segments to **drive to the holiday destination**, considering the journey to be part of the experience;
 - Enjoy the **freedom to explore** at their own pace and time, distancing themselves from everyday routine;
 - Are interested in **natural attractions**, natural water access and nature based activities;

- They want to **sample locally grown** Australian produce; and
- Enjoy **historical and local heritage** experiences.

Active Explorers who see holidays as an opportunity to push their boundaries through challenging themselves via physical activity. Active Explorers:

- Love to take part in **adventure activities** such as bushwalking and horse-riding;
- Are most likely to **visit multiple locations** during a holiday, likely to drive and will take a caravan; and
- Are most likely to **dine at the local pub** or club where the food is accessible and they can **experience the different flavours** and tastes of the region they are visiting.

Domestic Target Markets

Tier One

- Connectors in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Regional Queensland

Tier Two:

- Connectors in regional New South Wales and Victoria
- Active Explorers in Brisbane and Regional Queensland

International Visitor Segments and Target Markets

International visitation to the Region accounts for only 7% of total visitation to the destination. For this reason, the following international markets are considered tier three target markets for the Region.

- New Zealand,
- United Kingdom
- Germany
- France
- Netherlands
- Switzerland

Internationally, Tourism Australia works to promote the Australian experience to the 'Experience Seeker's market through tailored marketing messages.

Experience Seekers are marketing, advertising and technologically savvy, more open minded, less materialistic, more driven and can be any nationality. Experience Seekers:

- Tend to **stay longer** in Australia and therefore have the potential to spend more;
- Are **experienced travellers** who are often on their second visit to Australia;
- Seek **authentic personal experiences** that touch their senses and challenge them;
- Love to get **off the beaten track** and therefore more likely to disperse throughout the Region experiencing the different natural landscapes; and
- See the **unique Australian culture** as a stark contrast to their own so they will immerse themselves in local culture, people and food.

It is considered that the nature, rural and adventure attractions and experiences developed for the domestic market will provide a sound basis for targeting the International market.



Birdsville Pub

4 Gap Analysis

Sunrise at Castle Rock overlooking Gulf Savannah

4.1 Destination Opportunities and Challenges

The following gap analysis is based on a combination of stakeholder consultation and feedback, background research and an analysis of secondary data and information. This analysis was used to identify key infrastructure and investment gaps for the Region and was used to underpin the development of recommendations contained within the TOP.

Destination Opportunities

- Diverse landscape and **natural environment**
- Large areas of **National Park**
- **Natural assets** and areas with potential for further development
- Little known but rich **Indigenous culture**
- Abundant **wildlife** and viewing opportunities
- Range of in-land **fishing** and nature-based activities
- Large number of **community events** across the Region
- **European heritage** and historic precincts
- **Mining and agricultural** history
- Authentic **Queensland country** history and heritage
- Considered '**genuine**' **Australian** destination
- Improving **road and air infrastructure** and services
- **Unique atmosphere** and experience
- **Country hospitality**
- **Diversity of experiences** in the Region

Destination Challenges

- **Seasonality** of visitation and access
- **Environmental constraints** on development in some areas
- Natural assets generally **under-developed**
- Difficulty **accommodating peak tourist numbers** during events and in those areas experiencing strong resources sector growth.
- Need for **engagement with Indigenous community** in some areas
- Potential conflicts between tourism and other industries for **land use / development**

- **Poor connectivity** between attractions
- Lack of **internationally ready** product
- Relatively **low awareness** of the Region to deliver Australian 'outback' experiences compared to other regional/outback destinations across the country
- Limited success in **capturing transit visitors**
- **Low level of investment** in tourism product and infrastructure
- Limited **marketing and development** resources
- Lack of **packaged products**
- **Access and capacity** constraints – air, road and rail

4.2 Potential Growth Segments

The Region attracts a diverse range of visitors across a range of demographic and psychographic segments. With an array of unique / niche experiences, the Region attracts visitors across a range of special interest areas including:

- Dinosaurs and fossils (palaeo-tourism)
- Astronomy
- Bird watching
- Special events
- Fossicking (opal and gem)
- Four wheel driving
- Fishing

These niche markets provide the potential for further growth and development within the Region. In order to better meet the needs of these current and potential visitors it is essential that visitor numbers and perceptions throughout the Region are monitored and tracked in order to better analyse visitor needs and trends on an ongoing basis.

The stakeholder consultation process also identified a range of additional target markets that show potential for growth. These target markets include:

- Education sector
- Youth and Backpacker market
- Domestic families
- Visitors seeking Indigenous experiences



5 Catalyst Projects

Cattle drove on Landsborough Highway, Barcaldine-Longreach

Continued investment in tourism products and tourism related infrastructure is required in order to meet the future needs of visitors to the Region. A range of Catalyst Projects have been identified for the six core tourism precincts across the Region. The top 23 catalyst tourism projects identified from across the six precincts are listed below. These projects are considered to be the marquee projects that represent the character and appeal of the Region and which will drive ongoing growth and development of tourism across the Outback, Gulf and Western Downs:

1. Lawn Hill / Riversleigh Tourism Master Plan
2. Normanton Monsoon Centre
3. Karumba Barramundi Discovery Centre Extension
4. Mount Isa Rodeo Hall of Fame
5. Julia Creek 'At the Creek' Stage 2
6. Porcupine Gorge National Park Experience
7. Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways Upgrade
8. Australian Age of Dinosaurs Stage 3
9. Qantas Founders Museum Expansion
10. Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame Expansion
11. Barcaldine Tourism Precinct Expansion including Tree of Knowledge and the Australian Workers Heritage Centre
12. Regional Indigenous Story
13. Blackall Tambo Heritage Tourism
14. Bedourie Dust Storm Centre
15. Great Desert 4WD Journey
16. Birdsville Big Red Sand Dune Walk
17. Burke and Wills Dig Tree Strategic Plan
18. Eromanga Outback Gondwana Dinosaur Attraction
19. Cosmos Centre Expansion
20. Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Accommodation
21. Roma Big Rig Expansion
22. Nindigully Precinct Preservation
23. Lake Coolmunda Master Plan

5.1 Lawn Hill/Riversleigh Tourism Master Plan

Background

Lawn Hill Gorge, Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park, located 340 km north-west of Mount Isa and 220 km south-west of Burketown is one of Queensland's most scenic national parks. The park features spectacular gorge country, lush vegetation and sandstone ranges attracting visitors to experience exceptional bushwalking, wildlife viewing, canoeing and cultural sites of both the Waanyi Aboriginal people and European pastoralists. Lawn Hill Gorge was gazetted as a National Park in December 1984 and in March 1992 the park was extended to include the Riversleigh World Heritage Area, which was part of the neighbouring Riversleigh Station.

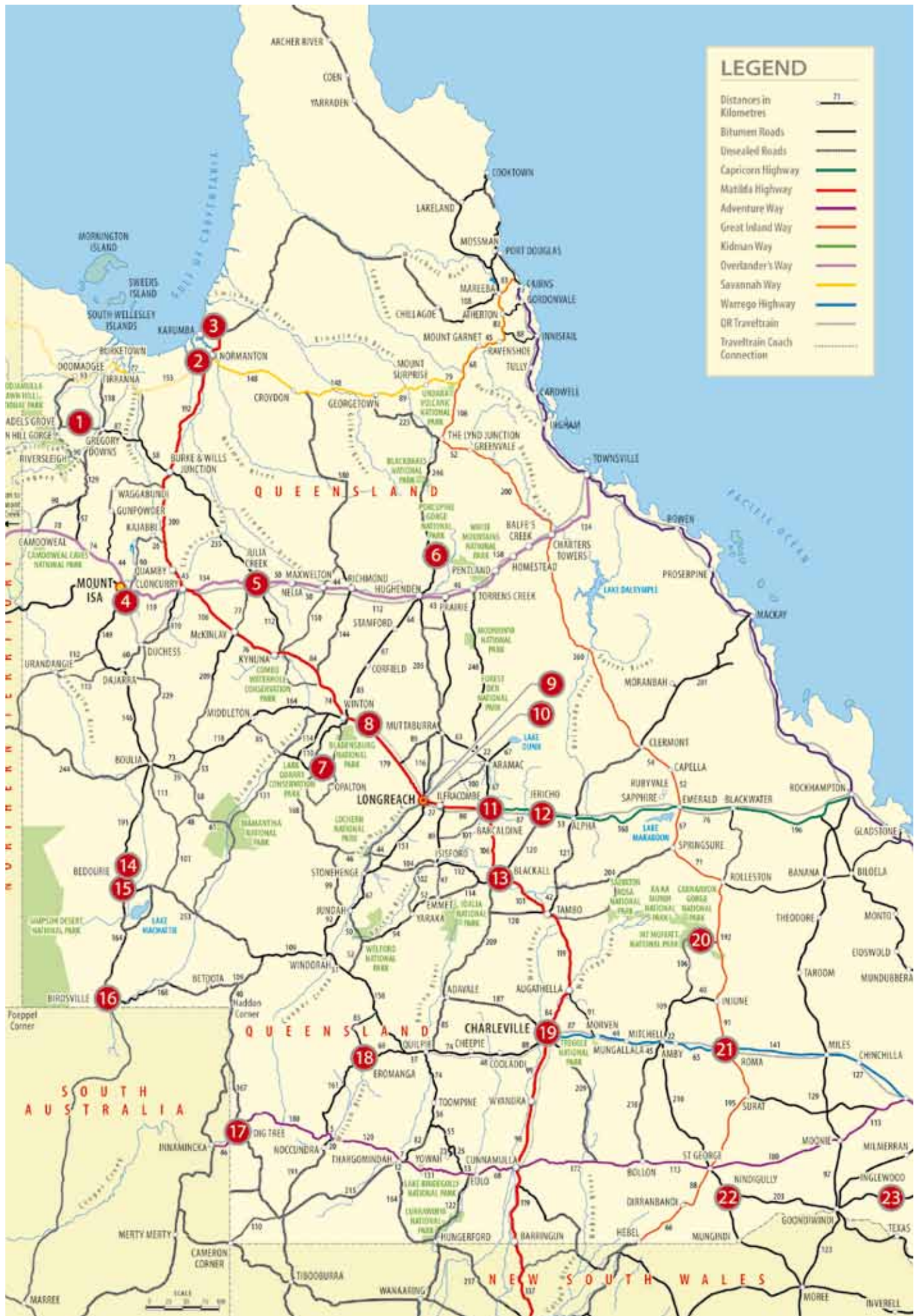
The Riversleigh World Heritage Area covers an area of 10,000 hectares and is the location of the Riversleigh Fossil Mammal site. The Riversleigh sites provide evidence of key stages in the evolution of the fauna of Australia and are outstanding for the extreme diversity and the quality of preservation of the fossils. The fossils span a record of mammal evolution of at least 20 million years in length and are an example of the Region's niche in geo-tourism and palaeo-tourism.

Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park and the Riversleigh World Heritage Area provide extensive opportunity for future development in nature-based and paleo-tourism experiences for the Region. Tourism development in this National Park has previously been underdeveloped and there is a need to value-add to the existing visitor experiences and create a world-class experience for both domestic and international visitors to the area.

Opportunity

In order to develop Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park and Riversleigh World Heritage Area as a world-class tourism experience, there is a need to develop a clear strategic direction for the sites. It is recommended that a Tourism Master Plan for Boodjamulla and Riversleigh be developed to guide future development and tourism growth for the sites. Key opportunities for the site have already been identified including:

- Walking trail upgrades throughout the National Park;
- Development of more sites for commercial guided tours including guided access only to restricted trails and sites; and



- Improved interpretive signage in Riversleigh World Heritage Site at specific fossil sites.

The development of a Tourism Master Plan for Boodjamulla / Riversleigh will address future plans for visitor management, facilities development and asset protection within both areas. The Plan would need to be developed in association with the operators of nearby Adels Grove and in recognition of its various tourism activities.

5.2 Normanton Monsoon Centre

Background

In 2010, the Tourism Tropical North Queensland Tourism Opportunity Plan identified the development of the Gulf Monsoon Centre in Normanton as a catalyst project for the Region. As described in the TOP, the Gulf Monsoon Centre in Normanton would be a must see visitor attraction and experience, telling the story of the wet season and its impacts on the people and landscapes in the Gulf. The concept behind the Centre is to better educate visitors on how the landscape, ecology and accessibility of the Region changes in the wet season and the impact it has on the lives of its residents.

A concept plan for the Monsoon Centre has been commissioned and developed. The centre proposes to occupy approximately 300m² of the existing historical Burns Phillip Building which currently houses the town's Visitor Information Centre. The Centre will provide an interactive visitor experience and deliver education and information through a range of interpretative media and presentations. A concept also incorporated into the overall project is an extension of the interpretation of the nearby Mutton Hole Wetlands.

Opportunity

Development of the Normanton Monsoon Centre will provide a unique attraction for the Gulf region that interprets the surrounding landscape and brings together the core visitor experiences of the region. It is expected that the development of the Centre will encourage visitors to extend their length of stay as they explore more of the region's environmental and cultural assets.

5.3 Karumba Barramundi Discovery Centre Extension

Background

The Tourism Tropical North Queensland Tourism Opportunity Plan also identified the Karumba based Barramundi Discovery Centre as a catalyst tourism project for the Gulf region. The Centre is responsible for the breeding and stocking of thousands of barramundi fingerlings into the rivers and lakes across North-West Queensland and is the only fish hatchery in the world that breeds the southern Gulf barramundi for release into rivers and lakes. Over the last 15 years the Centre has bred in excess of 1 million fingerlings and plays an essential role in the regional economy. The centre's goals are to ensure the sustainability of the barramundi fishing industry for both commercial and recreational fishermen.

The centre currently runs a small tourism based business, which includes tours, a kiosk to sell souvenirs and a Discovery Centre. The Discovery Centre has a range of displays and offers tours of the centre that celebrate all things 'barramundi' and the work of the Centre in breeding barramundi fingerlings. Visitors also have the opportunity to view the feeding of the breed stock of barramundi. The Centre currently operates on a non-profit basis.

Opportunity

Review of the dual roles of the Karumba Barramundi Discovery Centre as a tourist centre and fingerling growing facility to ensure it continues to develop as a strong and sustainable business with a sound financial base. The potential exists to re-develop the Centre into a larger attraction to attract more tourists and provide a more reliable source of income. In order to develop the Centre as a must-see visitor attraction, development funding and operational resources will be required to upgrade facilities and develop new and interactive displays and visitor experiences.

5.4 Mount Isa Rodeo Hall of Fame

Background

Starting out in 1959 with the help of committee members from the Cloncurry Merry Muster, the guidance of the Australian Professional Rodeo Association (APRA) and the hard work and self belief of the



Karumba



Mount Isa community, local sponsors and Mount Isa Mines, the rodeo became a reality. With some of the country's top riders listed on the program, the rodeo had its maiden run which has continued to today where the Isa Rodeo is the largest annual rodeo event in the Southern Hemisphere attracting best talent from Australia and overseas.

The city of Mount Isa is branded as the Rodeo Capital of Australia and identifies the development of a Rodeo Hall of Fame to be a natural and exciting next step in tourism development.

Opportunity

This is an opportunity for new product development in Mount Isa to build on the significance to the region of Rodeo events and history. The Mount Isa Rodeo Hall of Fame would not only tell the story of rodeo in Queensland and Australia but provide an interactive, hands-on and fun experience for visitors while also providing a training venue for novices wanting to learn the history and skills of rodeo.

The Hall of Fame would aim to increase visitation and length of stay in Mount Isa while cementing the city's standing as the rodeo capital of Australia. The project would also complement the city's existing mining related tourism product given the identities of mining and rodeo are intertwined in the city's history.

The initiative would be developed in partnership with the Mount Isa City Council, Mount Isa Chamber of Commerce as the Local Tourism Organisation and other key stakeholders including the Rotary Clubs, stock providers, competitors and supporters associated with the long history of the event.

5.5 Julia Creek 'At the Creek' Stage 2

Background

More than just a Visitor Information Centre, the highly successful 'At the Creek' facility at Julia Creek was opened in 2009 and showcases the Region's tourism experiences, providing cultural and heritage opportunities for visitors and locals alike. The opportunities to further leverage the success of this attraction and create new visitor experiences that extend length of stay and spend in the region have been identified.

Opportunity

The proposed Stage 2 of the Julia Creek 'At the Creek' Visitor Information Centre involves the inclusion of a live nocturnal dunnart display to raise awareness for this endangered animal. The Dunnart is a rare and endangered Australian marsupial which is known to reside in the Julia Creek district. The aim of the display is to broaden the appeal and holding power of the centre by providing an educational and entertaining experience which in turn may encourage increased overnight visitation to Julia Creek.

The initiative would be developed in partnership with, and provide linkages to, the Julia Creek Dunnart Recovery and Captive Breeding Program. This program is being developed with McKinlay Shire Council, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and Southern Gulf Catchment and has seen the opening of a 273ha Julia Creek Dunnart habitat sanctuary around the Julia Creek Airport in 2008. The David Fleay Wildlife Park at the Gold Coast is part of the QPWS dunnart captive breeding program working to re-introduce these threatened species into their natural habitat in Julia Creek.

5.6 Porcupine Gorge National Park Experience

Background

Porcupine Gorge National Park, just north of Hughenden, has the potential to improve its tourism opportunities through a range of public and private sector projects. The Gorge is home to towering sandstone cliffs and lush vine-forest fringing Porcupine Creek providing a striking contrast with surrounding flat plains. This impressive canyon reveals layers of sedimentary rocks spanning millions of years. The gorge is a great place for viewing a range of wildlife, especially a variety of bird species.

Opportunity

Enhanced tourism development in Porcupine Gorge National Park will provide the opportunity to increase visitation and economic growth for the surrounding region. Potential tourism development opportunities and required upgrades/improvement of the site include:

- Lookout upgrade to provide a more spectacular 'skywalk' viewing opportunities into the gorge. A cantilevered structure overhanging the gorge with interpretive signage should be investigated;
- Upgrade the gorge/river walks in and out of the gorge, at the base and along the rim to better cater for the average tourist including additional access points to reduce environmental impacts;
- Cabin/safari tent accommodation development as a private investment opportunity potentially in association with an established tour operator;
- Managed access to rock art sites by commercial tour operators with the approval of the Traditional Owners;
- Sealing the section of road entering the camp ground
- Further expansion of the campgrounds and facilities at the Pyramid campground area
- Any improvements to be coordinated with the nearby White Mountains National Park and the Wilderness Camping and Walking project identified in the Townsville North Queensland Tourism Opportunity Plan.



Qantas Founders Museum, Longreach

5.7 Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways Upgrade

Background

Lark Quarry, in Queensland's Outback, is currently the only recorded dinosaur stampede on earth. In this place, around 95 million years ago, a large herd of small two legged dinosaurs gathered on the banks of a forest lake to drink when they were startled, potentially by a large Theropod – four tonnes of sharp-clawed, meat-eating dinosaur. A record of those ensuing stampede of dinosaurs is cast in more than 3,300 fossilised footprints.

The Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways which house the fossilised dinosaur stampede records is located in the Lark Quarry Conservation Park, 110km south-west of Winton. The Trackways are first approached via the rammed earth entry building containing orientation displays on the history of discovering the Trackways and on the surrounding Jump Up country. Guided tours of the trackways are run daily, interpreting the creation, discovery and display of the fossilised footprints, as well as the surrounding environment and other Cretaceous fossils. The Trackways Viewing Room provides a spectacular display of all 3,300 fossilised footprints. Visitors can also experience the Spinifex Walk, a self-guided walking circuit around the complex.

Opportunity

The rebranding and name change from Lark Quarry to ***Dinosaur Stampede National Monument at Lark Quarry Conservation Park***, will better reflect the experience and enhance the appeal to tourists. Rebranding will include a change of the name, story, interpretational panels and overhaul of marketing initiatives such as the website, online and brochure listings etc.

Support the continual development of the Dinosaur Trackways experience to ensure repeat visitation and new stories on the attraction penetrate the market. An infrastructure upgrade at Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways could include life size dinosaur replicas and footprints. Further, improved visitor amenities and road access is also required at the site.

To compliment the impressive centre housing the dinosaur footprints and bring the footprints to life, this project would involve positioning 'to scale' replicas of the hunter Theropod and the

small hunted dinosaur outside the building. The replicas located appropriately in the landscape adjacent to and appearing to 'enter the building' would serve as a spectacular presentation of the site and a strong visual link to the story of the footprints. The replicas would need to be constructed of robust weatherproof materials requiring minimal maintenance.

The development should be designed to coordinate with and cross promote the other dinosaur attractions across the Region including the nearby Australian Age of Dinosaurs centre, Richmond's Kronosaurus Korner and the Eromanga Gondwana Dinosaur Attraction.

5.8 Australian Age of Dinosaurs Stage 3

Background

The Australian Age of Dinosaurs (AAOD) Museum, located 20 minutes from the town of Winton, is home to the world's largest collection of Australian dinosaur fossils. Stage 1 and 2 of the museum are now completed, which involved developing a working dinosaur museum facility and construction of a reception centre and associated infrastructure. AAOD is now a working dinosaur museum facility allowing visitors to view the collection of dinosaur fossils and see real dinosaur bones being prepared in the laboratory. Visitors can experience handling and preparing real dinosaur bones in the laboratory, working alongside experienced staff using professional equipment. Guided tours of the facility are available providing visitors with the story of Winton dinosaur discoveries and digs, viewing and working on dinosaur bones and interpretation of the fascinating geology of the Winton district. AAOD can now also handle larger numbers of people and provide a more comprehensive experience to the public.

Opportunity

Stage 3 would see the construction of a multi-million dollar working dinosaur museum facility with preparation laboratory, room facilities, classrooms, theatres and comprehensive displays. It will also encompass a wide range of 'external' displays and dioramas over a large area of the mesa, and the building of all associated infrastructure such as parking space, picnic and rest room facilities, walking trails and guided tour facilities.

The project should coordinate with and cross promote the other dinosaur attractions across the region including the nearby Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackway, Richmond's Kronosaurus Korner and the Eromanga Gondwana Dinosaur Attraction.

5.9 Qantas Founders Museum Expansion

Background

Opened in June 1996, the \$1.3m Stage 1 of the Qantas Founders Museum in Longreach was developed in recognition of the enormous service Q.A.N.T.A.S. had given to the people of the Outback and aviation in general across Australia and world. Today, the museum houses discovery and education centres, a theatrette, travelling and temporary exhibition areas, display galleries, a restaurant, conference facilities and gift store. The Qantas Founders Museum is the only place in the world where you can tour two fully equipped passenger jet aircraft. The museum offers fully guided tours including a unique wing walk experience allowing visitors to venture out onto the wing of a 747 aircraft, climb down in the computer bay and into the cargo bays, and sit in the pilot seat.

Opportunity

As part of the Qantas Founders Museum planning for 2020, a number of new and innovative development opportunities have been identified with concept planning underway. Building on this already successful Museum, the implementation of future development plans will further increase the appeal of the facility and see it housing 20 planes by the year 2020. This will be the largest collection of aircraft in the world, and will be a major draw-card for international tourists.

Upgrades and expansions to the buildings and refurbishment of existing aircraft are also planned along with the introduction of new interactive and computer displays. Further development will also see an expansion of current story-telling installations to tell the complete Qantas history (beyond 1936). Future potential opportunities also exist for development of accommodation on site.

Support the implementation of the Qantas Founder Museum complex development plans to complete the Qantas story and fulfil the potential of the facility as a significant and must see visitor attraction for Queensland and Australia.



Blacks Palace, Barcaldine

5.10 Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame Expansion

Background

The Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre in Longreach is one of Australia's premier outback heritage institutions. The Hall of Fame has five themed galleries, housing the history behind some of Australia's greatest and bravest explorers, stock workers, pastoralists and Aboriginals. The exhibits comprise a mix of objects, images, touch screens, audiovisual presentations and open displays, allowing visitors to interpret the outback story in their own unique way. The museum also houses a vast reserve collection which forms a unique work-in-progress display.

Opportunity

In order to support the vision for the expansion of the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and to ensure continued tourism growth and visitation for the surrounding region, a number of development opportunities have been identified:

- One of the major initiatives that is currently being progressed is the development of an **Outback Entertainment Centre**, a multi-purpose facility located within the grounds of the Hall of Fame. The facilities of the Outback Entertainment Centre will include two equestrian / event arenas, stock yards, seating, food and beverage facilities, camp sites and amenities. The venue will cater for around 10-15,000 spectators.
- A concept proposal has been prepared for the development of an **'Outback Heritage Camp'** at the Stockman's Hall of Fame site. The Heritage Camp proposes to include twelve luxury safari tents themed on the early settler's style with an authentic Australian feel. The development of a chapel within the surrounding gardens is also proposed to provide facilities for weddings and functions.

5.11 Barcaldine Tourism Precinct Expansion including Tree of Knowledge and the Australian Workers Heritage Centre

Background

Barcaldine is a drawcard for visitors to the Outback Region and there are some great opportunities to grow and develop current attractions. The two major attractions in the Barcaldine Tourism Precinct are the Tree of Knowledge and the Australian Workers Heritage Centre. The Tree of Knowledge is the historical site of the 1891 Shearer's Strike. Sadly, the tree was poisoned in 2006 and a traffic-stopping memorial now stands on the site. The trunk and some branches were preserved and form the heart of this unique, award-winning memorial, which was officially opened in 2009. The Australian Workers Heritage Centre is a unique attraction which celebrates many achievements of the working men and women of Australia. It also features displays on the Shearer's Strike of 1891.

Opportunity

There is a great opportunity to upgrade the Australian Workers Heritage Centre. Some of the exhibits are more than 20 years old and the displays and facilities need upgrading to ensure their preservation for future generations. Stage 2 of the Tree of

Starlights Lookout, near Longreach



Knowledge Project entails a range of infrastructure work around the Tree of Knowledge as well as linking the existing tourist attractions in Barcaldine, including the Visitor Information Centre, Tree of Knowledge, Art Gallery, Library and the Australian Workers Heritage Centre. The Globe Hotel redevelopment will also be included within this precinct expansion to explore the opportunity to create a space that can cater for events, conferences, art exhibitions and extend the facilities to include more space for training and workshops. A feasibility study is needed to support the development of the precinct expansion.

5.12 Regional Indigenous Story

Background

In the year ended June 2010, there were 332,000 domestic overnight visitors who participated in Indigenous tourism activities in Australia (0.5% of the Australian domestic market). Of these visitors 62,000 participated in Indigenous tourism activities in Queensland. In addition, 60% of all international visitors who participated in Indigenous tourism activities in Australia made a stopover in Queensland, a total of 417,000 visitors. Over the last ten years, the international market for Indigenous tourism activities has seen over 1% per annum growth, with the predominant source markets coming from UK and Europe.

The Indigenous story of the Region before and after European settlement is not widely known and appropriately presented to the community and travelling public. The rich Indigenous cultural story of the Region for the estimated 40,000 years prior to European settlement has either been lost or fragmented and the story of Indigenous involvement in the development of the Region's industry and communities is also not well presented.

Opportunity

Research and development of the Indigenous story of the Region will not only fill an important gap in the story of the Region but will also add a new and exciting element to the Region's tourism experience. This will assist the Region to further leverage a growing international market of Australian visitors interested in participating

in Indigenous tourism activities. It is recommended that further research and development of the Indigenous story and sites of the Region is required in order to develop a plan to incorporate these assets into the Region's tourism experience. Further development of these stories and sites is likely to be through input to existing and new tourism attractions and tours and the provision of infrastructure and interpretation at key sites including, 'The Palace' west of Barcaldine, Hells Gate on the Savannah Way west of Burketown, Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) / Riversleigh, White Mountain National Park and Porcupine Gorge. The opportunity to develop an Indigenous trade and food trail linking key Indigenous sites across the Region could also be investigated as a Region-wide approach to Indigenous tourism. The trail would link key sites of the Indigenous trade trail from Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Boulia, Bedourie, Birdsville, to South Australia. Detailed scoping of the exact route would be required.

5.13 Blackall Tambo Heritage Tourism

Background

The Blackall Tambo region has strong potential to develop Heritage Tourism Projects based on the history of wool and sheep. The Blackall Woolscour operated from 1908 through until 1978 and it is Australia's Heritage at its best. Woolscouring means wool washing. The Scour is an important part of the National Heritage. It is the only steam-driven scour incorporating a shearing shed left in Australia. The site of the scour is located a short 5 minute drive from the main street in Blackall. The area includes a camp kitchen with traditional wood stove ovens, some unused shearer quarters, and plenty of grassed open space. The Woolscour as a tourism attraction received a major boost in 2001, when they received funding through the Queensland Heritage Trails Network for displays and interpretation. Ten years on it is time to revitalise the site. Tambo Shear Power is a proposed cultural heritage facility that depicts the resilience and innovation of the rural sector and the Tambo community, with emphasis on celebrating the historic role of the wool industry in the settlement of the region. A shearing shed and yards sited in Tambo town, along the Landsborough Highway, would offer insights into the history and development of the locality. Tambo's original power generators and cooling tower structure would be installed adjacent to the shed. The facility would include a functioning camp kitchen and a purpose built viewing platform that will provide expansive vistas over the surrounding landscape and the township. In its entirety, Tambo Shear Power would convey an immersive experience of place highlighting the legacies of people, livestock and land.

Opportunity

The Matilda Highway remains a popular route for the touring market, but the needs of the market have changed. An increasing number are taking shorter trips, spending more per day and staying in commercial accommodation. Opportunities exists for the Blackall Tambo region to develop the Woolscour site into an integrated visitor precinct with overnight stay options, with themed accommodation, caravan and motor home facilities and expansion of the existing conference and events facilities. The Tambo Shear Power Project has the potential to develop as an experiential and interactive heritage tourism attraction. These properties would not only service the long haul drive market, but provide an alternative for business and meetings markets from Longreach, Charleville and Emerald.

5.14 Bedourie Dust Storm Centre

Background

Bedourie is located in Far West Queensland, 200km North of Birdsville and a 5 hour drive from Longreach. The town is the administration centre of the Diamantina Shire, covering 94,690 square kilometres and is the second largest shire in Queensland.

The town has excellent facilities including motels, a hotel, cabins, caravan parks, a restaurant and tavern and has some complementary attractions including the magnificent hot artesian spa and pool; the heritage-listed Mud Hut; community hall and indoor sport centre; cemetery and Outback golf course.

Opportunity

The name of the town Bedourie originated from the aboriginal word 'dust storm'. The township experiences many spectacular dust storms each year, which provides a great opportunity to create a unique and iconic experience through the development of the Bedourie Dust Storm Centre. The Bedourie Dust Storm Centre will allow visitors to experience a massive dust storm rolling towards them. Using multi sensory effects such as large animated projections and smoke effects with dramatic controlled coloured lighting, the visitor will feel as though they are being swallowed up in the dust storm, until they are eventually encompassed in an eerie darkness. The intense sounds of the dust storm will engulf and swirl around the visitor via the surround sound system.

When the storm passes the smoke will be extracted through the ceiling, and the visitors will learn first hand about the dust storm 'Bedouri' through a dream time story from the Traditional Owners. They will also be told by the descendants of pioneers and station owners/people on the land how these spectacular natural events have affected their lives and shaped the land throughout history.

5.15 Great Desert 4WD Journey

Background

At one million hectares, Simpson Desert National Park is Queensland's largest protected area. Across the Simpson, parallel dunes rising to 90 metres run south-east to north-west with dunes extending up to 200 km. With its bare windswept crests

and flat open plains, the Simpson Desert is a remote and rugged landscape that requires a four-wheel-drive to reach and drive through the National Park. The Diamantina Shire Council receives many inquiries about new places for four wheel drive visitors to experience the desert. The Old Vermin Proof Fence, which separates the Simpson Desert National Park from the pastoral lands to the east is of great interest to many 4WD visitors. The opportunity to capitalise on a growing adventure and 4WD market in the Region is evident.

Opportunity

In response to an increasing market demand for 4WD experiences in the Region, this project involves the development of a dedicated 4WD experience along the 400km journey from Birdsville to Bedourie accessed along the Old Vermin Proof Fence line bordering the Simpson Desert National Park. The entry / exit points to the track would be via the QAA Line from Birdsville or via the Pulchra Waterhole at Ethabuka and Ethabuka-Bedourie Diamantina Shire Road to Bedourie or further north to the Plenty or Donahue Highway. In addition to construction of the 4WD track, establishment of overnight areas, a permitting system and signage as well as the provision of Satphone hiring will be required.

5.16 Birdsville Big Red Sand Dune Walk

Background

Big Red, also known by its aboriginal name as Nappamerri, is a huge sand dune in the Simpson Desert that stands approximately 90 metres above sea level and 30 metres above the plain. Located 35 kilometres west of Birdsville, this awesome sand dune, is accessible to most vehicles (dependant on road conditions) and provides a challenge for any four wheel drive enthusiast. One of 1,113 dunes in the Simpson Desert, Big Red is also a popular spot from which to view spectacular sunsets across the region.

Opportunity

This project involves the development of the Big Red dune walk and associated Desert Interpretation Centre to maximise the visitor experience of this wonder of nature and to make it more accessible to a wider range of people. The dune walk would involve a desert walking platform going up and along Big Red to its summit, allowing





Carnarvon Gorge National Park

tourists to experience both the harshness and beauty of the desert but in a safe and sustainable manner. The Desert Interpretation Centre would be developed as a key component of the dune walk, exploring the fascinating ecological story of the desert and how it is interwoven with desert Aboriginal culture and lifestyle.

5.17 Burke and Wills Dig Tree Strategic Plan

Background

The Burke and Wills Dig Tree is one of Australia's National icons and an enduring reminder of the pioneering spirit and extreme harshness of the outback at any time. Nappa Merrie Station is proud to officially manage the site on behalf of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland. Located on the northern bank of Cooper Creek, the "Dig Tree" is a Coolibah (*Eucalyptus microtha*) where Burke and Wills' base camp party carved instructions to their buried provisions into the tree. In 1898 John Dick carved Burke's face into another tree (the Face Tree) about 30 metres downstream of the Dig Tree. The site is as Burke and Wills and companions would have viewed it nearly 140 years ago. These trees are an attraction and a link to the explorers of Australia's Historic Past.

Opportunity

Develop a strategic plan for the ongoing protection, presentation and promotion of the Burke and Wills Dig Tree site. This national icon, that represents a significant part of Australia's pioneering history, requires a range of measures to provide for sustainable visitor access and importantly, to be kept safe from environmental impacts and vandalism. Accessibility is currently inconsistent, as a small amount of rain can cut off roads leading into the site. Significant resources need to be contributed to develop reliable access into the site. The overall development and ongoing promotion of the Burke and Wills Dig Tree will add an important component to the pioneering experiences already existing in the Region and will help Thargomindah to create an outstanding experience for visitors to the area.

5.18 Eromanga Outback Gondwana Dinosaur Attraction

Background

Paleo-tourism, or visitors interested in Dinosaurs, continues to be an important niche market for the Region. With the World Heritage Riversleigh site, Outback @ Isa, Kronosaurus Korner, and the Muttaborrasaurus Hughenden in the North-West, and Australian Age of Dinosaurs and Lark Quarry in the Central West, there is an opportunity to have a significant site in the South West. The Outback Gondwana Foundation is a non-profit group dedicated to discovering and preserving fossil heritage. The foundation is continuing to dig and discover new dinosaur specimens near Eromanga in the state's South West. Until recently, this region within Outback Queensland has remained largely untouched by tourists.

Opportunity

Outback Gondwana Foundation is planning to build a \$1.5M field museum suitable to house and preserve the specimens found in and around Eromanga. This new facility, like Australian Age of Dinosaurs in Winton and Outback @ Isa, has the potential to value add to the current visitor experience and attract new palaeo and geo tourists to the Region. With a focus on hands-on participation, education and training, the centre could provide a critical position to the Region for world-famous events (a region-wide Dinosaur Dig) and as the Centre of Excellence in Palaeontology, attracting some of the best scientists. It is important therefore that the project works in collaboration with Queensland Museum and the tourism industry at the existing sites in Winton, Mount Isa, Richmond and Hughenden to offer a point of difference, but also to contribute to the sustainability of the dinosaur message. There is a risk of market saturation and each project must explain their point of difference as a jointly promoted message, not in competition.

5.19 Cosmos Centre Expansion

Background

The Cosmos Centre and Observatory, located in Charleville, provides visitors with the opportunity to take a journey through the night sky. Using the facility's 3 powerful 12 inch Meade telescopes, experienced cosmos guides share their knowledge and wonder of the night sky, relating the stories of the constellations, both European and Indigenous. The centre features a theatre screening the educational short film 'Journey to Infinity', along with a range of hands-on displays including the opportunity to hold meteorites in your hand. Visitors also have the unique opportunity to view the only star that can be seen in the day time – our Sun – through a specially designed filter. Merchandise, food and drinks are available in the Cosmos Cafe.

Also located in Charleville, is the Charleville Bilby Experience, supported by the Save the Bilby fund set up by conservationists Frank Manthey and Peter McRae to raise money to help put a stop to the steady decline of this rare and unique marsupial. The Charleville Bilby Experience runs regular bilby shows including education talks and videos and a visit to the outdoor bilby enclosure.

Opportunity

Support the opportunity to further expand on these two well-known visitor attractions through the refurbishment and expansion of the Cosmos Centre to incorporate a National Bilby Centre facility and surrounding tourism precinct. The proposed development of the Cosmos Centre tourism precinct would include:

- ▶ Audit of existing Cosmos Centre artefacts and reconfiguration and upgrade of existing facilities;
- ▶ Extension of the existing Cosmos Centre facility to include a new observatory with telescopes for deep sky imaging and a radio telescope to hear the sounds of the stars, a science and technology multi-media centre and geodesic domes for large scale and tech displays;
- ▶ A National Bilby Centre incorporating an underground educational and interactive display, depicting ecological processes and wildlife including the Bilby;
- ▶ Development of a Charleville Mulga Lands Environmental Park with interpretive signage and trails in the surrounding precinct to promote the natural assets of the Mulga Lands bioregion; and
- ▶ Development of walking and driving trails in the surrounding area to link key tourism attractions across Charleville.

Longer term opportunities for the Cosmos Centre include better interpretation of Aboriginal cosmology and a 'Sovereign National Night Sky Stories' event as well as investment in suitable sun viewing telescopes and radio telescopes.

5.20 Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Accommodation

Background

Carnarvon National Park lies within a vast, elevated section of sandstone country in central Queensland, approximately 600km northwest of Brisbane and 300km southwest of Rockhampton. The jewel in the Sandstone Belt, Carnarvon National Park is an area of outstanding natural beauty where erosion of the sandstone has left

behind many interesting geological features including sandstone gorges, cliff faces and other wind and water sculpted formations.

Over many thousands of years, Aboriginal people have developed a powerful spiritual connection to the Carnarvon landscape. They believe that spiritual beings were metamorphosed as particular features of the landscape and that they are responsible for the protection of these places. Some of the occupied sites in the park are more than 19,000 years old and their full significance can only be appreciated through knowledge of the legends and rituals with which they were created.

Opportunity

Carnarvon National Park is one of Queensland's iconic parks and there is the opportunity to create an iconic and unique accommodation experience through which this status can be maintained and enhanced. The southern and eastern parts of the park are less visited than the main gorge area. These areas offer a unique opportunity for wilderness style accommodation to complement what already exists in the park. Areas like the sculpted sandstone outcrops of Mount Moffatt offer spectacular views from the highest plateau in Queensland (over 1200 metres) and highly significant Aboriginal rock art sites are found in this remote section of Carnarvon National Park.

Building on the success of the Carnarvon Great Walk, an 86km long wilderness trail that links the Carnarvon Gorge and Mount Moffatt sections of the park, a feasibility study and preliminary environmental investigation is needed to assess the viability of remote wilderness lodge style accommodation. Options exist for unique accommodation both in and near the park in various settings. Key to its success will be site management, both to ensure that activities occur in a way that maintains and enhances the park's natural and cultural values and also to ensure existing operations are not negatively impacted. A range of interpretive materials would need to be developed in association with the accommodation to enhance visitor experiences and foster a greater appreciation of the park's outstanding geology, history, and cultural significance. Involvement of the traditional owners in this process will be essential.



Nindigully Pub

5.21 Roma Big Rig Expansion

Background

The Roma Big Rig serves as Australia's living history of oil and gas exploration, bringing together and presenting intriguing stories, photos and facts from the past and present. Catering for all ages, The Big Rig takes visitors on an absorbing journey from Australia's first discovery of petroleum, through the boom and bust years of oil and gas exploration and onto today's multi-billion dollar industry.

The 30 minute evening light and sound presentation provides visitors with a brief, informative and entertaining history of oil and gas. The show, set against the night sky of Roma, dramatically recreates the story of Australia's Oil and Gas industry, with emphasis on Roma's part in its development while bringing into focus those events, and characters, which justify Roma's claim to being the Cradle of Australia's Oil and Gas Industry. The venue is a terraced outdoor seating area which overlooks a pre set scene of a small bush rig camp, complete with tents, pond, and a small drilling rig. The lighting highlights the adjacent Emsco rig, which prompted the naming of the attraction, as the Big Rig.

Opportunity

Opportunities exist to further expand and develop the Big Rig attraction in order to attract a larger, more diverse visitor market. The Big Rig has the potential to further develop the Australian Oil and Gas story providing retrospective and current interpretation of the stories and culture associated with the industry. This includes development of interpretation of the science and challenges surrounding 'sustainable energy' production. Revitalisation of the night show experience to include new interpretation and stories will encourage repeat visitation from previous visitors to the attraction as well as encouraging new markets to visit. Providing linkages to on-ground interpretation of the oil and gas story in towns across the region will add further value for the visitors and encourage regional dispersal and extended stay. The opportunity to engage the support of mining communities and companies from around the region in developing and delivering new and innovative educational programs for local and intrastate schools and groups should also be investigated.

5.22 Nindigully Precinct Preservation

Background

Located 45 kilometres east of St George on the banks of the Moonie River, Nindigully is home to the historic Nindigully Pub. Established in 1864 Nindigully Pub is said to be Queensland's oldest hotel located in its original condition and position after operating as shearer's accommodation for the Nindigully Station. 'The Gully', as it is affectionately known, is a must see for Australian history buffs where visitors can experience the heritage and culture of the precinct from the original buildings to the traditional farming lands. The town of Nindigully is home to a population of six, however plays host to thousands of visitors each year with local events such as the New Years Eve Party, annual BandS Ball and the Nindigully Pub Pig Races. The Nindigully precinct, including the Nindigully Pub, is an important part of the European pioneering heritage and culture of not only the Region, but Australia as a whole. The need to continue to preserve this precinct is evident, in ensuring that the heritage and cultural values of the area are conserved and maintained.

Opportunity

Preparation of a Nindigully Precinct Master Plan will identify key planning and development specifications and infrastructure and maintenance requirements to ensure the long-term sustainability of the site. The Master Plan should include investigation of the potential for boutique cottage style accommodation next to the Nindigully pub to encourage overnight stays in the region and value add to the visitor experience. The accommodation design should be in keeping with the era of the pub and maintain the authenticity of the early settler / pioneering environment.

5.23 Lake Coolmunda Master Plan

Background

Goondiwindi Regional Council and the region's community recognise that the waterways and river systems are the lifeblood of the area. Situated just 13km east of Inglewood, on the Cunningham Highway, Lake Coolmunda has for many years been considered one of Queensland's best kept secrets and a valuable community resource. Managed in partnership between SunWater and the Council, Lake Coolmunda provides a range of recreation opportunities for locals and visitors alike. In 2010, following the recommendations contained within the South East Queensland Country Tourism Opportunity Plan, Council commissioned the development of a Tourism Master Plan for Lake Coolmunda. The Master Plan explored a range of options for the future development of the dam to maximise its contribution to the regional economy and the local community. A wide range of community and user groups were consulted and involved in the development of the Master Plan.

Opportunity

Support the implementation of the Lake Coolmunda Tourism Master Plan, in particular the development of a campground facility at the Lake in partnership with a commercial operator. A number of suitable locations and options were identified for the development of the facility to cater for increased visitation and recreation at the Lake. After further investigation and consultation a suitable site for the development of a new campground / caravan park facility was identified. The resulting concept and Master Plan identified a four stage approach to the infrastructure development with the emphasis on first establishing the appropriate lease arrangements and securing funding for Stage 1 development.

6 Region-wide Projects

Norman River, Normanton

In support of the destination specific Catalyst projects, the following 14 projects have been identified which address issues that are relevant across the entire Region and are expected to act as enablers for a range of other investment, marketing and product development opportunities.

Project	Description
Touring Market and Themed Route Action Plan	<p>The Region has an extensive system of themed highways and byways with nine identified routes radiating across the Region. The challenge in developing and marketing these routes is a lack of consistency in their management and no clear focus for marketing the routes and associated experiences.</p> <p>The development of a Touring Market and Themed Route Action Plan would provide a set of guidelines for drive route committees aimed at crucial issues such as incorporation, finances, management structure, grant funding and time management. Action plans for future development and promotion of the touring market would also need to be identified with allocation of responsibilities and timing.</p> <p>A challenge which needs to be addressed within this action plan is the availability and flexibility of hire car options within the Region. Currently, there are limited car hire facilities and very expensive one way hire charges that make it difficult for the touring market to have flexibility in the way they travel around the Region and along themed routes.</p>
Integrated Camping and Caravan Park Strategy	<p>Camping and caravanning as part of the touring market are key experiences for the Region which need to be more effectively managed to maximise economic and commercial returns, minimise environmental issues and maximise visitor satisfaction.</p> <p>Development of an integrated Camping and Caravan Park Strategy aims to identify all of the current free camping grounds across the Region and formulate a plan to upgrade these sites where necessary and manage them in coordination with established commercial caravan parks. This will provide a suite of camping and caravan experiences across the Region to cater for the diverse needs of the touring/camping market.</p>
Voluntourism and Guiding Tour Development Strategy	<p>With a growing trend of Voluntourism in Australia, Outback Queensland has the potential to thrive off of the growth in the market. Winton has begun to see an increase in enquiries for this sector and has implemented a structure to accommodate tourists who wish to volunteer their time towards assistance in projects through the 'Prep-a-dino' program at the Australian Age of Dinosaurs. There are many opportunities for the entire Region to grow their overall visitation through a strategy to develop programs to suit this market.</p> <p>Regional guides are an important way of telling the destination's story to visitors. A strategy to develop guides will ensure consistency and quality of the information given to tourists throughout the destination. This project should also consider the distribution of the message through face to face guiding as well as recording or broadcasting.</p> <p>This strategy will complement and coordinate with the 'Outback Mates' program aimed at creating passionate ambassadors for the Region, in particular targeting the touring market. These ambassadors demonstrate true outback character and spirit by welcoming and assisting visitors to make the most of their trip to the Region.</p>

Project	Description
Coordinated Events Strategy	<p>Consumer research shows that events are one of the key visitor expectations for the Region. The Region currently has a number of existing 'hero events' that are major drawcards for regional visitation. The development of a Coordinated Events Strategy will provide for the further development of those existing hero events and leveraging of local events to extend stay and encourage regional dispersal throughout the Region.</p> <p>The development of the Events Strategy should include an audit of all events and identification of opportunities to match up the timing of events, opportunities to grow and support 'hero events' and the development of a Regional Events Calendar. The audit process will also identify key gaps for new event development eg. Opera in the Outback, Circuit of Youth Music, Fishing Competitions, an integrated Dinosaur themed event across multiple venues / attractions.</p>
Paddock to Plate Strategy	<p>With the farming and agricultural industry worth \$2.5 billion to the Queensland economy, the Region has the opportunity to further leverage its abundant local produce and agricultural assets. The Region is well known for a wide range of products including lamb, beef, wheat, grapes, figs, dates and honey, with a particular focus on organic produce. The development of a 'Paddock to Plate' Strategy would aim to develop visitor experiences around local produce specific to each precinct across the Region.</p> <p>The delivery of these 'Paddock to Plate' experiences in local restaurants and cafes across the Region would require the development of supplier partnerships, appropriate marketing campaigns and capacity building of local hospitality operators in service delivery and food preparation. Over time, the development of visitor experiences at produce farms and facilities could also be investigated.</p>
Outback Historic Site Tourism Plan	<p>The pioneering story of the Region is one of the key reasons why people visit the Region and it underpins many of the Region's major attractions. While many of the major visitor attractions are well established there is a need for this 'story' to be better understood and coordinated across the whole Region, not just at individual sites.</p> <p>There is the opportunity to identify the key regional stories and themes and important historic sites across the Region and prepare a Regional Historic Site Tourism Plan. This plan would identify key strategies and actions for their preservation, presentation and management of key sites and identify opportunities to maximize their potential to add value to the Region's tourism experience.</p>
Birding Opportunities	<p>Bird watching has been identified as a small but growing opportunity across the Region both in terms of the niche 'birding' market but also as an additional experience that adds value and variety to the general visitor market. An audit of existing birding experiences and locations across the Region would assist in the identification of important/iconic bird species and sites that would attract the specialist birding market and broaden wider visitor experience opportunities.</p> <p>The development of a simple action plan to further develop and market these iconic birding experiences should be undertaken. The opportunity to develop a cross-regional birding trail featuring iconic species such as the Bulla Bulla (Cloncurry Parrot), Bora Birds (Currawinya National Park) plus confirmed and unconfirmed sightings of the Night Parrot should also be considered.</p>
National Park Ecotourism Opportunities	<p>National Parks and associated reserves in the Region preserve some of the important flora, fauna and associated habitats and landscapes of the Region and represent a valuable tourism asset. There are a wide range of National Parks across the Region, offering a diverse range of landscapes, natural attractions and visitor experiences. As the nature-based and ecotourism visitor market continues to grow in Australia, there is the opportunity for the Region to leverage this market through the development of new experiences.</p> <p>An assessment of the key Regional National Parks and associated tourism experiences should be undertaken in order to identify opportunities for future facility upgrades, infrastructure development and experience delivery. An action plan identifying roles and responsibilities, resources and timing should be developed. The North West National Park Strategy Plan was a pilot document used as a model to support development in National Parks and can be used as a model to support the development of National Parks in the Region.</p>
Visitor Information and Weather Reporting Program	<p>The provision of appropriate visitor information is essential in ensuring effective visitor safety and orientation in any destination. It is recommended that a formal Visitor Safety Program be established for the Outback Region including a dedicated weather reporting program. Key infrastructure required as part of the Visitor Safety Program should include pointer signage and comfort signage as well as other roadside infrastructure such as toilets, Driver Reviver stops and interpretive signage. Work has already begun through the local and regional Minor Infrastructure Grants and this should continue through the Local Government Authorities.</p> <p>A region-wide weather reporting program is required in order to ensure a consistent approach to visitor access to up-to-date and relevant weather information. There is a definite need to more accurately report on flooding and road conditions, which includes more up-to-date websites and assessment. Development of partnerships with key media and online agencies will be required.</p>

Project	Description
Backpacker Market Potential	<p>Queensland currently attracts up to 50% of international visitors to Australia who stay in backpacker / hostel accommodation with Europe and the United Kingdom making up 53% of the market. Backpackers represent a potential market for the Region through their working holiday and exploring pursuits.</p> <p>There is a need to undertake an assessment of the youth and backpacker markets, in order to identify the key elements that will attract this emerging market and the key regional experiences and opportunities that align with the needs of the market. An assessment of the economic potential of this market should be undertaken followed by the development of an Action Plan for developing and communicating with this market including the issue of public transport between towns across the Region. .</p>
Town Character Themeing	<p>Each town in the Outback, Gulf and Western Downs should have a clear understanding of the characteristics which distinguish it from other towns across the Region, in particular those unique attributes which set it apart from everywhere else.</p> <p>Identification of these 'unique attributes' can then provide the basis for town themeing that in turn will inform landscaping, signage and visitor attraction opportunities. Themeing will not only serve as a valuable point-of-difference from a tourism perspective but will also provide the community with a sense of identity and pride in their town. Themeing should look across the full spectrum of natural (major waterway, lake, mountain etc), cultural (Indigenous, multi-cultural, pioneering etc) and historical attributes (cattle sale yards, buildings, cemeteries, explorers, characters etc) and within the wider town and locality context.</p>
Energy Efficiency Program	<p>Faced with rising energy costs and increasing visitor expectations of business around climate change and sustainability, tourism businesses are required to take a more proactive approach to reducing their environmental footprint.</p> <p>Building on the work of the Government's Technology Innovation Department audit of the Australia Stockman's Hall of Fame, it is recommended that a pilot program with seven of the major tourism operators in the Region be established targeted at improving energy efficiency within their operations. Operators could include Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, Qantas Founders Museum, Waltzing Matilda Centre, Cosmos Centre, Australian Age of Dinosaurs, Outback at Isa and the Big Rig at Roma. Through participating in an energy audit, the operators will be able to identify individual and collective group solutions to reducing energy consumption and achieving cost savings.</p>
Accommodation Needs Analysis	<p>Across the Region, the mining boom has put pressure on existing facilities, infrastructure and services for many communities. In particular the availability of quality accommodation for visitors has been significantly reduced with mining companies securing the majority of room stock for use by employees and contractors.</p> <p>A Region-wide Accommodation Needs Analysis is required to identify areas requiring future investment in accommodation for both mining communities and visitor markets. A focus on providing youth hostel-style accommodation should also be considered in order to continue to encourage working holiday visa holders to the Region in locations where seasonal work is high. Partnerships with mining companies will be required in undertaking the Accommodation Needs Analysis to ensure that appropriate and feasible solutions are identified.</p>
Industry Story-Telling Workshops	<p>In order to effectively deliver unique visitor experiences, local tourism operators must further leverage the distinctive characters, stories and heroes that are synonymous with the Region. In particular, industry operators need to be re-invigorated in their approach to story-telling and interpretation.</p> <p>Facilitation of story-telling and interpretive workshops for industry operators to support further development and unique of innovative experiences for visitors. Workshops would focus on developing interpretive experiences that leverage local characters and present the stories to visitors in a more engaged and meaningful way. National and international interpretation experts could be engaged to facilitate a series of workshops across the Region.</p>



Cobbold Gorge

7 Precinct Projects

Countryside, Nobby

In addition to the Catalyst and Region-wide projects, the following suite of projects has also been identified for each of the Council precincts throughout the Region. These projects are considered important to the tourism growth of their precincts and as drivers for a range of other investment, marketing and product development opportunities.

7.1 Gulf of Carpentaria

Burke Shire Council Area

Project	Description
Burketown Entry Statement	The development of an aesthetic and appealing statement at the Western entry of Burketown has been identified as a major project for the Council. Currently upon entering the town there is a lack of identity or any significant statement about the town and its unique location.
Burketown Lagoon and Waterbird Habitat	Located at the Eastern entry to town is one of the last free running bores left in the Outback Region. This site although relatively un-developed offers potential to create a lagoon and waterbird habitat. This artificial wetland would provide an insight to tourists of the habitats of the local flora and fauna located within the surrounding and inaccessible Gulf delta. The wetland would include boardwalks, interpretive signage, and a bush foods garden and provide an interesting and eye catching entry statement to Burketown.
Morning Glory Festival	The mysterious morning glory cloud formation has the potential to form the basis for an event or festival within the gulf region. Given the unpredictable nature of the formation, a festival between the towns of Burketown, Karumba and Normanton could run over the course of a week and drive tourists between the three towns for different events which celebrate this incredible natural phenomena.
Stargazing on the Salt Plains	The region is well known for clear night skies and spectacular stargazing opportunities, which are impossible to experience in cities. There is an opportunity for the Burke Shire Council to begin 'Stargazing on the Saltplains' to take advantage of this opportunity and not only attract visitors, but keep them in the Region longer.



Horse racing, Julia Creek

Carpentaria Shire Council Area

Project	Description
Wet Season Tourism Opportunities	Undertake an assessment of the wet season tourism options for the Carpentaria Shire Council Area. While the region can be inaccessible by road for weeks and months during the wet season, in most instances air access into the area is still available which opens up opportunities for fly-in tourism and specialised rarely available wet season activities linked to birdlife, fishing and the spectacular 'flooded landscape'.
Burke and Wills Camp 119	More interpretation and promotion of Burke and Wills camp 119. The northern most camp of the explorers, however, is not well known and opportunities exist to enlighten the extreme distance between this camp and their final resting point near Thargomindah.
Karumba Boardwalk	The completion of a wooden boardwalk providing a critical link between the eastern and western precincts of town. The walk should include native flora and fauna interpretation and background into the industries that drive the port. This is a critical link required for the two zones

Croydon Shire Council Area

Project	Description
Implementation of the Croydon Shire Tourism Strategy	<p>When you reach Croydon you will see how proud its residents are of their heritage, their Shire and their life as it is today. Croydon is a genuine example of this 'last frontier' style of tourism providing true blue outback experiences, natural attractions, exceptional heritage, cultural activities and adventure.</p> <p>Within the town's heritage precinct the late 1880's classic Victorian buildings provide a unique visitor experience. The Town Hall is used for community gatherings and movie nights. The Court House displays the original furniture and the former Police building displays historic objects in a variety of museum styles. It is proposed to light these heritage buildings to provide a novel night time tourism experience that will also avoid the heat of the day. Nearby, the Chinese Temple site is of national archaeological significance while the Gulflander train service runs between Croydon and Normanton on heritage listed tracks.</p> <p>Croydon Shire Council is developing a Tourism Strategy in order to promote the region to a wider audience as a quality destination. Implementation of this plan requires marketing, investment and resource efforts in order to weave together the shire's significant cultural, heritage and natural assets.</p>
Implementation of the Lake Belmore Recreation Management Plan	<p>A hidden treasure located within Croydon Shire is Lake Belmore. Located just 4 kilometres from the main town centre, the lake is used year round by locals and visitors for boating, fishing, water skiing, bird watching and picnicking.</p> <p>Lake Belmore Recreation Management Plan seeks to promote a range of safe, ecologically sustainable, nature based recreation opportunities on both land and water. The plan entails a number of recreation/tourism management objectives that outline opportunities to further develop outdoor recreation infrastructure and create and promote events at the site. Implementation of this plan will lead to an increase in tourism product for Croydon Shire Council and a reason for visitation and increased length of stay in the Region.</p>

Etheridge Shire Council Area

Project	Description
Copperfield Gorge Management Plan	Einasleigh sits on the Eastern edge of the Newcastle Range, on the banks of the Copperfield River. Once a copper mining town, it is set among some unusual scenery with flat top hills that rise out of the grasslands. A key attraction to the town is Copperfield Gorge which includes a park, with electric barbecues and shade. With the completion of the new bridge and the spectacular environment that surrounds it, this is a true hidden treasure and has potential to be developed with camping and overnight facilities and interpretive signage. A plan to formalise parking, camping and safety issues surrounding Copperfield Gorge is required.
Gem Fossicking Network	Development of a plan to formalise and better promote a network of gem sites across the Etheridge Shire Council Area including gem fossicking sites are Agate Creek, Flat Creek Station and Mount Surprise.
Ecotourism and accommodation development	With Council claiming back some of the old town reserves around Gilberton, Durram, Forsayth and Gilbert River there is now potential for growth in tourism related development. In particular, tourism development opportunities through ecotourism and private investment in accommodation such as caravan parks should be investigated.

Georgetown VIC Re-development	With 17,000 people driving through Georgetown per year, and stage 2 of the VIC redevelopment to include interpretation of the history of the local Westpac, there is the opportunity to further expand facilities at the VIC to include a cafe. This will encourage increased spend in the town and capture passing traffic.
Road infrastructure upgrades	Roads upgrades that should be prioritised and funded include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kennedy Developmental Road – bitumen upgrade to link the North West for free and independent drive visitors ■ Bitumen upgrade for road from Einasleigh to the Lynd Highway ■ Annual gravel road upgrades
Undara Settlers Huts	Undara Experience is planning to improve their range of accommodation options by introducing 14 Settlers Huts which will be ensuite cabins especially designed to be environmentally sound and cater to the climatic conditions of the area. The cabins will be introduced in a staged approach over a period of seven years as well as refurbishment of the existing railway accommodation so that a total of 28 ensuite rooms are available. This forms part of Undara's overall long-term strategic plan to enhance its accommodation experience offering to better suit the needs of its target markets and therefore increase the appeal of the attraction.
Gateway Signage	Form a partnership with the four local councils in the Gulf of Carpentaria to buy and maintain gateway signage which promote each others region and products – located at entry and exit points to shires.

7.2 North West Outback

Mount Isa City Council Area	
Project	Description
Mount Isa city precinct upgrade	Mount Isa offers more than just a mining attraction to tourists. Aesthetically the town needs to develop a more prominent and eye catching entry statement. Upgrades could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Formalise walking and bike tracks and bird watching trails including support for plans to upgrade the '3 steps walk' with viewings ■ Mining history, cultural and the story of Mount Isa interpretive signage ■ Cloncurry trailback on Pamela Street hill which offers the best outlooks of the city ■ Re-create Bow Mow's Chinese garden - Riversleigh Region ■ Frank Aston site re-development ■ Town entry landscaping that tells the story of the town e.g. old machinery that embraces the proud mining history of the town
Mount Isa Fish Stocking Group Hatchery Project	The Mount Isa Fish Stocking Group (MIFSG) Hatchery Project has been developed to fill a void in the local area by facilitating a cost effective fish breeding program for re-stocking purposes. The hatchery will include a state of the art interpretive display centre and viewing platform creating an informative and unique tourist attraction for the local area. The project will be located within Mount Isa's largest tourism precinct, Outback at Isa, which will provide the facility with an existing customer base and value add to the visitor experience at the centre. Additionally, the MIFSG Hatchery Project will benefit local tourism through the re-stocking of local species into the surrounding lakes, building on the regions reputation as a fishing destination. The Hatchery Project will provide opportunities for the MIFSG to further develop partnerships with environmental, biological, trades and professional services through education, job placement and training opportunities.
Maximise the tourism potential of the Drover's Camp	The Drovers Camp Association in Camooweal currently hosts an annual Festival to honour the contribution of the drovers and their families and to provide an opportunity for the public to participate in a range of fun and quirky activities that celebrate drovers and droving. Infrastructure is needed to support this event and it is envisaged that a building be erected for use during the festival to enhance the visitor experience. The opportunity also exists for the building to become an attraction in it's own right outside the annual Drovers Camp Festival by providing safe storage, preservation and year round public presentation areas for authentic artefacts, documentation, art and photographic treasures from Australia's droving industry as well as contain audio-visual presentations, inter-active and interpretive displays.
Camooweal as Queensland's border gateway	Camooweal is Queensland's 'first town' after entering Queensland from the Northern Territory and there is the potential to upgrade the town precinct with a unique 'Queensland' theme that celebrates all things 'Queensland' making the town a must do tourism stop over with a difference. The town upgrade could also be linked in with the inclusion of a unique entry statement at the Queensland-Northern Territory border point 13 km west of the town.

Mount Isa Lake Moondarra Master Plan	<p>Lake Moondarra, located north of Mount Isa, is a popular recreation spot with both locals and visitors to the North West region. It has become an angler's paradise and popular for water sports, picnicking and various other recreation activities. The Lake has an existing boat ramp, walking trail, parking area, fenced lawn area, barbeques and covered picnic areas. Access to the site is restricted to 6am to 10pm every day. The Lake Moondarra precinct provides huge potential for future recreation and tourism development for Mount Isa. Potential development opportunities that have been identified include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ House boats / hire boats ■ Small marina type facilities ■ Redevelopment of the existing Lions Youth Club as accommodation facilities ■ Accommodation development at or near Lake Moondarra e.g. exclusive cabins / tents ■ Weekend kiosk / canteen ■ Horse riding or quad bike tours around the lake ■ Indigenous tours incorporating bush food, local arts and cultural history of the region
Cloncurry Shire Council Area	
Project	Description
Signage and Interpretation Plan	<p>An opportunity exists for the Cloncurry Shire Council to implement a Signage and Interpretation Plan to create interest in and direct visitors to the towns attractions. Key sites include:</p> <p>Cloncurry Community Precinct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Library ■ Undercover community open space ■ Art Gallery ■ Conference Rooms <p>Cloncurry Cemeteries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cloncurry first Cemetery – access and information board ■ Chinese Cemetery – "Chinese Entrance" ■ Old General Cemetery – Memorial Board ■ Interpretive signage – brochure "Cemetery walk" <p>Cloncurry/Mary Kathleen Memorial Park Complex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rail ambulance and railway memorabilia display ■ Lookout–upgrade to provide more spectacular viewing points and global signpost ■ Interpretive signage for outdoor museum displays ■ Installing the Burke and Wills Plaque
Cloncurry Visitor Information Centre and Museum Redevelopment Upgrade	<p>The Cloncurry Visitor Information Centre and Museum is currently located within the Mary Kathleen Memorial Park vicinity. As well as this, the area comprises a BBQ area, playground, lookout, public toilets and ample parking. The infrastructure within the Mary Kathleen Memorial Park is outdated and needs upgrading to improve functionality and the visitor experience. The Visitor Information Centre in particular needs upgrading in order to meet the eligibility requirements to become an Accredited Visitor Information Centre. It is proposed that a new structure be built to host both the Visitor Information Centre and Museum for visitors and locals to discover Cloncurry's history and future.</p>
McKinlay Shire Council Area	
Project	Description
Julia Creek Dirt n Dust : Future Development	<p>The Dirt and Dust Festival is part of the fabric of the Julia Creek community and has become internationally renowned for its unique outback approach and characters. The council has secured tenure on the section of land, which is used as the main site for the festival. Resources are needed to implement a strategy plan that has been developed to secure the long term future of the festival and associated activities. In addition, a three phase approach to securing the long term viability of the festival was identified, investment is needed to secure the future of the event and implement the plan.</p>
Tourism Research Education Cultural Centre	<p>An opportunity exists in McKinlay Shire Council to promote and educate tourists on the natural and cultural heritage of Western Queensland. Through the development of a unique education facility based in Julia Creek that will cater for travellers such as fisherman, hunters, environmental groups, school groups and universities, the unique assets of this region will be preserved for future generations. The Tourism Research Education Cultural Centre will be an attraction for the region, increasing visitation and length of stay.</p> <p>A comprehensive business plan already exists for this project which holds this project in good stead to move quickly onto implementation.</p>

Richmond Shire Council Area	
Project	Description
Richmond Town Precinct Upgrade	Richmond town precinct upgrades to further enhance visitor experiences in the region include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Town Gateway Signage including Overlanders Way signage to raise the regional profile ■ Further promotion of the Lake Richmond Fishing Tournament ■ Explore opportunities for more activity on Lake Richmond
Kronosaurus Korner renovations	Located in the heart of Richmond, Kronosaurus Korner was designed to display local fossils from the Cretaceous Inland Sea that covered a large section of Queensland 120 million years ago. A plan for the renovation of the facility has been developed and it's ongoing implementation should be supported.
Lake Fred Tritton	Ongoing development and marketing of this facility should be supported, to help increase overnight visitation and enhance this point of difference for the town.
Flinders Shire Council Area	
Project	Description
Hughenden Town Precinct Upgrades	The town of Hughenden is a main stopping point for travellers on the Overlanders Way. To encourage visitors to disperse and increase their stay in town a number of key precinct upgrades need to be investigated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A launching pad for scenic flights over Porcupine Gorge ■ Linking walking tracks around town to the Robert Gray Park and Eco Walk along the Flinders River ■ Create a feature around the Federation Rotunda (Comet Windmills) in the main street (Brodie Street) ■ Investigate a future for the historic Grand Hotel ■ Investigate opportunities out of town such as woolsheds and farm stays ■ Development of a Recreational Lake within the vicinity of the Hughenden township ■ Town entry beautification ■ Install more public art in public places ■ Consideration of the removal of the historic Shearing Shed at Afton Downs to Hughenden town precinct ■ Hughenden Powerhouse development for tourism ■ Development of an Arts and Cultural Centre
Flinders Discovery Centre Master Plan	The Flinders Discovery Centre is an accredited Visitor Information Centre, which holds an array of visitor information on local attractions as well as regional and interstate holiday destinations. In order to ensure the continued success of this facility it is recommended that the Master Plan is reviewed, the interpretative signage on fossils and dinosaurs are completed, as well as installation of new displays and interpretation.
Fossicking Development	An opportunity exists for the Flinders region to benefit from growth in the fossicking market segment and develop a Gem Field Development Master Plan. This process would be in conjunction with property owner agreements as well as interpretation and development of fossicking sites throughout the region.
Development of the 4WD market segment	Undertake research, planning and implementation into the opportunity for Flinders to enhance the current 4WD tracks with interpretation and investigate other opportunities for 4WDing on private properties.
Development of Kooroorinya Nature Reserve	Kooroorinya Falls is a natural waterhole surrounded by high rock walls on one side and sandy, shaded banks on the other. Visitors can go swimming, fishing, birdwatching or just take a walk. There is a creek with plenty of water and spectacular falls during the wetter months. The Kooroorinya site offers limited camping grounds, cold showers and toilet facilities. There is an opportunity to further develop this Nature Reserve in order to highlight it as a major attraction for the region.
Investigation into public transport opportunities	There is a need to investigate an increase in a number of public transport options for tourists, including hire car, taxi and coach transfers to and within Flinders Shire Council.
Mount Walker Development Plan; required infrastructure and interpretation	Mount Walker is approximately 8km south of Hughenden and boasts six spectacular lookouts scanning the district over 360° and stands 478m above sea level. The roads into and within the Mount Walker precinct have limited accessibility due to steep inclines and numerous sections of unsealed roads. Interpretation and infrastructure at the site is limited and the implementation of new features would increase visitor satisfaction to the region. .



7.3 Central West Outback

Longreach Regional Council Area

Project	Description
Starlight's Lookout Interpretation	With the landscape of central Queensland being so flat it is quite remarkable to get an elevated perspective on it. Starlight's Lookout, near Longreach provides a great opportunity to view the surrounding landscapes. Developing a piece of public art that celebrates the legend of Captain Starlight and is visible from the lookout could enhance the experience.
Powerhouse Museum	Upgrade of the infrastructure and promotion of the Powerhouse Museum to link and complement the other attractions in the region.

Winton Regional Council Area

Project	Description
Waltzing Matilda Centre Improvements	Improvements to the Waltzing Matilda Centre including an upgrade of the 'Billabong', a 'Kids Precinct' for interactive displays and the development of murals depicting our history and the meaning of the Waltzing Matilda Centre.
Winton to Longreach Roadside Artwork	The drive from Winton to Longreach is approximately 179 kilometres and is flat and open country. The opportunity exists to provide innovative artwork at strategic locations along this vast drive to encourage drivers to better appreciate the surrounding landscapes and 'stop, revive and survive'. Inspiration can be drawn from the exhibition of 'Inside Australia' artwork in Western Australia.
Development of the 4WD market segment	Review of existing 4WD brochures and investigate the opportunity for a joint brochure with neighbouring shires. Undertake research, planning and implementation into the opportunity for Winton in leading commercial tag-along tours.
Accommodation Development	Investigate and facilitate low-cost group or dormitory accommodation in Winton including an increased occupancy allowance in Diamantina Gardens.

Barcaldine Regional Council Area

Project	Description
Muttaborra Artesian Spa Complex and Museum	Create a Business Plan and Partnership Opportunity Plan to support the ongoing development of the recently completed Muttaborra Artesian Spa Complex. There is currently a local committee raising funds to build a small museum to house the bones and artefacts of the Muttaborrasaurus and to tell the story through static interpretation.
Aramac Tramway Museum (short Rail Line)	In June 2003, the last rail motor to use the Aramac/Barcaldine line, RM28 (better known as 'Aunt Emma') was returned to Aramac Shire Council by road following an overhaul at the Ipswich Railway Workshops Museum. RM28 is still a static exhibition within the local museum; however there is a great opportunity for the rail motor to be used on a 2km tramway loop around the township for tours.

Crystal Trumpeters Upgrade	In 1988 as a Bicentennial Project, the town constructed the 'Crystal Trumpeters' in memory of the Biblical story where the Israelites marched around the walls of Jericho for six days then blew their trumpets on the seventh day and watched as the city walls collapsed. The crystals symbolise various moments in the Old Testament including the slavery in Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, the receiving of the Ten Commandments, the crossing of the River Jordan and the arrival in the Promised Land. The Crystal Trumpeters monument needs upgrading including the engagement of an expert to realign the crystals on the attraction.
Man Made Attraction Upgrades	There are many man made attractions in the Barcaldine Regional Council Area which require upgrading in the area of displays and maintenance. Attractions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dr Arratta Museum, Cassimatis Store and Cottage Complex ■ Alpha Art Gallery ■ Alpha Pioneer Museum Extension
Natural Attraction Upgrades	There are many natural attractions in the Barcaldine Regional Council Area which require upgrading in the area of interpretation and facilities. Attractions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Redbank Park Upgrade (Jericho) ■ Lagoon Creek Water Park (Barcaldine)
Desert Uplands Interpretive Centre	Over many years, the Barcaldine Regional Council has gathered a collection of valuable botanical material and research of the Desert uplands bioregion, and it is proposed that these be displayed in a 'Desert Uplands Interpretive Centre'.
Blackall-Tambo Regional Council Area	
Project	Description
Blackall Aquatic Centre Mineral Spa Expansion	Support for the expansion of the Blackall Aquatic Centre Mineral Spa including a 15m spa facility, for day spa experiences. The potential for accommodation associated with the spa experience should also be investigated.
Jackie Howe story interpretive upgrade	Further development and upgrade of the Jackie Howe story and interpretation. The development of stronger linkages with the Blackall Woolscour is also required.

7.4 South West Outback

Murweh Shire Council Area	
Project	Description
Guided tours and precinct upgrades	Upgrades to the Charleville town precinct for tourism development should be investigated including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expansion of outback native timber walk to include guided tours of the Native Outback Trees that can be offered year round ■ Promotion of the WWI and WWII stories including daily guided convoy tours within a 50km radius of town which is rich in history and machinery ■ Guided Town and Heritage Trail taxi tours that include the history of fire and floods in the surrounding area
Regional Itineraries	Continue to develop and improve visitor itineraries incorporating new experiences, tourism products and packages to increase visitation in the low season.
Tregole and Chesterton National Park tourism opportunities	Investigation of the tourism potential of upgrading facilities at both Tregole and Chesterton National Park to improve visitor services, walking experiences and interpretation of the surrounding landscape.
Home of the Natural Sciences Trail	Development of a regional 'Home of the Natural Sciences Trail' through the four South West Region shires. The development of signage, collateral, promotional CDs will be required.
Quilpie Shire Council Area	
Project	Description
Hell Hole Gorge Access	Investigate appropriate access routes to Hell Hole Gorge, located North of Adavale, to open up future ecotourism development opportunities for the site and surrounding region.
River Bank Public Access	Convert freehold land on the Bulloo river bank into public access, and upgrade camping and boating facilities for visitor use.

Expansion of the Pinkilla Opal field near Quilpie	Pinkilla opal field is an old mine, filled and flattened, which now has a great deal of opal bearing rock lying around waiting to be picked up. An opportunity exists for the Flinders region to benefit from growth in the fossicking market and develop a Gem Field Development Master Plan. This project would be in conjunction with property owner agreements as well as interpretation and development of fossicking sites throughout the region.
Upgrade of the iconic Quilpie Hotel Motel	There is a great opportunity for the iconic Quilpie Hotel Motel to be upgraded and developed into a boutique accommodation establishment reflecting the era of the 1920's.

Bulloo Shire Council Area

Project	Description
Facilities Upgrade	Provide toilet facilities at various spots throughout the region, e.g. Lake Bindegolly National Park; near Cooper Creek near the Naccowlah Gas Fields enroute to Innamincka. Incorporate one set of these facilities with a Lookout at the Grey Range.
National Park Upgrades	Required upgrades and development in Lake Bindegolly and Currawinya National Park include road access, interpretative signage, showers and amenities.
VIC and Interpretive Centre	Development of the corner block opposite the motel (council land) for a purpose built Visitor Information and Interpretive Centre focussed on interpreting explorer's history. Development should include an internet café, gift shop and coffee shop.
Bird Hide Project – Lake Bindegolly	Lake Bindegolly National Park currently contains a walking track, which offers popular bird watching opportunities that will be enhanced by the development of bird hides and associated infrastructure including interpretation. This infrastructure development project will enhance the visitor experience to Lake Bindegolly and Bulloo Shire Council

Paroo Shire Council Area

Project	Description
Cunnamulla Fella Centre Expansion	Cunnamulla Fella Centre expansion and upgrade including improving the Artesian Water Story and building a small theatrette and film facility. The enhancement of the Heritage Museum experience is also important through ongoing training of staff and volunteers in recording oral histories, both pre-European and post-European, and interpreting and presenting exhibition displays.
Warrego River Experiences	Improve accessibility to and experiences along the Warrego River, including extension of the Warrego River Walk (Stage 2) which will include bush regeneration activities and improved directional and interpretive signage. Support for commercial operators and the development of commissionable product and experiences on the Warrego River is also required.
Cunnamulla Precinct Upgrade	Further upgrades to the Cunnamulla precinct including development of the cultural precinct and interpretation of the natural and cultural features of the region. This could include the development of the boiling mud springs and interpretive signage and support infrastructure.
Marketing Themes	Promote the following themes in marketing campaigns and activities – Natural Sciences (eg. mud springs), Artesian Water, Organics, Agribusiness, Culture (Indigenous and Pastoral themes) and Bird life (eg. Bowra Sanctuary, 16 kilometres from Cunnamulla).
Caravan and Camping Infrastructure	Implementation of the recommendations contained within the Paroo Caravan and Camping Strategy for investment in new infrastructure and facilities.



7.5 Far West Outback

Diamantina Shire Council Area

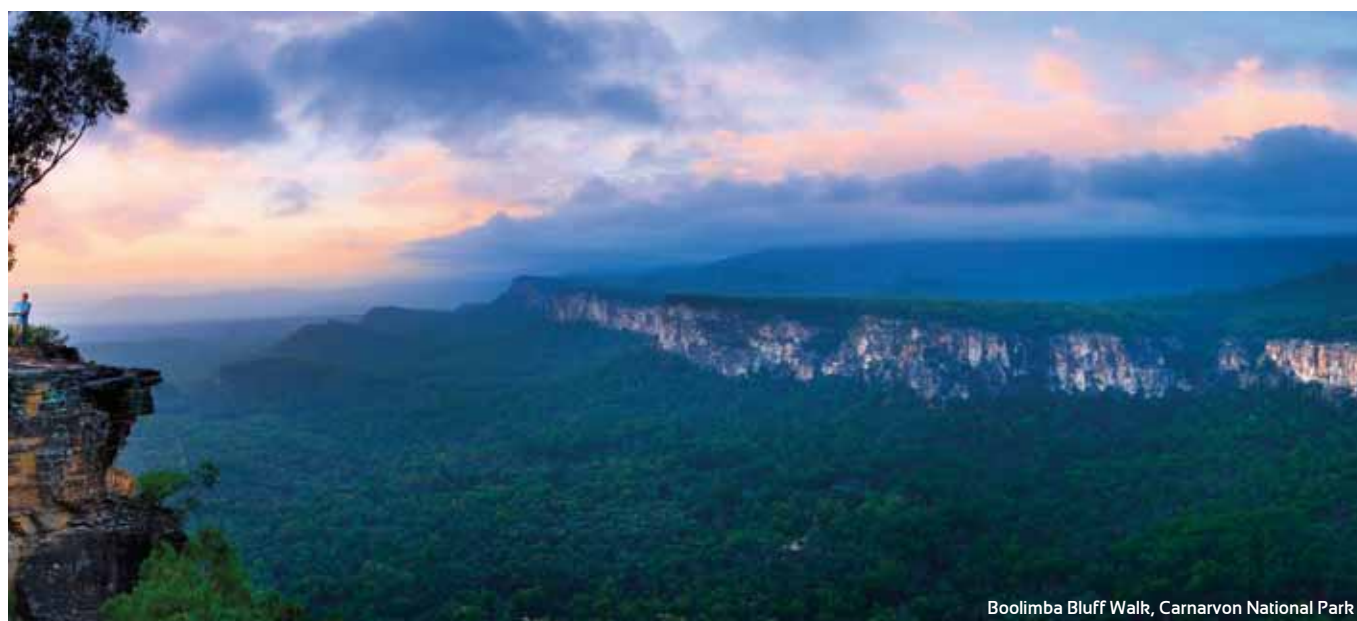
Project	Description
Dingo Caves Feasibility Study and Development	The Dingo Caves are located 16km north of Birdsville, offering visitors a spectacular view of the surrounding countryside including the rare desert Waddi Trees. Sunsets from atop the cave are an ideal spot for pre-dinner champagne and nibbles. Guests are then able to take a short stroll to the bottom of the caves for a spectacular outback dinner under the stars. There is currently no infrastructure at the site and a feasibility study should be done to determine the potential of the site to become a significant tourist attraction for the Diamantina Shire Council.
Remote Accommodation and Camping Feasibility Study	Prepare a Business Case and Feasibility Study for remote area camping and accommodation sites in the Far West including key National Parks (e.g. Diamantina Lakes National Park).
Signage and Interpretation Plan	Prepare a Signage and Interpretation Plan for directional and roadside interpretative signage in the Diamantina Shire.
Community Energy Innovation	Building on the success of the Windorah Solar project, prepare a business case for the development of sustainable energy production for remote communities in the Far West (e.g. Urandangi)

Boulia Shire Council Area

Project	Description
Min Min Outdoor Attraction	Prepare a feasibility study for the expansion of the Min Min Lights story to incorporate the development of a night show to bring the Min Min story to life and outdoors. This could be done through light projection on key town structures including the water tower and sports ground building.
Town precinct upgrades	Interpretative walk highlighting nature and Indigenous themes through town and across the Burke River. Extending the Visitor Centre with an Art Gallery space and establish better linkages with the Stone House Museum.
Dinosaur Triangle Extension	Prepare a plan to extend the Dinosaur Triangle (Richmond, Winton, Hughenden) to Boulia through interpretation, events and possibly signage and promotion

Barcoo Shire Council Area

Project	Description
Nature-based and National Park tourism opportunities	Work in partnership with Queensland Parks and Wildlife to identify emerging parks with potential to take peak demand load off existing popular sites and to investigate the tourism potential of key regional attractions including Welford and Hell Hole Gorge National Parks and Lake Yamma Yamma (Mackillop). It is vital that the sites be identified in partnership and that capital investment required in site hardening (e.g. parking, campsites) are completed before marketing and media activity commences.



Boolimba Bluff Walk, Carnarvon National Park



7.6 Western Downs

Balonne Shire Council Area	
Project	Description
Indigenous Cultural Centre	Development of an Indigenous Cultural Centre focused on interpreting the stories and culture of the four Aboriginal tribes that live in the surrounding area.
Dirranbandi Rail and River Plan	The planned Dirranbandi Rail and River Precinct project, situated on the main street, includes a gallery, museum display and garden installation. Located on the river, it will connect with a planned bridge, tunnel and pathways, the Rail and River Levee bank Walk, a standalone Indigenous museum, a language centre and riverside camping options.
St George self drive tour	Development of a St George self drive tour which can provide a linkage between surrounding shires. The self drive tour could be developed as a heritage trail and be promoted by the VIC to tour with bus groups.
Local Produce	Further leveraging and promoting of local produce, in particular fruit and vegetables produced from properties like Moonrocks. Alignment with the region-wide Paddock to Plate Strategy recommended in the TOP should be ensured.
River Cruise	The current proposal for a Balonne river cruise should be further investigated to identify potential hazards and long term feasibility. Further investigation and development of weekend visitor experiences and products is required with cross-promotion between operators.
Signage	Improved signage in town is required to direct visitors to the Balonne River. Development of a lookout at the river should also be investigated.
Goondiwindi Regional Council Area	
Project	Description
Campground Audit and Upgrades	Undertake an audit of all existing campgrounds and boat ramps on Local Government reserves to assess and review road conditions and potential visitor safety hazards. This is particularly important in assessing access safety during wet weather. Facility upgrades for many of the campgrounds is also required and there is an opportunity to implement leading sustainability initiatives in the upgrades (e.g. solar powered lights/hot water/BBQs, environmentally friendly toilets etc). The planting of native flowering trees and native bush tucker plants to encourage wildlife also provides the opportunity for interpretation of the landscape.
Night Boat Cruise	Identification of tourism development opportunities to extend visitor stay and encourage visitors to stay overnight. The opportunity for a night boat cruise or late afternoon / early morning activities should be investigated.
Landscape Interpretation	Development of signage and interpretation of wetland walking trails in Goondiwindi Natural Heritage Water Park is required to add value to the visitor experience and encourage exploration of the surrounding landscape. Opportunities for visitor experiences on the river should also be encouraged (e.g. local canoe clubs offering hire services).

Designated Group Touring Routes	There is an opportunity to increase the number of motor groups and clubs travelling through the region eg. Goondiwindi to Texas and touring bikes travelling through Aratula on a weekend. The development of designated touring routes for motor groups is required with relevant signage and facilities.
Tourist Drive Loops	Development of tourist drive loops, surrounding the region is required to further enhance the experience of the self-drive market and encourage an increased length of stay. The drive loops could be developed as themed routes and be adopted as a whole-of-region approach across the Western Downs.
Customs House Museum Refurbishment	The Customs House Museum is a popular local attraction, however it requires refurbishment and refreshment of the facilities to make the site more user friendly. Packaging options with other tourism products and attractions is required to further raise awareness of the museum.
Rabbit Factory	The Rabbit Factory in Texas is a unique attraction that has the potential to be a key drawcard for the region. The Rabbit Factory Committee is currently overseeing a \$1million infrastructure upgrade including development of a night film facility. Full support for further upgrades and promotion of this facility is required.
Events Infrastructure	Development of events related infrastructure is required to meet the needs of existing local and regional events such as Hell of the West and the Texas Country Roundup. In particular there is currently an undersupply of accommodation available for these events.

Maranoa Regional Council Area

Project	Description
Romavilla Winery	As the oldest winery in Queensland, the Romavilla Winery has the opportunity to better interpret and present a unique visitor experience for its customers. There is a need to reinvigorate the existing products and develop new interpretation of the experience. The opportunity for future investment in a cafe / dining experience and tourism accommodation on-site has also been identified.
Great Artesian Spa Upgrade	Located at the eastern entrance to Mitchell in the aquatic centre, the Great Artesian Spa comprises two large pools of artesian water. One spa has naturally heated waters from the Great Artesian Basin which is maintained at a comfortable temperature designed to relax tired muscles, ease tension and revitalize both body and mind. The other pool is designed for those who prefer a cooler experience. The Great Artesian Spa is one of the region's premier tourist attractions, bringing many economic benefits to the Mitchell and wider Maranoa community. The infrastructure at the site is aging and requires renewing in order to ensure the facility is more energy efficient, easier to maintain and more attractive to tourists. New pool shells, electrics, heating and filtration systems are required as part of the Great Artesian Spa upgrade.
Surat Cobb and Co Changing Station Museum upgrade	Surat is historically the site of a Cobb and Co Changing Station. The Surat community has, with much dedication, preserved this precious remnant of their history and have used the complex as a great attraction, which also houses the Surat on Balonne Gallery. Today, the Cobb and Co Changing Station is a reason for visitors to stop and extend their stay in the region. While the community has done all they can to preserve the complex, infrastructure upgrades are needed to meet visitor expectations and for the history to be conserved for future generations. A plan needs to be developed and implemented to upgrade the Surat Cobb and Co Changing Station.



Birdsville

Energy Sector VFR Packages	Development of a partnership with Qantas Link and local industry to develop family holiday packages out into the region for families of energy sector workers.
Conference packages	Development of local partnerships to establish and market conferencing packages for the business and conference market.
Regional drive trails	Further development of the self drive loop concept to provide a range of regional drive trails across the Maranoa Region including the Natural Sciences Loop. More detailed mapping and interpretive signage is required.
Sale Yard Tours	Development of Roma sale yard tours for visitors to experience the largest sale yards in southern hemisphere. The development of a visitor interpretive area including a video reel of the sale yards will be important for visitors who are in town when it is not a sale day. Interpretation of the historical and current cattle industry as well as development of interactive activities and photo opportunities for children's entertainment should be considered.
Indigenous Interpretive Tours	Development of indigenous interpretive tours (exclusive experience) in Injune and base camp lagoons at Carnarvon Gorge.
Bonus Downs Shearing Shed Development	The award winning farm stay retreat, Bonus Downs, has the opportunity to include an extra attraction onto their property to improve the visitor experience for it's customers. The conservation of the Bonus Downs 42 stand shearing shed will ensure the future of an important local heritage iconic building. Restoration work, in the form of restumping is need for the shearing shed.
Western Downs Regional Council Area	
Project	Description
Miles/Dogwood Public Art Project	Implementation of the recommendations of the Dogwood Public Art Opportunities Report developed in 2008 is needed. This report identified possible spaces and themes of interest to the community for public art and sculptural pieces. The Dogwood Public Art Project is envisaged as a staged project with four sculptural concepts identified for development as part of Stage One. Further public consultation regarding these concepts is required before commissioning of works.
Miles Town Entrances Beautification	Miles sits on the crossroads of the Leichhardt and Warrego Highways and as such is a stopping point for both transport and travellers. Each entrance has its own unique attraction which could be further enhanced through landscaping and beautification of their surrounds. A Concept Master Plan should be developed for each entrance and funding secured for development works.
Chinchilla Community and Tourist Complex	The proposed Chinchilla Community and Tourist Complex will cater not only for leisure and business visitors to the region but new residents and the community including a Visitor Information Centre, interactive historic display area, business and community facilities and art workshops. Initial concept development, design drawings and stakeholder consultation has already been undertaken for the proposed development however a full Feasibility Study and Business Plan is now required to determine key next steps in implementing the project.
Birding Trails Development	Further development and leveraging of the Brigalow Birds Project for the Western Downs Regional Council Area. Development of educational experiences and linkages between birding trails across the region is required.
Tara Caravan Park Development	The existing Tara Caravan park has limited sites for visitors with local residents as the main occupancy. Private investment in the development of an additional caravan park in Tara targeted at visitors to the town is required. The Tara Lagoon Parklands Caravan Site requires the sealing and supply of power to the area.
Regional Pull Over Areas	Development of pull over areas for the Western Downs region containing facilities such as environmental toilets, showers, rain water tank, play area, bbq and solar lighting. Pull over areas can range on the type of facilities provided however a number of key sites should provide a full suite of facilities for visitor use.
Tara 'Ants Nest' Visitor Centre	Development of a multifunction visitor information and community facility next to the lagoon to become the home of visitor information in Tara. This centre would house the VIC, an art gallery (workshop rooms) and opportunity for retail sales of local produce and art and craft. Located in the centre of an emerging area with a network of roads leading out to the region's attractions.

Tara Tourist Information Boards	Development of a range of noticeboards for tourist information and maps within the Tara region. Potential sites include Tara Lagoon Parklands, Tara Grevillea Park, The Gums Store, Leo Gordon Apex Park Meandarra, End of the Line Glenmorgan, Westmar Toilets, Flinton, Moonie Rural Transaction Centre.
Miles Historical Village Upgrade	Miles Historical Village and Museum has been operating since 1971 and has over 30 buildings and countless displays featuring authentic and original buildings from the 19th Century as well as collections of significance. Upgrading and redevelopment of this precinct to incorporate improved interpretation and visitor experiences is required to ensure the continued success of this tourism attraction. Opportunities could also include the development of a night-time Ghost Tour through the Gaol to encourage extended stays in the region.
Artesian Basin Centre Development	An existing feature of the Miles District Historical Village and Museum is the Artesian Basin Display. The building which houses this display is deteriorating and requires major maintenance and upgrades. Development of a Concept Master Plan for the renovation and extension of the Artesian Basin Display to become an Artesian Basin and Geology Centre is required.
Myall Creek Parklands Redevelopment	Myall Creek Parklands are one of the major natural assets for the Dalby Region. The need for redevelopment of the facilities, attractions and access for Myall Creek and the surrounding area has been identified due to user group clashes, vandalism and the need for improved scenic amenity and walkway / cycleway linkages. Further enhancement of the Myall Creek Parklands area would include the redevelopment and widening of the walkways, development of interpretation of the region's culture and history, public artwork, lighting and pathway linkages to the main street.
Warrego Highway Upgrade	The Warrego Highway is the major road link between Toowoomba and Dalby. This road is used primarily as a freight link for industry between the Western Downs and the regional centre of Toowoomba. This road already experiences above capacity traffic and clashes between freight, resident and visitor traffic. The Surat Energy Basin development will continue to increase the amount of traffic utilising this highway. The need for an upgrade to the Warrego Highway to include overtaking lanes from Toowoomba to Dalby is evident.
Mobile Events Infrastructure	Purchase of additional mobile events infrastructure by Council to support and attract additional local and regionally significant events for the area. Infrastructure could include amenities, a Public Address (PA) system, lighting, seating, and small stages. The purchase of additional events infrastructure will allow for the leveraging and expansion of existing events and the development and attraction of new events.



Lawn Hill



Julia Creek

8 Implementation

To enable the Outback, Gulf and Western Downs Region's vision for tourism product investment and infrastructure to be realised in an effective and timely manner, a number of implementation mechanisms are necessary. Outback Queensland Tourism Association (OQTA), Southern Queensland Country Tourism (SQCT), Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) and Savannah Way Limited (SWL) working in partnership with Tourism Queensland, the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and Local Governments, will be the key influencers in prioritising and advocating the implementation of the TOP.

This plan has been developed for the benefit of Local, State and Federal Government agencies, regional economic development agencies, regional and local tourism organisations, investors and developers and tourism industry operators. It is envisaged that this document can proactively assist with securing future funds via government grants, sponsorships and business partnerships to ensure that the priority projects become a reality for the Outback Gulf and Western Downs Region.

Key Research Sites

www.tq.com.au

www.queenslandholidays.com.au

www.toowoombaholidays.info

www.gulf-savannah.com.au

www.cairnsgreatbarrierreef.org.au

www.business.qld.gov.au/tourism

www.qtic.com.au

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