

North Burnett

Tourism Strategy



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1 Introduction

Tourism Queensland and Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism were commissioned by the Department of Employment Economic Development and Innovation and the North Burnett Regional Council to develop a Tourism Strategy for the North Burnett region. The North Burnett Tourism Strategy ('Strategy') reviews the tourism potential of the region based on a realistic assessment of tourist demand and the region's visitor attractions. The Strategy provides a sound basis for identifying short to medium term tourism projects to guide the sustainable development of tourism in the region.

The Strategy has been developed in recognition of the recommendations of the recently released Bundaberg – Fraser Coast Tourism Opportunity Plan (TOP) which identified a number of catalyst and support tourism projects for the North Burnett region. The TOP and this Strategy are tourism specific documents whose recommendations must be considered within a broader planning context that includes the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2007-2026 and the North Burnett Regional Council's Corporate Plan, Economic Development Plan and Planning Scheme.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Strategy is to provide a strong and united tourism direction and identify the associated actions required to drive the sustainable development of tourism in the North Burnett region.

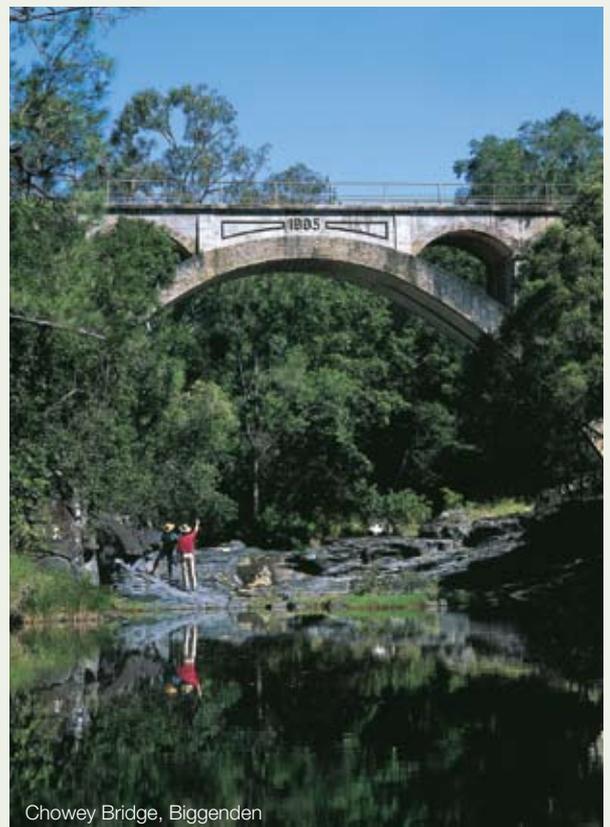
Among other things, the Strategy aims to:

- Identify new and upgraded tourism product that meets future visitor expectations and demand;
- Identify infrastructure requirements to support the ongoing sustainable development of tourism in the region; and
- Provide a focal document for the development of tourism in the region.

The Strategy does not purport to canvass all possible projects for the region. Instead, it focuses on those projects which have been identified as having the capacity to attract broad stakeholder support, which are more likely to succeed and which are likely to assist in realising the tourism vision for the region.

This Strategy draws on strengthening existing, and where appropriate, creating new tourism nodes and regional product, which will help extend visitor length of stay, increase expenditure and offer greater visitor dispersal throughout the region.

The North Burnett is a developing tourism region and as such needs to focus on strengthening the fundamentals in product development, partnerships and capacity building. This approach will provide a sound basis for realising the full potential of the existing tourist trade which in turn will provide a platform for possible future expansion into new markets. To this end, the Strategy has purposely not attempted to identify one or two high profile projects for the region but provide a set of 'catalyst' and support projects across the region that will underpin the long term sustainable development of tourism in the North Burnett region.



Chowey Bridge, Biggenden

1.2 Process

Tourism Queensland working in partnership with Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism has delivered this project in two stages:

Part A – Desktop Audit

Part A involved a desktop audit of existing tourism plans and reports, and regional consultation meetings with key stakeholders to identify:

- existing and proposed tourism product in the North Burnett and adjacent regions (ready, near ready and realistic future)
- existing and potential tourism segments and markets
- potential challenges and opportunities for tourism development in the region
- gaps in tourism services and products in the region

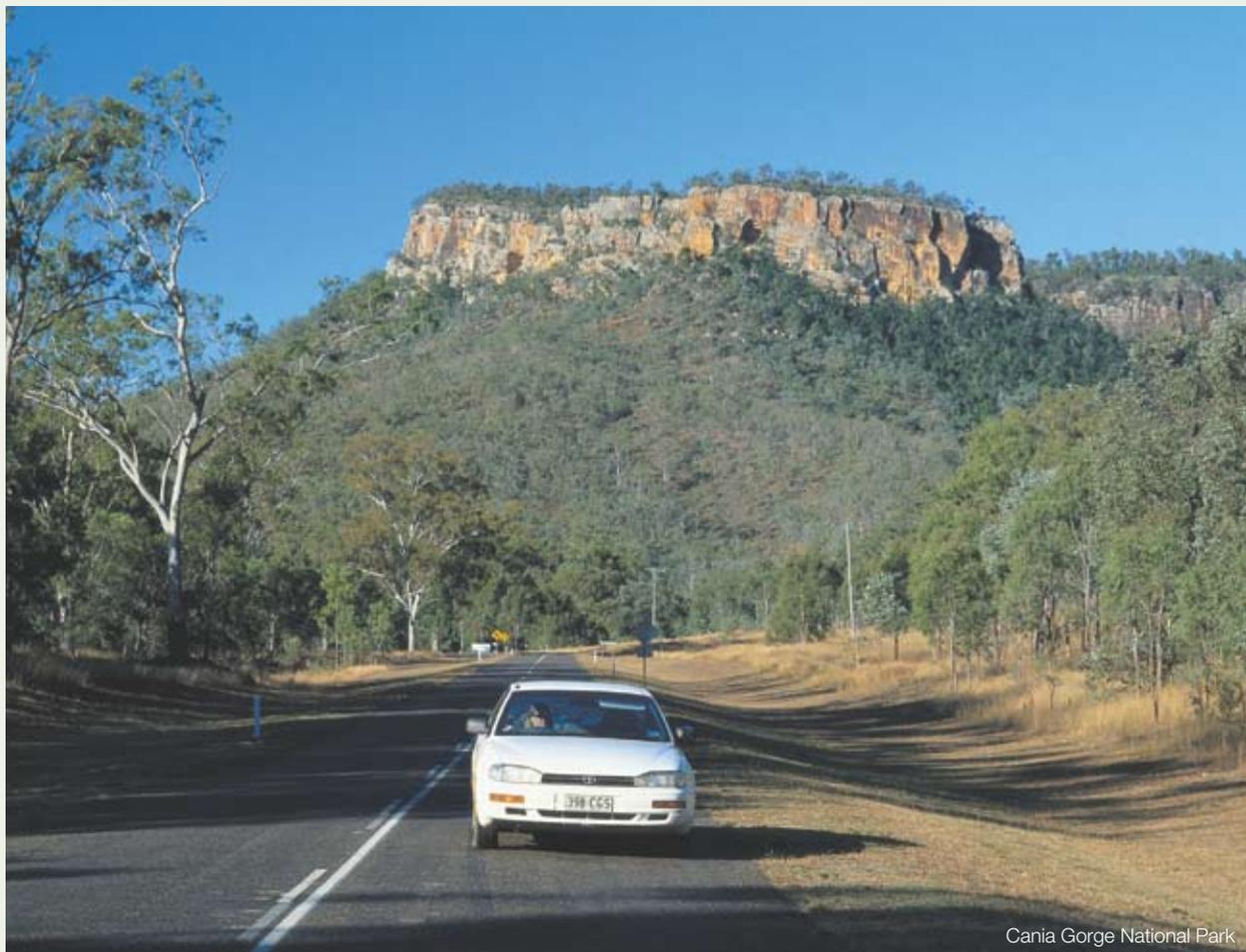
Documents identified and reviewed during Part A are listed in Appendix 2.

An Industry Product Review Team (refer Appendix 4) was established to undertake an in-the-field review of the region and consult with key regional stakeholders. The Industry Product Review Team included selected industry representatives from outside the region with hands-on tourism business experience providing objective specialist input on tourism accommodation, tour and attraction

product ideas and industry development issues. The on-site consultation included face to face interviews with over 50 regional stakeholders, including tourism bodies, operators, local council, and key community stakeholders (refer Appendix 3), to identify a range of key issues to be considered and addressed to progress sustainable tourism development and resource management in the area.

Part B – North Burnett Tourism Strategy

Part B involved the development of this Strategy for the North Burnett region that identifies key, short to medium-term initiatives that can be used as a realistic foundation for future tourism development.



Cania Gorge National Park

2 Overview

2.1 Situation Analysis

The North Burnett region is located approximately four hours drive north of Brisbane and one hour west of Bundaberg and includes the six main townships of Biggenden, Eidsvold, Gayndah, Monto, Mount Perry and Mundubbera. The area services around 25 villages and farming catchments and is home to one of the leading citrus producing regions in Australia (refer Map 1).

The potential for rural and nature-based tourism to play a more prominent role in the future of the region should be realised, capitalising on the increasing flow of visitors along the 'Country Way' A3 Burnett Highway that bisects the North Burnett region. The highway provides opportunities for tourists to travel freely through the region while offering a number of side trips and attractions along the way.

The region has a large number of national parks, state forests, rivers and dams, which are a major component of the region's existing tourist appeal. Cania Gorge and Auburn River National Parks are two such local attractions, as are Lakes Wuruma and Cania. The development of Paradise Dam and Mingo Crossing has prompted a growth in visitation to the region. However, with the right style and types of development, these areas could play an even more critical role in helping to realise the region's vision as a rural and nature-based tourism destination.

The North Burnett's current rural industries are a powerful asset that could provide the opportunity for tourist related activities to be developed. New products such as working cattle property tours, farm stays, attendance at cattle sales and farm gate sales of local produce could be developed to offer new experiences and broaden the tourism appeal of the region.

Recent Local Government amalgamations resulting in the formation of the North Burnett Regional Council have created opportunities for the region to be more united in its approach to tourism planning, development, management and marketing and the associated benefits which can flow from improved coordination.

2.2 Target Markets

Whereas detailed visitor statistics for the North Burnett region are not readily available the greater Bundaberg and North Burnett tourism region received approx 562,000 visitors to the year ending September 2009. Domestic visitors accounted for 511,000 visitors with an average length of stay of 3.7 nights. International visitors accounted for 51,000 visitors with an average length of stay of 12.3 nights. Based on feedback from regional stakeholders in the North Burnett region it is estimated that the North Burnett received in the order of 100,000 of these visitors.

To ensure the North Burnett region is better able to meet the needs of current and potential visitors it will be essential that the region implements mechanisms to monitor and track visitor numbers and perceptions throughout the region so as to be able to better analyse visitor needs and trends on an ongoing basis.

Traditional methods of 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. This approach can make marketing, advertising and product development a hit or miss proposition when it comes to achieving resonance within consumer groupings. It is more productive to understand the consumers' needs and wants, thus maximising the impact of the marketing dollar, communicating more effectively with the consumer and better focussing product development activities. Tourism Queensland has adopted a segmentation approach for both Domestic and International Visitors. Further information outlining consumer segmentation is located on Tourism Queensland's website www.tq.com.au.

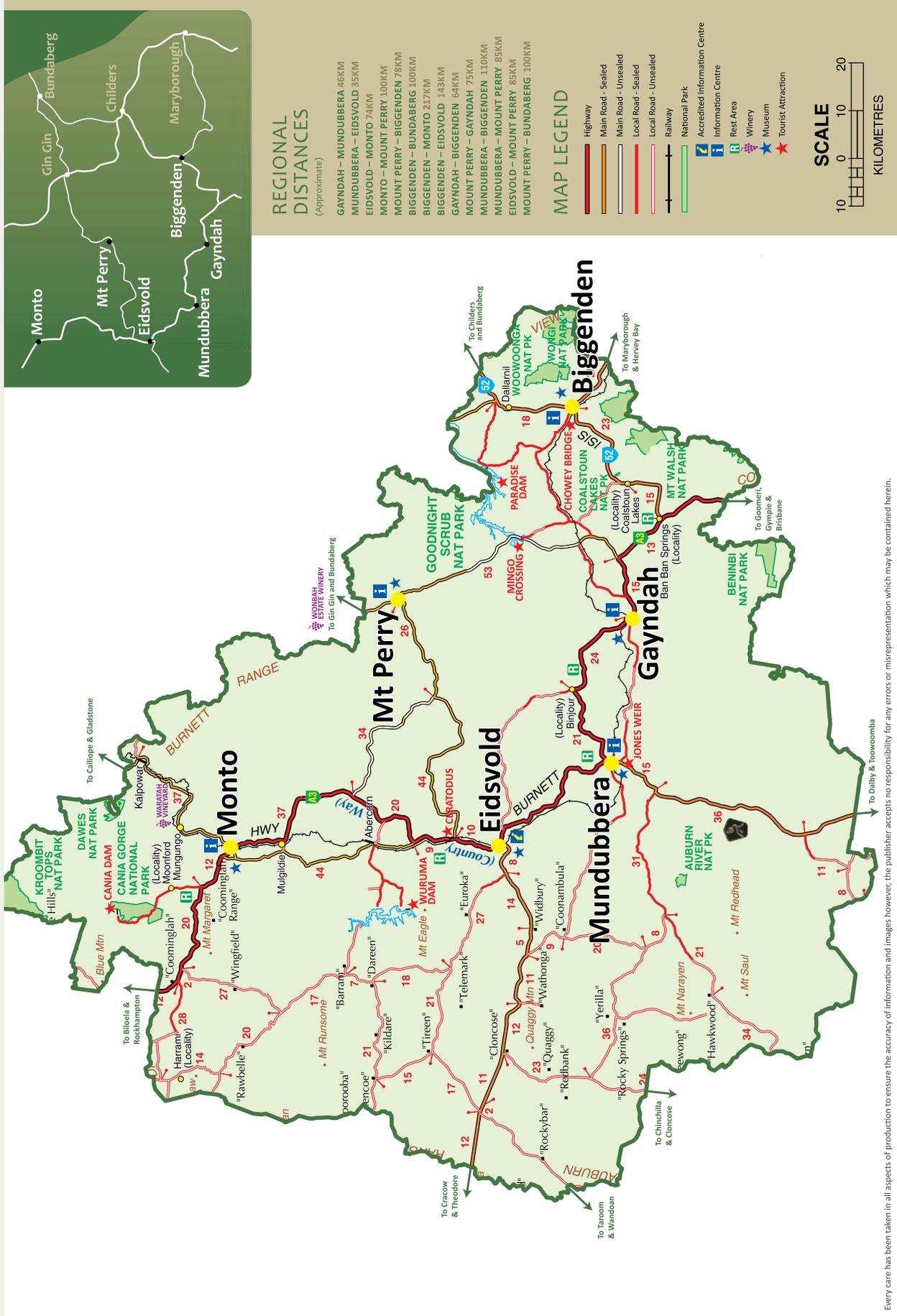
The Domestic Tourism Market

The Primary Target markets for the North Burnett Region are 'Connectors' from Brisbane, Regional Queensland and Northern New South Wales.

Attributes of the Connector segment include:

- Connectors 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.

Map 1 – North Burnett Region



Every care has been taken in all aspects of production to ensure the accuracy of information and images however, the publisher accepts no responsibility for any errors or misrepresentation which may be contained herein.

- It's about what is real and what's important.
- Connectors are more likely than other segments to drive to the holiday destination, considering the journey to be part of the experience.
- They enjoy the freedom to explore at their own pace and time, distancing themselves from everyday routine
- Connectors are interested in natural attractions, natural water access and nature based activities
- They enjoy historical and local heritage experiences
- They want to sample locally grown Australian produce

The North Burnett's nature, rural and water based attributes means it is well placed to capitalise on the needs of the Connector segment through further development of nature based activities, fishing, culinary trails, farmers markets and heritage experiences.

Secondary Target markets for the North Burnett are 'Active Explorers' from New South Wales and Victoria.

Attributes of the Active Explorer segment include:

- Active Explorers look for physical activity and love to take part in adventure activities such as bushwalking and horse-riding
- Active Explorers, of all segments, are most likely to visit multiple locations during a holiday, likely to drive and will take a caravan
- They 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

It is considered that boutique farm stay facilities where visitors can experience horse-riding, 4WDing, quad biking and farm based adventure represent the best potential to tap into the Active Explorer segment of the domestic market.

The International Tourism Market

Key Target Markets for the region are 'Experience Seekers' from the United Kingdom, Central Europe and Korea.

Attributes of Experience Seekers include: (further information on Experience Seekers can be located at Tourism Australia's website www.tourism.australia.com)

- Experience Seekers tend to stay longer in Australia and therefore have the potential to spend more
- They are experienced travellers who are often on their second visit to Australia
- Experience Seekers love to get off the beaten track and therefore more likely to disperse throughout the region experiencing the different natural landscapes
- The unique Australian culture is a stark contrast to their own so will immerse themselves in local culture, people and food

It is considered that the nature, rural, adventure and culinary attractions and experiences developed for the domestic market will provide a sound basis for tapping into the International market. Of particular interest to the North Burnett region is the 'Youth Traveler' who holds a working holiday visa (WHV). In 2008-2009 187,696 WHVs were granted to International visitors, an increase of 22% against the previous year¹. There is an existing number of working holiday visitors engaged in seasonal farm work within the North Burnett region. Opportunities to develop further nature based and adventure based activities that promote dispersal and increased length of stay should be explored for this market.

A3 Burnett Highway

The 'Country Way' or A3 Burnett Highway which bisects the North Burnett has played a major role in identifying the target markets for the North Burnett region. When marketing the unique experiences on offer within the North Burnett region, whether targeted to the Connector or Active Explorer domestically or to the International Experience Seeker, the 'Country Way' provides direct access, linkage and dispersal to connecting routes throughout the region. As future development of tourism product and experiences are realised, a re-focus on marketing experiences along the 'Country Way' should be considered.



North Burnett Touring

¹ Tourism Australia website www.tourism.australia.com

3 Tourism Vision

A regional tourism vision provides a clear direction and focus for sustainable tourism development and the platform from which to progress new tourism opportunities, infrastructure upgrades, industry development needs and marketing activities.

The North Burnett Region as a tourist destination is characterised by the statement;

North Burnett – Naturally Beautiful

with an associated vision that states:

The North Burnett is a vibrant tourism destination providing visitors with a unique tourism lifestyle and nature based experience in close proximity to the Bundaberg, Gladstone and Fraser Coast South Burnett regions.

The central themes of this vision for the North Burnett are 'nature-based experiences' and 'lifestyle' and the following are considered to be the key elements that populate these themes:

- the natural attributes of the region with its rolling rural landscapes, striking volcanic peaks and gorges and the variety of vegetation types and associated wildlife;
- the range of spectacular man-made water bodies in the region which both complement and contrast with the natural landscape;
- the key focus of 'water' with the Burnett River acting as a major defining link through the region and the importance of water for agricultural, grazing, recreation and fishing on dams and the Indigenous cultural heritage links to water;
- the small but spectacular National Parks including Cania Gorge, Auburn River, Mt Walsh and Goodnight Scrub;
- the broad variety of established agricultural and pastoral activities in the region serving as an important food bowl for Queensland and beyond;
- the character and charm of the six main towns in the region; and
- the unusually high propensity of seasonal workers and their economic, social and cultural impacts

Together these elements serve to provide a strong nature-based tourism focus for the region with the added elements of rural-based activities, country lifestyle and produce.

To maximise the tourism potential of these elements and for the region to become identified as a competitive rural and nature-based destination for visitors, it will be necessary to:

- Identify and develop a sense of uniqueness, highlighting the region's 'points-of-difference' that stand it apart from other country and hinterland areas;
- Promote and support the development of new and enhanced tourism opportunities that build on the region's attributes, character and uniqueness;
- Ensure the built environment is upgraded and enhanced to match the quality of the region's natural environment and rural character;
- Support the development and upgrading of regional infrastructure that underpins sustainable tourism growth, in particular roads, signage, boat ramps, trails and lookouts;
- Address the shortage of accommodation styles in the region that match current and potential visitor markets in order that existing and proposed tourism experiences can be appreciated by more visitors staying longer and spending more; and
- Educate tourism operators and the wider community of the important role that tourism plays in supporting regional economic, environmental, social and cultural development and the key role 'everyone' in the community plays in providing a welcoming and authentic Queensland country experience to visitors.

4 Catalyst Tourism Projects

It is considered that further development of tourism in the North Burnett would benefit from focusing activities and energies on the following six key tourism precincts based around the region's main towns and their environs (refer Map 2). This recognises the long established and unique characteristics of each of the towns and the important roles they have played in shaping the social, cultural, economic and environmental development of the region.

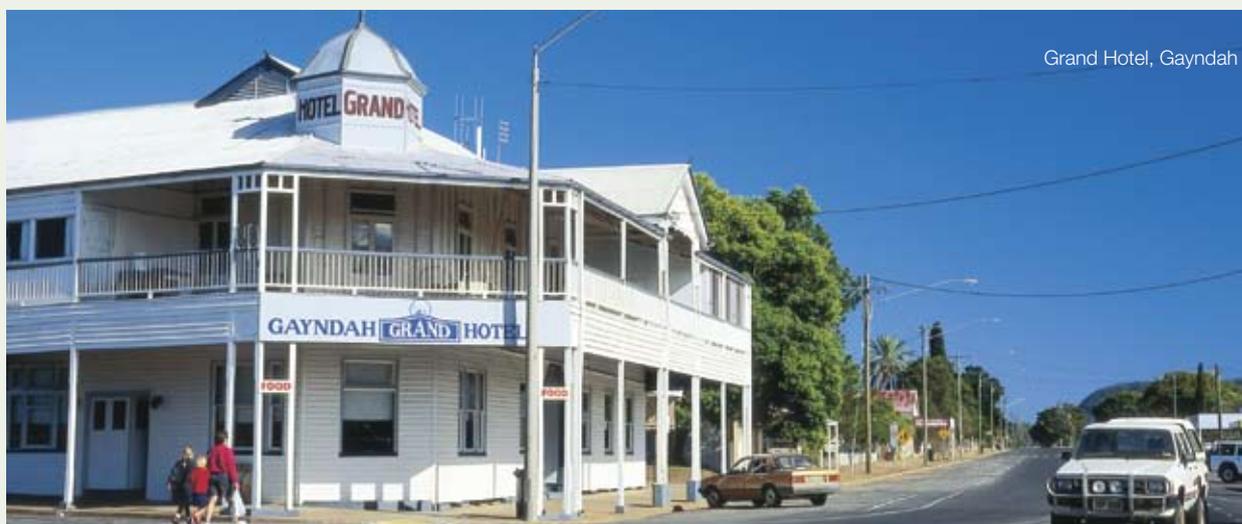
A number of catalyst projects have been identified for each of the six town precincts across the region. These projects are recommended on the basis that they:

- reflect the character and nature of each town and surrounding area,
- provide a point of difference for each area,
- strengthen the appeal of each area for existing and future visitors,
- have in some instances been previously identified in the Bundaberg Fraser Coast TOP, are likely to attract broad ranging community support and serve as a focus and direction for each of the towns, and
- together, across the six precincts, provide an interesting and attractive suite of tourism experiences that tell the 'story' of North Burnett and support the intent of the region's tourism vision, providing the basis for developing a compelling rural and nature-based tourism destination.

These precinct projects, if pursued, would significantly increase the region's destination appeal and tourism growth, thus serving as 'catalysts' for other tourism and associated infrastructure projects and private sector investment. Some catalyst projects by their nature are 'supply led' as opposed to being 'demand driven' by existing visitor demand. These supply led projects are generally addressing either a key regional issue, like value-adding to local agricultural produce through farm gate sales, or building on an important destination attribute like a spectacular natural feature such as Auburn River National Park. Such projects are presented to promote discussion based on creating the supply of new experiences which in turn can stimulate demand.

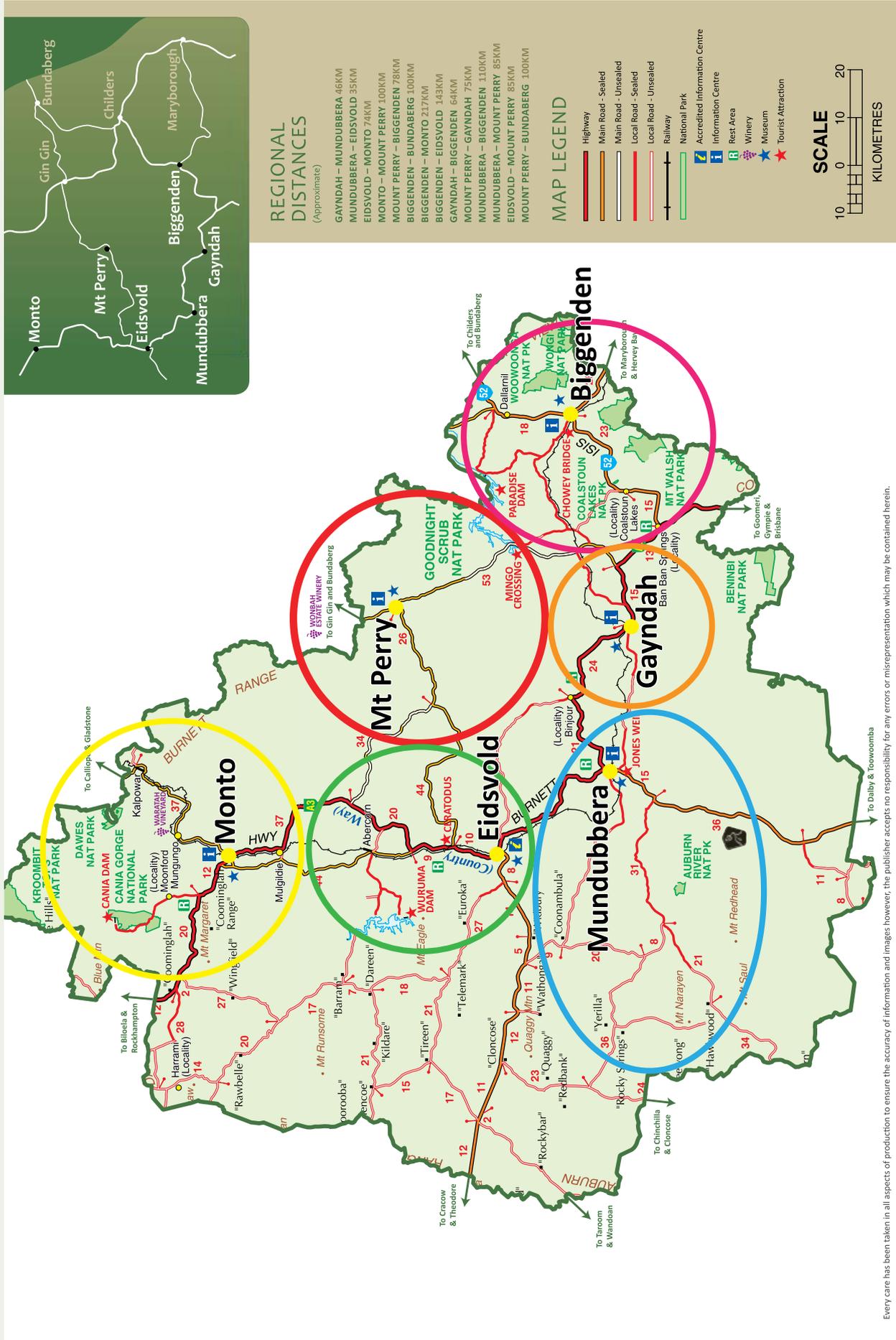
Complementing the precinct specific catalyst projects are a number of catalyst region projects which have also been identified. These projects are relevant for all communities across the region and provide the basis for the North Burnett to develop a coordinated and sustainable tourism offering that maximises the tourism appeal of the region and the combined resources and energies of its community and the Regional Council.

In addition to these key precinct and regional catalyst projects there are also a range of support tourism projects/opportunities/issues that were identified during the conduct of this study and these are outlined in Appendix 1.



Grand Hotel, Gayndah

Map 2 – North Burnett Tourism Precincts



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4.1 Precinct Projects

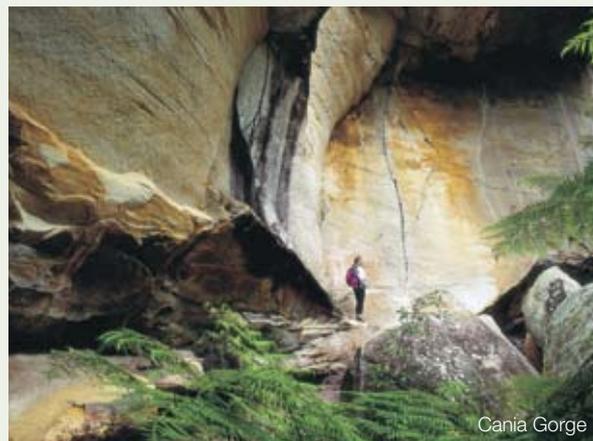
4.1.1 Mt Perry

- Focus on the mining heritage of the town, incorporating this into the town street-scaping and improving the visitor experience of the town's rich history.
- Improve the static interpretative display at the old Copper Smelter site and incorporate more interactive elements including the possibility of moving the existing operating 'Gold Stamper' to the site involving regular demonstrations.
- Develop a coordinated mining/heritage town walk including the potential of a town lookout, linking all key sites with directional and interpretive signage.
- Development of the Historical Museum to improve visitor appeal and interaction and ensure links to the Copper Smelter display and town heritage walks.
- Incorporate the 'Mining' theme into the towns signage.
- Investigate the possibility of linking the town's mining heritage to the nearby section of the Bicentennial Trail to provide a longer walking option for visitors and improve length of stay.
- Investigate the potential at Mingo Crossing of lakeside accommodation options and boat/houseboat hire operations including recreation links to Goodnight Scrub National Park.



4.1.2 Monto/Cania Gorge

- Utilise the '3 Moon' story as a theme for the precinct linking the range of attractions together.
- Further develop the Monto Botanical Gardens as a high quality Australian native botanical experience. Potential exists to highlight links with wildlife, Indigenous food and culture e.g. medicinal use, importance of the regions timber industry and historical significance of European settlement.
- Establish physical and/or theme links between the Botanic Gardens and the upgrade of the town's CBD and wider streetscape.
- Investigate the potential of walking trails and associated visitor facilities at Coomingleh State Forest to complement Cania Gorge.



- Work with the relevant State Government Departments to develop a recreational use plan for Hurtle Gully and Coomingleh State Forest identifying ecotourism activities such as walking trails and visitor facilities to showcase the largest remaining stand of semi evergreen vine thicket on the east coast of Australia, as well as the historical and Indigenous significance of the areas.
- Establish stronger links between Monto and Cania Gorge through the Botanic Gardens, stronger relationships between local businesses and more focused product packaging and marketing.
- Provide a safe walking link (possibly associated with fire breaks) between the Cania Gorge Caravan and Tourist Park and established walking trails in Cania Gorge National Park.
- Investigate opportunities for guided tours of Cania Gorge NP and Coomingleh SF including bus tours and QPWS permit issues.
- Investigate the potential of a loop drive and lookout on the Mulgildie Plateau.

4.1.3 Eidsvold

- Support the ongoing planning and investigation of the proposed RM Williams Centre as a tourist, educational, training and Indigenous cultural facility with associated accommodation options. The Centre could provide a key focus for the community to develop Eidsvold as a welcoming and friendly tourist stopover and broaden the scope of tourism services being offered to visitors. Realistic visitor and associated income generation and economic contribution projections will be critical in determining the project's viability and funding options.
- Incorporate the town's themes/character into the town's street-scaping.
- Investigate the opportunity of conducting 'old time movie nights' in the old theatre in town coordinating with other local businesses to provide an evening entertainment option for travelers.
- Investigate the potential to provide public access to the Kirar Weir to enhance water-based activity options in town.

- Establish short local loop drives emanating from Eidsvold highlighting key points of interest including the provision of directional and interpretive signage and local guide maps.

4.1.4 Mundubbera

- Utilise the 'Footprints up a tree' story as a theme for the town linking together the nature-based attributes of the town and environs and incorporating this into the town street-scaping.
- Extend Arthur Dagg Nature Walk upstream of Jones Weir to include boardwalks and bird hides.
- Develop stronger links with the 'Bugs for Bugs' operation through direct products, like tours and souvenirs, but also as a selling point for the nature-based and sustainable image of the town.
- Establish an amphitheatre adjacent to the Visitor Information Centre overlooking the river to support existing town events.
- Further upgrade Black Stump Park on the Burnett Highway coming into town as a key introduction/viewing point to the town with a focus on the 'footprints up a tree' theme and visual link to town's water tower.
- Upgrade Auburn River National Park as essentially a day-use facility and review the need for camping. Upgrade to focus on day-use facilities including a lookout and a graded walking trail down into the gorge to showcase the areas stunning scenery and interpretive signage to highlight key features including Indigenous culture and geology.
- Investigate the potential of orchard and packing shed tours in the area.

4.1.5 Gayndah

- Further highlight the 'citrus' industry and story as a theme for the town and incorporating this into town street-scaping.
- Upgrade McConnell's Lookout on Mt Gayndah with picnic facilities and interpretive signage of the surrounding landscape and promote as a must stop for sunsets and sunrises.
- Establish and sign key loop drives around town including the river, rail bridges and orchards and the links to Paradise Dam.
- Investigate developing a range of weekend recreation activities/packages for seasonal workers to enhance their stay and increase their expenditure in the region.
- Further investigate the need for additional seasonal worker accommodation in the wider Gayndah/Mundubbera area. There may be scope to develop such accommodation as a public/private partnership and utilise out-of-season capacity for tourism and education purposes.
- Investigate the opportunity of a Citroen Car attraction based on the existing collection of the largest number of Citroen classic cars in the Southern Hemisphere, including site infrastructure upgrades and the introduction of appropriate directional and interpretive signage.

4.1.6 Biggenden and Paradise Dam

- Further develop the untapped tourism potential of the Paradise Dam including:
 - development of a high quality Visitor Centre focusing on the current Turtle Hatchery as an integrated research and interpretive facility; history of the dam; Goodnight Scrub NP; and Indigenous culture and heritage of the area



Rocky Creek Homestead, Biggenden

- o investigate the possibility of a dam wall walk in association with the Visitor Centre.
- o secure a fish stocking permit for the Dam.
- o expand the camping and caravan facilities at the Dam and investigate scope for the development of lake-side cabins.
- o investigate the establishment of walking, mountain biking and horse trails around the Dam and where appropriate in association with Goodnight Scrub.
- o investigate options for lake boat tours, house boat hire and a canoe trail on the dam.
- Upgrade Mt Walsh NP/Coongarra Rock with walking trails and associated directional and interpretive signage with a focus on the heritage and culture of the local Indigenous community. There is also potential for Bush camping facilities to further increase visitor length of stay and expenditure in the region. Access to the area is limited and road infrastructure would need to be upgraded to provide visitors with a safe and reasonable 2WD entry to the site.
- Further investigate the potential for the development of road access and day-use facilities at Coulston Lakes NP.
- Upgrade Ban Ban Springs as a key stop-over point for travelers through the region focusing on the natural springs and the significant links to Indigenous cultural heritage.
- Town street-scaping should reflect the central theme/s of the town in particular the important linkages with the nearby Paradise Dam.

4.2 Regional Projects

4.2.1 North Burnett Touring Route

- Develop a North Burnett touring route based around the Country Way A3 Burnett Highway as the key artery linking together the six town and environs precincts and their associated rural and nature-based attractions and loop drives. This project could also investigate the cycle touring opportunities of the route identifying on and off highway linkages across the region and associated accommodation and attraction options.
- This touring route should be signed, mapped and branded and promoted as providing the 'Best of the North Burnett'. The route should provide the basis for each precinct to promote what they have to offer and to cross-promote other precincts and the region as a whole.
- This project should also review previous marketing activities associated with the Country Way including the Country Way Tourist Book.
- Development of the route should also investigate linkages with tourist rail opportunities utilising the existing Maryborough to Monto rail line.
- This project should also include a review of dam and river fishing opportunities in the region so as to incorporate a fishing trail in the touring route.

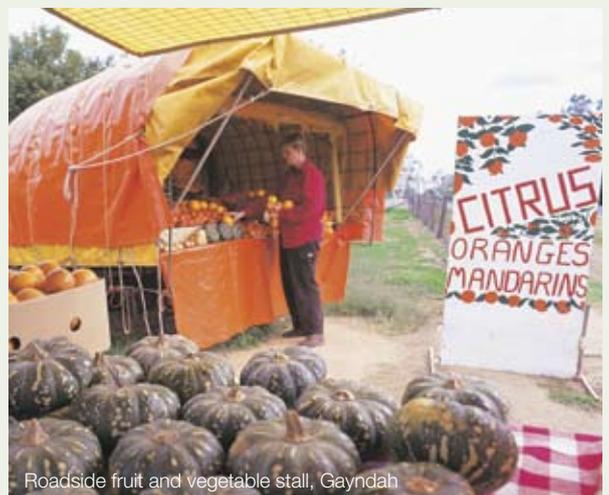
- Similarly, this project should include a review of tourism/recreation opportunities in the regions national parks and state forests so these can be appropriately incorporated into the touring route.
- This project incorporates a number of projects recommended in the Bundaberg – Fraser Coast TOP including the 'Hinterland Tourism Route' catalyst project.

4.2.2 North Burnett Produce

- Working with the wider Bundaberg Region investigate the potential of identifying key local North Burnett produce that could contribute to a wider regional food/culinary tourism experience including farm gate sales, farm tours, farmers markets and 'paddock to plate' strategies.
- Such an 'experience' would 'value-add' to the established rural industries in the area and strengthen the proposition/offering of the North Burnett Touring Route. This project would also provide an opportunity for each town/precinct to focus on particular produce/food that could offer them a point of difference while creating a food trail across the region.
- This project would form part of the region wide 'Culinary Tourism Experience' catalyst project recommended in the Bundaberg – Fraser Coast TOP.

4.2.3 Regional Events and Activities

- Develop a Regional Events Calendar for the North Burnett aimed at better coordinating and maximising the tourism potential of major events in the region.
- Developing the Calendar would explore the potential for greater linkages between established events and identify potential new events to fill seasonal gaps and to capitalise on untapped local/regional 'happenings'.
- Promote the regular cattle sales across the region as an opportunity for tourists to experience an authentic Queensland country event. Make the sales 'tourist friendly' by providing special car parking, seating areas and a bush BBQ and a local volunteer to explain and guide visitors through the sale. Possibly promote cattle sales as a day experience for guests at tourist and caravan parks.



Roadside fruit and vegetable stall, Gayndah

4.2.4 Community Tourism Awareness Program

- Formulate and deliver a community tourism awareness program aimed at educating residents about the true value of tourism's contribution to the region in terms of visitor expenditure, contribution to the regional economy, job creation, support for local businesses and overall community development.
- The program would also need to highlight the important role customer service and genuine Queensland hospitality plays in maximising the tourism experience and that customer service is the responsibility of all businesses and residents not just tourist operators.
- This project aligns with the recommendations of the Bundaberg-Fraser Coast TOP.

4.2.5 Road Infrastructure Upgrades and Development

- As part of the wider North Burnett Touring Route project prepare a Tourism Road Development Plan for the region focusing on the major and support roads that will be promoted to distribute tourists across the region.
- Key initial priority roads requiring upgrading and eventual sealing include the Mt Perry to Monto and Mt Perry to Gayndah roads.

4.2.6 Regional Accommodation Options

- Investigate the potential to establish a network of farm stay and B&B establishments across the region that would provide new accommodation options for existing visitors and serve as a basis for targeting new markets.
- New farm stay options could also provide accommodation opportunities for backpackers whether they are touring or staying on as seasonal workers.
- Investigate the need for new, expanded and/or upgraded caravan and camping facilities across the region including at Waruma Dam, Paradise Dam, Mingo Crossing, Biggenden, Mt Perry and Eidsvold.

4.2.7 Regional Signage

- As part of the wider North Burnett Touring Route project, linking in with the various precinct tourism projects and reflecting the broader character/themes of the North Burnett, develop a Tourism Signage Plan for the region.
- The Plan should address both directional and interpretive signage needs and coordinate with the Council's regional signage plan to include all regional "Welcome and Directional" signage incorporating the new "Naturally Beautiful" regional brand.

4.2.8 Indigenous Tourism

- In addition to the Indigenous cultural opportunities identified for the RM Williams Centre and Ban Ban Springs, investigate the broader Indigenous tourism opportunities in the region building on the strong 'freshwater' cultural heritage of the local Aboriginal people and the linkages with the previously outlined 'water' theme of the region and the central focus of the Burnett River.

5 Implementation

Prioritisation of projects in this Strategy and their implementation will primarily be the responsibility of the North Burnett Regional Council with support from Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism.

Implementation of this Strategy will be subject to the availability of funding and a key purpose of the document is to serve as a prospectus for Council and Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism to not only plan their expenditure in tourism but also importantly to attract State and Australian Government funding and private sector investment.

Once project priorities have been determined, it is recommended that Council establishes project specific working groups comprised of relevant industry, council, government and community representatives to take ownership of projects and to progress them through the next phases of more detailed assessment, design, funding and implementation.

For some of the proposed precinct and regional catalyst projects to progress further it may be necessary to undertake more detailed assessments of potential viability through feasibility studies. These studies will need to address project benefits, costs, impacts, scope and resourcing.

For the North Burnett to realise its tourism potential and effectively implement the recommendations of this Strategy, the community will need to take ownership for implementation of projects and work synergistically with the support of the Regional Council. In turn, the success of this strategy is dependent on the Regional Council and Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism building on their established working partnership and ensuring the continued resourcing of associated marketing and product development initiatives.



Monto

6 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Tourism Support Projects/Opportunities/Issues

Project	Region Wide
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the possibility of an online register and booking system for events. Development of fishing competitions to enhance awareness and use of the region's dams
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of retail based staff to promote the region e.g. Aussiehost to enhance service standards and skilling staff in the delivery of regional information of locations and activities in the area. This will assist town to town and business to business cross promotion. The introduction of a 'Tourism Ambassador' program promotion will assist to increase the visitor experience and potentially the visitor spend. Training services need to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Sales Websites (e communication) Email Social Media Ensure the staff skills are developed to meet the expectations of the consumer e.g. coffee making etc
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to get areas such as Paradise and Waruma Dam on touring maps to help develop awareness.
Seasonal Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backpackers make an important contribution to the local economy when staying in the region to work. Many currently stay in caravan parks or on site at the orchards. Additionally there is a growing population of foreign workers from places like Korea and the South Sea Islands on work visas in the area. Consideration should be given to how the region capitalises on these demographics. Investigate government programs to assist the region to manage the impact of seasonal workers on local infrastructure.
Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to ensure that where possible trading hours of key outlets e.g. convenience stores, restaurants and tourist activities are convenient to travellers.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Transport is a major issue for the region with the absence of scheduled bus and train services into and across the region impacting tourism development and growth. This is an issue which needs to be addressed but is problematic as the solution is based on actual demand/patronage for commercially viable services or subsidised services. Implementation of this Tourism Strategy will assist in increasing the critical mass of tourism products and experiences in the region which in turn will provide a stronger case for the re-establishment of scheduled bus and/or train service across the region. There is also an issue of no public transport in an around the key towns limiting tourism to private vehicle based opportunities. Investigate the potential of public transport options around the towns as a partnership between commercial establishments like caravan parks, hotels, motels, cafes and the Regional Council or linked to major events.

Project	Mt Perry Precinct
Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of “Gold Fossicking” as a tourism activity. Would require access to mining facilities now closed.
Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade/redevelop public toilets including disabled access to improve the visitor experience. Potential re-location to the town park to provide a more attractive ‘Rest Stop’ linked in with the proposed town walk. • An increase in local medical services is required. Currently there is only a registered nurse available from Monday to Friday. With an ageing population and an increase in tourism numbers from older age groups additional resources will be required to ensure locals retain the ability to receive appropriate medical services.
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event marketing is required to assist to ‘spread the word’ of key local activities and events e.g. Camp Draft. Resources are required to capture the details of attendees to assist with future promotion and encourage repeat visitation.
Project	Monto/Cania Precinct
Infrastructure Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the upgrade of the airport to enable aviation based events and potential new tourism products e.g. Hot air ballooning, skydiving. Investigate the installation of an instrument landing beacon
Product Packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monto needs to develop a close working relationship with Cania Gorge to leverage off the high volume of visitors to Cania. The introduction of vouchers to restaurants, shopping centres and other activities could provide visitors the incentive to stay longer and spend more in the broader region.
Research and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a program to measure the success of tourism packaging, and the impact on the region. A voucher system would enable the measurement of performance and overall success of a specific program.
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to update GPS data. GPSs do not show Monto on route to/from Cania Gorge. RACQ, Telstra and Google need to be updated to reflect the best and safest road maps. • Souvenirs of Monto reflecting the ‘3 Moons’ story. Souvenirs would be a constant reminder to visitors to return. • When visitor details are captured a letter could be sent, signed by the Mayor, thanking them for their visit and inviting them back. Could link to regional events.
Project	Eidsvold Precinct
Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Indigenous culture experiences – investigate opportunities for walking tours, history, bush tucker, storytelling, dances etc. This could be considered in partnership with the RM Williams project.
Product Packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop links with the free Ceradadous Tourism Park and key businesses in town such as grocery store and the local butcher. Increase the interpretive and educational material for viewing at the Ceratodus.
Research and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Country Way A3 market research is required to take advantage of the travellers along the route. Identify which tour operations currently use the A3 and explore partnership opportunities with these operators to see Eidsvold as a potential stopover/rest stop.
Project	Mundubbera Precinct
Infrastructure Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water for irrigation and the town as a whole is an issue that requires further investigation as population and visitation grows.

Festivals and Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mundubbera is a very multicultural area. The town currently holds a successful multicultural festival with over 500 attendees. Consideration should be given to further development of this festival through regional marketing and promotion. The Bats & Bulls Festival is based around a 7-aside cricket competition which attracts between 60 and 70 teams. For this festival to be developed further consideration should be given to the supply of accommodation and resources required to manage an event of this size. As these two festivals are resource intensive there is the potential to join them together to achieve economies of scale.
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential exists to develop a newsletter targeting immigrants in places like Sydney to encourage residency in Mundubbera. This needs to be developed in consultation with local government and planning strategies for accommodation. The possibility exists for the development of a local produce campaign. This could consist of local menus promoting produce from within a 100kms. The region could conduct a masterclass utilising local personalities to showcase the region's produce and raise the awareness of the region as a significant agricultural area. Develop in association with the proposed Regional Culinary Tourism Experience project identified in the Bundaberg-Fraser Coast TOP. Consideration should be given to the development of a marketing campaign focus on the Bundaberg region. Local operators to package up products and services to attract day and weekend visitors to the region. Work more closely with Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism to ensure regional product is promoted on the tourism website.
Project	Gayndah Precinct
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gayndah is a strong work prospect environment. Consideration should be given to how the region can promote this opportunity to key markets to attract more seasonal workers with associated flow-on benefits for local tourism opportunities.
Project	Biggenden Precinct
Product Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Biggenden Air Strip is utilised by visitors to the Bundaberg Air Show. Consideration should be given to how this opportunity can be further developed. Consider local events that could coincide with the Air Show to leverage off the large number of visitors to this major event. Biggenden previously conducted a successful Rose Show. In conjunction with the Regional Events Planning project consideration should be given to the viability of reintroducing this activity. Possibly link or join this activity to other events to achieve economies of scale. Biggenden would benefit from a working Visitor Information Centre. Consideration should be given to inexpensive, possibly unmanned solutions e.g. innovative 'outdoors' displays & signage, touch screens or videos co-located with existing operators in town.
Infrastructure Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to its proximity to the high growth destination of Paradise Dam it is important that Biggenden is caravan and recreation vehicle friendly e.g. drive in – drive out parking facilities in town. Biggenden provides free overnight campsite on the Bicentennial Trail. Need to investigate avenues of funding to upgrade this section of the national trail to encourage further use.
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mt Woowoonga walking trails – these are both rugged walks and need to be promoted as such to ensure public safety. 4 Historic bridges exist in the area and provide an interesting historical experience. Key stakeholders should engage with relevant agencies to ensure the protection of the current rail line. The opportunity exists to negotiate with the relevant stakeholders to encourage the development of a short rail trip from Maryborough to Gayndah Consideration should be given to the development of Indigenous tourism. Need to engage with local Traditional Owners to promote the history and culture across the region. Biggenden hosts an Auto Spectacular that attracts up to 1500 attendees. Consideration should be given to the development of this event to ensure its future. Event security, infrastructure and resources are critical to ensure public safety and the reputation of this activity.

Appendix 2 – Reports, plans and strategies reviewed in the development of the North Burnett Tourism Strategy

1. Central Queensland and Bundaberg Region Product Audit – Bundaberg (2008)
2. Bundaberg Region – Tourism Opportunity Plan (2009)
3. Monto Magic Tourism Action Group – Tourism Ambassador Program
4. Monto Shire Tourism Action Plan and Audit Report – (2007)
5. Monto Business Precinct Revitalisation Master Plan (2008)
6. Mundubbera Shire Tourism Strategy (2005 – 2010)
7. RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre (2010 – 2015)
8. Sustainability & Semi Evergreen Vine Thicket Knowledge Opportunities from the WHFA.
9. Mundubbera Shire – Snapshot
10. Monto Shire – Snapshot
11. Eidsvold Shire – Snapshot
12. Gayndah Shire – Snapshot
13. Perry Shire – Snapshot
14. Biggenden Shire – Snapshot



Boardwalk, Cania Gorge

Appendix 3 – Stakeholder Consultation

Attendee	Business/Interest
Mt Perry	
Paul Lobegeir	NBRC
Yvette Stephensen-McKay	McKays Fuel & Rural
Geoff Brandon	NBRC
Beppie Stanly	Perry Shire Heritage and Tourism Centre
Peter Baker	NBRC
Patricia Smith	Family History
Wendy Castle	Mt Perry Caravan Park
Greg Wallace OAM	NBRC
Patty Klaasen	Mt Perry Health Centre
Emma Price	LGL Equigold
Kalman Salgo	LGL Equigold
Monto	
Dolores Fowler	NBRC – Business Advisory Group
Lyn Tucker	Waratah Vineyard/Monto Magic Tourism Action Group
Lauren Pattie	MCDC Inc
Glenn Baker	Landcare
Neville Golloway	Agforce
Eidsvold	
Paul Francis	NBRC
Emma Nock	DEEDI
Zona Hyssey-Smith	DEEDI
Richard Roth	Community
Noel Thompson	Community
Faye Whelan	NBRC
Mary Nelson	Community
Audrey Larsen	Community
Evelyn Bancroft	Historical Society
Peter Anderson	Eidsvold News (President of Tourism Association)
Andrew Schulz	Eidsvold Motel
Mundubbera	
Loris Doessel	Munduberra Enterprise Association
Trisha Hansen	NBRC
Claire Stewart	Billabong Motor Inn
Gayndah	
Don Waugh	Chamber of Commerce
Peter Huth	NBRC
Eric Sturgess	Gayndah's Big Orange
Gale Aberdein	Paradise Dam
Greg Aberdein	Paradise Dam
Biggenden	
Jillianne Cahill	Biggenden B&B
Lofty Wendt	NBRC
Joy Jensen	NBRC

Appendix 4 – Project Review Team

Pam Hardgrave

Owner Director
Lillydale Farmstay
Board Member Tourism Queensland

Wayne Clift

Director
Beetswalkin Consulting
Board Member Qld Tourism Industry Council

Trevor Cox

Director – Central Queensland, Southern Great Barrier Reef and Bundaberg
Tourism Queensland

David Morgans

Director – Destination Planning and Design
Tourism Queensland

Paul Massingham

Destination Management Officer
Bundaberg and Fraser Coast Regions

Key Regional Contacts:

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Acting General Manager
Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism

