

Manning Valley

Destination Management Plan

September 2014





This Destination Management Plan (DMP) provides the framework for the development and management of our *Manning Valley...naturally™* visitor destination.

It is designed to facilitate and support visitation growth and encourage visitor expenditure in a manner that is sustainable and in line with community aspirations.

Manning Valley Tourism

M Manning Valley
...naturally!



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Executive Summary



DESTINATION ANALYSIS

The Manning Valley Destination Management Plan has been prepared in the context of the broader regional visions outlined in the North Coast Destination Network DMP and in line with the strategic priorities of the Visitor Economy Taskforce report. The key objectives in this plan are reflected in Council's annual Operational Plan. Manning Valley's Destination Management Plan establishes five clear goals in this context.

These goals are:

1. Increase Visitation
2. Grow Physical Capacity
3. Renew and Revitalise Destinations
4. Improve the Visitor Experience
5. Increase Visitor Spend

The goals are to complement the broader visions contained within the regional plan, but simultaneously differentiate Manning Valley as a standalone destination.

DESTINATION DIRECTION

Vision

To make the Manning Valley the visitor location of choice for our target markets and key growth markets.

Mission

To promote the Manning Valley as a desirable destination for visitors so as to create economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits to the whole community through the development, implementation and performance monitoring of the Destination Management Plan.

This Destination Management Plan is in place to work towards the NSW state goal of doubling Visitor Spend by 2020.

DESTINATION REQUIREMENTS

Greater Taree City Council employs a number of people to oversee destination management and visitor services as *Manning Valley...naturally™*. However, staffing levels within Council are not sufficient to assume full responsibility to carry forward all of the actions in this Destination Management Plan. Voluntary and in-kind support from key stakeholders such as individuals, businesses and community groups need to be encouraged and coordinated to implement the direction.

Financially, in order to carry this plan forward, a number of revenue streams have been identified to enable implementation of actions. Not all identified actions are the responsibility of Council. There are also a number of actions for which budget is not identified nor currently available.

A range of risks have been identified, including internal and external factors that could impact on the delivery of our goals. A number of strategies have been outlined to mitigate these.



The Destination Management Plan

What is a Destination Management Plan (DMP)?

The Manning Valley DMP is intended to be an industry resource that gains ongoing industry input, and provides a platform for access to funding opportunities. The target audience for the plan is the Manning Valley's tourism industry and is a significant step in better managing the regions visitor economy. The DMP provides the framework for the development and management of a visitor destination. It is designed to facilitate and support visitation growth and encourage visitor expenditure in a manner that is sustainable and in line with community aspirations.

The Manning Valley DMP has been prepared in the context of the broader regional visions outlined in the North Coast Destination Network DMP and in line with the strategic priorities of the Visitor Economy Taskforce report. Manning Valley's DMP establishes five clear goals in this context.

These goals are:

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The goals are to complement the broader visions contained within the regional plan, but simultaneously differentiate Manning Valley as a standalone destination.

Why have a DMP?

The Manning Valley DMP provides the framework to better understand our destination, establishes the visions for the Manning Valley visitor economy, and sets the pathway to help achieve the goals of the NSW government to double visitor expenditure by 2020.

The DMP is the first step in better managing a sustainable and competitive visitor economy. A DMP is a pre-requisite for applying for Commonwealth tourism, State tourism and other infrastructure grant funding.

The NSW Government Visitor Economy Taskforce report highlights seven strategic priorities, which are:

Strategic imperative 1: increase visitation

Strategic imperative 2: grow physical capacity

Strategic imperative 3: renew and revitalise destinations

Strategic imperative 4: improve the visitor experience

Strategic imperative 5: increase visitor spend

Strategic imperative 6: make NSW more competitive

Strategic imperative 7: change of mindset





Destination Management Planning

The Manning Valley DMP has been developed by Greater Taree City Council in consultation with the Manning Valley Tourism Committee.

A key document utilised in the development of the Manning Valley DMP is the *Visitor Economy Action Plan* which was commissioned by the State Government (following the final report by Visitor Economy Taskforce) to achieve the state's benchmark **to double overnight visitation in NSW by 2020.**¹

To help achieve this state goal each region has been requested to develop a DMP.

It should be noted that whilst Greater Taree City Council has initiated the process of developing a Manning Valley DMP, responsibility for implementation of the recommendations as a result of this DMP may or may not lie with Greater Taree City Council.

Visitor Economy

For the 12 month period to September 2013, an average of \$167 million of direct benefit was achieved from visitors to the Manning Valley region. This does not take into account the indirect benefits to our regional economy.

The Visitor Economy Taskforce suggests that the 'visitor economy' is more than measuring tourism. It includes hospitality, transport, education, retail, cultural programs and many other industries and activities that affect a visitors' travelling experience such as those travelling for employment, education or business.



Figure 1: Tourism Output Mid North Coast [All Industries]

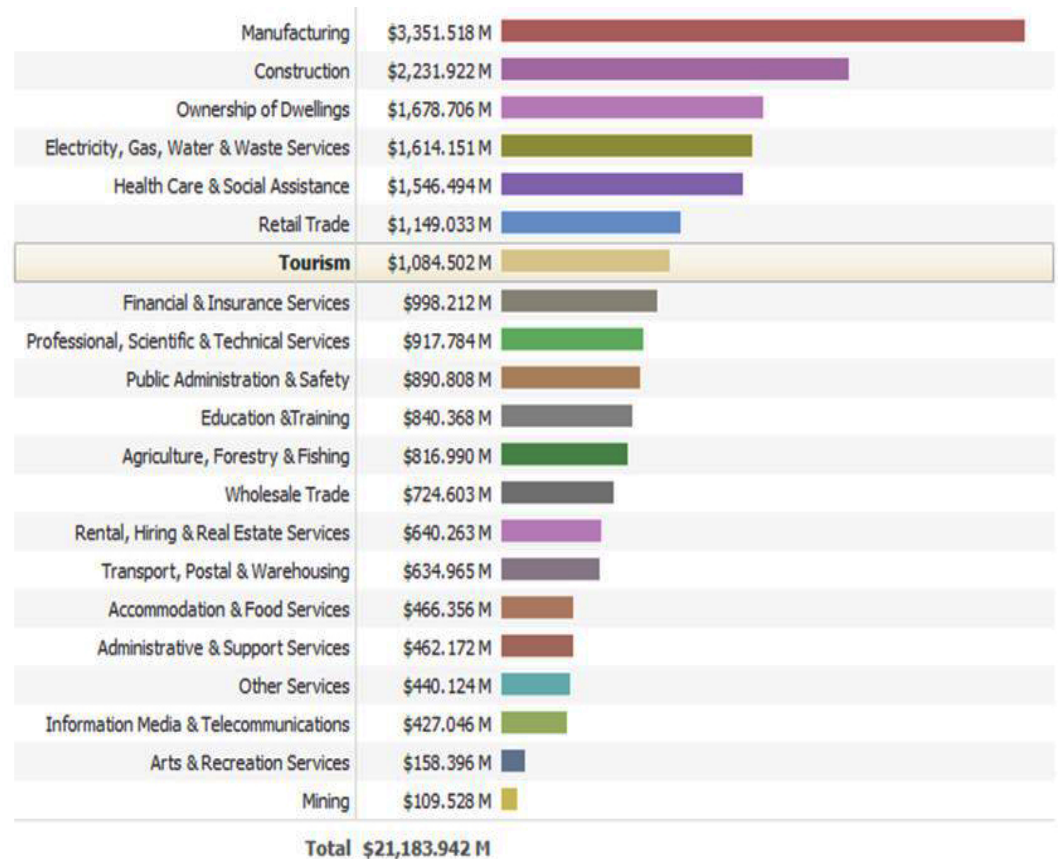


Figure 1 shows the Tourism Output of the Mid North Coast (the area between Woolgoolga and Taree) as \$1 billion. A component of the dollar contributions to retail, accommodation, telecommunications, employment and arts for example, needs to also be taken into account when looking at the direct impact of visitors on the regional economy.

¹Reference to Visitor Economy Action Plan
<http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/doing-business-in-nsw/industry-action-plans/visitor-economy>



Regional Economy

Greater Taree City is located on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales, in the Manning Valley, about 320 kilometres north of the Sydney CBD. Over the past five years the population of the Manning Valley has increased by 1,870 persons, or an average rate of 0.8%, which is marginally lower than the level for the Lower Mid North Coast (1.1%) and New South Wales (1.3%) over the same period.

History

European settlement dates from exploration in 1818, although few people lived in the area until the 1840s. Timber-getting and timber mills were established from the 1820s, with timber remaining an important industry today. In 1843 Wingham became the first township settlement, functioning as a river port for the cedar trade.

There was some growth in the area in the 1860s and 1880s with arrival of the pastoralists, who mainly used the land for dairying. Some residential development occurred after the opening of the railway line in 1913, when commercial expansion took off. This growth resulted in Taree becoming the main town centre of the area. Significant growth occurred in the post-war years, especially from 1940, when the Martin Bridge was built, allowing easy passage to Taree from the south. Growth was also aided by the tourism boom in the 1960s, particularly in the coastal areas. The main agricultural pursuits shifted to beef cattle farming by the late 1900s.

Land use

Greater Taree City is a predominantly rural area, with some residential, industrial and commercial land use. Greater Taree encompasses a total land area of 3,752 square kilometres, of which a large proportion is State Forest and National Park, including beaches, coastline, waterways and mountains. Much of the rural area is used for timber and agriculture, with dairy and beef production being the main agricultural pursuits. In more recent years there have been an increasing number of viticulture industries. The City has two main townships with many small villages and localities. The largest town is Taree, followed by Wingham, with other major population centres being Old Bar, Harrington and Hallidays Point.

Indigenous Background

The original occupiers of the Greater Taree area are the Biripi People.

GDP \$2.2 billion

Population 48,846

Local jobs 22,122

Largest Industry Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

Local businesses 3,407 (ABS 2012)

Employed Residents 20,580

Land Area 3,732 km²



1 Destination Analysis

1.1 Key Destination Footprint

The Manning Valley covers an area of 3,732 km². It ranges from Johns River in the north to Nowendoc in the west, south toward Bunyah and bounded to the east by the coastline.

Natural assets are a key component of our region with nine National Parks and Reserves, stunning surf beaches spreading across 45 kilometres of pristine coastline and more than 26 seaside and hinterland towns and villages to explore.

There are a number of options to choose from when accessing the Manning Valley. Self drive, train, fly, hire car and coach facilities are available and central to towns and attractions.

The Valley is the perfect place to unwind and do as little or as much as you choose.

1.2 Key Stakeholders

Tourism is a multi-faceted industry that embraces a wide variety of public and private sector stakeholders.

The DMP is an important step to better manage and develop a sustainable visitor economy for the Manning Valley. While authored by Greater Taree City Council, in consultation with the Manning Valley Tourism Committee, broad industry input and engagement into this plan will be one of the key success factors.

Regular key stakeholders that *Manning Valley...naturally* work in partnership with are included in the following list:

- The Legendary Pacific Coast
- North Coast Destination Network
- Destination NSW
- Tourism Research Australia
- Greater Taree City Council – Councillors and staff
- Manning Valley Tourism Committee
- Chambers of Commerce
- Tourism Industry and Partners
- RDAMNC – Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast
- National Parks and Wildlife Service
- State Forests
- Sporting Facilities
- Universities, TAFE and schools
- Taree Airport and Taree Service Centre
- CountryLink
- Bus / Coach Companies
- Arts Mid North Coast
- Local Community
- Visitors
- Neighbouring LGAs



1.3 Key Data and Documents

A range of national, regional and local policy, planning and promotional documentation was reviewed in the preparation of this DMP.

- The Destination NSW – LGA Profile Greater Taree September 2013 ³
- Manning Valley Community Plan ⁴
- Tourism Development Plan 2013 / 14 ⁵
- North Coast of NSW Destination Management Planning June 2013 ⁶
- Manning Valley Business Chamber – Manning Valley Economic Brief March 2014
- 2000 Visitor Economy Taskforce ⁷

1.4 Key Assets

Manning Valley is a unique destination within New South Wales. It is an area of natural beauty and diverse landscapes offering a combination of beach, river and mountain environments.

The Manning Valley provides the opportunity for a diverse range of water based activities and nature experiences. With Ellenborough Falls being one of the southern hemisphere's longest single drop waterfalls and the Manning River the only double delta river system in the southern hemisphere we are well equipped for unique experiences.

To compliment the outdoor and adventure activities; there is also a range of accommodation, food, shopping, sports, art and culture options:

Nature, Outdoor and Adventure

Coast, Beaches, Waterways, Surfing Based

Aboriginal Based

Food Based

Arts, Culture and Heritage Based

Sports Tourism Based

The Manning Valley community is passionate about sports and as such has a range of local sports associations and facilities to accommodate local, regional and State events.

Cross Regional Assets



Refer to the **Key Assets of the Manning Valley** table overleaf

³www.destinationnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Greater-Taree-LGA-profile-1.pdf

⁴www.gtcc.nsw.gov.au/mvcp

⁵www.gtcc.nsw.gov.au

⁶www.ncdn.com.au/sites/default/files/ncdn-dmp.pdf

⁷www.destinationnsw.com.au/our-industry/visitor-economy-taskforce



Key Assets of the Manning Valley

Nature, Outdoor and Adventure

- National Parks:
Coorabakh National Park, Crowdy Bay National Park, Saltwater National Park and Tapin Tops National Park
- State Forests:
Coopernook State Forest, Kiwarrak State Forest, Knorrit State Forest, Lansdowne State Forest and Yarratt State Forest
- Nature Reserves:
Brimbin Nature Reserve, Goonook Nature Reserve, Killabakh Nature Reserve, Khappinghat Nature Reserve, Talawahl Nature Reserve and Wingham Brush Nature Reserve
- Ellenborough Falls – Located on Tourist Drive 8 – at 200m drop second longest drop waterfall in southern hemisphere
- Wingham Brush – 10 ha of sub-tropical floodplain rainforest including a colony of Grey Headed Flying Fox and huge Moreton Bay Fig trees
- Cattai Wetlands
- Manning River – is Australia's only double delta river system having two entrances, one at Harrington and one at Old Bar - Offers 150kms of navigable waterways
- Harrington Beach State Park
- Camping
- Lookouts:
Brushy Cutting, Apex, Breakneck, Vincents, Newbys, Blue Knob, Pilot Hill and Flat Rock
- Farquhar Park
- Beach 4WD
- Mountain bikes, road bikes
- Walking trails
- Push / Dirt Bike trails / Fire trails
- Kite surfing – Mud Bishops Reserve
- Fishing:
Saltwater – Harrington, Manning Point, Old Bar, Charleys Island, Croki, Wingham and just about anywhere on the Manning
- Freshwater – Rocks Crossing
- Bird watching:
Cattai Wetlands, Stewarts River, Hannam Vale, Waitui, Crowdy Bay National Park, Oxley Island, Mud Bishops reserve, Old Soldiers Road, Talawahl, Khappinghat, Boorganna, Brimbin Nature Reserve, Kiwarrak, Lansdowne and Yarratt State Forest

Coast, Beaches, Waterways, Surfing Based

- Beaches:
Saltwater / Wallabi Point, Black Head, Red Head / Diamond Beach, Old Bar, Manning Point, Harrington, Crowdy Bay
- Manning River
- Waterfalls:
Ellenborough, Waitui and Potaroo Falls
- Access to river and waterways, pontoons

Aboriginal-Based

- Aboriginal Culture
- Saltwater National Park
- Bluewater
- Art Galleries

Food-Based

- Developing food and wine experiences and itineraries
- Farmers Markets / Markets
- Wineries
- Fresh produce
- Manning Valley Beef
- Manning Valley Free Range Eggs
- Dairy Industry
- Oysters
- Potential to further develop region as an online business hub
- Potential to develop food tours: farm gate, producers, bush tucker
- Farm tours and experiences
- Emerging café culture
- Cooking / cheese making schools
- Specialist retail outlets

Sport Tourism Based

- Huge variety of sports groups and facilities
- Facilities:
Hockey, mountain bike and BMX riding, football, cricket, soccer, swimming, surfing, equestrian, horse racing, clay and target shooting, archery, go cart racing, basketball
- Adventure sports
- NSW Surfing activities

Cross Regional Assets

- Gloucester / Barrington Tops
- Great Lakes Region
- Port Macquarie:
Timbertown, Koala Hospital, Billabong Koala Wildlife Park

Arts, Culture and Heritage Based

- Manning Entertainment Centre
- Manning Regional Art Gallery
- Museums:
Wingham, Cundletown and Tinonee
- Gardens and Nurseries - open gardens and specialised nurseries
- Events, including:
 - * Akoostik Festival and Fireworks
 - * ANZAC Day Ceremonies
 - * Australia Day - Hallidays Point, Harrington, Old Bar, Taree, Wingham
 - * Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival
 - * Charity-Based Events: Walk for Life, Starlight
 - * Christmas Carol events
 - * Envirofair
 - * Hallidays Point fun day
 - * Harrington Festival
 - * Killabakh - Day in the Country
 - * Manning Winter Festival
 - * Old Bar Beach Festival
 - * Relay for Life Manning Valley
 - * Stan Austin Memorial Under 16s Cricket
 - * Taree Agricultural Show
 - * Taree Craftathon
 - * Taree Cup weekend including cup day
 - * Taree Easter Powerboat Spectacular
 - * Taree Open Art Exhibition
 - * Taree Riverbank
 - * Taree Summer Regatta
 - * Troy Bayliss Classic
 - * Volunteer Rescue Association Weekend on Wheels
 - * Wingham Beef Week
 - * Wingham Community Christmas Street Carnival
 - * Wingham Show
 - * Wingham Summertime Rodeo

 Manning Valley
...naturally

1.5 Key Imagery and Videography

In May 2014 the Manning Valley image library was updated with quality commercial photos specifically for our three core target markets. Due to the natural beauty of the region we are fortunate to be able to provide a wide range of nature based, product based and consumer focused high resolution images.

A range of images are available to Manning Valley tourism partners. Various tourism operators in the region also have commercial quality imagery available.

In addition to imagery the region has recently finalised three 30 second commercial quality television commercials.

An ongoing project is underway to increase the high definition video footage of the region for the provision to third parties for promotions, marketing and advertising for online and TV.

The region will require the ongoing updating of imagery, and require additional footage for both online and broadcast. Images are available for industry partners and trade as required.

Selected images and footage have been provided and made available to Destination NSW.



1.6 Key Source Markets and Consumer Segments

Core Market: Domestic Overnight Traveller

Figure 2
Why people come to the Manning Valley

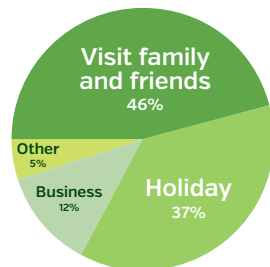


Figure 3
Where Manning Valley visitors come from

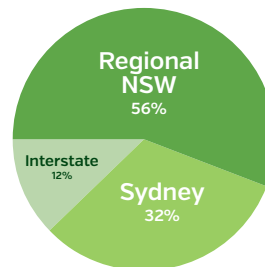
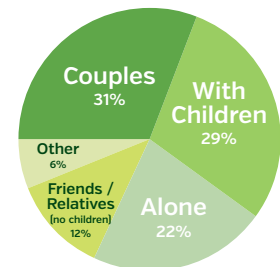


Figure 4
Types of travel Parties to the Manning Valley



Visitation to the Manning Valley has been increasing since June 2012 and currently sits at 699,000 visitors⁸ on average per year. The average stay is three nights.

Figure 5 What visitors like to do in the Manning Valley



⁸Source: International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey, Tourism Research Australia (TRA)

Australian Travel Mindsets

Of the six Australia Travel Mindsets⁹ three are core targets for the Manning Valley.

- Compatriots / Family Traveller**
 Quintessentially middle market, female skew, wanting DFY (do-it-for-you) but forced to compromise, family-focused, role-driven, good shoulder market, activities focused, budget conscious, like resorts and don't like camping, favour 3-star, but aspire to 5-star, self-contained an advantage.
- True Travellers / Adventure Travellers**
 Experimental, adventurous, trail-blazing, immersion travellers who want to experience a single destination in depth, active, physical, overseas orientation, seeking difference and challenge, opinion-leaders, white-collar skew, male skew, take longer holidays, will spend more getting there than being there, definitely DIY.
- Wanderers / Touring Travellers**
 Marked older skew, adult couples, empty nesters, frequent tourists, DIY, great off-peak market, keen observers, widest range of preferences in transport mode, favour difference, continue their 'Darby and Joan' lifestyle when travelling, like to potter.



Figure 6
Travel mindsets for Mid North Coast Travellers

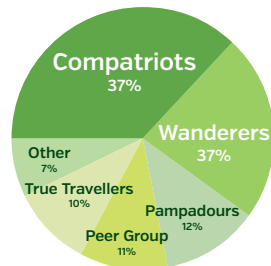


Figure 7
Comparison of visits to Manning Valley with State Average



More adult couples visit the Manning Valley than the state average

Based on international travel party types

More holiday visitors to the Manning Valley than the state average

Based on purpose of visit

Emerging Markets / Growth Markets

- Eco-tourism
- Sports and events packaging
- Conferencing
- Agri-tourism
- Caravanning, RVs and glamping
- Visiting friends and relatives
- Aged and disability respite holidays

In development:

- Organised Tours
- Cross regional promotional options
- Industry Collaboration
- Expanded target markets

⁹ Snapshot year ending March 2014, Travel to the Mid North Coast sub-region, at www.destinationnsw.com.au/tourism/facts-and-figures/regional-tourism-statistics/north-coast-region

1.7 Key Infrastructure

Transport

- Airport
- Easy access to Pacific Highway
- XPT – stops at Taree and Wingham
- Coaches
- Hire Car
- Bus service to Newcastle Airport

Other

- Manning River, waterways and beaches
- Strong brand:
Manning Valley...naturally™
- Highway billboards
- NBN Facilities (Broadband)
- Visitor Information Centre
- Town Entry Signs
- TAFE, University study centres

Facilities

- River – good access to river with pontoons and boat launching facilities
- Sporting facilities
- Beaches and coastline
- Wetlands
- Subtropical rainforests
- Farm experiences
- National Parks and State Forests
- Regional Shopping Centre
- Services – hospital and medical specialists
- Diverse range of accommodation
- Good river infrastructure
- CBD parking
- Private and public hospital services and facilities (and aligned with John Hunter Hospital) oncology, scans, specialists

Unique selling points to focus on

- Proximity to Sydney
- Gateway to Mid North Coast
- Cost effective base with a diverse range of holiday and accommodation options – families, grey nomads
- Climate
- Quality lifestyle
- Friendly, welcoming
- Diverse range of natural attractions
- Agricultural industry – oysters, fishing, dairy, beef, manufacturing
- National Parks – Ellenborough Falls
- State Forests
- Wingham Brush
- Cattai Wetlands
- Range of tourism options
- Uncrowded, unpretentious, uncomplicated, unspoilt region
- Education options
- Pristine beaches, coastline, waterways
- Boutique accommodation options

Competitors

Our neighbouring local government areas of Port Macquarie and Great Lakes are well known tourism destinations. We are uniquely positioned to appeal to day trippers from these regions. Visitors do not know nor care about boundaries of LGAs, therefore, establishing working relationships with neighbouring regions will strengthen all of our regions and the visitor economy as a whole.

Destination Brand / Theme

- Manning Valley Coast
- Country on the Coast
- Gateway to the North Coast
- Central and cost effective holiday options
- Unspoilt
- Manning Valley Hinterland
- Country hospitality
- Manning Valley Country
- Natural, clean and green
- Place to spend quality time with partner, family friends
- Something for everyone / choice
- Relax and rejuvenate



1.8 Key Communication Channels

- Ambassadors
- Billboards
- Cartoscope
- Cross regional collaboration
- Destination Management Plan
- Face-to-face
- Image library
- Local events
- Local media – Focus Magazine & Manning River Times
- Manning Valley Visitor Guide
- Partner websites
- Partners
- Phone – 1800 182 733
- Publications
- Publicity of quality tourism operators
- Social media channels
- The Legendary Pacific Coast
- The www.manningvalley.info website
- Trade shows
- TV advertising
- Visit NSW



2 Destination Direction

2.1 Focus

Marketing focus will be proportionate to visitation research – visiting family and friends (46%), holiday (37%), business tourism (12%) and others (5%).

By focusing on the following areas we will be able to achieve our vision and work towards achieving the State's ambitious target to double overnight visitor expenditure by 2020.

- Product development, diversification and investment attraction
- Stimulate consumer demand
- Product and service delivery
- Regional dispersion
- Brand awareness and immersion
- Industry cohesion
- Lead by experiences
- Increasing the depth of a visitors stay
- Visitor servicing including Visitors Centre, information, signage
- Reporting, research and measurement
- Supporting key markets and working on growth sectors
- Packaging festivals including sports events

2.2 Vision

To make the Manning Valley the visitor location of choice for our target markets and key growth markets.

2.3 Mission

To promote the Manning Valley as a desirable destination for visitors so as to create economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits to the whole community through the development, implementation and performance monitoring of the DMP.

This DMP is in place to work towards the NSW state goal of doubling Visitor Spend by 2020.



2.4 Marketing Analysis

SWOT



Strengths

- Highway signage
- Welcome and town entry signage
- Unique selling points
- Diversity in what the region has to offer
- Proximity to Sydney and Newcastle
- Cost effective holiday options
- Base yourself in the Manning Valley for day trips
- Transport to major centres
- Brand recognition
- Local produce and producers
- Local people in local businesses
- Proximity to LGAs who have high tourist visitation

Weaknesses

- Quality of service
- Inadequate use of websites and social media
- Not seen as comparable to other destinations
- Size
- Understanding of our defined area
- Lack of public transport
- Marketing \$ available
- Amount of cultural diversity in region
- Major commercial attractions
- No strong point of difference
- Roads and bridges

Opportunities

- Special interest events / activities:
 - * Weddings as central location
 - * Small business conferences [less than 200]
 - * Sporting NSW events: hockey facility, pool sports
 - * River sports: rowing, sports boats, cricket
 - * Motor enthusiasts
- River activities and cruises
- Partnering with other regions
- Social media engagement and marketing
- Competitions and offers
- Events and activities
- Identify attractions and reasons to come
- Strengthen brand outside region
- Develop strong partnerships
- International market
- Street scaping
- Walkways, bike tracks
- Indigenous tourism

Threats

- Reduced funding opportunities
- Competition from other regions striving for the same \$
- Socio-economic profile of our region for tourism investors
- Current status of 'stagnation' on the tourism destination lifecycle
- Perceptions associated with natural disasters
- Perceptions of social profile

Key Marketing Assets

- Value for money
- Family friendly
- Diversity of landscape
- Manning River
- Ellenborough Falls and other waterfalls
- Cattai Wetlands
- Beaches
- Agricultural farming land and fresh, local produce
- National Parks and State Forests
- The Valley
- Service facilities hub
- Quiet accommodation – boutique and tranquil
- Aboriginal culture
- Boutique events - most festivals per capita
- Themed experiences at villages:
unspoilt *Manning Valley...naturally* theme
- Three museums plus National Motor Cycle Museum
- Excellent sporting facilities
- Niche tourism-themed businesses

2.5 Goals and Objectives

Of the seven strategic priorities of the Visitor Economy Taskforce Report, Manning Valley has identified five goals to help achieve the New South Wales State Government's objective to double overnight visitor spend by 2020. These are:

Increase Visitation

Grow Physical Capacity

Renew and Revitalise Destinations

Improve the Visitor Experience

Increase Visitor Spend



GOAL

Increase Visitation

[Positioning, Promotion and Selling]

Objectives and Actions

Develop and implement a compelling, consistent and long-term brand strategy for *Manning Valley...naturally* that focuses on the priority target markets and liaise with industry prior to implementation.

- Build on the brand development work already completed, finalise and implement a brand communications strategy for *Manning Valley...naturally* that drives the key brand messaging to attract business, education and leisure visitors.
- Integrate events and festivals' positioning and messaging into the broader brand strategy for the region.
- Establish a systematic theming approach to the promotion of *Manning Valley...naturally* as a destination for use by all key industry and partners.
- Integrate major events and festivals, arts and culture, natural heritage and other relevant positioning into the *Manning Valley...naturally* brand strategy.

Balance Marketing initiatives according to target markets balance between technology, Face-to-Face and printed material.

Develop emerging market opportunities.

Increase tourism partner / operator bundling and packaging.

Take packaged experiences to key events, activities and locations identified.

Make greater use of digital marketing for all promotional activity:

- Build a competitive industry digital marketing capability, harnessing:
 - * online promotion / search engine optimisation
 - * social media networks / video casting / blogs
 - * location and map search functions, smartphone apps, including QR codes
- Expand digital promotions with a focus to increase social media engagement
- Develop and implement social media and targeted digital campaigns
- Investigate the feasibility of mobile phone app
- Ensure web link / social media action is included in all media
- Review and update website
- Improve web statistics
- Perpetual YouTube channel
- Interactive touch screen technology to promote destination information



GOAL

Grow Physical Capacity

[Skills and Labour]

Objectives and Actions

Support tourism partners and operators through key initiatives in the Partner Program, including opportunities for improvement (training – digital media, images, cultural awareness, business planning, grant writing).

Facilitate school-based and technical training in targeted visitor economy industries, for example, marketing, communications, hospitality, tourism and events in partnership with key education institutions:

- Work collaboratively with educational facilities
- Establish work experience program with TAFE
- Establish traineeship / internship program with universities

Ensure our staff are always learning & participate in continuous improvement:

- Visitor Information Centre detailed operations manual
- Up skill staff (including casuals and volunteers) in line with trends and regional direction

Become more active with Destination NSW, Visit NSW, Tourism Australia and the North Coast Destination Network / The Legendary Pacific Coast:

- Develop individual site on the Visit NSW website
- Work collaboratively with The Legendary Pacific Coast
- Cross regional collaboration
- Participate in cooperative campaigns with North Coast Destination Network and neighbouring regions

Establish productive relationships with Business Chambers, businesses, tourism partners, community and internal Council departments.

Embrace a collaborative approach.

Establish effective relations with coach companies and taxi companies to help in education and marketing of our region.

Improve visitor arrivals into our region at airport, train stations, bus drop off points and highway billboards.

Utilise partner and committee member expertise – through industry lead strategy meetings, informal discussion groups, launches and promotions.

Identify Tourism Ambassadors that will appeal to our target market.

Examine ways to increase income streams to return into the *Manning Valley...naturally* marketing initiatives:

- Develop strategy to expand Partner Program
- Develop the theatrette at the Visitor Information Centre as a desired space for hire for business, training and small conferences
- Event and conferencing packages

Expand capacity to the region through airports:

- Increase presence and packages available at Newcastle Airport
- Tap into Port Macquarie Airport
- Ensure Taree Airport is kept on the state tourism radar and maximise opportunities to expand facilities
- Investigate inclusion in conferencing strategy
- Work with neighbouring regions on strategies for Taree Airport



GOAL

Renew and Revitalise Destinations

[Destination Management Planning]

Objectives and Actions

Ensure that the DMP addresses demand and supply, and policy and planning issues including: infrastructure requirements; Tourism Industry development; destination experience; destination brand and positioning; appropriate relevant target markets, major events and festivals, arts, culture, sport and recreation activities; and the role of Crown Lands, including National Parks, State Reserves, heritage precincts and National Landscapes.

- Take a holistic and integrated approach to developing the *Manning Valley...naturally* visitor economy so that the community can reap the financial and social benefits of tourism. Stakeholders will be involved in the approach to address both supply and demand factors to ensure current and future sustainability of our destination.

Develop cross-regional arrangements with adjacent destinations.

Implement DMP:

- Sub committees
- Media releases to promote awareness of DMP
- Ensure internal Council communications encourage community involvement in the promotion of tourism

Investigate RV camping site options.

Protect our key natural assets.

Ensure Manning Valley Tourism Committee includes representatives of visitor economy interests (for example, including representation from Chambers of Commerce, retail, local tourism operators, events and festivals, Crown Lands, including National Parks management, and cultural institutions).



GOAL

Improve the Visitor Experience

[Visitor Services and Experience Development]

Objectives and Actions

Manning Valley Visitor Information Centre to build strong commercial relationships with our visitor products and provide a single delivery and coordinated approach for servicing visitors.

- Train staff and volunteers
- Continue to explore ideas and options to revitalise

Review the role, location and operation of the visitor information centre and explore turning the centre into 'experience' gateways that showcase a destination's key experiences and link effectively with other destinations.

- Introduce tourism information into libraries
- Provide free Wi-Fi at visitor information hotspots in the region
- Investigate turning the Centre into a business, educational and cultural hub - a multipurpose facility

Review tourist route and other wayfinding road signage policy and guidelines in consultation with Destination NSW and RMS to ensure the appropriate timely facilitation and enhancement of road travel and touring by visitors.

Coordinated and consistent approach to messaging for our region.

Integrate arts and culture into the visitor experience.

Encourage and support festivals and events.

Strengthen the Partner Program, increase membership and promote benefits:

- Sub committee
- Strategy for promoting new partners
- What are you missing out on?

Develop new products and experiences.

- Develop itineraries showcasing the unique Manning Valley experience including wineries, food, wildlife, adventure, lookouts, shopping, arts and culture, family, kids, wet weather
- Develop a series of videos to be online focusing on unique experiences
- Build on the 'Experience' Manning Valley theme
- Develop cooperative marketing opportunities and experiences – work with industry to create package deals for twice yearly campaigns – ensure these are being measured by industry
- Participate in the Restaurant Australia website and promotions

Develop a year-round, well-planned and co-ordinated calendar of major events and festivals for the Manning Valley and surrounds that results in events complementing each other, rather than being in competition with one another.

- Streamline approval processes and enable long-term Development Approvals to be obtained for events and festivals
- Expand and promote a year-round regional events and festivals calendar

Identify nature and heritage tourism experiences and develop a co-ordinated and more dynamic approach to delivery of these opportunities.

Develop and promote Great Walks in NSW to enhance visitor nature experiences.





GOAL

Increase Visitor Spend

[Visitor Yield]

Objectives and Actions

Increase length of stay from an average of three nights:

- Expand on *27 reasons to stay another day*
- Develop appealing extended-stay packages - accommodation and meal/s; accommodation and tour/s; travel, accommodation, tour/s and meal/s

Convert day trippers into overnight stays.

Extend marketing to include food and wine experiences.

Promote shopping destinations:

- Identify niche markets

Develop emerging markets.

Improve Manning Valley Visitor Economy:

- Review and develop Partnership Program to ensure meeting the expectations, trends and is continually improving and growing in numbers
- Education and awareness strategies
- Regular media releases

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase Manning Valley Facebook likes by 50%
- Increase unique Manning Valley website hits by 15%
- Double overnight visitor spend by 2020
- Increase partner program participation
- Better local statistics numbers

3 Destination Requirements

3.1 Human Resources

Greater Taree City Council employs a number of people to oversee destination management and visitor services on behalf of the destination. The tourism and public relations team is responsible for the planning and implementation of this DMP.

These positions include:

- Team Leader Tourism and Public Relations
- Public Relations Officer
- Digital Media Officer
- Tourism Officer
- Communications Support Officer
- Casual Visitor Services Officers (7)

3.2 Financial Resources

It is recognised the budget for Manning Valley Tourism is limited and requires the support of external funding and partner marketing opportunities to gain effective reach into target markets.

The key financial stakeholders are: Greater Taree City Council, the tourism partners, with a key partner for marketing funding and major event funding being Destination NSW through our Regional Tourism Organisation.

3.3 Key Risks

- Decline in quality or loss of tourism product
- Reduction in marketing or major event budget
- Decline in visitation numbers
- Lack of industry cohesion / fractured industry
- Reduction of political support for tourism
- Reduction of funding
- No new product development in region
- Poor image / perception of destination through major events [ie flooding]
- Environmental impacts – forestry, flooding, drought, water usage





Need to contact us?

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