



MIDCOAST
council

Destination Management Plan

APPENDIX 5

DMP GAME-CHANGER PROJECTS

NOVEMBER 2017

MIDCOAST COUNCIL DMP

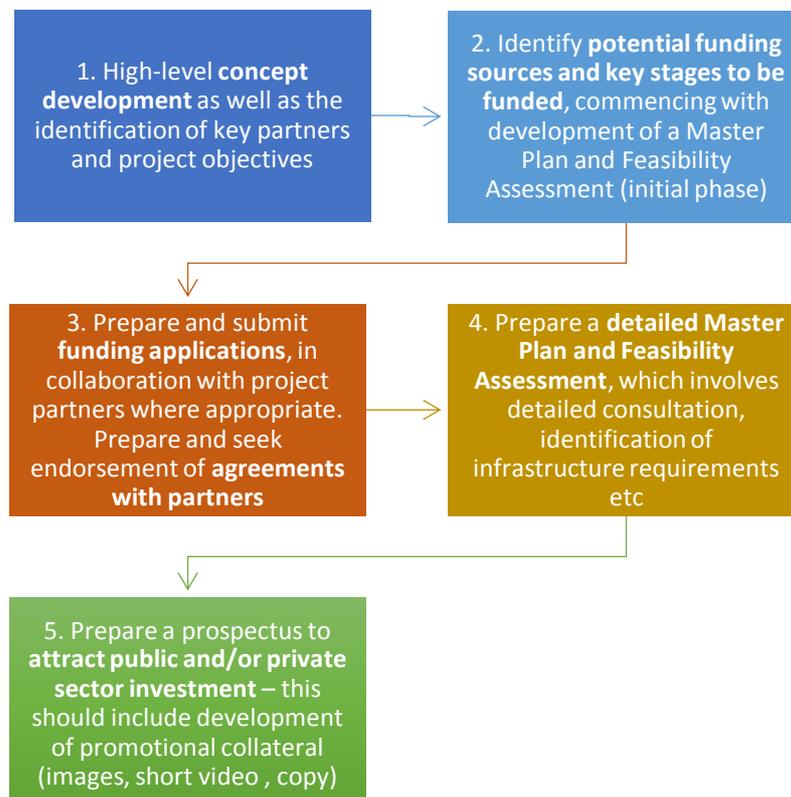
GAME-CHANGER PROJECTS

The following summary of Game-Changer projects, which are proposed in the Destination Management Plan (DMP), provides insight into the concept and high-level thinking behind key initiatives. It is critical that further analysis, assessment and concept development through appropriate master-planning are undertaken to ensure that the concepts are tested in relation to their appeal to the target market and potential feasibility and contribution to the visitor economy.

A further consideration is the resources required to implement the projects. In most cases, it is unlikely that MidCoast Council (MCC) would have sufficient funding or be the appropriate land manager to implement the project. This requires, among other things:

- Identification of appropriate partners or proponents to undertake and deliver the project;
- Potential sources of funding for the initial project requirements, including feasibility analysis and master planning; and
- Review of existing land use or planning policies to enable or incentivise the project.

The DMP sets out a simple five-step process to initiate and commence detailed consideration of each project. It is strongly recommended that these steps are adapted to each project, noting the variation of the scale and scope between the projects. The process is outlined in the following diagram:



The following overview of each game-changer initiative has been structured to outline or address:

- High-level concept
- Priority based on the potential for the project to contribute to the growth of the visitor economy
- Primary lead and potential key partners
- Primary target markets and key tourism trends
- Linkages to other projects and broader economy of the MidCoast region
- State Government goals and regional planning priorities

The game-changer projects identified within the MCC DMP have been grouped in this Appendix as follows:

1. Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project, which was the recipient of a 2016/17 Tourism Demand Driver Infrastructure grant, including:
 - Great Lakes Ecolodge; and
 - Smith's Lake Eco Village.
2. Manning Valley Soil to Sea Produce Precinct, which is linked to the Taree urban revitalisation and would offer benefits to the local communities and business, especially the Manning Valley agricultural sector as well as visitors, including:
 - NABIAC Agricultural Hub, which is an economic development initiative with significant benefits and integrated planning for the visitor economy.
3. Gloucester Visitor Hub, which could be developed in collaboration with the local tourism and hospitality industry, NPWS and Forestry Corporation of NSW
 - Gloucester Dairy Factory Redevelopment, which would be a significant adaptive reuse of quality heritage assets.
4. Outdoor and Nature-based Recreation, which incorporates a range of initiatives including but not limited to:
 - High Ropes Adventure Park, which could be developed with a private sector provider; and
 - World-class Equestrian Destination, which would leverage race days, rodeos, horse-riding trails, beach riding and equestrian events as well as private sector horse studs and the NPWS horse riding strategy.
5. Celebrating Culture on Country, which highlights the importance of acknowledging and showcasing the connection of the Biripi and Worimi Aboriginal people to the MidCoast region, including but not limited to:
 - Dark Point ecolodge or glamping experience, which is also linked to the Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project; and
 - Aboriginal Health & Well-being Retreat, potentially the first of its kind in Australia and involving production of native plants.
6. Centre of Excellence for the Environment and Wetlands, which would reinforce MCC's commitment to environmental sustainability.
7. Forster Tuncurry Revitalisation, which would integrate planning for the visitor economy and tourism.

PROJECT SUMMARIES

1. GREAT LAKES GREAT WALK AND AQUATIC TRAILS	
STRATEGIC THEME	Natural Adventure
CONCEPT OVERVIEW	<p>Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project involves developing an internationally significant Great Walk along a 100 km stretch of coast between Forster and Hawks Nest, incorporating Myall Lakes and Booti Booti National Parks. It would offer myriad opportunities to enhance the accommodation offer of the region as well as nature, culture and adventure-based tours and activities.</p> <p>It would be enhanced by aquatic trails extending from Port Stephens into Myall Lakes, Smiths Lake and Wallis Lake. There is significant potential for the future extension of this initiative into the Hinterland/Barrington Tops World Heritage Area as well as Forster by linking it into the Bicentennial coastal walk.</p> <p>An additional benefit would be the opportunity to promote, raise the profile and elevate the nature and cultural-based perception of many of the smaller villages and towns throughout this part of the MidCoast Region, including Tea Gardens and Bulahdelah among many others.</p>
PRIORITY & CURRENT SITUATION	<p>High priority.</p> <p>This project was the recipient of a NSW Government 2016/17 Tourism Demand Driver Infrastructure (TDDI) grant for completion of a feasibility assessment, master plan and investment prospectus. This phase is due to be completed by 30 June 2018.</p>
PRIMARY LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	MCC and NPWS with involvement of the Forster and Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC). The master plan and feasibility assessment will identify opportunities for private sector involvement, including public access across private land as well as business opportunities such as accommodation, tours and hospitality.
PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS & KEY TOURISM TRENDS	Nature and adventure markets, including active families and active 55+ market. This initiative will be particularly attractive to independent or small groups of female travellers, which delivers on one of the key areas for growth in the nature and adventure-based tourism market. It also provides myriad opportunities for immersive, nature and culture-based tours.
LINKAGES TO OTHER PROJECTS AND SECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Beach Strategy and Forster urban revitalisation, including extension of the Bicentennial coastal walk from Forster to Pacific Palms via Cape Hawke Lookout and Elizabeth Beach • Key accommodation offering to be investigated and assessed through the master plan process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Great Lakes Ecolodge. This could potentially be located near Bluey's Beach. A key feature would be ocean or lake views and easy access to the proposed Great Walk. It could also provide the base for a 'hub and spoke' model, offering nature and adventure-based tours and activities all within easy access or out to the World Heritage-listed Barrington

1. GREAT LAKES GREAT WALK AND AQUATIC TRAILS	
	<p>Tops.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Smith’s Lake Eco Village. There is an opportunity for the private sector to invest in the development of an eco-village on the ocean-side of Smith’s Lake, which would introduce a new style of accommodation into the region that would appeal to new target markets identified within the DMP. The opportunity to create public spaces to host activities such as local produce or farmers markets as well as easy access to kayaking, hiking or surfing would enhance the attractiveness of this initiative, particularly if it included access to the proposed Great Walk project. In addition, its positioning would contribute to the perception of the region’s commitment to sustainability. ○ Dark Point ecolodge or glamping experience within Myall Lakes National Park. While the exact location of this infrastructure would need careful consideration and be subject of detailed consultation with and collaboration between the LALC, Aboriginal community and NSW NPWS, it has the potential to provide world-class coastal and cultural experience as part of the Great Walk. There is an outstanding opportunity for the active involvement, ownership and management by the local Aboriginal community as part of sharing and celebrating their culture on country, including through the delivery of tours, feasts and other activities. This project links to the Celebrating Culture on Country priority outlined below. ○ Opportunity to further develop and enhance the waterfront access at Tea Gardens, including walking trails along the river toward Myall Lakes as well as improved access for boats providing transfers to Port Stephens or Broughton Island as well as whale and dolphin watching or ocean fishing tours, which would value add to the Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails experience. ○ Broughton Island provides an outstanding example of the diversity of nature-based camping experiences across the region that immerse visitors in a variety of nature-based activities including snorkelling and diving.
STATE GOVERNMENT GOALS & REGIONAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NSW Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan ● Hunter Regional Plan 2036

2. MANNING VALLEY SOIL TO SEA (MVSS) PRODUCE PRECINCT	
STRATEGIC THEME	Nature's Bounty
CONCEPT OVERVIEW	<p>The Manning Valley and broader MidCoast region offer an outstanding range of quality produce, from seafood including oysters through to internationally-recognised beef and more boutique produce such as buffalo cheese and Manuka honey. As a result, there is a unique opportunity to create the ultimate produce hub within MidCoast, which showcases and profiles the region's produce, strengthens collaboration between the visitor economy and the agricultural sector and provides a base for promoting and growing agri-business and agri-education. A key benefit will be to provide the linkage between the hospitality sector and producers, enabling the improved supply, use and promotion of local produce across the region. In addition, it would provide a hub to promote and involve some of the towns and villages around Taree, including Wingham and the broader region's food and drink offer.</p> <p>Soil to Sea produce event and markets should be also considered as a high priority to provide a 'taste' of the Precinct's potential and start to build community support for the initiative (see below).</p> <p>The Precinct would involve the restoration and revitalization of two key hubs, potentially linked by a cycleway. The two proposed hubs are the Taree Fisherman's Coop (Fish Coop) on the banks of the Manning River and the former Dairy Factory, set back but connected to the former Fish Coop by a disused rail line. The first stage should focus on the Fish Coop, which should be connected by a shared path (cycling and walking) along the riverfront of Taree's CBD and on to Old Bar (see below). A second stage would involve the redevelopment of the former Dairy Factory.</p>
PRIORITY & CURRENT SITUATION	High priority to commence master planning and feasibility assessment. It will be important to identify opportunities for grant funding to enable the master planning, feasibility assessment and potentially investing in the development of the cycleway between Taree and Old Bar as a key piece of community infrastructure.
PRIMARY LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	MCC, land owners and agricultural sector, including high profile producers and seafood providers as well as TAFE and the Business Chamber
PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS & KEY TOURISM TRENDS	Nature and adventure markets, the active 55+ market as well as food lovers. Leverages the global trends relating to the continuing growth of the contemporary female traveller market as well as the trend towards experiencing locally sourced and curated food and drink. There are also opportunities to enable immersive, personalised tours.
LINKAGES TO OTHER PROJECTS AND SECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycleway between the MVSS Precinct and Old Bar along the riverfront and connecting the precinct with places of interest, beaches and key hospitality sites in Old Bar (for example, Flow Bar). This would provide an outstanding community asset, which would provide preventative health and active lifestyle benefits while also being attractive to tourists and travellers.

2. MANNING VALLEY SOIL TO SEA (MVSS) PRODUCE PRECINCT	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil to Sea produce event and markets to recognise and promote the diverse and seasonal produce or ‘nature’s bounty’ offered by region. This would raise the profile and contribution of the region’s agricultural sector. It would also provide insights into and an early ‘taste’ of the potential for the development of the MVSS Precinct. This could involve or leverage existing markets or events that promote local produce, food and drink. • ‘Share our Produce’ capacity building and networking program to encourage greater awareness, use and promotion of local produce, including food and drink • Provides a key site within day or multi-day itineraries, including linking into Farm Gate Trails • NABIAC Agricultural Hub, which is a core economic development initiative with significant benefits and integrated planning opportunities for the visitor economy. It could be linked to the Taree-based precinct, enabling the region to offer and promote the ‘working country’ aspect of the NABIAC Agricultural Hub with the consumer and industry-focused MVSS Precinct. <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region’s agri-businesses, including the growing interest in bee keeping – should also involve Taree Airport to further facilitate produce export potential and enhance links to the MidCoast Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) • Agri-education offer, such as provided by Taree TAFE • Art and culture offer of the region, including the Manning Valley Gallery – there is an opportunity to link and cross-promote these experiences, demonstrating the richness of the visitor experience offering
STATE GOVERNMENT GOALS AND REGIONAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan • Hunter Regional Plan 2036 • MidCoast REDS

3. GLOUCESTER VISITOR HUB	
STRATEGIC THEME	Natural Adventure and Vibrant Country Life
CONCEPT OVERVIEW	The concept would be to reimagine and enhance the profile of the Gloucester and Barrington Tops World Heritage experience offer, including other key hinterland villages such as Stroud. A core component would be collaboration between key organisations, such as NPWS, NSW Forestry Corporation, Gloucester Tourism and the Visitor Information Centre as well as private sector tourism operators. It would act as the hub of the visitor experience, providing contemporary high quality interpretation, information and promotion of the wide range of outdoor recreation, nature and cultural-based experiences as well as facilitating bookings, including for accommodation. Importantly, the hub should be strategically located to improve services to the traditional visitor markets as well as growing markets, such as active

3. GLOUCESTER VISITOR HUB	
	families and the more active 55+. For example, this could include vehicle servicing as well as profiling the best of the region’s retail offer. A key requirement for the hub to elevate the appeal of the destination while ensuring it continues to encourage increased traffic to ‘main street’ businesses.
PRIORITY & CURRENT SITUATION	High priority. An initial step will be to further strengthen the concept in collaboration between key partners, including NPWS and NSW Forestry Corporation as well as identifying appropriate funding sources for the developmental process.
PRIMARY LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	MCC, in particular through Gloucester Tourism as well as NPWS, Forestry Corporation of NSW and industry.
PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS & KEY TOURISM TRENDS	This initiative is strongly focused on enhancing services for the more traditional visitor markets as well as growing markets, such as active families and the more active 55+. There is a strong domestic and global tourism trend for more genuine and personal interaction with locals that links directly to high-quality interpretation and visitor information.
LINKAGES TO OTHER PROJECTS AND SECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manning Valley Soil to Sea Produce Precinct, Events and Markets. The opportunity to profile and cross-promote the agricultural and produce offer of the region, including local hand-made products that leverage local produce. This could also include profiling local artisans or artists. • Gloucester Dairy Factory Redevelopment, which would be a significant adaptive reuse of quality heritage assets. There are a number of challenges in relation to this potential game-changer project, including that the site is currently under private ownership, the cost of heritage restoration for adaptive reuse is substantial and the location of the site is currently not directly connected into the country train network (although sits on a railway siding). As a result, while this project could proceed through the developmental process identified for game-changer projects, it is a lower-order priority and the responsibility of the current landowner to progress, including any associated discussions with Transport NSW. It should also be noted that the cost of realigning the train line to integrate with the Gloucester Dairy Factory site would be costly and likely to be a lower-order priority for the NSW Government. • Cross-promotional opportunities with surrounding regions such as the Hunter and into key domestic day source markets such as Newcastle. This should leverage existing work done by the Barrington Tops Promotion Group, which included Dungog Shire Council.
STATE GOVERNMENT GOALS AND REGIONAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan • Hunter Regional Plan 2036

4. OUTDOOR AND NATURE-BASED RECREATION	
STRATEGIC THEME	Natural Adventure, Vibrant Country Life, Contemporary Coast
CONCEPT OVERVIEW	<p>MidCoast offers a wide range of outdoor and nature-based recreational opportunities, including sporting facilities and infrastructure, such as extensive terrestrial and aquatic trail networks that support recreational activities such as horse-riding, fishing, diving, hiking and mountain biking. There are also a large number of events held across the region that profile or focus on key recreational activities, ranging from rodeos through to fishing competitions and mountain biking events. This game changer project would involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding value to participants by linking existing events to cultural events that help to raise the personality or profile of the region, for example linking the proposed ‘Town Hall Akoostiks’ music events with the rodeos and other equestrian events to reinforce the vibrant country life theme and raise the perception of the region as a world-class equestrian destination, with horse studs, other equestrian facilities and outstanding nature-based horse trails • Creating day and multi-day itineraries and enhancing information for visitors (and locals) on the range of outdoor recreation and adventure opportunities, in particular through undertaking an audit of the experience offer and developing itineraries that link experiences with the events program and potentially tours such as a Waters and Wetlands Tour. In addition, develop new content (images, video and copy) to promote the wide range of outdoor recreation opportunities across the region while also reviewing the scheduling of events to optimise visitation outside of peak periods • Introducing or developing new events, such as a Weekend Warriors Series or acquiring high profile events, such as equestrian or mountain biking events • Promoting the range of guided experiences and tours across the region, such as kayaking from Tea Gardens. It would also assist in raising the profile of many of the villages and towns, such as Tea Gardens, Bulahdelah and Harrington, which offer some fo the region’s more immersive and authentic nature and cultural-based experiences • Integrating junior events or event series, such as an expanded Junior Spirit event (leveraging the Forster event and integrating ‘Teen Spirit’ activities), the proposed high ropes adventure course (see below) and mountain biking technical track in Forster • Prioritise investment into supporting infrastructure, such as the Forster Tuncurry ‘Lake to Ocean Trail’, mountain biking technical track in Forster, Gloucester lookout walking trail and the shared path from Taree to Old Bar, including maintaining or enhancing existing trails such as the mountain biking trails at the Kiwarrak Mountain Bike Park (near Taree) and the Cape Hawke Lookout and Bi-Centennial walking trails (around Forster). This approach could be developed in collaboration with NPWS and Forestry Corporation of NSW to ensure strategic investment to facilitate linkages and

4. OUTDOOR AND NATURE-BASED RECREATION	
	<p>loops across lands managed by difference land management authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop up tented accommodation should be considered in some locations to highlight the potential for new sustainable accommodation, such as ecolodges or safari-style tents, which can be developed to cater for different price points, or to support events by adding additional capacity. A review of the existing accommodation offer, including the type or style of accommodation is an important step towards strengthening the region's appeal to new markets (enabling priority). This initiative is linked to the Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project.
PRIORITY & CURRENT SITUATION	<p>High priority, including collaboration across the region's peak recreation interest groups or clubs, recreation activity or tour providers as well as event organisers, for example dive and fishing operators, cycling groups such as the Tip Riders, Taree Aquatic Club, sporting associations and horse-riding groups.</p> <p>An investment strategy for outdoor, sports and nature-based recreation facilities and infrastructure is also required as a priority. For nature and adventure-based trails, this could be developed in collaboration with the Forestry Corporation of NSW and NPWS, in particular for sites such as Cape Hawke Lookout as well as walking trails and camping grounds in Myall Lakes, Booti Booti, Wallingat, Saltwater and Barrington Tops National Parks.</p> <p>This game-changer project provides an outstanding opportunity to deliver social, health and well-being benefits to the communities of MidCoast as well as being attractive to visitors.</p>
PRIMARY LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	<p>MCC in collaboration with industry and recreation interest groups and clubs. A potential lead for the High Ropes Adventure Course (see below) would be the Forestry Corporation of NSW and NPWS in relation to maintaining and enhancing existing walking trails in NSW National Parks.</p>
PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS & KEY TOURISM TRENDS	<p>This priority delivers directly on the key motivations and interests of active families, event participants as well as those seeking a more immersive nature-based experience, in particular groups of young adults. Given the growing interest in nature and adventure-based tourism as well as health and well-being, in particular among contemporary female travellers, these actions would deliver a more attractive proposition for domestic and international tourism markets. As noted above, there are also significant benefits for the local communities of the region, contributing the destination's perceived vibrancy and nature-based positioning.</p>
LINKAGES TO OTHER PROJECTS AND SECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World-class equestrian destination. The repositioning of the region to elevate horse-riding activities and trails would also enable the promotion of the region's horse studs, equestrian facilities and infrastructure and events from rodeos, race days through to dressage. It would also leverage the NPWS horse riding strategy.

4. OUTDOOR AND NATURE-BASED RECREATION	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s health and well-being market, including events such as a Weekend Warrior series. • Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project, including the development and promotion of new walking and kayaking trails. • Children’s outdoor activities, including the Forster mountain biking trail, high ropes course (see below) and competitive regional sporting events, which all deliver for Active Families • High Ropes Adventure Course – this is a potential initiative that could be developed on either private or public lands, such as those managed by the Forestry Corporation of NSW. The strengthening of the MidCoast region’s economy through the amalgamation process and repositioning to profile its nature and adventure-based offer would support the feasibility of private sector investment in this type of outdoor activity. It would add to the region’s offer for active families, particularly during non-peak periods while also encouraging regional dispersal and increased day visits from Newcastle and the Hunter Region.
STATE GOVERNMENT GOALS AND REGIONAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan

5. CELEBRATING CULTURE ON COUNTRY	
STRATEGIC THEME	Celebrating Culture on Country and Natural Adventure
CONCEPT OVERVIEW	<p>The MidCoast region (MCC) is situated on the traditional lands of the Biripi and Worimi Aboriginal people. This creates a unique opportunity to further develop the Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences to strengthen the visitor economy and provide benefits to the local Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>The domestic and international markets interested in nature, cultural and adventure-based tourism as well as the active families and 55+ markets are all seeking more immersive, genuine experiences that involve local Aboriginal people and their stories, whether they be told through tours, art or food.</p> <p>As a result, this game changer initiative encompasses a number of projects that would lift the destination’s perception and offering as a dynamic, authentic and engaging culture. Each of the projects outlined below relate to each other as well as providing linkages to other major initiatives, including the Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project.</p>
PRIORITY & CURRENT SITUATION	High priority, noting the need for each project to be carefully assessed through an appropriate developmental process and with the involvement of the Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC), the Aboriginal community and relevant organisations such as NPWS. This will also need to involve ongoing support, in particular for capacity building initiatives that enable job creation and sustainable business

5. CELEBRATING CULTURE ON COUNTRY	
	development for local Aboriginal people.
PRIMARY LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	Joint initiative between MCC, LALC and NPWS, among others.
PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS & KEY TOURISM TRENDS	<p>This initiative delivers to the nature and adventure-based market, both for domestic and international travellers. Many of the projects outlined below would also appeal to contemporary female travellers and younger adults travelling in groups as well as active families and the 55+ markets.</p> <p>Key global tourism trends relate to the significant growth of the nature and adventure based tourism market, especially when coupled with cultural tourism. Likewise, there is increasing interest in more immersive and genuine engagement with local people and their stories, including for the luxury market.</p>
LINKAGES TO OTHER PROJECTS AND SECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Health and Well-being Retreat – potentially the first of its kind in Australia and involving cultivation of native plants to create spa-treatment products as well as for unique food experiences. The preferred location, master plan and feasibility of this project would need to be determined in line with the developmental process outlined within the DMP. It is recommended that a site within the Barrington Tops World Heritage Area be identified, either on public or private land, with close involvement of the Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), NPWS, Forestry Corporation of NSW and MCC. A key area to be investigated is creation of jobs for the local Aboriginal community, from construction through to retreat staffing and management of the native plant nursery. It may also be possible to draw on the expertise of successful retreat operators in Australia (or New Zealand) as part of a capacity-building and ongoing mentoring program. This retreat, if delivered as a high-quality or luxury experience, would be highly attractive to the domestic and international Leading Lifestyle market, especially given the proximity to Sydney and Newcastle international airports. • Dark Point ecolodge or glamping experience, which is linked to the Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project. It requires collaboration and partnerships to be developed between the Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALC), the Aboriginal community and NPWS. This project is already being incorporated into the developmental process undertaken with TDDI grant funding for the Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project. • Develop a concept and detailed proposal for the creation of a permanent contemporary Aboriginal Art Collection at Manning Valley Regional Art Gallery at Taree. It would enhance the profile of regional artists while also assisting to attract exhibitions of Indigenous art from other regions of Australia or internationally. This proposal would leverage the extraordinary success of the Manning Regional Art Gallery and its <i>Cultures of the Manning Festival</i>. The proposal should include the inclusion of an Aboriginal

5. CELEBRATING CULTURE ON COUNTRY	
	<p>Art Prize as a category in the annual art prize competition while also consider opportunities for an art and culture outreach program to activate and profile Aboriginal artists, artisans or musicians across the MidCoast region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of day or multi-day itineraries for both nature and cultural-based tours, either self-guided or delivered by a tourism operator, including by or involving the local Aboriginal community. For example, the development of Waters and Wetland Tours through to Junior Discovery Trails.
STATE GOVERNMENT GOALS AND REGIONAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan • NSW Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2013 - 2016 • Hunter Regional Plan 2036 • MidCoast Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) • Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails master plan and feasibility assessment 2017-18

6. CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND WETLANDS	
STRATEGIC THEME	Contemporary Coast and Nature's Bounty
CONCEPT OVERVIEW	<p>Centre of Excellence for the Environment and Wetlands, which would showcase and reinforce MCC's commitment to environmental sustainability while also demonstrating the link between conservation and productivity, in particular for the agricultural sector. For example, activities such as oyster farming, which benefits from the pristine water quality of the lake system as well as honey production, which would be strengthened through the development of a Manuka honey industry leveraging the high quality wetlands of the region.</p> <p>There is a key opportunity to provide visitor experiences that enhance the stories of Aboriginal culture, for example through Waters and Wetland Tours as well as strengthening the interpretation of and access to the dynamic waterways of the region that stretch from the mountains to the sea.</p>
PRIORITY & CURRENT SITUATION	Medium priority, following assessment through the developmental process outlined in the DMP
PRIMARY LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	MCC in collaboration with the private sector (including land owners on Smith's Lake), higher education institutions and the LALCs
PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS & KEY TOURISM TRENDS	This initiative delivers to the nature and adventure-based market, both for domestic and international travellers. Many of the projects outlined below would also appeal to younger adults, especially those who travel in small groups and have a strong interest in sustainability.
LINKAGES TO OTHER PROJECTS AND SECTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manning Valley Soil to Sea Produce Precinct, including links to specific agricultural or fishery industries, including bee keeping and oyster farming, among others • Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails, in particular in relation to building content to enhance interpretation and provide more immersive experiences that contribute to a greater understanding

6. CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND WETLANDS	
	<p>of the importance of the conservation of waterways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smith’s Lake Eco Village, which is also linked to the Great Lakes Great Walk and Aquatic Trails project. The key opportunity would be to link the location of the Centre of Excellence to a new and sustainable accommodation development, with access to local produce and nature-based experiences • Cattai Wetlands and the enhancement of the visitor experience, which could include Waters and Wetland Tours and demonstrate the commitment to pristine and productive waters and wetlands across the MidCoast region
STATE GOVERNMENT GOALS AND REGIONAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan • Hunter Regional Plan 2036 • MidCoast Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS)

7. FORSTER TUNCURRY REVITALISATION	
STRATEGIC THEME	Contemporary Coast and Natural Adventure
CONCEPT OVERVIEW	Forster Tuncurry already delivers a peak-period holiday opportunity for many families and retired couples or groups of friends. However, there is an opportunity to revitalise the existing offer and create a more contemporary coastal experience, which leverages the natural and cultural assets of the region and integrates planning for the visitor economy, tourism and events, including conferences and weddings. It also provides an opportunity to profile the artists and artisans of this part of the region. A key to success will be to reposition the urban experience to attract new markets and encourage repeat visitation, including outside of the traditional peak summer period. It would have the added benefit of attracting new businesses and adding a sense of vibrancy to the destination, which would deliver social benefits to the local community and enhance the appeal of the region to retain younger adults within the community or attract new residents.
PRIORITY & CURRENT SITUATION	Long-term planning, including opportunities to improve traffic and pedestrian movement through the main centre and connectivity between Wallis Lake and the ocean beaches should be commenced as a high priority. This would assist in the strategic identification of key corridors and town-centre planning. At present, the town centres of both Forster and Tuncurry are impeded by high volumes of traffic and people during peak periods as well as poor pedestrian connectivity between the centres and the ocean front, which is one of the region’s primary natural assets.
PRIMARY LEAD & KEY PARTNERS	MCC
PRIMARY TARGET MARKETS & KEY TOURISM TRENDS	This initiative is strongly focused on enhancing services and the appeal of the destination for the more traditional visitor markets as well as growing markets, such as active families, younger adults and the more active 55+ market. It would also enhance the attractiveness of the region to host conferences and special events such as weddings.
LINKAGES TO OTHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forster Main Beach Strategy, including investment in maintaining

7. FORSTER TUNCURRY REVITALISATION	
PROJECTS AND SECTORS	<p>and enhancing existing facilities, trails and connectivity, such as Main Beach Surf Club, Cape Hawke Lookout and Bi-Centennial Walking Trails and Forster Tuncurry Lake to Ocean Trail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forster mountain biking technical/single track • Manning Valley Soil to Sea Produce Precinct and events, such as produce markets. This location is ideal to showcase seafood from the region, including oysters as well as more boutique agricultural produce from the region • Linkages to key scenic sites and facilities that offer opportunities for the wedding and special event market or to support smaller-scale conferences
STATE GOVERNMENT GOALS AND REGIONAL PLANNING PRIORITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan • Hunter Regional Plan 2036 • MidCoast Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS)