

To Draft Hunter Regional Plan

Submission

24<sup>th</sup> February, 2016

Dear Panel,

Through no fault of the writers of the 'Draft Hunter Regional Plan', tourism to and through the Dungog Shire is grossly under-represented in the Draft Plan, partly because previously the Shire saw itself as a mainly cattle-breeding, dairying and timber-getting shire. However, these industries are static, diminished or gone, and the tourist potential for Dungog is growing but largely untapped and unrecognised by signs, websites, maps etc of the Hunter.

The potential can be summarised as follows:

1. **No minerals:** Dungog Shire, having no mineral deposits, has retained its totally fresh country flavour throughout.
2. **Ideal Event Town:** The town of Dungog is becoming something of an events town, with all features within walking distance, and capable, so far, of holding events up to 14,000 people.
3. **The Common:** The 600 acre English-style Common on the edge of the town is ideal for hiking, cycling, bike riding, horse riding in a safe environment, with huge natural amphitheatres for large-scale events.
4. **Nearest point to Sydney:** Dungog is the *nearest departure point to Sydney for access to the* Barrington Tops National Park, Dungog being only 2.5 hour drive from Sydney. From Dungog walks such as the Blue Gum Loop Walk and the Jerusalem Creek Walk, to mention just a couple, consist of magnificent remnants of the the Gondwana Rainforests of pre-history, preserved in their natural state. In addition, the train link from Sydney to Dungog town is around 3.5 hours direct and allows easy access for the non-driver.
5. **'Horseshoe Drive'/'Gondwana Drive':** An underdeveloped Tourist Drive (from the perspective of signage) is what has been called the Horseshoe or Gondwana Drive. This leaves the highway in the Raymond Terrace area, passing through Clarence Town, Dungog, Gresford, Vacy, Paterson and joins the New England Highway in the Maitland area (or vice versa). The drive can be achieved in a day or a month, depending on the activities which bring the tourists to the area. Both Gresford and Dungog are stepping-off points to the Gondwana Forests and the road between these two towns, rarely shown on maps as a tourist road, is arguably the most scenic road in the Hunter Valley.
6. **Potential:** Being underdeveloped, this area has the greatest potential of all for the greater

development of tourism in the Hunter Region, but it is necessary to give it more prominence in general literature of the region, as well as an improvement in internal strategies.

**7. Dungog Shire (PAW River Valleys) Tourism Strategy and Destination Management**

**Plan:** Up until now, the Dungog people had depended on Hunter Tourism for inclusion in the Hunter Tourism Destination Management Plan. This resulted in almost no mention of Dungog at all, probably because of a lack of 'push' by Dungog. However, please find here also another attachment, a copy of the just approved Destination Management Plan and Tourism Strategy for Dungog Shire, the result of the tourism community coming together to kick-start tourism in Dungog Shire - the Paterson, Allyn and Williams River (PAW) Valleys, which run together into the Hunter River. (This, by the way, is independent of any outcome of the current amalgamation proposals). The Council this month approved their involvement in the Strategy, and to change their funding priorities to accommodate the plan.

On Behalf of the Tourism Advisory Committee Working Group, a 355 committee of the Dungog Shire, consisting of both Councillors and members of the Tourism Industry and the Dungog and District Chamber of Commerce, I request that you give further consideration to the Action 2.2.2 in the Draft Hunter Tourism Plan to give more prominence to the potential of enhancing tourism infrastructure in the Dungog Shire, namely, the drive mentioned above, along with others already mentioned, "The Lakes Way, Bucketts Way, Nelson Bay Road and Wine Country Drive".

Kind Regards

Nancy Knudsen

Chair

355 Committee Tourism Advisory Committee Tourism Strategy Working Group  
Dungog Shire.

# **Dungog Shire**

## **Visitor Economy**

### **2015 -2018**

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## Executive Summary

The Dungog Visitor Economy plan has been developed to provide a strategic framework to guide the Dungog tourism industry over the next three years. The plan provides a new and exciting direction for the Dungog Tourism Industry and its partners.

The implementation of the plan will see the Dungog Shire Industry;

- ✓ Foster a coordinated modern Tourism Industry in Dungog Shire
- ✓ Implement a coordinated approach to Marketing Dungog Shire
- ✓ Implement a program of product enhancement and development
- ✓ Implement a coordinated approach to events

These four key strategies will be supported by 12 priority actions that will drive the implementation of the plans objectives

1. Implement an alternate Visitor Information delivery methodology to enable Council to reinvest their current Tourism spend into proactive innovative industry support, marketing and product development.
2. Split the current Tourism and Economic Development Officer role to 60% tourism activities and 40% economic development activities. Support this position with a job description and annual KPI's that are based on the strategies and actions in this plan
3. Establish an industry led Dungog Shire Tourism Organisation
4. Implement a new Dungog Shire Brand and brand strategy
5. Implement a marketing strategy for the Dungog Shire
6. Update Dungog Shire's marketing collateral
7. Increase market share by focusing on leading product segments
8. Develop and reinforce the iconic experiences in the Dungog Shire
9. Develop the Village experience
10. Create and market the top 10 experiences of Dungog Shire
11. Develop and Implement a signage plan across the Dungog Shire
12. Develop and implement an events plan for the Dungog Shire

Our measures of success at the end of the three year period will see a;

- ✓ A proactive innovative Tourism Body driven by local industry with 100 members
- ✓ An increase in the new "Dungog" brand awareness and brand usage
- ✓ An increase of 10% of the visitor economy for Dungog Shire to \$52m
- ✓ An active program of existing and new product development
- ✓ A thriving online media presence

## Introduction

In 2011 the NSW State Government established the Visitor Economy Taskforce to develop a strategy to double overnight visitor expenditure to NSW by 2020. The State Government in large measure embraced the findings of the report and set in place an action plan to drive a new paradigm that moves beyond tourism to a new and wider focus on the “visitor economy”. This includes recognising the need for everyone to adopt an integrated approach to tourism; establishing a clearer linkage between social, environmental and economic development and tourism that looks beyond leisure.

According to the Visitor Economy Taskforce, the term “visitor economy” takes into account “broader economic activity than what has been historically defined as tourism and events”. It encompasses the direct and indirect contributions to the economy resulting from a person (a ‘visitor’) travelling outside their usual environment for holiday, leisure, events and festivals, business, conventions and exhibitions, education, to visit friends and relatives and for employment in NSW.

A key element in this new approach is the need to complete a Destination Management Plan (DMP). As guided by the Visitor Economy Taskforce the process of destination management doesn’t happen in isolation. It involves a range of sectors, stakeholder groups and delivery partners — such as government agencies, communities and business groups — working collaboratively to deliver their part of the picture. Communities need to take a holistic destination management approach that includes planning, implementation, regular reviews and assessment. They need to consider and manage the unique natural environments, the cultural attributes and the community of interest at the heart of our tourism destination.

Dungog Shire has now embraced the idea of destination management planning and has developed this Visitor Economy strategic plan to assist with the ongoing development of a viable and vibrant tourism Industry.

The plan has been developed in consultation with community, industry and government and will lay the groundwork for the future success of Dungog Shire’s Tourism Industry.

## Project Methodology

Research and Consultation has been used to determine the strategic opportunities that need to be addressed in the development of this Visitor Economy strategic plan and what the limited human and financial resources available to the industry should concentrate on.

The project methodology included;

- Desktop research and analysis
- On-line surveys. One for the local tourism industry and one for the local Community
- Face to face interviews with business, community and council leaders
- Two local workshops. One for the local community and industry and one for the project steering
- A briefing to Councillors
- Distribution and analysis of a draft
- Finalisation presentation of the plan

## The Visitor Profile

Total visitation to Dungog Shire over the past decade has generally increased from around 160,000 per annum in 2008 and 2009 to over 200,000 per annum in 2014. The following tables show that the visitation is made up of 65% day-trippers, 34% overnight visitors and 1% international visitors. This is fairly consistent within NSW as a whole.

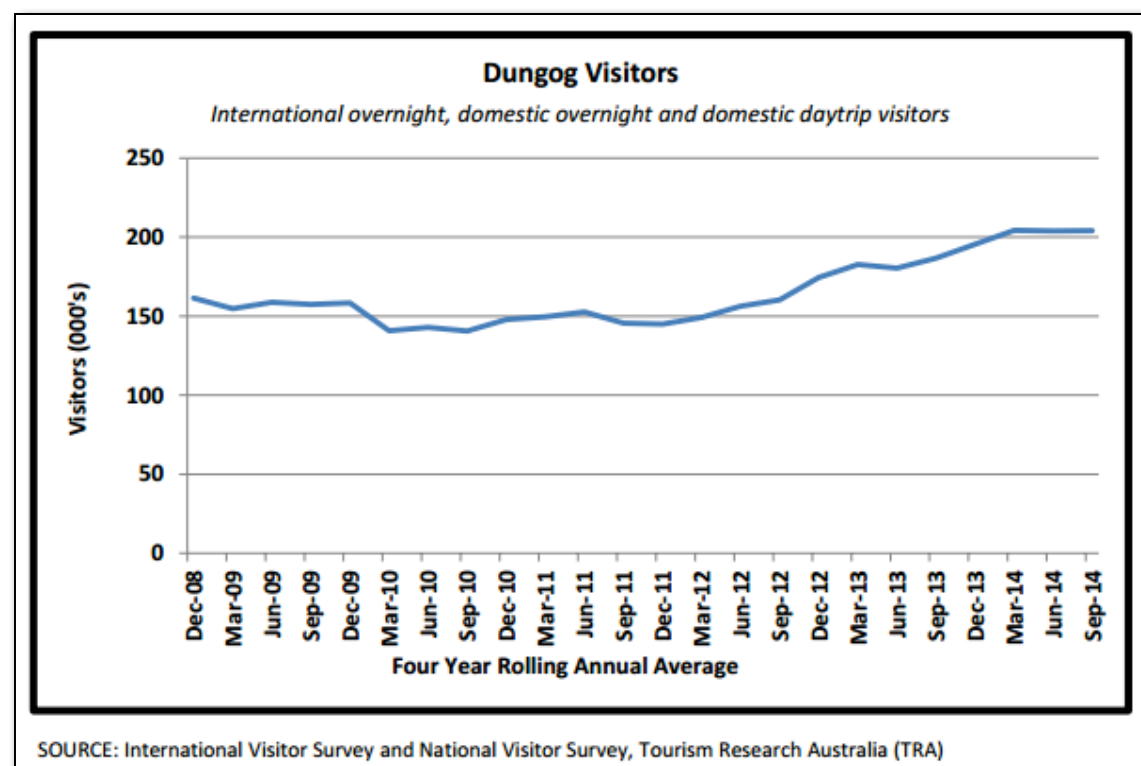


Figure 1 Total visitation to Dungog Shire 2008-2014

## Economic Impact of the Visiting Economy

The visitor economy for Dungog Shire is worth approximately \$47 million with the overnight visitors spending approximately \$33 million in Dungog Shire annually.

Indicator	Dungog			Region and year NSW		
	2007	2013	2014	2007	2013	2014
Total visitors (overnight and domestic day trip) (000s)	n.p.	187	204	n.p.	79,269	80,316
Total spend (overnight and domestic day trip) (\$ million)	n.p.	43	47	n.p.	25,645	26,503
Total overnight visitor spend (\$ million)	n.p.	32	33	n.p.	20,187	20,955

Table 1 Dungog Shire - Summary of key measures (Source: Destination NSW)

## Domestic day-trippers

The average spend per visitor for Dungog Shire is \$100 per person (compared with \$106 for NSW as a whole). The data shows that total number of day-trippers has increased by approximately 6% over the period.

Indicator	Region and year					
	Dungog 2007	2013	2014	NSW 2007	2013	2014
Visitors (000s)	126	116	134	n.p.	51,873	52,212
Expenditure (\$ million)	5	11	13	n.p.	5,458	5,548
Spend per visitor (\$) <sup>1</sup>	43	95	100	97	105	106

Table 2 Dungog Shire – Domestic day-trippers (Source: Destination NSW)

## Overnight visitors

- ✓ Total overnight visitors have dropped 8% since 2007
- ✓ Total nights have increased by 11%
- ✓ Visitors are staying longer (2.9 nights from 2.4 nights) and spending more (\$137 per visitor to \$164)

Indicator	Region and year					
	Dungog 2007	2013	2014	NSW 2007	2013	2014
Visitors (000s)	75	70	69		24,537	25,194
Nights (000s)	178	209	198		82,743	84,263
Average length of stay (nights)	2.4	3.0	2.9	3.4	3.4	3.3
Expenditure (\$ million)	24	31	32		13,963	14,467
Spend per visitor (\$)	323	443	450	429	569	574
Spend per night (\$)	137	148	164	125	169	172

Table 3 Dungog Shire – Overnight visitors (Source: Destination NSW)

## International visitors

The average length of stay in Dungog Shire is 14.8 nights compared with 24.2 nights for NSW as a whole. The spend per visitor for Dungog Shire is \$1,144 per person (compared with \$2,229 for NSW as a whole) and the spend per night is \$67 (compared with \$92 for NSW as a whole).

Indicator	Region and year					
	Dungog 2007	2013	2014	NSW 2007	2013	2014
Visitors (000s)	n.p.	2	1		2,859	2,910
Nights (000s)	n.p.	24	16		66,745	70,300
Average length of stay (nights)	n.p.	15.1	14.8	19	23.3	24.2
Expenditure (\$ million)	n.p.	2	1		6,224	6,488
Spend per visitor (\$)	n.p.	1,000	1,144	1,849	2,177	2,229
Spend per night (\$)	n.p.	66	67	99	93	92

Table 4 Dungog Shire – International visitors (Source: Destination NSW)

<sup>1</sup> In 2007 the indicator was for spend per trip ;

## Visitor profile

- ✓ The majority of visitors to Dungog Shire come to the area for a holiday (73%) with a further 22% visiting friends and relatives.
- ✓ The majority of visitors to Dungog Shire come from regional NSW (58%), with a further 26% coming from Sydney.
- ✓ The top activities are visiting friends and relatives (44%), general sightseeing (32%) and eating out at restaurants (29%) or relatives property (43%)

Indicator	Response
Reason for visit (nights)	Holiday (73%) and Visiting Friends & Relatives (22%)
Origin of visitors (nights)	Sydney (26%) and Regional NSW (58%)
Top 5 activities (visitors)	VFR (44%), General sightseeing (32%) and Eating out at restaurants (29%)
Main accommodation used (nights)	Friends or relatives property (43%)

Table 5 Dungog Shire – visitor profile 2014 (Source: Destination NSW)

## Data Collected from the Visitors Information Centre (VIC)

- ✓ 26% of Visitors through the VIC come from Newcastle, 29% from Sydney, 10% from the Central Coast, 8% from interstate and 5% from international destinations
- ✓ Areas of interest to the VIC visitors include accommodation (3%), camping (15%), directions (17%), walks (11%), events (8%)

## Identified issues in relation to measurement of the Visitor Economy

*During the consultations with industry and community it became apparent that there is a lot of information missing in relation to the visitor economy in Dungog Shire. Accurate answers to the following questions were not available and this made our evaluation and understanding of the local industry difficult. Solutions to this issue have been suggested in the action plan.*

- ✓ *Accommodation occupancy rates across the differing product*
- ✓ *Event evaluation in relation to how much participants spend and on what, where they came from, did they stay overnight, if yes where and how did they find out about the event*
- ✓ *Where are the tourism visitors coming from, what they are doing when they get here, how much they are spending and on what, are they staying overnight, where and why?*

## Our Product

Key Assets	Description	Appeal
National parks, wilderness, forests and reserves	The rainforests of Barrington Tops National Park are of international significance; forming part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area, with Antarctic Forest remnants being contained within the Shire.	The park is a nature lover's paradise, with a walking track network, camping and sightseeing
	Columbey National Park comprises 868 hectares, the majority of which was reserved on 1st July 2007	The park was reserved due to significant vegetation features including three vegetation communities that are listed as endangered ecological communities.
	Recreation areas in the State forests of the Lower Barrington Tops are focused in Chichester State Forest, accessed via Dungog or Gresford. Problem Creek Falls. Allyn River Forest Park, Peach Tree Park, White Rock, Old Camp, Mount Allyn, Ladies Well, Dobbie Rim, Pademelon Park	Walking trails, sightseeing, pristine environment, breathtaking scenery
	The Dungog Common Recreation Reserve is zoned for passive recreational use and environmental protection	Recreational use, events and environmental protection. An outdoor healthy and diverse experience
Rivers	Includes swimming in the upper reaches of the Paterson, Allyn and Williams rivers, kayaking in some reaches, fishing in Lostock Dam	Access to the rivers and waterways. Exhilarating experiences in pristine environments
Scenic Drives	Scenic drives such as the great forest adventure, the great mountain adventure, the great all-rounder, great country wander	Ability to enjoy the natural settings, the natural environment and the village landscapes
James Theatre	Town of Dungog's main event facility	Historical, diverse events, old movie theatre atmosphere
Varied event calendar	Art, Film, food, music, community, sporting events	Delivering experiences in a uniquely different environment
Attractive country towns and villages	Antique shops, pubs and cafes and coffee shops that retain a hint of a by-gone era Museums, churches, cemeteries, monuments, and historic homesteads	Makes for an old-fashioned atmosphere, and experiences within easy driving distance of major population centres
Rail and Air proximity to key areas	CountryLink connect to Sydney and regional NSW. Close proximity to Airport	Close proximity of air and rail is attractive and offers ease of access

Table 6 Dungog Shire – Key Products (Source: Dungog Shire Council)

## Primary Motivators

The following tables list the primary and secondary motivators that were identified through the project survey. The surveys asked for the primary motivators or reasons why people visit Dungog Shire. These experiences arguably represent the key unique selling points for the Dungog Local Government Area. (LGA)

Primary motivators	Tourism businesses (%)	General community (%)
State and National Parks	88	79
Art, film, food and music events	74	77
Horse and cattle events	70	61
Fitness, cycling, swimming and canoeing events	61	47
Sport events	57	36
Mountain bike trails	54	49
Cycling trails	47	49
Historic villages	32	52
James Theatre	31	n.a.
Dungog Common	28	28

Table 7 Dungog Shire – Primary motivators to visit (Source: Project survey)

## Secondary motivators

The top secondary motivators (motivators for people to stay and spend once they are here) as perceived by tourism businesses and the community are shown in table 7 below.

Supporting motivators	Tourism businesses (%)	General community (%)
Antiques and bric a brac	81	58
Cafes	78	57
Wineries	73	51
Galleries	70	54
Hotels/pubs	69	64
Markets	68	52
Cultural heritage	67	41
Restaurants	66	55
James Theatre	64	n.a.
Art trails	59	n.a.
Historic villages	57	34

Table 8 Dungog Shire – Supporting motivators to visit (Source: Project survey)

## Positive things impacting on visitation to Dungog Shire

Table 8 below shows the top things that have a positive impact on visitation to Dungog Shire as perceived by Tourism operators through the survey process.

Things which have a positive impact	% Of Tourism Businesses
Natural beauty and fresh air	100
Proximity to the Barringtons	97
Pristine rivers	97
Southern accessibility to the Barringtons	92
Heritage of the countryside	79
Maps of the Barringtons	77
Importance of the Chamber of Commerce to tourism organisations	67
Availability of activities for holiday makers	64
Railway links	61
Close proximity to main markets	60

Table 9 Dungog Shire – Items that have a positive impact on visitation to Dungog Shire (Source: Project survey)

## Product enhancements

Survey respondents were asked to comment on a range of primary motivators in relation to whether they thought they needed reinvigorating had great potential to expand or whether they should be more extensively marketed.

Strategies	Re-invigorated (%)	Great potential to expand (%)	More extensively marketed (%)
State and National Parks	36	39	22
Art, film, food and music events	14	54	31
Horse and cattle events	9	41	28
Fitness, cycling, swimming and canoeing events	13	48	35
Sport events	11	46	11
Mountain bike trails	9	63	25
Cycling trails	16	58	19

Table 10 Strategies for enhancing tourism products (Source: Project survey)

## Identified issues in relation to our product

*During the consultations with industry and community a number of factors were highlighted in relation to product that have a major impact on this report.*

- ✓ *There is significant product in the Dungog LGA that is being underutilised.*
- ✓ *The Dungog LGA Villages are a major part of the product offering*
- ✓ *Discussion between stakeholders, including National Parks and Forestry Corporation, is required to improve access to the Barringtons*
- ✓ *Local experts need to be consulted in relation to existing and new iconic experiences*
- ✓ *Many previously popular forest walks are no longer maintained or signposted*
- ✓ *Primary and supporting motivators need to be linked*
- ✓ *There is distinct lack of product knowledge in the Dungog Shire. We consulted a wide cross section of businesses, council and community and it was rare to find someone who could tell us with any surety what a tourist could do in the LGA. This was most apparent in relation to the Unique Selling Point (USP) products*
- ✓ *There is a definite want within the Dungog Shire business community to work together*

## Events

Events enrich opportunities for people to connect to a city, town or village, enjoy time together, celebrate and experience the diversity of cultures, and foster creativity and innovation. They allow a community to come alive and provide an opportunity for a destination to showcase its tourism experience and increase economic activity. Events contribute significantly to areas of community building, lifestyle and leisure enhancement, cultural development, increased tourism promotions and visitation, volunteer participation, fundraising, infrastructure and economic development.

Local events and externally organised events enhance the development of diverse tourism opportunities. They have the capacity to turn a long-term desire to visit a destination into actual visitation. Events are also recognised as a legitimate tool of social change. They bring people together – be it community member or visitor. Festivals and events can assist to define a sense of place, connect a community, enhance civic pride and can create local jobs.

Despite festivals being mostly small-scale, economically modest affairs, geared around community goals, the regional proliferation of festivals produces enormous direct and indirect economic benefits. At a time when Australians are reassessing what makes our economy more or less resilient to global economic forces, important lessons can be learned from festivals and their stories of grass-roots community-building...” Professor Gibson, *Reinventing Rural Places*

In his report, “Reinventing Rural Places” which focused on analysing 2800 festivals and events in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania, Professor Gibson went on to say.

“ This is not to say that festivals cannot generate benefits of an economic nature for their local communities. In 2009, with an estimated attendance of 9,500, the Parkes Elvis Revival Festival brought in \$6 million in direct visitor expenditure (at an average of \$643 per visitor). In 2008, with an attendance of 22,000, the Deniliquin Ute Muster generated direct visitor expenditure of \$13 million (at an average of \$610 per person). Even in much smaller festivals, their relative impact is notable: at the Gromfest youth surf carnival in Lennox Head, Northern NSW, 1200 visitors attended, spending \$472 per person on average. This translated into nearly \$600,000 of spending, injected into the small town over the course of a weekend.” And he continued. “Indeed, herein lies a common characteristic of festivals: their organisers may make no or little direct profit, but instead they catalyse meaningful monetary benefits for their surrounding communities as a flow-on effect – through tourism visitation expenditure, through the hiring of local expertise, and sourcing local services and materials. Benefits are felt most by an array of local small businesses that are functionally connected to the festival, such as cafes and restaurants, sound and lighting equipment hire, waste management, hotels and motels, pubs, printers, advertising agencies, legal services and catering companies.”

Professor Gibson conducted the first major Australian academic survey and report on the value of festivals and events to regional areas and found what most event professionals, supporters and volunteers already knew anecdotally – that the event industry has an immense impact socially, culturally and economically on regional communities.

Dungog Shire is ideally positioned to take advantage of the opportunities presented by events and promote itself as an events destination on a regional, state and national level. The city has a supportive council, a successful event industry and a keen population of residents open to embracing diverse event benefits and experiences.

## Dungog Shire Events

In 2015, approximately 110 events will be conducted in the Dungog LGA.

- ☞ 8 events are classed by Council as major events (2 local shows, 1 Billy Cart derby, 2 Rodeos, 1 Festival, 1 Village Fair and 1 NYE celebration)
  - ☞ 19 events have some sort of a horse and cattle theme
  - ☞ Around 50 markets throughout the year
  - ☞ 1 motor cycle event, 1 car show
  - ☞ 3 bike riding events
  - ☞ 20+ film events at the James theatre
  - ☞ 7 arts and crafts events
  - ☞ 4 Fairs
  - ☞ 1 flower show
  - ☞ 1 ball
- 
- ☞ 1 Charity event
  - ☞ 3 walking or running events
  - ☞ 10 Music events
  - ☞ 3 events with food and drink

## Events and the Dungog Shire Brand

Around the world, we see the growing place that events are taking in destination marketing. Destination sales and promotion strategies are increasingly dependent upon those events (Hong Kong launched last year a two-year, \$30 million tourism campaign, that features over 200 events, festivals, and other attractions). Special tourism events can be used to help promote, position, and brand a destination. Particularly in the context of experiential tourism, events can play a prominent role in branding, positioning, and promoting a destination.

However, for events to play a significant role in the overall marketing efforts of the destination, several conditions should be met. First, the events' target markets should be consistent with the destination's target markets. Strategic decisions must be taken to determine the type of experiences a destination wishes to sell and the profile of customers a destination wishes to attract. These two points are, of course, related and the strategic decisions should be consistent with one another. Unless a re-positioning strategy is decided, the image portrayed or promoted by the event should be consistent with the destination's overall image. In addition, the events should use or relate to the features/ attributes that are specific to the destination.

Analysing the various events held within the Dungog LGA it is difficult to find many that actually match Dungog Shire's main unique selling propositions.

It is important therefore, that if Dungog's event industry is going to "deliver the goods", Dungog's events target markets should be consistent with the Dungog's target markets and secondly the image portrayed or promoted by our event should be consistent with the image we are trying to portray for Dungog Shire.

## Identified issues in relation to our events

*During the consultations with industry and community a number of factors were highlighted in relation to events that have a major impact on this report. Note that these statements are of a general nature and there are exceptions to the rule.*

- ✓ *Events are seen as a significant driver for the Tourism industry*
- ✓ *There are many events held within the LGA of Dungog each year. To date, these events have developed, lived and died without any sort of focused strategic directions.*
- ✓ *There is an opportunity to develop and implement an event strategy in the Dungog LGA*
- ✓ *There is opportunity to match events to strengths*
- ✓ *There is limited cooperation between any of the events on the Event Calendar*
- ✓ *There are no council event guidelines beyond compliance with regulations*
- ✓ *Council does not have an event funding grant program*
- ✓ *Council's event budget goes to the Dungog Shire Events Inc organisation that distributes the funds.*
- ✓ *Councils resources are stretched*
- ✓ *There is no collated information available in relation to the number of participants at the events, where they come from and how much they contribute to the Dungog Shire economy*

## Dungog Shire brand, marketing and promotion

### Recent Marketing campaigns

Year	Campaign	Date	Media Used	Target market
2010	Dungog Film Festival	May	Various	Sydney market
2011	Dungog Film Festival	May	Various	Sydney market
	Hunter Tourism Sydney media campaign	November	Print & travel	Sydney market and elsewhere
	Dungog Film Festival	May	Various	Sydney market
	Regional Living Expo (in partnership with other Hunter Councils)	August	Expo	Sydney – people wanting to move to rural and regional areas
	Mumford and Sons	October	Various	Triple J listeners, general public
2012	Hunter Tourism Sydney media campaign	October	Print & travel	Sydney market and elsewhere
	Increase the profile of <a href="http://www.visitbarringtontops.com.au">www.visitbarringtontops.com.au</a>	October	Expo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the look and feel of the Barrington Tops Facebook page and link to <a href="http://www.visitbarringtontops.com.au">www.visitbarringtontops.com.au</a></li> <li>Install Google analytics onto <a href="http://www.visitbarringtontops.com.au">www.visitbarringtontops.com.au</a> to help us better measure success of the website</li> </ul>
2013	Planet Dungog	October	ABC 1233 promotions	Lower Hunter
2014	Dungog Festival	2014	Various	Sydney - overnights
	Regional Living Expo (in partnership with other Hunter Councils)	August	Expo	Sydney – people wanting to move to rural and regional areas
	Planet Dungog	May	ABC 1233 promotions	Lower Hunter
2015	Regional Living Expo	August	Expo	Sydney – people wanting to move to rural and regional areas
	Dungog Festival	October	Social Media Timeout 2KO	Sydney, Hunter

Table 11 Dungog Shire –marketing campaigns undertaken over the past 5 years (Source Dungog Council)

- ☞ Events, festivals and Hunter Tourism have driven marketing campaigns in Dungog Shire over the last 5 years.
- ☞ Only anecdotal evidence is available in relation to the success or failure of these campaigns as there has been no evaluation or measurement

## Social Media and Web presence

There is no current facebook page for Dungog Tourism

### **www.dungog.nsw.gov.au**

- ☞ Website is fresh and modern looking
- ☞ Information is up to date
- ☞ Site is easy to navigate
- ☞ Attractions menu item has limited information

### **www.visitdungog.com.au**

- ☞ The website was created in 2009
- ☞ Old images that do not reflect the now
- ☞ Left hand newsletter does not display news
- ☞ There is limited call to action on the page
- ☞ Dining out lists two of the 25 eating establishments
- ☞ The events section of the website is out of date
- ☞ There are no maps of the area under the Maps section

### **www.visitbarringtontops.com.au**

- ☞ Limited information about Dungog but does link to www.visitdungog.com.au
- ☞ At first glance you would not know Dungog is involved
- ☞ Front-page link to events Gloucester but not Dungog
- ☞ Limited promotion of Dungog Shire; eg activities menu item lists 8 lookouts to visit and all reference distance from Gloucester
- ☞ Accommodation page advises the most direct vehicular access is from Gloucester
- ☞ Virtually no details of Dungog Shire on the facebook page

## Our Print Collateral

### **Barrington Towns Visitor Information Guide 2015**

- ☞ Concept is good but the information and images require significant updating
- ☞ Design needs to be modernised
- ☞ All Dungog Shire information needs to be together (villages are currently separated)

### **Great Country Drives**

- ☞ Excellent concept but design lacks imagination
- ☞ Great use of product

### **Dungog Area Birding Route**

- ☞ Great concept
- ☞ Should include all the villages

### **VIC photocopied handouts**

- ☞ Out of date information
- ☞ Visitor handouts should be professionally designed

### **Paterson Allyn Tourism Group**

- ☞ Professional looking brochure
- ☞ Easy to read, well laid out

## Dungog Shire Visitor Information Centre

The Dungog Shire Visitor Information Centre was established at its current location at the corner of Dowling and Brown Streets in 1996. There are also informal outlets in various businesses in each of the four other villages; Clarence Town, Gresford, Paterson and Vacy. The VIC is managed by a full time Tourism Officer who is assisted by a number of volunteers. The VIC has a range of brochures on the local area as well as a limited range of brochures from areas outside Dungog Shire. The building is looking tired and the interior needs a refit.

The following tables summarise trends in the areas of interest of VIC clients collected by the Visitor Information Centre between 2009-10 and 2014-15.

Interest area	Year					
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Accommodation	10%	10%	9%	6%	4%	3%
Info Pack	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Camping	6%	6%	6%	8%	8%	15%
Canoeing	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cinema	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Directions	26%	26%	25%	26%	22%	17%
Events	7%	8%	10%	8%	9%	8%
Fishing	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Historic info	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Historic walks	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	4%
Horse riding	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Picnic areas	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Road conditions	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Scenic drives	5%	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%
Snow	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Toilets	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Walks	7%	6%	8%	8%	10%	11%
Waterfalls	1%	2%	4%	1%	3%	4%
Weather	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Where to eat	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Wineries	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	21%	21%	17%	21%	17%	13%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 12 Dungog Shire – Area of interest of VIC clients (Source: Dungog Shire Visitor Information Centre)

### Additional information;

- ☞ During the 2014-15 F/yr, the visitors to the Dungog Shire Visitor Information Centre were predominately from Sydney (29%), Newcastle (26%), and Central Coast (10%)
- ☞ The Value of accommodation booked through the VIC over the last 6 years has reduced from \$91777 to \$22796
- ☞ Membership fees collected in 2014 were \$4922

## Our Brand

*“A brand is more than a name, logo, or slogan and it is not built only through advertising. Genuine brands are the result of a comprehensive strategy that encompasses the entire destination experience from the visitor and prospective visitor point of view.”*

It is for this reason that the destination brand-building process must focus on strategic development of a brand versus individual tactics focused on identity, awareness, image and promotion.

It is interesting to note that you get to be a real brand only when your customers (visitors) say you are distinctive. You are a genuine brand when visitors perceive you as one of a kind. And when visitors perceive a destination brand to be truly unique, it has achieved genuine brand status! Destination loyalty is at the heart of destination brand equity. Destination loyalty can be defined as the tourist's conscious or unconscious decision, expressed through intention or behaviour, to revisit a destination. It occurs because the visitor perceives that the destination offers the right features or attributes, image, or level of quality.

### **Our Brand Essence**

Motivated by nature

### **Our Brand personality and values**

Pristine, authentic, friendly, warm, welcoming, real, heritage, experience

### **Our brand attributes**

Barrington World Heritage Area, fresh air, rolling hills, pristine scenery and environment, friendly warm and welcoming, authentic experiences, real country villages

## Our Target Markets

Consultation with stakeholders revealed a number of key opportunities that focused on our brand identity and attributes. Target markets as promoted by Destination NSW that best suit these opportunities currently are the family travel market and the over 55's

### Family Travel Market

*Source – Destination NSW*

Domestic travel fulfils a key role in busy family lives by offering a chance for families to reconnect, recharge and have a break from normal routine. A domestic holiday is often a weekend break or a short break (2 to 4 days) providing an opportunity for families to relax and to open lines of communication between adults and children without time pressures. They are often a mix of planned and spontaneous trips, spread across the calendar to provide milestones to look forward to, and are often undertaken for social reasons such as visiting family and friends. Research identified road trips as providing a perfect opportunity for families to bond as a family unit.

The study conducted by research company TNS Australia reported that the key drivers for domestic travel by families in Australia focus around ease and convenience. Key attributes of destinations include:

- ☞ Somewhere relaxed and easy with beautiful surroundings (e.g. scenery and beaches), in the same time zone, which have familiar restaurants, healthcare and amenities.
- ☞ Accessible locations particularly for short breaks, often only a few hours' drive from home. This allows freedom and comfort for young families to travel in their own car, for disabled travellers and for older teens that want to travel separately but desire to be part of a family holiday.

### Why the Family travel Market for Dungog Shire?

- ℓ Dungog Shire creates the imagery for “family reconnections”. These are not always overt opportunities sought out by families; rather they can be intangible benefits of a family holiday such as tapping into the emotions of re-connecting. Boost the appeal of road trips via nostalgia imagery to tap into the desire to “re-connect.
- ℓℓ Dungog Shire caters to the needs of the entire travel party and that may include kids, teenagers, elderly or disabled family members, and the family pets. This means availability of a range of accommodation and dining options, entertainment and activities, technology devices and a Wi-Fi connection.
- ℓℓℓ Dungog Shire can promote the value of domestic holidays by offering all-inclusive travel packages (e.g. accommodation, meals, and activities). Packages have a strong appeal as they offer ease and convenience, transparency and they also provide a sense of urgency for travel.
- ℓℓℓℓ Dungog Shire can motivate families to travel now and to take short breaks during off-peak periods (for example, to attend a major event or a local festival). The need for immediacy and spontaneity is one that only domestic travel can offer. Domesticate reported that authentic food and wine experiences, and events and festivals can generate the desire to travel.
- ℓℓℓℓℓ Dungog Shire can make domestic holiday travel an easy experience. This includes availability and easy access to comprehensive information on accommodation, transport, food, shopping, tours and attractions, ease of booking and availability of a wide range of services.

## Over 55's

### Source – Destination NSW

The quarterly survey conducted by market research company Instinct and Reason found that the over 55s preferred domestic to international travel with 90% of the over 55s wanting to travel within Australia compared to 67% travel overseas.

Based on the latest data on outbound resident departure and domestic travel as sourced from Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey, 92% of Australians aged over 55s travelled within Australia in the year ending (YE) September 2014 compared to only 8% of over 55s who went overseas. The percentage shares of domestic travel and outbound travel of Australians aged over 55 have been steady since YE September 2009.

In YE September 2014, 71% of the total domestic overnight visitors to NSW who were aged over 55 came from intrastate compared to 29% who came from Interstate.

Of the 18 million intrastate visitors to NSW in YE September 2014, 33% were aged above 55. Of the 8.5 million interstate visitors to NSW for the same period, 29% were over 55. The average annual growth rate of intrastate visitors to NSW aged over 55 since YE September 2009 was 5%, higher than the average annual growth rate for their interstate visitor counterpart (4%)

## Why the Over 55's travel Market for Dungog Shire?

According to the Over 55s Monitor Survey, the most important reasons for over 55s taking overnight leisure trip are to:

- ☞ Spend time with family or friends (55%),
- ☞ Get away from daily routine (42%),
- ☞ Have fun (37%),
- ☞ Spend time with partner (34%),
- ☞ Relax mentally (32%).

As over 55s become empty nesters, it was more likely for them to travel as couples instead of families. The domestic over 55s visitors to NSW were more likely to be 'adult couples' (45%) and only 26% travel 'alone

Domestic over 55s market to NSW were dominated by visitors without package arrangements (74% and 98% of visitors with non package tour', respectively)

### Visitor Profile

☞ Average length of stay	3.9 nights
☞ Purpose of Visit for domestic travel	Holiday or Leisure (40%), VFR (45%)
☞ Main activities undertaken for domestic travel	Eat out / dine (61%) General sightseeing (29%) Outdoor or nature activities (9%)
☞ Main information source	Internet (33%), Friends and relatives (35%)

Source: National Visitor Survey, Year Ending September 2014

## Identified issues in relation the Dungog brand, marketing and promotions

*During the consultations with industry and community a number of factors were highlighted in relation to marketing that have a major impact on this report?*

- ✓ *We need to develop a brand that reflects the strengths of our major products*
- ✓ *There is a need to raise awareness among local community and business owners / staff of the areas attractions and activities, including training of relevant volunteers*
- ✓ *Dungog tourism & Council website requires current and attractive tourism information*
- ✓ *Print collateral requires attention*
- ✓ *A cohesive marketing plan is required to link the areas product, events, targets markets and spends.*
- ✓ *Tourism monitoring is required to gather and analyse much needed information such as visitor origins, interests/purpose of visit, spend and length of stay*
- ✓ *The opportunity cost of keeping the VIC in its current state needs to be analysed. Is the current spend by council delivering the required outcomes.*

## Industry support and development

### Dungog and District Chamber of Commerce

The Dungog and District Chamber of Commerce is a progressive body with a growing membership base. As there is no Local Tourism Industry body in Dungog the Chamber acts in this role where appropriate.

### Gresford Community Group

This is a non-political group formed to assist in the responsible development, future planning and expansion of the Gresford district to the benefit of all residents.

### Paterson Allyn Tourism Group

The Allyn Paterson Tourism Group was established around 2010 to co-ordinate and promote tourism and visitation to the areas in the Allyn Paterson Valley including the towns of East Gresford and Gresford, Paterson and Vacy and surrounding areas.

### Paterson Progress Association

Mostly concerned with local issues, but keen to promote Tourism for Paterson

### Clarence Town Progress Association

The association has developed a Tourism action plan that includes discussion and action on;

- ☞ •Digital media
- ☞ •The River
- ☞ •Signage
- ☞ •Tourist Routes
- ☞ •Village Green / wharf reserve / wetlands
- ☞ •Caravan Park
- ☞ •Museum

## Council Industry Support

- i The Dungog Shire Council Tourism Advisory Committee is the #355 committee of council appointed to develop tourism opportunities in the Shire. It was established in 2005, originally with representation from the following groups:
  - Councillors (2)
  - NPWS
  - Hunter Water
  - Forestry Corporation of NSW
  - Dungog District Chamber of Commerce
  - One industry representative from Clarence Town, Dungog, Gresford / East Gresford, Paterson and Vacy
  - The Mayor (ex officio)
  - The Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator (ED&TC) and tourism officer would be required to attend in a secretariat and advisory capacity.

The responsibilities of the committee were set up to be;

  - The development of an overall marketing strategy for Tourism product within the Dungog Shire, and in association with Gloucester Shire Tourism for the Barrington Tops Tourism Zone.
  - Maintenance of the Strategic and Action Plans for the Tourism Unit of Council
  - Responsibility for the reporting of results against key performance criteria to Council and the Tourism Association members on a quarterly basis.
- ii Council manages and funds the Dungog Shire VIC
- iii Council funds the Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator
- iv Council funds Dungog Shire Events, assisting with insurance and the tools of event management, such as star pickets, bunting etc

## Identified issues in relation to Industry Support and Development

*During the consultations with industry and community a number of factors were highlighted in relation to Industry Support and Development that have a major impact on this report.*

- ✓ *There is support for the formation of a local Industry lead skills based Tourism Body. Indeed, during the consultation phase of this plan, a number of industry people agreed to be a part of such an organisation*
- ✓ *There is a support for Council to analyse their current tourism spend against the outcomes of this report*
- ✓ *There is widespread opinion within the local industry that the VIC is non-strategic and reactive*

# The Dungog Visitor Economy Action Plan

*The success of this Plan is underpinned by four key strategies, each one working to support the next...*

## 1. Fostering a coordinated modern Tourism Industry in Dungog Shire

With the enthusiastic support this project has received from Council, Business and Community now is the time to refocus our local Tourism Industry.

## 2. Implementing a coordinated approach to Marketing Dungog Shire

Central to the growth of the Dungog tourism industry is creating consumer awareness and demand. Inspiring visitors to book, stay and explore the unique landscapes and vibrant villages. It is very evident from the consultations and feedback received through this project that Dungog Shire is ready for the implementation of a unified Brand and a coordinated marketing strategy. Utilising the enthusiasm around this plan and the skills of the newly formed Tourism Body, the Brand and marketing plan will be product based and industry focused.

## 3. Implementing a program of product enhancement and development

Coordinating the enhancement of existing product and facilitating the development of new product is central to the growth of the Dungog Shire Tourism Industry. During the consultations with industry and community it was evident that we need to develop, highlight and reinforce the iconic experiences in the region, develop the village product, reinforce touring routes and trails, build relationships with other LGA's, NSW Parks and wildlife and identify enhanced tourism opportunities and experiences. We need to develop the southern part of the Barrington Region as a premier destination, to establish the Dungog Shire as the southern gateway to the Barrington Region, to increase visitor understanding of, and access to the Region, to expand the range of information available on the area, particularly information on walks and drives, explore more effective ways of 'packaging' the Barrington Region, provide information and interpretation at key locations, focused on the gateway towns and villages and improve signposting to and within the Barrington Region.

## 4. Implementing a coordinated approach to events

Events are seen as a significant driver for the local Tourism industry so it is critical that Dungog Tourism implements actions that will identify and take advantage of opportunities for growth, development and funding for the local event industry.

## 1. Foster a coordinated modern Tourism Industry in Dungog Shire

With the enthusiastic support this project has received from Council, Business and Community now is the time to refocus our local Tourism Industry.  
Successful implementation of this project will require the Council to financially support the process. The Council has an annual budget cycle where funds are allocated, the Councils approach to future funding of the tourism portfolio will require the Council to consider how its funds are to be prioritised as part of their deliberations in respect of this strategy

Actions	By Who	By When	Budget
<b>Priority Action 1</b> <b>1.1 Implement an alternate Visitor Information delivery methodology to enable Council to reinvest their current Tourism spend into proactive innovative industry support, marketing and product development.</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the Accreditation of Category 3 VIC's in each village in the Shire, Dungog, Paterson, Gresford, Clarence Town, Vacy.</li> <li>Implement a mobile and proactive touch screen program at identified sites in each village in the shire in conjunction with the Cat 3 VIC's.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report completed and actioned by May 2016</li> <li>Touch Screens and accredited VICs installed by Sept 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Action 2</b> <b>1.2 Split the current Tourism and Economic Development Officer role to 60% tourism activities and 40% economic development activities. Support this position with a job description and annual KPI's that are based on the strategies and actions in this plan</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an updated job description with KPI's for the Tourism and Economic Development Officer role that is based on the implementation of the strategies and actions contained in this Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council GM in consultation with</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> </ul>	March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC</li> </ul>

**Priority Action 3****1.3 Establish an industry led local Dungog Tourism Organisation**

- ☞ Form a Dungog Tourism Organisation with the aim of driving tourism development and the implementation of this plan
- ☞ Implement a simple skills-based Board structure led by a Chair, with a tourism skills-based management team, led by a Tourism Coordinator.
- ☞ Council to provide seed funding to assist with the set up to ensure the successful launch of the organisation.
- ☞ Establish an annual reporting structure that is focused on a suitable business plan and KPI's. Provide seed funding for DTO to employ a Dungog Tourism Coordinator for 2 days a week for 12 months to drive the implementation of the plan
- ☞ Establish a membership structure for the organisation, with categories of individuals, non-profit organisations and profit organisations as members.

- ☞ Tourism and Economic Development Officer
- ☞ Local Industry
- ☞ Local Community
- ☞ NPWS

- ☞ Board Established by June 2016
- ☞ Business plan adopted by Sept 2016
- ☞ Coordinator employed in July 2016
- ☞ 50 financial members by June 2016

- ☞ \$3000 for DTO formation
- ☞ Seed funding by DSC

**1.4 Restructure Council's event funding program with an aim of focusing the support on events that provide deliverable outcomes based on agreed tourism and economic benefits to Dungog shire.**

- ☞ Implement an updated annual event funding program with a revised set of funding guidelines. The guidelines will include the type of events to be funded, the funding available, the economic and tourism related outcomes expected, the reporting required by funded events and the timeline
- ☞ Communicate the new program to all events
- ☞ Run two funding programs per year

- ☞ Tourism and Economic Development Officer
- ☞ Dungog Tourism
- ☞ NPWS
- ☞ Event managers and committees

- ☞ New guidelines completed by May 2016
- ☞ First funding round rolled out June 2016

- ☞ DSC

1.5 Take advantage of tourism funding opportunities as they arise			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss funding opportunities with Destination NSW, NSW Dept of Industry, NSW Dept of Premiers and Cabinet, Ausindustry and others as appropriate</li> <li>Join grant newsletter data bases to take advantage of opportunities as they arise</li> <li>Create opportunities for the ongoing funding of the Dungog Tourism Coordinator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism Contractor possible on a fee basis to do grant applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings held with all government bodies by May 2016</li> <li>Dungog Tourism coordinator part funded by grants from Aug 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC</li> </ul>
1.6 Facilitate Industry Development across the LGA			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify skills gaps and seek to improve the skills/knowledge of tourism operators and managers, in conjunction with Dungog Community College</li> <li>Identify initiatives to promote industry professionalism, in marketing, communication, promotion, customer service, technology and planning</li> <li>Promote and facilitate business success through networking, learning and development and information sharing</li> <li>Emphasise the need for co-operation rather than competition within and outside the region.</li> <li>Support the existing volunteer visitor program to encourage volunteers to know and have more first hand experiences about the area and utilise the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism Local Businesses</li> <li>Dungog Community College</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly networking initiatives started in Mar 2016</li> <li>Skills gaps study conducted by July 2016</li> <li>Funding sought for program of training in 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC</li> <li>DTO</li> </ul>

## 2. Implement a coordinated approach to Marketing Dungog Shire

Central to the development of the Dungog tourism industry is creating consumer awareness and demand. Inspiring visitors to book, stay and explore the unique landscapes and vibrant villages. It is very evident from the consultations and feedback received through this project that Dungog Shire is ready for the implementation of a unified Brand and a coordinated marketing strategy. Utilising the enthusiasm around this plan and the skills of the newly formed Tourism Body, the Brand and marketing plan will be product based and industry focused.

Actions	By Who	By When	Budget
<b>Priority Action 4</b> <b>2.1 Implement a new Dungog Shire Brand and brand strategy</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Develop a brand for Dungog Shire based on the area's personality, values and attributes</li> <li>☞ Maximise the reach and build brand awareness and impact by making the brand central to all marketing activities and cooperative partnerships</li> <li>☞ Develop a process to ensure the brand message is communicated and delivered in the visitor experience</li> <li>☞ Create stories and images that integrate physical aspects of the brand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>☞ Dungog Tourism Marketing consultant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Consultant engaged to develop a brand and brand strategy by May 2016</li> <li>☞ Brand completed and strategy implementation commenced by July 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ DSC</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Action 5</b> <b>2.2 Implement a marketing strategy</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Develop a simple Marketing strategy that will guide the brand and marketing activities. Utilise the priority actions in this plan as the basis for the strategy</li> <li>☞ Ensure the plan outcomes and KPI's are measured by implementing a range of relevant market monitoring options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>☞ Dungog Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Marketing strategy completed by October 2016</li> <li>☞ Implementation of the strategy started by June 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ DSC</li> </ul>

<b>Priority Action 6</b> <b>2.3 Update Dungog Shire's marketing collateral</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present Dungog Shire through a professionally designed and managed web site</li> <li>Implement a comprehensive social media program</li> <li>Present Dungog Shire through a professionally designed and managed suite of printed collateral</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website completed by May 2016</li> <li>Social media plan completed by Oct 2016</li> <li>Printed collateral updated by Jul 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Action 7</b> <b>2.4 Increase market share by focusing on leading product segments</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and distribute a series of drive / walk / ride / trail packages in partnership with the Dungog Tourism, Council, DNSW, NSWNPWS, tour operators, other LGA's, local villages and local businesses</li> <li>Develop and distribute professionally designed and managed touring route itineraries, the key route being the Horseshoe Trail through the Shire</li> <li>Develop and distribute a series of village experience packages in partnership with the Dungog Tourism, Council, DNSW, NSWNPWS, tour operators and local businesses</li> <li>Utilise the experience of local experts and business owners to develop and market innovative experience based packages utilising the areas primary assets. Examples could include mountain biking, adventure in nature, adventure on water, ecotourism and other niche tourism activities and adventure experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> <li>NPWS</li> <li>DNSW</li> <li>Tour Guides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working group of all interested parties to be formed by June 2016</li> <li>Develop packages by Jul 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC and DTO dollar for dollar</li> </ul>
<b>2.5 Broaden Dungog Shire's appeal by promoting complementary tourism experiences</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the connection between Dungog Shire's primary motivator tourism experiences and the secondary motivator tourism experiences</li> <li>Improve the links between Dungog Shire's primary motivator tourism experiences and the community in general</li> <li>Implement cooperative marketing activities between all tourism stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dungog tourism develop a range of networking functions from Sep 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DTO</li> </ul>

### 3. Implement a program of product enhancement and development

<p>Coordinating the enhancement of existing product and facilitating the development of new product is central to the growth of the Dungog Tourism Industry. During the consultations with industry and community it was evident that we need to highlight and reinforce the iconic experiences in the region, develop the village product, reinforce touring routes and trails, build relationships with other LGA's, NSW Parks and wildlife and identify enhanced tourism opportunities and experiences. We need to develop the southern part of the Barrington Region as a premier destination, to establish the Dungog Shire as the southern gateway to the Barrington Region, to increase visitor understanding of, and access to the Region, to expand the range of information available on the area, particularly information on walks and drives, explore more effective ways of 'packaging' the Barrington Region, provide information and interpretation at key locations, focused on the gateway towns and villages and improve signposting to and within the Barrington Region</p>			
Actions	By Who	By When	Budget
<b>Priority Action 8</b> <b>3.1 Develop and reinforce the iconic experiences in the LGA</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In partnership with Dungog Tourism, Council, NPWS, tour operators, local villages and local businesses and local industry experts identify the iconic experiences that have a positive impact on the visiting tourist. If past experiences are no longer viable use newly created partnerships to suggest/develop new ones</li> <li>Implement a plan of action focused on either the expansion, marketing or reinvigoration of the identified experiences</li> <li>Utilise the strength of the new Dungog Tourism and new partnerships to lobby government to assist with the development / redevelopment of identified experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> <li>NPWS</li> <li>Tour Operators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial meeting held by October 2016</li> <li>Strategy developed by Mar 2017</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC</li> </ul>
<b>Pirority Action 9</b> <b>3.2 Develop the Village experience</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elucidate the most unique aspects of each of the Villages of the shire</li> <li>Package and promote the individual Village experiences as a leading product segment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> <li>NPWS</li> <li>Tour Operators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Village product audit completed by June 2016</li> <li>Village product packages completed by Nov 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DTO</li> </ul>

<b>Priority Action 10</b> <b>3.3 Create and market the top 10 experiences of Dungog Shire</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the top 10 brand-leading experiences in the Dungog LGA</li> <li>Visit all 10 and describe the experience for use in the destination marketing</li> <li>Develop professional online and print marketing packages for the 10 and launch a promotional marketing package through the web and social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> <li>NPWS</li> <li>Tour Operators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Top 10 identified by Jun 2016</li> <li>Promotional packages completed by Nov 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DSC dollar for dollar</li> <li>DTO</li> </ul>
<b>3.4 Establish a product development subcommittee within the new tourism body</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a plan of action around the identified product enhancements</li> <li>Build relationships with other LGA's and NSW Parks and Wildlife</li> <li>Implement a program to raise awareness among local community and business owners/staff of the areas' attractions and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> <li>NPWS</li> <li>Tour Operators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DTO</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Action 11</b> <b>3.5 Develop Implement a signage plan across the Dungog Shire</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a signage audit and identify all the signage requirements around the LGA</li> <li>Develop a staged implementation plan, focus on the greatest need first</li> <li>Develop and lobby for an official Tourist Route Loop from Highway to Highway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>Dungog Tourism</li> <li>NPWS</li> <li>Tour Operators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit completed by June 2017</li> <li>Place a staged implementation plan in the 2017 – 2018 budget according to identified need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DTO and grants</li> </ul>

## 4. Implement a coordinated approach to events

Events are seen as a significant driver for the local Tourism industry so it is critical that Dungog Tourism implements actions that will identify and take advantage of opportunities for growth and development in the event industry.			
Actions	By Who	By When	Budget
<b>Priority Action 12</b> <b>4.1 Develop and implement an events plan for the Dungog Shire</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Identify why events are important to local tourism</li> <li>☞ Identify areas for growth in relation to festivals, sporting, special interest and animal themed events</li> <li>☞ Streamline the existing events program</li> <li>☞ Identify events that may be bought to the area through competitive bidding</li> <li>☞ Identify a Calendar of Events identifies periods requiring stimulus</li> <li>☞ Identify event resources that are lacking in the Dungog LGA</li> <li>☞ Identify event measurement options to ensure outcomes are being measured</li> <li>☞ Implement an action plan based on the findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>☞ Dungog Tourism event subcommittee</li> <li>☞ Consultant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Event plan to be completed by a consultant by Aug 2016</li> <li>☞ Event plan implementation to start from Nov 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ DSC</li> <li>☞ Dungog Tourism</li> </ul>
<b>4.2 Establish an Event subcommittee within the new tourism body</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Develop communication channels for the event industry in Dungog Shire</li> <li>☞ Guide the implementation of the event plan</li> <li>☞ Assist with professional training for event coordinators and committees in the LGA</li> <li>☞ Work with Council to implement their new event funding program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Tourism and Economic Development Officer</li> <li>☞ Dungog Tourism Professional trainer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ Event subcommittee to be formed by May 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☞ DTO</li> </ul>