



DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

14th December 2004

DCS4	MACLEAY VALLEY COAST TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN
	FILE: T3-2 SJR

SUMMARY:

Presenting the Draft Macleay Valley Coast Tourism Strategic Plan for adoption by Council.



DESCRIPTION:

The preparation of a long term strategic plan to guide the future of the tourism industry in the Macleay Valley Coast (MVC) has been a long held objective of the Tourism Services Section of Kempsey Shire Council.

The Tourism Manager successfully negotiated a partnership with the National Parks & Wildlife Service, Tourism New South Wales and the Department of State & Regional Development to collectively and equally fund the development of a Strategic Plan which would address long term requirements of each, in regard to future directions relevant to tourism within the boundaries of the Macleay Valley Coast region

The four contributors agreed to the engagement of a tourism consultant to undertake the plan independently of internal constraints and policies.

A Project Brief was prepared and submitted to Macleay development And Promotion (MDAP) prior to advertising for tenders for the project.

The Preliminary Draft Plan was circulated amongst the financial contributors, the MDAP committee and Councillors in August.

Community Workshops to introduce the six strategies contained in the plan were held in Bellbrook, South West Rocks and Kempsey also in August.

Councillors Hayes and Bowell joined the steering committee for the October meeting and provided further feedback from Council's perspective. At this meeting the Steering Committee agreed that ownership of the plan resided with Kempsey Shire Council. Our consultant met privately with the Mayor and General Manager on 14 October to refine key issues within the plan.

All of the suggested alterations and deletions were incorporated into a revised Preliminary Daft, which was once again introduced to a very well

attended Tourism Industry Workshop in Kempsey on 28 October. The revised Preliminary Draft was workshopped by members of the MDAP committee on 1 November and final amendments have again been included in this Draft.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

▪ **Environmental**

This plan seeks to minimise the impacts of tourism on the environment through defining a pathway to increase the yield more so than the number of visitors to the Shire. Traditionally the MVC attracts numerous holidaymakers in the peak times as do neighbouring coastal areas. The focus of this plan is to:

- *spread manageable visitation throughout the year*
- *identify ways to increase the yield or economic contribution to our economy*
- *develop new markets to the MVC who harmonise with the core values of the MVC*
- *Advise, promote and enhance the capabilities of the abundant built and natural heritage within the MVC for the enjoyment of visitors and residents alike*

▪ **Social**

The successful implementation of this Strategic Plan should lead to enhancement of the profitability and capability of existing businesses to become more sustainable and in turn require additional staff.

The proposed business incubator will stimulate the development of new businesses and employment. These incubated businesses will primarily be linked to escorted and adventure tourism, opening up opportunities which until now have not been capitalised on. The provision of these facilities will elevate local pride within the local community.

▪ **Economic (Financial)**

The November meeting of Council called for full costings of the actions contained within the report. This is supplied at [\(Appendix B - Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3\)](#). All costs identified within year one (\$19,500) have been incorporated into the Macleay Valley Coast Tourism Marketing Plan 2004/05. Many of these costs are normally provided for in each year's tourism budget. Costings for subsequent years are:

- *Year 2 \$13,500*
- *Year 3 \$20,000*
- *Year 4 \$40,000*

It should be noted that initial approaches have been made to AusIndustry to seek grant funding to \$500,000 for the proposed Tourism Incubator. This application will be in tandem with the Macleay Business Enterprise Centre.

The plan contains six key strategies and ninety-nine actions. The majority of these actions fall to Council and the plan identifies funding opportunities where relevant. A major requirement of the plan is for the core tourism benefactors to form an industry cluster to work cooperatively with Council to implement the actions within. The plan seeks to harmonise with the vision for the Kempsey Shire and actions will ensure that tourism remains a positive contributor to the environment, culture and local economy.

The fact that the plan identifies strategies to increase the yield or spend of visitors will assist the viability of local businesses, stimulate jobs growth and benefit the local economy.

Numerous investors in the Shire and indeed new residents were first introduced to the area as tourists

▪ **Policy or Statutory**

Throughout the development of the plan reference was made to numerous Council policies. It is the intent of this plan to harmonise with those plans objectives.

▪ **General Managers or Directors Review**

Not all of the financial ramifications of implementing this plan have been able to be identified. There are costs associated with the development of Horseshoe Bay reserve, the caravan parks and the Gladstone Art Gallery and although these projects are actions of this plan they are plans in their own right and are separately provided for in Council's budget. Many of the actions are "to consider" or "to seek" and the costs of implementation will not be known until investigations are carried out. If the investigations prove that an action is feasible, grant options would be applied for and a bid made in the appropriate years budget. This is no different to financing works under a plan of management adopted by Council for any other project

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Draft Macleay Valley Coast Tourism Strategic Plan is adopted by Council.

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G B Snape
DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES