

GLEN INNES HIGHLANDS

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

BACKGROUND ANALYSIS REPORT 2021



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GLEN INNES HIGHLANDS DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN, 2021

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Glen Innes Highlands acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land – the Ngoorabul people, and we pay our respects to Elders both past and present. We would also like to acknowledge our young leaders who are the Elders of the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSISTANCE

Glen Innes Severn Council wishes to thank residents, businesses and organisations who met with our consultant and Tourism and Events Officer and provided information and input into our DMP



ABBREVIATIONS

4WD	Four-wheel driving (off road)
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
BnB	Bed and Breakfast accommodation
CSP	GIS Community Strategic Plan
DNCO	Destination Network Country and Outback
DMP	Destination Management Plan
DNCO	Destination Network Country and Outback
DNSW	Destination NSW
FNSW	Forestry Corporation of NSW
GIH	Glen Innes Highlands
GIHVA	Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Association
GISC	Glen Innes Severn Council
LALC	Local Aboriginal Lands Council
LGA	Local Government Area
LSPS	Local Strategic Planning Statement
MTB	Mountain Bike
NEHC	New England High Country (marketing alliance)
NEJO	New England Joint Organisation (alliance of Councils)
NE-NW	New England North West region
NPWS	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
REDS	Regional Economic Development Strategy
RMS	Roads and Maritime Services
RV	Recreational Vehicle (eg motorhome, campervan)
TRA	Tourism Research Australia
VEIAP	Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives
VIC	Visitor Information Centre
YE	Year Ending



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Tourism is a significant economic activity for Glen Innes Highlands (GIH), with the sector having an estimated output in 2019 of \$47.337 million and a value-add of \$21.801 million¹. The sector directly employs 245 people².

The GIH attracts an estimated 155,000 visitors per annum, 62% of whom were domestic visitors who stayed one or more nights in the GIH, with 37% being domestic day trippers and around 1% being international visitors³. These visitors spend in the order of \$45 million per annum within the area. Visitors bring 'new' dollars into the local economy, with these dollars being largely independent of the fluctuations in the agricultural sector and providing cashflow year-round. The additional dollars and improved cashflow contributes to the sustainability and resilience of local businesses.

Glen Innes Severn Council (GISC) is the key driver of, and stakeholder in, the visitor economy. GISC owns and operates the Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre (VIC), employs economic development and tourism staff and is responsible for the production of information and promotional collateral and the marketing and promotion of the GIH. GISC also supports events; has a significant investment in the venues, reserves, parks and gardens, infrastructure and facilities that underpin visitation; and is the regulatory authority in areas such as planning, development and food safety. GISC works closely with a range of organisations and committees to deliver products and experiences and market and promote the GIH.

The on-going development of the visitor economy is a priority for GISC and the GIH community with the sector recognised as having the potential to:

- Grow and diversify the local economy, reducing its dependence on agriculture and building resilience.
- Bring 'new' dollars into the area helping to sustain and retain local businesses and services.
- Create employment.
- Attract new residents, businesses and investment.
- Raise the profile of the GIH and generate awareness.

While the tourism sector is performing well, there is more that can be achieved with the assets and resources available. Visitor markets are changing. There is strong and growing interest in, and visitation to, regional areas with this stimulated in part by the regional dispersal strategies being implemented by Tourism Australia and Destination NSW and most recently, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel.

Accompanying this there has been a paradigm shift in visitor expectations with travellers increasingly wanting to challenge themselves; be outdoors and active; reconnect as a couple or family; and interact socially with locals and other travellers – to hear their 'stories' and to 'learn'. This creates opportunities to use assets differently – to focus on the activities that can be undertaken, and the experiences offered.



¹ RDA Northern Inland: REMPLAN Economic Profile – Tourism: Glen Innes Severn Shire

² RDA Northern Inland: REMPLAN Economic Profile – Tourism: Glen Innes Severn Shire

³ Lucid Economics GIS Economic Development Strategy – Background Report

New technology is also impacting on the tourism industry. Digital technology has, and is, continuing to change the way in which consumers communicate, access and share information, select destinations and products, and book and pay for travel. Digital technology provides the opportunity to enhance the visitor experience (eg Apps, virtual reality), while the 'shared economy' provides opportunities for new businesses and investment.

Realising the opportunities that are emerging will be dependent on the continued development of the product, infrastructure and services available; delivering comprehensive information services via a diverse range of touch points; and ramping up marketing and promotion, particularly in the digital space.

1.2 Destination Management

In line with Government policy, GISC has adopted a destination management approach to provide the direction and framework for growing the local visitor economy.

Destination management introduces a 'holistic' approach to the development, management and marketing of tourist destinations. The approach requires that all tiers of Government, the tourism industry and business and community leaders work together to develop and manage destinations to ensure that tourism adds value to the economy and social fabric of the area, is sustainable into the future, is resilient to external shocks and is responsive to changes in both the marketplace and competitive environment. It involves formulating a strong vision for the future of the destination and putting in place the framework and resources to 'deliver' this vision. A Destination Management Plan (DMP) provides the framework for developing and managing the destination and is a pre-requisite to accessing tourism funding and will assist in accessing a range of Federal and State Government grant programs.

1.3 Purpose of the Glen Innes Highlands Destination Management Plan (DMP)

The purpose of the Glen Innes Highlands DMP is to provide the direction and framework for taking the Highland's visitor economy forward over the next five years. The primary goals of this Plan are to:

- Increase visitor expenditure within the GIH, with resultant economic and social benefits for the local community.
- Diversify the GIH economy and build resilience.
- Improve the viability and sustainability of local businesses.
- Attract public and private sector investment.
- Create employment.

To achieve this, the DMP focuses on:

- Initiatives to grow and diversify visitation and encourage visitors to explore and spend money locally.
- Encouraging and facilitating the development of touring routes, attractions, activities, experiences and events.
- Ensuring that the infrastructure, facilities and services are in place to meet visitor needs and expectations and support the growth of the visitor economy.
- Identifying priorities to ensure the most effective use of limited funds and resources.



1.4 Outcomes being Sought

The main outcomes being sought from the Glen Innes Highlands DMP are:

- To deliver on GISC's Strategic Objectives as articulated in the GISC Community Strategic Plan, Local Strategic Planning Statement and Economic Development Strategy.
- A higher profile and increased awareness of the GIH.
- Increased visitation to and visitor expenditure within the GIH.
- Increased appeal and competitiveness of the GIH as a destination.
- Increased viability and long-term sustainability of businesses and services.
- Increased public and private sector investment in new businesses, products, infrastructure, facilities and services.
- A stronger, more resilient community.
- Framework and directions to assist GISC in the allocation of funds and resources.

1.5 Implementation – Tourism is everyone's business

The Glen Innes Highlands DMP is the starting point for consolidating and growing the visitor economy over the next five years. It will however take time, funds, resources and commitment to implement the strategies and actions incorporated in this Plan.

Given the limited resources available, actions need to be prioritised. While there are several relatively simple, cost effective actions that can be undertaken in the short-term that will result in growth in visitation, sustaining visitation in the medium to longer term will only be achieved if the Highland's tourism product and infrastructure base continues to be improved and expanded. This will require a strong partnership between GISC and the community; support from tourism and business organisations and operators; strategic relationships with key State and regional organisations and land management agencies; and funding support from the State and Federal Governments.

Some of projects and actions in the DMP are 'aspirational' and are well beyond the financial capacity of GISC and other key stakeholders to implement in their entirety currently. These projects are however included in-case funding opportunities arise in the future. The fact that the projects have been identified and documented as important for the development of the local and/or regional visitor economy, can assist in securing funding.

To be effective, the DMP must be a living document that is constantly evolving. The recommended actions need to be implemented and the results evaluated and the DMP revised to build on what has been achieved.



2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Glen Innes Highlands Tourism Destination Management Plan (DMP) was prepared within the framework set by Federal and State Government policies for the development and management of tourism destinations. It is also consistent with the NSW Government's priorities for Regional NSW and key regional plans and strategies and with the directions and strategic directions of the Glen Innes Severn Community Strategic Plan and Local Strategic Planning Statement.

2.1 Policies, Strategies and Plans for Destination Development and Management

2.1.1 Australian Government - National Long-Term Tourism Strategy

The National Long Term Tourism Strategy for Australia 2020 recognises that the future of tourism is dependent on providing 'compelling and sustainable experiences' to consumers with 'innovation, continuous improvement and renewal' of products, experiences and infrastructure required if Australia is to remain competitive. To facilitate this, the Commonwealth Government, in conjunction with the State Tourism Agencies advocates for integrated planning, development and management of tourism destinations, with localities encouraged to prepare and adopt Destination Management Plans (DMPs).

The Long-Term Strategy is currently being reviewed with the draft directions⁴ including a focus on dispersal of visitors into regional Australia, developing unique Aboriginal and agri-tourism tourism experiences, harnessing technology to enhance the visitor experience, addressing transport and accommodation capacity constraints and building a skilled workforce.

2.1.2 NSW – Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan (VEIAP) 2030

Building the visitor economy is a key priority of the NSW Government, with the visitor economy recognised as having the potential to drive growth in the State's economy. The VEIP sets a target to increase visitor expenditure in NSW to \$55 billion by 2030. The Plan has a strong emphasis on growing tourism in Regional NSW and has set targets of achieving \$20 billion in visitor expenditure in Regional NSW by 2025 and \$25 billion by 2030. Key directions include a focus on:

- Product development: nature-based activities, aboriginal experiences, tours and trails, interest-based activities, events and regional conferencing
- Investing in infrastructure: including accommodation and signage
- Industry development: including workforce skills

2.1.3 Destination NSW – Strategic Objectives⁵

Destination NSW's eight key strategic objectives and product development priorities are:

Strategic Objectives	Product Development Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Sydney and NSW as world leading tourism and event destinations • Attract and secure high value major events • Build a sustainable events calendar for NSW • Increase industry stakeholder and customer engagement • Deliver value in partnership cooperative programs • Develop and sustain a high-performance organisation • Maximise yield and dispersal from the visitor economy • Implement the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and wine • Aboriginal experiences • Regional conferencing • Events • Nature-based • Agri-tourism • Touring routes and trails • Interest-based activities

⁴ Beyond Tourism 2020 Steering Committee Report to Government

⁵ Destination NSW Annual Report 2018-19

2.1.4 State-wide Destination Management Plan

The State-wide Destination Management Plan sets the direction for tourism product, infrastructure and industry development in NSW to deliver on the Government's visitor expenditure targets for NSW. The Plan has 10 Strategic Focus Areas:

- Destination NSW will continue to take a leadership role in aligning Government and industry across the state to deliver the 2030 Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan and grow the NSW visitor economy sustainably and raise the importance of the sector with all levels of Government.
- Position the visitor at the heart of the NSW visitor economy by making best use of data and developing deep customer insights that drive destination development, management and marketing strategy.
- Develop and deliver state-wide experiences and products strategies in partnership with the Destination Networks.
- Support the Department of Industry, National Parks & Wildlife Service and other Government departments in the development and delivery of sustainable state-wide tourism infrastructure and access improvement strategies.
- Work with Roads and Maritime Services and the Destination Networks to develop and deliver a streamlined state-wide wayfinding and visitor information services strategy.
- Develop and deliver an enhanced state-wide industry development strategy, in partnership with the Destination Networks and the Department of Industry.
- Develop and deliver an enhanced state-wide industry development strategy, in partnership with the Destination Networks and the Department of Industry.
- Develop and deliver an enhanced state-wide digital and content strategy and plan, in consultation with the Destination Networks.
- Develop a Destination Management Plan for Sydney.
- Prepare for future industry disruption, innovation and global trends.

For product development, DNSW will focus on supporting the Destination Networks to create and maintain a pipeline of 'hero' experiences, better 'bundling' of assets, developing touring routes and trails, industry development and increase the number of 'export ready' and 'China ready' experiences. The DMP identifies 20 experience categories that DNSW and the Destination Networks need to focus on.

The products and experiences offered by GIH are strongly aligned with:	The GIH also has products and experiences that fall within the categories of:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and adventure • Caravan and camping • Journeys and touring routes • Farm Stays • Special Interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and culture • History and heritage • Aboriginal • Agri-tourism • Food and drink • Aquatic (rivers) • Events and festivals • Business events



2.1.4 Destination Country and Outback NSW - Destination Management Plan (DMP)

In 2016, DNSW established six Destination Networks in NSW. Glen Innes Highlands lies within the Country and Outback Destination Network. The Network, which incorporates the New England North West, Central NSW, Orana and Far West Regions of NSW, is administered by Destination Network - Country and Outback (DNCO). The Destination Network has adopted a DMP for the Region, with the core ambition of the Plan being to:

‘Provide an inspiring and innovative approach to grow the visitor economy of Country and Outback NSW and create meaningful connection between the place, its communities and businesses with visitors to the region’.

The DMP has six high level goals:

- Create a positive collaborative culture to support the growth of the visitor economy
- Increase visitation and yield to Destination Country and Outback NSW
- Strengthen the perception and awareness of Country and Outback NSW
- Build the capacity and capability of the industry and local government
- Facilitate the development or enhancement of products, experiences and events
- Enable effective and efficient communication with stakeholders and communities across the network.

The Destination Network is looking to grow existing markets:

- Touring, with the focus on 55+ years
- Visiting friends and relatives
- Event participants
- Nature and cultural visitors
- Short breaks with an emphasis on food and wine.

It is also looking to diversify and build new markets including:

- Active families
- Younger adults
- More active 55+ years
- Conference and meeting markets
- International visitors – focusing on nature, cultural, and food and wine visitors.

For product development the Plan’s positioning statement is:

‘Explore the unlimited possibilities of Country and Outback NSW, as mesmerising as the stars that stretch across the evening sky’.

The Plan has 7 strategic product themes:

- **Celebrating Culture on Country:** enhancing existing and developing new meaningful and immersive Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences.
- **Wine Lovers and Foodie Finds:** food, wine and agri tourism experiences including events and be-spoke experiences.
- **Unlimited horizons:** developing drive journeys and touring routes, flying tours and leveraging the night sky (eg camping under the stars).
- **Exploring Our Nature:** leverage opportunities for outdoor activities and adventures – bush walking, cycling, canoeing etc – both independent and guided tours.
- **Revealing our Heritage:** enhancing and expanding heritage experiences to bring heritage to life. This includes events, trails and use of technology in storytelling and interpretation.
- **Little Places Big Stories:** leveraging small town stories and events to encourage travellers to explore and stay longer in the region.
- **Conferences and Events**



Glen Innes Highlands' strength lies in 'Exploring Our Nature' outdoors and adventure activities, with the GIH also having product that aligns with Foodie Finds, Unlimited Horizons, Heritage, Little Places – Big Stories and Events.

2.2 Regional Plans and Strategies

2.2.1 Priorities for Regional NSW - A 20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW

In July 2018, the NSW Government released its priorities for driving economic growth in Regional NSW⁶. In relation to tourism, the NSW Government is looking to:

- Draw in more domestic and international tourists in areas with tourism potential
- Attract more domestic and international students to regional NSW

The Plan is also looking to 'Grow vibrant places to live and work to encourage business and population growth.'

2.2.2 New England North West Regional Plan

The NSW's State Government's vision for the New England North West Region is:

'A sustainable future that maximises the advantages of the region's diverse climates, landscapes and resources.'

Key elements of the Vision, relevant to tourism, are:

- Developing communities that are great places to live, work, visit and invest.
- Conserving and celebrating natural and cultural heritage assets.

The Plan identifies tourism as a priority sector, recognising that the Region's assets (including the national parks, heritage and cultural assets, events, conference and meeting venues, agriculture / local produce and the hot artesian waters), combined with good transport connections and the region's proximity to larger settlements in South East Queensland, the Hunter, North Coast and Sydney, provide opportunities to grow and diversify both the local and regional economy. The Plan has as one of its core actions:

Action 4.5.1 Facilitate opportunities for a range of tourist experiences and accommodation: 'The NSW Government will work with councils to plan for a range of tourist experiences and accommodation. This includes providing scope for complementary land uses, and infrastructure and services that support and build on existing and emerging tourist attractions across the region. This can be done by:

- Providing flexible planning controls to facilitate a range of tourist accommodation options, such as farm stay and bed and breakfast developments.
- Enabling a diverse range of cultural heritage tourism, including opportunities to engage with Aboriginal communities and their culture.
- Supporting the development of complementary tourism experiences associated with agriculture.
- Planning strategies and local environmental plans to provide land and opportunities to support tourist experiences and accommodation.'

Other strategic initiatives in this Plan that will help to drive growth of the visitor economy include:

- Encouraging locality planning to develop centres with a strong local identity and sense of place, including providing recreation and sporting facilities, open space, and infrastructure and services that promote healthy and active lifestyles (Direction 3.4).

⁶ NSW Government (2018) A 20 Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW

- Improving linkages across the region and inter-regionally by improving road and transport connections (Goal 4). This includes improving road links, particularly between State Roads (Action 4.2.1) and preserving current regular passenger transport air services to Sydney Airport.
- Enhancing the viability and vitality of commercial centres (Direction 4.4).
- Protecting water, environment and heritage (Goal 5). Key directions and actions to deliver this goal include:
 - Managing water resources for a growing economy and environmental sustainability (Direction 5.1) and maintaining healthy waterways and wetlands (Action 5.1.3).
 - Protecting areas of high environmental value (Direction 5.2).
 - Protecting Aboriginal and European heritage (Direction 5.3), including identifying appropriate and innovative opportunities to leverage heritage assets (Action 5.3.2).

2.2.3 Northern New England High Country Regional Development Strategy (REDS)

The State Government, through the Department of Premier and Cabinet, has prepared a Regional Development Strategy (REDS) for the Northern New England High Country (Glen Innes Severn + Tenterfield LGAs) Functional Economic Region of NSW. The REDS has three core strategies, with Strategy 2 being 'Support and grow key sectors'. Tourism is identified as a key sector and driver of growth with the tourism initiative being to 'grow the tourism sector (visitor economy) through product development, improved signage, marketing promotion, and growing the events sector'. Tourism infrastructure priorities were identified as:

- Product development – improving existing attractions and facilities and developing new attractions
- Signage
- Improving event venues.

2.2.4 New England Joint Organisation (NEJO) – Strategic Plan

The NEJO represents seven LGAs in the New England North West Region of NSW – Armidale, Glen Innes Severn, Inverell, Moree Plains, Narrabri, Tenterfield and Uralla. Its vision includes 'delivering positive economic and social benefits for its Member communities'. The Strategic Plan identified tourism as strength of the region and recognises that 'increasing visitation will drive economic growth and boost market confidence for inward investment and business development'.

2.3 Local Plans and Strategies

2.3.1 Glen Innes Severn (GIS) Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027

The GIS Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 articulates the vision, direction and framework for coordinating development, resource allocation and service delivery within the LGA. The vision for the LGA is:

'Glen Innes Severn will have a vibrant, confident and inclusive community supported by a sustainable and prosperous economy underpinned by a well-maintained road network'.

The Plan recognises that the visitor economy is a significant economic contributor to the local economy. It also identified concerns with the current capacity to deliver on tourism expectations with issues including the standard and range of accommodation and trading hours for retail - particularly restaurants and cafes.

The Plan has five strategic directions, two of which 'Economic Development' and 'Environment and Heritage' have goals and actions relevant to tourism. GISC's economic objective is to **'facilitate a growing local economy by continuing to support an attractive business climate'**, with its tourism goal being:

- ED 1.3 Review tourism opportunities and promotion with a particular focus on strengthening accessibility and providing incentives to draw visitors into the Glen Innes Highlands.

The environment and heritage objective is to **‘manage the natural values of our local area and conserve our heritage to ensure that it is enjoyed by the community, visitors and future generations’**. Goals pertaining to tourism are:

- EH 3 Improve opportunities for passive recreation around our nature and heritage assets.
- EH 3.1 Improve signage for the benefit of the local community and visitors.
- EH 3.2 Advocate for the development of a rail trail to promote pedestrian and cycle connectivity.
- EH 5 Further pursue the creation of innovative public art attractions and the establishment of an artistic culture and ambience within Glen Innes.
- EH 6 Improve the entrances to Glen Innes and the villages that are representative of its proud and environmentally conscious community.

2.3.2 Glen Innes Severn Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) - A Strategic Land Use Vision to 2040

The LSPS provides the direction and framework for land use planning in the LGA for the next 20 years, with the vision for the area being:

‘Glen Innes Highlands is the place to experience a unique lifestyle with opportunity, connection and well-being among a cherished and sustainable environment’.

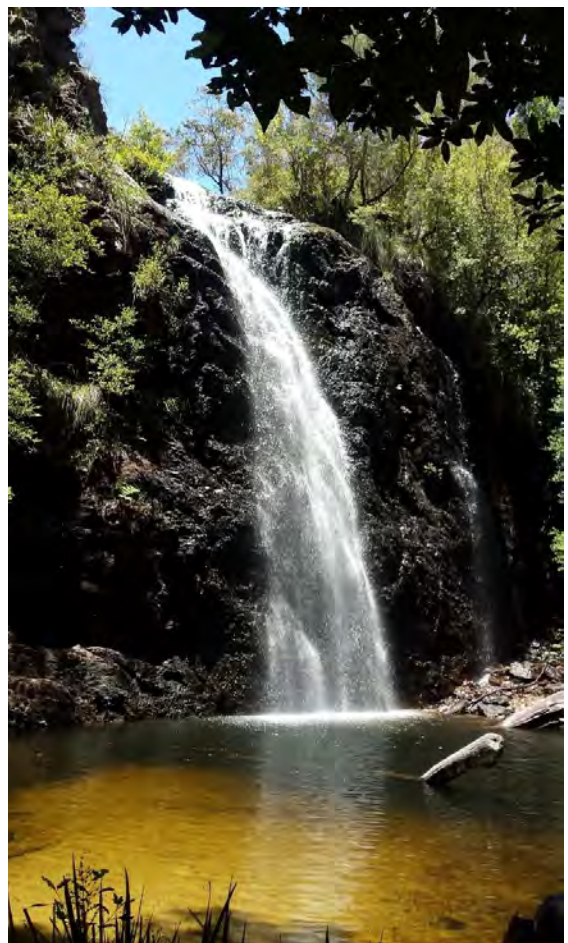
Goals include population growth, a diverse economy and the protection of environmental and heritage assets. The Plan has 4 key themes and 10 planning priorities. Tourism sits within Theme 1: ‘A renewed economy and authentic place; with tourism being Planning Priority 3: **‘Expand nature-based adventure and cultural tourism by leveraging environmental and iconic assets such as World Heritage listed National Parks and the Australian Standing Stones’**.

GISC is looking to:

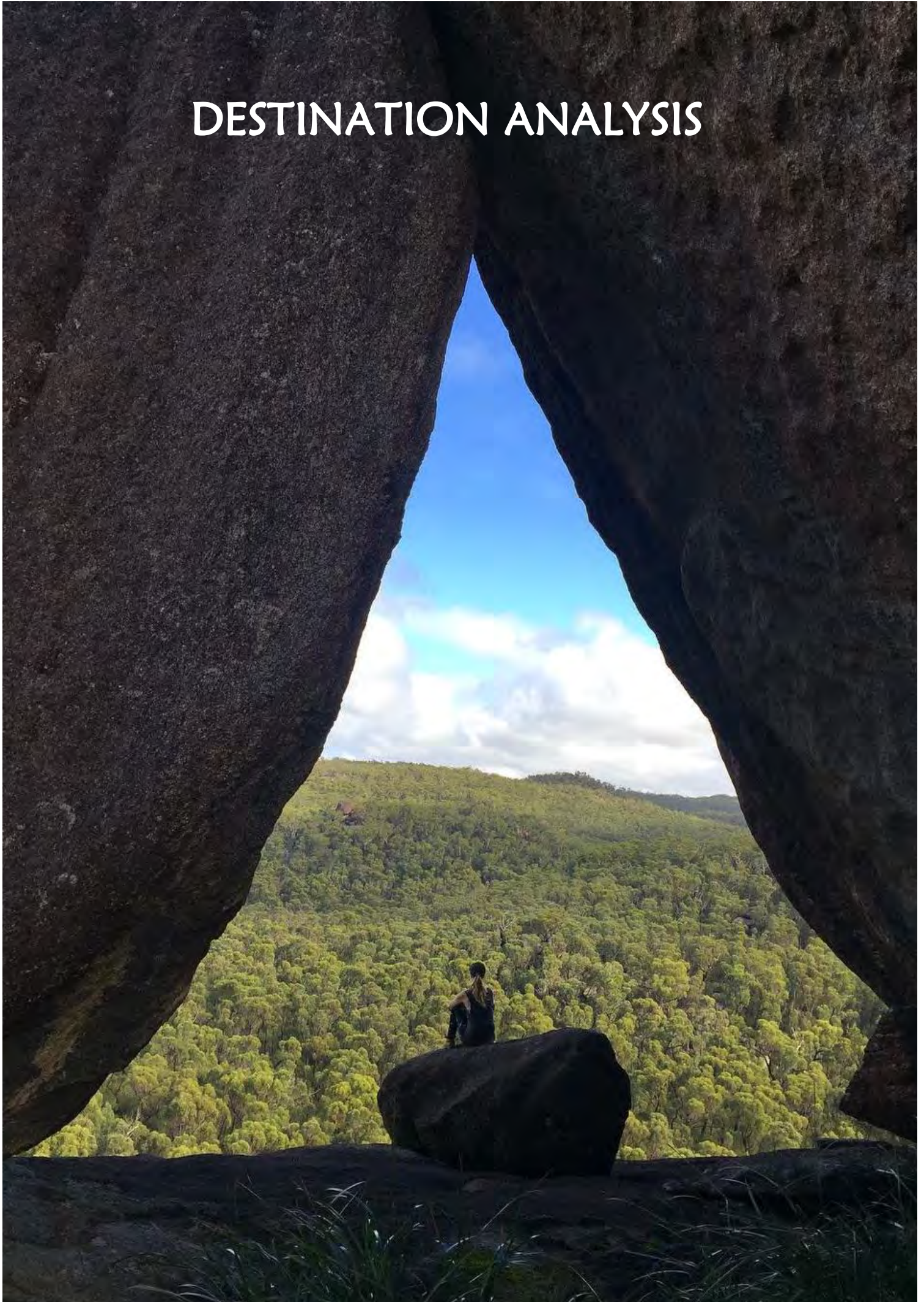
- Encourage commercial, tourist and recreation activities that complement and promote a stronger agricultural sector and build the sector’s adaptability.
- Create opportunities for community and visitors to connect to Aboriginal cultural heritage values in the landscape with collaboration with Aboriginal Elders and Local Lands Council.
- Expand tourism and visitor opportunities.
- Protect areas of high environmental value and enhance biodiversity.
- Promote sustainable development and protection of our natural resources through the planning system.

The actions for tourism are:

- 3.1 Prepare the destination management plan or other tourism-focused strategies that align with Country and Outback NSW Destination Management Plan prepared by Destination NSW.
- 3.2 Facilitate tourism and visitor accommodation and supporting land uses where appropriate through local plans and strategies.
- 3.3 Build relationships and support Local Aboriginal Lands Council to develop new events and cultural activities.
- 3.4 Integrate Aboriginal cultural heritage and experiences into Centennial Parklands Master Plan.
- 3.5 Review DCP to include specific control for tourist and visitor accommodation.



DESTINATION ANALYSIS

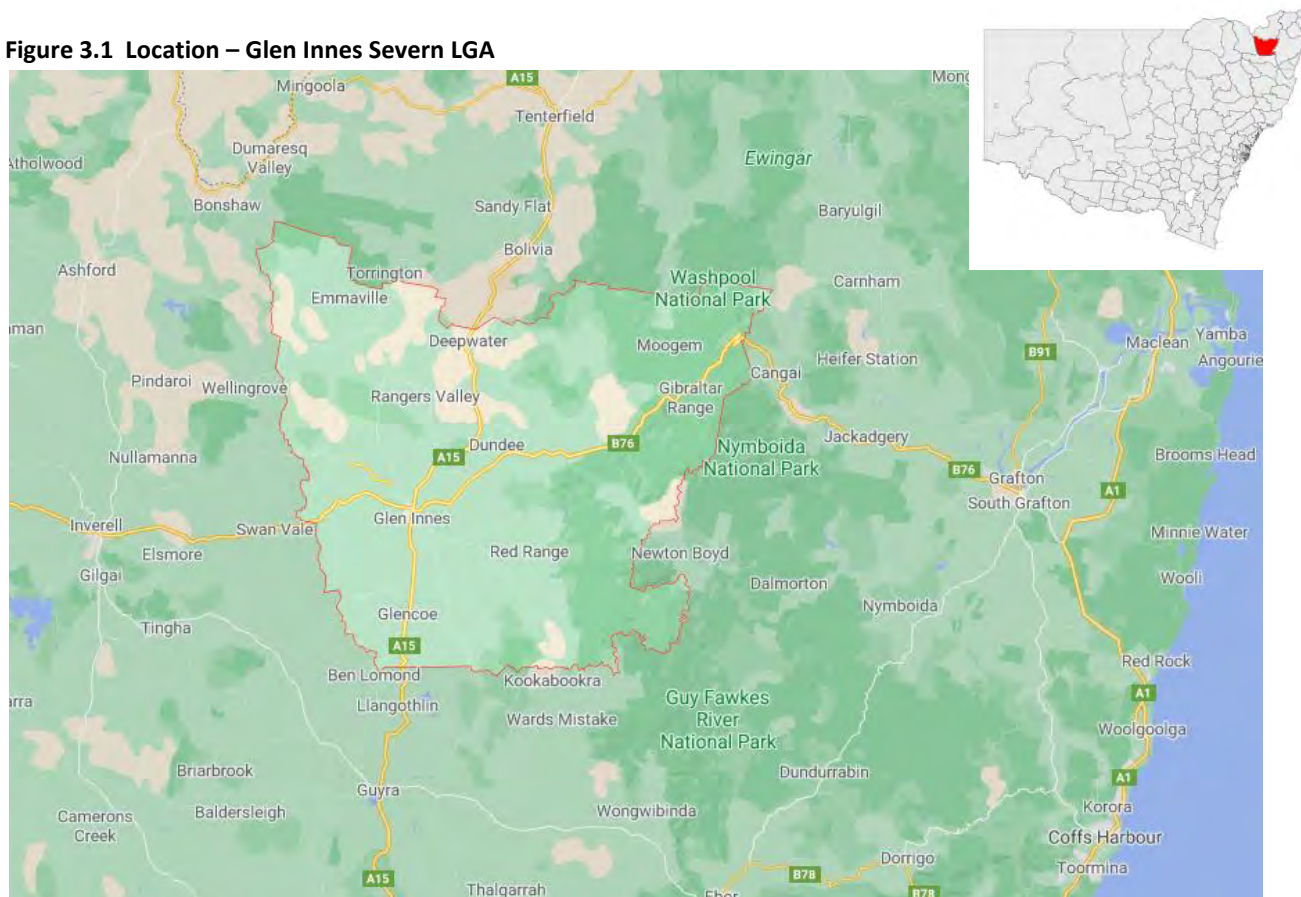


3. GLEN INNES HIGHLANDS

3.1 Location

Glen Innes Severn Local Government Area (LGA) is branded and referred to as the Glen Innes Highlands. The GIH is located in the north of the New England Region of NSW, approximately 600 kilometres north of Sydney, 350 kilometres south west of Brisbane, 300 kilometres south of Toowoomba, 100 kilometres north of Armidale and 165 kilometres inland from Grafton. The GIH has an area of 5,487 square kilometres and shares boundaries with Tenterfield, Inverell, Armidale Regional and Clarence Valley LGAs.

Figure 3.1 Location – Glen Innes Severn LGA



Source: Google Maps

3.2 Access

Located at the intersection of the New England and Gwydir Highways, Glen Innes Highlands is readily accessible by road. The New England Highway is a major interstate route and part of the main link between the GIH and southern Queensland. The Gwydir Highway is a State Highway connecting the Pacific Highway at Grafton to the Castlereagh Highway near Walgett, via Glen Innes, Inverell and Moree. To the east of Glen Innes, the Gwydir Highway is branded 'World Heritage Way' and provides access to the Washpool and Gibraltar Range World Heritage listed National Parks. To the west, between Glen Innes and Wyallda, the Gwydir Highway is branded 'Fossickers Way' with Fossickers Way linking towns and localities within the New England North West region with mining heritage and gold, gemstone and mineral fossicking sites.

While most travellers arrive via the highways, several regional and local roads, particularly between the Armidale area and the GIH are popular with the touring motorcycle and 4WD markets. The Old Glen Innes / Old Grafton Road is becoming a popular touring route for trail bikes, with this route and the Aberfoyle Tablelands Track being well known amongst 4WD enthusiasts.

The GIH is located on the Main North rail line⁷, with daily coach services between the rail terminus at Armidale and Tenterfield, stopping at Glencoe, Glen Innes, Dundee and Deepwater in the GIH.

Glen Innes Airport is licensed for general aviation and has the capacity to take charter flights. The nearest airports with RPT services are in Inverell and Armidale, with services to Sydney and Melbourne.

3.3 Physical Environment

Glen Innes Highlands straddles the Great Dividing Range. Elevation ranges from 100 metres above sea level in the north east to over 1,500 metres in the south west. The GIH landscapes are stunning. The eastern edge of the GIH is dissected gorge country formed by the headwater tributaries of the Clarence River. The remainder of the GIH is elevated plateau, dominated by 'granite country' with spectacular granite outcrops, tors and balancing rocks. The central and western areas of the GIH are drained by the Severn River and its major tributary, Beardy Waters. The GIH pristine rivers and creeks are well stocked with native fish including Murray cod, brown trout and yellow belly.

26% of the GIH is National Park estate⁸ (1,190km²) and State Forests (231km²), with the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks being part of the World Heritage listed Gondwana Rainforests of Australia. Vegetation across the GIH includes the warm temperate rainforest in the gullies, eucalyptus forests and woodlands, and sub-alpine vegetation at higher elevations.

The GIH has a cool temperate climate with four distinct seasons. Summers are mild-to-hot with low humidity. Winters are cold, frosty and windy, with temperatures often falling below 0°C. Frosts are prevalent and snow falls occur at higher altitudes. The GIH attracts the 'snow chasers' in winter, people escaping the humidity on the coast in summer and visitors seeking the spectacular display of autumn trees.



⁷ The Main North Rail line links Armidale to Sydney. The line is closed north of Armidale, with coach services operating between Armidale and Tenterfield.

⁸ Includes National Parks, State Conservation Areas and Nature Reserves

3.4 History⁹

Glen Innes Highlands is the home of the Ngorabul people, with Ngorabul country extending from the escarpment west to Ashford and north to Tenterfield.

The first European settlement occurred in the late 1830's with the taking up of pastoral runs. The first 'towns' of Deepwater, Stonehenge, Dundee and Wellingrove were established on pastoral runs. Glen Innes was gazetted as a town in 1852 and progressively became the centre of the GIH. The mining boom of the 1880's and the coming of the railway in 1884 stimulated the development of Glen Innes, with many of the town's beautiful historic buildings dating from this period. The railway, north of Armidale, closed just over a century later, with the last passenger train to Glen Innes in 1988 and freight services ceasing in 1993.

Gold was discovered in the Glen Elgin area in the 1850's and in the Kookabookra area in 1889, which both finds resulting in brief gold rushes. Tin and associated minerals was discovered in the Emmaville area in the 1870's which resulted in a tin mining boom. In its heyday in the early 1900's, Emmaville was the largest town in the area with a population of over 7,000 people, 2,000 of whom were Chinese. The Ottery arsenic and tin mine and refinery was established near Emmaville in 1882 and operated through to 1939. The Ottery is the oldest principal ore refinery in Australia and one of the few remaining world-wide¹⁰. With the coming of the railway in 1886, Deepwater became the rail head for Emmaville and was the largest and busiest rail freight hub north of Newcastle.

Sapphires and other gemstones were found in conjunction with tin¹¹. Commercial sapphire mining commenced in the 1920's, with the deep blue Glen Innes Sapphire becoming much sought after by European gem buyers. Mining ceased during the Depression and WW11, commencing again in the 1950's. Sapphire mining peaked in the 1970's with over 100 mining plants in the region: declining in 1980's with the exhaustion of alluvial deposits and a fall in global prices. A few commercial plants remain, with now gem fossicking a popular tourist attraction.

Most of the earliest pastoral settlers were Scottish, with the mining attracting Irish, Welsh and Cornish workers. There was also a significant influx of Chinese, most of whom worked in the market gardens around Emmaville. The GIH strong Celtic history is marked by the Australian Standing Stones and the annual Australian Celtic Festival. The Land of Beardies Museum in Glen Innes, and the Emmaville Mining Museum and Emmaville Court House Museum provide an insight into the GIH pastoral and mining history with the mining industry also celebrated through the Minerama and Gemorama festivals.

3.5 The Glen Innes Highlands Today

Today, Glen Innes Highlands is home to around 8,965 people, approximately 60% of whom live in Glen Innes. Glen Innes is the commercial and administrative centre of the GIH and the primary destination for visitors. The town has a strong retail and commercial core and a concentration of visitor accommodation. The town's main attractions are the Australian Standing Stones, its historic town centre, the Land of Beadie's Museum and Heritage House, Super Strawberry and the Glen Innes Parklands, with second tier of attractions including galleries, boutique and lifestyle shopping, a distillery, Chapel Theatre and sapphire outlets.

There are four highland villages – Emmaville, Deepwater, Red Range and Glencoe, and four hamlets - Glen Elgin, Wellingrove, Wyaliba and Dundee. Emmaville is known for its mining history with its main attractions being the Mining and Courthouse Museums, its heritage hotels and the historic Ottery Mine. The historic village of Deepwater is a popular stop on the New England Highway with the eclectic Longhorn Bar and Grill and the Bakery being well known eateries. Deepwater is also a gateway to the Torrington SCA. Glencoe is also located on the New England Highway with the Red Lion Tavern popular with highway travellers and local and regional residents.

The GIH key economic activities are agriculture and forestry, construction, public administration and safety, health care and social assistance and tourism, with agriculture and tourism being 'engine' industries. The GIH primarily produces

⁹ Information in this section is summarised from <https://www.beardieshistoryhouse.info/glen-innes/>

¹⁰ Heritage Council of NSW

¹¹ Information on the history of sapphire mining taken from www.minerama.com.au

premium Black Angus and Wagyu beef and sheep for both fine wool and meat. It also has a large apiary industry and an emerging horticultural sector, including the production of black garlic. The GIH is also becoming a renewable energy hub with two large integrated wind and solar farms, and further development proposed.

3.6 Outlook

The outlook for Glen Innes Highlands is positive. Approval has been given for the expansion of the wind and solar farms, consolidating Glen Innes position as a renewable energy hub. In the agricultural sector, major investment is proposed to expand the Rangers Valley Feedlot. Diversification and value-adding in the agricultural sector is occurring which will increase returns and spread risk. The Taronga Tin Mine project has been approved for the Emmaville area, starting a new chapter in Emmaville's mining history.

In terms of lifestyle and community, the Glen Innes Hospital is being upgraded and funds have been secured for a new Indoor Sports Stadium, skatepark and other recreation facilities. There are also a range of projects in the pipeline that will provide opportunities to grow and diversify the visitor economy (see Section 4.3).

GISC is also seeking funding to establish the GIH Business and Community Hub which will include a business incubator as well as conference and meeting rooms and remote working and hot desk facilities.



4. THE VISITOR ECONOMY

Tourism is a significant economic activity in the GIH. In YE September 2019, the GIH attracted an estimated 155,000 visitors, 62% of whom were domestic visitors who stayed one or more nights in the area, with 37% being domestic day trippers and around 1%, international visitors¹².

4.1 Structure

Tourism in the Glen Innes Highlands is primarily coordinated and driven by GISC. GISC owns and operates the Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre (VIC), employs tourism staff and is responsible for the production of information and promotional collateral, and the marketing and promotion of the GIH. GISC also supports events, has a significant investment in the venues, reserves, parks and gardens, infrastructure and facilities that underpin visitation, and is the regulatory authority in areas such as planning, development and food safety.

The GIH has an industry-based tourist association – Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Association (GIHVA), which has a membership base of around 80 tourism and business operators. The Association undertakes some marketing and promotion, produces or contributes financially to the production of visitor information and promotional collateral, sponsors local events, is involved in business and industry development and industry networking, and advocates on behalf of its members.

4.2 Economic Contribution

Total visitor expenditure within the GIH in YE September 2019 was estimated at \$45.1 million¹³. There are 119 tourism businesses¹⁴ the majority of which are small businesses, with 43.7% employing no staff and 37.0% employing 1 to 4 staff. An estimated 245 people are employed in the tourism sector, with tourism being the GIH 5th largest employer¹⁵. Total wages paid by the tourism sector in 2019 was in the order of \$11.985M¹⁶.

In 2019 the tourism sector had an estimated output of \$47.337 million and a value-add of \$21.801 million¹⁷.

The GIH economy is highly dependent on the performance of the agricultural sector, with agriculture influencing the performance of most other sectors. In contrast, tourism brings 'new' dollars into the local economy, with these dollars being largely independent of the fluctuations in the agricultural sector and providing cashflow year-round. The additional dollars and improved cashflow contributes to the sustainability and resilience of local businesses.

4.3 Attractions, Activities and Events

Glen Innes Highlands has six core product themes:

- Adventure Country
- High Country
- Celtic Country
- Heritage Country
- Ngoorabul Country
- Progressive Country



¹² Lucid Economics GIS Economic Development Strategy – Background Report

¹³ Lucid Economics GIS Economic Development Strategy – Background Report

¹⁴ Tourism Research Australia – Local Area Profile: Glen Innes Severn Shire, Local Government Area Profile 2019

¹⁵ RDA Northern Inland: REMPLAN Economic Profile – Tourism: Glen Innes Severn Shire

¹⁶ RDA Northern Inland: REMPLAN Economic Profile – Tourism: Glen Innes Severn Shire

¹⁷ RDA Northern Inland: REMPLAN Economic Profile – Tourism: Glen Innes Severn Shire

The product base is dominated by Adventure Country attractions, activities and experiences with these complemented by High, Celtic and Heritage Country experiences. Ngoorabul Country and Progressive Country are in the early development phase with opportunities yet to be realised. A list of attractions is given in Appendix 1.

High profile attractions are:

- The Australian Standing Stones in Centennial Parklands overlooking Glen Innes. The Standing Stones are a national monument acknowledging the contribution that people of Celtic nations have made to Australian culture. Glen Innes also hosts the Australian Celtic Festival and a range of flag ceremonies and other small Celtic-related activities.
- Washpool and Gibraltar Range World Heritage listed National Parks. Washpool is located in gorge country with steep, rainforest gullies and fast flowing, pristine creeks. Gibraltar Range National Park is located on the escarpment, with a high country, granite landscape and extensive views over the gorge country. The Parks are linked by the World Heritage Walk – a 45-kilometre loop that can be walked or cycled (mountain bike). Both Parks also have several camping and picnic areas and walking tracks.
- Glen Innes historic town centre – with grand heritage buildings dating from the late 1800s; lifestyle shops, boutiques and galleries; and an emerging café scene.
- Spectacular autumn colours – Glen Innes in Autumn.
- Sapphires - Glen Innes is known for its Reddestone deep blue sapphires, with visitors interested in both fossicking and sapphire jewellery.
- The Super Strawberry (strawberry farm, café and retail outlet) – well known for its strawberry milkshakes, the Super Strawberry is a favourite stop for New England Highway travellers.

Other attractions include:

- The historic villages – Emmaville, Glencoe and Deepwater
- Stonehenge Reserve and Balancing Rock
- Beady Woodlands Reserve – walking trails and picnic areas
- Torrington State Conservation Area – walking tracks, lookouts, camping areas, and picnic areas. Following the 2019 bushfires new visitor facilities have been installed, providing a quality visitor experience
- Historic Ottery Arsenic and Tin Mine and Refinery
- Lookouts
- Old Grafton (Old Glen Innes) Road touring route and the Mann River Nature Reserve camping and picnic area
- Scenic drives
- Guy Fawkes River, Butterleaf, Warra and Capoompeta National Parks and State Forests in GIS and Kings Plains National Park in Inverell Shire
- Museums: Land of Beardies History House Museum and Research Centre, Emmaville Mining Museum and Emmaville Court House Museum
- Art galleries, antiques, boutiques and lifestyle shops
- Beverage producers: Glen Gowrie Distillery, Deepwater Brewery and 2 Wild Souls Meadery (Tenterfield Shire)
- Rivers (for fishing, fossicking, swimming and paddling) and Pindari Dam in Inverell Shire
- Popular eateries including The Local Café and Furry Cow in Glen Innes; Deepwater Brewery, Longhorn Bar and Grill and Bakery at Deepwater; and the Red Lion Tavern at Glencoe.



The GIH is popular for a range of outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities including:

- Camping
- Bushwalking
- 4WD
- Motorcycling (road and trail bike) touring
- Fishing
- Mountain biking
- Fossicking
- Bird watching

The GIH has a diverse calendar of events, with the main events being the:

- Australian Celtic Festival
- Minerama
- Gemorama
- Glen Innes Agricultural Show and Gourmet Fiesta
- Glen Innes Cup and Deepwater Picnic Races

Proposed New Tourist Attractions

There are a range of projects proposed and underway that will strengthen the product base. Projects include:

- New England Rail Trail – 103-kilometre-long trail linking Armidale to Glen Innes.
- New England Soundtrails – including a sound trail for the Washpool National Park.
- Windfarm viewing and interpretative area.
- Interpretation at the Big Blade Park.
- Upgrading Centennial Parklands – with additional walking and cycling tracks, a sky walk, themed playground and new indoor and outdoor function and event spaces.
- Rocky Ponds Creek Wetlands – a larger constructed wetlands with cycling and walking tracks at the northern end of the Glen Innes Parklands.
- Eerindii Ponds – conversion of a quarry area into lakes and recreation facilities.
- New sporting facilities – Indoor sports stadium and skatepark in Glen Innes and a polo field in Deepwater.
- An ‘Escape Room’ in Glen Innes
- Glen Innes Powerhouse Museum in the former power station, possibly as a regional arm of the Sydney Powerhouse Museum.

Funding has also been sought to extend the shared pedestrian – cycle pathway network in Glen Innes and to develop a Tourism Package and Itinerary Platform that will increase the exposure of and access to products and experiences within the GIH. GISC is also assessing the potential to develop the Glen Innes Airport as an air sports and events precinct and is in the preliminary stages of scoping a motorsports complex.

To the north, Tenterfield LGA is seeking funding to establish the ‘Angry Bull’ mountain bike trails as a major MTB complex primarily targeting the Southern Queensland market.



4.4 Accommodation

Glen Innes Highlands has a diverse range of accommodation¹⁸:

Locality	Accommodation
Glen Innes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 motels providing 216 rooms. One 4 star property (42 rooms – 19% of the room stock) with the remainder being mid-range 3-3.5 star properties. • 2 historic pub hotels – 30 rooms with shared facilities • 3 apartment properties – 8 self-contained apartments • 3 boutique BnB properties – 7 rooms total • 3 highway caravan parks providing powered and unpowered sites, cabins and cottages + cabin complex • Glen Innes Showground – camping • 3 holiday houses
Deepwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel / motel – 6 rooms • Bank BnB boutique accommodation – 3 rooms • Longhorn Bar – free primitive camping area • Deepwater Station – 2 cottages, shearers' quarters (10 rooms), camping areas
Emmaville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 historic pub hotels – 23 rooms with shared facilities • Caravan park – powered and unpowered sites
Glencoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Lion Tavern – 3 BnB rooms + free camping area (open Thursday to Sunday)
National Parks, SCAs, State Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washpool – 2 campgrounds + hut + primitive camping • Gibraltar Range – 2 campgrounds + house + camping area for people with horses • Mann River – small campground • Torrington SCA – 3 campgrounds – only 1 currently open due to bushfire damage • Primitive / informal camping (no facilities) – permitted in National Parks, SCAs and State Forests
Heritage rural properties – high end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterloo Station – homestead, cottage and shearers quarters • Kings Plains Castle – BnB – 10 rooms (Inverell LGA)
Farm stay / rural retreats with activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 properties in GIS (including Deepwater Station) • 2 fishing lodges near Ben Lomond (Armidale Regional LGA)
Farm stay / rural retreat – accommodation only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 properties – cottages and houses
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stonehenge Reserve – group camping by approval • Beardsley Waters Rest Area - free campsite on the New England Highway



¹⁸ Several of the accommodation properties that service GIH are located just outside of the LGA boundary in adjoining LGAs.

Accommodation is concentrated in Glen Innes. The supply of motel accommodation has been static for more than three decades. The town's motels and caravan parks were established primarily to service highway travellers, with eight of the motels and three of the caravan parks located along the New England Highway corridor. Ten of the motel properties and highway caravan parks are basic to mid-range (3-3.5 star) in standard. The town has only one 4-star motel property, with this property providing 42 rooms (19% of the room stock). Externally, all the motel and caravan park properties appear dated. The Glen Innes Showground is becoming popular for touring vans and RVs, offering an attractive, off-highway location at lower rates than the commercial caravan parks.

The GIH has 19 farm stay / rural retreats plus 3 farm stay properties located just outside the LGA boundary. These properties are one of the strengths of the area. They range from two very high-end, grand historic homesteads through to rustic cabins, shearers accommodation and primitive riverside campsites. Eleven of the properties offer onsite outdoor and adventure-based activities with several of the properties specialising in fishing. Nine of the properties offer accommodation in a rural setting but no activities. (Appendix 2).

NPWS campgrounds are available in the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks, Mann River Nature Reserve and the Torrington SCA, with these areas having beautiful settings and basic facilities. Primitive camping is also permissible in other parts of the National Parks and in the State Forests. There is also a cottage in the Gibraltar Range National Park and a cabin in the Washpool National Park available for holiday lettings.

Proposed New Accommodation

Development approval has been given for the conversion of the historic Glen Innes Convent to luxury accommodation (30 rooms) and conference and function facilities. This project has the potential to become an iconic property for both Glen Innes and the broader New England Region. It will also provide a focal point for growing the business events and weddings and small functions markets.

4.5 Venues

Glen Innes Highlands is well supplied with venues for large outdoor events but has limited quality facilities for business events and functions. Venues include:

- Glen Innes Showground – Show ring with grandstand seating (400), two large heritage pavilions (each 1500+m²), smaller pavilions, covered barbeque and bar areas, commercial kitchen, horse stalls and powered and unpowered camp sites.
- Glen Innes and Deepwater Racecourses.
- Chapel Theatre – 160 raked seats.
- Glen Innes & District Services Club – 3 function – meeting rooms, with a maximum capacity 400 banquet style.
- Glen Innes Town Hall – maximum capacity – 250 banquet style
- Glen Innes Golf Club – function room – maximum capacity of 250 banquet style.
- GIS Learning Centre / Library – small meeting rooms with video conferencing facilities. The adjoining art gallery is available for small functions. Small meeting rooms are also available at GISC.
- Glen Innes Community Centre – training room.
- Australian Standing Stones – Centennial Parklands – outdoor events
- Glen Innes Parklands corridor including Anzac Park and King Edward Parks and King George V Oval
- Sporting facilities.
- Stonehenge Reserve – a stunning natural area plus two former sports fields and very basic amenities.
- Bens Falls Function Centre.
- School of Arts and/or community halls and sports / recreation grounds in Deepwater, Emmaville, Glencoe, Dundee, Red Range, Tent Hill and Wellingrove.
- Glen Innes Airport – suitable for aviation events and possibly some motor sports eg drag racing, sprint series.

The National Parks and State Forests¹⁹ can also be used for functions and a range of outdoor and adventure-based events such as trail running and adventure racing, with State Forests also able to be used for horse, MTB, trail bike, motor sports and music events.

Currently none of the venues in Glen Innes are listed on the DNSW 'Meet in Regional NSW' venue guide, however GISC, through the VIC, has registered as a professional conference organiser (PCO) offering unique 'pop-up' experiences.

Proposed New Venues

Proposed new venues include:

- Indoor sports stadium (2 courts) which will provide a venue for indoor sports and potentially markets and other activities.
- The Convent – function and meeting rooms.
- Centennial Parklands (Australian Standing Stones) – indoor function centre plus new outdoor spaces for small events.
- GIH Business and Community Hub – will include meeting and training rooms.
- The Power Museum.
- Polo field at Deepwater Racecourse.

GISC is also looking to use the Airport as a venue for air sports and events and is in preliminary discussions to establish a motorsports complex.

Several properties have the potential to become iconic venues for both the GIH and the broader New England Region:

- The Bens Falls Function Centre near Emmaville which is located on a rural property and cantilevered into the cliff overlooking Bens Falls on the Severn River.
- The conference and function facilities in the proposed Glen Innes Convent project.
- The new function centre proposed for Centennial Parklands adjacent to and overlooking the Australian Standing Stones.



¹⁹ Events in National Parks and State Forests require permits / licences and need to meet a range of criteria.

4.6 Infrastructure to Support the Visitor Economy

Facilities and infrastructure available in Glen Innes Highlands to support the visitor economy include.

- **Information services:** Accredited Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in Glen Innes.
- **Eateries:** Glen Innes has a range of eateries including restaurants, cafes, takeaways and fast-food outlets. Meals and takeaway are also available in Emmaville and Deepwater, with the Red Lion Tavern in Glencoe open for meals from Thursday to Sunday. The GIH has several eateries that are popular with Highway travellers – the Super Strawberry in Glen Innes, the Red Lion Tavern in Glencoe and the Longhorn Bar and Grill and Bakery in Deepwater. The Local Café and Furry Cow in Glen Innes and the Deepwater Brewery are also becoming known.
- **Retail and support services:** Glen Innes is a district service centre with a diverse range of businesses and services. It has a cluster of lifestyle shops and quality boutiques which draw regional residents into the area. Deepwater and Emmaville are local service centres with basic services.
- **Picnic and rest areas:** Glen Innes and each of the villages have parks and reserves with playground, picnic facilities and amenities. The Glen Innes Parklands corridor is known for its spectacular autumn colours.
- **Dump Points:** Public dump points for caravans and RVs are located in Glen Innes and Deepwater.
- **Electric Vehicle Charging Station:** An EV charging station is located adjacent to the Glen Innes VIC.
- **Free WiFi:** Free WiFi is available in the Glen Innes town centre and at the Glen Innes VIC.

4.7 Strengths and Assets

From a tourism perspective, the Highland's key strengths and tourism assets are:

Strengths	Assets to work with	Opportunities
Highway access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located at the crossroads of the New England and Gwydir Highways – high volume of through and touring traffic. • New England Highway is a major interstate route and provides ready access to Glen Innes from Southern Queensland and the regional cities of Tamworth and Armidale. • Gwydir Highway links Glen Innes with growing population centres in the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast regions of NSW to the east and to significant attractions (eg Moree hot artesian baths and Lightning Ridge) to the west. • Gwydir Highway is part of two tourist drives – World Heritage Way to the east and Fossickers Way to the west. • Gwydir Highway is popular for motorcycle touring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with LGAs along the highways to position and promote the New England and Gwydir Highways as touring routes. • List World Heritage Way as a Natural Wonders Road Trip route on the VisitNSW website. • Package and undertake targeted promotion of the Gwydir Highway to the NSW North Coast communities. • Building and leveraging the motorcycle touring market, focusing on the trail bike market.
Access to domestic markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 4.87 million people living within 5 hours drive of Glen Innes – 4.11 million in Southern Queensland (including Brisbane and the Gold Coast) and 760,000 from the Northern Rivers, Mid North Coast and New England North West Region of NSW. • Approximately 190,000 people living within 2.5 hours drive of Glen Innes – including the regional cities of Grafton, Tamworth and Armidale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Tenterfield LGA to draw visitors out of Southern Queensland and the NSW Northern Rivers Region. • Escape the crowds and the humidity – summer holiday promotion targeting the Northern Rivers Region – featuring the cooler highlands climate, the lack of crowds, and the pristine creeks and rivers for swimming and paddling.

Strengths	Assets to work with	Opportunities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position the GIH as a short-breaks destination for couples, small social groups and families within the surrounding region.
Standing Stones and Celtic Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unique, high profile attraction located in Centennial Parklands at Glen Innes. Crofters Cottage. Celtic Country branding + gateway entry signs, Australian Celtic Festival and flag raising and solstice events. Stonehenge Reserve and Balancing Rock. Glen Innes Highland Tours – Kilted Tours. The Alder Grove – Celtic Art Gallery. Glen Innes Tartan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop the Centennial Parklands with Celtic themed attractions / activities, possibly exploring Celtic mythology and legends. Develop Stonehenge Reserve into a significant attraction and event venue. Grow the existing events held at the Standing Stones and introduce new festivals and events – eg Celtic Games, Pipe Band and/or dance festivals. Incorporate Celtic Food and wine into local eateries. Whiskey distillery. Develop additional Celtic themed activities and events – eg a Celtic Film Festival.
Adventure Country: with a concentration of outdoor, nature and adventure-based attractions and experiences and rural and bush retreats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two World Heritage listed National Parks (Washpool and Gibraltar Range) – part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia + World Heritage Trail (walking, MTB), camping areas, walking tracks, creeks and waterfalls, lookouts, wildlife viewing (including platypus) and bird watching. Capoompeta, Butterleaf, Warra and Guy Fawkes National Parks + Torrington State Conservation Area – 4WD and MTB trails, camping areas, bushwalking, bird watching. State Forests – native forests and pine plantations – suitable for a range of activities and events. Pristine rivers and creeks – waterfalls, rapids and swimming holes. Beardy Waters – one of the few places that have both Australian monotremes (echidna and platypus) in the same place. Stonehenge Reserve – unique natural feature and recreation area with the Reserve used for bouldering and a range of outdoor activities. Gem and mineral fossicking Farmstays – rural and bushland retreats and camping areas – offering a range of activities. The GIH appears to have the largest concentration of farm stay properties within the New England North West Region. Two high profile 4WD routes – Old Grafton Road and the Aberfoyle Track and opportunities for 4WD, trail bike riding, mountain biking and gravel grinding in the National Parks, Torrington SCA, State Forests and private property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Package and promote activities (cycling, mountain biking, 4WD, trail bikes, paddling, fishing, horse-riding, camping etc) to enthusiasts, clubs and associations; encouraging clubs and associations to include localities in GIH in their activity and event programs. Develop / attract adventure-based events – promoting the GIH localities and venues to event organisers, clubs and associations. Position Glen Innes as the primary hub for touring trail bikes – utilising local road and trails to encourage them to stay longer in the area. Leverage the farm stay / rural retreat properties to build both the short breaks and adventure markets. Encourage farm stay / rural retreat properties to value-add to the product and activity base. Develop Crown Reserves (Beardy Woodlands, Centennial Parklands, Stonehenge) into key attractions and activity nodes. Leverage Touring Route 11 and the Torrington SCA to grow visitation to Emmaville and Deepwater. Work with the Deepwater community to position Deepwater as a centre for horse riding. Develop new products and experiences – including the Sky Walk, Eerindii Ponds, Rocky Ponds Creek Wetlands, Ngoorabul on-country experiences, nature-based play area and State Forest attractions. Leverage mining heritage and fossicking opportunities in the Emmaville area.
New England Railway corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal to develop a rail trail along the corridor. Glen Innes has the accommodation and infrastructure to become a major track head and activity node on the rail trail. Localities / attractions on the rail corridor – attractive high-country scenery, Glencoe village, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position and promote Glen Innes as a rail trail hub and Glencoe and Stonehenge Reserve as activity nodes and service centres along the trail. Extend the rail trail to Deepwater. Develop / promote complementary cycling / mountain biking experiences in and around Glen Innes.

Strengths	Assets to work with	Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stonehenge Reserve, Beardsy Waters and historic railway bridges and infrastructure. Complementary existing and potential cycling activities within the GIH. Growth in e.bikes which is making cycling more accessible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage investment in cycling businesses – eg bicycle shop, cycle hire, cycle tours
High Country climate, landscapes, landforms and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional (New England High Country) and local (Glen Innes Highlands) brands. Spectacular landscapes and landforms – the granite high country, the balancing rocks, and the escarpment and dissected gorges along the eastern edge of the GIH. Stonehenge Reserve – a unique landform with balancing rocks and naturally occurring standing stones. Pristine high-country creeks and rivers – opportunities for fishing, platypus spotting and bird watching. Four distinct seasons – climate and changing landscapes – snow, frost and fog; spring blossoms; autumn leaves; green oasis in summer. Cool climate parks, gardens and reserves –including the Glen Innes Parklands, Stonehenge and Beardsy Waters. Glen Innes Golf Course. Produce and providers + signature food event – Gourmet Fiesta. High country towns and villages – heritage, streetscapes, eateries, speciality boutiques, galleries and lifestyle shops. Beverage producers – Brewery, Distillery, Meadery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate – leverage to attract the regional coastal market – snow chasers in winter; those looking to escape the humidity and crowds in summer; blossoms in spring and spectacular autumn colours. Grow high country activities – golf, arts and lifestyle workshops, fishing. Arboretum – building on the cluster of cool climate trees in the Beardsy Woodlands Reserve. Cool climate gardens – potential for to develop the Cool Climate Garden Centre into a lifestyle attraction. Country drives. Events that celebrate the seasons – possibly linked to other themes (eg Celtic).
History and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glen Innes historic town centre. Historic villages. Heritage App and walking tour. Land of Beardsies Museum and Historic House. Emmaville – rich tin mining heritage, Ottery Mine, Emmaville Mining Museum, Emmaville Court House Museum. Proposed Power Museum. Historic rail infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring the area's history (including the Museums) to 'life' through the use of digital technologies, storytelling, events and activities.
Sapphires, gems and minerals / rich mining heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home of the world renown Reddestone Sapphire Peel Fault – one of the richest gemstone and mineral areas in Australia. Sapphire / gemstone fossicking areas. Fossicking tuition available. Farmstay properties specialising in fossicking. Rich mining heritage. Emmaville Mining Museum. Historic Ottery Tin and Arsenic Mine and refinery – the only one in Australia and one of a few remaining world-wide. Proposed Taronga Tin Mine. Commercial sapphire and mineral outlets. Minerama and Gemorama events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the fossicking experience to include minerals and sites around Emmaville. If the Taronga Project proceeds, explore options (eg virtual reality) for incorporating it into the Emmaville 'story'. Focus on building the farm stay – fossicking experience sector. Strengthening Emmaville as a destination for fossicking and mining – both past and present.

Strengths	Assets to work with	Opportunities
Quality, boutique accommodation / unique accommodation experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural and bushland retreats – historic homesteads, country cottages, bush cabins, shearers quarters. B&B's – including the Bank Guesthouse GI, Bank BnB Deepwater. Proposed Convent luxury accommodation and conference and function facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profile 'aspirational' properties – offering visitors quintessential high-country living – sample a tree change. Romantic escapes. Short breaks couples and small groups of couples markets out of the surrounding region. Target the weddings market.
Growing number of local food and beverage producers and provedores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Super Strawberry The Local Café Free Range Eggs Koala Black Garlic Deepwater Brewery Glen Gowrie Distillery 2 Wild Souls Meadery Local Butchers (3) Bakeries / Pie Shops – Glen Innes & Deepwater Sage and Clover Organic Groceries Glen Innes Cottage Markets (weekly) Honey industry Sales at the Glen Innes Saleyards Gourmet Fiesta annual event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri tourism – farm gate outlets and/or tours. 'Grown in Glen' – brochure detailing produce and outlets. Profiling businesses in regional media and lifestyle magazines. Whiskey distillery. Local and/or Celtic fare added to menus and product lines. Activities – eg farm tours, farm gate trails, 'pick your own' produce, cooking workshops, seasonal events, foraging tours etc.
Emerging arts / creative culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapel Theatre – film and live entertainment Glen Innes Art Gallery Makers Shed gallery and workshops Colours on Grey – workshops Made in Glen – local arts and craft outlet The Alder Grove – Celtic Art Gawura Gallery – Aboriginal Art / Fine Art Markets in the Highlands GI Ceramics Art installations – Glen Innes Town Centre Large venues suitable for music events (eg Showground, racecourses) Unique venues – eg Australian Standing Stones, Stonehenge, Ben Falls Retreat, proposed Covent, Waterloo Station. Arts-based events including – GlenRock, GlenFest, Festival of the Winds, Light up the Park, Writers' Festival Headquarters of Arts North West. Active performing and creative arts groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grow the GI Art Gallery into a regional gallery with artist and artisan studios. Arts-based events – eg Meet the Maker, photograph workshops. Ceramics gallery / sales outlet Plein air activities Film festivals and events – eg a Celtic Film Festival, Big Screen showing of the Edinburgh Tattoo. Music festivals. Permanent and temporary art installations – eg temporary installations in Autumn in the Glen Innes Parklands and other localities (eg Stonehenge). Reviving and showcasing 'lost' / heritage arts and crafts.



4.8 Challenges and Issues

Issues and challenges faced by Glen Innes Highlands in growing the visitor economy include:

Issue	Challenges
Funding and resource constraints within GISC and the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited marketing and promotional budgets. Reliance on volunteers and management committees to run / manage key tourism assets. Limited funds to invest in product development. Challenges in sourcing matching funds to access grant funding.
Accommodation capacity constraints / Lack of up-market (4+ star) accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentration of older highway motels and caravan parks in Glen Innes – predominately budget to mid-range in standard. Growing the events market – business events generally require 4-star accommodation; limited capacity is a challenge for large events.
Many business and tourism operators have no or a very limited on-line presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many tourism and business operators are yet to claim their google business listing. Operators and businesses with no or older generation websites. Operators and businesses relying on social media (mainly facebook) as their promotional collateral with posts being irregular and often irrelevant for visitors / travellers, with no supporting website for more information. Not all accommodation operators use on-line booking sites (eg booking.com) and/or have on-line booking facilities on their websites. No venues listed on the DNSW 'Meet in Regional NSW' Directory. Most operators are not taking advantage of free listings on third party websites.
Retail and café business trading hours – with very few businesses open on Saturday afternoon, Sundays and public holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limits the ability to build the regional day trip and short-breaks market as travel is concentrated on weekends. Encouraging businesses to work together to stagger opening days / hours. Changing the sales pitch - encouraging VIC staff and accommodation operators to recommend that weekend visitors explore the GI shopping centre on Saturday mornings and the 'hinterland' on Saturday afternoon and Sunday.
Encouraging visitors from the coast attracted by the World Heritage National Parks to continue west to explore Glen Innes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing touch points (eg signage, information boards, bill boards) on the eastern approach to the GIH - at the National Parks and/or Highway rest areas to encourage travellers to continue west. Positioning Glen Innes as a day trip and 'wet weather' destination for visitors camping in Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks. Promoting other Parks in the Region (eg Torrington, Kings Plains) at Washpool and Gibraltar Range, to raise awareness and encourage visitation. Reinvigorating 'World Heritage Way' as a touring route.
Key assets not realising their full potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving signage to and visitor facilities at Stonehenge Reserve and increasing use of the reserve as an event venue. Improving the presentation of and signage and visitor facilities within the Beardy Woodlands. Providing public access to the Beardy Waters Dam. Increasing the use of the GIH venues – eg Showground, racecourses.



5. VISITATION

5.1 Visitation to the New England North West Region

Glen Innes Highlands is located in the north-eastern corner of the New England-North West Region. The Region extends from the NSW – Queensland border south to the Liverpool Range, and from the Great Dividing Range west to the floodplains of the Namoi and Gwydir Rivers. The primary destinations within the Region are Tamworth, Armidale and Moree. Travel within the Region is concentrated north-south along the New England Highway in the east and the Newell Highway in the west. The main east-west routes are the Kamilaroi, Oxley and Gwydir Highways.

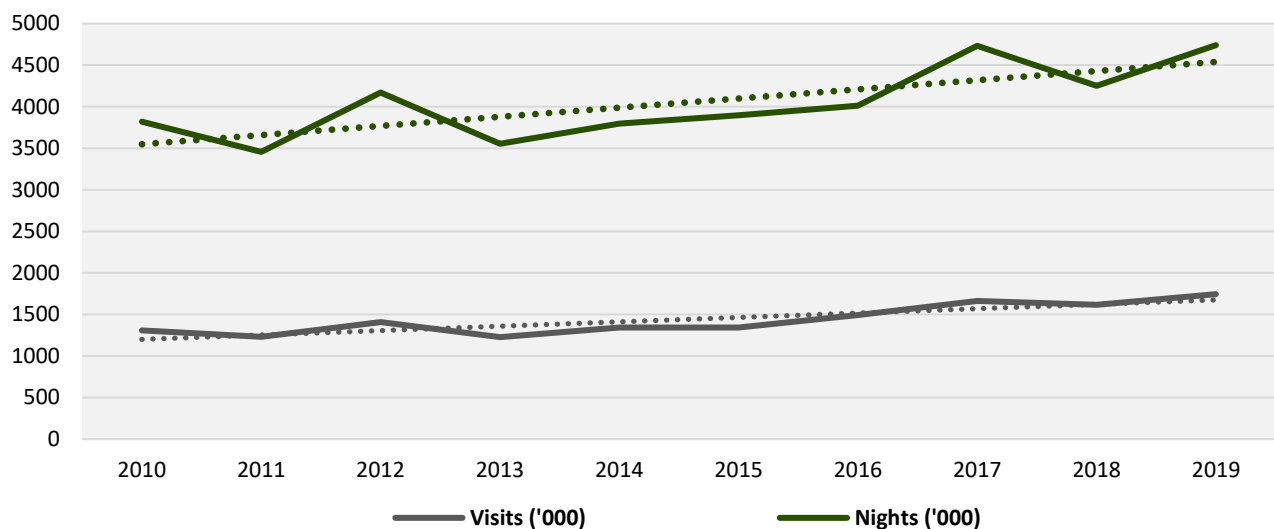
Information on visitation to the NE-NW region is given for YE December 2019²⁰ which is pre-COVID and considered more representative of visitation to the region. Data released for June 2020 shows a 19% decrease in visitation to the Region with this due to the 2019/2020 bushfires and the COVID-19 restrictions from March to June 2020.

In 2019, the NE-NW Region attracted an estimated 1.744 million domestic visitors and 38,000 international visitors who stayed one or more nights in the Region and 2.286 million domestic day visitors. Domestic and international overnight visitors spent 4.740 and 1.014 million nights, respectively within the Region.

5.1.1 Domestic Overnight Visitors²¹

- The NE-NW was the 6th most visited region in NSW, sitting behind North Coast, South Coast, Hunter, Central NSW and Central Coast regions.
- Visitation to the Region is growing. Between 2010 and 2019, the number of domestic overnight visitors and the number of nights spent in the NE-NW Region has increased by 29.1% and 24.6% respectively.

Figure 5.1 Domestic Overnight Visits and Visitor Nights: NE-NW Region, 2010 – 2019 ('000)



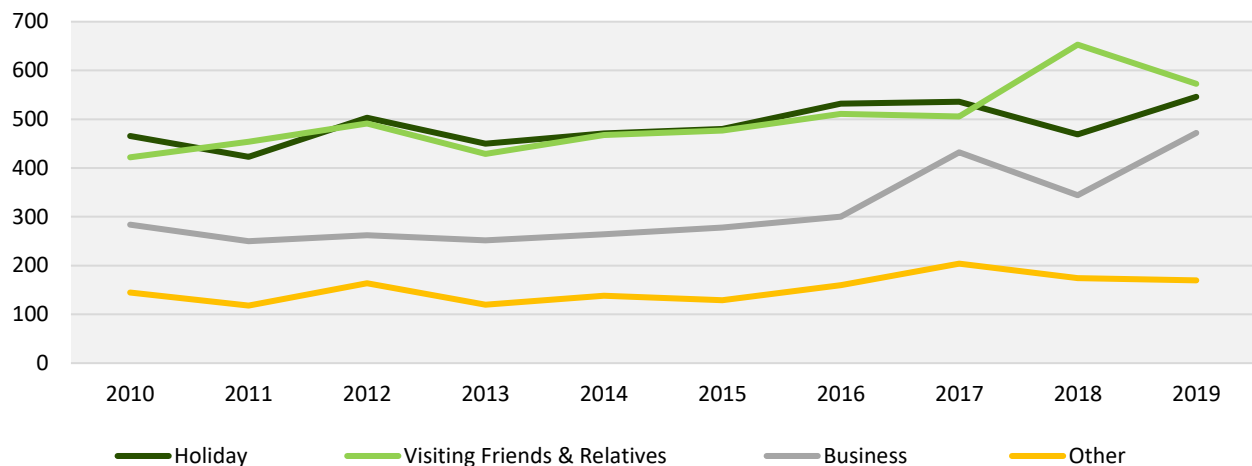
- In 2019, domestic overnight visitors spent nearly \$719 million in the Region, up 13.6% on 2018. The average spend per night was \$152. The average spend in the NE-NW was lower than the Regional NSW average of \$163 per visitor per night.
- The main reasons for visiting the NE-NW Region were to visit friends and relatives (32.5%), for a holiday (31.0%), for business (26.8%) and other (9.7%). From 2010 to 2019, there has been growth in all markets with the strongest

²⁰ DNSW Travel to the New England North West Region: Time Series YE Dec 2019 and YE June 2020.

²¹ Information in Sections 5.1.1 to 5.1.3 is taken from Destination NSW: New England North West Region NSW, Time Series YE Dec 2019

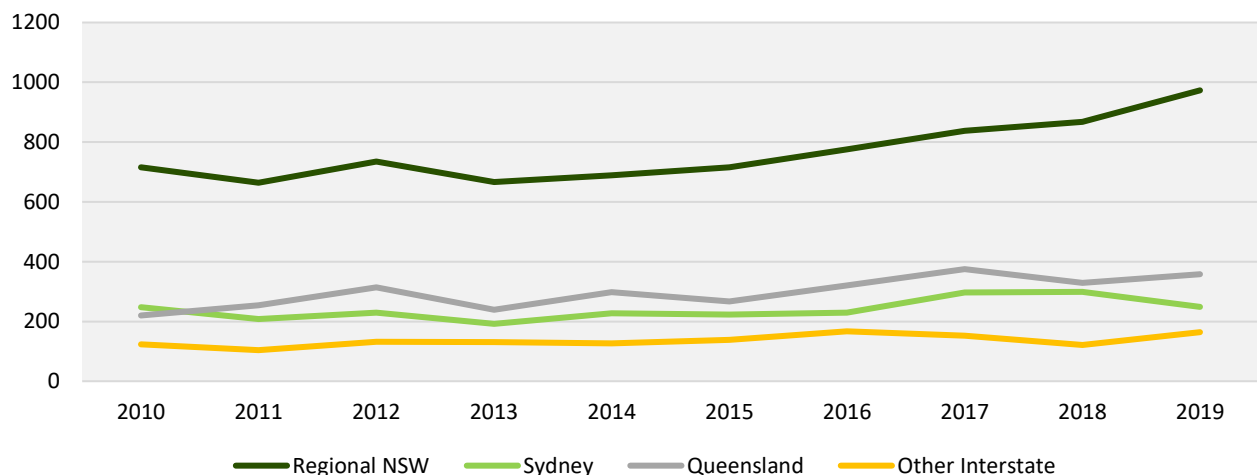
growth being in business and holiday travel, up 66.2% and 35.8% respectively, with the VFR and other markets each growing by 17.2%.

Figure 5.2 Number ('000) of Domestic Overnight Visitors by Purpose of Visit: Domestic Overnight Visitors – NE-NW Region, 2010-2019.



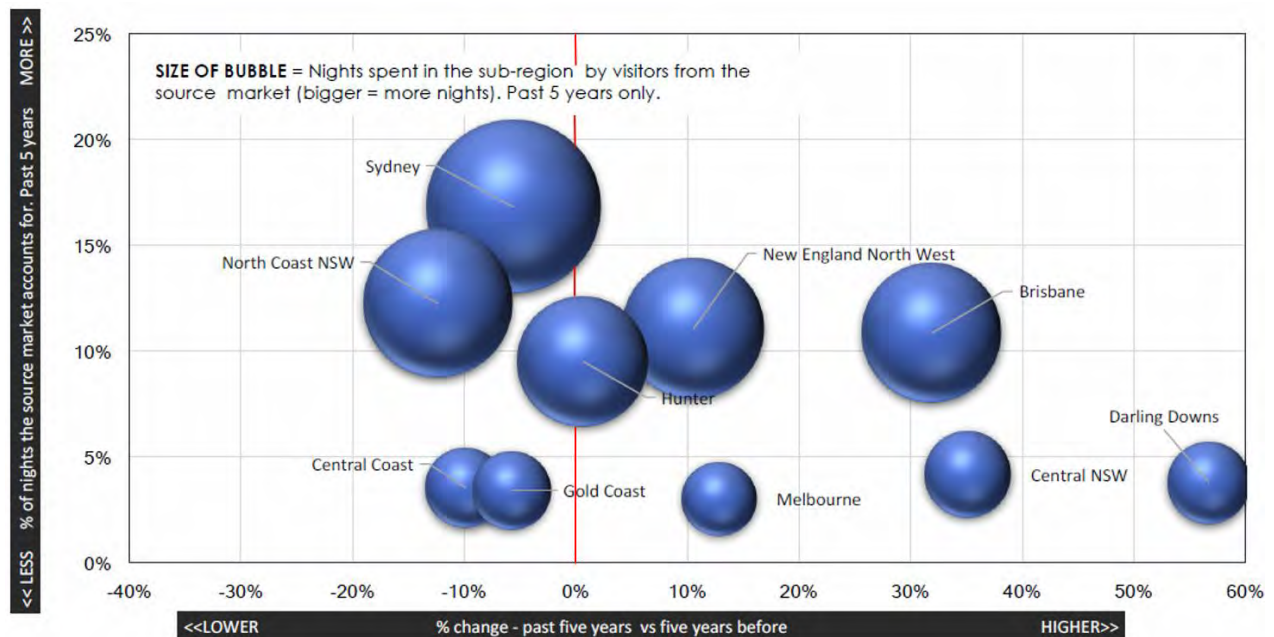
- Holiday travellers accounted for 35.3% of the nights spent in the Region, with these travellers staying on average 3.04 nights. VFR travellers accounted for 31.3% of nights and stayed on average 2.62 nights. Business and other travellers accounted for 24.1% and 8.7% of nights, respectively, with business travellers staying on average 2.41 nights and other travellers, 2.42 nights.
- 70.1% of visitors to the Region were from NSW, with 29.9% from Interstate. The main source markets are Regional NSW (55.8% of visitors), Queensland (20.5%) and Sydney (14.3%). Since 2010, strong growth has occurred in visitation from Queensland (up 62.7%), Regional NSW (35.5%) and other interstate markets (33.3%), with the Sydney market remaining static (0.4%).

Figure 5.3 Origin of Domestic Overnight Visitors, NE-NW Region, 2010 to 2019 (number of visitors '000)



- Destination Country and Outback NSW assessed changes in the main source markets for the NE-NW Region for the five-year period YE June 2013 to YE June 2017, with the regional data for each State broken into sub-regions. The analysis shows that the main source markets for the NE-NW are Sydney (the largest), NSW North Coast, NE-NW Region (intra-regional travel), Brisbane and the Hunter. From 2013 to 2017 the number of visitors from Sydney and the NSW North Coast decreased, the number of visitors from the Hunter Region remained static, while visitors from NE-NW Region and Brisbane increased. In the smaller source markets, there was a decline in the visitors from the NSW Central Coast and Gold Coast Regions, and an increase in visitors from Melbourne, Central NSW and the Darling Downs Region of Queensland, with the Darling Downs and Central NSW showing the strongest rates of growth.

Figure 5.4 Change in Visitor Nights Spent in the NE-NW Region by the Main Source Markets – YE June 2013 to YE June 2017



Source: Destination Country and Outback DMP – Appendix B Research and Insights Analysis

- The NE-NW attracts visitors across all age groups, with a relatively even spread. People aged 30-39 years and 60-69 years each accounted for 18.9% of visitors, with people aged 15-29 years accounting for 18.6% of visitors. Since 2010, the strongest growth has occurred in travellers aged 60-69 years (up 81.8%), followed by people aged 70+ years (up 81.4%) and people aged 30-39 years (up 48%). People aged 40-49 years declined by 5.8%.
- 32.6% of visitors were travelling alone, 27.1% as adult couples, 15.8% with friends or relatives (no children) and 15.1% as a family (with children). Since 2010, there has been strong growth in the number of people travelling alone (up 69.3%), as adult couples (up 19.1%), and with friends and relatives (up 17.4%), while the number of families visiting the Region has remained static (0.4%). The increase in visitors travelling alone is largely due to the significant increase in business travel to the Region.
- During their visit, 51.0% of visitors dined out at restaurants and cafes, 27.6% visited a licensed club and/or pub, 17.6% went sightseeing and 9.7% went shopping for pleasure.
- Visitor nights were primarily spent in the home of friends and relatives (36.0% of nights), followed by standard hotel or motel (19.7%) and free camping (13.4%). In Regional NSW, the number of nights spent in commercial and non-commercial caravan parks and camping areas ranks second to nights spent staying with friends and relatives.

5.1.2 Domestic Day Visitors

- In 2019, the NE-NW Region attracted 2.286 million day visitors, up 39.5% on 2018.
- Domestic day visitors spent on average \$147 per trip, injecting \$339 million into the Regional economy.
- 40.7% of day trips were for holiday and leisure purposes.
- 45.4% of day visitors dined out at restaurants and cafes and 20.9% shopped for pleasure during their visit.

5.1.3 International Overnight Visitors

- In 2019, the NE-NW Region attracted 38,000 international visitors with these visitors spending 1.014 million nights in the Region (average stay of 27 nights).
- The number of visits and nights were up 5.6% and 12.2% respectively over 2018.
- International visitors spent on average \$49 per night in the Region, injecting \$49 million into the local economy.
- 57.9% of international visitors were holiday and leisure travellers.

5.2 Visitation within the Region surrounding Glen Innes Highlands

Visitation estimates are available for the larger LGAs within NE-NW Region. The data is for 2019 and is based on a 4-year rolling average of data from the National and International Visitor Surveys.

Within the NE-NW, Tamworth Regional LGA is the most visited destination, followed by Armidale Regional LGA and Moree Plains Shire with Glen Innes Highlands ranking 8th.

Table 5.1 Estimated Visitation, Selected LGAs in the NE-NW Region 2019 (4 year rolling average)

LGA	Domestic Overnight Visitors				International Overnight Visitors	Day Visitors
	Visitors	Nights Spent	Av. Length of Stay (Nights)	Av. Spend / Visitor / Night		
Glen Innes Severn	93,000	234,000	2.52	\$118	np	60,000
Armidale	295,000	719,000	2.44	\$168	11,000	348,000
Gunnedah	111,000	287,000	2.59	\$117	np	109,000
Inverell	143,000	392,000	2.74	\$126	2,000	149,000
Liverpool Plains	58,000	164,000	2.83	\$ 85	1,000	66,000
Moree Plains	177,000	419,000	2.37	\$154	4,000	82,000
Narrabri	165,000	388,000	2.35	\$107	3,000	102,000
Tamworth	510,000	1,254,000	2.46	\$156	14,000	727,000
Tenterfield	115,000	254,000	2.21	\$121	3,000	74,000
Walcha	38,000	114,000	3.00	\$ 96	np	60,000

Source: Tourism Research Australia: Local Government Area Profiles, 2019.

Date not published for Gwydir and Uralla LGAs.

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- Prior to bushfires and COVID-19, overnight visitation to and the length of stay within the NE-NW Region was growing, with this growth partly driven by strong growth in people travelling for work and business. The construction of the large renewable energy projects near Glen Innes would have contributed to the growth in work-related travel.
- Regional NSW remains the main source market of visitors to the NE-NW Region, with Queensland and Sydney also significant markets. A significant proportion of regional visitors are from the NSW North Coast and there is also a high level of intra-regional visitation. Glen Innes Highlands is readily accessible to both North Coast and intra-regional visitors.
- The Queensland market (primarily out of Brisbane and the Darling Downs Regions) is showing strong growth. The GIH needs to ensure that it has a presence in these markets.
- The long-haul touring market out of Melbourne is increasing, while the number of travellers coming out of regional Victoria is declining. This may be due to improvements in and/or promotion of alternative routes (eg Hume-Pacific Highway), competition from low cost airfares for travel between Victoria and the main destinations in Queensland and/or a decline in the number of Victorian retirees making the annual trip north to Queensland in winter (aging market).
- The Region has a large VFR market, providing the opportunity for the GIH to put in place promotions to encourage local and regional residents to bring or encourage their visitors to explore the GIH. The resident host significantly influences what their visitors see and do while in the area, and as such the challenge lies in educating and motivating the host community.
- The Region is seeing strong growth in the Baby Boomer market. This market has a focus on activities and experiences – ‘doing’ and ‘participating’ rather than just ‘looking’.

- The number of people travelling as alone, as adult couples and in small social groups of adults is growing. In contrast the family market is relatively static.

5.3 Visitation to Glen Innes Highlands

The following data on visitation to the Glen Innes Highlands is taken from the Glen Innes Economic Development Strategy Background Report. It was provided by TRA and, due to small sample sizes, is based on a 7 year rolling average, for YE September. Data is also included from YE December 2019, with this data based on a 4 year rolling average. Given the small sample sizes, the data should be considered indicative only.

In YE September 2019, total visitation to Glen Innes Highlands was just under 155,000 visitors. In addition, hundreds of highway travellers are likely to stop in the GIH each week for a short refreshment / pit stop. From 2012 to 2016, total visitation was sitting around 160,000 per annum, with visitation falling marginally in 2017 and again in 2018, with a slight recovery in 2019. The decline in total visitation was due to a decline in day visitors.

Domestic visitors who stayed one or more nights in the GIH accounted for 62% of visitors, with these visitors staying around 260,000 nights in the GIH (average length of stay of 2.7 nights). These visitors spent on average \$118 per night. 37% of visitors were day trippers, with around 1% being international overnight visitors, with these visitors spending on average \$115 per trip and \$45 per night, respectively.

Figure 5.5 Visitors ('000) by Type of Visitor, GIH, YE September

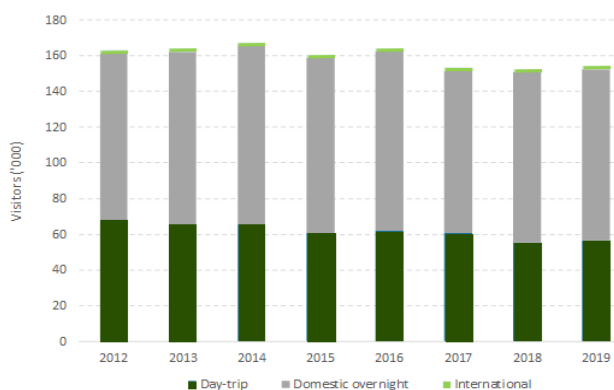
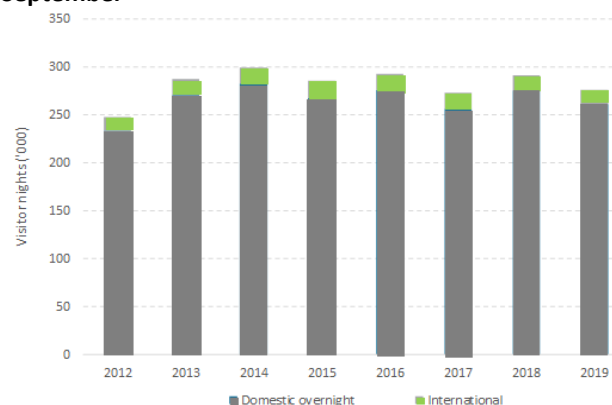


Figure 5.6 Visitor Nights ('000) by type of Visit, GIH YE September



Note: Year Ending September. 7-year average used due to low sample sizes.
Source: TRA (2020).

Visitors to the GIH mainly came from within the New England North West Region (32%), other areas of NSW including Sydney (35%) and interstate (32%) – primarily from Queensland. Day visitors are more likely to come from the surrounding region, with overnight visitors coming from further afield. Data for GIH for YE December 2019, estimates that 52.7% of domestic overnight visitors came from NSW and 47.3% from interstate.

Visitation to the GIH is primarily for holiday and leisure purposes (52% of total), with the number of holiday and leisure travellers remaining relatively stable over the past five years. Over the same period, the number of people visiting friends and relatives and business and work-related travellers declined.

The most popular activities undertaken were dining out, visiting friends and relatives, sightseeing, visiting pubs and clubs and bushwalking.

The profile for YE December 2019 indicates that 59.1% of domestic overnight visitors were aged 55+ years and that 38.7% were travelling as adult couples and 25.8% were travelling alone. The majority (59%) of these visitors stayed in hotel and motel accommodation.

Figure 5.7 Visitors ('000) by Origin of Visitor, GIH, YE September

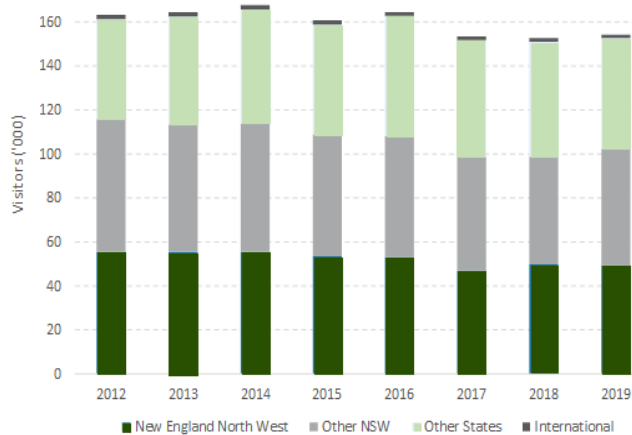
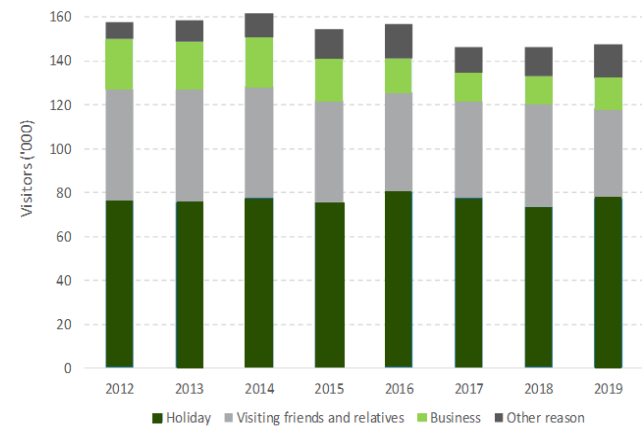
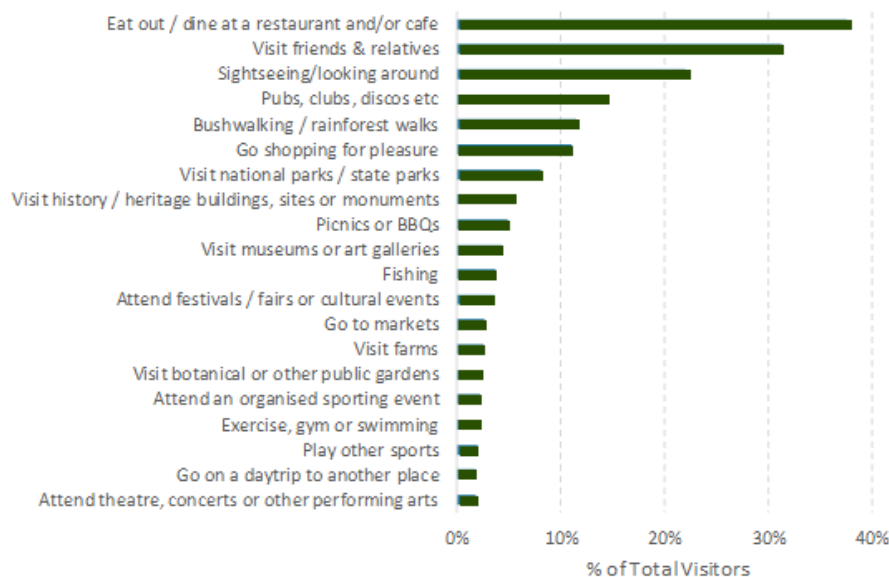


Figure 5.8 Visitors ('000) by Purpose of Visit, GIH, YE September



Note: Year Ending September. 7-year average used due to low sample sizes.
Source: TRA (2020).

Figure 5.9 Activities undertaken while in GIH



Note: 10-year average used due to low sample sizes. Year ending September data.
Source: TRA (2020).

5.4 Markets Attracted to the Glen Innes Highlands

The following information on the GIH visitor markets is based on information provided by staff from the Glen Innes VIC, GIHVA and business and tourism operators. The information is qualitative and should be regarded as indicative.

Glen Innes Highlands attracts a diversity of markets, with the market mix varying in the different localities throughout the GIH. The primary markets are:

- Highway traffic – visitors passing through the area with the GIH being a convenient place to have a break.
- Touring traffic (looking to explore). Market segments include touring caravans and RVs (primarily baby boomers), family market (mainly campers), touring by car and touring by motorcycle.
- Business and work-related travellers – dominated in recent years by the wind farm construction workers; but also including sales representatives, tradesmen, professionals, government officers, contractors and rural workers.

- People visiting friends and relatives (VFR) including people coming into the GIH for social events such as weddings.
- Regional residents.
- People attending events.

The GIH also attracts a range of special interest and activity-based markets including:

- Bushwalkers
- Bird watchers
- Anglers
- Car clubs / social groups
- 4WD clubs and enthusiasts
- Motorcycle enthusiasts (road and trail bikes)
- Horse riders / horse events
- Golfers
- Cyclists and mountain bikers
- History enthusiasts / family historians

The key market segments are discussed below.



5.4.1 Highway Travellers / Passing Traffic / Touring Traffic

Tourism in Glen Innes Highlands is highly dependent on highway and touring travellers. The main feeder routes into the GIH are the New England and Gwydir Highways. While most of the tourist traffic has traditionally arrived via the New England Highway, with the closing of the Queensland border and the easing of the COVID-19 travel restrictions in NSW, the GIH has seen a significant increase in travellers arriving via the Gwydir Highway, often enroute to/from Moree (hot artesian baths) and/or Lightning Ridge.

Market segments include:

- Retirees and semi-retirees – touring by both caravan and car. This is predominantly a long-haul market with these travellers often having flexible itineraries.
- Regional traffic, passing through the GIH enroute to other localities - primarily to the regional centres (north-south) and to Grafton and the NSW North Coast (east-west traffic).
- Families, with travel concentrated during school holiday periods – often travelling in 4WDs with camper trailers.
- Motorcyclists – touring by both road and trail bikes.
- Truck drivers – primarily along the New England Highway, with Glen Innes and Deepwater being fuel and meal stops for many drivers.

The GIH is seeing strong growth in the touring caravan, RV and motorcycle markets.



Highway Travellers / Passing Traffic – the short stop

Being a minimum of an hour's drive from surrounding towns, the GIH is well positioned to attract the refreshment / pitstop market as well as overnight stays for the long-haul market.

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- Visibility, presentation and cleanliness of facilities (eg toilets) and businesses are key to encouraging these travellers to stop and spend in the GIH.
- First-time visitors often google the services they are seeking on the approach to town and as such it is important that businesses have an on-line presence and that facilities are listed on on-line directories (eg fuel, toilets). Sites such as trip advisor play a major role in the choice of eateries and cafes.
- Regular / repeat travellers tend to develop preferred places to stop / stay, with consistency of product and good customer service keys to retaining these visitors.
- For meal / coffee stops, truck drivers are generally looking for a safe, easy place to pull over, with Deepwater (particularly the bakery) popular with this market. Parking for long rigs needs to be taken into consideration in streetscaping plans (eg positioning of blisters and landscaping).

Touring by Car

Touring by car is forecast to grow significantly over the next few years as domestic border restrictions ease and international travel remains difficult. Traditionally this market has tended to stay in motels and caravan park cabins. Air BnB has changed the dynamics, with travellers increasingly seeking 'experiential' accommodation.

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- To showcase unique / experiential properties through the VIC, GIH tourism website and social media to raise awareness of the accommodation options available in the GIH.
- Providing suggested itineraries, to encourage travellers to stay longer and explore the GIH.

Touring Van Market

The touring van market incorporates campervans, motorhomes (RVs), and travellers towing caravans and camper trailers. While these travellers are a subset of the traffic / touring market, this segment has different needs and expectations and can be separately targeted. The touring van market is a significant market for Regional NSW with the NE-NW Region being the 4th most visited region in NSW, ranking behind the North and South Coasts and Central NSW.

The touring van market and RV market is increasingly travelling with bicycles, canoes / kayaks and and/or small runabout boats and is looking for places to cycle, canoe / kayak, boat and/or fish, with riverside locations being very popular.

Glen Innes Highlands offers a range of opportunities for the caravan, RV and camping markets. Caravan parks are available in Glen Innes and Emmaville, with the Glen Innes Showground providing low cost, off-highway sites. The Red Lion Tavern at Glencoe (Thursday to Sunday) and Longhorn Bar at Deepwater provide free camping areas, with free camping also occurring at the Beardy River rest area on the New England Highway. Camp sites (for smaller rigs) are available in the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks, Mann River Nature Reserve and Torrington SCA, with

camping permitted in the State Forests. Several rural and bushland properties also cater for caravanners and campers and provide a mix of riverside, rural and bushland sites.

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- The touring caravan and RV market is a strong growth market for the Region.
- The market is changing with travellers looking for attractive places to stay, particularly those that do not require vans to be unhitched and offer opportunities to socialise with other travellers. Freedom camping, as well as camping in national parks and state forests and on rural properties are popular with this market, particularly for those travelling with 4WD rigs. Showgrounds are popular for travellers that have self-contained rigs, are looking for lower cost sites and/or who do not want to unhitch their vans. The older highway caravan parks are not what a lot of travellers are looking for, and as such, the GIH needs to focus on promoting the diverse range of opportunities available.
- Glen Innes needs to be positioned as a hub – encouraging caravanners to stay in town and take day trips to the National Parks, Emmaville, Deepwater and the Torrington SCA.
- Promoting the activities that are sought by the touring market – cycling, mountain-biking, canoeing / kayaking, fossicking, fishing, bird watching will encourage travellers to stay longer in the GIH. Easily accessible outdoor attractions that do not require a high level of fitness (eg Mann River picnic area, Stonehenge Reserve, Beardy Woodlands and Torrington SCA) are ideal for this market. If the rail trail proceeds, the Glen Rest Caravan Park will be very well positioned to leverage this asset.
- Glen Innes needs to review its caravan / long rig parking areas, to ensure that there is parking close to the supermarkets and that this parking is easy to find, preferably drive through and effectively signposted.
- A quality caravan park / camping area should be considered as part of any development of the Eerindii Ponds – Beady Waters Precinct.
- The GIH has several venues (eg Showground, racecourses, Stonehenge) that would be suitable for caravan and RV rallies and events.

Touring by Motorcycle

The New England High Country Region, which extends from Walcha Shire north to Tenterfield, is a mecca for touring motorcyclists. There are eight primary touring routes plus several secondary touring routes, with the Gwydir Highway and Old Glen Innes Road being part of the primary network. Several secondary routes also feed into Glen Innes.

Since the Region commenced targeting the motorcycle market, Glen Innes has seen a significant increase in motorcyclists – both road and trail bikes. Depending on what time of day motorcyclists arrive in town, they either pass through (refreshment stop) or, if arriving later in the afternoon, stay overnight primarily in the pubs and motels. Within the region, the Old Glen Innes Road has become the ‘must do’ ride for touring trail bikes, with Glen Innes being the staging point for this ride.

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- The motorcycle touring market is a high yield market that travels year-round.
- At the regional level there is opportunity to grow the market further. To the south, Singleton Shire promotes the Putty Road (from Sydney to Singleton) as a touring route, with motorcyclists heading north from Singleton via Dungog and Gloucester to Thunderbolts Way and the NE High Country Region. There is potential to work with the Singleton, Dungog and Mid Coast areas to develop a ‘Putty Road and Beyond’ promotion to tap into the Sydney

market. Consideration should also be given to establishing a route(s) that tap into the southern Queensland market.

- Glen Innes has the potential to become the primary hub for touring trail bikes. The GIH has a concentration of unsealed local roads plus unsealed national park, SCA and forest roads and fire trails that can be linked to provide a network of local looped rides radiating from Glen Innes. There are also several rural accommodation properties (eg Bullock Mountain, Bens Falls Retreat, Deepwater Station) that would be ideal for the trail bikers.
- There may be potential to:
 - Develop a trail bike park in the GIH, similar in concept to Bike Territory near Narrabri.
 - Host an annual trail ride event (eg the North Star Trail ride).
 - Hold a trail bike enduro event in the GIH and/or promote the GIH to dirt bike clubs, inviting them to host a round of their events in the GIH.

Touring by Coach

In the past, Glen Innes Highlands was a popular destination for coach tour groups. Coach tour groups were a primary market for both the Land of Beardies and Emmaville Mining Museums. This market was displaced during the construction of the wind farms, with construction workers booking out the accommodation. Coach tours are currently suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- Post COVID-19 the Glen Innes VIC needs to work with GIHVA and the operators who were active in the coach tour market (eg accommodation properties, Museums) to re-build it.

5.4.2 Business and Work-Related Travel

Business-related travel is the primary market for hotels, motels and serviced apartments in Glen Innes. While the level of business and work-related travel is determined by construction projects and economic activities in the GIH and surrounding region, strategies can be put in place to service and support the business travel markets and generate visitation and expenditure.

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- As business and work-related travellers generally do not frequent VICs, the GIH needs to ensure that comprehensive information is available on-line and in print-form at various touchpoints. For major construction projects, such as the hospital re-development, there may be opportunity to work with employers / project managers to distribute information (eg a Dining-out Guide) to staff at the work-site and/or on-line.
- The proposed Convent development can be leveraged to build the business events market.

5.4.3 Visiting Friends & Relatives Market

Approximately 26% (24,000) of overnight visitors to the GIH are visiting friends and relatives within the GIH. Likewise, there is a significant VFR market in the surrounding NE-NW Region with the Region attracting 500,000 to 600,000 VFR travellers each year²². In relation to 'what to do' and 'where to go', the VFR market is strongly influenced by recommendations from their hosts. Events also influence when people visit, for example, visits to Glen Innes and surrounding LGAs may be timed around the Australian Celtic Festival, Minerama etc.

²² DNSW Travel to the NE-NW Tourism Region – Time Series June 2011 – June 2020,

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- Use both social media and the local and regional press to ensure that residents of the GIH and surrounding region are aware of 'what's on' within the GIH and to promote key attractions and activities.
- In the lead-up to school holidays, participate in the 'what to do with children during the holidays' sections of both the local and regional media and seek to secure a daily segment on local radio during holiday periods.

5.4.4 Regional Market

There are around 190,000 people residing within 2.5 hours drive of the GIH. The regional market is potentially a source of day, short-breaks and event visitors. Regional residents are also able to bring or recommend attractions and activities in the GIH to their visiting friends and relatives. Travel patterns depend on lifecycle stage, with retirees more likely to travel mid-week, while younger couples, social groups and families primarily travel on weekends, with families also visiting during school holidays.

One of the keys to attracting the regional market is to leverage opportunities to generate publicity (eg snow, autumn leaves) and create a reason to visit 'now'. Events and packages with promotional offers can also be used to 'trigger' visitation.

Implications and Opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands

- Positioning Glen Innes GIH as a short breaks / weekend destination for:
 - Families: focusing on outdoor, soft adventure and fun activities, the national parks and SCA and camping and farm stay / bushland properties.
 - Couples: focusing on 'escapes' and 'celebrations' (eg anniversaries) – promoting properties such as Waterloo Station, the Bank BnB, with cafes and lifestyle businesses, Glen Gowrie Distillery, Deepwater Brewery and 'spending time together outdoors'. The proposed Convent development will provide an ideal product for this market.
 - Social groups: friends and/or extended families having a weekend away together – hiring the Shearers accommodation at Deepwater or Waterloo Stations, lunch at Bens Falls Function Centre or the Red Lion Tavern etc.
- Packages tailored for and direct marketed to clubs, organisations and groups from within the Region – eg: golf, fishing, 4WD, creative arts, heritage, gardens etc.
- Raising the profile of the GIH events and capitalising on opportunities for value-adding and packaging.
- School holiday activities – positioning Glen Innes Highlands as a great day-out with the kids - movies at the Chapel Theatre, exploring Stonehenge, encouraging sporting associations and/or arts groups to run skills-based holiday programs, kid's program at the Museums etc.

5.4.5 Special Interest and Activity-based Markets

Glen Innes Highlands attracts a range of special interest and activity-based markets. These markets can be cost effectively targeted through direct marketing using on-line channels including and social media. Potential markets include:

- 4WD enthusiasts
- Bushwalkers / walking groups

- Bird watchers
- Cyclists and mountain bikers
- Horse riders
- Paddlers
- Golfers
- Arts – photographers, people coming into the area to participate in workshops
- Heritage groups / family historians

5.5 Directions Forward: Target Markets and Market Development

Over the next five years, the focus for market development should be to:

- Continue to encourage through traffic to stop and spend in Glen Innes and the villages.
- Continue to grow the touring caravan and camping markets encouraging these travellers to stay longer in the GIH.
- Position the GIH as a hub for the touring motorcycle market, with the focus being on trail bikes.
- Build the regional market – encouraging residents and their visiting friends and relatives to take day trips and short breaks in GIH and to attend local events.
- Tap into the NSW North Coast and South East Queensland markets.
- Capitalise on the GIHs assets to grow special interest and activity-based markets.

As proposed projects come on-line, they can be used to leverage new markets and refresh existing markets. For example, the Convent and Centennial Parklands function centre projects will provide the opportunities to position the GIH as a destination for weddings, functions and the business events markets and grow the short-breaks / celebrations market.



6. MARKET TRENDS

Understanding, embracing and responding to changes in the marketplace is fundamental to driving growth in the visitor economy in Glen Innes Highlands. The development of tourism products, activities and experiences needs to be based on an understanding of the changing expectations of consumers, while information delivery and marketing and promotion needs to respond to changes in the way that consumers are sourcing information at all stages of the ‘path to purchase’ and during the journey itself. Market trends providing opportunities for the GIH are discussed below.

6.1 Growth in Regional Travel

Pre the COVID-19 pandemic, Tourism Research Australia was predicting strong growth in both domestic and international visitation to regional areas. Over the 10 years to 2026-27, the number of domestic nights spent in Regional NSW was forecast to grow by 1.9% per annum, with Regional NSW attracting 71.9% of domestic visitor nights by 2026-27 (85.47 million nights). Over the same period, nights spent by international visitors to Regional NSW were forecast to grow by 5.4% per annum, with Regional NSW attracting 15% of all nights spent by international visitors in NSW (15.783 million nights in 2017-18 increasing to 24.232 million nights by 2026-27).

COVID-19 has severely disrupted domestic and international travel. Australia’s international border is expected to remain closed in the short to medium term. Once borders open, the global recession is likely to continue to impact on international travel, particularly from long haul markets.

Domestically, travel in Australia will increase as State borders re-open and restrictions on gatherings are lifted. Already in NSW there has been an increase in travel to rural and coastal destinations with travellers seeking to be outdoors after the lockdown restrictions. Avoidance of crowds, higher unemployment and reduced household incomes is resulting in people looking for lower cost options, such as camping. On the plus side, the COVID-19 lockdown has encouraged people to exercise and ‘rediscover’ the outdoors, with people taking up cycling, bushwalking and other activities. Tourism Research Australia²³ is forecasting that in the short term, regional destinations close to major populations will see a surge in visitation, however as State borders re-open and flights return, domestic travellers are likely to travel interstate and more remote destinations, spending money that they would have spent on overseas travel.

With the easing of COVID-19 restrictions in NSW, Glen Innes Highlands and the surrounding region are seeing a surge in visitation, in particular the touring caravan and RV market (primarily seniors), touring motorbikes, short-breaks from the surrounding region, campers in the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks and the family market during the spring school holidays. The re-opening of the Queensland – NSW border to regional NSW and Victoria will also channel visitor traffic through the GIH.

GIH has most of the characteristics and assets that travellers are looking for – it is close to major population centres; has a stunning rural and bushland setting; fresh air; is uncrowded; provides opportunities for low-cost short breaks and holidays (eg camping); and offers a range of outdoor activities. Glen Innes also has some lifestyle and boutique shopping and an emerging dining scene.



²³ Tourism Research Australia (2020) Moving Forward: The Role of Domestic Travel in Australia’s Tourism Recovery

6.2 Strong Growth in the Caravan and RV Markets

The caravan and RV markets have been growing strongly, with growth forecast to continue. From 2018 to 2019, the number of people aged 55+ years holidaying in a caravan increased by 11.4%, while those aged 30-54 years increased by 2.2%. Most touring van travellers aged 55+ years do not have 'fixed' itineraries. As such these travellers are relatively flexible in where they travel and how long they stay. Factors that are important to this market and influence travel patterns include:

- Word-of-mouth referrals from other travellers.
- The 'RV Friendly' status of a town / locality and localities listed on caravan and camping websites (eg Wiki Camps).
- Access to free or low-cost camping areas in scenically attractive areas, with bush settings and river foreshores being favoured locations.
- The attraction base of an area and the events being held – with caravaners often looking for self-drive itineraries, soft adventure-based activities, walks available, unusual landforms, national parks and forests, access to rivers and lakes, seasonal food events and local produce and artisan markets.
- Rallies, meetings and events held by the caravan / motor home clubs and associations, with travellers slowly making their way to and from these activities.
- Road conditions and the volume of truck traffic. The increase in caravan and camper trailers designed for unsealed roads / off road is resulting in more travellers on unsealed roads and venturing into National Parks and State Forests.
- Safety - there is a fear and avoidance of areas that have a reputation for crime.
- Caravan park configuration and services – with a strong preference for drive-through sites and access to Wi-Fi.
- Need to access facilities such as a dump point, laundry, power to recharge batteries etc (every few days).

Research undertaken by DNSW in 2017, found that 58% of caravaners and RVs stayed in commercial caravan parks and 42% in non-commercial locations. Non-commercial sites include free camping, campgrounds in National Parks, State Forests and SCAs, camping on private property and other locations such as sporting venues and showgrounds. This tallies with information provided by the CMCA who estimates that 34% of caravaners / RVs always stay in commercial caravan parks, 16% always free camp and 50% use a mix of commercial parks and other sites. Different travel parties and age groups had different propensities to stay at commercial and non-commercial sites.

Glen Innes Highlands has traditionally been a popular overnight stop for long haul travellers on the New England Highway. Over the past decade, the caravan market has changed substantially moving from a long-haul transit market to a touring market. The upgrading of the Hume – Pacific Motorway corridor (replacing the New England Highway as the 'easier' route for caravans), the availability of affordable air travel and generational change has resulted in a significant decline in the annual flow of Victorians to Queensland with this impacting negatively on the highway caravan parks.

For the touring market, the journey is the focus, with the choice of where to stay strongly influenced by the appeal of the locality, the attractiveness of the camp site, the ability to meet other travellers and the costs involved. Product development, information and promotional collateral and how the area is 'sold' by VIC staff needs to reflect this new mindset.

Figure 6.1 Travel Party Mix: Proportion of Visitors staying in Commercial Parks and Non-Commercial Areas

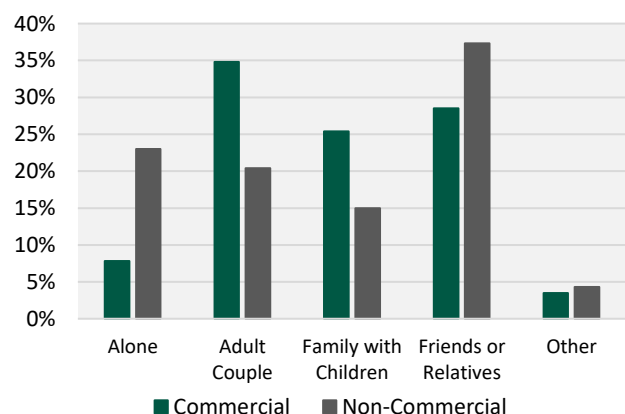
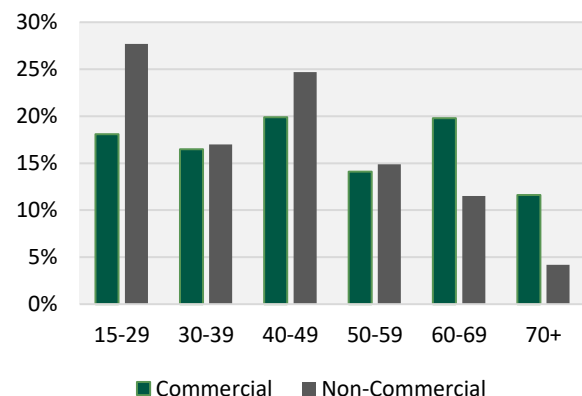


Figure 6.2 Age (years) by Percent of Visitors staying in Commercial Parks and Non-Commercial Areas



6.3 Growth in Nature-based²⁴ Travel

Pre-COVID 19 NSW was experiencing very strong growth in the number of domestic overnight visitors and day trippers who travelled to undertake nature-based (nature, outdoors, adventure) activities. From YE December 2014 to 2019, the number of domestic overnight and day visitors undertaking nature-based activities increased by 58.2% and 59.3% respectively.²⁵ From 2018 to 2019 the number of overnight visitors undertaking a nature-based holiday increased by 14.6% with the number of day trippers increasing by 25.4%. COVID-19 has further stimulated interest in nature-based tourism, with people looking to spend time in natural environments to escape the pressures of day-to-day life, rejuvenate and reconnect. Nature-based travellers are often looking to challenge themselves through physical activities and/or by learning new skills.

World-wide there has been very strong growth in the number of women travellers pursuing outdoor and adventure-based activities, with a significant proportion of women travelling solo. Women have a higher propensity than men to join guided or structured tours, particularly for hiking, cycling, mountain-biking and paddling activities.

The product available in the Glen Innes Highlands is a natural fit with the nature-based market.

6.4 Emergence of the Accessible / Inclusive / Adaptive Tourism Market

Accessible tourism is broadly defined as the ongoing endeavour to ensure tourist destinations, products and services are accessible to all people, regardless of their physical limitations, disabilities or age. The introduction of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act (2014) and the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan (2015) seeks to ensure that people with a disability have the right to full and effective participation in society. The introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), has provided scheme participants with greater opportunity for travel and participation in activities, with the scheme funding travel and recreation for both the person with the disability and their carer/s.

Research undertaken by Destination NSW²⁶ has found that 18% of the population of NSW (1.4 million people) have some form of disability. In the March Quarter 2017, people with disabilities made 1.2 million overnight visits in NSW, generating 4.6 million visitor nights. Sydney was the most popular destination (32% of trips), followed by followed by the North Coast (16% of trips) and the South Coast (14.5% of trips).

Within the NE-NW Region there are limited attractions and activities for the accessible tourism market. The hot artesian pools at Moree are attracting this market and the new Moree Water Park has facilities for disabled water skiing. Moree Plains Shire is looking to capitalise more effectively on this market. If Moree 'pulls' from the coast, this could provide some opportunities for Glen Innes Highlands.

Glen Innes Highlands currently has limited accessible tourism products and experiences. The development of the proposed rail trail and improvements to Centennial Parklands will provide some accessible areas. There may also be potential to cater for this market when upgrading Beardy Woodlands and Stonehenge and the development of the Eerindii Ponds precinct. In other areas of the State, the NPWS and Forestry Corporation are developing accessible trails, campgrounds and day use areas. The possibility of providing disabled access in the parks and forests in the Glen Innes Highlands should be explored.



²⁴ DNSW defines nature-based travel as travel for the purposes of undertaking outdoor or nature-based activities, including bushwalking, going to the beach, cycling, adventure sports and activities, golf, birdwatching and wildlife viewing.

²⁵ Statistics in this paragraph taken from DNSW Nature Based Tourism in NSW YE December 2019

²⁶ Destination NSW Domestic Overnight Visitation to NSW by People with Disabilities

6.5 Changing Traveller Expectations

Over the past decade there has been a paradigm shift in the expectations of travellers, with travellers increasingly looking to:

- Experience something different from everyday life
- Understand and learn about different lifestyles and cultures
- Hear the stories
- Through participation, experience the lifestyle rather than just observe it
- Meet and interact socially with locals and other travellers – making friends and developing personal relationships
- Challenge themselves – physically, emotionally and/or mentally
- Be outdoors and active, with a focus on natural settings (eg National Parks)
- Visit 'authentic' destinations
- Have unique and personally compelling experiences

In addition to the above expectations, different market segments also have additional motivators and drivers.

Baby Boomers – over 55's

The baby boomer generation is a primary market for Glen Innes Highlands, with visitation concentrated in the towns and villages. This market is at, or approaching, retirement age. This market has a strong sense of freedom and a desire to travel. Baby boomers are generally healthy and active and are seeking new places, different lifestyles, soft-adventure and new experiences. The most appealing experiences are nature and outdoors based (56%); touring by car – sightseeing (51%); relaxation, health and indulgence (43%); and food and wine (35%). This market is knowledgeable, sophisticated and demanding, and generally prepared to spend to achieve what they want. They are more interested in value-for-money than in the lowest price. They expect quality customer service and are intolerant of poor service. They are also technologically capable and use on-line sources to research, plan and book travel. Trends in this market include:

- Increasing demand for soft adventure and recreational activities – seeking a variety of activities and experiences on each trip.
- Growth in the number of 'learning' visitors – wanting to come away with new knowledge and/or skills.
- Recognition that the journey is part of the experience.
- 'Slow movement' – travel slowly and immersion in the locale.
- A desire to feel like a local – to be welcomed by locals and treated like a visiting friend rather than a tourist.
- The freedom to interact - the ability to strike up a conversation and make themselves at home.

Gen X

Generation X refers to people born between 1965 and 1979 and now aged 40 to 55 years. This generation has grown up in a period of relative prosperity, with technology and access to information. Generation X is starting to reach the height of their careers and moving into the wealth accumulation stage. X'ers have embraced inner city and higher density living, tending to prefer lifestyle locations within the city, the areas with the restaurant precincts and trendy shops. They are also a market for 'sea change' and 'tree change' lifestyle locations. Work-life balance is important with Gen X is far more health conscious than previous generations. Going to the gym, team sports or individual physical activity (jogging, cycling, swimming) is generally part of the weekly routine.

Socially, Xers tend to have a large circle of acquaintances. They enjoy getting together and dining out. It is a generation that goes away together as informal social groups, for short breaks and long weekends. 'Activity-based' (eg mountain biking), 'pampering / luxury' and 'stress release / escape' breaks are popular with this generation. Gen X patronises festivals and events, enjoys live music and seeks out food and beverage experiences.

Most travel is researched and purchased on the internet. This is a generation that will patronise resorts (with kids clubs), health spas and boutique accommodation. Upmarket cabins in attractive locations are also very popular. There has been a significant increase in Gen X family camping trips, however the camping is generally 4-5 star with camper trailers and quality equipment.

In addition to the National Parks, properties such as Waterloo and Deepwater Stations and attractions such as The Local Café, Glen Gowrie Distillery and Deepwater Brewery are ideal for short breaks for couples and groups of couples. The proposed Convent project will also appeal strongly to Gen X.

Family Market

The family market straddles Gen X and Gen Y. For this market, domestic travel fulfils a key role in busy lives by offering a chance for families to reconnect, recharge and have a break from normal routine. A domestic holiday is an opportunity for families to relax and to open lines of communication between adults and children without time pressures. The emphasis is on destinations that offer a range of activities that are enjoyable for every member of the family. Families have a high propensity to undertake outdoor and nature-based activities (52%) and to participate in sports and active outdoor activities (29%) and visit local attractions (27%).

Touring holidays offers opportunities for families to have a 'safe adventure' and to reconnect and bond as a family. Many of the experiences sought are 'aspirational' – escaping the city, camping by a river, camp-fires under the stars, exploring the National Parks, exploring the unsealed roads and trails; getting back to nature and a simpler lifestyle; and doing 'fun' things together. 'Digital detox', opportunities for the children to 'learn' and nostalgia (wanting their children to experience the holidays that they experienced as a child) are also motivators.

The 'Adventure Country' attractions and activities available in the GIH, plus the National Parks, State Forests and the rural farm stay properties (eg Bullock Mountain, Three Waters) are ideal for this market.

Youth Market – Gen Y and Z ²⁷

The youth market (defined as travellers aged 15-29 years) is the fastest growing visitor market. Pre Covid-19 the youth market accounted for 33% (1.3 million visitors) of international visitors to NSW, with the market divided into travel for education, working holidays and holiday – leisure which includes VFR. The main source markets are Mainland China, United Kingdom, USA, New Zealand and Germany.

Domestically, the youth market takes around 6.5 million trips per annum in NSW. The most visited destinations are Sydney, the NSW North Coast and the NSW South Coast. In selecting destinations, the youth market seeks out experiences, particularly those that are unique, immersive, challenging and/or contribute to personal knowledge and development. They have an appetite for risk and a strong interest in environmentally sustainability. The youth market is sophisticated and reasonably wealthy, with value-for-money more important than price. Young people primarily take inspiration from word-of-mouth recommendations (67%), social media postings by friends and family (60%), and user generated content (45%).

Implications for Glen Innes Highlands

- The GIH will continue to see an increase in the touring markets. Baby boomers will generally have the flexibility to spend multiple nights in the GIH, with the decision likely to be made once they arrive. The VIC can play a pivotal role in the decision process. In contrast, the family and youth markets typically have time constraints, and will have largely planned their trip before leaving home. Information (particularly images and video clips) available on-line will significantly influence decision-making.
- Product development and marketing needs to focus on activities and experiences that provide the opportunity for travellers to be outdoors, active, learn and 'connect'. The GIH is extremely strong in outdoor, soft adventure and nature-based assets and experiences, providing a range of opportunities for visitors to be active, 'connect' with

²⁷ Information in this section taken from the Destination NSW Webinar on the Youth Market and from TNS Domestic 2016.

nature and challenge themselves. The GIH also has a range of assets (eg pubs, galleries, cafes) and events (eg weekly markets) that can be leveraged to ‘educate’ travellers and enable them to ‘connect’ with locals.

- Marketing and promotion needs to focus on the ‘aspirational’ reflecting what travellers are seeking from their rural / bush experience – the adventure, scenery, camping by the river or in a national park, campfire under the stars, bushwalking, cycling, boutique and lifestyle shopping.

6.6 Changing Technology

New technology is changing the tourism industry. Digital technology provides significant opportunity for information delivery, communication, marketing and promotion, and for enhancing the visitor experience. It also enables growth in the ‘shared economy’ and provides opportunities for new activities and businesses. Changing technology requires an investment in infrastructure and training. Opportunities include:

- Information delivery, marketing and promotion: Digital technology has and is continuing to change the way in which consumers access and share information, select destinations and products, and book and pay for travel. Travellers now have access to an exponentially increasing range of information sources through an expanding number of touch points including:
 - Tourism, travel and product websites and travel directories– information and bookings.
 - Google Maps and Google Earth – maps, satellite images, photographic images, routes, directions, distances and travelling times.
 - Social networking sites including Facebook, WhatsApp, Bebo, Twitter etc.
 - Trip Itinerary planning and booking apps.
 - Pod casts and applications (eg sound trails, geo-caching).
 - User generated content (eg blogs, You Tube, Instagram) both on websites and through the social networking sites.
 - Travel specific networking sites – such as Trip Advisor, Google Review, Virtual Tourist, Lonely Planet Thorn Tree. These sites not only advertise destinations, accommodation, attractions, tours, events etc, they also provide forums where travellers can discuss their experiences – providing a digital word-of-mouth referral system

Allied to this is the ability to capture and process data which can be used for personalised, direct marketing of tailored experiences and the application of artificial intelligence – including use of website chatbots and biometrics; and to capture the sale and value-add with real-time bookings and seamless connectivity between products.

- Story telling: The use of virtual and augmented reality to promote destinations visually and through ‘story-telling’; enabling ‘virtual’ access to remote and/or highly sensitive areas; and enhancing visitor experiences by adding additional ‘layers’ of information.
- The rise in the share economy: Providing options for home sharing (eg Airbnb, Couch Surfing), farm camping (eg Hipcamp, Under the Stars), ride sourcing (eg Uber, Go Get), tours (eg Airbnb tours by locals) and more recently dining options (dine with a local).
- Changes in building materials and technologies: Resulting in different types of accommodation (eg bubble tents, tiny houses) and the ability to go ‘off grid’ which is enabling accommodation to be located in remote and/or environmentally sensitive locations and relocated quickly (eg during flooding, bushfires) if needed.
- Introduction of electric vehicles: Over the next decade, the number of electric cars in Australia is forecast to grow by 28% per annum and reach 20% of new car sales by 2030²⁸. This will create the need for additional charging infrastructure. Electric bicycles are enabling more people to participate in cycling and mountain biking, with access to electric hire bikes a potential opportunity for Glen Innes to leverage the rail trail and other cycling infrastructure that is developed.

²⁸ ENERGEIA (2018) Australian Electric Vehicle Study

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT



7. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

7.1 Positioning

Glen Innes Highlands' strengths lie in its stunning high-country landscape, World Heritage listed National Parks, rich heritage and contemporary country lifestyle. The GIH is being marketed by GISC under the banner of 'Glen Innes Highlands – Chase Adventure', with tag lines including 'discover your next adventure', 'find your inner Celt' and 'experience living history'.

The GIH invites visitors to 'chase adventure' – to escape, explore and indulge. Visitors are encouraged to discover and experience:

- Stunning national parks
- Australia's only standing stones
- Outdoor adventures – camping, bushwalking, bird watching, paddling, motorcycle touring, mountain biking, 4WD
- Distinct seasons – the spring blossoms, the spectacular autumn colours, winter by the fireside and the cool, non-humid summers
- Gourmet food and artisan beverages
- Picturesque, historic villages
- Living history
- Local art – uniquely hand crafted by local artisans

The Glen Innes Highlands' core product themes are:

- Adventure Country
- High Country
- Celtic Country
- Heritage Country
- Ngorabul Country
- Progressive Country

There is significant overlap between the first four themes, with the High Country providing the setting for Adventure Country, and some of the adventure activities (eg fly fishing), and the Celtic and Heritage products contributing to the High Country experience. Ngorabul Country and Progressive Country are in the early development phase with opportunities yet to be realised.



7.2 Development Framework

Development of the visitor economy in Glen Innes Highlands needs to:

- Be consistent with GISC's and the community's vision for the GIH.
- Deliver on the GIH brand values and its promise and invitation to visitors.
- Maintain and protect key assets – its scenic and rural character, national parks, state forests, waterways, heritage and lifestyle.
- Support economic development – encouraging new residents and businesses.
- Focus on activities that are compatible and sustainable and offer opportunities for value-adding and packaging.
- Take into consideration the changes that are occurring in the marketplace.

The priorities are:

- To enhance and strengthen key attractions, activities and experiences:
 - Strengthen Glen Innes and villages as both destinations and service centres, encouraging travellers to stop, explore and spend.
 - Leverage and enhance touring routes and drives.
 - Continue to develop, improve and diversify the attraction base of the GIH – including fostering agri tourism.
 - Consolidate the GIH as a destination for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities.
 - Continue to build the events sector – growing local events and attracting events to the GIH.
- To ensure that the infrastructure, facilities and services needed to enable and support growth in the visitor economy are in place.



8. PLACE MAKING: ENHANCING GLEN INNES AND THE VILLAGES

Glen Innes and the villages provide a range of visitor facilities and services and are part of the GIH attraction base. Having highway locations, the presentation of the highway corridor, availability and visibility of facilities and signage are keys to encouraging travellers to stop in Glen Innes, Deepwater and Glencoe. The presentation of businesses, particularly in the villages, is also critical with businesses that present as clean and vibrant more likely to attract patronage than those that appear dated, tired and/or run down. Presentation is also an attribute for people who are looking to relocate to and/or invest in the area, with tourism being a driver of the 'tree change' process.

Encouraging visitors to stop, explore and spend can be achieved by:

- Creating strong and favourable first impressions: through quality presentation of the gateway entry points and corridors, town centres and parks and gardens.
- Improving gateway, directional and facility signage.
- Creating points of interest: through art, landscaping, colour, footpath activation etc.
- Businesses presenting well and providing quality customer service: meeting the desire by visitors to interact with locals and encouraging positive on-line reviews and word-of-mouth referrals as well as repeat visitation.

8.1 Glen Innes

Set amongst rolling countryside, Glen Innes is a very attractive, high country town with its main features being:

- Its landscaped, historic town centre with impressive buildings dating from the late 19th century, contemporary cafes, galleries, antiques, boutiques and lifestyle shops.
- A green corridor along Rocky Ponds Creek with high country parklands, Anzac Memorial Walk, playgrounds, a historic rotunda and visitor facilities. Anzac Park in Autumn is one of the highlights of the New England Region.
- The Australian Standing Stones and Centennial Parklands - on the hill overlooking the town.
- Wide tree-lined streets that provide stunning displays of pink and white blossoms in spring and vibrant autumn colours in winter.
- Tree-line historic Showground.

GISC has been progressively implementing a town centre streetscape program, with the core of the town centre and part of the New England Highway corridor (Heron to Meade Street), landscaped and presenting well.

Suggested Improvements

From a visitor perspective, the improvements needed include:

- Reviewing parking for caravans, RVs and other long rigs. Designated long rig parking is currently available behind the VIC, and in East and West Streets. Caravaners arriving in Glen Innes on the Gwydir Highway from the east, are also occasionally parking along the centre of Meade Street to access the VIC. Opportunities to provide parking spaces close to the supermarkets should be explored. RV parking spaces are currently signposted using a mix of fingerboard signs. Caravanners are typically looking for the caravan parking icon and need advanced warning signs so that they have time to slow down and stop.
- Improving the signage to the Showground from both the New England and Gwydir Highways with the signage to include the caravan park icon.
- Sign posting World Heritage Way and the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks at the intersection of the New England and Gwydir Highways, possibly with advanced warning signs for New England Highway travellers arriving from the south.

- Formulating and implementing a town-wide tree planting strategy – to provide a mass display of colour in spring and autumn and green in summer. A coordinated approach to tree planting is also needed along the New England Highway corridor between the Glen Rest Caravan Park and the United Service Station.
- Establishing an attractive pedestrian link between the VIC carpark, proposed Powerhouse Museum and the town centre, to encourage VIC visitors to explore the Museum and town centre.
- Improving signage to public toilets from the New England Highway – using international facility signs.
- Additional use of permanent and temporary art installations in the town centre, Glen Innes Parklands and Centennial Park and in other strategic locations.

8.2 Deepwater

Deepwater is a small historic village located on the New England Highway approximately 42 kilometres north of Glen Innes. It is a popular refreshment and pit stop for highway travellers, including truck drivers. With the opening of the Deepwater Brewery, new owners at the Longhorn Bar and Grill, and additional accommodation (Bank BnB, Deepwater Station and the free camping area at the Longhorn), Deepwater is starting to become a destination. Deepwater Jockey Club hosts an annual picnic race which draws significant numbers of visitors to the area.

The attractions and assets include:

- Deepwater Brewery – brewery, eatery and local provedore, with a small hops garden and an outlook over Deepwater River.
- Deepwater Bakery – very popular with Highway travellers
- Longhorn Bar and Grill – eclectic tavern, with an onsite café and free camping area. It also offers live music.
- Echo's Antiques.
- Accommodation – Commercial Hotel / Motel, Deepwater Bank BnB and free campground in the village and Deepwater Station (cottages, shearers quarters, camping) nearby.
- Doug Biddle Apex Park – rest area with small playground and amenities.
- Deepwater Racecourse.
- Heritage buildings including the Railway Station, Eclipse Theatre and School of Arts, with the School of Arts suitable for functions and events.
- Deepwater River and riverside reserve. The river is popular for fishing.
- Proximity to the Torrington SCA, Capoompetta and Bolivia Hill National Parks.

Deepwater is also on Touring Route 11 which links Glen Innes, Emmaville and Deepwater via Torrington SCA and the Ottery Mine. The Deepwater Polo Club is establishing a polo field at the racecourse and there is a proposal to establish a horse-riding venture.

Opportunities and Suggested Improvements

- Continue to improve the presentation of the New England Highway corridor through the village including:
 - Corridor tree planting along the southern entry corridor – reflecting the tree planting along the northern entry corridor.
 - Defining the town centre by landscaping the Highway – Young Street intersection and improving the landscaping along the Highway between Young and Dundee Streets.
 - Providing a sign with facility and service icons on the New England Highway approaches to the village.
 - Encouraging the owner of the Longhorn Bar and Grill to improve the presentation of the area between the hotel and Cadell Street to encourage caravanners and RVs to use the free camping area.

Improvements need to ensure that trucks and long rigs can continue to pull up safely in the village.

- To improve access to a small section of riverbank along the riverside reserve – weeds limit the ability to access the river and signpost river access points and fishing spots close to town.
- Strengthen the links between Deepwater and the Torrington National Park including signposting both the SCA and Touring Route 11 from the intersection of the New England Highway and Torrington Road.
- Work with the NPWS and Forestry Corporation to identify potential trail bike and 4WD touring routes in the area surrounding Deepwater – taking in the Torrington SCA, Capoompeta, Bolivia Hill, Washpool (north western section) and Butterleaf National Parks and nearby State Forests, with these promoted in conjunction with group accommodation available at Deepwater Station, as well as the potential for groups to camp at Deepwater Station, the Longhorn Bar and Grill campground and possibly, for large groups, at the racecourse and/or oval.
- Investigate promoting the Ten Mile Road – Bezzarts Road loop as a ‘Back Road’ tourist drive, trail bike route (linking to the forests and national parks) and/or a gravel grinding loop.
- Erect an information directory (promoting the village and surrounding area) at Doug Biddle Park and possibly near the Bakery or other strategic location.
- Promote the racecourse and the School of Arts as venues for functions and events and investigate the potential to utilise the historic railway station building and surrounding area for small functions and events.
- Extend the proposed Armidale – Glen Innes Rail Trail north to Deepwater.
- Improve information and promotional collateral on Deepwater and the surrounding area (eg a Deepwater map/brochure) and encourage local businesses to display and distribute the brochure. As part of this replace the Deepwater town maps on the Glen Innes Highlands website with a map that promotes the businesses, attractions and facilities available in the village and the surrounding area.

8.3 Emmaville

Emmaville is located in the north western corner of Glen Innes Highlands, approximately 45 kilometres north west of Glen Innes. With the discovery of tin in the 1870’s Emmaville grew rapidly, and in its heyday in the early 1900’s, was the largest town in the area with a population of over 7,000 people, 2,000 of whom were Chinese. The Ottery arsenic and tin mine and refinery was established near Emmaville in 1882 and operated through to 1939. The Ottery is the oldest principal ore refinery in Australia and one of the few remaining world-wide²⁹. The proposed Taronga Tin Mine continues Emmaville’s mining heritage and will provide the opportunity for contemporary mining ‘stories’.

Today, the attractions and assets of the village include:

- Rich mining heritage
- Emmaville Mining Museum
- Emmaville Court House Museum
- Emmaville Lookout
- Two historic hotels, both providing basic accommodation, with the Tattersalls Hotel also having a display of Murray Cod photos and other fishing memorabilia
- Emmaville Caravan Park – a small park with powered and unpowered sites, located adjacent to the swimming pool
- Rural / bushland retreats close to town – Bens Fall Retreat and Function Centre and Monster Murray Cod
- Proximity to the historic Ottery tin and arsenic mine
- Access to the Severn and Beardy Waters Rivers
- Proximity to attractions in adjoining LGAs – Pindari Dam, Torrington Village and Torrington SCA

The village is part of both the Fossickers Way touring route and Touring Route 11 and is popular with touring motorcyclists and car clubs, 4WD enthusiasts and visitors exploring the area. The village also attracts anglers and fossickers.

²⁹ Heritage Council of NSW

Emmaville is located at the junction of several regional roads. The village has multiple entry points and a disjointed village centre, with the village layout being somewhat confusing for visitors. While there is some signage in place, it is unclear, with travellers left wondering where the public toilets and information outlet are. The route markers for Touring Route 11 are also confusing and missing at several key intersections.

Opportunities

- Build on the village's mining history:
 - Promote the Ottery Mine in conjunction with the Emmaville Mining Museum and provide directional signage to the Mine from the town centre. Promoting the two attractions together will provide a more compelling reason to visit Emmaville.
 - Identify and signpost fossicking sites located in close proximity to the village.
 - Explore opportunities to include mining machinery / relics as points of interest / art installations in the front yard of the Museum and at strategic locations within the village.
 - Explore the possibility of establishing a Chinese garden adjacent to the Court House Museum (or other suitable location) to mark the Chinese market gardens that supported the tin mining.
 - Explore opportunities for storytelling to bring the Mining Museum and the Court House Museum 'to life'.
 - Use virtual or augmented reality technology to tell the tin mining story, both past and present – recreating Tent Hill, the Ottery Mine, Chinese vegetable gardens and the village centre and including the Taronga Tin Mine if it proceeds.
 - Brand the Emmaville loop of the Fossickers Way as the Miners Way and develop a mining heritage drive and sound trail / app (or drives) around Emmaville incorporating areas such as Vegetable Creek, Tent Hill and the former mines (dams).
- Continue to develop and promote Tourist Drive 11, update route signage in Emmaville and the surrounding area and produce information and promotional collateral.
- Position the village as a destination for anglers – promoting the memorabilia at the Tattersalls Hotel, the Severn and Beardy Rivers, Pindari Dam, and the Bens Falls and Monster Murray Cod Retreats. Also explore with the fishing club, opportunities for an open fishing competition and encourage local businesses to stock fishing tackle and bait.
- Re-instate the Sheep Races.
- To promote the dams and bushland areas around Emmaville for birdwatching. There maybe opportunity to develop bird routes, walking trails and/or bird hides.



Suggested Improvements

- Improve gateway arrival signage and the presentation of the entry corridor, with the priority being the Emmaville Road entry from Glen Innes.
- Rationalise and update the facility icon signage and include public toilets on the signs.
- Erect and signpost an information directory in a highly visible, strategic location – possibly outside the Museum.
- Improve, signpost and promote river access points close to town.
- Improve directional signage to the Lookout, upgrade the presentation of the area, and improve the safety of the Lookout – Emmaville Road intersection.
- Signpost the Torrington SCA from Emmaville.
- Endeavour to obtain RV Friendly Locality (RVFL) accreditation for the Village and ensure that the caravan park is listed on key caravan and camping website directories.
- Improve promotional collateral on Emmaville, including providing a tourist map detailing the attractions and facilities within the village and surrounding area.

8.4 Glencoe

Glencoe is a small village located on the New England Highway approximately 19 kilometres south of Glen Innes. The village currently has three assets:

- Bicentennial Park – toilets, picnic table and small playground. The Park functions as a rest area for highway travellers.
- Red Lion Tavern – popular eatery on the New England Highway and with the regional market. The Tavern is currently only trading from Thursday to Sunday. Facilities include 3 guest rooms, a free camping area, bar and dining room and a beer garden.
- Home of ‘Koala Black Garlic’, a niche food producer, with the garlic available from various outlets, including the Red Lion Tavern.

Glencoe is located on the proposed Rail Trail, with the Red Lion Tavern having frontage to the railway line. If the rail trail proceeds, it will create opportunities for additional businesses in the village.



9. TOURING ROUTES & ACTIVITY TRAILS

Touring routes are designed to bring travellers into and through the GIH, with the self-guided tours and activity trails providing links between attractions and activities to increase the product 'mass' and to encourage travellers to stay longer in, and explore the area, driving visitation to and expenditure in Glen Innes and the villages

Activity trails provide products and experiences that can be used to grow special interest and activity-based markets. There are opportunities within the GIH to develop trails that will appeal to the GIH target markets and strengthen the Adventure Country, High Country and Heritage Country themes.

9.1 Touring Routes

Touring travellers are a primary market for the GIH.

There are two key routes feeding into the GIH – the New England and Gwydir Highways, with the Gwydir Highway to the east of Glen Innes branded 'World Heritage Way'. To the west, between Glen Innes and Wyallda, the Gwydir Highway is part of the Fossickers Way touring route.

New England Highway

The New England is a national, interstate highway, linking the New England Region with the Hunter, Central Coast and Greater Sydney regions to the south and Southern Queensland to the north. The section of Highway between Glen Innes and Tamworth is part of the Fossickers Way touring route. Plans are in place to position and promote the New England Highway as a touring route. The New England Highway is a more scenic route than the new Pacific Motorway, providing the opportunity to drive through and explore country towns, rather than by-passing them.

Gwydir Highway

The Gwydir Highway is a State Highway (B76) linking the Pacific Highway at Grafton on the NSW North Coast through to the Castlereagh Highway near Walgett in Outback NSW – with links to Lightning Ridge and Bourke. High profile attractions and localities within the Highway corridor include the Washpool and Gibraltar Range World Heritage National Parks, the Australian Standing Stones in Glen Innes, Copeton Dam, Bingara and the hot artesian baths in Moree. The progressive upgrading of the Highway combined with population growth on the NSW North Coast is resulting in growth in travellers using the route.

The eastern end of the Highway, between Grafton and Glen Innes is a popular route for car and motorcycle touring and for the short-breaks market coming out of the NSW North Coast. At Glen Innes a significant proportion of travellers arriving from the east either turn north or south onto the New England Highway, returning to the coast via the Bruxner Highway from Tenterfield, or Waterfall Way via Armidale, or travel south to Sydney via the New England Highway.

West-bound, long-haul travellers on the Gwydir Highway tend to be heading to the hot artesian baths at Moree and/or travelling further west to Lightning Ridge and/or Bourke. Some west-bound travellers are leaving the Gwydir Highway at Inverell or Wyallda to travel via Bingara, and then west on State Touring Route 3 (Killarney Gap Road) to join the Kamilaroi Highway at Narrabri to travel through to Walgett via the Burren Junction bore baths. Other travellers are 'doing the loop' – travelling via the Gwydir Highway in one direction and STR3 and the Kamilaroi Highway in the other.

There is sufficient depth and diversity of product along the Gwydir Highway corridor to position and promote the Highway as a touring route. (Appendix 3).

World Heritage Way

'World Heritage Way' is one of three 'branded' touring routes linking the NSW North Coast and the New England Region, with the other routes being Thunderbolts Way and Waterfall Way. Promotional collateral (on-line and print) is available for both Thunderbolts Way and Waterfall Way, with Waterfall Way recognised and promoted by DNSW as one of the

State's premier road trips. There is no promotional collateral for World Heritage Way, with the only branding for the route being two dilapidated signs on the Gwydir Highway near South Grafton and at Glen Innes. A decision needs to be made on whether to retain this branding and develop promotional collateral to support the route, or whether to focus on the Gwydir Highway as the touring route.

Fossickers Way

The Fossickers Way is a looped touring route that passes through Tamworth Regional, Gwydir, Inverell, Glen Innes, Armidale Regional and Uralla LGAs. In the GIH, Fossickers Way incorporates the Gwydir Highway west of Glen Innes, the New England Highway south of Glen Innes and an extension to Emmaville. The Emmaville extension incorporates part of Touring Route 11 (see below). Fossickers Way is recognised and promoted by DNSW as a road trip.

Fossickers Way has been established for more than 20 years, with the brochure organised and published by the Inverell Times. The route has been funded through LGA buy-in and advertising, with content largely dictated by the advertising. While the original concept was to link historic mining areas, and fossicking and geological based activities, this has been significantly 'diluted' over the years. The publication and associated website are dated, with the website not being inspirational, comprehensive nor mobile optimised.



The website and promotional material for Fossickers Way needs to be revamped and expanded to include information on the gemstones, rocks and minerals that can be found along the route as well as how and where to fossick.

Secondary Routes

There are three secondary routes, Old Grafton / Old Glen Innes Road, Pinkett Road and the Aberfoyle Track which feed into the GIH. These routes are primarily used by the touring trail bikes and the 4WD markets. Old Grafton / Old Glen Innes Road and the Aberfoyle Track (see Section 11.10) and 'must do' routes for 4WD enthusiasts. The Old Grafton / Old Glen Innes Road and Pinkett Road are promoted as motorcycle touring routes by New England High Country.

Country Drives

Glen Innes Highlands promotes three local Highland Country Drives:

- **Tour 1: The Town of Glen Innes:** self drive and walking tours around Glen Innes. These tours are supported by the Glen Innes Heritage Tour App.
- **Tour 2: The Mountain Villages:** loop from Glen Innes to Ben Lomond via Glencoe, with the key features being the Stonehenge Reserve, Balancing Rock, Little Llangothlin Nature Reserve, the Red Lion Tavern and the historic Glencoe and Ben Lomond villages.
- **Tour 11: The Mining Villages:** loop from Glen Innes to Emmaville, Torrington, Deepwater taking in the historic villages, museums in Emmaville, the history Ottery Mine and the Torrington State Conservation Area. The section between the Ottery Mine and Tenterfield (approximately 23 kilometres) is unsealed. The route is promoted as a motorcycle touring route with the Glen Innes – Emmaville section being part of Fossickers Way. GISC is looking to re-brand route 11 as the Miners' Way – with the main route being the Glen Innes-Emmaville-Deepwater loop (via Emmaville and Wellington Vale Roads and the New Highway) which is fully sealed, with an extension loop from Emmaville to Torrington to Deepwater.

The Old Grafton / Old Glen Innes Road is promoted separately as a tourist drive.

There is potential to also develop and promote:

- **A World Heritage Drive** from Glen Innes to the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks – taking in the Gwydir Highway National Parks, Boundary Falls, Raspberry Lookout and Beardy Waters, with an extension to the Mann River Nature Reserve.
- **Granite Country Drive** – a loop from Glen Innes incorporating Red Range, Lawler and Pinkett Roads.
- **Back Roads** – touring loops on unsealed roads targeted to All wheel and 4WDs, trail bikers and gravel grinders (cyclists).
- **Seasonal routes** – At various times of the year, agricultural activities create a ‘patchwork’ of colour across the GIH. Depending on the activities (eg grain and canola crops and harvesting, horticulture, alpacas) undertaken and their location and accessibility, there may be opportunities to promote self-guided routes. There is also potential to promote routes that showcase the spring blossoms and/or the autumn colours, or wildflowers in the National Parks and State Forests.

9.2 Activity-based Trails

Glen Innes Highlands has in place activity-based trails / guides for fishing, fossicking and bird watching. As discussed in Chapters 10 and 11, there is opportunity to enhance these guides and also develop trails and guides for a range of activities including:

- Bushwalking
- Cycling – road, gravel grinding and mountain biking
- Paddling
- 4WD
- Trail biking
- Trail running
- Horse riding

Activity based trails can be used to link products and experiences to strengthen the product offering and encourage visitors to stay longer and/or disperse throughout the area. Trails can also be used to attract and host events.



9.3 Actions

- Continue to work New England High Country to:
 - Grow the motorcycle touring market, positioning Glen Innes as the hub for trail bike touring (see Section 11.8)
 - Establish and promote the New England Highway as a touring route.
 - Grow the car club, caravans and RVs and self-drive markets.
- Work with LGAs along the Gwydir Highway corridor to establish the Highway as a touring route. Work with the Kamilaroi Highway and Natures Way marketing groups to develop a touring loop linking the NSW North Coast and Southern Queensland (via New England Highway to Glen Innes) to Lightning Ridge and Bourke.
- Determine the future of Wilderness Way – and if it is to be a branded route, work with Clarence Valley Council, NPWS and Forestry Corporation to produce on-line and print promotional collateral, update maps with the Wilderness Way branding and advocate for DNSW to include the route as a ‘Road Trip’ on the visitnsw website.

- Work with LGAs along the Fossickers Way to revamp the information and promotional collateral for the route, including providing information on how and where to fossick.
- Restructure and re-brand Touring Route 11 as the Miners Way, offering two loops (Glen Innes, Emmaville, Deepwater – all sealed access; and the Emmaville – Torrington – Deepwater loop).
- Work with Clarence Valley Council to build the profile of the Old Glen Innes / Old Grafton Road as a touring route, with this positioned as a ‘must do’ ride / drive for the touring trail bike and 4WD markets.
- Work with Armidale Regional Council, NPWS and Forestry Corporation to develop and promote the Aberfoyle Track as an iconic touring route for the 4WD market.
- Expand the ‘Country Drives’ offering – possibly including World Heritage, Granite Country, Back Road and Seasonal routes.
- Leverage the touring routes and country drives to develop and promote 3 to 7 day itineraries for travellers.
- Develop and promote activity-based trails targeted to special interest and activity-based markets.



10. ENHANCE AND DIVERSIFY THE ATTRACTION BASE

The Highland needs both hero attractions to bring visitors into the area as well as a strong second tier of local attractions to keep visitors engaged; enhance their experience and encourage longer lengths of stay; and increase expenditure, repeat visitation, positive on-line reviews and word-of-mouth referrals.

The National Park product within the GIH is well developed with quality visitor facilities in the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks, the Mann River Nature Reserve and the Torrington SCA. These localities are located on the periphery of the GIH, with Park visitors not necessarily venturing into Glen Innes and/or the villages. To maximise economic benefits, the GIH needs to strengthen and diversify the attraction base of Glen Innes and immediate surrounds, including providing easily accessed 'Adventure Country' experiences close to Glen Innes and the villages.

Maximising the potential of Centennial Parklands, Stonehenge Reserve and the Beardy Woodlands and realising the proposed New England Rail Trail would provide additional activities for visitors (encouraging them to stay longer in Glen Innes) and strengthen the Adventure Country, High Country and Celtic Country product themes.

Eerindii Ponds and the Rocky Creek proposed wetlands projects provide product development opportunities, with the Eerindii Ponds – Beardy Waters Weir area having the potential to become a major tourism and recreation precinct.

Priority Projects:

- Centennial Parklands
- Stonehenge Reserve
- Beardy Waters Woodlands
- New England Rail Trail
- Eerindii Ponds – Beardy Waters Weir Precinct

Strengthen Existing Attractions:

- Glen Innes Parklands corridor
- Land of Beardies History House Museum and Research Centre
- Emmaville Mining Museum
- Emmaville Court House Museum
- Glen Innes Art Gallery

Product Development:

- Celtic Country experiences
- Agri and industry-based tourism – attractions and experiences
- Ngorabul Country – products and experiences
- Arts and cultural tourism
- Glen Innes Powerhouse Museum
- State Forests
- Motor sports
- Air sports

Motor sports and air sports are potential Adventure Country activities and are discussed in Sections 11.13 and 11.14 respectively.



10.1 Priority Projects

10.1.1 Centennial Parklands

As the site of the Australian Standing Stones, Crofters Cottage and Martins Lookout, the Centennial Parklands is one of the most visited localities in Glen Innes. GISC has adopted a Plan of Management and Masterplan for the Parklands, with key elements including:

- Formalising and sealing key pathways to provide all-weather access.
- Extending the track network with some of the trails potentially suitable for cycling and mountain biking.
- Developing a sky walk – connecting vantage points with elevated boards walks and platforms.
- Providing a range of outdoor spaces for events.
- Constructing an indoor multi-purpose function – meeting space (250 seats banquet style).
- Constructing a new playground with Aboriginal and Celtic themes.
- Installing a human sundial and a large Celtic Brandubh board game.
- Upgrading the visitor facilities.

The pedestrian – cycle link between the Parklands and town centre will be strengthened and there is provision to link the trail network to Eerindii Ponds precinct in the future. GISC is also seeking a lessee for Crofters Cottage to provide Celtic based activities (eg food, beverage, merchandise, workshops etc).

Actions

- Progressively implement the Plan of Management, including the development of the Sky Walk.
- Increase the range of events held within the Parklands.
- Explore opportunities to introduce Celtic mythology – through art installations and storytelling.
- Increase the range of activities for young children, possibly building a grotto for Celtic faeries, a dragon's lair, labyrinth or maze.

10.1.2 Stonehenge Recreation Reserve

Stonehenge Recreation Reserve is located on the New England Highway, approximately 12 kilometres south of Glen Innes. The Reserve is quintessential 'high country' – elevated plateau with extensive views over the surrounding countryside, a mass of granite tors and balancing rocks and a stunning display of colour in autumn. Facilities includes two former playing fields / polo grounds which are ideal for events and camping for large groups, basic amenities that are in very poor condition, a small playground and two picnic shelters. A small area of the Reserve is occupied by the Glen Innes Clay Target Club.

The elevated section of the Reserve with the granite formations attracts walkers, sightseers, photographers and artists, people meditating, yoga and tai chi practitioners and bird watchers. The Reserve is a recognised bouldering site with 79 bouldering routes identified (see Section 11.12). The area is popular with families and is used informally for nature-play.

The Reserve abuts the rail corridor and has the potential to become one of the highlights on the proposed rail trail. Just south of the Reserve is the historic bearded Waters River rail bridge. The Reserve is approximately mid-way between Glen Innes and Glencoe, and in terms of distance, is ideal for recreational cyclists (including families), joggers and walkers to access from Glen Innes or Glencoe.

Currently the Reserve is managed by the Stonehenge Reserve Trust which is a Section 355 Committee of Council³⁰. There does not appear to be a Plan of Management in place.

The Reserve has been identified as a potential site for the proposed motorsports complex. From a tourism perspective, motorsports would destroy the attractiveness and ambience of the Reserve and degrade the area as both a stand-alone attraction and a feature and activity node on the proposed New England Rail Trail.

³⁰ GISC website: Community Committees of Council

Actions

Stonehenge Reserve has the potential to become an iconic attraction for the New England High Country region and an outdoor event venue for Glen Innes Highlands.

- Formulate a Plan of Management for the Reserve. The Plan of Management should include provisions for the Reserve to be used for outdoor and nature-based activities, events, temporary accommodation, and commercial activities (eg coffee van, cycle hire).
- Assess the feasibility of developing a large nature / wild play area.
- Improve signage to the Reserve, including providing advanced warning signs on the New England Highway. Seek TASAC approval for a brown tourist sign.
- Formalise the track network – defining vehicle and walking / cycling tracks and including links with the proposed rail trail and historic railway bridge.
- Provide interpretation, explaining how the granite formations evolved.
- Construct a new toilet block and upgrade / replace other visitor facilities.
- Promote the Reserve as an event venue.
- If the rail trail proceeds, boutique accommodation (eg glamping, tiny houses, historic railway carriages) could be developed on part of the Reserve.
- Protect and maintain the existing poplars and plant additional trees in strategic locations to enhance the display in Autumn.

10.1.3 Beardy Woodlands

Beardy Woodlands is a Crown Reserve located on the Gwydir Highway approximately 5 kilometres east of Glen Innes, just downstream of the Beardy Waters dam wall. The Reserve has a grassed riverside picnic area with access to the river, plus a woodland section with Australian native plants surrounding a core of exotic high-country conifers and deciduous trees. The Woodlands is a bird 'hotspot' with a mix of woodland, grasslands and waterbirds. Echidnas are also found in the Reserve with platypus and turtles found in the river. It is not often that Australia's two monotremes are found in the same location – a strong point of difference and selling point for the Woodlands. The river is popular for fishing and used occasionally for canoeing. The Woodlands has a network of unsealed walking tracks, including a track along the river. Views of Beardy Waters Dam and surrounding countryside are available from the southern edge of the Reserve.

The visitor amenities within the Reserve are basic – toilets and picnic tables. The Woodland area is fenced off, with pedestrian gates providing access to the walking tracks. There is no map showing the walking trails, nor interpretative information on the significance of the woodlands. Visitors driving into the Reserve would be unaware of the walking tracks and could be deterred by the fencing and gates from entering the woodland area. A section of the river adjacent to the Woodlands is ideal for canoeing, however accessing the riverbank to launch and retrieve canoes is difficult.

Actions

- Promote the Reserve as being home to Australia's two monotremes with information available on 'how to spot' these shy animals. Public art depicting these creatures could also be installed in the Reserve.
- Investigate the feasibility of providing a platypus viewing area. (The platypus viewing area at the Bombala Platypus Reserve is popular and provides an example).
- Improve information and signage:
 - Name and mark the key trails and identify areas with good views.
 - Erect an information board including a map showing the trails and key features / highlights.
 - Provide interpretative information, including information on the echidnas and platypuses.
- Progressively upgrade visitor facilities.

- Assess the suitability of the trails for cycling (mountain bikes and hybrids) and, if suitable, mark the trails and develop information and promotional collateral.
- Assess the potential to expand the cluster of exotic trees to form a cold climate arboretum – featuring trees from Celtic countries (eg Scots Pine – the official tree of Scotland; the Sessile Oak – the official tree of Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany, the yew tree of Asturias and the Galicia Pine). Note: the Kilmun Aboretum in Scotland has an Australian Eucalypt collection and trail which it promotes as ‘Visit some guests from Down Under ... On a warm day, the wonderful aroma will transport you to the Australian bush’.
- Assess the potential to extend the trail network to include the western side of the River. This would require a pedestrian bridge across the river.
- Provide a safe area that is easy to access, for launching and retrieving canoes.

10.1.4 New England Rail Trail

The New England Rail Trail Project involves converting the disused Main North Railway corridor between Armidale and Glen Innes into a rail trail. The trail would be 103 kilometres long and at each end would link into local cycleways. Within the Glen Innes Highlands the rail trail would pass by Glencoe and Stonehenge Reserve, with the trail-head being the historic Glen Innes Station. The project feasibility assessment and project plan have been prepared, with the project now seeking funding to proceed.

According to the Trail Plan, the Glen Innes corridor has ‘instantaneous appeal’ with the rail corridor immediately south of Glen Innes Railway Station providing a ‘best of’ rail trail experience within a very short length. Within the first 5 kilometres heading south of Glen Innes station, users can see a high-quality station, historic railway infrastructure (signals, switches, etc), cuttings, embankments, timber bridges and a brick underpass, with the trail then following the Beardy River past Stonehenge Reserve and then crossing the Beardy River on a 120 metre long wooden bridge. This bridge has been identified as one of the iconic features of the trail. The bridge could be marketed as part of the attraction base of Stonehenge Reserve.

The development of the Rail Trail would be a ‘game-changer,’ providing the GIH with an iconic attraction that will attract significant numbers of visitors to Glen Innes and encourage overnight stays. It would also form the focal point for the development of cycle tourism and provide business opportunities in Glen Innes and Glencoe, and potentially for landholders (eg Glen Rest Caravan Park, farming properties), along the route. The Trail could also be used for events. The Trail aligns with the GIH Adventure, High, Celtic (Stonehenge) and Heritage Country pillars.

Actions

- If, due to funding constraints, the project has to be staged, advocate strongly for the development of the corridor from Glen Innes to Glencoe as the first stage, with Stage 2 being Glencoe to Ben Lomond.
- Although not part of the current proposal, consideration should be given to extending the rail trail north to Deepwater. Deepwater has sufficient businesses to anchor the trail. Extending the trail to the north would encourage visitors to stay longer in the area and stimulate investment in Deepwater. The Deepwater section would include the State Heritage listed Yarraford Railway Bridge which is a copy of the St Germans Bridge in Cornwall (providing an additional attraction under the Heritage and Celtic Country pillars).
- Position and promote Stonehenge Reserve (and Beardy River Bridge) and Glencoe as attractions, service centres and activity nodes along the route.
- Position Glen Innes as the northern trail head – with cycling tracks linking the railway station to the town centre and attractions (eg Super Strawberry, Glen Innes Parklands corridor, Centennial Parklands, Big Blade, and in the future to Eerindii Ponds). Spring and autumn routes in and around town (to see the blossoms and the autumn leaves) could also be promoted. Glen Innes could also be positioned as a hub for gravel grinding (see Section 11.6).

10.1.5 Eerindii Ponds – Beardy Waters Weir Precinct

The Eerindii Ponds project is in the 'ideas' stage. GISC owns and operates the Glen Innes Aggregate Quarry on the corner of the Gwydir Highway and Shannon Vale Road, adjacent to Centennial Parklands. The site has two large quarry pits, one of which is being used to store water for Glen Innes and the other being actively quarried. One of the pits has been stocked with native fish with the view to it becoming a tourist attraction in the future. GISC also owns an adjoining property which has frontage to Shannon Vale Road and extends from the Quarry to the Beardy Waters Dam. Currently, there is no public access to Beardy Waters Dam. The upper reach of the Dam is a 'hot spot' for water birds, with birdwatchers currently only able to view the area from Shannon Vale Road.

GISC is in the process of determining the future direction for quarrying in the area and is starting to explore options for the use of existing quarry area (Eerindii Ponds) when resources are exhausted. One of the options is for GISC to purchase additional land, including land with frontage to the Beardy Waters Dam. Preliminary ideas include parklands, access for fishing, walking and cycle trails, access for canoes and kayaks, mountain bike tracks and possibly accommodation (eg a holiday park, glamping, eco lodges, bubble tents).

The Precinct lies between Centennial Parklands and the Beardy Woodlands. Depending on the land acquired by GISC, these two precincts could be linked with a network of trails. This, plus the access to the Ponds and Beardy Water Dam would potentially be a 'game changer' for Glen Innes. It would also significantly value-add to the NE Rail Trail, providing additional cycling / mountain biking and/or walking opportunities and possibly accommodation – and potentially generating multi-night stays in the area.

Actions

Develop the Eerindii Ponds – Beardy Waters precinct as an iconic attraction, activity and accommodation precinct for Glen Innes, with the precinct linked to Centennial Parklands and Beardy Waters, with a cycleway link to the proposed NE Rail Trail. Once GISC has determined the land to be secured, the first step should be to prepare a concept plan and business case assessment for the precinct (from the Quarry through to the Weir, with consideration given to including walking trails, X-country and downhill mountain bike trails, a MTB pump track, lookout, jetty / canoe launcher and accommodation).

In the short term, provide a small parking area / lay bay on Shannon Vale Road at the Beardy Waters crossing and a viewing platform, board walk and/or bird hides.

10.2 Enhance and Strengthen Existing Attractions

There are opportunities to enhance and strengthen several of the GIH existing attractions.

10.2.1 Glen Innes Parklands

The parklands along the Rocky Ponds Creek corridor are one of the main features of Glen Innes. The parklands include Lions Park rest area on the Gwydir Highway, Anzac Park and King Edward Park. The main attractions are the mature trees which provide a green, shady oasis in summer and a stunning display of colour in Autumn, the Anzac Park War Memorial Walk, the historic rotunda and the walking tracks. Facilities include picnic tables, two small playgrounds, amenities and a caravan dump point.

GISC has a proposal to construct the Rocky Ponds Creek wetlands (water feature with walking and cycling tracks) at the northern end of the parklands in the area bounded by Herbert, Grafton and Gray Streets and West Avenue.

Actions

- Position the Parklands as the focal point for the Autumn colours, with the Park enhanced through temporary art installations and potentially a music and/or family event to celebrate the colours.
- Develop the Rocky Creek Pond Wetlands as a new attraction for the town.

10.2.2 Land of Beardies History House Museum and Research Centre

The Museum is one of Glen Innes's main attractions. Housed in the historic former Glen Innes Hospital, the Museum showcases the history of the Glen Innes district, with displays spread over 26 rooms plus an outdoor machinery shed. It also has a Research Centre which provides access to the Museum's collection for research purposes as well as family history research. The Museum attracts around 4,000 to 5,000 visitors per year, with visitors including school students, coach tour groups, and people researching their family history. The Museum hosts a range of events and activities and supports other local events by providing exhibitions and complementary activities. The Museum was established in 1970 and has been operating continuously for 50 years. While each room is 'themed' the displays are largely static with written interpretation.

While local history museums play a significant role in recording and conserving local history, as tourist attractions they often struggle. Nearly every town has a local history museum, with many of the items on display (eg household appliances, farm machinery) being similar. Unless the Museum offers something unique, a visitor has a connection with the area and/or is a history enthusiast, the propensity to visit is low.

Building visitation is dependent in part on having a very strong point of difference. Visitors are also increasingly interested in 'hearing the stories' rather than reading facts and information, with digital technology being increasingly used for 'story telling'. The Historical Society is exploring options to introduce more 'story telling'. It is also wanting to hold more events and activities on site, and improve the Machinery Shed exhibit. The Museum is also exploring opportunities to work with the proposed Glen Innes Powerhouse Museum.

Actions

- Endeavour to find a strong point of difference that will have broad market appeal. Being located in a former hospital building and already having in place a hospital – medical – dental exhibit, could be a potential option.
- Increase the focus on 'story-telling' utilising digital technology were suitable.
- Explore opportunities for 'selfie' photographs – to raise the profile of the Museum on social media.
- Support the Historical Society in sourcing funding to:
 - Improve the machinery shed and display.
 - Increase the number of events held at the Museum. Ghost / paranormal tours have been suggested as an opportunity.
 - Introduce digital technology (eg virtual reality) to bring displays to 'life'.
 - Establish a heritage garden.
- Promote the Museum as a function and event venue.
- Work with the Museum and other local attractions to re-build the coach tour market once COVID 19 restrictions are relaxed.

10.2.3 Emmaville Mining Museum

The Emmaville Mining Museum is one of the key drivers of visitation to Emmaville. The Museum is open 6 days a week and attracts around 3,500 – 4,500 visitors per annum. The Museum houses several mineral collections with over 4,000 specimens on display. It also has an extensive collection of historic photographs and exhibits relating to the history of the village and the mining, as well a war memorial with a collection of war memorabilia. Outside is the old general store, blacksmith's shop, historic bakery, a machinery shed with historic mining equipment and a large (1,500+) bottle collection. The Museum also has a small shop primarily selling minerals and rocks. The Museum is operated by volunteers as a 355 Committee of Council. Most of the volunteers are retirees and finding the next generation of volunteers is becoming an issue.

From a visitor perspective, the external presentation of the Museum does not inspire confidence. There is no indication in the shop front presentation, window displays and signage, about the type of exhibits on display. The signage (which is starting to fade) promotes the Museum as 'displaying nature's beauty and history', rather than highlighting what the Museum has to offer. There is also potential to enhance some of the exhibits, particularly the mining equipment shed, and improve the presentation of the front windows and the entry – shop area.

The re-activation of tin mining in the Emmaville area provides the opportunity to introduce a new exhibit that tells the contemporary story of tin mining – the latest chapter in Emmaville's history.

Actions

An immediate initiative to build visitation to the Museum would be to promote the Museum in conjunction with the historic Ottery Mine. Combining the two attractions would 'strengthen' the reason to visit Emmaville, with the Mine being the only one in Australia and one of a few remaining world-wide. Identifying gem and mineral fossicking sites in close proximity to Emmaville would also strengthen the village as a destination.

Improving the external signage and presentation of the Museum would encourage visitation. Consideration should also be given to providing a display in the front yard (eg a piece of mining equipment, sculpture etc) and/or using the side walls of the building for a mural, reproduction of signs of 'yester-year' or an art installation. Revamping the window displays, and entry and shop would also assist in building both visitation and merchandise sales.

In addition, GISC could look to assist the Museum committee to:

- Update their Strategic Plan and formulate a Collection Policy, Business Plan and Succession Strategy.
- Explore options for assistance / sponsorship from the Taronga Tin Mine project.
- Seek funding to:
 - Bring in a professional curator to work with the Museum to enhance their exhibits.
 - Record the knowledge and oral histories of the volunteers and other Emmaville residents and integrate this information into the Museum.
 - Introduce digital technology, including virtual or augmented reality technology, to tell the tin mining story, both past and present – recreating Tent Hill, the Ottery Mine, Chinese vegetable gardens and the village centre and including the Taronga Tin Mine if it proceeds.

10.2.4 Emmaville Court House Museum

Emmaville's historic courthouse has been restored and is used for a small Museum. The Museum has two rooms, both set-up to depict a court in session as well as an extensive collection of mining and court records. Outside is a large picnic shelter and amenities. The Museum is open by appointment.

Actions

Explore options for:

- Establishing a Chinese tribute garden.
- Story-telling – bringing some of the cases heard in the Court House 'alive' through collaboration with local arts groups and/or the use of digital technology.

10.2.5 Glen Innes Art Gallery

The Glen Innes Art Gallery is a small gallery located adjacent to the Glen Innes Library, approximately half a block south of the town centre. The Gallery space is owned by GISC and operated by volunteers from Glen Innes Art Gallery Incorporated (GIAGI), a not-for-profit organisation. GIAGA organise exhibitions to showcase and sell works from local artists and artisans, host small travelling exhibitions, run workshops and activities and organise the Glen Innes Archies.

The Gallery is open Monday to Friday and Saturday mornings. It attracts around 1,500 – 2,000 visitors per year, most of whom are local.

The low level of visitation is due in part to the Gallery's location and its very low visibility from Gray Street. In addition, GIAGA is limited in what they can offer by their dependence on volunteers, the small size of the gallery, and lack of workshop, back-of-house and storage space. There are ongoing discussions about the future of the gallery – whether to extend the space or relocate to another premise, possibly the Town Hall.

Glen Innes has an emerging creative arts scene, with the Gallery having a role to play as both a visitor attraction and as a sales outlet for local artists and artisans. There is also the potential for the Gallery to support local events by hosting exhibitions and/or activities that complement and value-add to the event.

Actions

- The immediate priority is to increase the visibility of the Gallery, possibly using 'feather' or 'tear-drop' style flags that can be put out on the footpath when the Gallery is open.
- The future of the Gallery (expand or relocate) needs to be determined and planning (including a Business Case Assessment) undertaken to enable GISC and/or the Gallery to take advantage of funding opportunities.

10.2.6 The Alder Grove – Celtic Art Gallery

The Alder Grove is a relatively new attraction in Glen Innes. The Gallery offers a range of Celtic art, handmade artisan products and clothing. It is also home to a Coven, provides Tarot Card readings and hosts a range of Celtic workshops and activities. Although the Gallery has frontage to and signage on the New England Highway, the Gallery lacks visibility. This is due to a combination of factors including the front garden blocking views of the Gallery, the small size and muted colours of the signage and the signage for the Super Strawberry which draws the traveller's attention.

Opportunities

To theme and landscape the front garden to include Celtic art and increase the visibility of the Gallery. There may also be opportunity to establish a garden incorporating plants from 'The Book of Shadows'. Consideration should also be given to increasing the visibility of the signage and providing signage that is highly visible from the Super Strawberry parking area to encourage visitation from Super Strawberry patrons.

10.2.7 The Glen Gowrie Distillery

Glen Gowrie Distillery is located within a few minutes' drive of Glen Innes. The Distillery has an attractive rural setting with mature homestead gardens and an old farmshed with a lot of character. The Distillery produces hand-crafted gins and liqueurs which are sold on site, at markets and through various boutique providers and liquor outlets within the New England region.

Opportunities

There is opportunity to re-purpose the farmshed as a tasting room, eatery and/or small function space. The property is also ideal for outdoor functions and events and potentially workshops and may also be suitable for boutique accommodation. The farmshed proposal would benefit from 'in principle support' to enable the operator to apply for grants. The Glen Innes VIC regularly receives enquiries from visitors wanting to see Highland cattle and this could be an ideal location for a small herd.



10.3 Product Development

10.3.1 Celtic Country Experiences

Glen Innes Highlands is home to the Australian Standing Stones and the Australian Celtic Festival. In the past, the GIH was promoted as 'Celtic Country' reflecting both the Celtic heritage of the early pastoralists and miners who settled the area, and the Standing Stones. Celtic Country is now one of the GIH product pillars. The Celtic product available includes:

- The Australian Standing Stones and Crofters Cottage
- Celtic events – the Australian Celtic Festival and various small events including flag raisings and solstice celebrations.
- Glen Innes Highlands Tours – which includes a kilted – Celtic heritage tour
- Alder Grove Gallery which specialises in Celtic art and offers workshops and tarot card reading
- Celtic heritage exhibits at the Land of Beardies Museum
- Glen Innes Tartan
- Events hosted by the Caledonian Society of Glen Innes including the St Andrews Dinner and Ceilidh and the Burns Supper.

Stonehenge Reserve, the Glen Gowrie Distillery, 2 Wild Souls Meadery³¹ and the Red Lion Tavern at Glencoe also have Celtic 'overtones'.

The Australian Standing Stones is a high profile attraction with most first-time visitors to Glen Innes visiting the site. It is however less than an hour experience and unlikely to generate significant repeat visitation. Implementation of the Centennial Parklands Master Plan (see Section 10.1.1) will enhance the experience and enable more events to be held in the area. Depending on the tenant and use, Crofters Cottage could also enhance the experience and encourage repeat visitation.

Glen Innes is currently lacking Celtic food and beverage experiences. 'Themed' food and beverage is one of the keys to success in heritage towns that feature their ethnic ancestry – eg Handorf in South Australia.

Opportunities

Possible opportunities to diversify and strengthen the Celtic Country theme include:

- Introduce Celtic Mythology / Gods (eg Ana or Danu/Dana – The Primordial Goddess of Nature), Celtic games (similar in concept to the big chess games), a themed playground for children (Masterplan); a fairy grotto and/or dragons lair for children within Centennial Parklands (see Section 9.1.1).
- Continue to develop Celtic themed events, growing the existing events and introducing new events. There may be potential to develop a Celtic dance festival around May Day (maypole dancing); introduce a 'Battle of the Pipe Bands'; organise Celtic Games (Stonehenge Reserve would be an ideal location); host a Celtic film festival, working with the

³¹ While the Meadery is located at Torrington in Tenterfield Shire, it is promoted as part of the attraction base of GIH.

Scottish and Irish Film Festival organisers to bring the best films to Australia; stream the Edinburgh Tattoo live on a big screen at the Stones; organise a family / children's festival around the Celtic fairies etc.

- Develop a small arboretum at Beardy Woodlands featuring Celtic trees.
- Explore with Glen Innes Golf Club the opportunity to replicate one or more famous Scottish and/or Irish golf holes – for example the 'Road Hole' (17th hole) from St Andrews golf course in Scotland, the 'Postage Stamp' hole (8th hole) at Royal Troon Golf Course in Preswick, Scotland.
- Encourage the establishment of a whiskey distillery.
- Establish a Celtic food trail – working with local provedores, butcheries and eateries to include one or more Celtic products in their product range / menu.
- To encourage a farming property located close to Glen Innes (with public road frontage) to stock Highland cattle.

10.3.2 Agri-Tourism: Attractions and Experiences

Agri-tourism is becoming a 'driver' of visitation. Visitors are increasingly looking to for 'country' holidays – to stay on rural properties, explore farming life, visit farm gates outlets, pick fruit, visit farmers markets and sample artisan food and beverage.

Glen Innes Highlands has a nucleus of agri-tourism products and experiences including:

- Farm stay properties
- The Super Strawberry
- Koala Black Garlic
- Beverage producers – Deepwater Brewery, Glen Gowrie Distillery, 2 Wild Souls Meadery
- Free Range egg producer and retail outlet
- Butcheries – Bruce Family, Campbells and Hooper Country Meats.
- Sage and Clover Organic Groceries
- Honey – there are around 30 honey producers based in the GIH.
- Local bakeries – Glen Innes and Deepwater
- Furry Cow (gelato)
- The Local – showcase local produce
- Glen Innes Saturday Cottage Markets
- Alpaca farms close to town (view alpacas from the public road)
- Gourmet Fiesta



GISC is developing an Agricultural Innovation Plan to strengthen and diversify the agricultural sector. The Plan recommends supporting farmers to connect and integrate tourism where appropriate and encouraging the development of a range of agri-tourism activities including a Farm Gate Trail, seasonal food events and encouraging eateries to showcase and use local produce.

Actions

- To support and encourage the development of appropriate agri-tourism accommodation, attractions, activities and events. In addition to accommodation and food and beverage-based experiences, attractions and activities could include outdoor, nature and adventure-based activities, farm tours, creative and activity-based workshops and retreats.

- Showcase agricultural activities and products through the Glen Innes VIC, other appropriate outlets and at events.
- Explore opportunities to bring specialist agricultural tours to the GIH.
- Assess the potential to promote self-guided seasonal drives – eg to view alpacas, nut plantations, garlic, lavender, canola and other crops and activities.
- Highland Cattle: Visitors to the GIH frequently ask where they can see Highland Cows and there may be opportunity for a rural property close to town to stock a small herd.

10.3.3 Industry-based Tourism

Visitors are interested in local industries and activities. There may be opportunities to showcase local industries through a mix of tours, viewing areas with interpretation and digital technology. Potential industries include:

- Renewable energy sector: capitalising on having the largest windfarm in NSW and the co-location of wind and solar farms. Attractions include the White Rock Wind Farm viewing area and the Big Blade, with the potential to provide both interpretation and photo opportunities at these attractions. There may also be potential to include a digital display on renewable energy production at the proposed Powerhouse Museum with this sponsored by the renewable energy producers.
- Tin mining: GIH has the largest tin deposit in the world as well as rich tin mining heritage. If the Taronga Mine proceeds there may be opportunity to showcase the mine possibly through the occasional open-day, pre-booked tours for groups and/or via virtual reality at the Emmaville Mining Museum.
- Sapphire Mining: telling the story of the history of gem mining in the GIH and using digital technology to show contemporary commercial mining operations.

Action

- Assess the potential to showcase local industries and develop industry-based tourism attractions and activities.



10.3.4 Ngoorabul Country

The Ngoorabul people are the traditional custodians of the Glen Innes Highlands area. Ngoorabul Country has been identified as product pillar with GISC looking to support tourism initiatives from the Ngoorabul community.

The Glen Innes Local Aboriginal Land Council owns The Willows and Boobaree properties on the Severn River, and in the past visitors have been able, with the permission of the LALC, to camp on the property. There is also the Cooramah Aboriginal Cultural Centre which is currently closed.

Actions

- Encourage and support the Glen Innes LALC to realise the tourism potential of its assets and the Aboriginal community to establish tourism businesses, activities and events. Destination NSW and the NSW Aboriginal Tourism Operators Council (NATOC) will provide advice and support for people / organisations interested in establishing a tourism business. There are also on-line resources and TAFE courses available. Arts North West has programs in place to encourage and support Aboriginal artists and artisans.
- Leverage opportunities arising from the First Nations Festival which is being held in Glen Innes in 2021.

10.3.5 Arts and Culture

From a tourism perspective, growing and leveraging the creative sector can play a significant role in growing the visitor economy, contributing by building the identity and profile of the area; providing attractions, activities and events that attract visitation; value-adding to other sectors and activities; stimulating business investment and attracting grant funding. It can also contribute to population retention and growth.

Glen Innes Highlands has an emerging arts scene, with Glen Innes starting to take on a creative persona. Activities include:

- Chapel Theatre – film and live performances
- Galleries – Glen Innes Art Gallery, the Makers Shed, Gawura Gallery, Made in Glen, Colours on Gray, the Alder Grove, the Knick Knackery, The Sunflower Patch. Most of the galleries host workshops.
- Arts Groups; GI Arts Society, GI Pottery Club, GI Choir, Quilters and Craft Inc.
- Markets in the Highlands
- Events: High Country Writers festival, GlenRock, GlenFest, Festival of the Wind, Light the Park.

Australians are turning to the arts when they are exploring new places and seeking out authentic experiences of the many and varied parts of the country. The stories and perspectives brought to life through the arts provide unique conduits for visitors to understand the place they are visiting, its people, landscape and history.

Australia Council for the Arts 2020, Domestic Arts Tourism; Connecting the Country

Actions

- Work collaboratively with and leverage opportunities provided by Arts North West and surrounding LGAs to build arts-creative based tourism.
- Incorporate a strong arts-focus in place-making throughout the GIH, with this to include temporary and permanent art installations that reinforce key assets and themes.
- Explore the potential of developing a community arts centre incorporating gallery and outdoor exhibition space and workshops.
- Assess the potential for a local art trail. This could include an 'open studio' trail / event.
- Build the arts workshops and activity markets – by encouraging and supporting local groups / organisers / artists to grow their programs; packaging and promoting accommodation properties and venues suitable for artistic (and lifestyle) workshops to arts groups and workshop organisers inviting them to include workshops in the GIH in their programs; working with the arts community to secure grant funding to run workshops and activities; leveraging opportunities through Arts North West and other regional arts organisations; and run workshops and activities as value-added products for events and other activities in the GIH.

- Develop the music and live entertainment scene including promoting the outdoor venues (eg GI Showground, GI and Deepwater Racecourses and Stonehenge) to commercial tour promoters as venues for large events.
- As part of building the GIH profile, leverage opportunities to promote and generate media coverage of local artists, artisans, events and activities.
- Continue to develop and promote arts-based events.

10.3.6 Glen Innes Regional Powerhouse Museum

There is a proposal to convert the historic Glen Innes Power Station into a regional Powerhouse Museum. The building is located in Fitzhardinge Lane in the Glen Innes Town Centre, less than 100 metres from the Visitor Information Centre. Strategically, the location would strengthen the link between the VIC and town centre, with visitors encouraged to leave their vehicles at the VIC and explore both the Museum and town centre.

The Museum will feature two antique Crossley stationary engines plus other machinery and have a workshop for repairing historical engines and machinery. The antique engines are operational, with the proponents proposing to hold regular working machinery days. The New England Traction Club and History House Museum also have working machinery and other exhibits that can be loaned to the Museum. The Museum will also be looking for support and potentially exhibits from the NSW Powerhouse Museum with the proposal being to operate as a regional arm of the NSW Powerhouse Museum.

With Glen Innes becoming a major renewable energy hub, there may be opportunity for the Museum to seek funding from the wind and solar farm operators to include a renewable energy display. The Museum grounds and surrounding GISC parking areas may be suitable for machinery related events (eg Swap Meets, working engine days).

Actions

- Secure approval in principle / enter into an MOU, to lease the site from Essential Energy for a nominal rent.
- Complete the project planning and feasibility studies and (if feasible) prepare a business case assessment as the basis for seeking grant funding.
- Build relationships with key organisations including the NSW Powerhouse Museum and heritage machinery groups and other historic machinery users (eg Nundle Woollen Mill) in the NE-NW region.
- Explore the potential to include a renewable energy display, sponsored by the wind and solar farm operators.





10.3.7 State Forests

The State Forests in NSW are managed by the Forest Corporation of NSW. Recreation and tourism are designated uses of State Forests, with the Corporation having a Recreation and Tourism Policy that encourages public access to the forests. State Forests cater for a wider range of recreational activities than National Parks, with permissible activities including horse riding, registered trail bikes and 4WD vehicles, single trail mountain biking, hunting, fossicking and foraging. Dogs and horses are permitted in State Forests. Fossicking is also permitted in many State Forests (permit required). Forestry Corporation is receptive to allowing the Forest estate to be used for a diverse range of events and is willing to enter into partnerships and other arrangements with Councils, community groups, commercial operators and other organisations to develop attractions, facilities and infrastructure and to host events.

There are nine State forests in GIH plus the Torrington State Forest just north of the GIH in Tenterfield LGA. Several of the forests are subject to grazing leases and/or have no public access. Some of the forest areas were also badly damaged by the 2019-20 bushfires and are closed to the public.

Forests that may have tourism and recreational potential are:

- Butterleaf
- The forests along the Gwydir Highway corridor – Moogem, Mount Mitchell, Glen Elgin
- Brother
- Gibraltar Range
- Oakwood

The Mount Mitchell Forest has both softwood (pine) and hardwood compartments, with the remainder of the forests being native hardwood. The pine forest areas may be suitable for foraging, including harvesting mushrooms³². The

³² Note: Foraging by individuals is permitted, however Forest Corporation is currently not issuing permits for commercial foraging nor for foraging tours and events.

recent fires have exposed large granite formations in the Mount Mitchell State Forest, adjacent to the Old Grafton Road, approximately 2 kilometres south of the Gwydir Highway intersection. This area could be ideal for a forest walk.

Actions

- In developing nature and adventure-based products and experiences (eg 4WD, registered trail bikes, mountain biking, gravel grinding, camping, fossicking, horse riding, bushwalking, birdwatching etc), work with the Forestry Corporation to identify and assess localities that are suitable for these activities and include them in information and promotional collateral.
- Investigate opportunities to host events within the State Forests and promote suitable areas to event organisers.
- Explore the potential for a Forest Walk around the granite formations in the Mount Mitchell State Forest and for foraging (including mushrooming) in the pine forests.



11. ADVENTURE COUNTRY: OUTDOOR, NATURE AND ADVENTURE

11.1 Overview

‘Chase Adventure’ is one of the invitations that the GIH extends to visitors, with activities promoted being:

- Hiking
- Fishing
- Fossicking
- Canoeing and kayaking (paddling)
- Mountain biking
- Trail Running
- Motorcycling
- Bird watching
- Golf

Other outdoor and adventure-based activities undertaken in the GIH include:

- Four-wheel driving
- Horse riding
- Rock sports

The local road network is also be ideal for cycling and gravel grinding.



While there has been good promotional material developed around these activities, for ‘enthusiasts’ the GIH is ‘over promising and under-delivering’, with the product lacking depth. The GIH has a plethora of assets that could be developed into products and experiences.

The most successful outdoor / adventure-based destinations have one or more iconic / signature attractions that act as the anchor – creating awareness of the destination and motivating people to visit. These attractions are then under-pinned by a raft of second-tier options, with these options generate longer lengths of stay and encouraging repeat visitation. Product development in the GIH needs to focus on developing the second tier of attractions and experiences for most of the activities being promoted.

In developing and promoting activities, consideration also needs to be given to how visitors can be dispersed throughout the GIH (eg encouraging them to move between Washpool – Gibraltar Range National Parks in the east and the Torrington SCA and Kings Plains in the west, channelling them through Glen Innes and Emmaville) and also in offering products and experiences close to Glen Innes. The type of visitors also needs to be taken into consideration, with families and retirees often looking for places to walk, cycle and paddle that are easy and safe and in easy reach of the town.



11.2 Walking / Bushwalking / Hiking

Overview

Bushwalking is a popular activity within the GIH, with the GIH attracting visitors who come specifically to hike and those who undertake a bushwalk in conjunction with other activities (eg 4WD, camping, sight-seeing). Bushwalking occurs primarily on walks in the Washpool and Gibraltar Ranges National Parks and the Torrington SCA. The World Heritage Walk (45km) links the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks and showcases the World Heritage listed rainforest as well as granite country ecosystems.

Assets to work with

- Designated bush walks in the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks and Torrington SCA and the nearby Kings Plains National Park. The day walks range in length from around 900 metres to 8.5 kilometres, with most of the walks rated as easy to moderate (Grade 3-4).
- Fire trails in the smaller National Parks and State Forests. While these are not promoted, they attract use from bushwalking groups primarily from the surrounding region.
- Short walks at the Beardy Woodlands and Stonehenge Reserve.
- Several farm stay / rural retreats with riverside walking trails.

The proposed New England Rail Trail and the proposed Skywalk and extension of the walking track network in the Centennial Parklands and the proposed Rocky Ponds Creek wetlands project will provide additional assets.

Actions

The focus should be on raising the profile of the GIH as a destination for walking, bushwalking and hiking.

- Position and promote the Gibraltar – Washpool World Heritage Walk as a signature walk for both the GIH and the New England Region. Approach DNSW to include this walk in their collection of 'Great Hikes and Walks' in NSW. Also include a link to this walk on the GIH website.
- Expand the information on hiking on the Glen Innes Highlands website. In the introduction also mention the Torrington SCA and Kings Plains National Park, as well as short walks around Glen Innes. In the list of bushwalks, list under the name of the Park / SCA. Also include a link to the World Heritage Walk and a section on short walks around Glen Innes – Beardy Woodlands and Stonehenge.
- Explore with NPWS opportunities to list the Torrington SCA and Kings Plains National Parks on the signage in Washpool and Gibraltar Range, and vis versa in Torrington and Kings Plains – the objective being to encourage repeat visitation to walk in the other localities and to draw visitors across the GIH.
- Promote rural and bushland retreats that include bushwalking as part of their product and activity base.
- Explore ways to capture and harness bushwalking-related user generated content.
- Continue to expand the product base:
 - Explore with Forestry Corporation opportunities to develop / promote walks in the State Forest – including developing a 'granite country walk' in the Mount Mitchell State Forest (see Section 10.3.7).
 - Explore with NPWS and possibly Forestry Corporation, opportunities for inclusive access to one or more walks.

11.3 Fishing

Recreational fishing is a popular sport. In the New England Region, with the Glen Innes Highlands well-known for Murray Cod, trout and perch. Glen Innes Highlands offers a multitude of places to fish as well as accommodation properties that have river frontage and specialise in fishing. There are also a range of properties that are ideal for fishing clubs and social groups, including the Tattersalls Hotel in Emmaville which has a collection of Murray Cod memorabilia. The Glen Innes VIC has a fishing map and guide. There are also several video clips on You Tube, including one by Outside Edge Adventures sponsored by GISC.

Assets to work with

- The GIH has a multitude of places to fish, including the Severn, Beady Waters, Deepwater and Mann Rivers and their headwater tributaries and the nearby Pindari Dam in Inverell Shire.
- Rural retreat properties that have river access and advertise fishing as one of the activities offered – River Glen (also provides fishing tours), Bullock Mountain Homestead, Three Waters, Bens Fall Retreat (river + dams), Deepwater Station, Waterloo Station, Monster Murray Cod Retreat, Kookaburra Camp, Oakhurst Cottage and Gimardi Gatehouse (fish in dam) plus two properties near Ben Lomond (Uncle Billy's Retreat and Dunmore Trout Waters).
- The Tattersalls Hotel in Emmaville – a collection of Murray Cod memorabilia, with the pubs in Emmaville being ideal for fishing groups.
- Several outlets in Glen Innes and Deepwater selling fishing licenses, tackle and bait.

GISC has also stocked on of the ponds at its aggregate quarry with fingerlings, with the potential to open this area for fishing and/or fishing tournaments, in the future.

Actions

- The fishing market can be grown through increased marketing and promotion.
 - Use the start and end of each fishing season to generate publicity for fishing in the GIH.
 - Develop fishing – accommodation packages and direct market these to fishing clubs.
 - Work with DNSW to generate PR coverage and to bring fishing journalists and bloggers to the area.
 - Harness user generated content, particularly some of the You Tube videos of fishing in the area (eg the Outside Edge Adventure and IFish clips), to increase awareness of fishing in the area.
- Host an annual fishing tournament.
- Explore with the local fishing clubs and/or fishing enthusiasts, the possibility of establishing a fishing tour operation as a micro business.
- Invite specialist fishing guides (eg. Australian Inland Fishing Charters who bring groups to Copeton and Pindari Dams) to bring tours to the GIH.
- Invite businesses that run fly fishing clinics (eg Aussie Fly Fisher) to run courses in the GIH area.
- Explore with NSW Fisheries, opportunities to run school holiday fishing programs for children in the GIH, targeted to the regional market.

With the increasing use of fishing canoes, there is a need to improve river access points.

11.4 Fossicking

Glen Innes is known as the home of the Reddestone Sapphire and, for more than 50 years, fossicking has been marketed as one of the attractions of the area. Fossicking is an activity that has a relatively low entry cost and is suitable for people of all ages and levels of physical ability. Fossicking is popular with a range of market segments, including the touring (retiree) and family markets. It is an activity that is highly 'saleable' to the regional market – escape to the GIH for the weekend, stay in the bush and spend quality, interactive time outdoors with the family. Fossicking provides a reason to visit the GIH and encourages travellers to stay longer and to return to the area.

The GIH attracts both ‘beginners’ – visitors wanting to try fossicking and experienced fossickers. Sapphire / gemstone fossicking sites have been identified and promoted through the fossicking guide. The public sites are located at river crossing points. These areas are not signposted nor maintained and there are no guidelines / instructions on how to fossick.

The GIH is also rich in rocks, minerals and fossils, particularly around the Emmaville area. Rock, mineral and fossil ‘hunting’ should be promoted as a complementary experience to gemstone fossicking. This requires less patience than fossicking and no equipment and is a fun-based activity for children.

Assets to work with

- Gemstones and minerals: The GIH is located at the north eastern end of the Peel Fault³³ with area around Glen Innes recognised as one of the most productive gemstones fields in Australia. In addition to sapphires, there is a multitude of other gemstones, rocks and minerals that can be found, including tin and gold. The GIH has one of the largest and richest tin deposits in the world.
- Part of Fossickers Way: The branding of the route raises the profile and awareness of fossicking with travellers often wanting to ‘try’. Fossickers Way follows the Peel Fault, and many fossickers experiencing the thrill of a ‘find’. This in-turn creates user generated ‘word of mouth’ and on-line publicity.
- Variety of public and commercial fossicking sites: Tuition is available at Bullock Mountain, and the Fossickers and Glen Rest Caravan Parks in Glen Innes. Visitors can also stay at Bullock Mountain (camping and homestead accommodation), Torrington SCA (camping), Three Waters (camping) and Aroona Glen (camping) and fossick. Fossicking is permissible in State Forests with fossickers needing to purchase an annual permit.
- Supporting experiences: Including the Emmaville Mining Museum, Ottery Mine, Reddestone Sapphires, Aussie Sapphire Lapidary Warehouse, Griffs Crystal Emporium and GemHunter’s Haven.
- Fossicking events: Minerama in Glen Innes and Gemorama in Emmaville.

Actions

Continue to improve fossicking product and experiences:

- Improve the presentation of the public fossicking areas – signage, slashing / weed control, safe parking and signage.
- Promote ‘rock, mineral and fossil hunting’ as a complementary experience to fossicking. This requires no equipment and less patience and is a fun-based activity for children.
- Identify and promote fossicking and rock / mineral / fossil hunting sites in the Emmaville area and include in the fossicking brochure (or a separate Emmaville brochure). Also include the Emmaville Gemorama Festival.
- Identify and promote areas suitable for the use of metal detectors.
- Continue to work with the Fossickers Way marketing group to improve the information and promotional collateral. Include information on how and where to fossick on the Fossickers Way website and consider developing an App that provides instructions on how to fossick as well as a guide to identifying rocks, gemstones, minerals etc.
- Capitalise on opportunities to gain free publicity for fossicking – for example, features / listings in regional school holiday activity promotions, contributing to fossicking forums and blogs, coverage on travelling with children websites etc. Ensure that the dates for Minerama and Gemorama are submitted to the Australian Gem and Mineral Calendar website.

³³ The Peel Fault is the largest serpentine fault in the world, the combination of faulting and volcanic activity has resulted in a diversity of rocks, minerals, precious metals and gemstones.

- Explore with the Forestry Corporation of NSW potential fossicking locations within the State Forests that are suitable for experienced fossickers.
- Investigate commercial opportunities for value-add – for example fossicking tours, jewellery making (eg Makers Shed) and lapidary workshops, and small, boutique gem and mineral shows.

11.5 Paddling – Canoeing and Kayaking

Overview

Over the past two decades, paddling has been the 7th fastest growth sport in Australia³⁴. Growth is attributable to a combination of factors including entry level craft being highly affordable; an abundance of places to paddle; paddling can be enjoyed by all age groups; paddling delivers significant health benefits (low impact cardio and strength workout) and it is physically and mentally stimulating. Most of the growth in paddling has been driven by Gen X and Baby Boomers taking up recreational paddling. In 2019/20, 66.9% of paddlers were aged 45+ years³⁵. Road trippers (including families and the touring caravan and RV markets) are increasingly travelling with canoes / kayaks. There has also been strong growth in canoe hire outlets and canoe / kayaking tour operators. The GIH is seeing an increasing number of visitors arriving in the GIH with canoes and looking for places to paddle.

While canoeing and kayaking is promoted as one of the Highland's adventure country attractions. Only four sites are publicized – Nymbodia River to the east of the GIH, Beady Woodlands, Beady Waters Dam and Deepwater Station. There is no information at Beady Woodland advising on where to launch canoes, nor easy access to the riverbank, and Beady Waters Dam is fenced with no apparent access point.

The Severn River is the only waterway in the GIH listed on the NSW Waterways Guide, however there is no content (river notes and images) available.

Assets to work with

- Waterholes along the river systems, including Little Dandahra Creek adjacent to Mulligans Campground in the Gibraltar Range National Park. Other than under high flow conditions these waterholes are suitable for recreational paddling. Some of the rivers (eg Mann River) would be suitable for white water paddling (experienced paddlers) under high flow conditions.
- Accommodation properties with river access suitable for canoes including Bullock Mountain, River Glen and Deepwater Station.
- Waterbodies in adjoining LGAs that are readily accessible from the GIH – Pindari Dam, Nymbodia River, Little Llangothlin.

Actions

- Identify and assess locations suitable for paddling. The assessment should include the characteristics of the river / water hole under different flow conditions; access points including ease of vehicle access and parking available as well as access to the riverbank for launching and retrieving craft; and degree of difficulty (beginners, intermediate, experienced). Most of the visitors arriving in the GIH with canoes are likely to be beginners, looking for safe places to explore.
- Explore options for providing access to Beady Waters Dam for paddling. This would require a lay-bay / small parking area on Shannon Vale Road and a place to launch and retrieve canoes – a site hardened area or small jetty, canoe launcher or pontoon.

³⁴ AusPlay Participation Trends in Australian Sport 2001 - 2020

³⁵ AusPlay Participation Trends in Australian Sport 2001 - 2020

- Identify a safe place to launch canoes at Beardy Woodlands, improve access if needed and provide appropriate signage.
- Produce information and promotional collateral (similar to the fishing brochure) and also approach Paddle NSW to input the information into the Paddle NSW / RMS Waterways Guide on-line directory.

11.6 Cycle Tourism – Mountain Biking, Gravel Grinding and Road Cycling

Cycle tourism is a strong and high growth, high yield niche market. In 2019 cycling was the 5th most popular participation sport in Australia and also one of the fastest growing sports³⁶. Broadly this market incorporates:

- Cycling enthusiasts who are motivated to travel to destinations primarily or solely because of the routes, trails and the riding experiences available.
- Event attendees – cyclists who travel to participate in or watch community and competitive cycling events.
- Cycling tours – independent, supported, and escorted.
- Recreational cyclists – visitors who will ride while visiting a destination, with cycling not the primary reason for their visit.

Research into cycle tourism has identified a diverse range of benefits for the host destination, including:

- Cycling enthusiasts have a higher propensity to travel to regional areas and generally stay longer.
- Cyclists have a higher level of repeat visitation and change the way they ‘experience’ the location – they may visit the area initially to attend an event, returning as part of a club organised ride, visit as part of an informal social group and/or visit with their families.
- Cyclists are a high yield market, spending across a range of sectors.
- Cyclists tend to travel frequently – day trips, short breaks and extended holidays.
- Cycle tourism creates opportunities for business investment: accommodation, eateries, bike hire, bike sales and maintenance, transfers, tours etc.
- Cyclists are an easy and cost-effective market to target.

Cycling can be broadly divided into road cycling (sealed road), gravel grinding (also called adventure riding incorporating a mix of sealed and gravel roads, fire trails and MTB tracks) and mountain biking.

The proposed New England Rail Trail will bring cyclists to Glen Innes. Keeping these cyclists in town for multiple days, will require additional cycling experiences. With the road network around Glen Innes, it is possible to develop a series of road cycling and gravel grinding loops as well as additional MTB trails.

Mountain Biking

Mountain biking is popular within the NE-NW Region and in Clarence Valley LGA to the east. Mountain bike parks are located in Tamworth and Inverell, with Walcha, Gunnedah, Armidale and Grafton having extensive trail networks. Tenterfield Shire has plans to develop mountain biking and is seeking funds to establish the ‘Angry Bull’ mountain bike trail network centred on Tenterfield.

Glen Innes Highlands promotes mountain biking (MTB) as one of its adventure country activities. The MTB product promoted is limited with the only rides promoted being the World Heritage Loop and several short rides in the Washpool – Gibraltar Range National Parks. There are no trail notes available and these rides are not listed on popular MTB websites such as Trailforks, Strava and Singletrack.

³⁶ SportAus (2019) AusPlay Participation Survey Top 20 participation sports and physical activities – Australia 2019

As mountain biking is permitted in all of the National Parks, SCAs, State Forests and Travelling Stock Reserves within the GIH there is opportunity to identify and promote a range of places to ride. There are also several farm stay properties which have terrain suitable for mountain biking.

Gravel Grinding

Gravel grinding is aligned to mountain biking. Gravel grinding is the newest and fastest growing cycling sector. It involves routes that incorporate sealed and unsealed local roads as well as fire trails and if accessible, mountain bike tracks. The unsealed local road network within the GIH is ideal for gravel grinding. None of the LGAs in the New England- North West Region promote gravel grinding nor have a gravel grinding event and/or gravel Audax. There is opportunity for the GIH to 'claim this space'.

Road Cycling

Road cyclists are looking for sealed, low traffic roads, with the preference being for loop routes varying from around 40 kilometres to 200 kilometres in length. The only fully sealed loops (Emmaville Rd – Wellington Vale Rd – New England Highway and Gwydir Highway – Bald Knob Road – New England Highway) incorporate highway sections which are not popular with cyclists. There are however several linear routes (including Pinkett, Red Range, Glen Leigh and Furracabad Roads) that radiate from Glen Innes that are scenically very attractive and suitable for road cycling.

The Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic passes through Glen Innes. This race (228 kilometres) is part of Cycling Australia's National Road Series and rated as Australia's toughest one day cycle race. The Race Promoter is exploring opportunities to introduce an additional shorter race between Glen Innes and Inverell as part the Classic event.

Actions

- The immediate focus should be on positioning the World Heritage loop as an iconic MTB ride for the New England region, with this promoted in conjunction with several shorter rides and loops in the National Parks, SCAs and State Forests that are within or readily accessible from the Washpool – Gibraltar Range National Parks. The objective is to encourage MTB enthusiasts to spend multiple days in the area. Maps and trail notes need to be prepared for each ride and the information uploaded to websites such as Trailforks, Singletrack and Strava. Once the information is in place, the GIH should approach DNSW to organise famils and publicity for the rides. Once this core information is in place, additional trails can be identified and added.
- Easy road and off-road rides close to Glen Innes are needed to tap into the touring caravan and RV visitors who are travelling with bikes. The possibility of riding in the Beardy Woodlands and Centennial Parks should be assessed. The trails at Stonehenge would be suitable for families with small children who are looking for a place to ride.
- There are several rural retreat properties that have terrain and trails that may be suitable for mountain biking. The potential for these properties needs to be investigated further. River Glen BnB has a motorcross track which can be ridden as an MTB pump track.
- As part of gearing up for the NE Rail Trail, it is recommended that a cycle tourism strategy be developed. The strategy would identify and evaluate road, gravel grinding and MTB opportunities in the GIH.

The process for developing road cycling and gravel grinding experiences would include:

- Identifying and accessing road cycling and gravel grinding routes – ranging from 10 to 200+ kilometres.
- Map the rotes and prepare route notes.
- Post the routes on cycling websites (eg bicyclensw; strava).
- Package and promote to cycling clubs within the surrounding region.
- Work with DNSW / DNCO to bring influential cycling journalists and bloggers to review the cycling experience.
- Approach Audax Australia and other organisations that organise long distance and charity rides to include the GIH in itineraries and/or bring events to the GIH.

- Explore opportunities to leverage the Grafton to Inverell Cycle Class, including supporting the introduction of a shorter race from Glen Innes to Inverell and possibly organising a community ‘fun ride’ around Glen Innes.

11.7 Trail Running

Trail running is a growth sport. It is permitted in the National Parks, SCAs and Forests within the GIH area. The Trail Running Association of Queensland (TRAQ) currently hosts an annual event – the Washpool World Heritage Trail Race in the Washpool – Gibraltar Range National Parks. The event is held over 2 days and includes 3 races, a short course for beginners and families (9km), a half marathon (26km) and an ultra-marathon (52km). The number of entries for this event is capped at 150, with the event generally booking out very quickly.

There are six trails in the Washpool – Gibraltar Range National Park which are listed on the AllTrails website for best trail running tracks in NSW.

Actions

This market can be grown by:

- Identifying trail running opportunities across the GIH and developing trail notes and promotional collateral.
- Posting the routes on key websites such as AllTrails and TrailForks.
- Inviting Trail Running Australia and trail clubs and associations to run events in the GIH.

Trails suitable for trail running are often suitable for multi-sports events such as Dirty Tri, TreX and Adventure Racing. Options for these activities should also be assessed, and if feasible, marketed to clubs, associations and commercial event promoters.

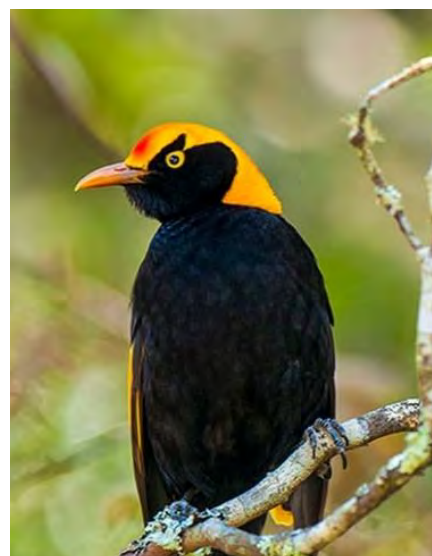
11.8 Birdwatching

Glen Innes Highlands has in place a bird-watching guide and a bird list for the area.

Actions

Further enhancing the bird watching experience and growing the birdwatching market can be achieved through:

- Providing a link to the Glenracc list of endangered and rare birds on the bird watching page of the GIH website.
- Improving access to the Beardy Waters Dam area adjacent to Shannon Vale Road – providing a safe place to park and possibly a walking track and bird hide.
- Establishing bird routes / birdwatching sites in the Emmaville area (see Section 8.3).
- Including information on, and links to, bird identification apps in the Birdwatching Guide and birdwatching page of the GIH website.
- List the Highland’s birdwatching sites on key birdwatching web sites.
- Capture and use bird-related user generated content, particularly sightings of rare and endangered birds.
- Direct market to birdwatching clubs and groups.
- Target / bid for bird watching congresses and conferences.
- Approach specialist bird tour and bird photography operators to explore opportunities to bring tours to the GIH.



11.9 Four Wheel Driving

While not promoted as an Adventure Country activity, the GIH area is popular with 4WD enthusiasts. Four Wheel enthusiasts are typically a camping market and undertake a range of outdoor activities – fishing, MTB, hiking and paddling. There are two popular, high profile touring routes feeding into the GIH – the Old Grafton / Glen Innes Road and the Aberfoyle Track. The Aberfoyle Track links Ebor to Glen Innes via Guy Fawkes River National Park, Kookabookra, the London Bridge and Oakwood Fire Trails and Pretty Valley Road.

There are several designated 4WD routes in the Gibraltar and Washpool National Parks and Torrington SCA, with 4WD also permitted in the Butterleaf, Warra and Capoompeta National Parks and the State Forests. Some of the rural retreat properties (eg Bullock Mountain and Bens Falls Retreat) have riverside areas that are only accessible by 4WD. Tenterfield Shire has two 4WD adventure parks – Levuka and Emu Creek Retreat, which are very popular with the 4WD enthusiasts and clubs coming out of southern Queensland.

Actions

4WD could be added to the list of Adventure Country activities. Actions to develop this market include:

- Position Old Grafton Road and the Aberfoyle Track as signature (must drive) routes for the 4WD market. These routes would provide the ‘anchor’ attraction.
- Identify and document second tier experiences - working with NPWS and the Forestry Corporation to identify and ‘grade’ the best 4WD trails in the National Parks and State Forests within the GIH.
- Identify properties (eg Bullock Mountain, Bens Fall Retreat) suitable for (and willing to take) 4WD enthusiasts and promote as part of the product base.
- Develop a 4WD brochure, video clips and information kit, and include 4WD trails on the GIH website.
- Work with DNSW / DNCO to bring influential 4WD journalists and bloggers to review the 4WD experiences on offer.
- Direct market to 4WD Clubs and associations in NSW and Queensland.
- Promote the GIH as a venue for 4WD club rallies and jamborees. The Glen Innes Showground, Stonehenge Reserve and some of the hamlet recreation grounds would be ideal venues.
- Encourage the development of a commercial 4WD park and/or tracks on private property, possibly as part of the agri tourism project.
- Encourage the establishment of a local 4WD and/or tag-along tour operator.
- Explore ways to capture and harness 4WD-related user generated content.



11.10 Motorcycling

As discussed in Section 5.4.1, the New England High Country Region is a mecca for touring motorcyclists – cruisers, road bikes and trail bikes with Glen Innes seeing an increasing number of motorcyclists. Within the region, the Old Grafton / Old Glen Innes Road has become the ‘must do’ ride for touring trail bikes, with Glen Innes being the staging point for this ride. At present motorcyclists are passing through the GIH with the area being a pit stop or overnight stay. Bikers are not spending multiple days, exploring the area. Opportunities to grow motorcycling at the regional level are identified in Section 5.4.1.

At the local level, Glen Innes has the potential to become the primary hub for touring trail bikes, with these bikers encouraged to stay longer and explore the GIH. The GIH has a concentration of unsealed local roads plus unsealed national park, SCA and forest roads and fire trails that can be linked to provide a network of local looped rides radiating from Glen Innes. There are also several rural accommodation properties (eg Bullock Mountain, Bens Falls Retreat, Deepwater Station) that could be ideal for the trail bikers.

Assets to work with

- Significant investment at the regional level in building motorcycle touring, with the New England region now well established as a motorcycle touring destination.
- Old Grafton / Old Glen Innes Road is becoming an iconic ride for touring trail bikes.
- Extensive network of unsealed local roads, as well as National Park, SCA and Forest roads and fire trails that can be linked to provide a network of local looped rides radiating from Glen Innes.
- Several rural accommodation properties (eg Bullock Mountain, Bens Falls Retreat, River Glen, Deepwater Station) that would be ideal for the trail bikers – providing accommodation for small groups, with Bullock Mountain and Bens Falls Retreat also having a network of rough tracks suitable for trail bikes. River Glen B&B has a motorcross track for use by guests.

Opportunities

- Position and promote the GIH as the hub for trail bike touring in the New England Region – developing and promoting a network of secondary touring routes and riding localities (eg State Forests) within the GIH.
- Develop a trail bike park in the GIH, similar in concept to Bike Territory near Narrabri.
- Host an annual trail ride event (eg the North Star Trail Ride).
- Organise a trail bike enduro event in the GIH and/or promote the GIH to dirt bike clubs, inviting them to host a round of their events in the GIH.

Actions

- To position Glen Innes as the hub for trail bike touring in the New England Region.
- To develop and promote additional products and experiences for the trail bike market including a series of touring routes and riding destinations (eg the Butterleaf National Park, SCA, Forest precinct).



11.11 Horse Riding

Overview

While horse riding is currently not promoted as an Adventure Country activity, horse owners are coming to the GIH for trail riding and for horse sports and events. Visitors to the GIH, particularly families, also enquire about horse riding as part of a farm stay experience, with only one property (Three Waters) advertising this activity.

Attributes and assets to work with

- Riding trails – including over 100 kilometres of trails in the western section of the Washpool National Park; the National Bicentennial Trail along the eastern side of the GIH; designated trails in the Butterleaf National Park and SCA and in the Torrington State Conservation Area; and trails within travelling stock routes and State Forests.
- Places to stay with horses – camping ground at Boundary Falls, Four Bull Hut in the Washpool National Park, Glen Innes Showground (around 200 stalls) and Three Waters Holidays farm stay. With approval, groups with horses can also camp at the recreation grounds in the hamlets and at Stonehenge Reserve.
- Trail riding – Three Waters Holiday accommodation offers trail riding for guests as one of its activities, with guests also able to holiday with their own horses.
- Facilities for horse sports: Rodeo and camp draft infrastructure at Glen Innes Showground, polo ground at Deepwater Racecourse and Equestrian Park (sand arena) in Glen Innes. The smaller communities of Red Range, Pinkett, Dundee and Glen Elgin also hold annual camp drafts at their recreation grounds.
- Active local clubs and associations – including the GI Show Jumping Society, GI Endurance Riding Club, Deepwater Polo Club, Glen Innes and Emmaville Pony Clubs and numerous camp draft committees.

The proprietor of the Longhorn Bar and Grill in Deepwater is also looking to offer an equine experience.

Actions

- To identify and package horse riding opportunities in the GIH and direct market these to horse riding clubs and associations within the surrounding region.
- Holiday with your horse: Promote opportunities for horse-owners to have a short-break / holiday with their horse within the GIH.
- Build the horse events market – working with the local clubs and committees to grow existing events and to attract additional events to the GIH.
- Assess the need for additional facilities (eg: a covered arena, cross country course) to support and stimulate growth in equine events.
- Develop a multi-day trail riding event, similar in concept to the Weddin Mountains Muster. The trails that the GI Endurance Club uses in their 'Ride the Range' event may be suitable for trail ride event.
- Assist businesses and organisations in Deepwater to develop and grow equine tourism and horse sports.



11.12 Rock Sports

Rock sports include climbing, abseiling, canyoning and bouldering. These activities occur at minor levels in the National Parks and SCAs and State Forests within the GIH, with bouldering occurring at Stonehenge Reserve. Activities within the National Parks and SCAs require permission from the NPWS. Rocks sports are permitted in the State Forests, without permission. Commercial operators require a licence to operate in both National Parks and State Forests.

Stonehenge is featured as a quality bouldering site on key bouldering websites (eg TheCrag) with 79 routes identified and a recommendation to stay in the area for multiple days. Other sites identified in on-line rock sports sites include Mulligans and Gibraltar Rocks in the Gibraltar National Park and the One Lost Chossy Boi boulder on the south western edge of Glen Innes (near the railway corridor and Craigieburn).

Actions

Rock sports, particularly bouldering, could be added to the list of Adventure Country activities.

11.13 Motor Sports

Glen Innes Motor Sports Club is seeking a site to develop a motor sports complex in the GIH. The complex would include a 1/8 mile drag strip, skid pan for driver safety courses, a motoX track and supporting infrastructure. Stonehenge Reserve has been suggested for the complex. As discussed in Section 10.1.2, from a tourism perspective, Stonehenge Reserve is not a suitable site for a motorsports complex. The Glen Innes Airport or the Wattle Vale Quarry area to the west of Glen Innes could be more suitable.

The local road network (particularly the unsealed roads) and some of the State Forest roads may be suitable for motor sports events such as enduros, rallying (multiple formats) and hill climbs.

Action

Work with the Glen Innes Motor Sports Club to explore opportunities for motor sports within the GIH.

11.14 Aviation Tourism

Glen Innes Airport is licensed for general aviation. The Airport infrastructure is in good condition and GISC is looking to increase general aviation and recreational use of the facility. Opportunities could include:

- 'Fly-ins' by aero-clubs. The Convent development and/or local events could provide an anchor to attract this market.
- Charter flights – private charters for events such as the Australian Celtic Festival.
- Air shows
- Air tour operators (eg Captains Choice, Air Adventure) bringing small groups into Glen Innes. This would need to be supported by quality accommodation (eg Convent, Waterloo Station, Kings Castle) plus ground tours.
- Joy flights
- Flight training
- Air sports – ballooning, gliding, ultra-lights, sky diving, hang gliding, paragliding etc
- Model aircraft meets / sports
- Drone meets / sports
- Use of the runway for drag racing and possibly other motor sports. (Gunnedah Airport provides an example)

Action

Prepare a Master Plan for Glen Innes Airport, with the feasibility of aviation and motor sports tourism assessed as part of the planning process.

12. EVENTS

12.1 Overview

Events are one of the key drivers of visitation to Glen Innes Highlands and, going forward, have a key role to play in growing the visitor economy. Strategically, events can be used to strengthen key themes, showcase and celebrate the GIH and its communities, and enhance lifestyle. Events are part of the cultural and social fabric of the area, providing an opportunity to bring visitors and residents together, ‘tell the stories’, and create memorable experiences. For visitors, events provide a reason to visit – they are essentially a ‘call to action’, encouraging people to ‘visit now’. Many travellers take local events into account in planning their itineraries. Events also generate publicity and focus attention on the area, can be a key driver in the economic, social and cultural development and play a role in the ‘tree change’ process.

Events in the GIH include:

- Australian Celtic Festival and various smaller events (eg flag raising) at the Standing Stones throughout the year.
- Minerama Fossicking, Gem and Jewellery Show
- Gemorama in Emmaville
- Glen Innes Show + Gourmet Fiesta
- Glen Innes Cup and Deepwater Races
- Christmas in the Highlands
- Glenfest (live music targeted to baby boomers)
- Glenrock (live music, performance partnership with the Chapel Theatre and music and music memorabilia swap meet)
- High Country Writers Festival
- Horse events, including show jumping, pony club, rodeo and camp drafts
- Livestock and poultry events
- Dog shows and trials
- Washpool World Heritage Trail Run
- Markets - Markets in the Highlands (monthly), Glen Innes Cottage Markets (weekly), Glen Innes Sunday Markets
- Performances at the Chapel Theatre
- Arts North West programs and activities
- Art and artisan workshops
- Vintage and specialist car club meets.



In 2021 the Highland will host the inaugural Feel the Light (light show) Festival and the First Nations Festival which will celebrate Aboriginal culture and heritage from around the Region.

12.2 Opportunities & Actions

Opportunities and actions to build both the events sector and events-based visitation include:

- Grow the business events sector, concentrating on attracting regional events and the association conference market.
- Grow participation in and/or attendance at existing events: In addition to the support currently provided by the Glen Innes Highlands Tourism and Events Officer, there may also be opportunities to:

- Raise the profile of the event within the surrounding region.
 - Direct market to special interest groups.
 - Package the event with other accommodation and/or activities.
 - Package and direct market the event to coach wholesalers and/or coach companies that organise tours.
- Organise / attract events that leverage the GIHs outdoor assets including its road network, National Parks, State Forests and Crown Reserves. Events could include road cycling, gravel grinding, trail running, long distance running, dirty-tri, adventure racing, orienteering, a birding conference, music festival etc.
 - Host more Celtic and Highland themed events throughout the year.
 - Explore opportunities to host events that celebrate / showcase local produce and industries (eg a honey festival).
 - Investigate events and activities that showcase alternative building techniques (eg strawbale houses) and/or heritage based skills and practices (eg building stone walls)
 - Attract caravan and RV club chapter rallies and events.
 - Attract 4WD, car and motorcycle club rallies and events utilising Glen Innes Showground, the Racecourse and/or Stonehenge Reserve.
 - Identify and target footloose events that could be held in GIH: bidding for events, as well as direct marketing the GIH venues to event organisers and promoters.
 - Partner with other areas within the New England Region and along the touring route corridors to develop regional festivals and events – eg Autumn Festival, Racing Carnival, golf tournament circuit.



13. INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Growing the visitor economy is dependent in part on the availability and capacity of supporting Infrastructure, facilities and services and the ability of these services to meet market needs and expectations.

13.1 Accommodation

While Glen Innes Highlands has a diversity of accommodation, the bed capacity in Glen Innes is limited. The motels and caravan parks in the town appear dated, with most of this accommodation being budget to mid-range in standard. The proposed Convent development will provide 30 luxury rooms which will help to address the need for 4+ star accommodation in the town.

Actions

- Encourage the development of additional motel (4-4.5 star) and serviced apartment accommodation in Glen Innes.
- Encourage motel properties and caravan parks to continue to update their properties, including their external facades.
- Continue to encourage the development of on-farm accommodation and activities. Accommodation could include conversion of farm buildings, tiny houses, caravans and camping area, glamping, or bush cabins.
- To encourage accommodation operators to continue to improve their on-line presence, including having a contemporary website with on-line booking facilities. The websites need to promote the GIH key attractions and events and ideally provide a link to the 'gleninneshighlands' website.

13.2 Venues

Growing and capitalising on regional events and building the regional conference market are priorities of Destination NSW and the Destination Network. DNSW has in place regional conferencing and regional event strategies which are looking to build capacity and infrastructure in regional NSW. The Destination Network DMP has identified the need to continue to improve venue and event infrastructure.

Growing the events sector is dependent in part on upgrading venues and leveraging assets, such as the local road network, airport, parks and reserves and State Forests, to host events.

Proposed venues include:

- Glen Innes Convent: upmarket function and meeting facilities.
- Netball Stadium: potential to host sporting events and other activities.
- Centennial Parklands additional event spaces: small outdoor events.
- Glen Innes Powerhouse Museum – potentially suitable for machinery and vehicle related events.
- Deepwater Racecourse Polo Field: polo and polocrosse and possibly other horse sports.
- Eerindii Ponds: potential for fishing and possibly open water swimming and other sports events (eg Triathlon, Dirty Tri, Iron Man) that have a swim / paddle component.
- Motor sports complex.

Actions

- Continue to improve event venues and support and assist venue managers to:
 - Secure grant funding to improve their venues to enhance their capacity to attract and host events.
 - Bid for and/or organise events.

- Investigate opportunities to host events within the National Parks and State Forests and promote suitable areas to event organisers.
- Ensure that suitable venues are listed on the NSW Regional Conference data base.
- Produce a GIH venue guide and include a venues page on the GIH Tourism website, with the guide downloadable from the website.
- Leverage the opening of new venues to generate publicity and raise awareness of the facilities available in the GIH.

13.3 Information Services

Information services are integral in supporting visitation. These services are an important link between local businesses and visitors, support the GIHs marketing and promotion, and, most importantly, make a visitor feel welcome. Information needs to be available and readily accessible from a range of touch points and devices at all stages in the path to purchase, during the journey and at the destination. Information services extend well beyond the visitor, with services provided to tourism and business operators, the travel trade, government agencies, tourism organisations and the local community.

13.3.1 Sourcing Information

Web and digital technology have and are continuing to change the way in which consumers access and share information, select destinations and products, and book travel. Travellers now have access to an exponentially increasing range of information sources through an expanding number of touch points. To remain competitive, Glen Innes Highlands needs to continue to expand its multiple channel use (traditional and online) to communicate targeted messages to consumers at each stage of the decision-making process.

On the downside, consumers have access to too much information creating a 'data surplus' and an 'insight deficit'. Consumers are increasingly relying on VIC staff to provide the 'insight'. The challenge for the GIH is to provide a information services that are authoritative, contemporary, comprehensive and unbiased, in a diverse range of formats that are responsive to individual needs.

Travellers are using multiple devices (referred to as 'cross platform') to research travel, with 89% of searches started on one device (frequently a smart phone and/or tablet) and completed on another. Most of the searches undertaken on mobile devices are 'micro minute' - short searches while people are waiting around (eg at the bus stop, on the train, in a cafe etc) with searchers primarily looking for 'inspiration'. At this stage, there is a very high propensity to view images, short videos (You Tube) and deals and offers.

94% of people are now travelling with one or more mobile devices (90% with smartphones, 42% with tablets and 26% with laptops/notebooks). Amongst those travelling with mobile devices, nearly three-quarters (71%) used them to navigate, source travel information, and/or to make bookings during their stay. VICs (42%) and word-of-mouth referrals are leading sources of information while in-region.

Videos have become one of the most important promotional tools. Destination videos are primarily used during the 'Dreaming' stage when travellers are searching for ideas and destinations. 85% of travel-related searches on YouTube focus on destinations, attractions, points of interest and general travel ideas³⁷. Product (including accommodation) videos are more likely to be viewed during the planning stage when travellers are comparing products and prices. Travellers watch a mix of user generated and professionally made video clips. 58% of leisure travellers and 64% of business travellers advised that watching on-line videos influenced their choice of destination and/or products (eg accommodation, activities, tours) selected.

User Generated Content (USG), both as a communication tool and to share travel experiences, continues to increase. User generated content is broadly defined as any content (text, images, videos) posted on the web that is not published

³⁷ Travel Content Takes off on YouTube www.thinkwithgoogle.com.au

by a brand. It includes content such as blogs, comments, posts, forums, reviews, podcasts, videos and images, posted via on-line services, social media and content sharing sites. UGC provides another source of information, from a user perspective, with potential travellers interested in what other travellers have to say about a destination.

13.3.2 Changing Nature of Information Services

As a result of the changing technology, the 'back room' activities for information service providers have increased significantly. Tourism organisations / VICs are increasingly employing people with strong digital and graphic design skills to leverage the digital space.

Research within Australia and internationally, has concluded that:

- The tourism website is now the most important information and marketing tool. The website has to be cross-platform (mobile, tablet, computer and in the future – smart watch) and voice optimised, and semantic search responsive and supported by and fully integrated with social media, with social media being used to 'drive business' to the website.
- Despite digital devices, travellers are still looking for contact with and recommendations from locals, as well as print-based information – maps, visitor guides, information sheets.
- Visitor Information Centres are and will remain a significant in-region touch point for visitors, bringing visitors into contact with what the area has to offer – providing visitors with the information, advice and services needed to enhance their visit and encourage them to spend more time and money within the area. VICs are also an integral part of the marketing, distribution and sales process. The key attributes that VICs bring to this process is their ability to:
 - Inspire - to match visitor needs with local experiences in a friendly, professional manner and create a 'wow' factor for visitors.
 - Make sense of the vast amount of information that is available – removing uncertainty and confusion.
 - Deliver current, comprehensive and, most importantly, unbiased information.

VICs also have a significant role in keeping visitors 'safe', being the 'go to' places for information during natural disasters as well as providing information on road conditions, 'safe' places to leave vehicles or camp etc.

- **The 'next generation' of VICs³⁸ will:**
 - Continue to evolve to provide an extraordinary experience, including telling inspiring stories.
 - Continue to deliver a high level of customer service underpinned by a wealth of local knowledge.
 - Provide information at all stages of the trip planning, booking and travel phases – using a range of communication media, channels and touch points.
 - Deliver their visitor guide, maps and other key information in both print and digital format.
 - Provide opportunities for booking accommodation and tours.
 - Offer free Wi-Fi and have information available digitally through a variety of mediums. This will be supported by spaces within VICs where visitors can sit and spend time using their own digital device.
 - Provide information on a 24 hour basis through a number of touch points – eg static information displays, touch screens, web, Apps, QR codes etc.
 - Integrate the use of technology (eg touch screens, tablets, augmented and virtual reality, soundscapes etc) into how information is displayed and presented. Tablets are proving very popular within VICs, allowing staff and visitors to search for information, communicate with non-English speaking visitors, book on-line and transfer information digitally to the consumer's smart phone or tablet.

³⁸ Australia's Accredited VICs : A Strategic Directions Discussion Paper

13.3.3 Information Services in Glen Innes Highlands

Information services are co-ordinated and delivered by the Glen Innes Visitor Information Centre. The 'gleninneshighlands website' and facebook page and the GIH Visitor Guide (available electronically and in print) are the primary communication tools, with these supported by Instagram, Twitter and print information.

The VIC is well located and highly visible for New England Highway travellers arriving from the south. Visibility is lower for travellers arriving from the north and via the Gwydir Highway.

In addition to providing information, the Centre showcases and sells a range of locally produced merchandise. Taking the VIC to a 'next generation' centre would involve enhancing the experiences offered and moving into 'story-telling'. Using digital technology (eg virtual reality), there is opportunity to showcase the GIH agriculture and industries (eg sapphire and tin mines, honey extraction, renewable energy) and to provide 'virtual' access to remote, inaccessible areas of the GIHs. There may also be opportunities to provide an insight into Ngorabul culture and heritage and virtual access to significant Aboriginal sites.

Across the GIH other touch points for information are limited. There is no information available in Deepwater or Glencoe. While there are 'i' icons on the facility signage in Emmaville, it is not possible to identify the information outlet. Emmaville and Deepwater both require village and surround brochures which can be displayed by all village businesses.

13.3.4 Actions

- Evolve the Glen Innes VIC into a 'next generation' centre, focusing on enhancing and expanding the internal and external displays, and increased use of digital technology to showcase the area, tell 'stories' and provide experiences.
- Consider erecting information directories at strategic locations throughout the GIH, including the Gwydir Highway rest areas to the east of Glen Innes, at the Glen Innes Showground and in the villages.
- Continue to expand the range of information available, including information on individual activities (4WD, horse riding) and produce village brochures.
- Continue to build the GIH on-line presence, including expanding the content on the GIH tourism website and leveraging opportunities to list on third party sites.
- Seek funding to develop a digital platform that integrates itinerary planning with bookings.

13.4 Access Infrastructure

13.4.1 Roads

Roads are critical infrastructure for tourism, providing access to and through the GIH. They also form part of the attraction (scenic drives) and activity (eg motorcycle touring) base and can be used to stage events. As such, the role that the road network plays in tourism needs to be taken into consideration in GISC and RMS decision-making. Within the GIH, roads that are significant for tourism include:

- New England and Gwydir Highways
- Old Grafton / Glen Innes Road
- Pinkett Road – designated motorcycle touring route
- Touring Route 11 – Emmaville, Wellington Vale, Tent Hill and Torrington (southern end) Roads



Actions

From a tourism perspective:

- Improve access to Stonehenge Reserve.
- Maintain the gravel section of Tent Hill Road to 2WD standard (note: Part of this road is in Tenterfield Shire).

12.4.2 Glen Innes Airport

Glen Innes Airport is owned and operated by GISC. The Airport is CASA³⁹ registered and licenced for general available and used for private and charter planes, recreational flying, medical evacuation, emergency services and agricultural activities. Local businesses and some agricultural properties (including the Rangers Valley Feedlot) are dependent on the Airport for access, with this facility contributing to business and work-related travel in the GIH.

The Airport has been upgraded and has development approval for an International Flight Training School (600 students). There is a global shortage of other aviation workers with this expected to worsen as the airline industry recovers from the COVID 19 pandemic. The Australian Aviation Industry Reference Committee / Australian Industry Standards – Aviation Skills Forecast Report (2019) has identified significant shortages in skilled pilots; educators, trainers and assessors; maintenance engineers and technicians; avionics and software engineers; and aerodrome management and reporting officers.

Likewise, the Report of the Expert Panel on Aviation Skills and Training (2018) found that Australia is currently experiencing a severe shortage of aviation personnel, particularly commercial pilots and aircraft maintenance engineers and technicians, with this situation forecast to worsen as a result of the growth in the global aviation market. The Report recognises that there is 'considerable scope for Australia to develop a much larger aviation training capability, including opportunities to grow the aviation training export market. The Report recommends that the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities and the Department of Education and Training, in conjunction with other government agencies, explore the opportunities to establish a *'small number of centres of excellence to build upon Australia's aviation expertise and existing cadet flying academies and to maximise the opportunities for Australia in the training of aviation professionals in the Asia Pacific'*. Glen Innes Airport could be a potential contender for flight training, with the establishment of a flight school resulting in growth in domestic and international visitation to the GIH.

The Airport may also be suitable for tourism and recreational aviation activities (see Section 11.14).

Actions

- Continue to pursue opportunities to attract a flight training operation.
- Prepare a Master Plan for the Airport with the feasibility of aviation tourism opportunities assessed as part of the master planning process.

13.4.3 River Access

Several of the GIH Adventure Country activities – paddling, fishing, birdwatching and fossicking, require river access, with paddling in particular, needing easy, safe access to launch and retrieve canoes / kayaks. While the Highland Fishing, Fossicking and Birdwatching Guides identify river access points, the 'on-ground' experience can be confusing, with the sites not sign-posted nor slashed, fences blocking access and no obvious place to park.

Action

As discussed in Sections 10.3, 10.4, 10.5 and 10.9, there is a need to improve river access points to support adventure and nature-based activities.

³⁹ CASA = Civil Aviation Safety Authority

13.5 Signage

Signage plays a significant role in how an area presents. It also forms part of the visitor information services infrastructure and is a significant marketing and promotional tool. Within the GIH, GISC is responsible for signage on GISC controlled roads and in the public domain, while Roads & Maritime Services (RMS) is responsible for Highway signage.

To be effective, the signage needs to be comprehensive and integrated at all levels, namely:

- **Motivational and promotional signage** – to raise the profile of the area, develop brand / image recognition and to make travellers aware of the area and the attractions and facilities on offer. Billboards can be effective if well designed (eg quality images) and maintained. GISC needs to explore opportunities for billboard signage in the Gwydir and New England Highway corridors. The World Heritage Way signage at both ends of the Gwydir Highway route needs to be replaced.
- **Gateway signs** – important in creating a sense of arrival, making a visitor feel welcome and reinforcing the GIH brand. Gateway signage has been updated in Glen Innes in line with the GIH branding. This needs to be rolled out to the villages.
- **Information signs / directories** – on arrival in a new area, visitors tend to look for the Visitor Information Centre ‘i’ signs and roadside information directories. As discussed in Section 13.3, there is a need for information boards in the villages and at other strategic locations on the approaches to and throughout the GIH.
- **Directional signage** – the primary purpose of directional is to ensure that travellers can find their way easily. Directional signage also provides re-assurance and reinforces the motivational signage by creating the perception that the area has ‘a lot to offer’. There is a need to update directional signage to and throughout the GIH, including signposting the Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks from the New England Highway in Glen Innes and the Torrington SCA from the New England Highway in Deepwater. The directional signage needs to include advance warning signs, so that travellers, particularly caravanners, have time to process the information and make a decision.
- **Service & facility signs** – Travellers are looking for the international symbols for public toilets, accommodation, camping areas, car and caravan parking etc. Fingerboard signs are not as effective as the symbols. There needs to be a program in place to progressively replace fingerboard signs with international symbols and to ensure that all facilities are signposted. Signage on the entry corridors to the villages should include symbols of the facilities and services available. With caravanners and RVs being a significant market for the GIH, it is important that the caravan parks, camping areas, dump points and caravan parking areas are well signposted.
- **Interpretive signage / information** – this is particularly important at attractions (eg Beardy Woodlands) that are not staffed. Interpretive signage can include QR codes to provide more in-depth information, maps etc.
- **Event signage** – frames / hanging points, where event organisers can advertise their events, with this infrastructure strategically located so that it is visible to both local residents and passing travellers. There is event entry signage (with interchangeable inserts) on the four entrances to Glen Innes. Consideration should also be given to erecting similar signs on the southern side of Glencoe and the northern side of Deepwater and providing infrastructure in Emmaville to hang banners / signs for Gemarama and other local events.

Action

Undertake a detailed signage audit and progressively update and improve signage throughout the GIH.



13.6 Telecommunications

Most visitors are now travelling with a smart phone and generally with a Tablet and/or lap-top computer. There is also increasing use of ‘wearable’ technology (eg smart watches) which are being used to access information. Visitors are highly dependent on access to the mobile telephone network and are increasingly expecting free WiFi to be offered by the VIC, accommodation properties, cafes and other businesses. Free WiFi is available in the Glen Innes town centre and at the VIC.

Glen Innes, the villages and the New England Highway corridor have 4G/3G mobile phone coverage on both the Telstra and Optus networks. Coverage is patchy along the Gwydir Highway corridor to both the east and west of Glen Innes, with virtually no coverage in the National Parks and State Forests. The National Parks and State Forests are bush-fire prone, with lack of mobile phone coverage being a major impediment to warning visitors of risk and evacuating areas. The National Parks and Forests are also used for adventure-based activities which have a higher risk of misadventure. In addition, the escarpment section of the Gwydir Highway is subject to landslip, fallen trees and other hazards as well having a higher risk of accidents. For safety purposes mobile telephone services need to be extended along the entire length of the Gwydir Highway corridor.

Poor telecommunications infrastructure within the GIH has been identified as an impediment to economic development within the GIH⁴⁰.

Action

Continue to advocate for the expansion of mobile phone coverage throughout the GIH (with the priority from a tourism perspective being the Gwydir Highway) to improve safety for residents and visitors as well NPWS, Forestry and Emergency personnel.



⁴⁰ Glen Innes Highlands Place Strategy 2020-2040 and Action Plan 2020-2025

14. INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

The marketplace is evolving, and tourism and business operators need to keep abreast of changes. In particular, tourism and business operators need to be highly active in the digital space, with this space used to communicate, build relationships, market and promote, and 'make the sale'. Tourism operators need to be responsive to changing needs and expectations, recognising that customers are becoming more sophisticated and demanding and less tolerant of inferior customer service. The retail community needs to recognise the importance of the presentation of both their shop front and merchandise. It is also essential that retailers and service providers have a strong online presence as travellers looking for goods and services are increasingly searching on-line. Trading hours are also issue, businesses needing to be open when visitors are in the area.

There are a diverse range of resources including on-line training programs available from Government agencies to assist business operators.

Both GISC and the Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Association (GIHVA) are involved in industry development.

Actions

- GISC (Economic Development) to endeavour to keep the Glen Innes Visitor Association and local businesses and tourism operators informed of the training and resources available as well as relevant grant programs.
- GISC to work with GIHVA to address skill gaps and build the capacity of tourism and business operators.
- To encourage all businesses to claim their Google business listing and have a website (preferred) and/or facebook page.
- Endeavour to showcase local innovative businesses and business operators, as a way of stimulating business evolution and growth.
- To explore options for ensuring visitors have access to services, 7 days per week. This could include some form of rota system between operators – eg businesses agreeing to open on certain days, or staggering opening hours.



15. MARKET DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Destination development needs to be supported by market development and effective destination marketing.

15.1 Marketing of Glen Innes Highlands

The destination marketing of Glen Innes Highlands is undertaken by both GISC and the Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Association. Marketing activities include:

Glen Innes Severn Council

- Production and distribution of information and promotional collateral including the Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Guide and a range of promotional guides and brochures.
- On-line marketing through the gleninneshighlands tourism website and social media (facebook and instagram).
- Digital marketing campaigns including the 'Would You Rather' and 'Live and Invest' campaigns.
- Television advertising – regional WIN and NBN networks.
- Participation in New England High Country market development and marketing and promotional campaigns and activities. Market development is focused on the touring motorcycle, car clubs and touring RV and caravan markets.
- Promotion of a 'pop-up' conference experience through the DNSW Regional Conference Directory.
- Supporting local events, including marketing and promoting these events on-line and through local and regional media channels.
- Public relations marketing - endeavouring to generate media and industry exposure for the GIH – press releases and media interviews, capitalising on events and activities.
- Feature articles accompanied by advertising in magazines and other publications.
- Hosting familiarisation tours for journalists and social media 'influencers', with the activities generally organised through Destination NSW, the Destination Network and the New England High Country alliance.
- Glen Innes Highlands monthly e.newsletter.

GISC is also developing the Tourism Package and Itinerary Planner which will provide a seamless itinerary planner and booking platform which will increase the exposure and reach of local products, facilities and services.

Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Association (GIHVA)

GIHVA is a membership-based industry association incorporating tourism operators, local businesses and local organisations within GIH. The Association was formed to support Highland businesses that are involved in the tourism, hospitality and service industries. The marketing and promotion undertaken by GIHVA includes:

- GIHVA website: this includes 'Plan' in the menu bar which provides information on attractions and activities, accommodation, dining, events, services available and transport options. The website does not appear to be optimised and is not identified in searches for Glen Innes or visit Glen Innes. At first glance, the website appears to be an industry association website rather than a website promoting the GIH destination, with 'Plan' potentially interpreted as industry planning / the Association's strategic plan, rather than plan a visit. The website has a link to the GIHVA facebook page but not to the Association's Instagram page. The site is not linked to the Glen Innes GIH tourism site and there are no links to download the Glen Innes Highlands Visitor Guide or other maps and guides.

- Social media with regular posts on the GIHVA facebook page and occasional posts on Instagram.
- Radio advertising on 2GF and FM104.7, both of which broadcast in the Clarence Valley.
- Production of the 'More than 100 Things to do in Glen Innes Highlands' brochure and contribution to other brochures and guides produced by GISC.
- Supporting local events through sponsorship, marketing and promotion.
- E.newsletter for members.

Other Marketing

Marketing undertaken by other organisations includes:

- **Destination NSW:** Glen Innes Highlands is marketed through the visitnsw.com website. This site draws on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse data base which is accessed via NSWconnect. GISC, through the VIC provides destination content and images and information on up-coming events. Tourism and business operators can list and provide content on their business through NSWconnect. DNSW also provides opportunities to participate in a range of marketing initiatives.
- **New England High Country:** New England High Country (NEHC) is a marketing alliance funded by the seven LGAs that comprise the New England Region of NSW. Marketing is focused on four key markets – motorcycle enthusiasts, caravaners and RVS, car clubs and the self-drive market. In addition to the NEHC website, NEHC produces print collateral, and undertakes PR marketing and mix of digital and print advertising.
- **New England Joint Organisation (NEJO):** NEJO is a joint organisation of Councils with seven members – Armidale, Inverell, Glen Innes, Tenterfield and Uralla from the New England Region and Narrabri and Moree from North Western NSW. The Organisation is currently formulating a tourism project to increase the promotion of member Councils.
- **Fossickers Way:** Collaboration of LGAs within the NE-NW region that have mining heritage and fossicking sites. Fossickers Way has a website and a brochure. The website is tired and needs to be revamped and ideally expanded to include information on how and where to fossick. There is also potential to produce a fossicking app for the route.

15.2 Marketing Directions and Actions

Marketing needs to concentrate on building the markets that are a natural fit with the attractions, activities and experiences that are available in the GIH and surrounding region; can be accommodated with the infrastructure, facilities and services that are available; and are cost and resource efficient to target. The focus should be on:

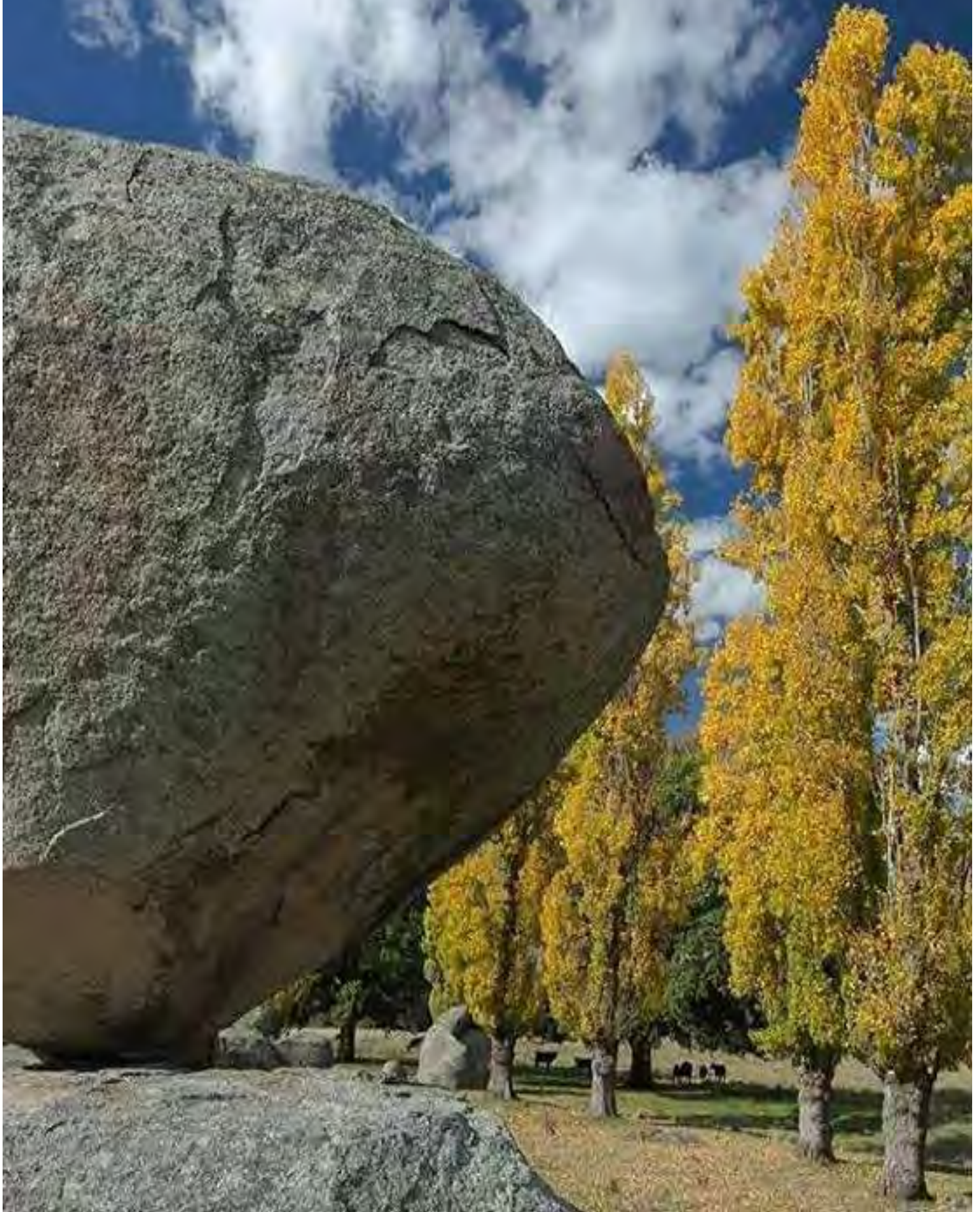
- Continuing to work collaboratively as part of New England High Country to build the motorcycle, caravan and RV, car club and self-drive touring markets – encouraging these travellers to visit and stay longer in the GIH.
- Building the regional market – encouraging residents and their visiting friends and relatives to take day trips and short breaks and to attend events in the GIH.
- Building special interest and activity-based markets – targeting individuals, clubs and associations.
- Growing the events market – increasing patronage of existing events, developing new events and attracting footloose events to the GIH. New venues (eg Convent, Centennial Parklands function centre) coming on-line will provide opportunities to target the business events and wedding and function markets.

With limited marketing dollars:

- Continue to work collaboratively as part of New England High Country and the New England Joint Organisation.
- Continue to work cooperatively with DNSW, the Destination Network and other partners (eg Gwydir Highway LGAs) and leverage opportunities to work with adjoining LGAs to develop specific markets
- Ensure that GISC and GIVHA are working collaboratively in marketing the GIH - sharing information, images, video resources and the timing of initiatives.
- Review marketing directions and strategies to leverage Covid 19 related travel opportunities and shifts in the market.
- Continue to focus on-line marketing activities to build destination awareness, communicate directly with key target markets and harness user-generated content.
- Leverage opportunities provided by NPWS and Forestry Corporation websites, social media channels and marketing initiatives.
- Continually improve and update GIH content on third party websites (eg visit NSW, Wiki Camps, travelling with children, travelling with pets).
- Undertake direct, targeted marketing to activity-based enthusiasts, clubs and association, leveraging relevant websites, magazines, you-tube content etc.
- Encourage tourism and business operators, community organisations and event organisers to develop /update their websites, embrace social media and to list on relevant free directories and third party websites. Accommodation operators should be encouraged to include a link to the Glen Innes Highlands website on their website and social media channels.
- Increase marketing and PR activities within the surrounding region to raise awareness of the GIH and grow the regional day trip, VFR and short-breaks markets.
- Endeavour to ensure that the GIH is represented at key travel, caravan and camping and lifestyle shows in Sydney, the Hunter – Central Coast, regional NSW, Brisbane and Southern Queensland.
- Seek funding to develop a digital platform that integrates itinerary planning with bookings.



DIRECTIONS, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS



16. DIRECTIONS, STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

16.1 Vision

A strong, diversified and sustainable visitor economy, that delivers significant social and economic benefits for the Glen Innes Highlands community. Known for its stunning highland landscapes, the Australian Standing Stones and its World Heritage National Parks, Glen Innes Highlands will be a destination of choice for those looking to 'chase adventure'.



16.2 Strategic Directions

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	<p>Strengthen the GIH towns and the villages as both destinations and service centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance presentation • Improve facilities & infrastructure • Leverage / improve existing attractions and events • Develop new attractions, activities, experiences, and events 	<p>Develop and promote touring routes that feed into and traverse the GIH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position and promote the New England and Gwydir Highways as touring routes • Revamp Fossickers Way and World Heritage Way • Develop and promote self-drive tours and activity trails 	<p>Continue to develop and improve the attraction base of the GIH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realise the potential of key assets • Enhance existing attractions • Develop new products and experiences 	<p>Consolidate the GIH as a destination for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and expand the range of outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities available in the GIH
GOAL	<p>To increase the number of highway and touring travellers stopping, exploring and spending money in Glen Innes and the villages</p>	<p>To encourage more travellers to come into and explore the GIH</p>	<p>To strengthen and diversify the attraction base of GIH</p>	<p>GIH - a destination of choice for outdoor, adventure and nature-based products and experiences</p>
KEY METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRA visitor and expenditure data • Glen Innes VIC visitor numbers • Website and social media analytics • Museum / Art Gallery visitor numbers • Visitors staying at Glen Innes Showground and Emmaville Caravan Park • New business start-ups • Actions completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRA visitor and expenditure data • Glen Innes VIC visitor numbers • New England and Gwydir Highways, Fossickers Way and World Heritage Way established and promoted as touring routes • Touring Route website and social media analytics • Network of special interest and activity-based trails in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed projects completed • New attractions and activities in-place • Increase visitation to existing attractions • TRA visitor data • GIH website and social media analytics • NPWS visitor / booking data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New attractions and activities in place • GIH activities and products listed on key activity-specific websites • Direct marketing undertaken to activity-based clubs and groups • VIC: number of enquiries / bookings from groups and clubs • Website and social media analytics • TRA visitor data • NPWS visitor / booking data

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	<p>Grow the events sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easy to hold events in GIH • Grow existing events • Introduce new events • Attract footloose events 	<p>Ensure that the infrastructure, facilities and services needed to support growth of the visitor economy are in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New accommodation and venues • Improved road and waterway access • Effective signage • Expanded information services 	<p>Continue to build industry capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist tourism operators and local businesses to continue to develop their business, customer service and marketing skills • Promote hospitality training and career opportunities to school and tertiary students 	<p>Market growth and development supported by effective marketing and promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build destination awareness • Build GIH on-line presence / leverage digital channels • Work cooperatively with other LGAs • Focus on building primary markets
GOAL	<p>A strong, vibrant program of events and activities that stimulates visitation and raises awareness of the GIH.</p>	<p>Improved and expanded visitor infrastructure, facilities and services</p>	<p>Skilled and motivated business and tourism operators</p>	<p>Build destination awareness and grow visitation</p>
KEY METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of event attendees / ticket sales • Catchment area for event attendees • Number of new events held • Number of events attracted to the area • Amount and value of media coverage generated • Website and social media analytics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing accommodation properties and venues upgraded • New accommodation properties and venues developed • Effective signage in place • Road and waterway access improved. • VIC revamped and information services expanded. • Mobile phone coverage expanded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programs held and attendee numbers • Number of businesses with contemporary websites • Participation in the proposed tourism platform • Number of operators registering with NSW Connect / STDW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional material produced • Marketing undertaken • Level of operators support / buy-in • Marketing campaign results • Familiarisation tours hosted • Website and social media analytics • TRA visitor data • VIC enquiries

16.3 Strategies and Actions

Strategic Direction 1: Strengthen Glen Innes and the villages as both destinations and service centres

Localities play a very significant role in the visitor economy both as destinations and service centres, with presentation and first impressions playing a major role in the decision to stop in or visit a locality. From a visitor perspective, the key areas that make an impression are the gateway entry points, routes through the area, appearance and presentation of the town centre, and the parks and gardens. The presentation of businesses is also critical in encouraging travellers to stop, with businesses that present as clean and vibrant more likely to attract patronage than those that appear dated, tired and/or run down. Presentation is also important for the local community, building pride and confidence in the area, and is an attribute for people who are looking to relocate to and/or invest in the area, with tourism being an important driver of the ‘tree change’ process.

Strategic Direction 1: Strengthen Glen Innes and the villages as both destinations and service centres

Actions		Key Tasks	
Strategy 1: Position Glen Innes as a picturesque high country town with a strong Celtic heritage, four distinct seasons and a vibrant town centre – home of the Australian Standing Stones and Australian Celtic Festival, gateway to the World Heritage-listed Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks and hub for highland fossicking and adventures.			
1.1	Continue to improve the presentation of the gateway arrival points and entry corridors.	1.1.1	Continue with corridor tree planting to reinforce the highlands theme and four distinct seasons.
		1.1.2	Improve signage, using international icons, to public toilets from the New England Highway.
1.2	Strengthen the town’s gateway positioning to the World Heritage-listed Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks	1.2.1	Explore options for raising the profile of the World Heritage National Parks on the New England Highway and Ferguson Street (Gwydir Highway) approaches to (eg signage, billboard advertising).
		1.2.2	Update / replace the World Heritage Way signage at the Glen Innes and Grafton locations on the Gwydir Highway.
		1.2.3	Approach RMS to erect an information board at Heffron’s Lookout and the Dandahra Rest area on the Gwydir Highway – to encourage National Park visitors arriving from the east to continue west to Glen Innes.
		1.2.4	Collaborate with the NPWS to develop and install a virtual reality experience showcasing the National Parks in the GI VIC – provide virtual access to the key sites and to spectacular but inaccessible areas within the Parks.
		1.2.5	Continue to communicate the gateway positioning in information and marketing and promotional collateral.
1.3	Continue to evolve the town centre into a lifestyle precinct	1.3.1	Encourage and support property owners and businesses to improve the presentation of their buildings, shop fronts and merchandise displays.
		1.3.2	Continue to encourage on-street trading and dining and attractive signs, flags etc to activate the footpath by adding colour and movement.
		1.3.3	Explore options for permanent and temporary art installations in the town centre and at other strategic locations (eg Glen Innes and Centennial Parklands).
		1.3.4	Establish an attractive pedestrian link between the VIC, proposed Powerhouse Museum and the main street.

Strategic Direction 1: Strengthen Glen Innes and the villages as both destinations and service centres

Actions		Key Tasks	
1.4	Ensure that Glen Innes remains caravan, RV and long rig friendly.	1.3.5	Provide opportunities for business owners and staff to network and up-skill, with the focus on digital marketing, window dressing and merchandise displays and customer service.
		1.4.1	Signpost the availability of caravan and long-rig parking at the VIC, from strategic locations within the town centre and along the Highway corridors.
		1.4.2	Explore options to provide designated, signposted long rig parking spots near supermarkets.
		1.4.3	Improve signage (caravan icon) to the Showground from the New England and Gwydir Highway.

Strategy 2: Encourage travellers to stop, explore and spend in the villages

2.1	Improve the presentation of the villages.	2.1.1	In conjunction with the village communities, formulate and implement an improvement plan for each village, with the plan addressing presentation and including both tourism and community / lifestyle initiatives.
2.2	Promote the facilities and services available.	2.2.1	Erect blue and white facility (icon) signs on the approaches to each village.
		2.2.2	Ensure that facilities (eg toilets) are well signposted from the main access corridors using international icons.
		2.2.3	Erect information directories in strategic locations - providing information on the village and its attractions, facilities and services, and the broader GIH area.
		2.2.4	Work with the village businesses / communities to develop a village brochure / map promoting the village and the attractions in the surrounding area, with the brochure available from all local businesses used by visitors.
		2.2.5	Develop a village tourism brochure / map with this downloadable from the Glen Innes Highlands website (replacing the existing village maps).
2.3	Promote key village businesses	2.3.1	Leverage promotional opportunities to raise the profile of local businesses – featuring the businesses that have a profile in the market-place and are popular with Highway travellers – eg Red Lion In in Glencoe, and the Brewery, Longhorn Bar and Grill, and Bakery in Deepwater
2.4	Strengthen Deepwater as a visitor destination	2.4.1	Improve the presentation of the New England Highway corridor in Deepwater including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corridor tree planting along the southern entry corridor – reflecting the tree planting along the northern entry corridor. Define the town centre by landscaping the Highway – Young Street intersection and improving the landscaping along the Highway between Young and Dundee Streets. Encourage the owner of the Longhorn Bar and Grill to improve the presentation of the area between the hotel and Cadell Street to encourage caravanners and RVs to use the free camping area.
		2.4.2	Position Deepwater as a gateway to the Torrington SCA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signpost the Torrington SCA and Miners Way (Touring Route 11) at the intersection of the New England Highway and Torrington Road. Ensure information on Torrington SCA and Tourist Drive 11 is available in Deepwater – on the information directory and through brochures available from local businesses.

Strategic Direction 1: Strengthen Glen Innes and the villages as both destinations and service centres

Actions		Key Tasks	
		2.4.3	Explore opportunities to promote Capoompeta, Bolivia Hill and Washpool (north western section) National Parks and the Butterleaf National Park, SCA and State Forest as part Deepwater's activity base.
		2.4.4	Explore options for refurbishing the external façade of Eclipse Theatre, possibly as a community project.
		2.4.5	Improve access to Deepwater River by removing weeds and potentially providing fishing deck / site hardened area in the Riverside reserve adjacent to the New England Highway and identify river access points and fishing spots close to town.
		2.4.6	Investigate promoting the Ten Mile Road – Bezzarts Road loop as a 'Back Road' tourist drive, trail bike route (linking to the forests and national parks) and/or a gravel grinding loop.
		2.4.7	Promote the Deepwater Racecourse and the School of Arts as venues for functions and events and investigate the potential to utilise the historic railway station building and surrounding area for small functions and events.
		2.4.8	Advocate to extend the proposed Armidale – Glen Innes Rail Trail north to Deepwater.
		2.4.9	Support the Deepwater community in developing equine tourism and horse sports facilities and events.
2.5	Strengthen Emmaville as a visitor destination	2.5.1	Continue to develop and promote Miners Way (Tourist Drive 11) and update route signage in Emmaville and the surrounding area.
		2.5.2	Improve gateway arrival signage and the presentation of the entry corridors.
		2.5.3	Rationalise and update the facility icon signage and include public toilets.
		2.5.4	Erect and signpost an information directory in a highly visible, strategic location.
		2.5.5	Build on the village's mining history: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote the Ottery Mine in conjunction with the Emmaville Mining Museum and provide directional signage to the Mine from the town centre. ○ Identify and signpost fossicking and rock and mineral hunting sites located in close proximity to the village. ○ Explore opportunities to include mining machinery / relics as points of interest / art installations outside of the Mining Museum and within the town. ○ Explore the possibility of establishing a Chinese garden adjacent to the Court House Museum (or other suitable location) to mark the Chinese market gardens that supported the tin mining. ○ Explore opportunities for story-telling and digital applications to bring the Mining and Court House Museums 'to life'. ○ Use virtual or augmented reality technology to tell the tin mining story, both past and present – recreating Tent Hill, the Ottery Mine, Chinese vegetable gardens and the village centre and including the Taronga Tin Mine if it proceeds.
		2.5.6	Position the village as a destination for anglers – promoting the memorabilia at the Tattersalls Hotel, the Severn and Beardy Rivers, Pindari Dam, and the Bens Fall and Monster Murray Cod Retreats. Also explore with the fishing club, opportunities for an open fishing competition.
		2.5.7	Promote the dams and bushland areas around Emmaville for bird watching and assess the potential to establish bird routes, walking trails and/or bird hides.
		2.5.8	Assess the feasibility of reinstating the Sheep Races.

Strategic Direction 1: Strengthen Glen Innes and the villages as both destinations and service centres

Actions		Key Tasks	
		2.5.9	Endeavour to obtain RV Friendly Locality (RVFL) accreditation and ensure that the caravan park is listed on key caravan and camping website directories.
		2.5.10	Signpost and promote river access points close to town.
		2.5.10	Improve directional signage to the Emmaville Lookout and the safety of the Lookout-Emmaville Road intersection.
		2.5.11	Signpost the Torrington SCA from Emmaville.
2.6	Stimulate visitation to and investment in Glencoe	2.6.1	Position Glencoe as an attraction and activity node on the proposed New England Rail Trail.
		2.6.2	Encourage and support the establishment of tourism businesses and highway services in the village.

Strategic Direction 2: Develop and promote the touring routes that feed into and traverse the Glen Innes Highlands

Touring routes are designed to bring travellers into and through the GIH. There is opportunity to work with surrounding Councils to position and promote the New England and Gwydir Highways as touring routes and to re-vamp Fossickers Way and World Heritage Way. Self-guided tours, scenic drives and activity trails link attractions and activities, thereby expanding and strengthening the activity base. They encourage travellers to stay longer in, and explore the area, and will help to drive visitation to and expenditure within Glen Innes and the villages.

Strategic Direction 2: Continue to develop and promote the touring routes that feed into and traverse the Glen Innes Highlands

Actions		Key Tasks	
Strategy 3: Develop touring routes, self-guided tours and activity based trails.			
3.1	Work cooperatively with adjoining LGAs to develop and promote touring routes that feed into and through the GIH	3.1.1	Continue to work New England High Country to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Grow the motorcycle touring market, positioning Glen Innes as the hub for trail bike touring.Establish and promote the New England Highway as a touring route.Grow the car club, caravans and RVs and self-drive markets.
		3.1.2	Work with LGAs along the Gwydir Highway corridor to establish the Highway as a touring route. Work with the Kamilaroi Highway and Nature’s Way marketing groups to develop a touring loop linking the NSW North Coast and Southern Queensland (via New England Highway to Glen Innes) to Lightning Ridge and Bourke.
		3.1.3	Determine the future of Wilderness Way – and if it is to be a branded route, work with Clarence Valley Council, NPWS and Forestry Corporation to produce on-line and print promotional collateral, update maps with the Wilderness Way branding and advocate for DNSW to include the route as a ‘Road Trip’ on the visitnsw website.
		3.1.4	Work with LGAs along the Fossickers Way to revamp the information and promotional collateral for the route, including providing information on how and where to fossick.

Strategic Direction 2: Continue to develop and promote the touring routes that feed into and traverse the Glen Innes Highlands

Actions		Key Tasks	
3.2	Develop and promote self-guided tours and activity-based trails	3.1.5	Work with Clarence Valley Council to build the profile of the Old Glen Innes / Old Grafton Road as a touring route, with this positioned as a 'must do' ride / drive for the touring trail bike and 4WD markets.
		3.1.6	Work with Armidale Regional Council, NPWS and Forestry Corporation to develop and promote the Aberfoyle Track as an iconic touring route for the 4WD market.
		3.2.1	Restructure and re-brand Touring Route 11 as the Miners Way, offering two loops (Glen Innes, Emmaville, Deepwater – all sealed access; and the Emmaville – Torrington – Deepwater loop).
		3.2.2	Expand the 'Country Drives' offering – possibly including World Heritage, Granite Country, Back Road and Seasonal routes.
		3.2.3	Leverage the touring routes and country drives to develop and promote 3 to 7 day itineraries for travellers.
		3.2.4	Develop and promote activity-based trails targeted to special interest and activity-based markets including 4WD, trail bikes, road cycling, gravel grinding, mountain biking, bushwalking, paddling and horse riding.

Strategic Direction 3: Continue to develop and improve the attraction base of the Glen Innes Highlands

GIH needs both hero attractions to bring visitors into the area as well as a strong second tier of local attractions to keep visitors engaged; enhance their experience and encourage longer lengths of stay; and increase expenditure, repeat visitation, positive on-line reviews and word-of-mouth referrals.

Strategic Direction 3: Continue to develop and improve the attraction base of the Glen Innes Highlands

Actions		Key Tasks	
Strategy 4: Develop Strategic Direction projects maximising the potential of key attractions and assets			
4.1	Upgrade Centennial Parklands and diversify the range of attractions and activities on offer	4.1.1	Progressively implement the Plan of Management, including the development of the Sky Walk.
		4.1.2	Promote the Parklands as an event venue and increase the number and range of events held.
		4.1.3	Explore opportunities to introduce Celtic mythology – through art installations and story-telling.
		4.1.4	Increase the range of activities for young children, possibly building a grotto for Celtic faeries, a dragon’s lair, labyrinth or maze
4.2	Develop Stonehenge Reserve into an iconic attraction (for both the GIH and the NE Rail Trail) and event venue	4.2.1	Formulate a Plan of Management for the Reserve.
		4.2.2	Improve signage to the Reserve, including providing advanced warning signs on the New England Highway. Seek TASAC approval for a brown tourist sign.
		4.2.3	Formalise the track network – defining vehicle and walking / cycling tracks, including links with the proposed rail trail.
		4.2.4	Provide interpretation, explaining how the rock formations evolved.

Strategic Direction 3: Continue to develop and improve the attraction base of the Glen Innes Highlands

Actions		Key Tasks	
		4.2.5	Construct a new toilet block and upgrade / replace other visitor facilities
		4.2.6	Assess the feasibility of developing a large nature / wild play area.
		4.2.7	Promote the Reserve as a venue for bouldering.
		4.2.8	Promote the Reserve as an event venue.
		4.2.9	Strategic planting of trees with strong autumn colours to complement the Glen Innes Parklands and provide sufficient depth of product to promote the GIH as a destination to see the autumn colours.
4.3	Maximise the potential of the Beardy Woodlands Reserve	4.3.1	Position and promote the Reserve as the home of Australia's two monotremes – the echidna and the platypus.
		4.3.2	Formulate a Plan of Management and Masterplan for the Reserve with the Masterplan incorporating options to link the Woodlands to the Eerindii Ponds – Beardy Waters Dam precinct.
		4.3.3	Improve information and signage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name and mark the key trails and identify areas with good views. • Erect an information board including a map and information on the trails. • Provide interpretative signs, including information on the echidnas and platypus.
		4.3.4	Progressively upgrade visitor facilities.
			Assess the suitability of the trails for cycling (mountain bikes and hybrids)
		4.3.5	Assess the potential to expand the cluster of exotic trees to form a cold climate arboretum including featuring the national trees of the Celtic countries.
		4.3.6	Assess the potential to extend the trail network to include the western side of the River. This would require a pedestrian bridge across the river or access across the dam wall.
		4.3.7	Investigate the feasibility of providing a platypus viewing area
4.4	Support the development of the New England Rail Trail	4.3.8	Explore options for public art installations.
		4.4.1	Advocate for the development of the corridor from Glen Innes to Glencoe be included in the first stage of the trail development, with future extensions to Ben Lomond to link to the Armidale section and to Deepwater.
		4.4.2	Position Glen Innes as the northern trail head – with cycling tracks linking the railway station to the town centre and key attractions (Super Strawberry, Centennial Parklands, Big Blade, Eerindii Ponds (when developed)).
		4.4.3	Position Stonehenge Reserve and Glencoe and potentially (in the future) Deepwater, as attractions and activity nodes along the route.
4.5	Develop the Eerindii Ponds – Beardy Waters precinct as an iconic attraction and activity precinct for Glen Innes	4.5.1	Provide safe access to the upper reach of Beardy Waters Dam for sight-seeing and bird watching: provide a small parking area / lay bay on Shannon Vale Road at the Beardy Waters crossing and a viewing platform / board walk / bird hide.
		4.5.2	Prepare a concept plan and business case assessment for the precinct, from the Quarry through to the Dam, with consideration given to including walking trails, X-country and downhill mountain bike trails, a pump track, lookout, jetty / canoe launcher and accommodation (eg eco cabins, lodge, camping sites).

Strategic Direction 3: Continue to develop and improve the attraction base of the Glen Innes Highlands

Actions		Key Tasks	
		4.5.3	Link the Eerindii Ponds precinct to the Centennial Parklands and Beardy Woodlands trail networks, with a cycleway connection to the proposed NE Rail Trail.
Strategy 5: Continue to develop and enhance the Glen Innes Highlands' existing attractions			
5.1	Continue to expand the attraction base of the Glen Innes Parklands corridor	5.1.1	Develop and position the Parklands as the focal point for the Autumn colours, with the Park enhanced through temporary art installations and potentially a music and/or family event to celebrate the colours.
		5.1.2	Develop the Rocky Creek Pond Wetlands as a new attraction for the town.
5.2	Continue to develop and enhance the Land of Beardies History House Museum and Research Centre	5.2.1	Encourage the Museum to develop a strong point of difference to other local history museums – creating a 'must visit' attraction.
		5.2.2	Increase the focus on 'story-telling' using digital technology where suitable.
		5.2.3	Explore opportunities for 'selfie' photographs – to raise the profile of the Museum on social media.
		5.2.4	Assist the Museum to secure funding to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the machinery shed and display • Increase the number of events held at the Museum • Introduce digital technology to bring displays to 'life' • Establish a heritage garden
		5.2.5	Promote the Museum and its grounds as a function and events venue.
		5.2.5	Post COVID-19 work with the local museums to re-build the coach tour market.
5.3	Work with the Emmaville Mining Museum to ensure the Museum's future	5.3.1	Promote the Museum in conjunction with the Ottery Mine.
		5.3.2	Assist the Museum committee to update their Strategic Plan and formulate a Collection Policy, Business Plan and Succession Strategy.
		5.3.3	Assist the Museum to re-vamp its external presentation, signage, and merchandise displays to increase visitation and retail sales.
		5.3.4	Assist the Museum to secure funding to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek advice from a professional curator to work with the Museum to enhance their exhibits. • Record the knowledge and oral histories of the volunteers and other Emmaville residents and integrate this information into the Museum. • Introduce digital technology (including virtual and/or augmented reality) to tell the tin mining story – both past and present.
		5.3.5	Explore options for assistance / sponsorship from the Taronga Tin Mine project.
5.4	Continue to develop the Emmaville Courthouse Museum	5.4.1	Explore options for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a Chinese tribute garden adjacent to the Courthouse. • Story-telling – bringing some of the cases heard in the courthouse 'alive'. •
5.5	Glen Innes Art Gallery	5.5.1	Endeavor to raise the visibility of the Gallery through additional directional signage, flags on the footpath and possibly art installations along the Grey Street frontage of the Library building.

Strategic Direction 3: Continue to develop and improve the attraction base of the Glen Innes Highlands

Actions		Key Tasks	
		5.5.2	Determine the future of the Gallery (expand or relocate) and prepare a business / strategic plan and other documentation (including a Business Case Assessment) to enable GISC and/or the Gallery to take advantage of funding opportunities.
Strategy 6: Develop new products and experiences			
6.1	Encourage the development of Celtic country experiences	6.1.1	Grow existing events (eg Solstices, flag raisings) held at the Standing Stones.
		6.1.2	Assess the potential for additional events – eg pipe band festival or competition, Celtic music and dance festival / eisteddfod, Celtic games – possibly held at Stonehenge.
		6.1.3	Promote Stonehenge and other locations to historic re-enactment groups, encouraging them to hold events in the GIH.
		6.1.4	Endeavour to attract activities and businesses with a Celtic theme – eg a whiskey distillery, tartan weaver, bakery, clothing.
		6.1.5	Establish a Celtic food trail – work with local eateries to include Celtic food items on their menus.
		6.1.6	Explore options to developing an annual Celtic Film Festival – working with organisers of film festivals in Celtic countries to show these films in Australia.
		6.1.7	Explore with the Glen Innes Golf Club, the opportunity to recreate one or more of the iconic holes from high profile Scottish (or other Celtic Country) golf courses.
6.2	Grow agri-tourism	6.2.1	Encourage and support the development of appropriate farm stay accommodation and agri tourism attractions, activities, experiences and events.
		6.2.2	Showcase the GIH agricultural activities and produce through the Glen Innes VIC, other outlets and at events.
		6.2.3	Explore opportunities to bring specialist agricultural tours to the GIH.
		6.2.4	Explore opportunities to develop self-guided seasonal drives.
		6.2.5	Explore opportunities to introduce seasonal agri-based events.
6.3	Showcase local industries and economic activities	6.3.1	Showcase the GIH agricultural activities and industries in the Glen Innes VIC, embracing digital technology, including virtual reality experiences.
		6.3.2	Develop the 'Big Blade' into a visitor attraction – providing opportunities for 'selfies' as well as information about the significance of the GIH as a renewable energy generator.
		6.3.3	Assess opportunities to showcase the proposed Taronga Tin Mine – possibly through the occasional open-day, pre-booked tours for groups, an exhibit in the Emmaville Mining Museum and/or via virtual reality.
6.4	Develop Ngoorabul Country: Encourage and support the development of Aboriginal products and experiences	6.4.1	Encourage and support Aboriginal tourism initiatives.
		6.4.2	Encourage the re-opening / re-use of the Cooramah Aboriginal Cultural Centre.
		6.4.3	Assess opportunities arising from the First Nations event for further Aboriginal events and activities in the GIH.

Strategic Direction 3: Continue to develop and improve the attraction base of the Glen Innes Highlands

Actions		Key Tasks	
6.5	Develop arts and cultural tourism products and experiences	6.5.1	Work collaboratively with and leverage opportunities provided by Arts North West and surrounding LGAs to build arts-creative based tourism.
		6.5.2	Incorporate a strong arts-focus in place-making throughout the GIH, with this to include temporary and permanent art installations that reinforce key assets and themes
		6.5.3	Explore the potential of developing a community arts centre incorporating gallery and outdoor exhibition space and workshops.
		6.5.4	Assess the potential for a local art trail. This could include an 'open studio' trail / event.
		6.5.5	Build the arts workshops and activity markets (see Section 10.3.5)
		6.5.6	Develop the music and live entertainment scene including promoting the outdoor venues (eg GI Showground, GI and Deepwater Racecourses and Stonehenge) to commercial tour promoters as venues for large events.
		6.5.7	Leverage opportunities to promote and generate media coverage of local artists, artisans, events and activities.
		6.5.8	Continue to develop and promote arts-based events.
6.6	Establish the Regional Powerhouse Museum	6.6.1	Secure the site
		6.6.2	Complete the project planning, feasibility studies and business case assessments and secure funding and support.
		6.6.3	Explore the potential to include a renewable energy display, sponsored by the wind and solar farm operators.
6.7	Realise the potential of the State Forests	6.7.1	Work with the NSW Forestry Corporation to identify and assess localities within the State Forests suitable for a range of outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities.
		6.7.2	Investigate the feasibility of establishing a 'granite country forest walk' – a trail around the significant granite outcrop in the Mount Mitchell State Forest, accessed from the Old Grafton Road.
		6.7.3	Investigate opportunities to host events within the State Forests and promote suitable areas to event organisers.
		6.7.4	Assess the potential for foraging and mushrooming in the pine forests.



Strategic Direction 4: Adventure Country - Consolidate the GIH as a destination for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities

GIH is well-endowed with natural assets, with these assets supporting a range of outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities and providing one of the primary drivers of visitation to the GIH. There is opportunity to leverage these assets to deliver quality outdoor, adventure and nature-based products and experiences; to enable GIH to become a destination of choice for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities, for FIT travellers, and activity-based clubs and associations.

Strategic Direction 4: Adventure Country - Consolidate Glen Innes Highlands as a destination for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities

Actions		Key Tasks	
Strategy 7: Improve and expand the range of outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities available in the GIH			
7.1	Raise the profile of the GIH as a destination for bushwalking	7.1.1	Position and promote the Gibraltar – Washpool World Heritage Walk as a signature walk for both the GIH and the New England Region. Approach DNSW to include in their collection of ‘Great Hikes and Walks’ in NSW.
		7.1.2	Identify as ‘second tier’ of walks: Expand the information on hiking on the Glen Innes Highlands website to include the walks in Torrington SCA and Kings Plains National Parks and the short walks at Stonehenge Reserve and the Beardy Woodlands.
		7.1.3	Explore with Forestry Corporation opportunities to develop / promote walks in the State Forest – including developing a ‘granite country walk’ (see Action 6.7.2).
		7.1.4	Explore ways to capture and harness bushwalking-related user generated content.
		7.1.5	Promote rural and bushland retreats that include bushwalking as part of their product and activity base.
		7.1.6	Explore opportunities one or more fully accessible bushwalks.
7.2	Continue to improve fossicking product and experiences	7.2.1	Improve the presentation of the fossicking areas – signage, slashing / weed control, safe parking and signage.
		7.2.2	Promote ‘rock, mineral and fossil hunting’ as a complementary experience to fossicking. This requires no equipment and less patience and is a fun-based activity for children.
		7.2.3	Identify and promote fossicking and rock / mineral / fossil hunting sites in the Emmaville area and include in the fossicking brochure. Also include the Emmaville Gemarana Festival.
		7.2.4	Continue to work with the Fossickers Way marketing group to improve the information and promotional collateral. Include fossicking information on the Fossickers Way website and consider developing an App that provides instructions on how to fossick as well as a guide to identifying rocks, gemstones, minerals etc.
		7.2.5	Capitalise on opportunities to gain free publicity for fossicking in the GIH – for example, features / listings in regional school holiday activity promotions, contributing to fossicking forums and blogs, coverage on travelling with children websites etc.
		7.2.6	Investigate commercial opportunities for value-add - eg fossicking tours, jewellery making, boutique gem and mineral shows.
		7.2.7	Explore with the Forestry Corporation and private land holders, possible locations to send experienced fossickers.
7.3	Position the GIH as a destination of choice for inland fishing	7.3.1	Update the fishing brochure to include all rural accommodation properties that advertise fishing as part of their activity base. Also include the hotels in Emmaville and feature the fishing memorabilia at the Tattersalls Hotel.
		7.3.2	Endeavour to harness the various videos of fishing in the GIH that are available on You-tube.

Strategic Direction 4: Adventure Country - Consolidate Glen Innes Highlands as a destination for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities

Actions		Key Tasks	
		7.3.3	Package accommodation and fishing experiences and direct market to fishing clubs and organisations in NSW and Queensland.
		7.3.4	Lobby DNSW to include GIH fishing and the fishing retreats on its 'Fishing and Boating' webpage.
		7.3.5	Explore with DNSW and the DNCO opportunities to host a famil for fishing journalists and influential bloggers.
		7.3.6	Seek publicity regionally for the opening of the Murray Cod and Trout seasons.
		7.3.7	Explore with the fishing clubs in Glen Innes and Emmaville the possibility of providing fishing guides (a micro business) and/or hosting annual fishing competitions.
		7.3.8	Explore with the local fishing clubs and/or fishing enthusiasts, the possibility of establishing a fishing tour operation as a micro business.
		7.3.9	Invite specialist fishing guides (eg Australian Inland Fishing Charters) to bring tours to the GIH.
		7.3.10	Invite businesses that run fly fishing clinics (eg Aussie Fly Fisher) to run courses in the GIH.
		7.3.11	Explore with NSW Fisheries, opportunities to run school holiday fishing programs for children in the GIH.
7.4	Leverage all paddling opportunities	7.4.1	Expand the 'paddling' offer to include all accommodation properties that have large waterholes and reaches that are suitable for paddling. Also include opportunities in the Gibraltar Range National Park, Torrington SCA, Pindari Dam and along the Highland Rivers. Update website and produce a paddling guide.
		7.4.2	Approach Paddle NSW to input the information into the Paddle NSW / RMS Waterways Guide on-line directory.
		7.4.3	Explore options for providing access to Beardy Waters Dam for paddling.
		7.4.4	Identify a safe place to launch canoes at Beardy Woodlands; if needed improve access and provide appropriate signage.
		7.4.5	Investigate opportunities to provide canoe hire.
7.5	Grow cycle tourism	7.5.1	Support the development of the New England Rail Trail.
		7.5.2	Formulate a cycle tourism strategy.
		7.5.3	Promote trails at Stonehenge, Beardy Woodlands and Centennial Parklands as 'easy' rides for the family market and recreational riders.
		7.5.4	Develop road cycling and gravel grinding experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and promote a range of road cycling and gravel grinding routes and prepare route notes. • Post the routes on cycling websites (eg bicyclensw; strava). • Package and promote to cycling clubs within the surrounding region. • Work with DNSW / DNCO to bring influential cycling journalists and bloggers to review the cycling experience. • Approach Audax Australia and other organisations that organise long distance and charity rides to include the GIH in itineraries and/or bring events to the GIH.

Strategic Direction 4: Adventure Country - Consolidate Glen Innes Highlands as a destination for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities

Actions		Key Tasks	
		7.5.5	Diversify the MTB product available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position the World Heritage trail as a 'must do' MTB experience. • Promote the trails in the Butterleaf National Park and adjoining State Forest which area approved for mountain biking. • Liaise with Forestry Corporation to identify potential MTB and gravel grinding trails in the State Forests within the GIH. • Liaise with NPWS to identify suitable trails for MTB and/or gravel grinding in the smaller National Parks and Torrington SCA. • Explore with rural accommodation properties, opportunities for mountain biking on their properties. • Include MTB trails and pump track and/or skills park in the Eerindii Ponds development. • Assess the potential to build a downhill flow track in Centennial Parklands. • List the trails in GIH on key trail and MTB websites – eg Strava, Trail Forks
		7.5.6	Explore opportunities to leverage / value add to, the Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic.
		7.7	Promote the GIH as a destination for trail running and adventure racing
		7.7.1	Identify localities within the GIH that are suitable for trail running and adventure racing and map these on key trail and trail running websites – eg Trail Forks.
		7.7.2	Leverage the Washpool World Heritage Trail Race to raise the profile of the GIH as a destination for trail running, adventure racing and other similar sports.
		7.7.3	Target trail running clubs and commercial trail running and adventure racing organisers, inviting them to hold events in the GIH.
7.8	Continue to develop and promote bird watching.	7.8.1	Continue to update the GIH bird list including incorporating information from the Glenrac's list of rare and endangered birds.
		7.8.2	List the Highland bird watching sites and provide a link to the Highland's bird brochures on key birding web sites.
		7.8.3	Identify, signpost and promote bird watching sites / routes in the Emmaville area.
		7.8.4	Improve access to Beardy Waters Dam from Shannon Vale Road.
		7.8.5	Provide information on / links to, bird identification apps.
		7.8.6	Capture and use bird-related user generated content.
		7.8.7	Direct market to bird-watching clubs and groups.
		7.8.8	Target / bid for bird watching congresses and conferences.
		7.8.9	Approach specialist bird tour and bird photography operators to explore opportunities to bring tours to the GIH.
7.9	Grow the 4WD market	7.9.1	Position Old Grafton Road and the Aberfoyle Track as signature (must drive) routes for the 4WD market.
		7.9.2	Identify and document second tier routes and experiences - work with NPWS and the Forestry Corporation to identify and 'grade' the best 4WD trails in the National Parks and State Forests within the GIH.
		7.9.3	Identify properties (eg Bullock Mountain, Bens Fall Retreat) suitable for 4WD enthusiasts and promote as part of the product base.
		7.9.4	Develop a 4WD brochure, video clips and information kit, and include 4WD trails on the GIH website.
		7.9.5	Work with DNSW / DNCO to bring influential 4WD journalists and bloggers to review the 4WD experiences on offer.

Strategic Direction 4: Adventure Country - Consolidate Glen Innes Highlands as a destination for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities

Actions		Key Tasks	
		7.9.6	Direct market to 4WD Clubs and associations in NSW and Queensland.
		7.9.7	Promote the GIH as a venue for 4WD club rallies and jamborees.
		7.9.8	Encourage the development of a commercial 4WD park and/or tracks on private property (eg ADOs 4WD course in the Warrumbungle Shire).
		7.9.9	Encourage the establishment of a local 4WD and/or tag-along tour operator.
		7.9.10	Explore ways to capture and harness 4WD-related user generated content.
7.10	Continue to grow motorcycle touring - leverage the New England Motorcycle touring initiatives to encourage bikers to stay longer in the area.	7.10.1	Building on the popularity of the Old Grafton / Old Glen Innes touring route and the gravel roads connecting the Waterfall Way to Glen Innes, position and promote the GIH as the hub for trail bike touring – developing and promoting a network of secondary touring routes and ride localities (eg State Forests) within the GIH.
		7.10.2	Prepare a 'Rides Guide' to the GIH – including sealed and unsealed touring routes and the National Parks, Torrington SCA and State Forests 4WD trails and other areas where trail bike riding is permitted.
		7.10.3	Endeavour to post the rides on the NSW Government Ride to Live website.
		7.10.4	Endeavour to attract motorcycle rallies and charity rides.
		7.10.5	Explore opportunities to introduce a trail bike event similar to the North Star trail ride.
		7.10.6	Assess whether State Forests in the GIH are suitable for motorcycle enduro events, and if so, market these locations to motorcycle clubs within the surrounding region.
		7.10.7	Explore ways to capture and harness trail bike-related user generated content.
		7.10.8	Encourage / support the development of a trail bike park.
7.11	Grow horse riding and horse sports	7.11.1	Identify and package horse riding opportunities in the GIH and direct market these to horse riding clubs and associations within the surrounding region.
		7.11.2	Holiday with your horse: Promote opportunities for horse-owners to have a short-break / holiday with their horse within the GIH.
		7.11.3	Build the horse events market – working with the local clubs and committees to grow existing events and to attract additional events to the GIH.
		7.11.4	Assess the need for additional facilities (eg: a covered arena, cross country course) to support and stimulate growth in equine events.
		7.11.5	Develop a multi-day trail riding event, similar in concept to the Weddin Mountains Muster. The trails that the GI Endurance Club uses in their 'Ride the Range' event may be suitable for trail ride event.
7.12	Promote rock sports as an Adventure Country activity	7.12.1	Identify and package designated / approved rock climbing and bouldering sites in the GIH and direct market to rock climbing clubs and groups.
		7.12.2	Assess the potential to host a bouldering event at Stonehenge Reserve, possibly working with the UNE Outdoor Adventure Club.

Strategic Direction 4: Adventure Country - Consolidate Glen Innes Highlands as a destination for outdoor, adventure and nature-based activities

Actions		Key Tasks	
7.13	Assess the potential for motorsports in the GIH	7.13.1	Explore with the Glen Innes Motor Sports Club (GIMSC), opportunities for motorsports (on and off-road and track based) within the GIH.
		7.13.2	Assist the GIMSC and Glen Innes Motorcycle Club secure a suitable site for the development of a motor sports complex.
7.14	Aviation Tourism	7.14.1	Prepare a Master Plan for Glen Innes Airport, with the feasibility of aviation and motor sports tourism assessed as part of the planning process.
		7.14.2	Continue to pursue opportunities to attract a flight training operation.

Strategic Direction 5: Grow the Events Sector – focusing on events that support the Highland’s key product themes

Events form part of GIH attraction and activity base and are a significant generator of visitation. Locally they are part of the cultural and social fabric of the area, providing an opportunity to bring people together. For visitors, events provide a reason to visit – they are essentially a ‘call to action’. Events also generate publicity and focus attention on the area, enhance the lifestyle and play a role in the ‘tree change’ process.

Strategic Direction 5: Grow the Events Sector – focusing on events that support the Highland’s key product themes

Actions		Key Tasks	
Strategy 8: Provide a framework that facilitates and supports events			
8.1	Provide a positive regulatory environment.	8.1.1	Ensure that the provisions of the GIS LEP, Plans of Management and other planning instruments allow for events in a variety of locations (eg parks and reserves and on rural properties) reserves, and permit temporary structures and event-related facilities and services.
8.2	Formulate event guidelines for use by event organisers.	8.2.1	Prepare an event manual / event guidelines, articulating the policies and procedures relating to the development approval process, road closures and traffic management, parking, signage, insurance, GISC support etc
8.3	Define coordination and communication protocols within GISC	8.3.1	Ensure that all event enquiries are directed to a nominated GISC Officer with this position supported by an internal communications protocol to ‘streamline’ the event approval process.
8.4	Provide infrastructure for event signs.	8.4.1	Provide signage infrastructure within the villages to advertise up-coming events.
8.5	Continue to provide marketing support for events.	8.5.1	Continue to maintain the GIH Event calendar and encourage tourism and hospitality business operators to include a link to the calendar on their website and/or social media sites.
		8.5.2	Continue to list relevant events on the ATDW / NSW Connect data bases and relevant third-party websites and regional event and ‘what’s on’ guides and directories.

Strategic Direction 5: Grow the Events Sector – focusing on events that support the Highland’s key product themes

Actions		Key Tasks	
8.6	Develop a venue data base	8.5.3	Continue to send out regular ‘what’s on’ e.blasts to local and regional media, accommodation operators, VICs in the surrounding area and other interested parties.
		8.5.4	Promote events through social media channels.
		8.5.5	Explore opportunities to encourage and harness user generated content.
		8.6.1	Undertake a venue audit to identify and document venue capacity and the facilities and services available. The audit should include existing venues and assets that could potentially be used for events (eg Stonehenge Reserve, State Forests). Information needs to be collated on the type of activities that the venue / asset that could be held, facilities available, capacity, power and water supply, lighting, fencing – security, any specific rules / regulations, contact details etc.
		8.6.2	Develop a comprehensive venue data base and possibly a Venue Guide, with a summary included on the GIH website with a link to download the Guide.
8.7	Continue to improve facilities at, and increase the use of, event venues	8.7.1	Assist and support venue operators to develop masterplans / venue plans / business cases to assess the improvements needed, with these plans suitable for use in grant applications.
		8.7.2	Assist venue managers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Secure grant funding o Attract and host event o Market and promote their venue to potential user groups
		8.7.3	List suitable venues on the DNSW regional conferencing data base and other relevant on-line directories.

Strategy 9: Grow events-based visitation and visitor expenditure

9.1	Grow existing events	9.1.1	Continually review and revamp the Highland’s signature events to ensure that they do not become stale or repetitive.
		9.1.2	Assess local events to determine if they have the potential to be ‘grown’ into signature events for Highland and if so, work with the organisers to formulate and implement a growth strategy / business plan
		9.1.3	Explore opportunities to offer event packages – including direct marketing the packages to special interest groups and coach companies.
9.2	Grow the business events sector	9.2.1	Participate in relevant DNSW initiatives to grow the regional conference and business event markets.
		9.2.2	Leverage unique venues (eg Bens Falls Retreat) and the opening of new venues (eg Convent Conference Centre, Centennial Parklands Function Centre) to raise the profile of Glen Innes as a destination for conferences and meetings
		9.2.3	Advocate to host regional meetings in the GIH.
		9.2.4	Target / bid association conferences, focusing on those that have a connection (eg agriculture, land and water management) with the GIH.
9.3	Increase the number of events held in the GIH.	9.3.1	Organise / attract events that leverage outdoor assets (eg road network, State Forests, National Parks, Crown Reserves, Showground, racecourses etc)
		9.3.2	Introduce new events – eg Celtic themes events, arts and creative, alternative and/or heritage based building skills expo.

Strategic Direction 5: Grow the Events Sector – focusing on events that support the Highland’s key product themes

Actions		Key Tasks	
		9.3.3	Explore opportunities to host events that celebrate / showcase local produce and industries.
		9.3.4	Encourage and work with local organisations to bid for regional, state and possibly national events.
		9.3.5	Identify and target footloose events (eg car, caravan and motorcycle rallies, 4WD jamborees, concerts etc) that could potentially be held in the GIH.
		9.3.6	Direct market venues to clubs and organisations and commercial event organisers, inviting them to hold events in Glen Innes Highlands
		9.3.7	Target regional school events that the GIH has the capacity to host (eg Cross Country carnivals)
		9.3.8	Partner with other localities in the New England Region and along the touring route corridors, to develop and promote festivals and events (eg Autumn, Festival, Racing Carnival, golf tournament circuit).
		9.3.9	Grow the wedding and function markets – leveraging the Highland’s boutique and unique venues and stunning locations.
9.4	Encourage event attendees to spend money within the GIH.	9.4.1	Encourage event organisers to list accommodation available and include a link to the tourism website on their event website and/or facebook page as well as the tourism website address on all their correspondence and in the event program.
		9.4.2	Provide event organisers with lists of accommodation properties and eateries, to send out / attach to their event information / entry form.
		9.4.3	Provide Visitor Guides / town and village information for event organisers to distribute at the event and if possible, include promotional vouchers and value-add offers from local businesses.

Strategic Direction 6: Ensure that the infrastructure, facilities and services needed to support growth of the visitor economy are in place.

Continue to improve infrastructure, facilities and services to meet the needs and expectations of users and facilitate and support growth in the visitor economy.

Strategic Direction 6: Ensure that the infrastructure, facilities and services needed to support growth of the visitor economy are in place.

Actions		Key Tasks	
Strategy 10: Increase the capacity of the accommodation sector			
10.1	Improve and expand the accommodation base of the GIH	10.1.1	Encourage the development of additional motel (4+ star) and serviced apartment accommodation in Glen Innes.
		10.1.2	Encourage motels and caravan parks to continue to up-grade their properties, including their external facades and grounds.
		10.1.3	Continue to encourage the development of boutique, unique and specialist accommodation in rural areas (eg glamping, tiny houses, eco cabins, converted farm buildings).
		10.1.4	Encourage farm stay properties to diversify and/or enhance their ‘offer’ – promoting accommodation plus on-farm activities.
		10.1.5	Continue to improve facilities and infrastructure for the touring caravan, RV and camping markets

Strategic Direction 6: Ensure that the infrastructure, facilities and services needed to support growth of the visitor economy are in place.

Actions		Key Tasks	
10.2	Continue to improve the on-line presence of accommodation properties	10.1.6	Ensure that planning controls / Plans of Management permit temporary accommodation for events.
		10.1.7	Assess the feasibility of incorporating accommodation in the Eerindii Ponds / Beardy Waters Dam precinct.
		10.2.1	Encourage Accommodation operators to make more effective use of web-based and digital marketing including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating their own websites and include real time booking facilities. • Use of social media. • List on the higher profile accommodation booking websites. • Maintain their listing on the DNSW State Tourism Data Warehouse data base. • Utilise free / low cost listings on tourism and third party websites. • Utilise web-based resource material on DNSW, Tourism Australia and business support sites.
		10.2.2	Encourage pub hotels with refurbished rooms to list on pubrooms.com.au and other pub hotel accommodation directories.
		10.2.3	Provide content and images on Glen Innes Highlands that accommodation properties can include on their websites.
10.3	Encourage improvements to customer service levels	10.3.1	Continue to advise operators of training programs and industry briefing workshops held throughout the Region as well as the training resources available on-line.
		10.3.2	Identify skills gaps and training needs and access training programs.

Strategy 11: Continue to expand and improve information services, ensuring that information on the GIH is available from multiple touch points at all stages of the path to purchase and the journey.

11.1	Continue to develop the Glen Innes VIC as a key attraction for the town and a visitor service hub.	11.1.1	Evolve the Glen Innes VIC into a 'next generation' centre enhancing the experiences offered, telling the GIH 'stories', showcasing economic activities and local produce and products, and enhancing the delivery of information
11.2	Continue to improve and expand the range of information and promotional collateral available	11.2.1	Produce brochures, information, maps etc to promote and support scenic drives, trails, attractions and activities. Ensure that key brochures and maps are downloadable from the tourism website.
		11.2.2	Develop information kits to support targeted marketing to special interest and activity-based markets (eg bushwalking, 4WD etc).
		11.2.3	Continually update video clips, images and display material.
		11.2.4	Erect comprehensive information directories at strategic locations in the villages
		11.2.5	Develop an on-line business and services directory with this accessible from the Glen Innes Highlands tourism website.
11.3	Continue to improve the GIH on-line presence	11.3.1	Continue to enhance the Glen Innes Highlands tourism website, incorporating video clips, itinerary planner and booking platform.
		11.3.2	Seek funding to develop the proposed digital platform incorporating itinerary planning and direct booking functions.
		11.3.3	Increase the use of social media to raise awareness of the GIH and 'drive' traffic to the Glen Innes Highlands website.
		11.3.4	Progressively build consumer data bases to be used for distribution of information, direct marketing, promotional offers etc.

Strategic Direction 6: Ensure that the infrastructure, facilities and services needed to support growth of the visitor economy are in place.

Actions		Key Tasks	
11.4	Continue to build product knowledge and sales skills	11.3.5	Improve and expand Glen Innes Highlands content on third party websites – including touring route sites and special interest and activity-based sites.
		11.3.6	Continue to improve the Glen Innes Highlands content on GIHVA, local operator, event and other relevant websites.
		11.3.7	Increase exposure of individual products, services and facilities: Encourage operators to list on free and low cost tourism, travel and other relevant websites and directories.
		11.4.1	Continue to expand the knowledge and skills of VIC staff, including undertaking property inspections and famils.
		11.4.2	Provide opportunities for tourism and business operators to expand their product knowledge. Work with GIHVA and other groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host networking functions, with operators invited to showcase their product / services. • Encourage new operators to hold a briefing function / open day for other existing operators. • Host familiarisation tours and/or take new operators / accommodation managers on guided tours of the GIH.

Strategy 12: Improve access infrastructure.

12.1	Recognise that road conditions will influence visitation levels and travel patterns.	12.1.1	Ensure that implications for tourism are assessed in developing road construction and maintenance programs and priorities. The most significant roads from a tourism perspective are listed in Section 12.4.1.
		12.1.2	Improve access to key localities / sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Tent Hill Road between Emmaville and Torrington to 2WD standard and advocate for the sealing of this route. • Improve access to Stonehenge Reserve
12.2	Improve access to rivers and waterways.	12.2.1	Identify, improve and signpost river access points in close proximity to Glen Innes and the villages.

Strategy 13: Ensure that signage is effective and contributes positively to the image of the area.

13.1	Improve signage throughout the GIH.	13.1.1	Undertake a comprehensive signage audit and formulate and progressively implement a signage improvement plan.
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Strategy 14: Increase access telecommunications infrastructure and services.

14.1	Improve mobile and broadband services across the GIH.	14.1.1	Continue to advocate for improved mobile telephone coverage throughout the GIH.
		14.1.2	Promote free Wifi locations to travellers.
		14.1.3	In the accommodation directory, include information on availability of broadband / wifi at each of the accommodation properties.

Strategy 15: Continue to improve visitor facilities

15.1	Ensure that the parks, gardens and reserves are well presented and maintained.	15.1.1	Continue to maintain and improve the presentation of parks, gardens and reserves, both to enhance the visual impact and appeal of the locality and to encourage travellers to stop.
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Strategic Direction 6: Ensure that the infrastructure, facilities and services needed to support growth of the visitor economy are in place.

Actions		Key Tasks	
15.2	Continue to provide and maintain public toilets in strategic locations.	15.2.1	Ensure that public toilets throughout the GIH are clean and well maintained and signposted using the international facility symbols.
		15.2.3	List accessible toilets on inclusive / accessible tourism and other related websites.
15.3	Cater for electric vehicles (EV).	15.3.1	Ensure that the Glen Innes EV charging stations is well signposted and listed on relevant on-line directories.
		15.3.2	As the need increases, encourage accommodation operators to provide charging facilities.
		15.3.3	If the rail trail becomes operational, provide a charging station for e.bikes.

Strategic Direction 7: Continue to build industry capacity

Allied with product and infrastructure development is the need to increase the skills of tourism and business operators and their staff. The marketplace is evolving, and tourism and business operators need to keep abreast of changes. Tourism and business operators need to be highly active in the digital space, with this space used to communicate, build relationships, market and promote, and 'make the sale'. Tourism operators need to be responsive to changing needs and expectations, recognising that customers are becoming more sophisticated and demanding and less tolerant of inferior customer service. It is also essential that retailers and service providers have a strong online presence and travellers looking for goods and services are increasingly searching on-line.

Strategic Direction 7: Continue to build industry capacity

Actions		Key Tasks	
Strategy 16: Continue to provide opportunities for industry training and development			
16.1	Encourage tourism and retail operators to continue to build their business, customer service and marketing skills	16.1.1	Continue to work with business organisations, operators and training service providers to identify skills gaps and the type of training programs needed within the GIH and develop strategy / approach to deliver appropriate programs.
		16.1.2	Encourage businesses to participate in GISC’s business development and marketing initiatives; generate publicity about initiative outcomes; and showcase local innovate businesses and business operators.
		16.1.3	Continue to keep GIHVA and tourism and business operators informed of the on-line training resources available from DNSW and other agencies as well as relevant grant programs.
		16.1.4	Encourage all businesses to claim their Google business listing.
16.2	Promote training and career opportunities	16.2.1	Participate in the High School / TAFE work experience and VET Programs, working with operators to provide experience in the VIC, accommodation properties, Chapel Theatre, eateries and other hospitality businesses.

Strategic Direction 8: Market growth and development supported by effective marketing and promotion

Market development needs to focus on consolidating and building the GIH primary target markets and capitalising on cost effective opportunities to build secondary markets. This will be supported by effective marketing and promotion. The primary target markets are touring travellers (self-drive, caravans, RVs and motorcycles), the regional market, (day trippers, short breaks and VFR), special interest and activity-based markets, and event attendees

Strategic Direction 8: Market growth and development supported by effective marketing and promotion

Actions		Key Tasks	
Strategy 17: Build destination awareness			
17.1	Maximise the use of marketing resources, leveraging opportunities to influence buying decisions:	17.1.1	Continue to work collaboratively with NEHC and the NEJO to raise the profile of and drive visitation to the New England Region.
		17.1.2	Leverage opportunities afforded by DNSW and DNCO to generate exposure for the GIH.
		17.1.3	Work with surrounding GIHs to develop touring routes, products and experiences and target niche markets.
		17.1.4	Coordinate GISC and GIHVA marketing activities to align and reinforce communication messages and maximise exposure for the GIH.
		17.1.5	Leverage opportunities provided by the NPWS and Forestry Corporation websites, social media channels and marketing initiatives.
17.2	Increase the GIH digital footprint.	17.2.1	Implement the GIH brand strategy – delivering consistent and compelling ‘story-lines’ and images on the GIH six product pillars.
		17.2.2	Continue to improve / evolve the Glen Innes Highlands website.
		17.2.3	Increase social media activities to communicate directly with and inspire and motivate consumers and drive traffic to the GIH website.
		17.2.4	Continue to implement digital marketing campaigns.
		17.2.5	Seek funding to develop a digital tourism platform that integrates itinerary planning and bookings.
		17.2.6	Monitor and harness user generated content.
		17.2.7	Leverage opportunities provided by third-party websites and social media channels – listing relevant Highland products and experiences, improving content, providing quality images and video clips.
		17.2.8	Encourage local tourism and business operators, community groups and event organisers to develop / update their websites, embrace social media, and to list on free / low-cost directories and third party websites.
17.3	Support digital marketing with strategic off-line marketing initiatives.	17.3.1	Continue to expand and enhance print and display collateral.
		17.3.2	Undertake strategic television, radio and print advertising to tap into the regional NE-NW, NSW North Coast and Southern Queensland markets.
		17.3.3	Leverage PR marketing opportunities – utilising the regional media as well as DNSW and DNCO channels.
		17.3.4	Participate in relevant DNSW, DNCO and NEHC familiarisation programs.
		17.3.5	Undertake direct, targeted marketing to special interest and activity-based enthusiasts, clubs, and associations (see Strategy 18).

Strategic Direction 8: Market growth and development supported by effective marketing and promotion

Actions		Key Tasks	
		17.3.6	Ensure that the GIH is represented at key travel, caravan and camping and lifestyle shows in Sydney, regional NSW, Brisbane and Southern Queensland.
Strategy 18: Build key markets			
18.1	Grow the drive-based touring market: car-based, caravans and RV's, motorcycles	18.1.1	Continue to work collaboratively as part of New England High Country and the NEJO to build the touring markets.
		Strategic Direction 2	Develop and promote the touring routes that feed into and through the GIH – See Priority 2)
		Action 7.10	Position the GIH as the hub for trail bike touring.
		18.1.2	Attract drive-based events and activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caravan and motorhome club rallies and events • Motorcycle rallies and charity rides • Car and 4WD club rallies, jamborees and other events.
18.2	Grow the regional market focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering the opportunity for families and groups of friends to escape: to be outdoors, get back to basics, reconnect and have fun. • Bringing residents and their VFR into the GIH for events and activities. • Positioning the GIH as a day out and shortbreak destination for social groups. 	18.2.1	Raise the profile Glen Innes Highlands within the surrounding region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use PR marketing to place stories in the regional media. • Leverage social media and user generated content to raise awareness. • Use both the Tourism and GISC social media sites to communicate with the regional media (journalists are increasingly using social media sites to generate ideas for stories). • Ensure that Highland events and activities are listed in regional 'what's on' directories and programs and seek media coverage in the lead-up to and during the events. • Explore 'quirky' opportunities to generate interest and media coverage.
		18.2.2	Work with accommodation and business operators to develop and promote 'short-break' packages.
		18.2.3	Work with local businesses to raise the profile of shopping and dining opportunities within the GIH
		18.2.4	Target and direct market the GIH to clubs and social groups within the surrounding region – those that organise day and short trips.
		18.2.5	Direct market GIH venues to potential users and relevant interest groups; encouraging sporting clubs and commercial promoters to hold a 'round' or 'leg' of a sporting event in the GIH.
		18.2.6	Package and value-add to entertainment events being held in GIS .

Strategic Direction 8: Market growth and development supported by effective marketing and promotion

Actions	Key Tasks
<p>18.3 Build special interest and activity-based markets, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush walkers - walking groups • Fossickers • Cyclists – road, gravel grinding, mountain-biking • 4WD and trail-bikers • Anglers • Paddlers • Bird watchers • Horse riders / equine sports • Golfers 	<p>Use the GIHs assets and facilities to grow special interest and activity-based markets – clubs, individuals and social groups - targeting these groups primarily through direct marketing online, and PR in specialist publications and on specialist websites.</p> <p>Basically, the same approach can be used to grow the different special interest markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the activities, attractions, facilities and/or services available in the GIH and surrounding region that the market is likely to be interested in. • Package these into itineraries and products. • Use the internet to identify associations, clubs, event organisers etc – develop a data base. • Direct marketing to clubs and associations. • Conduct follow-up. • Support the direct marketing with public relations and social media marketing – seeking to place articles in relevant magazines, newsletters and websites and post on social media sites. • List on free directories and websites relevant to the interest / activity and participate in forums. • Include relevant information on the tourism website and seek links to relevant activity-based sites.
<p>18.4 Re-build the coach and group tour market (Post-COVID)</p>	<p>18.4.1 Work with accommodation operators, the Museums, and other local attractions to re-build the coach and group tour markets.</p>
<p>18.5 Grow the accessible (inclusive) tourism market</p>	<p>18.5.1 Undertake research to develop an understanding of market needs and expectations.</p>
	<p>18.5.2 Continue to improve access through the implementation of the GIS Disability Inclusion Action Plan.</p>
	<p>18.5.3 Evaluate the GIH accommodation, products, facilities and infrastructure to assess suitability and capacity. Identify ‘accessible ready’ products and infrastructure as well as the work required to upgrade other products and infrastructure.</p>
	<p>18.5.4 Review inclusive tourism initiatives being undertaken in the surrounding region and identify opportunities to work collaboratively to build the market.</p>
	<p>18.5.5 Develop targeted information and promotional collateral - including video clips, images and specifications and include information on the Glen Innes Highlands website (see www.shoalhaven.com/inclusive as an example).</p>
	<p>18.5.6 If there is sufficient accessible / inclusive product and facilities, direct market to disability / inclusive travel wholesalers and retailers and disability service providers.</p>

17. MONITORING

It is important that GISC monitor the effectiveness of its tourism development and marketing activities. This will assist in:

- Providing an indication of whether the strategies and actions are effective in building visitation and/or achieving economic growth. Ineffective actions can be terminated or modified.
- Setting priorities and allocating funds and resources.
- Providing data to support funding applications. This is particularly important where funding for the extension of an existing program is being sought.

Potential indicators include:

- Progress of product and infrastructure development projects.
- Grant funding secured.
- Value of new / additional investment in the tourism facilities (accommodation, attractions, tours etc) within the GIH.
- TRA visitor statistics – NE-NW Region and GIH Profiles.
- Visitor statistics collected at the Glen Innes VIC.
- Website, social media and itinerary planner – booking tool analytics.
- Media coverage gained (track amount of coverage and the dollar value).
- Familiarisation tours hosted and the resultant coverage.
- Performance statistics from the GISC controlled venues – including the Glen Innes Showground and Emmaville Caravan Park. GISC could require community groups and event organisers to provide visitor statistics as part of GISC funding agreements.
- Feedback from GIHVA / individual operators on visitation, occupancy rates, trends in turnover etc.
- Traffic count data.
- Growth in local events: number of events held; number of attendees.
- Number of events attracted to the GIH, and the number of participants and room nights generated.
- Number of coach and other tour groups attracted, tour participants and nights spent in the GIH.
- The business / industry development activities held, the number of participants and the outcomes achieved.

For some initiatives, particularly in the areas of market development, it may take several years before the results are fully realised.



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PHOTOS - SOURCE AND CREDITS

Page	Position	Description	Source / Credits
Cover	Top	Autumn in Glen Innes	Glen Innes Highlands
	Bottom Left	Fossicking	Glen Innes Highlands
	Bottom Middle	Australian Standing Stones	Glen Innes Highlands
	Bottom Right	Fishing	Drop Bear Lures – Turtle
ii		Stonehenge Reserve	GISC
iii		Ngoorabul Welcome to Country	Glen Innes Highlands
iv	Top	Balancing Rock	Glen Innes Highlands
iv	Bottom	Autumn Colours	Glen Innes Highlands - Facebook
1	Top	Deepwater Brewing	Deepwater Brewery - Facebook
1	Bottom	The Makers Shed, Glen Innes	The Makers Shed - Facebook
2		Motor Cycles outside of the Grand Central Hotel	Jenny Rand & Associates
3		Australian Standing Stones, Glen Innes	Wotif
5		Gibraltar Range National Park	NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service
6		Fossicking, Glen Innes Highlands	Glen Innes Highlands
9		Boundary Falls	Glen Innes Highlands
11		Dandahra Crags, Gibraltar Range National Park	Glen Innes Highlands - Facebook
12	Left	Washpool National Park	Queensland and Beyond
12	Right	Granite Country - Stonehenge Reserve	Jenny Rand & Associates
14		Fishing – River Glen BnB	Glen Innes Highlands
15		Celtic Country	MX-5 Club of Queensland
16		Mystery Face Torrington SCA	LookANDsee
17	Top	Camping – Gibraltar Range National Park	Queensland and Beyond
17	Bottom	Mountain Biking – World Heritage Track	Glen Innes Highlands
18		Waterloo Station Homestead	Visit NSW
20		Glen Innes Convent	Trip Advisor
24		Glen Innes Ceramics Centre	Jenny Rand & Associates
25		Old Glen Innes / Old Grafton Road	CamperMate
32	Top	Motorcycle Touring	Glen Innes Highlands
32	Bottom	Glen Innes Rotary Charity Bike Race	Australian Rotary Health
37		Camping at Glen Innes Showground	Thegreynomads.activeboard.com
38		Stonehenge Reserve	Visit NSW
40		Adaptive bushwalking – freedom wheelchairs	Wonderfulengineering.com/freedom-wheelchair
44		Australian Celtic Festival	Glen Innes Highlands
45	Top	Paddling – Beardy Waters	Glen Innes Highlands
45	Middle	Trail Bike Touring	Glen Innes Highlands
45	Bottom	Gravel Grinding	Glen Innes Highlands

Page	Position	Description	Source / Credits
46		Glen Innes Town Hall	Glen Innes Highlands
50	Left	Emmaville Mining Museum	Emmaville Mining Museum
50	Top Right	Entrance to the Ottery Mine	Interest @bearded_baron1
50	Bottom Right	Emmaville Courthouse Museum	Jenny Rand & Associates
51		Red Lion Tavern, Glencoe	Glencoe NSW - Place Advisor
53		Map: Fossickers Way Touring Route	www.fossickersway.com
54		Horse trails	Glen Innes Endurance Riding Club
55		Old Glen Innes / Old Grafton Road	Glen Innes Highlands
56	Top	Bouldering at Stonehenge Reserve	www.thecrag.com
56	Bottom	Beardy Waters Reserve and Dam	Glen Innes Highlands
63		Farm Shed – Glen Gowrie Distillery	Glen Gowrie Distillery - Facebook
65		Koala Black Garlic	www.gillensgarlic.com
66		Glen Innes Wind Farm	Glen Innes Wind Farm
67		Artist: Lloyd Gawura Hornsby	Gawura Gallery - Facebook
68		Historic engines – proposed Power Museum	Power Museum Committee
69		Aberfoyle Track - Lookout	www.whichcar.com.au
70	Top	Fishing – Bens Falls on the Severn River	Bens Falls Retreat – Facebook
70	Bottom	Hiking the World Heritage Trail	Awildland.blogspot
76		Grafton to Inverell Cycle Classic	www.graftontoinverell.com.au
77		Bird – Glen Innes Highlands	Glen Innes Highlands
78		4WD Washpool National Park	www.whichcar.com.au
79		Motorcycle Touring – Gwydir Highway	www.practicalmotoring.com.au
80		Horse Riding – Three Waters Holidays	Trip Advisor
82		Australian Celtic Festival	Australian Celtic Festival
83		Deepwater Picnic Races	Glen Innes Highlands
87		Road Trip - New England Highway	www.adventuresallaround.com.au
89		Confusing Touring Route Signage - Emmaville	Jenny Rand & Associates
90		Bens Falls Retreat Function Centre	www.AbFabTours.com.au
91		Centennial Parklands – Australian Standing Stones	GIHVA - Facebook
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107	Left	The Big Blade, Glen Innes	Jenny Rand & Associates
107	Right	Alpacas, Glen Innes	Jenny Rand & Associates
121		Rotunda – Glen Innes Parklands	Glen Innes Highlands
125		Washpool National Park	Glen Innes Highlands



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: PRODUCT AUDIT – ATTRACTIONS ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

A1.1 Adventure Country – by Locality

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
Adventure Country – Listed by Locality				
National Parks / Nature Reserves / State Conservation Areas	Washpool National Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camping areas • Day Use / Picnic areas • Walking trails • Granite Lookout • Creeks for swimming • Waterfalls – Lyrebird, Duffer, Summit Creek • Wildlife and birds 	Camping Picnicking Bush walking / hiking Mountain biking Trail Running Bird watching Swimming Horse riding (own horse)	Washpool World Heritage Trail Race	Four Bull Hut – can camp with horses. Supports the National Bicentennial Trail.
	Gibraltar Range National Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camping areas • Day Use / Picnic areas • Walking trails • Landforms – Dandahra Crags, Anvil Rock • Creeks for swimming and canoeing • Dandahra Falls • Murrumbooee Cascades • Wildlife and birds • Needles Lookout • Raspberry Lookout • Heffron Lookout • Hills Lookout 	Camping Picnicking Bush walking / hiking Kayaking and canoeing Swimming Mountain biking Trail running Bird watching Platypus Spotting		Gibraltar House accommodation
	Boundary Falls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camping area • Area for camping with horses • Day Use / Picnic areas • Falls lookout • Walking trail • Creek for swimming 	Camping + camping with horses Picnicking Bush walking / hiking Bird watching Swimming Horse riding (own horse)		
	Mann River Nature Reserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camping area • Day Use / Picnic area 	Camping Picnicking Bush walking / hiking Kayaking and canoeing		

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mann River – swimming holes and rapids 	Swimming Fishing		
	Barool National Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4WD and walking access to Peregrine Point, Chimbley Creek and Four Mile Trig lookouts from the Gwydir Highway 	Informal camping (no facilities) 4WD Trail biking Bushwalking		
	Nymboida National Park (part) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nymboida River camp ground Nymbodia River 4WD Bushwalking 	Camping White water rafting and canoeing 4WD Trail biking Bushwalking		
	Butterleaf National Park and adjoining State Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network of trails suitable for 4WD, trail bikes and mountain bikes Primitive camping (no facilities) Mount Scott Walk 	4WD Trail biking Bush Camping Bush walking / hiking Mountain biking Bird watching		Facilities limited to an information board and network of fire trails. Could be used for trail running and off-road motor sports events.
	Torrington State Conservation Area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thunderbolts Lookout Mystery Face Ugly Corner Falls 4 camping areas Day Use / Picnic areas Mole River - swimming holes Network of fire trails / forest roads 	Camping Picnicking Bush walking / hiking Swimming 4WD Trail biking Mountain biking Bird watching Fossicking Fishing		Part of Touring Route 11. Less than 20 minutes' drive from Deepwater
	Capoompeta National Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest trails 	4WD Trail biking Bush Camping Bush walking / hiking Mountain biking Bird watching		Part of the attraction base for Deepwater – 28km from town
	Warra National Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sara River Fire Trails – 4 WD only Crown Mountain Informal walking tracks along the Sara River and to Crown Mountain 	4WD Trail biking Bush Camping Bush walking / hiking Mountain biking Bird watching		Access from GI and Glencoe

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
	Guy Fawkes River National Park & SCA (part) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp grounds (3) • Picnic areas • Guy Fawkes and Boyd Rivers • Chaelundi Falls • Lucifers Thumb • Sara River • Walking tracks • Fire trails, 4WD tracks – part of the Aberfoyle 4WD trail 	4WD Trail biking Bush Camping Bush walking / hiking Swimming Fishing Canoeing / Kayaking Mountain biking Bird watching		
National Parks, SCAs, Nature Reserves in adjoining LGAs but easily accessed from Glen Innes	Little Llangothlin Nature Reserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic area • Lake Circuit Walking Track 	Picnicking Walking Bird Watching		
	Kings Plains National Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp grounds (2) • Kings Plain Creek and Waterfall • Informal walking track from the campgrounds along Kings Plain Creek to the waterfall 	Camping Bushwalking Swimming (water level dependent) Bird watching Prolific wildflowers (seasonal)		
State Forests – with public access and suitable for activities	Butterleaf State Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest roads and fire trails 	4WD Trail biking Mountain biking Horse riding Informal camping		
	Oakwood State Forest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oakwood and London Bridge Fire Trails • The London Bridge, Henry Valley and Starlite lookouts • Part of the Aberfoyle 4wd trail 	4WD Trail biking Mountain biking Horse riding Informal camping		
	Brother State Forest			
	Mount Mitchell – Moogem – Gibraltar Range			
Crown Reserves	Beardy Woodland Reserve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic areas • Walking Trails • Views of the weir and river • Beardy Waters – River 	Picnicking Walking Fishing Birdwatching		Trails could potentially be used for MTB. Potential to link to other GISC owned land along Beardy Waters European trees – could be expanded to become an Arboretum

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
	One of the few locations to see Australia's two monotremes – Platypus and Echidna			Could be a nature play area – example: Durham University forest in the UK
	Stonehenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mass of granite tors and balancing rocks Two former recreation grounds Picnic facilities Views 	Walking Cycling Bird watching		Ideal location for group camping and potentially events. Could be used for nature-play Destination on the proposed rail trail
	Fossicking areas	Fossicking		
	Farm Stays – with outdoor and adventure activities	See Appendix 2.		

A1.2 Adventure Country – Listed by Activity

	Camping (bush setting)	Walking / Bushwalking	Fossicking / Gemstones + Minerals	Fishing
Iconic / Signature		World Heritage Walk	Reddestone Sapphires	Trout fishing in the highland streams Murray Cod
Free	Roadside rest areas State Forests Smaller National Parks Guy Fawkes National Park / SCA	State Forests Smaller National Parks Guy Fawkes National Park / SCA Beardy Woodlands Stonehenge Reserve	Fossicking Reserves – 5 (no facilities)	Public Access: Beardy Waters Deepwater River Severn River Adjoining Shires: Pindari Dam Copeton Dam
National Park Fee	Washpool National Park Gibraltar Range National Park Boundary Falls Mann River Nature Reserve Torrington SCA	Washpool National Park Gibraltar Range National Park Boundary Falls Mann River Nature Reserve Torrington SCA	Torrington SCA	Torrington SCA Mann River Nature Reserve
Commercial	Bullock Mountain Three Waters Deepwater Station Kookaburra Park		Tuition Bullock Mountain Fossicker Caravan Park Glen Rest Tourist Park	Fishing Tours: River Glen + Quad bike access to river Stay and Fish:

	Camping (bush setting)	Walking / Bushwalking	Fossicking / Gemstones + Minerals	Fishing
			Commercial Fossicking Sites Three Waters Aroona Glen	Bullock Mountain Homestead Three Waters Bens Fall Retreat – River + dams Deepwater Station Waterloo Station Monster Murray Cod Retreat Kookaburra Camp Oakhurst Cottage Gimardi Gatehouse (fish in dam)
Supporting Experiences			Emmaville Mining Museum Ottary Mine Reddestone Sapphires Aussie Sapphire Lapidary Warehouse Griffs Crystal emporium GemHunter's Haven	Tattersalls Hotel Emmaville – fishing memorabilia – taxidermy murray cod, photographs – potential for fishing stories
Events			Minerama GI Gemorama, Emmaville	
Other				Fishing licence outlets – GI & Deepwater Seasonal regulations Deepwater River – one of the closest rivers to Brisbane stocked with trout
You Tube Footage				https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZflaVotlXLc&ab_channel=OutsideEdgeAdventures
Possible / proposed product		Washpool National Park sound trails	Fossicking and rock hunting sites around Emmaville. Showcase Taronga Tin Mine and Sapphire mining.	GI Quarry project – potential for the lake to be stocked with fish and opened for an annual tournament

	4WD / Trail Bikes	Mountain Biking	Horse Riding	Birdwatching
Iconic / Signature	Old Grafton Road Aberfoyle Track (Ebor to GI via Guy Fawkes River NP, Kookaburra, London Bridge and Oakwood Fire Trails and Pretty Valley Road)	World Heritage Trail <i>Note: none of the trails in GIS are listed on MTB sites such as Trail Forks and SingleTrack</i>	National Bicentennial Trail – passes through Washpool, Gibraltar Range and Guy Fawkes River National Parks	
Free	State Forests – London Bridge, Henry Valley and Starlight lookouts on the Oakwood and London Bridge trails. Butterleaf National Park	State Forests Butterleaf National Park Warra National Park Capoompeta National Park Torrington SCA	Horse camping area – Boundary Falls Torrington SCA Capoompeta National Park State Forests	National Parks, State Forests, Crown Reserves and other localities

	4WD / Trail Bikes	Mountain Biking	Horse Riding	Birdwatching
	Warra National Park Capoompeta National Park Torrington SCA Guy Fawkes National Park Tommy's Lookout Fire Trail	Guy Fawkes National Park Tommy's Lookout Fire Trail		
National Park Fee		Washpool National Park Gibraltar Range National Park	Washpool National Park – 100km of trails Four Bull Hut – horses permitted	
Commercial	Bullock Mountain Bens Fall Retreat Deepwater Station River Glen (MotorX track)	River Glen Kookaburra Camp	Three Waters Horse-o-tel (own horses) Three Waters – Trail Rides	
Supporting Infrastructure / Experiences	Bush / Riverside Camping Fossicking		Stabling: Glen Innes Showground Glen Innes Racecourse Deepwater Racecourse + Polo field Village and hamlet recreation grounds	
Events			Glen Innes Showground – horse events Pony Club activities Polo (future) Campdrafts	
Other	Levuka and Emu Creek Retreat 4WD adventure parks in Tenterfield LGA.	Inverell MTB Park MTB trails / parks in Armidale (3)	In the past, Three Waters has hosted the Crackin Cancer Charity Horse Ride – 130 participants	
Possible / proposed product	Property similar to Bike Territory at Narrabri could work well.	Potential for MTB trails at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullock Mountain • Beady Woodland • Old quarries 	Long Horn Hotel Deepwater – looking to introduce horse experiences	

Observations:

- Abundant and very strong outdoor, nature and adventure-based product – National Parks, SCAs, State Forests, Crown Reserves, creeks and rivers + commercial rural and bushland accommodation that provide access to stunning environments and a range of activities.
- Possibly the largest number of commercial rural and bushland accommodation properties in the region.
- National Park has / is investing significantly in Mann River, Gibraltar Range and Washpool National Parks and Torrington SCA.
- Torrington has been under promoted – it is the closest quality park to Deepwater + strategically, using Touring Route 11. Torrington SCA it can be used to extend the length of stay of visitors to GI and draw visitors through Emmaville, Torrington and Deepwater.
- Kings Plains NP in Inverell Shire is located closer to GI than the escarpment parks – needs to be better leveraged.
- Opportunity to do more with State Forests.

- Opportunity to develop 4WD product that is direct marketed to 4WD clubs in Southern Queensland and NSW. The smaller National Parks X – Capoompeta, Butterleaf and Warra - Capoompeta + Torrington, Gibraltar Range and Guy Fawkes National Parks, are suitable and approved for 4WD + State Forests + properties such as Bens Fall Retreat and Bullock Mountain are 4WD products. Old Grafton Road and Aberfoyle Track are well known within the 4WD market. Tenterfield has 2 commercial 4WD parks that are drawing 4WD clubs out of SE Queensland – GI has the potential to pull them further south. Use of smaller parks would drive traffic through GI, Glencoe, Deepwater and potentially Emmaville.
- With a bit of tweaking – 4WD products and experiences can be tailored to the touring dirt bike market.
- There may be opportunity for a 4WD park (eg Levuka and Emu Creek Retreat 4WD adventure parks in Tenterfield LGA) and/or a trail bike park (eg Bike Territory near Narrabri and Goana Tracks at Coonabarabran) for farmers who have sub-optimal country.
- Opportunity to grow the cycling market. Have one signature MTB ride + ability to MTB in other locations. No dedicated single track – which is what MTBers are looking for. Potential to work with Prison to develop trails in State Forest also properties like Bullock Mountain could be ideal. The Shire is ideal for gravel grinding (riding on a mix of gravel roads and fire trails) – this is the fastest growing area of the cycling market. Development of the rail trail will provide opportunities to grow cycle touring and road cycling.
- Possibility of using the trails in Centennial Parklands, Beardy Woodlands and Stonehenge for older couples and young families with hybrid / MTB / BMX bikes looking for somewhere to ride. Part of the Quarry area could be converted into a BMX track / MTB Pump track. If GISC purchases land on the southern side of the weir (currently being considered) – potential for downhill and Xcountry MTB tracks on this site – linking with Beardy Waters and Centennial Parklands.
- Canoeing – lots of opportunities – information needs to be collated into a canoeing guide – for recreational as well as more extreme white water. Need for canoe hire.
- Fishing – product largely in place: opportunities to package with suitable accommodation and direct market to fishing clubs in NSW and southern Queensland. Could potentially do more with the trout fishing and the Murray Cod.
- Fossicking – public sites need some signage and possibly the occasional slashing / rubbish removal.
- Crown Reserves – Beardy Waters, Centennial Parklands and Stonehenge – opportunities to improve the experience.
- Potential for a large nature-based playground at Stonehenge and/or Beardy Woodlands (eg Durham University nature play area)
- Great riverside camping / swimming holes – need to feature strongly as a summer activity – provide an alternative to the coast – attract the family market over the summer school holidays.

A1.3 Celtic Country

- Other than the Standing Stones, the Celtic product is weak.
- Standing Stones is a high profile attraction – first time visitors to the area will visit the site: less than an hour experience. Unlikely to repeat visit unless showing someone else the site and/or trying to get photographs at different times.
- Crofters Cottage is one of the keys to building repeat visitation to the Parklands – Celtic dining experience and/or good Celtic merchandise would encourage repeat visitation
- Is there opportunity to introduce Celtic Mythology / Gods (eg Ana or Danu/Dana – The Primordial Goddess of Nature), Celtic games (similar in concept to the big chess games), a themed playground for children (Masterplan); a fairy grotto and/or dragons lair for children
- Events: explore opportunities to grow the existing events (eg solstices) at the Stones. Assess potential to develop a Celtic dance festival around May Day / A maypole; Battle of the Pipe Bands event; Stonehenge could be good for Celtic Games – see Bundanoon Highland Gathering.
- Stonehenge has the potential to be a higher profile attraction – needs improved facilities + better signage. Needs to be developed into a destination along the rail trail.

- Need Celtic food and beverage – eg a Whiskey distillery, either a Celtic café or a Celtic food trail where each food outlet has one or more Celtic products in their range / menu.
- Possibility of a Tartan Weaver establishing in the town.
- Possibly of introducing Celtic country links at other attractions – eg Film Festivals at the Chapel Theatre; a replica famous Scottish / Celtic hole at the golf course; Arboretum featuring the national trees of the Celtic countries,

Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
Celtic			
Australian Standing Stones + Crofters Cottage	GIH Tours: kilted Tours + Highlands Haggis Ceremony	Australian Celtic Festival Flag raising ceremonies (8+ pa) Solstice Celebrations	Proposed skywalk Needs Celtic food and beverage
Alder Grove Gallery – Celtic art + games	Workshop Tarot Card Reading		
Glen Innes Tartan			
Stonehenge Reserve	Walking Photography Potentially cycling and picnicking		
Two Wild Souls Meadery	Mead tastings and sales		
Glengowrie Distillery	Spirit tastings and sales		
Red Lion Tavern, Glencoe			

A1.4 High Country

- Part of New England High Country – well positioned for touring by car and motorcycle. Also a good product for coach tours.
- Stonehenge epitomises the granite country.
- Opportunity to do more with the change of seasons – particularly spring blossoms and autumn colours + winter fires, frost and snow.
- Could build on high country gardens: Beady Woodlands has a pocket of exotic trees that could be used as the nucleus for an arboretum of northern hemisphere high country trees. Cool Climate Garden Centre has the potential to become an attraction.
- High country sports – is there potential to do more with GI golf course – possibly based on courses in Scotland – golf in Scotland dates back to the 1500's – potential overlap with Celtic theme.
- Clay target shooting – originated as an English sport – is there opportunity to do more with this – possibly maze shooting, open days / come and try?
- High country fishing – one of the few locations for this in NSW – potential to target the Queensland and NSW fishing club markets.
- Rail trail – potential 'ride high country' iconic attraction.
- Are there opportunities for foraging tours / activities as part of local produce?
- Is there an opportunity to develop a 'high country weddings' product? – photo opportunities in spring and autumn.

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
High Country				
Environment	Landscape – gorge country and granite country Four seasons / highland climate Autumn leaves – spectacular colour – Anzac Park, Stonehenge Winter experience – fires, frost and snow Historic town and villages Cool Climate Garden Centre Cool Climate Gardens	Touring / sight-seeing by car and motor bike Frolicking in autumn leaves Fishing – trout fishing in highland streams	Vintage Rose Festival	Potential for garden centre to become an attraction
Other – Could these be branded as High Country to strengthen the product				
Arts / Culture	Glen Innes Art Gallery Ceramic Group The Alder Grove Knick Knackery The Makers Shed Gawura Gallery Made in Glen Carelles The Sunflower Patch Colours on Grey	Alder Grove: workshops, tarot card reading Knick Knackery: craft Makers Shed: silversmithing, word smithing and arts & crafts Colours of Grey: workshops	Markets in the Highlands (monthly) High Country Writers Festival Glen Innes Cottage Markets (weekly) Glen Innes Sunday Markets Glen Rock	

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
Produce and Provideores	VIC shop The Super Strawberry Gillens Glencoe Garlic Glen Pie Shop Smeatons Bakery Bruce Family Butchery Campbells Butchery Hoopers Country Meats Free Range Eggs Sage and Clover Organic Groceries Glengowrie Distillery 2 Wild Souls Meadery Deepwater Brewery & Cellar Door Deepwater Bakery Honey Industry Cafes / Restaurants serving local produce: The Local Cafe Hereford Steakhouse Char Grill, NE Motor Lodge, Railway Tavern, The Great Central Hotel	Shopping Dining Beverage Tastings / Cellar Doors	Glen Innes Cottage Markets (weekly) Glen Innes Sunday Markets Gourmet Fiesta (part of the Show) Glen Innes Show	
Antiques / Olde Wares	Deepwater Antiques Knick Knackery Bourke Street Vintage Marlou Vintage The Book Market			

A1.5 Heritage Country

- Product is not strong
- Nearly every town in inland NSW promotes heritage town centres and villages.
- Most towns have local history museums – while important for local residents / preserving local heritage, generally of limited appeal to travellers. Land of Beardsy Museum needs to find and promote a strong point of difference. Also needs to provide photo / selfie opportunities.

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
Heritage Country				
Museums	Land of Beardies Museum Emmaville Mining Museum Courthouse Museum, Emmaville	LBM: Family History	Proposal to introduce events at the Land of Beardies Museum	Land of Beardies – considering a historic garden.

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
	Proposed Powerhouse Museum			
Historic towns and villages	GI Main Street Historic villages	Sight seeing Heritage hotels GI Historic Walk - App		Potential to link with the rail trail
Historic Sites	Ottery Mine			Range of historic sites and buildings not open to the Public.
Antiques / Olde Wares	Deepwater Antiques Knick Knackery Bourke Street Vintage Marlou Vintage The Book Market			

A.1.6 Ngoorabul Country

- Currently no product
- Not politically correct to promote Gawura Gallery as part of Ngoorabul Country
- Potential for The Willows and Boorabee to be opened up as attractions – would be strong cross-over with Adventure Country

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
Ngoorabul Country				
Ngoorabul Country	The Willows / Severn River Gorge (GILALC) (not accessible) Boorabee (GILALC) (Not accessible) Art at the GI VIC			Aboriginal artists: Nick Levy, Adele Chapman Burgess (VIC)
Other Indigenous	Gawura Gallery	Gawura Gallery (not Ngoorabul)	Gawura Gallery workshops	First Nations Festival

A.1.7 Progressive Country

	Attractions	Activities	Events	Other
Progressive Country				
Progressive / Lifestyle	Renewable Energy – Wind and Solar Farms / Sinclair’s Lookout Giant Blade		GI and Deepwater horse races? Xmas in Glen?	Potential to showcase local industries and agriculture

A1.8 Product Development Opportunities

Location / Product	Mooted / Proposed	Suggestions	Product Theme	Other Comments
Centennial Parklands	Improved walking tracks Sky walk Themed playground	MTB tracks – linking with Eerindii Ponds and Beardy Waters Celtic Gods / Mythology Celtic large board games Fairy grotto / Dragon’s Lair	Celtic Country Adventure	Potential to link to Beardy Waters via Eerindii Ponds.
Beardy Woodlands		Use trails for MTB Link to GISC land on western side of Beardy Waters – provide a looped trail High Country Arboretum- building on the exotic trees and linking with high country gardens. Possible Nature-based play area.	Adventure Country High Country Celtic (potential)	Area not well maintained. Aging infrastructure. Needs walking track signage / track head facilities Potential to link to Eerindii Ponds and Centennial Parklands.
Eerindii Ponds	Ideas being mooted: No firm plans. Use quarry for water storage. Possible picnic area. Possibly stock with fish and only open for an annual fishing tournament. Link with walking / cycling trail to Centennial Parklands	Use of part of the area as a BMX track / MTB pump track	Adventure Country High Country (fishing) Progressive Country	

Location / Product	Mooted / Proposed	Suggestions	Product Theme	Other Comments
Shannon Vale Road property / Beardy Waters Dam – GISC owns land between Eerindii Ponds + possibility of purchasing land on western side of the Reservoir THIS WOULD BE A GAME CHANGER		Accommodation – stone cabins, boutique resort and/or caravan park / camping area. Lookout Mountain Bike and walking tracks Bird watching hides Fishing Canoeing	Adventure Country High Country (fishing)	In the short term – provide access to the dam foreshore adjacent to Shannon Vale Road to launch canoes and for bird watching.
Rail trail GAME CHANGER	Rail trail – Armidale to Tenterfield	Attractions along the route: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stonehenge Reserve • Glencoe – Red Lion Tavern • Deepwater • Access points to Beardy Waters and Williams Creek. <p>Would need cycle links to town centre, Anzac Park, Standing Stones, Ponds, Beardy Waters in GI and to Deepwater Town Centre.</p>	Adventure Country High Country Progressive Country	Promote GI to Glencoe as a priority section followed by GI to Deepwater, then extend from Glencoe to Ben Lomond
Stonehenge Reserve		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature Play area • Extend track network – promote for cycling • Improve visitor facilities • Develop and promote as an event venue + camping area for large groups (eg RV, 4WD club rallies) • Capitalise on the Bouldering 	Adventure Country High Country Celtic Country	Visitor facilities and directional signage needs to be improved. Plan of Management needs to be prepared and funding sourced to improve facilities.
Mount Mitchell State Forest – Granite outcrop – approximately 2km		Fires have exposed a large granite outcrop that is readily accessible from the Old Grafton Road – could be ideal for a short	Adventure Country High Country	Would provide an additional walking track in the eastern part of the Shire – more accessible than the trails in the surrounding

Location / Product	Mooted / Proposed	Suggestions	Product Theme	Other Comments
south of Gwydir Highway – Old Grafton Road intersection		walking track around the base of the area and potentially a track to the summit – for a lookout		National Parks – also dog friendly. Forestry currently have funding to improve forest infrastructure
State Forests		Possibility of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTB, horse and/or trailbike trails. • Foraging – pine forest mushrooms • Utilise for a range of events 	Adventure Country High Country	
The Willows Boorabee		Possible tour and story telling by virtual reality in the VIC.	Ngoorabul Country Adventure Country	
Gwydir Highway		Promote as a touring route – from Coast to Lightning Ridge – see product audit – Appendix 3.		
Escape Room	Escape Room			
Off road park/s		As part of agri tourism – develop 4WD and/or trail bike park	Adventure Country	
Arts collective		Explore options to develop workshop spaces Additional public art		
Whiskey Distillery			High Country Celtic Country	
Big Blade		Selfie opportunity Interpretation and link to the wind / solar farms Assess the potential to provide access to walk along the Blade	Progressive Country	

Appendix 2: RURAL / FARM STAY PROPERTIES

Observations

- All properties provide a high country experience through their setting and views – most offer opportunities for winter fires
- 9 properties promote a range of outdoor, nature and adventure based activities + specialist fishing retreat **Is there opportunity to work with the other 9 properties to include more activities as part of their product offer?**
- Properties that support the heritage theme: Waterloo Station, Deepwater Station, River Glen
- Properties suitable for 4WD, caravan and camping groups – Bullock Mountain, Three Waters, Ben's Falls Retreat, Deepwater Station.
- Properties with the capacity to accommodate small groups – non camping: Waterloo Station, Deepwater Station, River Glen. These properties could be used for creative and lifestyle workshops, family reunions, small weddings and functions.
- Bullock Mountain and Ben's Fall Retreat – ideal for 4WD and trail bike clubs / groups
- Bullock Mountain, Ben's Falls Retreat, River Glen and Deep Water – ideal for fishing clubs and groups
- Tattersalls Hotel in Emmaville has a strong fishing theme – ideal for fishing clubs

Property	Accommodation							Activities Offered																			
	Homestead	Farm Dwelling	Cabin / Lodge	Apartment	Shearers Qtr	Pwd Sites	Camping	Farm Tours	Animal Petting	Fishing / Yabbying	Fishing Tours	Fossicking	Bushwalking	Walking	Birdwatching	Swimming	Canoeing / Kayaking	4WD	4WD Tours	4 Wheeler	MTB / BMX	Trail bikes / MX	Hunting	Tennis	Horse Riding	Own Horse	Airstrip
Properties that offer a range of activities and support the Adventure and/or Heritage Country Themes																											
Bullock Mountain																											
Three Waters																											
River Glen																											
Waterloo Station																											
Deepwater Station																											
Oakhurst Cottage																											
Ben’s Fall Retreat																											
Kookaburra Camp																											
Aroona Glen																											
Monster Murray Cod Retreat																											
Properties that offer no or limited activities																											
Sharron Park																											

Property	Accommodation							Activities Offered																			
	Homestead	Farm Dwelling	Cabin / Lodge	Apartment	Shearers Qtr	Pwd Sites	Camping	Farm Tours	Animal Petting	Fishing / Yabbying	Fishing Tours	Fossicking	Bushwalking	Walking	Birdwatching	Swimming	Canoeing / Kayaking	4WD	4WD Tours	4 Wheeler	MTB / BMX	Trail bikes / MX	Hunting	Tennis	Horse Riding	Own Horse	Airstrip
Plain View																											
Kai Iwi Estate																											
Halloran House																											
Glen Waverly																											
Glendawn																											
Gimardi Gatehouse																											
Glenrowan Cottage																											
Scandi House																											
National Park cottages																											
Gibraltar House																											
Four Bulls Hut WNP#																											

Four Bulls Hut is located in the Washpool National Park in Tenterfield LGA

Appendix 3: KEY ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES - GWYDIR HIGHWAY CORRIDOR

Gwydir Highway east of Glen Innes is marketed as World Heritage Way. Gwydir Highway between GI and Warialda – part of Fossickers Way

LGA	Clarence Valley	Glen Innes – Severn	Inverell	Gwydir	Moree Plains	Walgett
Branding		Glen Innes Highlands Celtic Country			Artesian Water Country	
Towns & Villages on Gwydir Highway	Grafton / South Grafton	Glen Innes	Inverell	Warialda, Gravesend	Moree Pallamallawa	Collarenebri
Towns & Villages off Highway (45 mins)		Glencoe, Deepwater, Emmaville	Tingha	Bingara Coolatai Croppa Creek		Walgett Lightning Ridge
Iconic / High Profile	Jacarandas	Standing Stones	Sapphires	Roxy Theatre	Hot Artesian Spas	Lightning Ridge / Opals
Unusual / Unique Rock Formations / Natural Features		Stonehenge Balancing Rock Gibraltar Range Granite formations Waterfalls	Dungeon (Gorge) MacIntye Falls	Cranky Rock Rocky Creek Glacial Area	Waa Gorge	Bundabreena Falls, Collarenebri. Opal Fields
National Parks (NP), Nature Reserves (NR), State Conservation Areas (SCAs), Crown Reserves, State Forests	Washpool NP Gibraltar Range NP Guy Fawkes River NP Nymbodia NP	Washpool NP Gibraltar Range NP Guy Fawkes River NP Capoopeta NP Butterleaf NP Warra NP Mann River NR Little Llangothlin NR Torrington SCA Beardy Woodland State Forests	Goonoowigal SCA Barayamal National Park Nullamanna National Park Kwiambal NP Kings Plains NP	Koorilgur Nature Walk	Gwydir Wetlands NP Kaputar NP	Narran Lakes
Waterways, Lakes & Dams	Mann River	Mann River Severn River Beardy Waters Numerous headwater streams	Copeton Dam Inverell Lake Pindari Dam	Gwydir River Copeton Dam Horton River	Gwydir River Weirs Water Ski Lake	Barwon River (Collarenebri) Barwon & Namoi Rivers (Walgett)
Artesian Baths					Moree Artesian Aquatic Centre	Lightning Ridge Hot Artesian Bore Baths

LGA	Clarence Valley	Glen Innes – Severn	Inverell	Gwydir	Moree Plains	Walgett
					3 accommodation properties with artesian baths.	Burren Junction Bore Baths
Lookout		National Park Lookouts Thunderbolts Lookout Martins lookout GI	MacIntyre Falls Lookout McIlveen Park Lookout Dungeon Lookout	Batterham Lookout, Bingara		Lightning Ridge - lookouts
Aboriginal Sites / Experiences		Gawura Gallery	Goonoowiggal SCA	Myall Creek Memorial Site	Terry Hi Hi Aboriginal Area Dhiyaan Centre Centre for Aboriginal Art – Moree Plains Regional Gallery TAFE Artist Studios & Mehi Gallery Yaama Ganu Café & Gallery	<u>Collarenebri</u> Fish traps Aboriginal cemetery Collymongle Carved Trees <u>Walgett</u> Dharriwaa Elders Cultural Exhibition Norman Tracker Walford Walkway Don Lillyman Aboriginal Art Gallery
Arts & Cultural	Grafton Regional Gallery	Glen Innes Art Gallery Chapel Theatre Ceramics Gawura Gallery	Inverell Art Gallery Itty Bitty Art Gallery New England Wood Turning – Yangoora Gallery NE Conservatorium of Music	Ceramic Break Sculpture Park Roxy Theatre Ceramic Break Sculpture Park Carinda House, Warialda	Moree Regional Gallery Moree Gallery Mehi Gallery Yaama Ganu Café & Gallery	Café 64 Gallery, Warialda Lightning Ridge: - John Murray Gallery - The Gallery - 2834 Studios - A Quiet Man's Place
Museums & Historic Sites	Shaeffer House Museum Remember When Cottage Museum	Land of Beardies History House & Museum Emmaville Mining Museum Ottery Mine Glen Innes Heritage Walk Emmaville Court House Museum	Pioneer Museum National Transport Museum Wing Hing Museum Inverell Heritage Walk Family History Group WWII Remembrance Group Various Memorials	Roxy Theatre Museum Bingara Museum Bingara Sound Trail Warialda Sound Trail Myall Creek Memorial Site & Sound Trail Warialda Historic Walk All Nations Mine & Stamper Battery Warialda Historical Museum		Town walks and drives. Miners Hut, LR
Showcase Parks & Gardens	Jacaranda street trees	Anzac Park		The Living Classroom Bingara Memorial Orange and Olive Trees		Lightning Ridge Bush Tucker & Medicine Garden

LGA	Clarence Valley	Glen Innes – Severn	Inverell	Gwydir	Moree Plains	Walgett
						Bevan's Cactus Garden, LR
Fossicking / Gemstones		Sapphires, zircons, topaz, quartz crystal, gold, beryl, fluorite, Commercial fossicking parks Designated fossicking reserves Torrington SCA Ottery Historic Mine Emmaville Mining Museum Minerama and Gemarama Festivals Griffs Crystal Emporium Jewellery Shops (local gemstones) Lapidary & Jewellery Supplies	Sapphires, Quartz Crystal, Gemstones 3 commercial fossicking areas 6 Fossicking Reserves 3 local gem centres / gem cutting Numerous jewellery shops	Gold, Petrified Wood, Quartz Crystals, Agate, Jasper, Amethyst, Diamonds, Manganite, Calcite, Garnets, Serpentine Warialda – 4 fossicking areas Bingara- 5 fossicking areas Wells Gem & Mineral Collection – Warialda VIC		Opals Opal Fields – Lightning Ridge, Grawin, Glengarry, Sheepyards Underground mine tours Buyers and cutters Jewellery Stores / Opal Sales
Food & Wine		Super Strawberry Glen Innes Pie Shop Smeatons Bakery Specialty Butchers (3) Free Range Eggs Glengowrie Distillery 2 Wild Souls Meadery Deepwater Brewery The Local Cafe Sage and Clover GI	Olives of Beaulieu Bakery (2) Patisserie Fe Fi Fo Bindaree Beef Several wineries Community Garden	Bethel Mill Flours Jac Wagyu Horton Valley Premium Pork Meat on Maitland, Bingara Gwydir Meats, Warialda Ruby Farm Honey & Olives Locally produced Jams, Condiments & Cordials	Pecans / Pecan Farm Tour Olives Woolaway Winery Moree on a Plate - Festival	Quirky Clubs & Pubs
Specialty Shopping & Dining	Regional Shopping Mall Antiques Boutiques Lifestyle Cafes	Antiques Boutiques Lifestyle Cafes	Antique Boutiques Lifestyle Cafes	Boutiques & Lifestyle – Warialda Hotel Lane Op Shop, Coolatai Cafes – Bingara & Warialda	Boutiques Lifestyle Shops Cafes	Lightning Ridge - galleries, opals, souvenirs etc Stone's Throw – Walgett – Lifestyle & local produce
Guided Tours		GI Highland Tours			Pecan Farm Tours Cotton Farm / Gin Tours	Various Opal Tours

LGA	Clarence Valley	Glen Innes – Severn	Inverell	Gwydir	Moree Plains	Walgett
					Art Deco Tours Town Tours	Aboriginal Tours by Appointment
Family / Group Fun		Chapel Theatre Movies	Shake Rattle N Bowl Inverell Paintball	Copeton Dam Water Park	Moree Artesian Aquatic Centre – water slides and water playground.	Lightning Ridge Pool
Scenic Drives / Trails	Old Glen Innes (Grafton) Road	Old Grafton Road Touring Route Celtic Country Drives High Country Motorbike Touring Routes STR 11	Nature's Way Fossickers Way	Geological Drives Nature's Way Fossickers Way	Scenic drive routes	LR Car Door Tour Scenic Drive Routes
Signature Walks		World Heritage Walk (50km)	Slippery Rock Walking Track			
Fishing	Clarence River – boat and bank Mann River	Fly & line fishing Fishing lodges / retreats Fishing tours Numerous fishing locations	Copeton Dam	Copeton Dam Gwydir River	Gwydir River Mehi River Carp Muster	Barwon River Namoi River
Rock Sports		Stonehenge Bouldering				
Bird Watching		Bird Routes & Sites		Bird Trails	Gwydir Wetlands + Live Bird Cam Bird Routes	Bird sites
Golf	Grafton golf course	Glen Innes – 18 hole	Inverell – 18 holes	Bingara Warialda Croppa Creek North Star	Moree Golf Club	
Horse Riding	Hawthorn Park Equestrian Centre (own horses)	Three Waters Properties where you can bring own horses		Wades Horses		
Mountain Bikes / BMX	Bom Bom State Forest – 78 trails	National Parks Torrington SCA State Forests	Copeton Waters State Park Kwiambal NP			
Cycle Routes	Cycle routes defined			Cycle routes defined		
Water Sports/ Tours		Numerous sites for canoeing	Copeton Dam – Power boating, water skiing etc Joey's Kayaking Tours	Copeton Dam Gwydir River Canoe Hire	Water Ski Lake	

LGA	Clarence Valley	Glen Innes – Severn	Inverell	Gwydir	Moree Plains	Walgett
Camping	Mann River National Parks	Numerous NP & SCA camping areas Camping areas on farm stays and private properties Camping at fossicking & fishing reserves Group camping – GI showground + Stonehenge	Copeton Dam Fossicking Reserves Camping areas at commercial fossicking parks National Parks	Copeton Dam Gwydir River corridor Horton River corridor Ezzy's Crossing Gravesend	Gwydir River Weirs	Burren Junction Walgett Collarenebri river bank