

Flinders Shire Council

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN



**SHIRE OF
FLINDERS**

Explore Create Engage

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Content produced by



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Executive Summary

1.1 Overview

The Flinders Shire is situated 383kms southwest of Townsville, and is made up of the townships of Hughenden, Prairie, Torrens Creek and Stamford. Hughenden is the major town centre in the Shire and is featured on a number of Outback drives and on Australia's Dinosaur Trail. The majority of visitors arrive on their way east towards Charters Towers and Townsville, and some stay for the day or one night on their travels west.

There are four national parks within the Flinders Shire, with Porcupine Gorge being the unique natural asset that is often cited as the main reason for visiting the shire. The other major drawcard to the Shire is the Flinders Discovery Centre, a museum focused on fossils, which, while ranking well with visitors, presents an opportunity to be transformed into an essential family friendly Outback experience.

An ambitious yet measurable goal is to target an average two-night visitor stay over the next five years.

This will be achieved by harnessing the opportunities and challenges that exist for the Flinders Shire, which are heavily weighted towards product and experience development, as opposed to marketing. The Flinders Shire has the potential to deliver experiences across the themes of national parks, paleo, settlement heritage, wool history and renewable energy and all can be delivered with genuine country hospitality.

The willingness of the Flinders Shire Council and the local Flinders Shire business community to grow tourism, along with the welcoming and friendly nature of the local community, are key success factors for future tourism development in the region.

1.2 Major Attractions for Visitors

The Flinders Shire is fortunate to have the stand-out iconic natural attraction that is Porcupine Gorge National Park, only 64kms (40 minutes drive) from the major town centre, Hughenden, with sealed road access. This pristine national park attraction sets the Flinders Shire apart from surrounding Council areas in the North West precinct of the Queensland Outback.

Whilst enhanced marketing strategies could generate increased visitation to the Gorge, it is highly unlikely that the surrounding experiences and products would adequately service the consumer to keep them in the area beyond the Gorge visit. The economic injection to the community would be marginal as campers at the Gorge will not travel to surrounding towns for meals and day visitors to the Gorge have little reason to stay more than one day to partake in local experiences.

1.3 Key Strategic Opportunities to Extend Visitation

The key strategic opportunity for tourism in the Flinders Shire lies in presenting to and realising for the visitor a two to three day itinerary inclusive of a visit to the Gorge, a transformed Flinders Discovery Centre and compelling local experiences.

Presently the Flinders Shire has a small under-developed selection of "must do" attractions with no tours. There are opportunities for growth in the dining and retail sectors and there are significant opportunities to develop compelling things to do to attract visitors and keep them overnight.

More experiences at Porcupine Gorge, which is the jewel in Flinders' crown, are a strategic priority. Presently a walk at the campground is under development. Further opportunities have been identified in guided walking tours, scenic flights (also an opportunity for White Mountain) as well as investigation into the development of a skywalk.

Travellers visit the Flinders Discovery Centre, which includes the visitor information centre and museum. The museum asset presents an outstanding opportunity to transform the attraction into a state of the art Outback experience, thereby giving Flinders a second major attraction aside from the gorge.

A transformed Flinders Discovery Centre can be a central traveller and tourism hub for the area.

The Flinders Discovery Centre can become a precinct that inspires and services visitors, engages, entertains and educates them, provides exhibition space for local arts and culture and is a place for businesses and community members to commune on tourism development and business training.

To successfully attract, engage and convert the target markets to the Flinders Shire, Council and the local industry will need to work closely together and with key industry partners, in particular, the Outback Queensland Tourism Association (OQTA). OQTA in turn works closely with Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) and Tourism Australia (TA). Funding to OQTA is determined by the Queensland Government and OQTA derives funding from Councils within their marketing region as well as through membership revenue. Stable and relevant funding models are essential to the success of OQTA as the key marketing organisation for the Queensland Outback region.

1.4 Community Engagement

The business mood in some cases is in need of invigoration, however a number of operators are overtly motivated and proud of their offerings. It is understandable that business optimism has waned given the economic hits that the area has endured and there has been no tourism plan that the businesses can attach their own business planning to. There is opportunity to engage local businesses and the community in each of the Shire towns in tourism plans and in supporting local businesses to develop experiences and hospitality standards that travellers want.

The locals are genuine, welcoming country people and “country life” is a theme that the towns of Flinders can own and genuinely deliver on.

Engaging locals in the experience development required to implement this plan is an opportunity to empower them and provide ownership of the plan. The locals love where they live and can tap into the local culture and stories to create “country life” tours and guided tours of local attractions.

This development plan creates the opportunity to integrate local indigenous culture into new experience offerings throughout the area and to work with the Yirandali and Gudjala people to create and deliver experiences.

The lake development, due to come online in 2019, presents a valuable opportunity to improve local residents’ lifestyles and to provide experiences for visitors as well as a place educate and engage people in local culture and history.

Introduction

2.1 Overview

Flinders Shire Council invited businesses to tender to develop a three-part plan for the Flinders Shire: a Tourism Development Plan; Future Marketing Opportunities Report; and a Flinders Discovery Centre Development Plan. Tourism Tribe were successful in this tender.

All three plans have been created in unison, leveraging a central set of objectives to grow visitation and extend overnight stays.

This Tourism Development Plan represents the first stage of the overall project.

The purpose of the Flinders Shire Tourism Development Plan is to give Flinders Shire Council a roadmap for developing tourism in the region as an economic platform to support the community in the future. It is envisaged that this document will be referred to when Council plans tourism venues and initiatives in the shire, to drive growth in tourism to the region.

2.2 Methodology

Tourism Tribe has undertaken the following approach to complete the Flinders Shire Tourism Development Plan:

1. Expert analysis of the Flinders Shire (and Flinders Discovery Centre) tourism and leisure current offering, based on exceptional levels of experience in strategic planning, development, promotion and management of tourism regions and iconic experiences.
2. Benchmark against comparative regions to identify market gaps and opportunities which support the region's objectives.
3. Report on the suitability and capacity of the region's existing product and experience offering and provide recommendations on potential promotional and development opportunities.
4. Identify and develop collaborative opportunities with operators within the region.
5. Creative input into the development of a tourism plan for the region, including a plan for the Flinders Discovery Centre and marketing tools and opportunities for the shire.

Situation Analysis

3.1 Flinders Shire

Flinders Shire is an area of 41,538 square kilometres that encompasses the business centre of Hughenden and the small communities of Prairie, Torrens Creek and Stamford. It is located 376 kilometres west of Townsville and 1,400 kilometres North-West of Brisbane.

The Flinders Shire is predominantly a grazing area, with some emerging irrigation pockets. North of the Flinders River is mainly red and black volcanic basalt country and to the south of Hughenden is black soil downs country with open natural grass lands.

The Flinders Shire is known for a number of industries, including renewable energy, wool industry, railway, cattle and transport.

HUGHENDEN

Hughenden is situated on the banks of the Flinders River, Queensland longest river. Hughenden has direct road access to a number of major centres and tourist attractions within the region. The Flinders Highway runs through Hughenden connecting to Townsville (376km) in the east and Mount Isa (519km) in the west, with a southern sealed road access via the Dinosaur Way to Winton and Longreach. For those wanting to travel north there is the Kennedy Developmental Road, a gravel and bitumen sealed road to the Atherton Tablelands and Cairns.

Visitors call in to the Flinders Discovery Centre to find out more about this region and the extensive and diverse range of attractions in the area including national parks, gemfields, mountainous volcanic basalt country, sweeping black soil plains, rich fossil, dinosaur areas and the history arts and culture of the region.

PRAIRIE

Prairie is a small township to the east of Hughenden in Queensland's Flinders Shire in the great North West. The township has a history as an old Cobb and Co depot and is serviced by an authentic Aussie hotel providing food and accommodation. The Prairie Hotel is a must-see for its collection of stockmen's hats and other memorabilia. The name Prairie would seem to be derived from the 'prairie-like' setting. The explorer William Landsborough passed through this area in 1862. He camped by Jardine Creek (named after the explorer Alexander Jardine), viewed Jardine Valley and named Tower Hill. Many sheep and cattle properties were developed around the area and helped the town to progress. 57 kilometres south of Prairie is Kooroorinya Nature Reserve for those wishing to enjoy a natural waterhole. Kooroorinya offers swimming, bush walking, fishing, bush camping and bird watching. The Reserve comes alive for three days every year when the Oakley Amateur Picnic Race Committee holds their Annual Race Meeting in May. The Prairie Races are held in August.

TORRENS CREEK

The Torrens Creek, after which this Outback town is named, rises in the Great Dividing range and runs southward to the Thomson River system to eventually run into Lake Eyre. William Landsborough discovered it in 1862 while searching for Burke and Wills. He named the creek after Sir Robert Torrens, Premier of South Australia. The Great Northern Railway reached Torrens Creek in 1885 and from then on it became the supply centre for a large district. Mailmen rode out to the north and south to various stations delivering mail along routes which are still used today. The district's most famous mailman, Jack Bunt, who served from 1931 to 1954 is honoured with a cairn and plaque erected by Torrens Creek residents.

Torrens Creek had its place in history associated with the Coral Sea battle. In 1942 this little town was nearly blown apart when a huge allied ammunition dump exploded. Torrens Creek was in a vital position for a supply dump when the threat of Japanese invasion was apparent. Australian and American troops were in charge and carried out regular controlled burns to create firebreaks. One summer day in 1942 a

fire that was not properly extinguished caused a terrific explosion, which hurled men from their trucks. There were 12 major explosions in succession, sufficient to leave craters 20 feet deep.

South of Torrens Creek is Moorrinya National Park. This park offers a dramatic impression of the harsh beauty and open expanse of the Desert Uplands. White Mountains National Park offers camping and short walking tracks for those experienced bushwalkers who wish to explore this magic spot a little further.

There is also a local golf course and they hold an annual event called The Torrens Creek Hambrose.

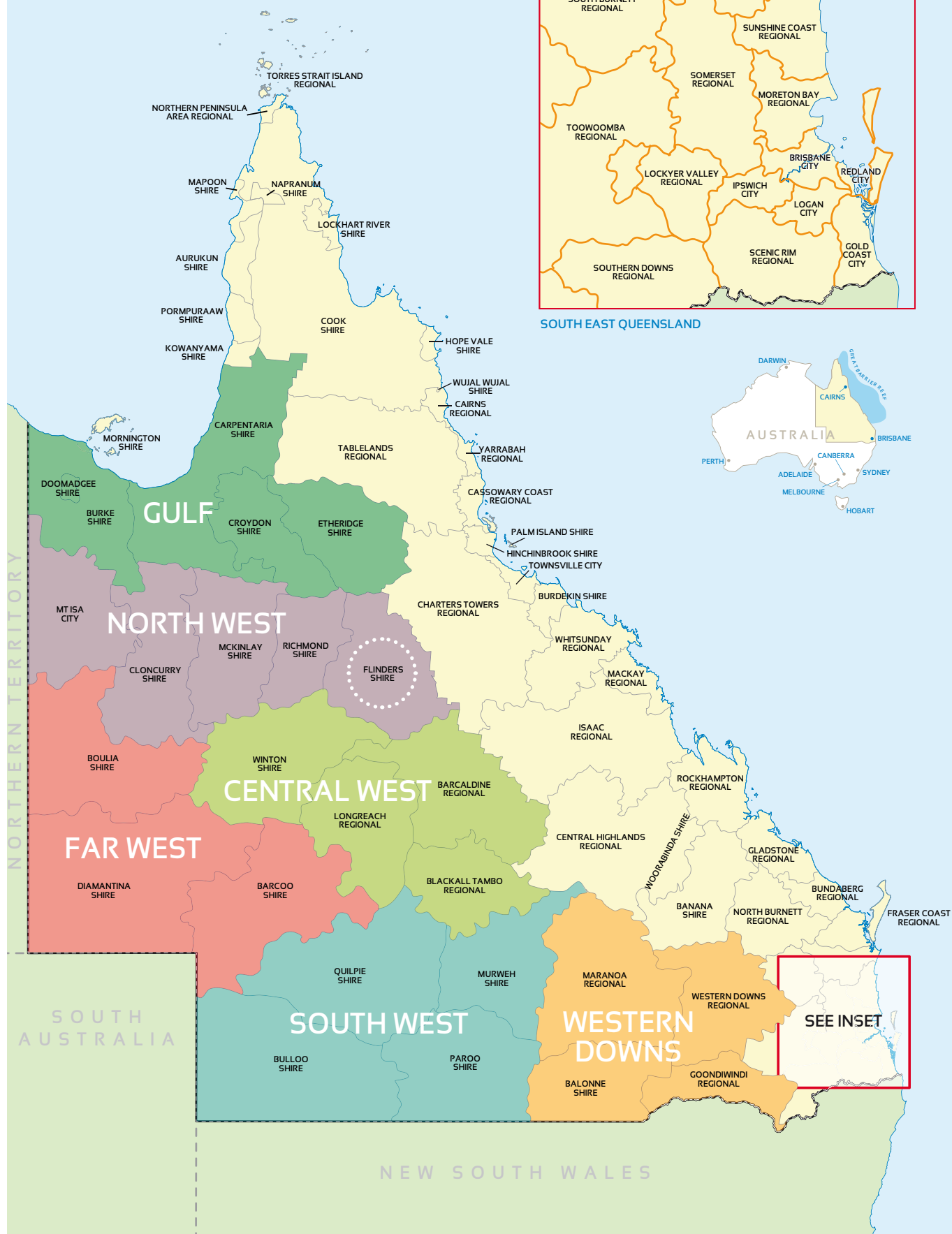
STAMFORD

Stamford is situated 61 kilometres south of Hughenden on the Kennedy Development Road to Winton, dubbed the 'Dinosaur Way'. Named after the adjoining pastoral land 'Stamfordham'. Stamford was originally part of 'Katandra Station'. Stamford is a town steeped with Outback history and was once an overnight stop for Cobb and Co Coaches travelling from Hughenden to Winton. A rail line to Stamford was opened on the 13 December 1897 and became a busy railhead for local wool graziers. The Stamford of today is a much more relaxed place. Stamford comes alive at its annual Race Meeting held each year in July. Many people travel to enjoy this Outback experience, the charm and excitement of a real country race meeting.

(Source: queensland.com.au)

From a tourism perspective Flinders Shire is the local government area that sits within the regional tourism organisation boundaries of the Outback Queensland Tourism Association. It is considered to be a region within the "North West" precinct of the Outback and is on the Overlander's Way, a major drive route that takes the tourism drive market from Townsville to far west Queensland and into the Northern Territory. It is marketed by regional and State tourism organisations as being part of Australia's Dinosaur Trail, along with Richmond and Winton.

Local Government Areas of Queensland



SOURCE: Queensland's Outback, Gulf and Western Downs Tourism Opportunity Plan



3.2 Population

The shire's population is estimated to be 1,569 (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016*).

The Flinders Shire is mainly a grazing area used for cattle production and Council has highlighted the potential for irrigation based intensive agriculture and meat processing. Renewable energy investments are also developing as industry in the area and present economic development and tourism opportunities.

There is access to national parks and a nature reserve within the Flinders Shire, including White Mountains National Park, Moorrinya National Park, Blackbraes National Park, Porcupine Gorge National Park and Kooroorinya Nature Reserve. The biggest drawcard for tourists to the Flinders Shire is Porcupine Gorge National Park, often referred to as 'Australia's little Grand Canyon', just 64km (40 minutes) out of Hughenden and accessible to most visitor markets.

The Flinders Discovery Centre in Hughenden is usually next on traveller's lists, as is a walk through the town centre to see local sculptures and historical sites. Hughenden is the primary town centre of the shire.

Hughenden is situated on the longest river in Queensland, a dry river and used to be home to a prehistoric inland sea and also features in the iconic Overlanders Way Drive, Australia's Dinosaur Trail and Discover North West drives.

Hughenden is at the intersection of two major highways, the Kennedy Development Road (north-south) and the Flinders Highway (east-west) with future links to Cairns on the horizon.

3.3 Visitation to the Shire

3.3.1 Limited tourism data for Outback regions

Tourism Research Australia (TRA), a part of Austrade that provides leading research insights into tourism for the nation, does not have adequate data to publish a Local Government Area Profile for the Flinders Shire. This seems consistent with all outback regions, as there was also no profile for Richmond, Winton, Longreach and similarly located areas. This presents a challenge to the project as good economic and marketing strategy is built on good research and data. This means that Council needs to rely on locally collected data, which while helpful, lacks the sample size and robust reliable nature of TRA research.

State Tourism Organisations, such as Tourism and Events Queensland, also rely on the data from TRA to formulate insights and profiles and therefore have no further data or analysis they can provide.

Queensland Outback Visitation

886,000 TOTAL VISITORS

\$573 MILLION SPENT

27,000 VISITORS FROM EUROPE

3.5 NIGHTS AVERAGE

HOLIDAY 28% VFR 18% BUSINESS 45%

3.3.2 Queensland Outback Visitor Trends

Domestic visitation to the Outback is the main source of travellers for the region, with the majority of visitors coming from other parts of Queensland. In the past three years (to September 2017), visitation to the Outback has been on the increase, in particular visits for the purpose of a holiday.

The amount visitors spend in region is also on the increase, however the time visitors are spending in the region has decreased.

To illustrate this further for year ending September 2017, domestic overnight visits were up 9.5% (859,000 visitors) along with total visitor spend up 8.9% (\$573 million). 696,000 of these visitors were from intrastate, with 163,000 visitor from interstate, up 10.6% and 5.8% respectively.

Visitor for the purpose of business is showing the strongest growth (up 18.4%), followed by VFR (visiting friends and relatives) up 3.3%. The length of stay in the Outback region is 3.5 nights.

International visitors are a small proportion of the travellers to the Outback, making up on 3% of the visitor market, with the majority coming from Europe (including the UK). Growth out of international markets has declined by 2.1% to 27,000 visitors, with visitors from Europe (12,000) slightly down and with them spending slightly less time in region.

It is useful to compare the last 12 months (to September 2017) for the Outback with other regions in Queensland. The Outback is performing well, with business travel still the largest market, followed by the holiday visitors and VFR markets.

Three year average - year ending September 2017

	Visitors	Holiday	VFR	Business	Expenditure (\$m)
Domestic Overnight	859,000	243,000	155,000	382,000	\$554.7m
Trend % change ²	▲ 9.5%	▲ 0.7%	▲ 3.3%	▲ 18.4%	▲ 9.2%
International Overnight	27,000	19,000	n/p	n/p	\$18.3m
Trend % change	▼ -2.9%	▲ 2.4%	n/p	n/p	▲ 1.5%
TOTAL	886,000	262,000	n/p	n/p	\$573.0m
Trend % change	▲ 9.1%	▲ 0.8%	n/p	n/p	▲ 8.9%



Source: Tourism & Events Queensland. Outback Regional Snapshot.



3.3.3 How do Outback residents feel about tourism?

When developing tourism in a region, it is relevant to gauge the feelings of the local community about tourism.

In the Outback, locals 'really like' tourism, with 64% (compared to 46% of the rest of Queenslanders) saying they like the way the industry is developing in their area and they are much more likely to talk to tourists than other Queenslanders are.

In fact, 71% of residents want tourism to increase, compared to 36% of residents in other parts of Queensland.

Three in four Outback residents think that tourism has a positive impact on the community and agreed that those impacts were greater cultural diversity, economic benefits, an increased regional profile and increased local pride.

Source: Tourism & Events Queensland (2017).
Outback Social Indicators.

"I love seeing tourists coming to our town, we really need to have more attractions to encourage more holidaying tourists in our region."

- Outback resident, 2017



3.3.4 Economic contributions from tourism to the Outback

According to the Tourism Satellite Account (2017), the key tool used to measure tourism, tourism delivered \$214 million to Outback regional economies, which is 3.1% of the gross regional product of the region. Tourism also had direct employment advantages, with 2,000 people being employed in tourism in the Outback (1,500 directly and 500 indirectly), which is 4.4% of the overall employment in the region. Most were employed in either transport, accommodation or cafes and restaurants.

Visitors contributed \$709 million in tourism consumption to the Outback economy, with intrastate visitors contributing the most (\$487 million), **spending on average \$224 a night in region.**

Deloitte Access Economics (2017). Regional Tourism Satellite Account Outback 2015-16.

3.3.5 Flinders Local Data

As visitors arrive at the Flinders Discovery Centre they are recorded into an online visitor numbers spreadsheet.

According to the data collated in the spreadsheet called "Daily Origins 2016", 22,806 total visitors originated from:

- Local 9%
- Intrastate 40% with the majority of visitors coming from SEQ representing 17% of the total visitors
- Interstate 44% with the most visitors coming from NSW and VIC making up 20% and 13% respectively
- International 7%

This breakdown of origins is reasonably consistent over the last three years.

The data indicates year on year growth as follows:

	2014	2015	2016
Total visitors	18,442	21,204	22,806
Growth	9%	15%	8%

The locally captured survey data indicates an average growth over the last three years of 10.5%, which closely aligns with the Outback Regional Snapshot, September 2017, produced by TEQ, which reports that visitation to the Queensland Outback has an average growth trend of 9.5% (outpacing the state's growth over the same period).

In terms of direction of travel, according to the survey results, in the past 12 months, most travellers arrived from either Richmond, Charters Towers or Winton.

How did you arrive in Hughenden?

From Richmond (west)	34%
From Charters Towers (east)	32%
From The Lynd Junction (north)	6%
From Winton (south-west)	27%
From Muttaborra (south)	1%

Source: Daily Origins 2016 Survey

Flinders Visitor Profile:

Most were departing the Flinders Shire, travelling east to Charters Towers and to a lesser degree, travelling to Richmond or Winton. They were holidaymakers, staying at a van site, staying overnight to two days, were using a 4WD and towing and had the intention to visit Porcupine Gorge National Park and sculptures around Hughenden. They obtained information from the Outback Queensland Tourism Authority, were most likely to be male or female aged 59-68 and male or female aged 0-17 (which indicates Empty Nesters and families). They intended to spend \$100 or more in region and it was unknown as to whether they intend to visit the region again.

Perhaps the most reliable piece of local data is the sales to the Flinders Discovery Centre as units sold/total admissions. Figures were 8,438 for January-December 2016 and in the nine months to the end of September 2017, 7,370 visitors. Amounts sold were \$29,807 for January-December 2015; \$39,010 for January-December 2016; and \$36,043 for January-December 2017. The data shows that the vast majority of sales are for adult admissions. However it is worth noting that the free entry of younger children may be skewing these figures slightly.

The cost of entry to the Flinders Discovery Centre is \$5 for adults, \$2 for children six and over and free entry for children five and under. Group sales are for a minimum of 25 people (adults) and are \$112.

Other information provided includes RV statistical data, RV campsite suggestions and feedback and Adult/Child breakdown from 1998-2010. The RV statistical data certainly confirms the difference in the high season to the low season with two nights in January and 372 nights in July.

The Adult/Child breakdown 2010 data seems consistent with the years before it, where the adult to child ratio is 14,675: 2,041 which is approximately seven adult visitors for every child visitor.

3.3.6 Regional Comparison

Comparative data for Queensland Outback Visitor Information Centres has been supplied by OQTA. This is derived from 2016/17 audits by Visit Queensland.

This data, summarised in the table below provides an overview of visitor enquiries via walkup, phone or web. Of the 18 Centres for which data was provided, the Flinders Shire ranks as follows:

- 8th position for walkups
- 13th for phone
- 15th for web

10 of the 18 centres site between 10,000 and 20,000 walk-ups and Flinders is in that top cohort with 16,902 walk-ups. Only three centres are above 20,000 walk-ups and they are the major tourism centres of Mt Isa, Winton and Longreach.

16/17 Visitor Information Centre Activity

VIC Name	Walk-ups	Phone	Web
At the Creek - Julia Creek Visitor Information Centre	12,651	580	581
Barcaldine Tourist Information Centre	14,747	455	25
Bedourie Outback Visitor Information Centre	5,860	120	89
Blackall Visitor Information Centre			
Charleville Visitor Information Centre	17,339	147	95
Cloncurry Unearthed Visitor Information Centre & Museum	17,018	80	30
Cunnamulla Fella Centre	18,618	2,569	117
Flinders Discovery Centre	16,902	320	55
Injune Information Centre	13,316	1,825	550
Kronosaurus Korner Information Centre	12,330	293	156
Longreach Visitor Information Centre	38,688	10,068	500
Min Min Encounter & Boulia Information Centre	7,600	8,000	5,000
Outback at Isa	26,000	7,220	3,610
Quilpie Visitor Information Centre, Museum and Gallery	11,581	642	129
Roma Visitor Information Centre	16,941	782	150
Thargomindah Visitor Information Centre	4,735	1,546	2,485
Winton Visitor Information Centre	31,220	1,400	723
Windorah Visitor Information Centre & Library	7,874	819	74

Source: Visit Queensland and OQTA

3.3.7 Target Market

Another valuable insight would come from understanding the exact breakdown of visitors to the Flinders shire. We know from the Outback regional research that visitors are there for the purpose of business, holiday or VFR, but we don't know what percentage are couples, families or Empty Nesters and how these percentages might have changed over the years.

Anecdotal feedback from Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ), relative to the Outback and the Flinders region, suggests that 'Empty Nesters', retired persons travelling their country for extended periods usually in caravans, are still the bread and butter market and continue to be a market on the increase.

There is a portable family camper trailer market that yields more and might book a motel room and buy more merchandise from retail shops, but they need things to do. The family market is moving faster through their travel itinerary, they have less time, but they also still need things to do with the kids.

There is also the opportunity to cater for and attract school education groups. The TEQ Outback Queensland Education Experience program may assist with this, as it entices Queensland school camps from grade five through nine to the Outback regions with a subsidy of up to \$130 for each student and a handbook that is aligned to the school curriculum.

The exact role that the Flinders Shire plays in a traveller's itinerary is also not available in research. Anecdotal evidence (local survey and interviews) suggests that the primary purpose is to see Porcupine Gorge National Park and the secondary is to spend time getting to know Hughenden (sculptures, Flinders Discovery Centre, walk through town).

Competitor Analysis

4.1 Methodology

The purpose of a competitor analysis is to understand how other towns are represented in the travel marketplace and therefore **how consumers form their impressions** of the offerings (experiences and products) in the planning phase of their travel purchase cycle. The analysis is conducted by looking through the eyes of the consumer who is trying to plan their itinerary based on **"where can we stay, what can we do, where can we eat?"**

Further purposes are to identify competitor comparative strengths and to identify opportunities for the Flinders Shire. The competitor analysis was conducted online, providing a good opportunity to assess how well Flinders businesses and attractions are represented in the digital space.

In selecting relevant competitor destinations or areas against which to analyse the Flinders Shire, we've considered those that have similar target markets and are geographically aligned. We have assumed a competitor set within the parameters of an Outback Queensland drive market, therefore have not looked broadly at alternatives to an Outback Queensland experience, for example an overseas trip.

The destinations selected were Winton, Longreach and Richmond. These destinations feature alongside Hughenden in a number of drives including the Overlander's Way and Australia's Dinosaur Trail and therefore are part of a visitor's consideration set when deciding where to spend their time.

It is important that Flinders towns be able to differentiate themselves from these destinations in the minds of consumers, in order to encourage consumers to consider them and to be able to package product effectively with neighbours as part of the overall experience.

A copy of the online review can be found in the Appendix to this report.

Based on available information the primary market is Empty Nesters and the secondary market is families. What we need to consider as part of the Tourism Development Plan is whether there are adequate things to do and services for families and if not, what needs to be developed.



4.2 How Well Represented is Flinders in the Online Space?

The marketing relationship with OQTA is important to Outback regions and major drive routes and suggested itineraries are a key feature of the OQTA website to assist consumers to understand how to holiday in the Outback. Flinders Shire features in a number of them. For example, inclusion in the Overlanders Way and Australia's Dinosaur Trail drive routes.

Itineraries categorised as Family Friendly that feature Flinders attractions that can be found on OQTA website are:

- 14 Day Dino, Crocs and Gold
- 7 Day Dinosaur Outback Trail

A number of drive routes are also under development by The Mount Isa To Townsville Economic Development Zone (MITEZ), including Drive North West, of which both the North West Loop and the Discovery Drive include Flinders Shire destinations. The Drive North West brochure and the website www.drivenorthwestqld.com.au have been developed in partnership with OQTA and TEQ. It's not clear as to the level of marketing investment and type of marketing activity that will be undertaken to promote and distribute the assets. Itineraries featured in the Drive North West website include:

- 12 Day North West Loop
- 12 Day Discovery Drive

It is also relevant to note that Hughenden features as part of the Queensland Outback on www.queensland.com as a destination on Australia's Dinosaur Trail and for its fossil collection and Porcupine Gorge as part of Mt Isa and the North West.

The key finding of the online assessment is that Flinders compared to Winton and Longreach appears to the consumer to have not as many facilities and attractions for travellers. For example, there are only two attractions on Tripadvisor, being Porcupine Gorge and Flinders Discovery Centre. Therefore in many cases their first impression of Flinders is that there are only two things to do.

Accommodation and dining options that are listed are rated by consumers as four star average, which is good. An aspiration would be to achieve 4.5 stars to sit ahead of competitive regions.



Council staff are working well with OQTA with regards to sharing of content for the OQTA website. Of all the platforms available this is the best source of information about Flinders and its content supports google searches.

On major consumer platforms like Tripadvisor Individual businesses (particularly dining) and attractions are underrepresented.

There is currently no online accommodation booking available for any Flinders Shire accommodation. Accommodation houses could investigate setting this up.

The Flinders Shire needs to improve how they are represented online and align with the TEQ Experience Pillars of **Natural Encounters** (Natural Landscapes), **Adventure & Discovery** (Adventure Experiences, Dinosaurs and Fossicking, Journeys), **Lifestyle Culture & People** (Outback and Country Life, Indigenous Experiences), and **Events** (Outback Events) as these are all areas that are relevant to experiences within the Flinders Shire.

TEQ's paleo strategy, which is presently under development aims for Outback Queensland to be recognised globally as one of the world's foremost palaeo tourism destinations.

Tourism and Events Queensland in partnership with Outback Queensland Tourism Association, recently engaged Destination Think! to help Outback destinations position and, ultimately, market themselves under the palaeo theme and a report is currently being finalised that makes recommendations to support the development of the this theme across the Outback Queensland area.

Despite this being an excellent opportunity Flinders may struggle to be a stand out with Paleo Tourism, as nearby towns have a comparatively strong dinosaur/fossil product offering, but Flinders owns the ancient rock formation of Porcupine Gorge, as no surrounding regions have anything like it. Further the review and recommendations for transformation of the Flinders Discovery Centre museum should serve to enhance Flinders' paleo positioning and provide family friendly experiences.

4.3 Product Audit

In October 2017, Tourism Tribe Consultant Liz Ward visited the Flinders Shire and inspected a number of key tourism product. The following are a list of product that are featured online on the Outback Queensland website and the Visit Hughenden website and in the list of product and map provided to visitors at the Flinders Discovery Centre. This list is not a list of every business in the Flinders Shire, but rather a list of product that are promoted by the VIC or of interest to the tourism visitor.

Product Name	Council Asset	Product Category	Product Type	Location
35' Comet windmill (Wirrila Mill)	Yes	Attraction	Built structure	Hughenden
Blackbraes National Park	No	Attraction	National Park	Hughenden
Eco Walk on Flinders **	Yes	Attraction	Self-guided tour	Hughenden
Eromanga Sea Byway (for 4 wheel drive enthusiasts)	Public access road	Attraction	4WD Track	Hughenden
Federation Rotunda	Yes	Attraction	Sculpture	Hughenden
Flinders Discovery Centre **	Yes	Attraction	Museum	Hughenden
Flinders River Byway	Public access road	Attraction	4WD Track	Hughenden
Four local parks: e.g. Robert Gray Memorial Park (on the banks of the Flinders River)	Yes	Attraction	Park	Hughenden
Hebrew Grave	Yes	Attraction	Historical site	Hughenden
Historic Coolibah Tree and Surveyors Peg	Yes	Attraction	Historical site	Hughenden
Hughenden Bowls Club	No	Attraction	Bowls Club	Hughenden
Hughenden Golf Club	No	Attraction	Golf Club	Hughenden
Mount Walker scenic lookout **	No	Attraction	Lookout	Hughenden
Mutt the replica Muttaborrasaurus ** (in street)	Yes	Attraction	Built structure	Hughenden
Porcupine Gorge National Park ***	No	Attraction	National Park	Hughenden

Product Name	Council Asset	Product Category	Product Type	Location
Public Art *	Yes	Attraction	Public Art	Hughenden
Returned soldiers memorial rotunda	Yes	Attraction	Historical site	Hughenden
The Basalt Byway (scenic drive)	Public access road	Attraction	4WD Track	Hughenden
White Mountains National Park	No	Attraction	National Park	Hughenden
Hughenden Country Music Festival (July)	No	Event (community run)	Music Festival	Hughenden
Hughenden Races (May & July)	No	Event (community run)	Horse Racing	Hughenden
Hughenden Show (June)	No	Event (community run)	Agricultural Show	Hughenden
Porcupine Gorge Challenge (June) **	Council managed	Event	Running event	Hughenden
Hughenden Rugby 7's (July)	No	Event	Rugby	Hughenden
Hughenden Memorial Aquatic Centre	Yes	General services	Pool	Hughenden
Cemetery Arts and Symbolism Self-guided tour	Yes	Tour	Self-guided tour	Hughenden
Kooroorinya Races (May)	No	Event (community run)	Horse Racing	Kooroorinya
Kooroorinya Falls Nature Reserve	No	Attraction	Nature Reserve	Prairie
Prairie Races (August)	No	Event (community run)	Horse Racing	Prairie
Prairie Pub **	No	Food & Drink	Pub	Prairie
Stamford Races and Community Fun Day	No	Event (community run)	Races	Stamford
Moorrinya National Park **	No	Attraction	National Park	Torrens Creek
Torrens Creek Golf Club	Yes	Attraction	Golf Club	Torrens Creek

** Indicates level of appeal (visitor pull factor) from Liz's perspective. Liz at time of writing had not visited all products.

A selection of local businesses were visited as part of this product audit.

4.4 Accommodation Capacity

The following is a list of accommodation in the area and capacity levels :

Product Name	Accommodation Category	Capacity and other relevant details to indicate min and max of sleeping capacity	Location
Royal Hotel Resort	Motel	51 rooms 20 x 1 queen & 1 single = 60 10 x 1 queen & 2 single = 40 1 x king & 1 Double = 4 13 x 1 Queen = 26 4 x 1 double & 1 queen = 16 3 x 1 double & single = 9 (155 people)	Hughenden
Great Western Hotel	Hotel	10 rooms 2 x 3 Double bunks & 1 single (6 single) = 14 5 x 1 double & 1 single = 13 2 x 1 double = 4 1 x 1 double bunk = 2 (33 people) Unused Backpacker share style - 21 rooms (66 single beds - bunks can be added). (66 people more if bunk)	Hughenden
Allan Terry Holiday Park	Caravan Park	Cabins 8 x double and single bunk = 32 6 x queen & single bunk = 48 (80 people) Single rooms 6 x 2 single = 12 1 x 3 single = 3 1 x single = 1 1 x double = 2 1 x queen = 2 (20 people) 40 Powered caravan sites. Unlimited unpowered caravan sites. 10 Powered tent sites. Unlimited unpowered tent sites	Hughenden
Rest Easi Motel	Motel	11 rooms 5 x 1 queen & 2 single = 20 1 x 3 single = 3 4 x double = 8 1 x double & 2 single = 6 2 x double & 2 singles = 8 (45 people) 6 van sites	Hughenden
Flintstones Diner & Van Park	Van Park	5 x powered sites 4 x unpowered sites	Hughenden
Torrens Creek Exchange Hotel	Hotel/Motel	Motel rooms 5 x double & 1 Single = 15 9 x double & 1 Single = 27 (42 people) Van site. 10 x powered. Unlimited unpowered	Torrens Creek
Prairie Hotel Motel	Motel	2 motel rooms 2 x Queen & 2 singles = 8 Hotel room 2 x 2 singles = 4 (12 people) Unlimited unpowered van sites	Prairie

Stakeholder Feedback

Gathering feedback from key stakeholders in the tourism industry was a critical part of developing the Tourism Development Plan. In formulation of the strategy, consultations have been held with the following stakeholders:

- Flinder Shire councillors and staff
- Flinders business community
- Yirandali indigenous group
- TEQ Destination Director and CEO
- Outback Queensland Tourism Association GM
- Outback and Education consultant (AC Tourism)
- Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Queensland Government Department of Environment & Science
- Visit Queensland representative

It is important to note that the Gudjala people were also in a small area in the north of the Flinders Shire. The Yirandali are the major group, but no descendants are living locally.

A number of recurrent themes were raised within the consultations and prominent feedback can be summarised as follows:

- Strengths of the Flinders Shire includes the friendliness of the people, tidiness of town, location, proximity to Porcupine Gorge
- We need to find “our thing” in Flinders (unique selling proposition / reason to stay)
- VIC and the Flinders Discovery Centre require an overhaul to convert to genuine assets for Council and attractors for visitors
- Empty Nesters are the bread and butter market; there is room to develop the family market
- More visitor experiences need to be developed
- Need to collaborate with other Councils and OQTA to leverage investment in marketing.

- Realise the potential of Porcupine Gorge as an iconic natural attraction through experience development
- Need to enhance community mood and create an optimism for the future of Hughenden and district.
- Work with willing businesses to revamp shops, service standards and develop tours and products
- Hughenden main street shops need a face lift
- Completing the sealing of Kennedy Development Road would open the Cairns market
- Opportunity to develop an education market via school group visits to Porcupine Gorge and other attractions, need to understand and develop accommodation facilities to meet this market's needs, inadequate capacity for dormitory style accommodation presently
- The old Grand Hotel could be a majestic visitor attraction and will undergo a conservation plan for future direction.

We need to find “our thing” in Flinders

Hughenden main street shops need a face lift

Need to rebuild community mood and create an optimism for the future of Hughenden

Further, specific feedback from the Yirandali Indigenous Group, via Jim Hill, was captured as follows:

- Would like to be fully engaged in the development of tourism plans for the area and be part of the tourism business community
- Can play a role to understand the cultural and spiritual impacts of tourism developments, for example, Jim is conducting the assessment for the dam that is being built in Hughenden.
- Would like to establish Yirandali knowledge centre / cultural tourism centre.
- Always looking for opportunities for education and training of their people and this is a key principle of their engagement. Ultimately they want jobs to result from tourism development for their people, as does the entire community. This includes youth trainee programs.
- Liz suggested that the potential redesign of the Flinders Discovery Centre (FDC) should incorporate stories of history and culture of the Yirandali people. Liz thought every visitor should walk away from the museum with the knowledge of how to say 'welcome' or a few words in Yirandali. Jim mentioned that there was intended to be a cultural display in the FDC and the Library, but they didn't happen or weren't maintained.
- Yirandali people could be involved in the design of projects eg. areas that Council wants to beautify. How can these incorporate elements that are valued by the indigenous people, for example, artwork and specific native plants/bush tucker. Jim advised they are not involved in any cultural projects for FSC at this stage.
- When being involved in projects, there is an expectation that they will be contracted and paid, not just volunteering. This supports the principle of creating skills and jobs.
- There are five Yirandali families (that are not in Flinders Shire) that Jim would also like to consult with to seek their input. Jim will act as the conduit to his people for the purposes of collecting their ideas and input.

**Would like to
establish Yirandali
knowledge centre
/cultural tourism
centre**

**Would like to be
fully engaged in
the development
of tourism plans**

**Can play a role
to understand
the cultural and
spiritual impacts
of tourism
developments**

**Yirandali people
could be involved
in the design of
projects**

**Incorporate
stories of history
and culture of the
Yirandali people**

6.0 SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Porcupine Gorge is an iconic natural attraction highly accessible via sealed road
- Location of Hughenden on the highways (or Flinders Highway) and on Australia's Dinosaur Trail.
- Fossils and dinosaur history and displays
- Local people are authentically country, friendly and optimistic about tourism potential for their towns.
- Staff are enthusiastic and keen for improvements and change
- A selection of business operators are enthusiastic and presenting a quality offering
- Hughenden awarded Tidiest Town award 2017
- Eco Walk and River Walk are appealing
- Hughenden public art reflecting history
- Committed plans for lake development
- Strong and positive relationships with OQTA, TEQ, QPWS and regional partners
- Mt Walker recent developments for visitors and residents
- Established events:
 - Porcupine Gorge Challenge
 - Hughenden Show
 - Hughenden Country Music Festival
 - Hughenden Races
 - Rugby 7's
 - Prairie, Stamford, OAPRC races
- Rich sheep/wool industry history
- Free RV camp ground
- Footpath network for cycling and walking
- 4WD tracks in national parks

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of compelling experiences to keep visitors for more than one night
- Flinders Discovery Centre is in need of reinvigoration and out of step with museum offerings
- Competitive strength/differentiation of product when part of a drive such as Australia's Dinosaur Trail or Overlander's Way
- Inconsistent service standards in hospitality across the region
- Increase in accommodation capacity needed to respond to education market opportunities
- Business owners are rebuilding confidence and inspiring hope for economic growth
- Hughenden shops are in need of face lifts
- Lack of interest by and opportunities for youth in working in the area
- Low level of visibility of businesses and attractions online
- Flinders doesn't yet have a unique selling proposition as a region
- Tenuous nature of relying on volunteers, they are often not around and in the future will be more scarce
- Trading hours are limited

OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop experiences, tours and events catering to the family market
- Increase visitor experiences at Porcupine Gorge and other national parks
- Embrace a 'country life' theme reflecting the essence of the people
- Develop indigenous cultural experiences and local experiences that focus on County Life
- Redesign and develop the Flinders Discovery Centre into a must-do attraction in the Outback
- Create a 'country hospitality' benchmark in food offerings, quality and friendly service (adopt "Welcome to..." program facilitated by OQTA)
- Exploit the lake development to develop visitor experiences at the lake
- Develop high-end visitor experiences and accommodation in national parks
- Partner with surrounding shires to maximise presence in drives such as Australia's Dinosaur Trail and Overlander's Way
- Complete the Kennedy Development Road sealing and market into Cairns
- Develop a major and local events program including review of Porcupine Gorge Run event
- Involve the local businesses and local community in the tourism plans and provide opportunities to participate and invest
- Motivate and educate local businesses in better business and marketing practices
- Increase online accommodation booking capability
- Involve local school in the tourism plans
- Collaborate with Charters Towers on White Mountain NP experience development
- Torrens Creek can be primary access point for White Mountain experiences
- Adventure tourism out of Townsville e.g. develop 4WD itinerary programs such as 4WD tours in White Mountains – Saw Pit Gully
- Council support locals with story development to support development of tours
- Develop pioneers history stories
- Develop Flinders Breaker Morant story
- Promote flora / fauna photography in the area
- Develop kids ranger cadets program for locals and visitors
- Astronomy tours at PG or Mt Walker
- Public Art Plan
- Renewable energy sites as attractions and education experiences
- Development of Mount Desolation - extinct volcano

THREATS

- Flinders as a holiday offering does not keep pace with consumer expectations
- Iconic must do experiences e.g. Australian Age of Dinosaurs distracts travellers from visiting and staying in Hughenden
- Nearby towns get it right sooner and distract travellers from visiting Hughenden
- Flinders can't differentiate its reasons to visit from surrounding areas
- Some local businesses need encouragement in retail presentation
- Drought – prevailing weather conditions
- Minimal investment in national parks
- Government funding does not keep pace or align with strategic plans of Outback stakeholders

Strategic Opportunities and Action Plan

7.1 Marketing Goals and Target Markets

Goals:

- Develop a clear value proposition for the market about why they should visit and stay in Flinders Shire
- Develop experiences that will increase Overnight Stays by the family market
- Create whole of life memories for children
- Create braggable experiences to generate customer advocacy

Empty Nesters are the current primary market for the region and the Queensland Outback, with families as secondary. Families can be attracted to the region and enticed to stay an extra night by the provision of compelling family experiences, at the early or later stages of their Outback Queensland itinerary. Families from Townsville can be attracted to visit Flinders to visit must do attractions of Porcupine Gorge and the Flinders Discovery Centre (FDC) and to experience country.

This will all help to realise the goal set by the Flinders Shire Council to increase tourism numbers by 25% by 2020, as stated in the Flinders Shire Council Corporate Plan and Operational Plan.

7.2. Experience Development

The key experiences themes are national parks, paleo, settlement heritage, wool history and renewable energy. These key experiences are delivered with *genuine country hospitality*.

DEVELOP FLINDERS DISCOVERY CENTRE INTO A MUST-DO AWARD-WINNING OUTBACK ATTRACTION FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY TOURISM HUB

- ▶ Lives up to its name as a “discovery” experience – you learn from discovery and fun
- ▶ The FDC is the visitor hub of the region, a place be entertained, learn, get information and local advice, experience local art, relax, shop, access WiFi; and a community tourism development hub (concepts are further explored in the dedicated Flinders Discovery Centre Development Plan)
- ▶ Develop the Flinders story with a few main themes eg. ancient landscapes and paleo; European and Indigenous history; local culture and art. The story is the content platform from which to design the centre and its features to communicate the stories and create lifelong memories.
- ▶ High level of interactivity to create engagement and lasting memories
- ▶ Discovery walk-through so each corner reveals a new “discovery”
- ▶ People to people communication of stories through tour guides
- ▶ Live active displays eg. shearing (continue); fossil treatments/lab; art creation/workshops
- ▶ Expand the centre to become a local artisans gallery vs. commercial souvenirs only
- ▶ Rebalance merchandise so less imported commercial and more local quality products eg. locally made jewellery
- ▶ Incorporate digital technologies eg. virtual reality tours (walking with dinosaurs; indigenous storytelling; flying over or through the Gorge); bring Hughie to life through projection technology

INCREASE VISITOR EXPERIENCES AT PORCUPINE GORGE

- ▶ There is planning in place to develop a walk around the lookout at Porcupine Gorge
- ▶ Skywalk development feasibility study
- ▶ Helicopter tours to be developed as a product (see also White Mountain, where Shandonval homestay at Aramac is in planning for heli tours from their property to White Mountain)
- ▶ Guided walks focusing on fitness and incorporating food and wine elements
- ▶ Flora and fauna photography opportunities for visitors
- ▶ Mt Walker sunset drinks with tour guide
- ▶ Country life tours including 'on the land experiences' and a home style lunch or early 'outback BBQ' dinner
- ▶ Also suggested through stakeholder feedback sessions was Brass Dinosaur footprints in the main street pathway, similar to the Hollywood stars. These could include snippets of historical people, or a timeline along the street pathway, example from New Zealand town below. Another example of this type of trail is the Hull Fish Trail in the UK. "It's been great for families doing a walking tour of the city and the fish keep the children interested."

DEVELOP LOCAL CULTURAL EXPERIENCES THAT FOCUS ON COUNTRY LIFE

- ▶ Opportunity for the Flinders Shire to own 'country life'; this is the authentic essence of the local people
- ▶ Local walking tours in the cooler parts of the day
- ▶ Self Guided Tours: There are opportunities to improve the visitor experience through self guided storytelling. For example, QR codes at attractions, public artworks, historical sites that people could scan and link to a video of a local character telling the story of that attractions; or the local artist who designed the sculpture; or features of the memorial plaques through Robert Gray Park; the people who donated it and telling the story of the great floods in 1917 that took their ancestors lives and how it swept away the house down the river.
- ▶ Some ideas were given to us about self guided tours and lanterns that project stories at the Cemetery at night. Maryborough was used as an example of some valuable ideas.
- ▶ Opportunity to develop Cemetery history tours
- ▶ Develop art experiences and design gallery based on local artisans
- ▶ Projection wrap the old hotel, water towers and other sites in the high season
- ▶ Develop footpath timelines to tell the historical stories and improve the experience of walking around town



DEVELOP INDIGENOUS CULTURAL EXPERIENCES INTEGRATED WITH ATTRACTIONS AND ASSETS

- ▶ Work with traditional owners at the outset of planning to identify opportunities to develop indigenous culture experiences
- ▶ Maintain active collaborative relationship with traditional owners around tourism planning

CREATE A 'COUNTRY HOSPITALITY' BENCHMARK IN FOOD OFFERINGS, QUALITY AND FRIENDLY SERVICE.

- ▶ Adopt "Welcome to..." program facilitated by OQTA
- ▶ Leverage and maintain Tidy Town award standards
- ▶ Research what travellers want in food and drinks and connect these needs with historically and geographically relevant menus

EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP THE EDUCATION MARKET

- ▶ Develop adequate suitable accommodation (dormitory style)
- ▶ Develop marketing, distribution and conversion solutions

EXPLOIT THE LAKE DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE VISITOR EXPERIENCES FOR FAMILIES

- ▶ Existing caravan parks cannot compare to 'family park resorts', e.g. 'Big 4', Flinders can utilise the infrastructure of the lake to provide fun family activities
- ▶ Kayaking for families
- ▶ Organised kids events / games in school holidays
- ▶ Outdoor pop-up cinema

DEVELOP HIGH-END VISITOR EXPERIENCES AND ACCOMMODATION AT WHITE MOUNTAINS

- ▶ Glamping in White Mountains
- ▶ White Mountains 4WD tours into White Mountains then scenic flight
- ▶ Opportunity for chopper tours with multiple stops including pubs and national parks

EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FLINDERS SHIRE AS A RENEWABLE ENERGY HUB

- ▶ Position Flinders as a renewable energy hub in Australia
- ▶ Develop tours and attractions around solar farms and wind turbine sites

7.3 Events

- ▶ Review Porcupine Gorge Run
- ▶ Examine opportunities to package Porcupine Gorge Run with other experiences
- ▶ Create a major and regular local 'country life' events program
- ▶ Explore opportunity for night-time events eg projection wrapping at Porcupine Gorge and evening story-telling tours
- ▶ Half marathon Mt Walker to Hughenden
- ▶ Family Colour Run

7.4 Access

- ▶ Complete road sealing on Kennedy Development Road to open up the Cairns market

The Kennedy Development Road forms part of the highway network from Cairns to Melbourne and once sealed will offer a viable alternative to the Bruce Highway. The final stretch is being worked on presently, contributed to by Council. It would open access to the Cairns tourism market with must-do attractions on the way such as Undarra and Cobalt Gorge and it will provide a good opportunity for transport truck drivers to refresh in Hughenden.

- ▶ Explore opportunities to open access to indigenous art sites in collaboration with traditional owners and private property/land owners
- ▶ Investigate historic tracks that can be reopened for walking, mountain biking and horse riding

7.5 Business Capability

- ▶ Reinvigorate local businesses' mindsets and physical shops / windows / facades
- ▶ Identify local business champions and promote them as role models to others.
- ▶ Create opportunities for training / business capability development
- ▶ Encourage adoption of a Country Life theme in the local businesses so visitors are getting that local branding message when they visit local shops eg. one of the stores should have an old fashioned lolly counter; make devonshire teas a feature; best local beef pies in the Outback
- ▶ Develop ongoing business community engagement program inclusive of regular training workshop and support sessions
- ▶ Leverage a common vision for economic growth coming from the tourism plan
- ▶ Establish seed funding program from Council to seed start-ups for tour experiences

7.6 Community Pride

CREATE AND NURTURE A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP OF THE TOURISM PLAN BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

- ▶ Develop a community communications plan to educate and engage business owners and residents on the value of tourism including helping them to understand that overnight visitors on average spend \$224 in the Queensland Outback; and educate on what visitors feel about the Flinders Shire now and what the opportunities are for region; and how they can play a role in the future tourism strategy
- ▶ Establish a regular communications plan to inform the community about tourism plans, progress and results eg share visitor statistics
- ▶ An opportunity for the local Chamber of Commerce is to form a business networking group to provide continuing input to tourism plans and collaborate on business improvement projects

RECRUIT AND TRAIN TOUR GUIDES: PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEIR LOCAL AREAS AND PASSIONATE ABOUT GUIDING

- ▶ Investigate opportunities for Council to support people wanting to undertake training e.g. Savannah Guides
- ▶ Provide training and tour guide accreditation pathways

INVOLVE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN THE TOURISM PLAN AIMING FOR STUDENTS TO IDENTIFY WITH A JOB IN TOURISM IN THE FUTURE

- ▶ Include tourism and hospitality in the curriculum
- ▶ Develop students' understanding of the economy and the value of tourism
- ▶ Teach local and paleo history in schools
- ▶ Run a program "be a tour guide for the day" in schools

7.7 Council Responsibilities and Integration

- ▶ Look for opportunities for alignment in Council business and operational plans, responsibilities and budgets to ensure tourism plan activities and goals are supported e.g. maintenance of Council assets like repainting of dinosaur feet around bins; tree maintenance timed to consider aesthetic impacts and impacts on visitor seasons
- ▶ Define Council's role for successful implementation recognising that Council cannot successfully implement the plan working alone and success will rely on community and partners taking on responsibilities
- ▶ Develop appropriate project management methodologies that ensure development and activity plans are mapped out with milestones, success measures, responsibilities, timeframes, resources
- ▶ In consultation with partners and community stakeholders, establish a list of priority tourism projects

7.8 Partnerships

- ▶ Align Flinders marketing strategy with OQTA's Outback Vision to be "The No.1 choice for an authentic Australian Outback experience and adventure for families" and the Outback Mission to "connect every visitor with an authentic and memorable Australian outback experience and adventure"
- ▶ Be an early adopter of OQTA's "Welcome to..." program for industry development/hospitality
- ▶ Deeply engage with the OQTA team and take every opportunity to leverage their marketing plans and commercial relationships
- ▶ Develop and share content with OQTA and other partners to provide them experiences, stories and information to share through their channels; standards
- ▶ Continue to nurture the QPWS relationship and engage with key staff to ensure they understand and support experience development plans
- ▶ Develop relevant and consistent communication and engagement programs to get local businesses on board with the tourism plan and to invest in new products and experiences in partnership with Council
- ▶ Work with surrounding Shires to develop a shared common vision of growth in visitors to the Outback and collaborate on sharing information and creating itineraries

7.9 Funding Opportunities

- ▶ Continue to explore funding opportunities for the region and local businesses available within the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) Funding Gateway, Queensland Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning and share the Tourism Development plan at a state and federal level to leverage funding potential
- ▶ Share the Tourism Development Plan and Strategic Tourism Development Opportunities with potential funding partners to identify how Flinders developments support their regional development objectives

7.10 Measurement

- ▶ Develop a model to measure successful implementation
 - ▶ Customer reviews, ratings, positive comments
 - ▶ 80% or above in customer satisfaction in review platforms
 - ▶ Growth in visitor numbers, two night visitor stay and maintaining 8% growth in tourism numbers year on year
 - ▶ Review the visitor survey (currently taken at the Flinders Discovery Centre) to ensure the right data is being captured; and consider how key questions can be asked when visitors are accessing the free wi-fi service; and how key questions can be asked and data collected at time of purchase of entry tickets to the museum
 - ▶ Community feedback about tourism

Appendix

Competitor Analysis - Online Assessment

As part of the competitor analysis, the Flinders Shire was assessed in the online environment against surrounding regions in TripAdvisor, Google organic search, WiKiCamps and OQTA website.

Traveller Offerings	Longreach	Winton	Richmond	Hughenden
Accommodation Source: TripAdvisor	Albert Park Motor Inn 4* Abajaz Motor Inn 4.5* Longreach Motor Inn 4* The Jumbuck Motel 4* Longreach Motel 4* Kinnon and Co Outback Accommodation 4.5* Wellshot Hotel 4.5* Ilfracombe Caravan Park 4.5* Lyceum Hotel 2* Longreach Tourist Park 3.5*	North Gregory Hotel 4* Boulder Opal Motor Inn 3.5* Matilda Motel 3.5* Outback Motel 4.5* Banjo's Overnight and Holiday Units 3.5* Cottage on Cork 5* Tattersalls Hotel 4* Pelican Fuel Stop and Caravan Park 3* Matilda Country Tourist Park 2.5* The Winton Holiday House 5*	Ammonite Inn 4* Entriaken's Pioneer Motel 2.5* Lakeview Caravan Park 4.5* Midway Roadhouse 3*	Royal Hotel Motel 3* Prairie Hotel Motel 5* Allan Terry Holiday Park 4* Rest Easi Motel 4* Great Western Hotel 4*
Dining Out Source: Google local search "restaurants in ... queensland"	Happy Valley Chinese Restaurant 4.6* Longreach Motor Inn & Harry's Restaurant 4.5* CCD Restaurant Bar Tapas 4.7* The Woolshed Restaurant 2.6* Albert Park Motor Inn 4.1* Jumbuck Motel Longreach 4.1* McGinness' Restaurant 4.0* Curry Across the Street 3.0* Bushrangers Bistro 4.2* Ferdinando's Pizza (no reviews)	Balamara Bakery 4.3* Banjo's Bistro (no reviews) Tattersalls Hotel 4.4* Musical Fence Cafe 1.7*	Mud Hut Hotel 4.1* Moon Rock Cafe 4*	Chengs Chinese Restaurant 4.6* Great Western Hotel 4* FJ Holden Cafe 4.5*
Dining Out Source: TripAdvisor	Merino Bakery 4.5* Harry's Restaurant and Redford Bar 4.5* Longreach RSL 4* CCD Restaurant and Beer Garden 4.5* The Welcome Home Cafe and Tearoom 5* The Birdcage Hotel 4* The Lazy Sheet 4.5* Outback Pioneers 4.5* Happy Valley Chinese Restaurant 4* Eagle Street Pizza 5* Oasis Restaurant & Bar 4.5* Darcy's Diner 4.5* Outback Pics 4.5* Cattlemans Bar and Grill 4* Curry Across the Street 4* Outback Gallery 4.5* Eagle Boys 4.5* Historic Railway Cafe 4* Commercial Hotel 3.5* The Woolshed Restaurant 3.5* McGinness' Restaurant 3.5* Starlights Tavern Steakhouse 3*	Tattersalls Hotel 4.5* Balamara Bakery 4.5* Daphne Mayo Dining Room 4* The Spun Yam Cafe 4.5* Boulder Opal Motor Inn 4* Coolabah Cafe 4.5* The Musical Fence Cafe 3.5*	Treats for Your Table 5* Mud Hut Hotel 4* MoonRock Cafe 4* Curry King 3.5* Rivers Restaurant 3.5*	FJ Holden Cafe 4.5* Chengs Chinese Restaurant 4.5* Hughenden Coffee Lounge 5* (only 1 review) Holdens Bakery 4*

Traveller Offerings	Longreach	Winton	Richmond	Hughenden
"Sites" listings including caravan parks, backpacker hostels, POIs Source: WikiCamps	Camden Park Station 4.5* Anderson Creek 3* Stockmans Hall of Fame & Outback Heritage 4* Queensland Helicopters Qantas Founders Museum 4* Longreach Outback Adventures 4.5* Longreach Tourist Park 3* Porcelain Doll Display and Outback Colle... Lioness Park 4* Anzac Park 4.5* 24hr Laundromat 2.5* ININGAI Native Flor & Fauna Park 1* Longreach Library 3.5* Longreach Information Centre 4.5* Outback Pioneers Experience Booking Office Longreach Aquatic Centre 4.5* Toilet and Shower (CWA Rest Rooms) 4.5* Kinnon & Co. Booking Office 5* Longreach Public Dump Point 4* Parking Bay for Caravans 4* Skate Park Longreach Powerhouse Museum 3* Longreach Caravan Park 2.7* Smithys Outback Stockshow 5* Thomson River Apex Riverside Park (Thomson River) 3* Thomson River 1* Dingo Creek Downs 3.1* Macland Rest Area 3.3* Track to River Longreach Waterhole 4* Native Well 2* Stonehenge Address Book 4.1* John Egan Pioneer Track 5* Broadwater Waterhold Lochern NP 3*	Bladensburg Homestead 3* Long Waterhold Winton (RVFT) 3* Mistake Creek 3.5* Winton Showgrounds 3.5* Winton DP & Shaded Park Area 5* Waltzing Matilda Centre 3.5* Winton Memorial Swimming Pool 4* Memorial Park Squash hall toilets and showers 4* Pubic Toilets Hollow Log Park Willie Mar historic market garden 3.5* North Gregory Hotel Winton (RVFT) Vision Splendid Outback Trou Company 5* Winton Club 3* Ben's Chicken Stamped 4.5* Arnos Wall 3* Laundromat 3* Library Free WIFI 5* Winton Tourist Information Centre 2.5* Red Dirt Tours 5* BP Winton - Free Hot Showers with fuel 3.5* Tattersall's HOtel Van Park 3.5* Winton Opal Company 5* Patricia Bucknell Park Matilda Country Tourist Park 2.5* Winton Hostel 2* Pelican Fuel Stop and Caravan Park 3.5* Musical Fence & Qantas Monument 4.5* Winton Rec Groupd DP 3.5* Pelican Monument / Old Winton Town 1* Jessie Knoll Turnoff Lake Quarry: Dinosaur Trackways 4* Conn Hole 3.5* Ayrshire Hills RA 3* Paddy Creek Rest Area 3.5*	Centenary Park 4* Lake Fred Tritton 4.5* Midway Roadhouse 3* Lakeview Caravan Park 4* Richmond Town Pool Cambridge Downs Heritage Display Centre 4.5* Hampstead Tours - Cattle Station 5* Richmond Info Centre / Kronosaurus Korner 4.5* Bobby Murray Memorial Park Library Richmond Dump Point Richmond RV Park Laundromat Richmond Fossil Dig Stopping Bays	Mount Walker 3* Sunset Lookout at Mt Walker 4* Hughenden Showground Dump Point Hughenden RV Campground 2.5* Rotary Park - JA 'Bully' Platford Park 3* Flinstones Diner & Van Park 4* Lundromat 2.2* Hughenden Allan Terry Caravan Park 3.5* Hughenden Aquatic Centre 3* Big Dinosaur - Muttaborrasaurus 3.5* Elvis and FJ Holden memorabilia 4* Hughenden Dog Clipping/Minding 5* Hughenden Dump Point 4* Brodie Street Playground 4.5* Picnic Shelter - Tap for Water Fil Up Rest Easi Motel & Caravan Park 3* Free cold Showers Rest Area 5* Pyramid Campground Porcupine Gorge NP 4*

Traveller Offerings	Longreach	Winton	Richmond	Hughenden
Attractions Source: TripAdvisor	Outback Pioneers 5* Outback Aussie Tours 5* Qantas Founders Museum 4.5* Australian Stockmans Hall of Fame and Heritage Centre 4.5* Ilfracombe Machinery and Heritage Museum 4.5 Camden Park Station 5* Spirit of the Outback Train 4* Longreach Region Visitor Information Centre 4.5* Captain Starlight of Starlight's Lookout 4.5* Outback Pics 4.5* Longreach Powerhouse Museum 4* Lake Eyre Basin 4.5* Spinifex Collections 5* Air Central West Pty Ltd 5* The Outback Show 5* Nogo Station Experience 3.5* History Tours Australia - Longreach Cemetery Tours 4* Queensland Helicopters 5* The Garden Shed 5*	Australian Age of Dinosaurs 4.5* Waltzing Matilda Centre 4* Dinosaur Stampede at Lake Quarry Conservation Park 4.5* Red Dirt Tours 5* Vision Splendid Outback Tour Company 4.5* Bladensburg National Park 4* Arno's Wall 4* Winton Diamantina Heritage Truck & Machinery Museum 4.5* Qantilda Museum 4* Corfield & Fitzmaurice General Merchants 3.5* Royal Theatre 4* Ben's Chicken Stampede 4* Winton Opal Gems 4*	Kronosaurus Korner 4.5* Federal Palace Hotel 3.5* Cambridge Downs Heritage Display Centre 3.5* Richmond Fossil Hunting Sites (No reviews)	Flinders Discovery Centre 4.5* Porcupine Gorge 4.5*
Things to do Source: Google local search "what is there to do in ...?"	Qantas Founders Outback Museum 4.5* Australian Stockmans Hall of Fame 4.3* Lake Eyre Basin Longreach Powerhouse Museum and Social History Museum 3.5* Heartland Theatre 4.7* Iningai Nature Reserve Anzac Park	Lake Quarry Dinosaur Trackways 4.6* Waltzing Matilda Centre Bladensburg National Park 4.5* Machinery Museum Musical Fence Matilda Country Tourist Park 3* Arno's Wall 3.2* Outback Regional Gallery	Kronosaurus Korner Free Fossicking Sites Lake Fred Tritton Bush Tucker Garden Heritage Trail Walk Cambridge Downs Heritage Display Centre Cambridge Ruin Richmond War Memorial More items... Local Attractions - Richmond Shire Council www.richmond.qld.gov.au/kronosaurus-korner	Blackbraes National Park Eco-Walk on Flinders Eromanga Sea Byway Flinders Discovery Centre With link to OQTA website
TripAdvisor overview of number of product listings	Accommodation (8) Things to do (19) Restaurants (19) Attractions: Museums (5) Tours (6) Outdoor Activities (3) Sights & Landmarks (4) Traveller Resources (1) Shopping (3) Nature & Parks (1) Concerts & Shows (1)	Accommodation (10) Holiday Rentals (4) Things to do (13) Restaurants (6) Attractions: Museums (5) Sights & Landmarks (2) Outdoor Activities (2) Tours (2) Nature & Parks (1) Concerts & Shows (1) Shopping (1) Fun & Games (1)	Accommodation (4) Holiday Rentals (2) Things to do (4) Restaurants (7) Attractions: Museums (1) Nightlife (1) Sights & Landmarks (2)	Accommodation (4) Things to do (2) Restaurants (2) Attractions: Museums (1) Nature & Parks (1)
Experiences/Products overview Source: OQTA website	Attractions/Things to do (21) Accommodation (9) Food & Drink (14) Businesses & Services (12)	Attractions/Things to do (8) Accommodation (5)	Attractions/Things to do (6) Accommodation (none listed)	Attractions/Things to do (13) Accommodation (5) Food & Drink (10)

Traveller Offerings	Longreach	Winton	Richmond	Hughenden
Major annual events Source: OQTA website	(4) Longreach Annual Show Longreach Picnic Races October Outback Fiesta Yellowbelly Fishing Classic	(4) Outback Festival Outback Writers Festival Vision Splendid Outback Film Festival Winton Opal Festival	None Listed	(3) Hughenden Agricultural Show Hughenden Races Porcupine Gorge Challenge
Suggested itineraries Source: OQTA website	(9) Back Roads to Winton (Approx. 6 Days) Central Queensland Outback Drive (Approx. 7 Days) Far West Adventure Drive (Approx. 10 Days) Gems of the Outback (14 Days) Longreach Region Self-Drive Experience (5 Days) Outback Giants (7 Days) Outback Legends (14 Days) Stars, Parks & Legends Drive (Approx. 7 Days) The Matilda Way (Approx 9 Days)	(6) Australian Dinosaur Trail Back Roads to Winton Natural Encounters Drive 7 Day Dinosaur Trail 7 Day Outback Giants 14 Day Gems of the Outback	None Listed	Dinosaur Trail Self-Drive (7 Days) Dinos, Crocs & Gold Self-Drive (14 Days) Overlanders Way

Notes

[illegible]

Explore Create Engage

Flinders Discovery Centre

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN



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