

A CULTURAL TOURISM PLAN FOR THE MAITLAND AND DUNGOG DISTRICTS, NSW

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Project Team:

Associate Professor David Rowe, Dr John Jenkins, Dr Kevin Markwell, Ms Georgia Paton and Dr Deborah Stevenson

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This tourism strategy for the Maitland and Dungog local government areas sets out to identify the cultural richness and diversity of the two areas from the standpoints of local tourism authorities, stakeholders, residents, and visitors. The Plan describes two areas where the vitality and creativity of residents, in conjunction with unique built and natural environments, are playing pivotal roles in defining each place, their images and identities. In addition, such factors are contributing significantly to local amenity, economies, the quality of life enjoyed by residents, and the experiences of visitors. The premise of this Plan is that the bases of a successful, integrated cultural tourism strategy lie in harnessing and developing existing resources and ways of life. This is not a conventional exercise of promoting cultural tourism among other forms, such as nature-based or sport tourism. Instead, it seeks to put the cultural dimension to the forefront of diverse tourism resources, activities and attractions.

The districts of Maitland and Dungog are both facing considerable economic and social change. In order to meet such challenges, it is necessary to develop strategic planning responses that are informed by an awareness of local cultures and the issues that are important to the community. Significant benefits can flow from such an integrated 'cultural planning' approach to local tourism development.

The recommendations contained in this Report are practical and strategic ways whereby local councils and tourism authorities, in conjunction with their communities, can develop the built, natural and cultural wealth of the districts as the basis for the establishment of a viable tourism industry. Maitland and Dungog are well-placed to use the findings and recommendations of this Cultural Tourism Plan as the starting point from which to explore the connections between different functions, expenditure programs, agencies and spheres of government. It offers a means of integrating a cultural development perspective into their broader planning processes. The Plan, it is hoped, will also be of value to other regions, who may see in its process, information and recommendations a guide to devising their own sustainable regional cultural tourism plans.

The Project Team thanks all those involved, directly and indirectly, in the production of this Plan. They include the Steering Committee, the Councils, stakeholders, visitor survey respondents and others who provided important information and opinion. We have all learnt much in the process, and we hope that various individuals, groups and organisations who consult this Plan will benefit from it in some way. Now that the Plan is in the public arena, we strongly encourage government at all levels, the tourism industry and local residents to cooperate in its implementation.

Maitland City

Strategic Opportunity: Extend the Scope of the Tourism Community

- Widen the operational definition of 'tourism business', 'tourism event' and 'tourism attraction' to include a full range of community-based cultural activities.
- Involve Maitland CBD Office as an alternative tourist information outlet.
- Integrate the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) information base with the CBD Office's 'Community Directory'.
- Develop a strategy to assist community organisations in providing the VIC with regular and accurate information about their activities and events.
- Explore the possibility of providing free marketing and/or services and information to community groups and businesses that don't currently see themselves as part of the tourism community.
- Develop (in partnership with the CBD Office, Chamber of Commerce, and Lower Hunter Business Enterprise Centre) a networking/educational programme to draw non-traditional businesses and community groups into the tourism community.

Strategic Opportunity: Mindaribba Aboriginal Council Museum and Community Centre, Metford

- It is recommended that discussions take place between Mindaribba, Maitland Tourism and Maitland City Council to resolve any difficulties, and to establish a better line of communication.
- Establish ways by which Maitland Visitor Centre can provide ongoing support and encouragement to Mindaribba.
- Maitland City Council to promote the Mindaribba Cultural Centre. Consequently, a crucial first step would be to develop a marketing strategy that would include recommendations relating to product development, activities such as guided tours both on and off site, advertising and promotions.
- Explore opportunities for increasing group bookings for tours.
- Refine marketing opportunities:
 - Information and booking forms might be sent to bus tour companies at their point of departure;
 - Explore marketing opportunities with Indigenous and other groups overseas via the Internet;
 - Extend the existing Schools program through appropriate marketing;
 - Market to tertiary education institutions, and to historical, archaeological and nature-based groups and clubs in Sydney and Newcastle;
 - Develop a brochure advertising existing and potential programs offered by Mindaribba.
- Explore the opportunities for joint exhibitions with Maitland Art Gallery. The VIC might also be used as an exhibition/retail space for these groups.
- Explore opportunities for developing a 'shop front' arts and crafts facility, either at the Centre or in locations such as Maitland or Morpeth.

- Investigate services, information and support that may be available from the Hunter Business Centre at Kurri Kurri to aid in the development of a 'shop front' arts and crafts facility, and in commercial development of other Centre facilities and tours.
- Apply for funding to support the production and sale of arts and crafts. Several funding opportunities both for individual Aboriginal artists and community arts projects have been provided by the Australia Council over the last 12 months.
- Explore opportunities for Mindaribba to run and market its own tours to local Aboriginal sites of interest. This must be done with care and consideration for the protection of important Aboriginal heritage sites.
- Explore opportunities for running 'bush tucker' tours using currently available local expertise.
- Explore opportunities for employing (recruiting as a volunteer in the short term) an Aboriginal person to provide information at the Maitland Visitor Centre.
- Explore opportunities for building up existing conference and workshop business, marketing to Aboriginal groups, government departments with Aboriginal interests, and to the wider community.

Strategic Opportunity: Events

- Canvass the seeding of a Maitland District event that would incorporate regional craft, shopping, and regional food and wine in ways that would appeal to a mature audience.
- Examine the possibility of organising a community event based on the former 'Heart of the Hunter' event that some survey participants felt provided a full day's entertainment for a wide range of age groups and interests, and included river rafting races, a street parade and side shows.
- Look at ways of revitalising Steamfest by adding activities and attractions that appeal to a wider age group.
- Approach Maitland Dramatic Society to explore the development of a 'progressive play', showcasing venues and sites around Maitland, combined with a quality dining experience.
- Undertake detailed, strategic research concerning the events and conference market potential for Maitland.

Strategic Opportunity: Local Education

- Work with the City Centre Office to take advantage of the well used 'drop in' service at the Heritage Mall for local residents by providing up-to-the-minute information about local attractions and events.
- Develop a campaign in the local media to raise awareness about the importance of tourism in the District, and featuring visitors' stories about their visits to local attractions, markets, festivals, events and eateries.
- The Visitor Guide requires more editorial information rather than being largely advertising based.
- Target local retailers, hairdressers and other service providers who could be used to disseminate information about the attractions, activities and

events that are occurring in the area, through the distribution of tourism information and by inviting them to attend tourism seminars.

Strategic Opportunity: Accommodation

- Ways of improving accommodation variety (B&B motels, hotels, caravan and camping), quality and price competitiveness should be explored.
- Develop a strategic approach to community events to spread the accommodation load in order to overcome problems associated with peaks and troughs in accommodation bookings.
- Explore potential markets for accommodation among regular users (such as Maitland Markets stall operators).
- Explore ways of encouraging local accommodation providers to provide good information to the VIC for its new web site.
- Market more vigorously the availability of Bed and Breakfast and other boutique style accommodation, including pub-stays, so that the links between tourism and the culture of the area are made more evident in the marketplace.

Strategic Opportunity: The Hunter River

- Encourage the development of an open space network in Maitland and surrounding districts.
- Provide land for a range of recreation purposes and protect land from encroachment by incompatible land uses. Opportunities for appropriate multiple use, especially across private lands, should be explored.
- Explore the feasibility of locating new picnic and BBQ areas along appropriate sections of the River. These would need to be linked to adjacent streets with walking trails or access roads.
- Develop an integrated walking path and cycle way along the riverbank.
- The Hunter River's rich natural and social history could be the subject of creative interpretation using interpretive signage, brochures and sculptures.
- Encourage the use of the River in artistic expression by Maitland City Council sponsoring an annual prize for artwork based on a selected aspect of the Hunter River.
- Incorporate the River into a new special event or festival that would perhaps include rowing or raft races in order to create a water-based spectacle.
- Investigate the feasibility of installing sculptures and other artwork in the River itself or adjacent to the river.
- Install viewing platforms and boardwalks at judiciously chosen points along the River, together with seating.
- Explore feasibility of re-introducing boat trips from Maitland to Morpeth and Paterson.

Strategic Opportunity: Maitland Heritage Architecture

- Place a consolidated inventory of local architecture on the World Wide Web in a way that is easily accessible to visitors seeking information about Maitland.
- Consider making contact with the Faculty of Architecture at The University of Newcastle to involve students in documenting local architectural heritage, and identifying buildings of significance that may fall outside heritage guidelines.
- Conserve and protect buildings exhibiting local architectural features.
- Historic Maitland Streetscape requires more sophisticated interpretation. This could take the form of better signage and clearer connections between buildings.
- Historical trails and interpretive signs at key sites are needed to help 'rediscover' Australian architects in Maitland.
- The full ambit of Maitland's architectural strengths could be emphasised, including innovative modern building firms, creative renovations and adaptive building uses.

Strategic Opportunity: Innovative Marketing

- Capitalise on the communications opportunities offered by the Internet, including:
 - better use of the Internet for information and promotion;
 - create a fully searchable database on the Maitland Visitor web site;
 - establish good links to other sites (like Dungog);
 - develop suggested 'patterns'/ packages of things to do while visiting, and post these on the Internet;
- Ensure that the websites of tourism organisations are regularly updated to reflect existing facilities, services, pricing structures and events.
- Make the Cultural Tourism database generally available in booklet form.
- Target marketing activities at groups and clubs, such as garden and other hobbyist clubs.
- Improve the editorial to advertising ratio in the existing Maitland Visitor Booklet.
- Explore existing historical information about Maitland and look at ways of publicising it through user-friendly leaflets, the Internet, and appropriate signage.
- Explore the development of a tourism radio programme.
- Establish more effective links with the Hunter Regional Tourism Organisation.
- Forge creative strategic alliances between individuals and organisations in Maitland and across the Hunter Region, whilst also recognising that alliances can be developed with organisations outside the Hunter.

Strategic Opportunity: Improving Basic Amenity

- Improve general amenity and basic recreational facilities in Maitland District. Existing community events (like driving clubs) require good parks and parking facilities with quality toilets, BBQ facilities, and food available.
- The recent up-grade of Maitland Park was not felt to address the needs of young families very well. The Park needs to be reconsidered in terms of family needs and the requirements of existing community events by:
 - providing more covered eating areas and seating;
 - improving existing play equipment;
 - providing more and better BBQ's;
 - encouraging the opening of a kiosk at weekends and around key events;
 - exploring the possibility of centring organised family activities and events at the Park on a regular basis (such as themed picnic days).
- Tidy up the areas adjoining the New England Highway between the railway overpass and the Heritage Holden roundabout.
- Develop bike trails and walkways that link facilities and suburbs. In particular, consider developing a bike trail from Maitland to Morpeth.
- Create points of interest and rest areas along the New England Highway in the Maitland District.
- Protect the utility and visual amenity of the major road networks by maintaining views and vistas from the road corridors.

Strategic Opportunity: Morpeth

- Encourage the development of the Morpeth Jazz Festival by facilitating more media coverage and better signage. Seek larger scale sponsorship for this event to attract bigger jazz names.
- Further develop the Heritage Month concept by increasing the number of venues, developing historic walks, and offering genealogy courses. Introduce Hunter branding for appropriate events.
- Look at ways of increasing funding for Morpeth Museum, increasing display space, and improving presentation (such as through museum grants). Expand opening hours and collection.
- Provide incentives to home and commercial property owners to restore and enhance heritage properties/facades in the village.
- Centre more activities on the river at Morpeth using boardwalks, cruises, picnic spots. The river at Morpeth currently is not very accessible. Showcase Morpeth as an historic river port as well as a craft centre.
- Upgrade existing children's play equipment and increase/improve public toilet facilities.
- Encourage extended opening hours for shops at Morpeth as part of a broader attempt to establish Morpeth as a night-time attraction by, for example, promoting historic pubs and inns in Morpeth and nearby places such as Largs.

Strategic Opportunity: Walka Water Works

- Address the lack of facilities and poor availability and selection of food on site.
- Consider complaints that the main attraction of the site for young families - the train ride - does not consistently operate. Investigate alternative novel family attractions.
- Address the complaint that there are not enough covered tables to provide shelter from sun and rain.

Strategic Opportunity: Maitland Heritage Mall

- Investigate ways of encouraging Mall shopkeepers to open on Sundays and Saturday afternoons, as these are times when visitors, according to the survey, are most likely to be disappointed by the Mall.
- Investigate the seeding of Mall-based events like Newcastle's Darby Street Fair, Beaumont Street Fiesta, and King Street Fair.
- Improve the general visual amenity of the Mall through maintenance and planting programmes, festive lighting, and other artistic/visual means of improving the Mall's ambience.
- Encourage the use of the Mall as a night time facility, and stress its community as well as retail uses and identity.
- The Mall, as befits its heritage character, needs to be conceptually and physically opened up to the River as a critical heritage influence.
- Explore the current international trend in Mall management away from the pedestrian model to create better access and inject new life and vitality into the Mall.

Strategic Opportunity: Maitland Gaol

- An anchor attraction acts to bring visitors to a destination in its own right, which necessitates a level of awareness about that attraction that is quite high within the particular markets it targets.
- Investigate the possibility of linking the Gaol to other buildings or events associated with law and order, such as historic courthouses, police stations, and sites of past civil disorders.
- Maitland Gaol in its current form has a very high level of authenticity, and considerable attention will need to be given concerning the extent to which the authentic Gaol experience could be compromised through the incorporation of other activities and enterprises such as the bakery, accommodation, a museum, and dining and other retail outlets.
- The potential for the Gaol to be used for weddings and other events is being investigated. We suggest that this focus be broadened to include consideration of staging plays and other creative activities there. The site could form an evocative set for an interactive children's adventure play or for more formal scripted works such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*.

Dungog Shire

Strategic Opportunity: Raising Community Awareness of the Importance of Tourism

- The Shire should explore ways of using local media to raise awareness of the economic, social and cultural significance of tourism in the Shire by:
 - initiating newspaper articles that follow the 'tourist dollar' for a day/week around various businesses in the Shire;
 - publicising results of economic surveys that show the significance of tourism to the Shire's economy;
- A regular (weekly or monthly) column about aspects of tourism in the Shire could be published in the local newspaper.
- A competition for school children (both primary and secondary) could be established whereby the students demonstrate the importance of tourism to the Shire through art or written expression.
- Successful tourism business operators, including those who have recently joined the industry, could be encouraged to share their experiences at seminars, workshops, or through newspaper articles.

Strategic Opportunity: Community Cultural Life and Activities

- Encourage the development and promotion of local cultural activity for the enjoyment of both visitors and locals. Embrace producers of local and everyday cultural activities within the broad ambit of cultural tourism by encouraging them to join the Barrington Tops Tourism Association/Hunter Highlands Tourism Association as associate members.
- Expand the use of private gardens in the Shire as cultural tourism resources by encouraging homeowners to consider opening their gardens to visitors at regular times.
- Promote sports facilities and local/regional sports events to visitors, and improve and maintain local parks, Dungog Swimming Pool, golf course and tennis courts.
- Place a greater emphasis on the marketing and promotion of local events such as agricultural shows, market days, amateur theatre productions, and other such activities as part of the Shire's distinctive tourism product.

Strategic Opportunity: An 'Inclusive' Tourism Brand for the Shire

- Develop a brand for the Shire that will be inclusive of all townships and that will incorporate the cultural as well as natural resources that contribute to the distinctive identity of the Shire.
- In the development of this brand, explore concepts such as 'Centre for Organic Produce', 'Hunter Arts and Crafts' and 'Other Side of the River' that widen the current focus on the Shire's attributes.

Strategic Opportunity: Signage

- Develop a signage plan that incorporates both place naming and interpretive signs, based on an overall theme that reflects the rural quality of Dungog Shire.
- Involve local artists in the process of developing a signage system.
- Consider using the imagery that occurs on the 'Welcome to Dungog' sign at Lioness Park in some consistent way within the signage system.
- Ensure that key elements of the cultural landscape are identified and interpreted by creatively designed interpretive signs located along roads, at lookouts, and at rest stops throughout the Shire.
- Locate map signs at points within the Shire that enable visitors to situate themselves easily and to identify points of interest (in the same way that such signs are used to great effect in Hunter Valley Wine Country).
- Use appropriate signs to mark and interpret specific buildings and other sites of interest in the townships of Dungog, Gresford/East Gresford, Paterson, and Clarence Town.
- The arrival and departure points of every town and village should be well marked. Such markers play an important role in generating a sense of expectation and occasion.

Strategic Opportunity: Diversifying Access to Information

- Provide information about the range of goods and services available within the Shire, such as closing times of local shops.
- Opening hours of coffee shops, craft centres, restaurants and take away businesses in each township could be similarly advertised.
- The existence of visitor-friendly video rental shops, newsagents etc could also be included.
- Prospective guests not using the web-based booking system could be sent this information (pre-packaged by the Visitor Information Centre) by mail with booking confirmation notices.
- Visitors to the Visitor Information Centre could be provided with a one-page flyer containing this information when making inquiries.
- The potential of the library as a source of local information should be properly exploited.
- Signs are an important source of information for visitors that require improvement.

Strategic Opportunity: Promote Dungog Shire as a Centre for Arts and Crafts

- Dungog Shire Council should develop a closer relationship with the arts and crafts community with a view to drawing non-traditional activities into the 'tourism community'. The Visitor Information Centre could also operate as a place that showcases local cultural products, including local arts and crafts, and books written by local authors.
- Promote Dungog as an emerging Arts Centre by the conversion of vacant buildings into studio, workshop and exhibition spaces.

- Existing art workshops that are currently run by some artists could be further developed and marketed.
- Explore the development of specialist artist/writer/musician short-stay packages by working with providers of accommodation, the Visitors Information Centre, Barrington Tops Tourism Association and Hunter Highlands Tourism.
- Develop an integrated Cultural Plan for Dungog Shire that articulates with its formal Cultural Tourism Strategy.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a permanent art gallery in Dungog.

Strategic Opportunity: Architectural Heritage

- Encourage heritage homeowners around the Shire to open their homes (and gardens) to visitors on key dates – a good low season strategy that could have widespread appeal. A Heritage Home Trail could be devised and advertised to special interest groups in Sydney and Newcastle.
- Develop an interpretation strategy that creatively interprets heritage buildings using a variety of interpretive methods such as signs, self-guided brochures, and guided walking tours of townships.
- Investigate opportunities for the production of a range of high quality souvenirs based on these buildings.
- Convert vacant heritage buildings on Dowling Street into arts and craft studios for local and visiting artists, writers and others.
- Develop a programme of regular heritage walking tours of the various townships within the Shire, as well as self-guided walking tours for each township considered to warrant them.
- Investigate heritage based retail and leisure opportunities

Strategic Opportunity: The Water Pipeline

- Initiate discussions with Hunter Water to establish the feasibility of using the pipeline in ways that encourage closer access and use, including the provision of roadside access and adopting sections of the pipeline as a 'community canvas'.
- The collection, treatment and distribution of water could be interpreted by means of brochures and signs situated at Chichester Dam, the Dungog Water Treatment Plant, and at points along the pipeline.
- Theme accessible sections of the pipeline as works of art documenting local history. For example:
 - sections running adjacent to the Dungog Cemetery could document the lives of selected people buried there;
 - sections running parallel to the rivers could provide interpretation of those rivers;
 - some sections could document and record aspects of local Aboriginal history and cultural life;
 - theme sections near Dungog with pictorial and textual representations of the town and its community – nature, community, sporting and architectural heritage, etc;

- theme sections near Chichester Dam with stories of community and experiences of individuals who worked on the building of the Dam.
- theme sections with stories of famous local sons and daughters such as Doug Walters, Les Darcy, Kevin Bacon, and Doc Evert.
- surviving sections of the original timber pipeline are of significant historical interest. Their locations should be documented and they should be interpreted for visitors either on site or in the Dungog Shire museum.

Strategic Opportunity: Amenity Improvement

- Establish and maintain an up-to-date database that organises information about each of the parks in the Shire, and which can be made available to visitors.
- Improve access to rivers in those parks that have river frontages.
- Improve the amenity of the parks and reserves.
- Several inadequacies were identified at Chichester Dam Picnic Area, including overcrowding at riverside facilities; a need to improve and extend the existing BBQ and toilet facilities; and to replace BBQs with gas or electric facilities to overcome inadequate provision of firewood.
- Consider the incorporation of public art into some of the parks and reserves in the Shire. These could be commissioned pieces funded through sponsorship arrangements with relevant corporate citizens such as Hunter Water and Telstra.

Strategic Opportunity: Tocal Homestead Complex

- The Tocal Homestead Complex has the potential to become an anchor attraction for the Dungog Shire that could be used to help brand the Shire as an important rural tourism destination.
- Educate the tourism providers in Maitland and Dungog about the developments at Tocal by inviting them to an inspection of the site.
- Explore potential for the Visitor Centre at Tocal College to act as a bridge between Maitland and Dungog districts by:
 - providing information about tourism opportunities in the Maitland and Dungog districts;
 - acting as a focal point for the coordination of a farm-door produce trail;
 - acting as an attraction that will link tourists based in Maitland to Dungog Shire (with a corresponding 'flow' of information and tourists from Dungog Information Centre to Tocal Homestead Complex)

Strategic Opportunity: Dungog Railway Station

- Develop visitor products that link rail travel with accommodation, meals at local restaurants and cafes, film showings at the Dungog Cinema, and walking tours.
- Coordinate the opening of the museum and proposed art gallery, Dungog walking tours, garden tours etc, with train arrival times.

- Identify sources of funding to improve the visual appeal of Dungog Railway Station.
- Explore potential for regular steam train trips from Maitland to Dungog.
- Make strong recommendations to CityRail to cease breaking the rail journey to and from Dungog and Maitland by a coach service.

Strategic Opportunity: Dungog Main Retail Centre (Dowling Street)

- Signify the importance of retaining the local retail functions of Dowling Street in appropriate planning frameworks, such as Local Environmental Plans) in order to prevent the street from orienting itself too much towards the needs of tourists rather than to locals.
- Explore opportunities for improving the amenity of Dowling Street using appropriate landscaping and the work of local creative artists, keeping in mind the need to refrain from imposing an artificial and inappropriate streetscape.
- Devise creative ways of restoring and using some of the vacant buildings on Dowling Street, for use as 'shop-fronts' for artists' work, temporary exhibitions, displays and studio space.
- Encourage hoteliers to address tourists' needs. This may involve the improvement of the overall level of customer service and catering, and responding more to the expectations of urban visitors.
- Encourage local retailers to stock and advertise local produce. The importance of local fresh produce to tourists could be conveyed through a seminar held within the Shire for retailers and farmers.
- Explore the opportunities for extending the trading hours of retail and food outlets on Sundays and after 8pm on other days, especially on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Consider incorporating the unique lead light glass used in many of the shop fronts into marketing campaigns for the district.
- Incorporate Dowling Street into an overall directional and interpretive signage programme for the entire Shire that is underpinned by a consistent style and appearance. Dowling Street (including but not only its Dungog Visitor Centre) can also be a useful 'shopfront' for many activities and facilities throughout the Shire.

Strategic Opportunity: Dungog Picture Theatre and Community Centre

- Explore ways of promoting/utilising the Dungog Picture Theatre:
 - highlight the activities of the Film Society and the architectural significance of the building in tourist promotions and information;
 - provide screenings of special interest films, such as classic films, or a specialist film festival;
 - develop current cooperative arrangements between the Motion Picture Distributors Association of Australia and independent regional cinemas to exhibit selected new release films at the same time as major cinema complexes in large towns and cities.
 - package special screenings with rail trips and/or accommodation;.

- target this information to Film Societies in Sydney, Maitland and Newcastle, and to local accommodation providers;
- recognise community/Council support for the Cinema before screenings for the benefit of visitors;.
- use the cinema screen to advertise local tourism attractions and events both to visitors and to the local community.

Strategic Opportunity: Events

- Identify those events that have the capacity to develop further and that might be able to act as hallmark events for the Shire. In particular, events such as Pedalfest that promote sustainable energy, healthiness and family activity would have considerable and broad tourism appeal.
- Explore the possibility of 'piggy-backing' some smaller complementary events to the larger events so that the tourism potential can be expanded and consolidated.
- Ensure that the events calendar currently produced is up-to-date and available throughout the Shire so that all visitors have access to information about what events might take place during their trip.
- Explore the possibility of applying for funding to help develop the hallmark events identified as having considerable tourism potential for the Shire.
- The tourist/visitor appeal of local events such as market days, local agricultural shows and theatrical productions should not be underestimated, and assistance should be given to encourage these events to promote themselves to a broader market.

Linking Maitland and Dungog

- Establish a joint working party comprising representatives from Maitland City Council and Dungog Shire Council to investigate possibilities for cooperative initiatives in relation to cultural tourism.
- In particular, funding opportunities to assist in the development and marketing of tourism available through Tourism NSW and the Hunter Regional Tourism Association should be fully exploited. For example, the Regional Tourism Action Plan 2000-2 (RTAP), which is partially in place in the Hunter, and will focus on the Region in 2002, is an excellent opportunity to advance the recommendations in this Regional Cultural Tourism Plan.
- Explore opportunities for common membership of the tourism association of each area with the intention of enabling crossover membership.
- The 'tourist trails' that might link Maitland and Dungog be further developed to the concept stage and possible sources of funding be identified. Funding could be used to develop and trial one or more of the trails suggested in this Plan.
- Ideas relating to joint marketing campaigns be examined with the intention of developing and trialing such a campaign, the relative success of which would need to be evaluated. Examples of joint initiatives here could include a tour brochure for the Maitland-Dungog area; the development of a shared website; and the target marketing of specific tourism products making use of both Maitland and Dungog.
- A shared festival based on the riverine system linking Maitland with Dungog Shire is investigated in terms of its viability and feasibility.

1 INTRODUCTION

Regional and rural areas in developed countries have undergone dramatic changes, with the issues of population decline, economic change and community regeneration almost universal (Butler *et al.*, 1998). The structure of many regional and rural economies, including the lifestyles of inhabitants, have been altered by such factors as industrialisation (and, in places, the reverse – de-industrialisation), growth in wealth and leisure, increased environmental awareness, aging populations, industry deregulation, transportation developments, fluctuating farm incomes, and declining agricultural (on-farm) employment. Social expectations of regional and rural areas are also changing. In brief, economic, social, technological and political developments, particularly since the late 1960s/early 1970s, are putting increasingly complex pressures on areas outside the metropolis (Jenkins *et al.* 1997).

In Australia, recent State and Federal government programs have sought to address regional problems and imbalances, often in specific rural industries, by way of rural and/or regional development programs. Government and communities have identified key industries, such as tourism, which appear to offer considerable prospects for regions to diversify their economic base and to stem leakages and transfers of labour and capital.

The Commonwealth Department of Transportation and Regional Services funded the development of this Community-based Cultural Tourism Plan for the Maitland and Dungog Districts under its Understanding Rural Australia Programme, as part of a national strategic effort to identify ways of stimulating regional economic development and enhancing community understanding of development techniques and processes. The Plan has been prepared by members of the Department of Leisure and Tourism Studies at The University of Newcastle, in association with Maitland City Council, Dungog Shire Council and the Hunter Regional Tourism Organisation.

This Plan is structured in the following way:

1. Introduction – provides the context for the Plan.
2. Background and Rationale – discusses the development of the Plan and the rationale for the focus on Cultural Tourism in the Maitland-Dungog districts.
3. The Operational Philosophy of Cultural Tourism – outlines the approach that has been taken in conceptualising and seeking to develop Cultural Tourism.
4. The Research Process – provides a summary outline of the methodology used in gathering and interpreting the data on which the Specific Strategies are based.

5. Summary of Visitor and Resident Survey - summarises the main findings derived from the Visitor and Resident Survey carried out at a number of key tourist sites in the Maitland and Dungog areas. A discussion of the main findings and their implications for cultural tourism is also presented.
6. SWOT Analysis – assesses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to Cultural Tourism in Maitland and Dungog districts based upon the perceptions of stakeholders and visitors, and also on observations made by the Research Team.
7. & 8. Strategies and Actions – offers a detailed series of strategies and actions. Each of the major strategies comprises a number of ideas and practical aims that could be adopted to achieve, cumulatively, the major strategic direction outlined. These address Dungog and Maitland districts separately and together.
9. & 10. References and Appendices – presents many valuable sources of information for those interested in regional cultural tourism development to follow up. Information includes research literature, funding sources, training opportunities and advisory services.

2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This Project was conceived with the purpose of assisting the development of sustainable cultural tourism as a viable means of supporting local economies without eroding the positive elements of local lifestyles. The research team is aware that some of the strategies and actions proposed have been previously tried and may, in fact, have failed. The Plan, however, in proposing a more integrated approach to cultural tourism, encourages the re-thinking and re-positioning of these strategies and actions within a new operational framework. The framework for this task is set out below.

2.1 Project Background

The benefits of tourism in regional and rural areas have been endorsed by governments and widely publicised as of major economic, environmental and social significance to many coastal and inland regions in Australia (Commonwealth Department of Tourism, 1994: 2). The identification and promotion of tourism as a tool in regional development implies the selective expansion of tourist flows designed to achieve one or more of the following objectives. To:

- contribute to the costs of local infrastructure (eg. roads, water and communication);
- create and maintain local resident amenities (eg. sports facilities, outdoor recreation opportunities) and services (eg. shops and public transport);
- assist the conservation of environmental and cultural resources; and
- sustain and create local employment and incomes (Jenkins and Hall, 1998).

Tourism offers much scope to influence regional and rural economic development. Tourism is a decentralised industry with considerable growth opportunities in regional economies and comparatively few barriers to entry. The tourism industry consists predominantly of labour intensive small businesses with employment opportunities at all levels, and has comparatively little reliance on direct financial assistance or regulation by government (Report of the Taskforce on Regional Development, 1993).

A number of regions in Australia, including the Hunter Region, are looking to tourism to diversify their regional economies. Some regions see tourism as the key element in their economic strategy since it offers diverse and sustainable long-term employment (see Report of the Taskforce on Regional Development, 1993; McKinsey & Co., 1994; NSW Department of Business and Regional Development, 1994). To this end many regions are capitalising on their natural/comparative advantages in primary products (eg. vineyards - wine tours; aquatic enterprises - prawn and lobster farms) to market new travel experiences, often in collaboration with other local enterprises (Sorensen and Epps, 1993; Butler et al., 1998). Increasingly, too, the potential of local cultural activity to provide the basis for the development of a thriving regional tourism industry has been recognised (Stevenson, 2000).

Rural landscapes and their associated activities, including leisure and tourism, are dynamic and complex. These areas also have unique and diverse cultures, including both the local way of life and creative endeavours. The processes driving changes in rural areas are both global and local in scale, and relate to physical, political, social and economic forces. Population growth and rising levels of affluence and mobility for significant (mainly metropolitan) elements of that population, and the more selective and discerning use of scarce leisure time, means that the recreation and tourism demands on rural areas and the changes they bring are intensifying. Regional and rural areas that have suffered from downturns in local manufacturing and agriculture need to position themselves to benefit from the expansion of the service sector of the economy, and are especially well placed to exploit their comparative advantage in tourism, recreation and culture.

The responses of residents of regional and rural areas to the growth in demand for recreation and tourism have been generally positive, as expressed in the establishment of festivals and other attractions, the provision of accommodation on farms, and the conversion of facilities for leisure and cultural functions. Resorts and facilities have been developed; sporting facilities improved and created; landscapes and communities aesthetically enhanced; museums, gardens and galleries restored, and natural features protected. On the other hand, an increasing trend towards agribusiness, corporate farming and forestry, institutional ownership of land, and the growth in the numbers of retirement and leisure homes in rural and semi-rural areas have resulted in such problems as the privatisation of an increasing proportion of the landscape and the subsequent denial of local resident access to resources (e.g. waterways and bushland).

The future of tourism in rural areas depends heavily upon the successful integration of traditional and new forms of leisure, economic and cultural activities. To make tourism sustainable in regional and rural areas requires negotiation, compromise, and a willingness of all parties to communicate and debate future directions and emphases. As one tourism researcher argues, "Consultative processes are central to the successful development and implementation of viable development strategies and policies" (Craik, 1995: 93). Put simply, there is a great need to:

- develop an inventory of local cultural resources;
- understand the nature of these resources and their economic, physical and social settings; and
- find ways of conserving and nurturing these resources as the basis of a tourism strategy and for the benefit of local residents.

Solutions to existing and potential conflicts and problems will need to encompass and reflect local conditions, cultures, preferences and global trends.

2.2 Project Rationale

Appropriately planned and managed, a tourism strategy that aims to build on local cultural activity and diversity can assist in the conservation and maintenance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural sites, traditions and objects, and can provide opportunities for both locals and visitors to learn more about their shared cultural heritage. This rapidly growing form of tourism also has significant economic benefits outside the main capital cities, attracting domestic and inbound tourists to regional areas. Importantly, the resources for a cultural tourism industry already exist to a large extent in most local areas, but need to be better integrated within an overall plan to maximise their role in a cultural tourism industry.

The distinctive histories, locations and ways of life of the New South Wales Hunter Valley locations of Maitland and Dungog are well placed to develop a tourism plan and associated strategies that are underpinned by local cultural activity. A strategic approach to tourism planning in Maitland and Dungog should have two axes:

1. The development of a plan that focuses on the identification and promotion of the cultural vitality and distinctiveness of each place; and
2. Building on the orientation of these individual strategies, the plan should also emphasise the connections between Maitland and Dungog in a way that will enhance the cultures of both places and provide a firm foundation for a broadly-based regional tourism industry development.

The rationale for strategically linking the Maitland and Dungog districts rests largely on the historical and cultural parallels that exist between the two districts, and on the fact that they are linked by three significant physical routes – road, rail and river. In addition, agricultural industries such as dairying and cropping have produced high quality rural landscapes that continue from Maitland onto the floodplain of the Hunter River and follow the Hunter River's tributaries of the Paterson, Williams and Allyn Rivers. The routes between Maitland and Dungog incorporate the small, aesthetically appealing and 'living' rural townships or villages of Paterson, Clarence Town, Vacy and Gresford, providing a rich and diverse set of experiences built upon a rural foundation. These places are also culturally rich in terms of their heritage, lifestyles, arts, and crafts.

The focus on Maitland and Dungog in this Plan highlights the potential benefits of strategic planning for cultural tourism in rural communities. These benefits include strengthening product development and marketing, maximising synergies that are already in place or could be easily established, and helping to reduce duplication of effort. In so doing, we do not want to create an impression that somehow these districts should be quarantined from their neighbouring districts, but rather to show that synergistic partnerships and alliances are possible between adjoining local government areas and should be capitalised on. Tourists do not visit places based on their awareness of local government boundaries. Tourists are attracted by the lifestyles, resources and facilities offered by destinations. Travellers are becoming increasingly sophisticated and

discerning, and are looking for high quality, authentic natural and cultural environments where the likelihood of recreational satisfaction is high. This means that, "A great responsibility rests with the industry and governments to develop sustainable industry practices, which conserve the natural and cultural environments, and which, subsequently [our emphasis], will hold tourist appeal" (Pigram and Jenkins, 1999: 268). Sustainable regional cultural tourism, then, does not rely on inventing tourist visitor attractions, but on the judicious management and promotion of existing local resources that are not traditionally associated with the tourism industry *per se*.

3 THE OPERATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURAL TOURISM

"The cultural tourist, are they someone who comes in a group or someone that goes in a family car and drives around?" (Participant, Maitland Workshop)

"It needs to be a real experience, not just something that is catering for tourists, it has got to be real." (Participant, Dungog Workshop)

"Culture and tourism are inseparable." (Lash and Urry, 1994: 265)

3.1 What is *Cultural* Tourism?

Cultural tourism is defined as "tourism that focuses on the culture of a destination – the lifestyle, heritage, arts, industries and leisure pursuits of the local population" (Office of National Tourism, 2000). Defined in this way, cultural tourism encompasses Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural practices, sights and objects including sites of religious and historical significance, arts, crafts, cultural ceremonies and performances, sports, music, and heritage. It also incorporates elements of the day-to-day life of the residents such as sporting events and general aspects of lifestyle. The Commonwealth Office of National Tourism and Tourism NSW have both identified cultural tourism as playing an increasingly important role in Australian tourism. More than 60% of inbound tourists to Australia visit at least one cultural attraction during their stay (Bureau of Tourism Research 1998), and the domestic market for cultural tourism products and experiences is continuing to grow. Provided that it is planned and managed appropriately, cultural tourism has the potential to contribute to sustainable regional development. According to Stevenson (2000:123), cultural tourism can have substantial and tangible benefits such as:

- broadening the local or regional economy and providing a variety of employment opportunities;
- assisting in the promotion of a regional or local cultural identity; and
- helping to reposition or 're-image' a regional economy undergoing economic restructuring.

Sustainable tourism is as much about sustaining regional and rural culture as it is about conserving the physical environment. Positive elements in a strategy for sustainable tourism ought to include:

- development within each locality of a special sense of place, reflected in architectural character and development style, sensitive to its unique heritage and environment;
- preservation, protection and enhancement of the quality of the resources that are the basis of tourism;
- fostering development of additional visitor attractions with roots in their own locale and which develop in ways that complement local attributes;

- development of visitor services that enhance awareness, understanding and development of local heritage and environment; and
- endorsement of growth when and where it improves conditions, not where it is destructive or exceeds natural and social carrying capacities, beyond which the quality of human life is adversely affected (Cox, 1985: 6-7).

Sustainability does not mean 'freezing' the landscape. Rather, it requires conceiving of a regional and rural area first as a living cultural landscape, and then finding ways of developing, 'showcasing' and sustaining it. 'Place making' does not only play a vital role in determining the rate of change in regional and rural areas. It also affects deeply the ways in which tourists see the countryside, and in which local communities see themselves. Any policy and planning responses which seek to use tourism as a mechanism to ameliorate the negative impacts of economic restructuring and wider regional and rural change needs, therefore, to address directly the dynamic cultural component of regional and rural life. Government can best assist these areas to meet the challenges of economic restructuring and change by supporting the development of leadership and generic skills (education and entrepreneurial skills), and by attaching greater importance to the provision of the relevant global, national, regional and local data essential for effective decision-making (Butler *et al.*, 1998).

However, as with all other forms of tourism, cultural tourism can, if not planned and managed appropriately, lead to a range of social and cultural conflicts and problems. These include local-visitor competition for resources, local resentment at intrusions into daily life, as well as the misrepresentation and stereotyping of local cultures. Carefully planned cultural tourism can, however, help advance local democracy and citizenship rights. A cultural perspective considers quality of life in terms of residents' relationships with their local area, as individuals and as a collective entity, and in terms of residents' access to, and participation in, its broader community and public life. A cultural tourism planning perspective which is based on an understanding of local cultural resources and of regional cities and towns as 'living' cultural entities – as places where people meet, talk, share ideas and desires, and where identities and lifestyles are created and developed – will help planners better assess the needs of the community, ensure cultural pluralism, and raise strategic questions about a place's future as well as its history (Bianchini, 1993: 212).

Tourism is not generally regarded as a significant cultural industry. Cultural tourism planning seeks to revise this perception by providing a strategic means to integrate seemingly disparate economic, social and environmental activities to the advantage of regional and rural areas.

3.2 Why Regional Cultural Tourism?

Until quite recently, culture and tourism have rarely been regarded as vitally linked. When discussing tourism, the idea of culture has usually been regarded as important for certain 'refined' types of mostly metropolitan tourist experience (like attending art galleries and theatres). Or it has been applied to encounters

with local or Indigenous peoples whose way of life is very different from that of the visitor (as in the case of Aboriginal or Polynesian cultures).

Gradually, we have developed an understanding of the concept of culture and its relationship with contemporary societies and economies, and of the position of tourism within culture (Craik, 2001). *We have come to appreciate that all tourism is in some way cultural, and that tourism is a cultural industry.* This is because tourism is as deeply reliant on images, meanings and symbols as the wider cultural and entertainment industry that produces films, plays, books, pop songs and other cultural products. Like those pop songs, plays, books and films, tourism is not an essential good or service – people choose a tourist experience from a wide range of other potential ways of outlaying their leisure expenditure of time and money. Tourism, like popular culture, is also subject to fads and fashions, with last year's 'essential' destination or activity sometimes suddenly becoming *passé* this year.

This dynamic and unpredictable nature of tourism has, as with other cultural industries, prompted attempts to plan tourism development in a way that can maximise *sustainability*. Careful management and planning is particularly important in regional and rural areas where large amounts of investment capital and dense populations do not exist. These areas have often experienced the decline of major industries such as agriculture, mining and manufacturing, and have faced as a result the prospect of disinvestment and de-population leading to decline and even extinction (Gray and Lawrence, 2001). *The culture of place* is particularly important here because regional tourism cannot just rely on building capital-intensive tourist attractions, but attempts instead to capitalise on the existing built, natural and human resources that make it distinctive and appealing (Mules and Miller, 1997).

Regional tourism has, as an industry with a substantial component of small enterprises, often developed in an *ad hoc* manner. Proprietors tend to perceive each other in competitive terms, failing to recognise potential strategic alliances within and outside their regions. Local councils and shires and, to a lesser extent, State governments, have also been reluctant to subsidise selected private businesses (that is, to 'pick winners'). Nonetheless, local and State governments have provided substantial resources for tourism planning, development, research, and marketing and promotion. Governments, too, have been willing to support the development of sectoral and spatial strategic partnerships and alliances.

Repositioning regional tourism as *cultural* helps to promote the collective notions of the common good, with all elements within the local community – irrespective of whether they perceive themselves as being part of the tourism industry – having a part to play in enhancing the cultural vitality and diversity of the place in which they live. Cultural tourism is especially advantageous for regional communities because it emphasises the coordination, promotion and use of existing cultural resources that are a part of the everyday life of the area, rather than imposing artificial features and facilities in the hope of attracting tourists. It is for these reasons that this is a Regional Cultural Tourism Plan, and one that

aims to demonstrate ways in which regional Australia can benefit from tourism development in a manner that is socially, culturally and economically sustainable.

3.3 Cultural Tourism in the Hunter

According to the Councils in the Cultural Planning team established by the Hunter Regional Organisation of Councils (HROC), planning and developing culture in a community means:

- enhancing quality of life;
- celebrating cultural diversity;
- reflecting on and celebrating the past;
- supporting a unique community and environment;
- establishing our current and future identity and character, spirit and sense of place (HROC, Regional Cultural Planning Team, 1998: 5).

In an HROC workshop designed to identify barriers to cultural development in local councils, several problems were noted, including:

- many staff and Councillors do not have a clear understanding of what culture is;
- culture is not taken seriously;
- most councils do not allocate adequate staff time or financial resources to culture;
- it is hard to document the economic benefits of cultural activities in a community;
- the strong relationship between culture, tourism and economic development is often not recognised (Hunter Regional Organisation of Councils [HROC], Regional Cultural Planning Team, 1998: 5).

This plan for the development of cultural tourism in the Dungog and Maitland districts aims to go some way towards overcoming these perceptual and logistical barriers. The plan intends to build on the strengths of the localities in partnership with local councils and the community, and in so doing it seeks to provide a model for a cooperative approach to cultural tourism development in rural and regional areas. The research process outlined next may also serve as a model for other regional council areas interested in pursuing sustainable cultural tourism development.

4 THE RESEARCH PROCESS

A research process was designed to generate valuable quantitative and qualitative data to underpin the Plan. Integral to this process was consultation with tourism providers, visitors, local citizens and organisations, which enabled the strategic analysis to take account of a wide range of factors in the development of cultural tourism in the areas addressed by the Project. This research process is set out below:

4.1 Research Phases and Methods

Phase I – Project Establishment

A Project Steering Committee was established comprising the research team, representatives of the Hunter Region Tourism Organisation, Maitland City Council and Dungog Shire Council. The Committee was responsible for the management and monitoring of the Project, and ensured that the research team provided formal feedback at specified intervals during the life of the Project. A comprehensive review of documents on cultural tourism in general was conducted, as well as of those documents relating to the Project that had been produced by the Hunter Region Organisation of Councils, Maitland City Council and Dungog Shire Council.

Phase II – Cultural Tourism Resources Analysis

An inventory was undertaken of existing and potential cultural tourism resources in the Maitland and Dungog districts. This 'cultural mapping' exercise involved an examination of existing databases, tourist brochures and other marketing material, entries in telephone books, as well as site visits. Several questions on the stakeholder and visitor surveys (see below) also related to cultural tourism resources, enabling a general picture to be built up of the cultural infrastructure of both areas.

Phase III – Aspirations Analysis

A range of research methods was employed to gain an understanding of tourism stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions in Dungog and Maitland, involving:

Local stakeholder surveys

Key local stakeholders were identified from the membership lists of Maitland Tourism and Hunter Highlands Tourism Associations, together with Council Cultural and Arts Committee memberships, lists of Councillors, and community and business listings in telephone books. A range of alternatives for administering the Stakeholder survey was considered. The alternatives included:

- postal survey, which has a lower response rates than other methods, but which, given the population under consideration and the location of that population (dispersed across Dungog and Maitland, and to a lesser extent across the Hunter Region), was relatively easy to administer. Postal surveys often incorporate more than one contact in order to encourage responses (e.g. a second/reminder mail out or reminder call), and response rates are

likely to diminish with any increase in the size of the survey. A critical factor in considering postal surveys is the significance of the issue to respondents;

- telephone survey, which provides an opportunity for more personal contact, probing and exploration of responses than postal surveys or call-back approaches. However, success hinges on such factors as the interviewer's communication ability to keep the respondent motivated; the level of hearing of respondents; agreement to commit to an appropriate amount of time to think and respond to questions (some of which are quite complex); and the willingness of respondents to discuss issues with a 'stranger';
- direct/personal (face-to-face) interview, which provides the ultimate form of human contact and permits probing and further explanation of responses. Response rates for this form of survey approach are usually high. Unfortunately, this form of survey is very expensive and time-consuming to administer. After cost estimations, it was considered by the Project Team that this form of survey approach was well beyond the resources available (estimates for conducting personal interviews for this Project varied between \$100 and \$150, depending on such factors as the length of the interview, number of refusals, travel times, timing of interviews). Nevertheless, the survey that was used did contain a number of open ended questions designed to elicit information about the quality of the visitor experience; and
- call-back approach, where a field worker delivers the questionnaire in person, explains the purpose of the questionnaire, and arranges a further visit to the respondent (the call back visit) for subsequent collection of the questionnaire. This approach again increases human contact and is relatively expensive to administer. Response rates are not as high as for personal interviews, but are likely to exceed those of postal and, perhaps, telephone interviews.

After consideration of the merits of each survey approach, the significance and support for the Project from local individuals and organisations, and the resources available, a postal survey method was adopted. A questionnaire survey was posted to 200 Tourism Stakeholders in the Maitland district and 240 in the Dungog district. The questionnaires included an explanatory letter and a pre-paid postage envelope.

After the first round mail-out and reminder calls, 57 (13%) usable surveys were returned. This was a disappointing response rate. It was also considered by the Research Team that the issue at hand was of sufficient merit and concern to encourage a good response rate. It was hoped that a minimum of 20 per cent of surveys would be returned. It was difficult to encourage stakeholders to complete the surveys, despite contacting many of them by telephone. Many stakeholders contacted complained about the number of surveys they were asked to complete for this and other projects, about restrictions of time, about the size of the survey, and about the relevance and potential usefulness of such a survey. As a result, the small sample size means that the findings of this component of the study are only indicative, whilst also limiting the potential for applying non-parametric statistics. However, low response rates are typical of mail-out surveys of this kind and, while a statistically small proportion of the research 'population', the responses provided a considerable level of useful stakeholder information and opinion for use by the Project Team.

Stakeholder workshops

Stakeholder workshops were held in Maitland and Dungog with the aims of generating discussion and ideas about cultural tourism in the region, and involving the Dungog and Maitland communities in the planning process. Participants were obtained via the stakeholder surveys, and from advertisements placed in the *Lower Hunter Star*, *The Dungog Chronicle* and *Maitland Mercury* newspapers, as well as from newsletters produced by Maitland Tourism, Hunter Highlands Tourism, the Hunter Regional Tourism Organisation, and through community notices on local ABC Radio. Workshops were held on 22 August. 15 and 20 people, respectively, attended the Dungog and Maitland workshops. These workshop attendances, while not particularly high, also provided important information and ideas for incorporation into the Plan.

Visitor and resident surveys

In total, 441 surveys were completed face-to-face at key tourism locations throughout the Maitland (226 respondents) and Dungog (215 respondents) districts (see Appendix). As an essential pivot of cultural tourism development is recognition that visitors want to enjoy the same experiences as do locals, this survey was aimed at both residents and visitors. The response rate for the surveys of approximately 90 per cent was pleasing but not unexpected (see method discussion above). The face-to-face nature of this survey method typically facilitates better response rates when compared with mail-out surveys. The cost of face-to-face interviews in this instance was reduced because interviewers were based in a well-defined location, refusals were few, and there was no need to stagger travel times and appointments to meet respondents. The visitor and resident surveys did have some limitations. In particular, the surveys undertaken could be likened to 'street surveys', a form of non-random sampling. Secondly, the surveys were conducted within a confined period (or season) and within limited time frames. In brief, the findings from the visitor and resident surveys cannot be simply generalised to the wider population, and must be treated with caution. Nonetheless, they provided some highly instructive pointers to the development of the Plan.

The visitor surveys were administered by research assistants over five days on consecutive weekends in June and July. The surveys examined visitor demographics, expectations, perceptions of the quality of services and products, signage and the overall cultural infrastructure in Maitland and Dungog. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the quantitative data generated by the stakeholder and visitor surveys, while qualitative data were transcribed and analysed.

Phase III – SWOT Analysis

Based on the information gathered in Phases II and III, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis was undertaken of cultural tourism in the Maitland and Dungog districts. This analysis enabled a strategic overview that informed the next stage of the research process in which concrete proposals could be advanced.

Phase IV – Identification of Strategic Directions and Actions

On the basis of the analysis of the various sets of data gathered, a series of strategic directions and actions was formulated in order to develop a sustainable cultural tourism industry in the Maitland and Dungog districts. Emphasis was given to identifying strategic directions that could be implemented in a practical and relatively straightforward way. This pragmatic approach is consistent with the Project's principal aims of providing specific advice concerning cultural tourism development to the Maitland and Dungog districts, while also operating as a process model that may be adopted and adapted by other regional areas.

5 SUMMARY OF VISITOR AND RESIDENT SURVEY RESULTS

This section presents a summary of the data collected for the Visitor and Resident Survey that was conducted in June and July 2001. A brief discussion of the findings for both Maitland City Council Area and Dungog Shire is also given.

5.1 Maitland City Council Area

Total Number surveyed	216	Gender (entire sample)	
Number of locals	74 (34%)	Female	121 (56%)
Number of visitors	142 (66%)	Male	95 (44%)

Table 1: Age distribution of total sample

Age (years)	Frequency	Percent
16-19	5	2.3
20-24	12	5.6
25-29	18	8.3
30-34	26	12
35-39	30	13.9
40-44	32	14.8
45-49	29	13.4
50-54	22	10.2
55-59	12	5.6
60-64	8	3.7
65 and older	22	10.2
Total	216	100

Table 2: Origin of visitors

	Frequency	Percent
Dungog Shire	4	2.8
Newcastle	34	23.9
Lake Macquarie	29	20.4
Port Stephens	9	6.3
Sydney	27	19.0
Other NSW	29	20.4
ACT	2	1.4
Queensland	3	2.1
Canada	1	.7
UK/Ireland	2	1.4
USA	2	1.4
Total	142	100

Table 3: Importance of cultural tourism factors in influencing visit to Maitland City Council area

	Frequency	Percent
Very important	57	40.1
Somewhat important	55	38.7
Not at all important	30	21.1
Total	142	100

Table 4: Local residents' views on the importance of cultural factors in influencing tourists visiting Maitland City Council area

	Frequency	Percent
Very important	50	67.6
Somewhat important	23	31.1
Not at all important	1	1.4
Total	74	100

Table 5: Main sources of information for trip to Maitland City Council area

	Frequency	Percent
Previous visit	56	39.7
Friend/relative	45	31.9
Magazine/newspaper	10	7.1
Govt travel centre	1	.7
Tourist Info Centre	3	2.1
Other	21	14.9
Total	136	100

Table 6: Number of nights stayed in Maitland City Council area

	Frequency	Percent
Not staying overnight	121	85.2
1 night	9	6.3
2 nights	6	4.2
3 nights	4	2.8
6-10 nights	1	.7
11-20 nights	1	.7
Total	142	100

Table 7: Main form of accommodation used while in Maitland City Council area

	Frequency	Percent
Friends/relatives	12	57.6
Motel	6	28.6
Caravan	1	4.8
Bed and Breakfast	1	4.8
Other	1	4.8
Total	21	100

Table 8: Number of visits to Maitland City Council area in the last 12 months

	Frequency	Percent
1	37	27
2-5	53	38.7
6-10	22	16.1
10+	31	18.2
Total	137	100

Table 9: Satisfaction with trip to Maitland City Council area

	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	82	57.7
Satisfied	57	40.1
Unsure	1	.7
Dissatisfied	2	1.4
Total	142	100

Table 10: Cultural tourist attractions visited

	Frequency	Percent
Morpeth	201	93.1
Maitland Gaol	93	43.1
East Maitland	147	68.1
Antique Shops	110	50.9
Maitland Art gallery	67	31
Airds of Lochinvar	99	45.8
Mindaribba Aboriginal Centre	16	7.4
Walka Water Works	126	58.3
Maitland Heritage Mall	144	66.7
Historic home	57	26.4
Heritage Walk	34	15.7
Historic cemetery	47	21.8

5.1.1 Discussion of results

A total of 216 usable surveys were collected comprising 142 visitors and 74 locals (defined as being residents of Maitland City Council district). There were about 12% more women surveyed than men, and about 75% of the sample was aged older than 30 years. Of those who were not resident in the City of Maitland, 24% were from Newcastle, 20% from Lake Macquarie, 19% from Sydney, 6% from Port Stephens and a further 20% from elsewhere in New South Wales. Only 3% were from Dungog Shire, less than 4% from overseas, and less than 4% were interstate visitors. While factors like season were not taken into account, *these findings indicate that the greater majority of visitors surveyed lived within a 2-hour radius of Maitland City, and it is to these areas that Maitland should focus its marketing campaigns, at least in the short-to-medium term.*

A little over half of the visitors were not intending to stay overnight in Maitland City area, indicating the importance of the day-tripper segment of the market (again this information is important in designing marketing strategies). Of those who stayed in the Maitland City Council area, most stayed with friends or relatives, followed in importance by motels. Caravans and B & B's were used by a very small proportion of visitors (less than 10%). The majority of the visitors surveyed had visited Maitland previously in the past twelve months. The following responses to the survey question asking why they had come to Maitland are indicative:

- *It's a beautiful day, haven't been to Maitland in years and we had some time to kill. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*
- *To wander around, do some shopping, it's a beautiful sunny day for a day trip. (Respondent, Morpeth)*
- *Just driving through and thought we would stop for lunch. (Respondent Maitland Park)*
- *I am part of a group touring the area to see historic Maitland. (Respondent, Art Gallery)*

A considerable number of respondents also made a point of saying that they intended to eat at or near a local attraction. Morning tea and lunch in a café or restaurant were popular for people visiting Morpeth, the Art Gallery, and the Maitland Gaol. For those visiting the Walka Water Works and Maitland Park, picnics and barbecues were a central part of the day. The importance to the tourism experience of having restaurants and coffee shops open all day, and clean and functioning barbecue facilities, cannot be underestimated. The following comment from one visitor to the Art Gallery is unfortunate:

- *I was going to have a coffee and a look around but everything looks shut. (Respondent, Art Gallery)*

Not surprisingly, shopping was a popular activity for visitors to Morpeth, with a high proportion of respondents identifying shopping as the main reason for their visit. For instance:

- *Visit a friend, shopping, look at country stalls and restaurants. (Respondent, Morpeth)*

However, as with coffee shops and restaurants, there is a need for shops to be open at times convenient for visitors. The following comment is from a respondent who claims to go to Morpeth *'all the time to shop'*:

- *Morpeth shop opening times are difficult to gauge. Many shops not open on weekends, school holidays. Friday seems to be the best day to visit. (Respondent, Morpeth)*

Many respondents also identified spending time with family and/or friends as a part of what they hoped to do while in the area. This was particularly the case for people visiting Walka Water Works. The following comments are indicative of the responses received from people at different sites:

- *We thought we would visit a few tourist sites while visiting our son. (Respondent, Maitland Swimming Pool)*
- *Have fun with family and friends in the park. (Respondent, Maitland Park)*
- *Picnic, socialise, ride train. (Respondent Walka Water Works)*

Almost the entire sample of visitors was either very satisfied or satisfied with their trip to Maitland, and this is a very positive result. Less than 2% were dissatisfied with their visit. The dimensions of satisfaction need to be investigated more thoroughly than this current survey was able to do, however, in order to understand better why and how the current tourist population is satisfied. More in-depth questioning can be expected to draw out more detailed responses, including criticisms of the Maitland tourist 'experience'.

A range of responses was received when people were asked to name to places in Maitland the visitors surveyed least enjoyed. Many of these responses were quite idiosyncratic (for instance, *"too many geese"* at Walka Water Works!), and 116 respondents either did not answer this question or could not think of anywhere they had not liked. As one person said, *"most places were enjoyable, accessible and well equipped"*. Of the 100 places named, 32 responses identified Maitland Heritage Mall as having something of an image problem. The following descriptions from a number of respondents are illustrative:

- *Not heritage; boring; dead; crowded, difficult to park; dangerous at night; no effort to impress visitors; it has no soul.*

The Mall is an important space in the city that plays a key role in defining the character of Maitland and its status as a commercial, heritage and cultural centre. Therefore, the image of the Mall, its features and lived rhythms, need to be addressed if any cultural tourism strategy in the area is to be successful.

Approximately 80% of the visitors surveyed felt that cultural factors were either very or somewhat important elements in the appeal of Maitland, while almost the entire sample of local residents felt this way. Clearly, locals understand the significance of culture in the development of tourism product in tandem with that of the city, and would appear to indicate a degree of support for further cultural tourism product development. The Maitland Art Gallery emerged as a particular focus, and not only for respondents surveyed at the Gallery. The following comments are indicative of comments made about the potential of the Gallery:

- *Maitland needs a bigger art gallery with special exhibitions. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*
- *Improvements needed to the art gallery, the lack of space is of great concern. (Respondent, Maitland Art Gallery)*

In terms of attractions visited in the area, the most frequently visited by the sample surveyed included Morpeth (93%), East Maitland (68%), Maitland Heritage Mall (67%), Walka Water Works (59%), antique shops (51%), Airds of Lochinvar clothing shop (46%), and Maitland Gaol (43%). These key tourist attractions must be sustained and developed, but must also be supplemented by both additional specific attractions and by a broader process of cultural development in Maitland.

5.2 Dungog Shire Council

Total Number surveyed	235	Gender (entire sample)	
Number of locals	82 (35%)	Female	123 (52%)
Number of visitors	153 (65%)	Male	112 (48%)

Table 1: Age distribution of total sample

Age (years)	Frequency	Percent
16-19	10	4.3
20-24	13	5.5
25-29	15	6.4
30-34	21	8.9
35-39	33	14
40-44	38	16.2
45-49	24	10.2
50-54	28	11.9
55-59	13	5.5
60-64	12	5.1
65 and older	28	11.9
Total	235	100

Table 2: Origin of visitors

	Frequency	Percent
Maitland City Council	26	16.9
Newcastle	37	24.1
Lake Macquarie	18	11.7
Port Stephens	15	9.8
Sydney	28	18.3
Other NSW	26	16.9
ACT	2	1.3
Queensland	1	.65
UK/Ireland	1	.65
Total	153	100

Table 3: Importance of cultural tourism factors in visiting Dungog Shire (visitor sample only)

	Frequency	Percent
Very important	37	24.2
Somewhat important	63	41.2
Not at all important	53	34.6
Total	153	100

Table 4: Local residents' views on the importance of cultural factors in visiting Dungog

	Frequency	Percent
Very important	71	88.8
Somewhat important	5	6.3
Not at all important	4	5
Total	80	100

Table 5: Main sources of information for trip to Dungog Shire

	Frequency	Percent
Previous visit	90	61.5
Friends/relatives	28	19.3
Magazine/newspaper	5	3.2
Govt travel centre	3	1.9
Motoring organisation	2	1.3
Tourist Info centre	4	2.6
Other	5	9.7
Total	154	100

Table 6: Number of nights staying in Dungog Shire

	Frequency	Percent
Not staying overnight	105	67.3
1 night	4	2.6
2 nights	27	17.3
3 nights	7	4.5
4 nights	3	1.9
6-10 nights	6	3.8
11-20 nights	4	2.6
Total	156	100

Table 7: Main form of accommodation while in Dungog Shire

	Frequency	Percent
Friends/relatives	15	30
Motel	8	16
Caravan	5	10
Bed and Breakfast	3	6
Serviced apartment	3	6
Camping	2	4
Other	14	28
Total	50	100

Table 8: Number of visits to Dungog Shire in last 12 months

	Frequency	Percent
1	59	37.8
2-5	58	37.2
6-10	10	6.4
10+	29	19.6
Total	156	100

Table 9: Satisfaction with trip to Dungog Shire

	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	95	61.3
Satisfied	53	34.2
Unsure	6	3.9
Dissatisfied	1	.6
Total	155	100

Table 10: Cultural tourist attractions visited

	Frequency	Percent
Chichester Dam	203	86.4
Paterson Village	178	75.7
Clarence Town	182	77.4
Historic House	85	36.2
Historic Cemetery	91	38.7
Art/Crafts Gallery	97	41.3
Antique shop	106	45.1
Telegherry Forest Park	39	16.6
Forestry Museum		
Lostock Dam	119	50.6
Paterson Rail Museum	26	11.1

5.2.1 Discussion of Results

A total of 235 usable surveys were collected comprising 82 locals (defined as being residents of the Dungog Shire) and 153 visitors to the Shire. Slightly more women were surveyed than men, and about half the total sample was aged 35 years or more. Of those who were not resident in the Shire, 17% were from Maitland District, 24% from Newcastle, 12% Lake Macquarie, 10% Port Stephens, 18% from Sydney and 17% from elsewhere in NSW. Only 3% of visitors came from outside New South Wales or Australia. Clearly, the majority of those surveyed were from within a 2.5 hour radius from Dungog Shire and whilst we must be cautious about generalising from this one sample, *the data suggest that the most important tourist market for the Shire is likely to be other residents of New South Wales, especially from elsewhere in the Hunter Region, the Central Coast and Sydney.* Marketing campaigns should be focused on these areas.

About two-thirds of the respondents were not staying overnight in the Shire, so day-tripping tourism is also an important component of the market that needs to be taken into account when developing plans and strategies. The following responses are indicative of those received from day trippers when asked why they had come to the Dungog district:

- *To stop off for lunch in the park, have a drive around the area and enjoy the countryside. (Respondent, picnic area – Tucker Park)*
- *Nice day out, fresh air, bbq, bush walks etc. (Respondent, Chichester Dam)*
- *Came to visit a friend and have lunch. (Respondent, Beattie Hotel)*
- *Lunch, wandered streets and visited antique shop. (Respondent, Crazy Chairs Cafe)*

To cater for this large group of visitors it is important to have restaurants and cafes that are open all day and to make sure that barbecue facilities in parks are clean and functioning. Indeed, there were many complaints that barbecues, particularly in Tucker Park, needed to be improved. The following comments from respondents at Tucker Park are illustrative of the general criticisms:

- *Lots of bbqs are rusted out, no chimney, need improvement. (Respondent, Tucker Park)*
- *Lack of wood for bbq, toilets had no seats. (Respondent, Tucker Park)*

For many locals and visitors, the district is seen as a good place to spend time with family in particular, with this kind of an outing involved picnics and barbecues, drives, walks, and letting the children play and swim. The following quote illustrates the unstructured, relaxed approach taken to such outings:

- *Sit and do nothing, have a chat, let kids play, have a look at the river, maybe do the Paterson walk, have a look around Paterson village. (Respondent, Tucker Park)*

Of those who stayed in the Shire, about 30% stayed with friends and family, 16% at a motel, 10% in a caravan, 6% each for B and B's or serviced apartments, and 4% camping. No doubt these accommodation statistics would vary according to season, and we would expect a larger proportion of people to camp in the warmer summer months. Probably because such a sizeable portion of the sample came from within a 2.5hr radius, about a third had visited the Shire between 2 and 5 times previously, indicating quite a high level of repeat visitation.

- *Beautiful, clean, favourite place in the world – I'm just drawn there. (Respondent in Paterson, talking about the Upper Allyn)*

A very high level of satisfaction with their visit to the Dungog Shire was recorded, with 40% indicating that they were very satisfied and a further 23% satisfied. Significantly, less than 1% was dissatisfied. This is a pleasing result that augurs well for future tourism development, but the dimensions of satisfaction need to be further teased out. For example, it might be the case that visitors to the Shire would not be in favour of developments of a type or at a scale that changed it to significant extent. Follow-up research might well elicit more information on tourist likes and dislikes in Dungog Shire. When asked about places people had not enjoyed and why, the responses were very mixed, although some recurrent themes are evident – the most significant being the poor quality of the roads. A sample of comments made about the roads include:

- *Shocking; large potholes; dreadful; not wide enough, needs to be upgraded, bad for the car; dangerous, narrow; lots of trucks, damaging; uncomfortable; tourism thrives but won't last long if roads are not improved; terrible.*

To a lesser extent the poor quality of facilities in a number of public places was raised as an issue. Criticisms expressed related, in particular, to: dirty toilets; litter; broken barbecues; and a lack of firewood.

While nature-based activities were clearly the most popular, both with day-trippers and those staying for longer, many survey respondents felt that cultural resources (including heritage and arts attractions) were important elements of the touristic appeal of the Shire, with local residents appearing to have much

stronger convictions on this matter than visitors. Interestingly, one respondent said that he had gone to Paterson for *"painting sketches, and see historic architecture in Paterson village"*. Several others noted the attraction of the picture theatre and the screening of specialist movies.

These findings demonstrate a fairly well developed awareness of the significant role of culture within the broader tourism product, and would seem to indicate tacit support for initiatives associated with the further development of cultural tourism within the District. In terms of the attractions visited by both locals and visitors, it was clear that significant sites were Chichester Dam, Paterson, Clarence Town, Lostock Dam, as well as historic homes, cemeteries, arts/crafts shops and antique shops. Sustainable tourism benefit must balance the development of these existing important tourism resources and also of new ones within an integrated cultural tourism plan.

6 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

A SWOT analysis is a standard analytical device that draws out the positive and negative, current and future dimensions of the subject under review. This realistic appraisal of the conditions for the development of cultural tourism in Maitland and Dungog is essential in order to turn aspiration into achievement.

6.1 Maitland District

Strengths

- a relatively mature tourism product;
- proximity to Sydney and Newcastle;
- Council support for appropriate tourism development, and a willingness to embrace a more inclusive approach to tourism;
- strong 'anchor' attractions such as Morpeth, and potentially, Maitland Gaol;
- special events and festivals such as Steamfest, Heritage Week.

Weaknesses

- a restrictive brand based on the built heritage concept to which some operators have become overly attached;
- unwillingness of some individual operators to develop productive partnerships and alliances within and outside the Maitland District;
- limited accommodation supply;
- under-recognition of significant natural and cultural resources such as the Hunter River and its *environs*;
- under-utilisation of the Internet for the marketing of Maitland.

Opportunities

- re-focus Maitland away from the rather restrictive 'heritage' tourism brand to one that is more contemporary and inclusive of broader cultural and natural attributes. This shift reflects the repositioning of Maitland as 'Hunter River Country';
- willingness of key stakeholders to embrace alternative approaches to the development of a tourism product for the city;
- considerable potential for Aboriginal cultural tourism based on the Mindaribba Aboriginal Centre;
- capacity for cultural tourism development associated with Maitland Gaol.

Threats

- competition from regions promoting similar characteristics;
- competition from regions with better targeted and resourced promotion strategies and marketing campaigns;
- more pronounced shift to Newcastle and the coast as cultural and entertainment sites;
- perception of 'falling between two stools', neither sufficiently urban nor rural to retain resident consumption and attract tourist visitation.

6.2 Dungog Shire

Strengths

- high quality, picturesque rural landscapes, with backdrop of forested hills and mountains;
- well presented, 'living' rural villages located within an easy drive of each other;
- growing awareness of, and support for, appropriate forms of tourism by community members and local government;
- a diverse range of historic sites, especially related to the built environment, that could be incorporated into cultural tourism;
- proximity to Newcastle and Sydney

Weaknesses

- much of the road system is of poor quality;
- inadequate level of financial resources committed to supporting and coordinating tourism at local government level;
- lack of marketing presence and coherent image or brand;
- poor signage system within the region;
- lack of a Tourism Manager to assist in the building of a tourism community;
- no 'anchor' cultural tourism attractions;
- too much focus on Dungog township at the expense of other townships and villages in the district.

Opportunities

- re-alignment of the economy away from forestry and dairying opens up opportunities for other economic activity, including cultural tourism;
- considerable cultural resources available that could be harnessed for the purposes of cultural tourism;
- willingness of key stakeholders to embrace the idea of cultural tourism that would complement the traditional focus on nature-based tourism associated with the Barrington Tops area;
- variety of funding sources available to assist with the development of cultural tourism in regional areas undergoing economic restructure;
- growth potential for rural tourism associated with the developments proposed for Tocal Agricultural College, near Paterson;
- promotion and development of events (races, rodeo, shows) and special interest tourism (walking, cycling).

Threats

- competition from other regions;
- social and economic effects of economic restructuring that could degrade the visual quality of the rural landscapes in the district;
- potential impacts on local quality of life of greater numbers of tourism visitors;
- transformation of the Shire into a largely residential area servicing retirees, commuters and weekend visitors.

6.3 Maitland and Dungog Region

Strengths

- comprises high quality rural landscapes, historic towns and city, heritage listed buildings;
- incorporates diversity of cultural resources suitable for cultural tourism, including fixed site attractions and festivals and events;
- enthusiasm for appropriate forms of tourism development at both a community and local government level;
- willingness to consider ways of working together to create a synergy that will strengthen cultural tourism to the region.

Weaknesses

- relationships between the Maitland and Dungog districts not strategically strong or well developed, with little collaboration at present;
- no structure in place that will facilitate the development of synergistic relationships within the Maitland-Dungog region;
- a more competitive than cooperative relationship at this stage.

Opportunities

- effective synergies could be created that work to the advantage of the Maitland and Dungog regions, especially in terms of cultural tourism product development and marketing;
- considerable potential to strengthen cultural tourism based on the initiatives occurring at Mindaribba Aboriginal Centre and Tocal Agricultural College. Both of these initiatives have potential for the international as well as domestic tourism markets;
- capacity to develop the 3-part transport linkages (road, rail, river) to allow visitors to 'flow' around the Region while gaining a diverse range of tourist experiences;
- a variety of funding schemes is available that could help to build the cultural tourism product in the region.

Threats

- competition from other regions, within and outside the Hunter Tourism Region;
- scepticism from within the regions about the possibilities of forming strategically importance alliances and relationships;
- maintenance of rigid 'jurisdictional' boundaries between the local government districts, leading to underdevelopment of both districts in cultural tourism and related potential areas of mutual cooperation.

7 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND ACTIONS: MAITLAND CITY COUNCIL AREA

7.1 Cultural Tourism in Maitland

The City of Maitland local government area is a relatively mature destination with several anchor attractions and a wide range of complementary attractions, both fixed site and event-based. It has a well-developed tourism infrastructure, incorporating a range of accommodation, transport routes and operators. Much of the promotion and marketing effort of Maitland Tourism has in recent years been focussed on branding the city as a heritage destination – indeed, as the 'Heritage Capital of NSW'. However, the recent shift in branding Maitland as 'Hunter River Country' recognises the limitations of a heritage concept that has largely reflected built heritage such as historic residences and other buildings. The positioning of Maitland as the heart of the Hunter River Country recognises that there are opportunities to incorporate a broader range of cultural resources from both the city and the rural hinterland, so allowing the lifestyle of the areas to contribute to a more inclusive strategic approach to tourism.

For example, Maitland Gaol offers considerable potential to add to the suite of cultural tourism attractions, and could become an important anchor attraction for Maitland. The Hunter River itself is another resource that is particularly under-utilised from a tourism perspective. While the 1955 Maitland Flood is marked by flood level signs throughout the city and surrounding areas, little else is made of the river from a touristic perspective. Indeed, the city has effectively 'turned its back' on the river. Interpretive signs, boardwalks and lookouts, together with walking trails, cycle ways and scenic drives, are ways of incorporating the river into the framework of cultural tourism resources. The river system generally also provides a crucial but underestimated link between Maitland and Dungog (see also sections 7.7 and 9.2.2).

Aboriginal involvement in the tourism industry is limited at present to the Mindaribba Aboriginal Land Council's museum at Metford. Because there are no other distinctive attractions based on Indigenous culture in the district, the initiatives underway at Mindaribba present a valuable opportunity for both cultural enrichment and the expansion of the city's cultural tourism product. In a similar vein, much greater use could be made of historical figures such as Molly Morgan, Les Darcy and others in the way that Maitland's story is interpreted to tourists. Indeed, a more creative interpretation of the heritage buildings throughout the local government area would do much to enhance the experience of visitors to those sites. Maitland also has a lively arts and cultural scene, including an active local theatre group and local art galleries that, in tandem with other facilities and resources, could be an important plank for a tourism strategy.

Maitland City Council's aims in pursuing tourism development are to capitalise on a well-established tourism infrastructure, to broaden its market appeal beyond the constraining and somewhat out-dated notion of 'heritage capital', and to enhance the quality of life for residents. These are achievable, with the

reconceptualisation of cultural tourism able to assist significantly in the realisation of all three principal aims.

Tourism development in the Maitland area should:

- diversify tourism product and promotion to encompass other dimensions of cultural life in the local government area;
- integrate existing human and physical infrastructure more systematically into tourism development; and
- prioritise tourism as a key element of economic, social and cultural development.

The following strategic opportunities have been identified using feedback from Key Cultural Tourism Stakeholders as well as residents of and visitors to Maitland District, and based on observational, field and documentary research undertaken by the Project Team.

7.2 Strategic Opportunity: Extend the Scope of the Tourism Community

Currently Maitland Tourism Association does not incorporate many small operators who do not necessarily see themselves as part of the tourism community, such as specialised plant nurseries, herb farms, herb farms, olive farm, 4WD associations and the like. Yet these 'boutique' businesses and hobbyist associations contribute to the diverse cultural capital of the area and play a significant part in the cultural tourism product.

Strategies and Actions:

- Widen the operational definition of 'tourism business', 'tourism event' and 'tourism attraction' to include a full range of community-based cultural activities.
- Involve Maitland CBD Office, which currently receives inquiries from local residents about events/attractions in Maitland, as an alternative potential tourist information outlet.
- Integrate the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) information base with the CBD Office's 'Community Directory'.
- Develop (in partnership with the CBD Office) a strategy to assist community organisations in providing the VIC with regular and accurate information about their activities and events.
- Explore the possibility of providing free marketing and/or services and information to community groups and businesses that don't currently see themselves as part of the tourism community. Paid advertisements in the existing visitor booklet don't currently represent Maitland's broad cultural tourism base. A large number of community groups don't generate enough income to undertake marketing activities or to become paid members of the VIC.
- Develop (in partnership with the CBD Office, Chamber of Commerce, and Lower Hunter Business Enterprise Centre) a networking/educational programme to draw non-traditional businesses and community groups into the tourism community, perhaps by offering some form of 'associate membership' of the Maitland Tourism Association.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

It was clear from survey responses that people take a very broad approach to tourism, making little distinction between designated tourism sites/businesses and others (for instance shopping at Morpeth, the Heritage Mall and East Maitland was a highly popular activity).

7.3 Strategic Opportunity: Mindaribba Aboriginal Council Museum and Community Centre, Metford

The Mindaribba Aboriginal Council Museum and Community Centre at Metford is unique in the Hunter Region, and presents an exceptional opportunity for cultural tourism development in the Maitland District. The Community Centre at Metford houses an excellent Museum, with exhibits dating back 2000 years. The Centre hosts the "Yinnar Barran Bali" (Women of the East) crafts group who have their own kiln on site. This group, along with other community artists (painters, sculptors, photographers, potters, tapestry and wood workers), have staged two major exhibitions of their work in the Community Hall, resulting in some sales. Mindaribba currently does not have a tourism plan or tourism marketing strategy in place. The Centre operates and supports a wide range of community services and facilities with only a small staff, and may require external support to explore and develop its cultural tourism options.

Strategies and Actions:

The following proposals arise from discussions with the Mindaribba management team and reflect some of their ideas for the Centre. Given the unique position of Indigenous people and the consequent need for cultural sensitivity, the suggestions below are of a more preliminary nature than other aspects of this Plan, and require full consultation with the Indigenous operators of Mindaribba.

- The relationship between Mindaribba Centre and Maitland Tourism has been unsatisfactory for Mindaribba to this point. There is a strong feeling that little interest has been shown in the facility, and that there is reluctance on the part of the Visitor Information Centre to provide information to tourists about Mindaribba. It is recommended that discussions take place between Mindaribba, Maitland Tourism and Maitland City Council to resolve any difficulties, and to establish a better line of communication.
- Establish ways by which Maitland Visitor Centre can provide ongoing support and encouragement to Mindaribba.
- It is in the broader interests of Maitland City Council to help develop and promote the Mindaribba Cultural Centre. Consequently, a crucial first step would be to develop a marketing strategy that would include recommendations relating to product development, activities such as guided tours both on and off site, advertising and promotions. Possible funding sources for such a strategy should be investigated.
- Explore opportunities for increasing group bookings for tours. Staffing issues at the Centre make advance group bookings a better option in the short term than increasing 'drop in' visits by individuals. Advance group bookings would allow the Centre to work around Preschool and other administrative commitments and to resource the tours appropriately. This

would lead to a more professional service that could be 'costed' accordingly and would help extend opening hours.

- Refine marketing opportunities:
 - Mindaribba currently attracts bus groups travelling from Sydney to Morpeth who call in as a result of seeing the road sign. Information and booking forms might be sent to bus tour companies at their point of departure;
 - Mindaribba currently attracts overseas visitors, many of whom have heard about the facility through cultural exchange (for example, with Native American groups in the USA). Explore marketing opportunities with Indigenous and other groups overseas via the Internet;
 - extend the existing Schools program through appropriate marketing;
 - market to tertiary education institutions, and to historical, archaeological and nature-based groups and clubs in Sydney and Newcastle;
 - develop a brochure advertising existing and potential programs offered by Mindaribba .
- Currently, no relationship exists between Maitland Art Gallery and Mindaribba arts and crafts groups. Explore the opportunities for joint exhibitions. The VIC might also be used as an exhibition/retail space for these groups.
- Explore opportunities for developing a 'shop front' arts and crafts facility, either at the Centre or in locations such as Maitland or Morpeth.
- Investigate services, information and support that may be available from the Hunter Business Centre at Kurri Kurri to aid in the development of a 'shop front' arts and crafts facility, and in commercial development of other Centre facilities and tours.
- Apply for funding to support the production and sale of arts and crafts. Several funding opportunities both for individual Aboriginal artists and community arts projects have been provided by the Australia Council over the last 12 months.
- Mindaribba is currently able to put visitors in touch with guides and tours currently provided by Kampatu Land Council. Explore opportunities for Mindaribba to run and market its own tours to local Aboriginal sites of interest. This must be done with care and consideration for the protection of important Aboriginal heritage sites.

- Explore opportunities for running 'bush tucker' tours using currently available local expertise.
- Explore opportunities for employing (recruiting as a volunteer in the short term) an Aboriginal person to provide information at the Maitland Visitor Centre.
- Explore opportunities for building up existing conference and workshop business, marketing to Aboriginal groups, government departments with Aboriginal interests, and to the wider community.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

The urgent need for Mindaribba to develop a tourism strategy and for this strategy to be integrated into a comprehensive cultural tourism plan for the region is underscored by the fact that only 5 of the 216 survey respondents said that they had visited the site. Two (2) of these respondents identified it as the best place they had visited in the area. The other 3 respondents said that they had enjoyed it least, 2 because they were 'not really interested' in Aboriginal heritage, and the other because they had found the 'representative rude'.

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Numbers 1-4, 6-9, 12, 13, 15-19, 24-29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

7.4 Strategic Opportunity: Events

There was a perception amongst stakeholders and respondents to the visitor and resident survey that Maitland District lacks events that appeal to a mature audience. It was suggested that existing events in the District could be expanded to appeal to a wider audience and to provide a full day's entertainment.

Strategies and Actions:

- Canvass the seeding of a Maitland District event that would incorporate regional craft, shopping, and regional food and wine in ways that would appeal to a mature audience.
- Examine the possibility of organising a community event based on the former 'Heart of the Hunter' event that some survey participants felt provided a full day's entertainment for a wide range of age groups and interests, and included river rafting races, a street parade and side shows.
- Look at ways of revitalising Steamfest by adding activities and attractions that appeal to a wider age group. Perceptions are that there is little to maintain family interest as a day out at the current festival.
- Approach Maitland Dramatic Society to explore the development of a 'progressive play', showcasing venues and sites around Maitland, combined with a quality dining experience. Appraise the currently successful Wollombi model.
- Undertake detailed, strategic research concerning the events and conference market potential for Maitland.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Very few respondents mentioned festivals of events as important aspects of the current or potential tourism landscape. 2 Respondents made the following relevant comments in response to questioning about what they think visitors would find most interesting about Maitland:

- *The shops are quite interesting but most people come to Maitland areas like Morpeth to see things like the Jazz Festival. (Respondent, Maitland Art Gallery)*
- *Maybe the festivals we have here, a lot of people come for festivals such as the Jazz Festival and visit other places when they do, like the Gaol tour. (Respondent, Maitland Park Netball Courts)*

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Numbers 10, 14, 31 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

7.5 Strategic Opportunity: Local Education Campaign

There is a perception amongst Tourism Stakeholders that more needs to be done to improve 'word of mouth' advertising among local residents and businesses.

Strategies and Actions:

- Work with the City Centre Office to take advantage of the well used 'drop in' service at the Heritage Mall for local residents by providing up-to-the-minute information about local attractions and events.
- Develop a campaign in the local media to raise awareness about the importance of tourism in the District, and featuring visitors' stories about their visits to local attractions, markets, festivals, events and eateries.
- The Visitor Guide requires more editorial information rather than being largely advertising based.
- Target local retailers, hairdressers and other service providers who could be used to disseminate information about the attractions, activities and events that are occurring in the area, through the distribution of tourism information and by inviting them to attend tourism seminars.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

The following comments from survey respondents are relevant:

- *Need to provide additional tourist information. Involve people from all ages and not just older people. (Respondent, Maitland Art Gallery)*
- *Tourist operators must consider the needs of local residents and not be intrusive. (Respondent, Maitland Gaol)*

7.6 Strategic Opportunity: Accommodation

Several issues were raised by Stakeholders concerning the quality and availability of accommodation in Maitland District, and the strategic involvement of accommodation providers in tourism planning and Visitor Centre activities.

Strategies and Actions:

- Ways of improving accommodation variety (B&B motels, hotels, caravan and camping), quality and price competitiveness should be explored. Existing motel and caravan accommodation was described by some respondents as *"inadequate and substandard"*. A need for more three and a half star accommodation was identified.
- Develop a strategic approach to community events to spread the accommodation load in order to overcome problems associated with peaks and troughs in accommodation bookings.
- Explore potential markets for accommodation among regular users (such as Maitland Markets stall operators). The Visitor Centre should seek to facilitate a closer relationship between Maitland Markets and local accommodation providers, and encourage packaging of special offers. The Maitland Markets currently attracts people from Newcastle and elsewhere in the Hunter Valley – there is considerable potential for developing this source of tourists.
- Explore ways of encouraging local accommodation providers to provide good information to the VIC for its new web site.
- Market more vigorously the availability of Bed and Breakfast and other boutique style accommodation, including pub-stays, so that the links between tourism and the culture of the area are made more evident in the marketplace.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Given that 85% of survey respondents were not staying overnight in Maitland and that 57% of those who were staying over night were staying with relatives or friends, it is hardly surprising that accommodation did not feature as a major concern. Accommodation was mentioned by 7 people in response to questioning about tourism facilities that need to be developed. One (1) respondent identified a 'four star motel' as needed, 3 others suggested the need for 'improved accommodation' including 'high quality' hotels, B & Bs and a caravan park, while another made the following comment, which may be indicative of a more generally-held attitude:

- *Would probably never stay here, would prefer Newcastle or the wineries. (Respondent Visitors Centre)*

7.7 Strategic Opportunity: The Hunter River

The Hunter River is a phenomenon that straddles both 'the natural' and 'the cultural', and as such should be viewed as an important cultural tourism resource for the area. At present, little use is made of the River for tourism, or even within local community identity, even though the Hunter River and the 1955 Flood are strong aspects of the 'iconography' of Maitland. The new branding of Maitland as 'Hunter River Country' provides an opportunity to embrace this important cultural tourism resource.

Strategies and Actions:

- Encourage the development of an open space network in Maitland and surrounding districts.
- Provide land for a range of recreation purposes and protect land from encroachment by incompatible land uses. Opportunities for appropriate multiple use, especially across private lands, should be explored.
- Explore the feasibility of locating new picnic and BBQ areas along appropriate sections of the River. These would need to be linked to adjacent streets with walking trails or access roads.
- Develop an integrated walking path and cycle way along the riverbank.
- The Hunter River's rich natural and social history could be the subject of creative interpretation using interpretive signage, brochures and sculptures.
- Encourage the use of the River in artistic expression by Maitland City Council sponsoring an annual prize for artwork based on a selected aspect of the Hunter River.
- Incorporate the River into a new special event or festival that would perhaps include rowing or raft races in order to create a water-based spectacle.
- Investigate the feasibility of installing sculptures and other artwork in the River itself or adjacent to the river.
- Install viewing platforms and boardwalks at judiciously chosen points along the River, together with seating.
- Explore feasibility of re-introducing boat trips from Maitland to Morpeth and Paterson.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Although no survey respondents mentioned the River as somewhere they enjoyed visiting, a number noted its tourist potential. The following quotes indicate the tenor of their suggestions:

- *They should do something with the river. I don't know what but it is such a nice river. (Respondent, Maitland Art Gallery)*
- *The riverfront is offering great opportunities. (Respondent, Maitland Art Gallery)*
- *Fix up erosion along the river. (Respondent, Morpeth)*
- *River boats (2 Respondents at different sites in Morpeth)*
- *Make more use of the Hunter River as an active tourist venture. (Respondent, Maitland Art Gallery)*
- *A coffee shop at the art gallery and more walking and bike tracks, more involvement with the river. (Respondent, Maitland Art Gallery)*

It is intriguing that the majority of respondents who identified the potential of the River were visitors to the Art Gallery. This finding points to the potential for some imaginative links to be made between the Gallery and activities/facilities on the River, with the Heritage Mall perhaps playing a key linkage role between the two.

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Numbers 1 & 3 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

7.8 Strategic Opportunity: Maitland Heritage Architecture

Maitland City Council area includes a diverse stock of heritage buildings, many of which were designed by leading Australian architects. These buildings are often in good repair and have been used as the basis of a heritage tourism product. However, the potential to attract a wider range of tourists and other visitors could be enhanced through a more creative use of interpretation and presentation of these buildings.

Strategies and Actions:

- Place a consolidated inventory of local architecture on the World Wide Web in a way that is easily accessible to visitors seeking information about Maitland.
- Consider making contact with the Faculty of Architecture at The University of Newcastle to involve students in documenting local architectural heritage, and identifying buildings of significance that may fall outside heritage guidelines.
- Conserve and protect buildings exhibiting local architectural features.
- Historic Maitland Streetscape requires more sophisticated interpretation. This could take the form of better signage and clearer connections between buildings.
- Historical trails and interpretive signs at key sites are needed to help 'rediscover' Australian architects in Maitland.
- The full ambit of Maitland's architectural strengths could be emphasised, including innovative modern building firms, creative renovations and adaptive building uses.

Some Relevant Data from Visitors/Resident Survey

As was noted in 5.1, above, Maitland Heritage Mall has an image problem. The Mall is an important space in the city that plays a key role in defining the character of Maitland and its status as a heritage and architectural centre. Therefore, the image of the Mall needs to be refined for any cultural tourism strategy to be successful. While problems with the Mall need to be addressed, 'heritage' and 'history' did feature as a positive aspect of tourists' perceptions of Maitland, with Morpeth, the Gaol and 'historic homes' featured high on the list. Mention was made of the cemetery by several respondents ("scary and social"). Many also commented on the heritage values of local antiques and mention was made by 1 respondent of the river's historical role as an important port.

The following positive comments are illustrative:

- *Historical town, very interesting, a variety of antique shops. (Respondent, Maitland Art Gallery)*

When asked what people thought visitors would find most interesting about Maitland, the overwhelming majority identified heritage. For instance:

- *The heritage in the area, such as the old buildings. (Respondent, Maitland Park)*
- *Heritage – old houses and churches. (Respondent, Maitland Gaol)*
- *Heritage – old buildings and stories, such as about the flood. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*

As a reminder that heritage consists of both 'solid' buildings and of more elusive ideas and tastes, a respondent surveyed at the Visitors Centre suggested that there was considerable potential for the development of book trails between bookshops with a focus on historical literature.

7.9 Strategic Opportunity: Innovative Marketing

Tourism marketing of Maitland has tended to use orthodox and established methods, but these need to be supplemented by more innovative approaches. The Internet has been under-utilised to date as a marketing tool, with neighbouring Dungog making more effective use of online resources. More flexible and targeted marketing techniques could also be adopted at modest cost.

Strategies and Actions:

- Capitalise on the communications opportunities offered by the Internet, including:
 - better use of the Internet for information and promotion;
 - create a fully searchable database on the Maitland Visitor web site;
 - establish good links to other sites (like Dungog);
 - develop suggested 'patterns'/ packages of things to do while visiting, and post these on the Internet;
- Ensure that the websites of tourism organisations are regularly updated to reflect existing facilities, services, pricing structures and events.
- Make the Cultural Tourism database generally available in booklet form.
- Target marketing activities at groups and clubs, such as garden and other hobbyist clubs. Groups are reasonably easily managed in terms of knowing how many people are coming, where to and for how long. Match potential groups with experiences and facilities that Maitland has to offer, focusing on the Newcastle and Sydney markets - for example, historic societies, sports groups, arts groups, and 4-wheel drive clubs.
- Improve the editorial to advertising ratio in the existing Maitland Visitor Booklet.
- Explore existing historical information about Maitland and look at ways of publicising it through user-friendly leaflets, the Internet, and appropriate signage.
- Explore the development of a tourism radio programme.
- Establish more effective links with the Hunter Regional Tourism Organisation. There is a need to address branding issues concerning Maitland and surrounding Districts, and to ensure that Maitland is adequately and appropriately represented in HRTTO marketing activities, especially through the HRTTO Executive and Marketing Committee.
- Forge creative strategic alliances between individuals and organisations in Maitland and across the Hunter Region, whilst also recognising that alliances can be developed with organisations outside the Hunter.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Many respondents said that they had heard about a particular place from friends or relatives and had decided to visit either with them or alone as a result. For instance:

- *I'm visiting the Newcastle area – our daughter-in-law lives there and has brought us to Morpeth for the day. (Respondent, Morpeth)*
- *I'm only here for about an hour and a half. Wanted a rest and had heard about Maitland from family. (Respondent, Morpeth)*
- *Recommended by a friend who loves it here. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*
- *I'd heard about these places from the people I stayed with and thought they sounded interesting. (Respondent, Maitland Park)*

A number of respondents identified "promotion" as "additional facilities needed to attract tourists", with 2 making the following interesting points about promoting Maitland to Newcastle residents:

- *More positive promotions and marketing to people in Newcastle area, they don't tend to visit here although are so close – often have negative attitudes towards Maitland. (Respondent, Morpeth Village)*
- *Could be better promoted to Newcastle residents – it is so close and accessible but I have little knowledge of the area. (Respondent, Maitland Gaol)*

Two respondents had the following suggestions:

- *More access to information needed and a central booking agency for tourist attractions. (Respondent, Car Park, Maitland Park)*
- *Tourism radio would be good (as in Queensland). Would help promote the area and specific attractions and accommodation linked to local radio channel and have highway signage. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Number 11 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

7.10 Strategic Opportunity: Improving Basic Amenity: Parks, Grounds and Surrounds.

Respondents to the visitor and resident survey were very positive about the general appeal of Maitland District as a family recreational destination, describing Maitland as “good for families”, “safe”, “friendly”, and “hospitable”. There were, however, frequent negative responses concerning the general visual appeal and amenity of the area centred on parklands, grounds and surrounds. The survey request for words that visitors and residents would use to describe these aspects of Maitland included “run down”, “dirty”, “litter” and “vandalised”.

Strategies and Actions:

- Improve general amenity and basic recreational facilities in Maitland District. Existing community events (like driving clubs) require good parks and parking facilities with quality toilets, BBQ facilities, and food available.
- The recent up-grade of Maitland Park was not felt to address the needs of young families very well. The Park needs to be reconsidered in terms of family needs and the requirements of existing community events by:
 - providing more covered eating areas and seating;
 - improving existing play equipment;
 - providing more and better BBQ's;
 - encouraging the opening of a kiosk at weekends and around key events;
 - exploring the possibility of centring organised family activities and events at the Park on a regular basis (such as themed picnic days).
- Tidy up the areas adjoining the New England Highway between the railway overpass and the Heritage Holden roundabout.
- Develop bike trails and walkways that link facilities and suburbs. In particular, consider developing a bike trail from Maitland to Morpeth. These types of developments and associated movements can be facilitated by extending pedestrian and bikeway systems and by developing bridle trails in the rural parts of the locality. These systems, as well as providing for general movements, also need to focus on significant pedestrian and bicycle movement generators.
- Create points of interest and rest areas along the New England Highway in the Maitland District.
- Protect the utility and visual amenity of the major road networks by maintaining views and vistas from the road corridors.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Maitland Park and Walka Water Works featured as popular places for residents and visitors alike. A number of people suggested that there is a need for sheltered/shaded eating areas in local parks. Several also commented on the lack of barbecue and toilet facilities, and that many of those that have been provided need to be maintained. The gardens (both public and private) were noted as an attractive feature of Maitland, with Maitland Park being described as “beautiful”, and the words “picturesque, scenic, pretty, attractive” were used 31 times by respondents to describe Maitland.

7 respondents raised the need for more youth facilities such as skate-parks in public places. It is important that the needs of young people are not overlooked in any future Cultural Plan. Overall, though, the emphasis was on parks as places for families and young children, as the following quotes illustrate:

- *There are good picnic and recreation areas – family spots. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*
- *More parks and leisure areas for families. (Respondent, Morpeth)*
- *Less heritage tourism and more family stuff. Something for the kids as well as adults. (Respondent, Walka Water Works)*
- *Maitland Park was recently developed but not particularly well for young children. (Respondent, Morpeth)*

7.11 Strategic Opportunity: Morpeth

Morpeth has developed into a popular heritage tourist destination. To some degree it has developed too far in a single direction, with an over-concentration of similar coffee shops and craft outlets that has eroded the 'authenticity' of the experience of 'historic Morpeth'. The village's development is also limited somewhat by the uneven patronage of its facilities across the week and seasons. The opportunity needs to be taken to 're-balance' Morpeth's tourism effort, drawing on its established appeal but broadening its cultural character and the range and timing of activities that occur in and around it. The Draft Morpeth Management Plan comprehensively examines a range of issues associated with tourism and sets out a range of recommendations. The following strategic directions and actions are derived from the visitor and stakeholder surveys undertaken for this present Cultural Tourism Plan.

Strategies and Actions:

- Encourage the development of the Morpeth Jazz Festival by facilitating more media coverage and better signage. Seek larger scale sponsorship for this event to attract bigger jazz names.
- Further develop the Heritage Month concept by increasing the number of venues, developing historic walks, and offering genealogy courses. Introduce Hunter branding for appropriate events.
- Look at ways of increasing funding for Morpeth Museum, increasing display space, and improving presentation (such as through museum grants). Expand opening hours and collection.
- Provide incentives to home and commercial property owners to restore and enhance heritage properties/facades in the village.
- Centre more activities on the river at Morpeth using boardwalks, cruises, picnic spots. The river at Morpeth currently is not very accessible. Showcase Morpeth as an historic river port as well as a craft centre.
- Upgrade existing children's play equipment and increase/improve public toilet facilities.
- Encourage extended opening hours for shops at Morpeth as part of a broader attempt to establish Morpeth as a night-time attraction by, for example, promoting historic pubs and inns in Morpeth and nearby places such as Largs.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Morpeth was very prominent in the survey both as the place people most enjoyed visiting and as the place people thought had the most to offer visitors. Shopping, cafes, craft, and heritage featured as major attractions in Morpeth as the following comments indicate:

- *There are great cafes here for lunch. (Respondent, Morpeth Main Street)*
- *I'm particularly looking for antiques. (Respondent, Morpeth Main Street)*
- *Specifically a trip to come to the craft shops. (Respondent, Morpeth Main St)*
- *I came here because it's a heritage town with heritage buildings and shopping. (Respondent, Morpeth Main Street)*

Going to Morpeth is seen as "a great day" but, In spite of its obvious appeal and popularity, some respondents made important criticisms and suggestions for improvement. These included expressing concern that Morpeth "was losing its village atmosphere" and becoming "overly commercial" (Respondent, Walka Water Works), and, similarly, suggesting that it was getting "too busy" (Respondent, Walka Water Works). Many respondents suggested that there was a general need in the Morpeth area for "more places to eat" that also provide a different experience (including sidewalk cafes), and a greater variety of shops:

- *Would like to see more capitalisation on historical aspect, for example, for restaurants and cafes like Darby and Beaumont Streets (in Newcastle) (Respondent, Main Street, Morpeth)*
- *We need restaurants of high quality. (Respondent, Main Street, Morpeth)*

Some concern was also expressed about inadequate signage and toilet facilities, for instance:

- *I haven't found the toilets yet so perhaps more signage is needed. (Respondent, Main Street, Morpeth)*

7.12 Strategic Opportunity: Walka Water Works

Maitland residents surveyed identified Walka Water Works as one of the attractions that visitors to the District would find most interesting. However, comments from residents and visitors, such as "over-rated", "not much there", and "pretty boring" indicate that there is room for improvement.

Strategies and Actions:

- Address the lack of facilities and poor availability and selection of food on site.
- Consider complaints that the main attraction of the site for young families - the train ride - does not consistently operate. Investigate alternative novel family attractions.
- Address the complaint that there are not enough covered tables to provide shelter from sun and rain.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Walka Water Works is a popular place for nuclear and extended families to spend time together playing football, riding bikes, and having a barbecue or a picnic lunch. Indeed, several of the people interviewed were there for a family birthday or reunion.

- *Walka Water Works is a great place to unwind and ride mountain bikes, see wildlife and have a bbq. (Respondent, Walka Water Works)*

Five (5) key words and their associated themes recur in survey responses in relation to Walka Water Works: "family", "barbecue", "friends", "picnic", and "relax".

A minority of respondents did have some criticism, however, which included the "cost" and a "lack of facilities and food selection".

7.13 Strategic Opportunity: Maitland Heritage Mall

Maitland Heritage Mall attracted the most criticism from visitors, residents and key tourism stakeholders alike. Comments included, "no effort to impress visitors", "no soul", "dangerous", "dead", "ordinary" and "needs maintenance". A vibrant and attractive Heritage Mall is a key tourism attribute for Maitland.

Strategies and Actions:

- Investigate ways of encouraging Mall shopkeepers to open on Sundays and Saturday afternoons, as these are times when visitors, according to the survey, are most likely to be disappointed by the Mall.
- Investigate the seeding of Mall-based events like Newcastle's Darby Street Fair, Beaumont Street Fiesta, and King Street Fair.
- Improve the general visual amenity of the Mall through maintenance and planting programmes, festive lighting, and other artistic/visual means of improving the Mall's ambience.
- Encourage the use of the Mall as a night-time facility, and stress its community as well as retail uses and identity. The key to the success of the Mall in cultural tourism terms is its operation as a valued resource by local residents. Improvements to the Mall and the extension of its functions, therefore, will be of benefit to both visitor and resident user groups.
- The Mall, as befits its heritage character, needs to be conceptually and physically opened up to the River as a critical heritage influence.
- Explore the current international trends in Mall management (such as the partial reintroduction of vehicle access) to inject new life and vitality into the Mall.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

As detailed above, criticisms of the Heritage Mall were many. The few positive comments received about the Mall related to the shopping, the availability of food, and its proximity to the movie theatre. Two (2) respondents identified the architecture in the Mall as a positive feature, and 2 others said, a little ambiguously, that they had found the Mall "interesting". Two (2) other respondents said that they preferred it to Newcastle Mall (another much criticised space). Significantly, there was also a strong sense that there is a crime problem in this area, especially after hours:

- Crime rate is quite high. (Respondent, Maitland Gaol)

This is a common problem in such Malls that can best be addressed by developing the 24-hour economy of business, restaurants, movies, theatre etc, because greater numbers of people using public space over a longer daily time span reduces their sense of personal vulnerability.

7.14 Strategic Opportunity: Maitland Gaol

Maitland Gaol has the potential to become an important anchor attraction for the Maitland City area and has already established itself as an interesting and unusual tourist attraction. A separate Plan of Management has been undertaken for this site, although this document has not yet been sighted by this Project Team. Whilst the tourism potential of the Gaol is considerable, there are several issues relating to the way in which the Gaol is presented, interpreted and experienced that warrant attention at an early phase of its development as a tourist attraction.

Strategic Directions and Actions:

- An anchor attraction acts to bring visitors to a destination in its own right, which necessitates a level of awareness about that attraction that is quite high within the particular markets it targets. Therefore, considerable resources need to be channelled into the development of a creative marketing strategy targeting, in particular, the population centres of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Central Coast and Sydney.
- Investigate the possibility of linking the Gaol to other buildings or events associated with law and order, such as historic courthouses, police stations, and sites of past civil disorders. These could be incorporated into a tourist brochure or some other publication. There might be the possibility of developing a tourist trail based on past felonious activities.
- Maitland Gaol in its current form has a very high level of authenticity, and considerable attention will need to be given concerning the extent to which the authentic Gaol experience could be compromised through the incorporation of other activities and enterprises such as the bakery, accommodation, a museum, and dining and other retail outlets.
- The potential for the Gaol to be used for weddings and other events is being investigated. We suggest that this focus be broadened to include consideration of staging plays and other creative activities there. The site could form an evocative set for an interactive children's adventure play or for more formal scripted works such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Maitland Gaol is a very popular attraction for visitors and locals alike and, indeed, a number of respondents were locals taking friends from out of town to the Gaol. For instance:

- *I'm bringing friends from Sydney to visit the gaol and find somewhere nice for lunch. (Respondent, Maitland Gaol)*

Quite a number of those surveyed both at the Gaol and elsewhere commented on how much they had enjoyed the experience and, in particular, the tour, with the word 'interesting' recurring. Comments such as the following were common:

- *The gaol tour was informative, a good performance by the ex-convict tour guide. (Respondent, Maitland Park, swimming pool)*

Visitors also enjoyed the "authenticity" of the gaol and the opportunity to see the conditions in which prisoners lived until the late 1990s was appreciated by many:

- *It was different – to see how prisoners lived. (Respondent, Maitland Park, netball courts)*
- *Really interesting to see what the inside of a gaol is like. (Respondent, Maitland Park)*

When asked to name the event or attraction they least enjoyed, only 1 of the 215 respondents named the Gaol. This person, who was surveyed at the Art Gallery, said they had gone to the gaol out of "curiosity" but found it "boring". Only 1 respondent had any proposals for how the offerings at the Gaol could be improved, suggesting that there was considerable potential for special events and re-enactments to be held inside the Gaol.

8 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND ACTIONS: DUNGOG SHIRE

On the basis of the research and analysis previously outlined, the following proposed directions and actions for Dungog Shire have been framed.

8.1 Cultural Tourism in Dungog Shire

Dungog has been focussing its tourism marketing and product development towards nature-based forms of tourism. This is in order to take advantage of its location as the 'Foothills to the Barrington Tops'. However, the district does have considerable resources that could be used to develop its cultural tourism product as well. These relate primarily to the rural industries that either currently operate or have their legacy in the district. Dungog itself is a rural service town that comprises a variety of buildings (mostly private residences) that could have much touristic appeal if they were better linked and interpreted.

In the context of cultural tourism, the Shire does not have a major icon or anchor attraction, but instead has a wide variety of smaller complementary attractions. It also runs a substantial events and festivals programme, and many of these events have the potential to develop and play a more significant role in the cultural tourism system in the Shire.

The rural landscapes within the Shire are an attraction in their own right, but their value in a tourist sense could be improved through the provision of lookouts and interpretive signs. The other major 'resource' for cultural tourism relates to the forestry activities in the state forests of Barrington Tops, particularly in their earlier forms. In addition, cycling, walking tracks, mountain biking, bed and breakfasts, farm stays, and camping are important current activities and facilities in the district.

Less obvious is the contribution that cultural activities like the arts are making to the township. The Dungog Shire is home to an increasing number of artists who could be integrated into cultural tourism development through the provision and promotion of workshop and exhibition spaces. There is also the potential to build on this resource by developing artist holidays and educational workshops, and forging closer connections between the arts and local cafes, hotels and other businesses.

Dungog Shire Council's aim in pursuing tourism development is to widen and strengthen the local economy in an environment where traditional industries such as dairying and timber are in decline, and to enhance quality of life for local residents.

Accordingly, tourism development in the Shire should:

- focus on building upon and improving existing community facilities and amenities;

- add value to existing businesses by supporting initiatives that attract tourist spending as well as servicing the needs of residents;
- emphasise tourism as a way of maintaining local services and infrastructure; and
- take incremental and economically, socially and environmentally sustainable steps that enrich cultural tourism opportunities without, unwittingly, destroying the Shire's distinctive tourism advantages.

The following strategic opportunities have been identified using feedback from Key Cultural Tourism Stakeholders as well as residents of and visitors to the Shire.

8.2 Strategic Opportunity: Raising Community Awareness of the Importance of Tourism

A recent survey of Dungog Shire businesses has shown that there is widespread support for developing tourism, with 52% of local businesses supporting Local Government tourism initiatives and the improvement of cultural tourism resources in the Shire (Dungog Shire Council and Industry Services Group, 2001). There is a general feeling amongst the Council and the tourism business community, however, that local residents, and many of those businesses that benefit indirectly from tourism, do not see the relevance of tourism in their lives. This lack of understanding of the potential of tourism is a barrier to garnering Council financial support for tourism.

Strategies and Actions:

- The Shire should continue and extend its use of local media to raise awareness of the economic, social and cultural significance of tourism in the Shire by:
 - initiating newspaper articles that follow the 'tourist dollar' for a day/week around various businesses in the Shire;
 - publicising results of economic surveys that show the significance of tourism to the Shire's economy;
- A regular (weekly or monthly) column about aspects of tourism in the Shire could be published in the local newspaper.
- A competition for school children (both primary and secondary) could be established whereby the students demonstrate the importance of tourism to the Shire through art or written expression.
- Successful tourism business operators, including those who have recently joined the industry, could be encouraged to share their experiences at seminars, workshops, or through newspaper articles.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

This was not an issue that came up in the Visitor/Residence Survey. Even the issue of access to information which is often an area of concern was not raised. In addition, the Tourism Office was praised as offering a good service. For instance:

- *Tourist Information Centre is good, it is open on weekends – some in Queensland are not. (Respondent, Inside the Crazy Chairs Café)*

8.3 Strategic Opportunity: Community Cultural Life and Activities

Community life in the Shire, in all its diverse forms, such as sporting events, local market days, forms of creative and artistic expression, activities of schools, theatre groups, music groups, and events such as agricultural shows, all have the potential to appeal to visitors and residents alike. Cultural tourism acknowledges and celebrates this 'vernacular culture' and recognises the value of these community resources in a productive manner.

Strategies and Actions:

- Encourage the development and promotion of local cultural activity for the enjoyment of both visitors and locals. Embrace producers of local and everyday cultural activities within the broad ambit of cultural tourism by encouraging them to join the Barrington Tops Tourism Association/Hunter Highlands Tourism Association as associate members.
- Expand the use of private gardens in the Shire as cultural tourism resources by encouraging homeowners to consider opening their gardens to visitors at regular times. Target Garden Clubs, Probus Clubs and other associations and social clubs in Newcastle, Maitland and Sydney. Develop a 'Country Garden Lovers' tourism product that incorporates accommodation, meals, and visits to a variety of gardens within the Shire.
- Promote sports facilities and local/regional sports events to visitors, and improve and maintain local parks, Dungog Swimming Pool, golf course and tennis courts.
- Place a greater emphasis on the marketing and promotion of local events such as agricultural shows, market days, amateur theatre productions, and other such activities as part of the Shire's distinctive tourism product.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

The attractiveness of the locality and its way of life were repeatedly praised by visitors, as was the "friendliness" and "lifestyle" of the locals as the following illustrates:

- *People are friendly and helpful. (Respondent, Dungog)*
- *Local friendliness and relaxed quiet feeling. (Respondent, Gresford)*
- *Friendliness, close-knit community, homeliness. (Respondent, Tucker Park)*

"Meeting locals" was identified as an attraction for several respondents, with 1 respondent saying how much they "liked the community closeness" experienced at the rodeo (Respondent, Main Street, Dungog).

While the natural assets of the area are clearly popular and a major drawcard, a significant number of people talked also about the value of the local culture, such as the pleasure to be found in being in "country towns". Others noted the quality of local produce and the "true craftsmanship" of locally made pottery and other artefacts. It was noted repeatedly that people would like more opportunities to purchase such goods, for instance:

- *Paterson Market Day should be more often. (Respondent, Tucker Park)*
- *I would like to be able to buy local produce from street stalls. (Respondent, Picnic Tables, Tucker Park)*
- *More tourist sites needed, for example farming industries, dairy cattle. Local shops selling locally produced food product, for instance milk bar selling milkshakes from local milk. (Respondent, Children's Play Area Tucker Park)*
- *More horticultural endeavours to attract visitors to buy things – cheeses etc, handmade produce, open dairy. (Respondent, Grey Street Clarence Town)*

A considerable number of respondents suggested that the area needed more restaurants and coffee shops – including takeaway food outlets – which were open for longer hours.

8.4 Strategic Opportunity: An 'Inclusive' Tourism Brand for the Shire

Currently the Dungog Shire prefers to promote itself (although only in a limited way) as the 'Foothills of the Barrington Tops'. This is a brand that does not adequately include townships other than Dungog. The Visitor/Resident and Stakeholder surveys both uncovered strong feelings about the existing relationship between Dungog and other towns in the Shire. The perception was that there is currently too much focus on Dungog in tourism promotions and Council tourism services. This brand also does not take into account the rich rural dimension of the Shire as a tourist destination.

Strategies and Actions:

- Develop a brand for the Shire (following the award of brand development funding for 2002) that will be inclusive of all townships and that will incorporate the cultural as well as natural resources that contribute to the distinctive identity of the Shire.
- In the development of this brand, explore concepts such as 'Centre for Organic Produce', 'Hunter Arts and Crafts' and 'Other Side of the River' that widen the current focus on the Shire's attributes.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Not surprisingly, this was a subject not raised by respondents to the survey. It was instructive to note, however, that respondents generally had a very broad view of what they perceived as the local area. When asked to name places and events in the Dungog Shire, examples were drawn from across the Shire and not just in the immediate vicinity of the survey site. Significantly, out of over 560 responses to this question, only 2 people named places from outside the Shire, so indicating a good general knowledge of the area by visitors. However, 1 respondent did make the following pertinent comment that:

- *A theme is needed for the area to unite the numerous, small independent operators. (Respondent, Crazy Chairs Café)*

8.5 Strategic Opportunity: Signage

Signage throughout Dungog Shire is an issue that was highlighted in both the Visitor/Resident survey and the Stakeholder survey. Dungog Shire Council has previously explored this issue but was unable to deal with it adequately due to lack of funding. The lack of appropriate and attractive signage at key points around the Shire, especially at the entrance and exits to and from local townships, should be addressed as soon as possible. In 2001 the Shire initiated a signposting project for 19 locations within the Shire, and this foundational initiative needs to be reinforced and extended. Signage is a necessary part of the 'branding' of the Shire, and a mature signage system would incorporate both place-naming and interpretive signs.

Strategies and Actions:

- Develop a signage plan that incorporates both place naming and interpretive signs, based on an overall theme that reflects the rural quality of Dungog Shire.
- Involve local artists in the process of developing a signage system.
- Consider using the imagery that occurs on the 'Welcome to Dungog' sign at Lioness Park in some consistent way within the signage system.
- Ensure that key elements of the cultural landscape are identified and interpreted by creatively designed interpretive signs located along roads, at lookouts, and at rest stops throughout the Shire.
- Locate map signs at points within the Shire that enable visitors to situate themselves easily and to identify points of interest (in the same way that such signs are used to great effect in Hunter Valley Wine Country).
- Use appropriate signs to mark and interpret specific buildings and other sites of interest in the townships of Dungog, Gresford/East Gresford, Paterson, and Clarence Town.
- The arrival and departure points of every town and village should be well marked. Such markers play an important role in generating a sense of expectation and occasion.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Although people were generally happy with their experiences and with the Visitor Information Centre in Dungog, a considerable number of criticisms concerned the existing signage in the Shire, with suggestions that more are needed. The following comments are representative of the responses received:

- Need to signpost areas of interest. (Respondent, Grey Street Clarence Town)
- Need information boards in the parks and public areas. (Respondent, Clarence Town Caravan Park)
- I couldn't find Chichester Dam – lack of signage. (Respondent, Tucker Park)
- Better signposting of existing tourist attractions would attract passing traffic. (Respondent, picnic area, Tucker Park)
- Some maps and directories are unclear. (Respondent, Chichester Dam)

Explore funding opportunities – Grant Numbers 1 & 3 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices).

8.6 Strategic Opportunity: Diversifying Access to Information

One way of supporting the growth of existing and new local retail businesses (that will increase local amenity for residents and visitors) is to engage existing tourism businesses in providing 'point of booking' information about the local area. Dungog Shire businesses are well placed to do this because of the excellent existing use of web sites by accommodation providers.

Strategies and Actions:

- Provide information about the range of goods and services available within the Shire, such as closing times of local shops. Informing visitors that a supermarket is open 7 days per week in Dungog may encourage them to use self catering accommodation to meet their catering needs in Dungog rather than at their point of origin.
- Opening hours of coffee shops, craft centres, restaurants and take away businesses in each township could be similarly advertised.
- The existence of visitor-friendly video rental shops, newsagents etc could also be included.
- Prospective guests not using the web-based booking system could be sent this information (pre-packaged by the Visitor Information Centre) by mail with booking confirmation notices.
- Visitors to the Visitor Information Centre could be provided with a one-page flyer containing this information when making inquiries.
- The potential of the library as a source of local information should be properly exploited.
- Signs are an important source of information for visitors that require improvement.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Access to information – other than the need for better signage – did not emerge as a major issue for the survey respondents. One (1) respondent suggested that a tourist and historical directory and an information centre in Paterson were needed (Respondent, Cemetery, Tucker Park). Another person suggested that "information boards" were needed in "parks and public areas" (Respondent, Clarence Town Caravan Park).

8.7 Strategic Opportunity: Promote Dungog Shire as a Centre for Arts and Crafts

Dungog Shire already has a diverse local arts and crafts community whose energetic enthusiasm for developing and promoting the Shire has not yet been harnessed. Local artists were strongly represented at the Cultural Tourism workshop held in Dungog, and are clearly committed to contributing to cultural tourism development in the Shire and to making Dungog into a recognised Centre for Arts and Crafts.

Strategies and Actions:

- Dungog Shire Council should develop a closer relationship with the arts and crafts community with a view to drawing non-traditional activities into the 'tourism community'. There appears to be a strong desire among artists and artisans to work more closely and effectively with the Council. This may require an examination of the limitations of its current pay-for-service relationship with these and other non/*quasi*-commercial groups. The Visitor Information Centre could also operate as a place that showcases local cultural products, including local arts and crafts, and books written by local authors.
- Promote Dungog as an emerging Arts Centre by the conversion of vacant buildings into studio, workshop and exhibition spaces. Consideration should be given to the creation of an exhibition space such as a gallery (in addition to that associated with the Crazy Chairs Café), as it is important that both the production and distribution of the arts is supported.
- Existing art workshops that are currently run by some artists could be further developed and marketed.
- Explore the development of specialist artist/writer/musician short-stay packages by working with providers of accommodation, the Visitors Information Centre, Barrington Tops Tourism Association and Hunter Highlands Tourism.
- Develop an integrated Cultural Plan for Dungog Shire that articulates with its formal Cultural Tourism Strategy.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a permanent art gallery in Dungog.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

The potential of developing the local arts scene as an adjunct to existing tourism attractions was raised as an issue by a significant number of respondents. The following is a selection of comments/suggestions made:

- *Need art galleries selling local artists. (Respondent, Children's Play Area Tucker Park)*
- *More craft shops and art galleries would make Dungog a destination to come to. (Respondent Carriageway Resort, Clarence Town)*
- *Dungog needs special attention, like an Arts Festival, something big and unique to Dungog. This would draw more tourists from a wider area. (Respondent, Crazy Chairs Café)*
- *Possibly more antique shops and a bookshop. (Respondent, Visitors Information Centre)*
- *Encourage more arts and crafts similar to Morpeth – something to bring them to town. (Respondent, Chichester Dam)*
- *There should be more cafes, antique shops – more like Morpeth with galleries and craft shops that are open on weekends. (Respondent, Crazy Chairs Café)*

One respondent suggested that a 'craft centre' was needed:

- *Convert old buildings into a centre with coffee shops. Places where trades people can do their wares on the premises. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*

Not surprisingly, the focus of most of the comments was on Dungog, although some mention was made of other villages, including the need for craft shops and restaurants in Gresford.

Explore funding opportunities – Grant Numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 17, 27, 29, 32 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

8.8 Strategic Opportunity: Architectural Heritage as a Cultural Tourism Resource

Dungog Shire has a wealth of historic architecture represented in both private homes and public buildings. Terms such as “old”, “historic”, “heritage” and “quaint” readily came to mind when visitors and residents were asked to give their impressions of the Shire. A number of suggestions can be made for further capitalising on this important quality.

Strategies and Actions:

- Encourage heritage homeowners around the Shire to open their homes (and gardens) to visitors on key dates – a good low season strategy that could have widespread appeal. A Heritage Home Trail could be devised and advertised to special interest groups in Sydney and Newcastle.
- Develop an interpretation strategy that creatively interprets heritage buildings using a variety of interpretive methods such as signs, self-guided brochures, and guided walking tours of townships.
- Investigate opportunities for the production of a range of high quality souvenirs based on these buildings.
- Convert vacant heritage buildings (or those currently used for other purposes) on Dowling Street into arts and craft studios for local and visiting artists, writers and others (see also 8.7 above). The provision of such spaces, perhaps at subsidised rents, would attract artists to the area, and at the same time create spaces attractive to visitors. These buildings could also have exhibition spaces where local trades, arts and crafts would be showcased.
- Develop a programme of regular heritage walking tours of the various townships within the Shire, as well as self-guided walking tours for each township considered to warrant them.
- Investigate heritage based retail and leisure opportunities

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

A reasonably large number of people suggested that the townships of the area were a considerable attraction.

- *The insides of the heritage buildings need some restoring work. A bit of doing. Overall, looked a bit drab. (Respondent, Crazy Chairs Café)*
- *The townscape is particularly interesting. (Respondent, Visitor Information Centre)*

- *The streets [of Dungog] are full of character. (Respondent, Beattie Hotel)*
- *Dungog townships has interesting architecture, is a bit alternative – an arty community. (Respondent, children’s play area Tucker Park)*

Quite a few respondents identified heritage architecture and local streetscapes as some of their favourite places in the Shire; for instance:

- *Old architecture, wandering about, looking at the streetscape. (Respondent, Crazy Chairs Café)*

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Numbers 9, 11,17, 23, 27 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

8.9 Strategic Opportunity: The Water Pipeline

The pipeline connecting Chichester Dam to Newcastle is a significant and noticeable feature of the rural landscape in the Shire. It presents a number of opportunities to be interpreted and also to be used as a 'community canvas'.

Strategies and Actions:

- Initiate discussions with Hunter Water to establish the feasibility of using the pipeline in ways that encourage closer access and use, including the provision of roadside access and adopting sections of the pipeline as a 'community canvas'. This idea would involve using sections of the pipe as a surface upon which various groups could paint designs and other expressions of life in the Shire. The pipeline could then become a cultural tourism resource.
- The collection, treatment and distribution of water could be interpreted by means of brochures and signs situated at Chichester Dam, the Dungog Water Treatment Plant, and at points along the pipeline.
- Theme accessible sections of the pipeline as works of art documenting local history. For example:
 - sections running adjacent to the Dungog Cemetery could document the lives of selected people buried there;
 - sections running parallel to the rivers could provide interpretation of those rivers;
 - some sections could document and record aspects of local Aboriginal history and cultural life;
 - theme sections near Dungog with pictorial and textual representations of the town and its community – nature, community, sporting and architectural heritage, etc;
 - theme sections near Chichester Dam with stories of community and experiences of individuals who worked on the building of the Dam.
 - theme sections with stories of famous local sons and daughters such as Australian cricketer 'character' Doug Walters.
 - surviving sections of the original timber pipeline are of significant historical interest. Their locations should be documented and they should be interpreted for visitors either on site or in the Dungog Shire museum.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

None of the respondents mentioned the pipeline as a distinctive feature of the Shire, and no questions were asked about its potential as an attraction. This is not surprising given that it is a utilitarian object. Its potential use as 'community canvas' is an example of the imagination and invention that cultural tourism might release when installed as a guiding force in regional communities.

8.10 Strategic Opportunity: Amenity Improvement of Parks, Reserves and Picnic Areas in the Shire

Parks and reserves in the Dungog Shire were frequently mentioned – and criticised - in responses to the visitor and resident survey. Parks in the Shire should focus on the rivers and have good river access. They are also important sites for the location of signs giving information about the locality (including cultural activities), as well as having the potential for displays of public art in these sites.

Strategies and Actions:

- Establish and maintain an up-to-date database that organises information about each of the parks in the Shire, and which can be made available to visitors.
- Improve access to rivers in those parks that have river frontages.
- Improve the amenity of the parks and reserves. Aspects that were mentioned in visitor surveys were: poor condition of toilet facilities; poor condition of BBQs and picnic tables and seating; need to replace existing BBQs with gas or electric BBQs to overcome the problem of inadequate firewood provision; need to improve rubbish collection; need to improve children's playgrounds and equipment, and shade over children's playgrounds.
- Several inadequacies were identified at Chichester Dam Picnic Area, including overcrowding at riverside facilities; a need to improve and extend the existing BBQ and toilet facilities; and to replace BBQs with gas or electric facilities to overcome inadequate provision of firewood. The reinstatement of a kiosk was also favoured. Discussions with Hunter Water about possibilities for improving the amenities at this site should be initiated.
- Consider the incorporation of public art into some of the parks and reserves in the Shire. These could be commissioned pieces funded through sponsorship arrangements with relevant corporate citizens such as Hunter Water and Telstra.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

As detailed, above, heavy criticism of the state of facilities in parks was recorded in the surveys. This is an issue that clearly needs to be addressed.

The river was raised by a number of respondents as an under-utilised resource, and 2 people identified it as one of the "best" places in the Shire. Suggestions included fixing boat ramps and putting in jetties, as well as calls to "utilise the waterways" more, such as the following:

- *The river at Paterson could be made more of a feature with better access, parkland closer to the river. Use the river scenery more – plant natives by the river. (Respondent, Children's Play Area Tucker Park)*
- *Remove the Seaham Weir – it is an ecological disaster ... changed the tidal estuarine stream to a stagnant body of water. Boats cannot get to Clarence Town anymore. (Respondent, Grey Street Clarence Town)*
- *More focus on the river is needed. (Respondent, Picnic Area, Tucker Park)*
- *Canoe and rowing boat facilities needed. (Respondent, Picnic Area, Tucker Park)*

Similarly, a number of respondents said that they would like more tourist walks, designated cycle ways and cycling tours.

8.11 Strategic Opportunity: Tocal Homestead Complex

Tocal House, Farmstead and Visitor Centre have the potential to become a unique, high- quality tourist experience with international tourism potential. Still requiring some development, the concept is to create an open-air museum in the European tradition. The variety of attractions at Tocal Homestead gives it wide appeal. The Visitor Centre, which aims to open to the public in 2002, will provide: a theatre aimed at workshops, mini conferences and school groups; display areas; wedding and other function space; a regional genealogical library; coffee and craft shop; farm produce retail outlet, and tourist information service for the region as a whole. In addition to the wholly intact timber barns, bullpens and slaughterhouse in original 1840's condition, the site boasts convict barracks, a working blacksmith's shop, underground silo, and an array of historic farm equipment. The site also has several Aboriginal groove sites (where axes and tools were sharpened and food ground), a rainforest walk, extensive wetlands, animal husbandry and opportunities to view kangaroos and other wildlife.

Strategic Opportunities and Actions:

- The Tocal Homestead Complex has the potential to become an anchor attraction for the Dungog Shire that could be used to help brand the Shire as an important rural tourism destination.
- Educate the tourism providers in Maitland and Dungog about the developments at Tocal by inviting them to an inspection of the site.
- Explore potential for the Visitor Centre at Tocal College to act as a bridge between Maitland and Dungog districts by:
 - providing information about tourism opportunities in the Maitland and Dungog districts;
 - acting as a focal point for the coordination of a farm-door produce trail;
 - acting as an attraction that will link tourists based in Maitland to Dungog Shire (with a corresponding 'flow' of information and tourists from Dungog Information Centre to Tocal Homestead Complex)

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

It was perhaps surprising that Tocal did not feature prominently in survey responses. In fact, of the over 560 responses to questioning about respondents' favourite places in the Shire, only 5 named Tocal House or the Tocal Field Day. Of the respondents who did name Tocal as one of the places they most enjoyed in the Shire, the following comments are typical:

- *There are fun and interesting things to see at Field Days. (Respondent, Dungog)*
- *Lovely old house, Moreton Bay fig trees and old buildings. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*

One (1) of the respondents specifically named the Tocal Antiques Jewellery Day as her favourite event:

- *Went for a look, had a great day and learnt something. (Respondent, picnic area Tucker Park)*

Significantly, only 1 respondent identified Tocal as the place they least enjoyed visiting. They had found the Field Day:

- *Expensive, same old thing, nothing new. Full of Sydney yuppies. (Respondent, picnic area, Tucker Park)*

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Numbers 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 42 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

8.12 Strategic Opportunity: Dungog Railway Station

Dungog Railway Station is a community resource that has come under threat on several occasions over the last few years. It has distinctive art deco architecture, although it requires considerable work to improve its appearance. Developing the cultural tourism potential of the railway may be a way of permanently securing this service for the local community. It is important not to underestimate the potential of developing rail-based tourism links between Dungog Shire and other centres such as Maitland and Newcastle. Currently, trains from Maitland rarely stop at the station, but instead a rail coach service operates that disrupts the journey. Given the appeal of rail to many tourists, and the possibilities of incorporating rail-based tourism into the Shire, this is an unfortunate situation that it is necessary to overcome.

Strategies and Actions:

- Develop visitor products that link rail travel with accommodation, meals at local restaurants and cafes, film showings at the Dungog Cinema (see 8.14), and walking tours.
- Coordinate the opening of the museum and proposed art gallery, Dungog walking tours, garden tours etc, with train arrival times.
- Identify sources of funding to improve the visual appeal of Dungog Railway Station.
- Explore potential for regular steam train trips from Maitland to Dungog, and build on existing links with groups such as the Paterson Rail Society in the staging of the Dungog Shire Autumn Festival.
- Make strong recommendations to CityRail to cease breaking the rail journey to and from Dungog and Maitland by a coach service as soon as possible.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

No respondents raised the railway station as an issue, but some did raise rail access as an area that needs to be improved, with several acknowledging the importance of rail to the area. One (1) respondent suggested that more could be made of the rail line in Paterson to link with the historic train shelter in Tucker Park (Respondent, Children's Play Area, Tucker Park). Another (also in Tucker Park) made the following comment:

- *Enjoyed looking at trains at the station and the Paterson Rail Motor Museum. (Respondent, Children's Play Area, Tucker Park)*

One (1) respondent called for "more Newcastle-Dungog train services" (Respondent, Chichester Dam). Another suggested that a "good rail link" was needed with "3 trips per day to Sydney" (Respondent, Crazy Chairs Café).

8.13 Strategic Opportunity: Dungog Main Retail Centre (Dowling Street)

A major area of concern emerging from the research was the desire of residents, business operators, and visitors to maintain Dungog township as a living centre. There was concern that tourism development could result in the slow replacement of vital local services and retail outlets with craft shops and galleries in the style of Morpeth. A number of strategies emerged relating to the future development of Dungog retail centre.

Strategies and Actions:

- Signify the importance of retaining the local retail functions of Dowling Street in appropriate planning frameworks (such as Local Environmental Plans) in order to prevent the street from orienting itself too much towards the needs of tourists rather than to locals.
- Explore opportunities for improving the amenity of Dowling Street using appropriate landscaping and the work of local creative artists, keeping in mind the need to refrain from imposing an artificial and inappropriate streetscape. Any refurbishment of the street should consolidate its identity as an important rural service centre, rather than reflect the creation of a touristic streetscape. Improving street lighting at night was an issue that was raised by some respondents to the survey concerned with personal security.
- Devise creative ways of restoring and using some of the vacant buildings on Dowling Street, for use as 'shop-fronts' for artists' work, temporary exhibitions, displays and studio space (see 8.7 and 8.8 above).
- Encourage hoteliers to address tourists' needs. This may involve the improvement of the overall level of customer service and catering, and responding more to the expectations of urban visitors. A greater sense of contemporary identity could be achieved through the use of local artists' work in hotels. In this way, a good balance could be struck between the 'quaint' and the 'modern'.
- Encourage local retailers to stock and advertise local produce. The importance of local fresh produce to tourists could be conveyed through a seminar held within the Shire for retailers and farmers. Such produce should be clearly labelled as being local as, increasingly, tourists seek to buy produce that has been locally grown.
- Explore the opportunities for extending the trading hours of retail and food outlets on Sundays and after 8pm on other days, especially on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Consider incorporating the unique lead light glass used in many of the shop fronts into marketing campaigns for the district. The lead light

features are a distinctive element of the streetscape of Darling Street, and lend themselves to creative use in marketing and advertising campaigns.

- Incorporate Dowling Street into an overall directional and interpretive signage programme for the entire Shire that is underpinned by a consistent style and appearance. Dowling Street (including but not only its Dungog Visitor Centre) can also be a useful 'shopfront' for many activities and facilities throughout the Shire. Shop window posters, counter leaflets etc. can be used effectively to publicise the cultural tourism attributes of places beyond the Main Street.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Dungog township and main street were prominent places people liked to visit. Both were praised for their "architecture", "peacefulness" and "country feel" in particular.

- *Dungog is very attractive. (Respondent, Gumnut Glen Cottages, Clarence Town Road, Brookfield)*

Positive mention was made of specific venues, such as the Crazy Chairs Café, and local shops. One (1) respondent made the following comment about the entry to Dungog:

- *I enjoyed the scenery on the way into town, the rolling hills, trees. The townscape is particularly interesting. (Respondent, Visitors Centre)*

It was clear that many people enjoyed being in Dowling Street, Dungog and many had suggestions for how this local amenity could be improved. These suggestions mostly related to an increased number of cafes and restaurants, and longer opening hours. At least 1 respondent felt there could be "more trees in Dungog" (Respondent, Children's play Area, Tucker Park).

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Numbers 12, 13, 23 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

8.14 Strategic Opportunity: Dungog Picture Theatre and Community Centre

Operating since 1914, the Dungog Shire Picture Theatre is one of the oldest and longest running picture theatres in New South Wales. It is a rare example of an intact early picture theatre in the Spanish mission style, and is one of only four of this type remaining in the State. In addition, the theatre is one of only ten operating in the State that has a Category 1 heritage listing, the highest level of heritage assessment possible (Thorne, 1996). It has played a central role in Dungog social life since 1914, providing films, dances and balls and, more recently, acting as a community centre. The Picture Theatre was purchased by Dungog Shire Council in 1979. It is an important focus of community life in the Shire but has yet to meet its full potential as a unique and significant tourist attraction, ideally placed between the Railway Station and the Main Street.

Strategies and Actions:

- Explore ways of promoting/utilising the Dungog Picture Theatre:
 - highlight the activities of the Film Society and the architectural significance of the building in tourist promotions and information;
 - provide screenings of special interest films, such as classic films, or a specialist film festival;
 - develop current cooperative arrangements between the Motion Picture Distributors Association of Australia and independent regional cinemas to exhibit selected new release films at the same time as major cinema complexes in large towns and cities. Showing these current films will make the Picture Theatre a more attractive venue both to local residents and tourists.
 - package special screenings with rail trips and/or accommodation;
 - target this information to Film Societies in Sydney, Maitland and Newcastle, and to local accommodation providers;
 - recognise community/Council support for the Cinema before screenings for the benefit of visitors;
 - use the cinema screen to advertise local tourism attractions and events both to visitors and to the local community.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

The Picture Theatre was seen by a number of people as an asset to the Dungog area. The following comments were made by people concerned that it may have to close:

- *Maintain the picture theatre. (Respondent, Chichester Dam)*
- *Maintain the cinema for future generations. (Respondent, Chichester Dam)*
- *Improvement to the picture theatre needed. (Respondent, Crazy Chairs Café)*
- *They are trying to keep the Dungog Picture Theatre but not getting enough people – it is expensive to run. (Respondent, Picnic Tables, Tucker Park)*

When asked to name places or events in the Shire that they enjoyed, a number of respondents identified the Dungog Picture Theatre. The following comments are worth recording:

- *Its historic, not crowded, has atmosphere and great choc tops. (Respondent, Picnic Area, Tucker Park)*
- *Dungog cinema is intimate and friendly. I went to see 'Gone with the Wind' on the big screen. (Respondent, Dungog)*

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Numbers 11, 23 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

8.15 Strategic Opportunity: Events

Dungog Shire runs an extensive event calendar that helps to reinforce its identity as a vibrant rural community. Whilst many of these events admittedly have local and hence limited appeal, several, such as Tocal Small Farm Field Days, Dungog Rodeo and Pedalfest, have considerable potential as tourism attractions in their own right. The smaller localised events may not necessarily attract tourists or other visitors to the Shire but would certainly add to the 'smorgasbord' of offerings to be experienced once the visitor has arrived.

Strategies and Actions:

- Identify those events that have the capacity to develop further and that might be able to act as hallmark events for the Shire. Events such as Pedalfest that promote sustainable energy, healthiness and family activity would have considerable and broad tourism appeal.
- Explore the possibility of 'piggy-backing' some smaller complementary events on larger events so that the tourism potential can be expanded and consolidated.
- Ensure that the events calendar currently produced is up-to-date, on the Shire's website, and available throughout the Shire for visitors. The events calendar is a significant marketing tool that encourages visitors to return when other events are scheduled.
- Explore the possibility of applying for funding to help develop the hallmark events identified as having considerable tourism potential for the Shire.
- The tourist/visitor appeal of local events such as market days, local agricultural shows and theatrical productions should not be underestimated, and assistance should be given to encourage these events to promote themselves to a broader market.
- Extend the Event Club initiative to promote and coordinate the widest possible range of events within the Shire.

Some Relevant Data from Visitor/Resident Survey

Events did not feature prominently in the survey. Three (3) respondents praised local rodeos, while several mentioned that local markets could be better promoted and held more regularly. Other events mentioned favourably by a small number of respondents were the Tocal Field Day (2), Gresford Show (1), go-cart racing at Gresford (1), and the Vacy picnic races (1). One (1) respondent felt Dungog needed an annual Arts Festival.

Explore funding opportunities - Grant Numbers 10, 14, 31 (As per Table 1 in the Appendices)

9 DEVELOPING POTENTIAL CULTURAL TOURISM CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DUNGOG SHIRE AND MAITLAND

It makes great sense for adjacent administrative areas like Dungog and Maitland to cooperate in tourism development, especially given the strong historical and contemporary cultural links between them. This section explores some of the possibilities for working together in a more cooperative way and it identifies a range of synergies within the ambit of cultural tourism.

9.1 Stakeholder views on the possibilities for greater cooperation

Several questions in the survey sent to stakeholders related to this issue. Of 57 respondents, 49 were in favour of greater cooperation. The eight that weren't supportive listed reasons such as "the areas would lose their individuality", "the areas are too far apart", "they have different heritages – Dungog open spaces, Maitland more building heritage. Two different types of tourism", and "They are separate areas". The Project Team would argue in response that, in fact, the two local government areas (LGAs) share commonalities to the extent that there is a seamless link between the two areas that encourages the movement of tourists between them. They are complementary in terms of their tourist resources and so should stand to gain if they seek to coordinate and cooperate to create some innovative cultural tourism products and experiences.

The majority of respondents in favour of closer cooperation identified reasons such as "better to cooperate than be in competition with each other", "we would be able to keep tourists in the area longer", "both areas have many scenic and countryside attractions – bringing visitors to one area will invariably result in some of these people travelling to the other area", "many products in the two council areas have strong similarities, eg river towns, heritage buildings and homes in townships, outer rural/farming areas outside of townships, a sense of community, relaxed lifestyle, clean and green areas", and "it makes a lot of sense in terms of saving costs on promotion and marketing activities".

Thus, there was considerable willingness to consider the possibilities of greater synergies and cooperation between the two areas by the majority of stakeholders surveyed, provided that there were recognisable benefits for both areas. The areas were seen to complement each other, and working more cooperatively was considered to be a way of strengthening the tourist appeal for both areas.

In terms of the mechanisms that would allow for a greater level of cooperation, a number of respondents felt that both Councils needed to be supportive of not just the idea of greater cooperation, but of the importance of tourism as an economic activity worthy of support. Several respondents felt that without the strong support of both Councils it would be difficult to achieve any effective partnership arrangements. The issue of membership of the tourism associations was raised by a number of stakeholders, who felt that some arrangement should be made so that members of one association could join the other at a reduced rate, perhaps as an associate member. They believed that membership of both associations would facilitate information exchange, increase awareness of the tourism

products in both areas, and assist in joint marketing campaigns. This was a particular issue for respondents with businesses in the Paterson area who felt that it was especially important given their location between both Maitland and Dungog.

The most commonly suggested mechanism for achieving greater cooperation and the benefits deriving from it was related to joint marketing. Suggestions here included a combined website, or at the very least linking the Maitland website with that of Dungog, so producing a tourist guide that combined the two areas; joint advertising campaigns; improving the knowledge about each area's tourism products by running site inspections; linking events, and producing a calendar of events for the areas combined. Linking events and advertising them on a single calendar of events does not mean that their local identity need be compromised. Finally, several respondents saw the potential better to link the two areas through the creation and promotion of a number of 'tourist trails' that encouraged movement of tourists across and between the two areas. Before making recommendations in relation to the suggestions outlined above, we explore the concept of 'tourist trail' linkages between the two areas in some detail.

9.2 Linking Maitland and Dungog using the tourist trail concept

The Maitland and Dungog LGAs are linked by three tourist pathways. The:

- road system;
- river system; and
- the railway.

These pathways provide an excellent opportunity to link the two LGAs by the creation of a number of tourist trails, based on particular themes, and provide opportunities for visitors and residents alike to make full use of the range of transport corridors that connect and mark out the Maitland-Dungog cultural landscape.

9.2.1 Road

The following are ideas for trails constructed around the use of the road system in the region:

- *Antiques Trail* - would focus on the antiques and *bric a brac* shops that are located in Maitland, East Maitland, Morpeth, Paterson and Dungog. Co-operative marketing strategies could be adopted so that tourists are encouraged to visit a broad range of such shops. An antiques 'passport' could be developed whereby a visitor receives a stamp for each shop visited and could go into a draw for a prize, or receive a discount for a purchase at one of the shops.
- *Historic Homes and Gardens Trail* - would focus on historic homes and gardens located on a circuit beginning and ending in Maitland and incorporating Morpeth, Lorn, Bolwarra, Paterson, Dungog, Clarence Town, Gresford/East Gresford, and Vacy. A brochure could be developed incorporating all the cooperating homes and their location, and a system could be developed using an easily recognisable symbol that could be placed at the front of the house to let visitors know whether the home is open for visitation. Some homes might like to offer Devonshire teas and other refreshments.
- *Rural Architecture Trail* - would focus on elements of the rural landscape such as interesting sheds, bridges, and dairies. These elements of the rural landscape are frequently overlooked but contribute much to the charm of the area. Many of these structures have absorbing stories attached to them that could be made available to tourists through interpretive signs and brochures. A photographic exhibition or, indeed, competition, could be staged that focuses on sheds, so building interest and support for the value of sheds, bridges etc. It might be possible in some circumstances to provide access to sheds and dairies on private property to allow visitors a closer opportunity to inspect them.

- *Country Pubs Trail* - many of the hotels in the region have local or national heritage value and so could be incorporated into a trail. This trail could have particular appeal to organised groups who could visit the region in a coach, incorporating visits to several historic hotels in places like Paterson, Largs, and Dungog, perhaps even staying overnight at one of them. The trail need not become a conventional 'pub crawl', but rather visitors could be encouraged to drink sensibly, eat lunch/dinner, avail themselves of entertainment such as music, and hear stories about each of the hotels.

The region should encourage safe and pleasant motoring throughout its area through the provision of lookouts and rest stops at a variety of scenic locations, offering:

- creatively designed interpretive signage that helps visitors to make sense of the region and its rural culture;
- local fresh produce for sale at farm and household gates along roadways;
- upgraded directional signage throughout;
- display maps of the region at specific gateways, such as at the Maitland Visitor Information Centre, Bolwarra Lookout, Dungog Visitor Information Centre, and near Vacy. These facilities could also carry a number of attractive and informative self-drive brochures.

9.2.2 River

The Williams, Paterson and Hunter river system is integral to the history and life of both areas. The river system sustains the agricultural activities of both areas, it has played an important role in the transportation of goods and people, and as such has helped shape the cultural as well as physical landscapes of the areas.

We identify two important tourism uses that could be made of the river system. The first relates to using the river system as a tourist trail in its own right, and encouraging operators to establish boat trips from either Newcastle or Morpeth to Paterson. We acknowledge that what would be required initially is a feasibility study in order to determine the viability of such an operation, especially in light of the fact that boat trips did take place in the early-to-mid 1990s but have now ceased. However, at a conceptual level, such a boat trip would assist in linking the Maitland and Dungog areas, broaden the tourism product available, and create a high quality experience for visitors that would showcase both the natural environment and the cultural and social history of the areas.

The second main use to which the river system could be put involves the creation of an appropriate festival celebrating the historical and ongoing significance of the river and of water. This joint 'River Festival' could celebrate the precious resource that sustains Maitland and Dungog districts while shaping the everyday

lives of residents and the experiences of visitors. Rather than centring the festival on one location, the festival could take place over an entire weekend and involve all the townships that are situated close to the rivers that make up the river system - that is, Morpeth, Maitland, Paterson, Clarence Town, and Dungog. Each township could contribute something to the festival and participants would be encouraged to move from township to township over the course of the weekend, in a similar way, but on a larger scale, to the Lovedale Long Lunch held in the vineyards. The festival would be an excellent way of strengthening the relationships between the Maitland and Dungog areas.

9.2.3 Rail

A renewed focus on the link between Dungog and Maitland by train is crucial to the long-term health of tourism in those districts. Steam trains can play a role in this regard, but the restoration and maintenance of a continuing, daily, working rail link is a key priority. Trains are a very popular form of travel for tourists who are wanting to enjoy the journey to a destination as much as the destination itself. The rail line between Maitland and Dungog provides opportunities for the establishment of short rail-based holidays, whereby the rail journey is an integral part of the experience. Accommodation operators in Maitland, Paterson and Dungog could meet trains and transport tourists to their accommodation properties. These holidays could be particularly popular with older tourists from Newcastle, the Central Coast and Sydney. An integrated package of visits to local attractions, novel experiences such as attending the cinema in Dungog and visits to historic homes and gardens, could be easily created and marketed. However, such an experience requires that passenger trains continue to stop at Dungog Station and that coaches are not routinely used on the line to and from Maitland.

9.3 Creating a coherent destination for tourists

There would be advantages if tourists had a sense of being in a distinctive region when they visited the Maitland – Dungog areas, although the adoption of another name for the districts might simply confuse them. However, consideration could be given to enhancing the similarities that exist between the Maitland and Dungog areas and the elements of landscape and culture that link them. These elements would include the dairy and beef industries, and other agricultural activity, the history of agricultural settlement, Aboriginal cultures and their occupation of the areas, and the other social and economic linkages that could be recognised. Many of the agricultural activities can be further strengthened by their relationship with food and dining in the areas.

The food of the region could be capitalised upon much more creatively and inclusively than it is at present, and considerable potential exists to use local produce as an important plank in the cultural tourism programme. Given the increasing interest from consumers in organic, fresh produce and, in the case of meat, in meat that has been obtained from animals that have been farmed in a humane way, emphasis should be placed on first sourcing a wide variety of locally grown and/or prepared food, and then marketing it to visitors. Local cafes and restaurants should be encouraged, wherever possible, to feature local produce that is clearly identified as such to diners. Perhaps the two areas could develop an identifiable labelling system for produce that was produced locally. Unusual foods produced in the region – like olives and chillies, or game such as pheasants or ostrich - could be made more available to consumers. In the wake of the deregulation of the dairying industry, opportunities might exist for some farmers to move into less traditional forms of agriculture, value-add to their produce in some way, and sell it both at retail outlets but from the farm-gate. The recent Commonwealth Government grant awarded to Tocal Agricultural College to develop and promote a farm-gate produce tour is an excellent step in this direction.

The tourism developments and proposals at Tocal Homestead that were outlined in Strategy 8.11 offer an exciting possibilities in devising a cultural tourism plan for the Maitland and Dungog areas. Given its location almost on the boundary of the two local government areas, Tocal Homestead has the potential to occupy a highly significant position in helping to facilitate a shared sense of identity between Maitland and Dungog. The Visitor Information Centre that is planned will be a crucial cog in the creation and marketing of a variety of cultural tourism products that could be created out of a more cooperative approach to tourism. It is highly likely that, following the developments at Tocal, investment in a variety of forms of tourist accommodation could be encouraged in the area between Tocal and Paterson, which would in turn encourage further growth in tourist visitation to the Maitland-Dungog area.

9.4 Recommendations

- A joint working party is established comprising representatives from Maitland City Council and Dungog Shire Council to investigate possibilities for cooperative initiatives in relation to cultural tourism.
- In particular, funding opportunities to assist in the development and marketing of tourism available through Tourism NSW and the Hunter Regional Tourism Association should be fully exploited. For example, the Regional Tourism Action Plan 2000-2 (RTAP), which is partially in place in the Hunter, and will focus on the Region in 2002, is an excellent opportunity to advance the recommendations in this Regional Cultural Tourism Plan.
- Opportunities for common membership of the tourism association of each area are explored with the intention of enabling crossover membership.
- The 'tourist trails' that might link Maitland and Dungog be further developed to the concept stage and possible sources of funding be identified. Funding could be used to develop and trial one or more of the trails suggested in this Plan.
- Ideas relating to joint marketing campaigns are examined with the intention of developing and trialing such a campaign, the relative success of which would need to be evaluated. Examples of joint initiatives here could include a tour brochure for the Maitland-Dungog area; the development of a shared website; and the target marketing of specific tourism products making use of both Maitland and Dungog.
- A shared festival based on the riverine system linking Maitland with Dungog Shire is investigated in terms of its viability and feasibility.

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11 Appendices

11.1 Table 1. Cultural and Tourism Sources of Funding (information correct as of December 2001)

Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.1 Australia Council	Community, Environment, Art and Design for Community Cultural Development	Supports one-off Projects that involve artists and designers in planning and design of public environments. Fund aims to encourage greater recognition and appreciation of the link between the cultural life of communities and the quality of their physical environment.	Maximum \$2500	Grant not available for construction, fabrication, site preparation or installation of works of art.	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000
No.2 Australia Council	Development Grants for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts	Assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts organisations to develop ideas and skills. Eg. Mentorships which share artistic and cultural skills and knowledge, support for arts workshops, conferences or seminars.	Amount not specified	Target Group: Aboriginal Artists and Arts Organisations. Basic training will not be considered. Board encourages proposals which assist the recovery and restoration of disrupted stolen or repressed cultural practices.	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000
No.3 Australia Council	New Work for Community Cultural Development	Supports one-off Projects which create new artistic work through community- based arts and cultural activity.	Amount not specified	Target Group: Artists and Organisations. Projects are expected to have a public outcome. Projects may span more than 12 months.	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000

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Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.4 Australia Council	Development for Community Cultural Development	Supports development opportunities for communities and arts workers.	Amount not specified	Target Group : Artists and Organisations. Projects which develop ideas, skills and contacts may be submitted to this category.	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000
No.5 Australia Council	Fellowships for Community Cultural Development	Provides financial support for two years to community cultural development artists and arts workers with a solid record of achievement to enable them to create new work.	\$40,000 per annum for 2 years	Target Group: Individual Artists.	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000
No.6 Australia Council	Fellowships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts	Provides financial support for two years to artists to enable them to undertake a major creative Project or program in any art form.	\$40,000 per annum for 2 years	Target Group: Individual Aboriginal Artists.	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000

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Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.7 Australia Council	Partnerships for Community Cultural Development	Supports the development of new and strategic partnerships which assist community cultural development organisations and artists to access new resources and opportunities.	Amount not specified	Target Group: Organisations. Projects are expected to produce long term benefits for the community. Partnerships may be between a number of organisations or between organisations and individuals	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000
No.8 Australia Council	New Work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts	Supports artists, arts organisations or community organisations to create new work with an eventual public outcome.	Amount not specified	Target Group: Artists and Organisations. Examples are: theatre productions, writing for publication, song writing, new art works for exhibition etc.	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000
No.9 Australia Council	Triennial Grants for Community Cultural Development	Supports innovation in and further understanding of community cultural development practice by funding outstanding organisations. Aims to increase opportunities for communities to control and participate in their own cultural development.	Amount not specified	Target Group: Organisations. Applicants must demonstrate a substantial record of achievement in community cultural development.	Australia Council PO Box 788 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 http://www.ozco.gov.au Ph: 02 9215 9000
No.10 Commonwealth Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts	Festivals Australia	Provides funding to regional and community festivals for the presentation of cultural activity.	Amount not specified	Target Group: Rural and remote areas. Only Festival organisers are eligible to apply.	Project Officer, Festivals Australia GPO Box 2154 CANBERRA ACT2601 http://www.dcita.gov.au/festival.html Ph: 02 6271 1661

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Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.11 Commonwealth Department of Industry Science and Resources: Sport and Tourism Division	Regional Tourism Program 2001-2002	Funding for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> further development of existing regional tourism businesses development of tourism niche markets (eg. wine, sport, eco tourism) development of tourism attractions and facilities which build on an compliment existing industries (eg. agriculture, sport, mining, forestry) development of regionally significant cultural heritage tourist attractions (including indigenous and historical attractions) Regional Tourism industry enhancement including initiatives to promote best practice On-line Projects that develop regional tourism 	Grants of \$30,000 - \$100,000	Eligible organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Sector Businesses Indigenous Tourism Businesses Peak/national tourism industry associations Regional Tourism or development associations Non profit organisations Educational or research institutions State/Territory or local government agencies joint initiatives from a combination of the above groups 	Regional Tourism Program Department of Industry Science and Resources GPOI Box 9839 CANBERRA ACT 2601 www.tourism.gov.au Ph: 02 6213 7999 Extensive support information and lists of previously successful Projects are available on-line.
No.12 Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services	Regional Solutions Programme	Funding to help regional and rural communities find local solutions to local challenges. Projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing community plans developing community infrastructure resourcing skilled people 	Grants of \$1000-\$500,000	Target Group: Non-profit groups with strong community or regional support, able to contribute either in-kind or financially and seek support from other sources eg. state, local government/ private sector. No closing date.	Find out more about the Regional Solutions Programme by phoning the Commonwealth Government Information Service on 1800 026 222 http://www.regionalsolutions.gov.au

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Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.13 Enterprise Development Institute of Australia	NSW Enterprise Workshop	Funds to develop finance and enterprise skills (negotiation, presentation and team dynamics) are learned at the workshops.	Amount not specified	Target Group: Artists & Organisations. 2 rounds per year.	Allison Thomas http://www.en.com.au/nswewnsw@edia.org Ph. 02 9927 7436
No.14 Ethnic Affairs Commission	Carnivale Festival	Funds available to participate in the annual Carnivale Festival. Covers cross/cultural arts organisations, professional and amateur artists.	Various - \$100,000 total funds to be allocated.	Target Group: Artists & Organisations. Special Target Group: Non-English Speaking background Applications close February.	Project Officer, Carnivale http://www.carnivale.com.au Carnivale@carnivale.com.au Ph. 02 9251 7974 Fax. 02 9251 7973
No.15 Maitland City Council	Community Grants	Grants to individuals and incorporated local community groups for assistance towards the cost of new initiatives or Projects.	Maximum \$10,000	Target Group; Artists and Organisations Closing Date 30 April	Janice Bevan, Manager Cultural Services Maitland City Council 480 High Street MAITLAND NSW 2320 Ph: 02 49336967
No.16 National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)	The Marketing Grant Scheme for NSW Artists	Provides funds for NSW visual artists to market or promote their work. May include costs of advertising an exhibition, compiling a portfolio, launching a website – and more.	Up to \$500 for individuals, \$1,000 (groups). 4 rounds per year.	Target Group: Artists.	Catherine Benz http://www.culture.com.au/nava nava@visualarts.net.au Ph. 02 9368 1900 Fax. 02 9358 6909
No.17 National Library of Australia	Ian Potter Cultural Trust	Provides financial assistance to individuals in a wide range of cultural areas.	Amount not specified. Funding on-going.	Target Group: Artists. Grant must be used for purposes of education or the gaining of relevant experience or for the acquisition of property desirable for education.	Scott Anderson or Patricia Feilman 3 rd Floor, 111 Collins Street MELBOURNE VIC 3000 email: scotta@ianpotter.org.au Ph: 03 9650 3188

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Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.18 National Library of Australia	No title	Provides financial support for preservation Projects undertaken by local historical societies, libraries and other community organisations which hold documentary heritage collections of significance.	Maximum \$8000	Target Group: Organisations.	Community Heritage Grants Co-ordinator, National Library of Australia, Parkes place CANBERRA ACT 2600 http://www.nla.gov.au/chg/ Ph: 02 6262 1147
No.19 NSW Dept of Sport, Recreation and Racing	Aboriginal Community Grants Scheme	Funding for Projects that develop and deliver sport and physical activity opportunities for Aboriginal people.	Amount not specified. See list of previously funded programmes on web site.	Organisations eligible to apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not for profit community organisations that provide services to Aboriginal people • Not for profit organisations that provide sport and physical activity services or programs for Aboriginal people • Aboriginal Community controlled organisations 	http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au
No.20 NSW Dept of Sport, Recreation and Racing	Sports Development Program	The sports development program assists State sporting organisations and peak industry bodies.	Amount not specified. See list of previously funded programmes on web site.	Applications close 27 April 2001.	http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au
No.21 NSW Dept of Sport, Recreation and Racing	Shooting Facility Development Program	NSW Sport & Recreation - opportunity for the individual to gain fulfilment through participation in sport and recreation by development of quality shooting facilities.	Amount not specified. Funded programmes on web site.	Target Group: Shooting clubs to develop community oriented local shooting facilities.	http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au

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Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.22 NSW Dept of Sport, Recreation and Racing	Regional Sports Facility Program.	Aimed at enhancing the range, availability and quality of sport and recreational facilities throughout NSW. Objective is to develop and enhance a network of regional sporting facilities throughout NSW that meets the needs of the general community and that may incorporate uses for talented and elite athletes.	Maximum Grant Available \$300,000. Minimum Grant Value \$40,000.	Target Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Government Authorities (councils) and Local Government Authority Appointed Committees or Advisory Bodies. Not for profit sporting and recreational organisations.	NSW Department of Sport & Recreation's Regional Office Ph: 131302 for Project criteria. Application forms can be downloaded from web site. http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au
No.23 NSW Department of State and Regional Services	Range of programmes to help businesses and communities to develop in the NSW regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Street/small towns programme Regional Business Development Scheme Agribusiness Alternatives Programme Business Retention and Expansion Programme Developing Regional Resources Regional Economic Transition Scheme Town life Development Programme Country Centres Growth strategy Country Lifestyles Programme 	See web site for individual programme grant amounts.	Target Group: Businesses and Community Groups.	Department of State and Regional Development http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/regional/regional_assistance.asp
No.24 NSW Ministry for the Arts	Museum Programme: Salary Assistance	Grant to provide up to 50% of either full time or part time salaries.	Amount not specified	Target Group: Organisations	Program Manager for Museums. http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/ministry@arts.nsw.gov.au Ph. 02 9228 5533 Fax. 02 9228 4722
No.25 NSW Ministry for the Arts	Museum Program: Projects & Consultancies	Help with costs to conserve and document collections, undertake strategic planning for museums, develop displays/education.	Amount not specified.	Target Group: Organisations/ Museums.	http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/ministry@arts.nsw.gov.au Ph. 02 9228 5533

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Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.26 NSW Ministry for the Arts	Museums Program: Minor Capital Works	Grant to secure collections against deterioration or theft through improvements to buildings, displays and storage.	Up to \$10,000.	Target Group: Organisations.	Program Manager for Museums. http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/ministry@arts.nsw.gov.au Ph. 02 9228 5533 Fax. 02 9228 4722
No.27 NSW Ministry for the Arts	Museum Programme: Capital Assistance	For the purchase, construction, alteration, renovation, completion or fitting out of buildings and other facilities for arts and cultural artefacts.	Generally up to \$100,000 per year.	Target Group: Organisations.	Program Manager for Museums. http://www.arts.nsw.gov.au/ministry@arts.nsw.gov.au Ph. 02 9228 5533 Fax. 02 9228 4722
No.28 Regional Arts NSW	Country Arts Support Program	Funding for workshops, performances, festivals and seminars.	Grants range from \$100 to \$2,000. Applications close 2 nd Friday of December.	Target Group: Artists & Organisations.	Greg Snook http://www.artscouncilnsw.com.au nswarts@syd.comcen.com.au Ph. 02 9247 8577 Ext 205 Fax. 02 9247 7829
No.29 Regional Arts NSW (Initiative of the Australia Council)	Country/Rural Arts Support Programme	Grants to country-based community organisations to assist them in employing artists for locally initiated Projects such as workshops, performances, festivals and seminars.	\$100-\$2000	Target Group: Artists and Organisations. Closing Date 2 nd Friday of December	Regional Arts NSW Pier 5, Hickson Road MILLERS POINT NSW 2000 http://www.artscouncilnsw.com.au Ph: 02 9247 8577-Ext 205
No.30 Royal Australian Historical Society	Archives Grant Programme	Local History and Archives. Historical heritage, festivals and administration.	Up to \$3,000 per applicant Applications close last Friday in May annually	Target Group: Organisations.	Mari Metzke http://www.rahs.org.au history@rahs.org.au Ph. 02 9247 8001 Fax. 02 9247 7854

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Organisation	Grant Title	Description	Funding	Application Advice	Contact Details
No. 31 Tourism New South Wales	Regional Flagship Events Programme	Assists those events that express and contribute to the unique identity of the tourism regions in the State. aims to support tourism marketing activities.	Funds in the range of \$10,000 to \$30,000 over the one year funding period.	Target Group: Organisations with events that are 'market ready'. Liase with Hunter Regional Tourism Organisation prior to applying.	Applications to: Charlotte Prouse Regional Flagship Event Programme Tourism NSW GPO Box 7050 Sydney NSW 2001. Ph: 02 9931 1517
No.32 Windmill Trust	National Association for the Visual Arts	Scholarship to assist NSW regional artists, practising in the visual arts. The scholarship assists with exhibition or educational costs.	Up to \$5,000 (only one scholarship per year).	Target Group: Artists. Application Content: Proposed Project, CV, images of artwork and letters of support.	Catherine Benz http://www.culture.com.au/nava nava@visualarts.net.au Ph. 02 9368 1900 Fax. 02 9358 6909
No.33 University of Newcastle	University Collaborative Grants	University provides the research infrastructure and funds of up to \$10,000 for seeding collaborative research. The company/organisation provides matching funds, plus the involvement of its personnel in the research.	Maximum \$10,000	No closing date.	Peter Farley, Director Research Branch, Chancellery, University of Newcastle University Drive Callaghan, NSW 2308 http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/rb/grants/uni.html#collab Ph: 02 4921 5304

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11.2 Table 2. Cultural and Tourism Advice, Information and Training Assistance Programmes

Organisation	Programme/ Assistance	Programme Description	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.34 AussieHost International	The AussieHost Workshop	A workshop program which is locally delivered and facilitated. Covers skills such as communication, confidence building and the basic principles of service.	Cost Per person \$125.00	Melinda Larkin AussieHost International Level 2, Imperial Arcade 83 Castlereagh St SYDNEY NSW 2000 http://www.cultureandcreation.gov.au/grants/
No.35 Australian Commercial Galleries Association	Australian Commercial Galleries Association represent and promote living Australian artists. A strong and respected voice in the industry, the association provides a clear and ethical position pertaining to business practices on behalf of the commercial galleries it represents.	Advice and support	Target Group: Artists & Organisations.	Don Williams http://www.acgasec@acga.com.au Ph. 03 9354 0256
No.36 Business Enterprise Centres Association of NSW	Women in Business Mentor Programme: Women in the Arts	This program provides a linking mechanism between new starters in business and experienced business owners in non-competing industry sectors.	Target Group - Women	NSW Regional Development Level 43, Grosvenor Place, 225 George Street SYDNEY NSW 2000 http://www.cultureandcreation.gov.au/grants/ Ph: 02 9242 6699

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Organisation	Programme/ Assistance	Programme Description	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.37 Business Enterprise Centres Association of NSW	Small business Skills Development Program.	Workshops for owner operated businesses.	Target Group: Artists and Organisations.	NSW Regional Development Level 43, Grosvenor Place, 225 George Street SYDNEY NSW 2000 http://www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/grants/ Ph: 02 9242 6699
No.38 Business Enterprise Centres Association of NSW	First Base	This is a self-help resource centre which provides specialist assistance to people in business or going into business.	Target Group: Artists and Organisations.	NSW Regional Development Level 43, Grosvenor Place, 225 George Street SYDNEY NSW 2000 http://www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/grants/ Ph: 02 9242 6699
No.39 Department of Public Works and Services	Heritage Group Services	Help to develop/preserve heritage buildings, structures of national significance and their surroundings. Also provides an archival and research facility and advisory services, seminars and workshops, surveys and advice.	Target Group: Artists & Organisations.	Peter Alan http://www.dpws.nsw.gov.au Ph. 02 9372 8494
No.40 Multicultural Arts Alliance	Non Professional Workshops on Writing	Advice and training.	Target Group: Artists and Organisations with multicultural or non-English speaking background.	Multicultural Arts Alliance multliart@dot.net.au Ph. 02 9560 0005 Fax. 02 9560 0005

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Organisation	Programme/ Assistance	Programme Description	Application Advice	Contact Details
No.41 Heritage Council of NSW	NSW Heritage Office	Advisory services re- display and protection of heritage items in NSW. Aboriginal heritage, historical heritage, natural heritage and museums.	Target Group: Artists & Organisations	Dennis McManus or Victoria Throp http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au Ph. 02 9849 9576 Fax. 02 9891 4688
No.42 Philanthropy Australia	Resource Centre	Centre holds publications and annual reports about philanthropic trusts and foundations in Australia and overseas.	Target Group: Artists & Organisations.	Vanessa Meachin http://www.philanthropy.org.au pa@philanthropy.org.au Ph. 03 9650 9255 Fax. 03 9654 8298
No.43 Regional Arts NSW	Regional Arts Development Officer's Programs	Advice for regional artists re-developing regional festivals, seminars, etc and help in generating substantial grant income for arts activities and capital Projects in their respective regions.	Target Group: Artists & Organisations.	Greg Snook http://www.artscouncilnsw.com.au nswarts@syd.comcen.com.au Ph. 02 9247 8577 Ext 205 Fax. 02 9247 7829

Government Grant Search Engines:Commonwealth Government Grant links - <http://www.grantslink.gov.au/>NSW Government Grants - http://www.search.nsw.gov.au/search_results.aspNational Cultural Sector Grants and Services Database: <http://www.acn.net.au/grants/>**Grant Finding Reference**

Regional Arts NSW - Grants Directory: Provides a list of cultural grants for community organisations - \$10 per copy from Regional Arts NSW, Pier 5, Hickson Road, MILLERS POINT NSW 2000, Ph: 02 9247 8577-Ext 205

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11.3 Participants in the Preparation of the Plan

The Cultural Tourism Planning Team

Associate Professor David Rowe
Department of Leisure Studies
University of Newcastle

Dr Deborah Stevenson
Department of Leisure Studies
University of Newcastle

Dr John Jenkins
Department of Leisure Studies
University of Newcastle

Dr Kevin Markwell
Department of Leisure Studies
University of Newcastle

Ms Georgia Paton
Department of Leisure and Tourism
Studies
University of Newcastle

Roger Stephan
Economic Development Manager
Maitland City Council

Leanne Cherry
Economic Development Coordinator
& Tourism Manager, Dungog Shire
Council

Anna Benson
Maitland Visitor Centre

Bill Mabey
Northern Area Manager
Tourism New South Wales

Frank Ryan
Hunter Regional Tourism
Organisation

Michelle Wilson
Hunter Regional Tourism
Organisation

Key Tourism Stakeholders

Mr Rob McLaughlin
Managing Partner
Hunter Valley Day Tours

Gordon Sauber
Maitland Visitor Centre
Maitland

Margaret McMahon
Heritage Property Owner
Dungog Shire

Ms Julie Stephens
'Gully Falls House'
Dungog Shire

Councillor Vicki Galea
'Largs Hotel'
Maitland District

Mr Bruce Johnson
'Kirrilee House'
Dungog Shire

Susie Ridge
Dungog Shire Resident

Joy Beardmore
Artist
Dungog Shire

Ms Ros Runciman
'Yeranda Cottages'

Ms Jenny Trevethan
'Skara Brae'

Dungog Shire

Dungog Shire

Ms Ell Bartholomeusz
'Tree Tops Hideaway'
Dungog Shire
Councillor Margaret Flannery
Dungog Shire Council

Mr Cameron Archer
Tocal
Councillor Anne MacDonald
Dungog Shire Council

Beulah Goodwin
Dungog Shire Resident

Janelle O'Neill
Dungog Chronicle

Georgina Clark
Artist
Dungog Shire

Mavis Jukes
Artist
Dungog Shire

Jo Hathaway
Tourism Manager
Tocal Homestead

Gay and Bill Windeyer
Dungog Shire Residents

Ms Evelyn King
Maitland Gaol
East Maitland

Mr Rod Doherty
Manager
Lower Hunter BEC

Mr Mac Bignell
Commercial Heritage Property
Owner, Morpeth

Mr William F. Oakes
Chairman,
Maitland Heritage Group
Maitland

Mr Andrew H. Dejong
Director
Morpeth Trading Post

Mr John Peoples
'Rivendell'
Paterson

Ms Linda Greedy
'All Saints'
Woodville

Michelle Smith
Manager
Maitland CBD

Mr & Mrs Girven
Metropolitan Hotel
Maitland

Ms Catherine Blanch
Manager
Hunter Valley Fairs

Ms Jennifer Aitchison
Highland Travel

Ms Deborah Mackenzie
Hunter Regional Tourism
Organisation

Councillor Grahame Dark
Maitland City Council

11.4 Cultural Resources Database

NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Aberglasslyn Cottage	Aberglasslyn	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Aberglasslyn House	Aberglasslyn	Historical Site	Anchor
General Cemetery	Allynbrook	Schedule 2 HS/Historical Cemetery	Complementary
St Mary-on-Allyn Church	Allynbrook	Schedule 2 HS/Historical Building	Complementary
St Peters Church, Bendolba	Allynbrook	Schedule 2 HS/HB	Complementary
Stone Quarry	Bishops Bridge	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Res Group, Paterson Road	Bolwarra	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Bolwarra Barn	Bolwarra	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Gowan Brae	Bolwarra	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Bolwarra House	Bolwarra	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Dareel	Bolwarra	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Virginia House	Bolwarra	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Shenstone	Bolwarra	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Cambridge Cottage	Bolwarra	Antiques Retail	Complementary
Buchanan Gallery	Buchanan	Art/Craft Retail	Complementary
The Artists Shed Gallery	Chichester Dam Road	Art Gallery	Complementary
Telegerry Forest Park Museum	Chichester State Forest	Museum	Complementary
Police Residence	Clarence Town	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Hollydene	Clarence Town	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Post Office	Clarence Town	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
War Memorial	Clarence Town	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Erringhi Gallery	Clarence Town	Schedule 2 HS/Art Gallery	Complementary
Marshall and Lowe's Ship Yard	Clarence Town	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
General Cemetery	Clarence Town	Schedule 2 HS/Historical Cemetery	Complementary
Former Courthouse	Clarence Town	Schedule 2 HS/HB	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Clarence Town Bridge	Clarence Town	Schedule 2 HS/HS	Complementary
Hua Tsa, King Street	Clarence Town	Schedule 2 HS/HR	Complementary
Robards Slaughterhouse	Clarence Town	Schedule 2 HS/HB	Complementary
Berry House	Duckenfield	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Berry Park	Duckenfield	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Hedge Rows	Duckenfield	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Courthouse	Dungog	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Bank Hotel	Dungog	Schedule 2 HS/Historical Accommodation	Complementary
Pedalfast	Dungog	Event	Potential Anchor
Police Keepers Residence	Dungog	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Dungog Rodeo	Dungog	Event	Complementary
Melbee and Outbuildings	Dungog	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Former Dungog Inn No 211	Dungog	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Cangon & Outbuildings	Dungog	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
General Cemetery	Dungog	Schedule 2 HS/HC	Complementary
Dungog Water Treatment Plant	Dungog	Industrial Site	Complementary
Chichester Dam	Dungog	Dam	Anchor
Dungog Conservation Areas	Dungog	Schedule 5	Precinct
School of Arts	Dungog	Schedule 2 HS/HB	Complementary
Public School Residence	Dungog	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Dave Sands Memorial Park	Dungog	Memorial	Complementary
CBC Bank and Stables	Dungog	Schedule 2 HS/HB	Complementary
Dingadee	Dungog	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Dusodie Craft Cottage	Dusodie	Craft Retail	Complementary
Timber Bridge	East Gresford	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Catholic Cemetery	East Gresford	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Butter Factory	East Gresford	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Lewinsbrook	East Gresford	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Hotel Beatty	East Gresford	Schedule 2 HS/Historical Accommodation	Complementary
Former Shops Group	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Hillside	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
House, Nerang Street	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Horsley House	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Hanks House	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Rose Inn	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Rare Find Country Antiques	East Maitland	Antiques Retail	Complementary
Chelsea Antique/Craft Cottage	East Maitland	Antiques Retail	Complementary
Manse, Fitzroy Street	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
House, Elizabeth Street	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
St Josephs Church	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
House, John Street	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Stained Glass Attractions	East Maitland	Antiques Retail	Complementary
George and Dragon Hotel	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Old Maitland Mill Antique Centre	East Maitland	Antiques Retail	Complementary
Caroline Chisholm Cottage	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Lit Institute	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Parklands	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Cemetery, Hiland Crescent	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former High School Group	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Burial Ground	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
King Street Terraces	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Former AJS Bank	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Cottage Content Inn	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Joss House	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Outbuildings and Stables	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Red Lion Inn	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
St Peter's Rectory	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Land Board Office	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Smiths Flour Mill	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Oldhome	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Public School	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Ellmatta	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Matthew Talbot Hostel	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Roseneath	East Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Housing Group, King Street	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
St Peters Church	East Maitland	Historic Site	Complementary
Former Post Office	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Courthouse	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
House, King Street	East Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Wardens Cottage	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Police Barracks	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Police Station	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Sergeant's Residence	East Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Upper Allyn Lister Village	Eccleston	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Owlpfen	Farley	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
South Maitland Railway Yards	Gillieston Heights	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Anambah House	Gosforth	Schedule 1 Historical Site	Complementary
Goswyck'	Gostwyck	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Cawarra Estate Group	Gresford	Schedule 2 HS/HB	Complementary
Lostock Dam	Gresford	Dam	Complementary
Ard-na-Hane'	Gresford	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
St Anne's Church	Gresford	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Former Courthouse	Gresford	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Empire Tavern	Kurri Kurri	Historic Hotel/Accommodation	Complementary
General Cemetery	Kurri Kurri	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Chelmsford Hotel	Kurri Kurri	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Kurri Kurri Hotel	Kurri Kurri	Schedule 2 Historic Site/Hotel	Complementary
Former Railway Tunnel	Kurri Kurri	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Richmond Vale Railway	Kurri Kurri	Industrial Heritage/Museum	Complementary
Station Hotel	Kurri Kurri	Schedule 2 Historic Site/Hotel	Complementary
Public School	Largs	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Catholic Cemetery	Lochinvar	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Holy Trinity Church	Lochinvar	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
St Helena College	Lochinvar	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Clifton	Lochinvar	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Kaludah	Lochinvar	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Police Station	Lochinvar	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Airds of Lochinvar	Lochinvar	Rural Retail	Complementary
Windermere	Lochinvar	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Lorn House	Lorn	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Warrane and Grounds	Lorn	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Lorn Cottage Antiques	Lorn	Antiques Retail	Complementary
Niara	Lorn	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
St Johns Anglican Church Cemetery	Lostock	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Jewish Cemetery	Louth Park	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Luskintyre Bridge	Luskintyre	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Grand Junction Hotel	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Cong. Church, High Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Post Office, High Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Methodist Church, High Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Maitland Mercury, High Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former AJS Bank, High Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Presbyterian Church Group	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Brough House	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
ANZ Bank, High Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Bishops Residence, Cath.	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Grand Central Hotel	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Bourke Street Group Res.	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Government Railway	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
South Maitland Railway	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Terrace, Victoria Street	Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
St Paul's Church Group	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Maitland Fair Markets	Maitland	Rural Event	Complementary
Police Station and Residence	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Heritage Month	Maitland	Heritage Festival	Icon
Steam Fest	Maitland	Industrial Festival	Icon
Maitland Gaol	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historical Site	Anchor
Maitland Heritage Mall	Maitland	Retail	Anchor
Maitland City Art Gallery	Maitland	Art Museum	Anchor
The Hermitage	Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Hunter Valley Craft Fair	Maitland	Craft Event HM	Anchor
Maitland Public School	Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Maitland Hospital Group	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
St Johns Pro Cathedral	Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Grossman House	Maitland	Historic Site	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Maitland Heritage Walk	Maitland	Historic Walk	Complementary
Mansfield	Maitland	Historic Site	Complementary
Cintra & Stables	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historical Site	Complementary
Monte Pio	Maitland	Historic Site	Complementary
High Street Second Hand	Maitland	Antiques Retail	Complementary
Convent, Victoria Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Steptoos of Maitland	Maitland	Antiques Retail	Complementary
Training College, Victoria Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Hunter River	Maitland	Cultural Site	Potential Anchor
Riverview	Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Barden and Ribee Shop	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
CBC Bank	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Courthouse	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
War Memorial, Maitland Park	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Benhome	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Masonic Hall, Victoria Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Victorian Villa, Regent Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Cohens Warehouse, High Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Railway Station	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Hampton Court	Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Former CBC Bank	Maitland	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Tech College	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Maitland Town Hall	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Walli House Group	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
St Mary's Church	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Synagogue	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Former St John's Cathedral	Maitland	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
House, Regent Street	Maitland	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Elah	Maitland Vale	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Melville House	Melville Road	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Mindaribba Community Centre	Metford	Aboriginal Cultural Museum	Complementary
Mindaribba	Mindaribba	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Commercial Hotel	Morpeth	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Queens Wharf Railway Station	Morpeth	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Kiaroa	Morpeth	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
State School	Morpeth	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Former 'Morpeth House'	Morpeth	Schedule 3 Historic Site	Complementary
Slab Hut Pottery	Morpeth	Retail	Complementary
Festival of Mugs	Morpeth	Event	Complementary
Morpeth Village	Morpeth	Rural Heritage	Icon
Hunter River	Morpeth	Cultural Site	Potential Anchor
Cedar Grove Galleries	Morpeth	Antiques Retail	Complementary
More or Less Antiques	Morpeth	Antiques Retail	Complementary
The Terraces	Morpeth	Retail	Complementary
Closebourne House	Morpeth	Schedule 1 Historic Site	Complementary
Morpeth Trading Post	Morpeth	Retail	Complementary
Cemetery	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Morpeth Museum	Morpeth	Museum	Complementary
Campbell's Store	Morpeth	Retail	Complementary
St Johns Centre	Morpeth	Historic Residence	Complementary
Old Morpeth Convent	Morpeth	Historic Residence/B & B	Complementary
Morpeth Honey Festival	Morpeth	Event HM	Complementary
Novelty Tea Pot Exhibition	Morpeth	Event	Complementary
The Surgeons Cottage	Morpeth	Retail	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Morpeth Bridge	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
St James Group	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Marlborough House	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former CBC Bank	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Campbells Store	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Post Office and Residence	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Bond Store Group	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Morpeth Jazz Festival	Morpeth	Musical Event	Icon
Morpeth House	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
RC School and Convent	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
School of Arts	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Police Station	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
St James Parish Hall	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Roman Catholic Church	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Courthouse	Morpeth	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Summer Hill Homestead	Munni	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Munni Homestead	Munni	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Methodist Cemetery	Oakhampton	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Walka Water Walks	Oakhampton	Schedule 1 Historical Site/IH	Anchor
General Cemetery	Oswald	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Former Royal Oak Arms	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Corner's Flour Store	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Rail Motor Museum	Paterson	Museum	Complementary
Paterson Conservation Area	Paterson	Schedule 5	Precinct
Former Rydale House	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Former Commercial Hotel	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Noumea	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Annandale	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Former Public School	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Former CBC Bank	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
St Anne's Church	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Former St Paul's Rectory	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Haywood Cottage	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
St Paul's Church and Cemetery	Paterson	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Paterson Masterworks Gallery	Paterson	Art Gallery	Complementary
The Craftsman's Croft	Paterson	Craft Retail	Complementary
Paterson Post Office	Paterson	Historical Building	Complementary
Cottage No 35	Paterson	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Paterson Court House	Paterson	Historical Museum	Complementary
Corn Staddle	Paterson	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Cambridge Cottage	Paterson	Craft/Retail	Complementary
Clarence Brae Antiques	Paterson	Antique Retail	Complementary
Former Courthouse	Paterson	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Paterson Road	Paterson	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Paterson Bridge	Paterson	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
The Family Hotel	Rutherford	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
The Old Brick Shed	Rutherford	Antiques Retail	Complementary
Barrington Guest House	Salisbury	Schedule 2 HS/Historical Accommodation	Anchor
General Cemetery	Salisbury	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Police Lock Up	Salisbury	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Campbell's Hill Cemetery	Telarah	Schedule 2 Historic Site	Complementary
Tocal Field Days	Tocal	Rural Event HM	Icon
Tocal Homestead	Tocal	Historic Site	Complementary
Underbank House	Underbank	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary

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NAME	LOCATION	ATTRACTION CATEGORY	ATTRACTION TYPE
Vacy Bridge	Vacy	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Mowbray	Vacy	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary
Wallalong House	Wallalong	Historic Residence	Complementary
Hooke Family Cemetery	Wirragulla	Schedule 2 HS	Complementary
Crooks Park	Wirragulla	Schedule 3 HS	Complementary