

**macleay
valley coast**



**Destination
Events Plan**



Acknowledgement of Country

Kempsey Shire Council acknowledges the land of the Thunggutti/Dunghutti Nation.

We pay respect to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the role of emerging leaders to continue to guide us in the future.

We acknowledge the Stolen Generations and the need to change practices to be inclusive.

This land always was and always will be Thunggutti/Dunghutti land.

Tilma Group respectfully recognises the custodians of this continent who sustainably cared for Country for over 60,000 years. We acknowledge the Giabal people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which this report was written.

Thank You

Kempsey Shire Council and Tilma Group thank the stakeholders who took part in the consultation that supported the development of this strategic plan.



TILMA GROUP

Tilma Group is a regional tourism and event development consultancy. This strategy has been developed in alignment with the [Global Sustainable Tourism Council's criteria](#), which is based on the United Nation's [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

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Executive Summary

This document provides a strategic framework that will drive sustainable visitation to the Macleay Valley Coast via events, by leveraging the region's unique strengths and resources.

This plan for Kempsey Shire Council's Economic Development and Tourism team includes actions for other teams within Council to support and enable destination events, that is, events that attract out of region visitation.

Vision

The Macleay Valley Coast hosts a considered portfolio of destination events that sustainably drive overnight visitation and build awareness and love for the region.

Aspirations

The Macleay Valley Coast is:

- Appealing to visitors
- Appealing to event organisers
- Thriving

Guiding principles for events

- Deliver economic value
- Disperse visitation
- Build destination profile
- Provide a quality experience
- Align with community
- Are inclusive and accessible
- Are low impact

Strategic priorities

- Cultivate a considered event portfolio
- Maximise economic and visitation outcomes from events
- Support the development and execution of 'best fit' events

Measures of success

- Increase in visitation
- Notable economic impact
- Increased brand and destination awareness
- Increased association between specific event(s) and region

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Part A: Setting the Scene

1. Introduction and purpose of the plan

Halfway between Sydney and Brisbane, between Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour, the Macleay Valley Coast is an easy to access regional destination with pristine natural assets: the coast with its beaches, headlands, and excellent surf, lush hinterlands with mountains and productive agricultural landscapes, the 300km-long Macleay River, National Parks and State Forests, and a pleasant climate. The Macleay Valley Coast is deeply embedded with the ancient Indigenous cultural stories and history of the Dughutti and Thunggutti people, who have lived in and cared for the valley for millennia. The region also boasts several new and recently upgraded sporting facilities suitable for a broad range of sport and recreational events.

With events, Kempsey Shire Council (Council) has the opportunity to raise awareness of the region and tell the region's story through an experience that can only be had on the Macleay Valley Coast. The right event can bring to life the unique characteristics of the landscape, culture and people that make this region so special.



1.1 Purpose of the plan

Events improve liveability, enable active lifestyles, reflect local culture and heritage, connect people with nature, support local economies, and build collaboration and volunteerism.

The focus of the Macleay Valley Coast Destination Events Plan is to aid the Economic Development and Tourism team at Council in focusing its resources on maximising economic outcomes from events, including by investing in events that raise awareness of and love for the region while attracting visitors, particularly overnight visitors, to the Macleay Valley Coast.

Despite not being the focus of this plan, the important role that community events play in the visitor economy is acknowledged: they add vibrancy to the visitor experience and enable visitors to connect with locals and local culture. The Economic Development and Tourism team have endeavoured to develop a plan which can be applied by Council's other departments to support and grow all events in the region, including community events.

This plan identifies the types of destination events that are the best fit for the region based on their ability to achieve the strongest return on investment for Council, and the actions that need to be taken to secure and support those events at an appropriate level.

This plan for Kempsey Shire Council's Economic Development and Tourism team includes actions by other teams within Council to support and enable destination events, that is, events that attract out of region visitation.

1.2 Preview of key outcomes

Ultimately, this plan recommends a focus on improving information and resources for event organisers, investment in events that drive economic impact and either raise awareness of the region or showcase its unique assets, and importantly, a shift in the role of the Economic Development and Tourism team (excluding the Slim Dusty Centre staff) away from event delivery to focus its resources on event attraction and maximising economic outcomes from events.

1.3 Definitions

For this plan, destination events are defined as events with a clear economic impact that attract visitors to travel to the Macleay Valley Coast specifically to attend the event.

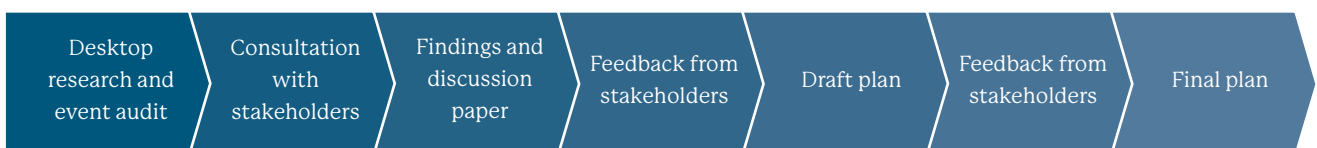
Macleay Valley Coast is referred to in two ways within this document: The Macleay Valley Coast is used interchangeably with Kempsey Shire to identify the region. Macleay Valley Coast is also the destination brand of Kempsey Shire Council and referred to as such. The context of use will make it clear which 'Macleay Valley Coast' is being referenced.



1.4 Engagement process and milestones

To support the development of this plan, regional tourism development consultancy Tilma Group undertook desktop research relevant to the region's events landscape and developed an audit of the region's recent events and event venues. Tilma Group undertook one-on-one and focus group discussions with a broad range of event stakeholders including Council staff who have touchpoints with events, local and external event organisers who deliver events in the region, local venue managers, the regional tourism organisation, and representatives from local tourism, First Nations, cultural, and business groups.

The key milestones in developing the Destination Events Plan included:



2. Strategic context

2.1 Strategic alignment

Strategic Plan		Strategic alignment + priorities for events
National: Austrade	THRIVE 2030: The Re-imagined Visitor Economy	Support the return of events, including business, cultural and arts, regional and major events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimise the impact of existing event promotion and support programs. • Establish new mass participation events including in regional areas to encourage visitor dispersal.
State: NSW Government	NSW Visitor Economy Plan 2030	Ambitions include vibrant events, and strategic pillars include invest in world-class events: signature sporting and cultural events as well as business events. <p>Key result areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased economic impact and visitor attendance. • Greater promotion of NSW as an events destination. • Increased community and visitor satisfaction with events.
Regional: Destination North Coast	North Coast NSW Destination Management Plan 2022-2030	Vision <p>To sustainably grow yield of visitors...without compromising the distinct natural beauty and communities that makes the region so unique.</p> <p>Positioning</p> <p>North Coast NSW is positioned as a natural escape with a food bowl and plentiful local produce across its vibrant communities. To ensure the region lives up to expectations, it must deliver on...events that promote its naturally spectacular and colourful image.</p> <p>Strategic Objective: Focus on world class events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use events to encourage greater visitor dispersal. • Position North Coast NSW as the premier participative sporting event host in regional NSW. • Encourage events that increase visitation across low and shoulder season. <p>Key desired results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased economic impact and visitor attendance at events. • Greater promotion of North Coast NSW as an events destination. • Increased community and visitor satisfaction.

Strategic Plan		Strategic alignment + priorities for events
Local: Kempsey Shire Council	Horizon 2030 Macleay Valley Economic Development and Tourism Plan	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Council's role in and resourcing of regional events procurement to maximise the leveraging of events to attract visitors to the Macleay Valley in low periods and to cross-promote destination brand awareness. Support the growth of unique local festivals to become significant regional events. Promote sports tourism in the Macleay Valley including events which leverage the region's motor sports racing heritage, running festivals and multi-sports events, and the Macleay Valley's natural attributes. Promote and support Kempsey and South West Rocks as business conference destinations. Audit community events and identify opportunities for existing and emerging events throughout the Macleay Valley to become part of a coordinated calendar of events with Destination North Coast. Progress the North Coast Business Events Partnership.
	Macleay Valley Sports Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide and improve sports facilities. Develop and implement criteria for supporting events including pitching to attract events, event sponsorship, and in-kind support.
	Our Creative Macleay Arts and Cultural Plan 2023-2030 (DRAFT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the delivery of creative events and performances that are accessible, inspiring and affordable.
	Sustainability & Resilience Plan 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporating sustainability and resilience into the actions of our community will better prepare us for a changing climate and challenging future Develop sustainable event guidelines.
	Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate to event owners to plan for a disability-friendly event experience.
	Your Future Places & Spaces Macleay Valley Community Infrastructure Plan 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a community event space in Kempsey for large, Shire-wide or regional community events. Prepare an open space plan which will assist in the strategic direction of open space, and identifying upgrades to open spaces. Provide residents without a car ways to access to community facilities

2.2 Trends in events tourism

Consumer trends influence visitors' attraction to events, and whether they are likely to be positive advocates of the event and the destination, and therefore provide opportunities for Macleay Valley Coast to increase its appeal as an events destination.

Trends	What they mean	Opportunity
Immersive experiences	Event attendees want interactive, immersive, personalised, local, compelling, and extraordinary experiences.	Identifying ways to enable attendees to get involved with hands on experiences rather than as passive spectators.
Quality over quantity and yield over volume	Rather than attracting many attendees with low per capita value, destinations are focusing on attracting fewer visitors with higher value and therefore lower negative impact.	The appeal of Macleay Valley Coast is as a less crowded destination. Boutique events rather than mass gatherings suit the region and its infrastructure. To attract larger audiences, festivals comprised of a series of boutique events spread across time and geography would suit the capacity of Macleay Valley Coast.
Authentically local	Travellers want to experience local culture, local produce, and life as a local. They want to feel inspired by the places they visit and the people they meet, with immersive experiences that allow them to forge deeper connections to the people and traditions of places they visit in ways that are meaningful and memorable.	Events should aim to enable visitors to connect with the community, and the community's interests and products, from art to produce.
Conscious consumers	Today's travellers increasingly want to connect with our extraordinary planet. 2/3 of Australians are looking for purposeful travel where there are opportunities to give back to the destination, and seeking transformative experiences that bring self-discovery and growth, enriching their lives through experiences and learning. ¹ 3/4 of travellers are seeking out sustainable options. ²	Ensure all events in the calendar are environmentally and socially responsible.
Diversity	Hosting events that are inclusive is not a passing trend; nor is it optional: events are all about building community.	Ensure all events in the calendar are implementing inclusion practices, to achieve diversity in the event's team, entertainers, and promotion.
Sports tourism	Consumers are seeking healthier lifestyles to maintain physical and mental health. Participation sports events have strong appeal to niche audiences who are willing to travel to take part in their sport. Sports events are a key motivator for travel.	Use sports events to appeal to these visitors if they will be high yield and low impact. Ensure these kinds of events do not result in a high impact on residents.
Increased sameness	Event offerings across Australia tend to be quite formulaic in their programming (for example, including a market, live music, and demonstrations).	Encourage event programs to regularly refresh to sustain appeal to target audiences.
Digital and social media	Digital technology is changing the way visitors plan, make bookings, interact with others, and share their experiences.	Encourage online ticketing to make purchasing event tickets and event packages easy.

¹ Consumer Insights Research, Tourism Australia, 2021

² Sustainable Travel Report 2023, Booking.com

3. Events landscape

3.1 Events and venues

Events

- Approximately 60 events are held in Macleay Valley Coast each year.
- Almost 1/2 of events are held in peak tourism season (October-April).
- 1/2 of events are held in the shoulder tourism season (April, August and September).
- 1 destination event is held in the off peak tourism season.
- 2/3 of events are held in either Kempsey, South West Rocks or Crescent Head.

Venues

Sporting	Business	Leisure	Cultural
<p>The Macleay Valley Coast has the natural and built assets to host major events in the following sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four football codes • Cricket • Off-road motorsports • Trail sports • CrossFit • Ocean sports <p>Major sports venues include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verge and Eden Sportsfields, Kempsey • Mid North Coast High Performance Centre, South West Rocks 	<p>Approximately 22 business event venues, including boutique coastal venues.</p> <p>The largest can host 900, but the destination is best placed for smaller boutique business events.</p>	<p>Open spaces and picturesque coastal reserves include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crescent Head Reserve • Kempsey Riverside Park • Brighton Park • Hat Head Reserve • Horseshoe Bay Beach Reserve • Stuarts Point Foreshore • Various spaces in the Macleay Valley Hinterland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance space at the Slim Dusty Centre (900) and Bandbox Theatre (150) • Cinema complex (660 across 4 theatres) • Art galleries • 13 community halls • Stuarts Point Foreshore Stage





3.2 Event visitors and the visitor economy

Tourism

- Emerging economic strength in the region.
- 1/2 million visitors each year.

Visitors come for

- Coastal and water-based activities (84%)
- Food and wine experiences (66%)
- Nature (46%)
- Shopping (31%)
- Cultural, arts, heritage, including events, performances and markets (29%)
- Sports (15%)³

Visitors⁴

- Mostly from regional NSW, QLD, and Sydney.
- Come to holiday in summer (October to March) or see family and friends.
- Almost half are couples, a third are groups of friends, and almost a third are families.

Day trippers

- 42% of domestic visitors
- Spend \$88/trip
- Aged 55+

Overnight visitors

- 58% of domestic visitors
- Aged 35+
- Stay 4 nights
- Spend \$481/trip (\$111/night).

³ Macleay Valley Coast Destination Management Plan 2019-2029
⁴ Tourism Research Australia



3.3 Competitive strengths

- Natural beauty
- Pleasant climate in winter for sports
- Dunghutti and Thunggutti culture
- Long nature trails and pristine waterways
- National Surfing Reserve
- Mid North Coast High Performance Centre
- Kalateenee Mountain Bike Trails
- Slim Dusty Centre
- Numerous cricket wickets in one region
- Number of motor sports clubs deliver events on nature-based off-road trails
- Five Headlands Coastal Experience (under development)

3.4 Gaps analysis

- Limited human and financial resources to deliver regionally significant events to desired standard.
- Limited information online to support event attraction and delivery.
- Limited wet weather venues.
- Limited suitable accommodation to support larger business events .
- Extreme weather events due to changing climate are a risk for events.⁵
- Only one destination event is currently hosted during the off-peak season for visitation.
- Only 4% of accommodations are greater than 3-star standard.⁶

⁵ The majority of regional business events are under 70-80 delegates, with many in the 20-30 delegate range, according to Business Events Victoria.

⁶ Destination North Coast, North Coast Accommodation Investment Prospectus



4. Target visitor markets for events

4.1 Domestic overnight event visitors to NSW⁷

- Events account for 6% of domestic overnight visitors to NSW, 5% of visitor nights and 8% of expenditure.
- North Coast is the most popular destination in regional NSW for domestic overnight event visitors.
- Motivated by authentic experiences, great locations and atmosphere, escaping everyday life, reconnecting with family and friends, experiencing something different, indulging passions, and food and wine, sporting and musical events.
- 1/4 are aged 15-29, 1/4 60+, 1/6 30–39, and 1/6 50-59.
- No difference amongst age groups in sport event attendance; leisure events are more popular among those aged 15 to 29, and those aged 60+.
- 1/3 are groups of friends or relatives, 1/4 are couples, 1/5 are families and 1/8 are solo travellers.
- Leisure events attract more couples, and sports events attract more families.
- Stay in under 4-star hotel/motels (1/4 of nights), or with friends or relatives (1/5).

4.2 Target markets for Macleay Valley Coast destination events

The following target visitor markets for events are based on current visitation trends to the region, venue assets such as sports venues and trails, and the region's limitations. Higher value markets include business event delegates, and visitors who stay overnight. Events that meet the needs of these markets will also deliver social benefits to locals.

				
Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) of locals	Families	Caravanners and campers	Sports participants	Delegates of small-scale business events
Aligns with Escape & Connect ⁸ market	Aligns with Family Fun market	Aligns with Rest & Relax market	Aligns with Walk On The Wild Side market	Aligns with Escape & Connect Market
Value				
\$96-155/night	\$156-237/night	\$170/night	\$389/night	\$416/night
58% of domestic overnight visitors come to MVC to visit local friends and relatives. ⁹	1/4 of visitors to MVC are families. ¹²	29% of MVC's visitors stay in commercial caravan parks, spending \$170 per night. ¹⁴	Sports visitors account for more than half of all overnight and daytrip event visitors, visitor nights and visitor expenditure. ¹⁵	Delegates to regional NSW spend \$416 per night. ¹⁷
MVC's domestic overnight visitors spend \$155 per person per night. ¹⁰	Intrastate family visitors to NSW spend \$237 per night and interstate family visitors spend \$156 per night. ¹³		Sports events participants and spectator to NSW spend \$389 per night. ¹⁶	Half experience leisure experiences, and a third visit for longer than the meeting time. ¹⁸ Many bring companions, further adding to their economic impact. ¹⁹
VFR visitors to NSW spend \$96 per night. ¹¹				Business events create and disseminate innovation and knowledge and enhance local individual and organisational performance. ²⁰

7 Event Visitation to NSW Year ended December 2018

8 Macleay Valley Coast Marketing Strategy & Tourism Plan 2020-2023

9 Local Government Area Profile 2019, Kempsey, Tourism Research Australia

10 Local Government Area Profile 2019, Kempsey, Tourism Research Australia

11 Domestic VFR travel to NSW 2015

12 Local Government Area Profile 2019, Kempsey, Tourism Research Australia

13 NSW Family Travel Market, Destination NSW, 2015

14 Local Government Area Profile 2019, Kempsey, Tourism Research Australia, 4-year average 2016-2019. This rose to \$358/night in 2020-2021.

15 Event Visitation to NSW 2018

16 Tourism Research Australia (Q2 2023)

17 Destination NSW, based on Tourism Research Australia's March Quarter 2023 data

18 NSW Regional Conferencing Research Report 2018-2019

19 Role of Business Events, Business Events Council of Australia

20 Role of Business Events, Business Events Council of Australia

5. Event categories and framework

Guiding principles

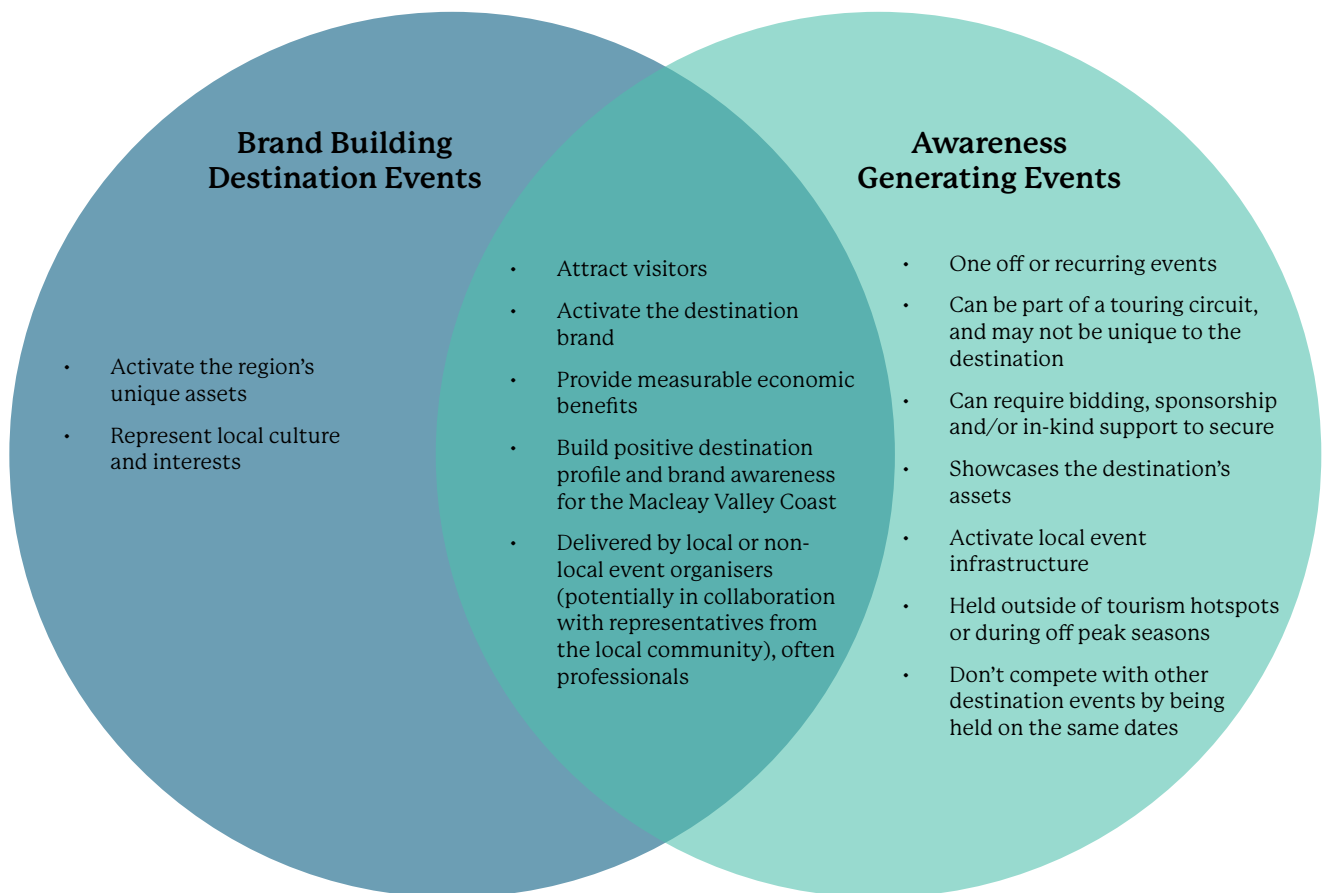
The events that are the best fit for the Macleay Valley Coast are those aligned with its landscapes, built assets, and community interests. The following principles will guide the selection of best-fit destination events for the Macleay Valley Coast. By supporting events that align with these principles, Council will enable events that drive visitation and economic development, while improving liveability and supporting the community.

Principle	Event qualities
Deliver economic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract high-yield visitors, particularly overnight visitors (e.g., are run over multiple days) • Attract out-of-region grant and sponsorship funding • Purchase from local suppliers where possible • Result in increased visitor spend in local businesses • Attract visitors to a location or during a season where or when visitation is usually light
Disperse visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract visitors outside of peak tourism seasons or outside of visitation hotspots
Build destination profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcase the strengths of the destination • Raise awareness around the region – put Macleay Valley Coast on the map • Are unique to what is on offer in the Macleay Valley Coast • Provide a positive experience and therefore encourage repeat visitation and positive word of mouth • Present destination marketing opportunities
Provide a quality experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are well-run events • Add value to the visitor experience • Provide a pleasant spectator experience (spectator events)
Align with community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community can be proud of, are aligned with the community's interests, and offer value for residents • Enhance liveability for residents
Are inclusive and accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can demonstrate that best efforts have been made to deliver an event that is inclusive and accessible • Are proactively inclusive and representative of all potential attendees, such as with diverse entertainers and staff, and provide for the diverse needs of attendees, such as by providing for dietary needs
Are low impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim for the lowest feasible environmental impact • Respect the natural landscape and cultural values of the venue and surrounds • Respect other venue users, neighbours, and the local community • Mitigate impacts on the community such as noise and traffic.

Event classification

The following destination event categories provide Council's Economic Development and Tourism team with a clear and transparent way to determine the level of support provided. Destination events are categorised here based on the type of value they deliver for the region (brand building or awareness generating), and maturity (new, emerging, or established).

Brand building refers to activating Macleay Valley Coast's unique assets and providing an event experience that is unique to the region, while awareness generating refers to events that may not be unique to Macleay Valley Coast but are significant, such as a competitive golf event that is part of a series of golf events across the state. 'Best-fit' event types are also outlined, including sporting, business and cultural events.



Brand Building Destination Events

- Incorporate an intense direct experience between visitors and the Macleay Valley Coast's destination brand.
- Helps visitors feel closer to the Macleay Valley Coast.
- Intensifies visitors' understanding of the region and its USPs.
- Built to appeal to the Macleay Valley Coast's target audiences.
- Tell the story of the region (culturally, historically, environmentally, etc).

Awareness Generating Destination Events

- Pre-existing series of events or events with an in-built audience or group of participants that align with the Macleay Valley Coast’s target markets.

Brand Building Destination Events		Awareness Generating Destination Events	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate the region’s unique assets • Attract visitors • Deliver measurable economic benefits • Activate the destination brand • Represent local culture and interests • Build positive profile and brand awareness for the Macleay Valley Coast • Ideally delivered by local event organisers but can also be delivered by external organisers (potentially in collaboration with representatives from the local community) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be one off or recurring events, can be part of a touring circuit, and may not be unique to the destination • Can require bidding, sponsorship and/or in-kind support to secure • Attract visitors • Provide measurable economic benefits • Activate the destination brand • Build destination profile and awareness by showcasing the destination’s assets • Activate local event infrastructure • Held outside of tourism hotspots or during off peak seasons • Don’t compete with other destination events by being held on the same dates • Delivered by local or non-local event organisers, often professionals 	
Incubator	Emerging	Established	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New event concepts with solid business plans targeting visitors as attendees, spectators or participants • New concept with genuine point of difference at heart of the event • Events that have been run for two or fewer years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation-focused events that have been held for more than two years • Provides outcomes for the visitor economy • Destination events recently lost from the Macleay Valley Coast that have the potential to be reinstated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven events that have been held for more than five years and have demonstrated positive outcomes for the visitor economy 	

Council’s sponsorship framework (see Appendix) will ensure there is a suitable mix of events that make up the destination events calendar.

Best-fit events

Council's Economic Development and Tourism team will aim to attract and support a strategic mix of event types, spread throughout the year and across the region.

Small to medium sized events (up to 1,000 attendees) have been identified as the best fit for the Macleay Valley Coast. The table below contains examples of best-fit events for the region.

Types	Suited to the Macleay Valley Coast	Example Brand Building Destination Event	Example Awareness Generating Destination Event
Sporting events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature-based participatory sports, such as adventure racing, trail running, mountain biking and endurance events such as obstacle courses River and ocean-based water sports, such as kayaking, ocean swims and surfing Off-road motorsports Cricket, rugby, Australian Rules (AFL), soccer, and CrossFit Regional junior competitions in football sports and cricket Social sports competitions, such as golf and regional equestrian events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trial Bay Regatta Weekend Oz GeoMuster GeoQuest Adventure Race Shimano MTB GP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cricket NSW Bradman's Cup Auscycling NSW School MTB series Veterans Week of Golf Tough Mudder
Business events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business events for small groups (20-40) 		
Cultural events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boutique, unique experiences that showcase the region's assets Dunghutti and Thungutti-initiated events (by local event organisers) Boutique music events Series of smaller concerts Art trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Coast Harvest Festival (comprised of many local produce events spread across the region, delivered by many businesses and organisations) Murwillumbah Art Trail (comprised of open studios and workshops across the region, supporting the local creative industry, and activating heritage buildings) 	Touring exhibitions at Slim Dusty Centre such as Steve Waugh Spirit of India Cricket Exhibition

New event development

In addition to supporting existing events there is scope for Council's Economic Development and Tourism team to identify opportunities for the development of new events. In such a case, Council may put out an expression of interest to event organisers who would be asked to develop a brief concept for an event and pitch it to Council for support. Any such event would require the development of a financial model with owned revenue streams to ensure its long-term viability.

By way of example, some concepts that arose during the development of this plan include the following.

- Dunghutti Surf and Turf event showcasing mullet harvest, and the preparation and eating of mullet, kangaroo, and other native foods.
- Sport and music festival.
- Dispersed food festival to showcase the Macleay Valley producers with farmers markets, tours, local produce specials at eateries, etc.
- Village hall activation, Festival of Small Halls-style, showcasing local musicians.
- Gravel mountain biking event.
- Kayaking event.
- Country music event dispersed across smaller venues (such as with a songwriting focus for a point of difference tied to country music connections to the region).





Part B: The Plan

6. Vision and aspirations

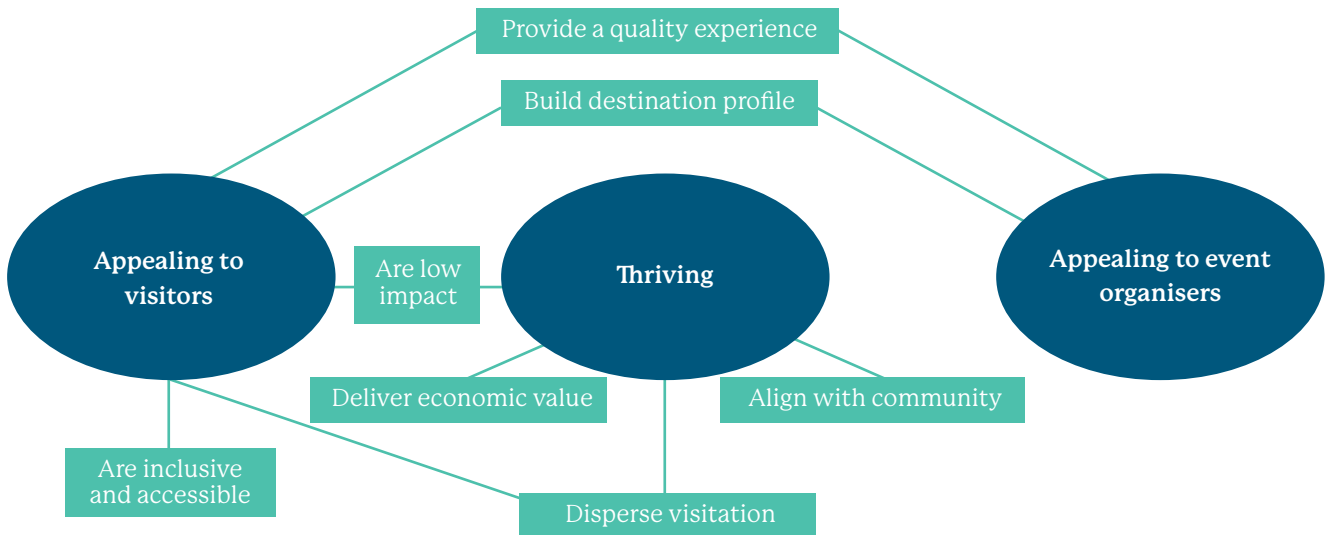
6.1 Vision

The Macleay Valley Coast hosts a considered portfolio of destination events that sustainably drive overnight visitation and build awareness and love for the region.

6.2 Aspirations

The Macleay Valley Coast is	Achieved through
Appealing to visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage events to raise awareness and build love for the destination, differentiating the Macleay Valley Coast from its neighbours Foster the development of events that are unique to the Macleay Valley Coast
Appealing to event organisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to invest in infrastructure to support the Macleay Valley Coast's appeal for event organisers Proactively attract external event organisers to bring 'best-fit' events to the Macleay Valley Coast
Thriving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the visitation benefits of events (attract events with higher-yielding visitors, off-peak overnight visitation, dispersal away from visitor hotspots, and increased visitor length of stay and spend) Maximise the contribution of events to community wellbeing and the local economy Support events that add to the liveability of the region.

These aspirations are connected with the guiding principles for best-fit events.



7. Strategic priorities

The following three strategic priorities will support the Economic Development and Tourism team in achieving the Plan's vision and aspirations.

Cultivate

a considered events portfolio

Maximise

economic and visitation outcomes from events

Support

the development and delivery of 'best fit' events



7.1 Cultivate a considered event portfolio

The best economic, social and environmental outcomes for the Macleay Valley Coast will be achieved through a considered portfolio of quality events with a strategic mix of destination event types that deliver an appropriate dispersal of visitation throughout the calendar year and across the region.

A considered portfolio of events will drive and support the visitor economy by

- positioning the Macleay Valley Coast as a premier regional visitor destination
- attracting visitation, particularly overnight visitation, and ideally in off peak periods or to lesser-visited parts of the region
- dispersing visitors away from visitation hotspots when possible
- tempting visitors to extend their visit to attend an event
- adding to the visitor experience
- promoting return visitation by event attendees
- being supportive of, and supported by, the local community.

Case Study: A regional city's destination event success

Bathurst Regional Council's Destination Management Plan identifies sports events as a growth opportunity area to develop. The Council has been strategically investing in sport facilities to attract large-scale sports events that attract visitors. An example is the Bathurst Cup and the Proctor Park Challenge, annual girls and boys soccer tournaments that attract crowds and fill local accommodations. These events each attract around 1,300 players and officials, and 5,000 spectators, mostly visitors.

The Council's ongoing investment in facilities and in developing relationships with major sporting events has resulted in a positive reputation that has led to a rise in requests to host diverse sports events across multiple codes, from grassroots to professional. Though the Council has worked with sports marketing agencies to pitch for events, most events held in the region now come on their own initiative, attracted by the combination of quality sports facilities and plenty of accommodation (a legacy of the Bathurst 1000). In 2023 there were 17 significant sporting events in Bathurst in addition to 5 major motorsports events. Sports tourism is widely acknowledged as vital to local accommodation providers for the quiet times between school holiday and other major events.

To maximise the benefits of these events for the community, by increasing the length of stay of visitors and their expenditure, the Council has developed relationships with accommodations and sports clubs to ensure visitors receive destination information to inspire them to plan to stay longer, and encourage return visits. Council also leverages large sports events to increase community benefit, such as through player workshops and interactions between the visiting pro teams and local amateur teams and schools.

Actions

- Refine Council's sponsorship program.
- Develop a business events prospectus.
- Facilitate collaboration to support the attraction of best-fit business events.
- Identify and pitch to attract destination events that fit the guiding principles.
- Investigate whether it is feasible to reinstate key destination events recently lost from Macleay Valley Coast.
- Identify opportunities for the development of new 'best-fit' event(s).

7.2 Maximise economic and visitation outcomes from events

Events require significant investment to deliver well. Rather than delivering destination events, Council's Economic Development and Tourism team can leverage their resources to multiply their impact and return on investment by focusing on maximising outcomes from events executed by third-party event organisers. This focus will result in the development of a portfolio of destination events that attract overnight visitation resulting in increased visitor expenditure, awareness of, and love for, the Macleay Valley Coast.

Case study: Collaboration to increase benefits

When Bendigo Art Gallery secured the Elvis: Direct from Graceland exhibition, the City worked hard to leverage the investment to maximise outcomes for the local economy.

A 'VIVA Bendigo' campaign was developed to engage local businesses in offering Elvis-themed events, menu items, and merchandise, and discounts for visitors.

Local accommodations provided packages, restaurants and bars added Elvis-themed desserts and cocktails to their menus, businesses played Elvis tunes, and the City packaged these up into Elvis-themed overnight itineraries.



Case study: Seasonal events calendar

A seasonal calendar of events was a vital tool used by Coolamon Shire Council to increase visitor numbers to the small rural town of Coolamon and surrounding villages, and their benefit for the local economy.

Every three months, Council collects details on upcoming events, which are then promoted widely. This seasonal marketing campaign keeps locals informed of what is coming up and encourages them to invite family and friends to visit for events. The calendar of events created also helps community groups and businesses to forward plan and ensures event dates do not clash.

The region's events promoted through the seasonal calendar have had an impressive impact on visitation to Coolamon. On weekends, the town has transformed due to increased visitation, resulting in the opening of several new main street businesses.

Case study: Leveraging events guide for businesses

East Gippsland Shire Council developed a practical guide to help businesses identify how they could leverage events to increase sales.

The toolkit provides a multitude of ways businesses can make more sales during events, but also how they can help attract more visitors to come to the region for events.

During the East Gippsland Winter Festival, the Paynesville Business and Tourism Association (BTA) organised Paynesville businesses to collectively light up the Esplanade with fairy lights to create a magical atmosphere called Paynesville Illumination.

While The Floating Tin Shed stage hosted live music on the weekend, and businesses stayed open later than usual to sell a meal or a treat to spectators. Together the businesses also promoted the special event.



Actions

- Develop a standardised event data gathering system.
- Report to the community on the value of the events.
- Develop a new Macleay Valley Coast brand toolkit for event organisers.
- Develop an event management toolkit for event organisers.
- Work with organisers of destination events to identify opportunities where Macleay Valley Coast can promote the region to visiting attendees.
- Develop marketing collateral to inform visitors of events happening across the region before and during their stay.

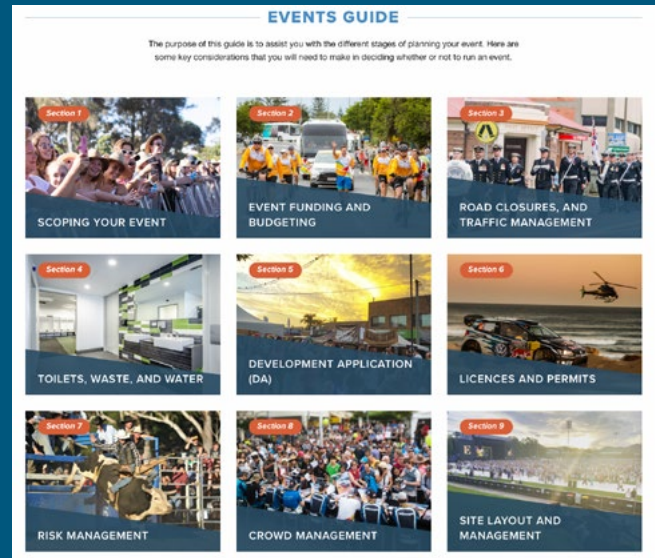
7.3 Support the development and delivery of 'best fit' events

To help destination events reach their potential, and become or remain viable for the long term, Council will provide resources to help both local and visiting event organisers. By providing more event support, Council can be seen as a creative partner and event enabler, and a powerful support system for the events industry, making the region more attractive to event organisers.

Case study: Event organisers' hub

Port Macquarie has an example of an event organisers' guide in online booklet (pdf) form, whereas Coffs Coast provides an online hub in the form of webpages.

Both provide information event organisers need in way that is quick and easy to find.



Actions

- Develop an event organisers' information hub/toolkit.
- Include destination event organisers in Council's tourism industry database to receive monthly industry newsletters.
- Provide networking opportunities for destination event organisers
- Facilitate brainstorming sessions with destination event organisers to develop ideas for new 'best fit' events for the region
- Continue the process of applying for a Development Approval to host outdoor events at the Slim Dusty Centre.
- Continue to support Development Applications by venues to host destination events.
- Advocate for trail development, including the construction of connections between trails and improved mapping
- Advocate for the addition of access points to the Macleay River to support its activation by events.
- Advocate for the development of active transport corridors to enable use by event attendees.

8. Enablers

The following recommended actions for other teams within Council will support the Economic Development and Tourism team to maximise economic outcomes from events and build the region's portfolio of destination events.

- Develop to-scale site plans, example event site plans, traffic management plan templates, and emergency evacuation plan templates for key Council-managed event venues.
- Conduct an audit of Council-managed venues to identify gaps in infrastructure at key event venues.
- Masterplan and construct a venue for large community events suitable for use during and after wet weather.
- Develop a central calendar of events.
- Develop an inter-unit Events Working Group.
- Streamline the event application and approval processes.



Part C: Activation



9. Roles within Council

9.1 Roles of Economic Development and Tourism team

This Plan recommends a shift in the role of the Economic Development and Tourism team (excluding the Slim Dusty Centre) away from event delivery to focus its resources on event attraction and maximising visitor economy outcomes.

Rationale:

- Council does not have adequate human resources to deliver destination events to the standard needed to meet visitor and resident expectations.
- Council does not have adequate financial resources to deliver destination events. Council's recent larger events have been funded with one-off grant funding, which is not a viable financial model for annual events. To deliver signature events requires a significantly higher level of investment in event delivery staff and budget than Council is currently investing. A review of the budgets of 20 events that attract 3,000-5,000 attendees revealed a cost to deliver of around \$20 to \$280 per visitor (excluding outliers). In other words, \$10,000 to \$280,000 per 1,000 attendees. At the lower end of the scale, these events attracted only locals.
- Without sufficient human and financial resources, it is not possible to make Sculptures in the Gaol and Macleay Music Muster competitive as destination events. Council is competing with neighbours with larger budgets who are delivering similar events, such as ArtWalk and Boots & Beach Country Music Festival in Port Macquarie.
- Council can work smarter with the resources it has by taking a strategic approach to attract and support events with visitation and destination awareness outcomes; by focusing on working with those events with visitation potential instead of spreading support thinly across all events.
- Shifting resources to a partnership and support model would attract events that fit the Macleay Valley Coast's unique attributes and assets, and better position the destination as a premier location for the 'best-fit' events such as participation sports events that showcase the region's spectacular landscapes.
- A focus on event attraction could increase benefits for the community, including dispersal away from tourism hotspots, and outside of busy tourism seasons.
- It is becoming less common for Councils to deliver destination events. For example, Bellingen Shire Council does not deliver any destination events. When Bellingen Shire Council receives funding to deliver events, they run an Expression of Interest process for others to deliver the events.

Case study: Managing the end of a long-time festival

Fun4Kids Festival was a multi-award-winning not-for-profit event managed by Warrnambool City Council for close to two decades. Designed to attract visitors and boost the local economy in the off-peak tourist season, the eight days of kids activities was held each year during the first week of the school holidays, attracting 25,000 attendees to Warrnambool, whose population is 34,000. The event was well known across the state of Victoria.

However, for Council's small Events team, the event was not sustainable, even after being shortened down to five days, and the last event ran at a \$600,000 loss - almost \$150,000 above the planned budget.

The Council successfully managed the ending of hosting this event with messaging to the community that Council was instead going to invest the same budget into support for 50 other local events, instead of consuming most of the Events team's time and budget on one event. There was a mixed reception in the community to the news, as some felt the event had been a waste of ratepayer's money while others felt nostalgic for it. Once the community started to see the benefit of the decision experienced by other events, the overall reception to this choice was positive.



The recommended destination event-related roles for Council's Economic Development and Tourism team moving forward are as follows.

Role	Description
Attract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and pitch for events aligned with the region's facilities and natural assets Provide detailed information online to support the attraction of the best-fit sports, business, arts and cultural events
Support/enable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund events that are likely to have economic impact and are aligned with the principles of events (see below) Build capacity of and facilitate networking between local destination event organisers
Maximise outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage events to increase their economic impacts (e.g., increase visitation, length of stay, visitor expenditure, event organiser spend with local suppliers, etc) Utilise events to build the Macleay Valley Coast destination brand profile and raise awareness around the region
Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively support the promotion of events to visitors Promote the value of destination events attracted and sponsored to Councillors and the community



9.2 Roles of other teams within Council

Events touch numerous teams across Council, from those who maintain venues, ensuring the lawns are mowed before events, to those who plan for future infrastructure developments to meet the recreational needs of the community, and many other touchpoints in between.

Role	Description	Responsible Team
Regulate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure events meet regulations through streamlined event approval and development approval processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service Development Assessment Parks & Recreation Traffic Management Compliance Environmental Health Communications
Support/enable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide, maintain, improve and manage bookings at Council-managed venues Fund community events aligned with desired community development outcomes Build capacity of and facilitate networking between local event organisers Develop a community events plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks & Recreation Asset Management Customer Service Community Development
Deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver events that achieve desired community development or other outcomes unrelated to the visitor economy Support the delivery of events (e.g. waste management support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Development Library Waste Services and Education
Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively support the promotion of events to locals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications



9.3 Roles of partners

A range of stakeholders within and beyond Macleay Valley Coast also have roles to play around events.

Role	Description	Organisation
Regulate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure events meet regulations through the development approval legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Department of Planning
Attract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and pitch for sports events aligned with the region's sporting facilities Identify and pitch for business events aligned with the region's function centres and quality accommodation capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local sports clubs Function centre managers Destination North Coast
Support/enable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate collaboration between local event organisers Hire out event venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community groups Venue managers
Maximise outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage events to increase their economic impacts (e.g., increase visitation, length of stay, visitor expenditure, event organiser spend with local suppliers, etc) Utilise events to build the Macleay Valley Coast destination brand profile and raise awareness of the region and what is on offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local tourism operators Local businesses
Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively promote events to visitors and the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event organisers Local tourism operators
Deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional event organisers Community groups Organisations, such as South West Rocks Figtree Descendants Aboriginal Corporation

10. Implementation Plan

10.1 Economic Development & Tourism team

#	Action	Timing
Strategic Priority 1: Cultivate a considered event portfolio		
1.1	<p>Refine Council's sponsorship program by developing the Macleay Valley Coast Destination Event Partnership Fund and the Macleay Valley Coast Event Attraction Fund.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For each fund, develop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A sponsorship application form aligned with the fund's objectives and guiding principles A sponsorship agreement with suggestions on how the event organiser can measure outcomes for their post event report e.g., how to format questions in their attendee survey A post event report template for the event organiser to report on outcomes. Provide information on Council's website about each fund's objectives and the event principles. Accept applications on a rolling basis during each financial year until funds are exhausted. 	Short term
1.2	Develop a business events prospectus aimed at boutique events that are a good fit for the region's infrastructure (function centre size in combination with suitable accommodation type and capacity). Provide to Destination North Coast and publish the content in the event organisers' hub (see Action 3.1).	Short term
1.3	Facilitate collaboration to support the attraction of best-fit business events, such as between smaller business event venues, quality accommodation providers, and team building activity providers to host business incentive events, such as with accommodation provided by multiple providers.	Short term
1.4	Identify desirable destination events that fit the guiding principles, particularly business and sports events, and use the Macleay Valley Coast Event Attraction Fund to pitch to attract them to the Macleay Valley Coast.	Medium term
1.5	Investigate whether it is feasible to reinstate any destination events recently lost from the Macleay Valley Coast.	Short term
1.6	Work together with third-party event organisers to identify opportunities for the development of new events. Any such event would require the development of a financial model with owned revenue streams to ensure long-term viability.	Long term
Strategic Priority 2: Maximise economic and visitation outcomes from events		
2.1	Develop a standardised event data gathering system to enable comparable economic impact assessments for events, using a combination of economic impact questions in attendee surveys (See Appendix for example questions) to provide data to input into Council's economic impact software (Profile.ID's Event Impact reports) to measure economic impact more accurately.	Medium
2.2	<p>Report annually to the community on the value of destination events held in Kempsey Shire.</p> <p>Write a media release, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The economic impact of events Other economic value, such as amounts fundraised via events by community groups How businesses and community groups leveraged event to achieve outcomes such as increase sales Newsworthy personal stories 	Long

#	Action	Timing
2.3	Develop a Macleay Valley Coast brand toolkit for event organisers.	Short
2.4	Develop an event management toolkit for event organisers.	Short
2.5	Work with organisers of destination events to identify opportunities where Macleay Valley Coast can promote the region to visiting attendees.	Medium
2.6	Develop marketing collateral to inform visitors of events happening across the region before and during their stay.	Medium
Strategic Priority 3: Support the development and execution of ‘best fit’ events		
3.1	<p>Develop an event organisers’ hub and host it in one consolidated section of Council’s website.</p> <p>Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed information on venues (see below) • Information on approvals and licenses required by events • Online bookings of Council-managed venues • Information on funding support available for events from Council and where to find other grant opportunities • Event management toolkit with event management templates, including a checklist to help event organisers know how to make their event more accessible and more sustainable, particularly low cost options, and this video from the perspective of event attendees with disability • Macleay Valley Coast brand toolkit and marketing kit to help event organisers promote the destination, with links to where to list their event online, including how to subscribe to Council’s tourism industry newsletter • Training and networking opportunities • How Council supports event, and the relevant contacts at Council (e.g. to contact the Community Development unit for capacity building support, and the Economic Development and Tourism unit for support and advice to grow out of region visitation to an event) • Council’s extreme weather event crisis response plan • The contacts of local organisations who support or work with events, such as community groups who will deliver elements of an event to fundraise, and local educational organisations with students looking for event management work experience. <p>To help non-local event organisers quickly and easily identify ideal venues for their events, information on venues should include both Council-managed and private venues, and detail the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity • Infrastructure details relevant to events, such as power, lighting, water, toilets, accessibility infrastructure, public transport service, parking, underground infrastructure, heavy vehicle restrictions, and infrastructure that supports on-river events, such as boat launches, boat parking, and riverside parks. • To-scale site plans including all event infrastructure and information to support accessibility, example site plans for a typical event held at the venue (for key venues) • Maps of trails to support nature-based adventure sport events, particularly at South West Rocks and for state forests. • Venue-specific emergency evacuation, risk management and traffic management plan templates for key event venues. <p>Link to the hub from relevant places, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue booking confirmation emails for Council-managed venues • Event approval confirmation emails • The tourism industry email newsletter 	Short

#	Action	Timing
3.2	<p>Include destination event organisers in Council's tourism industry database to receive Council's monthly tourism industry e-newsletters.</p> <p>This regular contact will support Council's aim to encourage event organisers to come to Council in the initial stages of event planning, including those who will not use Council-managed venues.</p> <p>Include content in the newsletters such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Council's event organisers' hub, such as a featured template • Information on local tourism marketing campaigns they can leverage to attract visitors • Information on event venue upgrades • Tips on how to increase an event's economic impact • Upcoming grants suitable for events • Upcoming training for event organisers • The Macleay Valley Coast marketing kit, with information and resources (such as social media graphics) to help event organisers promote the destination to visiting attendees • Upcoming events, and encouragement to 'claim your date' with an online listing in the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) 	Short
3.3	Encourage event organisers to attend Council's bimonthly gathering for tourism operators as a networking opportunity to support increased collaboration and efficiencies.	Short
3.4	Facilitate brainstorming sessions with destination event organisers to develop ideas for new 'best fit' events for the region.	Long
3.5	Continue the process of applying for a Development Approval to host outdoor events at the Slim Dusty Centre.	Short
3.6	Continue to support Development Applications by venues to host destination events.	As appropriate
3.7	Advocate for the construction of trail connections that would support the attraction of more adventure sport events, and maximise outcomes from the region's trail network. Remember to consider how waterway trails, ocean trails, and land-based trails interact. Publish the maps in the event organisers' hub. A consultancy such as Blue Sky Trails can support this activity.	As appropriate
3.8	Advocate for access points to the Macleay River to support its activation by events, such as an accessible canoe launch, and camping pads.	As appropriate
3.9	Advocate for the development of active transport corridors to enable use by event attendees as well as to support intraregional travel by residents, particularly youth.	As appropriate
3.10	Encourage commercial event venues such as Kempsey Showground, Trial Bay Gaol, Waves Campground, and Sherwood Estate to develop to-scale site plans, and emergency evacuation plan templates and add them to their website.	Short

Timing

Actions	Short	Medium	Long
Refine Council's sponsorship program			
Develop a business events prospectus			
Facilitate collaboration to support the attraction of best-fit business events			
Identify and pitch to attract destination events that fit the guiding principles			
Investigate feasibility of reinstating key destination events recently lost			
Identify opportunities for the development of new 'best-fit' event(s)			
Develop an event data gathering system			
Report to the community on the value of the events			
Develop a new Macleay Valley Coast brand toolkit for event organisers			
Develop an event management toolkit for event organisers			
Identify opportunities to promote the region to visiting attendees			
Develop marketing collateral to inform visitors of events held during their stay			
Develop an event organisers' information hub			
Include destination event organisers in Council's tourism industry database			
Provide networking opportunities for destination event organisers			
Facilitate brainstorming sessions to develop ideas for new 'best fit' events			
Continue applying for DA to host outdoor events at Slim Dusty Centre			
Continue supporting DAs by venues to host destination events			
Advocate for trail development	As appropriate		
Advocate for the addition of access points to the Macleay River	As appropriate		
Advocate for the development of active transport corridors	As appropriate		
Encourage commercial venues to develop site and emergency evacuation plan templates			

10.2 Other teams within Council

The following actions to support destination events are for other teams within Council, as specified.

Action	Timing
<p>For key Council managed event venues, develop to-scale site plans, example event site plans, traffic management plan templates, and emergency evacuation plan templates. Add these to the event organisers' hub.</p> <p>Examples of key event venues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slim Dusty Centre • Riverside Park • Stuarts Point Reserve • Smith Street • Mid North Coast High Performance Centre • Brighton Park • Verge and Eden Streets Multi-purpose pavilion 	Short
<p>Conduct an audit of Council-managed venues likely to appeal to event organisers to identify gaps in infrastructure that would reduce hiring costs such as power, water, toilets, and drainage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Council website and Council's event organisers hub with details. • Continue to invest in adding such infrastructure. 	Medium
<p>Masterplan and construct a venue for large community events suitable for use during and after wet weather.</p>	Medium
<p>Develop one central calendar of events, and include community events, tourism events, sports events, and business events.</p> <p>Ensure listings can be tagged with accessibility features, so these features can be searched for by attendees.</p> <p>Everi software can pull online event listings into one calendar, includes tagging, and has a forum for event organiser communications.</p>	Short
<p>Develop an inter-unit Events Working Group and meet monthly or bimonthly to support internal collaboration on events and to collaborative support homegrown and attracted events.</p> <p>The purpose of the working group will be to improve collaboration, efficiencies, and internal awareness of Council-run events; reflect on events delivered to identify future improvements; and find solutions for event challenges.</p> <p>Units to include in the working group include the following units who deliver events, have touchpoints with events such as traffic management or marketing, or manage event venues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development and Tourism • Community Development (including Recovery) • Customer Service (venue bookings) • Development Approvals • Slim Dusty Centre • Library • Weeds • Road Safety • Communications and Engagement • Mayor and General Manager's Office <p>The Working Group should develop a shared digital filing system for event management procedures and templates. The event organisers' hub will also support Council event organisers as a 'how to run events' guide with event management templates.</p>	Short
<p>Consider how the event approval and development approvals can be streamlined for event organisers who are not familiar with the process, and response times improved.</p>	Short

11. Measures of success

Council will measure the three pillars of sustainability when assessing event impacts (economic, socio-cultural, and environmental). Council-funded events will be required to report in a consistent format on agreed outcomes, enabling Council’s Economic Development and Tourism unit to report annually on the following measures of success. Consistency of measures across events and across time will enable effective comparison to see improvements.

Outcome	Measure of funded events	Means of measurement
Increased visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of daytrip and overnight visitors Average visitor expenditure 	Attendee survey ²¹ undertaken by event organiser
Increased economic impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total amount of grants and sponsorship secured from outside the Shire Total amount of event organiser local (in-Shire) expenditure 	Event organiser budget
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of local staff, artists, and business suppliers hired Number of local First Nations staff, artists and First Nations-owned suppliers (or percentage of budget spent with them) 	Event organiser records
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant economic impact (e.g. expenditure by non-local entertainers and stallholders) 	Participant survey undertaken by event organiser
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total visitor expenditure Event economic impact Return on investment (Council investment: Event economic impact) 	Data from attendee survey undertaken by event organiser input into Economy ID algorithm
Social benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of local attendees Number of local volunteers Number of local community groups and artists participating 	Attendee and participant surveys undertaken by event organiser
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of Thunggutti/Dunghutti community and culture Number of disability types that accessible features were provided for by the event (to enable attendees with mobility, visual, hearing and neurological disability) 	Event organiser records
Environmental improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reductions in emissions, waste to landfill, and energy consumption (including for transport) per attendee Risk management planning for extreme weather events 	<p>As part of their sponsorship agreement with Council, funded events must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include extreme weather events in their risk mitigation plan develop a sustainability plan with measurable targets²² report on outcomes achieved to Council.
Brand building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events that showcase the best of the region and serve as marketing for the visitor experience in the Macleay 	Attendee survey – Net Promoter Score (‘Would you recommend this event to others’ rating)

²¹ Advice on how to frame economic impact questions in an attendee survey can be found [here](#)

²² Council’s Sustainability Officer can help event organisers develop their plan. A template will be provided in the event organiser toolkit.

APPENDICES

Event sponsorship model

Council will re-allocate the event management budget of the Economic Development and Tourism team to focus on partnership and the attraction of events that will achieve economic outcomes.

The recommended model for event funding consists of the following three funds.

1. Macleay Valley Coast Destination Event Partnership Fund

This fund will aim to support increased outcomes from destination events that align with the guiding principles.

Within this fund, there will be three sub-categories to ensure that there is a pathway for event development leading to long-term self-sufficiency.

- a. Incubator Fund – seed-funding for **new** events, either at conception stage or within the first two years of delivery
- b. Pathway to Growth Fund – for **emerging** events that have been running for more than two years to help elevate their profile and attract visitation. Community events that have the potential to be elevated to destination events are considered emerging events.
- c. Enhancement Fund – for **established** events that have been held for more than five years and are able to demonstrate a clear strategic rationale for the continued development of their tourism potential (such as increased length of stay or increased expenditure by visitors, or significant state-wide media attention).

2. Macleay Valley Coast Event Attraction Fund

This fund is targeted at proactively attracting events to Macleay Valley Coast that align with the guiding principles.

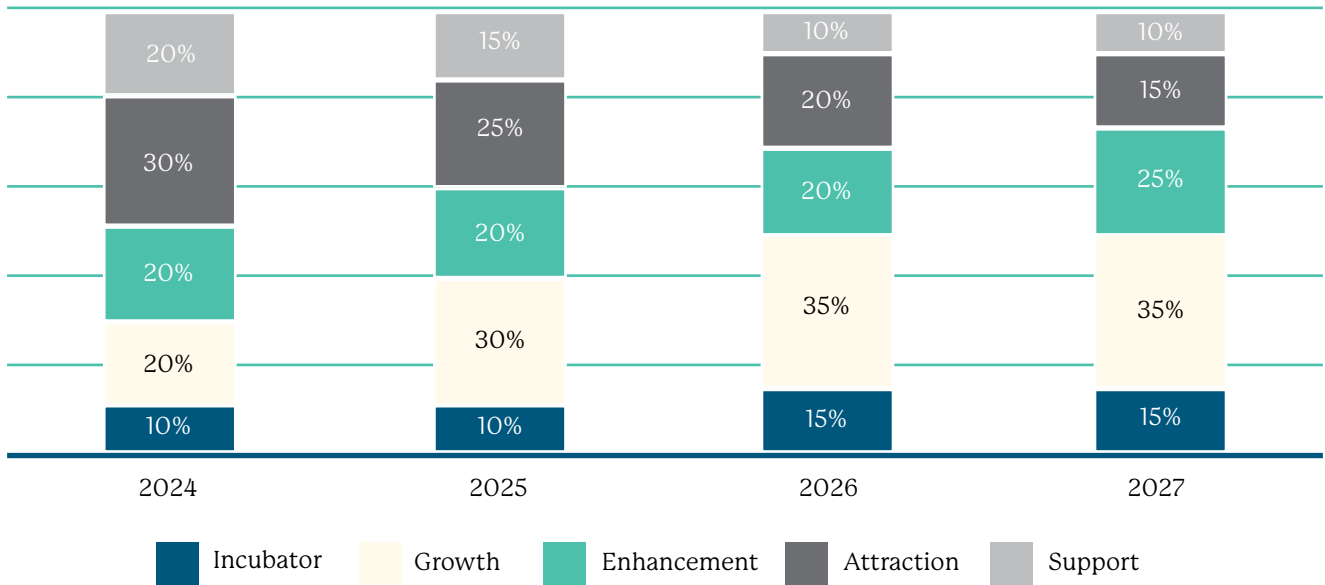
3. Macleay Valley Coast Event Support Fund

This is an internal fund to strategically enhance leveraging of the region's destination events. This fund will enable:

- promoting destination events to target visitor markets
- capturing photo and video content at events to support their future marketing, and promotion of the destination
- support event industry networking
- develop the event organisers' hub and streamlined approval processes.

It is recommended that the Economic Development and Tourism team's total budget is pre-allocated by percentage into the funding categories at a sliding scale over the next four years as capacity increases in the local event industry. Initially there will be a higher percentage of funding for attracted events, which will decrease annually as the local event industry's capacity grows. The incubator fund will decrease as new events move into the growth and enhancement phase. It is recommended that the incubator fund is then maintained to encourage entrepreneurship and the creation of new events in line with current trends.

Total Event Budget by Fund Category



Assessment framework

A balanced portfolio of events across the year will be achieved by assessing events against a set of relevant criteria based on the guiding principles. The following criteria are based on the guiding principles for best-fit events, and the sponsorship program should be transparent regarding these criteria. The requirements for sponsorship will tend to guide event organisers to make choices that improve their chances of receiving funding, such as to deliver their event outside of peak season.

To be considered for sponsorship, events must score highly against five of the following principles. Maximum sponsorship should only be provided to events that are aligned well with all seven principles.

Principle	Criteria Assessed Against - Application	Criteria Assessed Against - Post Event
Deliver economic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event's promotion of accommodations and reasons to stay longer to attendees Estimated visitor attendance Estimated overnight stay Estimated percentage of event expenditure spent with local suppliers Estimated percentage of event revenue received from outside the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers of visiting attendees Average length of stay of visitors Average visitor expenditure Event organiser expenditure with local suppliers Percentage of event revenue received from outside the region
Disperse visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of event outside of tourism hotspots, especially in peak season Held in off peak or shoulder tourism seasons (if held in tourism hotspot) and does not clash with other events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of attendees at event location/s Date held
Build destination profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point of difference, particularly from events held in Coffs Coast and Port Macquarie Alignment to Council's and/or Destination North Coast's tourism Plan Brand exposure in proposed marketing (how the event organiser proposes to promote the Macleay Valley Coast brand and/or destination) Event has good brand awareness opportunities for Macleay Valley Coast as a sponsor Unique/custom tools that integrate information on the region into event attendee experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net promotor score Media coverage Visibility of Macleay Valley Coast branding before, during and after the event to attendees (e.g. signage displayed at event)
Provide a quality experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of professionalism of event delivery Experience and composition of organising committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net promotor score from attendee survey Media coverage (exposure and sentiment)
Align with community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment to Council's Community Strategic Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of local attendees
Are inclusive and accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event has an access and inclusion plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility and diversity/inclusion of the event (improvement outcomes reported by the event organiser)
Are low impact ²³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event has a sustainability plan with measurable targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event organiser reporting of sustainability outcomes based on their plan Net Promoter Score by residents Site inspection post-event Incident reports

²³ All approved events will have noise and traffic management plans to reduce impacts on neighbours

Example economic impact questions for attendee surveys

Where do you normally live?

- Kempsey Shire
- Within 50km [or 100km] of [name of host town]
- Within NSW
- Interstate
- Overseas

Did you travel to [name of host town] specifically to attend the event?

- Yes
- No

If no, did you extend your stay in or near [name of host town] to attend the event?

- Yes
- No

How many nights in total did you spend in or near [name of host town] on this trip?

- 0 - Resident
- 0 - Daytripper
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

If visiting, how many additional nights did you spend in other parts of NSW during this trip?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

If visiting, approximately how much money did you spend in total in or near [name of host town] during this trip, both for yourself and for other people travelling with you, for the following items?

- Food and drink: \$ _____
- Accommodation: \$ _____
- Transport: \$ _____
- Tickets: \$ _____
- Attractions: \$ _____
- Retail purchases: \$ _____



TILMA
GROUP