

Cook Shire Tourism Strategy

Tourism Strategy Action Plan

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Executive Summary

Background

The Cook Shire Tourism Strategy Action Plan (Cook Shire TSAP) is the strategic outcome of a series of research and analysis undertaken throughout the development of the Cook Shire Tourism Strategy. This report builds on the key results of past reports, including:

- Phase I Consultation Report;
- Phase II Consultation Report; and
- Background Assessment Report.

The TSAP represents a key strategic document for the development of Cook Shire's tourism industry over the next 10 years. The report presents results and analysis from the following key project components:

- Key Tourism Markets;
- Strategy action plans; and
- Proposed methodology for capturing visitation statistics.

Strategic Context

The Cook Shire is home to nearly 4,000 residents and a land area 17% larger than Tasmania. Like Tasmania the Cook Shire includes some of Australia's leading wilderness areas and is an aspirational adventure destination for certain visitor markets. However the small population and financial base of the region along with its remoteness results in continual challenges for developing the region's tourism industry. The region has potential tourism assets far beyond what it can feasibly pursue, and as such a constant of this strategy has been a need to focus on a limited suite of best prospect directions.

The TSAP lays out a set of regional priorities for the next 10 years. It does not intend to supplant individual tourism operator and or organisation activities though it should be considered at these levels as a guide to shared directions. Rather it provides the roadmap for where the region should come together and pursue strategic priorities that will build the long-term value of tourism in the Cook Region. The region requires a more coordinated and strategic approach into the future if it is to begin to develop to its full potential.

Tourism in Cook Shire

Based on business numbers and employment by industry, tourism is already Cook Shire's second largest industry, after *Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing*. Tourists bring significant benefits to the region, creating expenditure in a range of businesses and contribute to sustaining services, infrastructure and events across the Shire that ultimately benefit all residents. Tourism is already an integral part of the Cook economy and community, with the potential to grow in importance and contribution over the next 10 years.

Priority Markets

The core priority market for the Cook Shire is the domestic 4WD / Adventure market. This is already the major visitor market for the region, and the market where Cape York has an already established aspirational reputation above competitor destinations in Queensland and Australia. The 4WD / Adventure scene also contributes much of the exposure and credibility of Cook as a destination, and so a focus on engaging with this market segment has flow-on benefits to other priority markets.

Other key current priority markets are Grey Nomads and Domestic Leisure markets. Both of these markets cross over with the core 4WD / Adventure market in interests and requirements in the region however generally have different preferences for the methods of accessing and experiencing the region.

Further market segments are relevant to Cook Shire, but do not form as worthwhile priorities for the region as a whole. This TSAP does not recommend significant efforts to develop the Cruise Ship market, with major practical and cost constraints to significantly enhancing this market for Cook Shire.

Capturing Tourism Visitation

As a part of the initial project brief, AECgroup has developed a methodology for capturing visitation and expenditure statistics in Cook Shire. The analysis includes a brief literature review, which included consultation with Tourism Queensland (TQ) regarding their methods for estimating visitor numbers and expenditure in regions of Queensland. The methodology developed includes a survey approach and requires a number of industry partners to collect bi-annual visitation statistics to their business. The successful implementation of the proposed methodology will provide Cook Shire with a total estimate for tourism visitation and an average expenditure per day / night for various tourism related expenditure categories. Collecting these statistics over time will allow planning bodies and industry members to monitor the overall health of Cook Shire's tourism industry and make better informed decisions.

The proposed methodology for collecting tourism visitation in Cook Shire follows a similar approach to that of Tourism Queensland's (TQ) Destination Visitor Surveys, whereby a survey will be utilised. However, the methodology differs where the application of TQ's approach for collecting data for Cook Shire would be overly expensive and/or require major project planning and design. An overview of the methodology for estimating tourist visitation and expenditure to Cook Shire is considered in Table A.2.

Table E.1: Summary Tourism Visitation Statistics Methodology

Stage	Action / Task	Detail
1	Find supportive businesses / operators that can collect visitor data (i.e. raw numbers of visitors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data should ideally be characterised bi-annually to reflect differences between seasons The businesses / operators should ideally be distributed across the Shire to at least three different townships (i.e. Cooktown, Coen, Portland Roads or Laura)
2	Design survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the proportion of tourists visiting the businesses / operators consolidated in Stage 1 Identify average daily spend on various items
3	Find supportive businesses that are willing to administer the survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey should ideally be administered on a bi-annual basis to reflect differences between seasons The survey sample size will depend largely on project budget constraints – a sample range of 200 – 400 would initially be sufficient The survey should ideally be distributed across the Shire to at least three different townships (i.e. Cooktown, Coen, Portland Roads or Laura) Survey should include accommodation businesses so as to capture the business tourism market
4	Compile data on an annual basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitation statistics for several key businesses / operators in the low and high seasons Proportion of tourists visiting the key businesses / operators in the low and high seasons Expenditures per day / night in the low and high seasons
5	Data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extrapolate visitor data at the key businesses / operators based on the proportion of tourists visiting these attractions (for low and high seasons) Take an average of the extrapolated visitation for all of the data points (for low and high seasons) Add low and high total average visitations to determine total annual visitation Determine average daily expenditure by category based on data obtained from the survey (can do so for low and high seasons and aggregate)

Source: AECgroup

Tourism Strategy Action Plan

The TSAP is a product of significant research and past project components including detailed stakeholder consultation, background demographic and economic analysis, review of existing literature and a comprehensive audit of Cook Shire's tourism products.

The TSAP specifically considers a number of key opportunities, which have been identified through an in depth opportunity identification and assessment process. Individual action plans have been developed for the highest scoring opportunities across a number of criteria important to Cook Shire.

The action plans include a brief project description, required resources to undertake the project, a list of key stakeholders, analysis relating to economic benefits, potential challenges, a staged action plan (including timing guidance) and key performance indicators.

The Cook Shire TSAP includes action plans for the highest scoring opportunities from the opportunity assessment. The leading opportunities are:

- Long Term Marketing Strategy –Low Cost / Targeted Focus;
- Grey Nomads and Camping Strategy (Cooktown focus);
- Expansion of Camping Related Tourism Facilities in the Iron Range Area;
- Emerging Market Development (China Focus);
- Cape York Touring Trails Development;
- Proactive Council Investment Attraction;
- Coen and Peninsula Development Road Signage Strategy; and
- Ongoing Preparation of the Cooktown Visitor Survey.

Summary

The strategic initiatives outlined in this TSAP focus on clear, achievable directions of clear relevance to Cook Shire’s markets which are appropriate to the region’s resources to deliver the strategies.

Several strategic initiatives are more aspirational and less certain (e.g. Emerging Market Development), on the basis of pursuing limited higher risk and longer term directions which have the potential to bring major benefits to the region’s tourism future. Ingredients within Cook Shire for success with emerging markets are apparent, but the pathways to success are not yet so clear.

The success of this TSAP will be determined primarily by the actions of the region’s stakeholders over the next 10 years. By focusing on these initiatives as a region, Cook Shire has the potential to significantly improve outcomes for its tourism related businesses.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2009, the Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism with the support of the Cook Shire Council, commenced the preparation of a marketing action plan, which was later completed in 2010. The marketing plan recommended that further research be undertaken to develop the long term sustainability of tourism in Cook Shire. The Cook Shire Council adopted this recommendation and has commissioned AECgroup to develop the Cook Shire Tourism Strategy to provide strategic direction for tourism in Cook Shire over the next 10 years.

The Cook Shire Tourism Strategy has been developed to address the following key objectives:

- Investigate strategies for the successful management of the 'Grey Nomad' and cruise ship tourism markets;
- Develop an appropriate methodology for estimating and recording tourism visitation numbers and associated statistics in the region;
- Promote the sustainable use of resources in relation to tourism development;
- Outline a long term marketing action plan;
- Identify, analyses and prioritise tourism product and infrastructure development; and
- Conduct comprehensive consultation with community members, regional tourism industry operators and tourism planning representatives.

The Cook Shire includes some of Australia's leading wilderness areas with Cape York an aspirational adventure destination for a niche market, particularly 4WD enthusiasts. However the region is challenged by its remoteness, small population (about 4,000 residents) and subsequently small funding pool relative to its land area (which is 17% larger than Tasmania).

1.2 Purpose of Report

The Cook Shire Tourism Strategy Action Plan (Cook Shire TSAP) is the strategic outcome of a series of research and analysis undertaken throughout the development of the Cook Shire Tourism Strategy. This report builds upon a series of previous research and the key results of the past reports, including:

- Phase I Consultation Report;
- Phase II Consultation Report; and
- Background Assessment Report.

The TSAP will represent a key strategic document for the development of Cook Shire's tourism industry over the next 10 years. It is intended to guide all of the region's tourism stakeholders, but with a particular focus on actions led by Cook Shire Council and the Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism.

The report presents results and analysis from the following key project components:

- Key Tourism Markets;
- Strategy action plans; and
- Proposed methodology for capturing visitation statistics.

1.3 Importance of Tourism to Cook Shire

Tourism is often talked of as an industry but technically it is not an industry but a segment of consumer demand. This is important, because the reason tourism is not definable as a true industry is that tourists create expenditure in a range of businesses within a region and contribute to sustaining services, infrastructure and events across a community.

Accommodation and Food Services is the industry that is most often considered a reasonable proxy for tourism activity as it is the most strongly driven by tourism demand. In Cook Shire 12.0% of businesses are in *Accommodation and Food Services*, compared to 5.2% in the Far North Queensland Statistical Division. 12.0% of the Shire's employment is in *Accommodation and Food Services* which is significantly higher than in the Far North Queensland Statistical Division or Queensland as a whole. The largest employing sectors in the Cook Shire are *Public Administration and Safety* with 12.3% of the Shire's employment and *Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing* with 18.2%. Given that tourism related employment extends into a range of industries other than *Accommodation and Food Services* it is safe to conclude that tourism is Cook Shire's second largest employing industry.

It is clear that tourism development needs to be a priority of Cook Shire in maintaining and developing its economy. The following Tourism Strategy Action Plan supports the need for the Cook region to focus more strategically on its tourism future.

1.4 Planning Context

The Cook Shire TSAP will inform Cook Shire Council planning but is not a Council document in itself. Background reports to this document, in particular the consultation reports, will be used by Cook Shire Council in updating several plans, including the Cook Shire Community Plan, Events Strategy, Cultural Plan and new Cook Shire Planning Scheme.

2. Cook Shire Tourism Markets

Cook Shire’s six largest tourism visitor markets have been considered in terms of alignment with Cook’s tourism products and value to the region. Table 2.1 describes each visitor type and the key experience types they seek in tourism destinations.

Table 2.1: Key Visitor Markets for Cook Shire

Visitor Market	Description (Cook Context)	Experiences
Grey Nomads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55 – 80 years • Usually retired or semi-retired • Generally from southern Queensland or interstate (New South Wales, Victoria, etc.) • Usually travel as a couple • Largely self-contained • Generally spend longer than average periods of time at various locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local history • Bird / animal watching • Rural Australian and Indigenous culture • Modest accommodation • Local food / wine
Cruise Ship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 – 80 years • Relatively higher spenders • Ships visit Cooktown • Generally spend a shorter than average periods of time at various locations (half a day) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luxury experiences • Shopping • Rural Australian and Indigenous culture • Local history • Fine dining
4WD / Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 – 55 years • Working aged and relatively wealthy • Chasing ‘hero’ experiences (such as reaching the tip of Cape York, running the old telegraph track) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiking / wilderness • Famous landmarks • Fishing • Camping • Rural Australian culture
International Backpackers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 – 30 years • Relatively low spenders overall, though expenditure on activities can be high • Seek to immerse in local culture • Seek value for money experiences • Seek casual employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modest accommodation • Camping • Clubs / bars • Hiking / wilderness • Rural Australian and Indigenous culture
International Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 – 80 years • Generally from European countries (Including Germany, United Kingdom, etc.) • Generally families • Moderately to high spending • Seeking organised and cultural experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural Australian and Indigenous culture • Local food / wine • Hiking / wilderness • Moderate to Luxury accommodation • Relaxing experiences
Domestic Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 – 55 years • Often families with children • Mostly use own car for travel and transport • Working aged and relatively wealthy • Significant proportion from North Queensland • Considerable proportion from South-East Queensland and interstate • Sometimes fall under the 4WD / Adventure market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modest accommodation • Hiking / wilderness • Fishing • History • Camping

Source: AECgroup

Note: Business tourists are not identified separately as in the Cook context they are a market primarily defined by essential expenditures as opposed to a discretionary and contestable market of significance. Visiting Friends and Relatives are not identified separately as they are considered to align their tourism interests with the markets outlined above.

2.1.1 Cook Shire Visitor Market Product Compatibility Summary

AECgroup has prepared a detailed audit of tourism products in Cook Shire and their prima facie compatibility with the interests of the Shire’s key visitor markets (*Cook Shire Tourism Strategy: Background Assessment Report*). In general, Cook Shire records high compatibility for its suite of tourism products with most of its key markets. Perhaps surprisingly, the *International Leisure* visitor market records the highest compatibility across all product categories, followed by *Domestic Leisure* and *4WD / Adventure*. However whilst product appeal is high, the time and financial costs of accessing many of the region’s assets is a significant barrier to many markets. The *Cruise Ship* visitor market records the lowest compatibility relative to Cook Shire’s tourism products and was the only key visitor market to fall below the 3.50 benchmark.

Cook Shire has the basis for a relatively broad appeal across its key visitor markets. However focussing the region's resources in targeting all of these markets is unlikely to be successful, due both to the lack of resources and the risk of sending confusing messages to the market.

2.2 Cook Market Priorities

Table 2.2 outlines the market priorities for Cook Shire that has informed the development of this strategy. Note that it is not the intention of this prioritisation to 'reject' any markets, but rather to focus on the markets that stand to deliver the greatest net return for the region.

Table 2.2: Visitor Market Priorities for Cook Shire

Market	Basis
Core	<i>Markets which are the highest priority for the region, and form the core audience at which marketing and communications are targeted</i>
4WD / Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High compatibility with product availability and assets • Relatively wealthy • Perhaps the only segment where Cook is already clearly established with a national reputation is as an aspirational destination for serious 4WD/fishing/camping/outdoor adventure • Relatively low infrastructure and further investment requirements • Strong market growth in Cook over past decade • High dispersal into regions • Highest potential for low season development • Messages to this market provides credibility to the region as a destination to other visitor market types (e.g. Grey Nomads, Domestic Leisure and International Leisure)
Peripheral	<i>Important markets for the region, but of lower value than core markets, and/or responsive to similar messages from the region</i>
Grey Nomads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing market • Reasonable product compatibility • Long lengths of stay • Reasonable dispersal into regions • Relatively low infrastructure and further investment requirements
Domestic Leisure (Local Convenience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Queensland residents for which Cook can be an escape over a long weekend or short holiday • Short escapes and furthering of local interests in different settings (e.g. fishing, camping, bike riding) • Often relatively self-sufficient, though will access fixed accommodation, organised tours and tourism products • Includes VFR and business markets
Domestic Leisure (Experience Seeking Interstate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily interstate visitors that are motivated with the wilderness tropical experience as a contrast to their everyday lives • High compatibility with product availability and assets • Broad market • Many similar interests to 4WD / Adventure market, but more likely to access through organised tours and tourism products • Often interested in Indigenous experiences • Includes VFR and business markets
Developing / Investigating	<i>Markets of low current value to the region, but which show prospects for longer term nurturing</i>
International Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable to high product compatibility • Strong interest in Indigenous products and experiences • Cairns provides a relatively nearby gateway • Significant challenges to a small region developing this market
Non-core / incidental	<i>Markets that are significant to the region, however have minimal growth prospects or minimal likelihood of the region influencing</i>
Cruise ship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constrained market without major infrastructure development • Short stays, need efficient, fast products to deliver whilst in town • Poor regional dispersal
International backpackers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively high product compatibility • Cooktown is not in the core east coast route (requires extension to the major backpacker routes) • Critical mass of supporting products, such as backpacker accommodation, clubs/bars, temporary employment agents is a constraint

Source: AECgroup

Conceptually, there are five stages to winning a visitor to the Cook region:

1. Position the existence of Cook in the visitors conscience;
2. Build the desire / aspiration in the visitor to experience Cook Shire;
3. Motivate the visitor to believe that the aspiration can be converted to an actual visit / experience;
4. Provide information to help a future visitor plan their visit; and
5. Assist the visitor with their experience once in the region to maximise spend and enjoyment.

The Cook region, as Cape York, already has a strong presence in the domestic market's conscience, though not generally as a realistic destination as a tourist. For the core 4WD / Adventure market and for the Domestic Leisure markets the focus of this strategy is on stages 3 and 4. For the Grey Nomad market the focus is on Stage 5.

Stage 1 (Position the existence of Cook in the visitors conscience) is extremely difficult for a region the size of Cook to achieve from first principles. Thankfully for Cook Shire, a strong presence in documentaries, publications and forums over many years has provided a high level of domestic exposure.

3. Tourism Strategy Action Plan

3.1 Overview

The Tourism Strategy Action Plan (TSAP) is a product of significant research and past project components including stakeholder consultations, background demographic and economic analysis, review of existing literature and a comprehensive audit of Cook Shire's tourism products. The TSAP specifically considers a number of key opportunities, which have been identified through an in depth opportunity identification and assessment process. Individual action plans have been developed for the highest scoring opportunities from the opportunity assessment phase. The action plans include a brief project description, required resources to undertake the project, a list of key stakeholders, analysis relating to economic benefits, potential challenges, a staged action plan (including timing) and key performance indicators.

In addition to these opportunities, strategic advice has been prepared regarding the Grey Nomads market, Cook Shire's long term marketing strategy and the cruise ship market. The advice has been based on results from consultations, a review of existing literature and incorporates strategies from the opportunity assessment phase.

3.2 Queensland Tourism Context

Tourism has developed over the past two decades to become one of Queensland's most important sectors for jobs and export earnings. Tourism Queensland is the Queensland Government's peak destination management organisation, responsible for promoting the State for interstate and international visitors.

Tourism Queensland's current brand platform is '*Queensland, Where Australia Shines*'. The platform is designed to move promotion towards consumer's emotional response rather than the State's physical attributes. Four key themes (Queensland Lifestyle; Islands and Beaches; Natural Encounters; and Adventures) and four major tourism regions (Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Tropical North Queensland and The Whitsundays) form the promotable foundation for the State.

Cook Shire bounds the Tropical North Queensland tourism region. Tropical North Queensland is currently marketed as '*Adventurous by Nature*', with the aim to position Tropical North Queensland as Australia's nature-based adventure destination offering the best Australia has to offer in the realm of tropical experiences and nature based adventures.

At the time of writing Tropical North Queensland has suffered several very poor tourism outcomes in recent years as a result of the global financial crisis and a high Australian dollar. Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) is the Regional Tourism Organisation. Whilst its' geographic scope extends from Mission Beach north to Cape York Peninsula and the Torres Strait Islands and west to the Gulf Savannah, its primary role is state as "*to promote/market the destination to increase the awareness and number of visitors travelling to the Cairns & Great Barrier Reef region*".

TTNQ describes Cape York as "*The Last Frontier: 4WD Adventure Safaris or self drive, National Parks, Rainforest, Heathforests, Camping, Accommodation, Fishing, Waterfalls, Wild Rivers, Wildlife, Aboriginal and Island Culture, History*". This description is reasonable, but highlights the contrast with the dominant Cairns region tourism industry.

Tropical North Queensland Current Brand

After 18 months of extensive research and industry consultation, Tourism Queensland and Tourism Tropical North Queensland have launched the new brand. Tropical North Queensland, Adventurous by nature, introduces a new vision for Tropical North Queensland as a tourism destination and focuses on the things that North Queensland is known and loved for. It captures the essence of Tropical North Queensland and repositions Tropical North Queensland as Australia's nature-based adventure destination offering the best Australia has to offer in the realm of tropical experiences and nature based adventures.

Tropical North Queensland invites people in and allows them to explore their adventurous side through nature. True to its personality and engaging, energetic, cheeky, warm and welcoming essence, Tropical North Queensland is perceived by our visitors as 'friendly' and 'free-spirited' in character.

The tourism experience in Cook Shire is towards the periphery of what Tourism Queensland and Tourism Tropical North Queensland is focussed on developing and promoting. This strategy promotes a more self-reliant focus with Cook Shire engaging with its core domestic 4WD / Adventure/ Leisure markets through the growing ability to directly connect with target markets. There is relatively little shared interest in the markets appropriate to Cook Shire and to the Cairns region.

3.3 Opportunity Development Methodology

The opportunity development phase included identifying all relevant tourism opportunities for Cook Shire, designing an assessment framework to reflect the region's priorities and constraints and systematically scoring each opportunity.

A total of 23 assessment criteria were developed in consultation with the Cook Shire Council to assess the identified opportunities. The criteria were combined under five major assessment categories, these being *Project Financial, Economic, Social, Environmental, and Government and Planning*. Priority opportunities included in the TSAP are those that received consistently high scores (relatively to all other opportunities) across multiple assessment categories.

3.4 Implementation

The TSAP is a strategic level document for the development of Cook Shire's tourism industry over the next 10 years. 10 years is a significant time-frame to plan for, particularly in the traditionally volatile tourism sector. It necessitates that stakeholders remain flexible to implementation over the period as circumstances inevitably change. However it is important to remain committed to longer term strategic goals to avoid the region working itself into a poorer tourism position as can sometimes occur with a pure focus on week-to-week and year-to-year needs.

The TSAP is intended to serve as a guide to all of the region's tourism stakeholders. However two key stakeholders are given the strongest focus on progressing actions in the TSAP.

Cook Shire Council is the closest level of government to the community, is formally the best organisation to act as an intermediary between the community / local tourism industry and other layers of government, has the widest reach across the Cook Shire and will almost certainly be the most enduring of the organisations relevant to the Cook Shire TSAP. For reasons including the above, Cook Shire Council is nominated as the key stakeholder in progressing, monitoring and coordinating other stakeholder's contributions.

The Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism is the peak body representing local businesses and tourism interest. It also acts as the Shire's Local Tourism Organisation. The Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism has been a strong supporter of various tourism development initiatives including the development of this TSAP. In terms of implementation the Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism has an important role in

terms of specifying business needs and considerations and collecting information from across the Shire.

Other partners of importance are the other Cape York local governments and development groups such as Balkanu, Ang-Gnarra Aboriginal Corporation, Quinkan and Regional Cultural Centre Ltd and the Cape York Institute.

3.5 Action Plan

The Cook Shire TSAP includes action plans for consistently high scoring opportunities from the opportunity assessment. These opportunities are:

- Long Term Marketing Strategy –Low Cost / Targeted Focus;
- Grey Nomads and Camping Strategy (Cooktown focus);
- Expansion of Camping Related Tourism Facilities in the Iron Range Area;
- Emerging Market Development;
- Cape York Touring Trails Development;
- Proactive Council Investment Attraction;
- Coen and Peninsula Development Road Signage Strategy; and
- Ongoing Preparation of the Cooktown Visitor Survey.

The action plans include detailed descriptions and step-by-step implementation plans for each of the key opportunities. AECgroup's project team has provided input regarding opportunities included in the action plans. As a result, some opportunities have been excluded or re termed as a part of a 'reality checking' process and a broader consideration of Cook Shire's resources and role limitations.

3.5.1 Long Term Marketing Strategy –Low Cost / Targeted Focus

Project Description	Resources Required	Stakeholders and Partners								
<p>The Long Term Marketing Strategy encompasses a number of key marketing related initiatives that received high scores during the opportunity assessment. The initiatives are centred on low financial cost and targeted marketing to the region’s core domestic markets. Cooperative marketing with TQ and TTNQ is limited to working to include a limited presence of iconic Cape York images and experiences in broader Tropical North Queensland and Queensland campaigns.</p>	<p>Traditional advertising is largely prohibitive in cost at effective levels for a region the size of Cook Shire. Modern media is increasingly offering the means for direct and effective communication with markets. Cook’s specific target markets and proactive and personable tourism community are also a strong fit for direct marketing methods.</p> <p>Some central marketing collateral is required to be maintained. It is suggested that primary materials be web-based, with a focus on information and content rather than promotion per se (promotion should focus on the guerrilla marketing approaches). An excellent Cook Tourism web platform has already be developed and provides the cheapest platform to serve as a central area to update and produce materials for other formats (e.g. one-off print runs).</p> <p>Minimal financial outlay is associated with these initiatives however time requirements are substantial, for which there is an opportunity cost incurred.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism (key stakeholder); • Cook Shire Council; • Local enthusiasts of target interest groups (e.g. fisherman, 4WD explorers); • Tour companies; • Relevant target market clubs and organisations; • Relevant event committees; and • Private tourism operators. 								
Benefits from Successfully Implemented Project	Identified Challenges									
<p>Benefits from the various initiatives outlined in this action plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased regional recognition; • Potential increase in tourist visitation and expenditure; • Synergistic marketing effect through social media; • Potentially additional tours and stronger relationships with tour companies; • Improved and more cost efficient business signage system (depending on the findings from the review); • Potentially additional visitation from the use of packages and discounting; and • Possible improved low season performance (less seasonal tourist industry). 	<p>There are several challenges facing the successful implementation of the various initiatives outlined in this action plan. In terms of direct and low cost marketing techniques, social media is possibly the most difficult to use effectively, yet the most rewarding if done well. Cook Shire is relatively well placed in terms that active presences in specific interest areas (e.g. 4x4 online forums) can directly translate into new visitors that make a significant impact to the Shire’s relatively small tourism industry.</p> <p>Finally, negotiating with local businesses and facilitating the development of packaging may be a challenge, as operators may not wish to participate. It is important to be persistent and offer help and support in facilitating the development of any new packages.</p>									
Action Plan	Timeline									
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10
<p>1. Develop and execute a guerrilla marketing¹ program: Develop and implement a number of direct and low cost marketing measures that focus on; forming informal relationships with target markets, online and social media, promoting personnel interactions and communicating with large-scale tour operators. Cook Shire is already an aspirational destination for certain key markets, for example most half-serious 4WD owners would have a ‘trip up the Cape’ in their minds. The guerrilla marketing campaign should target these groups with direct methods to provide the information and motivation to convert more of these aspirants to visitors to Cook.</p>	X									
<p>1A. Form direct personal relationships with target markets: Identify relevant clubs, associations,</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

¹ Guerrilla marketing focuses on attracting attention with minimal financial outlay. Whilst not expensive, particularly with online technologies, successful guerrilla marketing requires time, energy, and imagination.

<p>events, print media and television media that would have a potential interest in Cook Shire (including 4WD, caravanning, camping and fishing). Establish relevant Cook personalities that can act as informal communicators for the region in limited forums. Personally contact these avenues, develop Cook Shire presences in relevant online forums and form relationships. Consider inviting relevant organisations to visit, write about, film, photograph or host events in the Cook Shire. Where possible, provide tourist related information regarding relevant tourism products in the Shire.</p>										
<p>1B. Communicate with target markets via online forums: Locate, join and participate on online forums relating to various target markets (focusing on Grey Nomads, camping, fishing and 4WD). It is important to keep the relationship relatively informal and not to be seen as a salesman. The best approach is to be completely transparent in always identifying as a representative of Cook Shire, provide clear and practical information about the Shire and its relevant tourism attractions that may appeal to the various markets, and try to present as a credible (rather than strongly one-eyed) advocate of the region.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>1C. Utilise Social Media: Utilise key social media (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, blogs) for marketing purposes. Participate actively and regularly on relevant social media mediums, provide information, showcase photos and videos, advertise events, hold competitions and promote individual businesses. Use media to support interactions with target markets. It is essential to actively encourage people to become followers and share posts so as to maximize the word of mouth effect. Be mindful that social media users are typically of younger age – it may be worth trying to target posts and updates to appeal most to this market. Incorporate humour and user participation.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>2. Continue development of supporting information products: Continue to develop in-region supporting information materials such as the Cooktown and Cape York Peninsula Guide, the Cooktown and Cape York Website and associated social media platforms. Promote and develop the Nature's Powerhouse Visitor Information Centre as a one-stop-shop for information and intelligence for 'heading up the Cape'.</p>										
<p>3. Facilitate local famil opportunities: Develop, in co-operation with local businesses, a variety of famil itineraries for potential visits by tour operators, travel agents and important media. Consider specific famil events relevant to key markets –for example a 'first up the Cape' event each year for 4x4 clubs and enthusiasts.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>4. Improve intra-regional communication mechanisms: Investigate and trial various intra-regional tourism industry communication mechanisms including through online media such as email circulars, operator's forums and collaborate workbooks. Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism should organise and host business networking functions for local tourism operators and external tourism operators with interests in the region.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>5. Promotion of shoulder and off season tourism: Use of targeted and low cost marketing (as per Stage 1), events and incentives (for example by targeting groups that would be specifically interested in low season activities e.g. fishing). Focus on the convenience domestic market and communicate specific opportunities to visit (e.g. wind is down and the reef fish are biting) and solutions to local travel needs. Encourage and facilitate local business initiatives to develop off season packages and discounting.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Key Performance Indicators	Prospects for Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organisations contacted; • Number of online forums joined and number of posts; • Direct feedback from recipients of the guerrilla marketing program; • Number of 'followers' of social media marketing; • Number of packages put together by local tour operators; and • Tourism visitation throughout the off-season. 	<p>Most initiatives in this action plan have a relatively high likelihood of success provided sufficient energy is applied. Significant advances in some areas (website, local information materials) have already been achieved following the Cooktown LTO Marketing Action Plan (2010). Off season tourism development is difficult however even relatively small increases can significantly assist tourism operators with cash-flow.</p>

3.5.2 Grey Nomads and Camping Strategy (Cooktown focus)

Project Description	Resources Required	Stakeholders and Partners								
This action plan sets out strategies for the development of the region's Grey Nomad ² / camping tourism market. After considerable stakeholder consultation and industry research, a free camping policy is recommended for Cooktown and the surrounding area. The development of a short term stay comfort stop in Cooktown for Grey Nomads and campers should be considered as a part of this policy and is set out in the action plan below. Cook Shire Council should also provide ongoing support to existing commercial caravan parks who may plan to expand or improve their facilities.	The Cook Shire Council will initially be required to provide a significant amount of internal resources to undertake relevant feasibility and site analysis for the development of the free short stay comfort stop. Potential sites are likely to be Council owned land, which means that there will be an opportunity cost associated with using this land for Cook Shire Council, particularly as the campsite will provide no cash flow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook Shire Council (key stakeholder); • Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism; and • Commercial caravan parks operating in the region. 								
Benefits from Successfully Implemented Project	Identified Challenges									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved reputation as a Grey Nomad friendly location among the national caravan community; • Potentially significant increased visitation from Grey Nomad / camping market; • Flow on economy benefits for Cooktown's tourism sector (more tourism expenditure, for example as has been experienced in Home Hill and other towns adopting the policy); • Increased visitation, limited supply / length of stay and very basic facilities at free camping site may lead to increased visitation for existing commercial caravan parks; • May encourage existing parks to invest and improve their facilities to be more competitive; and • Word of mouth marketing benefits. 	<p>Free camping is a controversial issue in Cooktown. Some community members strongly oppose free camping, and as a result the adoption of a free camping policy has challenges. Commercial caravan park operators are most likely to oppose due to fears of loss of business. It is important to define the policy very clearly and spend a considerable amount of time explaining the benefits that can be achieved for existing commercial caravan park operators and the tourism sector as a whole.</p> <p>The costs of developing and maintaining the comfort stop are likely to be significant for the Cook Shire Council. It is important to only provide the bare essentials when developing the comfort stop and make efforts to utilise the travelling Grey Nomad community as potential volunteers for maintaining the park.</p>									
Action Plan	Timeline									
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10
1. Progressively audit and update camping areas across Cook Shire: It is recommended that Cook Shire Council regularly review camping policy for Cooktown and the surrounding area with the consideration of free camping locations and managing impacts of campers. An ongoing database of known popular camping areas should be built and regular audits used to build the database. Options for Council or other relevant authority to update or further manage impacts at these camping areas needs to be considered annually.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Undertake feasibility analysis to develop a Council operated short stay free comfort stop in Cooktown: Undertake detailed feasibility analysis for a free short stay comfort stop in Cooktown, including the consideration of multiple sites (including south of ANZAC park, corner Hogg and Walker Streets and Archer Point). The feasibility analysis should include factors such as accessibility, economic benefit, amenity for campers, potential social implications (proximity to households), environmental impact and local planning. A review of shires with successful free camping policies should be undertaken to benchmark practical outcomes.	X									
3. Proceed with the development of a short stay free comfort stop at the best determined site: Based on the results from the feasibility analysis, finalise		X								

² Note the term 'Grey Nomad' is used loosely here to describe campers who stay relatively long periods, tend to two caravans and campervans and are usually retired or semi-retired.

<p>suitable location/s for a free short stay comfort stop and proceed with its development. Provide only the bare minimum facilities and limit the supply of individual free camping sites – this will help existing commercial operators remain competitive and provide the town with a caravan / camping 'friendly' reputation. Consider utilising Grey Nomads as a volunteer / cheap labour source for campsite maintenance and length of stay monitoring to save on operational costs.</p>										
<p>4. Undertake a guerrilla marketing program: Undertake a marketing campaign as set out in the 'Long Term Marketing Strategy', with specific focus on the Grey Nomads / camping tourism market. Join and participate on caravanning / camping related internet based forums. Contact relevant clubs and organisations, form relationships, promote the region and provide information. Contact caravanning / camping related media publications and invite them to visit and report on the region. The caravanning / camping networks are famously efficient and positive news backed up by genuine actions should rapidly find traction.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>5. Provide support to existing commercial operators: Host workshops and information sessions providing information regarding the free camping policy and potential benefits achievable for individual businesses (increased visitation as a whole from the Grey Nomads / camping market to the region). Develop mechanisms for free campers to be directed to commercial park operators such as an active notice board and promotional leaflets at the comfort stop. Engage with caravan park operators to see if Council can help address barriers to developing larger sites for big RVs and generally investing in their businesses to differentiate their products from ultra-basic amenities provided at the free camping site. This may potentially include such issues as waste management, town signage, planning streamlining and water use concessions.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>Key Performance Indicators</p>	<p>Prospects for Success</p>									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful adoption of the camping audit and development policy for Cooktown and the surrounding region; • Outcomes from the free short stay comfort stop feasibility analysis; • Successfully choosing a site; • Development approval for the free short stay comfort stop; • Development completion of the free short stay comfort stop; • Response and feedback from community and businesses; and • Investment at existing commercially operated caravan parks. 	<p>Providing that this action plan is not subject to severe political setback (significant opposition for progression by community and businesses), the various steps outlined are very achievable. Cook Shire Council needs to take necessary steps to convey the economic benefits for the entire community and find ways to minimise operational costs after the development of the free short stay comfort stop.</p>									

3.5.3 Expansion of Camping Related Tourism Facilities in the Iron Range Area

Project Description	Resources Required	Stakeholders and Partners								
<p>This project involves building a case for upgrades to facilities in the popular Iron Range area. Lobbying of the State Government and/or the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (DNPRSR) will be required for facility development in National Park areas (e.g. Chili Beach). Other approaches may involve development of campsites on private, Council or traditional lands. The campsite at Chili Beach is far too small for the current visitation to the region. The boundaries of the campsite have been informally extended to the point where they are encroaching on the beachfront and surrounding rainforest and are causing considerable environmental harm. Many tourists are also being turned away due to a lack of available campsites. Basic camping amenities (such as toilets and showers) are also considered to be inadequate and in need of upgrading.</p>	<p>The Cook Shire Council will primarily be required to devote internal resources for delivering this project. Council staff will be required to devote a considerable amount of time in achieving certain stages of this action plan, particularly whilst preparing the case for upgrading the campsite and ongoing lobbying with the State Government / DNPRSR. Identifying local upgrade needs and options should be handled by a local community group – a process that is already underway. Council should aim to keep financial outlay to a minimum when undertaking this project (i.e. investing in developing facilities).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook Shire Council (key stakeholder); • Portland Roads Community Working Group (key stakeholder); and • Queensland Government (Local member and relevant minister) • Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. 								
Benefits from Successfully Implemented Project	Identified Challenges									
<p>The successful provision of additional campsites would enable a sustainable increase in tourist visitation to the Portland Roads / Chili Beach area, with lack of facilities currently the limiting factor in the tourism season. Appropriate additions and upgrades will also mitigate existing issues such as environmental degradation and the negative word of mouth effect occurring under the existing campsite arrangement. Catering for more campers in the region will also add to expenditures in the region.</p>	<p>Negotiating with the State Government could be a long term process. The critical success factors and DNPRSR's criteria for providing a commitment to campsite upgrades may be difficult to identify and meet. Persistence and proactively assisting DNPRSR collect evidence and information in support of the investment are essential for the successful implementation of this project. Development of alternative camping sites on Council, private or traditional lands may be simpler in terms of approval however additional investors/ stakeholders will need to be involved in funding, development and operation. Furthermore, excess demand problems are likely to remain at popular areas within National Parks such as Chili Beach.</p>									
Action Plan	Timeline									
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10
<p>1. Form community led working group: There is interest from community members in Portland Roads regarding the formation of a community led working group to discuss relevant community issues and possible solutions. Cook Shire Council should encourage the formation of this group and provide ongoing support, as it will be a useful driver during the lobbying process for upgrades to the Chili Beach campsite.</p>	X									
<p>2. Consult with community working group: Form an ongoing working relationship with the community working group (e.g. regular meeting schedule). Discuss the subject of upgrades in the Iron Range area, including issues, remedies, project roles and approaches for negotiating with DNPRSR.</p>	X									
<p>3. Determine exact upgrade requirements: Determine how many additional camp sites are required to sufficiently meet demand by considering historical visitation and number of campers being turned away due to full occupancy. Collate evidence to provide to DNPRSR or other operators. Consult with the community working group regarding upgrade to basic amenities.</p>	X									

<p>4. Initiate formal negotiations with DNPRSR: Contact DNPRSR (Council should lead, although the community group representatives may become involved and establish the need for negotiations regarding upgrades in the Iron Range area. Determine what internal processes need to be followed to apply for funding for upgrades. Determine what circumstances are required for DNPRSR to formally budget for appropriate upgrades. Form an ongoing working relationship and aim to leverage DNPRSR's internal resources as much as possible.</p>	X									
<p>5. Develop case for upgrades: Work with DNPRSR to determine what critical factors are required for approving upgrades (as far as they are concerned). Work with the community working group to build a case, which addresses these factors. Focus on the current environmental damage which is occurring due to overuse of the site. Also consider the loss to the region's tourism sector as a result of not being able to accommodate tourists. Present alternative delivery models as an adjunct to DNPRSR delivery of additional campsites, rather than a primary solution.</p>	X									
<p>6. Present case for upgrades: Develop and present the formal case for upgrades in the Iron Range area to/within DNPRSR. Involve the local State Member and consider whether representations to the relevant minister are also required on the basis of special / unusual circumstances.</p>		X								
<p>7. Continued lobbying and negotiation: Continue lobbying activities as required. Circumstances, investment criteria and personalities change over time so a regular update of the lobbying case is required. Continue to research and develop evidence through the community group for the upgrades and present findings to DNPRSR or other relevant stakeholders.</p>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>8. Maintain community working group: Maintain the community working group as a voice to promote Portland Roads and the surrounding region. Actively work with this group regarding other issues.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>Key Performance Indicators</p>	<p>Prospects for Success</p>									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful formation of the Portland Roads community led working group; • Determination of specific upgrade requirements to the upgrades in the Iron Range area; • Processes and critical factors that DNPRSR require when considering the plan to upgrade the campsite; • Formation of case materials to be presented to DNPRSR; • Response and feedback from DNPRSR regarding the case materials; • Representations to local member / relevant minister; • Commitment to providing upgrades from DNPRSR; and • Ongoing community working group activity. 	<p>The negotiation process with DNPRSR may well be difficult and makes the relative prospects of success challenging. It is essential to develop a strong working relationship with DNPRSR and proactively assist their requests and internal processes for funding approval. It is also important to be persistent and prepared for a potentially drawn out negotiation / lobbying process. Persistence has been the key to successes with similar projects in other regions.</p>									

3.5.4 Emerging Market Development

Project Description	Resources Required	Stakeholders and Partners								
<p>This initiative focuses on building ties and developing associated products for several key emerging tourism markets in Australia. The size and diversity of nearby emerging markets in Asia is astounding with recent growth in the inbound Chinese market attracting the attention of tourism operators across Australia. Whilst Cook Shire lacks the resources to directly research and develop these markets, it needs to position itself to grasp developing market opportunities that align with its unique product and offerings as they emerge.</p>	<p>The project cost can be kept to a minimum in terms of actual financial outlay, however, Cook Shire Council staff will be required to actively research and negotiate with stakeholders. Literature and research regarding travel patterns and desired experiences for the relevant emerging tourist markets will also be required. Involvement with TQ and TA as these organizations increasingly grasp and understand these emerging markets should be pursued, with the aim to incorporate some level of iconic Cook Shire images and experiences into their promotions and messages. Indigenous products are of high potential interest to International and many emerging markets and Indigenous groups and communities with a tourism interest from across the Cape should work with Cook Shire to engage and learn about these markets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook Shire Council (key stakeholder); • Tourism Queensland; • Tourism Australia; • National Chinese focused tour operators; • International Chinese focused tour operators; • Queensland Government; and • Federal Government. 								
Benefits from Successfully Implemented Project	Identified Challenges									
<p>The successful development of this initiative will provide Cook Shire with one or more new markets (potentially on mass), providing an increase in tourism visitation to the Shire. Additional economic benefits can be achieved if Cook Shire Council is able to successfully secure government funding for the development of emerging market tourism products in the region to a degree depending on the size and nature of the project/s.</p>	<p>Challenges relating to this initiative include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing relationships with international tour operators, including language and business cultural barriers; • Accurately profiling relevant emerging markets; and • Successfully securing funding for additional product development associated with emerging markets. <p>The prospects of developing Chinese and other emerging tourism markets to Queensland and Tropical North Queensland appear bright, however there is still considerable gaps in knowledge as how regions such as Cook and indeed much of Australia can best serve this market. Hence the evolution of these markets and Australia's position within them will need to dictate</p>									
Action Plan	Timeline									
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10
<p>1. Identify key emerging markets: Consider all significant emerging tourism markets for Australia and Far North Queensland. China is a key visitor market for Australia looking forward, and given Cook Shire's past affiliation with the Chinese (through mining), this market is the first focus under this action plan.</p>	X									
<p>2. Seek out new literature and updates regarding relevant markets: Research and subsequently understanding of Australia's key emerging tourism markets is constantly improving. It is important to make sure that new literature is reviewed and considered in the context of Cook Shire, particularly as TTNQ, TQ and TA improve their understanding of these markets.</p>	X									
<p>3. Develop ongoing research partnerships: Form new and maintain existing relationships with peak tourism research bodies (including Tourism Queensland and Tourism Australia) for research and information sharing. Consider forming a Cape York information group with other communities and Indigenous interests to approach the peak tourism research bodies. Keep up to date with latest market profiling research regarding key emerging tourism markets.</p>	X									

<p>4. Identify key industry representatives: Research and work with peak tourism bodies to identify emerging tourism market representatives (for Cook Shire's best suited markets), including international Tourism organisations and tour organizers / operators specialising in Australia.</p>	X								
<p>5. Develop engagement and direct marketing strategy: Determine the method for engaging with the identified key representatives / operators, including goals and desired outcomes.</p>	X								
<p>6. Contact and negotiate with identified representatives: Make contact with key industry representatives / operators with the aim to negotiate potential tours being conducted to Cook Shire. Provide marketing materials and offer aid and ongoing support for establishing tours in the region. Discuss the potential for product development supporting the establishment of tours.</p>		X							
<p>7. Identify product and skills development opportunities: Identify product development opportunities (relevant to Cook Shire's best suited markets) through existing research and negotiations with key industry representatives. Consider exploring the potential of skills development relevant for the provision of Chinese tour products, such as Chinese language skills and relationship development with accredited Chinese guides.</p>	X	X							
<p>8. Build funding case for appropriate opportunities: This step is appropriate for the development of non-commercially viable tourism products. This step requires carefully developing a funding submission and presenting to various levels of government with aim to secure funding support.</p>		X	X						
<p>9. Identify and approach potential private investors for product development: Relevant for those product opportunities that are commercially viable. For such products, build a business case (including plans, financials and marketing materials) and identify and negotiate with potential private investors. Where possible, utilise planning incentives and provide ongoing support.</p>		X	X						
<p>10. Aid the commercialisation and development of associated products: Provide ongoing support for the development of tourism related products relative to key emerging markets.</p>	X	X	X	X					
<p>Key Performance Indicators</p>	<p>Prospects for Success</p>								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and pursuit of one or more emerging markets; • Number of private stakeholders engaged; • Development of a list of relevant emerging market tourism product opportunities; • Value of private investment secured; and • Value of public investment secured. 	<p>The critical factors for the successful implementation of this initiative lie in Step 7 and Steps 9 and 10. Successfully negotiating with identified tour companies and international Tourism Organisations may make or break this initiative, as discussions may simply end as positive or negative. The best insurance for a possible negative ending would simply be being well prepared in terms of reviewing existing literature and preparing an engagement and direct marketing plan. Following this, securing public or private sector interest in product development will be difficult and require significant time resources devoted by the Cook Shire Council.</p>								

3.5.5 Cape York Touring Trails Development

Project Description	Resources Required	Stakeholders and Partners								
<p>This initiative represents a combination of several marketing, research, industry collaborative and product development initiatives aimed at increasing awareness and subsequently visitation of the 4WD / Adventure market on Cape York. Specifically the initiative will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active engagement of the 4WD market through 'guerrilla style' marketing; • Working with local stakeholders to develop a 4WD information base for Cape York travel; • Developing a dedicated online information source for 4WD travellers; • Identifying and pursuing potential products to establish Cooktown as 'base camp'; and • Facilitating on-going research. 	<p>A facilitator (most likely Cook Shire Council) will be required to manage the various components of this initiative. Some components of the project can be undertaken in a relatively cost effective manner, including collaboration with industry stakeholders and certain aspects of marketing (online direct engagement). The development of the online information source will require professional design and implementation, which is likely to require considerable financial resources. It would be wise to seek and apply for funding from the State / Federal Government and regional tourism organisations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook Shire Council (key stakeholder); • Cook Shire Development Groups; • Other Cape York based Local Governments; • Online based 4WD clubs and organisations; • Nature's Powerhouse; • Tourism Tropical North Queensland; and • Tourism Queensland. 								
Benefits from Successfully Implemented Project	Identified Challenges									
<p>This initiative is targeted at Cook Shire's key existing tourism visitor markets, meaning it will directly aim to increase tourist visitation to the region from a proven strength. The marketing component should generate positive regional recognition in general, particularly among 4WD enthusiasts. The initiative has minimal environmental implications and no major anticipated issues for access, planning and land tenure exist as the required tracks are already in place. A number of potential routes have already been considered and mapped.</p> <p>Cook Shire's tourism reputation is cemented through wilderness adventures in its remote country. Building the 4WD Adventure market will continue to build the headline reputation of the Cape York area for other tourism markets.</p>	<p>Developing appropriate partnerships to secure funding for the development of the online informative website will be key and potentially the most challenging component of this initiative. The product development aspect of the initiative may be difficult depending on routes, as it may involve negotiating with private industry, Indigenous owners and pushing for commercial business development where there is a gap in the market. However, the product development is not an essential component of this initiative for it to succeed. In addition, the Cape York 4WD market will always be subject to high seasonality, which means the initiatives do little for tourism activity in the summer months.</p>									
Action Plan	Timeline									
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10
<p>1. Guerrilla marketing program: As per the Long Term Marketing Action Plan – Actively engage with 4WD enthusiasts by direct contributions to networks and discussion contribution via websites, blogs, online forums, social networking and industry publications. Make contact with national clubs and associations, 4WD magazines and publications, and 4WD event coordinators and invite them to visit, report and host events in the region.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<p>2. Build an information network through consultation and ongoing research: Consult with local businesses, 4WD enthusiasts, regional tourism organisations and 4WD tourists to develop a network of information including routes, camping sites, fishing spots, cultural and heritage assets, natural assets, Indigenous products, live weather and live road conditions.</p>	X	X								
<p>3. Establish Nature's Powerhouse as 'base camp' for the provision of information regarding 4WD travel up the Cape: Establish Nature's Powerhouse as 'base camp' as a part of the guerrilla marketing program and in existing print marketing materials. Establish information flows with Nature's Powerhouse so information can be provided for visiting 4WD tourists. Focus on live information, such as weather, road conditions and traffic on different tracks. Generally promote Nature's Powerhouse as 'base camp' for 4WD</p>	X	X								

tourism, as it will provide greater incentive for 4WD tourists to start their trip in Cooktown, which will potentially result in additional expenditure in the town and Shire (as Cooktown is the most effective township for capturing tourism expenditure).										
4. Ongoing market research for complimentary product development: Identify potential product development opportunities through further research, industry and visitor consultation. Consider potential products and services that could be provided in Cooktown to further cement the town as the 4WD base camp for Cape York. Simply consider the commercial viability of providing the products and services in Cooktown and identify those with merit for further analysis and consideration.	X	X								
5. Develop business cases for promising complimentary products: Build business cases / plans for the provision of promising products and services that can be provided by the private sector. Business cases should include basic due diligence and qualitative evidence that supports the product's commercial viability. Actively seek and negotiate with potential private investors for the development of these products / services.		X	X	X						
6. Collate information for the development of an interactive website: Collate and prepare relevant information from Stages 2 & 4, for the development of an interactive Cape York touring website, with relevant overlays, including: 'Hardcore' 4WD trails, fishing trails, hunting trails, Indigenous trails and nature trails. Information regarding camping possibilities, directions to tourism assets, downloadable maps and general tourism information regarding towns should also be provided. This concept is similar to the Great Tropical Drive concept, however, will concentrate solely on Cape York Peninsula. As much preparatory work as possible should be done during this stage (such as conceptual designs and information collation) so as to help minimise costs in Stages 7 and 8. The website can be a part of Cook Shire's existing tourism website.		X	X							
7. Develop partnerships for funding of the interactive website: Actively engage various levels of government (Local Governments on Cape York, Queensland Government, Federal Government) and regional tourism bodies (Tourism Queensland, Tourism Australia) to identify funding opportunities and formally apply. When applying for funding, provide conceptual plans and all work done to date to demonstrate the projects maturity and high likelihood of successful completion.	X	X	X							
8. Facilitate the development of the interactive website: Working with established partners to facilitate the design and implementation of the website. Incorporate the information obtained in Stage 6. After the website is developed ensure a commitment to ongoing update and management. Also investigate possibility to recover expenditure through online advertising.			X	X						
Key Performance Indicators	Prospects for Success									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of people individually engaged with; Feedback from recipients of targeting 'guerrilla' marketing; Amount of cooperative funding secured from stakeholders; Successful development of the interactive website; Internet traffic on the interactive informative website Tourism visitation data; and Individual road traffic volumes. 	Several of the lower cost strategies (guerrilla marketing campaign, information gathering and consultation) incorporated into this initiative will depend on the active participation of the Cook Shire Council or similarly appropriate facilitator/s. The successful development of the interactive website is hinged upon securing appropriate project funding.									

3.5.6 Proactive Council Investment Attraction

Project Description	Resources Required	Stakeholders and Partners								
<p>This initiative includes the Cook Shire Council actively pursuing business development and investment in the Shire from both private sector and State and Federal Government. Individual actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a Council business investment information guide; Preparation of a Cook Shire development prospectus (for priority projects) for quick use by private and public sectors; and Active and regular engagement with potential private investors. 	<p>The financial outlay for this project is relatively small, however, Cook Shire Council staff will be required to invest considerable amount of time collating information, preparing documents and engaging stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook Shire Council; State Government; Federal Government; Identified private investors; and Tourism industry representatives. 								
Benefits from Successfully Implemented Project	Identified Challenges									
<p>The Cook region stands to benefit from any investment undertaken due to this initiative. Business and project development leads to an injective of money into the region, generation of employment opportunities and product expansion / diversification for the tourism industry. Furthermore, pursuing this initiative helps to communicate that Cook Shire is 'open for investment'. Actual impacts will be dependent on the size of projects attracted. The development of an Investment Prospectus may be used as a quick reference document if a government funding avenue should arise at short notice.</p>	<p>Successfully commercialising identified opportunities will be the most difficult aspect of this initiative. Finding appropriate potential investors is often a long process with many setbacks. Not all opportunities can be expected to be successful, which will be disappointing if a lot of Council resources have been invested into the conceptual development of the opportunity. However even a small percentage of successes can generate significant benefits that justify the work by Council in actively pursuing investment.</p>									
Action Plan	Timeline									
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10
<p>1. Content research and collation for Business Investment Guide: Work with various Cook Shire Council departments to obtain required information for the development of the Business Investment Guide (including planning policies for key sites, signage policy, rates information, utilities and associated network information, available real estate and land tenure information).</p>	X									
<p>2. Preparation of Business Investment Guide: Presentation of research and collated information in a simple, well presented brochure for widespread distribution. There is also potential to focus on several key sites in the Shire, which local industry feel are suitable for development. Information should be provided regarding these sites in terms of preferred land uses and possible procurement costs.</p>	X									
<p>3. Implementation and service of Business Investment Guide: Distribute the Business Investment Guide online and throughout the community. Identify and contact potential private investors and provide them with the Business Investment Guide. Provide ongoing service and support with interested parties. Where possible, provide planning incentives to facilitate / simplify business development. For example Council may provide rates holidays or waiver planning fees on priority sites where proposed uses are considered of significant public good to the Shire. Council may freely provide information collated from its own resources to assist the preparation of Planning Applications. Examples of incentives from other Councils around Australia should be reviewed to consider what best fits with Cook Shire.</p>		X								
<p>4. Industry consultation regarding business opportunities and projects for Investment Prospectus: Consult with industry and planning stakeholders regarding a list of business, project and</p>	X									

infrastructure opportunities for investment by private and government stakeholders (e.g. Foreshore development). Collate and filter the list of projects for further analysis.										
5. Preparation of the Investment Prospectus: Detail the key projects established in Stage 4 in a prospectus style report, which can be used for quick reference with private investors and governments.		X								
6. Active implementation of Investment Prospectus with Private industry stakeholders: Identify and engage with potential private investors that may be interested in pursuing various business opportunities. Discuss the potential of the identified business and project opportunities and look to provide planning incentives for desired developments.		X								
7. Presentation of Prospectus to State and Federal Governments: Formally present the Investment Prospectus to State and Federal Government representatives (appropriate opportunities would be during election campaigns or special visits by ministers to the region). Work with government stakeholders on an ongoing basis to establish relationships and funding commitments. Use the Investment Prospectus as a quick-reference document where funding opportunities arise at short-notice (e.g. issues arising in the press, government visits).		X								
8. Ongoing stakeholder engagement: Ongoing engagement with the public and private sectors to build relationships and facilitate private development and public funding projects.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Key Performance Indicators	Prospects for Success									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the Business Investment Guide; Completion of the Investment Prospectus; Number of private stakeholders engaged; Value of private investment secured; and Value of public investment secured. 	<p>The preparation of the Business Investment Guide and the Investment Prospectus have relatively high prospects for success, as they can be developed internally by the Cook Shire Council (or other nominated project facilitator). The conversion rate in attracting private and government investment to the Shire will be relatively low, however this should not dissuade the Shire from pursuing opportunities. The key here is to approach a large number of potential investors and undertake the program at marginal cost.</p>									

3.5.7 Coen and Peninsula Development Road Signage Strategy

Project Description	Resources Required	Stakeholders and Partners								
<p>This initiative involves improving the quality and frequency of directional and informative road signage on the Peninsula Development Road, with a focus on the Coen area. Road signage is generally considered to be inadequate on the Peninsula Development Road. There is minimal directional and informative signage for small communities and attractions leading off the road. Stakeholders in Coen note that the lack of signage leading up to the town means that many tourists stop at roadhouses or on the roadside for the night not far before the township, meaning that Coen misses out on overnight visitors.</p>	<p>The actual financial cost of purchasing the signage will be relatively small, however, there will be considerable opportunity cost (mainly internal resources in Cook Shire) associated with the Department of Transport and Main Road's (DTMR) application process. Cook Shire Council should try to undertake as much of the work internally as possible to minimise the financial outlay for the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook Shire Council (key stakeholder); • Cook Shire community; • Department of Transport and Main Roads; • Queensland Government; and • Federal Government. 								
Benefits from Successfully Implemented Project	Identified Challenges									
<p>Improving directional and informative road signage on the Peninsula Development Road will lead to general improvements in community and tourist amenity. Installing signage leading up to Coen will provide more measurable economic benefits, as it will encourage tourists to stay the night in Coen, capturing additional tourism expenditure.</p>	<p>The greatest challenge for this initiative will be overcoming DTMR's restrictions and application process for roadside signage in a cost effective and timely manner. It is important to form a strong working relationship with DTMR during the application process and utilise their internal resources in terms of understanding and completing the process.</p>									
Action Plan	Timeline									
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10
<p>1. Determine key areas in need of new directional signage along the Peninsula Development Road: Systematically considering sites along the length of the Peninsula Development Road that would benefit from new directional signage. Careful consideration should be made for Coen and the surrounding areas (with focus on the lead up to the town). Best results would be achieved by including a community consultation process, if the project budget permits.</p>	X									
<p>2. Determine key areas in need of informative signage along the Peninsula Development Road: Systematically considering sites along the length of the Peninsula Development Road that would benefit from new informative signage for tourist attractions. Signage should consider sites that are most relevant to Cook Shire's key tourist markets and take into consideration existing research (including visitor surveys). Community groups may be formed for relevant areas to research and submit their signage priorities. Best results would be achieved by including a community consultation process for the final options, if the project budget permits. Note that signage priorities will change over time. For example the development of 4WD touring trails may make some additional signage desirable.</p>	X									
<p>3. Plan the development of the signage: Finalise desired signage locations and content. Prepare a staging plan for the funding and implementation of signage over a period of 5 years. Set an internal budget for the project.</p>	X									
<p>4. Begin negotiations with the DMTR: Contact DTMR to discuss the project. Find out the relevant application requirements for each sign location and initial DTMR concerns. Form an ongoing working relationship.</p>	X									
<p>5. Prepare applications for signage as per the staging plan: Prepare applications for each sign location as set out by the staging plan, whilst meeting DTMR's requirements from Stage 4.</p>	X	X								

6. Explore potential funding support avenues: Hold discussions with the State and Federal Governments about potential project funding support.		X								
7. Implement signage as per applications are approved: Construct signage as they are approved by DTMR. Aim to maintain the timeline of the staging plan.	X	X	X	X	X					
Key Performance Indicators	Prospects for Success									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful identification of suitable sites; • Completion of planning, including staging and budgeting; • Successful negotiation with DTMR; • Number of approved signs; • Funding secured from State and Federal Governments; and • Increased overnight visitation to Coen. 	If the Cook Shire Council can successfully negate DTMR's application processes and control project costs, the project has a relatively positive prospect for success.									

3.5.8 Ongoing Preparation of the Cooktown Visitor Survey

Project Description	Resources Required	Stakeholders and Partners
There has recently been two tourist visitor surveys undertaken in Cooktown (2004 and 2007). The information obtained from these surveys is extremely important for planning organisations and industry operators and acts as an aid in decision making. This project involves the ongoing preparation and administration of the Cooktown visitor survey. The survey could also be extended to other regions in Cook Shire, to obtain a better understanding on tourist visitation to the greater region.	Cook Shire Council can either prepare and administer the visitor survey themselves, or as with previous visitor surveys, work with private industry to deliver the survey. From a resources point of view, partnering with industry would be beneficial, but will not always be possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook Shire Council; • Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism; and • James Cook University (potentially).
Benefits from Successfully Implemented Project	Identified Challenges	
The regular preparation of a region-wide tourist visitor survey will allow for a better understanding of the region's tourism industry, which will ultimately lead to improved information for decision making by planners and industry operators. The survey will also significantly improve the quality of tourism related data available (coupled with capturing tourism visitation statistics), which will provide the ability to undertake longitudinal statistical analysis to identify trends and changing dynamics in the region's tourism industry.	Cook Shire has been extremely lucky in the past to have a proactive industry operator willing to prepare and undertake visitor surveys in 2004 and 2007. Due to the Cook Shire Council's limited resources, it would be preferable is such an arrangement could be made again in the future preparation of the visitor survey, however, given the difficult economic times and potentially an increased scope of the survey (to encompass the greater region), this may be difficult to achieve. If the onus falls on the Cook Shire Council to undertake the survey, cost saving measures should be explored, similar to those suggested in the administration of the visitor / expenditure survey undertaken for the collection of visitation statistics (Section 3). If the cost of undertaking the survey is considered unachievable, applying for funding from Tourism Queensland may be a final option.	
Action Plan	Timeline	
	Yr 1 Yr 2 Yr 3 Yr 4 Yr 5 Yr 6 Yr 7 Yr 8 Yr 9 Yr 10	
1. Negotiate with private stakeholders: Previously the Cooktown Visitor Survey has been undertaken by a private industry operator. The Cook Shire Council should look to negotiate with the private sector for the continual preparation of the Visitor Survey however take a coordinating role to ensure a consistent methodology and process is preserved. The Cook Shire Council may also consider negotiating with James Cook University, as the Cooktown visitor survey would constitute a relevant honours project for business and tourism students.	X	
2. Consider expanding scope to regional Cook Shire: Cook Shire is quite diverse in terms of tourist product offering and visitor characteristics. Considering this, it would be useful to expand the scope of the Cooktown Visitor survey to encompass the entire Shire. Surveying can be undertaken in remote centres, such as Coen, Portland Roads, Laura and Lakeland. In practical terms however, survey location will be dependent on finding appropriate businesses that are willing to volunteer their services.	X	
3. Review past Visitor Surveys: Comprehensively review the 2004 and 2007 Cooktown Visitor Surveys before designing the new survey instrument.	X	
4. Design the survey: Design the new survey based on recommendations from Appendix A. The most important consideration is ensuring the long term longevity of the survey, so trends can be analysed over time.	X	
5. Undertake the survey: Administer the survey.	X	

<p>6. Undertake data analysis and reporting: Prepare relevant statistical analysis and draw conclusions and recommendations. It is recommended that MS Excel be utilised to store and analyse data, as it is a ubiquitous application with relatively high levels of ability to use across stakeholders and compatibility with add-ins and other more advanced statistical packages. Ensure data is collated, stored and presented in a manner which allows for longitudinal analysis with past and future survey results. Analysis should be relatively simple, so that readers of the data can intuitively understand the results and how they relate to the raw data.</p>	X									
<p>7. Publicly distribute the survey: Ensure that the results of the survey are made publically available as a simple snap-shot with minimal qualitative interpretation. The information collected by the survey will be valuable for all current and prospective tourist industry operators in Cook Shire. As the data will be a product of the Cook business community, the final excel spreadsheet should also be provided for businesses to undertake more detailed analysis of the raw data as suits their purposes.</p>	X									
<p>8. Plan future frequency of the survey: Plan for the Visitor Survey to be undertaken on a bi-annual basis.</p>	X		X		X		X		X	
<p>Key Performance Indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful negotiations with private industry operators; • Successful negotiations with James Cook University; • Successful preparation and administration of the visitor survey; • Continual administration on a bi-annual basis; and • Widespread distribution of survey results (number of recipients). 	<p>Prospects for Success</p> <p>The prospect of successfully completing the visitor survey is relatively high. The challenge for Cook Shire Council remains minimising the cost associated with undertaking the survey. Cost saving measures should focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiating with private industry partners to aid the preparation and administration of the survey; • Negotiation with JCU for the survey to be completed as a potential honours project for a business or tourism student; • Utilise a survey distribution method similar to the survey required to capture tourism visitation statistics (see report section 3); and • Apply for funding from Tourism Queensland to support the survey. 									

3.5.9 Cruise Ship Industry

The cruise ship industry is focused on Cooktown, as there are very limited port and mooring facilities elsewhere in the Shire. Cooktown is visited by a number of 'micro' and large cruise ships throughout the cruise shipping season. Depending on tides and weather, 'micro' cruise ships are able to dock at Cooktown Port and large scale cruise ships moor offshore and tender passengers ashore with a smaller craft. Most stakeholders in Cooktown recognise that the visiting ships provide economic benefits and a boost for the region's tourism industry. However, consultation with local, regional and State stakeholders has revealed a number of major issues for the further development of the cruise ship industry in Cooktown. The identified issues include:

- Lack of deep water port facilities, making it impossible for large cruise ships to directly access the shore;
- 'Micro' cruise ships can only access Cooktown's Port on high tide;
- Poor weather conditions (high winds and rough seas) often makes it impossible for large cruise ships to tender passengers ashore from an offshore mooring;
- Cooktown's tourism industry does not have the capacity to cater for large, irregular influxes of visitors from large scale cruise ships (i.e. Transport, tours, etc);
- Cruise ship scheduling is irregular and often subject to short notice changes; and
- Results from the product audit suggest that Cooktown's tourism product offering is generally not well suited for typical cruise ship passengers. An exception may be found in the expedition cruising (micro cruising) market.

The issues mentioned above weigh against the further development of cruise shipping tourism in Cooktown. Major and almost certainly unachievable investments are required to address a number of the issues. The weather and tidal conditions make it very difficult for cruise ships to visit Cooktown (particularly for larger scale cruise ships that require offshore tendering). Industry stakeholders note that rough sea conditions result in approximately 50% of large cruise ships visiting Cooktown being unable to tender passengers ashore. The cost of developing deep water port facilities in Cooktown to improve access for cruise ships would be major and unrealistic to expect for a small and remote community.

Based on the information gathered from local stakeholders, regional / State tourism organisations and cruise ship industry, the further development of the cruise ship industry in Cooktown should not be a key priority for Cook Shire. Although economic benefits can be achieved from encouraging cruise shipping, the irregularity of scheduling and accessibility means that visits will always be somewhat erratic. They should not be relied on as a sustainable demand base for the local tourism industry and instead considered only as 'cream on the top'.

Despite not being a key priority for Cook Shire, there are still a number of minor initiatives that can be undertaken to help maximise the economic benefits achieved under the current level of tourist visitation from cruise ships. These initiatives include:

- Develop strategies for businesses to coordinate opening during scheduled visits;
- Facilitate collaboration between local tourism operators to increase the capacity of the local tourism industry; and
- Continue to build relationships with cruise ship companies, with a focus on micro cruise shipping.

4. Conclusion

Cook Shire is a unique proposition for tourism development. The Shire contains an abundance of natural and cultural assets that provides a vast basis for development of tourism products and experiences. 'The Cape' also holds a certain allure and considerable reputation for genuine remote wilderness adventures throughout Australia and indeed much of the world. It is easy to project a great potential for tourism development in Cook Shire.

At the same time, Cook Shire is remote with a small population and resource base to service a very large and complex region. The region simply lacks the resources to successfully pursue many initiatives. As a region Cook must pursue a limited suite of priorities where the costs are low and/or the region has a clear advantage that differentiates it. Traditional tourist destinations such as the Cairns region will always have far greater resources, and be able to outcompete on any of the traditional features such as cost, convenience, market exposure, services, range of activities, etc.

It is hard to think of any similar sized communities in Australia with such a strong recognition by the market as Cook Shire. The challenge for Cook Shire's tourism industry is to consolidate and continue to enhance this reputation, to convert the recognition and interest into actual visits to the Shire, and to leverage the industry into the International market.

The Cook Shire TSAP represents the 'business end' of the Cook Shire Tourism Strategy project. The TSAP is a product of significant research and analysis, including two consultation phases, the Background Assessment report and the Tourism Product Audit.

4.1 Strategic Initiatives

Eight core strategic initiatives have been detailed, which are to shape Cook Shire's tourism industry over the next ten years. The eight strategic initiatives (as set out in Section 4) are:

- Long Term Marketing Strategy –Low Cost / Targeted Focus;
- Grey Nomads and Camping Strategy (Cooktown focus);
- Expansion of Camping Related Tourism Facilities in the Iron Range Area;
- Emerging Market Development (China Focus);
- Cape York Touring Trails Development;
- Proactive Council Investment Attraction;
- Coen and Peninsula Development Road Signage Strategy; and
- Ongoing Preparation of the Cooktown Visitor Survey.

Pursuing these initiatives requires that the region's stakeholders, most notably Cook Shire Council and the Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, invest significant time into understanding the background to these initiatives and adapting them to work within their current day-to-day operations. Relatively detailed guidance on how these initiatives would be pursued is provided, however this cannot replace further planning within the region to carry them through to implementation.

It is unlikely that all strategies will be able to be progressed concurrently. Guidance on how strategic initiatives fit with market priorities, timelines and leading stakeholders is summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary of Key Actions in the TSAP

	Project / Strategy							
	Long Term Marketing Strategy	Grey Nomads and Camping Strategy	Expansion of Camping Related Tourism Facilities in the Iron Range Area	Emerging Market Development	Cape York Touring Trails Development	Proactive Council Investment Attraction	Coen and Peninsula Development Road Signage Strategy	Ongoing Preparation of the Cooktown Visitor Survey
Core Market Priority								
4WD / Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on direct contact with interest groups through direct and online engagement Aim to provide specific information and support to convert interest in an 'up-the-Cape' adventure into more visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused on Grey Nomads but part of 'base camp' strategy to have more travellers heading up the Cape to stop into Cooktown for supplies, information (Nature's Powerhouse) and 'rest days' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on making is easier for greater volumes of 4WD / Adventure visitors to visit and spend time in the Iron Range area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4WD / Adventure experience will continue to serve as the key image of tourism in Cook Shire to International and domestic markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus is on making and adventure in Cape York easier to plan for and understand – without removing the adventurous nature of the trails themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal focus on investment to support this market at the time of writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist in wayfinding support for this market and enabling more spirit of the moment decisions to visit other attractions / facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive
Peripheral Market Priority								
Grey Nomads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct contact with Grey Nomad groups included but not as high a focus as 4WD / Adventure and Domestic Leisure markets Marketing focus for Grey Nomads more about repairing destination reputation and converting visitors into a higher level of expenditure and activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core focus on this market group Main aim is to make is easier for Grey Nomads to visit Cooktown and spend at least a short amount of time in the Town Base camp strategy for increased visits of Grey Nomads into Cooktown to be converted to more sales of supplies and better opportunity to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be significant user of these facilities however focus is on 4WD / Adventure market (although the two markets cannot always be separated) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be of value to assisting with dispersal of Grey Nomads however core market focus is on 4WD / Adventure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of additional and expanded camping and holiday park facilities is one of the focuses of this action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on wayfinding support for this market and better conversion of traffic to visitation of other attractions / facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive

Project / Strategy								
	Long Term Marketing Strategy	Grey Nomads and Camping Strategy	Expansion of Camping Related Tourism Facilities in the Iron Range Area	Emerging Market Development	Cape York Touring Trails Development	Proactive Council Investment Attraction	Coen and Peninsula Development Road Signage Strategy	Ongoing Preparation of the Cooktown Visitor Survey
		promote other products and activities						
Domestic Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core focus of this strategy Promotion focus is on similar adventurous / up-the-Cape experiences and images – Product focus is on more bite-sized experiences, tours and traditional accommodation options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic Leisure and Grey Nomads markets blend at the margin and cannot always be separated Some level of demand from Domestic Leisure market expected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some, but minimal, level of demand from Domestic Leisure market expected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of additional products and facilities for this market is one of the focuses of this strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic Leisure tourists are not a significant focus of the Road Signage Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive
Developing/ Investigating Market Priority								
International Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a current focus Techniques and experience developed through this strategy can be applied to international markets in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core focus is on gaining understanding of these emerging markets and pioneering approaches to attract them to Cook Shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive
Non-core / incidental Market Priority								
Cruise ship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction anticipated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-inclusive
International backpackers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not a focus but easily picked up through this style of marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backpackers are likely to be a significant secondary market utilising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More adventurous backpackers may utilise these facilities but are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backpackers from emerging markets should be considered as a potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive



Project / Strategy								
	Long Term Marketing Strategy	Grey Nomads and Camping Strategy	Expansion of Camping Related Tourism Facilities in the Iron Range Area	Emerging Market Development	Cape York Touring Trails Development	Proactive Council Investment Attraction	Coen and Peninsula Development Road Signage Strategy	Ongoing Preparation of the Cooktown Visitor Survey
		these facilities	not considered a significant focus	segment				
Leading Stakeholders								
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook Shire Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook Shire Council; Portland Roads Community Working Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook Shire Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook Shire Council Local expertise coordination through Natures Powerhouse VIC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook Shire Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook Shire Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cook Shire Council Cooktown Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
Priority Level*								
	Short-term, Ongoing	Medium-term	Long-term	Medium-term, ongoing	Short-term, ongoing	Short-term, ongoing	Medium-term	Short-term, ongoing

Source: AECgroup

*Short-term (1-3yrs), Medium-term (1-5yrs), Long-term (1-10yrs), Ongoing (review and update on an ongoing basis after delivery of the core strategy)



4.2 Interaction with Other Regions

The tourism experience in Cook Shire is towards the periphery of what Tourism Queensland and Tourism Tropical North Queensland is focussed on developing and promoting. This strategy promotes a more self-reliant focus on Cook Shire engaging with its core domestic 4WD / Adventure/ Leisure markets through the growing ability to directly connect with target markets.

This strategy views the Cape York region as the closest community of interest in terms of tourism strategy and cooperative approaches on initiatives such as Cape York Touring Trails Development. Within Cook Shire, there are also several distinctive communities such as Laura and Coen which have shared tourism objectives and also some of their own initiatives.

Engagement with Tourism Queensland and Tourism Australia to understand their evolving understanding of emerging markets is also required. Cook Shire is not currently in a position to make a significant entry into developing international tourism however this situation has the potential to change rapidly, as markets, travel means and communications technologies evolve.

4.3 Summary

The strategic initiatives outlined in this TSAP focus on clear, achievable directions of clear relevance to Cook Shire's markets and appropriate to the region's resources to deliver the strategies.

Several strategic initiatives are more aspirational and less certain (e.g. Emerging Market Development), on the basis of pursuing limited higher risk and longer term directions which have the potential to bring major benefits to the region's tourism future. Ingredients within Cook Shire for success with emerging markets are apparent, but the pathways to success are not yet so clear.

The success of this TSAP will be determined primarily by the actions of the region's stakeholders over the next 10 years. By focusing on these initiatives as a region, Cook Shire has the potential to significantly improve outcomes for its tourism related businesses.

Appendix A: Capturing Tourism Visitation

Background

As a part of the initial project brief, AECgroup has developed a methodology for capturing visitation and expenditure statistics in Cook Shire. The analysis included a benchmark review (summarised below), which included consultation with Tourism Queensland (TQ) regarding their methods for estimating visitor numbers and expenditure in regions of Queensland.

The methodology proposed for Cook Shire includes a survey approach and requires a number of industry partners to collect bi-annual visitation statistics to their business. The successful implementation of the proposed methodology will provide Cook Shire with a total estimate for tourism visitation and an average expenditure per day / night for various tourism related expenditure categories. Collecting these statistics over time will allow planning bodies and industry members to monitor the overall health of Cook Shire's tourism industry and make better informed decisions.

Benchmark Review

In terms of existing literature, there is limited information regarding the collection of regional tourism visitation statistics. Regional tourism statistics tend to be survey based, however, specific methodologies used to develop visitation numbers are not generally reported in detail.

AECgroup undertook consultation with TQ, to gain a better understanding on how tourism visitation statistics are developed for their Destination Visitor Surveys. Very simply, TQ surveys visitors from each tourism region (Australian Bureau of Statistics standardised tourism regions) to determine what regions they visit, for how long and how much they spend. These proportions are then applied to nationally collected visitation data, which is based on international overseas arrivals and departures data and Australia's population – to determine international and domestic tourism visitation numbers respectively.

Although this methodology is not perfect, it represents one of the only ways of capturing visitor statistics at a regional level. AECgroup has developed a methodology that uses similar principles in order to capture tourist visitation and expenditure in Cook Shire. The proposed methodology is outlined in the Section below.

Proposed Methodology

The proposed methodology for collecting tourism visitation data in Cook Shire, follows a similar approach to that of TQ Destination Visitor Surveys, whereby a survey will be utilised as a foundation. However, the methodology differs where the direct application of TQ's approach for collecting data for Cook Shire would be overly expensive and/or require major project planning and design. An overview of the methodology for estimating tourist visitation and expenditure to Cook Shire is considered in Table A.2.

Table A.2: Summary Tourism Visitation Statistics Methodology

Stage	Action / Task	Detail
1	Find supportive businesses / operators that can collect visitor data (i.e. raw visitor numbers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data should ideally be characterised bi-annually (with the ability to be monthly segregated) to reflect differences between seasons and be compatible with month long survey periods The businesses / operators should ideally be distributed across the Shire to at least three different townships (i.e. Cooktown, Coen, Portland Roads or Laura)
2	Design survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the proportion of tourists visiting the businesses / operators consolidated in Stage 1 Identify average daily spend on various items
3	Find supportive businesses that are willing to administer the survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey should ideally be administered on a bi-annual basis to reflect differences between seasons The survey sample size will depend largely on project budget constraints – a sample range of 200 – 400 would initially be sufficient The survey should ideally be distributed across the Shire to at least

Stage	Action / Task	Detail
		three different townships (i.e. Cooktown, Coen, Portland Roads or Laura) • Survey should include accommodation businesses so as to capture the business tourism market
4	Compile data on an annual basis	• Data will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visitation statistics for several key businesses / operators in the low and high seasons ○ Proportion of tourists visiting the key businesses / operators in the low and high seasons ○ Expenditures per day / night in the low and high seasons
5	Data analysis	• Extrapolate visitor data at the key businesses / operators based on the proportion of tourists visiting these attractions (for low and high seasons) • Take an average of the extrapolated visitation for all of the data points (for low and high seasons) • Add low and high total average visitations to determine total annual visitation • Determine average daily expenditure by category based on data obtained from the survey (can do so for low and high seasons and aggregate)

Source: AECgroup

The successful administration of this approach in Cook Shire will require the Cook Shire Council to work with a number of strategically located visitor data collection points across the Shire, which will most suitably be tourism associated businesses and operators who volunteer to collect data. Participating businesses / operators will be required to collect tourism visitation numbers data on a bi-annual basis (for the low and high season) so seasonal analysis can be later undertaken on the data. The businesses and operators should ideally be evenly distributed across Cook Shire to allow for best results.

A brief visitor survey (no longer than one-page) will need to be designed which includes questions to cross-reference the proportion of tourists visiting the participating businesses / operators. Note that the longer / more complicated the survey, the lower the response rate and less accurate the data that will be collected. To minimise costs, the survey can be distributed by businesses, ideally across Cook Shire. The survey should be conducted on a bi-annual basis to coincide with the bi-annual visitation numbers data collected by the participating business / operators.

Once the visitation data from the participating businesses / operators and the survey has been completed, all data will need to be electronically entered into a database for manipulation and analysis. To estimate total visitation to Cook Shire, visitor data collected by the participating businesses / operators and the proportions of tourists visiting these businesses and operators will need to be compared and extrapolated. To extrapolate each data point, the following formula is to be applied:

$$\text{Total Visitation} = \% \text{ of tourists that visited the business } \times \frac{1}{\# \text{ of tourists that visited the business}}$$

The formula will need to be applied to each tourism visitation data point provided by the participating businesses / operators for the low and high seasons. Low and high season visitations can then be estimated by taking the mean of the relevant visitation estimations. An example of the extrapolation analysis is outlined in Table A.3 **Error! Reference source not found..**

Table A.3: Visitation Data Analysis Example

Business / Attraction	Location	Proportion of Tourists Visiting	Bi-Annual Visitor Data	Extrapolated Visitor Numbers
High Season (May to October)				
Cooktown Example Business	Cooktown	50%	20,000	40,000
Laura Example Business	Laura	10%	4,500	45,000
Coen Example Business	Coen	8%	4,000	50,000
Portland Roads Example Business	Portland Roads	5%	2,250	45,000
Average High Season Visitation				45,000
Low Season (November to April)				
Cooktown Example Business	Cooktown	60%	14,000	23,333
Laura Example Business	Laura	8%	2,000	25,000
Coen Example Business	Coen	4%	1,200	30,000
Portland Roads Example Business	Portland Roads	2%	600	30,000
Average Low Season Visitation				27,083
Total Average Annual Visitation				72,083

Source: AECgroup

Example Survey

The survey is one of the core components of the proposed methodology for measuring tourism visitation and expenditure statistics. The survey has two key objectives:

- **Objective 1:** To determine the proportion of tourists visiting the visitor data collection points (participating businesses / operators); and
- **Objective 2:** To determine the average expenditure per person per day / night on various tourism related expenditure categories.

AECgroup has developed an example survey that incorporates the required information to undertaken this tourism visitation and expenditure estimation methodology. The Survey is noted below in Survey A.1.

Survey A.1: Example Tourist Visitor and Expenditure Survey

Q1. What is your primary reason for travelling to Cook Shire? <i>(tick one option only)</i>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Friends / Relatives → Go to Q3 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Business / Work → Go to Q3 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday / Recreation → Go to Q2 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other → Please Specify _____
Q2. If you answered Holiday / Recreation in Q1, what is the reason for travelling to Cook Shire? <i>(tick all that apply)</i>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting Cooktown 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Undertaking a tour → Please Specify _____ 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Travelling to Cape York 4 <input type="checkbox"/> History 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Nature / Environment 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous culture 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Australian Culture 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other → Please Specify _____
Q3. What is your primary mode of travel? <i>(tick one option only)</i>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Car (2WD) 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Car (4WD) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Car (w/ Caravan) 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Plane (Scheduled passenger service) 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Plane (Chartered flight) 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Boat (personally owned) 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Boat (Cruise or charter) 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other → Please Specify _____
Q4. On average, how much have you / plan to spend on the following items per day / night: <i>(Provide \$ per day / night for all)</i>	1 Accommodation: _____ 2 Groceries: _____ 3 Cafe / Restaurants: _____ 4 Travelling Supplies: _____ 5 Fuel: _____ 6 Tourism Activities: _____ 7 Other: _____
Q5. Which of the following destinations have you been to or plan on going to? <i>(tick all that apply)</i>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Cooktown Example Business / Attraction 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Cooktown Example Business / Attraction 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Laura Example Business / Attraction 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Coen Example Business / Attraction 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Etc.
Q6. Where are you from?	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Queensland

(tick one option only)	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Australian State: → Please Specify _____ 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Overseas Country: → Please Specify _____
Q7. What is your gender? (tick one option only)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Male 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Q8. What is your age range? (tick one option only)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 year 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 18 – 25 years 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 26 – 40 years 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 41 – 60 years 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 61 – 80 years 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 80 years+
Q9. Who are you travelling with? (tick one option only)	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Alone 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Partner only 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Family → Please Specify # _____ 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Friends → Please Specify # _____ 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other → Please Specify # _____

Source: AECgroup

Summary

In summary, the proposed methodology does have limitations in terms of data accuracy; however, it broadly aligns with other regional tourism visitation estimation methodologies, which are similarly problematic. Given the nature of Cook Shire (remote areas and many different access points) it is logistically very difficult to implement any other approaches for the collection of tourism visitation data with reasonable cost effectiveness. This approach is dependent on businesses volunteering time and collecting quality statistics and surveys.

Strong relationships need to be developed with tourist operators across the Shire in order to undertake this methodology in a cost effective manner. AECgroup's proposed methodology provides a relatively simple approach, which if administered effectively, will provide a relatively good estimation of tourist visitation and expenditure in the Shire and will be a great tool in monitoring the health of the industry on a longitudinal basis.

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