

Lismore, Nimbin & Villages

Destination Management Plan
2024 - 2028

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Lismore City Council acknowledges the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation, traditional owners of the land on which we work, live and play.

We acknowledge their continuing connection to the land, sea and community.

We pay our respects to the Widjabul/Wia-bal people, their culture, their Elders and community leaders past, present and emerging.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Destination Management Plan (DMP) is to provide a collective focus, strategic direction and actions for sustainably growing and managing the Lismore local government area (LGA) visitor economy to 2028 and beyond.

The intent is to maximise the benefits of tourism for the region, safeguarding and enhancing its natural and cultural assets for the local communities and businesses of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages now and into the future.

The plan will guide the sustainable growth and viability of the visitor economy in a constantly changing and competitive market.

VISITOR ECONOMY EXPLAINED

The term 'visitor economy' referenced throughout the DMP is a contemporary definition of tourism, including people travelling not just for leisure, but for events, business, work, education or visiting friends and relatives. It brings together the industries that directly service visitors, for example accommodation, tours and attractions, retail, medical, wellness and food production.



The visitor economy is everyone's business, delivering quadruple bottom line benefits – cultural, economic, environmental and social.



DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AT A GLANCE

VISION

Lismore, Nimbin and Villages are positioned as a leading alternative and regenerative tourism destination, welcoming visitors seeking active, creative, natural and sustainable lifestyle experiences.

GOALS



DESTINATION PROFILE



ECONOMIC GROWTH



VIBRANT REGENERATIVE VISITOR EXPERIENCES



COMMUNITY BENEFIT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

ROAD TO RECOVERY | BUILD THE BRAND | SHOWCASE OUR STRENGTHS
INVEST IN MAJOR EVENTS | FACILITATE GROWTH

IN FIVE YEARS TIME

In five years time, Lismore, Nimbin and Villages are firmly positioned as the leading alternative and regenerative tourism destination of the NSW North Coast. Its active, creative, natural and sustainable lifestyle visitor experiences and events transform visitor perceptions, their wellbeing and leave positive lasting legacies for our people, culture, wildlife and natural environment.

Strategic Context



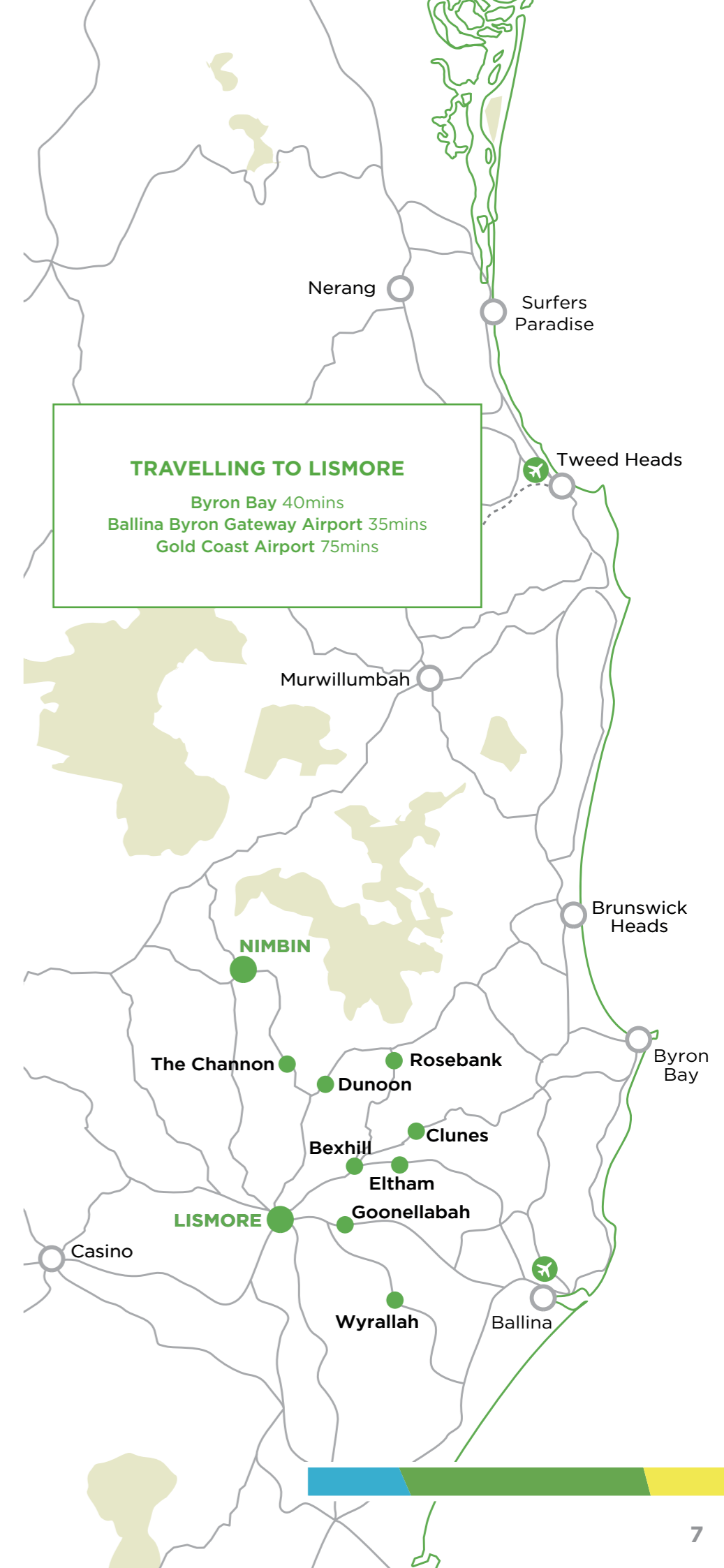
'In the Heart' Sculpture by Holly Ahern and Eden Crawford-Harriman, Lismore CBD.

DESTINATION PROFILE

Nestled in the Northern Rivers of NSW on the North Coast, situated 196km south of Brisbane and 731km north of Sydney, Lismore Local Government Area encompasses an area of 1,290 square kilometres with a population of over 44,000. The region is easily accessible via the Bruxner Highway and conveniently located within 40 minutes of Byron Bay, 35 minutes of Ballina Byron Gateway Airport and 75 minutes from the Gold Coast International Airport.

The area offers an incredible lush hinterland landscape, bordered by UNESCO World Heritage-listed Gondwana Rainforests of Australia, including the Border Ranges, Nightcap and Wollumbin National Parks.

Known for its diverse creative arts and culture, Lismore has been identified as a creative hub in Federal Government research. The cultural fabric of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages is woven with a tapestry of artistic expression, alternative lifestyles, and a thriving local scene. This distinct local culture serves as fertile ground for visitor experiences that embrace its natural environment, endemic wildlife, arts, music, events, wellness/wellbeing, sustainable agriculture and the exploration of unconventional ideas. It is an inclusive environment where innovation and self-expression offer the freedom to think outside the box, attracting over 600,000 visitors annually.





STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The Lismore, Nimbin and Villages DMP 2024-2028 has been developed within the strategic framework of location, regional, state and national strategies. This intended strategic and collaborative approach is to effectively contribute to and benefit from the visitor economy strategic direction of the greater region, NSW and Australia.

NATIONAL

Austrade

Thrive 2030, The Re-imagined Visitor Economy

STATE

Destination NSW

Visitor Economy Strategy 2030

REGIONAL

Destination North Coast

North Coast Destination Management Plan 2030

LOCAL

Lismore City Council

Community Strategic Plan 2022-32

Lismore Strategies for, including but not limited to:

- Events
- Economic Development
- Arts & Culture
- Brand & Identity
- Land Use Plans

COLLABORATION

Further strengthening the culture of collaboration within Lismore, Nimbin and Villages will be instrumental in achieving long-term desired outcomes for the wider visitor economy. This sense of collaboration extends to all strategic partners, local, regional, state and national, including, but not limited to, the following strategic partners:

LISMORE CITY COUNCIL

- Economy and Growth
- Events and Facilities
- Whole of Council approach

LOCAL

- Local community
- Local visitor economy businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Adjoining local government authorities

REGIONAL

- Destination North Coast (DNC)
- Northern Rivers Tourism Management Group
- Regional visitor economy businesses

STATE

- Destination NSW
- NSW Government Departments e.g. Regional NSW, Create NSW, National Parks & Wildlife Service, NSW Health, Northern NSW Local Health District
- NSW Tourism Industry Associations

NATIONAL

- Ecotourism Association of Australia
- Tourism Australia
- Tourism Research Australia
- National Tourism Industry Associations

TRENDS INFLUENCING VISITOR DEMAND

The following provides an overview of consumer trends relevant to regional NSW visitor economy growth, presenting opportunities for Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.



TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

Visitor experiences that are less about just looking at things and more about experiencing something new, to engage and connect visitors in a meaningful way, to the place, its history, heritage and its people.



THE CONSCIOUS TRAVELLER

Reflecting a growing concern among today's travellers for ethical and sustainable tourism options, seeking holidays that are meaningful and destinations that are open minded and sustainable. A staggering 86% of global travellers reportedly told booking.com they would be willing to spend some time on activities that offset the environmental impact of their stay.



THE GREEN CONSUMER

Climate change is a problem that is present and growing. The rise of environmental consciousness, with consumers actively seeking ecologically friendly destinations and experiences, to give-back, and reduce their impact on the environment and consumption.



WELCOME TO ALL

Rise in more inclusive and accessible travel and event experiences for all.



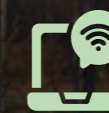
I WANT TO BREAK FREE

Urban dwellers are seeking rural and regional destinations in Australia, to 'break free' from the pace of city life and urban sprawl.



TRAVEL AS SELF CARE

Travel will become an essential form of self-care. Travellers agree that it helps their mental and emotional wellbeing more than other forms of self-care.



WORKCATION & EDVENTURES

Workcations have continued to rise, combining extended stays away from home while working remotely. Digital nomads seeking work-life balance. Edventures are on the rise, combining education and holidays e.g. while adults work remotely or attend meetings, their children participate in workshops and learning in a playful way.



FIERCELY LOCAL

The desire to purchase local and 'live like a local', where visitors seek local connection, to eat like a local, hang out where the locals go, and not to be viewed as tourists to ensure their trip is beneficial to the local community.

Nimbin Rocks

Situation Analysis

Dining, Lismore CBD

VISITOR ECONOMY SNAPSHOT

VISITORS 2021/22¹
TOTAL VISITORS 629,000

DOMESTIC¹

Total domestic visitors **143,573**
Total domestic nights **489,281**

INTERNATIONAL 5-YEAR AVERAGE¹

Total international visitors **13,435**
Total international nights **146,185**

DAY-TRIPPERS 2020/21¹

Total day-trippers **432,199**

EMPLOYMENT¹

1,265, representing
5.1% of total industry

AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY¹

Domestic **3.2 days**
International **10.9**

5-YEAR AVERAGE REASON FOR VISITING¹

47% holiday
23% visiting family and friends
30% other

SPEND

Total Value Added **\$97M¹**
Total Expenditure **\$117M²**
Domestic Overnight **\$58M²**
Daytrip **\$60M²**

ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY³

1,000+ sleep capacity
22 Accommodation providers
18 hotels/motels
45+ Airbnb
4 Holiday parks

¹Economy.id Lismore City. National Institute of Economic & Industry Research (NIEIR), 2021/22

²The Value of Tourism to North Coast 2022, Tourism Research Australia

³Lismore City Council Accommodation Report 2023

VISITATION TRENDS

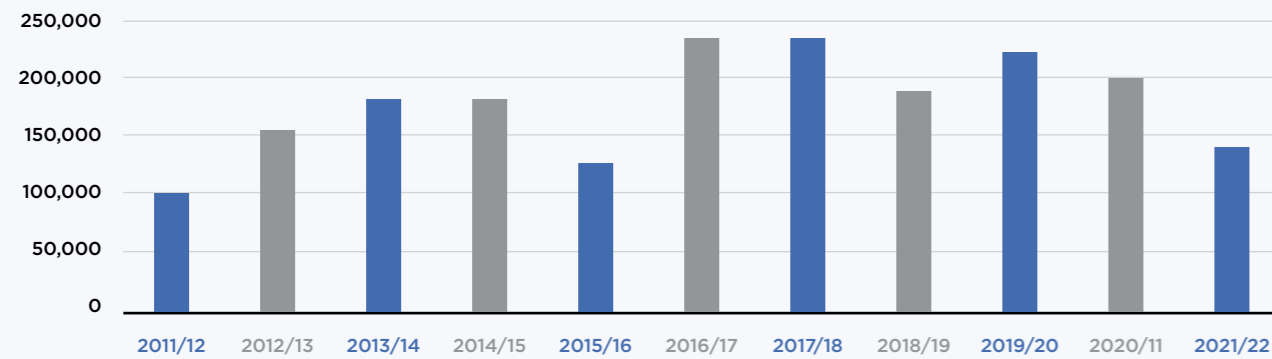
This following trend analysis provides a layered understanding of domestic and international visitation, visitor nights, day-trippers, and nights spent in the area over the past decade. The trends reflect the sector's vulnerability to various external influences, including natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, but they also underscore its resilience and potential for recovery. From fluctuations in day-trip visits to peaks and troughs in overnight stays, both domestic and international data reveal the complexities and challenges of the region's evolving tourism landscape. This multifaceted trend analysis serves as a resource for stakeholders looking to navigate Lismore, Nimbin and Village's ever-changing tourism ecosystem.

10 YEAR TREND ANALYSIS¹

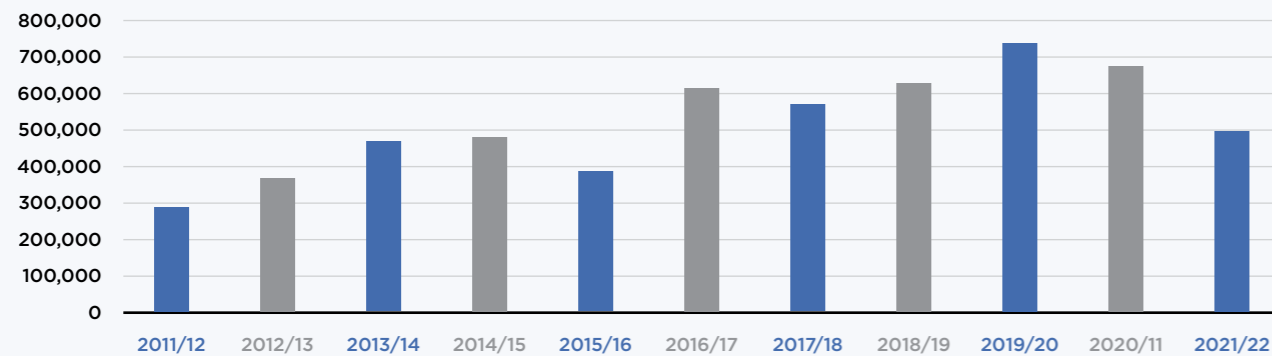
In the 2021/22 period, the Lismore LGA recorded 143,573 domestic visitors and 489,281 domestic nights, showing signs of recovery and increase despite the disruptive impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters. Compare this to peaks at 234,693 domestic visitors in 2016/17 and 731,060 domestic nights in 2019/20. Past records indicate a peak of 14,355 international visitors in 2017/18 and 290,202 international nights in 2013/14.

DOMESTIC VISITORS AND VISITOR NIGHTS¹

TOTAL DOMESTIC VISITORS 2011-2022

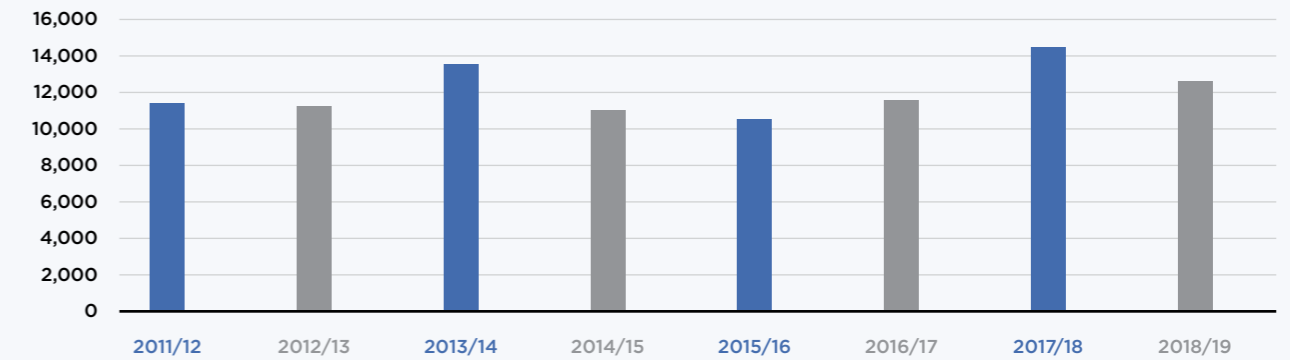


TOTAL DOMESTIC VISITOR NIGHTS 2011-2022

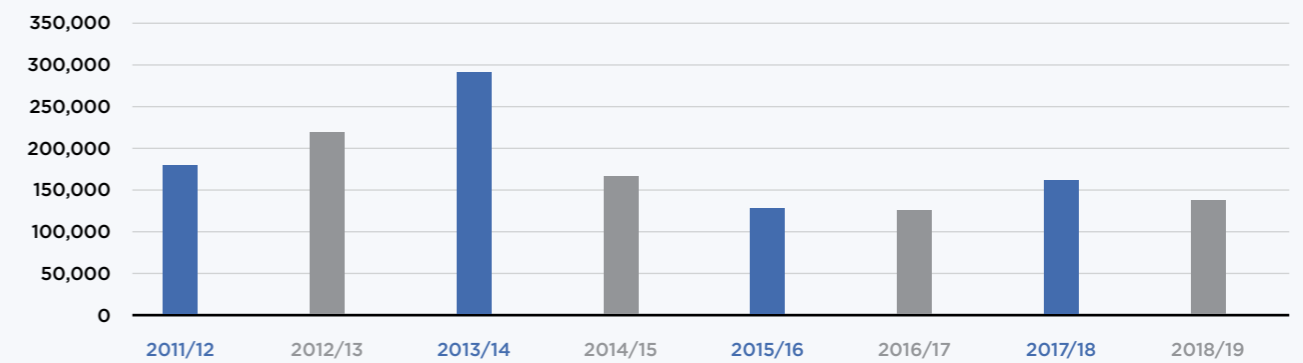


INTERNATIONAL VISITORS AND VISITOR NIGHTS¹

TOTAL INTERNATIONAL VISITORS 2011-2019

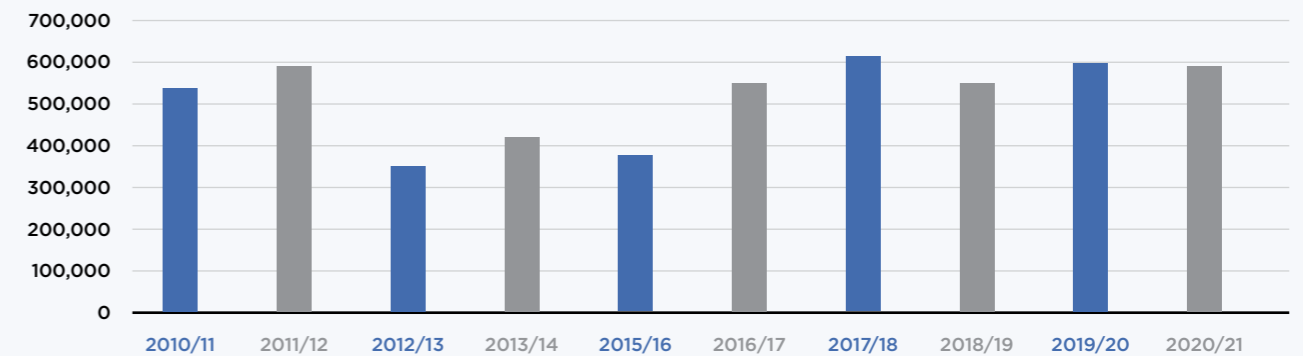


TOTAL INTERNATIONAL VISITOR NIGHTS 2011-2019



DOMESTIC DAYTRIP VISITORS¹

TOTAL DOMESTIC DAYTRIP VISITORS 2010 - 2021



¹Economy.id Lismore City. National Institute of Economic & Industry Research (NIEIR), Tourism Research Australia 2020/21

SPEND²

The tourism sector is a vital component of the Lismore LGA's economy, providing employment opportunities for a significant number of residents.

Total Expenditure \$117M
Domestic Overnight \$58M **Daytrip** \$60M

EMPLOYMENT¹

Total direct and indirect tourism employment in 2021/22 was 1,265, representing 5.1% of total industry.

In comparison to 2017-18, employment decreased, where total tourism employment was 1,782, representing 7.8% of total industry.

LENGTH OF STAY¹

The five-year average length of stay for domestic 2010/11 to 2021/22 and international for 2010/11 to 2018/19 was:

Domestic 3.2 days **International** 10.9 days

REASON FOR VISITING¹

The primary reason for visitation is holiday travel, with an average domestic stay of 3.1 days and a longer international stay averaging 10.9 days.

HOLIDAY VISITORS

In the 5 years up to 2021/22, 47% visitation was for holiday purposes.

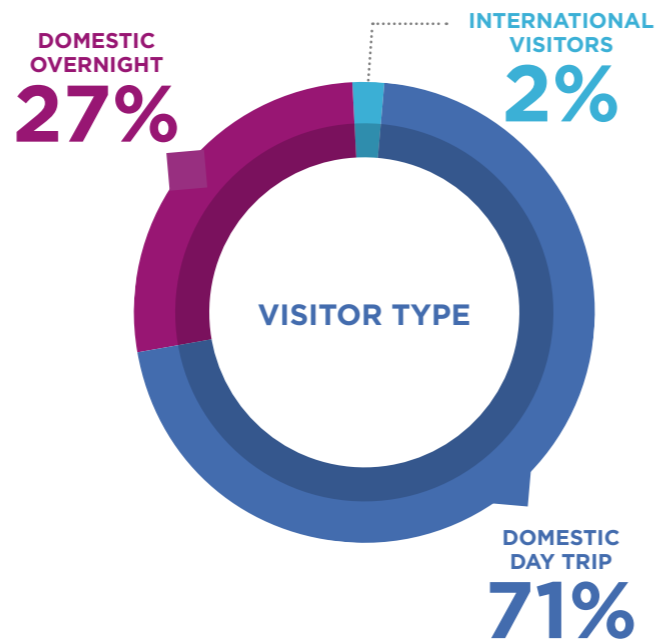
DAY TRIPPERS LOVE LISMORE, NIMBIN & VILLAGES

71% of all visitors are domestic day trippers.



VISITOR TYPE¹

In the 5 years up to 2021/22, domestic daytrip visitors to Lismore LGA accounted for 71% of all visitors, followed by domestic overnight visitors 27% and international 2%.



SHARE OF NORTH COAST VISITATION AND SPEND²

Lismore, Nimbin and Villages accounts for 5% of total visitation, 2% of the total visitor expenditure, and 8% of day trippers to the North Coast Region. In comparison Kempsey LGA, who shares the same 5% of total visitation to the North Coast region has double the total visitor expenditure at 4%.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Lismore, Nimbin and Villages, in the hills of the Northern Rivers of NSW, is renowned for its alternative lifestyle, creating an inclusive and dynamic atmosphere that celebrates diversity. Set within a stunning landscape its unique selling points provide potential for visitor experiences like nowhere else.



UNESCO WORLD-HERITAGE RAINFORESTS

The dramatically beautiful Border Ranges, Nightcap and Wollumbin National Parks form part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area, including spectacular views, waterfalls and ancient rainforests, with unique biodiversity linked to ancient Gondwana.



ENDEMIC WILDLIFE

Lismore has one of the largest urban populations of koalas in Australia, and the region is home to one of the largest genetically diverse koala populations in NSW. Several other threatened species include Albert's lyrebird and Fleay's barred frog.



ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE

Reflecting its inclusive and cultural diversity, a strong sense of community and desire for wellness/wellbeing and sustainable living, the area is known as the 'The Rainbow Region'.



CREATIVE COMMUNITY

A recognised vibrant creative arts scene, from performance, visual arts, street art, music to creative services, and home to Northern Rivers Performing Arts (NORPA), Northern Rivers Conservatorium, Arts Northern Rivers and numerous galleries and art hubs.



FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Creative arts, sporting and sustainable lifestyle events capital of the Northern Rivers, home to the Lismore Masters Games, the Lismore Lantern Festival, Aquarius Festival and Tropical Fruits New Year Festival just to name a few!



PROXIMITY

Just thirty minutes from iconic coastlines and a national surfing reserve, the region lies within an hour of South East Queensland, providing potential source markets from one of Australia's fastest growing areas. Proximity to Ballina Byron Gateway Airport and Gold Coast Airport provide potential for future interstate and international visitation.

Protestors Falls, PC: Philip Tsourlinis

¹ Economy.id Lismore City. National Institute of Economic & Industry Research (NIEIR), Tourism Research Australia 2021/22

² The Value of Tourism to North Coast 2022

KEY MOTIVATIONAL DRIVERS

To better understand visitor perceptions and the region's offer, an online visitor survey was conducted with 224 survey respondents, predominantly from the greater Northern Rivers region, Brisbane/ South East Qld and Sydney.

TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS

New visitors were motivated by:

1. Rest & Relaxation
2. National Parks/World Heritage Rainforests
3. Trekking/nature walks
4. Local food, farmers markets, and food trails
5. Spend time with family
6. Cheap flights into Ballina Byron or Gold Coast airports

Previous visitors would be motivated to revisit by:

1. Local Food, farmers markets and food trails
2. National Parks/World Heritage Rainforests
3. Festival/Event
4. Rest & Relaxation
5. Arts, culture & entertainment
6. Trekking/nature walks

VISITOR PERCEPTIONS

To gain a greater understanding of visitor perceptions, respondents were asked to share in order of priority what words best describe, what attractions come to mind and what perceptions/emotions they felt when they think of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.

DESCRIPTORS

1. Friendly
2. Alternative
3. Peaceful
4. Beautiful
5. Relaxed

ATTRACTIONS

1. Markets
2. Nimbin/Nimbin Rocks
3. National Parks
4. Arts Scene and Murals
5. Shopping

PERCEPTIONS

1. Sadness
2. Relaxed
3. Happy
4. Peaceful
5. Community

Of particular interest was the identification of "alternative" as a descriptor for the region, as words such as friendly, peaceful, beautiful and relaxed are common descriptors for rural and regional locations.

The most common perception response, "sadness" was surprisingly opposite to other perceptions of relaxed, happy, peaceful and community, highlighting the need to build positive brand profiling.



BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking with local government councils in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria with similar geographic locations, population bases and/or burgeoning tourism and events industry was undertaken to examine their structure, visitor services, eco-certification, industry support, RV/drive market and destination marketing. Councils benchmarked included Armidale Regional Council, East Gippsland Shire Council, and Scenic Rim Regional Council.

KEY LEARNINGS

STRUCTURE

Councils with compact tourism units are actively collaborating with Local Tourism Organisations (LTOs), Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) and other relevant tourism entities to achieve results. Emphasising collaboration is of paramount importance.

RV MARKET

Some councils did not see significant value or priority in the RV market, while others are contemplating the idea of adopting RV friendliness.

ECOTOURISM CERTIFICATION

Eco-friendliness is a prerequisite expectation from visitors when they visit destinations.

Although Eco certification did not directly boost visitation, it facilitated the establishment of globally recognised corporate social responsibility standards and promoted sustainable practices amongst tourism operators.

Eco certified Destinations have gained both confidence and authority in advocating for regional sustainability and increased media/destination profiling.

INDUSTRY CAPACITY BUILDING

Councils continually strive to inspire their local tourism and events industry through a combination of in-house and industry specialist-led workshops, along with networking events.

Real-time data is indispensable for making informed decisions.

DESTINATION MARKETING

Each destination is proactive in maintaining a dedicated 'Visit' website along with dynamic social media pages.

Specialised industry experts are frequently engaged for destination marketing and Media PR, enhancing brand visibility and attraction through established state and national media networks.

Every destination harnesses the potential of their unique natural tourism assets, such as National Parks. These are often intertwined with tour offerings and food and wine experiences.

VISITOR SERVICES

Feasibility studies conducted on Council-owned and operated Visitor Information Centres (VICs) identified a successful VIC is often characterised by its strategic location, with a cafe or attraction through partnership agreements.

Generally, it was cited management of VICs should ideally remain under Councils' jurisdiction to ensure consistency and reliability of services.

From a visitor perspective, accredited VICs are deemed essential in providing reliable, quality and impartial information and services to visitors.

With the growth of digital technology, VICs were still deemed an important component to the overall visitor services strategy.



OPPORTUNITIES, CONSTRAINTS + GAPS

During the consultation process the following opportunities, constraints and gaps were identified.

OPPORTUNITIES

REGENERATIVE & ECOTOURISM

- Promote Lismore/Nimbin as a hub for sustainable tourism featuring eco-friendly accommodations and renewable energy initiatives.
- Explore opportunities where 'every visitor contributes,' such as community-led experiences or volunteer tourism.
- Create 'visitor contribution' experiences focussed on conservation and community growth.
- Work towards achieving ecotourism accreditation to enhance sustainable credibility.

EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOPS

- Develop workshops in sustainable living for retreats and events, and AI/digital innovation.
- Develop wellness retreats focussed on yoga and alternative healing methods.
- Holistic experience weekends embracing cultural and national attractions.
- Further develop and promote workshops to engage visitors in local crafts and culture e.g. at 7 Sibly Street, Nimbin, Lismore Quad.

ADVENTURE & SPORTS

- Create a variety of adventure experiences e.g. hiking trails, mountain biking routes.
- Northern Rivers Rail Trail.
- Further develop/enhance camping options/facilities for adventure market.
- Capitalise on existing sports infrastructure to upgrade to regional/national standards and leisure infrastructure enhancements throughout region e.g. skate parks, tennis courts, Peace Park.

DESTINATION PROFILE

- Changing visitor perceptions of the region.
- Building the brand of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.

ART & CULTURE

- Capitalise on the rich street art and murals for guided art walks.
- Rainbow Road Walking Track.
- Incorporate more music in public spaces and initiate art-related street and storytelling events.
- Enhance Aboriginal cultural tours and experiences, allowing visitors to learn about the rich heritage, traditions, and art of the Widjabul/Wia-bal people of the Bundjalung nation.
- Expand Aboriginal cultural participation in traditional activities e.g. didgeridoo playing, bush tucker foraging under the guidance of Aboriginal elders.
- Redevelop Nimbin Museum for visitors to gain greater understanding of cultural heritage and sustainable lifestyle movement.

NATURE & WILDLIFE

- Build upon existing wildlife sanctuaries for educational experiences.
- Partner for Koala preservation initiatives, including development of Koala Care Centre experience with boardwalks for viewing koalas.
- Establish stargazing experiences e.g. International Dark Sky Reserve.
- Develop eco-tourism experiences, e.g. guided nature walks, tree walk, bird-watching tours, and wildlife spotting.
- Package guided tours focused on World Heritage areas, e.g. guided eco-tours, waterfalls.
- Invest in virtual reality experiences that can offer a taste of the destination to international audiences.
- Develop World Heritage guided tours to increase visitor engagement.

LOCAL PRODUCE & AGRITOURISM

- Develop sustainable farm/food tours and cooking classes focusing on organic farms and local cuisine.
- Organise farm-to-table events to highlight the region's agricultural capabilities.
- Possible partnerships with Southern Cross University for business events related to sustainable agriculture.
- Create immersive experiences in regenerative farming and organic food production.
- Explore "Sunday fundays" featuring hemp and vegetable gardens with pick-your-own (PYO) experiences.
- Further leverage/participate in regional food trails e.g. Northern Rivers Harvest Food Trail, North Coast Flavour Trails.

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORT

- Establish a transfer presence at Ballina Byron Gateway Airport for Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.
- Include EV charging stations and bike access improvements for easier city/village access.
- Develop small-scale bus tours operated by local businesses.
- Evaluate better public transport options, especially for event attendance.
- Develop latest sustainable public transport options e.g. electric buses.

VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES

- Re-establish VIC services in Lismore and Nimbin.
- Promote QR codes pointing to visitor website, dispersed throughout region.
- Encourage mobile Visitor Apps increasing distribution of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages visitor information.

CONSTRAINTS

ACCOMMODATION

- Limited variety of accommodation requiring development.
- Limited sustainable accommodation, including eco-friendly and energy-efficient options.
- Lack of high-speed internet connectivity in accommodations for digital nomads and modern travellers.

DINING & AMENITIES

- Limited options for night-time dining.
- Maintenance and aesthetic improvement of buildings in CBD and Nimbin to enhance overall visitor experience.

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORT

- Upgraded and well-maintained roads to accommodate visitor traffic and improve access to attractions.
- Expansion and upgrade of regional airports for easier domestic and international access.
- Limited charging stations for electric vehicles.
- No secure parking for electric bikes.

FACILITIES & AMENITIES

- Poor/limited visitor signage and interpretation.
- General maintenance and aesthetic improvements in town, including building upkeep, clearing overgrown walking paths and public amenities.
- A need for well-equipped and accessible visitor information included in museums and galleries.

CONSERVATION

- Ensuring habitat restoration efforts are not hampered by overtourism.
- Sourcing and managing long-term funding for tourism conservation initiatives.
- National Park Preservation: Investing in the maintenance and protection of National Parks and natural reserves to sustain the region's unique biodiversity and natural beauty.

LOCAL BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

- Encourage ecotourism accreditation to build critical mass of eco accredited businesses.

LOCAL EXPERIENCE

- Find a balance between attracting and retaining local participation.
- Address issues like overgrown walks that need maintenance to keep local sites attractive and accessible.



GAPS

ACCOMMODATION

- Boutique upscale lodging options to attract high-value visitors.
- Brand name 4-5-star hotel/apartments for business and conference group markets.
- Self-contained accommodation options catering for ree independent travellers (FITs), families, sporting groups, RV, caravan and camping.

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORT

- Well maintained road network throughout region for self-drive/touring markets.
- CBD and regionally dispersed EV charging stations for electric vehicles/bicycles.
- Maintenance and aesthetic improvements of buildings, walking paths, public amenities.
- Digital connectivity, regionally available high-speed internet and co-working spaces to cater for digital nomads.

NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY

- Evening dining experiences.
- Dawn, dusk visitor experiences.

VISITOR EXPERIENCES

- Well-maintained/managed walking trails with safe and ample parking.
- Cultural and Aboriginal tourism guided experiences.
- Adventure/outdoor tourism sector.
- Health and wellness experiences, including retreat packages.
- Family-oriented attractions and facilities, such as child-friendly trails and educational play areas.
- Programs for visitors interested in long-term stays for cultural exchange or education.

VISITOR INFORMATION

- CBD and regionally dispersed visitor information centre/services.
- Centralised digital platform to aggregate visitor information services and experiences.
- Accredited information centre/services.

DESTINATION PROFILE

- Presence/profile of visitor experiences in state/national/international tourism networks.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Partnerships and regular networking with visitor economy businesses and destination networks.
- Formalised partnerships between tourism businesses and domestic and international trade.
- Untapped collaboration opportunities with educational institutions like SCU and local businesses in agritourism events.
- Limited tourism partnerships with Aboriginal communities.

Gaps identified pertain to the comprehension of what drives the predominance of day-trippers in the Lismore, Nimbin and Villages' visitor market.

COLLABORATIVE ASPIRATIONS

Throughout consultation, including online surveys and facilitated workshops, respondents and attendees were asked to share their aspirations and shared vision for Lismore, Nimbin and Villages into the future.

CREATIVE STRONG COMMUNITY
OPEN AT NIGHT WELCOMING
HEALTHY WELLNESS LIFESTYLE
WORLD HERITAGE ALTERNATIVE
BETTER ACCOMMODATION
NATURE VISITORS FEEL RELAXED
COLOURFUL FUNKY GREENER
CLEANER VIBRANT AUTHENTIC
INSPIRING OTHERS RAIL TRAIL MORE
PEOPLE VISITING BUT MAINTAINING
COMMUNITY VILLAGE FEEL HAPPY
ECO-ACCREDITED FRIENDLY ARTS
SCENE ALTERNATIVE NATIONAL
PARKS SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES
VIBRANT PEACEFUL INNOVATIVE
PUSHING BOUNDARIES ART HUB
HOLISTIC LIFESTYLE ARTISANS &
MUSICIANS ON STREET CURIOUS
KNOWN FOR SUSTAINABILITY
KOALAS TREE WALKS BUSTLING
CAFES EMBRACING THE RIVER
COLLABORATION NATURAL
ATTRACTIONS MORE REGENERATIVE
TOURISM BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE
FAMILY FUN PERFORMING ARTS
CENTRE ACCEPTING INCLUSIVE
ACCESSIBLE WALKING TRAILS SOCIAL
ABORIGINAL EXPERIENCES

WHEN VISITORS LEAVE, WE WANT THEM TO FEEL

- Relaxed
- Safe
- Welcomed, not judged
- Healthy, fit, nourished and content
- Feeling more centred, less stressed
- Life has changed
- Educated, more aware
- Alive, invigorated, curious, entertained
- Relaxed, planning next trip
- Feeling part of a community
- Nature has a lot to offer
- Valued, satisfied and wanting to come back
- Welcome in a place they want to live
- Next generation becomes local
- Experienced somewhere special

ALTERNATIVE/REGENERATIVE TOURISM

Meaningful and transformative travel experiences going beyond a typical holiday. Sustainability is a priority as travellers aim to minimise their carbon footprint, while regenerative tourism takes it one step forward, actively giving back to conserve/regenerate the natural environments and cultural heritage of the local communities and locations they visit.

Into the future

VISION

Lismore, Nimbin and Villages is positioned as a leading alternative and regenerative tourism destination, welcoming visitors seeking active, creative, natural and sustainable lifestyle experiences.

Nightcap National Park

GOALS



DESTINATION PROFILE

Transform destination profile and visitor perceptions of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.



ECONOMIC GROWTH

Drive economic growth through increased visitor length of stay, regional dispersal and overnight visitor expenditure.



VIBRANT REGENERATIVE VISITOR EXPERIENCES

Facilitate leading regenerative visitor experiences, attracting year-round visitation by diverse, high-value visitor markets.



COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Enhance social benefits of tourism for the local community, inspiring creativity, cultural and environmental sustainability.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Road to Recovery | Build the Brand
Showcase our Strengths | Invest in Major Events
Facilitate Growth

IN FIVE YEARS TIME

In five years time, Lismore, Nimbin and Villages are firmly positioned as the leading alternative and regenerative tourism destination of the NSW North Coast. Its active, creative, natural and sustainable lifestyle visitor experiences and events transform visitor perceptions, their wellbeing and leave positive lasting legacies for our people, culture, wildlife and natural environment.

TARGET MARKETS

In line with current origin of visitors and the main North Coast target markets with associated growth opportunities identified in the North Coast NSW Destination Management Plan (2022-23), key visitor target markets for Lismore, Nimbin and Villages are:

TARGET MARKETS	GEOGRAPHIC SOURCE	KEY EXPERIENCES
Day Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50km radius. Northern Rivers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Food, farmers markets and food trails. Agritourism experiences. Bushwalking and wellness. Entertainment, live music, arts events. Northern Rivers sporting events/competitions. Arts/cultural/sustainable workshops and events
Domestic Short-Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200km radius. Brisbane/South East Queensland. North Coast, NSW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trekking, nature walks and wildlife. Wellness/rest/relaxation. Alternative lifestyle experiences. Arts, culture, music events. Regional sporting events.
Special Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Rivers/NSW North Coast. Brisbane/South East Queensland. Regional NSW & QLD. Sydney, Melbourne. International. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental/nature/wildlife. regenerative experiences. Alternative, wellness, lifestyle experiences and events. LGBTIQA+ friendly events.
Meetings, Incentives, Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Rivers/NSW North Coast. South East Queensland. Greater Sydney, Newcastle, Melbourne. Mid-week trade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business meetings and events. Incentive offerings related to arts, culture, sustainable lifestyle/agriculture, wellness, nature and sports.

MARKET POTENTIAL



SHORT BREAK

Population growth predictions of Brisbane and South East Queensland are projected to nearly double from 3.8m to 6m by 2046. Lismore, Nimbin and Villages is well located to further develop a strong short-break market from this geographic source.



TOURING

Within 26km of the Legendary Pacific Coast Drive Touring Route from Sydney to Brisbane, the domestic self-drive and international free independent traveller (FIT) markets present touring opportunities.



FLY/DRIVE

The growth of both Ballina Byron Gateway and Gold Coast airports provide opportunities to grow domestic and international visitation for visitors interested in experiences where Lismore, Nimbin and Villages has a distinct competitive advantage. i.e., World Heritage Rainforests/ Nature, Wildlife, Alternative Lifestyle, Creative Community and Festivals and Events.

VISITOR PROFILES

To assist in understanding domestic market segments, the following summarises Domestic Visitor Profiles from Tourism Research Australia (pre-COVID-19), suitable for Lismore, Nimbin and Villages. This plan recommends to target high-value travellers who are culturally and environmentally aware, to create a greater visitor economy benefit for the local community.

MARKET SEGMENT	TRAVEL	SEASON	AGE GROUPS	WHAT THEY DO	AVERAGE SPEND
Short-stay	1-2 nights stay in standard hotels or rented house/apartment. Self-drive (78%), fly (16%), hire vehicle.	Year-round. Favouring public & school holidays.	20-60 Single, couple, friends/family.	Food and drinks, sightseeing, pubs and clubs, shopping, national parks.	\$271 per night \$399 per trip
National Parks & Bushwalking	Self-drive (81%), fly (16%) 50% stay with visiting friends & relatives or private campground, and 50% stay in commercial accommodation. i.e. hotel/motel/resort (19%), caravan park/campground (14%), rented house/apartment (12%).	Winter. School holidays.	25-44 (20%) Travelling with children (28%) Adult Couples (30%)	Food and drink, tours, shopping. Visit National Parks. Bushwalking	\$228 per night \$895 per trip
Arts & Culture	Day trips, city and regional. Holidays and VFR. Self-drive/fly.	Year-round.	55+ , friends/ relatives, no kids.	Attending museums, theatres, concerts, art galleries/studios.	\$290 per night \$1,090 per trip
Festivals & Events	Stay VFR, motel, caravan park. Self-drive (74%), fly (21%).	Winter, Spring.	20-24, friends/ relatives, no kids.	Festivals and attending theatre, concerts, or other performing arts.	\$268 per night \$921 per trip
Visiting Friends & Relatives (VFR)	Primarily overnight, regional, intrastate travel. Self-drive.	Summer, Easter.	55+	Eating out, sightseeing, beach, pubs/clubs, shopping.	\$137 per night \$435 per trip
Youth	Regional destinations, multiple stopovers. Self-drive.	Year-round. Weekends. January.	15-29 Singles, couples.	More likely to attend sporting, cultural, festival events.	\$149 per night \$474 per trip
Business Travellers	Self-drive (50%), fly (50%). Travel solo (60%). Average 3.5 nights in commercial accommodation 16% 4-5 star, 26% hotel/motel	Year-round. Outside of summer/Easter	45+	Majority spent on accommodation/flights, followed by food, drink and shopping. Cafes/pubs	\$242 per night \$839 per trip

AUSSIES LOVE NATIONAL PARKS & BUSHWALKING

81%

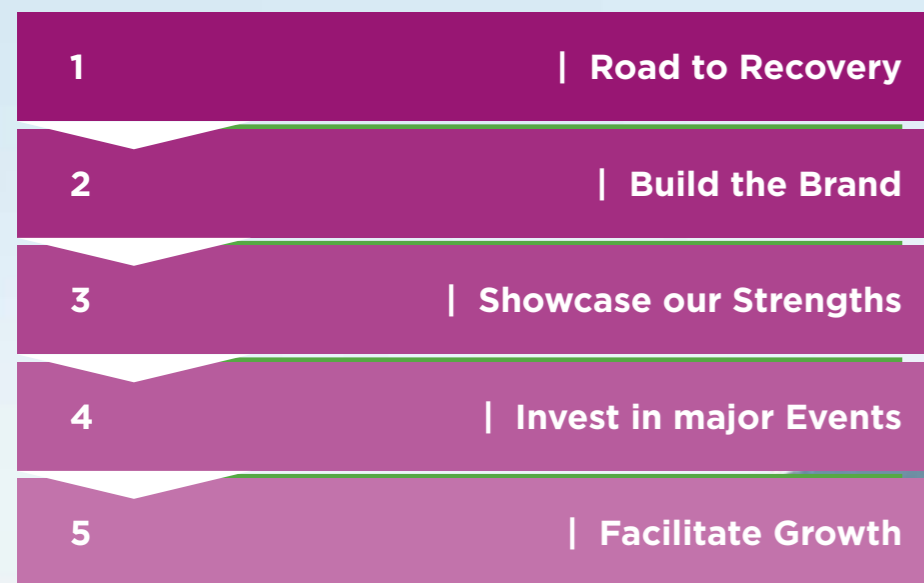
of domestic visitors went to a national park and/or bushwalking as part of their trip in a regional destination, that's 23% of all domestic overnight trips to regional Australia.

\$228

AVERAGE SPEND PER NIGHT

They source information from direct internet searches, friend & relative recommendations and a mapping website or app.

Strategic Objectives



Countryside, Nimbin. Destination NSW.

Our strategic objectives are designed to coordinate, facilitate and grow the Lismore, Nimbin and Villages' visitor economy industry into the future, aligning to the Destination North Coast DMP and the NSW Visitor Economy Strategy (VES) 2030 strategic pillars.

NSW VES STRATEGIC PILLARS	ROAD TO RECOVERY	BUILD THE BRAND	SHOWCASE OUR STRENGTHS	INVEST IN MAJOR EVENTS	FACILITATE GROWTH
Lismore, Nimbin & Villages DMP Strategic Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster local community pride and awareness of the quadruple bottom-line benefits of the visitor economy. Support visitor economy businesses to welcome back visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position Lismore, Nimbin and Villages as the alternative tourism destination of NSW. Build brand profile in key target markets. Strengthen partnerships with DNSW, DNC, bordering LGAs and local visitor economy businesses. Increase the quantity of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages products, experiences and events promoted digitally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the development of experiences based on the area's competitive advantages. Support the growth of alternative lifestyle/wellness experiences, sustainable living/ agritourism, creative culture and aboriginal experiences. Facilitate the growth of paid nature based guided and regenerative tourism experiences. Focus on increasing length-of-stay and overnight visitor expenditure (OVE). 	<p>As detailed in the Lismore Event Strategy 2024-2028:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position Lismore, Nimbin and Villages as the creative arts, sporting and sustainable lifestyle events capital of the Northern Rivers. Support building brand profile of area through promotion, development and attraction of major events. Support and attract events that increase visitation in low and shoulder seasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and facilitate key infrastructure projects. Attract investment in diverse visitor accommodation options. Support and facilitate visitor accommodation enhancements. Advocate for external, and undertake internal streamlining of planning processes. Support industry to increase sustainable operations. Support accessible tourism products and experiences.
Desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2026, return visitation levels to those experienced in 2018/19. Sustainable and resilient visitor economy businesses. Increased positive community sentiment towards tourism and events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased digital and Media PR profile in key target markets. Productive tourism network partnerships. Improved positive visitor sentiment towards Lismore, Nimbin and Villages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of visitor experiences. Increased quality, number and diversity of visitor accommodation options. Increased visitor satisfaction. Increased length-of-stay and overnight visitation expenditure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event vision realised by 2028. Increased profile of major events. Increased event attendance, attendee satisfaction. Increased economic impact and overnight visitor expenditure generated by major events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased private and public sector investment for visitor infrastructure. Increased private sector investment in accommodation. Increased quantity of tourism operators using sustainable practices. Improved accessible visitor experiences.

Action Plan & Monitoring

The following actions relate to the five Lismore, Nimbin and Villages DMP strategic objectives.

Actions align with the three phases of the NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 and Destination North Coast DMP 2030.

Recovery Phase
to 2025

Growth Momentum
to 2027

Growth Accelerate
2028 & Beyond

Lismore, Nimbin and Villages alternative lifestyle



MONITORING

The Action Plan should be monitored biannually and reviewed annually. To achieve the vision and grow the visitor economy will require significant collaboration with visitor economy businesses, the public and private sector, local, state and national tourism bodies, land managers and agencies.

STAKEHOLDERS

The bolded organisations identified in the stakeholder column of the following Action Plan indicates the lead agency, with key stakeholders identified as potential partners to support/facilitate the action.

ABBREVIATIONS

- LCC** - Lismore City Council
- ATDW** - Australian Tourism Data Warehouse
- BL** - Business Lismore
- NCC** - Nimbin Chamber of Commerce
- DNC** - Destination North Coast
- DNSW** - Destination New South Wales
- EAA** - Ecotourism Association of Australia
- KPIs** - Key Performance Indicators
- NPWS** - NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service
- TA** - Tourism Australia
- OVE** - Overnight Visitor Expenditure

1

ROAD TO RECOVERY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Support visitor economy businesses to welcome back visitors.
- Foster local community pride and awareness of the quadruple bottom-line benefits of the visitor economy.
- Reinvigorate Lismore CBD with creative activations.

The Recovery Phase focuses on regaining lost markets with a target to return visitation to 2019 levels, with a focus on domestic short-break and event markets.

ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS	MONITORING	2024-2025	2026-2027	2028 & beyond
1.1 Encourage the number of visitor economy businesses participating in government and non-government recovery support programs including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business advice to new and existing operators (approvals, licences and permit requirements). ▪ Business precinct activation projects. ▪ ArtVenture – transforming empty shop fronts. ▪ Business Activation Plan/Renewal Engagement. 	LCC. BL, NCC. State and Federal government.	Number of visitor economy businesses participating in recovery projects.			
1.2 Develop community awareness of the benefits of the visitor economy, working in partnership with local/regional networks and the Destination Network Project Management Group to create an 'Understanding the Visitor Economy Program' with local application in Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.	LCC. DNC. BL, NCC. Local/regional media.	Increased positive community sentiment towards tourism and events.			
1.3 CBD Activation Plan – a coordinated integrated approach to re-invigorate and grow CBD businesses. Including marketing initiatives to strengthen to strengthen Visit Lismore brand e.g. Back Lismore campaign.	LCC. BL.	Number of activations initiated and businesses/organisations participating.			

2

BUILD THE BRAND

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Position Lismore, Nimbin and Villages as the alternative, regenerative tourism destination of NSW.
- Build brand profile in key target markets.
- Strengthen partnerships with DNSW, DNC, bordering LGAs and local visitor economy businesses.
- Increase the distribution of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages products, experiences and events digitally.

Visitor perceptions have highlighted the urgent need to build positive brand profiling for Lismore, Nimbin and Villages. Online reviews have also revealed limited reach of visitor content across digital, social and mainstream media outside the North Coast area.

ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS	MONITORING/ KPIs	2024-2025	2026-2027	2028 & beyond
2.1 Increase tourism brand profile. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure tourism brand application is considered within LCC rebranding 2024. ▪ Develop visitor marketing and media strategy, building on the tourism competitive advantages. ▪ Facilitate increased participation in tourism/eco/sustainability awards. 	LCC. DNSW. TA.	Visitor brand application.			
2.2 Expand digital distribution, quality and quantity of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages visitor content. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop new destination website with ATDW feed. ▪ Develop content library (images, footage, fact sheets, blogs), including a connection to Country. ▪ Subject to funding, engage leading tourism content creators and Media PR specialists to develop targeted tourism media list. ▪ Investigate partnering opportunities e.g. DNSW/TA to increase content on their online image/footage libraries, Ballina Byron Gateway Airport. 	LCC. Industry operators/events. DNSW. TA.	Increased digital and Media PR profile in key target markets. Improved positive visitor sentiment.			
2.3 Develop online tourism brand toolkit for 3rd party media and industry, increasing use/distribution of branding elements and content to increase efficiencies of LCC Destination Team.	LCC. Industry operators/events.	Number of operators/events featured on ATDW.			
2.4 Own the alternative/regenerative tourism brand, creating content to reflect these experiences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target and engage travel writers and social media influences in this sector. ▪ Undertake media/industry familiarisations of these experiences. 	LCC. DNC. DNSW. TA.	New content created. Distribution of content through state and national networks.			
2.5 Further promote and develop self-drive itineraries based on competitive advantages to meet key target market interest/needs. Provide content/develop partnerships with existing trails/touring routes e.g., North Coast Flavour Trails, the Rainforest Way, Pacific Coast Touring Route.	LCC Industry operators. Adjoining LGAs. DNC. Touring routes. DNSW.	Self-drive itineraries on ATDW. Increased content in trails/routes. Established tourism network partnerships.			

3

SHOWCASE OUR STRENGTHS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Facilitate the development of experiences based on the area's competitive advantages.
- Support the growth of alternative lifestyle, wellness, sustainable living/agritourism, creative culture and active experiences.
- Facilitate the growth of paid nature based guided and regenerative tourism experiences.
- Focus on increasing length-of-stay and overnight visitor expenditure (OVE).

Despite Lismore, Nimbin and Villages being home to significant competitive advantages, including world heritage national parks, leading sustainable lifestyle and vibrant creative community, the area accounts for only 5% of total visitation to the North Coast region. With a visitor market dominated by 71% of domestic day trippers, and low total visitation and spend, it highlights the need and priority to develop significant visitor experiences to attract visitation and increase length-of-stay and spend.

ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS	MONITORING/ KPIs	2024-2025	2026-2027	2028 & beyond
3.1 Encourage and promote existing alternative lifestyle, wellness, sustainable living, agritourism, wellness, aboriginal, creative art workshops/ experiences, to package with wider visitor economy businesses e.g. including experiences on ATDW, packaging with accommodation providers and events.	LCC. Visitor economy businesses. BL, NCC. DNC	Increased number of visitor experiences on ATDW, event calendars.			
3.2 Facilitate visitor economy industry to develop new experiences based on unique selling points, and specifically dawn, dusk, evening experiences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate funding opportunities for an Experience Development Program for tourism operators. Develop and implement multi-faceted 3- Year Visitor Experience Development Program. 	LCC. BL, NCC, DNC	New visitor experiences in marketplace. Funding secured. Program designed.			
3.3 Encourage visitor economy businesses to increase conversion and distribution of products and experiences online, making it easier for visitors to find and book them.	LCC. Visitor economy businesses BL, NCC, DNC.	Increased number of tourism businesses with online booking systems.			
3.4 Partner with DNC to coordinate the delivery of DNSW First programs and resources to support operators to be international ready.	LCC. DND. DNSW.	Number of businesses in program and internationally ready.			

4

INVEST IN MAJOR EVENTS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Position Lismore, Nimbin and Villages as the creative arts, sporting and sustainable lifestyle events capital of the Northern Rivers.
- Support building brand profile of area through promotion, development and attraction of major events.
- Support and attract events that increase visitation in low and shoulder seasons.

In conjunction with the DMP, the Lismore Events Strategy 2004-28 has been developed with a detailed action plan to attract, develop and facilitate the development of events that will specifically:

- Enhance destination profile,
- Drive economic growth,
- Facilitate sustainable, vibrant events, and
- Inspire a creative community.

The Lismore Events Strategy encourages the development of events based on Lismore, Nimbin and Villages' competitive advantages to attract new markets, achieve overnight visitor expenditure and significant media profile to further support the visitor economy vision.

The following actions are included in the Lismore Events Strategy, contributing to the outcomes of this DMP.

ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS	MONITORING/ KPIs	2024-2025	2026-2027	2028 & beyond
4.1 Develop Event Friendly Destination to attract major events and make it easier to stage events in Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.	LCC.	Streamlined event processes. Activated venues/ spaces.			
4.2 Further invest in major events that deliver significant outcomes e.g. Destination profiling, economic impact of overnight visitor expenditure, low and shoulder season visitation, including development of Event Tourism Impact Model.	LCC. DNC. DNSW.	Increased economic impact/ OVE.			
4.3 Transform destination profile through developing, supporting and attracting hallmark and major events that deliver significant media profiling.	LCC. DNC. DNSW.	Media PR profiling, reach. Economic impact.			
4.4 Work within LCC events and tourism teams to encourage tourism and event packaging e.g. accommodation/event passes, pre/post touring.	LCC. Visitor economy businesses. Event coordinators.	Visitor experiences in online Event Toolkit. Number of tourism and event packages available online.			
4.5 Continue to work with NSW Office of Sport and DNC to attract and stage sporting events, hosting training camps for the Brisbane 2032 Summer Olympic Games.	LCC. NSW Office of Sport, DNC, Northern Rivers LGAs	Sporting events/ training camps secured for Lismore LGA.			

5

FACILITATE GROWTH

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Support and facilitate key infrastructure projects.
- Attract investment in diverse visitor accommodation options.
- Develop visitor information services.
- Advocate for external and undertake internal, streamlining of planning processes.
- Support industry to increase sustainable operations with a long-term Net Zero emissions target.
- Support accessible tourism products and experiences.

Key visitor economy infrastructure, visitor information servicing and a pathway to Net Zero emissions will be vital components to realising the vision and achieving the goals of the DMP for quadruple bottom line of a sustainable tourism ecosystem.

Noting 71% of the visitor market are daytrippers, further development of visitor experiences, services and infrastructure to attract, keep and accommodate them overnight is required to grow overnight visitor expenditure.

ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS	MONITORING/ KPIs	2024-2025	2026-2027	2028 & beyond
<p>5.1 Advocate and support investment in major projects with potential to grow Lismore, Nimbin and Villages' visitor economy related to the regions' positioning strengths e.g. Northern Rivers Rail Trail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support investment in the accommodation sector to grow the quantity, quality and diversity of visitor accommodation. ■ Ensure development of public and private visitor infrastructure and experiences includes accessible facilities/services and transportation. 	<p>LCC. DNC. State/Federal agencies. Major project stakeholders.</p>	<p>Increased public and private sector investment for visitor infrastructure. Improved accessible visitor infrastructure and experiences.</p>			
<p>5.2 Develop Visitor Information Services strategy to increase spend, length-of-stay and regional dispersal. Investigate co-location of accredited VIC services e.g. Lismore VIC in Quad/CBD location, Nimbin VIC with attraction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increase access, distribution and education of visitor information in key visitor nodes e.g. QR codes at cafes, accommodation, service stations, Northern Rivers VICs, Ballina Byron Gateway Airport. 	<p>LCC. Visitor economy businesses.</p>	<p>Co-located VICs in Lismore and Nimbin. Accredited VIC services. Monitoring of VIC enquiries and value of referrals Increased distribution of visitor information.</p>			



Two Mates Brewing Taproom, South Lismore

ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS	MONITORING/ KPIs	2024-2025	2026-2027	2028 & beyond
<p>5.3 Position Lismore, Nimbin and Villages as a leading sustainable destination through ECO Destination Certification. Partnering with EAA and DNC develop a capacity building programs to enhance operator knowledge and engagement with sustainability principles e.g. operator EAA certifications including Eco, EcoGuide and Respecting Our Culture (ROC), Sustainable Tourism and Climate Change Certification. Embed sustainability measures as part of funding applications.</p>	<p>LCC. EAA. DNC. Visitor economy businesses.</p>	<p>Increased quantity of tourism operators using sustainable practices with Eco-Certification. Achieve ECO Destination Certification.</p>			
<p>5.4 Review/assess internal cross-departmental requirements and State/Federal agencies to encourage/facilitate/reduce red tape for new regenerative tourism businesses and experiences to be developed in Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.</p>	<p>LCC. DNC. State/Federal agencies.</p>	<p>Internal council review. External agency review in partnership with DNC.</p>			



Game Changers

The following major projects were identified during consultation for their potential to position Lismore, Nimbin and Villages in its competitive strengths of active nature, wildlife and creative community.

It is not intended as an exhaustive list of all tourism infrastructure projects, but projects that offer significant destination profiling and visitor economy benefits to 2028 and beyond.

Koala Care Centre Experience

RAINBOW ROAD WALKING TRACK

The Nimbin Rainbow Road Walking Track is a community-led project to construct an attractive 750m long walking track for the active community of Nimbin and its visitors.

The track will connect pedestrians from Alternative Way to and from the village, providing an attract space to enjoy the natural beauty, learn about Aboriginal cultural heritage and why Nimbin is the alternative lifestyle capital of Australia.

The project includes concrete pathways, lighting, interpretive signage, way-finding signage, artwork, small bridges creeks, park furniture and native plantings.

CREATIVE CAPITAL

The refurbishment of the Lismore City Hall, the QUAD re-development, refurbishment of the Northern Rivers Conservatorium, Lismore Regional Art Gallery, Library and CBD creative activation projects combine to solidify the area as the creative capital of the Northern Rivers.

Further collaboration with these bodies and their productions and events with the wider visitor economy businesses and tourism marketing networks provides significant potential to harness cultural tourism for the area.

The high-value arts and cultural visitor market provides the greatest opportunity for overnight visitor expenditure and for further nurturing and sustaining the creative community of Lismore, Nimbin and Villages.

NORTHERN RIVERS RAIL TRAIL

The Northern Rivers Rail Trail (NRRT) is a project to convert the disused railway line which was abandoned in 2004. To be delivered in four stages, the 132km trail is expected to draw thousands of visitors each year to explore and discover the natural beauty of the Northern Rivers.

It follows the route of the former rail line and will be constructed in four stages as it passes through the local government areas of Tweed Shire, Byron Shire, Lismore City and Richmond Valley Shire. The Tweed section was officially opened in March 2023. Exceeding expectations, more than 70,500 people used the Tweed section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail from March to July 2023.

The Lismore LGA's 16.3km section of the trail will connect the former South Lismore railway station with Bentley via some of the most scenic rural landscapes in the Northern Rivers and provide a significant visitor experience to attract walkers and cyclists and business opportunities for visitor economy businesses and events. This section of the trail is projected to attract more than 21,000 users, providing a \$10M benefit within three years of construction.¹

KOALA CARE CENTRE EXPERIENCE

Friends of the Koala holds a 30-year lease with Lismore City Council and has received Development Approval (DA) for significant enhancements to the Koala Hospital. The approved plans feature the addition of educational walkways and displays, including interpretation from types of trees favoured by koalas and intriguing facts of one of Australia's most beloved native animals.

Currently, the centre can only conduct small tours due to the absence of an exhibition licence. Acquiring an exhibition licence will enable the facility to host larger tour groups.

Renovations are scheduled for completion by the close of 2024. Founding partners include Lismore City Council and Southern Cross University, while funding has also come from International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Program, Koalas Forever.

The project has the potential to evolve into a multifaceted information hub for the community and a significant visitor experience, including regenerative tourism experiences and educational tours extending into the Southern Cross University campus.

¹Lismore City Council LGA NRRT Visitation Benefits, Muller Enterprise July 2023

Consultation Process

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed their time, expertise, and insights to the development of this strategy. This encompasses those who engaged in online industry surveys, participated in workshops, attended facilitated meetings, and provided valuable insights during individual interviews. Your input has been invaluable and is greatly appreciated. Thank you sincerely for your contributions.

1	DESKTOP REVIEW	March - April 2023
2	ONLINE SURVEYS Industry Stakeholder Survey. Visitor Survey.	April - June 2023
3	BENCHMARKING Desktop/Phone/Virtual Interviews	May - July 2023
4	IN-REGION CONSULTATION Facilitated Workshops, Lismore and Nimbin	July 2023
5	VIRTUAL CONSULTATION Phone/Virtual Interviews	July - August 2023
6	BACKGROUND REVIEWS (Ecotourism, RV and VIC reviews)	July - September 2023
7	DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW	October - February 2024
8	DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN ADOPTION	March 2024

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

370

TOTAL PEOPLE

58

FACE-TO-FACE DMP WORKSHOP ATTENDEES + INTERVIEWS

244

VISITOR SURVEY RESPONDENTS

68

TOURISM INDUSTRY SURVEY RESPONDENTS

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

INDUSTRY SURVEY FINDINGS
June 2023

VISITOR SURVEY FINDINGS
June 2023

NIMBIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS

BENCHMARKING REPORT
July 2023

ECOTOURISM CERTIFICATION REVIEW
July 2023

VISITOR INFORMATION REVIEW
September 2023

RV, CARAVAN & CAMPING REVIEW
September 2023

LISMORE EVENT STRATEGY 2024-28
October 2023

