

## 16.2. MIDCOAST DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2030

### REPORT INFORMATION

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### SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report provides Council with an updated draft of the MidCoast Destination Management Plan 2030 and associated Implementation Plan 2024-2026 so that it can be adopted.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the draft MidCoast Destination Management Plan 2030 and associated Implementation Plan 2024-2026 provided in Attachment 1.

### FINANCIAL / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The implementation of actions in the 2024-25 financial year will be funded through existing budget allocations. In future financial years, requests may be made through the annual budget process and via other funding sources (grants

### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

### RISK IMPLICATIONS

The review and subsequent update of the draft MidCoast Destination Management Plan 2030 is a risk control for the Liveable Communities Division *Risk Number 11: Failure to facilitate economic growth and development opportunities.*

### BACKGROUND

In December 2017, the region's first Destination Management Plan (DMP2017) was developed and endorsed. Since then, there has been a focus on the development and implementation of the Destination Barrington Coast brand and associated destination marketing campaigns to drive visitation to the region.

The development of Destination Management Plan 2030 was guided the MidCoast Destination Management Plan Review Reference Group (DMPR Reference Group). The role of this group was to provide guidance, support, and advocacy to ensure the timely review of the MidCoast Destination Management Plan. Importantly, it is a plan for the whole region, not just individual businesses or operators. It aims to foster a vibrant visitor economy and promote liveability, which will deliver tangible benefits to businesses as well as the community.

### DISCUSSION

Tourism plays an important role in the MidCoast region. It requires a strategic approach that encourages collaboration across industry and government stakeholders. In the year ending September 2023 the MidCoast region welcomed more than 2.17 million visitors to the region (an increase of 2.9% from the previous year) and \$811million in expenditure (an increase of 16% from the previous year).

Whilst the region saw an overall minor decline in the daytrip market in 2023 in terms of visitors, there was an overall increase in their expenditure by 38% from the previous year, equating to \$145million. In the year ending September 2023, the region saw 1.239million domestic overnight visitors (5% increase from the previous year), staying more than 4.1million nights 95.5% increase from previous year). This equated to \$666million in expenditure for the region (11% increase from previous year). (*Tourism Research Australia*)

The MidCoast Destination Management Plan 2030 (DMP2030) is a continuation of the work completed as part of the DMP2017. There are common threads between the two documents, which suggests that there is still work ahead of us to ensure the region achieves its ambition as a leading sustainable destination. The plan focuses on sustainable growth, with people spending more money, staying longer, and exploring the region all year round, while also protecting the environment, culture, and community.

With the growth of visitation and visitor expenditure to 2030 and beyond, there is a requirement to support and build the region's capability and capacity to ensure:

- a vibrant and viable visitor economy.
- an inclusive and collaborative industry that shares the benefit across the region
- there is balance between growth and sustainability.

During stakeholder consultation in the development of the DMP2030, a set of guiding principles were established to ensure a balanced approach was taken to delivering objectives. These are:

- Inclusive of the whole region and all communities
- Informed - evidence-based
- Showcasing the destination's existing and emerging strengths
- Customer-centric - putting the visitor first
- Future-focused and sustainable - understanding a dynamic industry and the importance of protecting the destination's values and attributes
- Fostering collaboration across sectors and between industries and stakeholders
- Demonstrating leadership through effective implementation, partnerships and communication
- including through alignment with NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030
- Measurable in terms of both deliverables and outcomes

The DMP was informed by a comprehensive situation analysis, including global and domestic, visitor research, influences on travel to the destination over time and as consumer behaviours have evolved, and existing national, state, regional and local strategies, plans and programs.

### **Destination Management Plan Framework**

DMP2030 sets the direction and prioritises the sustainable growth of the visitor economy of the MidCoast Council Local Government Area to 2030 and beyond.

The ambition for the region largely remains unchanged from the DMP2017, which is to become a sustainable destination where outstanding natural beauty meets vibrant country living, inspiring healthy and active lifestyles.

The table below represents the DMP2030 Framework – additional details can be found in Attachment 1.

THEMES	CREATE A VIBRANT AND VIABLE VISITOR ECONOMY	INCLUSIVITY AND SHARED BENEFITS	BALANCE THE NEEDS BETWEEN GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY
	ENABLERS	SUPPLY	DEMAND
HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster a broad base of support for the visitor economy</li> <li>Lead genuine and effective industry engagement</li> <li>Ensure the region's natural and cultural values are protected, sustained and enhanced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the supply of paid visitor experiences and events</li> <li>Attract and enable investment for infrastructure projects and facilities that deliver shared benefits</li> <li>Attract investment in sustainable, nature and cultural tourism experiences, accommodation and hospitality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase low and shoulder season as well as encouraging mid-week visitation</li> <li>Increase overnight visitor yield, year-round</li> <li>Encourage greater regional dispersal</li> </ul>
MEASURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase low and shoulder season as well as encouraging mid-week visitation</li> <li>Increase overnight visitor yield, year-round</li> <li>Increase the supply of paid visitor experiences and events</li> <li>Lead genuine and effective industry engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage greater regional visitation and visitor spend dispersal</li> <li>Attract and enable investment for infrastructure projects &amp; facilities that deliver shared benefits</li> <li>Foster a broad base of support for the visitor economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract investment in sustainable, nature and cultural tourism experiences, accommodation, and hospitality</li> <li>Ensure the region's natural and cultural values are protected, sustained and enhanced</li> </ul>
ACTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Build a broad base of support for the visitor economy with residents and local businesses as well as across all areas of Council</li> <li>1.2 Facilitate genuine and effective industry engagement</li> <li>1.3 Protect, sustain and enhance the region's natural and cultural values</li> <li>1.4 Strengthen collaboration and partnerships</li> <li>1.5 Foster and facilitate a strategic approach to attracting investment and talent, including grant funding</li> <li>1.6 Advocate to address constraints and barriers to the sustainable growth of the visitor economy</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Co-design of a model for encouraging, supporting and developing First Nations cultural experience</li> <li>2.2 Implement a product and experience development program</li> <li>2.3 Attract new events and help build capacity of local events</li> <li>2.4 Attract investment for infrastructure and facilities that deliver shared benefits for residents and visitors</li> <li>2.5 Attract investment in sustainable, nature and cultural tourism experiences, accommodation, and hospitality</li> <li>2.6 Encourage diversification and revitalisation of accommodation supply</li> <li>2.7 Game changer projects for the region</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Continued commitment to the Destination Barrington Coast brand and positioning. Blaze your own trail</li> <li>3.2 Create a destination marketing plan to guide all marketing and marketing-communication activities</li> <li>3.3 Raise the awareness of the Destination Barrington Coast brand with local businesses and community</li> <li>3.4 Continue to deliver visitor services across the region</li> <li>3.5 Continue to support the growth of the Visiting Friends &amp; Relatives (VFR) market</li> </ol>
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN			

## Destination Management Plan – Implementation Plan

The DMP 2030 Implementation Plan is a two-year plan. In previous years there has been a strong drive in building the Barrington Coast brand through relevant media channels. To date, this has been very successful and has provided the region with a high level of exposure and awareness across various visitor market segments.

The next phase of DMP 2030 will focus on building the capability and capacity of the region's tourism industry and investigating opportunities for new investment in tourism infrastructure (e.g. new experiences).

## CONSULTATION

Consultation was guided by the MidCoast Destination Management Plan Review Reference Group, as well as the engaged Consultant. The last meeting for the DMPR Reference Group was on 14 December 2023. It was agreed by DMPR Reference Group members that there was no longer a requirement to meet, as the objectives of the group were achieved.

The Draft DMP was also placed on public exhibition from 28 September – 2 November 2023. A total of 14 submissions were received. DMP2030 has been updated where necessary to reflect the feedback received.

## COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Community impacts are considered as part of overall DMP 2030 Implementation Plan, specifically relating to local tourism industry growth and attracting visitors. It is imperative that a considered and measured approach is taken in terms of balancing the needs between growth and sustainability.

## **ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITY PLAN/OPERATIONAL PLAN**

The DMP 2030 aligns to the:

Community Strategic Plan:

*Community Outcome 3: A thriving and strong economy. A strong regional economy that supports business and jobs growth.*

Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2023-24

*3.2.1 Develop and implement a MidCoast Destination Management Plan.*

## **TIMEFRAME**

DMP2030 is a six-year strategy which includes a two-year implementation plan. It is expected that the actions are reviewed annually, and a revised and updated implementation plan is executed every two years.

## **LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

The following attachments are available on the meeting page of Council's website under the 'Attachments to Agenda' heading. The copy of Attachment 2 on the website has had the personal information redacted to protect the privacy of the members of the public providing the submissions.

Attachment 1 MidCoast Destination Management Plan 2030 (28 pages)

Attachment 2 MidCoast Destination Management Plan 2030 submissions (45 pages)