

# Southern Downs. Warwick Workshop Summary

## WHAT DO WE LOOK LIKE? 2032 ASPIRATIONS

- Increase in visitor numbers and economic benefits.
- Improved infrastructure with state government support for better roads and access to Brisbane.
- Availability of fully curated experiences to enhance visitor spending.
- Shops and attractions open on weekends to cater to tourists.
- Development of venues like ALEC in Tamworth to attract large numbers.
- Greater diversity of attractions and quality destination experiences.
- Enhanced streetscapes and increased foot traffic for a vibrant town.
- Modernised visitor information services with satellite VICs for broader coverage.
- Beautification projects to enhance town appeal and immersive educational experiences.
- Encouraging long-term stays, especially for the semi-retired with comprehensive services like pools, internet, gyms, and laundromats.
- Activation of smaller towns for tourism, such as Allora, Maryvale, and Killarney.
- A robust and vibrant tourism economy with competitive industry practices.
- Enhanced digital connectivity and online access for visitors to discover local attractions and book experiences.
- Development of new experiences tailored to mid-career individuals and teens, offering engaging activities for all family members.
- Utilisation of Warwick's potential as an Olympic venue to boost international recognition and visitor interest.
- Improvement of traffic management to facilitate easy access and movement for tourists.
- Introduction of e-bike rental services to encourage eco-friendly exploration of the region.
- Expansion of experiences that showcase Warwick's unique culture, heritage, and natural beauty to attract diverse visitor demographics.
- Strategic partnerships with businesses and local operators to foster a supportive environment for tourism growth.
- Investment in renewable energy and sustainable practices to enhance Warwick's appeal as an eco-conscious destination.
- Emphasis on accessible tourism, ensuring all attractions and services are welcoming to visitors with diverse needs.

## HOW DO WE WANT TO MAKE VISITORS FEEL?

- Feel welcomed with a "hug" from the community, offering a breath of fresh air and a desire to return for the natural beauty.
- Experience a home away from home, feeling entertained, catered to, and cared for.
- Leave with a sense of excitement and joy, eager to share the great experiences with others.
- Can't wait to return, feeling valued, invigorated and safe.
- Experience surprise and delight, fostering a sense of belonging and participation.
- Feel at home and welcomed, refreshed and satisfied, ready to share the "WOW" factor.
- Experience an easy, stress-free holiday.
- Leave satisfied and blown away by the experiences.
- Become ambassadors for the region, eager to promote it.
- Desire to stay longer and explore more.
- Feel distressed and deeply connected to nature.
- Gain new knowledge and interests, leaving interested and enlightened.
- Depart happy and eager to return soon, with memories to share.

## WHERE ARE WE GOING?

### Who we want?

- Adventure outdoor market seeking comfort with the thrill of the outdoors.
- Capturing the bike market, addressing the need for local bike services.
- Baby boomers/grey nomads with disposable income seeking packaged experiences.
- Focusing on the adventure and weekend market for short but enriching trips.
- Engaging Gen X and individuals under 50 interested in food, wine, and nature.
- Catering to those who appreciate nature and boutique experiences with prepared itineraries.
- Expanding rural experiences to educate visitors on farm life, including petting cows and packhorse adventures.
- Differentiating with themed experiences across the four seasons to appeal to diverse interests.
- Appealing to the adventurous and energetic demographic seeking unique experiences.
- Emphasising natural experiences as city populations grow, highlighting the desire to disconnect and reconnect.

### Emerging Trends

- International backpackers are returning.
- Increased travel in RVs.
- Need for enhanced awareness of attractions through better signage.
- Growth in the family market choosing RVs for travel.

## HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET THERE?

### EXPERIENCES

- Agri-tourism, including pick-your-own experiences, to diversify and offer immersive upskilling.
- Guided downhill bike tours in Goona National Park.
- Creating murals on the highway behind the train station to join the silo trail to contribute to the silo art trail.
- Developing infrastructure to support sunflower tourism.
- Offering classes on making cheese.
- Soaking in mineral waters for relaxation and health.
- Developing agritourism experiences, such as immersive farming and pick-your-own produce activities.
- Guided downhill bike tours in Goona National Park for adventure enthusiasts.
- Enhancing packaged experiences with better marketing strategies.
- Utilising volunteer support and strategic marketing for tourism development.
- Expanding options for outdoor stays, connecting visitors with nature.

## INFRASTRUCTURE – hard + soft

### Hard Infrastructure

- Development of a premier regional equestrian venue to attract performance horse enthusiasts.
- Establishment of a top-quality conference centre to attract business events market and generate experiences during the week and on weekends.
- Construction of a civic centre and arts precinct in Warwick, potentially with underground parking.
- Expansion of RV infrastructure, including parking and dump points, to enhance RV friendliness.
- Installation of QR codes on tourism signage linking to apps, YouTube, and websites for enriched visitor information.
- Revitalisation of the Warwick Visitor Information Centre and decentralised visitor services to better unite the region.
- Improvement of local infrastructure such as toilets and parking for large vehicles to accommodate visitors.

### Soft Infrastructure

- Extending trading hours and improving information on what's open to navigate local offerings better.
- Enhancing connectivity with apps and GPS tours of the region to guide visitors through local attractions and history.
- Training for volunteers in industry knowledge, capacity building, and product development to support tourism and local markets.
- Provision of hands-on mentoring for tourism operators to enhance their offerings and business operations.
- Encouraging private investment to facilitate the development of rural experience hubs close to town, where smaller private operators can combine to create comprehensive experiences.
- Streamlining grant policies and approval timeframes to support local tourism infrastructure and initiatives.
- Unified effort to improve Google listings, Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) listings, and search engine optimisation (SEO) for a united regional voice in marketing.

### Enablers

- Development of guided bike downhill tours in Goomburra National Park.
- Creation of murals on highways and train stations to integrate into the silo art trail.
- Expansion of agritourism experiences like 'pick your own' to diversify and upskill the tourism offering.
- Introduction of immersive classes, such as cheese-making, to enrich visitor experiences.
- Encouragement of outdoor stays and activities, including soaking in mineral waters, to leverage natural assets.
- Improvement in connectivity through apps and GPS tours, providing easy access to information about the region.
- Training for volunteers in industry-specific skills to enhance visitor experiences and support event logistics.
- Facilitation of extended trading hours and weekend openings for shops and attractions to increase visitor spend and encourage longer stays.
- Support for accommodation expansion and diversification, including luxury glamping options.
- Promotion of the region's unique food and coffee offerings to attract food enthusiasts.
- Enhancement of night lights and astronomy experiences to draw interest in the region's natural beauty after dark.
- Activation of water leisure activities.
- Utilisation of digital marketing strategies to compete in the Best of Queensland experience and attract more visitors.

### KPIs / How will we know it's working?

- Increased day and overnight visitation, reflecting a rise in the region's appeal.
- Investment in new infrastructure, such as bike tracks, conference centres, and tourism operator facilities.

- Strong collaboration between local tourism operators (LTO) and industry support, including hands-on mentoring and professional help.
- High levels of visitor satisfaction, evidenced by positive feedback and repeat visitation.
- Collective content creation with significant reach, showcasing Warwick's unique attractions and experiences through digital marketing and social media.

## Desired Outcomes

- Warwick becoming a destination known for its bespoke and immersive agritourism experiences, drawing visitors for more than just a quick stop.
- Enhanced local infrastructure and accessibility, leading to a boost in the economy through increased visitor numbers.
- Development of unique experiences around local produce, nature, and adventure, encouraging visitors to engage deeply with the region.
- Strengthened weekend culture with extended trading hours, making the region more appealing for weekend and long-term stays.
- A vibrant, well-supported tourism economy, with diverse attractions and experiences that cater to families, adventure seekers, and cultural enthusiasts.

## INTO THE FUTURE

### Vision / Aspiration

- Warwick becomes a vibrant hub for agritourism and adventure, known for diverse, immersive experiences.
- Focus on unique farm-to-table experiences, connecting visitors with local produce and its producers.
- Develop outdoor activities for all ages, including bike tours and glamping.
- Enhance infrastructure and accessibility, making Warwick welcoming for both short and long stays.
- Foster a culture of education and appreciation for the land and its history, leading in sustainable tourism.
- Innovate tourism offerings to ensure visitors leave with unforgettable memories and a desire to return.

### Regional Guiding Principles

- Promote Warwick's unique heritage and natural beauty, encouraging respect and understanding among visitors.
- Champion sustainable and eco-friendly tourism practices to protect local environments.
- Enhance local skills and businesses to create innovative tourism experiences.
- Foster a tourism sector that benefits the community year-round, contributing to economic and cultural vitality.
- Encourage collaboration between tourism operators to offer a cohesive and diverse visitor experience.
- Prioritise accessibility and inclusivity in all tourism developments to welcome a wider audience.

### Strategic Priorities & KPIs

#### Strategic Priorities:

1. Develop a premier regional equestrian venue to attract performance horse events.
2. Establish boutique conference centre to draw business visitors and stimulate midweek visitation.
3. Create a civic centre and arts precinct to enhance cultural offerings and community engagement.
4. Enhance RV infrastructure, including parking and dump points, to support the growing number of visitors traveling in RVs.
5. Implement QR codes on tourism signage for easy access to information and to enhance the visitor experience.

## KPIs

- Increased visitation numbers, particularly in performance horse events and business conferences.
- Enhanced visitor satisfaction through improved cultural and arts offerings.
- Growth in RV and self-drive market engagement.
- Effective use of digital tools to improve visitor information access.
- Increased participation in agritourism and outdoor activities.

## Now

- Engage local businesses and community in extending trading hours to accommodate visitors on weekends and evenings.
- Begin the development of the equestrian venue to position Warwick as a premier destination for performance horse events.
- Initiate the planning and design phase for the conference centre and civic centre arts precinct.
- Work with council and local businesses to improve RV infrastructure and accessibility.
- Start implementing QR codes on tourism signage to provide visitors with instant access to information about attractions, dining, and accommodation options.

## How?

- Strengthen the tourism network by fostering collaboration among local businesses, indigenous communities, food producers, and strategic partners.
- Assess and improve the Local Tourism Organisation (LTO) governance structure for better support and engagement with the tourism industry.
- Seek investment and partnership opportunities to develop and promote Warwick's accommodation sector, including unique stays like glamping and farm stays.
- Expand marketing efforts for Warwick's agritourism and natural attractions to attract families, adventure seekers, and food enthusiasts.
- Develop and promote a diverse range of experiences, including outdoor activities, historical tours, and local culinary delights, to enhance Warwick's appeal as a year-round destination.
- Enhance digital connectivity and app-based tours to make it easier for visitors to explore Warwick and its surrounding attractions.
- Encourage local businesses to adopt flexible trading hours, especially on weekends, to cater to visitors' needs.
- Invest in infrastructure improvements, such as better roads, parking facilities for RVs, and public amenities, to support increased visitor numbers.
- Utilise grants and support for local businesses to improve their online presence, ensuring Warwick is competitively represented on digital platforms.
- Implement educational programs and hands-on experiences that highlight Warwick's agricultural heritage and natural beauty, engaging visitors in meaningful ways.