

visit Griffith

DESTINATION TOURISM PLAN 2021 - 2024

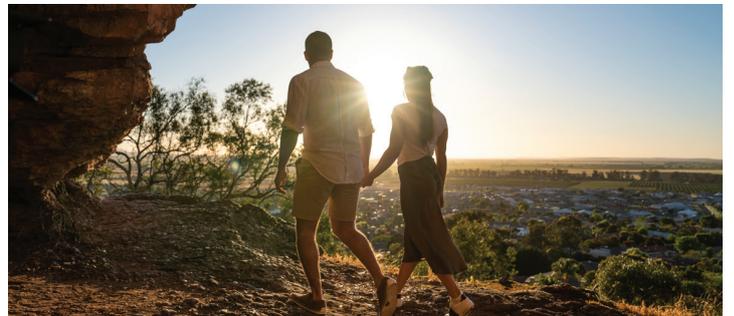




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Executive Summary

The Griffith Destination Tourism Plan 2021-24 (GDTP) will drive Griffith to realise the full economic and social benefits of the growing visitor economy, while contributing to the sustainable growth of its tourism industry into the future.

Tourism provides opportunities for Griffith to diversify its economy and generate new employment prospects that utilise a broad range of skills.

Griffith has had a healthy visitor economy serving diverse markets including corporate, families, backpackers, event and sporting visitors and the drive tourism market.

Operating in the COVID-19 world is difficult for many businesses in particular those in the tourism and hospitality areas. The circumstances around COVID-19 provide many opportunities for communities like Griffith to tap into.

This strategy includes the identification of future accommodation needs, refreshing existing product and the creation of new tourism attractions and experiences in the region which will encourage the key objective of increased visitation, visitor nights and expenditure.

Griffith is a leading tourism and events destination in the Riverina Murray region with a range of experiences and an environment that supports the aspirations and cultural interests of visitors mainly from key domestic source markets.

Griffith City Council

- Griffith City Council plays a significant role in tourism. It is an active facilitator and promoter of economic development, funds the marketing of Griffith as a Tourism destination and the operations of the Visitor Information Centre, supports events and is a provider of important infrastructure without which tourism would not operate or grow.
- The Griffith Destination Tourism Plan 2021-24 is an adjunct to the Griffith City Council Economic Development Strategy.
- The Tourism & Events Committee of Council has a pivotal role to play in connecting the various segments of the tourism industry together and with Council.

Griffith Tourism Team

- Griffith Tourism Team is a professional team that promotes Griffith through marketing and public relations, managing and supporting local events and provides excellent visitor information services to the visitor prior to and upon arrival in Griffith.
- The team has proactively built strong relationships and trust with Griffith's key industry and stakeholder groups as well as working closely and collaboratively with DNSW, DRM, the Western Riverina, and the Kidman Way Touring Route Promotional Committee. The Griffith Tourism Team also takes an active role in educating and inspiring the local industry and community on the importance of the visitor economy for Griffith.
- The Griffith Tourism Team give visitors a reason to be in Griffith, spend more time in Griffith and something to boast about, both on and offline. They have also successfully embraced the many online opportunities to help visitors who prefer to find their information online through the Visit Griffith website and social media platforms.

Setting the Scene

Griffith is ready to take the next step in growing tourism by opening up new opportunities to align with similar experiences usually enjoyed by Australians overseas, particularly around food and drink.

Griffith is a bustling, vibrant multicultural city with diverse, rich, intimate and authentic visitor experiences in a natural setting providing a significant point of difference from other destinations in the Riverina Murray.

Griffith is the regional centre of the Western Riverina, a diverse and rich agricultural region, boasting major industries of rice, cotton, poultry, citrus, nuts, wine grapes, cereal production, manufacturing and food processing.

Griffith is well positioned to benefit from the growing demand for food and wine as part of the travel experience. The enjoyment of food and wine is integral to the Griffith tourism experience, embodied by quality wine, fresh produce, a vibrant café culture and innovative cuisine. Griffith is an aspirational food and wine destination with a reputation as a substantial wine-producing region as well as one of Australia's major food bowls.

Consumers are seeking to engage with tourism destinations and experiences that have an authentic story to share, and are also looking for closer community interaction. This desire is driving growth in social media and consumers' willingness to interact with regional product offerings. This mindset is found in consumers from all walks of life, and defies demographic stereotypes. Griffith is well placed to take advantage of this trend.

There are also opportunities to build on the region's rich history and cultural heritage, industrial and agri-tourism, food and wine tourism, and nature-based experiences. Although Griffith has some of the largest wine and food producers in Australia, most of the visitor experiences are based around small family run businesses. Growing existing markets and capturing new opportunities for growth will require a co-ordinated approach to marketing, infrastructure provision and destination management.

Due to COVID-19 and the combination of reduced airline services, Australians have rediscovered drive tourism over the past couple of years as identified in the National Visitor Survey year ending June 2020, published by Tourism Research Australia.

Transport used for domestic overnight trips changed significantly in the June quarter 2020:¹

- Travel by self-drive vehicle accounted for over 90% (9.2 million) of all domestic overnight trips. This was up from 73% on the June quarter 2019.
- In contrast, domestic overnight trips that included air travel fell from 24% to 6%.

This pattern is consistent with travellers preferring to drive to regional areas over visits to capital cities and consequently has brought Griffith some new markets both geographically and demographically, which has been confirmed by local Industry Consultations and data collected by the Griffith Visitor Information Centre.

The completion of new sporting facilities will give more opportunities to host intrastate, interstate and national sporting events in Griffith. Griffith needs to be ready to support those events through provision of food, drink, entertainment and accommodation to house the participants, families and supporters and team officials.

Visitors spend money throughout the local economy, regardless of their purpose for coming to Griffith. This benefits the local economy in many ways - through the increased demand for services, goods, capital investment and labour - which in turn benefits many local industry sectors, including direct tourism services. More visitors spending in the community stimulates the creation of new businesses, they sustain existing businesses, create jobs and population growth, and they also support cultural events and the arts.

Role of Tourism and Events in our Community

Tourism and events visitation contribute positively to Griffith's economic well-being and social benefits with an increase in visitor numbers, length of stay and expenditure in the local community.

According to Griffith City Council's Economic Profile .idcommunity, total tourism and hospitality sales in Griffith 2018/19 was \$89.4M, total value added was \$47.6M, giving a grand total of \$137M.²

Griffith's rich and growing calendar of events provides an opportunity to grow this sector through strategic investment in events and marketing using Griffith's competitive strengths as an outstanding destination for cultural, food and wine, sport and recreational events. This will require closer cooperation between Griffith City Council, event organisers, regional and state tourism bodies, industry and the local community.

Tourism is not just about the economic benefits, it brings social and cultural benefits, provides facilities for the host community and helps preserve the communities culture and history.

ABOUT OUR DESTINATION

With an estimated resident population approaching 27,000 and a catchment population of approximately 60,000, Griffith is the major city and business centre in the Western Riverina.

Located 573km south-west from Sydney, 463km north of Melbourne and 358km south-west from Canberra, Griffith is bounded by Leeton, Carrathool, Narrandera and Murrumbidgee shires in the Western Riverina.

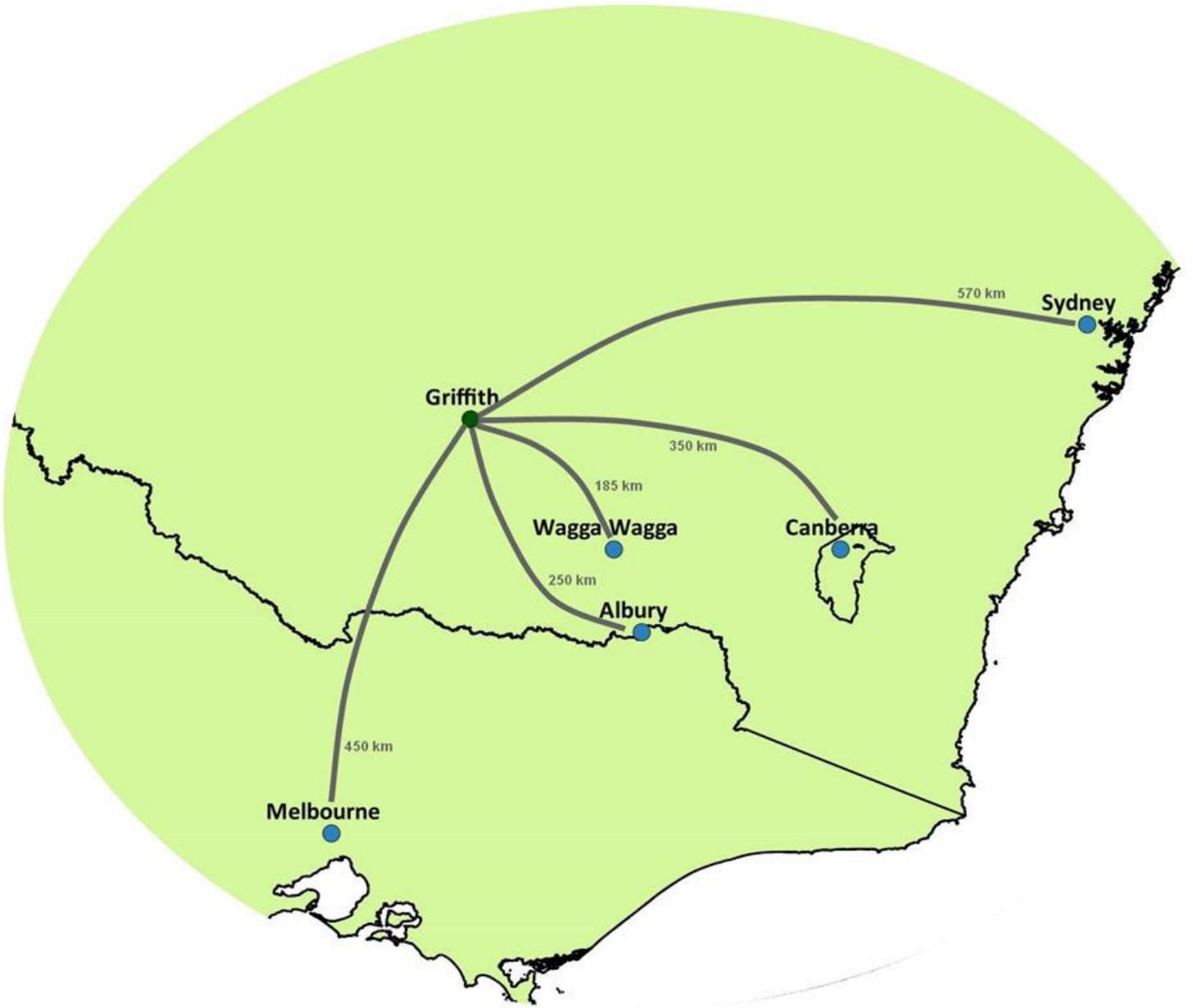
Tourism and hospitality are key industries and major contributors to Australia's economy. However, it has not been well represented in economic profiles in the past, because it actually includes parts of many different traditional industries.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics publish the "Tourism Satellite Account" which is a separate set of national accounts which look at the value and contribution of tourism in the national economy.

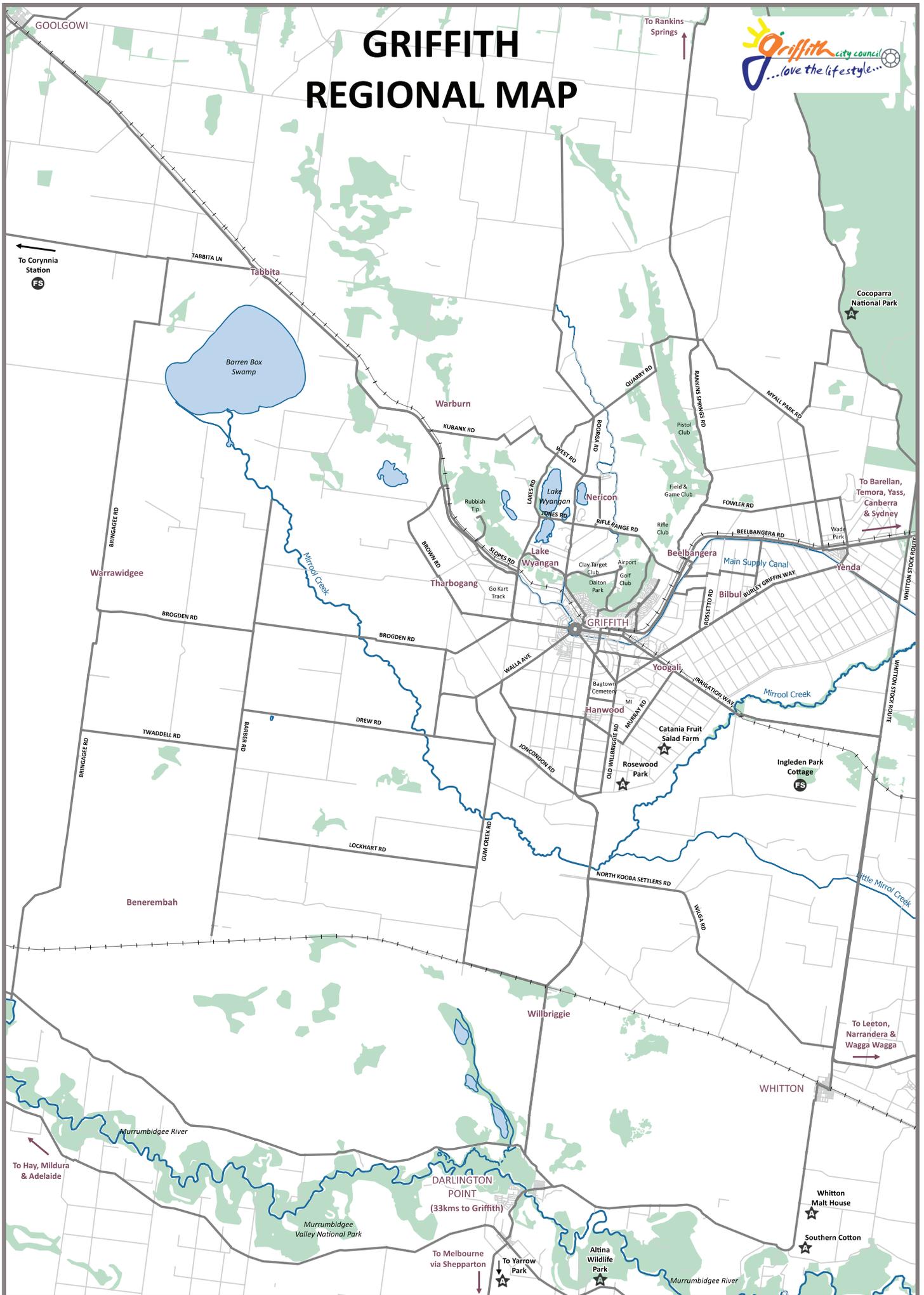
This dataset presents National Economics microsimulation model of the tourism satellite account at the local level, showing the value of total sales and value add, as well as annual estimates of employment and FTE (full-time equivalent) employment for the tourism sector.

Understanding the current role of the tourism sector is important when looking at attracting visitors, and as information for businesses looking to locate in the area. Tourism data should be viewed in conjunction with broader industry data in the Value added, Output and Employment by industry (Total) topics, as well as tourism Workforce characteristics.





GRIFFITH REGIONAL MAP



GRIFFITH VISITORS, VISITOR NIGHTS AND EXPENDITURE STATISTICS³

These statistics have been sourced from Tourism Research Australia (TRA) via the Bureau of Tourism Research (BTR). This data is consistently referenced by TA, DNSW & DRM, and is collated via phone surveys over four years to give a one year average and is weighted by the Census.

Average 4 years 2016 -2019	International	Domestic Overnight	Domestic Day	TOTAL
Visitors (000)	6	132	233	370
Nights (000)	280	299		580
Average nights	50	2		4
Expenditure (\$M)	11	49	45	105
Spend per trip \$	1,905	374	193	283
Spend per night \$	38	164		103
Spend per night \$ commercial accommodation	43	219		124

Source: BTR

VISITOR SOURCE

Visitors Average 4 years 2016 -2019	International	Domestic Overnight	Domestic Day	TOTAL
Holiday	2K	23K	NP	119K
Visiting friends and relatives (VFR)	NP	43K	NP	73K
Business	NP	48K	NP	69K
Other	NP	49	NP	NP

Source: BTR

NP - not publishable because survey error is too high for most practical purposes. Where figures do not add up to the total this is due to statistical errors such as the NP factor

LATEST STATISTICS WITHOUT 4 YEAR AVERAGING

YE Mar 2019 - YE Mar 2020 AVE	Visitors (000)	Nights (000)	Expenditure (\$M)
International	5.9	265.9	11.1
Domestic overnight	145.1	333.0	57.3
Interstate	34.0	95.2	14.1
Intrastate	111.1	237.9	43.2
Domestic day	277.4	-	65.7
Total Domestic	422.5	333.0	123.0
Grand Total	428.4	598.9	134.1

Source: BTR

CORE MARKETS⁴

PRIMARY	SECONDARY	EMERGING
<p>Pre COVID-19</p> <p>Business Traveller VFR Grey Nomads Day Trippers</p>	<p>Families International Backpackers</p>	
<p>During COVID-19 and borders closed (NSW / ACT only)</p> <p>Business Traveller VFR Grey Nomads Day Trippers</p>	<p>Families Millennials</p>	<p>NSW and Interstate Food & Wine Travellers 50-60+ years of age</p>
<p>During COVID-19 and borders open (NSW/ACT/Victoria/ South Australia/Tasmania)</p> <p>Business Traveller VFR Grey Nomads Families Day Trippers Millennials</p>	<p>Families Millennials</p>	<p>NSW and Interstate Food & Wine Travellers 50-60+ years of age</p>
<p>Post-COVID-19 and international travel recommenced</p> <p>Business Traveller VFR Grey Nomads Day Trippers</p>	<p>Families Millennials International Backpackers</p>	<p>NSW and Interstate Food & Wine Travellers 50-60+ years of age</p>

DESTINATION TOURISM PERCEPTIONS⁵

A number of common perceptions emerged through the consultation process with industry stakeholders. As these perceptions are based on observation made by those closely involved in the Griffith tourism industry, they are considered to be valid and as such will be addressed in strategies moving forward, and include;

- A vibrant contemporary city in the Western Riverina
- A major agricultural food bowl and wine producing region
- Hot summers and cool winters
- Large multicultural community with events celebrating this diversity
- Quality restaurants and a bustling main street (Banna Avenue) with its vibrant cafe and food culture
- Local events such as Griffith Spring Fest (including Griffith Garden Festival and Citrus Sculptures), Sikh Games, Riverina Field Days and Salami Festival.
- Seen as a strong business travel destination
- Access from many major routes and highways both north/south and east/west
- Quality world class wineries and food
- Positive consumer reputation and perception
- Surprising and hidden gem to most visitors
- Irrigation canals and history
- Patchwork quilt vista of all the agricultural fields and vineyards
- Some outdated negative publicity

SWOT ANALYSIS⁵

The SWOT Analysis is a result of community consultation and feedback from key stakeholders, influencers and partners. Community consultation was conducted at the commencement of research for the GDTP. Over 140 stakeholders were consulted either individually or in group settings. Sessions were targeted at particular industry sectors and allowed interactive discussion between participants.

Groups represented in the consultation process:

- Griffith Tourism Team
- Councillors of Griffith City Council
- Griffith City Council Tourism & Events Committee
- Griffith City Council Senior Management and key staff
- Griffith Business Chamber
- Griffith Women in Business
- Accommodation Industry
- Wine & Beverage Industry
- Restaurant & Foodie Industry
- Clubs, Pubs and Entertainment
- Events Industry
- Attractions & Experiences
- Sports Council & Sporting Groups
- Industry Volunteers

Consultation was also undertaken with Federal and State political representatives, Destination NSW, Destination Riverina Murray, NSW Parks & Wildlife Service, AusIndustry, and neighbouring Councils (Leeton, Narrandera, Carrathool, Hay, Murrumbidgee, Cobar).

Strengths

- Vibrant contemporary city in the Western Riverina
- High consumer recognition
- High standard of living and low unemployment
- Major agricultural food bowl
- Quality restaurants, local produce and a lively al fresco cafe culture
- Business travel destination due to world class industries and producers based in Griffith
- Drive market key leisure segment
- Quality world class wineries with cellar doors
- Appealing event destination
- Multicultural community
- Excellent current and new sporting facilities servicing local, intrastate, interstate and national events
- Griffith Airport has been serviced from Sydney and Melbourne for business and leisure travellers
- Location to key highways east / west and north/south servicing key consumer drive markets of NSW, Victoria, Canberra, South Australia and Queensland
- Sizeable day visitor segment due to Griffith's location and major shopping and services sector in Western Riverina, a boon for local businesses
- Irrigation canals as well as the patchwork quilt vista are visitor attractions

Weaknesses

- Lack of adequate and appropriate accommodation to address future growth in business, leisure, cultural and sports events
- Lack of current range of unique accommodation to meet the needs of the business, leisure, group and event visitor
- Perceived red tape for existing and potential tourism & event organisers is a deterrent
- Lack of regular collaboration and dialogues between local industry sectors such as event, sporting, attractions, restaurants and wineries
- Lack of knowledge of grant opportunities by local sporting and event stakeholders
- Poor communication within council and a lack of clear understanding of roles and responsibilities of staff
- Local wineries are not maximising visitation by not offering a whole of winery experience such as meet the maker and food tasting as is offered and expected in other wine destinations
- Perceived lack of knowledge by local industry of Griffith's visitor assets and experiences
- Destination is currently seen as a one-night stop for many leisure travellers
- Distance from major consumer markets
- Griffith has a lack of family friendly experiences and activities for children
- Destination is perceived as mainly a Baby Boomer RV / caravan destination
- Lack of pet friendly accommodation
- Visit Griffith website does not meet the needs of the travelling consumer who use their mobile or PDA , does not have the ability to itinerary build or make a booking
- Poor communication between local event stakeholders
- Capacity of Griffith to host large sporting events due to events clashing with other events timing and peak travel periods leading to a lack of accommodation

- Hermits Cave and Scenic Lookout are in a precarious state and require investment by Council to ensure the safety for all visitors and discourage vandalism for these key Griffith assets. The tracks to the sites are uneven, poorly signposted and dangerous for elderly, families and less able visitors.
- Lack of facilities / locations to cater for large groups such as coach, rail or conferences
- Welcome signage at all entry points to Griffith needs upgrade
- Experiences are hard to find due to signage issues
- ATDW (Australian Tourism Data Warehouse) participation generally by accommodation, wineries, restaurants and tourist experiences has been low and needs to be increased substantially and maintained to service the needs of all visitor segments and encourage pre booking and length of stay.
- Lake Wyangan precinct is a very underutilised tourism leisure asset
- Lack of evening entertainment
- Data tracking and collection for events
- The Riverina Wine Region is geographically different to the Riverina Tourism Region which is conflicting when trying to maintain consistent marketing

Opportunities

- COVID-19 presents Griffith with a short-term opportunity to attract and grow leisure visitation as it is seen as a safe destination
- Create blueprint for investors in Griffith's future accommodation needs as identified in the DRM Accommodation Audit 2019
- Streamline application and approval processes through Griffith City Council for tourism and event stakeholders
- Encourage growth in tourism events and experiences through capacity building workshops and education in risk management, public liability and post event analysis / acquittal
- Sharing of resources and assets by event organisers
- Formalise the links between local industry sectors to encourage and create sustainable growth in the establishment of Griffith as a quality food and wine destination, as well as a sports and events destination
- Capitalise on the quality of Griffith's food and wine to establish the destination as Riverina Murray's premier food and wine destination
- Create a major Griffith seasonal Food and Wine Farmers Market event to showcase the local grown produce and wine
- Work with DNSW, DRM, Government and industry partners such as TAFE NSW and Wine Australia, on programs to build skills in related disciplines to ensure the growth of a skilled workforce in Griffith's food and wine tourism sector
- Create action plan to establish capacity building workshops, mentoring and training for all Griffith industry sectors to drive industry, product and event development
- Utilisation of the irrigation canals for leisure activities such as gondolas
- Linkage and establishment of cycle, walking and running paths/ trails across Griffith as well as business opportunity for bike equipment hire for visitors
- Delink the Visit Griffith website from the Council system as there are onerous processes which do not allow timely and immediate changes to respond to consumer needs including booking in advance and itinerary planning
- Griffith is ideal for hosting of Masters events as these are not reliant of school holidays
- Opportunity to bundle experiences and attractions to increase length of stay

- Identify agricultural locations and business who are willing to host visitors for interpretive tours and experiences
- Lake Wyangan is an asset and ideally situated for a Big 4 or Discovery Parks resort leisure development to accommodate the next generation traveller requiring quality cabin or caravan/ RV accommodation
- Opportunity to encourage operators to work in partnership with NSW Parks & Wildlife Service to create new commercial tour experiences in local parks using the new Eco Pass
- Increase participation by all key industry sectors in the DNSW NSW First capacity building program as well all DNSW industry and product development assets
- Educate the tourism advocate on the role they play in the tourism industry, what local tourism products are available and Brand Griffith. Advocates include Front of House staff at accommodation, wineries, eateries, retailers, taxi drivers, etc.
- Incorporating local produce into guest services, such as at accommodation houses, cellar doors, pubs & clubs.
- Encourage eateries and producers to promote where the local produce they are using comes from

Threats

- Outdated historical negative publicity
- Griffith is impacted by Australian and NSW economic downturn
- Air services from Sydney and Melbourne are substantially reduced or cancelled due to COVID19 thus impacting on the corporate traveller
- All sectors of industry do not embrace a collaborative approach and continue to work in silos
- Capacity building initiatives are not embraced by local industry to support the growth of Griffith as a food and wine destination
- Visit Griffith website is not able to be updated in a timely manner and kept up to industry standards due to Council's current external web contractor having limited availability to maintain and update all council owned websites
- Sustainability of events is threatened by the lack of and the ageing of local volunteers
- Drought and negative changes in the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) Water Policy.

Competitor Analysis

- Regional food and wine regions such as Rutherglen, Hunter, Mudgee and Orange
- Regional NSW Drive destinations closer to major population centres

Where Will We Be In 2024?

Due to COVID-19 resulting in travel restrictions and border closures, this makes it impossible to predict visitation and expenditure in the near future. DNSW is developing forecasts which might be region specific rather than state wide in an attempt to take into account differing circumstances.

Providing Griffith continues to not be overly affected by COVID-19 hotspots it appears to be in a good position compared to many destinations in Australia. The aim is for Griffith to equal or exceed the targets developed by Destination NSW.

NSW Food & Wine Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2018 - 2022⁶

This Strategy is particularly appropriate for Griffith. Regional food, wine and culinary tourism continue to grow world-wide, and there is an opportunity for Griffith to capitalise and strongly feature the quality of local food produce and wine visitor experiences.

Destination New South Wales -

PRODUCT & EXPERIENCE AUDIT & GAP ANALYSIS REPORT & DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Riverina Wine Region - Presentation to NSW Wine Regions - September 2019

Summary of top findings:

- Limited number of signature or hero wine tourism experiences
- Very low level of export-ready and commissionable wine tourism products and experiences, online bookable experiences and poor user-experience testing in website design at both the business and regional level. A high priority is encouraging wine-related businesses to participate in Destination NSW's programs including NSW First and Get Connected
- Collaboration between local tourism and wine industry associations should be strengthened as a high priority - it is a key to success
- Opportunity for building awareness of the quality and diversity of NSW's wine offering within the hospitality sector
- Content for multi-channel distribution (traditional and digital channels to market) needs to be strengthened as a high priority, especially to bring the stories of each wine region to life through inspiring video
- Use of social media channels (especially Instagram and YouTube) and responsiveness to review sites (Trip Advisor and Google) requires attention as a high priority
- Leveraging the tourism appeal of a region through compelling content on its food and wine offering has demonstrated success in some regions – this approach should be expanded to all wine regions in marketing and promotional activities

Summary of development priorities for Riverina Wine Region

- Strong emphasis on building awareness of the value of wine tourism and strengthening capability for developing market-ready and export-ready products and experiences
- Clear positioning for the wine region for driving consistency and integration across the multiple tourism platforms and channels
- Leverage the internationally-recognised brands to grow awareness of the region and build content for multichannel distribution - requires the development of market-ready and export-ready wine tourism experiences to support any campaign activity
- As included in the Destination Network Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan, the region has the potential to create a truly aspirational and inspiring experiential precinct within or around Griffith to bring the story of the wine region and its produce to life - this should involve collaboration with the region's wineries and integrate its multicultural heritage, characters and well-known brands such as Yellowtail
- A key to success will be to strengthen collaboration and partnerships between the wine and tourism sectors within the region and between wineries and tourism operators

Direction 2021 - 2024

- Plan and implement marketing activities, promote industry advocacy, capacity building and experience development aligned to the Griffith Destination Tourism Plan 2021-2024
- Develop and communicate a clear and consistent 'Brand Griffith' to stakeholders
- Focus on promoting the destination, 'Brand Griffith' and key hero experiences to create a point of difference with the aim of building greater awareness, preference and conversion for the destination in order to grow visitation, visitor nights and spend
- Externally market and promote Griffith with an increasing focus on using digital resources and partnership innovation
- Work with the Griffith City Council Tourism & Events Committee to champion and advocate the Strategic Priorities identified in the GDTP with identified stakeholders and influencers
- As the key industry advocate, Griffith Tourism Team continue to forge strong partnerships with a clear vision of its role in those partnerships
- Griffith City Council will consistently provide a strong voice of advocacy for tourism in Griffith when communicating with key stakeholders including federal, state and local government, local business, media and the community
- Actively promote the economic value that tourism and events brings to the local community and businesses and that "tourism is everybody's business"
- Provide leadership and lobbying representation on behalf of the tourism industry, stakeholders and community
- Consistently communicate the Griffith Tourism Team's role and GDTP priorities to Griffith City Council, its industry partners and community so there is a clear understanding on what Griffith Tourism does and doesn't do
- Ensure Griffith Tourism staff members receive appropriate training and capacity building
- Actively follow-up and pursue tourism product experience gaps and opportunities as identified in the GDTP



Strategic Priorities & Actions 2021 to 2024

1. ACCOMMODATION

STRATEGY - Work to ensure Griffith has the right mix of accommodation to service visitor needs

There appears to be sufficient business travel accommodation, however, there are shortages of leisure accommodation and accommodation for large-scale events. Leisure accommodation includes boutique accommodation (bed and breakfast, holiday house lettings) and tourist parks (large destination parks with cabins, caravan and camping areas and activity areas). Lake Wyangan was mentioned as a potential location in many of the consultation sessions.

With the new sports precinct being developed at West End there will be a need for supporting infrastructure including accommodation. For example, large-scale events such as the Sikh Games, Griffith can only accommodate a small percentage of the participants and supporters. Accommodation options for the overspill from these large events could be explored for implementation, such as 'Tent Cities' and billeting system with locals.

This conclusion was made by talking to over 140 tourism and allied businesses while consulting for the GDTP and is in line with findings from the Accommodation Market Assessment for the Riverina Murray 2019 (refer to below table).

It is recommended that Griffith City Council takes this assessment to the next level where it could be used to attract private sector investment.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Update Griffith segment of the Accommodation Market Assessment for the Riverina Murray 2019, through to 2030	Assessment completed	Griffith City Council	Destination Riverina Murray	December 2022
Attract investment in destination tourist park	New destination tourist park commenced	Griffith City Council		December 2024
Attract investment in boutique accommodation	Five new boutique accommodation options in operation	Griffith City Council		December 2024
Investigate accommodation alternatives for overspill visitors	Identify best solution and create plan to implement	Griffith City Council	Individual Event Organisers	2023

Griffith & Western Riverina Accommodation Needs 2019 - 2029⁷

Projected Accommodation Needs by Segment	Description	Projected Extra Needs to 2019	Indicative Capacity -rooms per establishment	Total Room or sites	Location
Small Scale Self- Contained Accommodation	<p>The region has a limited number of single self-contained properties listed on Air B&B. This accommodation typology meets the needs of longer stay business, VFR markets and also events visitors which are travelling in groups. Projections show an increased demand for rooms and this typology meets the target market need well and can be delivered with little investment.</p> <p>The delivery of quality self-contained properties is needed to meet projected demand for visitors to the region.</p>	20	2 - 4 rooms	40	Griffith/ Narrandera/ Leeton
Quality Contemporary Budget Accommodation/ Hostel	There is a lack of quality contemporary budget accommodation in the region. Griffith should be able to support a large budget accommodation targeting younger markets and budget travellers. Quality backpackers would be suited to touring international markets, fruit pickers, short stay student markets and long stay working holiday market.	1	20 rooms	20	Griffith
Large and Medium Self-Contained Accommodation/ Serviced Apartments	There is growing preference for self-contained accommodation in a number of key markets for the region. There is a recently constructed Quest Apartments facility in Griffith, however there are very few other quality large scale accommodation facilities. Demand projections for Griffith and the surrounding region highlight the opportunity for an additional medium or large self-contained facility over the next 10 years.	1	60 rooms	60	Griffith
Caravan and Camping Ground/Tourist Park	Rural areas are an attractive location for Camping and Caravan Parks given their natural and rural setting and requirement for large sites. Locations in proximity to high amenity landscapes such as along the Murrumbidgee River or Lake Wyangan in Griffith.	2	25 cabins	50	Griffith/ Darlington Point
		2	50 sites	100	
Quality Farm Stay	Given the agricultural strengths of the region, quality farm stay accommodation is a key gap. The growing food and wine tourism market in the sub region is well matched with this accommodation type.	5	3 - 5 rooms	25	Rural areas
Total		31		295	

Source: Accommodation Market Assessment for the Riverina Murray 2019, conducted by Urban Enterprise as a contractor to Destination Riverina Murray.

2. EVENTS

STRATEGY - Attract, develop and maintain events that are sustainable and bring visitation to Griffith

Events are an excellent way of filling trough seasons and gaining valuable publicity for Griffith.

The Griffith Tourism Teamwork with the local tourism and events industry to identify the creation of new events and support the continued growth of sustainable existing events that will generate economic and marketing benefits for Griffith with the aim of:

Creating opportunities to increase visitation and spend

Generating purpose driven travel

Introducing new audiences to Griffith and encouraging repeat visitation

Creating awareness of Griffith and its core brand attributes

Stimulating the intrastate market

There is an opportunity to develop a series of smaller events across the year which are easier to run and should be more practical under COVID-19 rules.

A successful model for Griffith has been the implementation of marketing campaigns, encompassing multiple events under various umbrellas, including Griffith Spring Fest, Griffith Easter Party, A Taste of Italy Griffith. This model can be replicated throughout the year. An example could be a month-long Multicultural festival where each weekend, various businesses and communities would hold multicultural themed events or experiences under a common marketing umbrella.

Events should showcase Griffith's location and take advantage of the region's food and wine, uncrowded natural landscape, first class sporting facilities and cultural attributes.

There are opportunities for seasonal markets to celebrate each season and its produce. These markets would be different to the Rotary Markets currently held at the Griffith Showground, and ideally would be held on a weekend in the CBD area to bring visitors into the city centre with the purpose of them spending money with city traders as well as at the market.

It has been identified that local event organisers do not currently share resources and therefore find it challenging to make their event sustainable. A shared register of assets and of volunteers could be a solution to this issue.

Event organisers struggle with approval requirements for events. In discussions with event organisers and Griffith City Council it was decided that council develop a template and process for Event approvals so event organisers, council departments and external stakeholders (Police etc) will be able to follow this process in their applications. This process will be done electronically so that all areas involved could be included automatically on a check list. Once this is done, it is strongly recommended that capacity building workshops be held with council staff, other stakeholders and event organisers to discuss the new system and educate everyone on its use.



Action	KPI/Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Template and process to be developed to guide event organisers for approvals	Template & process completed	Griffith Tourism Team	Griffith City Council Other authorities (eg. ILGA, NSW Police)	August 2021
Capacity building for event organisers	Workshops undertaken	Griffith City Council	Griffith Tourism Team DRM & DNSW	October 2022
Establish an Events Tourism Action Group	Group formed and meeting	Griffith Tourism Team	Griffith City Council Tourism & Events Committee Industry stakeholders	March 2021 and ongoing
Encourage formation of CBD seasonal markets	Markets scheduled	Griffith Tourism Team	Griffith City Council Industry	July 2021
Develop shared register of assets and volunteers	Database developed	Griffith Tourism Team	Event organisers	July 2021
Encourage development of a series of small events	Gaps identified and communicated to prospective event organisers	Griffith Tourism Team	Industry stakeholders	March 2022



3. EXPERIENCES

STRATEGY - Facilitate the development of visitor experiences that add value to the core attractive features of Griffith

Culinary tourism is the world's fastest growing tourism segment and it is essential that private enterprise, assisted by government, develops more experiences in Griffith. For a destination the size of Griffith with its rich cultural, food and wine background there is a shortage of experiences for visitors to enjoy.

In order for visitors to experience the rich tapestry of Griffith, additional experiences such as visiting farms demonstrating how walnuts, olives, almonds, etc are grown and processed, will add to the visitor offering.

There are opportunities as a result of COVID-19, to provide alternative experiences for Australians who regularly travel overseas for gastronomic experiences. Visitors come to Griffith expecting to be able to book into food experiences, such as cooking classes with "Nonna", salami making, sauce making, etc. Now more than ever, Australian's can't go to Tuscany and they will happily pay for these experiences in Griffith.

The NSW Food & Wine Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2018-2022 recognises that the Riverina, particularly Griffith, needs to develop more experiences to fulfil its potential. The development of a quality culinary tourism experience is a key strategic objective as Griffith has an established food and wine industry. This will require bringing all key stakeholders together to establish a business framework (Tourism Action Group) to evolve this key culinary niche experience.

Food and Wine is one of the most powerful motivations globally for visitors considering a holiday destination. Visiting cellar doors, attending food and wine events, and tasting local wine at a local restaurant are integral to many visitors' experience. For wine producers, tastings at the cellar door offers the opportunity to make genuine connections with customers, build brand awareness, increase wine sales and diversify their business as part of the visitor economy.

Tourism Research Australia, in conjunction with DNSW, recently undertook research to better understand the perceptions, motivations, behaviours and experiences of domestic overnight food and wine visitors to NSW. The survey (Food and Wine Tourism in New South Wales, Tourism Research Australia, January 2015) showed that while wine was acknowledged as the core driver for food and wine tourism within the state and its regions, food was rising in prominence. From this research they were able to determine some key drivers for food and wine tourism. The most important elements identified by travellers were the opportunity to:

- Eat fresh, locally grown food for breakfast, lunch and dinner
- Buy local produce in its various forms
- Take short drives to places of interest near the main destination
- Make the journey a part of their holiday, with 'interest' stops on the way to the main destination and the return journey home

There are agencies, i.e. Destination NSW, Destination Riverina Murray and other Federal and State government agencies such as AusIndustry, who have assets and experience to assist Griffith City Council and the Griffith Tourism Team to deliver on key strategic experience developments.

It is recommended that the Griffith Tourism Team should not be working alone on these important experience developments but work collaboratively with partners to bring those projects to reality.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Hold information sessions/workshops on developing tourism experiences	Workshops held and five new experiences developed	Griffith Tourism Team	DRM DNSW AusIndustry	December 2021 and ongoing
Hold regular capacity building workshops for food and wine tourism operators	Capacity building workshops held	Griffith Tourism Team	DRM DNSW AusIndustry	December 2021 and ongoing
Establish a Culinary Tourism Action Group (need to be clear here who this is and how this works)	Group formed and meeting	Griffith Tourism Team	Griffith City Council Tourism & Events Committee Industry Stakeholders	March 2021 and ongoing

4. ACCESS

STRATEGY - Work with transport partners and neighbouring tourism stakeholders to make access to Griffith as easy as possible

Flights from Sydney with Regional Express and Melbourne with EastWest Airlines are important to the business, conference and short stay leisure markets. It is important that Griffith Tourism Team work closely with both airlines to assist with media and PR stories to promote flights to Griffith.

The drive market is, and will continue to be, the biggest market. Drive tourism is a critical segment to Griffith, not only for tourism businesses, but also to other services such as retail, food, wine businesses as well as jobs in service industries. This market has further increased its share since COVID-19, as visitors want the freedom and safety gained from travelling in their own vehicle and as flight frequencies have decreased.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics predicts in The National Visitor Survey (Year Ending June 2020), published by Tourism Research Australia, that by 2050 the number of Australians aged 55 years and over will more than double. Traditionally, the drive market has been associated with "grey nomads", who spend similar amounts of money as younger visitors. Importantly, however, "grey nomads" spend a greater number of nights per annum driving and staying within regions and often in areas not frequented by other visitors. In addition, "grey nomads" often visit travel in off-peak periods.

The drive market is expanding; families are increasingly discovering touring holidays with light weight camper trailers making camping even easier, and "millennials" are also enjoying drive trips to have food and wine experiences.

COVID-19 has created short term opportunities from the family and millennial demographic groups to Griffith. This is an interesting development and one which should be targeted with social media with purpose developed itineraries such as Griffith food and wine experiences for millennials and family experiences itineraries.

Drive itineraries need to be developed in partnership with neighbouring shires to leverage greater visitation for drive tourism travelling north - south, east - west on key trunk routes of Kidman Way, Newell Highway, Burley Griffin Way and Sturt Highway. Signage issues need to be addressed as they can negatively affect driver safety, and ultimately journey decision-making. Town entry signage, way-finding and the visual amenity of the area and region is very important to visitors.

A key action for this strategy is the development and marketing of Griffith tourist drives that are informative, appealing and safe, which highlight historical, heritage, cultural, community, economic, environment, scenic points of interest; provide rest, refreshment and local shopping opportunities.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Ensure Regional Express and EastWest Airlines are on media release list for updates	Regular media releases sent	Griffith City Council	DRM & DNSW Tourism Australia	Ongoing
Work closely with Touring Route and Highway committees	Griffith included in touring route and highway itineraries, and their promotion	Griffith Tourism Team	Neighbouring Touring Route and Highway Committees	Ongoing
Build drive itineraries with neighbouring councils	New itineraries developed	Griffith Tourism Team	Neighbouring councils' tourism units DRM	March 2021 and ongoing
Sign audit	Review of roadside signs directing visitors to Griffith. Identification of new sign opportunities	Griffith Tourism Team	Griffith City Council Roads and Maritime Services	November 2021

5. MARKETING

STRATEGY - Ensure Griffith has a focused tourism marketing direction

As part of the Griffith Tourism Team Business Plan, a Marketing Plan will be developed to promote Griffith clearly and consistently across multiple platforms. This will also give private enterprise operators actions to leverage, with key messaging developed.

Along with the Marketing Plan, it is important that 'Brand Griffith' is synthesised.

'Brand Griffith' is more than a logo and a tag line, it is the DNA that defines all things Griffith. It is the central message that binds the Council and private enterprise approach to tourism and events. At the DTP consultative meetings, it was evident that there wasn't a common view about 'Brand Griffith', the culture and language about the city and surrounds.

'Brand Griffith'

Some of the language that would make up 'Brand Griffith' includes:

- Major hub in Riverina Murray Region
- Important distributor with access from all major routes and highways
- Events are a key driver of visitation and important economically to Griffith
- Food & Wine Hub with quality world class wineries and food
- Significant agricultural food region
- Vibrant / Contemporary Regional Hub
- High standard of living / low unemployment
- Great sporting facilities with new major sporting precinct developments coming online
- Positive consumer reputation / perception
- Strong Business Travel Destination
- SURPRISE to most visitors
- Hidden gem
- Griffith Cultural Heritage and Multicultural community major asset
- Day trippers, 40km radius around Griffith, an important segment
- Irrigation canals and history
- Patchwork quilt vista of all the agricultural fields and vineyards
- Great base for weekend business

The Visit Griffith website is a vital sales marketing tool to sell the destination. Currently, this is not being utilised to its full potential as it is not user-friendly, attractive or interactive.

The current Visit Griffith website is not up to tourism industry standard, it is not connected to the Australia Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) which feeds details of accommodation, events, attractions and restaurants from a central database that is used by DNSW (and all the other state tourism offices), Tourism Australia and over 250 travel wholesalers. The ATDW also automatically updates changes on product displayed on the host site so if, for example, a motel changes its rates or adds a swimming pool, they update their 'Get Connected' listing and all sites connected to ATDW are automatically updated. This leads to more accurate sites and reduces double-handling for all stakeholders

It is essential that the Griffith Tourism Team is given full control to design, update & maintain the Visit Griffith website in order to be kept up with the fast-paced tourism industry. COVID-19 has further accelerated the urgency to have accurate and up-to-date information readily available to the consumer.

Consumers require a one-stop shop to search for current destination information and events, accommodation and tours, and to find attractions and restaurants. Preferably the site will have booking functionality.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Develop 'Brand Griffith'	Brand developed	Griffith Tourism Team	Industry stakeholders Griffith City Council Tourism & Events Committee	June 2021
Develop and implement a Tourism Marketing Plan	Plan developed	Griffith Tourism Team		September 2021
The Griffith Tourism Team be given full control to design, update & maintain the Visit Griffith website	Website re-developed and functional	Griffith City Council	Griffith Tourism Team	December 2021



6. CONFERENCES AND BUSINESS EVENTS

STRATEGY - Attract Regional Conference and Business Event Market

State and Federal Government agencies and industry association business groups are a key target for small to medium regional and local meetings / workshops / conferences. Griffith is in an ideal geographical position to host regional meetings and is well serviced with small to medium conference facilities.

The Griffith Tourism Team in conjunction with tourism industry suppliers should develop a guide for Regional Meetings and Small Conferences to inform and attract conference organisers.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Develop and distribute a Conferences and Meetings Guide	Guide developed and distributed	Griffith Tourism Team	Industry Stakeholders	March 2022
Develop a database of potential meeting organisers and maintain regular contact	Database developed and communication commenced	Griffith Tourism Team	Industry Stakeholders	March 2022 and ongoing

7. INDUSTRY CAPACITY BUILDING

STRATEGY - Build industry capacity to deliver quality tourism experiences

As identified in the DTP consultations, there is an identified and essential need for capacity building and training to enable Griffith and all key industry sectors to work together and maximise the growth opportunities in visitor numbers, nights and expenditure.

A priority will be to identify, develop and implement a range of capacity building programs in partnership with appropriate organisations to improve business practices across all sectors of tourism. Programs may include grant writing, Front-of-House customer service, local tourism product education, digital support, etc.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Develop and implement a range of capacity building programs in partnership with appropriate organisations to improve business practices	Programs developed and delivered for all sectors	Griffith Tourism Team	Griffith City Council Griffith City Council Tourism and Events Committee Tourism Action Groups DRM & DNSW	December 2021 and ongoing
Regular industry capacity building sessions combined with networking meetings	Speakers arranged for each networking event	Griffith Tourism Team	Griffith City Council Tourism and Events Committee Tourism Action Groups DRM & DNSW	March 2021 and ongoing

8. GOVERNANCE

STRATEGY - Strengthen Griffith City Council and Griffith Tourism Team links with the local tourism industry

It is recommended that the Griffith City Council Tourism & Events Committee provide strong leadership for the industry. The Committee should be seen as, and act as, the tourism industry peak body in Griffith.

A key role of the Committee is to progress and assist in the delivery of key Strategic Priorities in the GDTP to achieve increased visitor expenditure.

Importantly, the Committee agree to take ownership of the GDTP 2021-24 to ensure the priorities, facilitators and time-lines are being addressed and delivered as per the plan.

Committee members will liaise with Industry Sectors on the current state, issues and opportunities and revert any feedback to the Committee on a regular basis. It is recommended that the Committee meets quarterly to discuss and review this feedback.

The existing Committee Terms of Reference are currently outdated and do not reflect the role of the committee and the necessity of regular interaction with the Griffith Tourism Team.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Terms of Reference of the Tourism & Events Committee be amended to reflect role of committee members in the delivery of the GDTP	Terms of Reference updated	Griffith City Council	Griffith Tourism Team	September 2021
Griffith City Council Tourism & Events Committee to progress and assist in the delivery of key Strategic Priorities in the GDTP	Timely delivery of GDTP priorities	Griffith City Council Tourism and Events Committee	Griffith Tourism Team	January 2021 and ongoing
Committee members to liaise with Industry Sectors on state of each business sector, issues and opportunities and revert any feedback to the Committee on a regular basis.	Regular TAG meetings held and feedback discussed at Griffith City Council Tourism and Events Committee meeting, relative action taken and communicated back to industry	Griffith City Council Tourism and Events Committee	Griffith Tourism Team Tourism Action Groups	February 2021 and ongoing
Regular interaction and meetings between the Committee and Griffith Tourism Team	Quarterly Committee meetings held	Griffith City Council Tourism and Events Committee	Griffith Tourism Team Griffith City Council	January 2021 and ongoing

9. INFRASTRUCTURE

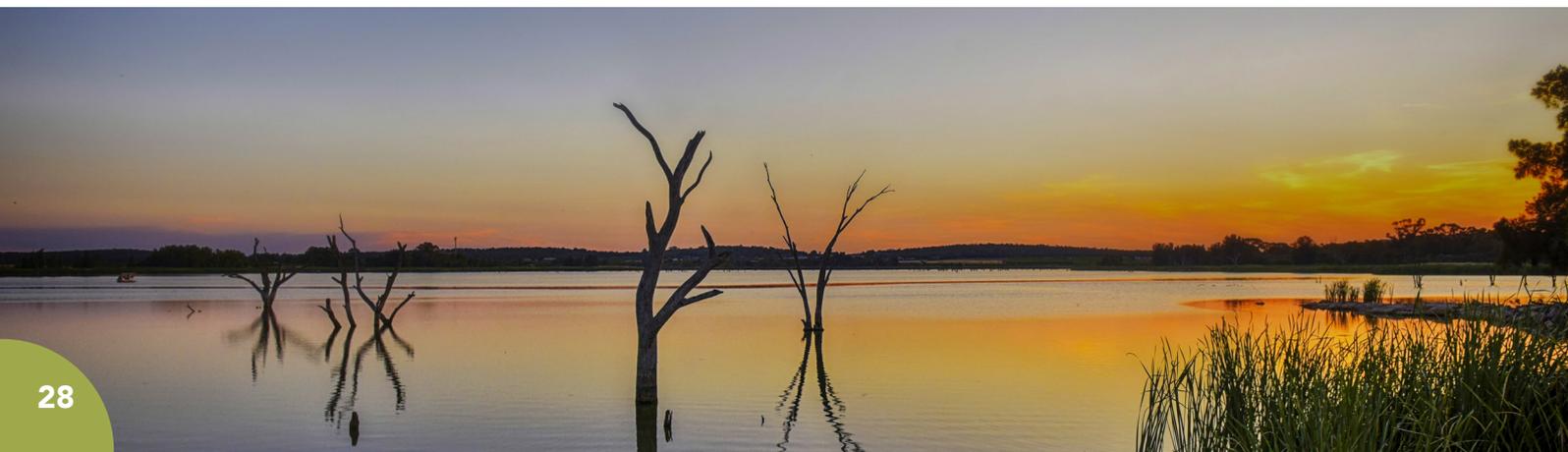
STRATEGY - Provide infrastructure to enable safe and useful facilities for visitors

Griffith has a valuable set of cycle and walking paths. It is critical for these paths to be connected to link Griffith and villages to improve visitor experience and access. This is also set out in the Griffith City Council Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP).

Hermits Cave Lookout and Precinct are popular visitor sites. It is essential that the entire site has a planned refurbishment included in the Scenic Hill Plan of Management.

There is also opportunity to develop the Lake Wyangan precinct for tourism uses and to improve visitor infrastructure. A plan is in place to develop the wetlands and improve sediment control.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Existing cycle and walking paths to be extended to join up with each other, linking Griffith, suburbs and villages.	Action taken	Griffith City Council	Griffith Tourism Team	July 2021 and ongoing
Hermits Cave Lookout and Precinct signage, pathways, steps and railings be rejuvenated into a safe and inviting visitor experience	Action taken	Griffith City Council	Griffith Tourism Team	July 2021 and ongoing
Lake Wyangan Masterplan to be developed which would investigate improved access, visitor infrastructure, trail network and potential sites for a Tourist Park caravan park (i.e. Big 4)	Action taken	Griffith City Council	Griffith Tourism Team	December 2024



10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY - Work closely with Griffith City Council Economic Development Team to share and maximise business opportunities for Griffith

Griffith City Council works in collaboration with its partners in industry, state and federal government and the community, to secure a prosperous future that is driven by innovation and investment in strategic projects and industries such as agriculture and tourism that will drive regional growth.

It does this by:

1. Prioritising initiatives and activities that support the growth and development of Griffith's 'pillar' industries of agriculture and tourism, with an emphasis on new opportunities in value-added economic activities which target existing, new and emerging markets;
2. Promoting a partnership approach to tourism promotion and development, working in collaboration with key tourism bodies such as DNSW, DRM and the tourism industry to enhance branding, marketing, product development, visitor servicing and support infrastructure;
3. Pro-actively promote the Griffith Region to prospective investors, using a strategic, informed and targeted approach consistent with the long-term vision for the region's economic development.

Action	KPI/ Target	Lead Organisation	Partner Organisation	Time Frame
Pro-actively promote Griffith to prospective investors	Work together to maximise tourism investment in Griffith	Griffith City Council	Griffith Tourism Team	Ongoing
Support the growth and development of Griffith's 'pillar' industries of agriculture and tourism	Take every opportunity to ensure that the agricultural sector considers tourism as one of its income streams	Griffith City Council	Griffith Tourism Team	Ongoing
Foster a partnership approach to tourism promotion and development	Work together to promote Griffith	Griffith Tourism Team	Griffith City Council DRM & DNSW Industry stakeholders	Ongoing



ACRONYMS

COVID-19: Coronavirus pandemic

DNSW: Destination New South Wales

DRM: Destination Riverina Murray

GDTP: Griffith Destination Tourism Plan 2021-2024

ILGA: Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority

TAG: Tourism Action Group

VFR: Visiting Friends and Relatives

BTR: Bureau of Tourism Research

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Brand Griffith: This is more than a logo and a tag line, it is the DNA that defines all things Griffith. It is the central message that binds the Council and private enterprise approach to tourism and events.

Destination New South Wales: The lead government agency for the New South Wales tourism and major events sector.

Griffith: Representing the area of Griffith City, its suburbs, and surrounding villages which include Beelbangera, Benerembah, Bilbul, Hanwood, Myall Park, Lake Wyangan, Nericon, Tharbogang, Warburn, Warrawidgee, Widgelli, Willbriggie, Yenda and Yoogali.

Griffith Tourism Team: Staff employed by Griffith City Council who work within the Tourism Department and are responsible for Visitor Servicing, Marketing & Events.

Griffith City Council Tourism & Events Committee: A Section 355 Committee of Griffith City Council comprised of Councillors and community members, with the purpose of focusing on tourism at a strategic level.

Kidman Way Touring Route Promotional Committee: Five councils along the Kidman Way which include Murrumbidgee Shire, Carrathool Shire, Griffith City Council, Bourke Shire Council and Cobar Shire Council, for the purpose of marketing the Kidman Way as a touring route.

Lead Organisation: The organisation who is responsible for owning the action. This does not mean that the lead organisation has to carry out the action themselves, they may do so or could facilitate the action being undertaken.

Partner Organisation: The organisation who supports the action being undertaken identified for each strategy.

Riverina Murray: One of six destination networks established by the New South Wales Government in which Griffith falls within for the purpose of Tourism.

Tourism Action Group: A Tourism Action Group (TAG) is an informal group of like-minded tourism stakeholders who operate in the same sector. For example Wineries, Restaurants and Food, Accommodation, Events and so on. These groups will get together, usually every three or six months to discuss issues and opportunities in their sector. The meetings provide an opportunity to build networks, undertake capacity development and share ideas.

Tourism Ambassador: A business or organisation who has chosen to invest in Visit Griffith marketing initiatives.

Western Riverina: A sub-region within the Riverina Murray including the councils of Carrathool, Griffith, Hay, Leeton, Murrumbidgee and Narrandera.

REFERENCES:

- 1/ National Visitor Survey year ending June 2020, published by Tourism Research Australia.
- 2/ <http://economy.id.com.au/griffith/tourism> .idcommunity demographic resources. National Economics (NIEIR) - Modelled series
- 3/ National Visitor Survey year ending June 2020, published by Tourism Research Australia
- 4/ National Visitor Survey year ending June 2020, published by Tourism Research Australia and tourism industry feedback from the 140 people who attended the tourism industry forums in Griffith 27 to 31 July 2020.
- 5/ Tourism industry feedback from the 140 people who attended the tourism industry forums in Griffith 27 to 31 July 2020.
- 6/ The NSW Food & Wine Tourism Strategy & Action Plan 2018-2022 is designed to provide the food and wine sector and the broader tourism industry with an overview of Destination NSW's plans to further support the development of food and wine tourism to the State.
- 7/ Accommodation Market Assessment for the Riverina Murray 2019, conducted by Urban Enterprise as a contractor to Destination Riverina Murray.

