



TOURISM MARKETING PLAN



LODDON
SHIRE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why would someone choose to visit the Loddon Valley, above all other areas, and perhaps to return, and even live and work?

The region is a hidden gem, with natural, historic and cultural assets that are not only unique in the State, but also internationally.

This includes the pristine natural environment, with vast water ways including Victoria's second longest river, and National Parks, home to many endangered animals and plants. The 460 million year old granite outcrops are amongst the oldest formations in the State, and on their peaks the curve of the earth is viewable across the horizon.

Within this unadulterated landscape is a time capsule of ancient and historic treasures. The region holds one of the most significant Aboriginal cultural landscapes in Australia with the Boort scarred trees, and the intact gold rush era villages stand with little changed from the 1850s. Indeed, significant amounts of gold are still being found just below the surface.

It is in this region too that food and produce is grown that cannot be found elsewhere; Laucke Flour (considered the best bread making flour in the world) is made in Loddon along with specialist meats, olives, salt from deep within the earth and the oldest and highest grade eucalyptus oil in the world. For these reasons, the wider region can claim to provide one of the most sustainable lifestyles in Australia.

These combined qualities speak uniquely to some of the main drivers that attract people to a region; where people are seeking out pristine and untarnished natural environments in which to spend their leisure time; to discover and explore jewels from the past, and to engage with one of the world's oldest living cultures.

As these treasures are not widely known an enormous opportunity exists to realise the potential of the region by promoting these assets, and to develop key areas and will maximise visitation. This Plan proposes a number of initial steps, as well as recommendations for further investigation that will not only help put the region on the map for visitors, but also attract wider investment and interest.

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the 2017 - 2019 Loddon Shire Tourism Marketing Plan is to establish the foundation for the joint promotion of the region to visitors by Council, businesses, organisations' and individuals.

Specifically, the Plan is set to identify and gain agreement on the fundamentals for promotions.

2 BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

To successfully deliver the new Loddon Shire Tourism Marketing Plan an additional \$9,000 is required over three years.

3 RISK ANALYSIS

No major risks have been identified in relation to implementing the Plan.

Actions identify within the plan will assist immensely to bring operators/organisations together to collaboratively market the points of difference for Loddon Valley that will grow visitor yield and increase extended stays.

The risk is in respect to the potential lack of enthusiasm and participation by operators/organisations to collaboratively deliver the actions in the plan for the betterment of the region.

4 INTRODUCTION

The plan is divided into three key sections.

First, it outlines the key products, experiences, assets and points of difference (POD) for the region, and provides a brief strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis.

The plan then considers factors specific to each town or district. Strategies are recommended.

The main body of the plan focuses on the qualities of the region, as it became clear during the workshops that the key strengths were common across the majority of towns and districts. From a marketing point of view, promoting the strengths of the region is preferable as it provides a stronger message and incentive for visitors to come to the region.

This approach also encourages a better use of resources.

The region summary therefore provides a strong strategic base to articulate the distinct products, experiences and POD that each town and district can then pick and choose from, utilise and share.

Products, POD and SWOT specific to each town and district are also detailed.

For ease of reference, products and experiences are listed under categories including: natural environment, history, food and gold.

These categories correspond to key points of difference for the region.

It is worth noting too that the categories are not rigid, but are offered as prompts or suggestions for how assets and strengths can be grouped and themed.

It is recommended to read information and absorb the point of difference for the region, as well as for each of the towns and districts.

5 REGION

5.1 Product, assets and experiences

Key products in the region include:

- Natural environment – Loddon River, lakes and tributaries, 460 million year old granite outcrops, vast landscape, parks with rare and endangered plants.
- Historical – particularly the Aboriginal cultural heritage in the region and the legacy of the 1800s gold rush such as gold rush era towns and architecture.
- Food and sustainable living – particularly exceptional products that are unique to the area and considered world class, such as Laucke Flour, Eucalyptus oil, Pyramid Salts, olives, tomatoes, and specialist meats such as Inglewood Dry Aged Beef. The antique and collectible stores are also outstanding offerings for sustainable living.
- Gold – since the first of the Australian gold rushes in the 1850s, huge nuggets have been uncovered in the vicinity of Wedderburn, Inglewood, Rheola, Kingower and Tarnagulla. More than 80% of the world’s largest nuggets have been unearthed in this part of Victoria. The Welcome Stranger is the largest nugget ever found in the world, at Moliagul (Central Goldfields).
- Eucalyptus – the region was one of the first areas to produce eucalyptus oil in the world. Today, the world’s highest quality oil comes from Loddon Shire, harvested from the same trees used in the 1850s, and from super crops being developed by Bosisto’s.
- Olive capital of Australia – the Boort region is the main producer of extra virgin olive oil in Australia and one of the world’s greatest olive oil producing regions. The land is home to over 1,250,000 olive trees producing six million litres of oil per annum – 85% of which is extra virgin olive oil. Producers such as Salute are known for their table olives, produced using a natural fermentation process.

5.1.1 Regional product, assets and experience detail

Category	Details product or experience
Natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granite outcrops – 460 million years old. • Sky – quality of light, sunsets, open landscapes, views across plains. • Loddon region provides night sky sites with minimal light pollution, commonly known as Dark Sky place. • From the peaks of Kooyoora State Park, the curve of the earth. • In the Loddon Valley region stars can be seen down to the horizon. • Water – the Loddon River is the second largest river in Victoria and part of one of the most extensive river, lake and wetland networks in the state. • National and State Parks of Leaghur, Terrick Terrick and Kooyoora.

Category	Details product or experience
Natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural Australian bush – the most southerly point to experience a central Australian landscape and Mallee bushland.
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal cultural heritage. Gold rush in 1850 – 1880s. Old Victorian railway towns.
Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The southern section of the Loddon Shire is the richest and most concentrated alluvial goldfield in the world.
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intact architecture from 1800s. Gold rush era towns – where little has changed since that time. Old deserted Victorian railway buildings.
Food and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eucalyptus – highest quality eucalyptus oil – home of the Eucalyptus Super Trees. Wheat from the fields produces the finest bread making wheat in the world – Laucke Flour. Olives. Specialist meats. Tomatoes. Diversity of agriculture – apples, tomatoes, honey, wool, salt, walnuts, olives and wheat.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bush and forest – walking, bike riding. Water – skiing, canoeing, fishing. Bird watching. Photography. Gold detecting. Camping. Cycling. Bush walking. Geology. Wildflowers. Star gazing.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gold rush towns, seemingly intact and frozen in time. Treasures to uncover (eg gold, food, opportunity shops, rare and endangered plants and animals).

5.1.2 Points of difference

Short statements (**key messages**) that encapsulate and summarise the region's point of difference are provided below.

- In this untarnished pristine environment, gems have been preserved.
- Natural environment
 - This region has one of the most extensive networks of rivers, lakes and wetlands in Victoria, as well as the State's second longest river.
 - Many rare and endangered birds, animals and plants have taken refuge in the sanctuary of the Loddon Valley.
 - One of the oldest intact forests exists in the region, home to many endangered animals such as the Tree Goanna.
 - This region has one of the world's few remaining native grasslands, with one of the rarest birds (Plains Wanderer) in the state taking refuge there.
 - 460 million year old granite outcrops – amongst the oldest rocks in Victoria.

- Vast landscape with clear skies where by day, the curve of the earth and in the evening stars down to the horizon can be seen.
- The wider region experiences the greatest number of sunny days during summer.
- It has significant parks with rare and endangered plants that you will not find elsewhere.
- This is the most southerly point in Victoria to experience Australia's desert landscapes and the unique plants and animals that reside within them.
- Time capsule
 - The Loddon Valley is home to one of the most significant Aboriginal cultural landscapes in Australia.
 - The Loddon Valley is the location of one of the world's richest gold rushes with intact and untouched gold rush era towns still existing.
- Food and sustainable living – particularly signature products that cannot be found elsewhere or are considered the best available product in Australia:
 - Laucke Flour, Eucalyptus Oil, Pyramid Salts, Olives, Tomatoes, Inglewood Dry Aged Beef, and other specialist meats, as well as antique and collectible stores.
- Eucalyptus – Loddon Valley is the home of the eucalyptus "Super Trees". The highest quality of eucalyptus oil.
- Gold – This region has the richest concentration of alluvial gold in the world – gems that sit on the surface of the land.
 - Historically, with more than 80% of the world's largest nuggets unearthed in this part of Victoria, it is considered the world's richest alluvial goldfield.
 - The Welcome Stranger, the largest nugget ever found, was unearthed just below the surface in Moliagul.
 - With new technology, nuggets worth millions are still being unearthed today.
 - The gold in this region is also the purest in the world, with a rating of 99.8%.

Reference: (Dunolly Gold Museum & Coiltek Gold Centre reference relates to the gold section of 5.1.2.)

5.3 Key points of difference

Category	Points of difference
Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pristine and untouched natural environment where rare birds, plants and animals can be found that exist nowhere else in the world. • The region has one of the state's most extensive water system with wetlands, lakes and Victoria's second longest river system. • The ancient 460 million year old granite outcrops are some of the oldest in Victoria with 360 degree views to the horizon. • Loddon Valley has landscapes of wide open spaces. • Loddon Valley has skies with outstanding sunsets and sunrises. • In Loddon Valley stars can be seen down to the horizon. • The curve of the earth can be seen from the top of Kooyoora State Park. • The quality of the air and quality of the light is outstanding. • Significant national and state parks and reserves. • Remnant forests and grasslands, areas of untouched wilderness that are home to some of Australia's oldest trees.

Category	Points of difference
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rare and endangered flora and fauna – see appendix. • Leaghur State Park – the black and grey box forest in Leaghur State Park is protected.
Aboriginal cultural history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The region holds some of the most significant Aboriginal landscapes in Australia – the Boort scarred trees. • Loddon Valley, the land of scarred trees. • The region has significant Aboriginal cultural heritage of high value, preserved as though frozen in time including camps, fish traps and other significant sites. • Other significant sites in the region include Kow Swamp, where possibly the oldest Aboriginal ancestral remains have been found.
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the significant Aboriginal cultural heritage, to intact gold rush era towns, to the rare and endangered animals, birds and plants. • All seemingly untouched and frozen in time, the region is an extraordinary time capsule that holds treasures that no longer exist elsewhere.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water sports – ski rimmed by nature, where the Australian champions choose to test their skills. • Photography – the nature of the light, and landscape mixed with the intact historic gold rush era towns, makes this a photographic nirvana. • Birdwatching. • Fishing – iconic Murray Cod catching area in Loddon River Laanecoorie, Newbridge, Bridgewater and Serpentine. Other fish found in the Loddon is Golden Perch (Yellow Belly) and Red Fin. • Camping and Caravanning – here you can camp or set up your caravan right by the water's edge. • Walking – walking/cycling trail from granite outcrop to granite outcrop where visitors can walk through intact mallee bushland, see the curve of the horizon from the tops of the hill tops and see significant Aboriginal cultural heritage and rare and endangered animals, birds and plants.
Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This small area is the richest concentrated alluvial goldfield in the world. • Treasures are sitting beneath the soil. • Nuggets are still being found today (\$250k nugget in December 2016 and \$4m nugget also found in 2016).
Food and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The larger region has one of the richest concentrations of boutique food and wine producers in Australia. • Laucke flour – producing the finest bread making flour in the world (according to one European bread making expert). This flour is used by the finest artisan bakers in Melbourne including Zeally Bay, Irrewarra and Dench's). • Eucalyptus – the home of eucalyptus oil. The original trees from the 1850s are still being harvested to produce this wonder oil. Super trees have now been planted producing the finest grade eucalyptus in the world.

Category	Points of difference
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olives – the region is the main producer of extra virgin olive oil in Australia. In the north of Loddon Shire is one of the world’s greatest olive oil producing regions. The land is home to over 1,250,000 olive trees producing six million litres of oil per annum – 85% of which is extra virgin olive oil. • Pyramid Salt – all Pyramid Salt comes from the unpolluted ancestral Australian seabeds beneath the Loddon Plains in Northern Victoria and retains magnesium and calcium, essential mineral elements for your health. It is totally natural and free from artificial additives. • Specialist meats and butchers. Inglewood Dry Aged Beef Butchers is one of only two butchers in Australia who use the dry aged methods. Their meat, sourced from local farms, is sold to restaurants and cafes in the wider area, again reinforcing the local and sustainable ethos that drives the regions strong food culture. Tasting these meats has been likened to eating an apply straight from the tree. • Farming abundance of irrigated farm land, areas with high quality soils, tremendous diversity of farming and farming opportunities, grain, livestock, poultry and horticulture. • Loddon Valley is plastic bag free. • Vintage and collectible furniture finds at reasonable prices. • Bridgewater hotel – one of the few hotels that site overlooking a river in Victoria. • The larger Bendigo region has one of the richest concentrations of boutique food and wine producers in Australia, which includes Loddon Valley.
People and environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed and welcoming. • Friendly communities.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush camping. • Farm stays. • Self-contained houses. • Motels. • Caravan parks by rivers and lakes.

5.4 Key messages relating to points of difference

- Within easy drive of Melbourne, in Central Victoria exists a region where time has stood still.
- The region holds and has protected (through an extraordinary quirk of nature and circumstances) some of Australia’s most significant ecological, aboriginal, architectural and historical sites. Treasures that you thought no longer exist, can be found here, and are waiting to be discovered.
- The pristine and untouched natural environment has provided sanctuary to critically endangered and rare flora and fauna, taking refuge in remnant forests and waterways.

- Of international significance are some of the most significant aboriginal cultural heritage landscapes in Australia. There are over 400 Aboriginal scarred trees in the Lake Boort area. Aboriginal guides, such as Jida Gulpilil whose family have lived in the area for thousands of years, can take you on a tour. The region is also home to the Kow Swamp where Aboriginal ancestral remains have been found that are possibly the oldest found in Australia.
- Treasures exist in this region – things that can be found nowhere else.
- Seemingly frozen in time, the region is a time capsule, where treasures from history still exist.
- Tracks and traces of life from hundreds of years still remain ready to discover. You will find things that you thought had been lost forever, but here take refuge.
- You don't have to travel so far to touch nature, to see the natural Australian bush, to see endangered flora and fauna. This is the most southerly point to experience the unique Australian desert landscape.

RIVERS AND WATER WAYS

- This region has one of the most extensive networks of rivers, lakes and wetlands in Victoria. The magnificent 400km Loddon River, the second longest in Victoria, runs through Loddon Valley.
- The wetlands are also the most southerly link to the outback, with the region being the closest point to experience the unique plants and animals of the deserted landscape. Goannas are one example of the extraordinary and rare creatures that have a stronghold in the Loddon Valley.

FAUNA

- These waterways are also home to many exquisite Australian animals such as the platypus, as well as rare, endangered and migratory birds, such as the Magpie Goose. This enormous bird was extinct in Victoria and South Australia, and is now showing signs of recovery since recently being reintroduced into the region.
- This region is one of the few remaining sanctuaries for many critically endangered plants and animals including Fat-tailed dunnart (a cute marsupial mouse), Australian Bustard, Barking Owl, Regent Honeyeater and White Bellied Sea Eagle.
- The Plains-Wanderer, which exists in the grass plains of the Terrick Terrick National Park is critically endangered, with between 20 – 400 of these precious ground-dwelling birds remaining.
- The region is a haven for wildlife and precious plants, with over 100 species of birds and 200 species of native flora, many rare and endangered, existing in its waterways and forests.

FLORA

- The native grasslands of the Loddon Valley are one of the few remnant populations of natural grassy plains left in the world. The grassy plains, which once extended across the continent, are home to many rare plants such as the outstanding Red Swainson-pea.
- Leaghur State Park – largest and healthiest black box forest in Victoria. Black Box – this is the best habitat tree as it contains many hollows for fauna. Many trees are 1,000 years old. Approximately 400 plant species.
- The region is home to Victoria's most intact black box forest. Estimated to be at least 800 years old, the trees are amongst the longest lived in the state and over time developed hollows where endangered birds and animals such as the tree goanna and owls, take refuge. The black box also retains aboriginal cultural scarring from hundreds of years of indigenous habitation in the region.

References: SWIFFT, Damien Cook and David Baker.

http://www.swift.net.au/cb_pages/threatened_fauna_loddon_shire.php

CLIMATE

- Over summer, the wider region that encapsulates Loddon Shire has the sunniest days of anywhere in the state. (i.e. October to April, and region up to Mildura).

Reference: Bureau of Meteorology

GRANITE OUTCROPS

- The 460-million-year-old granite outcrops of the Loddon Valley are the picturesque lava flows of now extinct volcanoes. It is in their crevices and caves, findings of rare plants and wildlife, and from the vantage point of their peaks looking across the ancient plains, see the curve of the earth.

Reference: Rod Steer and Museums Victoria.

5.5 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in this section (5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.5.3 and 5.5.4) have been collated from the six workshops that relate to the Shire as a whole.

Within this Plan, activities that maximise strengths, address weaknesses, and explore opportunities are considered.

It is recommended that the SWOT analysis for each town is also digested as many opportunities discussed by other towns could be considered across the region.

Similarly, strengths and weaknesses in other towns will inform other areas.

5.5.1 Strengths

- Nature – an area of high ecological value including rare and endangered animals, birds and plants, particularly box, ironbark forests and grasslands.
- Water ways – rivers, lakes, creeks and wetlands.
- Landscape – ancient granite outcrops with vast plains. Skies, sunsets and starry skies.
- Some buildings in towns not overdeveloped or underdeveloped and are still in pristine condition.
- Aboriginal heritage.
- Intact gold rush era heritage buildings.
- Climate – a micro climate that is stable.
- Undiscovered – towns are a discovery for people.
- Bush camps.
- Caravan parks.
- No parking meters.
- Proximity to Bendigo which can be used as a base for food and accommodation whilst the region develops higher quality infrastructure.
- Linkages with Bendigo Regional Tourism.
- Accessible to Melbourne and close to major tourist destinations Bendigo, Echuca, Swan Hill, Ballarat, Maryborough and Mildura.
- The development of the Captain Melville trail from Inglewood to Kooyoora State Park.
- Friendly, natural, down to earth people where local residents are willing to share their knowledge of the region with visitors.

- Diversity of land forms, flora, fauna, landscapes, agriculture, gold heritage and heritage buildings.
- Authentic and natural experiences.
- Support from Loddon Shire tourism staff.
- Volunteers.
- Food – high quality/organic foods.
- Safe place.
- Excellent facilities, e.g. Loddon Visitor Information Centre.
- Train line and bus services that are offered through the region.
- Unusual events, e.g. Wedderburn Detector Jamboree, Boort Agricultural Show, Pyramid Hill Fiesta, Wedderburn Engine Rally, Kooyoora Wildflower Show, Rheola Carnival.
- Change of pace, relaxing, peaceful.

5.5.2 Weaknesses

- It is over two hours from Melbourne so not appropriate for day trips.
- There is low awareness of where the region is (this includes the confusion between Bendigo and Ballarat).
- Lack of accommodation – particularly for larger groups and higher quality boutique accommodation.
- Volunteers are stretched.
- Very poor digital presence for many towns and businesses.
- Hospitality (lack of a range of higher standard food offerings across the region).
- Businesses have limited budget for marketing.
- All walking/cycling trails in Loddon Shire are short compared with, for example, Goldfields track.
- Limited resources.
- Towns work independently rather than collaboratively.
- Lack of good retail.
- No night time economy.
- Weather is too hot in summer.
- Limited or no public transport.
- Signage into towns does not express point of difference.
- Separate groups in towns working independently (“silos”).
- Engagement not occurring across all key stakeholders.
- Caravan parks are not members or registered with key associations (e.g. family parks).
- Limited mobile phone coverage.
- Limited utilisation of technology by tourist operators.
- Lack of understanding in the community of the value that tourism plays and the role that many businesses actually play in the industry.
- Lack of data collection by shop keepers of the point of origin of their customers.
- Poor presentation and customer service displayed by some shop keepers.
- Poor standard of some of the existing caravan parks.
- Anticipated poor return on tourism investment limits new developments.
- Some roads in the Shire are not suitable for tourist buses.
- Streetscapes (town entrances, nature strips, buildings, and front yards) are not as visually attractive as they could be.
- Regulations to prevent advertising signage being displayed on the road reserves or private property.
- Lack of maintenance of tourism infrastructure, e.g. seats at rest stops, toilets.

- Limited tourism products.
- Limited packaging of tourism products.
- Heavy reliance on volunteers, many of whom are ageing.
- Lack of operators with knowledge of tourism products and events in the Shire.

5.5.3 Opportunities

- Aboriginal cultural heritage. Significant enough to put Loddon Valley on the map internationally.
- Natural environment is an exceptional asset that provides a distinct point of difference.
- Rationalise and increase quality and effectiveness of Loddon Shire tourism section of the website.
- Training of social media to up skill operators.
- Underused halls, churches, sheds and farm houses could be established into accommodation venues.
- Loddon Valley halls can be used for art exhibitions.
- Themed itineraries connecting the key strengths and offerings in the region e.g. walking, cycling and canoeing.
- Connect Loddon Valley trails offering multiday activities – particularly walking, cycling and canoeing for example, Laanecoorie to Fernihurst canoe trail.
- Swimming holes along the Loddon River.
- Disused railway lines and existing railway tracks.
- Photography – create road side stops.
- Collaborating across towns, and businesses in mutually beneficial campaigns – addresses key strengths of region, better use of resources, which is more effective.
- Loddon operators to work together on cross promotion within the Shire.
- Loddon operators to work together with cross promoting with similar businesses outside the Shire.
- Work with other areas to co-ordinate and promote events, e.g. Food Fossickers, Bendigo Regional Tourism and the City of Greater Bendigo.
- Target tourists from Bendigo and Ballarat – not just Melbourne.
- Develop more specific promotional material, e.g. antique shops or museums.
- Promote whole Shire as Recreational Motorhome Vehicle Friendly.

5.5.4 Threats

- Lack of engagement by broader community.
- Internally businesses/organisations competing within the Shire, rather than collaborating and joining together for mutual benefit.
- Council staff not maintaining cycling and walking tracks within the Shire.
- With Loddon Shire Council rate capping, reducing services essential to tourism which assist in attracting visitor's example limited beautification.
- Limited contribution financially by local businesses/organisations for collaborative marketing.
- With climate change, has allowed for Loddon to become unattractive for visitors through drought and flood.
- Loddon Valley not keeping up with new technologies.
- Loddon Valley works with other region but we are also in competition as all regions are chasing the tourist dollar.
- Loddon Valley has to keep up with the changing consumption patterns to stay relevant in the tourism market.
- Low cost flights and holiday packages allow for tourists to travel internationally and interstate instead of exploring Victoria.

6 PYRAMID HILL (MITIAMO, DINGEE AND CALIVIL) PRODUCTS ASSETS AND EXPERIENCES

Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surrounded by national and state parks and reserves. • Granite outcrops - Pyramid Hill and Mt Hope. • Terrick Terrick National Park. • Unique and endangered animals, birds and plants in region.
Aboriginal cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt Hope and Pyramid Hill. • Kow Swamp. • Tang Tang – middens. • Terrick Terrick National Park.
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture. • Founded in 1836 by Major Mitchell. • 1860 Bourke and Wills Track. • Pyramid Hill Museum. • East Loddon Museum. • John Forbes sporting memorabilia. • Pyramid Hill, Mitiamo, Dingee and Calivil cemeteries.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking tracks (Pyramid Hill, Terrick Terrick National Park, Mt Hope and Dingee extended walks). • Camping. • Golf tournament. • Bird watching. • Cycling. • Golf. • Bowls. • Swimming. • Tennis.
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily V/Line train service stopping at Pyramid Hill and Dingee. • RV Friendly Caravan Park Pyramid Hill. • Overnight caravan stop on recreation reserve Calivil. • Dingee parks. • Swimming pool in Pyramid Hill and Mitiamo.
Food and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyramid Salt. • Walnuts, cherries, organic apples, dried muesli. Billabong farms. Olives. • Pork. • Coffee Bank. • Pyramid Bakery. • Filipino food. • Mitiamo General Store. • Dingee General Store.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyramid Hill Caravan Park with one cabin. • Victoria Hotel – mixture twin, double single with shared bathroom. • Bush camping – at the Terrick Terrick National Park. • Dingee Hotel.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyramid Hill Fiesta. • Pyramid Hill market – knitted goods, patchwork and jewellery. • Pyramid Hill Northern Victorian Quarter Horse Association. • Pyramid Hill Annual Golf tournament.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyramid Hill Bowls tournaments. • Pyramid Hill Triathlon (swimming pool, climb hill and cycle on flats). • Mitiamo Terrick Terrick National Park Open Weekend
Audit of websites and Facebook pages	www.pyramid.net.au Facebook- Pyramid Hill 3575 Facebook - Mitiamo store

6.1 Pyramid Hill points of difference

- This has been the crossing point for travellers and the earliest explorers for thousands of years. From the Aboriginal communities who walked to the top of Pyramid Hill, to Major Mitchell, and Bourke and Wills.
- Surrounded by some of the state’s most significant National Parks, State Parks and reserves, here are findings of the most intact remnant grassland from the northern plains and Aboriginal history dating back thousands of years, with rare and endangered birds such as the Plains Wanderer. Here can be seen a sunset that will stop visitors in their tracks, and stars that touch the horizon.
- During the day, wander to the top of the ancient Pyramid Hill and see the curve of the horizon.
- In this vicinity travel to Kow Swamp, where possibly the oldest Aboriginal ancestral remains have been found.

Terrick Terrick National Park

- Contains one of the largest, most intact tracts of indigenous northern plains vegetation in Victoria, recognised as one of the most endangered ecosystems in Australia it provides habitat for numerous endangered flora and fauna species An abundance of wildlife gives the park high conservation value, making it a very special place indeed.
- Victoria’s most significant stand of White Cypress Pine is found within the park. This species is slow growing with many of the trees being over 100 years old.
- Twenty-six rare or threatened plant species occur within the grasslands. Annual Buttons and Pepper Grass are endangered species that are only found at this site within Victoria. The park also contains the largest Victorian population of the following threatened species; Bottle Bluebush, Fragrant Leek-orchid and Murray Swainson-pea.
- The wooded and open grasslands are home to over 100 species of birds, including the Plains-wanderer, Grey-crowned Babbler, Bush Stone-curlew, Mallee Ringneck Parrot, Barking Owl and Brolga. Plains-wanderer is endangered in Victoria.
- The Hooded Scaly-foot is considered critically endangered in Victoria. A large legless lizard that grows to half a metre long. It has no limbs and may resemble a snake, however it can be distinguished by external ear openings, an undivided tongue, and a tail that is much longer than its body. This is one of only three habitats where it is known to exist in Victoria.

6.2 Pyramid Hill strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to the Terrick Terrick National Park and other significant nature reserves. • Daily V/Line passenger train stopping Pyramid Hill and Dingee. • Community minded and very friendly. • It doesn’t have city prices – accommodation, golf, bowls, tennis, and swimming pool.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No big supermarkets, which allows for the personal touch. • No parking meters. • All owner operated businesses. • No empty shops. • Pyramid Hill Salt. • Craft skills. • Pyramid Fiesta. • Close to Echuca, Bendigo and Swan Hill. • Mitiamo is the gateway to the Terrick Terrick National Park • Mount Terrick Terrick (Mitiamo Rock). • Bennett's and Regals Rock one of the largest outcrops of granite in the Terrick Terrick National Park. • Terrick Terrick National Park picnic ground. • Mitiamo football and netball association volunteers. • Mitiamo Country Fire Authority volunteers.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were key stakeholders from Pyramid Hill absent from the marketing workshop. • Aboriginal Cultural heritage – district is with Barup Barup not Dja Dja Wurrung so additional organisation to coordinate any trails and information. • Distance between towns. • Communications is unreliable. • Limited food offerings. • Fewer volunteers. • Focus too much on our history. • No lake. • Presentation of town, e.g. shade trees. • Need a sign /map in the town for people who visit, showing them our walking trails. Only walking trail sign/map is at the Hill. • Limited maintenance of tracks. • No one organisation takes responsibility for Pyramid Hill websites which allows for the content to become out dated. • Mitiamo has no tourism signs from Mitiamo to the Terrick Terrick National Park.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing the landscape with stopping points with picnic tables for those to stop and enjoy the farmland and take photographs. • Creating experiences with the train, e.g. train, bike and local produce hampers. • Farm houses – create farm stays. • Adventure camping. • Dingee silos to be painted similar to Brim. • Create an activity with scarecrows. • Food van – consider whether food vans could be developed that promote local produce from Loddon Valley. • Attracting photographers. • Collaboration with Pyramid Hill Salt. • Promote Pyramid Hill and surrounds to birdwatching, astronomers or rock climbing groups. • Collaboration – familiarisation tours to other areas and information centres. • Education – students may be able to develop YouTube videos of local stories.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract more buses with guided tours. • Collaboration with Fiesta. • Encourage Pyramid Hill Salt to be involved with marketing and promotions of Pyramid Hill and surrounds. • Attracting sports event – e.g. cycling. • Old Neighbourhood House building – possible shop or self-contained accommodation. • Nowhere in Pyramid to showcase the local craft.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate. • Resources. • Competition from other regions. • Changing consumption patterns. • Low cost flights and holiday packages. • New technologies and innovations in tourism. • Limited volunteers. • Ageing population.

7 BOORT (DURHAM OX) PRODUCTS ASSETS AND EXPERIENCES

Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surrounded by significant State Parks and reserves. • Little Lake Boort. • Big Lake Boort. • Leaghur State Park – largest and healthiest Black Box Forest in Victoria. Black Box – this is the best habitat tree as it contains many hollows for fauna. Many trees are 1,000 years old. Approximately 400 plant species. • Wetlands – Boort Wetlands are amongst some of the pristine wetlands in Northern Victoria, containing high numbers of migratory and wetland birds. Less common birds seen are Sea-eagles, Pectoral Sandpipers and Ruff. • Flora and fauna – unique and endangered animals, birds and plants in the region. • Landscape – skies, sunsets and sunrise. • Boort Lookout – where the Yung Balug Clan sent their smoke signals from. “Boort” means “Smoke From the Hill”. • Boort Hill with views and history. • Durham Ox - Serpentine Creek Canoe Trail. Bird watching, camping and fishing. • Oasis – Little Lake Boort, Irrigated lawns throughout the year, plenty of shade, BBQs and toilets.
Aboriginal cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Lake Boort. • Big Lake Boort. • Lake Lyndger. • Lake Yando. • Leaghur State Park. • Woolshed Swamp. • Aboriginal Tours with experienced guides. • Creation story south of Boort - Buckrabanyule - rainbow serpent.

Built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the oldest structures in the Shire is the weir built in Big Lake Boort 1844. • Victoria Street old wooden building started as a Saddler and Harness Shop 1880. • The National Bank built 1880. • Courthouse Museum built 1890.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.7km walking/cycle track around Little Lake Boort that includes the sculpture trail. • Water sports on Little Lake Boort. • Canoeing on Lake Boort, Little Lake Boort and Serpentine Creek. • Bird watching (over 200 species). All wetlands wet or dry have high numbers of birds. • Eco tourism. • Boort Hill Look Out. • Spanner Man – who makes large sculptures out of spanners which tourists can visit. • Photography. • Child friendly. • Fishing. • Golf. • Bowls. • Swimming.
Food and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simply Tomatoes. • Aussie Wool Quilts. • Salute Olives – organic certified, naturally fermented, handpicked. • Pasta sauce produced on farm at Boort from red tomatoes. • Boundary Bend Olives – over a million trees.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caravan park on shores of Little Lake Boort. • Banyandah Retreat – self-contained close to Little Lake Boort. • Railway Hotel – rooms with shared bathrooms. • Commercial Hotel – rooms with shared bathrooms. • Simply Tomatoes – RV Friendly Destination. • RV friendly campsite at the Boort Show Grounds.
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Kerr's aboriginal photographs – 31 photographs in Boort Museum. • Historic merry – go – round purchased in the 1960s in Nolen's Park.
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caravan park on shores of Little Lake Boort. • Lake Boort – scar trees. • Little Lake Boort close to town – facilities in town. • Photography of John Kerr's in State Library of Victoria of aboriginals take in Boort. • Paul Haw's Vietnam photographs. • Walking track around Little Lake Boort. • The Granites (Mt Egbert) magnificent rock formations. • Boort – Olive Capital of Australia. • Godfrey Street businesses – cafes, supermarket, gift shops • Hospital. • Swimming pool.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On farm tourist attractions – Salute Oliva, Simply Tomatoes, Aussie Wool Quilts and Spanner Man.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet and relaxing. • Not on highway. • Child safe. • RV friendly site. • Locals and operators willing to share knowledge of the region.
Audit of websites and Facebook pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.boort.com.au • Facebook – Boort connection.

7.1 Boort points of difference

- A gathering place for thousands of years, this beautiful town, perched on the shores of Little Lake Boort (the largest permanent waterhole in the north of Victoria) is an oasis surrounded by enormous lakes and wetlands.
- It is by this oasis that you will discover one of Australia's most significant aboriginal cultural landscapes, the Boort Scarred Trees, and in its environs, exceptional food producers such as Salute Oliva and Simply Tomatoes, producers such as Aussie Wool Quilts and the famous Spanner Man.
- This is the place to set up camp or park your van by the lake, all within an easy walk of town.

7.2 Boort strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to nature and activities to town. • Area of high ecological value. • Aboriginal cultural heritage still exists. • Farmers diversifying into tourism. • Traditionally Boort was a meeting place for different Aboriginal communities. A place of exchange. Collegial and friendly. • Repeat visitation. • Little Lake Boort has a water right. • Little if any rubbish. • Boort education – Victorian Certificate of Education Top 5 in state. • Durham Ox landscape has natural beauty. • Safe boating facility with regulated water level. • Boort “The Biggin Hill airport” suitable grass runway. • Very low crime rate, vandalism and graffiti. • Strong community infrastructure – hospital, doctors, bank, pharmacy, school, swimming pool, sporting clubs, vet, supermarket, hardware, newsagency, post office, and service station. • Opportunity shop – best one going around – and the most wonderful, pleasant, friendly volunteers. • Friendly town and friendly volunteers.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion between the two lakes – “Little Lake Boort and Lake Boort”. • Limited public transport – bus on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and at the weekend. • Limited directional signage to attractions. • There is two Master Plans being established by Council (Little Lake Boort and Streetscape) which community have obtain

	<p>very little feedback on the progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Boort there is little communication between organisations which limits progress. • Perceived lack of identity for the town (community branding exercise has come to a standstill). • Durham Ox – parking, rest areas, rubbish control and no toilet facilities. • Unregulated roadside camping at Durham Ox. • In Boort no access to meals/food after 8pm. • Unregulated camping in Boort showgrounds. • Lack of activities for visiting children/teenagers. • Lack of quality accommodation. • Working in isolation, as a newcomer it is evident that there is a lot of innovation and planning by various individuals and groups, however some do not work together and pool resources. • Losing visitors to other regions because of the lack of accommodation, or the lack of central coordination. • Lack of centralisation for tourist planning e.g. visitors have to coordinate their own visitations to individual attractions.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Lake Boort for culture tours. • Aboriginal cultural heritage – creation of extensive walkways and promotion of the area as key Aboriginal site in Victoria/Australia. • Eco tourism expansion. • Provide toilets at Durham Ox for canoe trail. • Learning and education e.g. learning farming, food, craft and ecology and aboriginal cultural heritage. • Bike exchange. • Streetscape and retail design. • More tourist buses. • Dining on lake – pop up restaurant. Food trucks with local produce and native foods. • Floating restaurant café on Little Lake Boort. • Larger boat to cater for school tours on Little and Big Lake Boort. • Connect Lake Mungo with Boort. • School camps (particularly during quieter months). • Raise awareness to clan – Yung Balug. • Signage Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Signs on major roads to define the boundaries of traditional owner groups. • Durham Ox – create as a designated spot for camping with facilities. • Connect Lake Mungo with Boort. • School camps (particularly during quieter months). • Raise awareness to clan – Yung Balug. • Signage Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Signs on major roads to define the boundaries of traditional owner groups.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durham Ox – create as a designated spot for camping with facilities. • Boort the olive oil capital. • Consider structured tours and packages. • Consider “keeping place” for artefacts presently stored in the district as well as Vietnam photos. • Centralised accommodation booking centre for not only the caravan park, but all other accommodation options. • Events on Little Lake Boort. • Create/relocate the tourism information centre from Boort Emporium to the caravan park. The caravan park is currently opened from 8am to 8pm (and beyond), and have all services from one location, accommodation and tour bookings.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate – drought and floods. • Too many organisations not communicating with each other. • Competition from surrounding areas. • New technologies and innovations in tourism. • Limited volunteers. • Ageing population.

8 BRIDGEWATER (SERPENTINE) PRODUCTS ASSETS AND EXPERIENCES

Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loddon River. • Waterhole (natural infinity pool). • Unique and endangered animals, birds and plants in region e.g. platypus, water rats, goannas (two types) birds. • Murray cod and red fin. • Serpentine. • Loddon River at Serpentine.
Aboriginal cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal heritage (fish traps, grinding stone behind the Laucke Flour Mill). • Kooyoora State Park. • Serpentine – Pon Pon reserve.
Built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture. • Old Mill – Laucke Flour Mill – 100 years. • Bridgewater Bakery was originally a hotel. • Railway Station building. • Serpentine East Loddon Woolshed built 1871.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skiing. • Canoe. • Swimming. • Camping. • Fishing. • Walking. • Rock hopping. • Market. • Golf. • Bowls.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tennis.
Food and sustainable living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laucke Flour (producing for artisan bakers in Melbourne). • Bridgewater Bakery. • Waterwheel Winery. • Bridgewater Hotel. • Growing tomatoes in a hot house. • Honey. • Eggs. • Sheep/cattle, grain (finest bread making flour in the world). • Serpentine watermelons and pumpkins. • Church op shop.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridgewater Public Caravan Park on the Loddon River. • Bridgewater motel. • RV friendly at recreation reserve – free. • Graylee – self-contained. • Parklands Retreat – farm stay self-contained.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Ski Masters. • Bridgewater Triathlon. • Bridgewater Mother’s Day Classic.
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loddon River historic swimming hole. • Hotel by the river. • Bridgewater Public Caravan Park by the river. • Solar farm. • Old railway line. • Serpentine Road House. • Serpentine Hotel. • Main street businesses in Bridgewater (for example bakery, mechanic, post office). • Farming.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mulwarrie Studio. • Berets – home crafted and available on internet.
Audit of websites and facebook pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.bridgewateronloddon.com.au
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serpentine was chosen as the starting point of Australia`s first official air race.

8.1 Bridgewater points of difference

- This gold rush era village sits beside one of the longest and widest rivers in Victoria.
- Within 2 hours of Melbourne, this is your entry to a natural and historic wonderland where you can discover overlooked towns, ancient granite outcrops with views to the horizon, and roads that lead to vast wilderness areas, home to rare and endangered animals, birds and plants.
- Stop at Bridgewater and take a dip in a natural infinity pool, surrounded by trees and rocks, just metres from town. With a view of the historic Laucke flour mill, you might picnic by the river, enjoying breads and pastries produced using what is considered to be the finest flour in the world – and made right here in Bridgewater.

- **Additional statements:**

- Mark Laucke “I grew up in Barossa Valley. We knew it as paradise. When I came to Bridgewater I discovered that this was the true paradise.”
- Mark Laucke “Every morning I see a platypus swimming in the river just by the bridge.”

8.2 Bridgewater strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close proximity to Melbourne and Bendigo. • Close proximity to nature, and nature to town. • Micro-climate. • Employment. • Skiing destination. • Drive through town. • Laucke Flour Mill and Bridgewater Bakery – world’s finest bread making flour.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited accommodation. • Absentee landowners. • Maintenance of pathways. • No taxi service – can’t drink and drive. • Parking in main street Bridgewater. • Vacant shop fronts. • Ski – September – April (not in keeping with interests of key tourist group). • Signage – entrance to town.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a canoe trail from Laanecoorie to Fernihurst which includes Bridgewater. • Establish other world skiing championships. • Establish a rowing regatta event. • A shop front selling local produce. • Working with children in education developing ideas. • Food – develop food brand for the region Loddon Valley (Similar to the Hunter Valley). • To make Bridgewater an attractive “River Town”. • To improve Bridgewater streetscape. • Bridgewater Public Caravan Park being used to its full potential.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corellas. • Climate – floods. • Empty shops. • Poor streetscape. • Not highlighted as a river town. • Competition from other river towns. • Not keeping up with changes in technology, (for example online bookings, website updates and apps). • Decline in volunteers. • Organisations not communicating with each other. • Operators/organisations not keeping up with new technologies and innovations in tourism.

9 INGLEWOOD (KINGOWER AND RHEOLA) PRODUCTS ASSETS AND EXPERIENCES

Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eucalyptus plantations. • Granite outcrops and caves. • Kooyoora State Park and Mt Korong. (In aboriginal tradition, Mt Kooyoora is a men's place and Mt Korong is a women's place). • Flat lands – can see the curve of the earth. • Here you can get closer to nature – stars on horizon, endangered birds, and animals. • Flora – Many species of rare orchid.
Aboriginal cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kooyoora State Park. • Mount Korong.
Built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture. • 100 year old grapevine. • Inglewood historic buildings with Vahland architecture.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking. • Orienteering championships. • Sleigh dog racing. • Abseiling and rock climbing. • Bike riding. • Geneology. • Horse riding. • Bird watching. • Wildflowers. • Cycling. • 4 wheel driving tours. • Botanists.
Food and sustainable Living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inglewood Aged Beef selling local produce. • New bakery making homemade Cornish pasties. • Wineries (Kingower and Rheola). • Olive oil. • Honey. • Soap making. • 6 collectible stores. • Eucalyptus oil industry. • Eucalyptus mulch for gardening. • Straw bale house construction.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inglewood Caravan Park. • Inglewood Motel. • Self-catering cabins. • Pet friendly camp Kooyoora State Park.
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectibles stores. • Kooyoora State Park – Melville Caves. • Inglewood historic buildings with Vahland architecture. • Inglewood historic blue plaque trail walk which promotes the buildings from the gold rush e.g. Tivey's House. • Inglewood Historic Town Hall. • Inglewood oldest operating fire station. • Historic Pipe Organ in St Augustines church. • Birth place of Sir Reginald Ansett.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic brick water drain through the Inglewood township.
Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kingower – Hand of Faith gold nugget. • Detecting fossicking – large nuggets that would buy you a house are still being found in the region. • Current working Gold Mine – Maxwell Mine.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inglewood Alive. • Rheola Charity Carnival. • Sled dog trials. • Cycling race. • Kooyoora Wildflower Show.
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eucalyptus Distillery Museum. • Motor Museum (open by appointment). • Miniature railway at museum – being developed. • Railway line. • Recreation reserves – fabulous playground. • Outdoor swimming pool. • Skate ramps. • Tennis courts. • Golf club. • Bowling club. • Inglewood Reservoir. • Botanical gardens. • On the edge of Inglewood State Park/Forest. • Brook Street businesses. • Hospital. • Medical facilities.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxed atmosphere. • Relaxed “yester-year” atmosphere. • Undiscovered/not commercialised - town and nature.
Audit of websites and Facebook pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website - www.inglewood.vic.au • Facebook – Inglewood.

9.1 Inglewood points of difference

- There is an element of surprise entering this town. This extraordinary and intact gold rush era village with grand buildings lining the streets sits as though untouched since the 1860s. In this seemingly overlooked town, visitors will find rows of vintage and collectible stores, stocked like finely-curated museums.
- This is the gateway to some of the oldest rock formations in Victoria. The ancient 460 million year old granite outcrops of Kooyoora State Park and Mt Korong, where visitors can wander through the boulders and capture the spectacular and unexpected views and can even detect the curve of the earth in the horizon. Untapped, untouched, untarnished, this is where visitors can touch the real Australian mallee bush and smell and touch the trees that produce the finest eucalyptus oil on the planet.
- Inglewood creates a complete sustainable lifestyle by sourcing the finest produce from the local fields – from flour, to chemical-free meats, eucalyptus oil and salt – to furnishing the home with vintage furniture and kitchenalia. The same treasures that sustained people’s lives in the 1800s still exist today.
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Notes supplied by Felton Grimwade and Bosistos

- Eucalyptus – The Inglewood and Wedderburn region in Victoria are unique as they are one of only two areas in Australia where blue mallee (eucalyptus polybractea) grow naturally. It produces the most potent medicinal oil from the hundreds of eucalypt species tested. It has very high cineole content (between 80-88%) and has a much stronger, longer lasting fragrance than other oils. The objective of a project with the University of Melbourne Botany Department is to increase the oil yield in the leaf to increase the overall amount of oil that can be extracted during distillation. This creates a ‘super tree’ to improve productivity. This high-tech agro-forestry project will help Australia to compete internationally and hopefully once again become the world’s major supplier of eucalyptus oil.

The advantages of blue mallee are:

- ability to produce a high quality pharmaceutical oil with a stronger, longer lasting fragrance
- ability to be mechanically harvested (being a mallee) which requires lower labour costs than harvesting other eucalyptus species.

The trees are mallees, so the roots remain in the ground post harvesting and regenerate, sending up new shoots. Harvesting is done every two years.

9.2 Inglewood strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close proximity to Melbourne and Bendigo. • Proximity to nature, and nature to town. • Surrounded by nature. • Intact architecture. • Eucalyptus industry – history and current production. • Bosistos eucalyptus plantation of the “Super Trees”. • Source of unique antiques and collectibles. • High quality butcher – only 1 of 2 in Australia doing dry age beef. • Major highway running through Inglewood. • Inglewood is a town people drive through. • Inglewood is a town where visitors are surprised with the historic streetscape. • Old gold mining towns (Inglewood, Kingower and Rheola) – history and relics still visible in the area. • Town hall – is an historic building, with space to hold large indoor events, e.g. music or movie nights, photography, quilting, embroidery exhibitions or baking competitions.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation (particularly for conferences). • Hospitality. • Summer and winter marketing. • Absentee landowners. • Maintenance of pathways. • No taxi service – can’t drink and drive. • Parking (particularly for large vehicles). • Vacant shop fronts. • Signage – entrance to town. • Large noisy trucks ruin the ambience/appeal of the “yester-year” feel – speed of traffic through narrow main street.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning – farms, craft, straw bale, eucalyptus, aboriginal culture and bush tucker.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic Pelican Hotel has 19 rooms but currently privately owned. • Establish ghost tours. • Night time experiences. • Further develop horse drawn carriages business near Rheola. • Inglewood Reservoir and Botanic gardens. (Potential to establish accommodation). • Inglewood, Kingower and Rheola full of history. • Light show on buildings (do something different to White Night). • Encouraging traffic to travel through Inglewood before travelling north at Bridgewater. • Collaboration with businesses internally and externally to promote Inglewood and district. • Unused silos around the district. • Open up railway line for trains. • Potential for balloon rides/sightseeing tours or tour companies. • Star gazing events. • Tour or information which talks about Maxwell Gold Mine. • Bike hire. • Open up more horse trails. • Monthly craft market or farmers market. • Sporting events, including cycling races. • Hosting Women's Institute events (flower, baking, photo, quilting and embroidery competitions). • Movie nights in town hall. • Pop up restaurants in empty shops or town hall. • Pop up galleries in empty shops. • Golf club to have more tournaments and to be open all year round (not just April to October). • Open up rail line between Bendigo and Inglewood to encourage day trips for people from Melbourne. • Identify and paint silos in Loddon Shire to create a tourist trail.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability of the town. • There are other Inglewoods in google so creates a problem for Inglewood – Victoria. • Appearance of the town. • Limited volunteers. • Limited funding to market the town. • If gold becomes scarce - gold prospectors cease to visit the area. • A bypass road around Inglewood.

10 TARNAGULLA (NEWBRIDGE, LAANECOORIE, EDDINGTON AND LOGAN) PRODUCTS, ASSETS AND EXPERIENCES

Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laanecoorie Weir. • Loddon River around Eddington, Laanecoorie and Newbridge. • Endangered flora and fauna. • Birds – Swifts Parrot. • Wildlife – Potaroo. • Wildflowers. • Most northern volcano in Victoria – Bald Hill. • Maldon Bridgewater Road – Bells Swamp. • Yabbies. • State Park in Tarnagulla has a large stand of Iron Bark trees, planted during the depression. These are between Tarnagulla and Dunolly.
Aboriginal cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal heritage – Laanecoorie area.
Built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarnagulla and surrounds gold rush architecture buildings. • Laanecoorie Bridge – Janevale Bridge, built in 1911, is the largest reinforced girder bridge designed and built by John Monash and the Reinforced Concrete & Monier Pipe Construction Co. and the largest bridge of its kind built in Victoria prior to the First World War. • The Tarnagulla Hall known as the Old Victoria Hotel and Theatre. • Tarnagulla has 6 buildings classified by the National Trust. • Other historic buildings from the gold rush are in Eddington, Laanecoorie, Newbridge, Arnold and Tarnagulla.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush walking. • Cycling. • Bike riding – Tarnagulla to Newbridge Old Tarnagulla Road. • Camping. • Fishing. • Skiing Laanecoorie. • Canoeing. • Birdwatching • Wildflowers. • Horse riding.
Food and sustainable living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olives. • Wine. • Honey from Arnold. • Pork from Murphy’s Creek Pork. • Bygum Eucalyptus oil produced at Arnold. • Newbridge General Store – local produce – homemade pies and home brew. • Vintage and collectibles stores. • September vintage – café with French delights. • Community Centre Café – Sunday 9am to 4pm.
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rostrata Country Farm Stay. • Laanecoorie Lakeside Caravan Park on the banks of the Loddon River near the Laanecoorie Weir. • Camp sites at Tarnagulla Historic Reserve, Newbridge

	Recreation Reserve and Laanecoorie Foreshore.
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intact 1850s towns – Tarnagulla, Eddington, Arnold, Newbridge, Llanelly, Waanyarra. • John Flynn's monument. • Genealogy. • Tarnagulla purpose built cricket pavilion (one of 2 in Australia). • Laanecoorie Bridge – Designed by Sir John Monash. • Cobb and Co cottages. • Historic houses. • Southern region historic streetscapes.
Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Welcome Stranger gold nugget was found at Moliagul and there is a Monument in the State Forest, 17kms from Tarnagulla.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strictly Vintage Fair – with High Tea. • Ulysses Motor Cycle Club Annual Rally.
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakeside Caravan Park Laanecoorie. • Loddon River. • Newbridge General Store. • Tarnagulla Hotel. • Tarnagulla Post Office and Mini Mart. • Logan Hotel. • Historic Victoria Theatre. • Tarnagulla Matildas Antiques and Collectables. • Eddington Septembre Vintage. • Newbridge Hotel – run by the local football team. • Newbridge – Recreation Reserve Pavilion. • Newbridge Recreation Reserve camping. • Rostrata Country Farm Stay includes machinery shed and a shed displaying the early history of Murphy's Creek and the intact separator room.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarnagulla State Forest. • Loddon River. • Laanecoorie Weir.
Audit of websites and Facebook pages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.tarnagulla.com.au

10.1 Tarnagulla points of difference

- Tarnagulla and district is central to some of best of man-made and nature's offerings – and the closest and most accessible points to these treasures from Melbourne.
- From the pristine rivers and lakes of the Loddon River and Laanecoorie Weir, to the Aboriginal culture evident in the scarred trees that line the roads, to the intact gold rush era villages that have been left in much the same way as when the miners departed.
- With thousands of years of layers of earth and history, much remains, including the richest concentration of alluvial gold in the world.

10.2 Tarnagulla (Newbridge, Laanecoorie, Eddington and Logan) strengths, weakness opportunities and threats

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to Melbourne, Bendigo and Maldon. • Central to key areas – nature, river, weir, villages, granite outcrops. • Intact history.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goldfields – centre of the Golden Triangle – gold detecting. • One of the main routes to Adelaide from East of Melbourne. • Proximity to food trails. • Ravenswood Crossing makes it easier to reach Tarnagulla Newbridge and surrounds. • Blue wrens and many other species of birds that pertain to this area. • Rheola Charity Easter Carnival that has been operating for 150 years. • Mt Moliagul. • Tarnagulla historic recreation reserve. • Tarnagulla historic blue plaque walking trail. • Historic villages – all close together. • Newbridge built on the banks of the Loddon River. • Newbridge Hotel. • Newbridge General Store. • Newbridge campground on the Loddon River. • Newbridge Recreation Reserve facility including shower and accessible toilet for camping. • Historic buildings. • Laanecoorie Weir providing swimming, canoeing, fishing, water skiing. • Laanecoorie Caravan Park. • Laanecoorie campground. • Eddington Septembre Vintage. • Friendly, natural, down to earth people. • Tarnagulla, untouched main street. • State forest. • Waanyarra Cemetery and other cemeteries. • Volunteers. • Waanyarra Morton’s Hotel (Waanyarra township). • Rostrata Country Farm Stay. • Tarnagulla has buildings listed on the Heritage Register.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited quality accommodation. • Community silos. • Lack of communication between organisations. • Phone coverage (people have to stop and get directions). • Reliability of services including internet in southern region. • Limited public transport. • Website confusion with the town name Newbridge with Newbridge Wallan which is a housing developer. • Limited volunteer resources. • Limited access to fresh produce. • Supplies of food – has to be delivered and no good local produce delivery services. • Limited hospitality. • Limited tour guides to share Tarnagulla and surrounds history. • Canoeing (Laanecoorie to Fernihurst). For this to take place there would need to be a lot of fallen trees removed from the river. • Very limited eateries. • Lack of understanding in the community of the value that

	<p>tourism plays and the role that many businesses actually play in the industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People working in isolation rather than collaborating. • Local culture is for a quiet life, many see no need for economic development. • Businesses need to define their open hours. • Lack of signage at Marong, Llanelly as well as other places. • Limited choice of accommodation. • No petrol. • Limited opening hours for the Tarnagulla Community Centre. • Cannot hire the Tarnagulla Community Centre.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loddon River. • Close proximity of historic towns. • Develop bike trail between the towns (riders pick up hampers with local food produce). • Develop more walking cycling trails between the towns. • Consider multi day multi activity trips including canoeing. • Removing powerlines in Commercial Road Tarnagulla. • Promoting from Maldon. • Farm house accommodation. • Promoting the southern region to Bendigo residents. • Establish a winery tour. • Promote southern region to niche groups e.g. Vintage motorbikes (Llanelly), sprint cars Eddington, other vintage clubs. • Tarnagulla Community Centre to be open each day. • Open the Historic Tarnagulla Hall and obtain a gold coin donation. • Develop an app to include trail maps with accommodation, food and historic places. • Increase High Teas numbers with Strictly Vintage Fair event. • Tarnagulla filming e.g. commercials, photo shoots. • Southern region streetscape upgrades. • Luxury camping in this area (glamping). • Vintage trail: Eddington, Tarnagulla and Inglewood. • Open Tarnagulla Caravan Park. • Establish ghost tour. • Attract more tourism operators to the area. • To be able to hire the Tarnagulla Community Centre. • Golden Triangle aspect very under-utilised. The centre of the richest gold nugget belt in the world. Gold has magical attraction for tourists from all over the world.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of public liability insurance – for market stall holders. • Dry conditions make the countryside unattractive. • Too many organisations not communicating with each other. • Competition from other regions. • Limited volunteers. • Cannot attracting new volunteers to committees. • Ageing population.

11 WEDDERBURN (KORONG VALE AND WYCHITELLA) PRODUCTS, ASSETS AND EXPERIENCES

Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt Korong. • Kooyoora State Park. • Mt Egbert (Granites). • Wedderburn Historic Skinner Reserve. • Hard Hill Tourist Reserve. • Flora and fauna. • Goannas – tree and sand. • Korong Vale historic railway town. • Korong Vale reservoir. • Natural bushland around Wedderburn, Wychitella and Korong Vale.
Aboriginal cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt Egbert (Granites). • Mt Korong.
Built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture of buildings around Wedderburn. • Wide promenades. • Jacka Park. • Hard Hill Tourist Reserve. • Donaldson Park. • Engine Park.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush walking. • Gold detecting. • Camping RV Friendly site Hard Hill Tourist Reserve. • Harness racing. • Bird watching. • Photography. • Cycling. • Wildflowers. • Canoeing. • Winter golf. • Summer bowls. • Fishing. • Yabbying. • Swimming. • Tennis.
Food and sustainable living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 Karat Café. • Wood carving bowls. • Candle making. • Local craft. • Eucalyptus oil. • Land owners with self – sustainable solar systems. • Steel's Butcher Award winning Strassburg using old traditional methods. • Korong Vale Hotel (Asian food).
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KurracaBurn Heights (originally Korong Bush Nursing Hospital). • Wedderburn motel. • Wedderburn Pioneer Caravan Park.
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albert Jacka – Australia's First VC Winner. • Historic mine at Hard Hill Tourist Reserve.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic houses – Nancy Stokes cottage and Butterick House from the gold rush. • Historic steam engines stored at Wedderburn Engine Park. • Historic Korong Vale petrol station. • Korong Vale old railway town. • Reservoir at Korong Vale was the biggest for steam trains in Victoria. • Historic walk of Wedderburn and Korong Vale. • Historic Wychitella hotel. • Historic cemeteries Wedderburn, Korong Vale and Wychitella.
Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wedderburn alluvial gold. • Gold detecting – plenty of public land to fossick.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minelab Wedderburn Detector Jamboree. • Community Christmas Tree Festival. • Wine tasting event. • Wedderburn Historic Engine Rally. • Dart events. • Wedderburn Community House events – market, open gardens, spring dance and Taste of Loddon monthly dinner evenings.
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach House Gallery and Museum. • Eucalyptus Stew Pot. • Hard Hill Tourist Reserve. • Facilities – supermarket, hotel, chemist and eateries. • Loddon Visitor Information Centre. • Swimming pool. • Sporting facilities. • Lions Club. • Wedderburn Community Centre. • Committees in Wedderburn, Tourism, Community House and Development and Association. • The townships of Wedderburn, Korong Vale and Wychitella surrounded by natural bushland. • Doctor's facility and service. • Volunteers.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peaceful. • Friendly. • The smell of the natural bush. • Quiet roads.
Audit of websites and Facebook pages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website – www.wedderburn.vic.au • Facebook – Wedderburn.
Characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robbie Collins.

11.1 Wedderburn points of difference

- Once a large gold rush era town, today the historic buildings and homes of Wedderburn remain.
- Surrounded by mallee bush, the town is central to a world of adventures and finds.

- Here find treasures not to be found elsewhere – from the old eucalyptus cutters who distil oil in the traditional method using an old bush still, to an old general store, with all its contents still remaining on its shelves from the 1850s, just as the owner left them.
- Perhaps visitors might want to try their luck fossicking and get lucky in the richest alluvial goldfields in the world, or move into the bush looking for things rarer still.

11.2 Wedderburn strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit to Mildura. • Wedderburn travellers rest. • Resourceful – volunteers. • Open space, serenity. • Friendly, accommodating locals. • Wedderburn has more open spaces than a popular location like St Kilda. • Good climate. • History. • Natural environment. • Wedderburn is an intact township. • Good café in town.
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from many other areas. • Volunteers are stretched. • Quality accommodation. • Unpainted shop fronts in the main street. • Engagement – businesses not engaging with community groups. • Quality hospitality. • Large amount of unsightly premises. • Better signage in town. • Lack of communication between committees. • Limited food choices. • Food outlets close at 8pm or 8.30pm. • Empty shop fronts.
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To open the miners tunnel at Hard Hill Tourist Reserve. • Develop an award winning cake. • Steam engines that are at engine park to be placed on display. • National Yamaha event. • Private motor cycle rally. • Engaging with young people. • Attracting new volunteers. • Motor bike riding. • Collaborative advertising and marketing with other towns. • Upgrade the Wedderburn Pioneer Caravan Park. • Develop walking tours for Wedderburn. • Attract new business to empty shops. • Paint main street shop fronts and clean up premises around the town.
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from Melbourne. • Extremes of summer and winter weather. • Maintenance on main street buildings. • Attracting and sustaining new business.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ageing population. • Limited volunteers. • Too many organisations not communicating to each other. • Competition with other areas. • Groups and businesses not keeping up with new technologies and innovations in tourism. • Attracting new volunteers.
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12 TARGET MARKETS

Loddon Valley's target market (the Lifestyle Leader) is in line with that identified by Visit Victoria. The independent travellers who wish to explore and discover something new.

12.1 Lifestyle leaders

- Inspired by nature
 - Driven by getting back in touch with nature and real, tangible, experiential activities.
- Enriched wellbeing
 - Driven by indulging their passions, appreciation for learning, heritage, arts and nature.
- Creative opinion leaders
 - Driven by creativity, inventiveness and an appreciation for artistic interpretation.
 - They want to find creative gems, discover new galleries and explore.
- Food and wine lifestyle
 - Motivated by enjoyment, sociability, authenticity and understanding of food and wine experiences.
 - They want a diverse choice of wineries and cellar doors, beautiful places to experience fine food and wine in well-known and chef hatted restaurants.
- Free independent traveller (car) and where possible train/bus. Not users of Visitor Centres.
- Those travelling to Bendigo for major art exhibitions or event, who may be interested in multiple days in the region.
- Re-visitation of visitors.
- Locals and visiting friends and relatives (VFR).

Note: Creatives and influencers are moving to regional areas within 1 to 1.5 hours from Melbourne. This group of influencers will be looking for activities and will be looking after friends.

13 STRATEGIC MARKETING ACTIVITIES

The following plan recommends that key fundamentals are established within the first year of activity. The second and third year of the plan would involve undertaking more dedicated campaigns, and developing key new products and events.

This includes:

Summary:

- **Engagement** – encourage the greatest number of stakeholders to participate in defining the brand and key points of difference for the region, as well as the development and execution of the plan more specifically.
- **Products and experiences** – identifying and agree key products, experiences and key areas for development, particularly those that address key weaknesses such as accommodation. Consider new signature products and experiences as well as events based on the strengths of the region that will help leverage the region.
- **Point of difference** – Agree POD to inform all promotional campaigns.
- **Themes** – consider working with themes to promote the key strengths of the region.
- **Communication:** incorporate POD and key messages into all communications (formal and informal).
- **Imagery** - Use of evocative imagery that expresses the POD.
- **Promotional avenues:**
 - Websites.
 - Social media.
 - Advertising.
 - Collaboration.
- **Key success factors** – consider critical success factors to inform work.

These are addressed in recommendations and actions to be undertaken over a two year period.

14 ESTABLISHING THE FOUNDATIONS

14.1 Engagement

The necessity of engagement in the process was noted by participants, and the need to engage the wider population was discussed to ensure all have the same understanding.

One participant commented we need to sell the POD to those in the Shire first prior to trying to sell outside the region. A strong, cohesive and widely held agreement on the brand, POD and way forward would cement the success of any plans.

Given the success of the process, further meetings and workshops were suggested that include a broad cross section of government, industry and residents to share the POD for the region and explore opportunities. This process would also foster stronger social bonding, break down silos, ensure that work across the Shire's departments are consistent and supporting one another, increase resourcefulness, collaboration and ideas. Several actions are recommended to increase engagement.

Engagement strategy:

- Action 1:** Invite a wider cross section of government, industry and residents to future workshops to introduce the plan and explore product development and collaboration.
- Action 2:** Encourage ongoing and regular engagement (e.g. six monthly professional development and collaboration workshops).

Additional suggestions from the community for ongoing engagement:

- Have regular show and tells for operators and tourism committees.
- Different businesses host social events where there is a regular sharing of ideas.

14.2 Points of difference

The POD is the key foundation for all undertakings. The success of the plan will be dependent upon these POD being incorporated into all communications, as well as informing future activities and events. Further research and refinement is recommended to continue to answer the question: Who are we and what unique products, assets and experiences does the region have to offer?

Action 1: Become familiar with key products, experiences, POD and key messages for the region and towns.

Action 2: Incorporate POD into websites, social media as well as share informally in conversation with those in the region, as well as visitors.

Action 3: Undertake additional research to further define point of difference.

14.3 Themes

A number of products, points of difference and themes became apparent across the Shire during the research and workshops. These have been grouped into clusters that reinforce the POD and can be used to inform product development, promotional, advertising and publicity campaigns, as well as many other activities. These groupings and themes may also help to inform infrastructure and investment.

Action 1: Develop and use themes to inform campaigns and product development

Products – points of difference – themes	Overall themes across towns	Considerations for campaigns
Where time has stood still. Time capsule	Nature - where endangered species, plants and animals still exist. Intact gold rush era villages A village – e.g. Tarnagulla – little has changed since the departure of miners. Frozen in time. Aboriginal cultural heritage. Museum Wedderburn. Museum Pyramid Hill. Museum Mitiamo.	Endangered and rare creatures map. Web map showing gold rush era towns that remain intact and untouched.
Found nowhere else	Scar trees and Kow Swamp. Eucalyptus stew pot. Home of the eucalyptus “Super Trees”. Wedderburn museum. Endangered flora and fauna (list). Pub beside the river.	A promotion in relevant publication that reaches the target audience.
Closer to nature	See the curve of the earth. Spectacular sunrises and sunsets. See the stars down to the horizon. Rare and endangered flora and fauna that still exists in this pristine pocket of the world.	Consider events that may highlight and celebrate these experiences.

Products – points of difference – themes	Overall themes across towns	Considerations for campaigns
Water ways	Loddon River. Big Lake Boort. Little Lake Boort. Wetlands. Bridgewater swimming hole.	Consider multi day trips on canoe or via walking trails.
Granite outcrops	Kooyoora State Park. Mt Korong. Pyramid Hill. Mt Hope. Terrick Terrick National Park. Mt Egbert. Mt Buckrabunyule.	Each have Aboriginal cultural heritage. Consider linkages that could connect some of the outcrops to create a multiday circuit.
Aboriginal heritage	Boort scarred trees and heritage. Lake Lyndger. Lake Yando. Pyramid Hill. Mt Hope. Terrick Terrick National Park. Kow Swamp. Kooyoora. Laanecoorie. Mt Egbert.	Some of the most significant cultural landscapes in the state. Consider referring to as Land of the Scarred Trees.
Walking tracks	Pyramid Hill. Boort. Inglewood. Serpentine. Pyramid Hill. Wedderburn. Tarnagulla. Laanecoorie. Kooyoora State Park. Terrick Terrick National Park.	Promote the Loddon walking or cycling trails that can be considered for multiple day rides.
Water sports	Boort. Bridgewater. Laanecoorie.	Promote the water sports to “Inspired by Nature” target audience.
Caravan parks by lakes	Laanecoorie. Bridgewater. Boort.	Promote Loddon Valley caravan parks beside wetlands or river to inspire by nature target audience.
RV friendly camp sites	Bridgewater. Boort. Wedderburn. Pyramid Hill.	Promote to the recreational friendly target audience.
Camping Recreation reserves	Boort. Laanecoorie. Tarnagulla. Bridgewater. Newbridge.	Campaign on campsites within Loddon Valley promoting the natural assets and surroundings.
Gold	Southern part of the Shire. Tarnagulla. Wedderburn.	Link with Central Goldfields Shire for detecting stories.

Products – points of difference – themes	Overall themes across towns	Considerations for campaigns
	Inglewood. Bridgewater. Rheola. Kingower. Moliagul.	
Learning and exchange	Aboriginal history and relationship, with new settlers. Farming. Eucalyptus. Strawbale housing. Crafts. Candle making.	Campaigns around meeting the maker of products.
Birdwatching	Terrick Terrick National Park. Kooyoora State Park. Boort wetlands. Tarnagulla State Forest. Leaghur State Park. Mt Korong. Wychitella Flora and Fauna Reserve.	Develop a tour with a notable bird experts from Birdlife Australia or Sean Dooley and Prof Gisela Wilcox, notable bird experts.
Photography	All over Loddon Shire – specific interests of photographers. Korong Vale. Boort. Inglewood. Serpentine. Pyramid Hill. Wedderburn. Tarnagulla. Laanecoorie. Kooyoora State Park. Terrick Terrick National Park.	Autumn weekend (during the golden light). Dusk and dawn events. Develop photographic themes – landscape, architecture, characters and food.
Fishing	Serpentine. Newbridge. Bridgewater. Laanecoorie.	Promote through Fishing Victoria. Promote through angling clubs.
People	Characters.	Consider characters in the region for publicity.
Food and sustainability	Eucalyptus oil. Flour. Salt. Honey. Tomatoes. Olives. Apples. Meats Solar farm. Wool. Vintage and collectible shops.	Promotion, Meet the Maker. Consider branded blackboard signs that promote local produce at the farm gate.

14.4 Product development

The region has many products, assets and experiences that are as yet underdeveloped or present significant opportunities for tourism. Whilst some key activities are recommended in this plan, it was raised during the workshops that further product development could benefit the region enormously, leveraging the region's strengths and addressing key weaknesses, and gaining consensus across the region to the key areas needing investigation and investment.

Strategically it is recommended too, that investment is given to developing signature products and events that will have significant leverage and interest across Victoria and Australia. This plan works with the theory of working smarter rather than harder, focusing efforts and investments into products and experiences that will reap the greatest rewards. Working with this plan will also help to put Loddon Valley on the map, and have a compounding effect by encouraging greater and increasing interest from media, government and investors.

Action 1: Develop signature products in keeping with POD of the region, and target market audience.

Hold a workshop to brainstorm product development ideas (e.g. Farm House accommodation). Prioritise key activities and seek potential funding.

Action 2: Conduct a workshop to explore collaborations across the Shire. Prioritise key activities and seek potential funding where relevant.

Action 3: Conduct gap analysis to ascertain possibility of multi day activities. Create multi-day tracks considering themes such as ecological, landscape (granite outcrops), history, aboriginal heritage and other for:

- Walking.
- Canoeing (Laanecoorie to Fernihurst).
- Bike riding.
- Combinations of the above.

This will respond strongly to the POD and strengths of the region, and speak directly to the target audience. This will also encourage visitors to visit the region as there are clear reasons to stay for several days, particularly as Loddon Valley is further than 2 hours from Melbourne.

Action 4: Create themed maps/guides to share the secrets of the region based on POD and existing experiences and products. Consider promotional channels to share this information including Visitor Guide, website and social media.

- Activities – e.g. walking, bike, canoe.
- Architecture or deserted towns.
- Nature – rare and endangered plants and animals.
- Waterways.
- Experiences – sunsets and night skies.
- Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Gold.
- Granite outcrops.
- Caravan route.
- Photographic routes.
- Food trail (could be signs that are distributed for home grown).
- Old railways towns route.
- Sustainable living.
- Antiques and collectibles.
- Product never seen before.

15 PROMOTION – COMMUNICATING BRAND AND POINTS OF DIFFERENCE

The plan has considered the key points of difference for the region, as well as products and experiences that might be promoted. Various phrases have been suggested that can be adapted when communicating these. As was discussed during the workshops, word of mouth is the most powerful form of promotion, and articulating the POD and experiences will help to spread the word formally and informally. A general approach is outlined below:

15.1 Key messages and language

Refer to POD statements as well as new Loddon Official Visitor Guide for phrasing and incorporate into all communications including website, brochures and social media. Also use these POD informally, in conversations with businesses/organisations in the Shire as well as with visitors.

Focus on experiences and words that are active and express the points of difference such as:

- Discover, Explore, Unearth, Uncover.
- Relax, Escape, Revive.
- Openness, Connect.
- Untarnished, Untouched, Preserved.

15.2 Third party endorsement

This is the essence of word of mouth. One of the key ways we can undertake this is by talking about one another's businesses – endorsing one another, each other's towns, businesses, and experiences.

Action 1 Refer to Visitor Guide and POD statements for suggested phrasing. Incorporate POD and language into websites and social media. Share informally in conversation with those in the region, as well as visitors. Promote other areas, businesses and experiences in Loddon Valley towns, and region.

15.3 Images

During the workshops the importance and power of evocative imagery was reinforced. A number of initiatives were recommended to increase the use of quality images:

Action 1: Establish a shared Dropbox of images reflecting key POD and experiences for this region and towns. Consider an image style for branding e.g. panoramic images to express wide open landscape and views.

Other suggestions arisen during the workshop included:

- Images that show key experiences and express the POD.
- As the region is about people, suggest images that focus on characters that tell a story – e.g. for flour, show someone clapping their hands with flour puffing into the air.
- Consider video or images that share secret stories.

15.4 Websites and digital

Websites and social media are the key ways that travellers and tourists gather information and the area most critically in need of investment in the Shire. It is strongly suggested that investment is allocated to this area prior to any other promotional work being undertaken.

Action 1: List current relevant websites managed by community groups.
Create an effective website for Loddon Valley.
Conduct a web workshop, and consider ways to improve ongoing management.
Consider cross platform promotion between operators and Council.
Consider app to deliver key information and itineraries.

15.5 Social media

Action 1: Develop a social media strategy for Loddon Valley.
Conduct a professional development social media workshop.

15.6 Collaboration

One of the most powerful and effective strategies within a campaign is cross promotion and collaboration. It could be as simple as boutique food producers joining together in a sign posted promoted trail, as well as joining into promotional food events in Melbourne. The following strategies are recommended:

Action 1: Talk about the POD for the region and of other towns and businesses in the region. Refer to these businesses on social media.
Link other like businesses to relevant websites.

As many operators and businesses in the region have similar interests and markets, it is recommended that a workshop is conducted to brainstorm possible mutually beneficial collaborations. This will also help to harness the power ideas, of cross promotion and sharing resources across the shire, e.g. Laucke Flour to be used in Loddon Valley local bakeries and cafes and available in retail shops across the Shire.

Action 2: A workshop to explore collaboration and cross promotion across the Shire.

15.7 Databases

Action 1: Develop databases for key groups including Australian coach companies and travel operators.

16 PROMOTIONS

Key campaigns – Year 1

Several campaigns are recommended for the first year where the product or experience is ready for market. It is strongly recommended that one key website is developed prior to any campaigns being undertaken.

16.1 Deserted/intact gold rush era towns

Itineraries:

- Create itineraries promoting activities within these themes: bike riding, gold detecting and photography.

Develop campaign: Promotion – Visit Victoria, Bicycle Victoria and National Trust

- Publicity.
- Advertising.
- Familiarisation tour.
- Events.

Promotion: Publicity

- Advertising campaign.
- Concentrating on gold rush era towns.
- Websites.
- Social media.

Familiarisation Tours

- For media.
- Invite well known landscape photographers (including overseas photographers) to the region on a familiarisation tour.
- Invite prominent instagrammers.
- Establish a social media campaign.

Events:

- Develop one large event to promote this POD. (a major sponsor e.g. Minelab.
- Smaller events can be promoted such as 'Back to Tarnagulla' events.

16.2 Natural environment, food and sustainability

Itineraries:

- Create itineraries promoting activities on Loddon Valley natural assets. e.g. photography, camping, canoeing, bike riding, walking or swimming.
- Create itineraries promoting signature products.

Develop campaign: Promotion – Visit Victoria or Nature based organisations

- Publicity.
- Advertising.
- Familiarisation tour.
- Events.
- Food and sustainable lifestyle.
- Create website itinerary.
- Promote key signature products including Laucke Flour, Eucalyptus oil, olives, specialty meats, Pyramid Hill Salt, Simple Green Tomatoes, antiques and collectibles.

Promotion: Publicity

- Advertising campaign.
- Concentrating on back to nature in Loddon Valley.
- Focusing on learning skills relating to sustainability.

Familiarisation Tours

- For media.
- Invite prominent instagrammers.

16.3 Additional key strategies

While accommodation and hospitality are developed in the region, a staged promotional approach is recommended:

- Promote the undiscovered, untarnished and undeveloped nature of the region as strength – thereby preparing visitors to limited assets in this area, and attracting those who will relish this.
- Promote nature based activities where camping and caravanning are embraced.
- Promote key accommodation and hospitality destinations in the region (using website and app).
- Promote quality accommodation and hospitality in Bendigo to support adventures in the region.

16.3.1 Accommodation

Self-contained accommodation has been identified as a key weakness in the region. It is recommended a strategy is developed to increase accommodation in the area.

Until an increase of self-contained accommodation is increased in Loddon Valley, it is recommended to promote other accommodation options in the Bendigo Regional Tourism region.

16.4 Key campaigns – Year 2 and 3

Once the foundations have been established, signature products and events identified in the product development and collaboration workshops, can be promoted during year 2 and 3. This may include:

- **Natural environment** – once extended trails are established and promotions of parks and endangered species.
- **Aboriginal cultural heritage** – To develop key sites in the region that includes the Boort Scar Trees project. A campaign to be developed once funding is received for the Boort Scar Trees project.
- **Events** – continue to promote key and additional quality events.

Action 1: Develop campaigns for signature experiences, themes and key maps and guides including:

- Publicity.
- Advertising.
- Website.
- Social media.

Action 2: Once fundamentals are developed, and signature products and events are identified:

- Conduct a familiarisation tour with key industry (tourism industry, coach companies).
- Develop dedicated promotional campaigns for tourism events.

Action 3: Consider signature events that can be developed that work to the POD for the region. These events can include: music, nature, wildflowers or bird watching. Campaigns can be built around words such as *Escape* or 'found nowhere else'.

17 ACTIONS SUMMARY

Action	Notes	Responsibility	Date	Cost of project
Engagement	Conduct a meeting/workshop to facilitate collaborations and invite more widely. Use this opportunity to present the Marketing Plan. Consider social events to bring people together to discuss ideas and reduce silos. Encourage ongoing and regular engagement (e.g. six monthly professional development and collaboration workshops).	Tourism and Marketing Officer	July 2018	\$1,500
Points of difference	Read Marketing Plan to learn of POD for region and towns. Incorporate POD into all communications (formally and informally). Conduct additional research to further define point of difference.	Tourism and Marketing Officer	December 2017	In-kind
Themes	Develop and use themes to inform campaigns and product development.	Tourism and Marketing Officer	June 2018	In-kind
Product development	Continue to identify and refine key products, experiences and assets for market. Refer to Plan. Meet to brainstorm product development . Prioritise key activities and seek potential funding. Meeting to explore collaborations . Prioritise key activities and seek potential funding where relevant. Conduct GAP analysis to ascertain possibility of multiply day activities and then create multi-day tracks across region. Create themed maps and guides based on POD and themes predominantly promoted digitally and	Tourism and Marketing Officer	December 2018	\$1,500

Action	Notes	Responsibility	Date	Cost of project
	through promotional campaigns.			
Key messages and language	Use language that reflects the POD and key messages Refer to Visitor Guide and POD statements for suggested phrasing. Cross promote other areas, businesses and experiences in their town, and region.	Tourism and Marketing Officer	December 2017	In-kind
Images	Create a shared Dropbox – for the region and for each town. Video consideration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tourism and Marketing Officer •Local operators •Community 	December 2017	In-kind
Website	List current relevant websites (quick audit) Consider web strategy to consolidate or link information on different towns, organisations and businesses. Create effective website for the Shire Consider ways for organisations to cross promote across platforms. Consider app to deliver key information and itineraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Bendigo Regional Tourism •Tourism and Marketing Officer 	December 2018	Bendigo Regional Tourism is funding the new Loddon Shire tourism website
Social media	Develop a social media strategy for Loddon Valley. Conduct a professional development social media workshop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tourism and Marketing Officer •Bendigo Regional Tourism 	June 2019	\$1000 Bendigo Regional Tourism provides funding for social media
Publicity	Undertake a publicity strategy to highlight the key POD of the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tourism and Marketing Officer •Bendigo Regional Tourism 	June 2018	\$1,000
Collaboration and cross promotion	Promote other businesses, towns and experiences. Conduct workshop to explore collaboration and cross promotion across the Shire.	Tourism and Marketing Officer	December 2017	In-kind

Action	Notes	Responsibility	Date	Cost of project
Database	Create a database with key information on tour operators or coach companies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tourism and Marketing Officer •Loddon Visitor Information Centre staff 	December 2017 ongoing	In-kind
Promotions	Create themed maps and key products and experiences of the region. Develop campaign for signature experiences and key 'maps' and promote/publish in Visitor Guides, websites and social media, advertising and other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tourism and Marketing Officer •Bendigo Regional Tourism 	June 2020	\$2000 Some of the themed itineraries to be funded by BRT
Responsibility	Audit on township websites and Facebook. Determine who will take responsibility in each of the towns for content on website. Nominate who would manage websites and social media in each town. Consider whether this is a part-time sponsored position.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tourism and Marketing Officer •Development and Tourism committees 	June 2019	In-kind
Investigate	Investigate multiday trails but not limited to canoeing, walking, cycling and granite outcrops. Cost of Laanecoerie to Fernihurst being cleared Investigate the Laanecoerie to Fernihurst canoe trail be linked with camping. Conduct a workshop to brainstorm product development ideas around self-contained accommodation. Explore events in product development workshops. e.g. night activities Develop significant events that can include musicians and artists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Manager of Community support •Tourism and Marketing Officer •Bendigo Regional Tourism 	June 2020	\$2000

18 COSTING AND FUNDING OF ACTIONS

Action	Cost of project	Total expected funding	Net cost to Council	Proposed funding source	Completion timeframe
<p>Engagement Conduct a meeting/workshop to facilitate collaborations and invite more widely. Use this opportunity to present the Marketing Plan. Consider social events to bring people together to discuss ideas and reduce silos. Encourage ongoing and regular engagement (e.g. six monthly professional development and collaboration workshops).</p>	\$1,500	0	\$1,500	Council budget	2018
<p>Product development Continue to identify and refine key products, experiences and assets for market. Prioritise key activities and seek potential funding. Collaborations. Prioritise key activities and seek potential funding where relevant. Conduct GAP analysis to ascertain possibility of multiply day activities and then create multi-day tracks across region. Create themed maps and guides based on POD and themes predominantly promoted digitally and through promotional campaigns.</p>	\$1,500	0	\$1,500	Council budget	2018
<p>Social Media Strategy Develop a social media strategy for Loddon Valley.</p>	\$1,000	0	\$1,000	Council budget	2019
<p>Publicity Undertake a publicity strategy to highlight the key POD of the region.</p>	\$1,000	0	\$1,000	Council budget	2018

Action	Cost of project	Total expected funding	Net cost to Council	Proposed funding source	Completion timeframe
Promotion Create themed maps and key products and experiences of the region. Develop campaign for signature experiences and key 'maps' and promote/publish in Visitor Guides, websites and social media, advertising and other.	\$2,000	0	\$2,000	Council budget	2020
Accommodation Conduct a workshop to brainstorm product development ideas around self-contained accommodation.	\$1,000	0	\$1,000	Council budget	2020
Events Explore events in product development workshops. E.g. night activities Develop significant events. That can include musicians and artists.	\$1,000	0	\$1,000	Council budget	2020

19 Appendix

Below is a list of *some* of the rare or endangered species that are found around the Loddon Shire. Whilst they are threatened, they may be found in other areas of Victoria or Australia.

Bushland: Grey-crowned Babbler (Endangered in Vic), Malleefowl (End in Vic), Hooded Robin, Scrub-robin, Diamond Firetail, Gilberts Whistler, Bluebonnet, Cockatiel, White-winged Fairywren, Painted Honeyeater (Vulnerable in Vic). Critically Endangered Swift Parrots are sometimes seen south of Inglewood. Bustard and Bush-stone Curlew (Endangered in Vic) have occasionally been seen in the shire.

Fauna South

Mallee Fowl (*Leipoa ocellata*) – Endangered (Vulnerable)- found around Mallee woodland areas including Wychitella State Park. Most southern point in Australia.

Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata cucullata*) – Threatened – found around woodlands Kooyoora State Park, Wychitella, Wedderburn and Mount Korong

Painted Honey Eater (*Grantiella picta*) – Threatened- found around woodlands Kooyoora State Park, Wychitella, Wedderburn and Mount Korong

Brown Tree Creeper (*Climacteris picumnus picumnus*) – Threatened- found around woodlands Kooyoora State Park, Wychitella, Wedderburn and Mount Korong

Sand Goanna (*Varanus gouldii*) – Least Concern – found around woodlands Kooyoora State Park, Wychitella, Wedderburn and Mount Korong

Tree Goanna (*Varanus varius*) – Near Threatened – found around woodlands Kooyoora State Park, Wychitella, Wedderburn and Mount Korong

Fauna North

Plains-wanderer (*Pedionomus torquatus*) - Critically Endangered – Grassy plains of Terrick Terrick

Brolga (*Grus rubicunda*) – Threatened- Wetlands and open plains (including Agricultural land)

Grey-crowned Babbler (*Pomatostomus temporalis*) endangered in Victoria

Diamond Firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*) Threatened Australia

Hardhead (*Aythya australis*) (vulnerable in Victoria)

Australasian Shoveller (*Anas rhynchos*) (vulnerable in Victoria),

Musk Duck (*Biziura lobata*) (vulnerable in Victoria),

Freckled Duck (*Stictonetta naevosa*) (endangered in Victoria)

Flora

Jericho Wire Grass (*Aristida jerichoensis* var. *subspinulifera*) Endangered in Victoria

Spiny Rice Flower (*Pimelea spinescens* subspecies *spinescens*) Critically Endangered in Victoria

Velvet Daisy Bush (*Olearia pannosa* subsp. *cardiophylla*) vulnerable in Victoria

Deans Wattle (*Acacia deanei* subsp. *paucijuga*) Near Threatened, Rare in Victoria

As well as several species of Orchids (perhaps you should contact Wendy Murphy or Robert Scholes from the Friends of Kooyoora for a list of Orchids that they have been working on at Kooyoora State Forest.

The Ecological system I was referring to is the 'North Western Goldfields Intermittent Soak Community'. These are located around the Granitic country including Kooyoora State forests and Mt Korong – Assessments of the area were undertaken by ecologist Dr Paul Foreman, who recently described the naturally occurring and rare groundwater dependent, intermittent spring-soaks. As a result of the work by Paul Foreman, they were officially accepted as a valid community by the Scientific Advisory Committee, and listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act on the 24th November 2016.

Geological and landform features

The park contains imposing granite outcrops (Mt Terrick Terrick, Bennetts Rock and Reigals Rock) that rise 100 metres above the surrounding landscape. These outcrops form part of the Terrick Terrick Range, which was formed as a result of an igneous intrusion of granite into the Lower Palaeozoic bedrock in the late Devonian period. Some sedimentary deposits of the Late Quaternary period can also be found in the park (LCC 1985). Erosion around the granite outcrops has resulted in the formation of shallow depressions that hold and provide water for fauna in the park. parkweb.vic.gov.au/__data/.../Terrick-Terrick-National-Park-Management-Plan.p

Kooyoora State Park

The Kooyoora granites (Kooyoora adamellite) are the most notable geological feature of the park. Unlike other granites in the region, most of these granites are exposed (Marlow & Bushell 1995). The granite of Kooyoora Range is surrounded by metamorphic rocks formed by the intrusion of the Devonian granites into Ordovician sediments. Coarser members of intruded schist have recrystallised to form micaceous or schistose hornfels, with the finer members converted to knotted mica schist (Marlow & Bushell 1995).

parkweb.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf.../Kooyoora-State-Park-Management-Pla

