



Destination Management Action Plan 2025 - 2028

Purpose

Council's Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP) is designed to guide the sustainable development and management of the Mansfield Shire. It aims to enhance visitor experiences, support the economic and social well-being of the Mansfield Shire and protect our cultural and environmental assets. By recognising and attempting to maximise the alignment between tourism volume, visitor behaviour and local values and priorities, the DMAP strives to ensure the Mansfield Shire remains competitive, resilient and true to its identity, while delivering long term real benefits for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Guiding Principles

- Align with community values and aspirations
- Strive for balance between costs and benefits
- Focus on realistic actions and be clear when actions are aspirational
- Favour what we can control
- Recognise the value of numerous small wins
- Look for gains within existing frameworks & processes

Goals

Enhance Visitor Yield rather than just increasing numbers

Address seasonal fluctuations by promoting off-peak and mid-week visitations

Improve infrastructure, accessibility, and visitor experiences

Foster collaboration between Council, industry and community stakeholders

Strengthen Mansfield Shire's position as a must-visit destination

Ongoing Activity

Council performs a range of tourism-related functions on an ongoing basis and will continue to perform them over the life of this plan.

This includes:

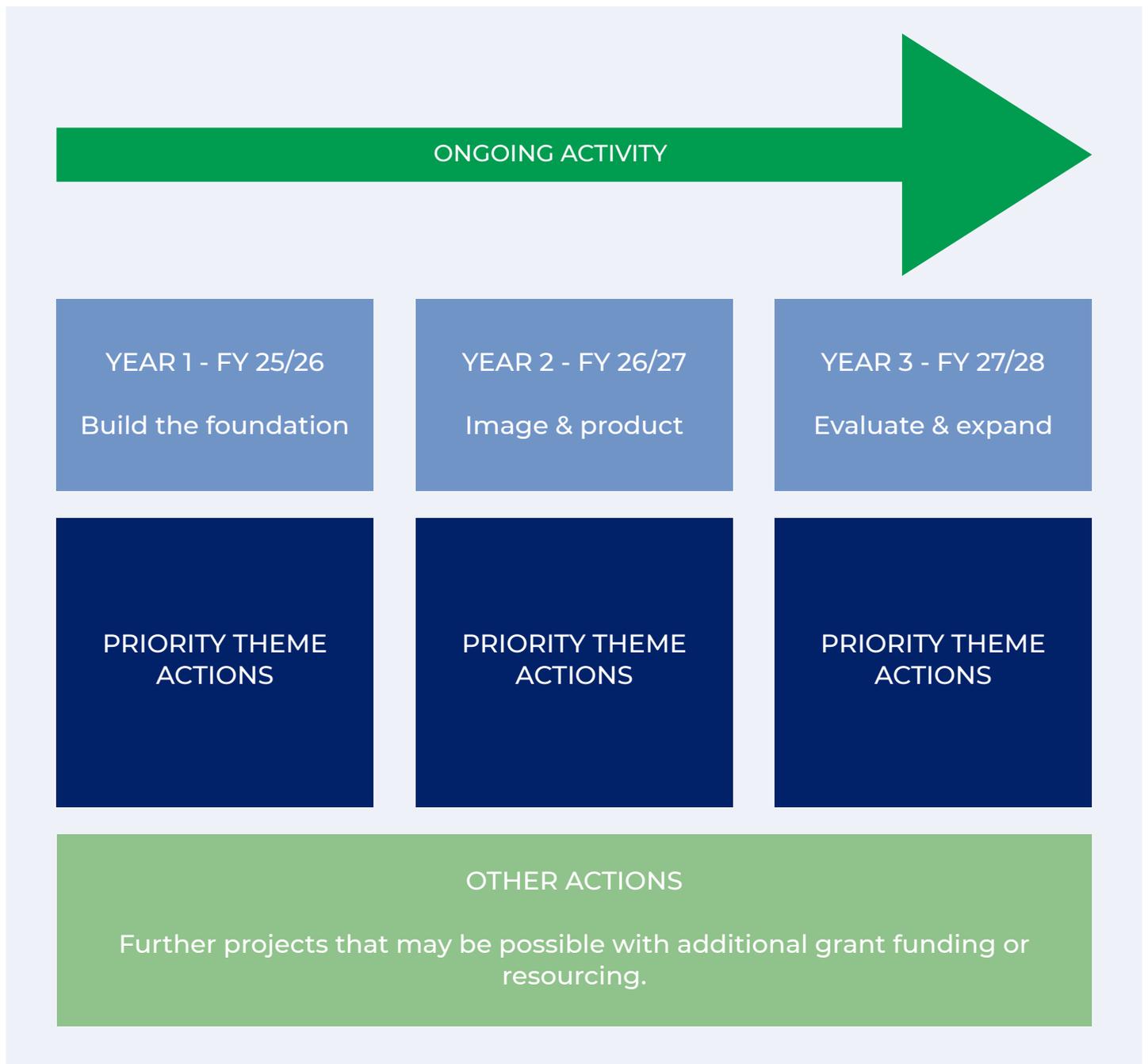
- ▶ **Council Policy & Planning Input:** Lead tourism-specific and contribute to other tourism-relevant Council strategies, plans, policies and budgets.
- ▶ **Visitor Information Centre:** Provide leadership, direction and support to the staff involved in the operations of the Visitor Information Centre.
- ▶ **Events:** Provide and coordinate support for event organisers; organise promotional support.
- ▶ **Engagement & Communication:** establish, maintain and nurture working relationships with key internal and external stakeholders to drive tangible benefits for tourism in Mansfield. Includes but is not limited to Mansfield tourism industry operators, other tourism-dependent businesses, local groups, Regional & State Tourism Organisations and other LGAs as required.
- ▶ **Visitor Experience:** Monitor and evaluate all aspects of the visitor and potential visitor experience, identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement. Includes infrastructure, amenities, tourism product and experiences, information and transport.
- ▶ **Market Insight:** Maintain awareness of tourism trends, competitor activity and target market preferences, identify opportunities/risks relevant to the Mansfield visitor economy and take steps to capitalise on or manage these. Includes communicating opportunities to industry, advocating for the mitigation of risks.
- ▶ **Grant Seeking & Management:** Identify relevant government (federal/state) and industry grant opportunities. Provide guidance to operators and community groups with applications as required. Manage Council-held tourism grants.
- ▶ **Performance Monitoring:** Monitor the performance of the overall visitor economy and components that are integral to desired outcomes. Includes visitation, visitor spending (data permitting) state of the industry, destination promotion and the VIC.
- ▶ **Reporting:** Regularly report to Council management, Councillors and stakeholders on activities, achievements, challenges, and data insights.
- ▶ **Support and ongoing advocacy:** Lake Eildon Masterplan, Delatite Valley Masterplan, Goughs Bay Masterplan, Station Precinct Masterplan and other developed town plans.

Action Themes

A consolidated review of the guiding principles, goals, industry and community input has identified four themes that will receive priority attention in each of the plan's three years.

The figure below shows how the actions in this plan are presented. This recognises the coexistence of ongoing support actions requiring ongoing effort over a longer period of time and actions with a lifespan limited to this Plan. The ongoing support actions are not tied to the existence of this Plan. They reflect the 'business as usual' actions currently being undertaken.

This separation has the benefit of creating an automatic focus on tangible actions and outcomes.



Action Themes

Balanced Tourism



Balanced tourism refers to a sustainable approach to tourism development and management that aims to optimise the benefits of tourism while minimising its negative impacts on the environment, local communities and cultural heritage. It seeks equilibrium between:

- Economic growth (supporting local businesses and employment)
- Environmental protection (preserving natural resources and biodiversity)
- Social and cultural integrity (respecting local traditions and ensuring community well-being)
- Visitor satisfaction (ensuring a high quality experience without overcrowding or degradation)

In practice, balanced tourism involves managing visitor flows, spreading tourism benefits geographically and seasonally, and involving local stakeholders in decision making.

Yield Focus



Yield focus refers to optimising the value derived from tourism by prioritising the overall economic, environmental and social benefits, rather than simply increasing visitor numbers or high-spending tourists. This approach focuses on attracting high-value visitors who contribute positively to the region, whether through sustainable spending, responsible behaviour or engagement with local communities.

While revenue is part of the equation, yield focus also includes the management of visitor flows to prevent overcrowding, ensuring that tourism supports local businesses and cultural heritage without overburdening the natural environment. It emphasises maximising the quality of the visitor experience such as enhancing appreciation for nature-based activities like hiking, wildlife observation and local cultural experiences, while maintaining sustainability and preserving the destination's unique characteristics.

Visitor Experience



Visitor experience refers to the totality of interactions that a tourist has with a destination, encompassing all aspects of their journey. From initial planning and arrival to their activities, interactions with locals and departure. It involves not just the quality of services and amenities, but also how visitors feel about their connection to the destination, the people and the environment.

Visitor experience centres on providing immersive, authentic experiences that foster a deeper appreciation for the natural and cultural landscape. It includes elements such as:

- Access to nature-based activities (e.g., hiking, wildlife viewing and exploring local ecosystems)
- Opportunities for cultural exchange with locals, such as learning about traditional customs or engaging in community-led tourism initiatives
- The sense of belonging visitors feel through responsible tourism, where they contribute to local conservation and support the region's sustainable practices
- Ensuring visitor satisfaction through ease of access, helpful information and well maintained infrastructure without compromising the region's integrity

A positive visitor experience leads to repeat visits, positive word-of-mouth and an increased likelihood that visitors will act as stewards of the destination's natural and cultural assets.

Collaboration, Coordination & Planning



Collaboration, coordination & planning refers to the process of engaging diverse stakeholders, including local communities, tourism businesses, government bodies, conservation groups and visitors in the collective development, management and sustainability of the destination. It emphasises the need for ongoing dialogue, shared decision-making and joint action to create a cohesive, well-aligned tourism experience that benefits all parties. Key elements of this approach include:

- Inclusive decision-making with stakeholders from all levels
- Cross-sector collaboration between council departments, local organisations, tourism businesses, environmental and cultural groups and the broader community
- Coordinated planning efforts to align regional development, infrastructure, marketing and sustainability practices, ensuring that tourism growth occurs in harmony with environmental conservation and community well-being
- Capacity building and knowledge sharing, which empowers stakeholders with the tools, resources and skills to effectively manage and benefit from tourism.

Collaboration, coordination & planning fosters a shared vision and mutual responsibility, ensuring that tourism development is sustainable, resilient and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the local community, visitors and the environment.

Actions 25/26

Balanced Tourism

- ▶ **Data analysis and industry survey**
We will analyse domestic visitor data for Mansfield Shire to identify seasonality, changes over time and identify visitor types and behaviours associated with lower season and mid-week.
- ▶ **Set targets in conjunction with industry to balance tourism**
Working with local industry to set an agreed target for increased visitation in identified periods.
- ▶ **Industry Strategy Analysis**
Conduct research and analysis into other destinations strategies for boosting low period visitation and see what can be learnt and applied to Mansfield Shire.

Yield Focus

- ▶ **Profile creation and education**
Produce and circulate a visitor expenditure and length of stay profile for our current domestic overnight visitor to industry with the goal of further educating local operators on the current market.
- ▶ **High Yield Visitor Health check**
Review current online presence, imaging, marketing and offerings with a lens of attracting high yield visitors to our destination.
- ▶ **Industry Survey**
Create and deliver a local business survey to allow a profile of our industry to be created and shared.
- ▶ **Sports Assessment**
Increase the understanding of sports related tourism in regional communities including equine events and local sporting competitions.



Actions 25/26

Visitor Experience

- ▶ **Social Listening**
Investigate affordable social listening platform in order to monitor visitor sentiment, satisfaction and trends.
- ▶ **Accessibility**
Work with industry and event organisers to assess accessibility requirements and ideas for business and events.
- ▶ **Investment**
Create a business prospectus and online dashboard to attract potential new tourism based businesses to address identified gaps in visitor experience.
- ▶ **Brand**
Investigate tourism branding models and propose branding for Mansfield Shire from a tourist lens.
- ▶ **Website Refresh**
Conduct a thorough check of our current tourism website and update content, look and user experience of the website.

Collaboration, Coordination & Planning

- ▶ **Annual Tourism Forum**
Deliver an annual Tourism forum for operators to present data, findings, hear from experts and create a group approach to identifying challenges, goals and strategies.
- ▶ **Social Media**
Bring our social media channels back in house and develop a local focus as well as being part of the bigger High Country brand.
- ▶ **Internal Education**
Educate and ensure all Council departments are aware of and understand the purpose of this plan and encourage them to consider potential roles in supporting or advising on specific actions.
- ▶ **Traveller Profile**
Create and provide industry with first annual domestic overnight traveller profile for Mansfield's main visitor generating markets to support their product development and marketing strategies.
- ▶ **Present all findings to industry at annual local Tourism forum.**

Actions 26/27

Balanced Tourism

- ▶ **Image Assets**
Audit existing image assets used in promotions and marketing. Identify gaps in relation to off season activities and high yield visitors. Fill identified gaps with a mix of user generated and commissioned assets.
- ▶ **Off Season Events**
Refine council's event support criteria to target off season event scheduling including incentives.
- ▶ **Mid Week Mansfield**
Engage with and encourage venue operators to explore mid-week packages and collaborate on "MidWeek Mansfield!" campaign.

Yield Focus

- ▶ **Online Curation**
Engage with online platforms across travel and tourism sector and take steps to ensure Mansfield Shire images and content reflects and connects with higher yield travellers.
- ▶ **Transaction Data**
Explore and cost options to measure and monitor visitor expenditure in the Mansfield Shire using electronic transaction data.
- ▶ **Paleo-Tourism**
Explore the yield potential associated with paleo-tourism and the new museum.



Actions 26/27

Visitor Experience

- ▶ **Asset Creation**
Create an inventory of current tangible tourism assets and identify gaps using data related to Mansfield's key visitor generating markets.
- ▶ **Website Accessibility**
Conduct an audit on our main tourism website to assess general health plus also compliance against web content accessibility guidelines.
- ▶ **Town Audit**
Conduct an audit on shade, seating and accessibility in the main Mansfield township with the lens of public facilities available.
- ▶ **Industrial Tourism**
Identify existing agricultural, manufacturing and other industrial activity that may have potential for industrial and study tourism.

Collaboration, Coordination & Planning

- ▶ **Annual Tourism Forum**
Deliver an annual Tourism forum for operators to present data, findings, hear from experts and create a group approach to identifying challenges, goals and strategies.
- ▶ **Industry Survey**
Create and deliver a local business survey to allow a profile of our industry to be created and shared.
- ▶ **Multi LGA Events**
Explore opportunities with neighbouring areas for off season events across multiple shires.
- ▶ **Feedback**
Create a basic online portal that allows tourism operators and business owners to send through feedback they hear from visitors directly to the tourism team at council.
- ▶ **Present all findings to industry at an annual local Tourism forum.**



Actions 27/28

Balanced Tourism

- ▶ **Off Season Assets**
Explore other regions off season tangible offerings and gauge potential for Mansfield.
- ▶ **Mid-Week Mansfield Campaign**
Engage with and encourage venue operators to explore mid-week packages and collaborate on “Mid-Week Mansfield!” marketing campaign.
- ▶ **Evaluation**
Evaluate the progress to increase lower season and midweek visitation and make recommendations for the next three year DMAP.

Yield Focus

- ▶ **Special Interest Groups**
Identify and reach out to special interest and other groups with the potential to run events that appeal to higher yield visitors.
- ▶ **Package Development**
Work with tourism operators to explore package development and a centralised payment option for accommodation, food and drinks and experiences.
- ▶ **Evaluation**
Evaluate the progress to increase and spread yield and make recommendations for the next three year DMAP.



Actions 27/28

Visitor Experience

- ▶ **Visitor Information Hubs**
Approach key identified tourist hotspot businesses with the idea of a small tourist information stand in their location.
- ▶ **Defined viewing zones**
Identify key tourism viewing areas such as top of Buttercup Rd and explore safer options to formalise these.
- ▶ **Ecotourism awareness**
Work with planning and conduct an information session with farmers and landowners that may be interested in supplementing income with low impact small scale accommodation.
- ▶ **Signage Audit**
Conduct an audit of signage including but not limited to way finding, accessibility and visitor dispersion.
- ▶ **Evaluation**
Evaluate the progress to increase lower season and midweek visitation and make recommendations for the next three year DMAP.

Collaboration, Coordination & Planning

- ▶ **Annual Tourism Forum**
Deliver an annual tourism forum for operators to present data, findings, hear from experts and create a group approach to identifying challenges, goals and strategies.
- ▶ **Industry Survey**
Create and deliver a local business survey to allow a profile of our industry to be created and shared.
- ▶ **Camping Strategy**
Engage with Parks and other stakeholders to develop a local camping strategy and guidelines to ensure sustainability.
- ▶ **Evaluation**
Evaluate the progress to increase lower season and midweek visitation and make recommendations for the next three year DMAP.

