Historic Heritage Tourism Strategy

Bundaberg Region
Bundaberg Regional Council
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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document presents a historic heritage tourism strategy for the Bundaberg Region. The strategy is focused on historic heritage, generally taken to mean the period after British settlement of the continent in the late eighteenth century.

The strategy has been developed for the Bundaberg Regional Council and should be read in conjunction with the following strategies:

- Bundaberg North Burnett Destination Tourism Plan.
- Iconic Events Strategy (currently under revision).
- 'Creativity for Life' - An arts and cultural strategy for the Bundaberg Region.

The strategy aims to develop clearly defined heritage experiences, attractions and events and in the process add value to existing strategies and approaches. The strategy is intended to create a deeper interest in the history and character of the region and provide experiences and attractions that help engage visitors and keep them in the region longer - and coming back.

1.2 Background

Converge Heritage + Community (Converge) has completed Stages 1 and 2 of a local heritage study. Stage 1 concluded with the adoption of a list of places of local heritage significance in the planning scheme in 2015. Stage 2 of the study is yet to be notified. As part of the study, Converge undertook consultation with local historical societies and historians, reviewed previous studies, travelled the region and prepared place cards that include detailed histories and statements of significance. The study adds to the places already entered on the Queensland Heritage Register (and one place on the Commonwealth Heritage Register), bringing the current total of listed or recommended places to over 140 in the region. The places cover natural and historic heritage, including archaeological sites; places that illustrate early contact between local Aboriginal people and the new arrivals; the development of important industries, in particular sugar; and the growth of towns and cities. It is a varied and substantial list that spans the important historic themes that have defined the Bundaberg region for nearly 180 years.

The heritage study provided a natural basis for the development of a heritage tourism strategy. The attractions and experiences recommended in this strategy are therefore based primarily on identified heritage places. There are a number of reasons why this approach is advantageous. Firstly, the study was prepared by assessing the important historical themes in the region and identifying places that reflect the themes, ensuring the list is broadly representative of the region's history (a narrative structure). Secondly, the list also had to be geographically representative, which in practical terms means there are significant places identified throughout the region, not simply in key locations (reasons to travel widely). Thirdly, the places must retain sufficient integrity to illustrate what makes them significant in order to meet the thresholds for entry to a heritage register or the planning scheme, (authentic experiences). Fourth, substantial research has already been undertaken for places as part of the nomination process (ready stories). Finally, listed places are subject to regulatory controls in the planning scheme and under State and National heritage Acts, and therefore the places are likely to be conserved (sustainable and protected).

Aspects of natural heritage and contact with local Aboriginal People have been incorporated into the strategy. Ideally, natural and Aboriginal heritage should form the basis of separate strategies that build on the recommendations in this strategy.
1.3 The Value of Heritage Tourism

Heritage is the belief that it is important to conserve and interpret things from the past for the present and future generations. These things - in heritage terms, referred to as 'places' - typically represent important historical processes, events and people, and our continued appreciation of these places contributes to the communal identity of our society, regions and localities. This is why local, state, national and world heritage registers have been established and legislation created to protect what is significant about places entered on the registers.

Heritage tourism is a growing tourism market and in some parts of the world is a primary driver of tourism. There are a number of key points that illustrate the value of heritage tourism:

- Regardless of the number or primacy of travel motivations, there is a strong propensity for tourists to attend the historic places or events of the country, state, region or town they are visiting.
- Heritage tourism identifies and presents the places where national or local values were created and continue to reside, and builds community pride and civic vitality.
- Changing travel patterns such as weekends and extended weekends, packaged trips, local itineraries, business side-trips, fewer long breaks and more unplanned vacations, stimulate and complement heritage tourism.
- The heritage tourism segment represents one of the highest yield tourism groups, ahead of both traditional mass markets and other niche tourism audiences such as arts. Heritage tourists spend 38% more per day, and stay 34% longer than traditional tourists and spend 20% more and stay 22% longer than arts oriented tourists.
- Heritage tourism stimulates both depth and breadth in tourism, creates new markets for local and regional arts and crafts, extends tourism seasons, and encourages adaptation of existing products (i.e. accommodation; tours).
- Heritage and historic tourism is globally attractive to governments because it has demonstrated an ability to contribute to the rejuvenation of regional and inner-city urban areas.
- Unlike many tourism products, historic and heritage tourism can spread economic benefits across a greater geographical area through themed trails and driving routes, rather than concentrating in single locations.
- There is a propensity for heritage tourists to stay and spend on accommodation provided within villages, towns and cities, unlike nature-based tourists who travel with greater levels of self-sufficiency.
- Heritage tourism assets are sustainable through restoration or adaptation processes, usually at considerably less expense than required for entirely new facilities (i.e. theme parks, galleries, museums), and retain greater authenticity.¹

The term 'authenticity' is vitally important. People are increasingly seeking authentic heritage experiences (as with other cultural experiences). Actual heritage places, in their original setting and context, provide authenticity.

¹ These points have been quoted directly from A Heritage Tourism Strategy for Western Australia, prepared by the Heritage Council of Western Australia in partnership with Tourism Western Australia. The strategy relies on extensive national and international research.
1.4 Developing a Holistic Heritage Experience

Historic heritage is only one part of the heritage of any given place. Natural and Aboriginal cultural heritage are also fundamental to the understanding of a region across time and collectively they help present a holistic understanding of the landscape and its human occupation.

Natural heritage is relatively simple in that it is largely free of human involvement (in evolutionary terms) and is therefore not subject to issues of representation. Knowledge of the paleogeography and geological processes that shaped the land, and the fauna and flora that colonised it, is inherently interesting, providing information about animals and plants that are millions of years old and the effects of continental upheavals, volcanic eruptions and weathering that has created the landscape people see today. It is also an integral to an understanding of human occupation and use of the region in the relatively recent geological past; the resulting landscape became significant to people as a source of food and shelter, but also for spiritual and, later, economic reasons. There are already good examples of interpretation about natural heritage in the Bundaberg region.

Aboriginal heritage is also essential to the understanding of the human occupation and settlement of the Bundaberg region, as it is elsewhere in Australia. However, interpreting this heritage requires a different approach to historic heritage. Aboriginal people and their ancestors have lived in this land for tens of thousands of years. As a culture, people have developed unique narratives that represent their history, society and spiritual beliefs, and invested the landscape with particular significance. They have also been subject to colonisation and the appropriation of traditional lands by newcomers. Tourism can impact this tradition and significance in negative ways for contemporary Aboriginal people and it is not appropriate for non-Aboriginal people to design and develop attractions and experiences that include Aboriginal stories and themes without the involvement of the Traditional Owners of the region. This approach is reinforced by legislation that establishes compliance requirements for Indigenous cultural heritage, including the 'cultural heritage duty of care' included in the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003.

These points are made simply to reinforce the need for the development of separate strategies for natural and Aboriginal heritage tourism and interpretation. There are various ways in which all three are linked, but the first step is to prepare separate strategies and in that process look for the connections, because just as often links simply will not exist and each approach should be treated singularly to properly convey the relevant themes and stories.
Part 1 - Context
2 Regional Overview

2.1 The Regional Context

The Bundaberg region forms part of the Wide Bay Burnett, which also includes North and South Burnett, Fraser Coast and Gympie. Historically, the region was noted for:

- Sheep and cattle stations (pastoralism) from the 1840s.
- Timber getting (from the 1860s).
- Sugar (from the 1870s) and rum (from the 1880s using molasses - a by-product of sugar crushing).
- Development of towns (from the late 1860s), including Bundaberg, Gin Gin and Childers.
- Bundaberg as a Port (from the 1870s).
- The railway (Mount Perry to Bundaberg [1870s], North Coast Railway [from 1880s]).

The region is best known for sugar and rum, encapsulated by Bundaberg Sugar and Bundaberg Rum, both of which reflect the historical importance of the sugar industry in the Bundaberg region.

Historically, the Bundaberg region has shared important connections to surrounding regions, today represented by the Fraser Coast, North Burnett and Gladstone regions. These connections include, but are not limited to:

- **North Burnett**: the most important connection was the Mount Perry to Bundaberg railway, which brought the copper from the Mount Perry copper mines to the Port of Bundaberg. Towns and settlements were connected to the sugar industry in Childers, in particular Dallarnil, and early pastoralists from the North Burnett were involved in reprisal attacks on local Aboriginal people in the 1840s and early 1850s.
- **Fraser Coast**: some of the major sugar manufacturers in the region began operations west of Maryborough. The Isis district is also associated with William Howard, after who the town of Howard in named. Colin (Colonel) Rankin, a significant land owner in Howard, was intimately associated with the sugar industry in the Isis district.
- **Gladstone**: Baffle Creek and the town of Rosedale were both connected economically to Bundaberg, not Gladstone. A sugar mill was established at Baffle Creek by Bundaberg businessmen and Rosedale relied on the Port of Bundaberg.

Figure 1: Bundaberg region in relation to surrounding regions.
2.2 Visitor Markets and Activities

The following statistics and analysis of visitor markets and attractions is taken from the Bundaberg North Burnett Destination Tourism Plan (2014).

Reasons for visiting the region are broken down into the following broad categories:

- Holiday/leisure (39%)
- Visiting friends and relatives (38%)
- Business (16%).

Traditionally, visitors to Bundaberg have enjoyed:

- Beach holidays, for example at Bargara and Woodgate.
- Long haul touring market, important for towns along the Bruce Highway.
- Bundaberg attracts day and overnight visitors as a prominent regional centre.
- Travel to visit friends and relatives.

Most visitors come from locations within Queensland, particularly regional areas:

- Regional Queensland (53%).
- Brisbane (32%)
- Interstate (15%).

While in the region, visitors typically:

- Visit friends and relatives.
- Eat out.
- Go to the beach.
- Sightsee.
- Shop.

The prominence of sightseeing is an important feature of visitor trends, naturally lending itself to heritage experiences. Indeed, in this respect, local residents also constitute a visitor market, as they may engage in tours and tourist-like activities within the region, which can help promote local identity and civic pride, but also encourage consolidation of the 'friends and relatives' market.

2.3 Tourism Promotion of the Region

The region is promoted specifically through 'Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism' and also features prominently in two major tourist marketing platforms: the 'Southern Great Barrier Reef' and the 'Pacific Coast Way'. All three sources feature websites that, given the ubiquity of the internet, form key portals for trip planning in the region.
For Bundaberg, a range of attractions are presented. Obvious attractions include Bargara Beach and the Mon Repos turtle experience. For heritage, key attractions include:

- 500 hectares of parkland e.g. Alexandra Park, Playground and Zoo, Baldwin Swamp Environmental Park.
- Historical museums, including the Hinkler Hall of Aviation, Railway Museum, Fairymead House and Sugar History Museum.
- Bundaberg Rum Bond Store.
- War memorials, including Bundaberg, Apple Tree Creek, Nurses Memorial.
- Bargara Beach.
- Landmark heritage buildings, including Bundaberg School of Arts, former National Australian Bank.
- East Bundaberg Water tower.
- Hummock Lookout.
- South Sea Islander Church and Hall.

This is a reasonably comprehensive list. However, none of the experiences are 'packaged' - they are presented individually. Childers is presented singularly as 'historic Childers', but the information is focused on wine, food and art galleries, not history.

The website includes information on 'Getting there' and a package of scenic routes:

- Real Country.
- Coral Coasting.
- A Mix of Coast and Country.

These drives include reference to heritage and they all connect with key locations in the Bundaberg (and North Burnett) region, including Childers, Bundaberg, Gin Gin and Bargara. These offer a solid basis for development as part of the heritage strategy, as they traverse key centres and provide access to substantial heritage places and attractions.
2.3.2  www.southerngreatbarrierreef.com.au

The Southern Great Barrier Reef is a large area stretching from Childers north to Yeppoon. Heritage is consistently noted for key sites, in particular Bundaberg, listing museums, buildings, the Hinkler Hall of Aviation and the Bundaberg Bond store Distillery. If the 'attractions' tab is selected, the viewer is provided the same information as on the Bundaberg Region website above.

Figure 2: Southern Great Barrier Reef region (southerngreatbarrierreef.com.au).

2.3.3  www.queensland.com/journey/pacific-coast-touring-route

The key advantage of the Pacific Coast Touring route is that it directs visitors to Bundaberg and then to Gin Gin. The website has basic information to guide the visitor, but heritage and museums are noted for Bundaberg.

Although the section of the Bruce Highway between Apple Tree Creek and Gin Gin is avoided in this scenario, there are still potential attractions along that route.
2.4 Existing Heritage Attractions and Experiences

There are numerous existing heritage attractions and experiences in the Bundaberg Region, many of which are explicitly mentioned in tourism promotional material including online promotion.

The table below provides more comprehensive detail for each town centre and district. The attractions and experiences are those that are actively promoted, either through material or on-site e.g. interpretation. It does not include the full range of heritage places and stories in the region. Until recently, the only event in the region that is explicitly themed along heritage lines was the Burnett Heads Lighthouse Festival (although the heritage aspect could be presented in a more pronounced way). However, the inaugural Bundaberg Open House was held in 2016, focused entirely on heritage-listed places.

There is an artificial separation between tourist attractions (including museums), interpretation and heritage trails and tours. Generally speaking, tours and trails do not incorporate interpretative signage (the only exception is the East Bundaberg Industry Tourism Trail, but this does not appear to have been fully developed). Likewise, the museum and tourist attractions are essentially separate, even where a
number of them are located in the Botanic Gardens (Hinkler Hall of Aviation, Fairymead House, Hinkler House and the Bundaberg Historical Museum).

Table 1: Existing heritage attractions and experiences in the Bundaberg region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction</th>
<th>Tourist attractions</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Heritage trails &amp; tours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bundaberg</td>
<td>Hinkler Hall of Aviation</td>
<td>Botanic Gardens</td>
<td>Two CBD trails (one out of print, the other in PDF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hinkler House</td>
<td>Queen’s Park</td>
<td>East Bundaberg Industry Tourism Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairymead House and Sugar History Museum</td>
<td>Baldwin’s Swamp (settlement and migration)</td>
<td>North Bundaberg Story Walk (in development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bundaberg Historical Museum</td>
<td>Nielson Park (railway picnics, resort experience)</td>
<td>Occasional South Sea Islander guided tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Railway Historical Museum</td>
<td>The Hummock</td>
<td>Occasional 'Behind-the-Scenes' tours of the Bundaberg Regional Arts Gallery / Customs House.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bundaberg Rum Bond Store Distillery</td>
<td>Burnett Heads (Lighthouse Park)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childers</td>
<td>Old Pharmacy Museum</td>
<td>Helm’s Scrub</td>
<td>Conducted in connection with the Childers Festival:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childers Historical Village</td>
<td>Millenium Park (Indigenous and South Sea Islander art installations)</td>
<td>Childers Historical tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childers Backpacker Memorial</td>
<td>'Discover Gin Gin', CBD</td>
<td>Paragon Theatre 'Behind-the-Scenes' tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childers Military Museum</td>
<td>Blaxland and Pegg Bros Memorial, Rest Area</td>
<td>Public art and memorial tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gin Gin</td>
<td>Gin Gin Historical Museum</td>
<td>'Discover Gin Gin', CBD</td>
<td>Isis Sugar Mill tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gin Gin Regional Art Gallery (old Courthouse)</td>
<td>Blaxland and Pegg Bros Memorial, Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider region</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Cemeteries (Invicta, Avondale &amp; South Isis)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted above, the planning scheme includes a substantial list of heritage places that reflect all the key historical themes for the region, but which are only partially represented in the existing heritage attractions and experiences. Combined with existing, marketed attractions and the scenic routes provided in the existing tourism marketing collateral, there is enormous potential to develop heritage tourism in the region.

Indeed, the region enjoys natural advantages over other similar regions along the coast of Queensland. These can be summarised as:

- There is a large intrastate tourism market.
- The region is relatively close to the largest concentration of population in the State - Brisbane and surrounds.
- It is easily accessed via established road and rail networks.
- It has a good range of existing accommodation and attractions, for example Bargara, Mon Repos.
- It has iconic branding - particularly Bundaberg Rum, but also Bundaberg Sugar. This branding sets the region apart from other sugar growing regions, for example Mackay or Fraser Coast.
- Importantly, sugar remains an important industry in the region and this is reflected in the landscape.
Bundaberg and Childers are 'historic' towns similar to Maryborough in the Fraser Coast. The next step is to determine how these advantages are reflected in existing tourism strategies for the region, and which particular actions in these strategies are relevant to developing the inherent advantages noted above.
3 Tourism Strategies and Plans

3.1 Existing Tourism Strategies and Plans

The Bundaberg region has been the focus of several strategies and plans, principally:

- Bundaberg North Burnett 2020 Destination Tourism Plan.
- Iconic Events Strategy.
- 'Creativity for Life' - An arts and cultural strategy for the Bundaberg Region.

Each of these plans and strategies include specific policies, strategies and actions to enable the overall aims of each document. The sections below summarise the key elements of each document that are relevant to the heritage tourism strategy.

3.1.1 Bundaberg North Burnett 2020 Destination Tourism Plan

The Bundaberg North Burnett 2020 Destination Tourism Plan identifies seven 'key opportunities' that 'cover all aspects of destination development'. Two of these are directly relevant to heritage tourism:

- Touring Routes and supporting infrastructure
- Product development influenced by the region's culinary experiences and Bundaberg North Burnett characters

The primary focus of the plan is on the development of the Southern Great Barrier Reef Platform, and also to increase international visitation. Other products are also contemplated that will augment existing options, including day tours to Lady Musgrave Island, redevelopment of the Mon Repos Turtle Centre, redevelopment of the Bundaberg Rum Distillery Centre and development of culinary tourism. Nonetheless, touring routes and product development are relevant to heritage, especially products that showcase the region's 'character'.

The plan includes a 'competitor analysis'. Competition comes principally from other destinations that includes similar experiences to the Bundaberg region and other major centres, for example Hervey Bay, Maryborough and Mackay. However, the advantages for Bundaberg are significant: one of the key advantages is Bundaberg's branded reputation, Bundaberg Rum and Bundaberg Sugar. Both of these brands are integral to understanding the historical development of Bundaberg region.

The plan then sets out strategic marketing platforms and principles for the region. The most relevant point to Bundaberg and heritage tourism is:

Regional Character - really get to know this special part of Queensland by exploring its coastal gems, lakes, gorges and rural landscapes while getting to know the people who are proud to live here.

This point is key to the heritage tourism strategy. In particular, 'megatrends' in tourism identified by the Queensland Government (with assistance from the CSIRO - and identified in the plan) are critical to developing tourism. Again, relevant to heritage are:

Great Expectations

- Authenticity, connection and personalised experiences will lead the way in motivating people to travel and generate consumer satisfaction. Providing a destination experience that satisfies these requirements is imperative for future growth.
- Friends and relatives will continue to be an important motivation for travel and is forecast to rise.
- A desire to understand what makes a place tick and the opportunity for social interaction and connection, in the youth travel specifically, will drive opportunities for visitation to a region.
- Importance of locals understanding the impacts of tourism and connections with visitors leads to increased visitor satisfaction.
On the Move

- Multi-purpose trips (business/holiday combined) and as such trade and connection leads to visitation and expenditure.
- Access and connectivity is vital to visitation, whether by road, rail or air.
- Increased mobility of consumers means they are travelling more regularly to more places and there are less barriers to travel.
- An increasingly diverse population will see increased international connections resulting in increased visitation of friends and relatives.

The drive tourism strategy is important in this regard, particularly the creation of themed drive tourism routes.

'Digital Whispers' is also important, particularly the point that 'Consumers are travelling with a suite of technology allowing real time reports on experiences and the seeking out of information without using local contacts and information sources'. Social media is a key platform in this regard, something that can be leveraged to create positive outcomes for (heritage) tourism in the region.

Top opportunities are then identified for the region. Key amongst these are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Select Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product development themed by culinary experiences and ‘Bundaberg North Burnett’ character</td>
<td>The development of experiences that establish the “Bundaberg North Burnett Character” ... will help grow the destination brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touring routes and supporting infrastructure</td>
<td>The development of touring routes and supporting infrastructure, which link the hinterland to the coast and to long haul drive routes will lead to regional dispersal, increased attractiveness to the drive market and boutique drive experiences for those looking for a paddock to plate or nature experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.2 Iconic Events Strategy

The Bundaberg region currently hosts a range of events throughout the year. The majority of the events are not related to heritage, or do not specifically focus on heritage. Recently, heritage components have been incorporated into events the Childers Festival and include heritage tours of the town, the Isis Sugar Mill and the Paragon Theatre.

The Iconic Events Strategy's Vision is to 'develop a small number of world-class iconic events that showcase the unique spirit and essence of [the Bundaberg] ... region, elevating [it] ... to become a premier destination of choice in Australia'. A SWOT Analysis is presented in the document and several opportunities are identified that relate to heritage, principally:

- Kanaka History/Sugar History.
- Leverage other regional towns [than Bundaberg].
- Cultural and/or heritage events targeted at young families and the older tourism market.

In passing, it should be noted that reference to 'Kanaka' should be avoided. This was a historically-contingent (and often derogatory) term used to describe labourers who were either kidnapped or recruited to work on sugar plantations in Queensland in the second half of the nineteenth century. 'South Sea Islander' is an appropriate term.

Strategic outcomes are identified in the document. As there is very little integration of heritage within existing events, the most relevant to these outcomes are:
• Identify regionally significant events to transition to hallmark/signature major events: Major events which demonstrate growth potential to become a hallmark/signature event need to be supported to realise their potential.
• Secure new major events and facilitate/develop opportunities in association with these events: This is fundamental to ensuring the longevity of major events in the Bundaberg region, securing additional economic and community development opportunities and building the reputation of the region.

These outcomes would directly address the opportunities related to heritage identified in the strategy (above).

3.1.3 Arts and cultural strategy

The arts and cultural strategy for the Bundaberg region 'Creativity for Life' presents culture as a way to enhance the tourism potential of the region and includes a number of strategies relating to the preservation, promotion and interpretation of cultural heritage. These include:

- Defining and promoting regional identity, including community events, cultural heritage trail branding, support for museums and heritage organisations and a local studies unit to document the region's stories.
- Enhancing the cultural values of the natural and built environment, including 'stories trail', 'nostalgia/retro' events, themed tours and documentation of the region's stories.

A number of relevant strategies and outcomes identified in the document are pitched primarily at a local audience. However, as noted above, people visiting relatives and friends is a major tourism market for the region and the strategies would hold inherent appeal for this visitor segment, as well as potentially other visitors - youth, older, family.

3.2 Strategies and Actions that Work for Heritage Tourism

The heritage tourism strategy cannot incorporate or address every aspect of the strategies and related actions that are presented in the strategic documents. The best option is to select key strategies and actions and build on those, while acknowledging that future reviews and development of the heritage tourism strategy may focus on other identified regional strategies, or are developed by key stakeholders independently of the heritage tourism strategy (particularly as they may focus more exclusively on the local community, rather than tourism). The Destination Strategy sums it up best: 'the plan does not include a comprehensive listing of all projects and activities that can and will be undertaken within the region but is a filtered, prioritised and actionable plan'. 'Actionable' is the key word.

Moreover, based on visitor analysis, the heritage tourism strategy is not aimed at the international visitor. This is, presently, a relatively small segment of the overall tourist market, and the Bundaberg North Burnett Destination Strategy is focused on developing this market by promoting the Southern Great Barrier Reef. Whilst international visitors may take advantage of heritage tourism in the region, the most productive markets are Brisbane and regional visitors that:

- Take long drive tours.
- Enjoy holidaying at the beach.
- Day and weekend trips, especially associated with the friends and relatives segment.

The principal aim is to extend and enrich existing trips and holidays, rather than presenting a reason in-itself to visit the region. However, there are potential events focused on heritage where visitation can be generated purely on that basis - these are explored later in the strategy.
Table 2: Select strategies and actions relevant to heritage tourism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Strategy/Policy</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bundaberg North Burnett Destination Strategy</td>
<td>Improve the road infrastructure, signage and rest areas along strategic tourism routes.</td>
<td>Development and marketing of themed drive trails and touring routes through the Bundaberg North Burnett region connecting into adjoining regions.</td>
<td>The Bundaberg North Burnett region is dependent on the drive market for in excess of 90% of its visitors.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourage development of product to support hero experiences; regional flavours, regional character, turtles, SGBR</td>
<td>Develop the Bundaberg Botanic Gardens into a heritage precinct to build on existing product in the site.</td>
<td>Provide a full day experience within the park. Extends length of stay through the provision of additional attractions within the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iconic Events Strategy</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Identify regionally significant events to transition to hallmark/signature major events.</td>
<td>Major events which demonstrate growth potential to become a hallmark/signature event need to be supported to realise their potential.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Secure new major events and facilitate/develop opportunities in association with these events.</td>
<td>This is fundamental to ensuring the longevity of major events in the Bundaberg region, securing additional economic and community development opportunities and building the reputation of the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Cultural Strategy</td>
<td>Enhance the cultural values of the natural and built environment</td>
<td>Develop a map of potential sites for a “stories trail” and a plan for their future interpretation that may include public art, interpretive signage, interactive media and other means of storytelling.</td>
<td>Development of a new cultural tourism product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a program of “nostalgia/retro” events utilising community halls and promoting their value to community (e.g. dances and theme nights).</td>
<td>Activation of public and community spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage the development of one-off themed tours to encourage the community to engage with places in their region.</td>
<td>Development of new cultural tourism product.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 2 - Opportunities
4 Organising Heritage Tourism Attractions and Experiences

4.1 Developing Stories

The heritage tourism strategy must conform to existing promotional material and strategic directions. This will ensure that it meets the strategy’s key aim: to enrich and enhance existing tourism opportunities.

Thus far, the heritage tourism strategy has presented two key tables:

- Existing Heritage Attractions and Experiences (Table 1).
- Strategies and Actions that Work for Heritage Tourism (Table 2).

From Table 1, it is clear that there is a lack of connection between attractions, heritage trails and interpretation. The opportunities exist, particularly in existing promotional material, but they are not 'packaged' to make them attractive to visitors. From Table 2, it is clear that there is a compact number of strategies and actions that relate specifically to heritage. These provide an opportunity to establish the packages that are currently missing.

Utilising the strategies and actions in Table 2, it is possible to reduce the opportunities into three key categories:

- Heritage Trails.
- Tourist Attractions.
- Events.

Heritage tourism is, however, fundamentally about stories. In order to convey the story of the Bundaberg region using the three categories, it is first necessary to create a conceptual map of the Bundaberg region (see figure below).

In this map, the region is divided into three distinct areas, coloured blue, green and red. These colours conform loosely to the Bundaberg ‘colours’ reflected in the logo, but they are also geographically meaningful: blue for the coast, green for the country and red for the rich volcanic soils of the Isis district. Icons are provided to indicate whether attractions and places are part of driving, cycling or walking trails, and events.

More importantly, these areas roughly equate to distinct periods and areas of historical development: Gin Gin, in the 'green' area, was settled in the 1840s, while the surrounding scrub was avoided as it was not suited to sheep. Bundaberg was settled in the 1860s, and the sugar industry was quickly established, especially on the rich soils of the Woongarra Scrub. The Isis district was settled last, eventually centred on the town of Childers. Each area is connected historically to each other, but they also represent distinct stories reflected in equally distinct landscapes.

Thus, the structure of this strategy is based on three distinct, but connected, stories:

- The story of Gin Gin.
- The story of Bundaberg.
- The story of Childers.

By focusing on key centres, the stories conform to existing tourism promotional material. This will make it easier to organise the overall stories for the purposes of heritage tourism, but each story contains substantial detail that links to other districts and attractions outside of each town or city.

The attractions and experiences recommended for the strategy are not exhaustive, but collectively they illustrate all of the key historical themes for region, include a substantial number of heritage-listed places. No matter what a visitor chooses to do, they will experience the historical character of the region and the people who reflect it - whether they are driving, walking, riding or simply holidaying by the beach.
4.2 Going Digital

To develop these attractions, an approach that combines static and digital media platforms is critical. Digital media has distinct advantages as an interpretation tool including the ability to be easily updated or changed and provides the option to tailor information including different languages, depth and complexity of content and delivery mediums (e.g. text/audio/images/video). The possibilities for use of digital media in interpretation are increasing quickly with technological development advancing continuously.

Nonetheless, app based guides for walking and driving trails work best when they are simply structured and utilise standard applications already installed on most smart phones and tablets (e.g. Google Maps). Integrated ‘share’ functions provide an excellent way to create a personal connection with the visitors and to promote the experience to their peers.

The following apps, available from the app stores, are provided as examples:

- Centennial Parklands Tour – History Walk
- Story City – History/art/adventure story walk.


The recent popularity of the augmented reality game app 'Pokémon Go' has led to a number of spin-offs in the museums and interpretation sector either by connecting to the game and thus drawing visitors to the geo-coded points or by creating a simplified and customised version. This development is at an early stage, however, it underlines the increasing interest in the use of the technology. One possible option is to link a customised version of the app with a local heritage trail and incorporate a rewards system whereby users collect rewards to redeem at local participating businesses if they complete the trail. This approach offers an inducement for people to use the app and therefore learn about the history of the locality, but it could also be used to promote patronage at local businesses and thereby provide a direct economic benefit to the community.

Traditional signage and printed booklets and brochures still have a place in the suite of interpretation tools. Signage offers a readily accessible, permanent and static information platform that requires no special equipment to use. Design and placement, however, have to be carefully considered to avoid negative visual impact. Interpretation can even include audio (without requiring power), which can enhance particular interpretive experiences. Printed booklets and handouts provide a take-away medium for way finding and interpretation and are often kept as souvenir, extending the link to the experience.

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2 Refer to http://m.mainebiz.biz/article/20160902/NEWS01/160909987
Figure 4: 'Constellation of Opportunities' Map
5 The Story of Gin Gin

5.1 The Story

The story of Gin Gin begins with the pastoral frontier. It conveys the isolation and hardship experienced by new arrivals, the violent encounters as Traditional Owners sought to resist the invasion of their land, and the emergence of a town perched at the crossroads – in particular between the mining hinterland to the west and the growing Port of Bundaberg to the east. It is also a story about the early selectors who took up land to make a life for themselves as the sheep and cattle stations were broken up, and the impact of war on the small community.

Key points of the story include:

- The Gin Gin sheep station (originally called Tirroan) was established in 1848, by Gregory Blaxland and William Forster.
- The station was established on Indigenous land and local Aboriginal people resisted the incursion, attacking and killing shepherds and, eventually, one of the owners of the station, Gregory Blaxland.
- The attacks on the shepherds and Blaxland prompted reprisals against the Traditional Owners, leading to further violence. Aboriginal resistance declined in the 1850s.
- Copper was discovered in the area west of Gin Gin station in the 1860s. The copper ore was sent to the new settlement of Bundaberg, on the Burnett River, and then transferred to ships.
- The town of Gin Gin was surveyed in 1877 and a railway connecting Mount Perry and Bundaberg was constructed in the early 1880s. Gin Gin was the key station on the railway.
- Gin Gin also became a telegraph station two years earlier in 1874. The town played an important role in communications in the district.
- The pastoral stations were gradually broken up by Land Acts designed to encourage closer settlement. Selectors took up blocks in the district, increasing the population and ensuring the growth of the town.
- Conditions were tough for the settlers. They had to clear the land, plant crops and build their own houses. They had to ‘make do’ with bush skills and plenty of patience.
- The men of the district keenly joined the Australian Imperial Force and fought in World War I. A long and devastating war, it had an enormous impact on small rural communities like Gin Gin.

There are many opportunities to explore the heritage and history of Gin Gin. The opportunities:

- Illustrate the original pastoral settlement in the district and the impact this had on relations with local Aboriginal people.
- Demonstrate the significance of copper discoveries to the west of the district and how copper helped establish the town of Gin Gin.
- Show the conditions for selectors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the impact of World War I on the small rural community.
Figure 5: Opportunities identified in the Gin Gin Story tourism map.
5.2 Attractions and Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key attractions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visit the Gin Gin Museum &amp; Art Gallery and learn about early life in the town of Gin Gin</td>
<td>The Gin Gin Historical Museum is situated in the Queensland Heritage-listed Gin Gin Railway Station and Complex and includes the station building, goods shed, Station Master’s house (now housing the historic collection) and other railway infrastructure. The setting provides an authentic experience of an early country railway station, complemented by displays of memorabilia from Gin Gin’s past. The Art Gallery is housed in the former courthouse, constructed in 1935. The building includes remnants of the earlier courthouse (1882), including the original prisoner’s dock and Magistrate’s desk. Visitors can also view the original police lock-up at the rear of the building. The venue illustrates life in a country town, versus a more established settlement like Bundaberg. Both venues offer attractions in addition to the heritage experience, for example: weekly country markets are held at the museum and exhibitions and workshops are offered at the art gallery.</td>
<td>・Museum  ・Art Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about the story of Gregory Blaxland, Gin Gin Station and the pastoral frontier.</td>
<td>The Blaxland Memorial was unveiled in 1959, the year of Queensland’s centenary, in a roadside rest stop. The memorial reflects the historical attitude about the frontier in Queensland, in particular the derogatory attitude to Aboriginal people and their attempts to resist the appropriation of their traditional land. For this reason, the memorial itself requires interpretation to put the entire episode into context so that modern visitors can better appreciate the complexity of the frontier. Indeed, it offers an opportunity for the Traditional Owners of the region to finally have a voice and present their perspective of the frontier to provide a complete understanding for visitors that will inform and challenge their understanding of the past. The memorial also draws attention to a macabre fact: the body of Gregory Blaxland is thought to be buried near Gin Gin Creek, possibly only metres away from the memorial itself. Moreover, although not open to the public, the homestead complex of Gin Gin Station is literally across the road from the memorial and the rest stop. The fact that travellers are already drawn to the site because of the rest stop provides a wonderful opportunity to interpret the complex story of the pastoral frontier and the effect it had on everyone, both the new arrivals and the local Aboriginal people.</td>
<td>・Memorial  ・Gin Gin Homestead</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visit the Allen Bros Slab Hut</td>
<td>The slab hut, located in the Kookaburra eco village, offers an insight into the living conditions and construction techniques of dwellings of selectors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the Gin Gin district. The slab construction is evocative, illustrating the bush skills and ingenuity of people carving a life for themselves literally out of the bush. The hut also presents an opportunity to tell the story of the Allen family, early farmers and graziers to the region. Three Allen brothers died fighting in World War I. Their mother Sarah was asked to turn the first sod of ground for the erection of the Kolan Shire War Memorial in Gin Gin. Sarah is buried in the Gin Gin cemetery and a plaque next to her headstone bears the names of her three sons. The story reflects the sense of duty and patriotism young Australians expressed during the war and the often disproportionate impact the conflict had on small, tightknit rural communities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visit the Boolboonda Railway Tunnel &amp; School</td>
<td>These two sites relate to the Mount Perry Railway, the copper mining in the district and the subsequent settlement of the Boolboonda district in the late nineteenth century. The tunnel was completed in 1884 and the school opened in 1897. The tunnel is an obvious attraction, particularly as the railway was decommissioned long ago and visitors can walk or drive through it. The school is passed on the way to the tunnel; it is an excellent example of a small rural school in a bucolic setting, which is evocative of life in the country. The Boolboonda Railway Tunnel and former Boolboonda State School are both listed on the Queensland Heritage Register. Interpretative signage has been recently installed at the tunnel.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explore the Mount Perry Heritage Trail</td>
<td>The Mount Perry Heritage Walk includes 76 points of interest and a paper base guide providing historic background information. The walk is relatively dated and could be updated, but it nonetheless provides a unique opportunity to explore a nineteenth century mining town, including the former copper smelter site, and learn more about how the mine was important to both the North Burnett and Bundaberg regions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explore the Gooburrum Heritage Trail</td>
<td>The Gooburrum Heritage Trail continues the country theme, allowing visitors to explore the rural landscape north of the Burnett River. Visitors can stop in at the historic Bucca Hotel, a nineteenth century single story timber hotel, enjoy a picnic at either Smith’s or Bucca Crossing and ponder early life in the district at the Invicta Cemetery. The area included the Bucca cattle station, owned by Alexander Adie (of Childers fame). Gooburrum, a local Aboriginal word, was the name given the Shire Council that managed the area in the early twentieth century.</td>
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Figure 6: Date palm, Gin Gin Homestead.

Figure 7: Blaxland Memorial.

Figure 8: Gin Gin Railway Station.

Figure 9: Allen Bros Slab Hut.

Figure 10: Gin Gin Art Gallery.

Figure 11: Boolboonda Railway Tunnel.

Figure 12: Boolboonda School.

Figure 13: Bucca Hotel.
The Story of Bundaberg

6.1 The Story

The story of Bundaberg is the story of sugar and the development of a substantial regional port. Sugar became a major industry in Queensland in the 1860s and the land in the Bundaberg district was ideally suited to growing sugar cane. Small sugar mills appeared in the early 1870s, quickly replaced by large mills that came to dominate the landscape. Cane plantations and farms stretched out across the fertile ground formerly occupied by ‘scrub’, especially the Woongarra Scrub to the east of Bundaberg. The sugar mills brought wealth to the region, reflected in the substantial buildings and the extensive wharves in the heart of Bundaberg, and the development of resort facilities at Bargara. The success of the industry was underpinned by the hard work of South Sea Islanders, who were recruited (and early in the process, often kidnapped) to work on the cane fields.

Key points of the story include:

- The first non-Aboriginal settlement of the Bundaberg district occurred in 1869, when the Stuart Brothers began logging timber on the north bank of the Burnett River.
- Development, including the first wharves, occurred on the north bank of the Burnett River. This is why the original railway station (the terminus of the Bundaberg-Mount Perry Railway) was located in North Bundaberg.
- Sugar mills appeared in the 1870s, but the really big mills were built in the early 1880s. The largest and most prominent included Millaquin, Fairymead and Bingera (near South Kolan). Millaquin and Bingera still operate today.
- Bundaberg became famous for its sugar, but it is just as well-known for its rum. The Bundaberg Rum distillery was built in the 1880s to make use of molasses, a by-product of the sugar production process. The brand sold well and soon became popular around Australia.
- Bundaberg became one of the major sugar producing regions in Queensland and its prominence is reflected in the grand buildings and wide streets of Bundaberg. The wharves were enormous and the river by the town was filled with ships until the construction of the Bulk Sugar Terminal further downstream in the 1950s. Bargara became a prominent resort and railway picnics were held at Nielsen Park from the 1920s.
- South Sea Islanders were brought to the region to work on the sugar plantations in large numbers. Most of the South Sea Islanders in Australia were forced to leave the country in the early 1900s, but many managed to stay and their descendants continue to live in the region.

There are many opportunities to explore the heritage and history of Bundaberg. The opportunities:

- Illustrate the prominence of the sugar industry in the history of the region.
- Demonstrate the importance of South Sea Islanders in the sugar industry in the nineteenth century.
- Show the extent of wealth generated by the sugar industry.
- Reflect the importance of Bundaberg as a port.
Figure 14: Opportunities identified in the Bundaberg Story tourism map.
### 6.2 Attractions and Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key attractions</th>
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| Explore the Bundaberg CBD heritage trail | The walking tour of the CBD of Bundaberg takes in sections of Quay Street, Bourbong Street and Woongarra Street, and set in-between Maryborough Street in the west and Tantitha Street in the east. The walk can be loosely divided into three distinct areas or themes:  
• The Port of Bundaberg - Quay Street.  
• The Place to be - Bourbong Street.  
• The Sacred Heart - Woongarra Street.  
The trail enables the visitor to explore the former wharves, right in the heart of Bundaberg, learn about the importance of Bundaberg as a port and imagine the piles of sugar bags, the noise of the steam cane trains and the bustling activity of men loading the great ships, ready to sail down the river and out to sea.  
Bourbong Street offers an opportunity to imagine a nineteenth century shopping district and promenade, with stately buildings, fancy clothes and genteel manners. Cultural institutions such as the former School of Arts, the Moncrieff Theatre and the beautiful Buss Park (including the Hinkler Memorial) make this street the true civic heart of Bundaberg.  
Woongarra Street takes the visitor to the churches and former theatres. The grand Christ Church and Holy Rosary Church offer exceptionally grand ecclesiastical architecture to admire.  
In amongst these streets the visitor will enjoy the beautiful fig trees, colourful pubs and very important looking bank buildings. Taken together, the sights and stories of Bundaberg paint a picture of a thriving city built on sugar. | • **Quay Street**: Government related sites (customs house, police, immigration barracks), wharf related infrastructure (ferry cutting, sugar cane railway, north bank), commerce (banks), entertainment (pubs).  
• **Bourbong Street**: Civic (Council building, School of Arts, Masonic lodge, Hinkler, Buss Park, post office), retail (Buss & Turner, pubs/hotels), commerce (bank, AMP), culture (Moncrieff Theatre).  
• **Woongarra Street**: Churches (Holy Rosary Catholic Church, Church Pharmacy, Christ Church, St Andrews Church), fig trees. |
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<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
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<th>Key attractions</th>
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| Visit the museums at the Botanic Gardens | The museums precinct offers a unique opportunity to provide an introduction to the natural and industrial landscape and also the people of the Bundaberg region. The location at the northern gateway to Bundaberg makes it an ideal spot to capture visitors and to provide them with an insight into the region, but also to deepen the understanding of visitors seeking more in-depth information about specific topics. The area includes parking facilities, a café and amenities, making it a good spot for travellers to have a break, enjoy the gardens and also take the opportunity to learn about the region. Attractions include the Botanic Gardens, established around 1906, the Hinkler Hall of Aviation and Hinkler House, the Bundaberg & District Historical Museum, Fairymead House and the Australian Sugarcane Railway. The individual elements, currently presented somewhat detached, would benefit from an overarching concept/masterplan for the overall precinct. A holistic concept could for example create connectivity through the sensible and careful juxtaposition of industrial artefacts/art installations within the natural environs of the garden, thus creating linkages between the individual elements and new thought-provoking aspects. The precinct also offers the opportunity to act as a stepping stone to the wider region through interpretive displays focussing on industrial enterprises i.e. sugar mills/rum distillery and Bundaberg Airport. Partnerships with local industry (as recommended in the heritage study) would support this strategy. An inclusion of regional vegetation, for example sugarcane and species representing the Woongarra Scrub in the gardens could be used to reflect the local environment and to create linkages to the respective regions. This approach encourages visitors to explore the region further and therefore stay for longer. The museums precinct also offers the opportunity for special events, i.e. 'Sugar Festival' and aviation days (in connection with Bundaberg Airport). | • Hinkler Hall of Aviation  
• Hinkler House  
• Bundaberg & District Historical Museum  
• Fairymead House  
• Australian Sugarcane Railway  
• Botanic Gardens |
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<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key attractions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Visit the Bundaberg Rum Distillery</td>
<td>The Bundaberg Rum Distillery offers visitors the chance to explore the history of rum production in Bundaberg and the iconic brand of Bundaberg Rum, established in the 1880s. The distillery is an existing tourist attraction and a major tourist asset for Bundaberg. Just as importantly, the distillery sits right alongside the Millaquin Sugar Mill, also established in the 1880s. It is one of three remaining sugar mills in the Bundaberg region, and it was always one of the biggest of the mills from the time it was first built. Although the distillery tour is relatively contained, the interested visitor can learn about the mill and the distillery in the broader context of Bundaberg's history and the other heritage tourism opportunities the region has to offer. Visitors can also take in the sight of the East Bundaberg Water Tower, site of Bundaberg's first reticulated water supply, complementing the amazing industrial landscape harking back over 100 years.</td>
<td>• Bundaberg Distillery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ride a bike along the Sugar Cane Rail Trail</td>
<td>The sugar mills of Bundaberg relied - and to some extent still do - on an extensive network of cane tramways to bring sugar cane to the mills for crushing. Whilst some are still in use, others are no longer operational - but the easement for the line still exists. There is a great opportunity to convert sections of the tramway from Bundaberg's CBD to Bargara for use as a rail trail. Bike trails are increasingly popular with tourists and the Sugar Cane Rail Trail offers a truly unique experience. Visitors can cycle through glorious cane fields, ride past beautiful Queenslander houses and appreciate the unique industrial landscape surrounding the Millaquin sugar mill - all along a flat route that won't be too taxing. The beginning of the rail - or the turnaround point, depending on where one begins riding from - is Nielson Park at Bargara. The park became hugely popular in the early twentieth century as a venue for railway picnics; people from the region and even beyond would travel to the park on the romantic steam engines for a fun day by the beach. The trail offers wonderful opportunities for interpretation along its length, giving riders the option to stop, learn about the history of the tramway and its importance in the history of the sugar industry, and simply take in the smells and sounds of a cane farming landscape.</td>
<td>• Rail trail</td>
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<td>Opportunity</td>
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| Explore the Woongarra Heritage Trail | Uniquely positioned close to the seaside village of Bargara, the Woongarra Heritage Trail offers visitors to learn about the early settlement of the district and the role South Sea Islanders played in the sugar industry in the nineteenth century. Visitors can climb the 'Hummock', a volcanic plug so-named by the navigator Matthew Flinders, and experience firsthand the vine scrub that covered the entire district before it was cleared and cane farms and plantations established. The lookout affords a view of the entire Woongarra district, the most fertile of the sugar cane districts surrounding Bundaberg. From there, the visitor can explore the material remnants of South Sea Islander labour - Sir Anthony's Rest, built to allow the Governor of Queensland to look over the Woongarra (he couldn't walk up to the top of the Hummock at the time!) and the extensive rock wall built by hand by South Sea Islanders from the extensive stock of volcanic rock in the district. The visitor can learn more about Sunnyside Plantation, where South Sea Islanders were buried and whose owner, a descendent of the original plantation owner, has opened up his property to the descendants of the South Sea Islanders who worked there. This trail could be supported by tours provided by the South Sea Islander community, which would deepen visitor's engagement with an important and emotive aspect of the region's history. The tour could link with other places significant to the South Sea Islander, including the church and cemetery adjacent to the Bundaberg General Cemetery. | • The Hummock  
• The Hummock Lookout  
• Sir Anthony's Rest  
• Rock wall  
• Sunnyside Plantation  
• Potential for South Sea Islander tour  
Note some attractions not open to the public - consultation with owners required, but interpretation still possible regardless. |
| Visit the Burnett Lighthouses         | Visitors can experience life for a lighthouse in the nineteenth century at Burnett Heads. The original 1860s lighthouse is located in the local caravan park. Visitors can walk to the lighthouse that replaced the original one and look out over the mouth of the Burnett River. Lighthouse Park offers a playground for children and there are plenty of ideal picnic spots in the lovely seaside town. The attractions offer the opportunity to learn more about Bundaberg as a port, but also the romance of shipping in the history of the region. | • 1860s lighthouse  
• New lighthouse  
• Lighthouse Park |
Figure 15: Hinkler Hall of Aviation.

Figure 16: Fairymead House.

Figure 17: Bundaberg Post Office and war memorial.

Figure 18: Australian Sugarcane Railway.

Figure 19: Bundy Rum Distillery.

Figure 20: Rock Wall, Sunnyside.

Figure 21: View from the Hummock Lookout.

Figure 22: Original lighthouse.
7 The Story of Childers

7.1 The Story

The story of Childers is also about sugar, but set in the dramatic landscape of rolling hills, red soil and cane farms carved from the ‘Isis Scrub’. Childers and the surrounding district developed later than Gin Gin and Bundaberg, but once it was connected to the North Coast Railway in 1887 the town and surrounding district grew rapidly. Juice and sugar mills appeared from the 1880s and the Isis Central Co-Operative Sugar Mill was opened in 1897, the only co-operative mill in the Bundaberg region. Childers developed into a substantial town, although it was devastated by a substantial fire in 1902, which destroyed most of the buildings on one side of the main street. The effect of the fire can still be seen today; timber buildings on one side, substantial brick buildings on the other. As with Bundaberg, the sugar industry in the district relied on South Sea Islanders, and a South Sea Islander Mission was established in the district.

Key points of the story include:

- Selectors, including non-English speaking families from Scandinavia, Germany, Russia and China, began settling in the Isis district in the early 1870s. The first settlements were Abington, which was later abandoned, and Horton.
- The new railway terminated at what became Childers - the town did not exist when the railway was built!
- Around this time, the Queensland Government enacted a village settlement scheme and one of the few locations selected for the scheme in Queensland was Cordalba.
- As soon as the railway was laid in the district sugar mills began to appear. The first was at Horton, just outside of Childers. Horton was a thriving town, eventually eclipsed by Childers. The remains of the mill are still observable today.
- Large sugar mills were established throughout the Isis, including the Childers (Colonial Sugar Refinery or CSR), the Isis Co-Operative and Knockroe. There was intense competition between the mills, eventually leading to the elimination of all but the Isis mill.
- The district was riven by a sugar strike in 1911. Strike camps were established in Childers and Cordalba. The strike was particularly nasty - there were even threats to use explosives to blow up mill infrastructure.
- Like in Bundaberg, South Sea Islanders played an important role in the sugar industry in Childers. Indeed, a mission was established to promote Christianity amongst the Islanders.
- There were two waves of Italian immigration to the Isis region, prior to World War I and after World War II, and the Italian migrants played an important part in the development of the multicultural community in the Isis.
- The concentration of sugar mills prompted the development of sugar cane farms throughout the district and beyond. A branch railway was even constructed to Dallarnil, in the North Burnett, to bring cane to the mills, and commune residents from Byrnestown west of Biggenden used to walk all the way to the mills to earn money to support their short-lived communal experiment.
- Russian families, escaping war and persecution in Europe, settled in the Isis from the late 1920s, further enhancing the multicultural society.
There are many opportunities to explore the heritage and history of Bundaberg. The opportunities:

- Illustrate the history and development of the town of Childers.
- Show the rich sugar history of the district, reflected in the extensive cane farms and the Isis sugar mill.
- Portrait the beautiful village of Cordalba and its importance to the Isis sugar mill.
- Demonstrate the historic connections to towns and settlements in the North Burnett region.
Figure 23: Opportunities identified in the Childers Story tourism map.
## 7.2 Attractions and Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key attractions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explore the Childers CBD Heritage Trail</strong></td>
<td>The Childers Heritage Trail offers visitors a wonderful array of beautiful historic buildings, stretching from early timber court houses, pubs and post offices, through to grand brick hotels and shops. Almost all of the main street is heritage listed! Churchill Street offers a fascinating vista - one side primarily consists of timber buildings, the other brick, reflecting the impact of a great fire in 1902 which affected only one side of the street. A tragic fire in 2000 in the Palace Hotel resulted in the death of fifteen backpackers. The building was restored and renamed the Palace Memorial Building. It includes the Childers Regional Art Gallery and visitor information centre. Whilst walking along the trail, visitors can explore the wonderful museums in Childers, including the Childers Historical Complex and the Old Pharmacy Museum. 'Behind the Scenes' tours are also held at the Paragon Theatre, providing a rich tapestry of interactive experiences in addition to learning more about the history and heritage of the buildings in the town.</td>
<td>• Churchill Street buildings • Childers Historical Complex • Palace Memorial Building • Old Pharmacy Museum • Paragon Theatre • Millenium Park</td>
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<td><strong>Explore the North Isis Heritage Trail</strong></td>
<td>Take a drive off the highway and visit historic sites that explore the history of sugar in the Isis district. Visit the John Thompson Missionary Memorial and learn about the South Sea Islander mission in Childers. Drive through the Isis sugar mill complex and see the mill, the Art Deco former administration building, mill bowling green and mill workers' houses in the classic Queenslander idiom. Travel past the famous Alexander Adie's former property; Adie had the largest sugar cane farm in Australia, owned two cattle stations (Bucca and Agnes Water) and employed dozens of men, accommodating them and their families. You can still see the archaeological remains of part of the original complex. Tourists can then drive on to Cordalba, which was intimately linked to the history of the Isis sugar mill. Visitors can enjoy a meal and drink at the historic Commercial Hotel, explore the village with its 1920s war memorial and general store, and even learn about the 1911 sugar strike at one of the two strike camp sites located behind the hotel.</td>
<td>• John Thompson Memorial • Isis Sugar Mill • Alexander Adie's former property • Commercial Hotel • General Store • War memorial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Key attractions</td>
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| Visit historic Dallarnil         | Dallarnil was once closely connected to the Isis, supplying sugar cane to the mills via a railway branch line especially constructed for that purpose. The settlement thrived in the first half of the twentieth century, but eventually the market for their cane declined and the railway was closed. In the early days of the settlement, the selectors built a public hall and athletics track - at a time when people were inspired by athletics events, especially following the renewal of the Olympic Games in 1896. The hall and track remain remarkably intact, illustrating life in the settlement at the turn of the twentieth century. The track still hosts athletic events on public holidays, just as it has done since its construction in the 1910s. | • Dallarnil Hall and Athletics Track Events:  
  • Athletics carnivals                                                             |
| Learn about the Byrnestown Commune | Visitors travelling deeper into the North Burnett can continue to learn about connections with the Isis district by visiting the Byrnestown Cemetery. Byrnestown was one of three communes established in the North Burnett region in the early 1890s - by the Queensland Government no less! The communes were not successful and the experiment was ended only a couple of years after it started. However, in that time, men from the Byrnestown commune would walk all the way to the sugar mills in the Isis to work during the crushing season, so they could buy food for their families. The cemetery is high on a ridge and overlooks the site of the commune.                                                                                                                                 | • Byrnestown Cemetery                                                                                   |
Figure 24: Paragon Theatre.

Figure 25: Lead lighting at Palace Hotel.

Figure 26: Palace Hotel.

Figure 27: Childers Festival.

Figure 28: Churchill Street Childers.

Figure 29: Commercial Hotel, Cordalba.

Figure 30: South Sea Islander Memorial, Childers.

Figure 31: Isis landscape.
8 Events

In addition to the trails and attractions exists the possibility of heritage contributing to existing events (and feeding back into attractions and trails), or establishing new events that showcase the region’s distinct character.

8.1 Existing events in which heritage can or does play a role

- **The Childers Festival**: This event showcases the heritage of Childers, in an active way (buildings are open for business, tours, a play that explores the 1911 sugar strike, etc. or in a passive way (as an evocative location and backdrop for the festival).
- **The Burnett Heads Lighthouse Festival**: The historic lighthouses form a backdrop to the festival and the festival would benefit from including heritage experiences i.e. telling the story of the lighthouses relating sites.
- **The Crush Festival**: This includes innovative arts and performance projects showcasing the Bundaberg region, some including heritage components, but could also incorporate additional heritage places and experiences.
- **Bert Hinkler’s Birthday Celebration**: This includes a themed birthday party in the Hinkler Hall of Aviation and surrounds, focussing on the person and also the era.
- **Dallarnil Queen’s Birthday Sports Carnival**: This carnival has been held since the hall and athletics track were opened in the 1910s.

The heritage component of these events should continue to be promoted and new linkages to connect visitors and event participants with the heritage of the region should be actively explored.

8.2 Potential new events

- **Bundaberg and Childers Open House**: Open House has become a significant event in the calendars of major cities and regional centres in Queensland and Australia over the last five years. Key examples of regional cities that host the event in Queensland include Maryborough and Toowoomba. To put the region into perspective, there as many places entered on local and State heritage registers and lists in Bundaberg as there are in the Fraser Coast. Both Childers and Bundaberg provide perfect opportunities for the event due to the concentration of heritage places in both centres. They also offer the opportunity for unique experiences associated with the sugar history. Indeed, Bundaberg celebrated its inaugural Open House (September 2016) since the draft Heritage Tourism Strategy was released and the Isis sugar mill recently opened its doors to visitors for the Childers Festival - a tour of the mills, even possibly the cane tramways - would represent an incredible drawcard to the region, for both locals and tourists alike.
- **Celebration of Local Halls**: The ‘celebration’ is proposed to be an annual cycle of events at the local halls that dot the region. Based on the successful ‘Festival of Small Halls’, the idea is to promote singular events at the halls such as dances and concerts that showcase the local area in which the hall is located, the community that lives there and the history of the district and the hall itself.
Queensland National Trust Heritage Week: Although not technically a 'new' event, concentrated planning and promotion of the event across the region would help raise the profile of heritage, particularly in Childers, Bundaberg and Gin Gin, and add value to existing visitation and local participation.

Open House is now a recognised brand name and therefore there is high potential for the event to be successful. The celebration of local halls has the potential to be a unique event that promotes local communities while conveying the historical significance of the district and the hall that represents its community. These events will also appeal in particular to families and older visitors.
9 Strategies and Actions

The following strategies and actions are designed to ensure the heritage tourism strategy is adopted and developed.

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| 1. Develop the heritage tourism opportunities identified in this strategy. | - The first step is to begin the process of developing the heritage tourism opportunities is to prioritise trails, attractions and events and seek internal and external funding to take the ideas from the strategy and develop them into discrete plans, from which the collateral will be produced and events organised.  
- A key outcome of this strategy would be the organisation of opportunities into a prioritised list, following stakeholder consultation.  
- Key to the process is the preparation of individual plans - either for a 'story' (e.g. Bundaberg), particular opportunities within it (e.g. CBD Heritage Trail) or an event.  
- Each opportunity should be approached within the context of the 'story' it is a part of, and also with consideration of the adjacent stories and connective elements.  
- Each plan should include consultation with key stakeholders. |
| 2. Heritage tourism should be integrated within the tourism strategy of the Bundaberg region | - The relevant stakeholders i.e. Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism and Bundaberg Regional Council should take ownership of the development and maintenance of the heritage tourism strategy and the opportunities presented in it and ensure the strategy is functionally integrated in a meaningful way with existing tourism opportunities and portals for the region.  
- For this to be effective, support and co-ordination between the stakeholders and relevant departments must occur. Ideally, key staff responsible for the development and co-ordination of tourism opportunities more broadly in the region should be responsible.  
- This approach should include all relevant stakeholders within both organisations that promote tourism and interpretation experiences e.g. Parks. |
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| 3. The profile of heritage in tourism information should be improved. | - Links to heritage tourism in existing sources of tourist information for the region should be increased and the profile raised to ensure higher visibility for tourists.  
- Means to improve the visibility of heritage include creating heritage products (attractions and experiences) and promoting the region's heritage through:  
  - A mobile-friendly website.  
  - Improved social media presence, particularly Instagram and blogs. Encourage popular individuals and celebrities to visit the region and promote its heritage.  
  - Special events, for example creating themed events in the museums precinct and participating in the National Trust Queensland Heritage Week and the Open House program.  
  - Improved street and highway signage and general wayfinding collateral.  
  - Increased profile of heritage in information provided in information centres in the region.  
  - Innovative apps that leverage augmented reality to encourage patronage of the trails and attractions and support local businesses.  
- This could also extend to ‘gateway’ promotion of the region’s heritage along existing travel routes e.g. highways. |
| 4. Heritage tourism needs to be unified into distinct packages. | - Packages should be developed based on the visitor segments and existing drive tours promoted by Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism.  
- For example, visitors staying at Bargara will naturally access the opportunities in that area; people taking the driving tours will need a cohesive narrative experience integrated with other (non-heritage) experiences across stories and visitors to Bundaberg should be encouraged to visit the museum precinct in the Botanic Gardens as a singular experience, rather than simply components of it (as is the case now).  
- Existing attractions and interpretation collateral should be integrated meaningfully into these packages and promoted accordingly. |
| 5. Heritage promotion needs to be standardised across the region. | - To promote heritage appropriately, it should be standardised across the region. This will assist in developing heritage as a discrete element of the Bundaberg tourism brand.  
- This entails that web and print media and collateral should reflect a unified approach, assisted by parallel strategies (for example, Bundaberg Signage Strategy).  
- Design an easily recognisable heritage label for the region and integrate into signage, printed and digital media so that visitors instinctively know when they are at, or near, a heritage place.  
- The promotion should also be consistent between Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism and the Bundaberg Regional Council. |
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<td>6. Bundaberg Regional Council should prepare and maintain a heritage</td>
<td>The authenticity of the region’s heritage is to a large extent guaranteed by the entry of individual places on to the local heritage register and planning scheme overlay.</td>
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<td>strategy for the region.</td>
<td>A heritage strategy will ensure consistent management of heritage places owned by Council, raise awareness of heritage issues in the development process for staff and owners, unify Council’s approach to heritage between various internal departments and ideally include options for incentives for owners of heritage places to conserve and promote their properties.</td>
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<td>7. Develop a museum precinct at the Botanical Gardens.</td>
<td>This idea is the key heritage related strategy in the Bundaberg North Burnett 2020 Destination Tourism Plan. The precinct presents a unique opportunity to be a platform for wider heritage experiences in the Bundaberg region.</td>
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<td>To do this effectively, a masterplan including concept and landscape design as well as a collection policy for the whole precinct (including the Botanic Gardens) and a funding strategy is recommended as the first step.</td>
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<td>Other relevant points for consideration include:</td>
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<td>▪ A staged implementation is recommended to allow for careful planning and also securing of funding.</td>
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<td>▪ The QHR listed Fairymead House currently contains displays relating to the sugar industry of the region. It is understood that currently a new display concept is being developed; interpretation should focus on the homestead itself and also the sugar history (including its people) to develop the full interpretive potential of Fairymead House within the precinct.</td>
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<td>▪ Investigate collaboration with local artists regarding art installations.</td>
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<td>▪ Consider including local vegetation within the Botanic Gardens.</td>
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<td>8. Include events and festivals in the regional event calendar that</td>
<td>Add value to existing events or create new events that promote the heritage of the region.</td>
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<td>focus on heritage, or have heritage as contributing element.</td>
<td>New events can act as unique attractors that promote the Bundaberg tourism brand.</td>
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<td>The ‘Celebration of Local Halls’ in particular can appeal to locals and tourists alike, span age groups and provide a year round cycle of events that promote the identity and heritage of local communities in the region.</td>
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<td>9. Develop heritage tourism links with surrounding regional councils.</td>
<td>This heritage tourism strategy needs to be extended to incorporate the North Burnett region given the obvious historical connections and a common tourism body.</td>
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<td>Cooperation should also be undertaken with Gladstone and Fraser Coast regions, as there are clear historical connections with these regions (Maryborough and Howard with Childers, Rosedale and Baffle Creek with Bundaberg).</td>
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<td>In general, the connections can assist in strengthening tourism experiences across the region, particularly promoted driving tours and routes.</td>
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<td>Strategy</td>
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| 10. Consultation must be undertaken with community stakeholders to ensure the strategy is supported and promoted at a grass-roots level. | • Undertake consultation with community stakeholders, in particular the Traditional Owners, South Sea Islander community, local historical museums and societies and community hall committees.  
• Consultation will help shape the development of opportunities identified in this strategy and ensure local promotion and commitment to heritage tourism opportunities.  
• Consultation will also be necessary for the development of particular plans, for example interpretation of the Blaxland Memorial (Gin Gin) with Traditional Owners, and South Sea Islander-built infrastructure.  
• Consultation may also be necessary with private owners in some cases, depending on access and other issues such as increasing the profile of a privately-owned place that currently does not attract any visitation. |
| 11. Develop partnerships with relevant industries.                      | • Council should actively engage with relevant regional industrial businesses, in particular the sugar industry, to create mutually beneficial outcomes through heritage tourism experiences. |
| 12. Develop and integrate natural and Aboriginal heritage in the tourism strategy more effectively. | • Although some suggestions have been made in this strategy for natural and Aboriginal heritage tourism, these aspects should be investigated further as part of separate heritage tourism strategies.  
• In the case of Aboriginal cultural heritage, this would entail the development of a working relationship with the region's Traditional Owners in all phases of the process, from planning through to implementation.  
• Nonetheless, the results of the strategies should be integrated with this strategy to form a holistic heritage tourism strategy.  
• One potential means to do this is to utilise the overarching theme of 'The Changing Landscape of the Bundaberg Region', which can unify the natural heritage, Aboriginal settlement and land use and the contemporary historic land use and settlement and how of each of these distinct phases is reflected in the region. |