



EXCITING NEW TOURISM PROJECT ONE STEP CLOSER AFTER COUNCIL GIVES NOD

The future of tourism in Dubbo took an important step forward last night when Council resolved that a robust business case be developed, including feasibility studies, with the aim to secure funding to develop and invest in an iconic tourism precinct for Dubbo.

In his Mayoral minute, Mayor of the Dubbo Region, Councillor Ben Shields said he has a vision to establish Dubbo as the number one inland visitor destination in NSW and Australia, both for Australian families and international visitors to NSW.

“It is with great pleasure that I announce that Dubbo Regional Council has been advised that an expression of interest on a project dubbed ‘Destination Dubbo-International Ready’ made to the NSW Government has been given the green light to progress to a business case under the Regional Growth Environment and Tourism Fund,” Cllr Shields said.

“This is very positive news for the potential project that will lay future foundations of our growing visitor economy, nurture and share our Indigenous culture and strengthen our offering to the ever growing events market,” he said.

Cllr Shields went on to explain that Councillors have held strategic planning days, reviewed Masterplans and discussed concepts within internal workshops to discuss opportunities to grow our regional visitor economy.

“While we all want to invest in our region, we need to ensure that it is development to meet demand, development that is sustainable and development where the community will see solid return on investment,” he said.

“Dubbo is home to the most iconic visitor attraction in regional NSW – the award-winning Taronga Western Plains Zoo (TWPZ), which attracted 260,000 visitors in 2017-18.

“However, for the Dubbo region to develop into a mature and diversified tourism destination, then additional iconic attraction products are required to support the TWPZ in showcasing Dubbo to the rest of Australia and the world,”

The ‘Destination Dubbo’ International Ready Project will drive growth in the visitor economy by drawing tourists from outside the Dubbo region, extending visitor overnight stays and increasing visitor expenditure.

Dubbo Regional Council is ready to support Destination NSW’s recently announced targets of making ‘tourism an engine industry for rural and regional NSW’ and is seeking around \$10 million to develop and invest in iconic tourism products to complement the TWPZ; including

- Dubbo Wiradjuri Tourism Centre – construction of a centre in which to exhibit repatriated sacred Aboriginal carved trees currently held in storage at the Australian Museum; creating a cultural experience truly unique to this region, exhibiting these Indigenous artefacts that will be the only location in the world to display this national

significant collection.

- Macquarie Foreshore Cultural Precinct and Trails – development of a state-of-the-art outdoor events arena with the capacity to attract major festivals to Dubbo and ignite new economic growth initiatives within the precinct.

“The precinct development will also see the construction of a new 100-metre-long pedestrian bridge over the Macquarie River to extend the popular Tracker Riley Cycle Way from the TWPZ to the Cultural Precinct and Old Dubbo Gaol,” he said.

“It will also become the merging point of Indigenous and heritage interpretive trails to TWPZ, through the Tracker Riley Cycle Way, Justice Trail to the Old Dubbo Gaol and Aboriginal Heritage Trail to the Dubbo Wiradjuri Tourism Centre. The foreshore development will provide activation for numerous experiences including kayaking, nature trails, fishing and eateries,” he said.

“In the 2040 Community Strategic Plan our community told us they wanted Council to achieve ongoing economic prosperity through a visitor economy that makes use of our tourism assets as well as explore and promote the potential for Aboriginal Cultural Tourism,

“The community have also repeatedly called for Council to identify ways to include our river corridors to play a prominent role in our leisure landscape,

“I must point out at this stage there is still a long road ahead to obtain final approval for these projects, however with the request to present a robust business case I believe we are on our way,” he said.

The final business case will be submitted to the NSW Government by the deadline of early January 2019.

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