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Light Country Visitor Information Centre Business Plan 2026/2027



Prepared by Tourism Development Manager, July 2026

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Vision Statement

To be known as a generous country community where visitors can connect with the past and the present and create lasting bonds with our people and places.

Strategic Goal

To work collaboratively with all levels of industry to build a thriving and sustainable visitor economy for the residents and businesses of Light Regional Council.

Light Country Brand

Tag Line – ***Get Closer***



Light Country brand purpose:

To give visitors a genuine country experience by sharing our unique stories, scenic beauty and diverse experiences.

Light Country brand positioning statement:

Light is a closer connection to the country.

Light Country brand values:

- People: We are a big-hearted community and care for one another.
- The Land: We respect the Traditional Owners and how our homeland provides for us.
- Heritage: We celebrate our ancestors and uphold our traditions.
- Diversity: We believe variety is what makes our community stronger.
- Honesty: We are genuine.

Introduction

Visitors are at the heart of the Light Country visitor economy. The choices they make, where to stop, what to explore, how long to stay and where to spend; are shaped by the quality, relevance and trustworthiness of the information they receive before and during their journey.

As an accredited provider of visitor information, the Light Country Visitor Information Centre plays a critical role in helping visitors feel welcome, informed and inspired. While accurate and timely information remains central to its purpose, the VIC's value extends well beyond answering enquiries. It is a trusted front door to the region, a connector between visitors and local stories, a promoter of businesses and events, and a practical hub for strengthening destination development across Light Country.

Today's visitors are seeking more than brochures and directions. They are looking for:

1. A warm, welcoming experience
2. Knowledgeable and professional staff and volunteers with strong customer service skills
3. Unbiased, authoritative and tailored information, available both online and offline
4. Confidence that their research and travel decisions are supported by reliable local knowledge
5. Local stories, recommendations and insights that help them connect more deeply with the place they are visiting.

For Light Country, accreditation provides a recognised standard of quality and credibility. It supports the VIC to operate as:

- An economic driver that encourages visitors to stay longer, explore further and increase local spend
- A trusted and recognisable part of the accredited visitor information network
- A point of connection and engagement with industry, community groups, residents and visitors
- A source of meaningful data that helps Council understand visitor needs, trends and opportunities
- A place for local employment, volunteering, skill development and community pride
- A channel to influence visitor behaviour and direct value back into the Light Region economy.

This Business Plan provides a clear framework for how the VIC will deliver on these opportunities in 2026/2027. By defining priorities, success measures and shared responsibilities, the plan enables the VIC, Council teams and regional stakeholders to work together with purpose. Each activity is aligned to broader goals in destination development,

visitor servicing, Light Country brand recognition and sustainable economic growth, allowing progress to be evaluated against investment and improved over time.

The role of the VIC also aligns with the direction of the South Australian Tourism Plan 2030, which highlights the importance of growing distinctive products and experiences, supporting industry capability, strengthening the South Australian story and delivering a genuine visitor experience. Through its local knowledge, industry relationships and visitor-facing services, the Light Country VIC helps ensure the region's stories, experiences and people are represented with authenticity.

Since management of the VIC transitioned to Light Regional Council's Economic Development unit in early 2022, the service has continued to evolve. This transition has supported the development of a dedicated VIC Business Plan, the recruitment of a Coordinator Visitor Services, the planning and implementation of a Volunteer Program, and stronger operational alignment with the Light Country destination brand.

Titled **DELIVER**, this Business Plan sets out how the Light Country Visitor Information Centre will continue to strengthen visitor information, operations, industry support and destination development while building the presence and value of the Light Country brand.

Centred around four strategic pillars—Community, Commerce, Conservation and Culture—DELIVER provides a practical roadmap for the actions required to maintain accreditation standards, grow industry and community connections, enhance visitor services, and support the goals and objectives of Light Regional Council's strategic plans.

Background

Kapunda Tourism became an incorporated body in 1986 and launched a Visitor Information Centre in the heritage-listed Hill Street Herald Building. Later a decisive move was made to a more prominent location at 76 Main Street, however difficulties with rental commitments forced a further relocation to the Kildea Room in the Soldiers Memorial Hall at 7 Hill Street.

In 1999 an application for Accreditation with the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) was successful and Accreditation status granted, recognising the diligent efforts of the committee and volunteers. Kapunda Tourism Inc., became Kapunda & Light Tourism Inc. (KLTI), reflecting a commitment to the wider Light region. As an Accredited Visitor Information Centre, the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) was supportive of the need to regain Main Street frontage to lift the profile and accessibility of the Centre and negotiated with Light Regional Council to provide space for the Centre in the Thomson Building upgrade to which SATC contributed funds. The move from the Soldiers Memorial Hall to the Thomson Building took place in 2003.

Following changes to guidelines for accredited Visitor Information Centres in South Australia, KLTI, as the current managers of the Kapunda Visitor Information Centre approached the Council to discuss various options for the future of the Centre. The parties concluded that to retain accreditation the Council is in the best position to assume future responsibility for the management of the Centre, enabling it to continue to operate effectively, providing stability, continuity, and growth to this important community service in respect to:

- Ensuring the best possible information services are made available to visitors and the public.
- Managing and developing a small retail outlet at the Centre.
- Encouraging and maintaining a high standard in the delivery of customer service.
- Recruiting and engaging paid staff and volunteers who have a genuine passion and interest in tourism related activity in the region.
- Promoting an understanding within the local community of the benefits to be gained from tourism activities.

At the 17 June 2008 Ordinary Council meeting the following resolution was passed by Council:

- That Council undertakes the management of the Kapunda Visitor Information Centre from 1 July 2008 and incorporates that service provision into the Kapunda library facility operations.
- That Council enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Kapunda & Light Tourism Incorporated to reflect the new arrangements, with the terms being reviewed biennially, to assist Kapunda & Light Tourism Incorporated achieve its objectives as set out in their business plan and to continue to promote the Light Region as a preferred tourism destination.
- That the final draft of the Memorandum of Understanding be referred to the Community Development Committee for adoption and a copy be presented to Council for information.

Kapunda & Light Tourism Incorporated ceased operation on 12 November 2019

Light Regional Council assumed the operation of the Kapunda Visitor Information Centre on the 11th of August 2008.

The Registered Business Name of Kapunda Visitor Information Centre was changed December 2022 to be the 'Light Country Visitor Information Centre' to reflect the new Light Region brand ***Light Country*** and to allow for flexibility in the location of the VIC within a regional Council; the name is required to be re-registered after three years.

Accreditation

The Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) is *QTAB Accredited and a paid member of the South Australian Accredited Visitor Information Servicing Network (SAVISN). There are approximately 40 Accredited Visitor Information Centres spread across South Australia. They achieve their accreditation status by adhering to the National Accreditation Standard and are regularly audited. Only Accredited VICs can display the trademarked yellow italic “i” sign, which serves to guarantee quality service and reliable information.

Audits

- South Australian Accredited VICs are subjected to online and physical audits by Tourism Industry Council SA (TiCSA) to ensure compliance with both national and state requirements. VICs are responsible for the cost of auditing.
- Online verification is based on *Quality Tourism Accredited Business (QTAB) requirements with some elements requiring evidence during an onsite visit. All of the SA requirements are verified during the onsite visit.
- Online audits are undertaken at the start of each financial year and include uploading a current public liability insurance certificate and the details of any other licenses/permits/compliance requirements.
- Physical audits are undertaken every 3 years and involve the verification of the requirements detailed in a checklist.

Benefits

- Recognition as part of the official network of SAVISN and recognised as part of the National Network of Accredited Visitor Information Centres. Membership of SAVISN.
- Benefits that arise from SAVISN’s “Industry Leader” membership of TiCSA
- Financial SAVISN members are also members of TiCSA. Complimentary “Supporter of Tourism” membership of TiCSA. TiCSA member rates for all TiCSA organised events.
- All other TiCSA members’ benefits allocated to “Supporter of Tourism”.
- Eligibility to use the registered trademark ‘i’ logo. The accreditation logo can be promoted locally, nationally and internationally as a symbol of quality.
- The ability to liaise with and seek assistance / ideas from other Accredited VICs
- Access to official State Government signage on main roads, approach routes and within townships
- Competitive advantage over non-accredited Centre’s.
- The ability to assure customers of the continued quality of service provided.

- Assurance to visitors/tourists that staff are well trained, knowledgeable and unbiased in recommending and providing correct information.
- Operators have confidence in recommending visitors to Accredited VICs.
- An Accredited VIC has access to edit and assist operators with updating their Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) listings.
- Implementation of formal operational and management procedures, which leads to improved business knowledge and performance, competence and predictability.
- Facilitate continuous business improvement via an alignment with Total Quality Management principles.
- South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) sponsorship of the South Australian VIC Conference allowing an opportunity to network and learn
- SATC support staff to assist or offer advice in relation to ongoing VIC issues.
- Promotion of VIC locations on southaustralia.com and southaustralia.com mobile site.
- Inclusion on the Tourism Australia, SATC and TiCSA websites. VICs must be registered on ATDW in order to appear on southaustralia.com website.
- VICs as call to action on South Australian touring routes for information and bookings
- VICs appear on regional maps and publications produced by private contractors e.g. Lonely Planet, Carto Graphics (maps).
- Supply of all regional guides for display and distribution within the VIC.



Figure 1 - Visitor Services Touchpoints

Key Visitor Services Objectives

- A region that is responsive to visitor service needs and continues to build a robust and sustainable visitor economy for the Light Region.
- A supporting governance and destination management framework that enables tourism providers to be assisted as appropriate to deliver effective, efficient, and contemporary visitor services.
- Visitor information services that are nimble and visitor-centric working to best practice and continuous improvement providing the information people want, when and how they want it.
- A destination Visitor Information Centre that is recognised and resourced as the tourism hub for the region.
- Visitor information outlets, and face-to-face visitor information services as required to deliver information where the visitors are.
- Digital delivery of up-to-date, accurate and user-friendly tourism information that is available to people before, during and following their visit.

Successful VICs

Successful VICs showcase the character of the place through clever delivery of information and are the bridge between travellers and the local community and local economy.

- They do not only provide information - but they also generate revenue, collect data on tourism, actively market the region and engage the local community.
- They strengthen tourism offerings and create unique experiences within their own facilities.

For Light Country, high-performing Visitor Information Centres (VICs) are those that go beyond simply providing information to become immersive experiences. They showcase our unique regional identity, embrace a distinct sense of place, and invite visitors to connect more deeply with our stories, landscapes, and communities.

Critically, VICs also play a direct role in strengthening the local economy. By inspiring longer stays, encouraging visitor spending with local businesses, and promoting authentic experiences, they act as catalysts for economic activity across the region. From directing visitors to local attractions and events to supporting small operators and producers, effective VICs help ensure tourism benefits are widely distributed.

In this way, successful VICs in Light Country are not just information hubs - they are economic drivers and destination experiences in their own right, helping convert visitor interest into meaningful engagement and tangible outcomes for our communities.

Within their role of supporting all local business, they can offer travellers a taste of the region, with a constantly revolving showcase of local suppliers displayed in a branded regionally characteristic way.

They build a local reputation of being the go-to tourism hub through connection, support, networking, services, knowledge, and expertise.

VICs:

- Deliver up-to-date, accurate information in-line with changing consumer wants and needs.
- Align their activities with the destinations brand and marketing and strategic plans.
- Make the best use of Local Government funding and resources.
- Increase local collaboration and partnerships in information delivery.
- Increase visitor numbers, length of stay and spend.

Situation Analysis – VIC – Visitor Services

Location

- State Heritage-listed Thomson Building, 53 Main Street, Kapunda
- Co-located with Council library and customer services and VIC permanent installations; the Sir Sidney Kidman Experience and Taste of the Region interpretive display
- In centre of town opposite Kapunda Town Square (which has a water station) and within walking distance of Kapunda Museum, shops, eateries, parking and amenities and Kapunda Mural Trail
- Crase Street car park has ample parking and an electric charging station less than 100m from the entrance of the VIC.
- Dedicated Caravan and Motorhome parking on town square side of Crase Street

Services

- Face-to-face visitor contact
- Phone and email visitor contact
- Displays / distribution tourism publications (printed information, e.g., guides, brochures, maps)
- Phone charging
- Printing of personal travel documents
- Use of public computers

Commercial products and services

Booking referrals

- Accommodation – direct with operator or online
- Tourism products and experiences
- Local or regional events

Retail

- Souvenirs, maps, gifts, locally made products and Local History books

Tours

- Kapunda Heritage Tour and Kapunda Town Tour in conjunction with Kapunda Historical Society
- Historic Kapunda Copper Mine Site tours throughout South Australian History Month and private tours for groups more than 10+ people which should be booked in advance.

Digital facilities on site

- Free Wi-Fi; Computers and internet access

Facilities

- Parking – on street parking or 1-minute walk to dedicated car park
- Reception desk, seating, toilets, lift access
- Interpretive display and information - 'Taste of the Region' display located in basement of building (self-paced, interactive maps, tourism videos and information)
- Kidman Exhibition (collection of photographic prints, artwork, memorabilia and 16mm film documenting pastoralists life) located on first floor of building.

Staff and Volunteers

Staffing

- Customer Service part service (not managed by Tourism)
- Training provided: dealing with difficult customers, first aid, systems, WHS
- Training / skills gaps: sales, marketing, bookings, digital

Volunteers

- Volunteer training began April 2026 and volunteers as of June 2026 are going through the final Working With Children Check and National Police Checks – with volunteers to begin July 2026
- Tour Guide Volunteer for Historic Kapunda Copper Mine Site Tours

Funding

- Light Regional Council (LRC) operational and staffing
- LRC owned building, business unit cost attribution excludes property expenses: depreciation, electricity, water, cleaning.

Initiatives

- Kidman Exhibition and film
- Trails app – Discover the Light

- Taste of the Region display with seasonal changes
- In-house flyers and brochures
- Kapunda Cornish Pisky Trail
- Historic Kapunda Copper Mine tours

Staff knowledge - updates

- Emails and notices, training and networking (SAVISN)
- Famil program
- Feedback from Tourism Development Manager (TDM) and Barossa Australia

Data

Manual recording of:

- Number of visitors ; Location of origin; Length of stay; Visitation to exhibition and interpretive display; Site Location; VIC Phone, Library Phone or In-person; time of attendance; number of people; Services given; who recommended the Kidman Exhibition; Number of Pisky packs taken; How they learnt about the VIC, Table Tennis bats and ball loans for table in Town Square. Recorded in a secure Nintex Form and detailed reporting made.

Performance measurement and reporting

- Trip Advisor rating; Google rating; 6 monthly SAVISN surveys; Customer feedback forms, Review Pro
- Tourism staff collation of visitor information
- Annual Report for LRC

Governance / Ownership

- Owned and managed by Light Regional Council.

Gap Analysis – Light Country Visitor Information Centre

Colocation - the Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) is co-located with the Council library and customer services, with a staff pool undertaking all three customer-facing roles. The Coordinator VIC has a dedicated desk for coordinating Visitor Services and adjacent space is where volunteers are based. There are currently no spatial need gaps to deliver VIC services as a co-located service in the Thomson Building.

Skills - while co-location can offer financial benefits, such as shared spaces and potential savings in salaries and wages, it also brings some notable challenges. Staff are required to

have a broad skill set and knowledge across library services, council customer service, and visitor servicing.

Volunteers play a key role in addressing the skills gap, bringing specialised expertise and a level of visitor-focused service that would be difficult to replicate solely through generalist staffing.

Space - challenges are present with competition for floor space for visitor servicing, displays, flexibility of layout (different customer service requirements) and technology to support all services. The site is also home to a curated Sir Sidney Kidman exhibition on Level 1 and Taste of the Region interpretive display in the basement.

Experience - specialist consultants have recommended that future modifications to the site consider the potential benefits of 'reimagining' the visitor experience both in terms of visitor information delivery and these attractions.

Volunteers - the VIC has is currently recruiting for volunteers.

Staff training - needs have been identified in areas such as sales, marketing and use of digital technology. The requirement (per accreditation guidelines) for 7-day delivery is currently inhibiting the ability to provide this training. The engagement of volunteers to assist in VIS delivery may assist in addressing this challenge and ensuring that service from volunteers exceeds customer service standards.

SWOT Analysis Light Country Visitor Information Centre July 2026

Strengths – increasing visitor numbers, Coordinator Visitor Services knowledge is strong, volunteers learning to provide high customer and visitor servicing, range of souvenirs had been tried and tested and good sales have been consistently happening, improved relationships with community groups

Weaknesses – New library staff with limited previous knowledge of VIC and of the areas of the region. Associated rostering challenges to be able to train efficiently new staff. Flexible spatial needs for library and customer services constraining opportunities for more permanent VIC furniture and limited amount of souvenirs offered due to space constraints. Not a friendly entrance into co-location space with a massive library desk that is not friendly for visitors coming into the VIC. Budget, operating hours on a weekend (close at 1pm) and extended operating hours on Monday and Thursday (6pm). Limited recognition of the scope and impact of Visitor Services and Tourism activities.

Opportunities – working with community groups, councils and private sector to create new exhibits and new agreements, volunteers who will be trained specifically on visitor servicing and excellent customer service. Updating the basement box room area of the Taste of the

Region display and creation of a new experiences within the boxes. Extending operating hours to 3pm on weekends and public holidays and have Mondays and Thursdays close at 5pm

Threats –budgetary restraints, heritage building issues, fuel crisis, bird flu

SWOT Analysis Light Region – Destination July 2026

Strengths – investment in Mine Site, Light Country branding throughout non-GI region, Drovers Way Drive Trail, new town signage and maps, new entry to council signs, new caravan and motorhome parking signage, RV dump points throughout the region. Tourism and Visitor Services marketing knowledge and activating marketing channels.

Weaknesses – budget, lack of grant opportunities for tourism development opportunities, no cycling tracks between townships for safe movement between towns

Opportunities – continued investment in Mine Site, investment in signage connecting all the towns in region, working with other council departments on projects that impact visitation. Increasing operator take up of ATDW that flows through to lightcountry.com.au and southaustralia.com, Drovers Encounter to boost the recognition and visitation of Kapunda and its surrounds

Threats – funding uncertainty, no investment in marketing, no subject matter expert in tourism marketing, no investment in new tourism attractions

Management Structure

Org Chart Economic Development

Economic Development

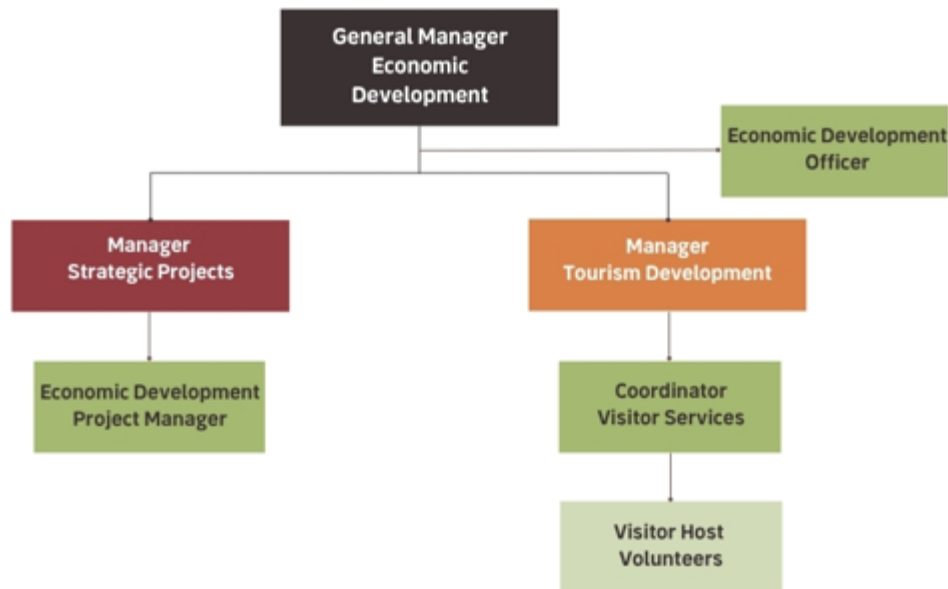


Figure 2 - Economic Development Organisation Structure June 2026

Business Functions

The Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) is owned and managed by Light Regional Council (Council).

Name:

Council has developed a regional destination brand "Light Country". VIO's and Pop Ups / Booths to support the delivery of visitor services to the Light Region.

ABN:

The VIC is an operational unit of Light Regional Council and utilises ABN 35 455 841 625.

Business Hours

The opening hours of the VIC are determined as part of the TiCSA accreditation process and are as follows:

Monday 9am to 6pm

Tuesday 9am to 5pm

Wednesday 9am to 5pm

Thursday 9am to 6pm

Friday 9am to 5pm

Saturday 9am to 1pm

Sunday 9am to 1pm

Public Holidays 9am to 1pm

Closed Good Friday, Christmas Day

Communication Channels

- Telephone: 08 8566 2902 and 1300 770 301
- In Person: 51 to 53 Main Street, Kapunda, 5373
- Email: visitorcentre@light.sa.gov.au
- Website: www.lightcountry.com.au
- Post: PO Box 72, Kapunda, 5373

Transactions

- Payment Types Accepted
- Cash, EFTPOS, Credit Card

Credit Arrangements

No credit is available to the public. Invoices issued by Light Regional Council for VIC related business shall be paid within 14 days of issue. All supplier invoices received will be paid within 30 days of receipt.

Security

A security system is installed throughout the building and this is provided and managed by DBT Security. Staff have individual pins for the security system.

Keys are issued to staff as required. A key register is kept at Council and managed within the Infrastructure and Environment Department. Staff must sign to acknowledge receipt of their key.

A new fob and code system will be shortly introduced to the Thomson building

Cleaning

Council has employed a contract to clean the Thomson Building daily. Any additional light cleaning (e.g., dusting shelves) is undertaken by staff as required.

Maintenance

The Thomson Building is owned by Light Regional Council, who is therefore responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the structure. Maintenance requests are put through to Council's 'Customer Action Team', from the Infrastructure & Environment Department and are then

escalated Council's Facilities Management Coordinator for programmed or works required by a contractor.

Insurance

Council holds the following relevant insurances with unlimited cover:

- LGAAMF – council assets – property, vehicles, computers etc
- LGAMLS – Public liability and Professional Indemnity
- LGAWCS – Workers compensation

Stakeholders

Council will continue to work closely with the business community and in particular the hospitality, tourism, and accommodation operators and industry associations and alliances.

Key Local Stakeholders:

- Light Regional Council (LRC) staff
- LRC Elected Members
- Tourism operators
- Event committees and organisers
- Residents and businesses
- Community organisations
- Local business alliances

Key External Stakeholders:

- Tourism Industry Council South Australia (TicSA)
- South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC)
- Regional Industry Organisations - Barossa Australia (BA)
- Regional Development Australia - Barossa, Gawler, Light, Adelaide Plains (RDA-BGLAP)
- South Australian Visitor Information Servicing Network - (SAVISN)
- Barossa Council and Town of Gawler
- National and international visitors

Light Regional Council

Light Regional Council Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028

The Light Country Visitor Information Centre strategic goals

Community

A vibrant country community, growing sustainably, with housing, services and places that support a healthy and happy life for all.

Focus area

- Ensuring places and activities for people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and means

Transport

Quality road, path, public and community transport networks that make it easy to get around.

Focus area

- Advocacy for improved bus and rail services, roads and speed limits

Sustainability

A thriving, healthy and resilient community working together to protect and restore our environment now and for the future.

Focus area

- Striving towards environmental sustainability of operations by the progressive reduction of GHG emissions to achieve net zero

Economy

A diverse economy sustained by its rural identity and heritage.

Focus area

- Investing in tourism initiatives that also benefit our community
- Improving tourism information and wayfinding

Leadership

An inclusive, accountable and collaborative Council that supports business and community

Focus areas

- Enhancing community engagement for all ages and backgrounds
- Improving the customer experience and enhancing the customer satisfaction
- Leading collaboration to share resources and strengthen advocacy

Economic Development Plan 2020 - 2030

The economic analysis of the local economy indicated that there are a number of future economic development growth opportunities for the Light Region in the following industries:

- Agriculture
- Food and beverage manufacturing
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Tourism
- Equine industry • Healthcare (including emergency services, aged care and retirement living)
- Creative industries

Tourism Plan 2018 - 2023

Priority Area 1- Drive Demand

- Inspire more people to visit, stay longer, spend more, and visit more of the experiences around the region through strategic marketing and communication actions.

Priority Area 2 – Working Better Together

- Collaborate with the region's stakeholders to grow the visitor economy through the implementation of strategic projects.

Priority Area 3 – Supporting what we have

- Help ensure visitors have a positive, memorable experience, so they tell their family and friends about the region, by building the experience base in the region.

Priority Area 4 – Increasing Recognition of the Value of Tourism

- To strengthen the industry from the inside out, creating more tourism ambassadors for the region.

Priority Area 5 – Activate an effective and sustainable visitor servicing model

- To ensure visitors can access visitor information when and where they need it, both on and offline.

Tourism Situational Analysis 2024

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

South Australian Tourism Commission

- South Australian Tourism Plan 2030
- South Australian Regional Visitor Strategy 2025

Nature Like Nowhere Else - Stand Out Walking Journeys (Heysen Trail). Sensory (zip line, heritage)

Tourism Industry Council South Australia (TicSA)

- Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026

REGIONAL

Barossa Australia

- Destination Management Plan 2026-2030 (coming September 2026)
- Annual Operating Plan 2025-26

Regional Development Australia Barossa, Gawler, Light, Adelaide Plains (RDA-BGLAP)

- Regional Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Destination

Brand Management

Overview:

The Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) will work to ensure that the VIC and Light Country brands are perceived as planned and secure their objectives within VIC operations and marketing activities. Developing a good relationship with the identified [target markets](#) is essential to supporting effective brand management and growth through socialgenics (*that which produces or causes a connection and an exchange between two or more people*).

Key Strategies:

Brand training and skill development

- Survey of participants and implementation at end of training.
- Achieve milestones, workshops.

Light Country brand implementation

- Attendance at brand implementation planning meetings and workshops.
- Statistics reflect target market visitation.

VIC and Light Country branding

- All external communications, services and products are on brand.
- Visual elements, messaging and brand values are consistent with brand guidelines.

Partnerships

Overview:

The Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) will develop and sustain collaborative partnerships and relationships with Light Country stakeholders and VICs. The building of the VICs brand equity is key to evolving respect and recognition as the primary contact and regarded tourism expert for Light Country for visitor and tourism information and services.

Key Strategies:

Consider the industry unity opportunities for leadership.

- Formation of a network of Light Country tourism operators and events.

Influence stakeholders to deliver Light Country brand activities, VIC and LRC Tourism Plans.

- Light Country brand uptake and achievement of VIC and LRC Tourism objectives.

Product bundling

- Increase in collaborative product development and promotion.
- Brochure exchange to give a bigger presence of brochures for Light Regional Council in other Council VICs

Experience

Customer Service

Overview:

The Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) will work to consistently deliver user friendly, quality customer service and experiences across all visitor touch points. The delivery of professional assistance and objective advice to generate socialgenic results expressed in customer satisfaction, positive word of mouth and referral outcomes.

Key Strategies:

Customer Service training and skill development for Visitor Servicing Volunteers

- Survey of participants and implementation at end of training.
- Achieve milestones, workshops.

Visitor touch points – moment of truth

- The visitor experience of the VIC and visitor services has been comprehensively audited.

Continuous improvement methodology

- Surveys and Review Pro reflect customer service and experience satisfaction.
- Social media insights indicate increased socialgenic engagement results.
- Timely responses to Google and TripAdvisor reviews to ensure visitor satisfaction after visitation

Accreditation

Overview:

The Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) will ensure it is continuously focusing on sustainability and adhering to Quality Tourism Framework Accreditation 'QTAB' requirements in its operations, services and planning to remain an Accredited Visitor Information Centre, a member of the South Australian Visitor Information Services Network (SAVISN) and hold a current Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard.

Key Strategies:

Connection and collaboration with SAVISN and regional VIC's.

- Regular connection with SAVISN.

VIC Accreditation status

- Audit standards are met to attain annual online renewal and onsite audits by TiCSA

Sustainable Tourism Certification

- Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard is achieved and current

VIC Attractions

Overview:

The VIC operates Taste of the Region - two rooms of information located in the basement of the VIC, the box room (which is in the process of being updated) and the map room, each containing different themes. The Sir Sidney Kidman Exhibition located on the first floor of the VIC is a static, primarily photographic exhibition with a 16mm film and some memorabilia of the life of Sidney Kidman. Both attractions are free.

Key Strategies:

Taste of the Region Experience

- The Taste of the Region Experience has been benchmarked against competition / other experiences
- Enhance cultural engagement and visitor experience at *Taste of the Region*
- Visitor feedback is collected and considered
- Find display opportunities through collaborative dialogue with community groups
- Taste of the Region display opportunities for seasonal displays through collaboration with other Barossa Tourism Region councils

Product bundle with other Kapunda attractions to attract group tours

- New products and experiences are developed to attracting group markets

Monitor grant opportunities to revitalise Taste of the Region

- Grant opportunities are identified and considered

Location

Events / Pop-Ups

A Pop-up is a non-permanent service operating for a part-day, single day or over multiple days for the purposes of an event, tradeshow, or crisis management. It is required to have person-to-person service when open and be aligned with Kapunda as the Hub Light Country VIC.

Key strategies:

Pop-up VIC at relevant gatherings to promote Light Country and provide information services

- Increased VIC presence at state events and gatherings

Hub / Networking

Overview:

The VIC will plan and deliver regular networking events, famil plans and provide a calendar of opportunities for operators to update their tourism product to staff and volunteers and to the community via the VIC. The VIC will work to be known as a Hub for tourism activation and information with regular engagement to develop a robust relationship and positive reputation with key stakeholders.

Key Strategies:

Tourism database

- Current and accurate tourism database

VIC Networking Calendar

- Regular networking events are planned and held

Famils

- A product famil plan is implemented
- A SAVISN plan is implemented

Information Services

Digital

Overview:

The VIC will monitor and investigate digital technology advancements for information kiosks; mobile information delivery and story and news creation for a memorable, safe and seamless visitor experience. Digital innovations / modifications may include the use of QR Codes; visitor tracker; virtual reality (VR) and voice activated search in association with touch screens.

Key Strategies:

Track trends

- Tourism industry trends are monitored and tracked

QR Codes

- QR Codes are linked where appropriate

Visitor tracker

- Best practice visitor tracking implemented for data capture

Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR)

- Increase in available video assets

Voice activated search

- Created content that fits the demand for voice search for accessibility

Display

Overview:

Physical and electronic visual displays to showcase merchandise, convey information and promote tourism operators, the Light Country brand and the VIC brand, including retail lines, maps, regional tourism products, and experiences, information, events, news and promotions.

Key Strategies:

Signs

- VIC internal and building signage is professionally presented and on brand

Display

- Display best practice reference tools are available for VIC team members
- Visual merchandising best practice evident

Programs

Overview:

The VIC will monitor favourable opportunities; plan and deliver programs to allow for tourism operators and community groups who run attractions and events to display and engage with community and visitors within the VIC and externally.

Key Strategies:

Business / Experience profiling

- A program to profile businesses and experiences implemented

Product presentation / display

- A program to feature businesses and experiences implemented

Visitor Services

Merchandising

Overview:

VIC merchandising solutions are investigated in relation to space, display, sales, brand, visitor services needs, supply and profit.

Key Strategies:

VIC Space

- VIC Spatial needs identified and implemented

Product

- Retail lines on brand and profitable

Tours

Creation of tours for Kapunda involving the Historic Kapunda Copper Mine and Kapunda Main Street. Other townships will be developed in due course.

Key Strategies:

Historical review

- Work with Kapunda Historical Society on Main Street history to create a walking tour that will captivate the visitors
- Work with internal and external experts in the Historic Kapunda Mine Site to curate a walking tour that is historically interesting weaving with storytelling of main history points of the mine
- Collating historical information for Freeling, Greenock, Seppeltsfield, Marananga, Roseworthy and Wasleys

Training of Volunteers

- Work with VIC Volunteers to garner interest in if they are interested in leading walking tours and Historic Kapunda Mine Site tours
- Set up a history information packs including stories for studying

Environment

Education

Overview:

The VIC, in association with Council, and industry stakeholders has an obligation to ensure the region, industry and assets including the delivery of a Destination Management Plan are supported, enhanced and protected where applicable through VIC, visitor and operator education and awareness. The environment being the surroundings and conditions in which the VIC team operates entails ongoing monitoring and adjustment to trends and regulations.

Key Strategies:

Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)

- ATDW listings are optimised, current and accurate

Tourism asset protection

- Increase in environmental and biodiversity content in visitor information channels

- Feedback to relevant stakeholders

Development and skills

- VIC team members and stakeholders are informed of training opportunities and industry trends
- VIC team skills gaps are identified and rectified
- Look at opportunities to upskill in tourism skills

Signage / Interpretation

Overview:

Consistent clarity in definition and brand are all key in ensuring the VIC is recognised and respected, and that Light Country evolves to become recognisable and regarded as a destination. The VIC has a key role as an accredited VIC, tourism hub, visitor services agent and attraction to positively effect the visitor economy by way of the application of visual elements and messaging.

Key Strategies:

VIC Signage

- VIC exterior and street signage meets accreditation standards

Interpretive signage attractions

- VIC interpretive signage is on brand
- Applying the Light Country brand is reinforced through VIC interactions with tourism operators
- Information Bays are monitored and current

Alliances

Overview:

The purpose of alliances is to strengthen organisations, and the connectivity between them, through focused conversations, collaboration and advocacy so that the common good is advanced with a shared vision. Collaboration is difficult to maintain, that is why there is a strong emphasis on building and maintaining relationships between the VIC, local groups and organisational leaders.

Key Strategies:

Industry Alliances

- Active industry support in collaboration with other stakeholders

Respond

Data

Overview:

Data allows the VIC to establish baselines, benchmarks, and goals to keep moving forward. Because data allows the VIC to measure, it will be able to support organisational decision-making and strategy. Effective monitoring will allow the VIC to be proactive rather than reactive and will support the VIC and Council to maintain best practices over time. Data allows the VIC to measure the effectiveness of a given strategy, to more effectively determine the cause of problems, help present a strong argument for systems change or investment, increase efficiencies, and identify high-performing programs, service areas, and people.

Key Strategies:

Physical data capture

- Data collection templates and methods are effective

Online Data

- Data collation templates and methods revised.
- Ratings customer satisfaction

Traditional data

- Point of sale, participation and survey data reported

Systems

Overview:

The VIC systems in relation to product, service and reporting are obliged to reflect Council and accreditation operational edicts. Systems thinking is a holistic approach the VIC can adopt for understanding the nature of why situations are the way they are, and how to go about improving results which is key to innovation and influencing the development of great ideas in line with operational efficiencies and continuous improvement.

Key Strategies:

Brochures

- Brochure management system effective
- Fee based distribution system implemented

Interpretive displays and information

- Information fact sheets, displays and visitor touch points are up to date

Sales

- Inventory management system researched and reported

Communication

Overview:

Key to evolving the VIC to be front of mind, to be the acclaimed expert, and to be recognised as value to the community and visitor is to develop robust communication and respected relationships with key stakeholders in a targeted manner through pertinent communication channels.

Key Strategies:

Communication plan

- A communication plan is developed and actioned

Reporting

- Information / display stakeholders receive regular reports as to uptake
- SED, Council and SAVISN reports developed as required

Visitors

- Visitor enquiries are managed professionally with minimal complaints
- Regional map on public display for visitor interaction
- Digital screens are utilised to communicate information and promotions

Financial

Key Objectives & Financial Review

Financial Objectives

The key financial objectives for the Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) are:

- Increase sales through stocking of merchandise and selling locally made products or products that reflect the Light Country brand.
- Manage budgets and output to deliver economic benefit for the visitor economy and the stakeholders within Light Region.
- Maximise income to the VIC through strategic marketing, increasing market penetration and improving visitor experience.

- Minimise staff costs without compromising level of service and quality of the visitor experience.
- Balance costs to operators for advertising rates with income generating potential of same to maximise product/operators utilising VIC services.

Potential Strategies to Increase Revenue

- Assist the development of new product/experience offering
- Bundle 'like' products/experiences as an offering
- Increase in Visitors/Sales through better new product/experience offerings
- Investigate commission on tours and bookings
- Review retail lines / price points as revenue stream

Potential Strategies to Decrease Expenses

- Utilise Volunteers where appropriate
- Review all operational expenditure to minimise cost

The Economic Value of the VIC

The visitor economy recognises that the benefits of visitor activity reach beyond industries that directly service visitors such as attractions, accommodation, tour companies and transport providers to retail, food production and service providers and other industries involved indirectly. The various stakeholders and their roles in growing the visitor economy are outlined in the following figure.

Visitor servicing that inspires and influences visitors is key to growing the visitor economy. Research continues to validate the role of VICs and the associated financial and social contributions they make to regional and state economies and communities and the creation of local jobs.

Sustainable Tourism

"Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities."

Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism

development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability. *Source: United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)*

Tourism Australia

To support the Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard, Ecotourism Australia developed the Sustainable Tourism Certification Program for businesses wanting to progress on their sustainability pathway.

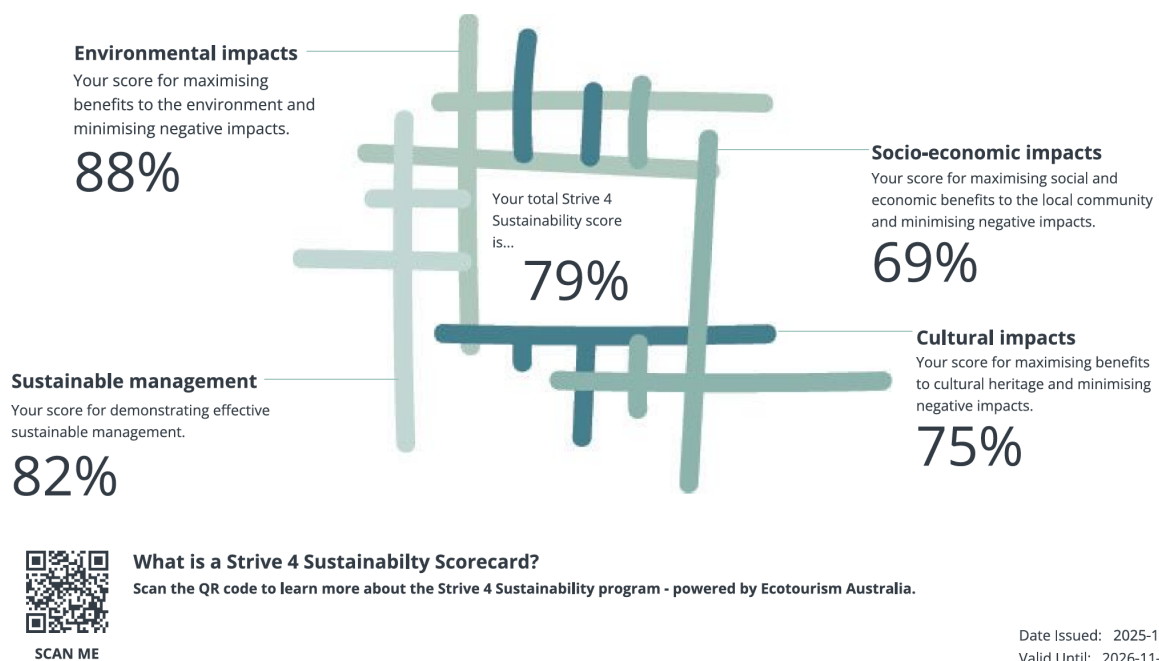


Figure 3 - Light Country Visitor Information Centre's Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard

Light Regional Council

At Light Regional Council (LRC), we use the term sustainability to mean:

'The integration of environmental health, social wellbeing and economic vitality to create thriving, healthy, and resilient communities for this generation and generations to come'.

Source: Light Regional Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2027

Sustainable tourism includes protecting and restoring our natural environment, helping to conserve our regions natural assets and cultures, so they can be enjoyed today and by future generations. It also means fostering a profitable industry that delivers employment opportunities and economic benefits to communities, and in turn helps improve the tourism experience for our travellers and the quality of life for our residents.

Council has an important role to play in championing and elevating the importance, and the appeal, of sustainable tourism, through our voice of advocacy and education, and actions

including those of Visitor Services and the VIC. Our communication platforms and stakeholders can help Light Region tourism businesses to better communicate their sustainability success stories; and, by doing so, help encourage others to follow their lead.

Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

The VIC will work to support LRC implement the Light Regional Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022 - 2027. The VIC will work to abide by the Principles and '7' Areas of Sustainable Tourism Focus by adhering to the Light Tourism Actions noted in the LRC Paper "Get Closer to Sustainable Tourism December 2022". Appendix (ii)

Participating in the Sustainable Tourism Certification program and completing the Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard as an example and role model to tourism operators will be key.

Digital

The digital revolution has brought an expectation of personalised service, tailored to individual needs. People can request what they want and have it customised and delivered to them. Their expectations for information are similar. They are seeking to find what will match their needs and preferences. Technology is providing opportunities for new information channels, dynamic ways of interacting with visitor markets and reasons to attract visitors into the VIC.

Engagement solutions that are more inclusive of digital technology and online platforms are required to ensure the VIC can provide information visitors want and in the way they want it.

As such, VIC resources need to be equipped financially and with digital expertise to step into this role when required. Continuing to update the knowledge and skills in online information delivery is key to handle online enquiries and social media engagement and an efficient way of keeping content knowledge high and consistent.

The provision of free Wi-Fi is an expected service for visitors in public spaces. Beyond Wi-Fi, there is no 'one size fits all' model of digital technology for VICs. Striking the right balance between the online engagement and offline visitor servicing is crucial for the VIC. The technology offered should fit the experience of Light Country and the needs and expectations of the target markets.

Target markets

The VICs role is to inspire and encourage visitors to explore Light Country through the information and experiences delivered. Visitors' needs set the direction for the VICs engagement.

Understanding the VICs target markets is crucial to ensure the engagement is relevant and valued. This is undertaken through the surveys that the Visitor Servicing staff enter after serving visitors in the Visitor Information Centre

Amid the plethora of information sources available on and offline, the VIC has a keen advantage as the official supplier of trusted and comprehensive local information. People trust recommendations from other humans over brands or organisations. The word of a local is more meaningful than online content. Visitors want local insights into the area, to find out the secret places and things to do to add value to their experience.

Working together

The VIC will reinforce regional marketing messages and support regional marketing plan efforts in encouraging increased visitation and spend in the region through the inspiration and influence it will generate.

Marketing channels in turn are important in ensuring visitors are directed to the VIC for information and bookings.

Implementation of an effective Famil program will allow for information and product sharing. Connections with the South Australian Visitor Information Services Network (SAVISN) and local Business Alliances will allow for information dissemination and collaboration to build the visitor economy for the Light Region.

Summary

The Light Country Visitor Information Centre (VIC) through the Road Map Actions of DELIVER and as an Accredited VIC will connect and collaborate with regional stakeholders to play their part in building a sustainable visitor economy for the Light Region. Attractive tourism product that meets the needs of visitor markets is fundamental to the VIC's ability to maximise economic and social benefits.

The VIC will play an active role in ensuring there is sufficient and relevant product to compel visitation. This is taking the form of research and advice on product development and bundling, and assistance and training in areas such as ATDW listings. The VIC will be the main touch point in Light Country that facilitates economic and social growth back into the community through its efforts. The focus is community sustainability and destination growth opportunities.

The VIC plays a critical role in promoting local businesses, events and council and community services to visitors. Through the information shared and the skilful sales and advice provided in person and online, the VIC can have a positive impact on the overall visitor experience and unlock visitor spending, facilitating a flow on effect through increased visitor expenditure and stay duration.

The facilitation by the VIC is both Direct and Indirect

Directly facilitated – where visitors purchase services and goods at the VIC

Indirectly facilitated – where visitors are made aware of services and goods while at the VIC, but purchase elsewhere, contributing expenditure into the Light Region local economy.

The social impacts of accredited VICs and the network can be substantial:

- Present the shop front for the region, providing a warm welcome on behalf of businesses and residents
- Provide peace of mind and ease of access for visitors seeking authoritative, unbiased and comprehensive information
- Provide the go-to place for up-to-date information for visitors and residents on road conditions and in the event of natural disasters
- Create community pride through promotion of what makes the area special
- Support local producers and artisans where they are showcased and sold through VICs
- Provide a central hub for residents, tourism industry and other businesses to engage
- Encourage business start-up and growth through economic impact or specific services
- Employ staff, use of volunteers and involvement in supporting events and other community services
- Enhance community amenity as tourism growth can facilitate conservation, preservation and restoration of natural and built resources
- Offer local services that are not met by the private sector as appropriate

Visitor Information Centres are an influential part of a collaborative eco-system of stakeholders that enhance the liveability and sustainability of communities.

Acronyms

VICs - Visitor Information Centres

STOs - State Tourism Organisations

RTOs - Regional Tourism Organisations

LTOs - Local Tourism Organisations

DN's - Destination Network Organisations

SATC – South Australian Tourism Commission

BA – Barossa Australia

TA – Tourism Australia

SAVISN – South Australian Visitor Information Services Network

LRC – Light Regional Council

VR – Virtual Reality