



Clutha Destination Strategy 2020-30 Overview

“Managing Growth of Respectful Tourism”



Prepared by



Destination Planning Ltd



Clutha Destination Strategy

Vision


Managed growth of a respectful visitor sector will enhance the Clutha District as a destination to visit, live, work and invest.

Our visitors are respectful of our destinations, communities, and environment.

Our residents are respectful and welcoming of visitors.

Destination and Experience Development

Key Destinations for Investment:

- The Catlins**
 Enhancement and protection of iconic experiences
 
- Lawrence**
 Develop heritage destination village, capitalise on historic elements and Clutha Gold Trail

Projects:

- Icon Experiences**
 Create destination experience management plans for icons e.g. Nugget Point
 
- Maori Tourism**
 Explore opportunities and partnerships for more Maori experiences
- Accommodation Development**
 Engage with the sector to develop opportunities and partnerships across all seasons and categories
- Bike and Walking Trails**
 Develop strategic framework, and support existing trails (Clutha Gold Trail): progress Catlins Coastal Walk
- Destination Towns**
 Prioritise town improvements that benefit both visitors and residents
- Event Development**
 Develop strategic framework

Tourism Infrastructure

Improve destination infrastructure to enhance the visitor experience and protect the environment:

Projects:

- Infrastructure to support Responsible Camping**
 Freedom camping strategy, promotion and upgrades to existing sites
- Core Infrastructure Issues water and waste management**
- Connectivity**
 Explore IT upgrade opportunities, mobile broadband
- Toilets, amenities, and other infrastructure**
 Development, and identification of gaps in infrastructure
- Access**
 Rooding, bridges, cycling safety, shuttle services
- Signage, wayfinding upgrade**

Industry Capability and Capacity Development

Project:

Partnering with tourism organisations to deliver business development opportunities including:

- Business planning**

- Marketing plans**
 To reach target markets
- Digital capacity**
- Meeting visitor expectations through quality customer experience and service**
- Assistance with Qualmark accreditation**
- Sustainable tourism accreditation programmes**
- DOC approved commercial operators**

Sustainability and Regenerative Tourism

Projects:

- Trends Analytics**
 Understanding demand and carrying capacity
- Responsible Camping**
 Education, management monitoring and consistent regulations
- Care Codes**
 Build on Catlins Code and Align with national responsible tourism initiatives
 
- Tourism Partnerships with Environmental programmes**
 Investigate ecological restoration visitor experiences
- Slow Tourism' and opportunities for offsetting Carbon Emissions**
- Waste and Recycling Management**
 Educate visitors, and increase geographical spread of services across the district

Destination Marketing

Projects:

- Positioning**
 Refine the destination brand and include consistent stories/messaging
- Content and Digital Channels**
 Content development and distribution through owned and 3rd party channels; coordinated promotion with partners. Niche interest content
- Printed Collateral**
 Better coordinate local and regional promotional material
- Media and Trade**
 Develop story ideas and support hosted itineraries; carry out Trade education and opportunities
- Implement recommendations from Visitor Information Centres Review**
 Thematic and story integration, promotion of visitor services

What Success Looks Like

- Increased visitor expenditure by an average 4% per annum through improved visitor facilities, experiences and marketing.
- Improved benefits to the community through the support of new businesses, jobs, facilities, services and cultural interactions.
- Managed tourism growth, environmental and social impacts, retaining what is special about Clutha and The Catlins.
- Increased length of stay in the district, from a one-day drive through to a two to three-day experience.
- Adopt new Quality of Life indicators relevant to tourism aligning with government, regional and district council indicators.

Clutha Destination Strategy 2020-30 Overview

This Destination Strategy has been developed to maximise and guide the opportunities within the tourism sector through a responsible and managed process.

It has involved consultation with a wide range of sectors, stakeholder groups, partners, communities and businesses.

Strategic Focus Areas

The following are opportunities to address the challenges and meet the strategic focus areas identified in the Clutha Destination Strategy.

1. Destination and Experience Development

The strategic management and protection of existing iconic experiences within the Clutha District, in the development of future planning opportunities. The careful planning of destinations to better understand current visitation and future sustainable carrying capacities retaining what is unique about Clutha.

2. Tourism Infrastructure

The quality of a destination's infrastructure enhances the visitor experience supporting more referral promotion of the area as an attractive and sustainable destination to visit. Not only do improvements to local infrastructure protect the environment and relieve visitor pressure, they also deliver improved services and facilities for locals and communities. Prioritise tourism infrastructure investment by tourism value proposition.

3. Industry Capability and Capacity Development

Before expecting to establish or attract significant new tourism operators to the district, the priority is assisting existing businesses to improve their quality and become more profitable. Partnering with neighbouring districts to facilitate access to business development programmes for Clutha operators.

4. Sustainability and Regenerative Tourism

Responsible and Regenerative tourism refers to the way in which visitors, residents, and small businesses interact with a destination. Aim to foster a positive social, economic, and environmental impact on our local communities through generating greater economic benefits and enhancing the overall well-being. The concept of Regenerative tourism means not just limiting impacts but striving to ensure the benefits exceed any negative impacts to create a net positive (improvement) for the community and environment.

5. Destination Marketing

While the Destination Marketing programme will continue to seek to grow the market, it will focus on: growing visitors outside peak season; influencing visitors with more time and money to spend and who are respectful of the local environment, wildlife, communities and culture. We will also ensure messages in mainstream tourism media are accurate wherever possible; and increase awareness of special interest attractions using low-cost channels to reach defined (niche) audiences.

Clutha Development will develop a more detailed marketing plan shaped by this strategy.

Success:

Increased visitor expenditure by an average 4% per annum through improved visitor facilities, experiences and marketing.

Improved benefits to the community through the support of new businesses, jobs, facilities, services and cultural interactions.

Managed tourism growth, environmental and social impacts, retaining what is special about Clutha and The Catlins.

Increased length of stay in the district, from a one-day drive through to a two to three-day experience.

Adopt new Quality of Life indicators relevant to tourism aligning with government, regional and district council indicators.

Strategic Action Plan

Actions have been identified under each of the strategic focus area, including some current or potential projects. While projects identified are aligned with one main outcome in some cases, they support multiple outcomes.

1. Destination and Experience Development

Project	Action	Priority
1.0 Icon Experiences		
1.0a	Establish destination experience management plan for Nugget/Kaka Point	High
1.0b	Establish destination experience management plan for Cathedral Caves	High
1.0c	Establish destination experience management plan for Gabriel’s Gully, Lawrence	High
1.0d	Wildlife Management - develop expert wildlife guide pool and sustainable commercial Wildlife viewing experience	Low
1.0e	Establish destination experience management plan for Purakaunui Falls	Med
1.1 Maori Tourism		
1.1a	Work through the local Runanga to facilitate more inclusion of endorsed Maori heritage stories in site interpretation and tour/activity commentaries.	High
1.1b	Seek to engage the Ngai Tahu Takiwa Tourism programme to establish Maori owned and operated tourism businesses in Clutha	Med
1.2 Accommodation Development		
1.2a	Encourage the Clutha Licensing Trust to upgrade its accommodation and hospitality properties	High
1.2b	Encourage Holiday Parks to “winterise” their facilities (more built, insulated and well heated units).	High
1.2c	Establish a database and communications programme to better engage the vacation rentals sector in quality enhancement, marketing and efficient booking systems	High
1.2d	Promote the opportunities for a luxury lodge/spa retreat and a mid-scale hotel (long term) in Clutha	Med-Low
1.3 Bike and Walking Trails		
1.3a	Ensure successful completion of Clutha Gold Trail and facilitate associated product development and promotion	High
1.3b	Progress the Catlins Coastal Walking Trail by first updating the feasibility study	High
1.3c	Develop a trails strategic framework to prioritise other trail opportunities such as Beaumont-Tuapeka Mouth, Blair Athol extension/enhancement, Taieri Mouth-Waihola, Owaka Coast, Kaka Point Hilltop to Wilsher Bay etc	Med
1.3d	Investigate pre-feasibility of a Catlins Rail Trail shared bike and walking path	Med-Low

1.4 Southern Scenic Route		
1.4a	Engage regional partners to establish SSR enhancement action plan covering roading, signage, interpretation, and potential, NZTA endorsed Tourist Drive Branches (e.g. Crichton-Kaitangata branch and Forgotten Coastal Highway (Tari Mouth-Toko Mouth-Kaitangata Coastal route)	Med
1.5 Destination Towns		
1.5a	Continue to work with CDC on the 'Our Place' community plans to prioritise town improvements that benefit both visitors and residents including public toilets, wayfinding and distinctive destination playgrounds.	Med
1.5b	Establish a programme to engage absentee property owners to encourage occupancy and upgrade/restoration of key main street buildings, especially in Lawrence and Milton.	Med
1.6 Event Development		
1.6a	Develop a basic event strategy that addresses seasonality, aligns events to destination positioning, delivers positive exposure and visitor spend.	Med
1.6b	Work with Great South to provide best practice event management resources for local event managers	Med-Low

2. Tourism Infrastructure

Project	Action	Priority
2.0 Infrastructure to support Responsible Camping		
2.0a	CDC Freedom Camping trial in Owaka \$25,000 CDC	High
2.0b	Investigate other potential Freedom Camping sites: Willsher Bay, Papatowai, and Curio Bay	Med-High
2.0c	Increase promotion of existing camping sites and maintain ongoing engagement with existing operators.	High
2.0d	Encourage upgrades to existing DOC campsites	Med-High
2.0e	Engage with the National Responsible Camping working group on policy, vehicle standards and national resister for monitoring and enforcement	
2.0f	Work with CDC on Responsible Camping Strategy	High
2.1 Core Infrastructure Issues		
2.1a	Private Public Partnership For example: Milton Main Street, and Milton's Taylor Park upgrades.	Med-High
2.2 Connectivity		
2.2a	Explore IT upgrade opportunities, particularly in regard to mobile broadband and fibre coverage in several areas of the Clutha District	Med
2.3 Toilets, Amenities and Other Infrastructure		
2.3a	Development of Destination Toilets in Milton and Balclutha *\$468,500k from <i>Tourism Infrastructure Fund</i>	Med-High

2.3b	Development of a public dump station in Balclutha *\$82,525 from Tourism Infrastructure Fund	High
2.3c	Consultation to identify gaps in the placement of toilet facilities at popular spots	Med-High
2.3d	Partnerships with community groups to drive-forward community-initiated projects such as parks and playgrounds.	Med
2.3e	Increase geographic spread and funded management of rubbish bins and waste stations	High
2.4 Access		
2.4a	Explore options to improve roads to cater for increasing tourist volumes – offering easy access to places to stop along the way enhances visitor experiences.	Med-High
2.4b	Electric Vehicle accessibility – charging stations throughout the Clutha District	Med-High
2.4c	Park and Ride opportunities for visitors to access Nugget Point	High
2.5 Signage		
2.5a	Establish a Wayfinding Plan - full audit of existing signage and wayfinding, a plan for additions, improvements and an asset management approach to ensuring future budgeting, maintenance and replacement.	Med

3. Industry Capability and Capacity Development

Project	Action	Priority
3.0 Partnering with tourism organisations to deliver sustainable business modelling		
3.0a	Business planning e.g. customer targets, financial management	High-med
3.0b	Develop simple marketing plans to reach target markets	High-med
3.0c	Digital Capacity – (website, social media, google business, review management, booking and payment systems)	High
3.0d	Meeting visitor expectations through quality customer experience and service	Med
3.0e	Funding and application assistance for Qualmark accreditation *Applications cost from \$575+ p.a. (post-COVID: FOC until Sept 2021)	Med
3.0f	Increase the number of operators in Sustainable Tourism Accreditation Programmes	Med
3.0g	Assist commercial operators to become DOC-approved to provide activities and services in conservation areas	Med

4. Sustainability and Regenerative Tourism

Project	Action	Priority
4.0 Trends Analysis - Understanding demand and carrying capacity		
4.0a	Establish robust ongoing visitor counts at key attraction sites (DOC), i-SITE and information centres (CDC). Conduct periodic visitor characteristic and behaviour surveys (CD).	High
4.0b	Investigate options to source quality industry data	High
4.1 Responsible Camping		
4.1a	Establish accurate data for existing camping capacity versus demand	High
4.1b	Work with neighbouring councils, operators and local communities towards a consistent Freedom Camping policy	High-med

4.1c	Increase the Responsible Camping Ranger/Information Officer resource <i>*Total cost \$45,000 (CDC: \$15,000). Increased to \$30,000 to cover trial mgmt. 2019-20.</i>	High
4.1d	Quality and effective promotion of Responsible Camping information in print, online, apps and information centres	High-med
4.1e	Identify methods of the economic benefits of Freedom Campers	High-med
4.1f	Investigate possibility of Owaka becoming a NZMCA motorhome friendly town	Med
4.2 Care Codes		
4.2a	Alignment with the national responsible tourism initiatives by DOC, TIA and TNZ e.g. Tiaki Promise	Med
4.3 Tourism Partnerships with Environmental programmes		
4.3a	Investigate ecological restoration visitor experiences including voluntourism opportunities	Med
4.4 'Slow Tourism' and Opportunities for offsetting Carbon Emissions		
4.4a	Electric Vehicle accessibility – ensure geographical spread of charging stations across the Clutha District	Med
4.4b	Encourage 'Slow Travel' – lengthen stay of the visitor	Med-High
4.4c	Encourage operators to engage in sustainable tourism programmes to reduce waste and emissions and demonstrate their sustainability to customers.	Med-High
4.4 Waste and Recycling Management		
4.4a	Educate visitors regarding sites without rubbish receptacles and their need to remove waste	Med
4.4c	Engage in national initiatives to broaden the range of recyclable materials and implement recycling stations	Med

5. Destination Marketing

Project	Action	Priority
5.0 Positioning		
5.0a	Refine the destination brand with consistent stories/messaging	High-med
5.0b	Audit current printed collateral across the Clutha District	High
5.1 Content & Digital Channels		
5.1a	Fund content development (video, photo library, special interest fact sheets, how to visit responsibly, suggested itineraries)	High
5.1b	Facilitate content distribution via key Third Party Digital Channels (advocating accuracy and comprehensiveness), TNZ, TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet, Southland, Dunedin ...)	High-med
5.1c	Enhance the www.cluthanz.com website	High
5.1d	Focus Social Media activity on Facebook and Instagram, and explore Asian SM channels	Med
5.1e	Explore more coordinated digital representation of individual towns/destinations across Clutha District.	Med

5.1f	Coordinate promotion of Clutha Gold Trail with the trail trust including project management of the website redesign, and maintenance of social media channels <i>* CD provided \$5,000 towards CGT website redevelopment</i>	High-med
5.2 Printed Collateral		
5.2a	Fund the development and distribution of a more expansive official RTO brochure map for nationwide i-SITE distribution	Med
5.3 Media and Trade		
5.3a	Develop story ideas and support TNZ, Great South, Dunedin Visiting Media programmes with hosted itineraries.	Med
5.3b	Carry out Trade education and hosting with Enterprise Dunedin, Great South and TNZ. <i>* Trade Shows – funds already allocated</i>	Med
5.3c	Develop a database of NZ based tour operators with potential to extend tours in Clutha, identify product needs and facilitate partnerships with local suppliers.	Med
5.4 Implement the recommendations in the Visitor Information Review		
5.4a	Thematic and story integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New display and interpretation panels • Ensure DOC engagement 	Med
5.4b	Marketing and online representation of visitor servicing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print: develop rack card for visitors and local operators • Online: RTO website and third-party websites • Explore revenue growth opportunities – Clutha collateral, online shop 	Med