

Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 15 March, 2023

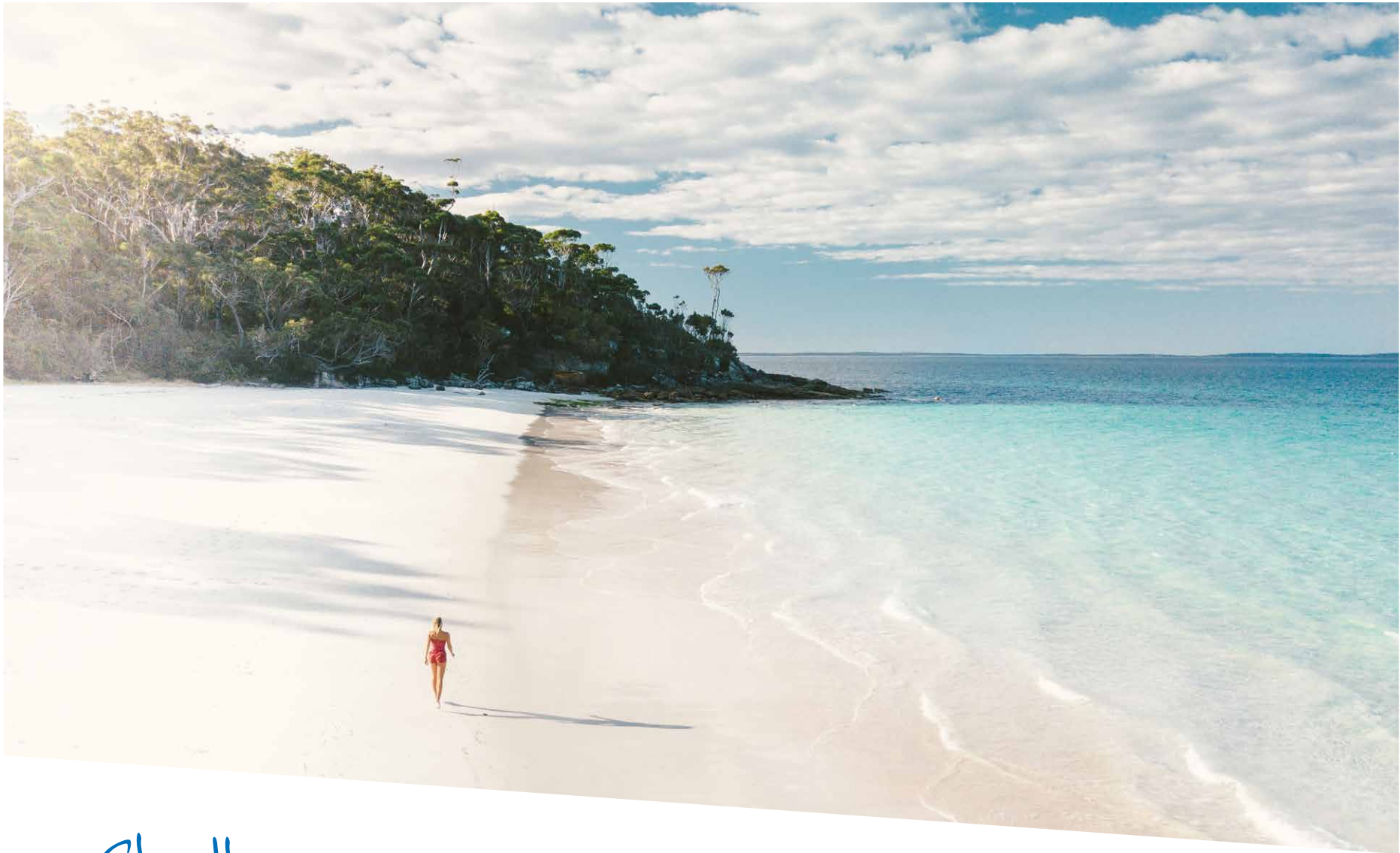
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra

Attachments (Under Separate Cover)

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5. Reports

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Shoalhaven
SOUTH COAST - NSW
MANY EXPERIENCES - ONE DESTINATION

Shoalhaven Tourism Recovery Action Plan
prepared Feb 2023

  
02 4421 0778
SHOALHAVEN.COM

EG23.4 - Attachment 1

1. Why this Plan Exists

This plan highlights the priority actions to reactivate the Shoalhaven as a “year-round destination, valued for its quality environment and visitor experiences” (Shoalhaven DMP2018-2023) in the changed context of living with covid 19 and increasing environmental pressures. These actions focus on delivering a strong, resilient, and vibrant tourism industry that actively contributes to the wellbeing of community, the sustainability of Shoalhaven’s natural environment and the return of visitor expenditure to pre-pandemic (YT to Sep 2019) levels by the same quarter in 2024.

2. What the Review Highlighted

The review insights were gathered from workshops, interviews, and a survey of the tourism industry in the Shoalhaven, alongside a literature review of key documents and reports and insights from the MyTravelResearch.com database of 50+ trends impacting tourism.



a) General Insights and Observations

- Both industry priorities and current market needs are still well aligned with the DMP in many areas. Most recommended actions relate to the urgency or level of priority of activities in that plan.
- Better alignment in the activities and processes of Shoalhaven Tourism (ST) with those of other parts of Council would increase Return on Effort for ST.
- Some of the barriers to reactivation are not within the control of ST, making advocacy an important role.
- If the challenges around data collection can be overcome, Shoalhaven 360 has the capacity to play a key role in developing a resilient tourism industry and positioning Shoalhaven as a leader in sustainable destination management.

b) Industry Development

- Activities in the plan need to align with the differing needs of operators which is influenced by business type (e.g. accommodation vs tour operator), size, longevity, and motivations. Supporting the diversity of industry needs and maintaining awareness of its activities place significant pressure on ST resources.
- Attraction and retention of a well-qualified workforce is a critical barrier to Shoalhaven becoming a 7-day a week, year-round destination. But this is a true ‘wicked’ problem.

c) Attracting Visitors

- Tourism sustainability (environment & community) is growing more important, especially to high yield customers. Focusing on attracting visitors who align with Shoalhaven values is more important than ever. There is potential to dial up targeting of wellness, food and wine and adventure travel markets.
- The destination attracted many new and high yielding customers due to border closures in 2020. Retaining these ‘covid new’ customers, especially those with potential to travel outside peak demand periods is a priority.
- To reduce fluctuations in visitation as domestic and international borders reopen, attracting high yield repeat customers is critical, working with businesses to attract this customer base will be important to success.

