



LAND DEVEL - MT MURUMBidge  
DCP - B22 - M'BAH  
TEDC

TWEED RIVER LINK PROJECT

TWEED SHIRE COUNCIL	
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Mike Rayner  
General Manager  
Tweed Shire Council  
PO Box 816  
MURWILLUMBAH NSW 2484

July 13<sup>th</sup> 2009

RELATED DOC 1965987

- Subject:** 1. Tweed River Nature Link Concept  
2. Draft Environmental, Educational Interpretative Resource Centre – Pre Feasibility Concept.

Dear Mike,

The above documents have been prepared by TEDC as part of a program of initiatives designed to encourage the development of diversity in tourism product available in Tweed shire.

The Tweed River Nature Link Concept is about creating a tourism product which would link by river, the coastal attractions of SEQ, Tweed Heads and Tweed Coast with Murwillumbah, as the gateway to the Hinterland and 60,000 hectares of World Heritage listed Rainforests and National parks.

The proposal is to encourage the development of a specific to type, purpose built, shallow draft, low profile vessel capable of carrying passengers/tourist, linking with facilities at Tweed Heads, either at The Southern Boat Harbour or proposed developments at either Boyds Bay or even Jack Evans Boat Harbour, with the Heritage Wharf at Murwillumbah.

This project has the capacity to act as catalyst for other tourism products either along the length of the river or at Murwillumbah, where TEDC has identified the opportunity to develop part of south Murwillumbah as an Art and Cultural Hub, or connecting with other hinterland rural tourism facilities including potential food trails etc.

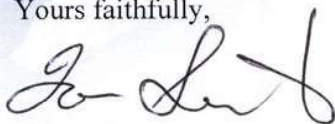
TEDC would like to believe that Tweed Shire Council might choose to endorse the concept in principle so that TEDC can more actively promote the opportunity to private enterprise interests. This approach would be seen as a proactive approach to growing the tourism economic component of the Tweed economy.

The Draft Environmental, Educational Interpretative Resource Centre – Pre feasibility Concept is another proposal which could be endorsed in principle by Tweed Shire Council for reasons as described above, and again as part of growing the tourism economy by promoting the environmental and ecological significance of the Mt Warning region which is now part of the whole Green Caldron Concept.

As you are aware TEDC has developed a very high and well recognized profile in investment and business circles, and is approached on an increasingly frequent basis by private enterprise interests seeking advice and information on a range of topics including business and investment opportunities available in the Tweed.

If you have any questions or require any other information relating to the attached initiative, please feel free to contact TEDC.

Yours faithfully,



**Tom Senti**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Tweed Economic Development Corporation Ltd**



**Tweed River Nature Link  
Draft Concept Plan**

**Prepared by Carla Baumer  
Tweed Economic Development Corporation**

**January 2009**

## **Tweed River Nature Link Draft Concept Plan**

### **Overview**

The Tweed River Nature Link aims to be the central tourism product in the Tweed using the natural resource of the Tweed River as the base for various tourism attractions and facilities. The project will directly link the coastal attractions of South East Queensland and Far North New South Wales with the rural and rainforest attractions of the Tweed area.

The concept of tourism entails the provider (tourism product suppliers) and consumer (tourist) in the movement from origin, through transit region, to destination where the product is consumed. The tourism market is fragmented and consists of domestic and international product and service providers catering for, and to, tourists. The tourism industry caters to various niche markets yet lacks a holistic tourism product to link the currently disjointed products and attractions. Although great emphasis has been placed on the importance of developing a coherent marketing concept and brand, the need for a central tourism product providing access to and enhancing the experience of tourists in their engagement with the destination and niche products provided.

Recent observations by Tourism Queensland in the Tourism Queensland Industry Journal (Issue 2, Spring 2008) suggest the use of marketing has fallen flat due to stagnation in tourism product development. Furthermore, the use of demographics in the establishment of the target market and market segmentation has become historic as contemporary trends shift towards categorizing consumers through habits and activities rather than characteristics.

The Tweed River is iconic to the Tweed and coincidentally a highly under utilized natural tourism resource with limited tourism product offered and lack of links to other tourism products which leaves a gap in the tourist experience. The river has a dominant geographic and visual presence in the Tweed Valley area and is capable of handling the average size, low profile, special-to-type passenger vessels with a shoal draft and low wash. The river is currently utilized for recreational purposes such as fishing, boating, rowing, water-skiing, and limited tours. The Tweed River Nature Link aims to create a sustainable tourism product by combining the use of the river for recreational and sporting purposes with the use of the river to create a central tourism product and access to river towns and tourism products. This would allow the Tweed to capitalize on the economic opportunities presented by the tourism market as well as recreational activities and river quality monitoring (environmental sustainability).

### **History**

The Tweed River was once the lifeblood of the district discovered by John Oxley in 1923 and ships crossed the Tweed Bar as early as 1842. The River's history and contribution to the Shire's economy and communications is legendary. The early navigation of the Tweed River was closely followed by the 'cedar getter' era of logging valuable red cedar

and floating them down the Tweed River whilst the fishing industry around the mouth of the Tweed River flourished later. The Tweed River was also the central form of transport and access across the region.

Steamships ceased plying the river in 1936 and from then on the River's usefulness declined. It has been used sporadically by cane barges, recreational fishermen, water skiers and rowers. Cane barges are no longer used, but the recreational uses of the Tweed River continue.



Ferry Rd Murwillumbah 1898



Tweed Heads Wharf 1910 'Mirriben' Ferry

### Environmental Assessment

The Tweed Shire Council through the Tweed River Committee is the governing body of the Tweed River System along with the Waterways Authority which is in alignment with the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment (1992). These bodies use regulation, education and enforcement in sustainable management of the Tweed River and waterways.

NSW Natural Resources notes the Tweed River and Estuary to include a catchment area of 1100 km<sup>2</sup> and a waterway area of 30 km<sup>2</sup> beginning at Tweed Heads/Coolangatta to Murwillumbah (26km upstream). The mean spring tidal range is 1.15 m at the entrance and 0.72 m at Murwillumbah. The NSW Department of Natural Resources also names the special characteristics of the Tweed River and Estuary to be:

- key tourism area- further development capacity for existing infrastructure
- ecologically important- wetland habitat for aquatic and terrestrial fauna
- Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypassing project of 2000 to maintain Gold Coast beaches and navigable entrance to Tweed River.

Most notably the infrastructure has the capacity for development which is in agreement with the Tweed Estuary Boating Plan of Management which highlights the need for not only waterway infrastructure but also complimentary area allocation such as parking to minimize disturbance to surrounding area and encourage sustainable river usage.

According to the Tweed Estuary Boating Plan of Management the usage of the Tweed River is limited to events, recreational activities and some commercial use which predominantly involves fishing, small boat hire ('tinnies' and kayaks) and recreational boat hire (BBQ boats and house boats). Also, the Tweed is more popular in boat registration and licensing in comparison to state average. The average recreation vessels on peak days is 252 (such as on Australia day long weekend) which is below the estimated peak demand and river carrying capacity.

Erosion is the prevalent environmental issue according to the Tweed Shire Council's Tweed River Estuary Bank Management Plan. The erosion is historically driven with key factors including altered flow patterns due to natural changes and human activity, tidal activities, flood velocities, wind and boat waves, and saturated bank soils. However, there has been no significant publication of pollution or other human intervention detrimental to the river with Waterways Authority listing pollution complaints as minor (just over 60 Complaints in 5 years) with safety, speed, and wash as the highest disturbance.

### **Comparative Analysis- River Recreation and Leisure Parks**

In relation to the Tweed River Nature Link concept, projects of similar nature are analyzed. Findings suggest that the Tweed River has potential as the key resource in sustainable tourism product development as projects of similar nature both in the domestic and international market have succeeded.

#### *Review of River Recreation and Leisure Parks- Domestic*

#### **Ipswich River Heart Parklands**



Description	
	Ipswich River Heart Parklands joins Ipswich Mall and d'Arcy Doyle place and aims to attract families and visitors to the city to enjoy the city centre and create a high standard future public domain.

Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boardwalks</li> <li>• Water features</li> <li>• BBQs</li> <li>• Picnic Facilities</li> <li>• Seating</li> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• Viewing platform</li> <li>• 1.5ha of landscaped parklands</li> <li>• Information plaques</li> </ul>
Funding	Ipswich City Council and Qld. Government
Cost	\$4.5 million Budget \$5.4 million
Ownership	Government owned
Size	1.5 ha Parklands
Management	NA
Community Response	Positive particularly regarding the family focus and activity area available. However critical of structure. Can be viewed on forum at <a href="http://forums.ipswich-city.com/viewtopic.php?t=899">http://forums.ipswich-city.com/viewtopic.php?t=899</a>

### Clarence River Way



Description	The Clarence River Way is an integrated market driven tourism destination that aims to position the Clarence as a river destination focusing on continuous culture, productive landscape, life from the river, the creative community and a history of play. The river way aims to boost the attraction/destination development of river cities including Yamba, Iluka, Grafton, Maclean, Ulmarra.
Facilities	<p>The townships will be revitalized and will work harmoniously as the Clarence River Way as well as differentiated attractions. Facilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• jetty/pontoon infrastructure</li> <li>• waterfront pedestrian pathways</li> <li>• port facilities cycle ways</li> <li>• public art</li> <li>• interpretation facilities</li> <li>• signage</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• open public recreation areas</li> <li>• outdoor even infrastructure</li> <li>• waterfront commercial, retail and food and beverage area</li> </ul>
Funding	Clarence Valley council and Federal Government's Australian Tourism Development Program
Cost	NA
Ownership	Public Initiative- Clarence Valley Council
Size	Clarence Valley
Management	Group with representation from NSW Tourism, NSW Department of Lands, NSW Department of State and Regional Development, Arts Northern Rivers, Northern Rivers Regional Development Board, Clarence River Tourism Association and Clarence Valley Council.
Community Response	In Progress
Website	<a href="http://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/cmst/cvc009/view_doc.asp?id=4426&amp;cat=240">http://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/cmst/cvc009/view_doc.asp?id=4426&amp;cat=240</a>

#### Murray River



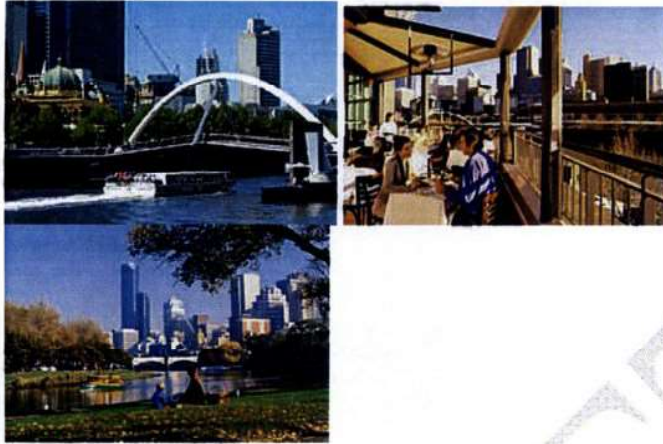
Description	<p>The Murray River is an extensive tourism product catering to a diverse market through the integration of various townships and local government bodies to create a succinct product. The Murray River enables historic, natural and built attractions with a diverse product mix. The website MurrayRiver.com demonstrates the collaborative efforts to the private and public sector in creating a tourism product of river experience, river towns, and Murray river events as well as effective natural resource management.</p> <p>Certain activities such as the Murray River Cruises incorporate the historical and scenic element as well as innovative trails such as the Mannum Canoe Trails allowing individuals and groups the explore the area. The river towns also host a variety of festivals to capitalize on the natural attraction.</p>
Facilities	River Experience



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Houseboats</li> <li>• River Cruises</li> <li>• Water cruises</li> <li>• Canoeing and Kayaking</li> <li>• Fishing Facilities</li> <li>• Public recreation areas</li> <li>• Paddleboats</li> <li>• Events</li> <li>• Rover Towns</li> </ul>
Funding	Public and Private
Cost	N/A
Ownership	Public and Private
Size	2756 kilometres. The Murray is continuously navigable for 1986 kilometres from Goolwa to Yarrowonga
Management	Murray-Darling Basin Commission
Community Response	The communities of the Murray are dependent on the river as a source of income in various ways and offer positive responses to productive measures of developing the river as a product if aligned with preservation.
Website	<a href="http://www.murrayriver.com.au/">http://www.murrayriver.com.au/</a>



**Yarra River, Melbourne**



Description	Melbourne's Yarra River precinct caters for tourism and recreation by generating activity at the river's edge as well as on water with river boats linking Federation Square, Southgate and the Crown Entertainment Complex as well as the proximity to dining, shopping and cultural opportunities including theatres, galleries, museums, concert halls, parks and gardens, and an aquarium.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public recreation areas</li> <li>• Sporting complex</li> <li>• Food and Beverage</li> <li>• Commercial and Retail services</li> <li>• Marina</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Public Transport Access</li> <li>• Tourist information centre</li> <li>• BBQ facilities and picnic area</li> <li>• Walking/cycling path</li> <li>• Proximity to public venues including theatres, galleries, museums, concert halls, gardens and aquarium.</li> <li>• Interpretive Information (panels and signage).</li> </ul>
Funding	The City of Melbourne, Membership fees
Cost	NA
Ownership	The City of Melbourne
Size	Lower Yarra Precinct of Melbourne
Management	Yarra River Business Association funded by the City of Melbourne. Various aspects are managed by different groups and authorities.
Community Response	The Yarra River precinct has developed over time with the City of Melbourne acknowledging its value to the identity of the city and offering a tourist (particularly business tourism) attraction as well as

	resident recreation area.
Website	<a href="http://www.yarrariver.info/">http://www.yarrariver.info/</a>

*Review of River Recreation and Leisure Parks- International*

**Broad French River- The Wilma Dykeman Riverway- Asheville, North Carolina, USA**



Description	<p>This plan aims to improve the environmental state of the river by having key objectives and controls in the planning process. This plan describes the Riverway which provides vehicle access to distinct areas where each area is personified by its contribution to the experience such as arts district and recreation area. The plan gives a distinct description of the Riverway's continuous road and trail system to combine active and passive recreation with the town's commercial and historic value. There is high emphasis on landscape character and elements in details such as design, lighting fixtures etc. These are designed to reminisce the historical buildings and will arguably date less than using modern vogue designs. The region of the Riverway has some similar demographics and geographic features to the proposed Tweed River Nature Link project.</p> <p>The project offers a variety of activities as well as membership to encourage participation as well as encouraging community participation to minimize storm water, pollution and trash.</p>
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• road network</li> <li>• bus tours</li> <li>• trail network</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plazas</li> <li>• signage</li> <li>• boat access</li> <li>• adopt-a stream project</li> <li>• watershed K-12 education program</li> <li>• ROVER mobile technology classroom</li> <li>• Kids in the creek</li> <li>• Enviroscape model (models effects of pollution etc)</li> <li>• River words and art</li> <li>• Summer river camps</li> <li>• Walking tours</li> <li>• arts district</li> <li>• refurbished historic buildings</li> <li>• amphi-theatre</li> <li>• open lawn festival areas</li> <li>• white water rafting course</li> <li>• cycle and walkways</li> <li>• watershed area including library, classrooms, courtyard, auditorium, restrooms, gift shop, workshop, greenhouse, parking facility, boat garage, changing rooms, bird feeding station</li> </ul>
Funding	RiverLink rose over \$250,000 to develop The Wilma Dykeman RiverWay Plan from the NCDOT, Buncombe County, the City of Asheville, The Asheville Merchants Association, The Tennessee Valley Authority and Progress Energy. The Federal Highway Administration has awarded a \$600,000 grant to develop an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the RiverWay to the City of Asheville.
Cost	Watershed complex \$US 1.34 million
Ownership	City of Asheville
Size	The Wilma Dykeman RiverWay Plan is a 17-mile greenway linking the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers into a 17-mile continuous greenway with separate walking and biking trails
Management	French Broad Riverkeeper. City of Asheville and Riverlink
Community Response	NA
Website	<a href="http://www.riverlink.org/programs.asp#riverwaytour">http://www.riverlink.org/programs.asp#riverwaytour</a> and

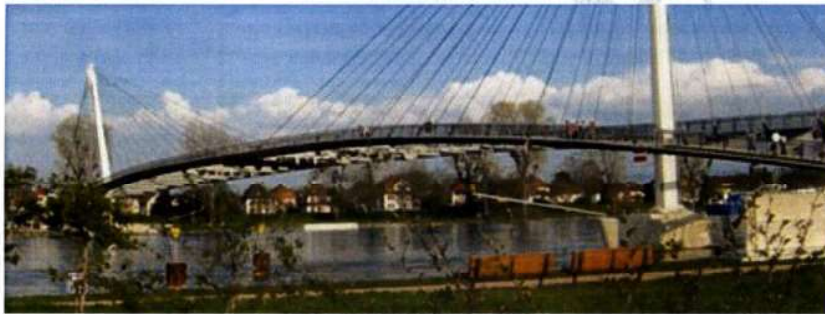
**Grand Parc- Miribel-Jonage Park, Lyon, France**



Description	The Gran Parc- Miribel-Janage is situation 15km from the city of Lyon and is part of the Riverlinks European project. In 1990 a policy of restoration of the 2000ha area began with the objectives of drinking water supply, protection from flooding, safeguarding of natural environment and leisure area.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cafés, restaurants</li> <li>• Parks and promenades</li> <li>• Cycle routes</li> <li>• Sports activities</li> <li>• Artificial lighting systems</li> <li>• Theatres, museums, science centres</li> <li>• Water quality measures</li> <li>• Water management options</li> <li>• Reduced motorised traffic, parking</li> <li>• Integrated master plan</li> <li>• Art and sculptures</li> <li>• Temporary markets and festivals</li> <li>• Facilities for children, the elderly and disabled</li> </ul>
Funding	48% came from European funds, 28% from SYMALIM, 15% from the Rhone-Alps region, 9% from the Corsica Rhone and the Mediterranean Water Agency.

Cost	1,894,941 Euros
Ownership	Symalin, Segapal, and Interest partners ( <a href="http://www.grand-parc.fr/institutionnel/acteurs-partenaires.asp">http://www.grand-parc.fr/institutionnel/acteurs-partenaires.asp</a> )
Size	2200ha.
Management	Parc Nature de Miribel-Jonage
Community Response	The Miribel-Jonage Nature Park has achieved excellent results with the public with its 2,200 hectares, including 350 hectares of water surfaces, 230 species of birds, 25 species of mammals, 800 species of listed plants, 15 marked routes and 4 supervised beaches, because it attracts 3,500,000 visitors a year. This park thus became the fourteenth attraction in France.
Website	<a href="http://www.riverlinks.org/casi%20studio/bordeaux/lyon%20miribel_cs_def.pdf">http://www.riverlinks.org/casi%20studio/bordeaux/lyon%20miribel_cs_def.pdf</a>  <a href="http://www.grand-parc.fr">http://www.grand-parc.fr</a>

### Jardin des Deux Rives



Description	This park area on the Rhine links the towns of Strasbourg and Kehl and is connected by a footbridge where pedestrians can walk to and from across the French/German border. The Garden of the Two Banks constitute the final element of this urban project as an expression of its crossborder character. The objectives are both touristic and cultural. Touristic, first of all, because it makes the site gravitational by creating a special space in direct contact with nature at the heart of the great metropolis of Strasbourg. The project of the Garden of the Two Banks envisages the construction of a bridge, barges and a shuttle to cross the river by water. The plans also reveal long promenades along the banks of the Rhine with restoration, playgrounds and rest areas. The goal is also to attract the inhabitants of Kehl and neighbouring cities towards the largest area of the park on the French side. It is also cultural because the Garden of the Two Banks will be a European meeting place due to its particular localisation. Indeed, it will encourage an exchange of cultures, languages, tastes and will make it easier for the inhabitants of Strasbourg and Kehl and their surroundings to cross the river. It
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	will host a festival: "the Festival of the Two Banks", during which an art contest will be organised.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ferry services, historic boats</li> <li>• Cafés, restaurants</li> <li>• Parks and promenades</li> <li>• Cycle routes</li> <li>• Sports activities</li> <li>• Artificial lighting systems</li> <li>• Water quality measures</li> <li>• Water management options</li> <li>• Reduced motorised traffic, parking</li> <li>• Art and sculptures Temporary markets and festivals</li> <li>• Facilities for children, the elderly and disabled</li> </ul>
Funding	48% came from European funds, 28% from SYMALIM, 15% from the Rhone-Alps region, 9% from the Corsica Rhone and the Mediterranean Water Agency.
Cost	1,894,941 Euros
Ownership	NA
Size	150 ha
Management	NA
Community Response	Positive and enthusiastic with both sides of the famed bridge celebrating festivals along the shore. The towns also host an annual joint festival attracting locals and tourists alike. Travel blogs reveal positive tourist reaction to the concept of 'linking' two cultures and 'bridging the gap' as well as the aesthetic appeal.
Website	<a href="http://www.tourisme-alsace.com/fr/parcs-et-jardins/jardin-deux-rives-strasbourg.html">http://www.tourisme-alsace.com/fr/parcs-et-jardins/jardin-deux-rives-strasbourg.html</a>

### Observations

The domestic river projects reviewed are often innate to the area due to historical use as well as developed for modern purposes. The Murray River project emphasizes the river as a tourism product resource with public and private organizations expressing their interest and cooperating to create a holistic product. Most notably, the case of the Murray River does not express any dilemmas relating to state legislation or conflicting state interests which suggest cooperation to be key to success. Further, the use of tourism to promote awareness of the environmental deterioration of the area is a profitable economic alternative of sustainable character.

The case of Clarence River Way is yet unclear as the project is currently being tried for community response and long term viability. The Clarence Valley has recognized the river as a natural asset and hopes to capitalize on this by creating a cohesive tourism product and brand in which the local community benefits from the profitable economic

impact. The Clarence Valley aims to forgo funding issues which may disrupt public support for the project through a government grant. The scale of the project involves a host of local communities with community support essential in achieving common objectives and sharing a common brand. The support of the community is evident in the case of Ipswich. The aim was to create a community space in response to the need to attract families to enjoy the city centre and community support for the structure is evident suggesting the need for such amenities having been fulfilled.

Internationally, the rivers of Europe are well known for their tourism infrastructure including the Rhine, Danube, and Seine as well as the more adventure based tourism products of the Amazon and Nile, or historic Mississippi. Towns, villages, and cities often being located on rivers has led to the remaining infrastructure now being considered cultural heritage sites and key tourist attractions. Whilst this is most evident in Europe and a key aspect of the tourism product, domestic river projects have not highlighted this historical aspect to the same degree. The Tweed River Nature Link concept's described area of the Tweed has great historical worth with the Tweed River having high narrative value. The review of the Wilma Dykeman Riverway of North Carolina, suggests historical aspects of the tourism product must be embellished through details in elements and infrastructure.

The review of domestic and international river projects demonstrates the need for support by the public and private sector to create a holistic product such as renovation of building facades, public amenities and signage. Further, the project must be endorsed by community involvement and support as their attitude and presentation towards and of the resource will create intangible value. The Tweed River Nature Link involves the need for a host of communities (Tweed Heads, Chinderah, Tumbulgum, Murwillumbah) to focus on the river as a tourism resource and create a holistic Tweed tourism product. It is critical that all areas of the Tweed are linked including the northern area of the shire and adjacent Coolangatta precinct (Southern Boat Harbour, Boyd's Bay, Jack Evans Boat Harbour and The Ivory Boat Harbour), the Tweed Coast (Chinderah facilities are critical to link patrons with Kingscliff and coastal resorts), Estuary Area (Tumbulgum, Condong) and the gateway to world heritage rainforest and cultural hub (Murwillumbah, South Murwillumbah). It is critical that the Tweed River Nature Link be indeed 'linked' with various tourist activity choices on the waterway as well as at each pertinent river town as this is essential in honing the rewards of the multiplier effect. The importance of the Tweed River and Mt. Warning to the identity of the Tweed and its residents is evident in even a limited review of public and private organization names and logos. The river towns may also diversify themselves such as Chinderah for example using its coastal community image compared to Murwillumbah as historical hub and gateway to the rainforest.

#### **Critical Success Factors**

- Vessel size must be low profile, special-to-type passenger vessels with a shallow draft and low wash to navigate existing infrastructure (Condong Bridge).



- Carrying Capacity must remain at optimum level with the use of licensing and registration, marketing strategies and product development critical to maintaining desired level
- Differentiation is key as each section of the Tweed River Nature Link must focus on offering the consumers something slightly different to keep them engaged for the length of their journey.
- Concept must act as a catalyst for niche tourism product development, river town identity development, and access point linking built and natural attractions such as Rainforest Way.
- The product must be central in linking to other attractions and hold a unique appeal which may be achieved through historical elements, aesthetics (appearance of the vessel), educational elements (guides, crew, signage), and environmental awareness.
- The product must appeal to both tourists and residents of various demographics to ensure the longevity of the product. The appreciation of residents is critical to ensure Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFS) market as well as creating an 'authentic' rather than commercial element to the product.
- The product must be supported by the public and private sector with an efficient management structure identifying the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders
- Clear guidelines, regulation and practices, and monitoring by waterway authority to ensure sustainable recreational and commercial practices.
- Communication between stakeholders such as rowing club, dragon boat club, commercial operators, and authorities to ensure efficiency of tourism product during waterway operation.
- Consistency in operation (ex timetabling) is critical in establishment of reputation as reliable product.
- The 'transition' from origin attraction (ex Boyd's Bay) to destination attraction (ex Tumbulgum) must be a quality experience in itself rather than merely a form of alternate access. It is critical that the experience can encompass a variety of interests and be adapted to suit shifting trends.
- The Tweed must establish an identifiable brand with which to integrate various nice products. The Tweed River Nature Link concept is instrumental in the central identity of tweed.

**SWOT of proposed Tweed River Nature Link Concept**

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Iconic natural resource (river)</li> <li>- Gateway to natural attractions (River, Coast/Beaches, 60 000ha Rainforest)</li> <li>- history of river use and travel</li> <li>- aesthetic appeal</li> <li>- creation of access and infrastructure</li> <li>- enhanced visitation to river towns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Links to further tourism products and attractions hosted by river towns</li> <li>- Enhance attributes of natural and built tourist attractions through</li> <li>- Catalyst for niche tourism product and event development</li> <li>- Improved infrastructure and access</li> </ul>

<p>and coastal communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increased access to niche tourism products</li> <li>- unique to the area</li> <li>- holistic brand appeal</li> <li>- proximity to Gold Coast Airport</li> <li>- road access decreases travel time north-south via Tugun Bypass and south north from Byron and Ballina Shire by Highway upgrade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased business and pleasure tourists due to Gold Coast Airport extension</li> <li>- Improved access via proposed Sexton's Hill bypass</li> <li>- Increased environmental appreciation and awareness</li> <li>- Development of arts and cultural precinct</li> <li>- Enhancement of recreational access and activities on the Tweed River and shore</li> <li>- Development of River based events and enhancement of Tweed River festival</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of consistent brand for the Tweed</li> <li>- Lack of infrastructure (viewing platform, boardwalk)</li> <li>- ageing population in Tweed area lends to low socio-economic profile</li> <li>- low employment participation rate of area</li> <li>- lack of adequate parking at water entry areas.</li> <li>- lack of safe pedestrian access</li> <li>- lack of regulation (ex little area limitation for water skiing).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flooding and poor weather conditions</li> <li>- Vandalism of signage and wharfs</li> <li>- Increased erosion of river banks</li> </ul>

### Objectives

The Tweed River Link Project has the following major objectives:

1. To be the central Tourism Product of the Tweed Valley and carry links to tourist products, attractions and activities from which the community will benefit socially, economically and environmentally.
2. To bring together a number of projects/attractions to be linked by the Tweed River, including:
  - Tweed Heads CBD
  - Jack Evans Boat Harbour
  - Southern Boat Harbour
  - Ivory Hotel Harbour
  - Boyd's Bay Marina
  - Tumbulgum
  - Condong

- Murwillumbah and Heritage Wharf
  - South Murwillumbah
  - Art Gallery
  - Rainforest and National Parks
  - Tweed Valley Villages
3. To attract tourists from the Tweed Heads/Gold Coast south to the Tweed Coast region and inland to engage with niche tourism product and natural attractions. The Tweed River Nature Link to encourage a dispersing of tourists through the Tweed Valley in their individual journeys for authentic experiences including arts, culture and the natural environment.
  4. To act as a catalyst for industry, tourism and other economic opportunities for the development of River Towns into attractions of their own right, through the creation of a conducive investment environment.
  5. To create an environment for tourism product to capitalize on renown natural resources including 60 000ha of world heritage listed rainforest and national parks whilst retaining the integrity to the destinations and attractions.
  6. To promote a sense of identity and place for residents as well as create a versatile destination image for tourists. It is critical that residents feel a sense of pride in place to enhance support, collaboration and innovation in product development. This is critical to the tourist experience as the connection with the local community is considered integral to the 'authentic' tourist experience.

### **Project Components**

This Tweed River Nature Link project will prove beneficial in not only increasing the tourism potential of the region, but also the economic well-being of the Tweed Hinterland. The Tweed River Nature Link concept brings together a number of projects to be linked by the Tweed River, including:

1. **Jack Evans Boat Harbour** (To be implemented as a result of the Tweed Heads CBD Masterplan)
2. **Tweed Heads Slipway Refurbishment** (complete)
3. **Southern Boat Harbour Redevelopment Plan** (to be undertaken by State Government in partnership with TEDC)
4. **Pier II/ Ivory Pier** (Private development)
5. **Boyd's Bay Marina** (Initiated by Department of Lands with successful developer to be announced early January 2009)
6. **Condong Regional Boating Facilities** (Recreational & industry-related marine infrastructure - in progress)
7. **Tumbulgum Facility Development**

8. **Murwillumbah** (Heritage wharf completed; Masterplan to be developed; other infrastructure including boardwalk; interpretative centre and creative hub to be developed as part of Masterplan.)

**Breakdown of Destination (Murwillumbah)**

- **Heritage Wharf and Pontoon** - Tourist berthing facilities and riverside boardwalk with attached floating pontoons adjacent to Tweed Regional Art Gallery (complete).
- **Heritage Interpretive Display Pavilion** - A photographic and interactive display, depicting the historical stages of the River.
- **Boardwalk improvements:** Heritage Wharf - Civic Centre; Civic Centre - Wharf Street; Wharf Street - Tweed Gateway Bridge.
- **Tweed Gateway Bridge** – Construct a covered pedestrian walkway attached to the bridge over the River.
- **Viewing platform on the Tweed Gateway Bridge Walkway.**
- **Condong Launch Pad** (complete).

**Future Facilities:**

- **East Bank (South Murwillumbah)** – This area has the potential to be developed as an arts and culture precinct which would be encouraged through the Gateway Bridge Walkway linking Heritage Wharf/ Murwillumbah to the East bank. The potential development of a wharf on the east bank would encourage pedestrian traffic, tourist and recreational activity, and allow for efficient access for the return journey down the river. Travelers would be encouraged to disembark at the Heritage Wharf which will encourage participation in activities in Murwillumbah and connecting tourism activities, crossing the Tweed River Gateway Bridge, and visiting Budd Park and the South Murwillumbah Cultural Hub prior to the embarking on the return journey down the Tweed River.
- **Commercial Road and River Parks-** development of boardwalk and services club
- **Budd Park and World Heritage Rainforest Centre-** development of walking paths, interpretive signage, event facilities, and recreational facilities (BBQ areas, benches, picnic tables, play equipment).
- **Park Development at Riverview Hotel-** Budd Park and World Heritage Rainforest Centre area has the potential to link to the Riverview Hotel area for a cohesive recreational landscape.

**Project Components improvements and developments**

**Boardwalk Improvements**

The proposal is to provide a wide and attractive walkway from the Wharf area alongside the levee wall to the Civic Centre. Further signage is critical to create a sense of place as well as to guide tourists.

**Heritage Wharf to Civic Centre**

The proposal is to provide a wide and attractive walkway from the new wharf area alongside the levee wall to the Civic Centre. This section involves widening 140 metres of existing pathway to 2.4 metres to enable wheel chair access and constructing Jersey Kerb and railing on the section adjacent to the roadway.

**Civic Centre to Wharf Street**

A second concrete section is planned to continue the walkway 150 metres from the Civic Centre to Wharf Street. This would complete the link to Murwillumbah's commercial centre for waterborne visitors and at the same time provide recreational enjoyment for the town itself.

**Wharf Street to Tweed Gateway Bridge**

A 2.4 metre wide timber boardwalk of 100 metres will be constructed to enable access to the Bridge, parks and other facilities.

**"Tweed Gateway Bridge"**

A further stage of the proposal is to construct a covered pedestrian walkway attached to the bridge over the Tweed River which is the main entry point to the town and as such links the eastern side of the town and the Pacific Highway to the town centre on the western side of the river. The 250 metre walkway would enable visitors to enjoy the magnificent views to Mt Warning and the Border Ranges upstream and the scenic views of the boardwalk, wharf and gallery, etc. downstream. The intention is to add a tourist focus to the bridge as the gateway to Australia's Green Cauldron and pristine World Heritage listed Rainforest, in addition to practical traffic access function it now serves.

**Viewing Platform on Tweed Gateway Bridge Walkway**

The viewing platform is planned for the centre point of the bridge walkway to provide a feature of interest to attract people to the walkway, and to provide an architectural attraction for the bridge structure.

**Heritage Interpretive Display Pavilion**

This is planned to be a photographic and interactive display, depicting the historical stages of the Tweed River development, from the early days of logging, through the years when the Wharf was the hub of transport activity in the region, till current times where it will become the focus of tourism for the town. The pavilion would be constructed in a similar style to that constructed at the Heritage Wharf.

### **Opportunities for linkage with tourism products and attractions**

#### **Retail**

Souvenirs and Gifts  
Niche Boutiques (ex organic products)  
Novelty Stores

Tweed River Regional Art Gallery  
Escape Gallery  
Artist Workshop  
Existing Food and Beverage Cafes  
Markets  
Heritage Museum  
Stoker's Siding Pottery

#### **Experience**

4WD tours  
Fishing  
Catch a crab  
Tropical Fruit World  
Madura Tea  
Tweed Endeavour Cruises (Tweed-Tumbulgum)  
Australian Day Tours  
Surf Schools  
Aussie Koala Scenic Tours  
Ilnam Estate Winery

#### **Sports and Recreation**

Fishing  
Walking and Running Track  
Rowing  
Dragon Boat Racing  
BBQ boats  
Houseboats  
Rainforest Way  
Bicycle Tracks  
VitaParcour or 'Keep-Fit Trails' (A European concept of a walk/running trail with permanent exercise equipment in place as well as instructions to encourage various exercise and stretch routines. Examples can be seen in the Bondi-Bronte Walk and the Kingscliff Beach Walkway).

#### **Accommodation**

Seaside Resorts  
Retreats  
Cabins  
Bed and Breakfast  
Backpacker's (Mbah on the River)

#### **Arts and Culture**

Tweed River Festival  
Rainforest Way  
Historical Walk

#### **Identities of River Towns**

The Tweed River Nature Link allows each River Town to enhance their identity for the benefit of the community as well as the appeal of the tourism product. Furthermore the perception of both the tourist and resident are critical in establishing the nature of the attraction and the genuine characteristics in order to balance in perception and foster a positive impact. It may be suggested that the river towns, differentiate themselves slightly to embellish the already established character of the place.

Tweed Heads  
Chinderah  
Tumbulgum  
Condong  
Murwillumbah

Murwillumbah South

**Resident/Tourist Cross perception of Attraction**

**Tourist perception of Attraction**

<b>Resident Presentation of Attraction</b>	<b>Genuine</b>	<b>Contrived</b>
Genuine	Positive Impact - Both parties recognize authentic nature	Negative Impact - Tourists believe genuine product is contrived
Contrived	Negative Impact -tourist misled or confused into mistaking the contrived for the genuine	Positive Impact - both parties recognize inauthentic nature

**Stages of Development**

**Stage One – Wharf and Tourist Landing Construction**

Stage One of the project comprises of the construction of a maritime structure in the form of a flood-resistant wharf, attached pontoon and traditional “ferry” shelter alongside the river bank at the Art Gallery/Nichol Park allowing both commercial and recreational vessels to come alongside and allow passengers to disembark safely. This stage has been completed yet due to lack of efficient tourism product the ferry service is currently unavailable and the wharf is under-utilised.

This wharf provides a destination for travelers arriving from downstream such as boat departures at Tweed Heads, Chinderah or Tumbulgum as well as a recreation and rest area. This, in conjunction with the boardwalk proposal at Stage Two, will provide a focal point for town visitors.

**Stage Two – Boardwalk Improvements and “Tweed Gateway Bridge”**

The proposal is to provide a wide (for wheelchair access and passersby) and attractive walkway from the new wharf area alongside the levee wall which would link central Murwillumbah to the Wharf for visitors and provide recreational enjoyment for the town itself.

The proposal is to construct covered pedestrian walkways and viewing platforms on, or attached to, the bridge – enabling tourists to explore the magnificent views to Mt Warning and the Border Ranges upstream and the scenic views of the boardwalk, wharf

and gallery, etc. downstream. The intention is to add a tourist focus to the bridge in addition to practical traffic access function it now serves.

The bridge at Murwillumbah has served as an entry point for the town since 1968 yet lacks a name and identity. It is proposed that the bridge be used as a feature and photographic vantage point whilst emphasizing Murwillumbah's status as entry point to world heritage listed rainforest through the name 'Tweed Gateway Bridge.'

### **Stage Three – Riverside Square**

The Murwillumbah Centre Design Master Plan (Woods Bagot, Riverside Square Vision) should be revisited. As Council funded this study in 1997, this provides an opportunity to capitalise on the expenditure and consider its implementation. However the Woods Bagot proposal of shifting Tubulgum Road, relocation of the levee wall and shaping of a town square including the war memorial involves large structural changes. Essentially the focal point would be the wharf to town walkway with the concept of riversides square needing review.

### **Stage Four – Budd Park / Alma Street and the World Heritage Rainforest Centre**

Stage Four will continue to implement the concept staging plans for the World Heritage Rainforest Centre. This area is seen as a low key recreation and leisure area including educational and tourist information (directional signage highlighting attractions, interpretive pillars, World Heritage Rainforest and Information Centre) facilities as well as family oriented activity area (playground, picnic area). This may include interpretive rainforest plantings, the development of a boardwalk along the Budd Park foreshore, development of pontoon/mooring facilities and some tourist-oriented commercial opportunities (restaurants, cafés, etc.).

There is a requirement to examine the need for a Highway Transit mode for pedestrian access to Murwillumbah allowing safe passage from Bus transit centre for interstate coach passengers. This mode would complete access linkage. Furthermore there is a distinct need for signage to increase presence and locality. The promotion of the transit centre/Budd Park area as a road rest stop would also be beneficial in enticing drive tourism.

### **Stage Five and Other Area Improvements**

These areas are in the process of being reviewed.

1. **Commercial Road and river parks** -There is a need to enhance existing landscapes and improve facilities. This would include the development of a boardwalk and the possible commercial development by the Services Memorial Club to extend their facilities to above the flood line on the river bank. The extension of this area could act as a walk/cycle way (possibly including a vita parcour) for leisure and sporting activities. Further, local businesses pertaining to retail, tourism and hospitality must



be encouraged to use the aesthetic appeal of the Tweed to their advantage in the development of their premises (i.e. Al Fresco Dining areas facing the river).

2. **East bank (South Murwillumbah)** -Consideration of development of Council-owned flood land adjacent to the south bank of the river. The purchase by Council of the remaining houses, reshaping the levee bank to a better grade and with careful landscaping, would provide the public with a major outdoor entertainment area for large scale events and festivals. This would include a floating platoon to improve accessibility to the arts and culture precinct.

**Current Project Status:**

TEDC is currently in the process of identifying suitable funding programs to leverage the resources of TEDC and the Tweed Shire Council. Applications will be developed and submitted for suitable funding programs one identified. In the interim the TEDC will continue to liaise with Tweed Shire Council and NSW Departments of lands to pursue the interests of progressive tourism approaches such as Tweed River Nature Link and South Murwillumbah Cultural Hub through the Masterplan concept.