

HANDMADE *in* COUNTRY

Living Heritage

Feasibility Report & Action Plan

.....
July 2010
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Executive Summary

In a world that is becoming increasingly homogenized by mass produced goods, Handmade in Country (HMIC) is a project that has the propensity to position Toowoomba and the Darling Downs as a leading region in Australia, known for its high quality handmade goods and produce.

This fresh and innovative approach to economic, education and community development will help preserve the heritage trades for future generations and deliver valuable entrepreneurial skills for local artisans and the wider community.

Initially identified as a one of the top ten catalyst projects in the region's Tourism Opportunity Plan, it will help position the region with a unique selling point and develop product and visitor experiences that will meet market demand.

This feasibility report aims to identify initial feasibility for the project, and includes:

- Establishing Project Demand, Supply and Need,
- Shows Genuine Community Support and Buy-in,
- Gives Examples of World's Best Practice,
- Develops Creative Concepts,
- Outlines Recommended Governance and Possible Funding options, and
- Offers a practical Action Plan to take the project forward, including a direct mail and media list and regional map.

PROJECT DEMAND, SUPPLY & NEED

“Craft is chic and items that show the care, passion – and gentle quirkiness – of the handmade are the new must-haves”, *Allison Tait, Australia Today.*

Globally, nationally and locally there has been a changing trend in consumer behavior that has led to the growth in craft, handmade and DIY products and services.

At the local level, many heritage attractions and handmade related events have experienced record visitor numbers in the last year. Heritage and cultural tourist to Australia have a higher than average yield and this sector has experienced a higher than average growth rate.

The number and type of artisans has been difficult to locate due to many operating from a home based studio. Galleries and potential businesses have also cited the difficulty in locating handmade, local products. This exemplifies the need for a more formalized and professional industry network and marketing.

Combined there are over 300 businesses, associations and loose clusters of artisans specializing in handmade crafts, products and services.

Based on livability concerns in the community, economic diversity, a recent decline in visitor numbers and potential business opportunities, there is a real need to develop a professional industry and Handmade In Country is a project with the potential and capacity to achieve this.

GENUINE COMMUNITY SUPPORT

To gauge community interest in the project, a series of "Long Lunches" (workshops) were staged throughout the region with over 90 people registering to attend the functions. At these functions questionnaires were distributed to identify support and genuine buy-in for the project. With over a 90% response rate, 100% of respondents registered interest in the project, with 98% considering paying commissions and/or membership where appropriate.

During the consultation process over 120 artisans have registered interest in the project and requested to be kept updated via the communications data base.

WORLD'S BEST PRACTICE

A desk top audit of leading examples of 'handmade' regions and projects was undertaken with "Handmade In America" and "Makers of Burnie" (Tasmania) giving real direction from a regional development perspective, and NOVICA (a website supported by National Geographic) offering an excellent example of retailing handmade arts and crafts online.

CREATIVE CONCEPTS

Throughout the consultation process, over 150 creative concepts were identified by stakeholders and interested parties.

The priority concepts and projects recommended to develop Handmade In Country are:-

1 STRUCTURE/GOVERNANCE - Establishment of a steering committee, who sets the strategic direction for the project, develops and oversees a quality assurance process, and sources and manages the project's financial and human resources.

2 ESTABLISHMENT OF A HANDMADE IN COUNTRY COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK – Strongly identified as a priority by stakeholders with networking, collaboration and word-of-mouth referrals was clearly a priority for artisans, suppliers and retailers.

3 HANDMADE IN COUNTRY BRAND DEVELOPMENT – Development of the Handmade In Country Brand, including industry and consumer testing with a resulting brand style guide and toolbox.

4 HANDMADE IN COUNTRY WEB SITE – The development of a dedicated networking and commercial Handmade In Country website.

A Handmade In Country Website was cited by artisans surveyed as the number one way they would like to sell/distribute their products.

5 TRAINING – Participation in up-skilling workshops and training was clearly identified as one of the top outcomes recommended for this project and the second highest opportunity for stakeholders to participate in. Topics and skills identified included branding, packaging and pricing, marketing, getting into tourism, insurance/regulations, starting a home based business, government assistance and grant writing and heritage skills. Training and education should underpin the

project to ensure greater industry capacity and future quality innovation. Creative retirement, mentoring and training for accreditation were all recommended as important trends and components in training.

6 SALES DEVELOPMENT – To ensure the project's commercial viability and artisan/industry buy-in, sales development is seen as a crucial priority in the successful development of Handmade In Country. The opportunity to sell products was cited by stakeholders surveyed as the number one way they would like to participate in the Handmade In Country project.

7 HANDMADE IN COUNTRY TRAILS – Development of Handmade in Country trails was cited by stakeholders as an important component to the project. Many artisans would like to be part of a trail but would only like to open for limited hours/days. The distances to and between attractions/artisans across the Darling Downs was also identified as an inhibitor to the success of visitor trails. It is recommended initially to incorporate HMIC products and services existing visitor drive infrastructure and marketing, rather than creating new ones.

8 HANDMADE IN COUNTRY HOLIDAYS – Packaging of products, art galleries, attractions, handmade in country workshops, accommodation and transport were identified as a HMIC opportunity.

RECOMMENDED GOVERNANCE AND POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

It is recommended in the short-term for a HMIC planning committee to be a sub-committee of Toowoomba and Golden West Regional Tourism Association. Possible funding sources outlined are a combination of grant funding, industry and artisan advertising, user-pays and fundraising.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

A proposed Action Plan is included as an attachment to the feasibility report to act as a practical guide on the development of Handmade in Country and implementation of the creative concepts.

Handmade in Country is a Toowoomba and Golden West Regional Tourism Organisation initiative, in partnership with Cobb+Co Museum and supported by Tourism Queensland. BMO Accountants were appointed to undertake the initial project investigation and deliver this Feasibility Report.



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1 Project Background & Development

The purpose of this report is to establish initial feasibility for the Handmade In Country – Living Heritage project.

The report aims to identify:

- Project demand, supply and need,
- Establish genuine community support and buy-in,
- Give examples of world's best practice,
- Develop creative concepts,
- Outline recommended governance and possible funding options, and
- Give a practical Action Plan to take the project forward

The report is limited to the artisans and heritage trade people who either registered interest for the project and/or where found via online searches. The research and communication lists are not exhaustive lists of all the artisans and heritage trades people in the region. The Action Plan recommends the continued call for interested parties and updating of contact lists.

1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Handmade In Country – Living Heritage is one of the top ten catalyst projects identified in Tourism Queensland's South East Queensland Country's Tourism Opportunity Plan 2009–2019.

The purpose of the Tourism Opportunity Plan (TOP) is to provide direction for the sustainable development of tourism in the region over the next ten years to 2019. It aims to identify new and upgraded tourism products that meet future visitor expectations and demands, that reflect the region's unique tourism products and experiences to maintain a competitive edge for the region.

1.2 PROJECT CONCEPT

With an ageing population and a growing interest in 'do it yourself', Handmade in Country – Living Heritage has the potential to position the region as the nation's leading 'handmade' education and experience destination.

The project explores the delivering of vocational training and education, not in the classroom, but in unique tourism settings. Visitors will see or be educated in the traditional arts of restoration conservation, arts, crafts and 'how to' create by hand. This concept builds on the growth in the number of 'learning' visitors who want to get more from their holiday than a suntan.

This is a fresh and innovative approach to economic, education and community development that will:-

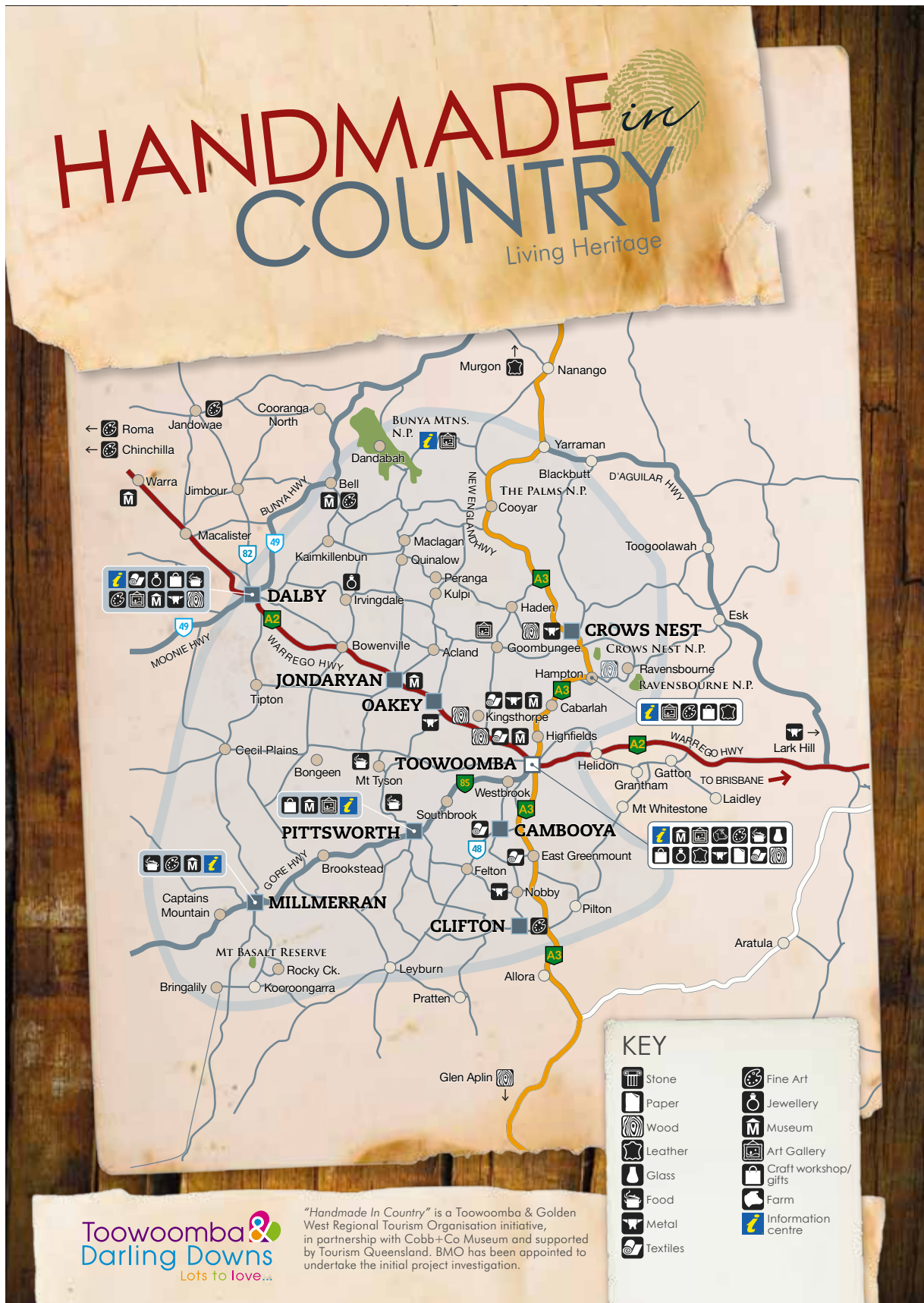
- Give the region a unique selling point,
- Give visitors a better and 'real' experience,
- Preserve our heritage trades and crafts, and
- Develop valuable skills for our artisans and local communities

In a region where mining and gas exploration is becoming a major component of the geographic, economic and cultural landscape, projects, such as Handmade in Country – Living Heritage are essential to help maintain the region's livability.



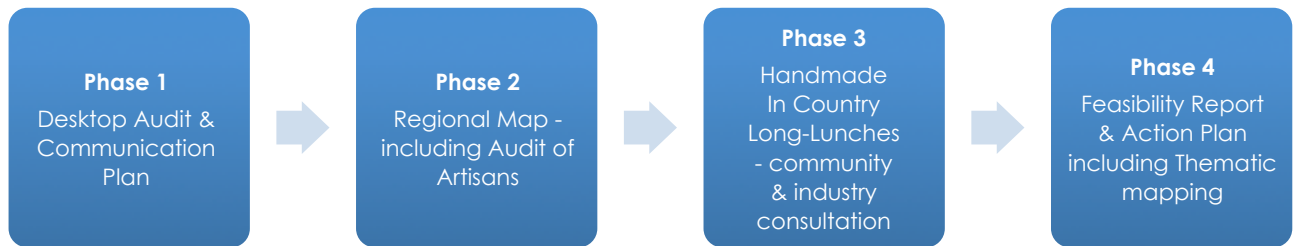
1.3 GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The initial geographic scope of the project is based on the Toowoomba and Darling Downs section of Toowoomba & Golden West Regional Tourism Organisation.



1.4 PROJECT PLAN

To prepare this report, the project was divided into 4 phases as outlined below. A more precise outline of the methodology used to develop this report is detailed on the following page .



1.5.1 Methodology & Consultation

Phase 1 March 1–19

DESKTOP AUDIT & COMMUNICATION PLAN

- Communication Plan, including development of 1 page information sheet. See Appendix 1
- Desktop Audit - national/international cultural heritage case studies. See part 3.0 of this report.
- Direct Mailing List - development of a direct communication list of 402 contacts including Education & Training (14), Arts/Heritage Societies (45), Museums/Art Galleries (34), Dignataries (58), Local/State/Federal Government (49), Private Enterprise (51), Tourism (26), Artisans (125). The list is a colation of contacts from google and whitepage searches; the online community directory of Toowoomba Regional Council and distribution of information through TGWT, Cobb+Co Museum, Regional Museum Development Officer and media publicity.

Phase 2 March 22–23 April

REGIONAL MAP DEVELOPMENT & AUDIT OF ARTISANS

- Map – Initial Development of map template and category coding.
- Media Distribution List – development of 90 media contacts including Arts (15), Craft/Heritage/Country Magazines (13), Local Media – print, tv, raio, newsletters, magazines (48) and Tourism/Events/Lifestyle Media (14).
- Communication of project in local media, industry and community newsletters. Direct mail of handmade envelope with media release to targetted media, distribution of media release and PDF of information flyer to remaining media and direct mailing lists. Over 500 e-mails and hard copies sent.

Phase 3 April 26–14 May

HANDMADE IN COUNTRY LONG LUNCHES

- 'Long Lunches' - series of information sessions Toowoomba May 4, Bunneyconnellan May 5, Pittsworth/Amazing Soaps May 11, Jondaryan May 12 and Dalby May 14. Invites sent w/c 19 April. Media Release sent w/c 26 April. See Appendix 2 for list of attendees.
- Questionnaire distributed at Long Lunches to identify readiness & willingness to participate in program. See Appendix 3 for Questionnaire and Results.
- Additional face-to-face, e-mail and phone consultation with key stakeholders and departments. See Appendix 4 for consultation list and Appendix 5 or DEEDI/DET project summary.

Phase 4 17 May–4 June

REPORT & ACTION PLAN

- Questionnaire results & consultation suggestions distributed to Long Lunch attendees (See Appendix 3)
- Presentation of Draft Report Report & Action Plan to TGWT Proejct Steering Committee - 4th June.
- Presentation of Outcomes & Recommendations to TGW Steering Committee
- Postage of Executive Summary of Report to Direct Mailing List to ensure all stakeholders and attendees at Long Lunch receive follow-up and a 'where to from here'.

2 Project Feasibility

Before embarking on the development of Handmade In Country – Living Heritage, it's important to establish if such a project is feasible; ie. is there consumer demand for handmade products and experiences and does the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region have the products to supply the market?

The project considered its economic and social impacts. Is there genuine community buy-in for the project? Does the project fit with the strategic vision for the region and for Queensland?

2.1 PROJECT DEMAND

To establish if there is consumer demand for handmade products and experiences, changing global, national and local consumer trends in retail and media in relation to handmade products and experiences were investigated. The Study also looked at visitor statistics (international and domestic) to see if visitors are seeking cultural/heritage experiences.

2.1.1 GLOBAL AND NATIONAL TRENDS

In a world that is becoming increasingly homogenized and dominated by mass produced goods and international brands, a change in consumer demand and new product trends is evolving.

Consumers are now demanding to know where the products they consume are made and by whom. They're searching for products that are genuine, 'have meaning' and 'give back' to the community and environment.

This trend now features in mainstream consumption and media. Internationally, the growth of crafts and handmade products has developed strongly in the USA (eg. growth of Martha Stewart empire www.marthastewart.com) and in the UK (eg. LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics www.lush.com.au). LUSH retail stores are now located throughout Australia in most capital cities.

“Craft is chic and items that show the care, passion – and gentle quirkiness – of the handmade are the new must-haves”, *Allison Tait, Australia Today*.

In Australia there are a suite of special interest magazines found in most news agencies including Australian Country Craft, Australian Patchworking & Quilting, Australian Ceramics, Glasswork & Pottery, And Australian Homemade. There are over 50 specialty craft/handmade publications printed on a regular basis.

The growth in 'make it yourself' and DIY has contributed to the expansion of retail outlets such as Bunnings Hardware and the ratings success of television shows such as Better Homes and Gardens and Masterchef Australia.

Recent articles such as, "Use Your Hands" (Qantas Magazine) and "The Handmade Band" (Australia Today) are testament to this growing trend. (see Appendix 6 for full articles).

2.1.2 LOCAL TRENDS

In June 2008, Cobb+Co Museum in Toowoomba and the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE released a review of Heritage Trade Training called, "Heritage Is In Our Hands". The report clearly identifies the need and demand for training in heritage trades. The report findings combined with the Museum's first-hand experience of growing participating in its heritage trades workshops and festivals have contributed to its multi-million dollar National Carriage Factory, due to officially open in September 2010.

Heritage and handmade related products, tourism attractions and events are also on the rise in the Darling Downs region.

Both Jondaryan Woolshed and Highfields Pioneer Village have sited record attendances at their heritage related events during 2010.

Several government offices, tourism outlets and galleries in the region, particularly in the Toowoomba area have sited difficulty in sourcing high quality locally made visitor souvenirs and corporate gifts.

2.1.3 TOURISM TRENDS

Cultural or heritage tourism is big business for Australia. According to a 2008 survey by Tourism Research Australia, over 50 per cent of all international visitors to Australia participate in at least one cultural or heritage activity during their stay,

The study also identifies Cultural/Heritage visitors as having a higher yield (ie. spend per visitor) than average and a higher than average annual growth.

Between 2000 and 2008 cultural and heritage tourism for international visitors had an average annual growth of 3 per cent, increasing to 2.7 million visitors. There were 9.7 million domestic overnight tourists in the same period.

TABLE 1 Expenditure per person by cultural and heritage visitors, 2008

Expenditure items	International \$ Per Trip	Domestic \$ Per trip
Food, drink & accommodation	1 861	559
Shopping	530	220
Domestic airfares	413	474
Other transport	1 995	203
Organised tours	542	307
Education	8 854	237
Entertainment	195	129
Other	1 631	379
Total spend per person	6 355	994
Total spend per night	148	178

Among domestic overnight tourists, 20 per cent participate in two or more cultural or heritage activities during their stay. The most popular cultural or heritage activity for international visitors was visiting a historical or heritage building, with 61 per cent participating. This was followed by visiting museums or art galleries with 57 per cent participating.

For domestic overnight visitors, visiting museums or art galleries was the most popular activity, with 44 per cent participating. This was followed by visiting a historical or heritage building with 30 per cent participating.

TABLE 2 Share of cultural and heritage visitors by activity type, 2007

	International %	Domestic overnight	Domestic day
Attend theatre concerts or other performing arts	24	23	22
Visit museums or art galleries	57	44	35
Visit art or craft workshops or studios	18	7	8
Attend festivals or fairs or cultural events	21	17	19
Experience Aboriginal art or craft and cultural displays	22	3	1
Visit an Aboriginal site or community	11	2	0
Visit historical/heritage buildings sites or monuments	61	30	24
Total ('000)	2668	9667	851

Source: - Tourism Research Australia, 2008, *Cultural Tourism Snapshot*

It is interesting to note what visitors to the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region expect to experience. Some 45% of visitors expect to have a rural experience, with over 40% of visitors expecting to experience our nation's/ Australia's heritage and nearly 30% expect to experience arts and culture (See Appendix 10 - TRA, Visitor Profile and Satisfaction, Toowoomba 2007). These visitor expectations are well suited to the Handmade In Country project offerings.

2.2 PROJECT SUPPLY

To establish if the region can support the Handmade in Country-Living Heritage project it is important to establish the supply side of the project, including:-

- What artisans currently exist and where?
- Is there genuine community buy-in for the project and how do people want to participate? and
- What retail/visitor attractions exist as potential venue partners and retail outlets for the project

2.2.1 Supply and Location of Artisans

To establish what artisans exist in the region, a collation of contacts was developed from online google and whitepage searches; the online community directory of Toowoomba Regional Council and distribution of information through TGWT, Cobb+Co Museum, the Regional Museum Development Officer, media publicity, distribution of information flyer via hard copy and e-mail and word-of-mouth channels.

In just 12 weeks, over 120 local artisans and craft groups in the region who have registered interest in the project. (Please note, this is not an exhaustive list of the artisans in the region. Many of creative and heritage trades people work from home and are not listed publicly on the internet or in community directories, This further exemplifies the need to establish a publicly listed network of artisans and suppliers).

These artisans are located throughout the region. We have categorised artisans into the type of work and where they are located to try and identify if any geographic and/or creative type clusters exist in the region (see Appendix 7 & 8 for list of artisans and category and HMIC Map).

As a result, there are clearly existing geographic clusters, particularly from Toowoomba to Crows Nest and Dalby. The region is particularly strong in the areas of heritage trades such as blacksmithing and particularly textile artisans including quilting. These are perfectly tied to the Handmade In Country concept.

It should be noted that we have also been approached by artisans in the Esk/Ipswich, Kingaroy/South Burnett and the Western Downs regions to participate in this project. It is recommended the initial steering committee address possible expansion of geographic boundaries of the project, but not so as to jeopardise the region's unique selling point/location.



2.2.2 Genuine Community Buy-In

To establish community buy in, a series of 'long-lunches' were held throughout the region including Toowoomba, Pittsworth, Crows Nest, Jondaryan and Dalby. These information sessions were held to inform the wider community of the project, to generate creative ideas and establish if people were genuinely interested in participating in the project. A nominal fee was charged to attend to cover catering costs and ensure only interested and genuine members of the public attended.

A questionnaire was distributed at each venue to specifically ask if people were interested in the project, how they would like to be involved and specifically for artisans, if they were willing to pay to be involved.

Some 94 people registered for the Long Lunches and 64 completed questionnaires were returned.

The questionnaire findings clearly indicate a genuine interest in the project, stating a willingness to participate and where appropriate, paying to be involved.

The results of the questionnaire can be summarised in the following graphs. A copy of the questionnaire and full results is listed in Appendix 3 .



Can't read graph on our macs

2.3 POTENTIAL ECONOMIC & SOCIAL IMPACTS OF PROJECT

Handmade in Country is an innovative and fresh approach to economic, education and community development. It has the potential to benefit the Darling Downs region through positive economic and social impacts.

The industries the project is likely to benefit directly include:-

- Creative industry, including artists, art/craft retailers and material suppliers
- Tourism industry, including museums, heritage attractions, art galleries, wineries, information centers, accommodation, cafes, restaurants and transport
- Education industry, including venues, trainers, education institutions

There are over 200 cafes/restaurants and 30 galleries, museums and art supply businesses in the region, with 119 accommodation providers. In the wider South Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt region there are 177 wineries.

The project has the capacity to take what is currently an ad hoc and loose cluster of artisans, manufacturers, tourism and retail outlets, and develop them to a professional, self-sustaining industry. The project would directly link over 300 peak industry groups, associations, artisans and businesses through the region.

It can build industry capacity through training and workforce development and increase profits and visitor yield to encourage new business and job creation.

Job creation is an important outcome of this project. According to the Economic Impact of the National Carriage Factory Report by Cobb+Co Museum, their new development alone will create up to 17 Full Time positions in the wider tourism industry by 2012. Handmade In Country has the propensity to develop this type of job creation throughout the wider region.

Positive social impacts of the project are likely to include:-

- Community pride through increased awareness of its cultural heritage
- Preservation of its cultural heritage
- Wider training opportunities for people of all ages
- Greater inclusion and awareness of the importance of artisans, the arts and creativity
- Improved livability through the development of a clean and sustainable industry

“Places that are open to creative innovators will be more likely to produce, retain and attract innovators of all sorts, including technological innovators. This, in turn, will generate new firms and businesses”, Urban Density, May 2007, *Economic Impact of the Professional Craft Industry in Western North Carolina*

2.4 PROJECT NEED

With the growth in the mining and resources boom and based on livability concerns in the community and a recent decline in visitor numbers there is a real need to develop the Handmade In Country project.

2.4.1 Livability & Economic Diversity

The Toowoomba and Darling Downs region is currently facing one of its greatest growth periods in history with the mining, gas and resources boom of the Surat Basin. As a result it is experiencing strong economic growth and low unemployment.

However, the social fabric of the region is changing with many people in the community concerned for the region's natural environment and general livability.

With such a change in the social fabric of the region, Handmade in Country has the capacity to preserve and build on the community's cultural heritage.

This project by no means represents the major industry in the region, but it represents an important sector, particularly for economic diversity and a clean and sustainable industry for the region's future.

2.4.2 Tourism Trends

The region receives over 2.3m visitors p.a. making it the 4th most visited region in Queensland (Dec 09, TRA), and with the projected population growth of SEQld, the region could benefit even more from tourism if it can maintain its competitiveness and provide the appropriate visitor experiences.

Unfortunately overnight domestic visitors to Toowoomba declined 5% in 2009. Day trip visitors grew 7%, perhaps indicating domestic visitors are opting for day trips in lieu of an overnight stay (See Appendix 10-Toowoomba Regional Snapshot, Dec 09, Tourism Queensland).

For this reason, it is imperative the region develops a greater range of quality experiences to its visitor offerings in order to increase visitation, length of stay and yield. It is imperative the region continues to develop unique product offerings to retain its competitiveness.

3 Case Studies

Before embarking on the creative concept of the project, a desktop audit was undertaken nationally and internationally to help establish world's best practice by identify existing "Handmade" projects and regions.

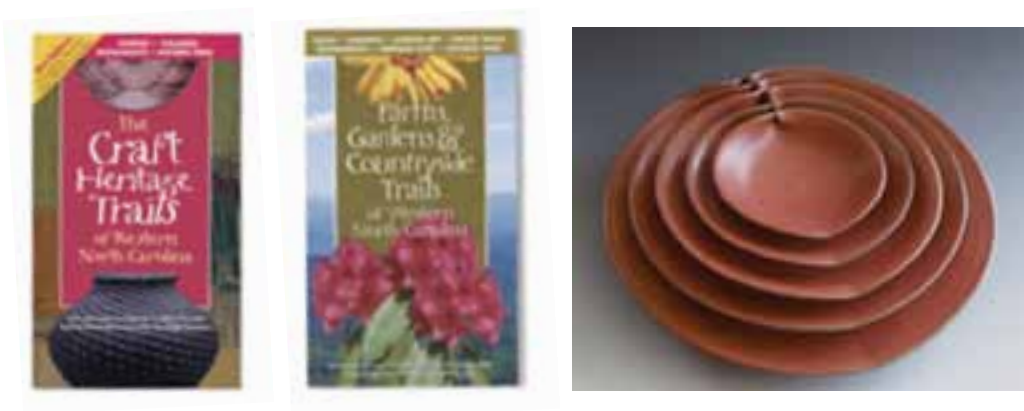
3.1 Handmade In America



The USA has strong heritage crafts/community development programs. Handmade In America was by far the most organized and professional 'handmade' region uncovered in the research. It should be noted this was assisted by the existing relationship that Cobb+Co Museum have forged with this group. In brief, Handmade in America has been developed over 20 years based on small town economic development and cultural heritage.

It is now the leading region in the USA for craft and traditional trade's education and have full economic studies of the professional craft industry.

The organization employs full-time staff and undertakes projects such as the Hand Made House, Folk Art Centre, a grants program and publications such as The Craft Heritage Trails publication and Farms, Gardens and Countryside Trails publication. Their website www.handmadeinamerica.org includes a full craft directory and they send out e-mail newsletters of up and coming events, workshops and training opportunities on a regular basis. The website and program is wholly inclusive and open to anyone in their region who wants to participate.



The group has strong corporate governance, including:-

Mission - HandMade in America's mission is to grow handmade economies through craft, cultural heritage and community assets.

Vision - We envision a thriving region that leverages the distinctive cultural assets of its people and the spirit of community.

Guiding Principles: HandMade in America Values

- The handmade object and the artists who create it. Craft is an integral part of economic development. The creation and appreciation of the handmade object is transformative to individuals and communities.
- Cultural heritage. Honoring arts, artists and cultural traditions in a region preserves and enriches community life.
- Sustainable development. The people in communities serve as the best resource to understand their challenges and opportunities and to seek and find solutions.
- Inclusion. It is vital, and all are welcome to participate.

3.2 Heritage Craft Centre of the Eastern Panhandle

This group is a membership based organisation in West Virginia. They offer training and handmade goods are sold on consignment through their visitor's bureau (with 70% going to the artists). They have a "Jurying Committee" that approves art/craft work and release regular newsletters via their website. www.heritagecraftcenter.org (see Appendix 10 – Jury Form).

Statement "providing the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia with the best in fine crafts and instruction in these artisan crafts."

Mission "preserving the craft skills from past generations".

Vision "An established learning and marketing center that serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia to preserve craft skills of past generations and improve the economic and artistic potential of the community".



3.3 Homestead Heritage

Located near Dallas in Texas USA, the Homestead Heritage is a heritage village that showcases their community of craftspeople who specialize in the traditional way of making craft and furniture by hand.

It includes a visitor centre, farm deli and café, gift barn, heritage furniture, a potter's house...just to name a few. This visitor attraction is like an American version of Jondaryan Woolshed and the Pioneer Villages located throughout the Downs.

More information on the attraction can be viewed at: - www.homesteadheritage.com



3.4 Handmade In India



Throughout many developing nations handmade, traditional crafts are seen as a way to contribute to economic growth. "The industries of the imagination, content, knowledge, innovation and creation clearly are the industries of the future. They are also important contributory factors to employment and economic growth" (UNESCO 1999).

India has recognised the importance of promoting traditional crafts and has undertaken research papers on the subject, with associated publications and websites.

3.5 www.novica.com



NOVICA is a revolutionary website, supported by National Geographic, that promotes 2,000 master artists from Peru, Brazil, Bali & Java, Central America, India, Mexico, Thailand and West Africa (Ghana). It promotes and sells more than 30,000 handcrafted works of art.

Their philosophy:—"we want to create a bridge between you and the many talented artisans across the globe. We want you to know about who you're buying from. We want you to feel that attachment to the product and to the hands that created it."

NOVICA believes in fair trade and compensation for their artists, not charging any fees for listing items on the website and giving free access to change prices as they wish.

The site is very easy to follow, clearly classifying products and including a gift finder based on the customer's price range.

There is a good corporate gifts section and they are developing relationships with corporate sponsors promoting the concept of "the gift that gives back".

See Appendix 11 for a copy of their Corporate Gift Gallery.

3.6 The UK

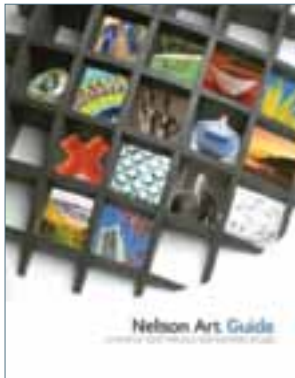
The UK has strong heritage/crafts networks and one of its most organised groups is the UK Heritage Crafts Association.

Further demonstration of the popularity of 'handmade' is the BBC TV Series called *Mastercraft* which was recently developed with the *UK Heritage Craft Association*.

Generally, heritage crafts in the UK have strong links to events and markets eg. "Living Heritage Craft Shows" (www.craft-shows.co.uk).

The Irish Loop Development Board has also developed a trail to help crafters and artisans learn and preserve traditional methods of doing their work and/or performing.

3.7 Nelson Art Guide – NZ



The Nelson Art Guide is a predominately visitor/arts guide for the Nelson region in the northern region of the south island of New Zealand. The guide is an excellent example of a quality publication that includes the art, natural and built attractions, particularly for visitors to the region.

The publication, in its 7th edition was organised by the now defunct, Nelson Bays Arts Advocacy & Marketing Trust. It is now published and sold by an independent, commercial publisher.

Artists/attractions/businesses pay an advertorial fee to be in the guide and sell it through their retail outlets.

3.8 The Art Trail- Bundeen & Maianbar



The Bundeena Art Trail is located in Cronulla, south of Sydney and is a diverse group of artists that are linked by their location and a willingness to open their studios to the wider community. Like many artists they do not want to open their studios to visitors 7 days a week so they have created an open day or "self-drive market day" on the 1st Sunday of every month. Visitors can go to their website www.arttrail.com.au and find out which studios will be open that month and then download a map that identifies the studio locations. Their website also promotes up and coming art shows and exhibitions.

3.9 Hawkesbury Harvest



Hawkesbury Harvest is a community based project conceived as a natural extension of the Hawkesbury Food Program. Hawkesbury Harvest aims to increase consumer access to nutritious, safe foods while developing the opportunity for agri-based tourism. They produce a guide and have a regular e-newsletter that includes events and featured tourism products and packages.

The project promotes country experiences and picking produce by hand. Located west of Sydney, they participate in markets in Sydney to promote their products. To find out more, visit www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au

3.10 Georgie Love



Georgie Love launched in March 2006 and was Australia's first website store dedicated to promoting and selling handmade products from independent and emerging artists from Australia (www.georgielove.com)

An artist is open to submissions with Items chosen purely on owner's tastes, and what will fit with the aesthetics of the site and customers trends.

They charge a commission base, with a 50/50 split of the retail price on one-of-kind items and a 2/3-1/3 retail price split (artist's favour) on repeated items.

Meet the Makers of Burnie



The Makers of Burnie is an initiative of the Burnie City Council in Tasmania and promotes the people of Burnie who 'make things' eg. Papermakers, coffee makers, whiskey makers, cheese makers, milk makers, garden makers, glass makers etc. Incorporated in the experience is the natural environment

('burrow makers' , little penguins) and the tourism industry (eg. where to stay).

The council has recently opened the Makers' Workshop with is 'part museum, part arts complex and part visitor information centre'. Included in the venue

are makers studios where visitors are encouraged to view the artisans and work and then purchase their objects for sale in the gift shop. For more information visit www.burnie.net

In summary, there are many aspects and experiences gained from each case study which could be incorporated into the successful development of Handmade In Country concept.

4 Creative Concepts and Development

During the consultation process, including long lunch events, questionnaires and one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders, over 150 creative ideas, suggestions and concepts have been generated for the Handmade In Country project.

The creative concepts have been classified and prioritised in this section of the report and are included in the Action Plan at the end of this report.

4.1 CREATIVE CONCEPTS

Of the 150 something creative concepts generated, most are related to the following headings, in order of priority from 1 – 8:-

- 1. Communication/Networking**
- 2. Sales/Website**
- 3. Training**
- 4. Branding/Promotion**
- 5. Trails**
- 6. Quality Control/Assurance**
- 7. Structure/Governance**
- 8. Holidays**

(A full list of the creative concepts and suggestions are included in Appendix 3)

4.2 PRIORITY CONCEPTS

Participants were asked to vote for two suggestions they felt were most important for the project. The most voted suggestions/concepts were:-

Structure/Governance	<p>Steering Committee of Arts/Crafts people, Council representative, Toowoomba & Golden West and Cobb & Co</p> <p>Incorporated - Non for profit. Committee of volunteers from various areas.</p> <p>Membership (By each organisation or individual)</p> <p>Cobb & Co as centre of handmade in country</p>
Trails	<p>Art & craft trail</p> <p>Handmade in Country days situated at a garden (gardener gets gate fees), artists/craftspeople get to sell goods</p> <p>Start a trail holiday – who sells what & who sells where? This trail</p> <p>Could be distributed via email & display/distribute</p>
Holidays	<p>Workshop Holiday</p> <p>Handmade in Country Craft/Art Retreats</p> <p>Develop workshop centers to provide displays & lessons & sell products</p>
Training	<p>Training in all aspects - training, selling, visual presentation</p> <p>Teaching classes for on-going generations to keep these skills alive</p>
Communication/ Network	<p>Listing of supplier of raw materials</p> <p>Establish a register of artists/artisans</p>
Branding/Promotion	<p>How will the Darling Downs region maintain the perception of being primarily an agricultural/horticultural/artisan environment when the is currently under threat of widespread bauxite and coal mining?</p> <p>Public exposure for products of art/business</p> <p>Handmade in Country living heritage sticker/logo to put on produce</p> <p>Support with printed material eg Artists cards - Burnie concept</p> <p>Distinctive logo for Handmade in Country - ASAP</p> <p>Branding and quality assurance</p>
Sales/Website	<p>Dynamic website that sells and lists all artists and craftspeople</p>
Quality Control	<p>Quality control of products being sold by the brand/entity</p>

As previously outlined, the results of the questionnaire had similar responses for what type of activities stakeholders would be interested in participating for the Handmade In Country project.

4.3 RECOMMENDED CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

Based on the outcomes of the long lunch, stakeholder questionnaire and face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders, it is recommended Handmade in Country – Living Heritage include the following 8 suggestions and projects in its concept development:-

- 1. STRUCTURE/GOVERNANCE** - Establishment of a steering committee who sets the *strategic direction* for the project, develops and oversees *quality assurance guidelines* and has a long-term view of becoming an incorporated association. *Resourcing of personnel* will also need to be considered to implement the project. More detail on structure, quality assurance, reporting and funding is included in part 5.0 – 7.0 of this report.
- 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF A HANDMADE IN COUNTRY COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK** – Consistently identified as a priority by stakeholders with networking, collaboration and word-of-mouth referrals were clearly a priority for artisans, suppliers and retailers.

Database and networking of artisans - A register of artisans, suppliers and retail outlets with associated partners from tourism, education, private sector and government is recommended to be maintained and updated. This network would form the basis of content and online distribution for website and e-marketing. Simple networking initiatives such as continuation of long-lunches where artisans had a 'show'n'tell', gallery openings and online communication including e-newsletters and blogs were all cited as initiatives for a Handmade In Country network.

Existing opportunities - In the development of this feasibility study, several opportunities that could have been communicated through this network were presented, including a craft show for artisans to display their products for just \$20 per site and an opportunity to supply handmade souvenirs to an international conference being staged in Toowoomba in 2011.

- 3. HANDMADE IN COUNTRY BRAND DEVELOPMENT** – Development of the Handmade In Country Brand, including industry and consumer testing with a resulting brand *style guide and toolbox*.

Stakeholder suggestions included using the brand on handmade products that passed quality assurance would help promote products and the concept. Over 50% of artisans surveyed were interested in paying a commission to sell under a Handmade In Country brand/logo. It is suggested to include photo shoot and ongoing process to maintain quality images of products through HMIC communications and marketing. More detail on brand development is included in part 6.0 of this report.

- 4. HANDMADE IN COUNTRY WEB SITE** – The development of a dedicated networking and commercial Handmade In Country website is recommended.

Communication network and database - The website should initially focus on the communication and networking of artists with the wider industry of suppliers, tourism and retail outlets. It could include training, promotional and networking opportunities, with a calendar of events and an associated e-newsletter. It is recommended the site be fully inclusive in the networking aspects and linking of existing sites related to the project and tourism. There could be a small annual fee for listing of products/stores/associations and advertising/sponsorship/partnership

opportunities. For example \$10,000 could be raised to set up the site if 100 artisans/business each contribute \$100 p.a. for listings and linkages. To recognise TGWT's role and investment in the project, TGWT members could be linked free-of-charge in the first year.

Commercial website - Once the quality assurance program and branding is confirmed, it is recommended to develop the commercial aspect of the website where a commission structure and/or annual advertising charge is associated with those products that meet the quality assurance process.

A Handmade In Country Website was cited by artisans surveyed as the number one way they would like to sell/distribute their products.

- 5. TRAINING** – Participation in up-skilling workshops and training was clearly identified as one of the top outcomes recommended for this project and the second highest opportunity for stakeholders to participate in. Topics and skills identified included branding, packaging and pricing, marketing, getting into tourism, insurance/regulations, starting a home based business, government assistance and grant writing and heritage skills. Entrepreneurial skills were cited by artisans as the type of training they were most interested in. Flexible training opportunities were identified as a priority for most stakeholders with a long-term view of developing recognised qualifications to be trainers was also identified.

Mentoring highly skilled artisans and experienced heritage tradespersons was also seen as an important process for the project.

A training process to achieve accreditation to use the Handmade in Country brand was also recommended.

Underpinned by training - Handmade In Country should be underpinned by a training, education and professional development program to ensure standards are constantly being raised and to develop a future skills base in the Darling Downs. The Downs could be developed as a leading region in Australia of artisans and professional heritage trades people. Such an innovative and creative workforce could earn valuable export dollars for the region, including attracting people to study these particular sectors and for professional consultants to be advisors, for example, for heritage preservation and restoration projects world wide for built World Heritage listings. For a more in-depth analysis of training opportunities, please to the report by Cobb+ Co called "Heritage Is In Our Hands".

Creative Retirement is a term growing in popularity to reflect the growing number of baby boomers turning to develop their creative skills in later life. In the tourism realm, this trend could be the new wave of grey nomads.

Handmade In Country Conference - In the long-term, a Handmade In Country annual conference has been suggested, to showcase the region, the work of artists and heritage trades people and to bring creative industry leaders to the region from all over the world.

- 6. SALES DEVELOPMENT** – To ensure the project's commercial viability, artisan/industry buy-in and long-term sustainability, sales development is seen as a crucial priority in the successful development of Handmade In Country. *The opportunity to sell products was cited by stakeholders*

surveyed as the number one way they would like to participate in the Handmade In Country project.

Sales opportunities - Opportunities identified included sales through a Handmade in Country website, galleries, trade and consumer shows (eg. agricultural shows, craft shows), markets and coordinated selling points eg. Visitor Information Centers. Point of sale displays, similar to Steve Parish display stands throughout Australia Post centers, was seen as something that could be developed under a Handmade in Country brand. Opportunities to sell on consignment through cafes, doctors surgeries, hospitals, meetings and conferences and the tourism industry (eg. in motel rooms) was also identified as major, un-tapped opportunities. Public art opportunities in main streets and private enterprise buildings were discussed as a way to develop the Handmade In Country image/brand throughout the towns and community of the Darling Downs

Facilitating the linking of the producer with the retailer - Most artisans cited a lack of selling skills, knowledge and time as the major inhibitor to selling their products and some 50% surveyed would like to participate in training related to entrepreneurial skills. On discussion with galleries, retail outlets and government representatives, difficulty in locating high quality handmade goods and art was constantly mentioned. They, like the artisans, don't have the time to spend researching and sourcing local products, but are very willing to promote and buy such products. A program of training artisans in entrepreneurial skills, particularly in relation to sales and distribution is recommended.

Sales coordinator - Subject to ability of the Steering Committee to raise funds/grants to employ human resources for the project, it is recommended to employ a Sales Coordinator (if not full-time, perhaps on a casual, consultancy or commission basis) to develop a Handmade In Country portfolio of products which have passed the quality assurance process to act as a sales agent and promote products to retail outlets, promotion to various industries (eg. tourism, medical and government) and to develop corporate partnerships (eg. based on the learnings from NOVICA's corporate partnership program).

- 7. HANDMADE IN COUNTRY TRAILS** – Development of Handmade in Country trails was cited by stakeholders as an important component to the project. Many artisans would like to be part of a trail but would only like to open for limited hours/days. The distances to and between attractions/artisans across the Darling Downs was also identified as an inhibitor to the success of visitor trails. Trails could be based on the clusters identified on the map (see Appendix 12).

Link to existing drive trails and strategies - In the short term, it is recommended to include Handmade In Country information with existing visitor drive infrastructure, marketing, famils and publications eg. Handmade In Country trail of the Great Bunya Drive, Cobb+Co Drive, Australia's Country Way, Rural Get-a-Way, Warrego Highway, Gore Highway and Adventure Way.

Link and leverage to existing events and festivals - From the learnings of the arts trail in Cronulla, if there were artisan clusters interested, an open day, once a month could be created. To ensure more commercial success it is recommended to develop a series of Handmade In Country open days/visitor trails to link with major festivals and events held throughout the region when there are visitors and a captive, self-drive audience interested in handmade produce/food/art. Such events and festivals where Handmade in Country trails/open days could be promoted could include Carnival of Flowers, Hampton High Country Food and Arts Festival, Highfield's Pioneer

Village Easter Festival, the Pittsworth Fine Food and Craft Spectacular, Millmerran Campoven Festival, Jandowae Timbertown Festival, Jondaryan Heritage Festival and Dalby Spring Festival. Linking with the open-gardens scheme and local, agricultural shows with organised handmade visitor packages and pre and post touring for the conference market could also be an opportunity to promote Handmade trails/open days. By leveraging events, festivals and conferences, visitor length of stay and yield for festival visitors would also be raised.

- 8. HANDMADE IN COUNTRY HOLIDAYS** – Packaging of products, art galleries, attractions, handmade in country workshops, accommodation and transport were identified as a HMIC opportunity. This medium term initiative could be promoted through existing networks and additionally packaged through special interest travel wholesales and/or retailers.

Holiday packages - Concepts could include a handmade silver jewellery workshop combined with traditional wood fire sourdough making class and historic guesthouse accommodation. Handmade In Country Junior Holidays could also be developed, such as damper making at Jondaryan Woolshed with soft drink appreciation at an old fashioned soft drink factory and accommodation on a host farm. Group packages tailored for schools and seniors could

Conference and events markets - As identified in the Handmade In Country Trail opportunities, the conference market could prove advantageous for pre and post touring, as well as festivals and events. Such opportunities could be part of the role of a business development manager for the project, using the network and tourism experience of TGWT.

5 Governance

To ensure the successful development and implementation of the Handmade in Country project it is highly recommended to adopt a strategic process of governance to oversee the project.

This would include the formation of a Steering Committee, confirming the project's geographic scope, branding development, a quality assurance process, participation/membership, strategic planning, communication and reporting, funding and human resourcing, and succession planning.

5.1 Organisational Structure Options and Recommendations

On assessment of the case studies researched, consultation and questionnaires conducted for this report, several structure options have been suggested:-

Option 1:- Subcommittee Of An Existing Body – in the short term it may be effective to establish a sub-committee of an existing body. Suggestions included being of a sub-committee of TGWT, Cobb+Co Museum, Toowoomba Regional Council, Royal Agricultural Society (Toowoomba Showgrounds), Highfields Pioneer Village or a collective of organisations eg. sub-committee of all the Arts Councils and/or Heritage Villages. Limitations of this option were seen to be the ability of an overarching organisation to take a regional and non-bias approach. Also the sub-committee could be restricted by trying to not be 'entangled' in an overarching organisation's politics or focus. Applying for funding through the overarching organisation would also need to be considered.

Option 2:- To Be Its Own Incorporated, Non-Profit Association – this was suggested as an option to ensure the project's focus and ability to apply for its own funding. Most stakeholders saw this as a medium to long-term structural option. The initial issue with this structure is the amount of time and energy required to apply for incorporation, setting up by-laws and articles of associations, conducting AGMs and annual reporting.

Option 3:- Public Company – this option was suggested to be a public company with non-profit objectives, whereby any profits generated were invested back into the company to benefit its stakeholders by way of marketing, training, artisan grants etc. While this option has many merits, particularly in establishing the project with an entrepreneurial focus, such a structure could be seen as limited when applying for government and private trust funding which is often only open to community, non-profit groups.

Option 4:- Loose Networking Group – such a group was cited as an idea so as not to 're-invent the wheel' or create 'another' association. Although networking was considered an utmost priority, most felt this option would mean the project would lose momentum too easily as no one group would have responsibility for it. It also lacks quality assurance and governance.

Included in the questionnaire, stakeholders were asked to identify which structure they felt would most beneficial. Most identified Option 1 "Subcommittee of an existing body", closely followed by Option 2 "Be its own incorporated, non-profit association".

RECOMMENDED ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

In the short-term it is recommended to structure Handmade In Country as planning committee of Toowoomba and Golden West Tourism (TGWT) for the following reasons:-

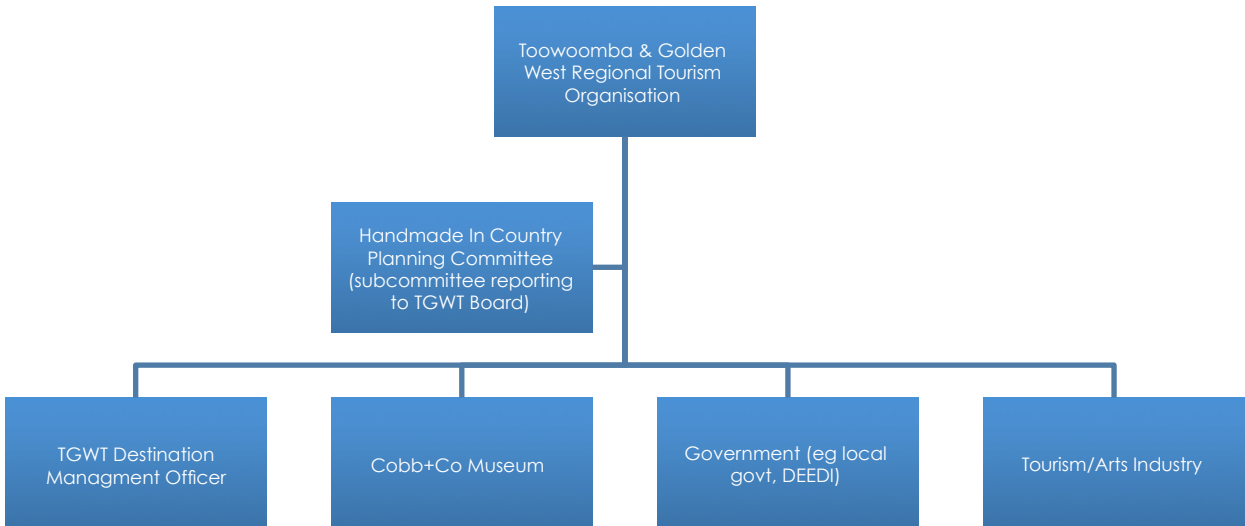
- TGWT has a regional focus
- As a peak, industry association with non-profit objectives, the sub-committee can apply for arts, community, industry and non-profit grants
- TGWT is open to host such a planning committee
- This feasibility study is an initiative of TGWT in partnership with Cobb+Co Museum and Tourism Queensland

Establishing The Planning Committee

It is recommended a HMIC planning committee of TGWT be established by the Handmade in Country Steering Committee (Destination Management Officer and TGWT Board member/Cobb+Co representative) and consist of –

- TGWT Board Member/Cobb+Co
- TGWT Destination Management Officer
- Cobb+Co Museum National Carriage Factory Representative
- Government – local and state government (eg. DEEDI)
- Industry – artisan and tourism operator

The meeting and reporting of the planning committee would be on a quarterly basis by written report to the TGWT Board and the Handmade In Country network. Reporting to be the initial responsibility of the Destination Management Officer until such time as a project officer/administration officer is employed.



5.3 Role of the Planning Committee

The role of the planning committee should be to set the strategic direction for Handmade In Country and ensure its implementation is undertaken with the appropriate governance. This would include confirming the project's geographic scope, participation/membership, strategic planning, communication and reporting, funding and adequate human resourcing, implementing a quality assurance process and succession planning.

5.4 Geographic Scope

In order to confirm the structure of the committee and the strategic direction for HMIC, it's important to confirm the geographic scope of the project. This initial study is for the Toowoomba and Darling Downs tourism boundary of TGWT. During consultation, quite a few enquiries were received from the Western Downs, Ipswich, Southern Downs and South Burnett.

Why Is Geographic Scope So Important?

The geographic scope is particularly important as it pertains to quality assurance and the Handmade In Country brand. For example, if a person purchases a Handmade In Country product, they want to know if was made by someone in that particular area.

Regional Tourism Boundary vs Consumer Perceptions/Marketing

If the project is to sit as a sub-committee of TGWT, it is recommended to at least cover the geographic boundaries of TGWT to fit with its organisation's communication and focus. However, if the long-term view is to establish Handmade In Country as an independent non-profit association, it should look at what the consumer considers as 'country' and align its geographic boundary more along a South East Qld Country boundary.

RECOMMENDED GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARY

In the short to medium term, as TGWT is the body hosting the planning committee and contributing in-kind, it is recommended to make the project the TGWT boundary (ie. incorporating the Western Downs) with communication/product listings available to the wider SEQld Country region at a different membership level/fee. This would be until such time as either other RTOs contribute to the project; or an independent body is incorporated; or until better consumer research of the Handmade In Country brand can be undertaken to better reflect the brand/product offering. If a wider region is considered, even Western Downs, consideration of increased travel and human resources costs will need to be assessed. Please note, it's important to consider the wider SEQld Country region, as this best reflects the brand and potential government funding for cross-regional project funding.

5.5 Participation/Membership

It is recommended to ensure Handmade In Country is as inclusive as possible from a communications and networking perspective. This is particularly important when considering the community culture of the Darling Downs. The Downs is a geographic collection of small towns and villages with a predominately agricultural background. Word-of-mouth, conservatism, egalitarianism and the 'bush telegraph' still underpin the community and business culture of the region, and as such, inclusiveness is very important.

This culture will need to be balanced to ensure quality, creativity, long-term vision and 'big picture' perspectives are not compromised.

It is recommended that that the project be open to anyone who is interested (ie. anyone can register to be on a communications list and attend networking functions). However if an artisan/product wishes to use the Handmade In Country brand and/or be promoted/linked with the brand (eg. to sell their product through a proposed HMIC web site) they would need to meet the quality assurance guidelines and apply to the Handmade In Country Committee for approval to use the brand/be part of HMIC marketing/promotions/sales.

5.6 Human Resourcing

Handmade In Country will not proceed as a successful venture if it is not adequately resourced particularly with human resourcing. In order to implement the 8 recommendations made in this report and the implementation of the Action Plan, ideally, full-time resources should be allocated to ensure its success.

It is acknowledged that there are no existing budgets to employ full-time resources in the short-term, but should funding and partnership agreements be secured, the positions recommended could include a Business Development Manager, Sales Coordinator and Information Officer. The roles would be best described by:-

Business Development Manager:- Responsible for the successful development and implementation of the Action Plan; including on a day-by-day basis financial management, brand development, implementation and monitoring, quality assurance monitoring and communication from HMIC committee, marketing plan, writing grant applications, securing sponsorship/corporate/government partnerships and opportunities and responsible for reporting to committee, appropriate stakeholders and overseeing sales and information officers.

Sales Coordinator: - Responsible for advertising opportunities, website optimisation and online sales/advertising. Development of sales calls to wholesale and retail outlets and development of conference and tourism opportunities. Role would include the coordination of online sales and delivery of products (ie. between artisan and consumer). Trade and consumer shows.

Information Coordinator: - Responsible for website/e-newsletter communication, updates of calendar of events, Database of artisans/stakeholders, development of holiday and conference packages, day-to-day phone and e-mail enquiries.

SHORT TERM HUMAN RESOURCE RECOMMENDATION

Following consultation with TGWT and Cobb+Co Museum, the short-term human resourcing and responsibility of the project aspects could include:-

- Strategic Direction - HMIC Planning Committee responsible for strategic direction/action plan day held with organisation consultant/ Destination Management Officer.
- Communication/Admin Support - A Partnership Agreement be established between TGWT with Cobb+Co Museum for Cobb+Co to allocate human resources to support day-to-day communication (particularly phone/e-mail), information gathering/distribution, database management and updating and initial/agreed project coordination.
- Funding Development – grant applications by Destination Management Officer and/or consultant to apply for grants identified in

5.7 Reporting and Communication

Initial communication of the final feasibility report and formation of the planning committee, should be distributed to the entire HMIC direct mail list. Included in communication should be a PDF of the Executive Summary and where the full report can be obtained from. Ideally committee nomination forms would accompany this communication.

Once established, the Planning Committee should meet on a minimum of a quarterly basis. It should initially present its strategic direction and endorsed Action Plan to the TGWT Board. For the first year, or until human resources can be allocated, it is suggested the Tourist Development Officer or Cobb+Co support officer take meeting notes and distribute HMIC committee information to appropriate networks.

In the short-term, opportunities and promotions could be promoted via e-mail to the HMIC distribution list and TGWT and Cobb+Co communication mechanisms. Where possible, marketing/tourism/arts offices of TGWT, Cobb+Co, TQ and local government should all be encouraged to distribute and promote HMIC updates, opportunities and media leads.

5.8 Succession Planning

As part of the strategic planning of the committee, succession planning should be considered to look at the mid to long term direction and resourcing of the project. In particular, the HMIC committee needs to address how it can continue to resource the financial and human resources of the project and the committee itself.

6 Branding & Quality Assurance

Throughout the consultation process quality assurance and branding were identified as key components to ensuring the project's success.

In order to maintain the integrity of the Handmade In Country brand and its resulting products, it is highly recommended to develop a Brand Style Guide, Brand Tool Kit and Quality Assurance Guidelines for 3rd party products/businesses to use the brand.

6.1 Branding

An initial look and feel for the brand has been developed for the project's feasibility study and consultation project. Depending on financial sources, this could be further developed and tested with consumers to ensure it meets market needs.

During consultation, particularly with artisan and retail stakeholders, branding was identified as an important outcome of Handmade In Country. At most Long-Lunch workshops, it was clearly seen as a priority.

Over 90% of stakeholders who completed a questionnaire said they would be willing and/or at least would consider paying a commission under a Handmade In Country branded website or retail outlet. 54% of artisans thought it would be highly beneficial to use HMIC branding on their art work, with an additional 44% who said they would consider using HMIC branding on their artwork.

Once a Brand Style Guide and Tool kit (ie. its brand essence, logo, official colours, fonts etc) is developed, it is the HMIC Committee's responsibility to ensure the brand's essence and integrity is maintained through its corporate culture and use.

The brand would be used for all communication from the committee, websites, signage, training workshops, possible point-of-sale displays, visitor trails, visitor guides, photography, and trade shows.

Testing of initial Handmade In Country brand could be piloted through the retail outlet of the new Cobb+Co Factory development.

6.2.1 Quality Assurance Guidelines

It is recommended that Quality Assurance guidelines are an essential part of the HMIC program and include a rating system for products to meet a certain standard. These could include:

- Made by hand by an artist in the local region. (ie. the geographic scope of the project)
- Where possible, be made or sourced by product either grown, produced/manufactured in the local region? (if supply isn't local, it is Qld or Australian?)
- Does the product deliver on its promise? (does it work?)
- Does the product reflect quality, and if relevant, stand the test of time? (is it made to last)
- Is the product unique and/or innovative? Does the product reflect the heritage and/or essence of the region?
- Is it suitably packaged for retail distribution?
- Is the product suitably priced for distribution? (please note, for web sites, such as NOVICA, they let the artisan chose and change the price of the products, ensuring consumer demand/purchasing determines the success of sales for the artisan).

To ensure the Quality Assurance process is workable, it's essential to 'pilot' the process with a selection of products from all the categories of artisans identified (see Appendix 7 for artisan categories).

6.2.2 Quality Assurance Process

It is recommended Quality Assurance be a key role of the HMIC Planning Committee, supported by strict policy and procedures that could include:-

- Clear, tested Quality Assurance guidelines that is publically available, that also clearly state the review process, timing and communication process back to the artisan.
- Once the project is established, a quarterly review process that is clearly documented and clearly stating, for example, 'that the decision of the HMIC committee is final, with no further correspondence entered into'.
- If an application is unsuccessful, the communication to the artisan needs to be in writing with full documentation per quality assurance process, stating specifically which areas need improving.
- It is also recommended, training opportunities and/or training programs be offered and tailored to unsuccessful artisans for their consideration.

It cannot be over-stressed, that the process be as simple, clear and open as possible. Art is very subjective, and the quality assurance process is about meeting standards for retail and insurance purposes, not based on personal taste.

7.1 Grants

Several sources of government and non-profit grants have been identified to assist, particularly in the initial seed funding of the project. These include:-

Grant Name / Source	Description	Deadline/Approx/ Average Amount
Australia Council	Australia Council	20k; close 7 Sept 2010
Australia Council	Regional Arts Fund - Partnership Development	5k; no deadline
Tourism Queensland	Network Grant Scheme for application through TGWT	7th May 2010
TQUAL	Cross regional/national tourism projects	TBC
DEEDI	Minor Tourism Infrastructure Grants	50k; 30th April 2010
Arts Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development & Presentation Grant • Art + Space – public art 	31st August 2010
Queensland Arts Council	Regional Arts Fund – Community Project Program	13th August 2010
Australian Business Arts Foundation	Professional Development, Partnering and Sponsoring business and the arts. Networking and training workshops	Ongoing
RADF/local government	Smaller local/regional arts projects	
Festivals Australia	Grants available for arts development and public art in association with festivals	Small project \$12k Large project 30k July 2010, Feb 2011
Gambling Community Fund	Community development/benefit fund	30k; quarterly annual deadlines
Jupiter's Casino Community Benefit Fund	On-off grants for non-profit community groups	Up to 150k; quarterly annual deadlines
Multicultural Affairs	Multicultural Assistance Program - To support events and projects that strengthen multiculturalism	TBA, annual

7.2 Advertising Packages/Commissions

As previously stated, to ensure the project is inclusive, it is recommended to make the communication network of the project open and free-of-charge to anyone who is interested.

If a HMIC website and marketing program is developed, an advertising and commission structure is recommended.

To be listed on a website an advertising package options could be developed (eg. with different advertising packages recommended from listings to full image and website linking). The advertising raised for this could contribute to the wages to update and up-keep the site and for online marketing, particularly website optimisation.

Here is an example of the type of advertising which could be raised:-

Advertising Package	Cost	Total
Listing with contact phone number <i>(no quality assurance required at this stage).</i>	\$100 pa x 50	\$5,000
Listing with images, contact details and website link	\$180 pa x 50	\$9,000
Advertising banners	\$1000 pa x 2	\$2,000
Sponsorship	TBA	\$16,000 p.a.

If products are sold directly through the website and who pass the quality assurance process, a commission structure is recommended, whereby it is free to list the product (with image supplied), with a 30% commission is charged back to the artisan for any product sold.

Should funding become available for a sales coordinator, it is recommended to charge either an advertising listing on a Handmade In Country portfolio, which the sales coordinator would take to potential retail outlets and/or a percentage of the commission charged by the retail outlet.

If funding for the position cannot be sourced, it is highly recommended to encourage groups of artisans to contract a potential sales person to work on their behalf. HMIC could be a facilitator of such a program.

If branding guidelines are introduced, use of brand could be either built in to advertising packages and/or charged separately for those products who pass the quality assurance process.

It is recommended not to introduce a membership structure in the short-term to reduce administration and keep an entrepreneurial focus for the project.

7.3 User Pays

Where possible, the concept of user pays should be encouraged for all HMIC projects. We believe this will ensure each aspect of the project is performance based and the project's long-term commercial sustainability.

For example, training workshops, advertising, use of branding, networking functions should all be charged to cover all costs, including human resources costs to organise and implement.

7.4 Partnership Agreements/Sponsorship

Several State Departments, namely the DEEDI and DET have been approached at a local level to discuss the HMIC project. A brief has been presented to these Departments to see if any possible partnership opportunities could arise (see Appendix 5).

Once the Committee is established and Action Plan confirmed, approaches could be made to other organisations, particularly private enterprise to identify potential partnership/sponsorship agreements. These could include mining and gas companies that operate in the region, large craft/art suppliers (Brandcraft, Spotlight, and Lincraft), media (particularly special Interest media such as Handmade and www.craftlovers.com) and Darling Downs businesses, such as Heritage Building Society. Businesses with a rural and regional focus could also be targeted.

A Corporate Gifts Program is highly recommended, including conference gifts, award trophies, in-room gifts, employee gifts, company branded gifts, souvenirs. This would target all levels of government and large corporations, particularly those in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region.

7.5 Fundraising

It is recommended an annual fundraising program be developed, initially to fund the development of the project, but ultimately to provide grants and scholarships for artisans and public art by Handmade In Country artisans.

If possible, a tax-deductible program of donations could be developed, whereby local businesses that have interest or receive potential benefits from the program could make donations.

Handmade In Country black tie annual fundraising dinners could be staged where art work is auctioned at the event. It could be held in Toowoomba and in Brisbane during Toowoomba Show and EKKA time, "where city meets country" and staged with a Handmade In Country trade displays, fashion parades, cooking demonstrations etc are held during the shows.

Handmade In Country art could also be auctioned at other events already held in the region, eg. business and industry award nights.

8 ACTION PLAN

The following Action Plan has been developed as a draft guide to develop the Handmade in Country project and Planning Committee to implement the 8 creative concept developments.

Project Description	Priority/Timing	Responsibility	Funding /Budget	Monitoring
Final Feasibility Report Distribution and Communication; including presentation to TAG and media releases via TQ, TGWT, Cobb+Co and HMIC network.	Short-term	TDO, TGWT, TQ	N/A	Media and public response
HMIC Planning Committee Formation	Short-term	TDO/TGWT/Cobb+Co	N/A	Committee formed
HMIC Planning Committee Strategic Direction Planning Day - Vision, Mission, Objectives and Action Plan Confirmation. Include marketing strategy development.	Short-term	TDO/HMIC Planning Committee	N/A	Strategic Direction and Action Plan Confirmed
Communication to network and media release of HMIC Committee structure.	Short-term	TDO/HMIC Planning Committee	N/A	Media publicity generated
Grant writing applications – particularly arts related grants to obtain funding to employ/ contract staff for industry development, including database maintenance and communication, brand and web site development.	Short-term and ongoing	TDO/HMIC Planning Committee	Subject to possible consultant costs	Successful grants attained
Continue follow-up with DEEDI/DET for possible seed funding for industry development	Short-term	TDO/HMIC Planning Committee		
Establish Communication Network –interim e-mail update of project and potential opportunities for those in network/networking, training opportunities and workshops, calendar of events development and communication.	On-going	TDO/HMIC Planning Committee (with outcome of grant applications to possibly contract to private enterprise)		
Database Development – continued call for interested artisans/businesses to participate.	On-going	TDO/HMIC Planning Committee (with outcome of grant applications to possibly contract to private enterprise)		Response, feedback, participation in opportunities
Response, feedback, participation in opportunities	Short-term	HMIC Planning Committee/Cobb+Co		Completion, pilot testing of brand with Cobb+Co retail outlet
Quality Assurance – development, confirmation and testing of quality assurance program.	Short-term	HMIC Planning Committee/Cobb+Co		Guidelines and pilot testing completed
Soft Launch – soft launch of Handmade in Country to regional tourism operators at annual conference in Toowoomba in early November, including media release	Short-term	HMIC Planning Committee/Cobb+Co		Soft launch of HMIC; attendance by industry and feedback

Project Description	Priority/Timing	Responsibility	Funding / Budget	Monitoring
Web site Development – initial research on quotes, format, hosting, optimisation, marketing plan, funding structure. Continue communications network via e-mail newsletter linked with HMIC website	Mid-term	HMIC Planning Committee with development based on outcome of grant applications to possibly contract to private enterprise	Subject to funding sources obtained & advertising raised	Website live with advertising packages sold, marketing
HMIC Committee Annual Review and Structural Review – annual financial and performance review, including communication to network and stakeholders. Review of structure and consideration of developing an independent HMIC body.	Annual	HMIC Planning Committee		Annual report style publication with results
Grant writing applications and funding partnerships/sponsorships continued	ongoing	HMIC /TDO /grant consultant		Grants secured, funding raised
HMIC Visitor Trails – further development of trails with possible publication of trails network and handmade in country outlets (based on NZ – Nelson Art Guide)	Long-term	HMIC Planning Committee/private sector contractor	Grants, sponsorship, advertising	Participants in trails, publicity generated, visitor numbers
HMIC Holidays – continued development of holiday packages particularly with events and conference markets	Long-term		Sponsorship, advertising and commission	Publicity generated, number of packages sold, yield generated
Fundraising Program – development and implementation of fundraising program	Long-term	HMIC Planning Committee/private sector contractor	User pays	Funds raised, profile raised
Brand Review – brand review including uptake and brand recognition	Long-term	HMIC Planning Committee	Review process subject to funding	Uptake of brand by artisans and consumer recognition.
Succession Planning and Financial Review – including development of 3 year plan	May/June 2013	HMIC Planning Committee/major stakeholders	TBA – possible grant funding for strategic direction planning	Strategic direction and financial status

11 APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Information Flyer



HANDMADE *in* COUNTRY

Living Heritage

In a world that is becoming increasingly homogenised and dotted by mass produced goods and international brands, we'd like to position Toowoomba and the Darling Downs as a leading region in Australia, known for its high quality handmade goods and produce. Offering visitors and residents alike, unique and real experiences and products that reflect our rich cultural heritage.

This fresh approach to economic, education and community development would help preserve our heritage trades for future generations and deliver valuable entrepreneurial skills for our artisans and local communities.

We envisage developing an exciting network of artisans that produce high quality handmade products with the vision of developing better skills and visitor experiences.

The network could lead to projects such as visitor trails, tours, events, public art, training, retail outlets, website opportunities and even "handmade holidays".





Whether you're a woodworker, a blacksmith, stonemason or quilter, if you're an individual artisan, group or just interested in the project, we'd like to ensure you are included in our communications network and invitations.

To register is FREE. Just forward your name, address, email/website and phone details to either:
Email: krista.hauritz@live.com.au
Phone: 0421 148 098 or
Post: Krista Hauritz c/- BMO Business Centre, PO Box 180, Dalby QLD 4405

Toowoomba & Darling Downs
Lots to love...

"Handmade In Country" is a Toowoomba & Golden West Regional Tourism Organisation initiative, in partnership with Cobb + Co. Museum and supported by Tourism Queensland. BMO has been appointed to undertake the initial project investigation.

Appendix 2 – Long Lunch Invite & List of Attendees



HANDMADE *in* COUNTRY

Living Heritage

Please Join Us For A Long Lunch

Join us to discuss the Handmade In Country – Living Heritage Project over lunch. We'll look at case studies from the USA, NSW and Tasmania and how artisans, heritage trades people and the regional community can benefit. We'd like to discuss the possibilities of the project and also hear your ideas. If you'd like to join us, here's where we'll be:-

- Tues 4th May, Platform 9, Railway St, Toowoomba
- Wed 5th May, Bunnyconnellen Olive Grove & Vineyard, Swain Road, Plainby
- Tuesday 11th May, Amazing Soaps, Pittsworth
- Wed 12th May Lunch in The Woolshed, Jondaryan Woolshed
- Thurs 13th May, BMO Business Centre, 178 Drayton Street, Dalby

Time: 11.30 for 12 noon start – 2pm

Cost:- Lunch includes 2 courses, tea/coffee for \$10 per head, payable on the day (please bring correct change)

RSVPs are essential by 28th April to: Krista Hauritz;
M: 0421 148 088, Fax: 4662 5675, e-mail:
krista.hauritz@live.com.au

Toowoomba Darling Downs
Love to love...

"Handmade in Country" is a Toowoomba & Golden West Regional Tourism Organisation initiative in partnership with Cobb & Co Museum and supported by Tourism Queensland. BMO has been appointed to undertake the initial project investigation.