

Barkly region Destination Management Plan

Two-Year Report Card: 2023-2024

The Barkly region Destination Management Plan (DMP) focuses on development priorities for the sustainable growth of tourism in the region over 10 years.

There are six DMPs that identify key strengths and assets across Northern Territory regions, and provide a comprehensive overview of comparative advantages, current product offerings and visitor profiles.

The six destinations are:

- Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region
- Lassetter region
- **Barkly region**
- Big Rivers region
- East Arnhem Land region
- Greater Darwin region

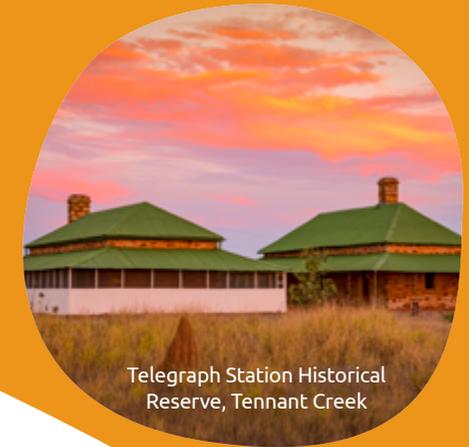
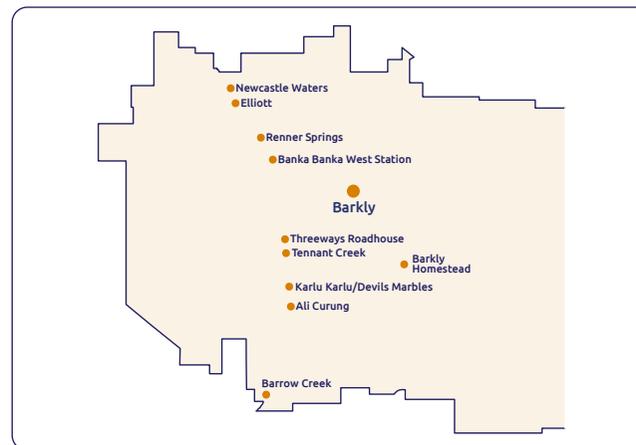


The two-year report card measures the progress of outcomes and includes key performance metrics for the region such as visitor numbers, expenditure, satisfaction rating, online feedback/ reviews and digital data. The DMPs are periodically reviewed to ensure the priority opportunities align with the region's growth and the DMPs remain relevant in the current tourism environment.

In 2024 the Barkly, Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges, Lassetter and Big Rivers region DMPs were refreshed to ensure currency and refocus priorities for the coming years. East Arnhem Land DMP, completed in November 2021 and the Greater Darwin region DMP, completed in May 2022 are both due to be refreshed in the 2025 calendar year.

Barkly region

The Barkly region is known for its pastoral and mining experiences, history and heritage, geological features and Aboriginal culture and art. It is a genuine outback destination and its history has shaped the region. Compared to other regions in the NT, it is a lesser known tourism destination, however it is important to drive tourism, has a highly rated art and culture centre, and unique quality historical and heritage experiences. Barkly is most frequently visited by travellers touring between regions of the NT, establishing the region as a key destination during transit. Opportunities exist to grow tourism experiences further, adding vibrancy and lifestyle benefits to residents and encouraging visitors to extend their stay in the region.



Telegraph Station Historical Reserve, Tennant Creek



Tennant Creek Bike Track

1. Visitation and expenditure

Two-year average: 2023 and 2024, with percentage changes compared to 2022 and 2023.*

1.1 Visitation snapshot

Visitors (000s) ↑ 28%

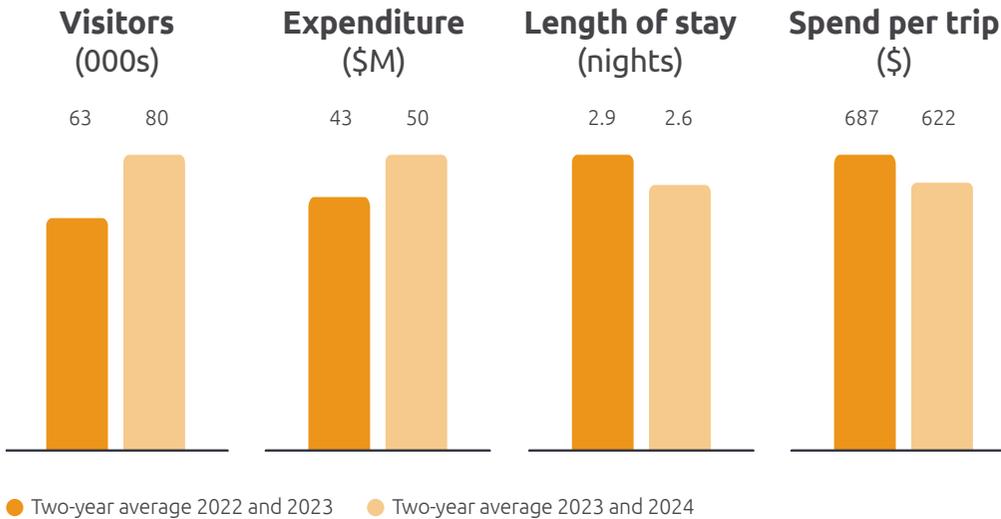
Expenditure ↑ 16%

80 → **Holiday: 35** ↑ 4.2%

\$50M

Remaining 45,000 visitors is made up of business, visiting friends and family and other travellers.
 Source: Tourism Research Australia, International and National Visitor Survey, Year ending December.

1.2 Visitation key data



Source: TRA, International and National Visitor Survey.
 *Datasets using year ending December data.

2. Visitor satisfaction

Year ending (YE) December 2024 with Barkly percentage changes compared to YE December 2023.

2.1. Visitor satisfaction data

Based on establishments – attractions, hotels, caravan parks and wayside inns (not food and hospitality providers) – ReviewPro data.

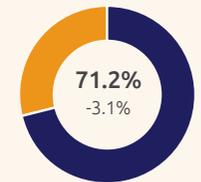
Global review index*

79.4%
+0.2%

Reviews



Semantic analysis



Management response

30.8%
+7.7%

- positive 959
- negative 161
- neutral 230
- not rated 0

- positive 2,596
- negative 1,049

Negative reviews:

Cleanliness	↑ 9.6%	Value	↑ 4.0%	Location	↑ 2.2%
Room	↑ 6.6%	Service	↑ 2.6%		

Global Review Index (GRI) saw a small increase of 0.2%, with number of reviews decreasing and management response showing an increase. Overall, semantic analysis showed a decrease of 3.1%, with an increase in negative results for the top five categories of mentions identified in visitor reviews.

* The Global Review Index (GRI) is an online reputation index which is calculated by an algorithm that generates a numerical score from 0 to 100 and can be used for tracking historical performance and comparison purposes. The GRI is based on reviews from 140+ online travel agencies in more than 45 different languages. However, the GRI is not an average of all review scores and the algorithm considers several aspects to provide the most accurate picture of online reputation (e.g. it gives a higher weightage to the most recent reviews and a lower weightage to older reviews).

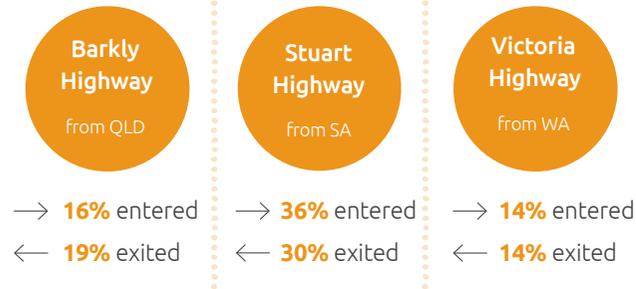
3. Drive Tourism

3.1 Most popular drive routes

9% travelled the **Binns Track**

56% travelled the **Explorers Way**

3.2 Entry and exit points for drive visitors using their own car

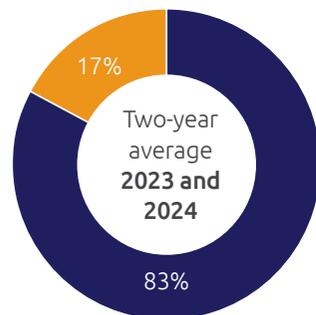
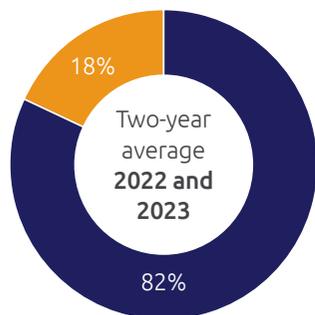


Source: Tourism NT Drive Tourism Study 2023.

3.3. Drive visitation performance

Barkly	Two-year average 2022 and 2023	Two-year average 2023 and 2024	Change
Drive visitors (000s)	52	61	17%
Percentage of total NT drive market visiting the region	7.0%	8.6%	1.6pp
Average length of stay (nights)	2.2	1.7	-0.5
Average spend per trip (\$)	569	517	-9.2%

* pp = percentage points



- Drive visitors
- Fly drive visitors

Note: Fly drive and drive visitors may have used other types of transport in addition to aircraft and/or self-drive vehicle (e.g. coach, bus, taxi etc.)

Source: Tourism Research Australia, International and National Visitor Survey, Year Ending December.



Karlu Karlu/Devils Marbles

4. Collective stakeholder progress on regional priorities

Locality and opportunity	Progress and regional achievements
<p>Tennant Creek: deliver a refreshed Destination Management Plan for the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A refreshed plan was delivered. • Implementation of updated priorities began in 2024 under guidance of the Project Implementation Team.
<p>Tennant Creek: enhance Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract awarded for infrastructure upgrades to Nyinkka Nyunyu Art and Culture Centre in 2024 with expected completion in 2025.
<p>Tennant Creek: establish contemporary visitor information centre facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Battery Hill Gold Mining and Heritage Centre directional signage completed and installed. • Procurement approvals and tender documentation for Visitor Information Centre upgrades in final stages of completion. Upgrade works scheduled for 2025. • Mine Tourist Tunnel inspection undertaken and recommendations provided. • \$500,000 allocated to the Battery Hill Gold Mining and Heritage Centre to develop and implement a site interpretation plan to enhance the visitor experience.
<p>Tennant Creek: develop contemporary streetscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 streetscape works, focusing on the main street intersections of Paterson Street, Pinnacles Road and Memorial Drive progressed to 90% completion. Stages 2 and 3 of streetscape project to commence in 2025.
<p>Barkly region: establish and improve quality accommodation offerings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bluestone Motor Inn supported through the Visitor Experience Enhancement Program (VEEP) to install an automated gate system.
<p>Barkly region: enhance Aboriginal cultural opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Cultural Tourism along Drive Routes – stage 1 completed, identifying the Explorers Way as a key route to support development of Aboriginal Cultural Tourism experiences. Stage 2 commenced.
<p>Barkly region: enhance visitor facilities at wayside inns throughout the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over \$245,000 of funding was allocated to assist wayside inn providers improve the quality of their facilities through round 6 and 8 of the VEEP.
<p>Barkly region: install and upgrade wayfinding signage across the region</p>	<p>Through partnership funding with Tourism NT, Tourism Central Australia (TCA) facilitated design and installation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New welcome billboard sign to Tennant Creek. • Discover Tennant Creek billboard sign on the Barkly Highway. • Audio sign at the Tennant Creek Telegraph Station in conjunction with NT Parks and Wildlife. • Content and audio for two audio signs to be installed at Newcastle Waters and Jones Store.

5. Future focus

- Regional preparations for the 22 July 2028 total solar eclipse.
- Development of evening and nighttime tours in the region focusing on 'Dark Skies' tourism.
- Development and enhancement of Aboriginal cultural tourism opportunities in Tennant Creek and across the Barkly region, informed by workshops held along the Explorers Way.
- Provision of dump points in Tennant Creek.
- Explore birdwatching visitor experiences in the Barkly.
- Enhance and expand accommodation offerings in Tennant Creek.
- Complete the Tennant Creek streetscape enhancement project.
- Complete upgrade of the Battery Hill Gold Mining, Heritage Centre and the Mine Tourist Tunnel.
- Develop and implement a site interpretation plan to enhance the visitor experience at the Battery Hill Gold Mining and Heritage Centre.
- Advocate for further funds to continue the redevelopment of Battery Hill facilities.
- Continue regular Barkly Tourism Action Group forums to inform DMP Project Implementation Team discussions.
- Advocate for roadside infrastructure to support the drive market.
- Support town development opportunities in Elliott.
- Support tourism operators to develop new sustainable and accessible visitor experiences.
- Deliver workforce development through education, training, capacity building and business support.
- Ensure regional tourism signage is in good condition, properly maintained and contemporary.



For further information please contact the Department of Tourism and Hospitality's Industry Development team on **tourism.development@nt.gov.au** or **08 8951 8584**

Read more about Destination Management Plans here:

[tourismnt.com.au/
research-strategies/
destination-management-plans](https://tourismnt.com.au/research-strategies/destination-management-plans)



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