

# INVEST NORTHERN TASMANIA



## Dorset

### INVEST IN THE DORSET DISTRICT



*Auspine Sawmill, Scottsdale*

**T**he Dorset district covers 3,200 square kilometres in North East Tasmania. The Dorset district is bordered by the Break O'Day district on its eastern, southern and south-eastern boundary, the George Town district on its western boundary, Launceston City Council on its south western boundary and to the north by Bass Strait.

The Dorset district is a proud, stable and self-reliant rural area, primarily involved with agriculture, forestry and associated industries with a small amount of mining, fishing and a growing tourism industry.

The Dorset district had a population of 6,980 in 2001, an increase of about 5.5% from 6,615 in 1986. The administrative and main service centre in the district is Scottsdale with a population of 1,875. Bridport, a fishing, retirement and holiday village on the coast north of Scottsdale has a permanent population of 1,350 that increases to about 5,000 at the peak of the summer holiday period. The many other rural and coastal villages throughout the district all have populations of less than 500.

One of the outstanding qualities of the Dorset district is the spectacular diversity of landforms and ecosystems, including coastal geomorphology with extensive complex dunes, rolling rural landscapes, precipitous mountains and a broad range of forest types. The district is well endowed with natural resources including large areas of high fertility soils, native and plantation forests, abundant but relatively undeveloped water resources and significant undeveloped coastal resources.

The Dorset district enjoys a cool temperate climate. The average annual rainfall is 983 mm at Scottsdale but much higher in the mountainous areas. The district has long daylight hours in summer (maximum 15 hours 10 minutes) and warm summer temperatures (mean monthly maximum summer temperature, 21.8°C in February) and cool, winters (mean monthly minimum of 3.6°C in July), ideal conditions for intensive agriculture and silviculture.

The Dorset district offers a relaxed, safe and enviable lifestyle and a broad range of recreational opportunities such as traditional team sports, coastal pursuits, trail riding, recreational fishing, bushwalking and cycling and other pastimes including hobby farming. Beaches, mountains and the regional city of Launceston are little more than an hour away from anywhere in the district.

*A diverse range  
of investment  
opportunities*



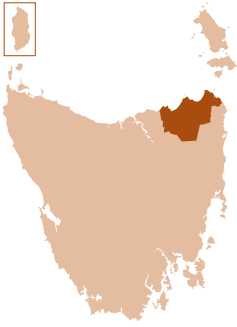
*Barnbogle Dunes Golf Links*



*Invest*  
DORSET

NORTHERN  
TASMANIA





## INVEST IN THE DORSET DISTRICT



Bridport



Harvesting lavender



Loading logs

## INFRASTRUCTURE

The Dorset district is serviced by an extensive road network. The Tasman Highway is the major route into and out of the district and connects Scottsdale with Launceston 60 kilometres to the west, and St Helens 70 kilometres to the east. The Flinders Highway, the main north coastal road connecting Bridport to the East Tamar Highway, is used extensively to transport wood from the forests of North East Tasmania to the Bell Bay Industrial Estate. The Lilydale-Golconda road, an alternative route to Launceston from Scottsdale, is currently undergoing an upgrade, enhancing its role as the principal passenger vehicle route to and from the district.

The Dorset district is well served by wired and wireless telecommunications networks.

The nearest major sea port for the Dorset district is the Port of Launceston at the Bell Bay Industrial Estate on the Tamar River, about 60 minutes from Scottsdale. Devonport, the terminus for the Bass Strait roll-on roll-off freight and passenger ferries, is about two hours from Scottsdale via the Flinders Highway. There is a small fishing and freight port facility at Bridport that is used to service Flinders Island.

Northern Tasmania's principal airport is the Launceston Airport, about 60 minutes from Scottsdale. The Airport offers the largest air freight service in Tasmania as well as daily direct passenger flights to Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. There is an unsealed airport at Bridport that is used for a daily light aircraft freight and charter service to Flinders Island and Cape Barren Island.

The Dorset district is well served by the State's electricity grid which is currently (2006) being upgraded to improve reliability and supply.

The Dorset district has excellent medical facilities including a 53 bed hospital and contemporary aged care facilities at Scottsdale.

The Tasmanian rail network, extending from Launceston to Scottsdale, was used in the past to freight logs to the softwood mills at Scottsdale and timber and other primary produce out of the Dorset district. The rail line was placed in care and maintenance in 2005 due to insufficient freight volumes.

Tasmania enjoys stable and attractive labour market conditions and in 2004 was the most favourably ranked State in Australia in the Labour Cost Index, Labour Turnover Index and Industrial Dispute Index. The most recently published Competition Index can be found at [www.development.tas.gov.au](http://www.development.tas.gov.au)

The Dorset district is well served by five local primary and two secondary schools including high schools at Scottsdale and Winnaleah and a Vocational Education and Training (VET) centre at Scottsdale. There are comprehensive tertiary education facilities available in Launceston including a University, TAFE College and Maritime College. There are daily bus services from the Dorset district to many of the Launceston educational institutions.

Northern Tasmania house prices remain the lowest in Australia. According to the Commonwealth Bank property guide ([www.pvg.webcentral.com.au](http://www.pvg.webcentral.com.au)), the median house price in Northern Tasmania in November 2005 was \$180,000 which compares with \$215,000 for all of Tasmania and \$317,000 for all of Australia. Further information is available at [www.tasmania.propertyguide.com.au](http://www.tasmania.propertyguide.com.au) and [www.realcomercial.com.au](http://www.realcomercial.com.au)

The Dorset district has industrially zoned land at Scottsdale. The Dorset Council supports economic development through its Sustainable Development Policy (2002). Dorset Council's Planning Scheme, Strategic Plan and Sustainable Development Policy can be accessed at [www.dorset.tas.gov.au](http://www.dorset.tas.gov.au)

## MAJOR INDUSTRIES

### Employment by Industry

The dominant industries of the Dorset district are forestry, timber processing and agriculture. Other significant industries are retailing, health and community services and tourism.

Table 1 shows employment by industry sector statistics at each of the last four censuses (1986, 1991, 1996, 2001).

Employment grew almost 9.6% from 2,619 in 1986 to 2,871 in 2001. In the same period the population grew 5.5% from 6,613 to 6,979. Employment in agriculture-forestry-fishing was static at about 800 although it is believed that there was an increase in employment in forestry at the expense of agriculture. Manufacturing increased significantly from 395 to 533, mostly reflecting an expansion of timber processing facilities in the same period.

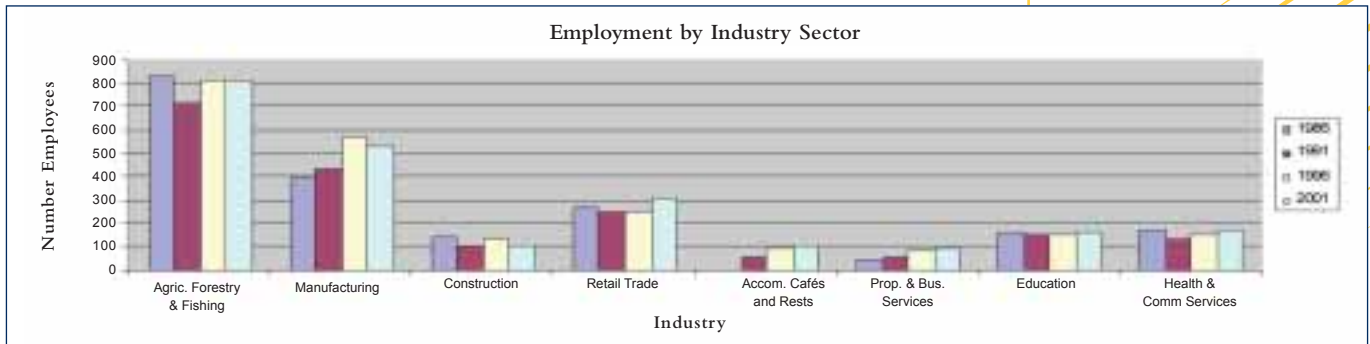


Table 1: Employment by Industry Sector – Dorset district

## Agriculture

The main agricultural enterprises in the Dorset district are cropping, dairying and grazing. The main crops grown are carrots, potatoes, onions, poppies and fodder. In addition, there are small amounts of specialist crops grown including hops, wasabi, lavender and stone fruits. The farm gate value of agricultural production in 2001 was about \$75 million. Investment opportunities exist in intensive agriculture, horticulture, food processing and marketing, and in water development.

Information about investment opportunities, land capability maps, soil maps and water development can be found on the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries and Water (DPIW) website at [www.dpiw.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au) and at [www.northerntasmania.info](http://www.northerntasmania.info)

## Forestry

The Dorset district is a major forest products supplier in Tasmania and is the administrative centre for Forestry Tasmania activities in the Bass District of Northern Tasmania. The Dorset district has seen significant investment in the establishment of hardwood plantations in recent years. The annual value of forest and timber production in the district is estimated to be in excess of \$200 million and is expected to rise significantly as recently planted hardwood plantations mature.

At present (2006) most of the hardwood forest product from the Dorset district is trucked to woodchip mills at the Bell Bay Industrial Estate. Gunns Limited is proposing to build a pulp mill at Bell Bay. When constructed, the mill will absorb the steadily increasing production from plantations in the district.

There are investment opportunities in the forestry and timber industry in value-adding of softwood and hardwood timber, in plantation establishment, co-recovery of non-wood products, and in service businesses supporting the construction and subsequent maintenance of the proposed pulp mill. More information is available at [www.northerntasmania.info](http://www.northerntasmania.info)

## Manufacturing

The Dorset district has the only two large softwood sawmills in Tasmania. Both mills are situated at Scottsdale and produce a range of building products for sale locally and interstate. These mills and other small timber processors are supported by a number of small engineering enterprises in the district.

There is a boat building enterprise at Bridport capable of building small to medium-sized fishing and ferry boats.

## Tourism

Tourism is an undeveloped but emerging industry in the Dorset district. There is a diverse range of investment opportunities in tourism in the Dorset district, linked to the Barnbogle Dunes Golf Links, to the Trail of the Tin Dragon, in ecotourism and in hospitality.

Visitor numbers to Scottsdale increased from 79,000 in 2001 to 151,800 in 2004, an increase of 92%, but about 50% of these visitors 'passed through' and less than 10% stayed overnight in the district. Details of the visitor market can be found at [www.tourismtasmania.com.au/research](http://www.tourismtasmania.com.au/research)

Visitors are attracted to the Dorset district by its many natural attractions, particularly its forests, diverse ecosystems, beaches and sand dunes.

The development of the Trail of the Tin Dragon, a themed tourism initiative celebrating the Chinese and tin mining heritage in North East Tasmania, has commenced and will offer investment opportunities. Further information about the Trail of the Tin Dragon can be found at [www.dorset.tas.gov.au](http://www.dorset.tas.gov.au)

The Barnbogle Dunes Golf Links at Bridport opened in early 2005 and has already established itself as a popular destination for interstate and international golfers. In 2006 the Links was ranked amongst the top one hundred golf courses in the world.

## Fishing – Aquaculture

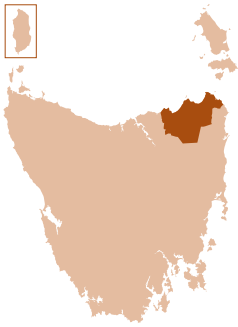
There is a small fishing industry based at Bridport and there are fresh water aquaculture enterprises at Scottsdale and Bridport.

There are opportunities for coastal aquaculture developments. Further information about investment opportunities in the fishing and aquaculture industry is available at [www.dpiw.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au) and [www.northerntasmania.info](http://www.northerntasmania.info)

## Property

The Dorset district has some of the most accessible but relatively undeveloped coastal resources in Tasmania. The Dorset Council, in 2006, was developing a strategic plan for Bridport to address long-term infrastructure requirements and identify the potential for expanding the village.

There are significant investment opportunities for property development in Bridport and other coastal locations in the Dorset district. Properties for sale can be found at [www.tasmania.propertyguide.com.au](http://www.tasmania.propertyguide.com.au), or [www.realcommercial.com.au](http://www.realcommercial.com.au)



## INVEST IN THE DORSET DISTRICT



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Australian Government

The Northern Tasmania Investment Attraction Project is supported by the Australian Government

## MAJOR BUSINESS AND PRODUCTS

The following are important businesses and industries in the economy of the Dorset district.

The Auspine and Frenchpine softwood sawmills at Scottsdale were amalgamated under the Auspine banner in late 2005. The combined operations employ 310 workers who process 385,000 tonnes of softwood into a wide range of building products ([www.auspine.com.au](http://www.auspine.com.au)).

Gunns Limited and Forest Enterprises Australia, both public companies, manage substantial areas of hardwood plantations in the Dorset district on their own behalf and for unit (woodlot) investors ([www.gunns.com.au](http://www.gunns.com.au) [www.forestenterprises.com.au](http://www.forestenterprises.com.au)).

KJ Padgett and Co is typical of a number of locally-owned and operated businesses that service the forest industry. Padgetts employ 58 workers and a fleet of trucks to transport most of the Dorset district's forest harvest to the woodchip mills and sawmills throughout Northern Tasmania.

The Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) has a food research establishment in Scottsdale which is principally involved in researching the nutrition value of highly processed long-life food ([www.dsto.defence.gov.au](http://www.dsto.defence.gov.au)).

Woodlea Nursery employs fifteen workers and produces about six million eucalypt seedlings per year for plantation establishment throughout Australia. It is the only Tasmanian independent organisation accredited to propagate grape vines. Email [woodlea@hotkey.net.au](mailto:woodlea@hotkey.net.au).

Southern Shipping is a sea freight and ship building company based in Bridport. The company employs 25 workers and operates two ferries between Bridport, Flinders Island and Port Welshpool in Victoria and also builds small to medium-sized freight and fishing boats.

## BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT AND SUPPORT

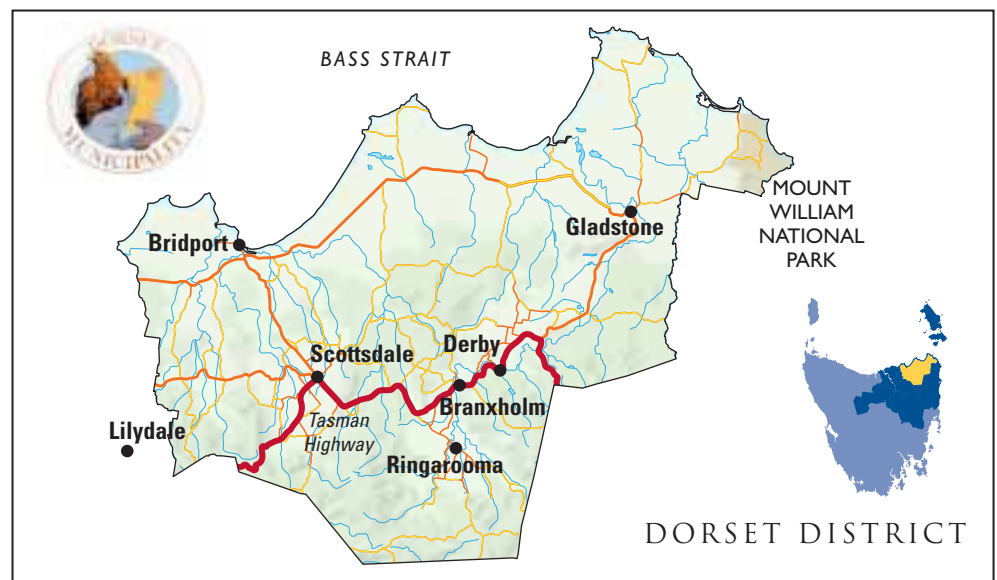
Further information on investing in Tasmania can be found at the Department of Economic Development's website [www.development.tas.gov.au](http://www.development.tas.gov.au). This website also contains the Northern Tasmania Regional Economic Development and Investment (REDI) Plan which provides detailed information on infrastructure and current investment activity.

Information about the economy of Northern Tasmania and other Council areas can be found at [www.northerntasmania.info](http://www.northerntasmania.info)

General information about the Tasmanian economy, environment and communities including the Dorset district can be found at [www.iris.tas.gov.au](http://www.iris.tas.gov.au)

Information about current small businesses, farms, commercial property and residential property for sale can be found at [www.tasmania.propertyguide.com.au](http://www.tasmania.propertyguide.com.au) and [www.realcommercial.com.au](http://www.realcommercial.com.au)

The business community in Dorset district is supported by the Dorset Community Economic Development Group (Dorset EDG) which was established in 2003 to foster economic development in Dorset ([www.dorset.com.au](http://www.dorset.com.au)) and the North Eastern Tasmania Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Dorset EDG initiated an Economic Opportunities Study in 2003 which is available at [www.dorset.com.au](http://www.dorset.com.au)



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