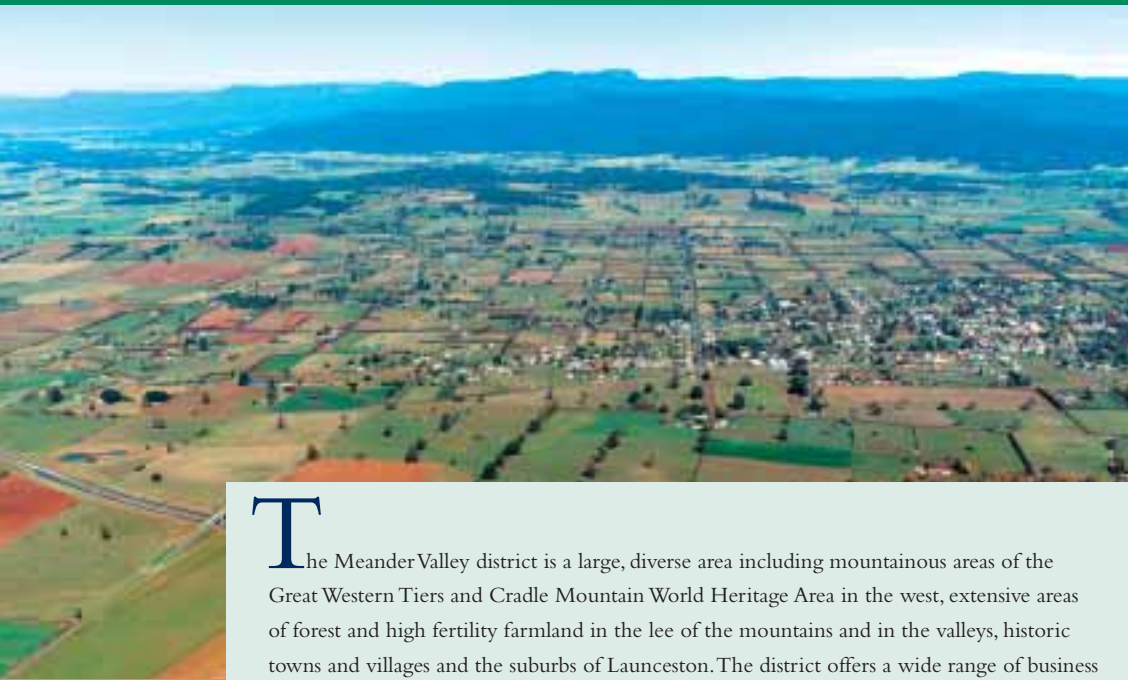




Meander Valley

INVEST IN THE MEANDER VALLEY DISTRICT



Meander Valley and the Great Western Tiers

*The district is well
endowed with natural
resources...*

The Meander Valley district is a large, diverse area including mountainous areas of the Great Western Tiers and Cradle Mountain World Heritage Area in the west, extensive areas of forest and high fertility farmland in the lee of the mountains and in the valleys, historic towns and villages and the suburbs of Launceston. The district offers a wide range of business and lifestyle opportunities.

The population of the Meander Valley district was 17,375 in 2001. Most of the rural part of the district is less than one hour from the regional centre of Launceston which hosts a teaching hospital, university, maritime college, jet airport, comprehensive schooling facilities and diverse retail, health and other service facilities. Smaller retail and service centres exist within the district at Deloraine, Westbury and Prospect.

The Meander Valley district is well endowed with natural resources, boasting large areas of high fertility soils, native and plantation forests, abundant but relatively undeveloped water resources, and a cool temperate climate.

The Meander Valley district offers a relaxed and enviable lifestyle and a broad range and diversity of recreational opportunities including traditional team sports, fly fishing, trail riding, bushwalking, and cycling and other pastimes including hobby farming.

The Meander Valley district is well known for its vitality and its creativity, its artists and its craft. This vitality and creativity have led to the development of two of the largest events in Tasmania – Agfest and the Deloraine Craft Fair – both of which are recognised nationally and attract visitors from interstate and overseas. The creativity, lifestyle, landscape and recreation opportunities have attracted many artisans and professionals to settle in the district.

The Meander Valley district has unsurpassed access to wilderness and recreational parks. The Mole Creek Karst National Park, and large parts of the Cradle Mountain National Park, the Walls of Jerusalem National Park and the Central Plateau Conservation Area are all within the district.



Centre Pivot Irrigator





INVEST IN THE MEANDER VALLEY DISTRICT

INFRASTRUCTURE

The Meander Valley district is serviced by an extensive road network and is bisected by the Bass Highway, the major national highway that links the north western and the southern regions of Tasmania. The State's north-south rail trunk line follows the Bass Highway through the district.

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

The nearest sea port for most of the Meander Valley district is the Port of Launceston in the Bell Bay Industrial Estate on the Tamar River, about 30 minutes from Prospect and 75 minutes from Deloraine. Devonport, the terminus for the Bass Strait roll-on roll-off freight and passenger ferries, is about 40 minutes on the Bass Highway from Deloraine. There are regional airports at Launceston and Devonport. The Launceston Airport offers the

largest air freight service in Tasmania as well as daily direct passenger flights to Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

The Meander Valley district is well served by the State's electricity grid and the gas trunk line that services north west Tasmania follows the Bass Highway through most of the district.

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

The Meander Valley district has many village and suburban primary and secondary schools including high schools at Deloraine and Prospect. There are comprehensive tertiary education facilities available in Launceston including a University, TAFE College and Maritime College.

Northern Tasmanian house prices remain the lowest in Australia. The Commonwealth Bank property guide (www.pvg.webcentral.com.au) shows that the median house price in Northern Tasmania in November 2005 was \$180,000 which compares with the \$215,000 for all of Tasmania and \$317,000 for all of Australia. Further information is available at www.tasmania.propertyguide.com.au

The Meander Valley district has serviced industrially zoned land at Deloraine and Prospect. The Meander Valley Council's Planning Scheme is available at www.meander.tas.gov.au



Westbury Bypass, Bass Highway

MAJOR INDUSTRIES

The dominant industry in the Meander Valley district is agriculture. Other significant industries are tourism, forestry, manufacturing and health and community services. Table 1 shows employment by industry sector statistics at each of the last four censuses (1986, 1991, 1996, 2001).

Employment by Industry

The total number of Meander Valley residents in employment grew by 43% from 4,068 to 6,218 in the fifteen years to 2001. This growth is consistent with changing demographics and population growth of 22.9% in the district in the same period. Most of the employment growth in a number of industry sectors reflects regional change rather than growth in those industries in the Meander Valley district.

The increase in employment in retail trade and health and community services, for example, would be mostly in the City of Launceston by employees living in Prospect, Hadspen and Blackstone Heights, the dormitory suburbs of Greater Launceston in the Meander Valley district.



Monds and Affleck Processing Plant, Westbury

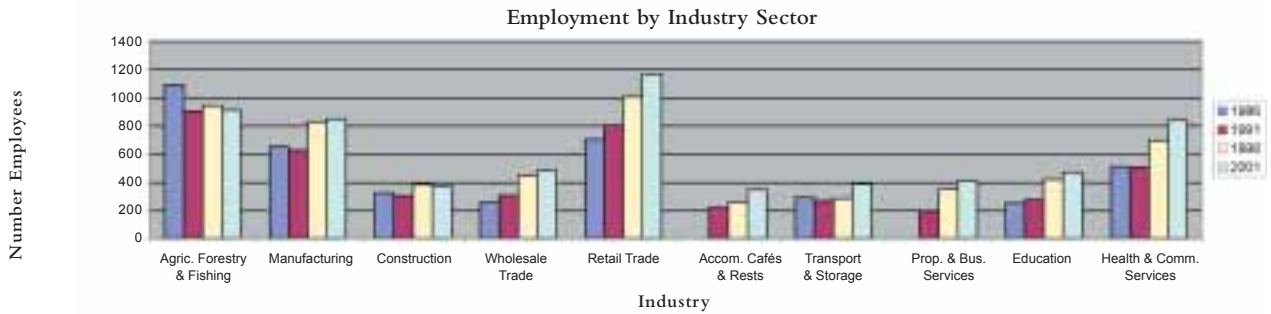


Table 1: Employment by Industry Sector – Meander Valley district

Agriculture

The main agricultural enterprises in Meander Valley district are cropping, dairy and grazing. In 2001 there were 395 farm establishments with a total area of 96,942 hectares and a gross output valued at about \$75 million.

The minimum average annual rainfall is 800 mm in the lowlands and the maximum over 2000 mm in the mountainous areas. The Meander Valley district has long daylight hours in summer (maximum 15 hours 10 minutes), warm summer temperatures (mean maximum monthly temperature 21.3°C in February at Deloraine) and cool winters (mean monthly minimum 0.9°C in July) – ideal conditions for intensive agriculture.

The construction of the Meander Valley Dam, a 44 gegalitre water storage for irrigation purposes, is expected to be completed in 2007. The dam will facilitate further intensification of agriculture in the Meander Valley district.

Investment opportunities exist in intensive agriculture, horticulture, food processing and marketing and in water development.

More 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 and at www.northern.tasmania.info

Tourism

Tourism is now recognised as being a significant economic driver in the Meander Valley district. Visitor numbers to Deloraine have increased dramatically in recent years, from 127,200 in 2001 to 214,100 in 2004 and visitor nights increased from 35,400 to 52,000 in the same period. Tourism makes an indirect and direct contribution of about \$70 million to the local economy.

Details of the visitor market can be found at www.tourismtasmania.com.au/research

Tourism in the Meander Valley district is promoted principally through the Great Western

Tiers Touring Route, details of which can be found at www.greatwesterntiers.net.au

The Great Western Tiers Visitor Centre is located at Deloraine in a complex that includes 'Yarns Artwork in Silk' and the Deloraine Folk Museum.

The Meander Valley district hosts two nationally recognised events in the Tasmanian calendar. Agfest, a State-wide agricultural trade exhibition held each year in May at Carrick, attracts over 70,000 visitors over a three-day period. The Deloraine Craft Fair, usually held in November, attracts a similar number of attendees. Visitors are attracted to the Meander Valley district by the National Parks, the cultural heritage, Agfest and the Craft Fair. The significant increase in tourist numbers to Meander Valley provides investment opportunities in the district in hospitality and new attractions, particularly in ecotourism.

Manufacturing

The value of manufacturing to the economy of the Meander Valley district is estimated to be about \$70 million. Manufacturing includes agri-product processing, timber milling and building industry fabrication. There are industrial estates at Prospect and Deloraine.

Property

Recent population growth in Northern Tasmania has been concentrated in the Meander Valley and West Tamar Council areas, principally in their dormitory suburbs of Greater Launceston. The Meander Valley district population increased from 11,820 to 18,275, or 55%, between 1986 and 2001. This population growth has resulted in significant residential and commercial development particularly at Prospect, Blackstone Heights and Hadspen. Development in these areas has occurred because of the availability of competitively priced and appropriately zoned land, excellent local services, the regional services in Launceston, and a world class setting with outlooks to mountain vistas or the South Esk River.



Property development at Prospect

There are investment opportunities in the Meander Valley district for both residential and commercial development. The district is ideally suited for commercial developments such as aged care facilities to service the Launceston community, and niche accommodation facilities to service the growing tourism industry.

The district, given its proximity to local and interstate markets, its lifestyle advantages and the quality of telecommunications, is an ideal location for home-based professional and artisan businesses.



INVEST IN THE MEANDER VALLEY 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 Meander Valley district.

Tasmanian Alkaloids, the largest single employer in the Meander Valley district, processes poppies at Westbury into high quality pharmaceutical products for distribution overseas. Details can be found at www.tasalk.com.au

The Federal Hotel Group is a major employer with the Country Club Tasmania located at Prospect Vale. Details at www.federalresorts.com.au

Gunns Limited is a major employer with forest activities and a timber processing plant at Deloraine. Details are at www.gunns.com.au

BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT AND SUPPORT

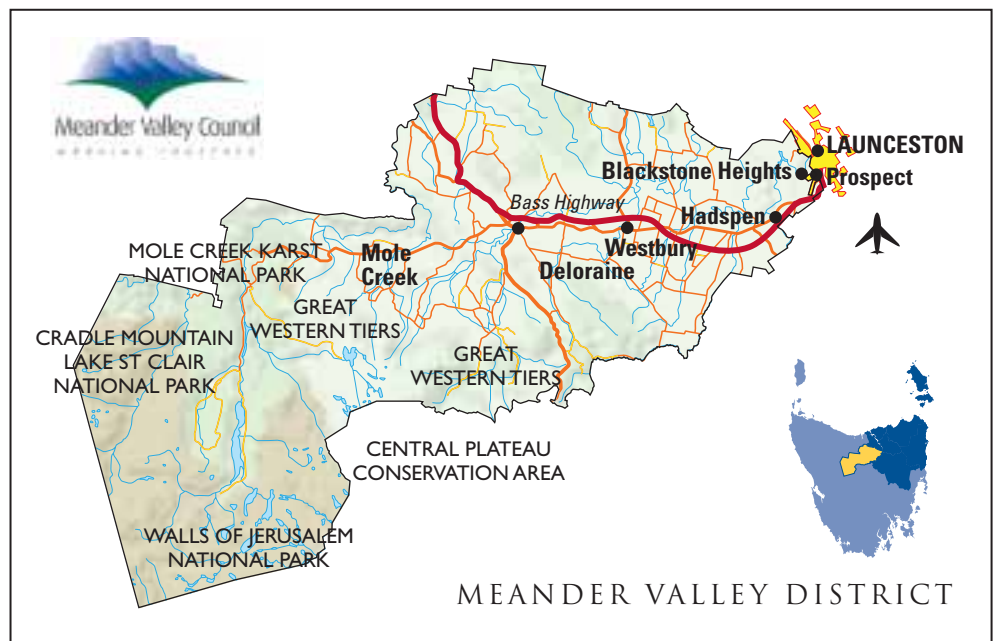
Further information on investing in Tasmania can be found at the Department of Economic Development's website www.development.tas.gov.au. This website also contains the Northern Tasmania Regional Economic Development and Investment (REDI) Plan which provides detailed information on infrastructure and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

Information about the economy of Northern Tasmania and other Council areas can be found at www.northerntasmania.info

General information about the Tasmanian economy, environment and communities, including the Meander Valley community, can be found at 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 and www.realcommercial.com.au

The business community in the Meander Valley district is supported by the Meander Valley Enterprise Centre. The Enterprise Centre can be contacted on 03 6362 3456 or by emailing mvecinc@hotmail.com



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