



stanthorpe & granite belt
chamber of commerce

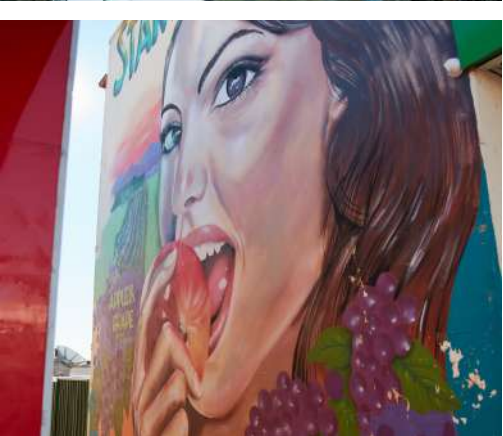
STANTHORPE & THE GRANITE BELT

Investment Folio



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Get to know us!

Stanthorpe and Granite Belt

Explore a region full of potential, where opportunity meets a great lifestyle. Here, businesses succeed surrounded by beautiful scenery, a strong economy, and an active community.

Beyond our orchards and vineyards, you'll find a lively tourism industry, driven by beautiful landscapes, award-winning wines, and a busy events calendar.

What makes us unique is the Granite Belt lifestyle—a friendly community, affordable living, and access to breath-taking natural surroundings. This isn't just a place to start a business; it's a place to live, work, and enjoy life.

Discover the strategic opportunities waiting for you in Stanthorpe and the Granite Belt — where business success and quality of life go hand in hand.



Businesses



There are 1,361 businesses in the Granite Belt Region, of which 351 businesses (or 25.8%) employed 1 to 4 employees.

Population



6,247 people call Stanthorpe and the Granite Belt region home, with an average age of 49.

Gross Regional Product



The Southern Downs Regional Council's Gross Regional Product was \$2.47m in 2023/24. Since 2021, the GRP has increased by 9.5% on average every year.

Did you know?

- The Granite Belt's economy thrives on diverse industries, with Commercial and Community Services making up 36% and Agriculture contributing over 20% to the local economy.
- The grape and wine sector significantly boosts the visitor economy, generating \$2.26 in additional output for every \$1 produced.

ABUNDANT NATURAL AMENITY

Characterised by breathtaking granite landscapes, sprawling national parks, and a rare four distinct seasons – from crisp winters that occasionally bring snow, to vibrant autumns, lush springs, and temperate summers – the environment itself is a drawcard. This natural beauty not only underpins the thriving tourism sector but also provides an exceptional backdrop for residents, promoting well-being and recreational opportunities. The clean air and pristine environment are invaluable attributes for lifestyle-focused industries and a discerning workforce.

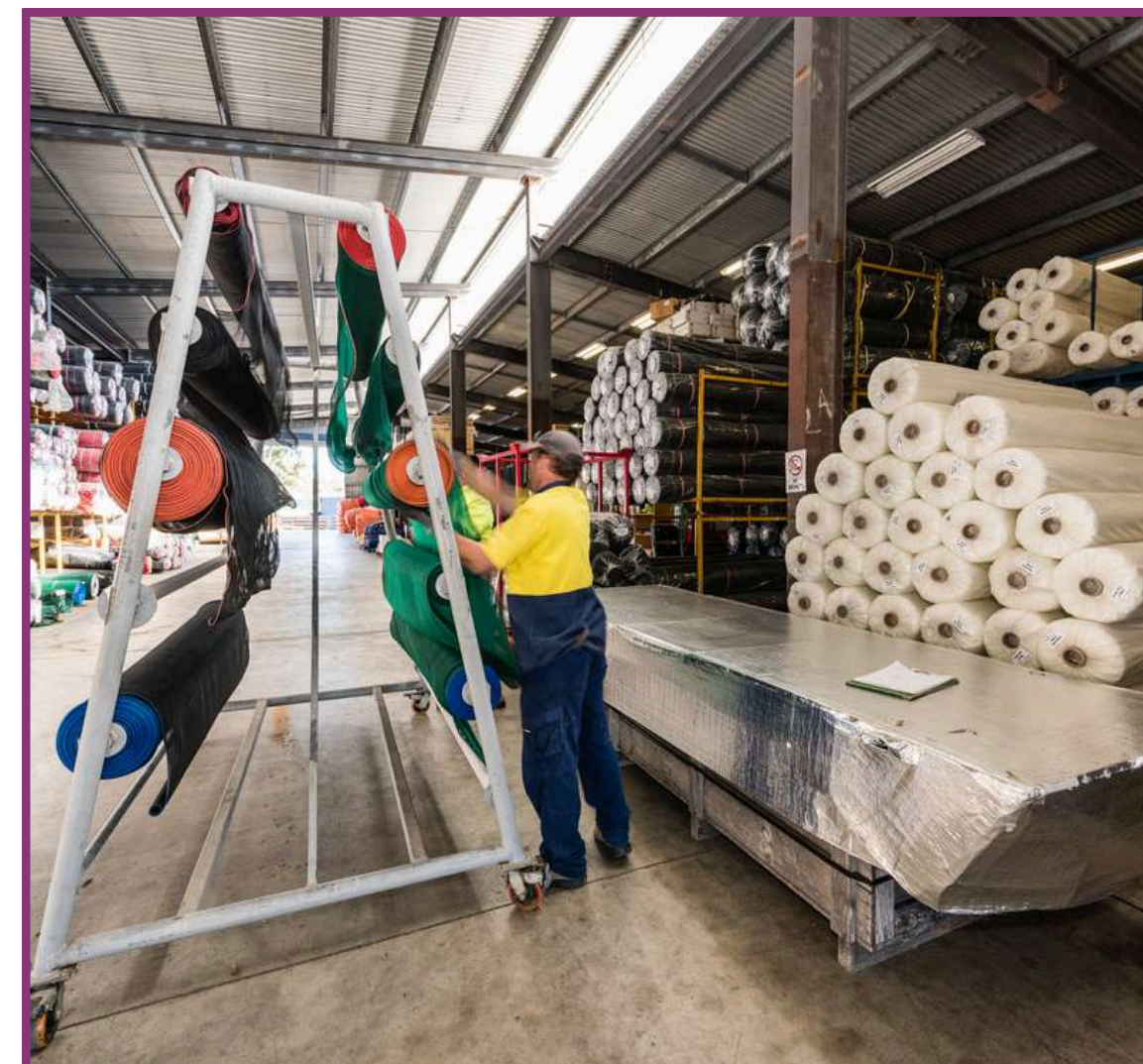


Capitalise on our Competitive Advantages

The Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region offers a compelling proposition for investors seeking sustainable growth and a unique quality of life. Our strategic advantages create a fertile ground for businesses to thrive, supported by a vibrant community and stunning natural surrounds.

LOW COST OF BUSINESS






A significant draw for investors is the highly competitive cost of doing business in the Stanthorpe and Granite Belt. Compared to metropolitan areas and neighbouring regions, businesses here benefit from significantly lower operating overheads. This includes more affordable industrial land values and commercial lease rates, reducing initial setup and ongoing expenses, as well as fostering more sustainable and profitable businesses.

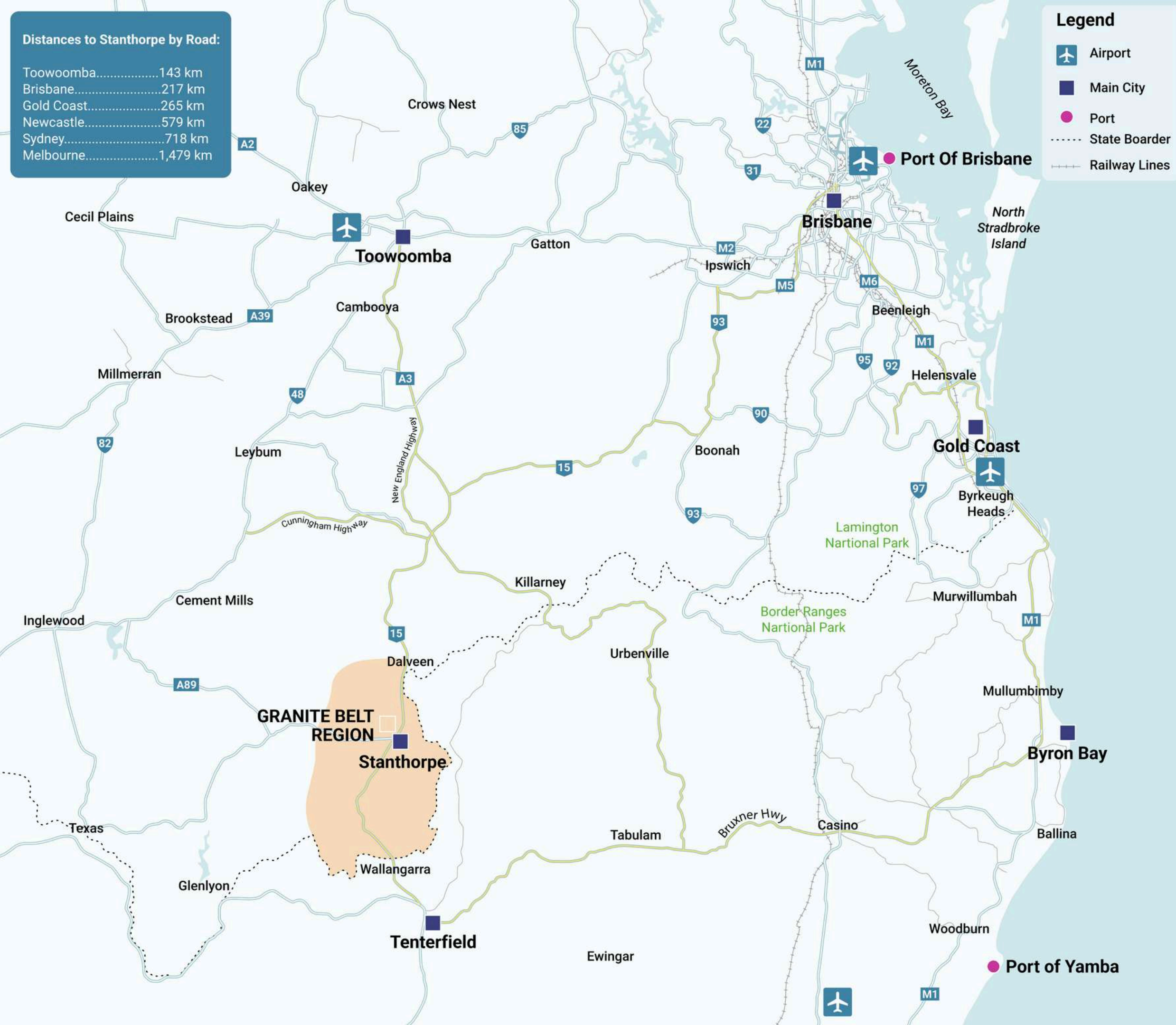


Distances to Stanthorpe by Road:

Toowoomba.....	143 km
Brisbane.....	217 km
Gold Coast.....	265 km
Newcastle.....	579 km
Sydney.....	718 km
Melbourne.....	1,479 km

Legend

-  Airport
-  Main City
-  Port
-  State Boarder
-  Railway Lines



STRATEGIC LOCATION

Our region benefits from a pivotal location, offering connectivity without the metropolitan bustle. Situated within a comfortable three-hour drive of the major centres of Brisbane and the Gold Coast, and with direct access to key national highways (Cunningham and New England), our location ensures efficient transport and supply chain links. Proximity to the Toowoomba Wellcamp Airport provides direct air freight capabilities, connecting local produce and products to national and international markets.

Our region is a strategic hub for businesses looking to serve Southeast Queensland, Northern New South Wales and beyond.

Economic Profile: *Embracing Change and Opportunity*

While many rural Australian communities struggle to maintain their vitality, Stanthorpe and the Granite Belt shine as an exception. In recent decades, this region has experienced a remarkable economic transformation, driven by:

- Shifting demographics
- Urban professionals in search of work-life balance
- A growing number of active retirees

This evolution has fostered a robust, skilled community that harmoniously blends lively urban and peri-urban lifestyles. Currently, the economy of the region is driven by high-demand professional and community services, supported by a strong network of trades, industry, wholesale suppliers, and high-value primary industry activities – a testament to the area's resilience and adaptability.



Over 45% of households in the region comprise of households without children, indicating a demographic of established individuals and disposable income.

The median weekly household income is approximately \$1,127, and the unemployment rate stands at 3.9%.



RURAL + URBAN

Peri-urban Granite Belt:

40% of local jobs

43% of total value

Key sectors are agriculture and mining, manufacturing and construction.

Stanthorpe (Urban):

60% of total jobs

57% of total value add

Key sectors are services and wholesale/retail.

Stanthorpe Township is the hub for services, accounting for 82% of services employment.

The peri-urban areas drive agriculture, with 92% of agriculture's value-add coming from this area.



PRODUCTIVITY

High-Value Sectors
(Value-Add \$ per worker):

Mining, Manufacturing & Construction: \$140,000
(Highest Productivity)

Logistics: \$109,700

Agriculture: \$107,000



ECONOMIC RESILIENCE + COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Strategic Location

The region's proximity to Brisbane's captive urban market gives it a unique competitive advantage, particularly for agritourism.

Niche Expertise

The blending of traditional agriculture with tourism-linked value-add, such as the premium wine sector, creates a unique and resilient local economy that can command price premiums.

Diverse Economy

The strong mix of an urban services hub and a productive rural hinterland ensures a balanced economic foundation, making it less susceptible to shocks that might impact single-sector economies.



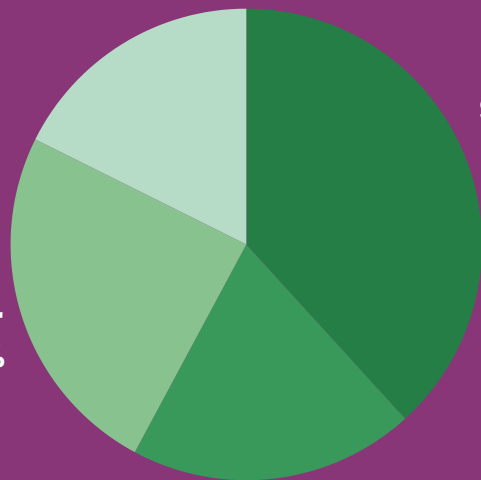
TOP 3 ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTORS

Mining, Manufacturing + Construction
17.6%

Services
38.2%

Other
24.5%

Agriculture
19.6%



Economic SNAPSHOT

IDENTIFIED

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

VALUE-ADDED AGRIBUSINESS ✓

AGRITOURISM & ECOTOURISM ✓

SERVICES AND TRADES ✓



Our lifestyle is second to none!

Direct Price Comparison - Homes

LOCATION	MEDIAN HOUSE PRICE	PRICE DIFFERENCE FROM STANTHORPE
Sydney	Approx. \$1,400,000	Sydney is roughly 233% more expensive (over 3.3x the price)
Brisbane	Approx. \$880,000	Brisbane is roughly 110% more expensive (over 2x the price)
Stanthorpe	Approx. \$420,000	

Beyond economic advantages, Stanthorpe and the Granite Belt offers an enviable lifestyle that supports a resilient and growing workforce. The region prides itself on its strong sense of community, where friendly people and a united spirit foster a welcoming environment for newcomers. Coupled with affordable living costs, access to quality local services, and a pace of life that balances productivity with personal well-being it is the perfect place for business looking to establish or expand their operations into a region where people truly live well.



"The **Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region** stands as a shining example of how unique natural beauty, world-class culinary offerings, and a vibrant wine industry converge to **create an exceptional tourism experience**. It's a testament to the passionate individuals who invest in and build tourism businesses here, cultivating this gem and **offering memorable moments** to all who visit."



Michelle Feenan
President

Stanthorpe and Granite Belt Chamber of Commerce



Apple and Grape Harvest Festival
Courtesy www.appleandgrape.org

KEY SECTOR: *Retail*

The retail sector in the Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region forms a dynamic and essential part of the local economy, diligently serving both its growing resident population and the significant influx of tourists. This sector is a substantial contributor to employment, reflecting its crucial role in the region's economic health.

Why establish a retail business in the Granite Belt?

- The region benefits from consistent population growth and strong tourist visitation, providing a steady and expanding market for retail goods and services.
- There's a strong local culture of supporting regional products, allowing retailers to differentiate by showcasing the Granite Belt's unique agricultural and artisanal offerings.
- The thriving tourism industry, particularly wine and culinary tourism, drives demand for specialised retail experiences, creating opportunities for businesses that cater to visitors seeking authentic regional products.

**Tourism expenditure for the region is
\$273 million, and we get 455,000 overnight
visitors each year!**



Case Study: Pink Poppies Living Creatively

This beautiful little shop stands as a beacon of retail success within Stanthorpe's commercial landscape. What began as a contemporary gift store in 2008 has strategically evolved into a premier destination, now offering a carefully curated selection of ladies fashion, alongside unique homewares and thoughtful gifts. Owner Lucille, drawing on a retail background, has cultivated an inviting in-store experience complemented by a robust online presence, allowing reach customers nationwide. This adaptive approach, combined with a focus on quality, exceptional customer service, and a keen understanding of their clientele, exemplifies how niche retail businesses can flourish in the Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region.

KEY SECTOR:

Agriculture & Ag Tech

The Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region boasts a robust and highly productive agricultural sector, a cornerstone of its economic identity. Renowned for its unique cool-climate, the region is a major producer of high-value horticulture, including virtually all of Queensland's apple crop, a significant portion of its stone fruit and berry production (such as strawberries and raspberries), and a diverse range of vegetables including brassicas, tomatoes, and capsicums. The viticulture sub-sector is particularly prominent, with grapes for the region's over 50 wineries thriving in the distinctive granitic soils and four distinct seasons. This diverse agricultural base provides a consistent demand for inputs and services, making agriculture a significant employer in the region.



Case Study: Ced Wise AB Services

With Dr. Ced Wise at the helm, this family-based team provides a comprehensive suite of cutting-edge reproduction services for the livestock industry. They play an important role in enhancing herd efficiency and genetic gain for cattle producers across Australia and for the export market. Their dedication to providing sophisticated solutions underscores the region's capacity to support and foster highly specialised and globally relevant agricultural businesses, reinforcing the Stanthorpe area's position as a hub for innovative rural enterprise.



KEY SECTOR:

Wine, Culinary & Agritourism

The Granite Belt stands as Queensland's premier wine region, that forms a significant pillar of its tourism appeal. The region's unique cool-climate environment fosters a thriving wine tourism sector, attracting a substantial number of visitors annually who are eager to explore its cellar doors and culinary offerings.



Case Study: Jamworks Gourmet Foods

A true gem of the Granite Belt, showcasing the region's abundant produce and entrepreneurial spirit in the gourmet food sector. Starting as a market stall, it has now evolved into a well-known tourist destination and local hub. Located in Glen Aplin, Jamworks produces an impressive range of over 80 artisan preserves, including jams, relishes, chutneys, sauces, and pastes, many of which are gluten and preservative-free and made on-site using local ingredients where possible. Beyond their award-winning products, which have garnered medals at prestigious events like the Australian Food Awards and the Royal Sydney, Jamworks also operates a fully licensed café and larder. They are a true drawcard to the region, offering an authentic taste of the Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region.

Wine Tourism and Culinary Experiences

The region beckons with a sophisticated yet welcoming wine tourism scene, where visitors can enjoy tastings of award-winning cool-climate wines, from crisp whites to elegant reds, at numerous cellar doors. Enhancing this experience is a growing culinary landscape that emphasises fresh, locally sourced ingredients. Gourmet dining opportunities abound at winery restaurants and charming local eateries, that provide a taste of the region's seasonal flavors. The direct connection between producers and consumers is fostered through farm-gate sales, offering authentic agritourism encounters that complement the wine and food journey.

Accommodation and Hospitality Development

To cater to the increasing number of visitors drawn by the wine and culinary experiences, the Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region boasts a diverse array of accommodation options. These range from intimate bed and breakfasts nestled amongst the vineyards to comfortable guesthouses and self-contained retreats. The ongoing development of unique and high-quality accommodation and hospitality services is crucial to further enhance the region's appeal and cater to a wide range of travellers.

Events and Festivals

The region's dynamic calendar of events and festivals is instrumental in showcasing its wine, culinary, and agritourism sectors. Key attractions include numerous wine-focused events, cellar door celebrations, and food festivals that highlight the seasonal produce and local gastronomy. These events not only drive tourism and economic activity but also create a vibrant atmosphere and provide valuable marketing platforms for the region's key attractions.

The Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region is home to over 50 wineries, covering 400ha in land area, which is about the same size as Russia!

OPPORTUNITY: *Services & Trades*

The demand for more services and trades businesses is linked to the region's dynamic growth across multiple fronts. Our thriving agricultural industry, and expanding tourism and hospitality sector, generates a continuous need for construction, renovation, plumbing, electrical, and general maintenance trades. In addition, the region's increasing population, particularly a significant demographic of established individuals and retirees seeking a lifestyle change, drives demand for a comprehensive range of personal and household services. From home maintenance and gardening to health and personal care services, the expanding residential base creates a robust consumer market.



Case Study: MWF Plumbing

MWF Plumbing is a highly respected and long-standing pillar of the Stanthorpe business community, offering essential plumbing services and supplies across the Granite Belt and surrounding areas for over 50 years. They provide a comprehensive range of services including residential and commercial plumbing, drainage, gas fitting, and specialised work like wastewater treatment systems and hot water unit installation. Their enduring commitment to the region, demonstrated through their multi-generational ownership and continuous adaptation, underscores the stability and resilience of family-owned enterprises within Stanthorpe's diverse economy.

The region's consistent growth in new residents frequently leads to longer wait times for essential local trades and services, highlighting a significant and immediate market opportunity for new entrants.

OPPORTUNITY: *Nature Based Tourism*

The Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region stands out as an exceptional destination for nature-based tourism, primarily due to its unparalleled natural amenity. Nestled high on the Great Dividing Range, the area is characterised by its distinctive granite landscapes, including dramatic formations within Girraween National Park (meaning "place of flowers"), and a truly unique four-season climate for Queensland. This offers visitors a diverse range of experiences year-round, from crisp winters with potential for frost and even snow, to vibrant spring wildflowers, temperate summers, and spectacular autumn foliage.

The region boasts extensive walking trails, picturesque waterways, and opportunities for birdwatching, stargazing, and outdoor adventure, appealing to a growing market of eco-conscious and experience-seeking travelers.

Girraween National Park in the Granite Belt is famous for its balancing rock formations and incredible spring wildflower displays, attracting over 120,000 visitors annually eager to explore its unique natural wonders.

Case Study: Stanthorpe Rare Wildflower Consortium

The Stanthorpe Rare Wildflower Consortium stands as a dedicated guardian of the Granite Belt region's unique and often endemic wildflower species. Formed by a passionate group of enthusiasts, the Consortium works tirelessly to identify, manage, and ultimately preserve this precious flora and their habitats. They hold popular guided wildflower walks each spring, workshops, and develop publications such as the comprehensive "Flora of the Granite Belt" guide. Their work not only contributes to the ecological health of the region but also enhances its appeal as an ecotourism destination, drawing visitors keen to experience the spectacular natural displays that emerge from among the granite rocks.



Population projections for the Southern Downs region (which includes Stanthorpe) suggest that the proportion of residents aged 65 and over will reach approximately 36% by 2041, highlighting a significant and growing market for retirement living and aged care services

OPPORTUNITY:

Health, Childcare and Retirement Living

Investment in these sectors is driven by the region's evolving demographics and lifestyle preferences. The Granite Belt region has a significantly older median age of 49 years, compared to Queensland's average of 38, indicating a growing demographic seeking quality aged care and retirement living options. This mature population often desires a relaxed, community-focused lifestyle with access to nature, which Stanthorpe readily provides.

Concurrently, the region's overall population growth, fueled by individuals and families seeking a tree change and more affordable living, is increasing the demand for accessible and high-quality childcare services.

As of February 2025, Stanthorpe has a current ratio of 1.7 resident children under 5 per Long Day Care place, indicating a need for more childcare facilities.

Case Study: Granite Belt Support Services (GBSS)

Established in 1989, GBSS provides vital support to individuals and families, particularly those with disabilities, across a broad age range from infancy to adulthood. They offer a comprehensive suite of services including direct disability support, a multidisciplinary allied health therapy team (Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Pathology, Specialist Education), and NDIS plan management. Their commitment to person-centred care, a holistic approach, and their significant contribution to local employment highlight the robust and caring community fabric that underpins the region's liveability and appeal.



OPPORTUNITY: *Professional Services*

The Stanthorpe region offers a solid foundation and growing demand for professional services such as accounting, law, and consulting. While already home to established firms providing these essential services, the region's economic landscape is evolving, creating new needs and opportunities.

Key industries like agriculture, food processing, and the burgeoning tourism sector continue to grow, requiring specialised legal advice, financial management, and business strategy support. Furthermore, the increasing population, particularly the influx of families and retirees, necessitates a broader range of personal professional services, from estate planning and property conveyancing to financial advice. This organic growth across both business and residential sectors ensures a sustained demand for a comprehensive suite of professional services.

The number of businesses in the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services sector in the Southern Downs Regional Council area (which includes Stanthorpe) increased by 19 between 2023 and 2024, indicating a growing local demand for these specialised services

Case Study: Cav Insure

A trusted insurance brokerage firmly established in the Stanthorpe business landscape, that serves the Granite Belt, Southern Downs, and broader South East Queensland regions. Established in 2015 by Josh and Cara Cavallaro, the business has rapidly grown from scratch to serve a substantial portfolio of over 600 clients. Their success is rooted in their commitment to making sense of often complex insurance policies for locals, providing tailored advice, and offering crucial support during the claims process.



We are here to *help!*

As the Stanthorpe and Granite Belt Chamber of Commerce, we are committed to supporting new and existing businesses thrive in our vibrant region. We understand that investing in a new area comes with many questions, and we are here to provide the guidance and connections you need.

Our Role:

The Stanthorpe and Granite Belt Chamber of Commerce is your local partner in success. We actively work to foster a thriving business environment. We can assist potential investors by offering invaluable insights into the local market dynamics, facilitating networking opportunities with established businesses, and providing guidance on integrating into our supportive community. Consider us your key resource for understanding the unique advantages and navigating the nuances of doing business here in the Granite Belt.

Government Support:

Investors in the Stanthorpe region may be eligible for various grants, incentives, and support programs offered by both Queensland and Australian governments. We can help you understand and navigate these opportunities, providing preliminary information on eligibility criteria and guiding you towards the relevant government bodies to maximize your investment potential.

Networking and Connections:

For all investment inquiries and initial assistance in exploring opportunities in the Stanthorpe and Granite Belt region, please reach out to us. We will connect you with the right local insights and resources.





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chamber of commerce

Have an idea? **Let's Connect!**

Stanthorpe and Granite Belt Chamber of Commerce

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Note: The Stanthorpe and Granite Belt Chamber of Commerce accepts no liability with respect to the accuracy or currency of data or information contained in this document. The information within is not investment advice and has been prepared without taking into account your investment objectives, financial situation and particular needs (including financial and taxation considerations) as an investor. You should seek independent and qualified professional advice.

Statistical Sources:
Southern Down ID Profile
Southern Queensland Country Tourism
Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census
Stanthorpe Childcare Needs Analysis (AreaSearch.com.au)
Rural Economies Centre of Excellence
CoreLogic

Imagery Source:
Southern Downs Regional Council