

Tātaki
Auckland
Unlimited



A NEW DIRECTION FOR AOTEA GREAT BARRIER
ISLAND'S VISITOR ECONOMY

AOTEA GREAT BARRIER ISLAND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

All effort has been made to ensure accuracy in this destination management plan, but no responsibility or liability is accepted for errors, omissions, or resultant consequences from relying on information contained in it, including damage or loss. The plan includes significant concepts and specific language requested by Destination Great Barrier Island Trust and the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, with the support of Tātaki Auckland Unlimited.

Contents

PART 1:	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1.1.	Aotea Great Barrier Island – Extraordinary Place, Extraordinary People	2
1.1.	Aspirations for the Visitor Economy	3
1.2.	A Destination Management Plan for Aotea Great Barrier Island	4
1.2.	Strategic Framework.....	5
1.3.	Recommendations.....	6
1.4.	Priority Recommendations.....	8
1.5.	Next Steps	9
PART 2:	WHERE ARE WE NOW?	10
2.1.	What is a Destination Management Plan?	11
2.2.	Preparing This Destination Management Plan	12
2.3.	Geographic Scope.....	15
2.4.	What We Were Told.....	16
2.5.	Aotea Great Barrier Island Situation Analysis.....	17
2.6.	Aotea Great Barrier Island’s Tourism Offering.....	24
2.7.	Aotea Great Barrier Island’s Brand Attributes and Hero Experiences.....	28
2.8.	Challenges/Barriers to Sustainable Growth for Aotea Great Barrier Island.....	30
PART 3:	WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?.....	33
3.1.	Strategic Framework.....	34
3.2.	Recommendations for Sustainable Growth.....	35
3.3.	The Priority Recommendations.....	39
3.4.	What Will Success Look Like?	42
PART 4:	HOW WILL WE GET THERE?	43
4.1.	Action Plan.....	44
PART 5:	APPENDICES.....	51
5.1.	Survey Questions/Results	52
5.2.	Net Promoter Score	54
5.3.	Visitor Forecasts	55
5.4.	Strategic Alignment.....	59

List of Figures

Figure 1: The process followed.....	13
Figure 2: Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board map.....	15
Figure 3: Top 10 Industries by Employment (and their respective contribution to GDP), 2020.....	21
Figure 4: Aotea Great Barrier Island Accommodation Spatial Audit.....	25
Figure 5: Aotea Great Barrier Island Attractions/Experiences Spatial Audit.....	27
Figure 6: Hero Experiences.....	28
Figure 7: DMP Guiding Principles.....	34
Figure 8: Strategic Imperatives.....	34
Figure 9: Proposed LDMO partnership structure.....	39
Figure 10: Respondent Profile.....	52
Figure 11: Survey Responses – Summary 1.....	53
Figure 12: Survey Responses – Summary 2.....	53
Figure 13: Aotea Great Barrier – Historic Visitation & Visitor Projections (2014 – 2031, March YE).....	56
Figure 14: Aotea Great Barrier Island Local Resident Population Estimates.....	61
Figure 15: Aotea Great Barrier Island Local Resident Population Estimates by Age Group.....	62
Figure 16: Population Projections.....	62
Figure 17: Population Projections by Age.....	63

List of Tables

Table 1: Who was consulted?.....	14
Table 2: Economic Structure & Industries Concentrated (location quotient) on Aotea Great Barrier Island.....	20
Table 3: Aotea Great Barrier Island SWOT Analysis.....	21
Table 4: Barriers to growth linked to destination management components.....	32
Table 5: LDMO organisational attributes.....	40
Table 6: Action Plan – Tier 1 Recommendations.....	44
Table 7: Action Plan – Tier 2 Recommendations.....	47
Table 8: Action Plan – Tier 3 Recommendations.....	49
Table 9: Plans/Strategies/Projects Assessed.....	59

Mihi

Ko Aotea te moutere rongonui
Ko Hirakimatā te maunga tapu
Ko te moana nui a Toi te moana
Ko te Tuatara, te Mauri, rātou ko te Tukaiaia ngā kaitiaki
Ko Aotea te kāinga o ngā uri o Ngāti Rehua
Anei te whenua e manaakitia tātou. E whakapiritia tātou. E whakaoratia tātou.
Te waahi o ngā taonga maha, ngā taonga tapu, ngā taonga matahāpo.
Na ngā whetū e kanapu ki te rangi ki ngā aitenga a punga e kōhimuhimu ana ki ngā ngahere.
Ko Aotea te taonga motuhake o te moana nui a Toi.
Ko Aotea toku tūrangawaewae.

Aotea is the renowned island. Hirakimata is the sacred mountain.
The Moana of Toi is the ocean that embraces our island.
The Tuatara, Mauri, and the Tukaiaia are the guardians.
Aotea is the home for the descendants of Ngāti Rehua.
Here is the land that protects us, brings us together, keeps us alive.
A place of many treasures, sacred treasures, precious treasures.
From the stars shining bright in the sky to the insects that whisper in the forest.
Aotea is the prize of the moana of Toi. Aotea is my standing place.

Ngāti Rehua-Ngāti Wai ki Aotea Trust Board 2023

Image credit: Auckland Council



Destination management for Aotea Great Barrier Island – a collaborative approach

In 2018, the Destination AKL 2025 strategy was launched by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited (then Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development), establishing a unifying vision for Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland's visitor economy, and ensuring the visitor economy contributes to a sustainable future for the region we call home.

Destination AKL 2025 articulated the importance of 'destination management', and the need to plan to manage the impact of our visitor economy in a way that ensures Auckland will be in a stronger position not just economically, but also socially and environmentally.

Areas within the Auckland region that enjoy the benefits of the visitor economy - including Aotea Great Barrier Island, the local area for which this plan has been created - are all too aware that balance must be achieved if we are to achieve this.

Tātaki Auckland Unlimited's role as the region's economic and cultural agency, and as a connector and facilitator within the destination industry, means we are well placed to provide the cross-sector leadership destination management requires. Destination management cannot however be achieved by one organisation alone.

Genuine collaboration between many groups - mana whenua, the Aotea Great Barrier Island community, and the public and private sectors amongst them - will be key. The opportunity to work together to preserve what makes Aotea Great Barrier Island special, while ensuring that the benefits of the visitor economy continue to be enjoyed, is one we are excited to undertake.

Nick Hill
Chief Executive
Tātaki Auckland Unlimited

Part 1: Executive Summary

1.1. Aotea Great Barrier Island – Extraordinary Place, Extraordinary People

Image credit: Auckland Council



Aotea Great Barrier Island (AGBI) is an extraordinary place, with extraordinary people. Located 90 km from central Auckland on the edge of the Hauraki Gulf, the island is a world away from city life. Situated in Aotearoa New Zealand's only national marine park, the island is home to a resilient, resourceful, and tight-knit community of approximately 1,200 residents (Aotea Health, 2022) who care deeply for the place they call home.

More than 60 per cent of Aotea Great Barrier Island's 285 square kilometres is Public Conservation Land (PCL), administered by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Residents have chosen a life of relative isolation with minimal infrastructure, but one which offers the opportunity to engage closely with nature. While settlements on Aotea Great Barrier Island are scattered, there is a strong sense of community spirit.

Aotea Great Barrier Island is characterised by an abundance of walking and hiking trails through pristine native bush, native wildlife on land and sea, and internationally recognised 'dark skies'. In 2017, the island was named as an IDA Dark Sky Sanctuary, awarded to

destinations that enjoy an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and a nocturnal environment that is protected for its scientific, natural, or educational value, its cultural heritage and/or public enjoyment.¹

The island is considered sacred by Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea who are acknowledged and recognised as mana whenua and have a deep spiritual connection to the whenua arising from the arrival of the Aotea Waka in the 13th century. The island is an iconic and precious kete of Aotearoa New Zealand ecology and biodiversity taonga. Wilderness areas dominate the island landscape and present a unique opportunity for its people to live close to nature.

Both Aotea Great Barrier Island and the Hauraki Gulf are nationally significant ecosystems whose regeneration is deserving of a local, regional, and national priority. The need to regenerate the critically degraded Hauraki Gulf marine environment is particularly desperate. Not surprisingly, the local Island community abounds with passionate volunteer organisations dedicated to environmental care and regeneration.

¹ <https://www.darksky.org/our-work/conservation/idsp/sanctuaries/>

1.1. Aspirations for the Visitor Economy

Tourism is the primary economic driver for Aotea Great Barrier Island.² For many visitors, the sense of wildness and natural quiet are the main motivation for visiting the island. Its remoteness and relative absence of people have created a haven of nature and natural quiet. The challenge Aotea Great Barrier Island faces is to manage the balance between growing the economic value of tourism and preserving and enhancing the natural value of the island, while sustaining mana whenua and the community.

The single-minded pursuit of greater visitor numbers and spending that characterised the tourism landscape for many destinations prior to the COVID-19 pandemic is not desired by the Aotea Great Barrier Island community. The quest for economic gain above all else risks negatively impacting the island’s natural environment and biodiversity and diminishing the resident and visitor experience. The importance of preserving and protecting Aotea Great Barrier Island’s natural tranquillity is an important consideration for residents and iwi.³

The *New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy*⁴ places high priority on achieving harmony between mana whenua, community, and wellbeing. Aotea Great Barrier Island has an opportunity to put this into practice, setting a new standard for conservation and destination management in Aotearoa New Zealand, and establishing a pilot destination management solution that others can aspire to.

In simple terms, tourism needs to give more than it takes, and the risk of tourism overwhelming Aotea Great Barrier Island needs to be monitored and carefully avoided. A coordinated approach to managing the island as a destination will be vital to achieving this.



Image credit: Auckland Council



Image credit: Auckland Council

² <https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/media/1828/aotea-great-barrier-localeconomic-overview-2019.pdf>

³ <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/462168/aotea-great-barrier-island-iwiopposes-plans-for-helipads>, RNZ, 24.02.2022

⁴ New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy, MBIE, 2019

1.2. A Destination Management Plan for Aotea Great Barrier Island



A localised destination management plan (LDMP) provides a roadmap for the future visitor economy. The Aotea Great Barrier Island Destination Management Plan ('the plan') outlines a shared approach to managing Aotea Great Barrier Island as a destination, setting a direction for tourism on the island.

This plan originated from the Destination Great Barrier Island Trust identifying a need for the future of the visitor sector on Aotea Great Barrier Island to be better defined, and for the island to be better protected from uncontrolled visitor numbers and negative visitor impacts. It was commissioned by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited (TAU), Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland's economic and cultural agency, as a starting point.

This plan focuses on a tourism reset and provides a unique opportunity for mana whenua, the Aotea Great Barrier Island community, DOC, local government, and tourism industry stakeholders to implement an approach to preserve what makes Aotea Great Barrier Island special for future generations.

The concept of destination management is articulated in *Destination AKL 2025*, a plan for Auckland's visitor economy launched in 2018. Destination management is broad and complex, but is primarily about planning for sustainable growth, managing environmental sustainability, and creating a positive experience for visitors and the communities they're visiting.

As is the case for most regions in Aotearoa New Zealand, the development of this plan follows direction from central

government, sponsored by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). The development of a LDMP for Aotea Great Barrier Island⁵ is however something of an exception, with similar plans elsewhere in Aotearoa New Zealand being largely regionally focused.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi has assisted in guiding this plan, which relies on a partnership approach with iwi, hapū, and whanau Māori and the Aotea Great Barrier Island community. It reflects the principles of kāwanatanga (governance), and tino rangatiratanga/mana motuhake (self-determination, sovereignty), as expressed in articles one and two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. These principles require genuine consultation and partnership with Māori through shared decision making and co-governance structures.

This plan is a 'living' document which will continually be referred to, edited and updated by key stakeholders with an interest in the Visitor Economy of the island. It brings together the elements of a growing visitor economy, building on the overarching *Destination AKL 2025* strategy and its guiding principles of kotahitanga (collaboration), kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and manaakitanga (hospitality or warm welcome).

The plan will adapt to the environment in which it operates and will be amended as progress is made. It will clearly define a long-term vision for Aotea Great Barrier Island as a destination and recommend actions to achieve this vision. This plan will be revisited regularly to ensure it is progressing as intended, and that the identified outcomes remain relevant and achievable.

⁵ As at January 2023, localised Destination Management Plans are also in development for Waiheke Island and Matakana Coast

1.2. Strategic Framework

The following strategic framework, which has guided the development of this plan, should be used to plan tourism development and marketing in Aotea Great Barrier Island going forward.

The Vision

“The Aotea Great Barrier Island visitor sector will partner with Ngāti Rehua - Ngātiwai ki Aotea as mana whenua, Aotea Great Barrier Island community leaders, and with those for whom Aotea Great Barrier Island is home, to manaaki manuhiri who share the resolve to enhance the spiritual, cultural, social, environmental and economic wellbeing of Aotea Great Barrier Island in a way that is exemplary, and by doing so restore the mana of taonga species, and ensure the mauri of ecosystems is thriving .”

Guiding Principles

KOTAHITANGA
Collaboration

KAITIAKITANGA
Guardianship

MANAAKITANGA
A warm welcome

Strategic Imperatives

An Insightful Place	A Place of Partnership and Planning	A Sustainable and Resilient Place	A Connected Place	A Unique Place	A Captivating Place
A place that makes evidence-based decisions, encouraging business support and improved viability while maintaining identity and showcasing community resilience.	A place where mana whenua has opportunities to input and prosper with mechanisms in place to ensure that community social license for the visitor economy is being monitored.	A place that advocates for the well-being of the terrestrial, land, and marine environments with an aim of transitioning to a low-emissions visitor economy.	A place where principles of economic, social and environmental sustainability are not compromised by planning that is being undertaken to better connect the destination.	A place where visitors are enticed to stay longer and embrace the communities for what makes them special.	A place that enriches the visitor experience in a way that gives back at least as much to a destination's people and places as it takes.

1.3. Recommendations

A variety of recommendations have been identified through the creation of this plan. These recommendations, which are outlined in full in *Part 3: Where Do We Want To Be*, are grouped under the plan's strategic imperatives. The recommendations have been designed to:

- Mitigate or overcome the barriers to sustainable growth
- Assist in activating the destination vision outlined in this plan
- Align with the broader destination management work already completed, particularly the *Destination AKL 2025* strategy and the *New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy*
- Provide the necessary building blocks to develop a sustainable visitor economy
- Allow the visitor economy to develop in the way the Aotea Great Barrier Island community wants, with an emphasis on lifting productivity, restoring and championing the natural environment, cultural and historical heritage, and improving the communities' lives as their region thrives because of the visitor economy.

An Insightful Place

A place that makes evidence-based decisions, encouraging business support and improved viability while maintaining identity and showcasing community resilience.

- Tourism data collection - start collecting and distributing tourism-related data
- Visitor journey mapping - establish profiles of visitor types to the island
- Working group for worker accommodation - establish a working group focused on accommodating seasonal workers
- Industry workshops (social media and digital literacy upskilling) - hold workshops to develop social media and digital capability
- Host community awareness campaign - highlighting the importance of the visitor economy to Aotea Great Barrier Island
- Destination events strategy, toolkit and calendar - streamlining the way for event organisers and visitors.

A Place of Partnership and Planning

A place where mana whenua has opportunities to input and prosper with mechanisms in place to ensure that community social license for the visitor economy is monitored.

- Local destination management office (LDMO) monitoring and support - LDMO to monitor and support on risk areas of direct concern to the visitor sector
- Support targets for greenhouse gas/carbon emissions
- Plan for future climate change impacts - to protect assets vulnerable to sea level rise/major weather events including historical and heritage assets, key infrastructure etc.
- Mainland/island connection - support future-proofing the mainland/island connection (ferry/air)
- Roding infrastructure requirements - support agreement on forward-planning roding infrastructure requirements
- Wharf/aviation infrastructure - determine wharf/aviation infrastructure is future proofed
- Zero carbon substitutes - support the rollout of zero carbon substitutes for fossil fuel consumption
- Waste minimisation promotion - promote the need for waste minimisation
- Reducing carbon and greenhouse gas emissions - visitor sector reducing carbon and greenhouse gas emissions
- Seasonal worker infrastructure - work with partners to address housing infrastructure constraints.

A Sustainable and Resilient Place

A place that advocates for the wellbeing of the terrestrial, land, and marine environments with an aim of transitioning to a low-emissions visitor economy.

- Work with DOC on visitor assets - ensure assets are well maintained
- Partnership with DOC - design a partnership model unifying the visitor sector, mana whenua, community, and Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board
- Feasibility of noise level restrictions - investigate the potential of a noise level of 32db
- Advocate for Resource Management Act (RMA) amendment - seek amendment to enable local authorities to control noise from airborne activities
- Demand management tools - develop a suite of demand management tools
- Environmental regeneration program - support existing regeneration projects on land such as Tu Mai Taonga and the development of marine biodiversity restoration initiatives - r?hui, Ahu Moanam approach, marine reserves or programmes such as "Sea Change - Revitalising the Gulf "
- Visitors as stewards/kaitiaki of Aotea Great Barrier Island - engage manuhiri as stewards/kaitiaki
- Conservation centre at Glenfern - support the establishment of a conservation centre at Glenfern Sanctuary
- Predator Free Aotea Great Barrier Island - progress towards predator free status on Aotea Great Barrier Island
- Aotea Great Barrier Island conservation story - articulate the Aotea Great Barrier Island conservation story, highlighting rare and endangered flora/fauna, initiatives underway.
- Develop voluntourism programs - offering visitors a chance to undertake flora/fauna rehabilitation on the conservation estate.

A Connected Place

A place where principles of economic, social and environmental sustainability are not compromised by planning that is being undertaken to better connect the destination.

- Satisfaction with mainland/island connection (air/ferry) - ensuring that connections are resilient, reliable and cost-effective for not only the community and visitors but also freight.
- Improved linkages to the north of the island for visitors and community - investigate the reinstatement of the permanent Tryphena/Port Fitzroy sea connection, and viability of a link between Auckland and Port Fitzroy.

A Unique Place

A place where visitors are enticed to stay longer and embrace the communities for what makes them special.

- Aotea Great Barrier Island brand proposition - develop a clear destination brand that promotes Aotea Great Barrier Island as an off-the-grid, eco-destination
- Position Aotea Great Barrier Island as an exemplar destination for renewables - work with renewable energy providers to pilot products
- Improve AGBI's food resiliency and reduce food miles by: supporting local growers e.g. Okiwi Passion and community initiatives that encourage residents and groups to grow produce on the island - existing initiatives include 'Grow Food Aotea' community gardens at Medlands, Orama and kawa marae.
- Develop and pilot a farm/ocean to table initiative focussing on locally grown/caught sourced food.
- Full-service guided tours - investigate tour guiding options, prioritise iwi-led initiatives.

A Captivating Place

A place that enriches the visitor experience in a way that gives back at least as much to a destination's people and places as it takes.

- Kayaking Tours - investigate guided kayaking tours where visitors can learn about Aotea Great Barrier from the water including significant areas of interest
- Bach letting - encourage bach owners to work together to promote sustainable principles and values to guests, "need to walk the talk"
- Glamping packages - investigate the development of glamping options on the island on pre-existing sites and/or identify new sites
- Upgrade camping grounds - opportunity may exist for a 'local/iwi start-up', in partnership with DOC to upgrade camping grounds
- Development of further guided walks on the Aotea Track (and other tracks) - work with DOC to encourage more concessionaires for local operator to provide guided walking experiences, in particular assistance with iwi to be operator telling the stories through guiding
- Boat charters - investigate offering more guided boat tours departing Aotea Great Barrier for sightseeing. Include investigation of iwi operator interest to tell the stories and significance of the Hauraki Gulf
- Determine a location and local interest in developing a boutique ecolodge that supports a higher yielding visitors wishing to stay longer and have an off-the-grid experience either a greenfield or expansion of existing commercial accommodation.

1.4. Priority Recommendations

A number of recommendations have been identified as being high priority. These are outlined in brief below, and in more full detail in *Part 3: Where Do We Want To Be*.

	Establishing a Local Destination Management Office	Brand Proposition	Guided Tours
Rationale	It is proposed that the implementation of this plan will be overseen by a co-funded, partnership-based LDMO.	There is a need to develop a clear destination brand that promotes Aotea Great Barrier Island as an off-the-grid, eco-responsible destination.	Developing a range of guided tour experiences that allow visitors to connect with and experience Aotea Great Barrier Island's natural environment and value proposition.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a LDMO that partners with Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea, DOC, local board, TAU with governance made up of local stakeholders and government agencies to better align the tourism industry with environmental groups and broader community groups Develop and implement a formal survey to capture monitor and respond to the community inputs on what the role of the DMO is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an eco-destination brand for AGBI Ensure the operators and community are aligned with this brand offering Engage a design agency to create the narrative for the brand position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine local community interest in expanding the offer of further professional guided tours If no local interest, source interest off the island

	Focus on Regeneration and Sustainability	Agriculture and Horticulture	Infrastructure
Rationale	Continuing to develop, support and promote experiences that have a positive impact on the island and its community, with a particular emphasis on regenerative tourism and sustainability - for example, supporting regeneration initiatives such as rahui, protected areas and marine reserves to assist in restoring the marine biodiversity of Aotea Great Barrier Island.	Leveraging Aotea Great Barrier Island's climatic strengths and developing agriculture and horticulture will support the community and the needs of visitors.	Investing in key infrastructure across Aotea Great Barrier Island will also meet the needs of residents and visitors alike.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look to establish AGBI as a pilot study for sustainable and regenerative tourism for NZ Develop a kete of demand management tools Market AGBI to a like - minded caring target market Provide training/workshops for tourism operators on how to calculate their carbon footprint and decarbonise their visitor experience Educate manuhiri on AGBI expectations re. pest/disease risk re. environmental regeneration so they can be party to kaitiaki initiatives. Have manuhiri understand the need to leave a light footprint when they visit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess options for home/grown sourced food (fish, shellfish, meat, vegetables, fruit) Support new initiatives to start a local weekly market Support local producer viability/sustainability Introduce training program to encourage local produce grower and processors Food tourism small scale events to promote island food production and growing production courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and upgrade airstrip Maintain and upgrade jetties and wharves as and where required Address potable water supply and sustainability Improve waste management facilities and capacity Ensure higher quality septic waste systems are introduced Develop a roading upgrade plan and ensure maintenance of roading network

1.5. Next Steps

It is important to recognise that there are many stakeholders who need to collectively take ownership of this LDMP if it is to succeed, especially as the visitor economy is the dominant economic sector for the island. Its success has implications across many government agencies and other stakeholder groups (including environmental societies and trusts, mana whenua, the community at large and tourism industry operators).

To achieve this, it is proposed that the implementation of this plan will be overseen by a co-funded, partnership-based LDMO. This will enable local government, mana whenua, DOC, and the Aotea Great Barrier Island community to partner as stewards and kaitiaki of the

spiritual, cultural, social, environmental and the economic well-being of Aotea Great Barrier Island, and support tangata whenua and local communities to participate in the tourism decision-making and planning processes.

Funding options for the LDMO will need to be investigated from a variety of sources, noting that TAU has already advised it is not resourced to implement local board destination management plans. If funding options can be shared amongst a number of stakeholders, the net contribution required from each may be relatively low.



Image credit: Auckland Council

Part 2: Where Are We Now?

2.1. What is a Destination Management Plan?

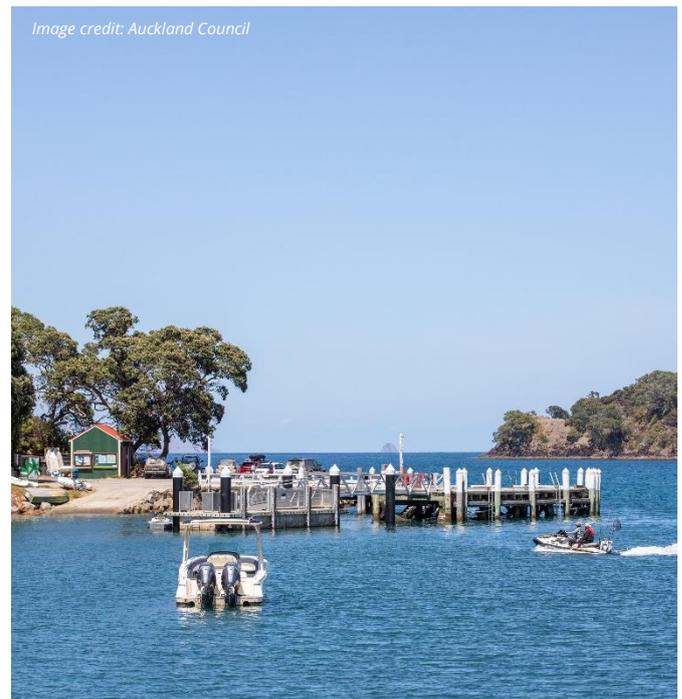
Adopting a destination management approach can help communities within destinations determine the type of tourism/visitor they'd like to have and the benefits they'd like to receive and take an active role in managing these. Unlike traditional visitor strategies which tend to focus on marketing, destination management focuses on product development, investment attraction, planning requirements, industry development, visitor management, infrastructure development as well as destination marketing.

As a result, destination management cannot work in isolation and requires a wide range of stakeholder groups and delivery partners, such as government agencies (local and central), communities and business groups. Importantly in Auckland's case, a successful destination management approach requires a true partnership approach with the appropriate 19 mana whenua authorities of Tāmaki Makaurau.

To enable Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland to reach its potential as a destination, the efforts of all interested parties must be channelled in the right direction. Unlike destination marketing, destination management is beyond the scope of the visitor industry alone.

A DMP brings together different stakeholders to achieve the common goal of developing a well-managed, sustainable visitor destination. It is an ongoing process that requires the visitor economy operating in the destinations to plan for the future and considers the social, economic, cultural and environmental risks and opportunities of their presence.

While DMPs elsewhere in Aotearoa New Zealand are largely regionally focused, LDMPs – including this plan for Aotea Great Barrier Island – are being implemented within Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland in areas where visitor volumes have the potential to negatively impact on the natural environment and the local community.



2.2. Preparing This Destination Management Plan

2.2.1. Background

The *Aotea Great Barrier Island Destination Management Plan* originated from the Destination Great Barrier Island Trust identifying a need for the future of the visitor sector on Aotea Great Barrier Island to be better defined, and for the island to be better protected from uncontrolled visitor numbers and negative visitor impacts.

Destination Great Barrier Island Trust is the entity charged with implementing the *Visitor Strategy, Aotea Great Barrier Island*,

2018 – 2023. This plan recommended a partnership approach with Destination Great Barrier Island supported by resourcing to allow the organisation to expand its activities and create an Aotea Great Barrier Island community tourism reference group⁶.

Although some resourcing was made available, there remained a reliance on the goodwill of staff to work extended hours for poor reward. Despite Destination Great Barrier Island Trust being predominantly representative of the Aotea Great Barrier Island visitor sector, and at best marginally funded, the energy of its people has ensured continued high productivity and high-quality outputs. The expanded demands of destination management, however, require a more substantial sustainable and viable implementation agency.

Destination Great Barrier Island recognised the risk that unmanaged tourism growth represented to Aotea Great Barrier Island and successfully sought TAU support for the development of a LDMP.

This plan brings together the elements of a growing visitor economy, building on the overarching *Destination AKL 2025* strategy and its guiding principles of kotahitanga (collaboration), kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and manaakitanga (hospitality or warm welcome). A range of stakeholders have worked collaboratively on this process to implement a robust plan which takes a holistic approach towards the visitor economy.

Every endeavour has been made to ensure the conclusions in this plan are built from an evidence-base. This plan sets a platform and direction for tourism on Aotea Great Barrier Island. It is assumed that the implementation of the plan will involve ongoing monitoring and strategic and operational adjustments, if visitor flows and impacts are to be balanced. This will require an evidence-based monitoring system to monitor progress of visitor growth and any associated impacts.

2.2.2. Te Tiriti O Waitangi/The Treaty Of Waitangi

Development of this framework, works towards Te Tiriti o Waitangi guiding this plan, which relies on partnership with iwi, hapū, and whanau Māori and the Aotea Great Barrier Island community. It reflects the principles of kāwanatanga (governance), and tino rangatiratanga/mana motuhake (self-determination, sovereignty), as expressed in articles one and two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

These principles require genuine consultation and partnership with Māori through shared decision making and co-governance structures. These principles include:

- Active protection, equity and partnership: Upholding the principle of active protection of Māori rights to exercise rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga. Active protection includes an undertaking to focus specific attention on addressing any inequities experienced by Māori. To achieve this requires a close working partnership with iwi, hapū, and whānau Māori to ensure sufficient understanding of Māori perspectives.
- Participation: Ensuring Māori are able to participate within an enabling environment in decision-making processes will be the basis for achieving equitable outcomes that align with Māori and iwi aspirations for intergenerational well-being.

Important Note:

High levels of care and consideration have been taken in the development of this plan and in engaging mana whenua and Māori communities. Timings that best align to iwi priorities will guide this process therefore engagement will vary, led by iwi priorities.

2.2.3. Methodology

This plan was commissioned by TAU, which has initiated the development of destination management plans for several regions within Auckland. Outcomes of the plan include:

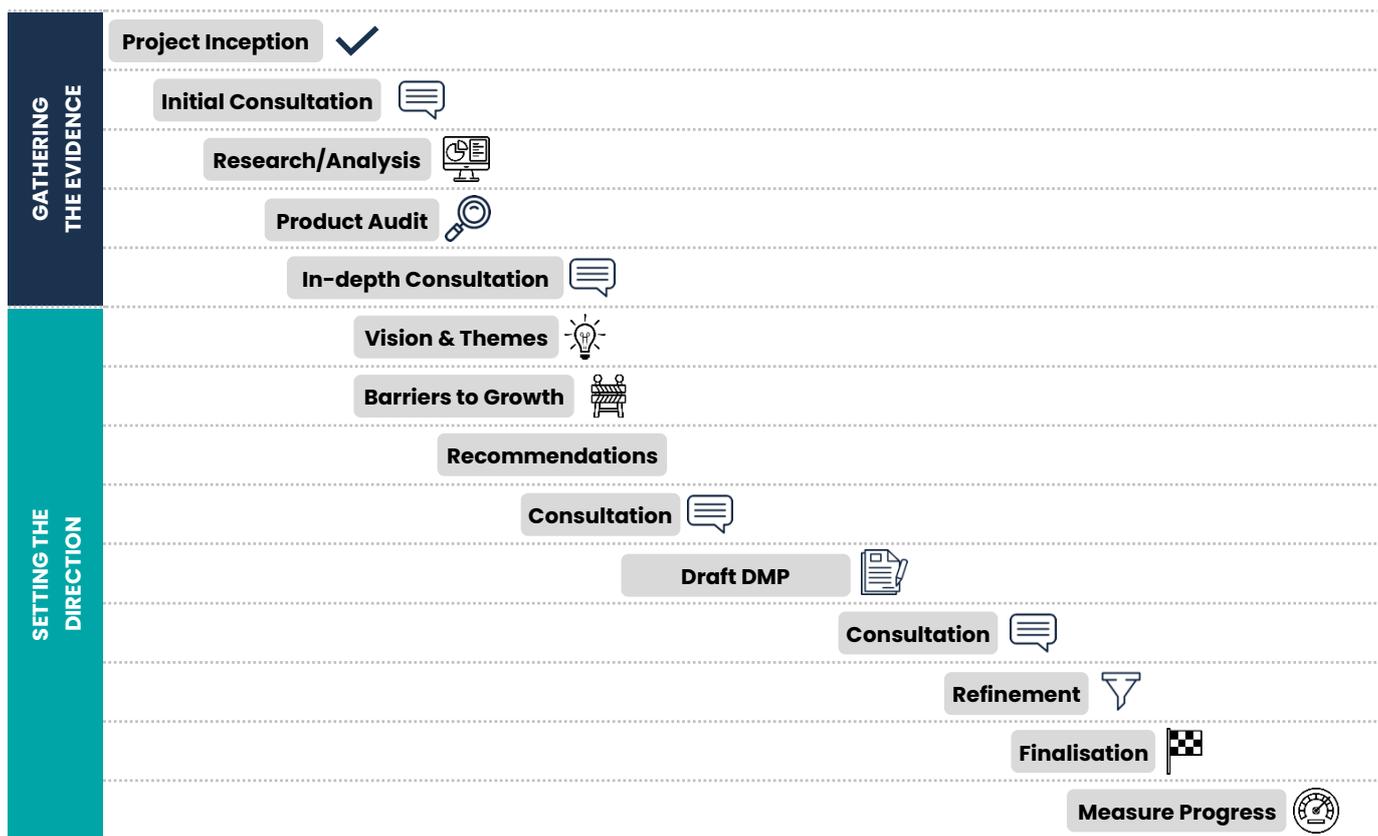
- A simple and focused vision, suggested goals to be achieved in the process of delivering on that vision and clear priorities with associated strategies that indicate how Aotea Great Barrier Island will get there.
- Focusing on the areas that will make the biggest difference for Aotea Great Barrier Island, acknowledging that the island needs to be specific about how it can best move forward from where it is now to where it wants to be.

The utilisation of good baseline data is required to inform projects and ensure that, as far as possible, decision-making is evidence-based.

⁶ Aotea / Great Barrier Island Visitor Strategy 2018-2013, Appendix 2 - Implementation Plan, p.1

This plan has been informed by extensive consultation (refer Figure 1 for the process followed).

Figure 1: The process followed



2.2.4. Consultation

Table 1 provides a summary of those consulted. Many stakeholders were consulted on more than one occasion as the plan evolved.

A major survey of the community was undertaken, attracting responses from almost a third of residents (the findings of this survey are summarised in Section 2.4.1). The LDMP project team was also in regular contact with stakeholders to discuss findings and options. Like all robust strategies and plans, there was often a divergence of opinions. Although every effort was made to accommodate these views, we acknowledge that this has not always been possible, though a predominant view has been applied where possible and appropriate.

While TAU commissioned localised DMPs, including this plan for Aotea Great Barrier Island, all stakeholders within regions where LDMPs are being implemented need to work closely together to achieve the desired outcomes of their respective plans. Localised DMPs will need to be consistent with local board plans in areas where DMPs are being implemented.

TAU is not funded or mandated to deliver on the outcomes outlined in each plan. Funding options and resourcing from a variety of sources will need to be investigated, noting that TAU is not resourced to implement DMPs. TAU, respective regional tourism organisations in each region and other stakeholders will continue to meet regularly to oversee the implementation of each localised

DMP, including this plan. The actions are non-exhaustive and will be regularly revisited over time.

2.2.4.1. Emergent Themes

A number of emerging themes were identified during consultation on this plan:

- Requisite organisational attributes for effective implementation
- Structured and funded to succeed (implementation, funding and governance)
- Strike the right balance – a values-based approach
- Integrated and connected
- Agile and responsive
- Attract the best talent with the right skills
- Community connectedness and evidence informs direction
- Guardians of the Aotea Great Barrier Island identity
- Supporting visitor development that fits the island
- Development imperatives
- Evidence-based decision making
- Value and maintain social license
- Accord priority to environmental regeneration (tourism gives more than it takes)
- Explore and pursue the implementation of a visitor levy
- Monitor and manager destination risk
- Enrich the visitor experience with appropriate development (the right scale and design)

Table 1: Who was consulted?

Sector	Entity
Informing and Guiding the Destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea ▪ Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board ▪ Tātaki Auckland Unlimited ▪ Destination Aotea Great Barrier Island
Broader Stakeholder & Community Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Motairehe Marae ▪ Kawa Marae ▪ Glenfern Trust/Sanctuary ▪ Pa Beach Café ▪ Aotea Brewing ▪ Aotea Ora Trust ▪ Aotea Car Rental ▪ Aotea Great Barrier Island Environmental Trust ▪ Barrier Air ▪ Currach Irish Pub ▪ Envirokiwi ▪ Fly My Sky (now in liquidation) ▪ Fullers Group ▪ Good Heavens ▪ Hooked on Barrier ▪ Island Gin ▪ Local residents via Community Survey & workshops ▪ Okiwi Passion ▪ Sea Link ▪ Tū Mai Taonga ▪ Windy Hill Sanctuary ▪ XSPOT ▪ LegaSea ▪ Hauraki Gulf Forum ▪ University of Auckland – Marine Sciences
Government Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment ▪ Auckland Council ▪ Parks & Places Specialist (Auckland Council) ▪ Park Services Parks, Sports, and Recreation Community Services ▪ Auckland Transport ▪ Department of Conservation ▪ NZ Leadership Institute ▪ Tourism New Zealand ▪ Regional Tourism Organisations NZ (RTNZ) ▪ VIN NZ (i-SITE network)

2.4. What We Were Told

Image credit: Auckland Council



2.4.1. Survey Findings

To provide the Aotea Great Barrier Island community with the opportunity to input into this plan's development, a survey was distributed. The survey, titled *What would you like the future of tourism to look like on Aotea Great Barrier Island?*, received more than 300 responses, which represents nearly one third of the island's residents. Retirees comprised the largest segment of responders by occupation (22 percent of responses), followed by those in the tourism and hospitality sector (19 per cent).

Survey findings include:

- Nearly 60 per cent of respondents thought Aotea Great Barrier Island has the right number of visitors, while 22 per cent thought it has too many.
- Respondents wanted to see environmental preservation and social development with greater collaboration guiding sustainable tourism development.
- The major challenges preventing sustainable tourism were noted as high access costs, lack of workers, the cost of starting a business, lack of available land, lack of community support and lack of sites zoned for development.
- The major tourism experience gaps noted were variety and quality of food and beverage, accommodation supply and quality, cultural tourism experiences, and indoor/all-weather experiences.
- Major infrastructure gaps were noted as public transport services, a faster and more regular ferry service, and car parking facilities at destinations.
- 46 per cent of respondents were either strongly in favour of or in favour of a visitor arrival levy, indicating the levy should be invested in the environment, followed by affordable housing.

Further details on the survey are included in Appendix 5.1.

2.5. Aotea Great Barrier Island Situation Analysis

2.5.1. Background

The remoteness and relative absence of people on Aotea Great Barrier Island have created a haven for biodiversity, a place of natural quiet and 'dark skies' that presents as an appealing lifestyle and visitor destination.

The Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board Plan 2020⁷ refers to achieving a 'resilient island' ('He aha te mea nui o te motu o Aotea? He moana, he whenua, he rangi, he tāngata. What is the essence of Great Barrier Island? It is the sea, it is the land, it is the sky and it is the people). This outcome is entirely consistent with the need to balance the visitor value of public conservation land and the Aotea Conservation Park, and the urgent need to regenerate terrestrial and marine biodiversity, with economic sustainability.

References to 'social licence' and 'the benefits of tourism need to benefit the community' in the *New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy*⁸ coincide with feedback from Aotea Great Barrier Island visitor sector businesses and the community that they need to have more say and influence over the way Aotea Great Barrier Island is developed and promoted as a visitor destination, and that the island's identity needs to remain under the 'ownership' and control of the island.

Operating a tourism service on the island brings challenges. Suitable accommodation for seasonal workers is in short supply which means labour is in short supply, to the extent that two businesses closed on agreed days so that staff could be shared. High seasonal visitor flows make year-round viability difficult. One suggestion from the community was that 'business incubation' and startup support should be provided to promising ventures.

2.5.2. Mana Whenua

Established in 1985, Ngāti Rehua – Ngātiwai ki Aotea Trust is the mandated iwi authority and decision-making body for Ngāti Rehua and Ngātiwai ki Aotea. The Trust engages in various activities and initiatives to support the cultural, social, economic, and environmental aspirations of the iwi and its members. The Trust's establishment demonstrates the recognition and acknowledgement of Ngāti Rehua's unique identity and history as the tangata whenua of Aotea.

The History of Ngāti Rehua on Aotea begins with Toi te huatahi who arrived on the island of Aotea in the 13th century on his waka Paepae ki Rarotonga, bringing with him the tikanga of Hawaiki. His

name is forever encapsulated within the islands of Te Moananui o Toi (The Ocean of Toi) and Ngāti Rehua are his direct descendants.

Toi's influence can be found in the name of Te Hauturu o Toi (the Winds of Toi) which Captain James Cook renamed to Little Barrier Island and gave the name of Great Barrier Island to Aotea.⁹ Ngā poitu o te Kupenga o Toi¹⁰ are described in Ngāti Rehua kōrero, as the floats of the fishing net of Toi, these are the many islands and rocky outcrops located in Te Moananui o Toi. Ngā Taratara o Toi are the pinnacles situated in the northern end of Aotea, known locally as 'The Needles'. This is where the two moana, Te Moananui o Toi and Te Moananui a Kiwa, join.

The naming of the main island as Aotea is significant because it relates to the visit of the Aotea waka in the fourteenth century. Turi, the captain of the Aotea waka, named the Island and his name remains at the southern end of the island at Schooner Bay with Turi Point, Ngāti Rehua are his direct descendants.

Rangitawhiri (Tryphena) holds a significance as the place where Kupe, a renowned Polynesian explorer, was welcomed by the descendants of Toi (Ngā tini o Toi). Kupe then travelled north to Okupe (Te o a Kupe), where he re-lashed and reprovisioned his waka.

The Takitimu waka stopped at Aotea on its long journey from Hawaiki, the Tohunga Ruawharo constructed an altar, performed a karakia, and laid down the mauri for the whenua and moana. This act symbolised the spiritual connection and protection of the surrounding environment and is still visible at Oruawharo (Medlands) to this day. Ngāti Rehua are direct descendants of Tamatea the captain of the Takitimu Waka.

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Around 1350, the Tainui waka landed in the North of Aotea, when they came into the bay the crew on board squinted because of the brightness of the white rock, which led to Hoturoa Capatain of the waka naming of the place as Motairehe. The crew of the Tainui waka built an altar and laid down the mauri brought from Hawaiki leaving an anchor stone which remains visible to this day at Motairehe.

The ancestor Rehua was born in Mahurangi in the seventeenth century. Rehua's father, Mataahu, was the younger brother of Maki

⁷<https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/about-auckland-council/how-auckland-council-works/local-boards/all-local-boards/great-barrier-local-board/Documents/aotea-great-barrier-local-board-plan-2020-english.pdf>

⁸ New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy, MBIE, 2019

⁹ McMath, states, "[i]n the late 1769 Captain Cook visited Whitianga and other Marutuahu kainga. He did not visit Aotea or Hauturu but had a number of indirect influences on Ngāti Rehua. He introduced the names of 'Little Barrier' and 'Great Barrier' which have almost

superseded the traditional names of Aotea and Hauturu." Evidence of Witi McMath, Investigation of Title to the Offshore Islands, Islets and Rocks off the Coastline of Aotea (Great Barrier Island), September 1995, p. 28.

¹⁰ Evidence of Whetu McGregor, Investigation of Title to the Offshore Islands, Islets and Rocks off the Coastline of Aotea (Great Barrier Island), September 1995. Burney, WAI 1040 A036 p. 43. Beazley WAI 678, p. 103.

(Chief of Te Kawerau a Maki) and was an integral part of the conquest of West Auckland, Northshore, Mahurangi, and Hauturu. Rehua was named in honour of the Atua (Māori God) of the Stars, who was the oldest son of Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatūānuku (Earth Mother) along with his Kawerau ancestry is a direct descendant of Toi te huatahi, Hoturoa (captain Tainui waka), and Turi (captain of the Aotea waka).

The conquest of Aotea by Ngāti Rehua begins with the arrival of Te Whaiti, a Ngāti Manaia rangatira and his daughter Te Koro, who came to Aotea. Te Koro was to marry a man of Ngāti te Hauwhenua, who at that time was living on the northern lands of Aotea. After the union of his daughter, Te Whaiti left and returned home to Mimiwhangata. Within the year, he received word that the family of Te Koro's husband had killed her. Te Whaiti sought utu, and asked Rehua and Te Kawerau for help as his first wife Hinurere was of Ngāti Manaia descent. Aspiring to expand their influence and territory, it was the natural progression for Te Kawerau to consider conquering Aotea and they quickly agreed to lead the conquest.

Rehua, and his son Te Rangituangahuru lead the conquest alone in the initial battles against the people of Ngāti Te Hauwhenua who lived in the North of Aotea, the Ngāti Manaia War Party led by Te Whaiti and his son Te Awe came late due to bad weather but arrived for the final battle which occurred at Te Rangī i Whakaea to Matenga o Te Koro (Wreck Bay). This name is still remembered on the island today, describing the utu taken by Te Kawerau and Ngāti Manaia. It translates to 'the day that the death of Te Koro was avenged'. This battle also led to the customary rights of Ngāti Te Hauwhenua on Aotea being extinguished.

After this significant event, two crucial peace-making marriages were made between the two remaining hapū on the island. A meeting was called on motu Kaikoura at the Motukara¹¹ pā, by the chief Taipikingarangi of Ngāti Te Wharau and, Mataa of Ngāti Taimanawaiti. In the pursuit of keeping the peace, Mataa, gifted his sister, Waipahihi to Rehua. Secondly, Taipikingarangi offered his daughter Rangiarua to Te Rangituangahuru, these 2 marriages connected the leaders of Ngāti Rehua to the people of Toi that had the ahi kaa roa on Aotea.

For a time, Rehua and his second wife, Waipahihi, lived peacefully on an island just off the east coast of Aotea. Mataa, who was both aggrieved after the previous conflicts and frightened that Rehua would strike again, decided to act first.¹² While on the island, Waipahihi saw an omen during a storm, in the form of a lightning strike at the cliff face on the paramount mountain of Aotea. She understood it to be a bad omen, but her husband told her 'it was nothing'.¹³ However, her foresight was correct, and Mataa proceeded to attack. This attack resulted in Rehua being burnt alive in his house while he was sleeping.

Three significant names commemorate the death of Rehua. Firstly, the mountain on which Waipahihi was shown the omen carries the name Hirakimatā. Second, the island where Rehua was burnt alive is called Rakitū. Finally, Haratonga, is named after the 'hara' Te Rangituangahuru felt at the death of his father. Because Rehua was a significant figure amongst the Te Kawerau people, his death was viewed as a kōhuru (murder). The main mountain on Aotea, the island where he lived, and Haratonga are now forever connected to his death.

After the death of Rehua, his son Te Rangituangahuru who was living at Mahurangi at the time wanted vengeance and so began the second phase of the raupatu. Te Rangituangahuru led a war party of Te Kawerau from Mahurangi supported by Te Awe's Warparty from Ngāti Manaia to attack Ngāti Taimanawaiti and Ngāti Te Wharau with brutal force. This was a two-prong assault down the east and west coast of Aotea.

Many resulting battles were fought along both coastlines until the most significant battle at Te Wharangi (Sandy Bay) down the southwest coast of Aotea. These inter-tribal pakanga are known as Te Kahukura o Te Rangituangahuru or 'the red cloak of Te Rangituangahuru'. After this battle, all rights of the people of Toi te huatahi that were held by Ngāti Taimanawaiti and Ngāti Te Wharau were transferred to the people of Ngāti Rehua who became the sole mana whenua and Iwi of the Island consisting of 2 Hapū "Te Uri o Te Rangituangahuru" and "Te Uri o Te Ikamimirua". Te Awe chose to join with Te Rangituangahuru's hapū and became one people under the mana of Ngāti Rehua. This status has remained unchanged to this day.

In the eighteenth century Ngātiwai visited Aotea led by the rangatira, Ranginui. Ngāti Rehua rangatira, Te Aonui, gifted a tuku whenua to Ranginui and through subsequent marriages, deep relationships, and ancestral connections evolved over time. Furthermore, Ngātiwai ki Aotea is identified as a hapū of Ngātiwai, emphasising the whakapapa connections between Ngāti Rehua and Ngātiwai, through inter-marriages.

In March 1838, without the knowledge and permission of Ngāti Rehua, Marutūahu chief Te Horeta Te Taniwha sold Aotea to his American son-in-law William Webster, however, due to colonial legislation which ignored te Tiriti and dubious dealings by Crown representatives and outside iwi, Ngāti Rehua lost a significant portion of their land. The granting of Webster's claim was unlawful, allotting three separate claims. Webster received 8,080 acres, Nagle 8,070, and Abercrombie 8,119, a total sum of 24,269.¹⁴

Ngāti Rehua continue to live in various locations and small islands around Aotea. including two maraes at Kawa (Te Rangituangahuru) and Motairehe (Te Ikamimirua) and continue to have close whanaungatanga through whakapapa to other Iwi such as Ngāti Wai, Marutūahu and Te Kawerau. To Ngāti Rehua, Aotea and its

¹¹ There were two other pā on this motu Kaikoura, their names were, Kohaituire and Pahangahou. Witi McMath, Investigation of Title to the Offshore Islands, Islets and Rocks off the Coastline of Aotea (Great Barrier Island), September 1995, p. 8.

¹² Wiremu Turipona he stated, "Rakitū belonged in former times to a man named Mata. The sister of Te Mata (Waipahihi) married Te Rehua and after their marriage Te Rehua lived at Rakitū and he built a house there. Some men went and said to Te Mata that the house was a trap to murder him. When Mata heard that Rehua intended treachery he

made up his mind to kill Rehua. Evidence of Wiremu Turipona, Rakitū Investigation, Auckland MB 2, pp. 31-2.

¹³ Ibid, p. 32.

¹⁴ AJHR, Land Claims Commission p. 5.

surrounding islands and connecting waters are a unified and living entity and the Iwi has expressed "ahi kaa roa" on Aotea from the time of Toi Te Huatahi to the present day.

2.5.3. Natural Heritage

The landscapes of Aotea Great Barrier Island are predominately volcanic which gives rise to a spectacularly rugged landscape and a large variety of coastlines. The west coast is home to steep forest-covered ranges that lead down to sheltered bays and islands drenched in pōhutukawa. This contrasts with the windswept east coast that has long white sand beaches, extensive dune systems, tidal creeks, and wetlands.

The remoteness of Aotea Great Barrier Island, coupled with its rough terrain, has kept the island largely undeveloped and free from many of the animal pests and weeds that have impacted natural environments on the mainland. This has resulted in an exceptional natural landscape, a haven for rare flora and fauna and numerous, populated with well-preserved historic sites.¹⁵

Aotea Great Barrier Island is one of the richest areas in Tamaki Makaurau Auckland for plant biodiversity, with at least 75 species of regionally and nationally threatened vascular plants found there, including the endemic prostrate kanuka (*Kunzea sinclairii*) and Great Barrier tree daisy (*Olearia allomii*).¹⁶ The island is a sanctuary for threatened fauna including thirteen species of lizard, tāiko/black petrel, titi/Cook's petrel, stronghold populations of North Island kaka and moho pererū/banded rail, and the only island population of pepeketua/Hochstetter's frog.¹⁷

Most of the island is now largely covered in regenerating indigenous forest, much of which is natural regeneration following the retirement of farming land on the island, but also partly due to the 150,000 kauri trees that were planted by the New Zealand Forestry Service in the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁸ A study conducted in 2010 indicated that kanuka and manuka forest make up 54 per cent of the land cover and more mature indigenous broadleaf forest (including totara, rimu and kahikatea) another 35 per cent.¹⁹

2.5.4. Sense of Remoteness

For many visitors the sense of wildness and natural quiet are the main motivation for visiting Aotea Great Barrier Island. The island is a significant national haven of biodiversity, aided by the relative absence of pests, with significant storytelling potential to be realised from the identification, recording, scheduling, and protection of all sites of cultural and heritage significance, all of which define a place of great value for the right people to live in and visit. The challenge is to manage a dynamic balance between growing the economic value of tourism and enhancing the natural value while sustaining mana whenua and the community of Aotea Great Barrier Island.

2.5.5. Economy

Aotea Great Barrier Island has a small local economy in which tourism-related activity is considered an important driver. Rental, hiring and real estate services (including cleaning and maintenance) is the main earner for the island's economy, contributing to 19 per cent of GDP in 2020 (see Table 2). This is followed by other services²⁰ (9 per cent) and arts and recreation services (9 per cent).

Between 2010 and 2020, the island's GDP fell by -6.4 per cent, decreasing from \$29.8m to \$27.9m. This decline is important to note given the growth experienced in other parts of the Auckland region, including the regional average of +21 per cent. The growth of sustainable tourism on Aotea Great Barrier Island presents an opportunity to reverse this decline, particularly as tourism cuts across so many economic sectors.

The island's future economic performance depends on being able to retain a sufficiently diversified economic base that has the potential to achieve high rates of productivity and export growth to enable businesses and people to prosper on the island. There are a few economic sectors that are more strongly represented on the island than they are in the broader Auckland region. This is referred to as the 'location quotient' (LQ).

In general, a LQ over 1.5 indicates a degree of specialisation or concentration in a particular sector. For Aotea Great Barrier Island, these economic sectors comprise Arts and Recreation Services (with a LQ of 5.1 in 2020), Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (4.3) and Other Services (3.7). Importantly, however, these sectors' LQs have declined between 2010 and 2020 potentially indicating a drop in their dominance or concentration on the island.

2.5.6. Employment

Figure 3 illustrates the top ten industries by employment in 2020, along with their respective contribution to the Island's GDP. It shows:

- Aotea Great Barrier's future economic performance depends on being able to retain a sufficiently diversified economic base that has the potential to achieve high rates of productivity and export growth to enable businesses and people to prosper on the island.
- As of 2020, the main employment sectors on Aotea Great Barrier Island included 'other services' (comprising 14 per cent of total employment, or 37 jobs) followed by administrative and support services (14 per cent/36 jobs) and health care and social assistance and retail trade (both comprising 9 per cent of total employment and providing 25 jobs).
- A high self-employment rate on Aotea Great Barrier Island provides an opportunity to grow economic activity but low population growth and limited connectedness is a major constraint.

¹⁵ Great Barrier Island, Armitage, 2001

¹⁶ Auckland Conservation Management Strategy 2014–2024, Department of Conservation, 2014, p.73

¹⁷ Auckland Conservation Management Strategy 2014–2024, Department of Conservation, 2014

¹⁸ Aotea Great Barrier Island Historic Context Statement, Auckland Council, p.136

¹⁹ Great Barrier Island Environmental Trust, 2010

²⁰ Personal services include personal services such as hair and beauty, death care services, religious civic, professional, and other interest group services, selected repair and maintenance activities and private households employing staff.

- Despite GDP falling between 2010 and 2020, employment opportunities available across the island have grown, increasing by 8 per cent (+19 jobs).
- With many jobs currently concentrated on administration and health care, there is an opportunity to diversify the employment base to provide not only more jobs for Aotea Great Barrier Island residents, but also, to offer jobs across a variety of

sectors that may assist in encouraging new younger residents (under 50s) to Aotea Great Barrier Island or for existing residents to take up employment opportunities where interested.

Table 2: Economic Structure & Industries Concentrated (location quotient)²¹ on Aotea Great Barrier Island²²

Economic Structure (GDP, 2020)

Sector	GDP	% of GDP Total	% Change since 2010
Accommodation and Food Services	\$0.7m	3%	+0%
Administrative and Support Services	\$1.8m	6%	+260%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	\$0.4m	1%	-50%
Arts and Recreation Services	\$2.5m	9%	-29%
Construction	\$0.4m	1%	-93%
Education and Training	\$0.9m	3%	-36%
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	\$0.0m	0%	
Financial and Insurance Services	\$0.0m	0%	-100%
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$2.0m	7%	+150%
Information Media and Telecommunications	\$0.0m	0%	
Manufacturing	\$1.2m	4%	
Mining	\$0.0m	0%	
Other Services	\$2.6m	9%	+63%
Owner-Occupied Property Operation	\$1.8m	6%	-5%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$2.0m	7%	
Public Administration and Safety	\$0.3m	1%	-81%
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	\$5.3m	19%	+26%
Retail Trade	\$2.0m	7%	+25%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	\$1.8m	6%	+50%
Unallocated	\$2.2m	8%	+0%
Wholesale Trade	\$0.0m	0%	-100%

Location Quotient (2010 & 2020)

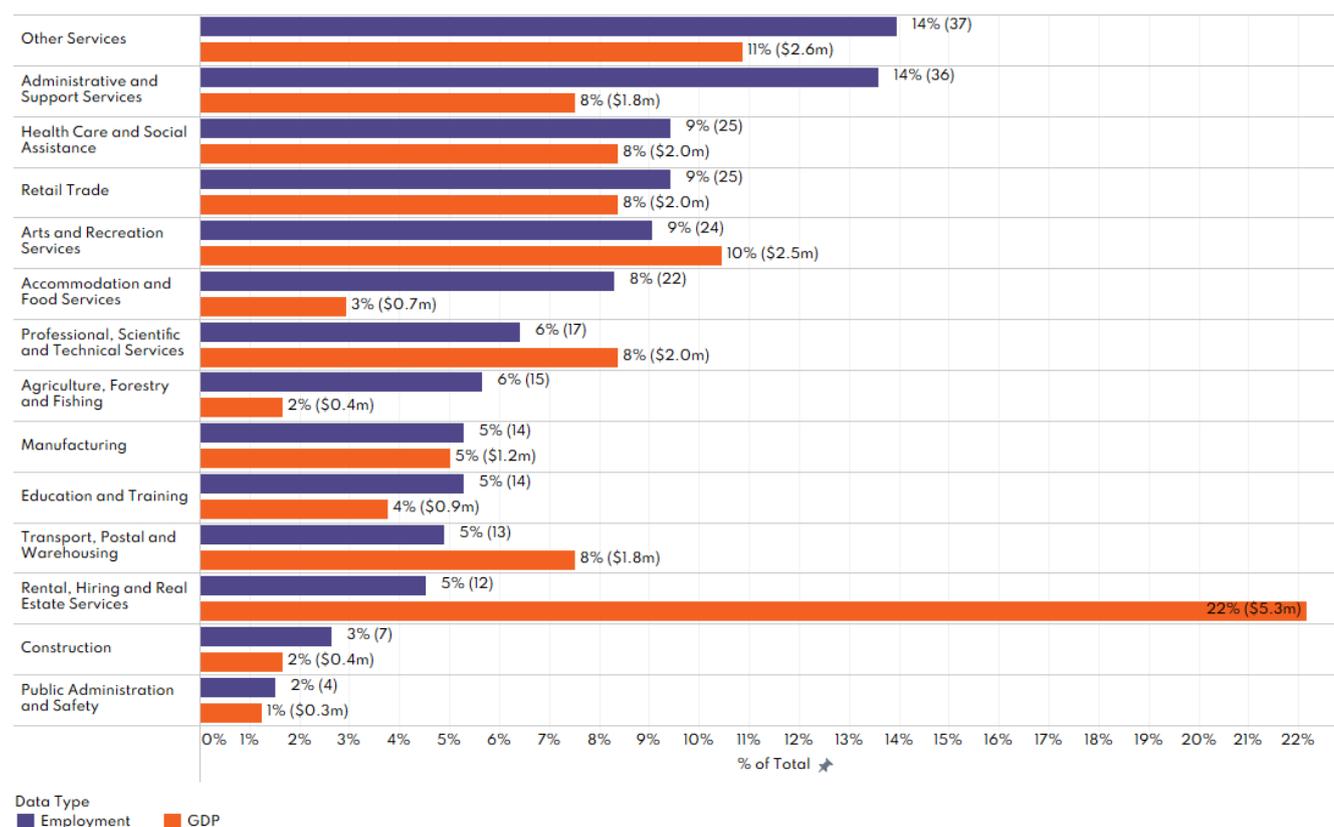
Sector	2010	2020
Accommodation and Food Services	1.8	1.1
Administrative and Support Services	0.9	2.0
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	8.3	4.3
Arts and Recreation Services	9.0	5.1
Construction	4.8	0.2
Education and Training	1.1	0.7
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	0.0	0.0
Financial and Insurance Services	0.5	0.0
Health Care and Social Assistance	0.6	1.0
Information Media and Telecommunications	0.0	0.0
Manufacturing	0.0	0.4
Mining	0.0	0.0
Other Services	2.9	3.7
Owner-Occupied Property Operation	1.2	0.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	0.0	0.5
Public Administration and Safety	2.0	0.3
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	2.1	2.0
Retail Trade	1.5	1.1
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	1.0	1.0
Unallocated	1.2	0.8
Wholesale Trade	0.4	0.0

²¹ A location quotient demonstrates economic sectors that are more strongly represented in an area than they are in the broader region as a whole (i.e., Aotea Great

Barrier Island compared with Auckland as a whole). In general, a LQ over 1.5 indicates a degree of specialisation or concentration in a particular sector.

²² Infometric

Figure 3: Top 10 Industries by Employment (and their respective contribution to GDP), 2020²³



Data Type

■ Employment ■ GDP

2.5.7. Destination SWOT Analysis – Aotea Great Barrier Island

Table 3 provides a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis for Aotea Great Barrier Island as a visitor destination. It is based on the consultation and research undertaken in the development of this plan and has helped identify barriers to growth and recommendations for Aotea Great Barrier Island.

Table 3: Aotea Great Barrier Island SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rich mana whenua stories that date back to the 13th century ▪ Rich heritage – early settler ▪ Aotea Great Barrier Island has been endowed with stand-out wilderness areas and biodiversity, with ongoing regeneration and the preservation of a unique lifestyle being the dominant community focus. ▪ Natural quiet ▪ Survey results acknowledge the contribution of tourism to the Aotea Great Barrier Island economy but are determined that tourism impacts do not interfere with spiritual, environmental, social, and cultural well-being. ▪ Remote bushwalking and tramping ▪ Perceived as an unspoilt natural environment and (almost) "off the grid" living ▪ Dark sky sanctuary status – no residential light spill ▪ Attractive backcountry areas, bays, and inlets ▪ A small group of enthusiastic tourism operators ▪ Mostly aligned local community and industry ▪ Strength of off-grid communities as part of the Island's appeal ▪ True visitor numbers are low once business workers and resident numbers are taken out of arrival data (so population to visitor ratio is likely lower than many other destinations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No public transport subsidy for accessing the island (PTOM) ▪ Incomplete mapping and scheduling of heritage sites and sites of significance ▪ History and cultural stories not told ▪ The population of 1,100 does not sustain many amenities and services ▪ Highly reliant on Auckland Council to subsidise the island ▪ The existing landfill is full, creating waste management challenges involving expensive removal charges off the island ▪ Limited and variable quality retail, food, and beverage facilities as well as limited accommodation options ▪ No sewage system and reticulated water offering challenges now (need to encourage rainwater capture) ▪ The poor condition of many camping sites ▪ Limited amount of fresh fruit and veggies grown on the island, noting the high cost of imported produce ▪ Limited commissionable tourism experiences/product ▪ One ferry service/one airline serving the island is a point of risk ▪ Limited public transport – one commercial ferry operator, one commercial airline.

²³ Informetric and Aotea/Great Barrier Local Economic Overview 2019

- Gin distillery, craft brewery, innovative products
- Motubikes

- 60% of the Island is DOC estate but limited resources for maintenance and upgrades
- Kaitoke Hot pools are not always hot and no supporting infrastructure, to support getting back to nature
- Seasonality marginalises economic benefits such as sustainable local employment etc.
- Lack of marketing and budget for promotional spend
- Limited worker accommodation
- Limited skilled and semi-skilled staff and ability to attract and retain
- An ageing population and limited replacement as lack of affordable housing
- The desire for higher-value visitors (incl yield but more importantly like-minded visitors) needs to be matched by communications strategy and visitor product.
- The island is characterised by numerous strategies and plans, but limited activation due to small population base and limited resources

Opportunities

- North of the Island has potential (e.g. Marae based visitor experiences? Glenfern Sanctuary, Motu Kaikoura and Orama)
- Reinstate a Tryphena – Port Fitzroy ferry service (freight and passengers) ... maybe ferry service AKL to Port FitzRoy once every 2 weeks?
- The North is a good location for regenerative tourism programs e.g. build of Tū Mai Taonga.
- Expand demand for the Aotea Track on DOC estate
- Support an "off the grid" brand proposition with a focus on regenerative tourism and limited numbers (yield over volume)
- Lend support to a Conservation Hub to be built at Glenfern
- Lend support to the establishment of a Visitor Hub/Museum at Claris
- Visitor levy for launches/yachts to cover environmental initiatives?
- Smaller-scale events (island triathlon, coast to coast summit run, art, and cultural festivals)
- General hospitality courses to include food preparation courses and upskilling
- Dark sky experiences as part of inclusive stay packaging
- Seasonal island boat tours with interpretation
- Small scale eco-lodge (8-12 rooms) with onsite dining
- Water taxi from Tryphena to other locations
- Local Iwi tour guiding options, possible accommodation development and boat tours etc
- Work with iwi to draw on Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge)
- Investigate seasonal concessionaire operator for Aotea Track guided walk
- Upgrade Kaitoke hot pools area
- Create marine reserves to help address sustainability issues and overfishing so develop "no-take" areas (Iwi declaring a rāhui as an interim measure)
- Support those looking to introduce glass bottom boats & snorkelling tours
- Develop island as a pest-free sanctuary
- Introduce modular-style low impact housing as worker accommodation
- Improve DOC camping grounds with camp kitchen, public toilet amenities
- Investigate means of calculating island carrying capacity (e.g., bed limit like Lord Howe Island)
- Explore the potential of a surf school, kayaking tours
- Upskill locals (if interested) to undertake guided tours etc rather than those not based on the Island
- Develop voluntourism through DOC programs
- Create visitor information app and island map to assist with self-guided walks and to support visitor distribution
- Bundle experiences and package these for promotions
- Tightly control cruise ship arrivals in the future and increase the economic return to the Island

Threats

- Constrained labour supply
- Older population and lack of younger families diminishes sustainability and replacement workers
- Reduction in access options and increasing pax costs
- Monitor and manage yacht/launch impacts (if any?)
- Risk of the human footprint impacts destroying the essence of why many visit and others choose to live on the island
- Visitation has reduced due to COVID-19 but concern that over-tourism will rekindle conflict between locals and visitors
- Lack of reinvestment into infrastructure will severely impact land and water quality
- Without a carrying capacity cap on visitors, the Island may struggle to remain environmentally sustainable
- Lack of ability to find, secure and keep staff, may result in business failure, lower service standards and tarnishing of the image
- No control of vehicle limits on the island impacts appeal and environmental quality
- The small scale of the visitor economy is appealing to some on the island, but these risks limit its economic value and potentially government support
- Incomplete recording and scheduling of culturally significant sites and historic heritage buildings and sites, and risks being lost.
- Failure to identify, record sites of significance leads to degradation and loss
- Failure to regenerate the natural environment leading to limited diving and snorkelling options (problem throughout the Hauraki Gulf)
- Unless existing environmental challenges and community-based infrastructure constraints are dealt with as a priority, community support for growing the visitor economy is likely to be unsupported.

2.6. Aotea Great Barrier Island's Tourism Offering

2.6.1. Accommodation Stocktake

Aotea Great Barrier Island has an estimated 43 accommodation properties. More than half (56 per cent) are boutique properties (B&Bs, guesthouses, cottages), followed by DOC-managed huts and campsites and holiday homes and apartments, comprising 19 per cent of stock.

The island offers an estimated 458 bookable room units²⁴. DOC huts and campsites provide the largest number of bookable units, comprising 69 per cent of all stock (including hut bunk beds and powered and unpowered sites). Spatially, most accommodation properties are clustered around Tryphena, with smaller clusters at Medlands, Whangaparapara and Port Fitzroy. There is no accommodation sited on the more northern part of the island, which is largely public conservation land. Figure 4 outlines a spatial audit of accommodation products.

There are few larger-scale accommodation properties (in terms of bookable room units). Based on the audit findings, there are no properties (other than DOC Huts) that supply more than 20 bookable room units. The largest property is Orama Oasis which supplies 18 rooms. This reflects the smaller-scale nature of tourism on the island.

2.6.2. Accommodation Sentiment

Figure 4 also summarises net promoter score (NPS) results for accommodation on Aotea Great Barrier Island. The NPS score is essentially a measurement of the extent to which a consumer will recommend the experience to someone else. It is not necessarily a reflection of product quality, but rather demonstrates consumer satisfaction with the price/value proposition offered by the product being reviewed. For more information on how NPS scores are calculated, read Appendix 2.

Aotea Great Barrier Island's accommodation stock receives a high average NPS of +63 based on a total of 925 reviews. This is a higher-than-average NPS score, particularly when compared with other destinations, and demonstrates that consumer satisfaction with accommodation on the island is generally strong and meets consumer expectations. Boutique properties received the highest NPS score, with an NPS of +69 from 682 reviews, followed by backpacker properties which received an NPS of +60 based on 94 reviews.

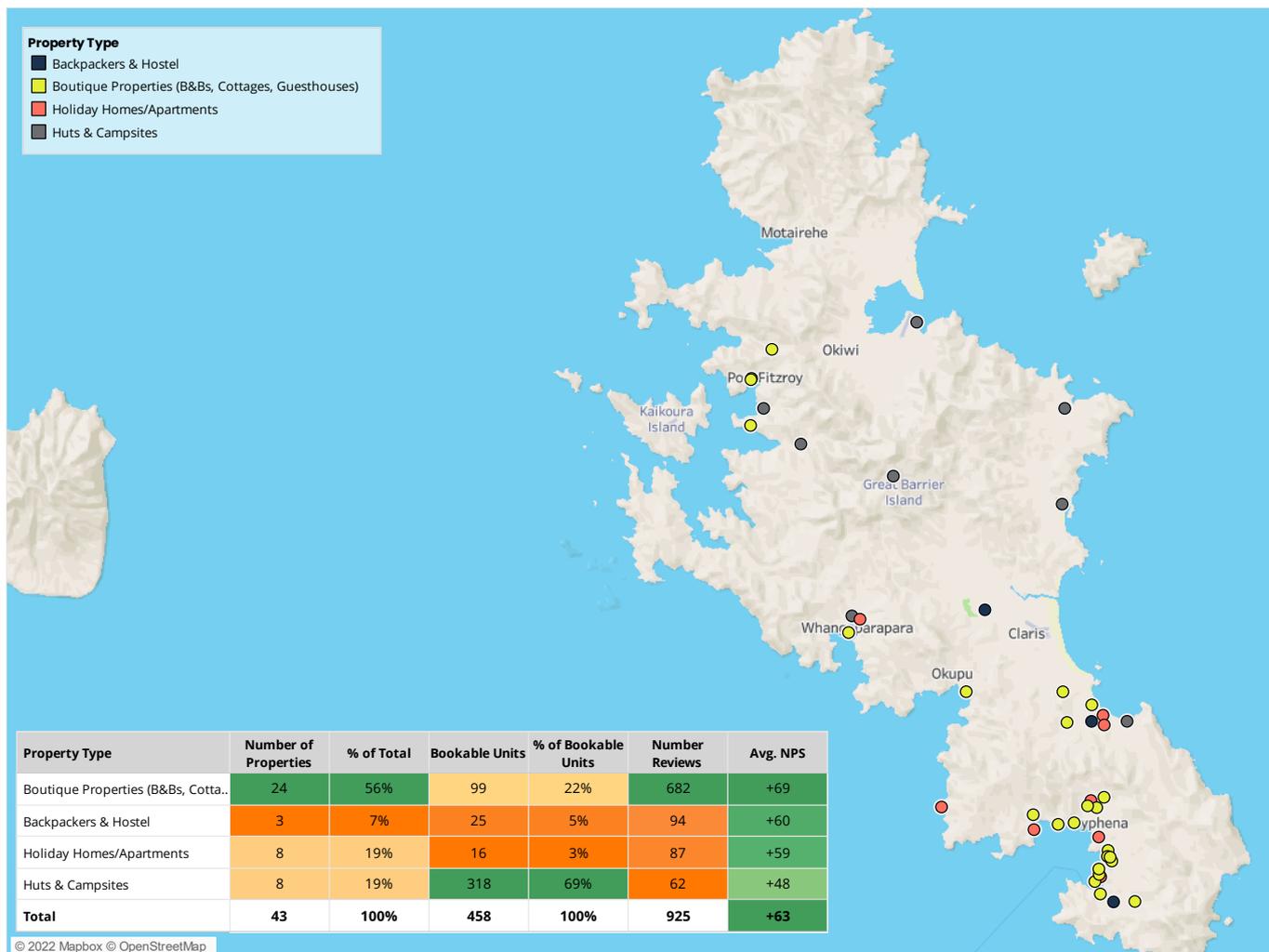
Based on the above analysis and consultation, the following gaps in Aotea Great Barrier Island's accommodation mix are noted:

- Accommodation with in-house dining facilities
- Serviced (smaller scale) apartments properties
- Full-service accommodation properties
- Eco-lodges that can generate an economy of scale by virtue of their size (and, as such, are able to generate jobs)
- Fully serviced camping ground facilities
- Properties that offer premium standards

While these gaps exist, ensuring the longevity and viability of the current accommodation offering on Aotea Great Barrier Island should be prioritised over the introduction of new offerings.

²⁴ Note, a bookable room unit represents the number of individual rooms/units that can be booked out by separate parties. If, for example, a holiday home has 8 rooms, but these are in the one house and can only be booked by one party, then 1 bookable unit is recorded for this property. A motel property with 12 rooms would be recorded as having 12 bookable units.

Figure 4: Aotea Great Barrier Island Accommodation Spatial Audit



2.6.3. Attractions Stocktake

The tourism sector is far-reaching and here are many products, experiences and assets which can be considered 'tourism based'. This analysis focuses on primary tourism experiences – those which are positioned as 'things to do' when visitors travel to Aotea Great Barrier Island. Products and experiences that are primarily utilised by the local community have been excluded.

To be able to derive qualitative and meaningful findings from the product audit, products have been listed in categories. It is important to note that:

- Events have been excluded from the analysis
- General parks have been excluded as there are many throughout Aotea Great Barrier Island that are primarily used by residents, which would skew the findings
- General food and beverage venues (cafes, restaurants, bars) have been excluded. The stocktake focuses on unique food experiences such as distilleries and breweries.

There are an estimated 72 attractions, experiences, and tourism-related services across the island (see Figure 5). Walking and tramping tracks comprise 26 per cent of the product identified. Beaches and parks, and arts and heritage each comprise 10 per cent of products identified.

Although tourism experiences are slightly more distributed across Aotea Great Barrier Island when compared with accommodation, there are still clusters of tourism products located around Tryphena, Medlands, Whangaparapara, Claris and Port Fitzroy.

A top-line analysis of free and paid product indicates Aotea Great Barrier Island has a relatively even distribution of free and paid product (51 per cent paid, 49 per cent free). While free products are an important aspect of any visitor economy, having a greater proportion of paid products will help generate greater economic benefit for Aotea Great Barrier Island from the visitor economy.

2.6.4. Attractions Sentiment

Figure 5 also summarises the NPS results for Aotea Great Barrier Island's attractions. There were 614 reviews on Google and TripAdvisor for the Island's tourism product. It is important to note that the product for Aotea Great Barrier Island's visitor sector has a much smaller digital presence than Waiheke Island's product. This includes the New Zealand Tourism Operator Database.

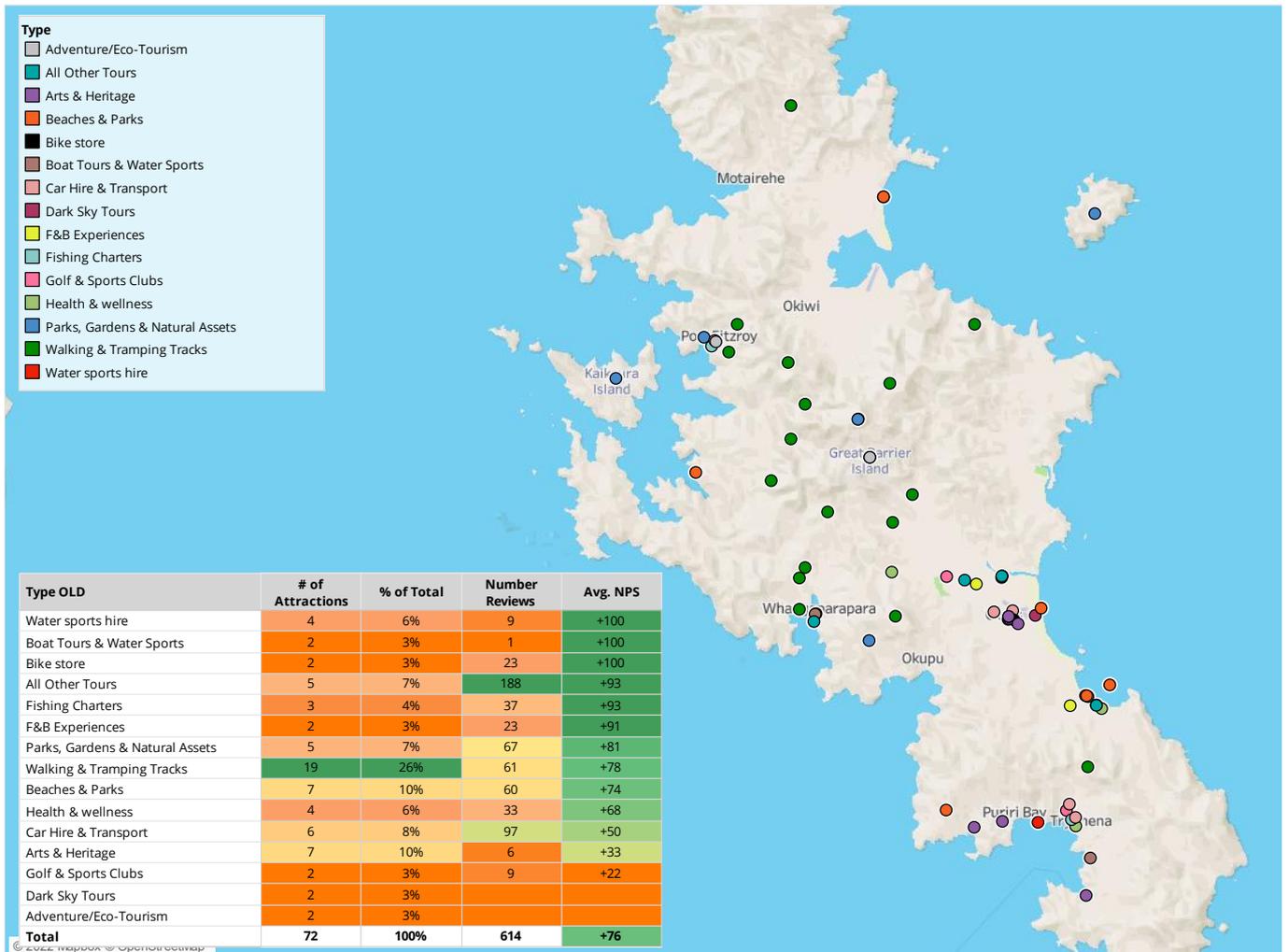
Overall, Aotea Great Barrier Island's visitor experiences received an average NPS score of +74. Although this is a relatively strong NPS, the review sample size is small. Categories with lower NPS scores include golf and sports clubs (+22), arts and heritage (+33) and car hire and transport (+50).

A top-line analysis of free versus paid visitor product indicates that paid product receives a slightly higher NPS (+76) compared with free product (+74). At a top line level, this demonstrates that a free product does not always generate stronger reviews simply because it is free. Consumers are prepared to pay for products and rate them well when the quality of the product matches the price charged.

Based on the analysis undertaken, it is apparent that the following product types on Aotea Great Barrier Island are limited:

- Commissionable products
- All-weather experiences for visitors to undertake during times of inclement weather
- Food and beverage products that offer consistent hours of operation
- Family-friendly experiences for both visitors and locals alike to undertake
- Guided tour product.

Figure 5: Aotea Great Barrier Island Attractions/Experiences Spatial Audit



2.7. Aotea Great Barrier Island’s Brand Attributes and Hero Experiences

2.7.1. Brand Attributes

Aotea Great Barrier Island’s natural beauty, isolation, and abundance of nature on land and in the water are what make the island special. It is seen as a place of tranquillity that operates largely off-the-grid, with a reliance on solar and generator power. With limited mobile phone and internet connections, many visitors seek to turn away from their digital devices and enjoy the island’s scenery and activities.

The island has a rich history derived from more than 1000 years of almost continuous inhabitation. Archaeological sites in accessible coastal areas have been dated to the earliest period of Polynesian settlement. From the 1840s, the island’s natural resources attracted European settlement. Several boom-and-bust industries exploited the island’s forests, minerals (copper, silver, gold) and migrating whales. The largely predator-free island is a refuge for native fauna, and home to native species that are rare or missing from the mainland.

Aotea Great Barrier Island’s beaches, bays, forests, and night skies offer residents and visitors a natural playground for adventure. For thousands of years, it has sheltered Auckland’s harbour from the relentless swells of the Pacific Ocean, creating a boating paradise. The eastern shore of Great Barrier Island faces the ocean with high cliffs and long white surf beaches; the western side offers deep sheltered harbours and calm sandy bays.²⁵

2.7.2. Hero Experiences

There are a number of exceptional visitor experiences on Aotea Great Barrier Island that can be leveraged to sustainably grow the local economy, benefiting the local community.

Figure 6: Hero Experiences



Walking & Hiking



International Dark Sky Sanctuary



Hauraki Gulf Marine Park



Glenfern Sanctuary Regional Park

²⁵ 100% Pure New Zealand website

2.7.2.1. Walking and Hiking

The island's native forest is home to many walking and hiking tracks, with the Aotea Track the most well-known. Sitting within the Aotea Conservation Park, the 25km Aotea Track loops the central mountainous area and is a manageable three-day circuit for reasonably fit trampers. The easier, flatter Harataonga Coastal Walk is another popular walk.²⁶ The Aotea Track is a network of easy walking tracks, steep climbs, stairways, and bridges. It travels over a range of spectacular landscapes: streams that complement a spectacle of beautiful native bush, tranquil wetlands, and the surviving forests of kauri, rimu and kahikatea with their special plants and wildlife. Visitors are also able to explore the rich history of Aotea Conservation Park with sites such as the wooden horse and tramline remnants.²⁷

2.7.2.2. International Dark Sky Sanctuary

Great Barrier Island is an International Dark Sky Sanctuary. In 2017, it was the first island in the world to be awarded this status, which recognises destinations that enjoy an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and a nocturnal environment that is protected for its scientific, natural, or educational value, its cultural heritage and/or public enjoyment.²⁸ The minimal number of outdoor lights make Aotea Great Barrier Island an ideal destination for star-gazers to take in celestial vistas, with some locals saying the starlight is about 10 times brighter than on the mainland.²⁹

2.7.2.3. Hauraki Gulf Marine Park

Located in the Hauraki Gulf, Aotea Great Barrier Island offers great swimming, surfing and kayaking. The Hauraki Gulf also offers world-class fishing and a diverse marine habitat, with visitors chartering fishing boats or joining heli-fishing tours to find the best fishing spots around the island.

There is a great need for balance to be achieved through tourism regenerating rather than depleting the gulf. The *Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000* recognises the national significance of the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana/Te Moananuiā-Toi. It recognises the historic, traditional, cultural, and spiritual relationship of the tangata whenua with the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana/Te Moananuiā-Toi and its islands. It provides objectives for the management of the waters, islands, and catchments of the marine park, including their use. It seeks to integrate the management of the natural, historic, and physical resources.³⁰

2.7.2.4. Glenfern Sanctuary Regional Park

Glenfern Sanctuary is the most remote regional park in the Auckland region. It is a predator controlled regenerating forest, where threatened and endangered species can thrive once more.³¹ It is a hub for environmental and sustainability activities including education immersion experiences and a must-see destination for all visitors to Aotea Great Barrier Island. Several mana whenua has associations with and overlapping interests in Glenfern Sanctuary, reflecting their connections, occupation and activities over a long period to the present day.³²

Glenfern is widely known as a “Great Little Sanctuary” and is home to stunning areas of remnant and restored native forest with both mature and young trees such as kauri, puriri, totara and pōhutukawa among many others. Accommodation is available at the sanctuary. Visitors can explore lush native forest and learn about its protected wildlife, and take a walk guided by an environmental scientist through 600-year-old kauri trees, with the chance of spotting a rare and beautiful North Island kaka.³³

2.7.3. Target Market

Of relevance to Aotea Great Barrier Island, the *New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy* makes it incumbent upon tourism leaders and stakeholders to “encourage visitors to act as guardians of Aotearoa New Zealand, to raise visitors’ awareness of their role in minimising the risk of introducing and spreading pests and diseases.”³⁴

Aotea Great Barrier Island is best suited to mindful visitors who share the Aotea Great Barrier Island community's care for their environment, and who are not time constrained, to include those:

-
- Seeking natural quiet and dark skies
-
- Seeking engagement with the natural environment
-
- Who are committed to zero impact (carbon and natural environment) visits
-
- Who share mana whenua and the community's values and ‘ethic of care’
-

²⁶ Top 10 Reasons To Visit Aotea Great Barrier Island, aucklandnz.com

²⁷ Aotea Track - Department of Conservation, 2019

²⁸ <https://www.darksky.org/our-work/conservation/idspsanctuaries/>

²⁹ Top 10 Reasons To Visit Aotea Great Barrier Island, aucklandnz.com

³⁰ State of our Gulf 2020, Hauraki Gulf Forum, 2020, p.25

³¹ Glenfern Sanctuary Regional Parkland, Auckland Council

³² Te Mahere Whakahaere I nga Papa Rehia a-Rohe Regional Parks Management Plan, Auckland Council, 2022 p.212

³³ Top 10 Reasons To Visit Aotea Great Barrier Island, aucklandnz.com

³⁴ New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy, May 2019, p.17

2.8. Challenges/Barriers to Sustainable Growth for Aotea Great Barrier Island

2.8.1. Macro Challenges/Barriers

Aotea Great Barrier Island faces several ‘macro’ challenges and barriers that require collaboration at a local, regional and national level to address. These challenges cannot be solved by this plan alone, but it is important to acknowledge these challenges and the impact they have on sustainable growth for Aotea Great Barrier Island.

2.8.1.1. ‘Off-The-Grid’ – Carbonzero

Many visitors believe Aotea Great Barrier Island is already ‘off-the-grid’. While it is trending in this direction, there is still some distance to go. The *Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board Plan 2020*³⁵ lists an objective that ‘our community is resilient to the impacts of climate change’ and refers to ‘expand our council facilities, renewable energy microgrid and provide public electric vehicle charging facilities’, and ‘supporting the community in moving to low carbon, resilient and sustainable practices by funding projects, events.’ The rate at which fossil fuels can be substituted for renewable energy options will likely be slow and expensive.

2.8.1.2. Water

Aotea Great Barrier Island relies on water collected from rainfall on the roofs of buildings or from bores, creeks, and springs high in the hills. This precious water is then stored in water tanks.’³⁶ Conserving water is part of life on Aotea Great Barrier Island but is likely to be a new experience for visitors. This highlights the need to educate visitors on water use.

2.8.1.3. Health Care

Although there is very good GP health care and a St Johns ambulance service on the island, these services are easily overstretched. Major emergency care requirements are sourced on the mainland and emergency care generally requires a helicopter response from the mainland.

2.8.1.4. Climate Warming, Sea Level Rise, Major Storm Event

Aotea Great Barrier Island is susceptible to the impacts of climate warming, sea level rise (SLR) and major storm events, as evidenced during Cyclone Gabrielle in February 2023. The Motairehe Urupa in Katherine Bay is an example of a culturally significant coastal site that is vulnerable to erosion and inundation. Motairehe Marae has responded to this immediate term risk by building a sea wall. A more comprehensive island-wide approach to mitigating the risk of coastal inundation and erosion on cultural and heritage sites is required.

2.8.1.5. Transport Services

- **Ferry Service:** Aotea Great Barrier Island is dependent on one privately owned ‘for profit’ ferry service for the transportation of fuel, essential supplies, vehicles, and waste to and from the island. Although there is no contract for services in place with Auckland Transport (AT), AT has indicated it would establish a replacement service in the event of any sudden cessation of ferry connectivity to the island, a contractual arrangement between AT/service providers/local board may be advisable.
- **Air Services:** Barrier Air is the main air transport provider servicing Aotea Great Barrier Island, with Sunair and Island Aviation providing mainly chartered services from a variety of destinations. While current air capacity was adequate when COVID-19 restrictions were in place, and for the low visitor season, added capacity will be necessary as visitor volumes begin to increase. Although Barrier Air has indicated it will be adding capacity to accommodate projected growth in numbers, island connectivity remains a risk area worthy of monitoring.
- **Roading/Wharf and Airport Infrastructure:** There are many kilometres of gravel roads on Aotea Great Barrier Island, with some locals promoting the argument that these rural roads discourage visitor overuse. The Waiheke Local Board has an agreed transport plan with Auckland Transport, no similar arrangement exists for Aotea/Great Barrier Island Local Board a recommendation to have a similar agreement may help provide an opportunity to address road and wharf infrastructure.

2.8.1.6. Communications

Mobile and internet connectivity on the island ranges from fair to poor quality when compared with connectivity on the mainland. This is constraining business activities on the island, limiting the

³⁵ Aotea/Great Barrier Local Board 2020 Plan, Auckland Council

³⁶ Water on Aotea Great Barrier Island, greatbarrier.co.nz

utility for residents, and hampering the experience of visitors.³⁷ The NZ Government's new project called Remote Users Scheme (RUS) which focuses on increasing the availability of broadband connectivity in rural and remote New Zealand could have a positive impact, reducing the current financial barrier for users.

2.8.1.7. Wastewater Treatment

Aotea Great Barrier Island does not have access to Watercare's network, relying on onsite wastewater systems to treat sewage and other wastewater. The improvement of water quality on the island is in the best interests of the environment, the community, and visitors. Given low average household incomes, households may need incentives to upgrade or replace aged or sub-standard septic tanks.

2.8.1.8. Environment

- **Pests and Weeds:** Despite constant pest eradication programs, the "unique flora and fauna of Aotea Great Barrier Island is under constant threat from pest plants and pest animals".³⁸ DOC. has sited significant infrastructure at the start of the major tracks including spraying stations to disinfect boots and has employed 'kauri dieback ambassadors - mana whenua' to assist with face-to-face messaging with trampers.³⁹

Challenges with pest marine plants are also a concern with organisations such as Biosecurity New Zealand who are working with Aotea mana whenua, local community and Auckland Council through the Local Board and DOC to eradicate.

- **Waste Management:** There is no longer capacity for landfill on Aotea Great Barrier Island. Waste is ferried off the island. Visitors will find no rubbish bins on the island as the expectation is that they will take their rubbish with them when they leave. EnviroKiwi has established a recycling facility on the island and supports the idea of a 'code of conduct' for visitors.

2.8.1.9. Fire Risk

Aotea Great Barrier Island's topography, where steep slopes are common, leads to more rapid fire spread and higher fire intensities.⁴⁰ The *Auckland Conservation Management Strategy*⁴¹ Auckland Council and Fire and Emergency New Zealand reference the fire risk on Aotea Great Barrier Island. A major wildfire would have disastrous consequences for the ecology of Aotea Great Barrier Island which justifies the risk being flagged with visitors to the island.

2.8.1.10. Labour Supply

A small population base means a high reliance is placed on transient seasonal labour. Although Aotea Great Barrier Island is an attractive lifestyle proposition for seasonal labour, the increase in house prices on this island and therefore rentals, together with COVID-19 related disruption, is constraining the supply of seasonal labour.

An added consequence of increasing house prices is that housing is out of reach for young couples and families who might ordinarily seek work on the island. Various options such as providing temporary accommodation for seasonal workers at the Barrier Social Club have been stymied by regulatory constraints. Aotea Great Barrier Island finds itself competing against locations with lower living costs and better infrastructure, and high national and global demand for labour.

³⁷ <https://getgravity.nz/blog/governments-remote-users-scheme-explained/>

³⁸ Pests of Aotea Great Barrier Island, a local guide, Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, undated

³⁹ DOC, 2021

⁴⁰ <https://sites.google.com/a/aotea.org/don-armitage/Home/fire>

⁴¹ <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/statutory-plans/statutory-plan-publications/conservation-management-strategies/auckland>

2.8.2. Local Challenges/Barriers

Growing Aotea Great Barrier Island’s visitor economy sustainably will require addressing several challenges and barriers. Many of these barriers were identified during the consultation and analysis undertaken for this plan. The barriers outlined in Table 4 – many of which other destinations are facing – are aligned with components of destination management including product development, infrastructure, governance, sustainability, and marketing and promotion.

Table 4: Barriers to growth linked to destination management components.

Barrier	Product Development	Infrastructure	Governance	Sustainability	Marketing & Promotion
A significant amount of DOC land limits some tourism product development	●	●		●	
Ageing population base		●		●	
Digital literacy of operators			●		●
Gaining agreement on acceptable levels of visitor economy growth		●		●	
High cost of imported produce and lack of fresh fruit and veggies	●			●	
Host community desire for visitor economy growth			●	●	
Infrastructure challenges (existing landfill is full, potable water supply, sewer issues, power generation)		●		●	
Lack of accurate/robust tourism data				●	●
Lack of agreement by the host community on the desire for visitor economy growth			●	●	
Lack of coordination, collaboration & structure for tourism		●	●		
Lack of public transport for accessing the Island and once on the Island		●		●	
Lack of wayfinding signage		●			
Land becoming too expensive for tourism uses	●	●		●	
Limited all-weather paid visitor experiences for visitors and locals during inclement weather	●				
Limited evening activities to grow overnight visitation	●				●
Limited F&B offering and consistency of operating hours of some providers					
Limited host community awareness of the importance of tourism			●	●	●
Limited Māori tourism product and iwi presence in the tourism sector	●				
Limited number of family-friendly visitor experiences	●				
Limited pool of skilled and semi-skilled staff and ability to attract and retain	●			●	●
Limited well-capitalised investors/developers on the Island	●	●			
Limited worker accommodation	●			●	
Mismatch between the quality of facilities/infra/experiences and the desire for higher-yielding visitors	●	●		●	
Seasonality marginalises economic benefits such as sustainable local employment etc.	●			●	
Small population base unable to sustain many amenities and services	●	●		●	
Ongoing uncertainty created by COVID-19 and potential new outbreaks			●	●	

Image Credit: Auckland Council



Part 3: Where Do We Want To Be?

3.1. Strategic Framework

The following strategic framework has guided the development of this plan and should be used to plan tourism development and marketing in Aotea Great Barrier Island going forward. The framework has been deliberately aligned with *Destination AKL 2025*, the overarching destination management plan for the broader Auckland region, and *Destination AKL Recovery Plan (DARP)*.⁴² The vision, guiding principles and strategic imperatives outlined below are informed by *Destination AKL 2025* and *DARP*.⁴³

3.1.1. The Vision

The unique vision for Aotea Great Barrier Island is:

“The Aotea Great Barrier Island visitor sector will partner with Ngāti Rehua – Ngātiwai ki Aotea as mana whenua, Aotea Great Barrier Island community leaders, and with those for whom Aotea Great Barrier Island is home, to manaaki manuhiri who share the resolve to enhance the spiritual, cultural, social, environmental and economic wellbeing of Aotea Great Barrier Island in a way that is exemplary, and by doing so restore the mana of taonga species, and ensure the mauri of ecosystems is thriving.”

Figure 8: Strategic Imperatives



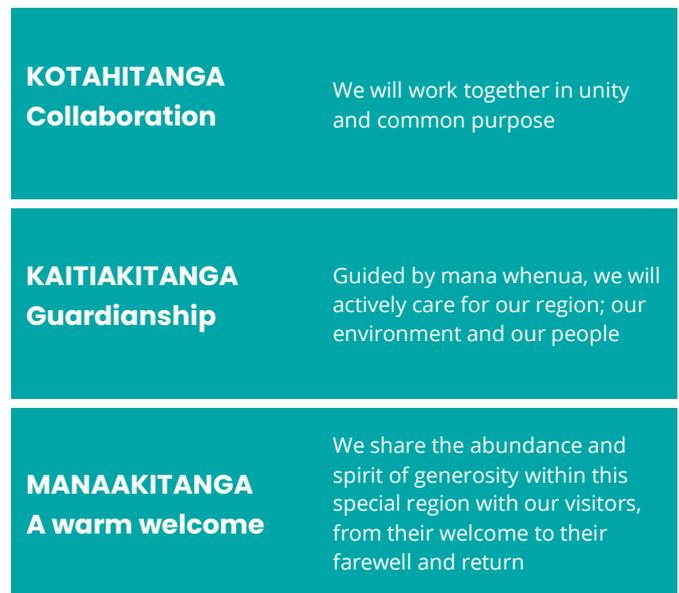
⁴² Destination AKL Recovery Plan (DARP), Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, 2020

⁴³ TAU released Destination AKL 2025 in mid-2018. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit New Zealand early in 2020, TAU developed the short-form Destination AKL Recovery Plan (DARP), setting out 25 key actions to enable the sector to respond to the significant and

3.1.2. Guiding Principles

The following principles, which mirror those included in Destination AKL 2025, have guided the development of this plan:

Figure 7: DMP Guiding Principles



3.1.3. Strategic Imperatives

The following strategic imperatives (Figure 8) have also guided the development of this plan. The recommendations that have been identified align with these strategic imperatives.

wide-reaching impacts of COVID-19. The DARP was designed to replace the original strategy for a period of approximately 18 months.

3.2. Recommendations for Sustainable Growth

A variety of recommendations have been identified during the process of creating this plan:

- Mitigate or overcome the barriers to sustainable growth
- Assist in activating the destination vision outlined in this plan
- Align with the broader destination management work already completed, particularly the *Destination AKL 2025* strategy and the *New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy*
- Provide the necessary building blocks to develop a sustainable visitor economy
- Allow the visitor economy to grow in the way the Aotea Great Barrier Island community wishes, with an emphasis on lifting productivity, restoring and championing the natural environment, cultural and historical heritage, and improving the communities' lives as their region thrives because of the visitor economy.

3.2.1. All recommendations (by strategic imperative)

41 recommendations have been identified as part of this plan. They reflect a wide variety of recommendations that will assist in sustainably managing and growing Aotea Great Barrier Island as a destination.

3.2.1.1. An Insightful Place

A place that makes evidence-based decisions, encouraging business support and improved viability while maintaining identity and showcasing community resilience.

- **Tourism data collection:** There is a lack of tourism-related data for Aotea Great Barrier Island. To guide the sustainable growth of tourism on Aotea Great Barrier Island, there is a need to start collecting and distributing tourism-related data. This will also assist with promoting the value of tourism to the community. This could be undertaken through:
 - An annual survey of industry operators to establish/track parameters such as: bed nights, source markets, average stay, reason for travel and visitor sentiment, and which may provide guidance for marketing activity
 - Working with SeaLink, Barrier Air, Island Aviation and AT to secure data that will assist with destination planning and visitor flow mapping
 - Continuing to lobby MBIE, Stats NZ and the Tourism Data Leadership Group to provide international and domestic tourism data at a local level.
- **Visitor journey mapping:** To assist in assessing capacity and infrastructure planning, visitor journey mapping could be undertaken. This may include establishing profiles of visitor types to the island, including descriptions of their journeys and how they enjoy their chosen attractions and neighbourhoods, which may assist in creating effective product development and future packaging, and visitor transportation strategies.
- **Working group for worker accommodation:** Establish a working group to consider and progress options for accommodating seasonal workers (such as modular, low-impact worker accommodation).
- **Industry workshops (social media and digital literacy up-skilling):** The local destination industry needs to continue to develop its capability to understand and apply social media and digital tools, which are a cost- and time-effective way to promote Aotea Great Barrier Island's product offering. TAU will work with the LDMO to promote Aotea Great Barrier Island through marketing campaigns, social media and through a presence on aucklandnz.com/visit, Auckland's visitor website. TAU will also make the LDMO aware of any suitable training programmes to help operators move into the digital space to support regional industry needs (for example, Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) and other industry associations often run training programs with facilitators/trainers).
- **Host community awareness campaign:** A broad-reaching awareness campaign on the importance of the visitor economy to Aotea Great Barrier Island should be considered. This could be as simple as highlighting how many loaves of bread, litres of milk, and glasses of wine are consumed by visitors on any given day, reflecting the importance of visitors to the local economy and business viability.
- **Destination events strategy, toolkit and calendar:** A destination events strategy should be developed for Aotea Great Barrier Island, including an events toolkit for organisers that outlines pre-approved event locations and the parameters of their use (capacity, event type, hours), the approval process, waste management requirements and fees, and local board contacts; and an events calendar that allows event operators to self-list and distinguishes between major destination events and smaller community-focused events.



3.2.1.2. A Place of Partnership and Planning

A place where mana whenua has opportunities to input and prosper with mechanisms in place to ensure that community social license for the visitor economy is being monitored.

- **LDMO monitoring and support:** The LDMO will monitor and mitigate risk areas of direct concern to the visitor sector, and lend support to lead agencies, mana whenua and the Aotea Great Barrier Island community.
- **Support targets for greenhouse gas/carbon emissions:** Identify and protect historical and heritage assets that are vulnerable to sea level rise/major weather events.
- **Mainland/island connection:** Support future-proofing the mainland/Aotea Great Barrier Island connection (ferry/air) with AT. Advocate for a formal arrangement with AT to underwrite mainland connection.
- **Roading infrastructure requirements:** Support the development of an agreement between AT and the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board to forward plan roading infrastructure requirements and wharf facilities.
- **Wharf/aviation infrastructure:** Confirm with AT that wharf/aviation infrastructure is future proofed against sea level rise/major weather events.
- **Zero carbon substitutes:** Support the rollout of zero carbon substitutes for fossil fuel consumption.
- **Waste minimisation promotion:** Promote the need for waste minimisation on the island and that the absence of rubbish bins is due to the expectation that waste management is a personal responsibility.
- **Reducing carbon and greenhouse gas emissions:** Ensure the visitor sector supports the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board's

aspiration for a 'resilient community' by reducing carbon and greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Seasonal worker infrastructure:** Present Aotea Great Barrier Island as a compelling opportunity for seasonal workers, working with regulatory agencies and the Housing Trust to address housing infrastructure constraints (e.g., to establish modular and container houses), or a glamping facility at the Barrier Social Club site.

3.2.1.3. A Sustainable and Resilient Place

A place that advocates for the wellbeing of the terrestrial, land, and marine environments with an aim of transitioning to a low-emissions visitor economy.

- **Work with DOC on visitor assets:** Work with DOC to ensure visitor assets are well maintained.
- **Partnership with DOC:** Work in collaboration with DOC to design a bespoke partnership model that unifies the visitor sector, mana whenua, the community, and the local board.
- **Feasibility of noise level restrictions:** Undertake a feasibility assessment to investigate the potential of setting a noise level of 32db.
- **Advocate for the amendment of the RMA:** The LDMO will support mana whenua and the Aotea Great Barrier Island community in seeking to amend the *Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991* to enable local authorities to control noise from airborne activities.
- **Environmental regeneration program:** Support the development of an environmental regeneration program to help restore marine biodiversity, to include the Ahu Moana approach referred to in *Sea Change - Tai Timu Tai Pari Marine Spatial Plan*.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Sea Change - Tai Timu Tai Pari Marine Spatial Plan, Sea Change - Tai Timu Tai Pari, 2017, p.48

- **Visitors as stewards of Aotea Great Barrier Island:** Engage manuhiri (visitors) as stewards of Aotea Great Barrier Island by clearly communicating what is expected of them when they visit the island (for example in visitor guides, websites, information post departure to the island (both air and sea) and welcome signage on arrival to the island.
- **Regeneration initiatives:** Support regeneration initiatives such as initiatives such as rāhui, protected areas and marine reserves.⁴⁵
- **Conservation Centre at Glenfern:** Support the establishment of a Conservation Centre at Glenfern Sanctuary. Glenfern Sanctuary is an 83-hectare Regional Park, and along with three neighbouring properties on the 240-hectare Kotuku Peninsula, sits behind a 2km-long pest-proof fence. It forms a conservation precinct in the northern part of Aotea Great Barrier Island, about 100km north-east of central Auckland.
- **Predator Free Aotea Great Barrier Island:** An advantage of being a remote island is the ability to more easily progress measures to achieve predator-free status. Being predator-free allows for the rejuvenation of flora and fauna and the development of healthier waterways. Predator species include rats and feral cats which are considered major threats to native plants and animals. Rakiura is currently strongly pushing to achieve predator-free status, with a not-for-profit alliance set up between iwi, government, businesses, and community members referred to as the Predator Free Rakiura Leadership Group. Tū Mai Taonga provides a perfect building block from which to progress towards predator-free status on Aotea Great Barrier Island.
- **Aotea Great Barrier Island's conservation story:** Articulate the Aotea Great Barrier Island conservation story, including rare and endangered flora/fauna, initiatives underway and mana whenua involvement in decision-making to enable the mauri of Glenfern, the Kotuku Peninsula and Aotea Great Barrier to be restored.
- **Voluntourism programs for Aotea Great Barrier Island:** Voluntourism is a form of tourism in which visitors participate in voluntary work. A programme could be developed in conjunction with DOC and other environmental initiatives, offering visitors a chance to undertake flora/fauna rehabilitation on the conservation estate. This would complement the proposed Aotea Great Barrier Island off-the-grid, eco-destination brand proposition.

3.2.1.4. A Connected Place

A place where principles of economic, social and environmental sustainability are not compromised by planning undertaken to better connect the destination.

- **Satisfaction with mainland/island connection (air, ferry):** Satisfaction with mainland/island connection (air, ferry) – ensuring that connections are resilient, reliable and cost-effective.
- **Improved linkages to the north of the island for visitors and community:** Investigate an Auckland to Port Fitzroy sea connection, and viability of a seasonal water taxi service.

3.2.1.5. A Unique Place

A place where visitors are enticed to stay longer and embrace the communities for what makes them special.

- **Position Aotea Great Barrier Island with an off-the-grid, eco-destination brand proposition:** There is a need to develop a clear destination brand that promotes Aotea Great Barrier Island as an off-the-grid, eco-responsible destination. The previous Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board funded a branding exercise in 2017 ahead of the launch of the Dark Sky Sanctuary. A further branding exercise was commenced in 2020 but a lack of funding meant this was unable to be progressed.
- **Position Aotea Great Barrier Island as an exemplar destination for renewables:** With a desire to position Aotea Great Barrier Island as an off-the-grid eco-friendly sustainable destination, the opportunity may exist to work with renewable energy providers to pilot products and position Aotea Great Barrier Island as an exemplar destination for renewable energy. This could include new forms of waste management, household waste-water treatment systems, solar energy and possibly mini-hydro systems, or the addition of micro-grids.
- **Promote and support Okiwi Passion:** Okiwi Passion⁴⁶ grows a small range of seasonal, naturally produced vegetables, fruit and seedlings. Promotion and support to help it be sustainable in the long term, as well as developing 'paddock to plate' food initiatives should be investigated.
- **Support local produce growers:** There is a need to investigate ways to encourage more residents to grow produce on the island (including both veggies, fruit, and dairy) as currently 90 per cent of produce is imported which is not sustainable over the long term. Aotea Great Barrier Island has rich soil and a climate to support the production of high-quality produce. This includes supporting existing Aotea food sustainability projects being set up by Aotearoa trust and led by Caity Endt (Okiwi Passion) by looking at the potential of visitor-related products.

⁴⁵ When residents were asked "what restrictions they'd like to see" on Aotea Great Barrier Island to manage the sustainability of the Island, the number one response (which garnered 180 responses) was for fishing restrictions if not a ban.

⁴⁶ Okiwi Passion website

- **Home-grown paddock/ocean to plate:** There is potential to:
 - Introduce a paddock and ocean to plate trail that promotes and focuses on locally grown and sourced food initiatives, drawing on existing Aotea Great Barrier Island expertise and not-for-profits such as Eat New Zealand
 - Establish and support a cluster of 'local food producers' to develop a supply chain for homegrown and sourced meat, fish, vegetables, fruit.
 - Increase home grown and sourced product ('paddock to plate' or 'ocean to plate') supplied to food and beverage outlets (e.g., Okiwi Passion, fish receivers' licence) to provide a point of difference.
- **Full-service iwi guided tours:** Investigate tour guide options including iwi-led initiatives, possible accommodation development and boat tours. The north of the Island is overlooked but could potentially offer iwi visitor experiences. Work with iwi to draw on Mātauranga Māori (commonly translated as Māori knowledge), potentially building off the Mahuki Island experience run by Opo and Elaine Ngawaka as an example.⁴⁷ There should be a focus on encouraging locals (if interested) to offer guided tours rather than those not based on the Island.

3.2.1.6. A Captivating Place

A place that enriches the visitor experience in a way that gives back at least as much to a destination's people and places as it takes.

- **Bach letting:** Undertake marketing to encourage Medlands Beach bach owners to promote agreed sustainability principles and values to guests so that visitors are encouraged to help preserve Aotea Great Barrier Island's uniqueness.
- **Glamping packages:** Investigate developing glamping packages (removing the logistical issue of transporting camping equipment on the ferry/plane).
- **Upgrade camping grounds:** Feedback received indicated that there is a need to improve the amenities/facilities offered at some of the DOC-managed camping ground facilities on Aotea Great Barrier Island. While they are recognised as basic campground facilities, this could include the development of

camp kitchen facilities and improved shower and toilet facilities with better quality waste management systems. The opportunity may exist for a 'local/iwi start-up', in partnership with DOC to upgrade camping grounds e.g., provide/improve toilets, showers, cooking facilities) and support with camping equipment/glamping. This could also include providing access to equipment hire.

- **Guided walks on the Aotea (and other) tracks:** The Aotea Track provides visitors with access to a range of spectacular landscapes and views. Walking the track takes approximately two to three days and there are two DOC huts on the track. The opportunity exists to work with DOC to investigate the potential of having a concessionaire operator to provide guided walking experiences along the Aotea Track. This could potentially be offered as a seasonal product until such time that demand determines the need for a year-round product. There should be a focus on encouraging and assisting locals in particular iwi (if interested) to offer guided tours rather than those not based on Aotea Great Barrier Island
- **Boat charters:** There is potential to investigate offering all year-round guided boat tours. These tours could offer commentary and include glass-bottom boat experiences and snorkelling tours as value-add experiences. There should be a focus on encouraging locals in particular iwi (if interested) to offer guided tours rather than those not based on the Island.
- **Kayaking tours:** Aotea Great Barrier Island has the potential to offer far more water-based recreation products. This could take the form of guided kayaking tours where visitors can undertake lessons and/or a variety of tours. This would likely need to be offered as a seasonal product during summer-based months. To provide the operator with a sustainable business, a model could be looked at where guided cycling tours (or similar) are offered during the winter months.
- **Eco Lodge:** A Boutique Eco lodge that supports higher yielding visitors wishing to have in-house dining and fully serviced facilities. This visitor is actively seeking an off-the grid experience, of natural quiet and engagement with their environment. This could be a greenfield site or expansion of existing commercial accommodation; expectation is that it will have a zero impact on facilities.

⁴⁷ <https://staynative.co.nz/experiences/mahuki/>

3.3. The Priority Recommendations

The following have been identified as high priority recommendations.

3.3.1. Establishing a Local Destination Management Office (LDMO)

It is important to recognise that there are many stakeholders who need to collectively take ownership of this LDMP if it is to succeed, especially as the visitor economy is the dominant economic sector for the island. Its success has implications across many government agencies and other stakeholder groups (including environmental societies and trusts, mana whenua, the community at large and tourism industry operators).

To achieve this, it is proposed that the implementation of this plan will be overseen by a co-funded, partnership-based Local Destination Management Office (LDMO). This will enable local government, mana whenua, DOC, and the Aotea Great Barrier Island community to partner as stewards and kaitiaki of the spiritual, cultural, social, environmental and the economic wellbeing of Aotea Great Barrier Island, and support tangata whenua and local communities to participate in the tourism decision-making and planning processes.⁴⁸

The Destination Great Barrier Island Trust (Destination Great Barrier Island) was charged with implementing the *Visitor Strategy for Aotea Great Barrier Island 2018-2023*. The task of implementation required skill sets that included: accounting and funding, operating a visitor centre at Claris, maintaining a website, designing, writing content and publishing marketing collateral, providing leadership to tourism operators, liaising with the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, DOC, Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea, TAU and other organisations and groups.

The budget allocation allowed for the one-off temporary employment (for 12 months, applied for annually) of a 0.75 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff member. The lack of certainty that this arrangement provided, together with the role realistically requiring many more hours be worked than the 0.75 FTE budget allowed for, reduced the ability for effective long-term planning. Aotea Great Barrier Island relies heavily on volunteer time and effort in similar fashion to many other island destinations throughout Aotearoa New Zealand and in many other regional destinations as well, to support the visitor economy.

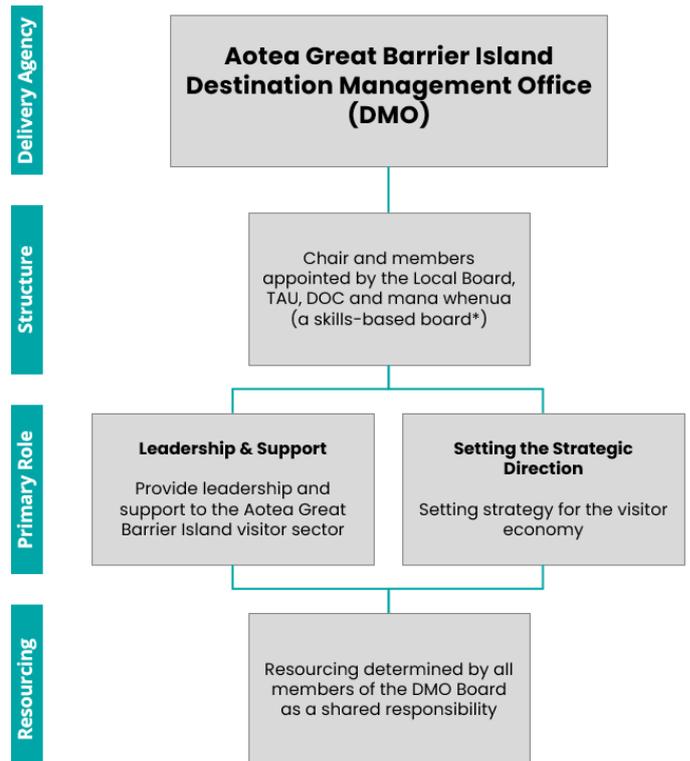
Feedback from the community and industry operators on the island confirmed the prevalence of 'volunteer fatigue'. The implementation of this plan will require the appointment of competitively remunerated individuals with the requisite skills and capability. High employment levels throughout New Zealand in

2022 (and forecasted to remain for the next few years at least), and the relative isolation of the island could make it more challenging to attract appropriately skilled workers for this role.

The idea of a visitor levy to fund activity, and a cap on visitor numbers, has been raised during consultation on this plan. These are not included as recommended actions as further consultation and legislative change would be required to implement these initiatives. Currently, TAU, the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, DOC, various community trusts and foundations and others who seek to ensure the well-being of the island and its communities, need to investigate how best to deliver the establishment of a LDMO as proposed. For more information on visitor levies and visitor cap mechanisms, read Appendix 5.4.4.2.

Funding options for the LDMO will need to be investigated from a variety of sources, noting that TAU has already advised it is not funded to implement local board destination management plans. If funding options can be shared amongst several stakeholders, the net contribution required from each may be relatively low. Figure 9 outlines a proposed LDMO partnership structure, while Table 5 summarises suggested organisational attributes for the LDMO.

Figure 9: Proposed LDMO partnership structure



*Board members drawn from Iwi/Hapu, TAU, visitor industry, service providers, Auckland Transport, environmental groups, DOC

⁴⁸ New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy, MBIE, 2019

Table 5: LDMO organisational attributes

Organisational Attributes	Focus
1. Structured and funded to succeed	<p>Governance/Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Co-governed by Aotea Great Barrier Island stakeholders (Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea , DOC, representation from the Aotea Great Barrier Island Visitor Sector, TAU) committed to best practice governance. Refer to 1.4.3 ▪ Co-funded – potential funders include Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, TAU, DOC, other stakeholders etc ▪ Co located for efficiency (e.g., shared overheads) ▪ Governance will be ‘fit for purpose’ with appointments being skill-based, and taking into account capability, and credibility. ▪ Organisational accountability could be to the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, DOC and TAU and should be exercised by way of a co-governed, co-funded destination management entity (DMO), formed, and resourced in consultation with the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, TAU, DOC, Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea, together with representation from Aotea Great Barrier Island environmental leaders, the visitor sector, and Auckland Transport
2. Behaviours are consistent with principles (the ‘Five Māori Well-beings’⁴⁹)	<p>Stewardship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The DMO will adopt the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitanga (Partnership, participation, equity, active protection), and WAI262. ▪ The DMO will adopt the ‘Five Māori Well-beings’ and tikanga Māori values (Manaakitanga, Kiatiakitanga, Whanaungatanga, Kotahitanga, Tau utuutu) as Guiding Principles for the implementation of this plan and the activities undertaken by the DMO ▪ Improving Spiritual, Cultural, Social, Environmental Economic well-being is the priority consideration. ▪ Business to be focussed on ‘value-creating’ ... where value, is defined in terms of well-being (spiritual, cultural, social, environmental, and economic) i.e., ‘profit is not an endpoint but part of the process of creating well-being. <p>Develop tools for managing visitor impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement a visitor levy on all arrivals to Aotea Great Barrier Island (based on the Rakiura model) as both a demand management tool and a source of revenue that reduces visitor sector reliance on ratepayer funds. This would need to include everyone who isn’t a full-time resident on the island and regardless of why they are visiting (holiday makers, VFR, business etc.)
3. Integrated and interconnected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Linked in with implementation partners ▪ Regularly and routinely engage with Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea and the community of Aotea Great Barrier Island to seek feedback in order that their concerns and suggestions are known and can be responded to. ▪ Investigate options for measuring visitor loads against carrying capacity ▪ Address the lack of data availability (visitor numbers, stay, spend and visitor profiling) ▪ Maintain ‘social licence’ by measuring and responding to any changes in mana whenua and community expectations. ▪ Maintain and utilise networks and accounts to enable influence and advocacy in Aotea Great Barrier Island’s best interests ▪ The visitor sector will adopt the Aotea Great Barrier Island ethos of being involved in any decisions that affect it. ▪ Establish, maintain, and exercise relationships to secure Aotea Great Barrier Island participation in decision-making forums relevant to the management of the Aotea Great Barrier Island destination, and to ensure Aotea Great Barrier Island interests are well represented and heeded.
4. Agile & responsive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This plan, typically, reflects current spiritual, cultural, social, environmental, and economic settings. The fact that these are in a constant state of change requires that agile and responsive leadership is introduced.
5. The best talent will be recruited, developed, and retained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriately skilled and capable leadership will be recruited (and retained) that will ensure an inclusive and collaborative approach to managing the Aotea Great Barrier Island destination in partnership with mana whenua, the visitor sector, and the Aotea Great Barrier Island community. ▪ The organisation will invest in developing the capability of its people focussed on the visitor economy.

⁴⁹ Relational Well-being and Wealth: Māori Businesses and an Ethic of Care, Chellie Spiller & Manuka Henare et al, 2011

Organisational Attributes	Focus
6. Evidence based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gathering evidence and feedback is a priority and findings are responded to with urgency. ▪ Address data gaps related to visitor flows and impacts ▪ Lobby for improved robustness and greater granularity in national tourism datasets ▪ Use research tools such as statistical modelling based on regular and routine survey to enable full and complete understanding of community interests/concerns and ensure these are responded to in a timely manner.
7. Guardians of the Aotea Great Barrier Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aotea Great Barrier Island to own Aotea Great Barrier Island identity and to control destination messaging but in unison with TAU ▪ Support initiatives to identify/record/interpret significant cultural/historical sites/assets and apply these to enriching the Aotea Great Barrier Island identity.
8. Visitor sector development that fits Aotea Great Barrier	<p>Critical Success Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confirm CSFs for visitor sector development ▪ Support (Initiate and drive where necessary) development concepts and initiatives that meet established Critical Success Factors (CSFs). ▪ Support (Initiate and drive where necessary) initiatives that address destination risk or that upgrade/develop vital infrastructure

3.3.2. Brand Proposition

There is a need to develop a clear destination brand that promotes Aotea Great Barrier Island as an off-the-grid, eco-responsible destination. This is best developed by a reputable branding agency that has previous experience in destination branding. The potential exists to liaise with Tourism New Zealand (TNZ) to help develop this, noting its expertise in marketing and brand development which may be able to be leveraged. Such a brand would tie in well with TNZ's traditional 100% Pure branding. The previous Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board funded a branding exercise in 2017 ahead of the launch of the Dark Sky Sanctuary.

Developing a range of guided tour experiences that allow visitors to connect with and experience Aotea Great Barrier Island's natural environment and value proposition should be explored. There is an opportunity to work with DOC to investigate having a concessionaire operator providing guided walking experiences along the Aotea Track. Seasonal guided boat tours could include glass-bottom boat experiences and snorkelling tours; guided kayaking tours where visitors can undertake lessons and/or a variety of tours; and local iwi-led tours are also potential options to explore. There should be a focus on encouraging locals (if interested) to offer guided tours rather than those not based on the island.

3.3.3. Focus on Regeneration and Sustainability

Continuing to develop and promote experiences that have a positive impact on the island and its community is important, with a particular emphasis on regenerative tourism and sustainability. This could take the form of several options, such as supporting the establishment of a conservation centre at Glenfern Sanctuary, better telling the Aotea Great Barrier Island conservation story, or investigating the development of voluntourism programs for the

island. Benchmark and commit to decarbonisation targets for the visitor economy on Aotea Great Barrier Island and building capability within the sector to measure and monitor their carbon footprint. Collaboration with industry both on the island and the mainland to provide innovative products and services, encouraging sustainable choices to be promoted to visitors.

3.3.4. Guided tours

Developing a range of guided tour experiences that allow visitors to connect with and experience Aotea Great Barrier Island's natural environment and value proposition. These could include kayaking tours, bushwalking (half-day and day options) tours, tramping tours (multi-day options), cultural immersion experiences with skilled guides etc,

3.3.5. Agriculture and Horticulture

Leveraging Aotea Great Barrier Island's climatic strengths and developing agriculture and horticulture will support the community and the needs of visitors. This could take the form of assessing options for home/grown sourced food (fish, shellfish, meat, vegetables, fruit); supporting new initiatives to start a local weekly market; supporting local producer viability/sustainability; introducing a training program to encourage local produce grower and processors; and supporting food tourism small-scale events to promote Aotea Great Barrier Island food production.

3.3.6. Infrastructure

Investing in infrastructure across Aotea Great Barrier Island – from roading, wharf or aviation infrastructure to infrastructure to support seasonal workers - is key. Advocating for investment into suitable infrastructure and low-impact modes of transport to and around Aotea Great Barrier Island will meet the needs of residents and visitors alike.

3.4. What Will Success Look Like?



Establishing a co-funded LDMO with a local focus, but with advocacy and influence extending into national and regional networks, is key to this plan being implemented. The following are suggested as aspirations for an LDMO to achieve:

- The visitor sector will be guided by the Tiaki Promise
- As hosts we need to live by an 'ethic of care'
- The visitor economy will deliver identifiable gains for Aotea Great Barrier Island.
- The visitor sector touches every part of Aotea Great Barrier Island. It is right and proper that the direction the LDMO follows is determined in partnership with mana whenua, the community, the tourism sector, TAU, Auckland Council organisations and DOC
- Visitation will be managed to ensure the design and scale of the visitor sector is kept within the spiritual, cultural, environmental, and social capacity of Aotea Great Barrier Island, fitting within the island's infrastructure, and having a net-positive effect on the community
- Visitors will be engaged and welcomed by mana whenua and the community of Aotea Great Barrier Island as stewards and guardians of the island's natural resources
- Connections and networks will support tourism innovation and development so viable and profitable tourism businesses prosper and produce wellbeing
- The visitor economy will measure its emissions across the sector and sub-sectors to benchmark performance, set targets and track progress.

Image credit: Auckland Council

Part 4: How Will We Get There?

4.1. Action Plan

Table 6 - Table 8 outlines a plan to activate the recommendations identified in this DMP. It highlights the:

- Tasks needed to implement this DMP
- Key agencies who should collectively be engaged to drive each recommendation
- Estimated timeframe for effective activation, noting that many may change over time as resources are revised and priorities potentially change
- Indicative budget required for feasibility studies, or strategies required to be undertaken; and
- Key performance indicators to ensure actions are implemented.

The action plan is a “living” document and, as such, needs to remain fluid to consider the needs of different stakeholders and their ability to undertake actions along with their other responsibilities.

Table 6: Action Plan – Tier 1 Recommendations

SI	Recommendation Action	Who	Budget	Timeframe	KPIs
A Place of Partnership and Planning	<p>New governance structure for a localised visitor office to better align stakeholder needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a LDMO that partners with Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea, DOC, local board, TAU with governance made up of local stakeholders and government agencies to better align the tourism industry with environmental groups and broader community groups ▪ Develop and implement a formal survey to capture monitor and respond to the community inputs on what the role of the DMO is 	Destination Great Barrier Local board, TAU, Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea, DOC, environmental groups, and NGO's.	\$45k for structure legal assessment, workshops, and consultation	2023-2024 (then ongoing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look at the potential to offer a solution as a pilot project for New Zealand ▪ Tu Mai Taonga is an example of a successful community governance structure – Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea and community ▪ Review island operating models offering international best practices for sustainable tourism and environmental outcomes. ▪ Identifying mechanisms for funding the LDMO ▪ The visitor sector is in touch with and responds to mana whenua and community ▪ Environmental/ community benefit is delivered from the visitor economy
An Insightful Place	<p>Tourism Data Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a robust data collection model noting current visitor numbers are overstated due to double counting 	TAU LDMO	\$20K	2023-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use the DMP as the starting point for building an annual robust visitor database including visitor spend patterns ▪ Split passenger data to reflect true visitors (and their footprint on the island) and residents (and their footprint impact on the Island) ▪ Use the updated visitor data to create forecasts and to help determine daily carrying capacity limits.
A Sustainable and Resilient Place	<p>Off-the-grid, eco-destination brand position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop an eco-destination brand for AGBI ▪ Ensure the operators and community are aligned with this brand offering ▪ Engage a design agency to create the narrative for the brand position 	LDMO, TAU (to provide guidance) TNZ (to provide guidance) Advertising Agency	\$60k	2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with TNZ and TAU to determine branded position for AGBI. ▪ Ensure these agencies use the new branding in their workstreams ▪ Engage a design firm to create collateral requirements ▪ Ensure all AGBI branding, and information adopts the brand requirements

SI	Recommendation Action	Who	Budget	Timeframe	KPIs	
A Sustainable and Resilient Place	<p>AGBI as an exemplar destination for renewables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look to establish AGBI as a pilot study for sustainable and regenerative tourism for NZ 	LDMO TAU TNZ DOC MBIE	Est: \$100k	2023 ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with key government agencies to determine factors to allow for regenerative tourism exemplar status Introduce all elements to ensure pilot study can be applied Enhance and protect AGBI's natural tranquillity Review results on an annual basis to illustrate progress Survey visitors on a 1-2 yearly basis to assess response to exemplar status 	
A Sustainable and Resilient Place	<p>Aspiration for leading Natural Tranquillity</p> <p>Investigate the feasibility of setting a noise level of 32db on AGBI</p> <p>Advocate for the amendment of the RMA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate where the establishment of maximum noise levels has been successfully achieved in New Zealand Re-affirm that the suggested noise level of 32db is a realistic and desirable level Work with Auckland Council to investigate legal requirements for amending the RMA to control noise Ideally achieve an inter-agency approach (Auckland Council, DOC, Ministry for the Environment) for a collaborative approach for amending the RMA and find a sponsoring Minister 	Local board LDMO Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea Environmental Groups AKLCouncil	TBC	2023- 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the aspiration with key stakeholders Achieve a consensus position with all major stakeholder groups Consider introducing a pilot project for potential implementation elsewhere throughout New Zealand Build on the feasibility work for setting a noise level and limit Local board to ensure Auckland Council is prepared to co-sponsor initiative Determine which central government agency in unison with Auckland Council can lead this Establish a working group to collaborate on amending the RMA Develop a policy position for moving this forward with central government Aim to get the proposed amendment on the legislative program by 2028 at the latest and ideally earlier if possible
An Insightful Place	Host community awareness campaign	LDMO Local board TAU	\$25k	2024 (post branding work done)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a program for raising awareness on AGBI of the Destination Management's Plans initiatives and progress Provide six-monthly updates on LDMP progress and where actions have been delivered 	

SI	Recommendation Action	Who	Budget	Timeframe	KPIs
A Sustainable and Resilient Place	Support environmental regeneration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a kete of demand management tools Market AGBI to a like-minded caring target market Provide training/workshops for tourism operators on how to calculate their carbon footprint and decarbonise their visitor experience Educate manuhiri on AGBI expectations re. pest/disease risk re. environmental regeneration so they can be party to kaitiaki initiatives. Have Manuhiri understand the need to leave a light footprint when they visit 	Mana whenua LDMO TAU DOC Tourism providers Environmental Groups	\$200k	2023 ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero impact tourism Operators have capability to measure and monitor their carbon footprint and report back on this Operators advocating for other businesses to measure and monitor Manuhiri as temporary residents of the Island
A Place of Partnership and Planning	Product packaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look to work with operators to package product options to help make more overnight stays easier and appealing. Packages need to be in line with new branding work Collaborate with industry to promote innovative products and services that encourage sustainable choices 	LDMO Visitor Industry Operators TAU	\$25k	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate a workshop with industry operators on and off the island to identify product packaging options Assess the potential for packaging airfares accommodation, ground transport attraction and tour guiding options Package product options and promote online to consumers and intermediaries Update product options annually as additional products are introduced.
An Insightful Place	Business mentoring/business incubation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate provision of business support according to need Train and upskill industry operators in social media and digital literacy 	LDMO TAU Go with Tourism DOC (concessions) Local board	\$15k	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAU to provide training modules and a trainer to facilitate courses for AGBI Visitor Economy Operators
A Unique Place	Home grown food supply – paddock/ocean to plate food initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess options for home/grown sourced food (fish, shellfish, meat, vegetables, fruit) Support new initiatives to start a local weekly market Support local producer viability/sustainability Introduce training program to encourage local produce grower and processors Food tourism small scale events to promote island food production and growing production courses 	Local board AKL Council Ministry of Primary Industry TAU Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea	TBC	Late 2023 ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local board in application to MPI for pilot program for supplying local Support Kawa marae community garden initiative Support Okiwi Passion to be viable and sustainable Investigate the development of an organic AGBI cookbook to act as promotional tool for the Islands produce and F&B outlets

Table 7: Action Plan – Tier 2 Recommendations

SI	Recommendation Action	Who	Budget	Timeframe	KPIs
A Unique Place	<p>Iwi/hapū guided tours sharing mana whenua stories of the island and gulf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with iwi over interest to offer guided tours Liaise with iwi over where pou and/or other forms of storyboards can be placed in key areas of significance to welcome manuhiri, and tell iwi stories and associations with the island 	<p>Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea AKL Council LDMO TAU</p>	Est \$100k	2023 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine interest of iwi in offering a specialised guided tour. If interested link with TAU Māori tourism team to offer advice on tour options, product offering and pricing If not interested, no further action required
A Sustainable and Resilient Place	<p>Support a predator free AGBI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDMO to engage with DOC/Tu Mai Taonga/mana whenua to establish how best to support this initiative Ensure as far as possible that visitors to AGBI are fully appraised of the community's expectation of them 	<p>LDMO Local board Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea DOC AKL Council Biosecurity Environmental groups</p>	TBC	2023 -2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with key environmental agencies and landowners to put in place mechanisms for engaging visitors to support the achievement of predator-free AGBI Confirm practicable communication channels to Manuhiri and activate
A Sustainable and Resilient Place	<p>Consult with Glenfern Sanctuary Trust to consider the best way to support the establishment of a conservation centre located at Glenfern Sanctuary/Port Fitzroy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an enduring and supportive relationship with Glenfern Sanctuary Trust and mana whenua to consider how the LDMO might best assist Support Glenfern becoming a research hub for the island 	<p>Glenfern Sanctuary Trust Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea LDMO</p>	TBC	Mid – 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Conservation Hub' concept brought to life providing opportunities to engage with te taiao/ the environment Summit to Sea planted pathway for flora and fauna across the sanctuary A place where Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea can share knowledge and experience to enable the mauri of Glenfern to be restored
A Unique Place	<p>Investigate the establishment of a visitor hub at Claris to provide visitor information, narrations of AGBI stories, history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a collaborative group comprising mana whenua, DOC, LDMO the stakeholders in Aotea community art gallery - Gray Museum the History Hut, The Milk Honey & Grain Museum to explore options for the cooperative amalgamation/development of a visitor hub 	<p>LDMO History Hut Milk Honey & Grain Museum Aotea community art gallery Mana whenua Don Prince DOC</p>	TBC	Mid 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A substantial professional hut that accommodates AGBI story telling, relics, visitor information – including expectations of Manuhiri when they visit Investigate and conduct a feasibility study for a site near Claris Airport for a central hub - providing a more reliable service for visitors
A Captivating Place	<p>Guided walks on the Aotea (and other) tracks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine local community interest in expanding the offer of further professional guided walk on various tracks If no local interest, source interest off the island 	<p>Mana whenua DOC LDMO TAU Environmental Trusts</p>	Est \$35K	2023 – 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine if local interest to offer guided tours If local interest, develop a guide training program with support from TAU If no local interest seek interest from those off the island with expertise already for running guided walks
A Place of Partnership and Planning	<p>Focus on maintenance of existing assets e.g. Kaitoke Hot Springs maintenance and upgrade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess upgrades to keep Kaitoke Hot Springs natural at the same time improving the amenities for visitor 	<p>Local board DOC LDMO</p>	<p>Est. design work \$40k Est Works \$900k</p>	2023 -2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess upgrades required for safety access etc. Assuming upgrades required undertake design work to improve supporting infrastructure whilst keeping natural. Introduce capacity limits to hot springs

SI	Recommendation Action	Who	Budget	Timeframe	KPIs
A Connected Place	Mitigate Sea Link Risk from Downtown Auckland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the establishment of a contractual understanding that provides greater than the current two -week notice period for termination of services (PTOM opportunity) Work with AT and ferry service providers to ensure a secure and cost-effective service for the Island 	Local board LDMO Auckland Transport Sea Link TAU	TBC	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A secure cost-effective passenger and freight service
A Connected Place	Mitigate air service risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate to work with current and future airlines beside Auckland Transport to future proof air access to AGBI 	Local board LDMO Auckland Transport Air Suppliers TAU – visitor economy	TBC	Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigate vulnerability risk Assess future needs for air access for community and visitor markets Review operating costs for airline access to AGBI Determine ways Auckland Transport can support air services to the land Ensure ongoing services and frequency of flights Ensure current and future air operators understand the target market for AGBI
A Unique Place	Night sky product extension with unique AGBI value proposition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop or enhance upon a night sky product experience in line with the AGBI value proposition (being determined in Tier 1 recommendation) 	LDMO Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea TAU Visitor Operators Community	Est \$150k feasibility and Capex	2024-2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a feasibility study to identify the unique value proposition for AGBI in relation to its night sky Determine local interest to develop or enhance a unique night sky product experience and if not found, identify off island interest Develop and package night sky experience, assuming viable with accommodation and other on-island product
A Unique Place	Boutique lodge with an eco theme - supporting higher yield, low impact longer stay visitor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine an appropriate location to develop a lodge of this nature on the island Determine if there is local interest to develop 	TAU Local board LDMO	Est \$40k for feasibility study	2024 - 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility study completed to determine viability Determine local/and or investor developer interest Assessment of expanding existing commercial accommodation as an alternative to a greenfield development

Table 8: Action Plan – Tier 3 Recommendations

SI	Recommendation	Action	Who	Budget	Timeframe	KPIs
A Place of Partnership and Planning	Camping ground upgrades and improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess opportunities for improving existing camping ground amenities 	Local board LDMO DOC	Est \$500k capex	2024 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the opportunity to enhance camping grounds with eco-friendly camp kitchens, shower/toilet amenities and waste system Determine other suitable locations for eco friendly campgrounds and Glamping options
A Place of Partnership and Planning	Strengthen the working relationships with mana whenua, landowners and organisations to identify/understand the significance and management of historical/heritage places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with mana whenua and the community, support the completion of the recording (and scheduling) of significant cultural and historical sites on Aotea Great Barrier Island⁵⁰ 	Local board, Iwi/hapū LDMO, DOC Regional Parks DOC (Heritage)	TBC	End of 2023 and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rich story's of mana whenua and colonial history to enhance the AGBI identity in storytelling. Benefits for local community and manuhiri To be included in guided walks, on-water tours and narratives in digital and other information for visitors
A Place of Partnership and Planning	Modular low-impact worker accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce worker accommodation to help cover visitor economy current needs and future proof 	Local board LDMO	\$25k for feasibility and design Est Capex \$1m	2025 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake feasibility study to determine preferred location and design for low impact eco-friendly worker accommodation Engage design and construction company to deliver worker accommodation facility
A Captivating Place	Year-round boat charters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the viability of additional boat charter for sightseeing including during the shoulder and winter seasons Investigate iwi/hapū operator interest 	Iwi/hapū LDMO TAU	\$20k for feasibility and design Est \$750 capex	2024 ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess local interest in offering additional boat charters for on-water tours around the island year round as some of the calmest weather and abundant marine life is throughout the shoulder and winter Season Additional tours could go out to Broken Island or Rakitu if no local interest, investigate options for other operators in greater Auckland region
A Sustainable and Resilient Place	Voluntourism programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate potential for environmental based voluntourism programs on AGBI 	Local board Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea Auckland Council biosecurity Environmental Trusts LDMO	\$75k	Late 2023 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess local interest to introduce voluntourism programs to link to environmental initiatives If interest is shown locally undertake a feasibility to determine all the components required, likely to also require accommodation options. Link to the workstream for AGBI renewable tourism in Tier 1

⁵⁰ Historic Heritage Survey Aotea Great Barrier Island, Auckland Council, 2019

SI	Recommendation	Action	Who	Budget	Timeframe	KPIs
A Connected Place	Improved linkages to the north of the island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the reinstatement of the Tryphena/Port Fitzroy Sea connection Investigate viability of a seasonal water taxi service to support the local community and visitor needs Investigate if interest exists from iwi/hapū to offer a service that links with their tours 	Local board LDMO Iwi/hapu Northern parties (e.g., Glenfern, Orama, Kawa marae, Motairehe marae)	\$20k for feasibility \$500k for implementation	2024 – ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support any interest Ngāti Rehua (and or/other interested mana whenua) for investment into sea services Assess the viability of water taxi services as a seasonal product offering a mix of public transport services and visitor attraction-activity experience Determine if local interest exists for service
A Sustainable and Resilient Place	Bach rentals and letting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with bach owners to get support for ensuring guests are acquainted with imperatives related to environmental care and regeneration 	LDMO Local board Bach operators (Airbnb/Bookabach)	\$5k	2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess online options to determine an optimum solution Engage with bach owners prepared to participate Establish a booking model with agreed values to adhere to once the visitor is on the island
A Place of Partnership and Planning	AGBI destination event strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a strategy to guide how events are to be undertaken, where they can be held, time of year, and rules that are clear over the operation of events 	LDMO Local board			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reassess events calendar on greatbarrier.co.nz to get better engagement from event organiser - needs to be done well in advance Establishment of guidelines/toolkit for events requiring approval by the local board Guidelines/toolkit made available online Determine types and scales of events wished to be secured on the island



Part 5: Appendices

5.1. Survey Questions/Results

What would you like the future of tourism to look like on Aotea Great Barrier Island?

Have your say

As instigated by Destination Great Barrier Island, our Local Board and Auckland Unlimited (AU) are working with the Great Barrier community to create a Destination Management Plan. AU has commissioned Stafford Strategy to assist this process.

Destination Management means not just promoting a destination, but having a plan that manages sustainable growth and that aligns with mana whenua and community desires, while ensuring the environment is protected and restored.

Essentially, it's about having a path for tourism to truly support the quality of life of our community and our environment.

The Local Board Visitor Strategy 2018-2023 did a great job in guiding us, but the island and the world have changed since 2018. It's time for the community to establish what they want and don't want through this plan.

This survey is the first opportunity to have your say.

If you would like a further meeting one to one with the consultants guiding us through the process, please contact Lucy (trustee1@dgbi.co.nz).

Figure 10: Respondent Profile

Aotea Great Barrier Survey - Respondent Profile

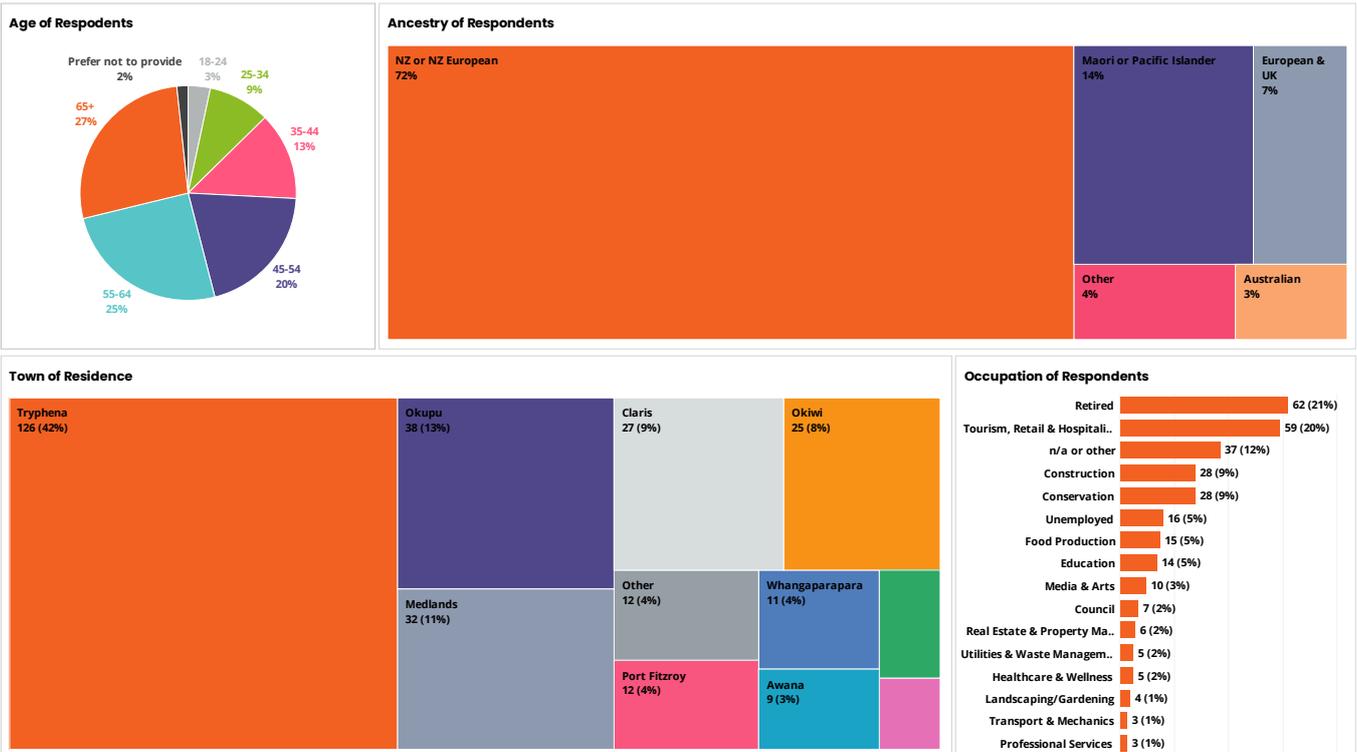


Figure 11: Survey Responses – Summary 1

Aotea Great Barrier Survey – Summary

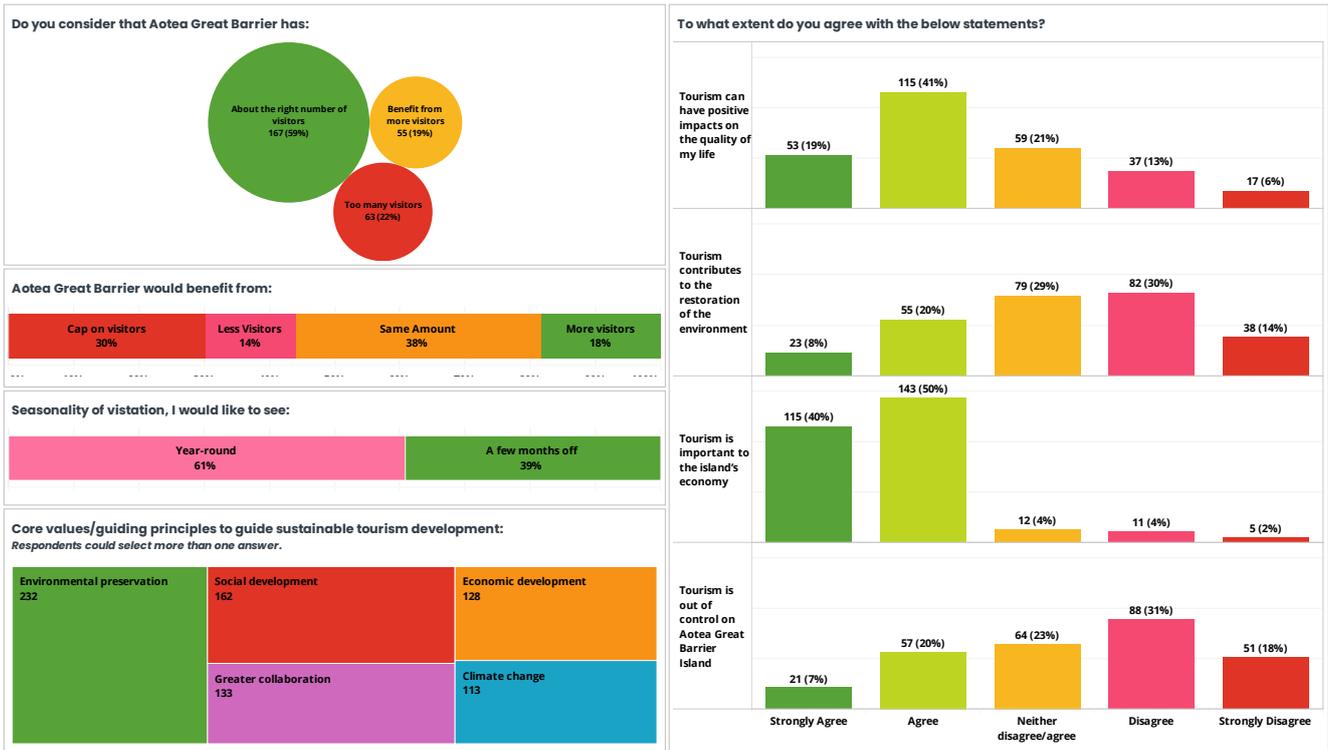
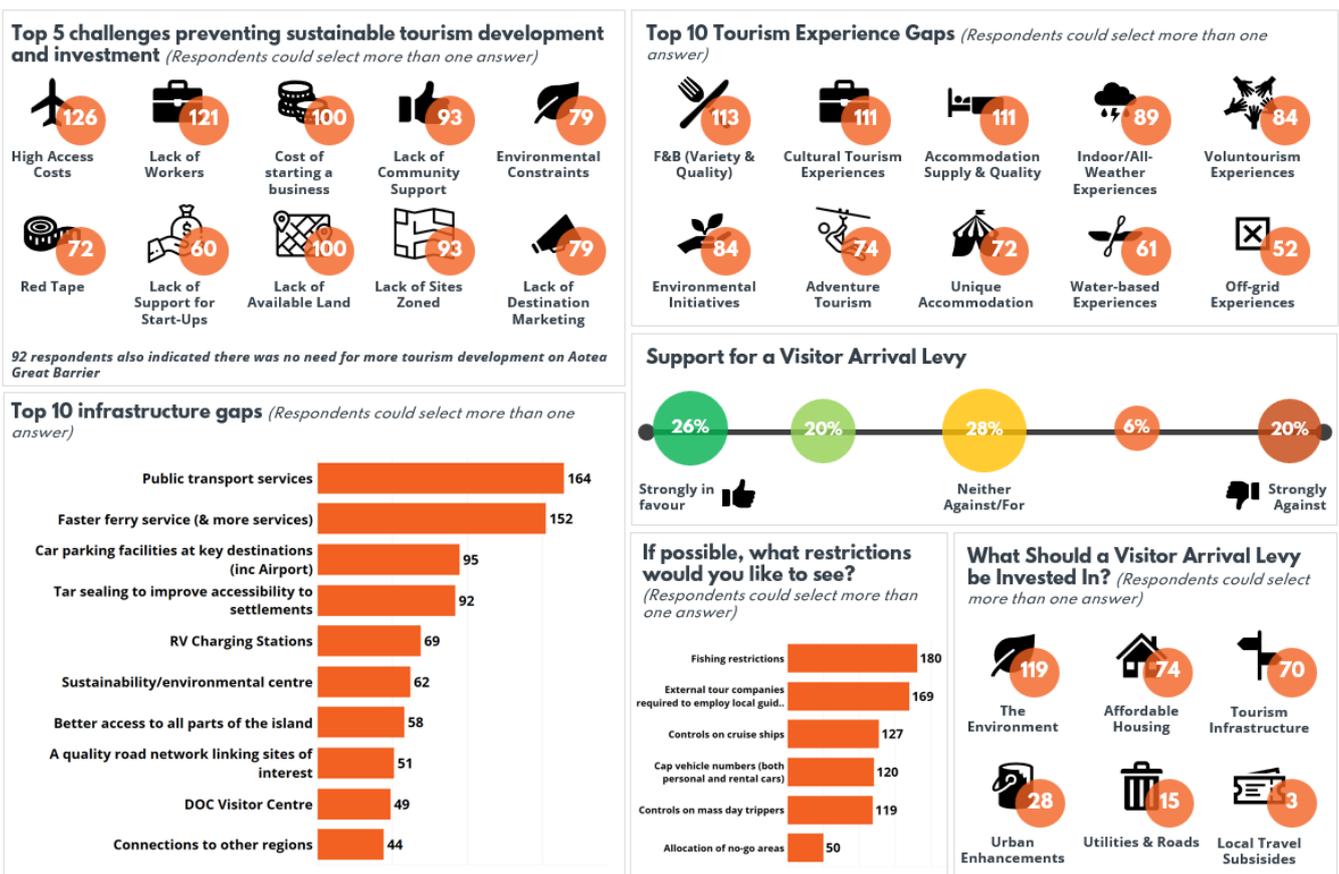


Figure 12: Survey Responses – Summary 2

Aotea Great Barrier Survey - Summary



5.2. Net Promoter Score

To undertake a top-line assessment on the quality of a region's product offering, a net promoter score (NPS) metric has been applied. This is a measurement of consumer assessment and loyalty. For tourism, this translates to a visitors' willingness to not only return for another stay, but also to make recommendations to their family, friends, and colleagues.

NPS scores are reported with a number from -100 to +100, with a score above 0 considered okay, a score above 30 considered good and a score above 50 considered excellent. The NPS is calculated using a scale. A score between:

- 0-6 are considered as unhappy customers or "detractors" who are unlikely to return, and may even discourage others from staying with or visiting a provider
- 7-8 are considered as "passives", meaning they are satisfied with the provider but not happy enough to be considered promoters
- 9-10 are considered "promoters" who are typically loyal and enthusiastic customers and who are likely to return and strongly promote the provider.

TripAdvisor and Google use a scale of 1-5 for consumer ratings on accommodation products⁵¹. Converting this to the NPS scale means that a rating of 1-3 are considered "detractors" for the product, a score of 4 are the product's "passives" and a score of 5 are the products "promoters".⁵²

⁵¹Booking.com has not been used to derive a NPS because it does not provide a scale of scores, but rather, only provides an overall score. Therefore, an NPS is unable to be calculated from Booking.com listings.

⁵²'Net Promoter Score Explained', birdeye.com

5.3. Visitor Forecasts

5.3.1. How visitation data was determined

Data was derived from airline operators to Aotea Great Barrier Island along with estimates for those arriving and departing by ferry. Discussions were also held with accommodation providers on the island and Destination AGBI to cross-check the data.

Because of the lack of empirical data on those arriving as day visitors via yachts etc., day visitor numbers were not able to be included.

Importantly, the dataset excludes arrivals and departures of Aotea Great Barrier Island residents.

5.3.2. Overview

Aotea Great Barrier Island is primarily a domestic tourism destination. 94 per cent of visitors to Aotea Great Barrier Island in 2020 were domestic visitors with the small number of international visitors visiting prior to COVID-19 border restrictions implemented in March 2020. Most domestic visitors (60 per cent) are from the Auckland region, due to the island's proximity to Auckland, and the majority of the island's bachs being owned by Auckland residents.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Australia was the major international market for Aotea Great Barrier Island (comprising 45 per cent of international visitation), followed by visitors from Europe (30 per cent) and the UK (8 per cent). These visitor markets tend to favour active visitor experiences (walking, tramping, cycling) and are more likely to venture 'off the beaten track' compared to other markets (e.g., Asia, North Asia). Australian visitors are expected to be the first international visitors to return following the easing of border restrictions in 2022.

Visitors to the island travel primarily for holiday/leisure purposes (84 per cent of domestic visitors and 96 per cent of international visitors), with a small 'visiting friend and relatives' market (comprising 12 per cent and 4 per cent of domestic and international travel respectively) and a business market totalling 4 per cent of domestic visitation.

5.3.3. Historic Visitation and Spend

Although references are made to pre-COVID-19 visitor data, the enduring impacts of the pandemic and global uncertainty are expected to render historical trends largely irrelevant, at least for the next seven to 10 years.

The data references for this plan are predominantly sourced from the period prior to COVID-19. This reflects uninterrupted domestic and international visitation and within time, is likely to reflect similar trends again though visitation overall might be constrained for some time.

Reliable visitation data is very limited for much of the Hauraki Gulf, including Aotea Great Barrier and Waiheke islands. In lieu of a robust visitor database, several assumptions have been made based on discussions with a variety of stakeholders who live and/or operate on Aotea Great Barrier Island, including data from the airlines and Sealink as well as estimates from TAU. Findings include:

- In 2020 (March YE⁵³), Aotea Great Barrier Island is estimated to have received 12,300 domestic and international overnight visitors. This represented 0.07 percent of total visitation to the Auckland region.
- Feedback from Destination Aotea Great Barrier Island indicates there are very few day visitors and no data exists to estimate this very small cohort. As such, no estimate for day visitors is provided.
- Prior to the pandemic, visitation to Aotea Great Barrier Island had been growing, increasing in line with growing visitation to the broader Auckland region, growing from 11,400 visits in 2014 (an increase of 6 per cent over this period).
- In 2020, total visitor spend for Aotea Great Barrier Island was estimated to be \$7.2m NZD.
- Overnight visitors contribute far more to visitor economies generally through increased spending on accommodation, food and beverage, transport, and activities. In 2020, it was estimated that domestic overnight visitors spent approximately \$495 per trip and international overnight visitors spent \$875 per trip⁵⁴ while visiting Aotea Great Barrier Island.

Establishing an annual visitor survey for Aotea Great Barrier Island – a recommendation of this plan – will allow for a robust database of visitation statistics to be collected. This will assist in managing the sustainable growth of the visitor economy on Aotea Great Barrier Island and help provide an evidence-based approach for the setting of visitor carrying capacity levels.

⁵³ Because this data is March YE, this negates COVID-19 impacts where most border closures and restrictions were in place from late-March 2020 on.

⁵⁴ Note, the higher international spend is often skewed by international workers staying for longer periods but still being counted as a visitor.

5.3.4. Projected Visitation

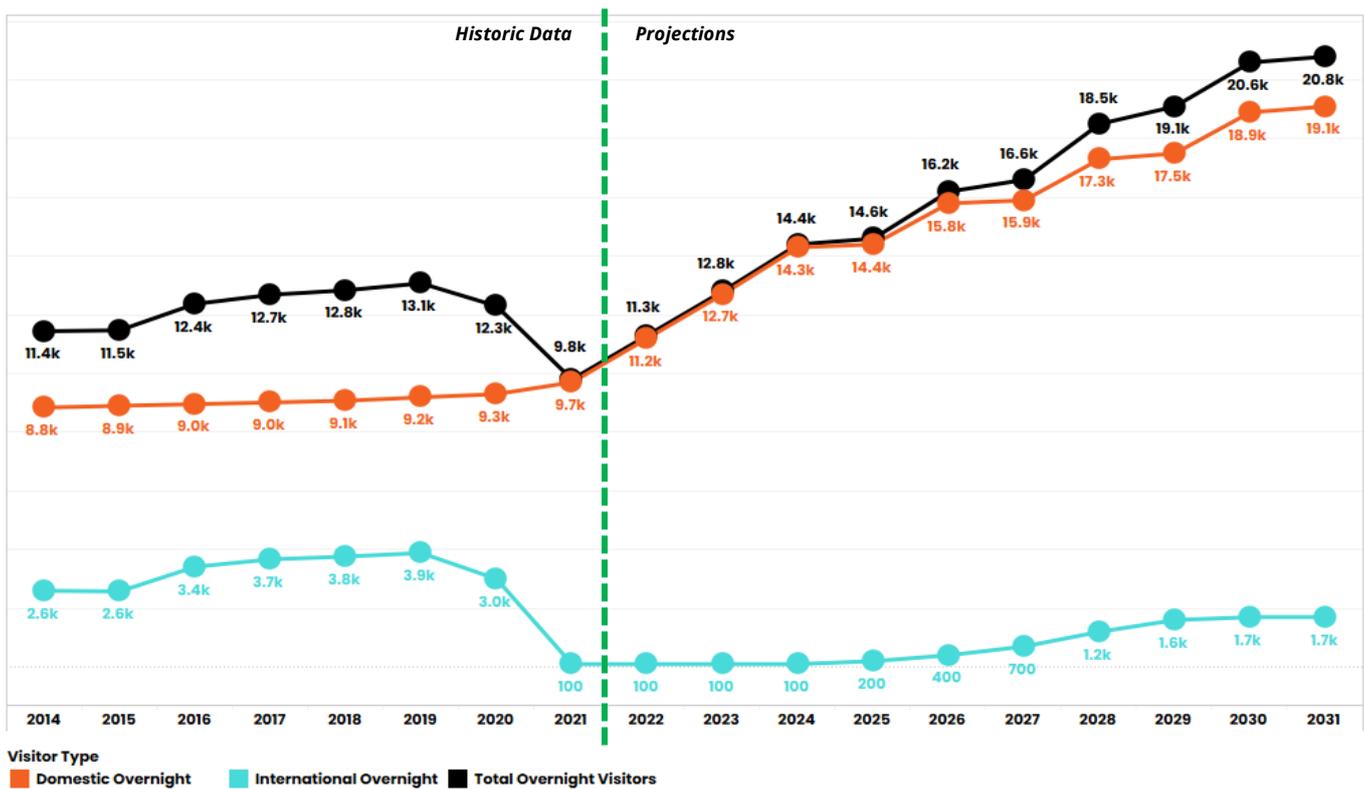
Figure 13 provides indicative visitor projections to Aotea Great Barrier Island over the period 2021 – 2031. It illustrates:

- The decline in visitation between 2020 and 2021 (March YE) because of COVID-19 border closures and lockdown restrictions (although Aotea Great Barrier Island was relatively unaffected by this as a predominately domestic destination, particularly when compared with other destinations in New Zealand which were heavily reliant on the international visitor market)

- That visitation is anticipated to grow to Aotea Great Barrier Island between 2021 and 2031, increasing from 12,300 visitors per annum to an estimated 20,800.

Although some residents may be reticent about this level of growth, it is important to note that it largely originates from the domestic overnight market - increasing by an estimated 7900 visitors between 2022 and 2031. Achieving this growth in overnight visitation, however, is predicated on expanding the accommodation offering available on Aotea Great Barrier Island and increasing flight capacity to and from the island. While the international visitor market is forecast to grow as COVID-19 border restrictions ease, this market will likely continue to comprise a very small share of visitation compared to the domestic market.

Figure 13: Aotea Great Barrier – Historic Visitation & Visitor Projections (2014 – 2031, March YE)⁵⁵



⁵⁵ Based on visitation data to Auckland (NZ IVS, New Zealand Regional Tourism Estimates and the New Zealand Visitor Activity Forecast - <https://freshinfo.shinyapps.io/NZVAF/>),

population data for Auckland, discussions with TAU, transport providers, and local industry operators.

5.3.5. Domestic Insights

Understanding domestic tourism trends is important for Aotea Great Barrier Island, as a primarily domestic destination, to best align its product development and marketing activity. Some major trends identified during the creation of this plan include:

- The need for travel to provide opportunities to relax, reconnect and rejuvenate, and those short breaks, events and festivals are cornerstone components and drivers for travel.
- Often there is too much choice, and the proliferation of online information makes decisions difficult for consumers. The planning process needs to be made simpler. Package deals have strong appeal (especially to a time-poor consumer) and are motivating as they create a call to action and offer a sense of urgency to book.
- Technology is both a friend and a foe. New Zealanders are prolific users of technology but are also looking to take a step back from technology. There is a strong desire to reconnect through disconnecting, going back to basics and taking a holiday away from the online world.
- New Zealanders are increasingly time-poor. Holiday time is precious, and reconnection remains central to travel. Taking time out to be with family and friends allows you to connect, recharge, escape and enjoy the small and important things in life.
- Creating a reason or occasion to travel provides an opportunity for domestic travel to grow, particularly when holidaying overseas is now less affordable.
- Customer service remains a point of contention on Aotea Great Barrier Island but should be recognised as a regional and national issue, competitive destinations build their offer around improved service standards.
- Food and wine experiences generate excitement and interest and can provide a reason to travel, but they need to be authentic experiences and well managed.
- Food and wine experiences must showcase local products, promote food and dining as an experience, leverage other experiences (including events) and ideally offer an element of interactivity.
- Logistics are important for event and festival attendees, including transport, being able to book online, value for money and easy ticketing options.
- New Zealanders have a strong proclivity to undertake outdoor activities, including walking and cycling, with 1.5 million New Zealanders indicating they are prepared to travel for more than two hours for cycling and walking experiences.
- There is an increased expectation with regards to authenticity and engagement. The quest for a deeper connection to a place and its people continues to be a strengthening travel goal. More visitors are looking for ways to have a local and connected experience if it offers quality experiences and service support.

- Although New Zealanders often choose to travel overseas, many New Zealanders are continuing to travel within the country even as international borders continue to open.
- Destinations focusing on tourism development promote themselves through strong visual cues and images that represent and 'sell' authentic experiences. If done well, people start to associate places with how it makes them feel and what they can expect.

5.3.6. International Insights

Pre-COVID-19, tourism was one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the world.⁵⁶ In 2017, the sector accounted for 6.6 per cent of total global exports and almost 30 per cent of total global service exports.

This growth was also reflected in results from New Zealand's International Visitor Survey (IVS) for 2018⁵⁷, with national figures showing an increase of 7.8 per cent to 3.8 million for international visitors for the year and international spending increased 9.6 per cent to \$16.2 billion, contributing to 20.6 per cent of New Zealand's total exports of goods and services.⁵⁸ COVID-19, has, however, dramatically shifted the size of the tourism sector globally and the number of people travelling internationally.

Pre-COVID-19, the country's top five largest international source markets (in order of demand) included Australia, China, the USA, the UK, and Germany. These international markets were seeking safety and security, world-class beauty and wildlife, value for money, family-friendly experiences, cleanliness and good food and local produce.

With the easing of border restrictions occurring in 2022, the first international market to rebound will be the Australian market. Though other international markets are expected to gradually open in 2023, numbers will be restricted due to:

- Greatly reduced seat capacity with fewer airlines flying to New Zealand less frequently
- Introduction of new imposts and higher taxes proposed by Government including a higher international visitor levy (and now being charged to Australians)
- Far higher customs duties to cover increased administrative cost
- New charges relating to the proposed carbon tax for those flying into and out of New Zealand which may not occur till post-2023 and on a graduated scale
- Stronger initial demand for those coming to visit friends and relatives (VFR) and business rather than holiday travellers. For international visitors, there are also likely to be supply-side capacity challenges with limited domestic seat capacity from Auckland to Aotea Great Barrier Island.

⁵⁶ <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impactresearch/regions-2017/world2017.pdf>

⁵⁷ March YE

⁵⁸ <https://www.tourismnewzealand.com/about/about-the-tourism-industry/> and <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/tourism-satellite-account-2018>

Based on the above, it is expected that international visitor numbers to Aotea Great Barrier Island will be constrained for some time. This will require far greater reliance on the domestic holiday market visiting the island over the period 2022-28.

Visitor perceptions are influenced by their knowledge of the destination, the distance they need to travel to the destination, media coverage, advertising, their available holiday time and whether it is a first or repeat visit. For example, in short-haul markets, such as Australia, New Zealand is a highly achievable destination. These visitors often travel to New Zealand more than once and purchase shorter, more frequent trips. With familiarity comes the confidence to plan their trip, travel to destinations beyond the gateways or travel in a less structured, more independent style.

In long-haul travel markets, such as the USA and Europe, New Zealand is seen as a destination that requires a large commitment of both time and money. There is much greater pressure on first-time visitors to see as much as possible or to see the 'icons'. In many instances, long-haul travellers believe New Zealand is the 'trip of a

lifetime' and see it as a single visit destination. However, constrained itineraries often mean these visitors "tick off" the bucket list items which are often promoted in New Zealand destination marketing (such as Milford Sound, Rotorua, and the Glaciers) The visitor who is time poor travelling to New Zealand with a "tick off" bucket list are not the visitors that the community and operators on the island wish to attract.

The opportunity for Aotea Great Barrier Island, therefore, lies in focusing on:

- The domestic market (especially Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, but also further afield - Wellington and Christchurch
- The Australian market, including as part of short breaks (Aotea Great Barrier Island offers a new and exciting destination which many Australians have not experienced) as well as part of longer trips around New Zealand
- Repeat international visitors to New Zealand, rather than those first-timers who are focused on the bucket list destinations
- Special interest travellers (for example, outdoors/nature lovers, and walkers/trampers/mountain bikers).

5.4. Strategic Alignment

This plan aligns with work being completed by the local board, TAU, Auckland Council and Central Government agencies. Table 9 outlines a number of plans, strategies and projects assessed in the creation of this plan,

Table 9: Plans/Strategies/Projects Assessed

Level	Plan/Strategy
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy (May 2019), MBIE ▪ Tourism New Zealand Four Year Strategic Plan, Tourism New Zealand ▪ Tourism 2025 & Beyond, Tourism Industry Aotearoa ▪ Welcoming Communities Pilot - Te waharoa ki nga hapori ▪ DOC Heritage and Visitor Strategy (January 2021) ▪ The Regional Growth Programme 2017, MBIE and Ministry of Primary Industries
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Destination AKL 2025 ▪ Te Mahere Aronga 2021-2024 ▪ Re-imagining Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Harnessing the regions potential - https://informedfutures.org/auckland/ ▪ Te Mahere Whanake Ōhanga - Auckland Economic Development Action Plan 2021-2024 (EDAP) ▪ The Auckland Plan 2050 ▪ Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan ▪ Sea Change - Tai Timu Tai Pari ▪ Environmental Defence Society – various reports
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board Plan 2020 ▪ Aotea Great Barrier Island Local Economic Overview 2019 (published March 2020) ▪ Aotea Great Barrier Island Visitors Strategy 2018-2023 ▪ Great Barrier Island Sustainability Stocktake May 2015 ▪ Aotea Great Barrier Island Ecology Vision Phase 2 Report, November 2016 ▪ Historic Heritage Survey Aotea Great Barrier Island May 2019 ▪ Affordable Housing on Great Barrier Island ▪ A Micro-Abattoir on Great Barrier Island

5.4.1. The Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board Plan 2020

The Aotea/Great Barrier Local Board Plan 2020 Plan⁵⁹ has 13 outcomes at its core:

1. Mana whenua will prosper
2. Our community is resilient to the impacts of climate change
3. We have marine protection and conservation around our coastline
4. Preservation of our island identity
5. Our Community Groups are resilient
6. Our local economy is strong, stable, and sustainable
7. We have sustainable tourism
8. Our environment is protected and enhanced
9. We reduce, reuse, and recycle to achieve zero waste
10. Our Dark Sky Sanctuary is protected and maintained
11. We have safe roads and walkways
12. Smarter housing opportunities will be explored
13. Our island infrastructure is future-proofed.

The development of the plan was supported by the Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board, given:

- The unique position of island destinations and their infrastructure needs and challenges
- Sustainable tourism as a sector has the potential to grow the island's liveability and economic well-being, to support community needs first, and visitor needs second
- Tourism's ability to help support greater awareness of the unique Island environment being offered and the potential to encourage a financial contribution from the visitor sector to support environmental protection and improvements
- Tourism's ability to contribute positively to the social and economic well-being of Aotea Great Barrier Island.

5.4.2. Destination AKL 2025

Destination AKL 2025 is the destination management plan adopted by Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED), now Tātake Auckland Unlimited (TAU), in 2018⁶⁰. The Destination AKL 2025 vision is for Auckland to be sustainable — economically, socially, and environmentally — as a place to live and work and as a place to visit. The plan was formed around six strategic imperatives that reflect:

⁵⁹ Aotea/Great Barrier Local Board 2020 Plan, Auckland Council

⁶⁰ Destination AKL 2025, ATEED, 2018

- The desire to have a clear identity for what Auckland is and what it aspires to be in the future
- The desire to focus more on value whilst maintaining sustainable volume growth
- The desire of industry and the community to protect the environment, support cultural development, and improve profitability
- The desire for improved physical and digital connectivity, regional dispersal, way-finding and collaborative decision making
- Recognition that the visitor economy requires greater human capacity and capability
- Feedback that ATEED and the industry need to be more data-led, content-rich and digitally focused in destination marketing.

In addition, *Auckland's Sustainable Visitor Economy – "Towards a Low-Carbon, Sustainable Future"*⁶¹ which was commissioned by TAU is linked to Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan. This requirement underpins many of the initiatives required for this plan, to ensure alignment of principles and outcomes for a highly sustainable visitor economy.

5.4.3. Auckland Council – Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan

Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan is Auckland's long-term approach to climate action. It sets out the priority action areas to deliver Auckland's goals to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The core goals are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 per cent by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050; and to adapt to the impacts of climate change by ensuring we plan for the changes we face under our current emissions pathway.⁶²

5.4.3.1. Auckland Council – Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy

This strategy outlines a vision: 'Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland's indigenous biodiversity is flourishing and treasured.' It outlines eight objectives that range from regeneration of indigenous biodiversity to sustainable use and refers to "protect biodiversity while enabling and balancing the four well-beings" and goes as far as to say "the council will develop and resource effective partnerships with iwi, hapū and whanau, individuals and community groups including carvers and weavers, kura kaupapa, where wananga, kohanga reo and Māori landowners to enable sustainable use of biodiversity."⁶³

5.4.3.2. Auckland Council – Regional Parks Management Plan 2022

The Regional Parks Management Plan (RPMP) 2022 sets the vision and direction for managing our regional parks network for 10 years. This is of particular relevance to Aotea Great Barrier Island's Glenfern Sanctuary Regional Park, which the plan notes is "where threatened and endemic species are protected. It is a hub for environmental and sustainability activities including education immersion experiences and a must see destination for all visitors to Aotea / Great Barrier Island. Through the combined efforts of mana whenua, the Glenfern Sanctuary Trust and many others, the mauri of te taiao / the environment and of people is restored."⁶⁴

5.4.3.3. New Zealand–Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy

The New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy sets out a more deliberate and active role for the government in tourism. Through this strategy, the Government states it wants "to make sure that the many benefits from tourism are realised, while managing the impacts. The Government works as a steward, looking across the system to make sure it is working effectively and as an actor through investments and interventions."⁶⁵

5.4.4. Other Supporting Info

5.4.4.1. Aotea Great Barrier Island Demographic Trends

5.4.4.1.1. Estimated Resident Population

Figure 14 provides population estimates from 1998 – 2022. As of 2022, there were an estimated 1,200 residents on Aotea Great Barrier Island. The island has predominantly a New Zealand European population, with a sizable Māori community (approximately 20 percent identify as Māori as of the 2018 Census⁶⁶). From 1998 to 2008, the island's population declined by 26 per cent (310 residents), though in recent years (2008 onwards) it has slightly increased, albeit, not in line with broader Auckland region trends (which increased by 21 per cent or just under 290,000 residents from 2008 - 2022).⁶⁷

The relatively small size of the island's resident population base does make it challenging to support the sustainability of retail, food and beverage establishments, and other facilities that require a resident market to sustain them during low season visitor periods.

⁶¹ Auckland's Sustainable Visitor Economy: "Towards A Low-Carbon, Sustainable Future", MartinJenkins, 2021

⁶² Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan, Auckland Council, 2020

⁶³ Auckland Council's Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy, Auckland Council, 2012

⁶⁴ Regional Parks Management Plan 2022, Auckland Council, 2022 p.212

⁶⁵ New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy, MBIE, 2019

⁶⁶ Stats NZ 2018 Census place summaries, Great Barrier Local Board Area

⁶⁷ Subnational population estimates (TA, SA2), by age and sex, at 30 June 1996-2022 (2022 boundaries), Stats NZ

5.4.4.1.2. Age Profile

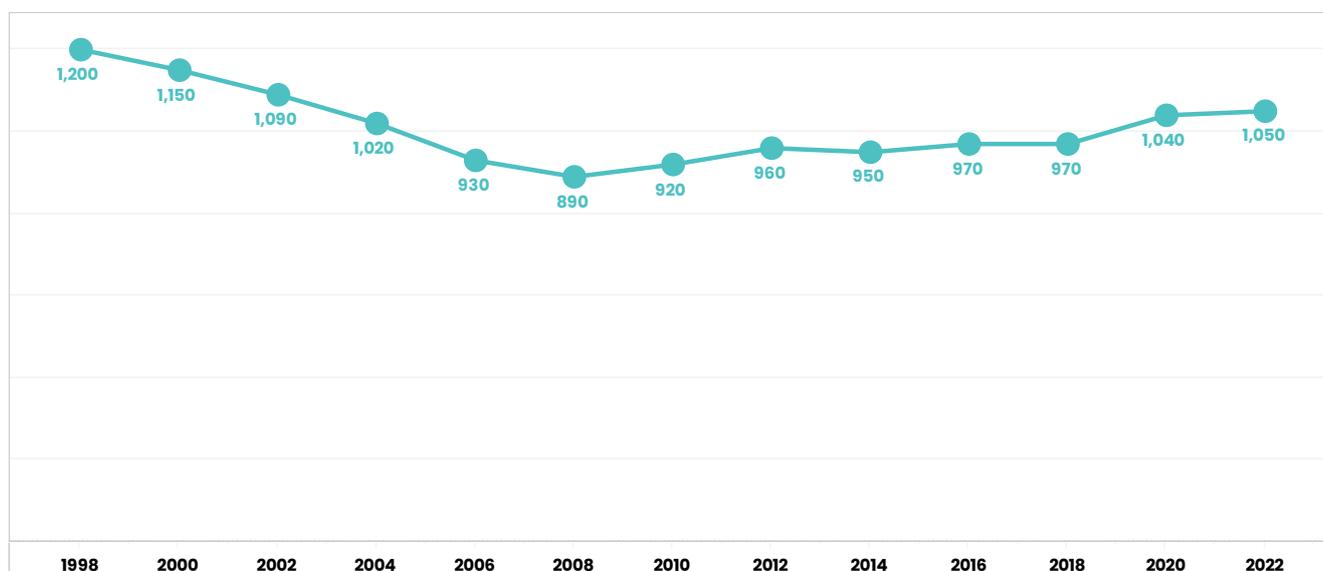
Aotea Great Barrier Island has an older resident age profile (see Figure x). Although there are likely many reasons for this older profile, the cost of purchasing property on the island and with limited employment opportunities are likely drivers. According to Stats NZ, over the period 1996 – 2022, the median age across the island has increased from 37.5 years to 53.2 years (compared with Auckland’s median age of 36.0 years in 2022).⁶⁸

This ageing population, particularly when compared with other parts of Auckland and the Hauraki Gulf, is important to recognise because:

- An older population requires different services and facilities compared with younger populations;

- Older residents are likely to have different consumer preferences regarding visitor experiences;
- Older populations typically have stronger spending power due to having higher levels of disposable income
- Older populations are likely to have a wide ‘visiting friend and relatives’ networks that have a different profile (and preferences) to younger populations
- Older populations are also less likely to want to establish a new tourism business or to make investment into existing or new businesses generally
- For an outdoor focussed destination such as Aotea Great Barrier Island, older populations are also far less likely to be interested in acting as tour guides, tour boat operators and more active forms of tourism operators.

Figure 14: Aotea Great Barrier Island Local Resident Population Estimates⁶⁹



⁶⁸ Subnational population estimates (TA, SA2), by age and sex, at 30 June 1996-2022 (2022 boundaries), Stats NZ

⁶⁹ Subnational population estimates (TA, SA2), by age and sex, at 30 June 1996-2022 (2022 boundaries), Stats NZ

Figure 15: Aotea Great Barrier Island Local Resident Population Estimates by Age Group⁷⁰

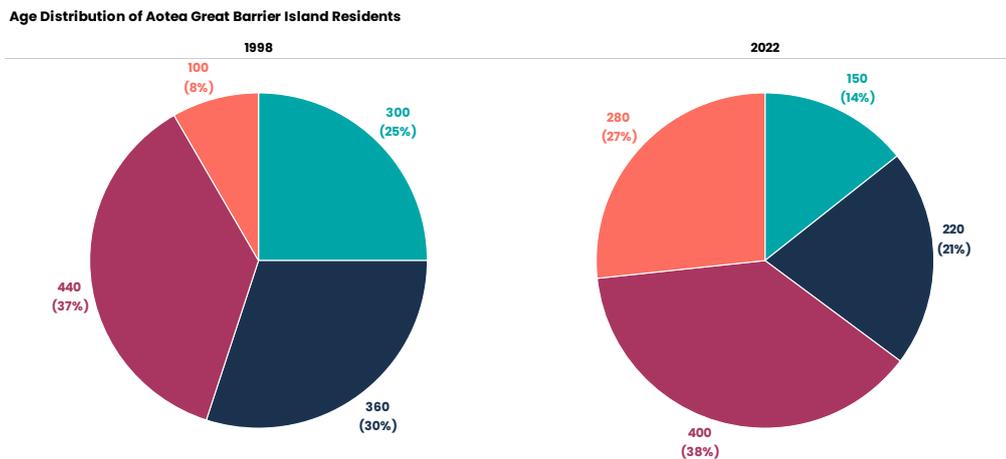
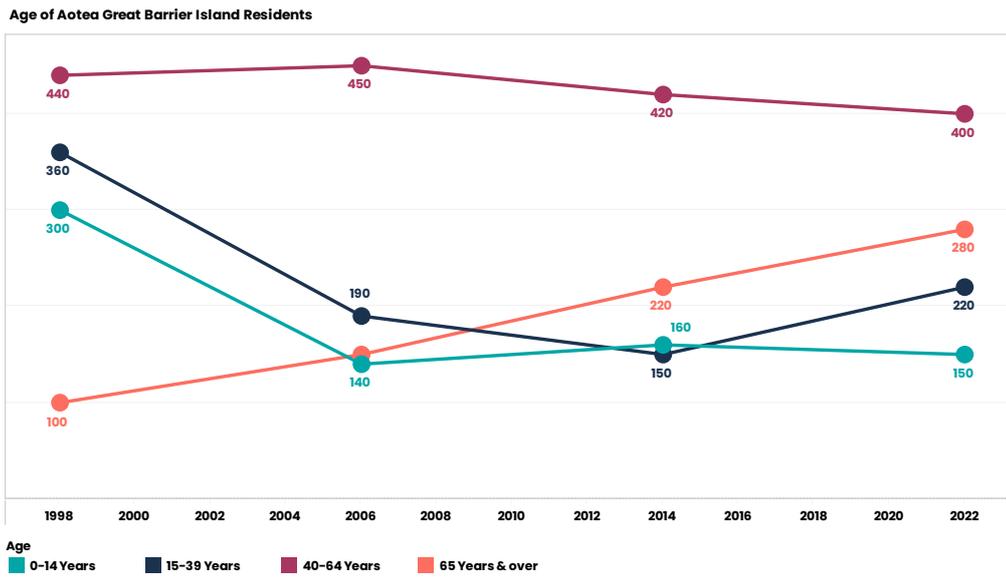
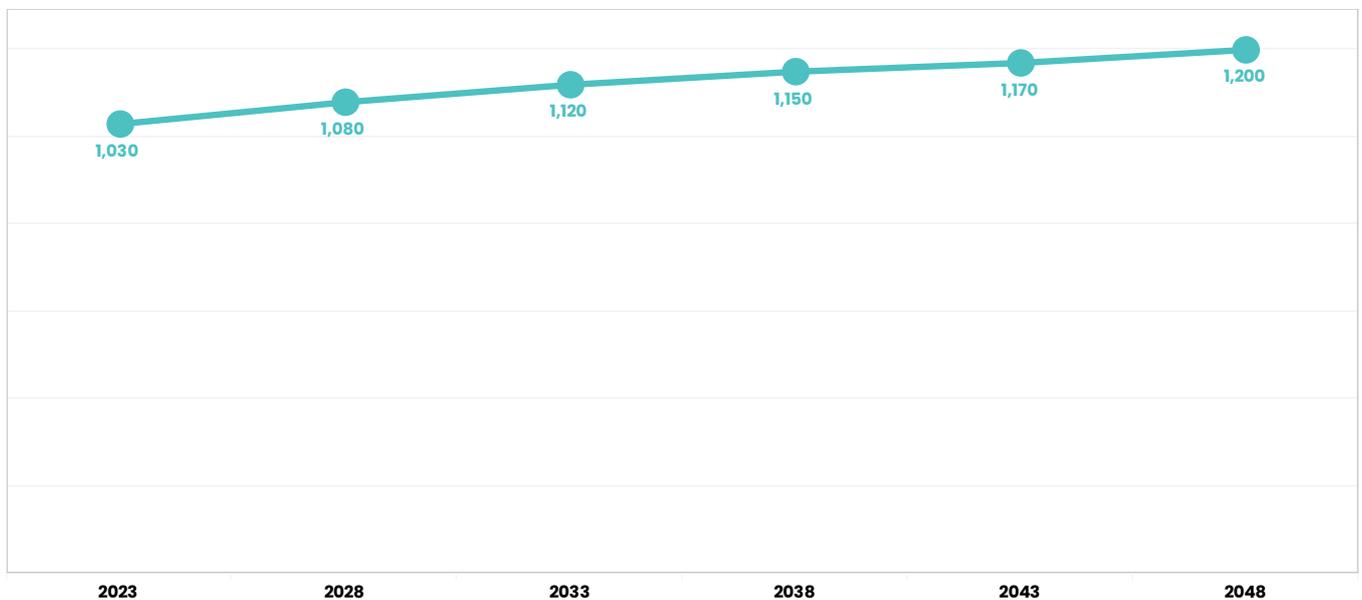


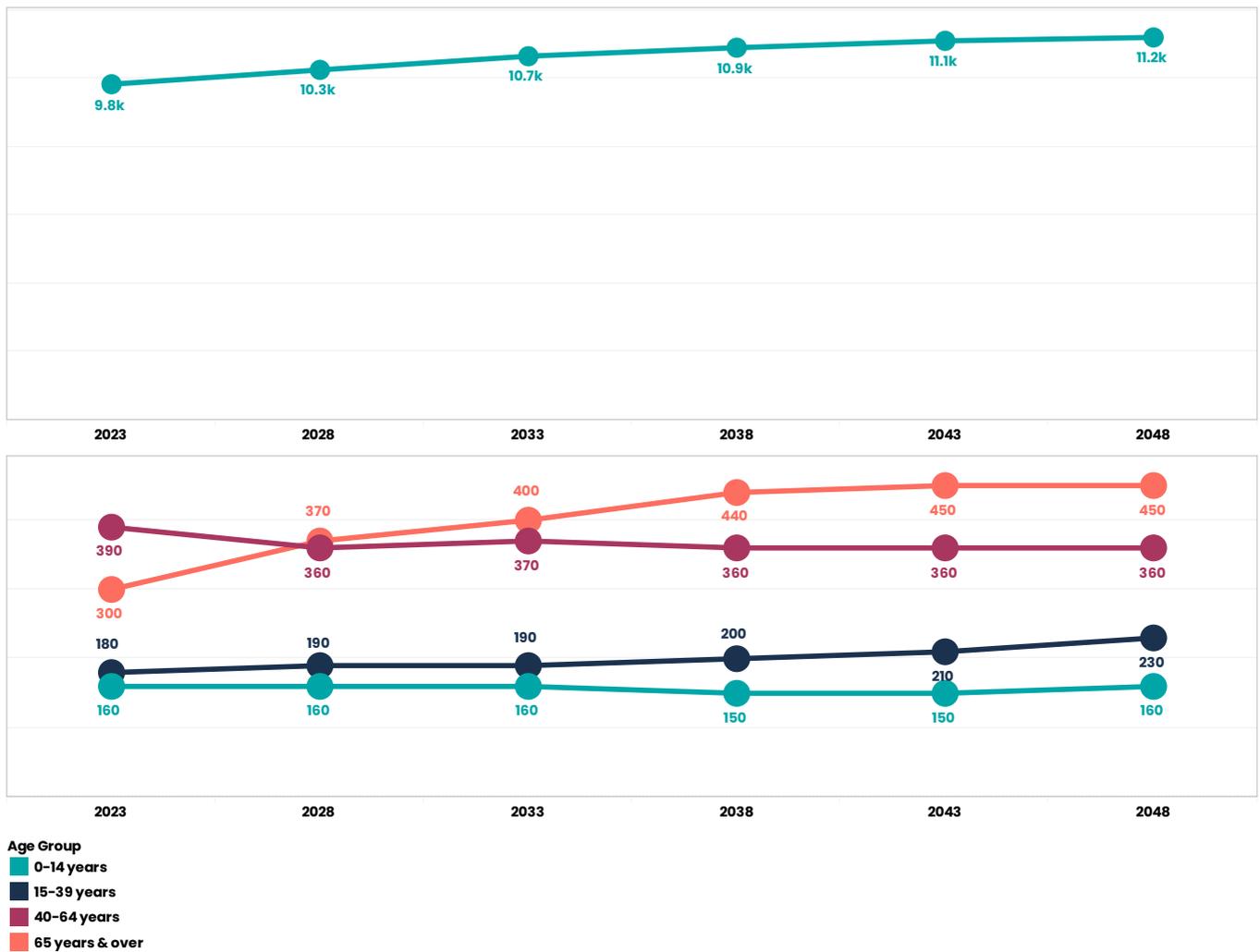
Figure 16: Population Projections⁷¹



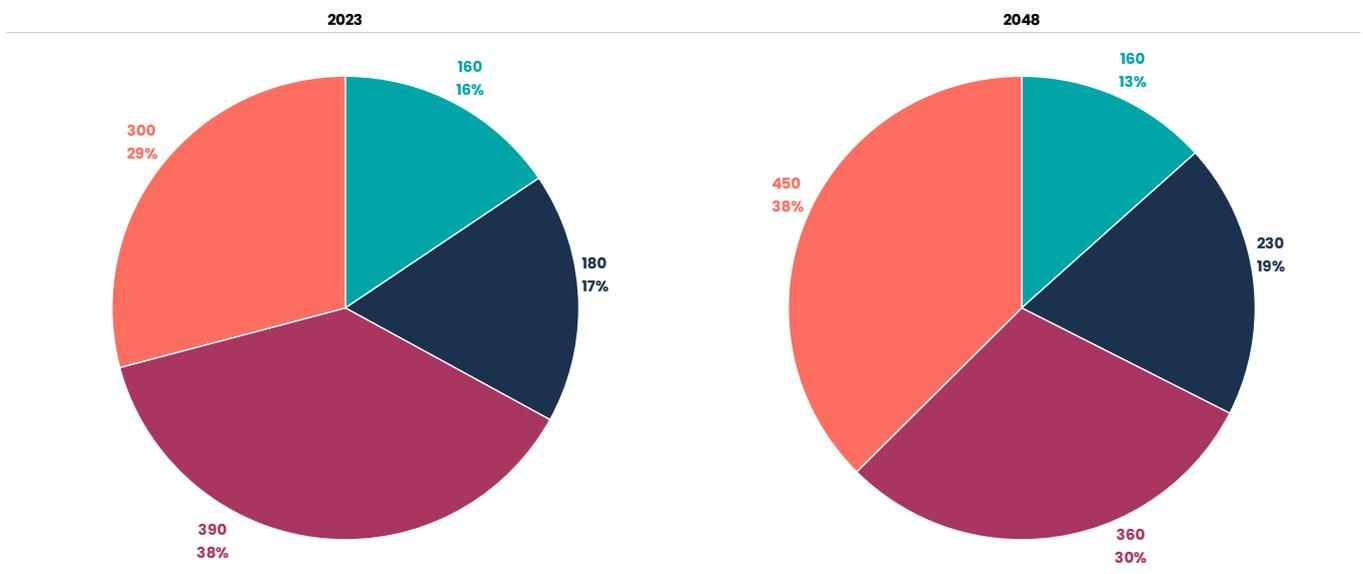
⁷⁰ Subnational population estimates (TA, SA2), by age and sex, at 30 June 1996-2020 (2020 boundaries), Stats NZ

⁷¹ Subnational population projections, by age and sex, 2018 (base)-2048, Medium Scenario, Stats NZ

Figure 17: Population Projections by Age⁷²



Age Distribution Projections



⁷² Subnational population projections, by age and sex, 2018(base)-2048, Medium Scenario, Stats NZ

5.4.4.2. Visitor Levies & Visitor Cap Mechanisms

Visitor levies and visitor cap mechanisms were raised as ideas to consider during consultation on this plan. Visitor levies can be applied to visitors to a destination as a demand management tool and revenue stream, which can be used to support visitor infrastructure upgrades and development. Visitor caps limit the number of people who can visit a destination. Lord Howe Island in Australia limits visitor numbers to 400 at any one time to avoid overcrowding during peak periods.⁷³

Visitor levies and visitor cap mechanisms have not been included in the recommendations in this plan. Any future implementation of these mechanisms would require potential legislative change and wider consultation. For the sake of completeness, examples of destinations in New Zealand that have implemented visitor levies are outlined below.

5.4.4.2.1. Stewart Island/Rakiura Visitor Levy⁷⁴

The Southland District Council (Stewart Island/Rakiura Visitor Levy) Empowering Bill ('the Bill'), a local bill in the name of Eric Roy MP, was introduced into the House of Representatives on 26 May 2010 and enacted in 2012. 'The purpose of this Act is to provide a mechanism for the Council to set and collect levies and obtain revenue from passengers travelling to Stewart Island/Rakiura, in order to better provide services, facilities, and amenities for those persons while they are on the Island.'

The levy is collected from visitors⁷⁵ by 'approved' operators on behalf of Southland District Council, and applied to:

- Funding, wholly or in part, activities used by visitors or any class of excluded visitor
- Funding, wholly or in part, activities on the Island for the benefit of visitors or any class of excluded visitor
- Mitigating the adverse effects of visitors or excluded visitors on the environment of the Island.

The visitor levy is also collected from any cruise ship whose passengers disembark onto the island. The amount of the levy is set out in the Stewart Island/Rakiura Visitor Levy Bylaw. 'In the event an increase in the levy or revenue amount is considered, public consultation will occur via the Southland District Council Annual/Long Term Plan process and a bylaw amendment process. If Council decides to increase the levy amount, the increase will not take effect until 1 October in the year following the decision to adopt the plan.' As of October 2021, levies collected had amounted to \$1.2m, 77 per cent of which had been allocated to infrastructure development.

5.4.4.2.2. The Chatham Islands Visitor Levy⁷⁶

The Chatham Islands Voluntary Tourism Levy is a voluntary visitor levy of \$25 per passenger that is paid to Tourism Chatham Islands. The levy was introduced in 2019 and is invested back into the development and management of tourism on the Chatham Islands.

The levy was an initiative of the tourism operators that service the Chatham Islands and has been generally well supported by the industry. The island typically receives around 2000 tourists a year (although this has increased markedly since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic), meaning the levy has the potential to generate up to \$50,000 per annum.

While the amount collected may appear low, given the small number of ratepayers, the levy makes a significant contribution to the islands.

5.4.4.3. The Environment and Regenerative Tourism

The visitor economy sector puts pressure on the environment. There is also a need to respond to climate challenges and line up with Auckland's climate targets, which are outlined in *Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan*. In parallel, two key TAU-led strategies – *Destination AKL 2025* and the *Destination AKL Recovery Plan (DARP)*⁷⁷ – both place sustainability front-and centre. Both identified the need for:

- Baseline data - A better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of Auckland's visitor economy, in terms of emissions and sustainability more broadly
- Leadership and an action plan, developed in collaboration with the sector, to guide the visitor economy's recovery towards a more resilient, adaptable and low impact (regenerative) sector

A high-level 'roadmap for change' has been developed to support the sector's transition towards being regenerative, setting out key evidence-based actions that will reduce emissions resulting from the visitor economy and support the sector to operate in a more sustainable manner.

*Auckland's Sustainable Visitor Economy: Towards A Low-Carbon, Sustainable Future*⁷⁸ includes baseline data (or where are we now?), and a plan of action (what changes will we make?) which were stress-tested by TAU and organisations from the visitor economy. The report finishes with brief recommendations about how TAU can take these actions forward and ensure that progress is made.

MBIE has indicated that transitioning to a regenerative tourism model is central to the Government's vision for tourism. While 'sustainable tourism' aims to have no negative impact on a place,

⁷³ <https://lordhoweisland.info/>, accessed February 2023

⁷⁴ Stewart Island/Rakiura Visitor Levy Policy, Southland District Council, 2019

⁷⁵ Exclusions include ratepayers, tenants, mana whenua, and does not include visitors who stay more than 21 days continuously

⁷⁶ Tourism Funding Toolkit, Morrison Low, 2022

⁷⁷ Destination Auckland Recover Plan (DARP), Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, 2020

⁷⁸ Auckland's Sustainable Visitor Economy: "Towards A Low-Carbon, Sustainable Future", MartinJenkins, 2021

'regenerative tourism' aims to have a net-positive effect. Under regenerative tourism, visitors travel with the intent of leaving a destination in a better position than it was before they arrived.

According to MBIE:

- Tourism must add more than only economic value, it must actively enrich our communities and help protect and restore our environment
- Building a regenerative model for tourism is important for ensuring the long-term sustainability and resilience of tourism. As tourism is a significant sector of our economy, building a regenerative tourism sector will also contribute to wider efforts to decarbonise our economy
- Regenerative tourism will ensure that visitors to Aotearoa New Zealand have a positive impact on our communities and leave as storytellers who are able to share our unique culture and heritage with the world.

Regenerative tourism will play a central role in the refresh of *Destination AKL 2025*, with information gleaned from the process of creating this plan and localised DMPs for other regions within

Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland forming part of this refresh. This will be dependent on budget being available, particularly considering TAU's and Auckland Council's current budget constraints.

Acknowledgments

Many people and organisations were extremely generous with their time and provided valuable insights. The organisations are noted below:

- The Aotea / Great Barrier Local Board
- Destination Great Barrier Island Trust
- Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea Trust
- Aotea Great Barrier Island volunteer organisations
- Aotea Great Barrier Island community
- Aotea Great Barrier Island tourism operators
- Tātaki Auckland Unlimited
- Auckland Transport
- Department of Conservation (DOC)
- Other tourism industry operators
- Previous residents who have since left the island
- Representatives of major central government departments and other agencies.

