

The Waiheke Project

Overview of tourism, wine and development on Waiheke Island



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Tourism and Wine on Waiheke Island:

Waiheke Project Report¹

1. Introduction

Extensive research on Waiheke Island yields insights into the complex dynamics that are accompanying change and development on the urban fringe of Auckland. The growth of the tourism and wine industries both reflects and contributes to these changes, with implications for the environment, the economy and society.

Waiheke is revealed as a thriving tourism destination, with a growing reputation as the 'island of wine'. The industries are entwined: wine has become an important part of Waiheke's tourism proposition; tourism is a critical part of Waiheke's wine industry.

Waiheke presents a distinctive combination of further aspects, and this distinctiveness underpins its ability to develop a range of values.

Waiheke makes an important contribution to Auckland's appeal to tourists with its unique combination of harbour, beaches and scenery coupled with its range of cultural features: a diverse and interesting community, sculpture, food and wine. Tourism on Waiheke offers an economic opportunity for businesses on the island, and contributes to Auckland's regional economy: while extremely popular amongst Aucklanders, Waiheke is also one of the prime hinterland attractions for tourists visiting Auckland and easily accessible from downtown.

Waiheke's wine industry makes a small but vital contribution to national wine production, and provides a further dimension to Waiheke's appeal to tourists. Waiheke wine is of growing importance in its own right. The island's wine producers have made excellent wine, some very expensive, and have made innovative decisions to sustain their businesses. The commercial imperatives of operators vary considerably, but for many, tourism is a critical component in their operations and marketing.

Our research suggests that Waiheke's proximity to Auckland, its multiple attractions and its popularity impose considerable pressure for further development, both of Waiheke as a residential maritime suburb of Auckland and as a tourism/wine tourism destination. Opportunities abound for building on:

- NZ's established reputation as clean and green, unspoilt and beautiful
- Auckland's yachting heritage and the 'America's Cup' legacy
- NZ's growing sophistication as a wine and food destination in attracting international visitors
- the appeal of Waiheke to domestic travellers, helping to buffer the vagaries of international tourism fluctuations

¹ I am extremely grateful to Dr Nick Lewis for his invaluable help with the project.

However, Waiheke's recent growth expansion and existing popularity as a destination are already creating pressures that require resolution. Our study has shown risks and concerns that Waiheke's uniqueness could be undermined if its distinctiveness is not protected:

- degrading the experience – infrastructure, rubbish
- overstretching resources – water, sewage
- changing the community – inappropriate development, demographic change
- distinctiveness being overridden or undervalued

This suggests the need for careful planning and recognition of what it is that makes Waiheke special. We analyse the existing situation and projected further development. This leads to a variety of recommendations. It is critical that planning takes sufficient regard for distinctiveness, enabling the blend of different ways in which Waiheke is imagined, that is “imaginaries”: different visions of what Waiheke is and should or could be, to coexist.

In analysing our Waiheke data we (Lucy Baragwanath and Nick Lewis) have been guided by the poststructural political economy approach articulated by Lewis (2009) and Le Heron (2009). This is a project of knowledge production that proceeds through engagement but not on the basis of a prior political project, a presumed expertise, or a framing conditioned by development. We engage in order to stimulate knowledge production that contributes to nudging things along and affects decision-making. This involves bringing different voices into the room rather than seeking to bend history to a particular arrow. The approach also re-imagines the contribution of the University in new ways for a new time, and acts upon that imagination; as opposed to pursuing a definitive answer for a definitive course of action.

2. Essential findings

Waiheke's distinctive character, close to central Auckland yet far removed in terms of experience, landscape and community, can lift the appeal of Auckland and New Zealand as a tourist destination. Its fast-developing international reputation as a centre for fine wine complements its other attractions. Yet the lesson of its recent history and its planning to date shows an urgent need to identify and respond to both opportunities and risks of Waiheke's various future possibilities (Baragwanath and Lewis 2010d, 2009).

The Waiheke Project, undertaken by researchers at the University of Auckland into tourism and wine on Waiheke, reveals important insights for the new Auckland Council, the New Zealand Government and the University of Auckland.

- For the new Auckland Council:
 - The need for investment in infrastructure (roading, water extraction, sewage disposal and waste management)
 - The need to synchronise functions currently divided between Auckland City and Auckland Regional Councils (such as resource consents, water extraction permits, helicopter landing rights)
 - The inevitable pressure for development at the margin of a large city and the need for planning to accommodate further development that retains the distinctive character of Waiheke in modification to the District Plan, the Metropolitan Urban Limit and green belt planning
 - The need for the distinctive requirements of the (vocal and active) community to be balanced against wider regional needs, including the implications for democratic participation and representation

- For central government:
 - The practical challenge in implementing the NZ Tourism Strategy 2015 and consolidating the success of the 100% Pure marketing campaign in boosting the number of tourists while simultaneously maintaining the distinctiveness and unique character that attracts tourists to NZ
 - The need to consider evolving the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement to meet Waiheke's future role
 - The potential to leverage past and ongoing national investment in Auckland's assets, including the America's Cup and yachting on Auckland's Hauraki Gulf and the national cycle-way
 - The potential to further leverage investment in the wine industry
 - Insights into the links with other initiatives in particular places including the SuperGold card transport subsidy scheme

- For The University of Auckland:
 - The value of Waiheke as a case study for different departments within the University
 - The resource management implications of current and predicted activity on the island (Law School)

- The planning implications for a particular locality under the new unitary Auckland Council (Planning Dept and School of Environment)
- The planning requirements to ensure that different perspectives are incorporated as the inevitable development at Auckland's margins is managed (Planning Dept)
- The value of the Waiheke wine region for the University's wine science programme (Wine Science Programme)
- The value of Waiheke's tourism industry as a case study for the Business School (Business School)

3. Synopsis of report

Waiheke's distinctive character, 35 minutes from downtown Auckland yet far removed from the hustle of the central city, has potential to lift the appeal of Auckland and New Zealand as a tourist destination. Extrapolation of its recent history and analysis of current planning shows an urgent need to identify both opportunities and risks of the options for Waiheke's future. Waiheke encapsulates the complex interplay of issues of key importance to NZ. Sweeping changes have occurred over 20 years affecting the island's landscape, economy, community and politics, driven by a combination of factors. Two industries reflecting, as well as helping to bring about, the changes are tourism and wine. The analysis reveals insights with broad application in NZ, centring on questions of social, environmental and economic sustainability.

Overview of key issues that have emerged from the Waiheke study:

1. **Auckland governance:** resource management planning is critical to future development, underpinning the ongoing and future success of tourism and wine industries.
 - a. The need for regulatory authorities to value and provide for local distinctiveness and unique requirements of particular locations.
 - b. Frustration with the Auckland City Council's handling of important issues on Waiheke
 - c. Opportunities for The University of Auckland in debate around the Super City

2. **Auckland tourism:** tourism is an industry of key importance to Auckland and NZ. Waiheke is a critical magnet for potential tourists to Auckland, as well as an exemplar of the challenges and possibilities that confront its development.
 - a. Sustainability and enhancing potential of the growth in tourism in Auckland as a whole and on Waiheke in particular, given the international perception of travel to NZ as carbon-excessive, the potentially adverse impacts of tourism on the NZ environment, the economic sustainability of individual enterprises, and the impact of tourism on the host community
 - b. Competitiveness and lack of unity of purpose among organisations

3. **Auckland wine** – wine plays a small part in Auckland's economy and Auckland's contribution to national wine production is also tiny. But the wine industry has become an increasingly important component of tourism. Waiheke illustrates the tensions, potential and risks that face the ongoing development of the wine industry, with implications for other wine regions.
 - a. Perception and reality – types of enterprise, the real nature of the businesses
 - b. Commercial imperatives of wine production
 - c. Connections between wine and tourism: imagining Waiheke

Each issue is discussed below, incorporating a snapshot of the present, options for the future and past developments that shed light on the way this unfolds, as are policy implications and university engagement. Four areas have been expanded in parallel papers:

Paper 1: Change and development at the rural-urban margin (Baragwanath and Lewis 2010c):

Pressure for development occurs at the margin of most large and growing cities, raising questions about the way that distinctiveness and visual amenity can be retained while accommodating change. Waiheke is renowned for its distinctive community: people value it and are prepared to take action to try to protect it from inappropriate change. Waiheke has become increasingly accessible as the ferry connections have improved, enhancing its popularity for tourists and residents. In turn, property values have risen, new economic opportunities have emerged, and the island's residential population has changed significantly. Clearly, socioeconomic and environmental changes are occurring on Waiheke. These changes are interpreted by different people in different ways, are frequently contradictory, and feature in the contests over change and development. We examine these changes through the concept of geographical imaginaries.

We have said that by 'geographical imaginaries' we mean different visions of what Waiheke is and should or could be; with the consequence that the ways in which people imagine Waiheke in turn affects how they behave. An imaginary is more specific than the abstract "imagination": the latter is an opening up notion, implying new possibilities and possibly even utopian notions; while a geographical *imaginary* is a particular representation of place that has creative effects. It implies a cultural and political project in which the imagination is connected to identity and to political economy, becoming in effect a discourse of place. What is interesting is when we get multiple and often contradictory geographical imaginaries operating around a particular place.

The concept of geographical imaginaries helps us understand how different imaginaries are mobilised and manifest in social practices. We examine certain imaginaries associated with Waiheke and consider the implications of contradictions that operate between them. We argue that these are actualised in economic practice, in terms of collective endeavour. Through talking with people, different images emerge. These can be seen to be operationalised and actualised in the practices of firms, the decisions taken by winegrowers, in collective enterprise, and in debates over development and planning. Such practices are actualised in contradictions which can be seen in the marketing and investment practices of wine and tourism enterprises on Waiheke. We identify a range of ways in which people imagine Waiheke, which affects their engagement with the island and how they envisage its future development. This provides insights into understanding change and resistance to change at the urban-rural fringe.

Paper 2: Wine imaginaries (Baragwanath and Lewis 2010a):

Waiheke has a growing reputation as a wine-growing region. The Waiheke Winegrowers Association has worked to promote Waiheke as the 'Island of Wine', encouraging the image of a boutique setting in which fine wines are produced that command premium prices. The paper explores the diversity of ways in which different wine enterprises on the island employ imaginaries in selling their wine.

Paper 3: Political activism and the protection of distinctiveness (Baragwanath and Lewis 2010b):

British academic Sarah Neal coined the expression 'strange towns' (meaning different from any norm) as she explored why some small, rural towns in the UK become associated with progressive politics and radical or counter-cultures. We consider Waiheke as a 'strange island' in terms of its high levels of political activism and ways in which different groups mobilise in order to preserve its distinctiveness.

Paper 4: The construction of a wine region: the 'island of wine', the 'wine village', the 'Auckland wine region' (Baragwanath, Howland, and Lewis 2010):

We examine how Waiheke has emerged as a wine region to be compared with other tightly defined wine areas, both in the Auckland region (Matakana, West Auckland) and in Martinborough.

4. The project plan

4.1 Background to study

The research on Waiheke Island was conducted by researchers at the University of Auckland as an internal study funded by the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Development Fund. It was designed to develop an understanding of the sustainability of the wine and tourism industries on Waiheke Island, and to identify key strategic issues of interest to the University. In meeting these objectives it has also revealed Waiheke as a microcosm of some of the critical dynamics at play in Auckland and NZ more generally, relating to tangible and perceptual aspects of industry development, community change, economic impact and environmental modification; and the interplay of these factors, particularly as they relate to two important industries in NZ: tourism and wine.

4.2 Tourism in NZ

Tourism is one of NZ's most significant export earners (second only to dairy in 2009), and contributed \$6.4 billion, or 3.8 percent, to NZ's GDP in the year to March 2009 (Statistics New Zealand 2009). It has multiple indirect benefits for NZ, helping diversify the economy, contributing to New Zealand's image and presence in offshore markets, underpinning NZ's aviation linkages to key markets, adding economic vitality to regions through both international and domestic expenditure, generating economic benefits from protected assets such as the conservation estate and generating GST revenue from foreign exchange spending (Ministry of Tourism 2008).

Attesting to its strategic importance, in 2010 the Prime Minister, Hon John Key, is also Minister of Tourism. The Ministry's central role is to implement the NZ Tourism Strategy 2015, which envisages that in 2015, tourism is valued as the leading contributor to a sustainable New Zealand economy. To achieve this requires overcoming several barriers, including growing concerns internationally about the impact of travel on climate change, and the environmental impact of tourism within NZ². "Tourism relies more than any other sector on our continuing sustainability as a nation. This is because New Zealand itself is the product we are selling" (Ministry of Tourism 2007).

Tourism is also a critical component of Auckland's economy. Based on 2006 figures:

- 27% of total national tourism expenditure was spent in Auckland, amounting to \$3.8 billion
- Tourism directly generated \$2 billion of GDP, equivalent to 4% of GDP
- Auckland Airport received 70% of all NZ's international visitors, and the sea port was the most popular of the NZ ports attracting 70 cruise ships

² Other challenges identified are exchange rate fluctuations, and restricted aviation capacity; and locally, the availability of appropriately qualified and skilled staff, and domestic air capacity and transport links (Ministry of Tourism 2009a).

- 7.4% of the workforce in Auckland is directly employed in tourism (Auckland Regional Council 2009b)

Visitor arrivals to Auckland increased considerably over 10 years, rising 66% from 1998 to 2008 (Auckland Regional Council 2009b), and this growth is projected to continue, rising from 12.50m in 2008 to 13.66m in 2015 – an increase of 9.3% (1.16m) or 1.3% p.a. % (Ministry of Tourism 2009a). This anticipated growth is far greater than for any other NZ region (Ministry of Tourism 2009a).

Improving Auckland's tourism proposition has been identified as an important way to improve the city's economy. *Bringing the World to Auckland* (AucklandPlus 2007; Vuletich 2008), the regional visitor strategy, suggested that:

- the CBD is the least positive aspect of Auckland's tourism proposition
- the hinterland opportunities are good but access is difficult
- Auckland's history is under-recognised and important

These issues can be addressed through revitalising the CBD, improving connections to the hinterland, and telling better stories about Auckland's history and possibilities. Waiheke provides a perfect story: the beautiful island, quantum removed from downtown yet only 35 minutes away, offering a spectrum of possibilities for doing everything from swimming to fine dining. Easily accessible from downtown Auckland, Waiheke is a critical element in Auckland's tourism offering, combining beaches and natural beauty with sophisticated cultural opportunities. The entwining of image and perception: the ferry ride across the sparkling Waitemata harbour, the clean and green island, the vibrant social history (nuclear free, GE-free, organic), the cosmopolitanism of the vineyards, the picturesque landscape itself. Appealing to both domestic and international tourists, Waiheke offers a composite package of enticements. It already attracts over half a million tourists each year and can easily be accessed by passengers from cruise ships moored beside the ferry terminal, from the Britomart transport hub and from the central city hotels.

Waiheke emerges from our research as a microcosm of broader forces. It shows the importance of tourism, the need to consider questions of sustainability, and the interplay between tourism and other spheres of activity: principally the wine industry, the host community and local governance. Our research on Waiheke thus provides crucial insights into the broader context of tourism in NZ and in Auckland in particular.

4.3 Wine and wine tourism

The NZ wine industry has become the pin-up of NZ's primary commodity producers. During the past twenty years it has grown nearly 24% per annum; over the past five years it has contributed around 5% of NZ's total goods exports growth. In addition, the wine sector provides an important contribution to promoting NZ's national brand internationally: 'NZ' features on every bottle sold, helps to generate media exposure, and it also contributes to NZ's reputation as a 'clean, green, sustainable producer' (NZIER 2009: 6).

The wine industry has gone from strength to strength, making an increasing contribution to the NZ economy in terms of output, GDP and employment. The impact extends beyond sales and employment because of its links to tourism, retail sales and bars and restaurants (NZIER, 2009: 6). In the year to 2009, exports leapt 27% in volume to reach 113 million litres. Export value rose 24% to \$992 million, while estimated domestic sales of New Zealand wine were 60 million litres, up 29% on the previous year (NZWG 2009). The industry makes a substantial contribution to GDP:

After taking into account the NZ wine industry's interlinkages with the rest of the economy, the industry contributes over \$1.5 billion to NZ's GDP and supports over 16,500 jobs. The industry generates over \$3.5 billion of revenue through its own direct sales and the sales it induces from related sectors (NZIER, 2009: 6).

Wine therefore contributes importantly to NZ's reputation and image. Wine has become an increasingly prominent part of NZ's tourism appeal (Ministry of Tourism 2009b). According to the Ministry of Tourism, in 2008, 195,100 tourists visited a winery, accounting for 475,200 trips to a winery (as a tourist can take more than one trip in a year). 177,700 were international trips (or 8% of all international trips) and 297,500 were domestic trips (or 1% of all domestic trips). Eight percent of all international tourists visited a winery in 2008 (Ministry of Tourism, 2009). The Ministry of Tourism's definition of wine tourists is somewhat generous, referring to 'international and domestic visitors, aged 15 years and over, who visit a winery at least once while travelling in New Zealand' (ibid). Local residents visiting a winery within their area are not included in this definition.

Auckland attracts by far the most wine tourists of any NZ wine region, attracting 130,700 wine tourists in 2007-08, followed by Hawke's Bay (92,000), Marlborough (85,200) and Wellington (78,100) (Ministry of Tourism 2009b). Wine-growing in Auckland is centred on three areas: West Auckland, Matakana (80 kilometres or one hour's drive north of Auckland), and Waiheke.

This study offers insights into the inextricable links between wine and tourism: two high profile and important industries, and the sorts of issues with which they are associated in a particular setting. It also considers the ways in which tourism and wine are connected to NZ's economy, environment and society. Tourists are attracted to Waiheke/NZ as pristine, remote, clean, and friendly – '100% Pure'. These attributes are leveraged by multiple agencies for a plethora of purposes, such as NZ Winegrowers' strapline 'NZ Wine: Pure Discovery', building on the established reputation and reinforcing it.

4.4 Broader questions

Our work has provided a lens into a critical aspect of Auckland's economy, revealing links between work already done and projects still unfolding at the national and regional level, and within the University. These include:

- *Central Government:*
 - *NZ Tourism Strategy 2015 – key challenges of sustainability*
 - *Auckland: a world class city* – MED Briefing to Incoming Minister in 2008 noted that Auckland is NZ's key attractor of internationally mobile flows of skilled workers, international companies, capital, and high value economic activities
- *Regional governance*
 - Metro Project
 - Regional visitor plan *Bringing the World to Auckland*
 - Restructuring of local governance and emerging 'Super City'
- *University of Auckland*
 - Thematic Research Initiative focusing on 'sustainable Auckland'

The Waiheke project thus provides insights into broader questions around the economic, social and environmental facets of development, and into the nebulous and contested notion of sustainability.

4.5 The project

The University of Auckland's several connections with Waiheke Island prompted the decision to undertake a strategic overview of issues relating to the island.

- As a key institution in Auckland, the University has an interest in Auckland's and NZ's economy, of which tourism is an important sector. Waiheke is a vital part of Auckland's appeal.
- NZ's wine industry has become increasingly important to the national economy, contributing \$1 billion to GDP in 2009. An industry of this magnitude with a substantial presence in Auckland region is of interest to the University.
- The University runs a Wine Science Programme at the Tamaki campus. As part of the programme, it leases a vineyard at Fossil Bay on Waiheke to provide the practical component for students enrolled in the programme.
- The growth of the wine industry and wine tourism over twenty years has enhanced the appeal of Waiheke, increasing the numbers of visitors to the island. This has implications for the existing infrastructure: roads, footpaths, drainage, sewage and waste disposal, water and a range of other planning and engineering considerations of interest to the University.
- The ongoing pressure for further development on Waiheke and the fact that the area within the Metropolitan Urban Limit is almost fully allocated, require new planning initiatives.
- Substantial social, environmental, economic, demographic and political changes have occurred on the island over the past decade, making Waiheke a microcosm of broader changes occurring elsewhere in NZ.

- The University thus has a range of strategic objectives relating to Waiheke that make it an extremely useful case study, in close proximity to downtown Auckland.

The Waiheke Project had three key objectives.

- i. To develop a comprehensive understanding of tourism and wine tourism on Waiheke
- ii. To develop an understanding of the wine industry on Waiheke
- iii. To develop relationships between the University and different stakeholders connected with Waiheke (public officials, wine industry representatives, and tourist organisations).

The project involved four phases. Each is described in detail in the Appendix.

First, we convened a reference group comprising representatives from the University, from local, regional and central government agencies; from the wine industry and from Waiheke. We convened the group to recommend contacts and to formulate the approach, and to discuss findings.

Second, we conducted a visitor survey in late January and early February 2009 on Waiheke Island ferries to provide baseline information on visitors to Waiheke. 1140 parties were surveyed, representing the views of almost 3600 people. This provides a snapshot of Waiheke tourists and tourism at the peak of the domestic tourism season. The Report and Executive Summary are appended (Baragwanath and Lewis, 2009).

Third, we undertook an intensive study of Waiheke involving in-depth interviews with 40 people from different agencies, industries and backgrounds connected with Waiheke, tourism and wine to explore the multiple perspectives. Interviews were transcribed or summarised and analysed thematically.

Fourth, we presented our findings to a range of audiences including industry and academic conferences, key stakeholders, media and the reference group. Feedback was analysed and incorporated into our overall understanding.

Rotoroa Island and the Coromandel. The western coast has small coves and sheltered bays, and faces Auckland city. Waiheke lies within the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park. Climate data collected by winemakers support widespread claims that Waiheke's climate is slightly warmer and drier than Auckland, especially at key points in the grape growing cycle (although this is debated – see below³).

Waiheke has a permanent population of around 8,000 people. This number increases dramatically in summer with estimates of up to between 30,000 and 40,000 people (Beehive 2006; Waiheke Island Community Board 2009). The population is unevenly dispersed, with the majority clustered in the western half of the island which contains several small settlements (Oneroa, Blackpool, Surfdale, Ostend, Palm Beach, Onetangi) linked through ribbon development along the roads, many of which are narrow, winding, and steep.

The eastern half of the island comprises several large land-holdings with largely rural zoning: the 2500 acre Waiheke Station returned to Ngati Paoa, the tangata whenua, as the result of a Waitangi Tribunal claim in the 1980s (Waitangi Tribunal 1987), and the 4500 acre land-holding of John Spencer known as Man o' War Estate (formerly Stony Batter Estate), as well as smaller farms and coastal settlements.

Waiheke is administered by Auckland Regional Council and Auckland City Council at present, and will be incorporated into the new unitary Auckland Council after local body elections in October 2010. The western half of the island closest to Auckland is within the Metropolitan Urban Limit of Auckland City.

5.2 Snapshot: recent developments on Waiheke

- Rural gentrification
- Growing significance as a maritime suburb
- Expanding tourism industry
- Wine industry creating value from boutique imagery, wine tourism and high value wine
- Political hotbed (close scrutiny of change and activist culture)
- Within the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park
- UNESCO Biosphere Reserve proposal

5.3 History

Waiheke has a long history of contested development and ongoing change. Successive waves of Maori occupation preceded wholesale deforestation of the original kauri forest by Europeans, and by 1860 the island was largely denuded. Pastoral farming led to extensive erosion and marginal returns, and the population throughout much of the 20th century by the dearth of economic opportunities on the island and the lack of easy access to the mainland (Monin 1992; Picard and Picard 1993).

³ The 2002 ARC Water Resource Map for Auckland (Auckland Regional Council 2002) omits the isohyets for Waiheke from its map of Auckland's rainfall. The only MetService recording station is at Awaawaroa Bay, where the mean annual rainfall is approximately 1280 mm (<http://www.waihekeweather.net/>).

Following World War Two Waiheke was opened up substantially for development, eased by the minimal building restrictions as Waiheke had virtually no local government or bylaws (Picard, 1993). In addition to farmers and fishers, the island attracted people wanting cheap land near Auckland – small numbers made the lengthy commute on the early ferry service which began in 1946 (Picard and Picard 1993). However, commuting was not an easy option – one long-time resident spoke of his father’s 1 ¾ hour trip each way to Auckland every day. In 1945 the population was 835, increasing to around 2000 by the mid-1950s as a result of Auckland’s acute housing shortage and the demand for land for holiday purposes (Picard 2005: 43; Baragwanath and Lewis 2009).

5.4 Waiheke in 2010: a summertime city escape in transition

Examining the development of tourism and wine on Waiheke, the most salient characteristics of the island are its attraction as a composite summertime destination; and the vast changes that have occurred over the past 20 years in island’s community, economic base, and landscape, all related to its proximity to Auckland.

The links that matter are to Auckland... Auckland is the seat of commerce, the labour force, proximity, investment capital (interview, Waiheke wine and tourism operator).

Underpinning these features is Waiheke’s dependence on the ferry service. The arrival of fast ferries in 1987 catalysed many of the subsequent changes, bringing Waiheke firmly into the urban orbit of Auckland. At first the fast service was restricted and not particularly reliable but by the early 1990s, it was becoming increasingly comprehensive.

The population of Waiheke has grown steadily as the ferry links have improved. 3500 people lived on Waiheke in the late 1970s, increasing to 4,500 in 1986. Four years later following the arrival of the fast ferry service, the population had risen to almost 6,000 (Picard, 2003) and 7689 by 2006 (Statistics New Zealand 2010). It remains at about 8,000 people in 2010 (Figure 2).

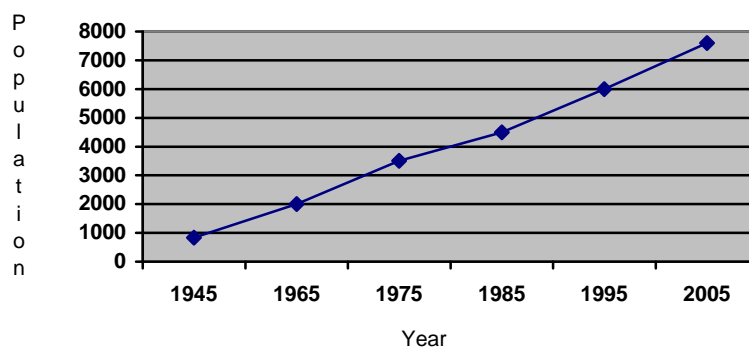


Figure 2: Waiheke's growing population (Auckland Regional Council 2009c; Picard 2005; Statistics New Zealand 2010)

In 2010, passenger ferries operated by Fullers make the 35 minute trip from downtown Auckland to Matiatia Bay on Waiheke hourly from dawn to midnight⁴, while vehicle and passenger ferries operated by Sealink take 45 minutes to run from Half Moon Bay to Kennedy Point on Waiheke hourly, with a more restricted service from downtown Auckland⁵. Waiheke Shipping also offers a freight and vehicle ferry service. Ferries are seldom delayed or cancelled, making the service a viable connection with the CBD. This compares favourably with the time and distance confronted by commuters across greater Auckland. Waiheke has become an increasingly viable residential option, effectively a maritime suburb of Auckland. As one of our interviewees put it,

Fullers has changed the nature of Waiheke: having a ferry every hour changed the nature and type of person who could make Waiheke work for them (interview, island resident since 2000).

Waiheke is also connected to Auckland via a light aircraft service that operates on demand between Auckland Airport and Waiheke Airfield. Helicopter services are also available between Waiheke and the airport or downtown Auckland.

5.5 Diminishing isolation

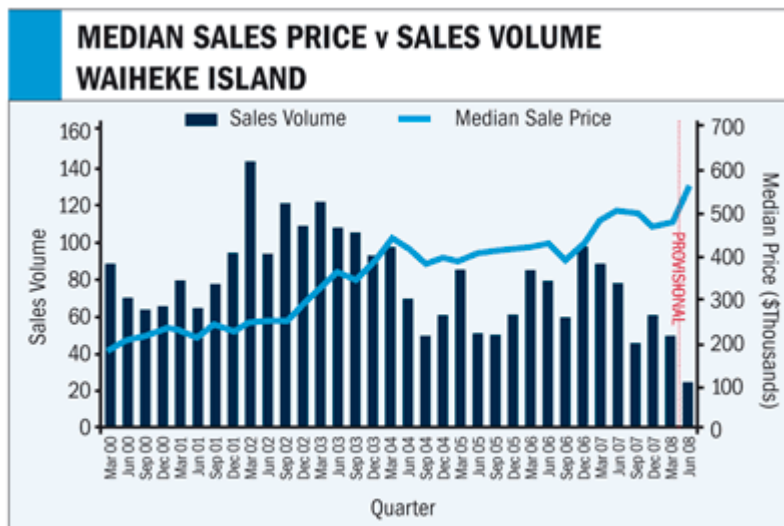
Waiheke's isolation has thus progressively diminished. It is now easier to commute, and about 1500 residents do so, most to work in the professional belt close to the ferry terminal in downtown Auckland. No longer beyond the urban-rural fringe, Waiheke is now firmly within it.

5.6 Rising property prices

The increasing accessibility and broadening appeal of Waiheke has been reflected in rising property prices. Residential house prices have surged: the median price more than doubled from 2000 to 2007, reaching \$508,000 in the June 2007 quarter, 160% higher than the June 2000 quarter (REINZ statistics cited in Bayleys, 2008 (Figure 3)). Rising house prices are mirrored in rates increases: the capital value of properties on Waiheke increased 98% between 2002 and 2007 compared with an average 51% Auckland-wide (Waiheke Island Community Board 2007).

⁴ <http://www.fullers.co.nz/tickets-fares/timetables/waiheke-island.php>

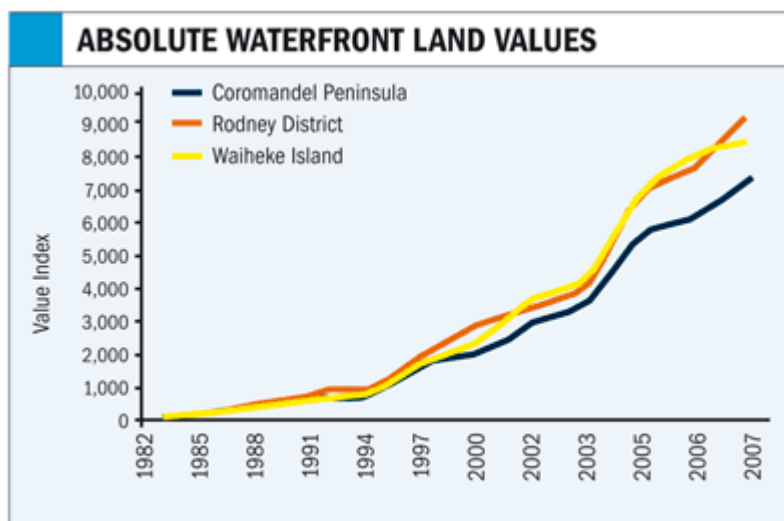
⁵ <http://www.subritzky.co.nz/waiheke-island/timetable.html>



Source: REINZ, Bayleys Research

Figure 3: Median sales prices on Waiheke (Bayleys 2008)

Coastal land in particular has skyrocketed in value close to Auckland (Figure 4).



Source: Bayleys Research

Figure 4: waterfront property values around Auckland 1982 - 2007 (Bayleys, 2008)

5.7 Increasing unaffordability

Rising prices determine who is able to purchase property on Waiheke. The island historically attracted a diverse population of residents drawn to its rural seclusion. It has an entrenched association with ‘alternative’ lifestyles, ‘counter-cultural’ developments and political activism. Waiheke’s ‘counter-cultural’ tendencies range across the spectrum from remnants of hippy cultures to those seeking solace in ‘island time’ removed from the pressures of Auckland city, to advocates for nuclear-free and GE-free futures, to passionate opponents of inappropriate development.

Waiheke has become increasingly unaffordable for low-income residents due to rising housing and ferry costs. The median income on Waiheke is \$23,500 compared to \$26,800 for Auckland region, the weekly mean rent \$253, slightly lower than the \$278 for Auckland region (Auckland Regional Council 2009c). However, ‘new money’

is clearly evident in the proliferation of large, imposing houses on subdivided farms, particularly apparent around the western end of the island at Matiatia Bay and Church Bay. Many of these houses are sited on ridge lines and command fabulous views – as well as being highly visible and thus a tangible beacon of the changes afoot. Around 2500 houses on the island are empty, the holiday homes of absentee owners who visit sporadically (pers. comm., Waiheke City Councillor).

5.8 Changing community

Waiheke's population size has remained fairly constant for the past ten years, but it has had an extremely high turnover: 47% of residents in the 2006 Census lived elsewhere five years previously (Auckland Regional Council 2009c). Island living obviously does not suit everyone.

Waiheke is associated with a laid-back, relaxed lifestyle far removed from the hustle of mainland city living. The sign greeting vehicle passengers arriving at Kennedy Point on Waiheke cautions: *Slow down – you're here*. The slow pace of life is defining. As one bumper sticker put it: *Waiheke: far enough behind to be ahead*. The winter sign above one shop in Oneroa chattily advertised: 'Closed for hibernation. See you in October'. For others, however, 'island time' is a mixed blessing: as one tourism operator observed,

The problem with the locals is if it's a nice day, they're likely to go diving or surfing and just not turn up to work (interview, Waiheke tourism business owner).

Our interviews suggest that Waiheke residents identify the length of time that people have spent on the island the measure of being a 'real Waihekean'⁶: for example "I'm a newcomer – I've only been here 10 years". Our research did not reveal a definitive period of time needed to be seen as a 'local', but this characteristic has implications for the way in which the wine industry is viewed by 'the community'. There is no suggestion that there is a clear split between the 'wine community' and the 'rest of the Waiheke community' – as one winegrower pointed out, anyone who arrived before 2000 has been there longer than half the island's population.

The community has come to accept places like ours. The reality is that for 85% of the population of Waiheke, we were here when they arrived. Many people don't last long on the island – there is a high turnover. We've seen this over the 17 years since we arrived – families change, parents leave when kids go to high school (interview, Waiheke wine enterprise owner).

The research suggests that the high population turnover has at least three interesting dimensions. First, Waiheke is no longer a refuge from the mainstream but a bustling maritime suburb of Auckland. Many who were once drawn to Waiheke for its remoteness have relocated to more remote areas – some to Great Barrier, an island 100 kilometres north of Auckland which marks the northern boundary of the Hauraki Gulf, and some to further removed places on the mainland (some island

⁶ Waiheke residents seem to refer to themselves as Waihekeans, although 'Waihitian' is sometimes used, mainly pejoratively, to refer to idiosyncratic behaviour (such as extreme political activism or a casual attitude to work).

residents mentioned that erstwhile residents have removed to 'mainland islands' such as Coromandel townships or Waihi). Changes are evident in the services and goods available on the island, from the exotic condiments stocked by the Waiheke Fruit and Veg shop to the eye fillets at the butcher's shop. There is some evidence of a more discernable split between the island's 'haves and have-nots' (interview, ARC planner): between visibly wealthy newcomers and people on lower incomes drawn to Waiheke for its diverse community, natural environment and so forth.

Second, despite the change in the population base, the rhetoric of a slow, relaxed pace of life has survived, albeit interpreted differently as an identity by different groups. Vestiges of the relaxed, 'counter-cultural' pace of life can still be seen (discussed further below). There are still no traffic lights on the island, but the queues of commuter cars lining the road to the wharf at Matiatia, parking problems, traffic jams coinciding with the arrival and departure of commuter ferries, and speeding demonstrate the infiltration of city problems, signalling change. These aspects are emphasised by Wakefield (2005) in her thesis on Waiheke in transition.

Third, the Waiheke community retains an unmistakable characteristic: a culture of political engagement and activism. Any proposed change is met with close scrutiny. This applies to new arrivals as well as long-term residents, reflecting partly 'last settler syndrome'⁷ – but also people's response to living in a special and distinctive place.

The high levels of political engagement on Waiheke are most evident in recent politics at the regional level. As the Auckland City Councillor for Waiheke put it, 'Waiheke is where green campaigners come to rest', and 'the island is awash with grey power'. There is also a vocal and well-organised group of new arrivals, many of whom have money and are prepared to fight to preserve Waiheke's distinctiveness. As the Community Board submission to the Royal Commission on Auckland governance summarised:

In the 2007 election our voter turn-out was 57% - on the isthmus the average was 38%. Our island has three local papers and local issues are debated fiercely in the letters to the editor section. We have 198 community organisations on this island that range from our sports clubs and play groups through to the elected trustees who govern our health services. The amount of volunteer participation and community engagement is phenomenal for a small population but is predictable for an island community where self-reliance and resilience are a way of life (Waiheke Island Community Board 2009).

There are many examples of community mobilisation. According to our interviewees, the Royal Commission on Auckland's Governance attracted 1500 submissions, 800 from Waiheke (see below). The Hauraki Gulf Islands Proposed District Plan drew 7000 submissions from an island of 8000 people. 1200 signatures were gathered in six weeks to oppose the Auckland City Council's wheelie bin proposal (pers comm.,

⁷ White (1971) noted that "Each wants his particular town and country landscape to remain just as it was when he or she arrived. The most recent settler wants to be the last settler" (Nielsen, Shelby, and Haas 1977: 575).

Auckland City Councillor for Waiheke and Auckland City Council Planning Manager Hauraki Gulf Islands). Finally, 'new residents' and the 'old guard' banded together with wealthy newcomers from exclusive Church Bay in the 'Love Matiatia' campaign to successfully forestall Auckland City Council's proposal to build a mall at Matiatia Bay.

Wealthy people have time to watch developments and let the community know. Nothing happens on Waiheke that isn't watched. People want to keep the island beautiful (interview, Waiheke resident and tourism operator).

There are people here on Waiheke who have the time, skills and money to be obstructive – and they do (interview, Waiheke winemaker).

The Langham proposal has had numerous obstructions – it's death by attrition. Entropy is characteristic of little islanders with time on their hands (interview, Waiheke wine enterprise owner).

The high levels of scrutiny and community engagement are not universally appreciated, but are a recognisable feature of Waiheke life. Further examples outlined in the Appendix include the 'campaign for fair ferry fares', 'Love Matiatia', and the waste management tender process of 2009.

5.9 Political activism and governance on Waiheke

There was no local government on Waiheke at all until 1921 (Picard, 1993) when a roads board was established. In 1945, the island's 835 residents rejected a merger with Auckland City (Picard, 1993), and in 1970 Waiheke got its own County Council. Waiheke has an established reputation for hosting alternative and even roguish characters. In 1977 Kerry Greer became Chairman of Waiheke County Council – the youngest in NZ. His career came to a crashing halt in 1980 when he was convicted and jailed for importing LSD (Picard, 1993). His successor was arrested two months into his new position and accused of smuggling firearms and stereos from Fiji (ibid).

Relations between the local council and different groups on the island have had a contested history. Through the 1970s, Council was preoccupied with dissatisfaction with the ferry transport to Waiheke (Picard, 1993): an ongoing bone of contention. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s Council activity was dominated by litigation with John Spencer over ownership of the roads running through his property to Stony Batter. The matter was finally resolved in 2002 by the Privy Council, and the public was granted access.

Major reform of New Zealand's local government structure occurred in 1989 with the amalgamation of about 700 local councils into 86 local authorities⁸, as part of the broader government restructuring programme. During this process Waiheke was brought into the ambit of Auckland City Council, losing its county council but gaining its own community board. Sandra Lee, the last Chair of the Waiheke County Council, became the island's first Councillor. Amalgamation was fiercely resisted by the local

⁸ http://www.localcouncils.govt.nz/lqip.nsf/wpg_url/About-Local-Government-Local-Government-in-New-Zealand-Index

community (much as the Devonport community sought to retain independence from the rest of the North Shore).

At present, the City Councillor for Waiheke is Denise Roche, a left-leaning councillor in a right-leaning Auckland City Council, and high levels of political activism continue. Two current issues are the review of the Auckland City Gulf Islands District Plan, and the restructuring of Auckland's governance.

Regulatory context

The Gulf islands were the first under the RMA to have an operational district plan: the *Auckland City Council District Plan – Hauraki Gulf Islands section*, operative 1996 (Auckland City Council 2006). In 2000, the Auckland City Council also released *Essentially Waiheke: A Village and Rural Communities Strategy*, a document developed through consultation with the Waiheke community (Auckland City Council 2000). Its purpose was:

to establish a community-approved framework for Waiheke's development and to signpost the directions towards a sustainable future, where opportunities for development are facilitated and the Island's community values and outstanding natural environment are respected and nurtured (ACC, 2000: 1).

Essentially Waiheke emphasised the island's unique environment sought to 'celebrate and recognise the diversity within Auckland City, and on Waiheke island particularly. It was built on five principles:

- environmental protection: The environmental protection principles identify areas of Waiheke which are inappropriate for development because of environmental or amenity constraints.
- economic development and employment: The principles of economic development and employment recognise the need to provide for local employment and business opportunities that are complementary to the character and lifestyle opportunities the Island provides.
- strong communities: The principles of strong communities identify opportunities to create a sense of place, a sense of belonging and a community that supports innovation, creativity and productivity.
- to protect and enhance Waiheke's character: The principles to protect and enhance Waiheke's character recognise the importance of maintaining the unique character of the Island, particularly by protecting the open character of rural areas of the Island.
- location: The principles of location guide the location and form of future growth-related development (Auckland City Council 2000: 4)

Essentially Waiheke presents a distinctive imaginary of Waiheke. It expresses aspirations and identifies key considerations for future growth on Waiheke (see later). Although its effectiveness is constrained because it is not a regulatory document, *Essentially Waiheke* is formal recognition of Waiheke's difference.

The principal mechanism for controlling development is the District Plan under the Resource Management Act (Auckland City Council 2010a). The Auckland City Council's *Proposed District Plan – Hauraki Gulf Islands* has just emerged from two years of preparation, consultation and hearings. As noted above, the process attracted intense interest and 7000 submissions from Waiheke residents (pers. comm., Planning Manager Hauraki Gulf Islands, Auckland City Council). Opinions spanned a spectrum of issues, and residents aligned in different ways. Several different organisations were set up around the District Plan review: the Gulf District Plan Association (GDPA), the Waiheke Island Community Planning Group (WICPG), and the Waiheke Island Sustainable Development Group (WISDG). While many submissions came from the same people and groups, this demonstrates to regulatory authorities that "People [on Waiheke] are very interested and quite well-informed – they are interested in their governance and in politics" (Interview, Planning Manager Hauraki Gulf Islands, Auckland City Council). In the Appendix we provide an analysis of the relations between parts of the Waiheke community and Auckland City Council.

The fraught 20 year relationship between Waiheke and Auckland City Council is coming to an end. The local body election in October 2010 will give effect to the disestablishment of the existing eight councils and their replacement with a single unitary authority: the Auckland Council (or 'Super City')⁹. As discussed earlier, island residents have subjected the process to close scrutiny.

In March 2010 the Local Government Commission released its determinations on the wards, local boards and boundaries for the new Auckland Council. Under the new arrangement, Waiheke will be incorporated into the 'Waitemata and Gulf Ward' which includes Great Barrier and the other gulf islands, as well as the CBD and inner city suburbs from Parnell to Ponsonby and Westmere. The LGC stated that they based the wards on 'communities of interest' identified in terms of three dimensions:

- a sense of identity with and belonging to a community (*a perceptive aspect*)
- the geographical area of services provided for a community (*a functional aspect*)
- other organisational boundaries for representing community interests (*a political aspect*)

"We have used all three aspects in determining boundaries and representation arrangements for Auckland. In relation to effective representation, given the fixed limit of 20 councillors, we have given particular emphasis to not splitting communities of interest when determining boundaries...

In the case of the Waitemata and Gulf Ward, we believe it is important to have a ward incorporating all of the Auckland CBD, as the commercial heart

⁹ The [Local Government \(Tamaki Makaurau Reorganisation\) Act 2009](#) establishes the unitary authority while the [Local Government \(Auckland Council\) Act 2009](#) sets out details on the structure, functions, duties and powers of the Auckland Council.

of the region, together with the adjoining inner city suburbs which have a common geographical orientation. This area has a distinct character of commercial activity, city amenities and higher-density residential accommodation requiring representation. There was widespread support for the concept of such a ward.

We believe that the Hauraki Gulf Islands are best included in this ward given functional community of interest factors such as location of employment, shopping and leisure activities, and transport links... We note that ward under-representation can be addressed, at least in part, by representation arrangements for local boards” (Local Government Commission 2010: 7).

Under the new arrangements, the Councillor for the Waitemata and Gulf ward will represent 79,300 people. In addition, the LGC is required to establish a local board for the Waiheke Island community (and one for Great Barrier), out of 21 such boards for the entire Auckland region (Local Government Commission 2010). The exact power and mandate of local boards is still being developed but the Auckland Transition Agency states that:

Local boards will meet regularly with the communities they represent in their local board area, understand their needs and help deal with the things concerning local people. They will also consult communities formally when developing local board plans. These plans will be an important part of Auckland Council’s overall planning process, and enable the community to participate in local decision-making (Auckland Transition Agency 2010).

Clearly, the identification of a ‘community of interest’ incorporating Waiheke, Great Barrier and the other islands as well as central Auckland is contestable in terms of each dimension. The *functional* is the clearest rationale for incorporation with the CBD – at least for Waiheke commuters and tourism operators on the island, given the importance of the connection with downtown. Other groups on Waiheke might resist even this (see Thames/Coromandel petition discussed below). In terms of the *perceptive* element, neither Waiheke nor the other gulf islands closely fit the ‘sense of identity’ of the central city, as the foregoing demonstrates (although it could be argued to fit more closely than does the isolated, rural Great Barrier). Finally, the *political* element is contentious given the high levels of mobilisation of the community on Waiheke, as distinct from other parts of Auckland. This suggests that further community resistance is highly likely.

5.10 Changing economic base

Over the past 10 years, tourism and wine have become increasingly important to Waiheke’s economy, impacting the community, the landscape, and the opportunities available on the island. These developments are discussed in the sections below.

6. Tourism on Waiheke

Waiheke tourism snapshot (Baragwanath and Lewis 2009)

Proximity and access – Waiheke is close to Auckland and easily accessible for domestic and international tourists

Composite package – Waiheke has important natural attractions including beautiful scenery, beaches and walking tracks; it provides a relaxed and peaceful escape from the city; it has a vibrant and diverse community including artists, hippies and artisan producers of a range of goods; and it has a cosmopolitan sophistication through its wine, food and art

Appeal to multiple audiences – Waiheke caters for a range of activities: half of all summertime visitors went to the beach, almost one third went to a winery

Extremely popular – our survey showed that 97% of visitors would recommend Waiheke to friends and family

Multiple existing and future challenges arising from tourism, rapid changes and projected growth including infrastructure overload, perceptions of crowding, pollution, water consumption, extreme seasonality in demand

Waiheke has long been popular as a destination for Aucklanders on holiday. Tourism on Waiheke began in the 1840s, and from the 1890s between 2000 and 4000 people took the steamer to remote Cowes Bay at the eastern end of the island for the New Year Regatta (Monin 1992). The Onetangi Beach Races – a community event with sandcastle competitions, beach games and horse racing – have been running for over 100 years and continue to provide a popular day out for Aucklanders (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Onetangi Beach Races (<http://www.onetangibeachraces.co.nz/>)

Waiheke's sheltered anchorages and golden beaches also provide an ideal destination for boat trips from the 'city of sails'. Waiheke makes a perfect weekend destination, with safe anchorages on its southern and eastern sides. It is the gateway to Coromandel, an easy sail away across the Firth of Thames. Bays such as Garden Cove are beautiful and popular and only accessible by boat, providing a haven for Auckland boaties and visitors cruising on charter boats.

The Gulf is what Auckland has that other places don't (owner, Waiheke tour operator).

In short, Waiheke is a stunning tourism destination, sitting right on the doorstep of downtown Auckland.

Waiheke encompasses every aspect of New Zealand. If you were only in New Zealand for one day, you could see the lot on Waiheke: pastoral farming, olive groves, wine, lifestyle, volcanoes, the harbour (interview, Waiheke resident).

Natural attractions (beaches and rocky headlands, bush-covered slopes, undulating rural landscape and regional park; and the harbour crossing past the iconic volcanic cones of Rangitoto and Browns Island) offer a strong base for tourism. They are complemented by cultural attractions such as art galleries, studios, and sculpture exhibitions. Special events are a significant part of the offering: the biennial Headland exhibition (previously 'Sculpture on the Gulf'), for example, drew 25,000 visitors in 2009. Waiheke is also a key wedding destination, and a popular venue for corporate functions and conferences. Further cultural offerings include a variety of local produce (olives, olive oil, exotic condiments, seasonings and sauces) and a wide variety of eating establishments from fish n' chips through to the haute cuisine offered by several of the vineyard restaurants.

Waiheke currently attracts between 500,000 and 750,000 visitors each year (pers. comm., CEO Fullers, interview, Waiheke tourism operator). We have been unable to find more specific figures because of the commercial sensitivities of the ferry operators. Fullers transports 1.6 million passengers per year, half of whom use concession fares, of which perhaps 300,000 single trips are visitors, while the other half of these are regular open fares (suggesting that visitors purchased the 800,000 single or 400,000 return tickets)(interview, CEO Fullers, 2009). This excludes passengers on the vehicle ferries.

Tourism on Waiheke is strongly seasonal, with the peak domestic season from Christmas to the beginning of February, and the peak international season extends from the end of January to Easter, while November and December is the corporate season (pers. comm, interviews, Waiheke tourism and wine operators).

When we started our research, little information was available on where the visitors come from, how long they stay, and what they do on Waiheke. Although the ferry companies gather data, this is not in the public domain, and the last survey had been conducted for Tourism Auckland in 2003 (Ryan and Aicken 2003). We conducted a comprehensive visitor survey during the peak summer period in 2009.

Snapshot: The SuperGold Card Travel Subsidy

In 2007 the government introduced a free discount and travel card for NZ residents aged 65 or over, and for those receiving NZ superannuation or the Veteran's Pension. Over 520,000 people were eligible for a SuperGold Card in 2007 and this number has grown by 35,000 each year (SuperGold, 2009¹⁰). The card provides free off-peak travel on public transport, including the Waiheke ferries.

The SuperGold initiative is contentious on Waiheke. A new Waiheke urban myth suggests that the SuperGold cardholder is a penny-pinching traveller who struggles off the wharf with her thermos and sandwiches, goes for a short walk or boards a (free) bus to Onetangi, before returning to Auckland. For opponents of the scheme on practical as well as ideological grounds, they take up valuable seats on the ferry at peak season having contributed nothing to the island's economy. Our research showed that nearly one in five parties on Fullers and 13% of those on SeaLink travelled free by virtue of their SuperGold card. However, our results suggest that SuperGold holders were as active as other visitors, and whilst there is some truth in the lower than average levels of spending¹¹, many SuperGold parties spent considerable sums on the island.

In its present form the SuperGold initiative is an important market niche for Waiheke and one that might be developed further by creative innovations – especially if SuperGold card holders can be attracted in winter months. The heavy subsidisation of the scheme means however that it may become a target for national spending reviews. According to media reports based on data obtained under an Official Information Act request (ARTA official, pers. comm.), an average of just over 200 pensioners a day visited Waiheke in the five months to February 28 in 2009 during which Fullers earned \$756,429 in central government subsidies and \$11,000 from the Auckland Regional Council (Dearnaley, 2009). The subsidy paid to the ferry companies accounted for almost a quarter of the Government's contribution to off-peak public transport travel in the Auckland region.

A press release from Transport Minister Stephen Joyce in March 2010 stated that consultation was beginning on the review of the SuperGold scheme, particularly "the eligibility of certain high-cost services, including the Waiheke ferry and the train service between Wellington and the Wairarapa". Mr Joyce said that "The transport concession of the SuperGold card has an annual budget of \$18 million across the country - \$2 million of that is currently spent on the Waiheke ferry alone" (NZPA, 2010¹²). This provoked an outcry from the Grey Power lobby group and the government quickly moved to allay fears, assuring pensioners that the scheme would be sustained into the next election (TV3, 2010¹³).

¹⁰ <http://www.supergold.govt.nz/about-the-card/the-supergold-card.html>.

¹¹ We found that while half SuperGold parties spent less than \$50 per capita, six parties as a whole spent more than \$1000, and more than 60 parties spent over \$100 (Baragwanath and Lewis 2009).

¹² SuperGold Transport Review Just Vehicle For Cuts: Labour, Friday, 12 March 2010, <http://www.guide2.co.nz/politics/news/supergold-transport-review-just-vehicle-for-cuts-labour/11/14936>

¹³ Friday 12 March 2010 *Government appeases pensioners over SuperGold card*, <http://www.3news.co.nz/Govt-appeases-pensioners-over-SuperGold-Card/tabid/419/articleID/146064/Default.aspx>.

The Waiheke Visitor Survey Report (Baragwanath and Lewis, 2009 - see Appendix) provided important baseline data on who goes to Waiheke, why, what they do when on the island, and how they enjoyed their experience. Results reflect the timing of the survey during the peak domestic season in January and February 2009.

Key findings from the research:

- 80% were New Zealand residents, and 91% were from the Auckland region
- Among international visitors, over 90% came predominantly from traditional western tourism markets
- 90% of respondents were in groups of five or fewer, with 40% of total respondents travelling in groups of two
- Two thirds of visiting parties were day trippers
- Of overnight visitors, one third stayed one night; half stayed two to three nights; and 10% stayed more than seven nights
- Only one third of those who stayed used paid accommodation: 40% stayed with friends and relatives, and quarter in their own holiday home
- The vast majority visit in summertime
- Waiheke is a composite destination: two thirds of parties surveyed indicated that their main reason for visiting Waiheke was for one of a set of reasons that could be described as 'a holiday day out'
- Irrespective of the primary reasons visitors give for visiting Waiheke, more than half visit beaches and natural attractions
- Among parties of fewer than ten members, the mean expenditure was \$314 per party, with 62% of parties spending less than \$200 on their visit
- The mean per capita expenditure for the dominant type of travel party - day-trippers in parties of less than 10 – was \$88
- 85% stated that they would visit again, and 97% would recommend Waiheke as a destination to their friends and family

Our survey confirms that Waiheke offers visitors a diversity of experience. While many go in order to visit friends and relatives, the island's attractions appeal to a variety of audiences. Our research showed that the beauty of the scenery and the open space are key attributes in Waiheke's attraction, along with the diverse character of the community. Some of the key attributes include:

- Nature
 - bush/coastal walking tracks
 - fishing
 - kayak or dive trips
 - charter yachts
 - eco-tourism
 - swimming
 - surfing
- Culture
 - sculpture park and exhibitions
 - artists' studios
 - galleries

- special events
- heritage sites (Stony Batter in particular)
- olive oil production
- wine
- food – locally-produced exotic condiments, casual food, fine dining
- budget holidays
 - backpacker accommodation (from \$25 per night)
 - camping at Whakanewha Regional Park
- family holidays
 - motel accommodation (from \$125 per night)
 - resort accommodation (from \$200 per night)
 - self-contained accommodation (from \$300 per night)
 - wide range of food options
- luxury holidays
 - helicopter transfer from downtown or Auckland Airport
 - light aircraft transfer from Auckland Airport
 - luxury accommodation
 - Lodges (from around \$600 per night in 2010)
 - private houses (from inexpensive to \$1600 per night in 2010)
 - boutique hotels (from \$700 per night in 2010)

While Waiheke remains a popular domestic destination, its reputation has gone global, with influential publications extolling its charms. Lonely Planet provides a glowing accolade:

Waiheke is 93 sq km of island bliss only a 35-minute ferry ride from the CBD. Once they could hardly give land away here; nowadays multimillionaires rub shoulders with the old-time hippies and bohemian artists who gave the island its green repute. [Auckland](#) office workers fantasise about swapping the daily motorway crawl for a watery commute and a warm, dry microclimate. On Waiheke's city side, emerald waters lap at rocky bays, while its ocean flank has some of the region's best sandy beaches. While beaches are the big drawcard, wine is a close second. There are 26 boutique wineries to visit, many with swanky restaurants and breathtaking city views. On top of that, the Waiheke Arts Trail encompasses 26 galleries and craft stores (Lonely Planet 2010).

Similarly, Frommer's, an extremely influential global trip advisory service, listed Waiheke as one of the top 12 destinations for 2009.

Just a ferry ride away from cosmopolitan Auckland sits the quaint Waiheke Island. It's a favorite summer holiday spot for Kiwis, the secluded shores dotted with baches -- the equivalent of a summer cottage. If the beach isn't your thing, no worries, Waiheke is a hot spot for New Zealand's massive wine and olive industries. Growers of both grapes and olives have caught wind of all those traveling foodies and responded by building sleek and modern accommodations amongst the vines, providing high-end creature comforts, menus offering food for the sophisticated palate and spectacular views of the bay and distant Auckland (Frommer's 2009).

A tourism operator on the island pointed out the tremendous fillip such recommendations provide for Waiheke. Google is an invaluable tool for contemporary travel planners, and a reputation from high-profile organisations like Frommer’s and Lonely Planet is a powerful endorsement as many international visitors rely heavily on reputable web-based travel advisory services.

Our research suggests that Waiheke’s traditional summertime reputation remains an important drawcard. Of our survey respondents, almost three quarters gave reasons for visiting Waiheke that can broadly be categorised as ‘a holiday day out’ (incorporating the categories of attending a special event, visiting wineries, restaurant/café’s, beaches, walking, and ‘holidaying’ more generally. 16% went to Waiheke explicitly to visit friends and relatives, and 12% went for work purposes (Baragwanath and Lewis, 2009). Half of all sampled parties in our survey visited the beaches, and more than a quarter used the walkways and paths. 23% visited a winery, and other cultural attractions and physical activities were also popular.

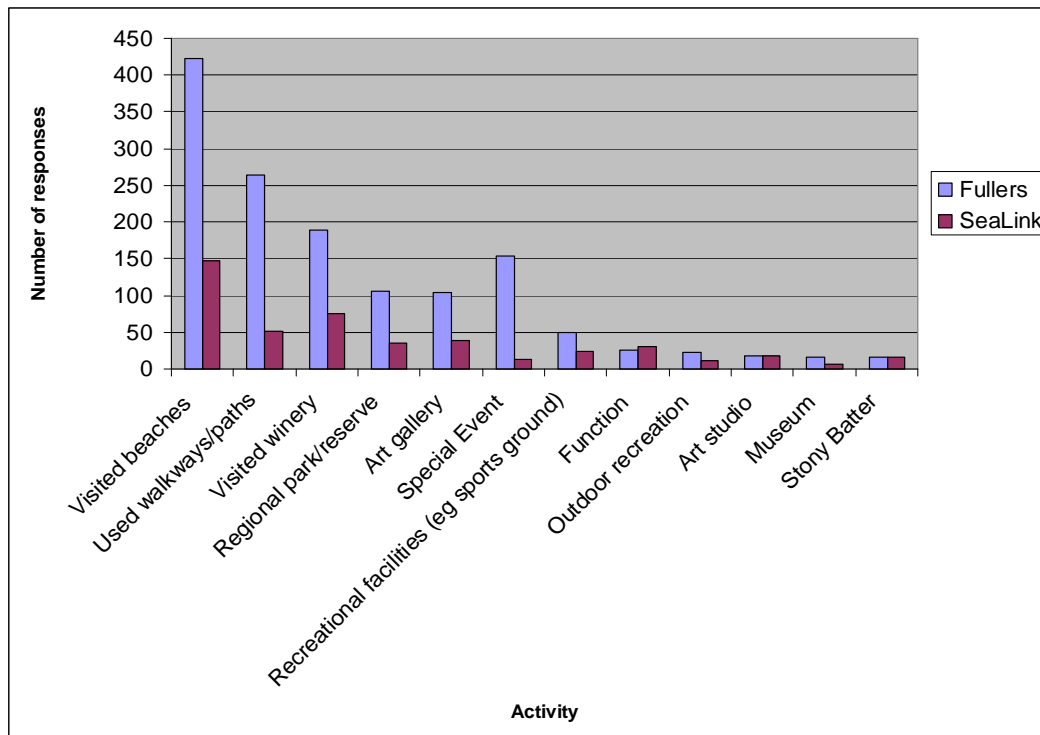


Figure 6: Activities undertaken during this trip to Waiheke (Baragwanath and Lewis 2009)

Clearly, Waiheke’s appeal reflects its composite package of attractions. The island’s wine industry has provided an important contribution to this increasing popularity and changing economic base.

7. Wine on Waiheke

Waiheke's contribution to the national wine industry is miniscule, at around 1%, although there is widespread recognition that some excellent wine is produced on the island.

The entire island except Man o' War isn't even boutique, it's so tiny. Waiheke is the shop window (interview, Waiheke resident and wine commentator).

However, the contribution of the wine sector to Waiheke's reputation and its tourism appeal has become increasingly important – and vice versa.

The first commercial vineyard was planted in 1978 by the Goldwaters, followed in 1982 by Stephen White at Stonyridge. By the mid-80s, Goldwater and Stonyridge were producing wines on Waiheke to international acclaim, focusing on Bordeaux-style blends.

Anybody who has seen 1987 Stonyridge Larose in a blind tasting of the 1986 classed growth Bordeaux will know that Waiheke Island can make Bordeaux blends of world-class, and even of better classed growth standard (Kelly 2009a).

Wine producing operations proliferated on Waiheke during the 1990s and early 2000s. There are now around 27 wine producers on the island of varying scales and aspirations. Wine has become an established feature of the Waiheke economy, and a highly prominent fixture in the landscape, as vineyards modify the existing pastoral landscape (Figure 7).



Figure 7: the changing landscape of Waiheke (photo: Justin Westgate)

As a wine region, Waiheke has a distinctive set of characteristics.

7.1 Waiheke's wine environment

- Waiheke is slightly warmer and slightly drier than the mainland around Auckland [see above]
- Its topography is hilly with a multitude of slopes and aspects making multiple sites available for winegrowing
- Low-fertility mineralised clay soils comprising Jurassic rock underlying weathered argillite converted to clay overlain by Aeolian silt (Waiheke Winegrowers' Association 2009)
- Waiheke is windy particularly in spring, which can affect fruit-set, although this helps to minimise the humidity that can cause problems of rot and disease for Auckland region winegrowers
- Land is very expensive – competing land uses in the more developed western half of the island are residential lifestyle properties, while in the rural eastern half is predominantly large landholdings and therefore unavailable
- Most Waiheke wine enterprises are very small: all but one has fewer than 15 productive hectares, and the average planted area is five hectares (Waiheke Winegrowers' Association 2009)¹⁴. All produce fewer than 30,000 cases of wine annually, and most fewer than 1,000.
- The only larger-scale exception is Man o' War in the north-east of the island which has 150 acres of grapes planted on a large landholding of 4500 acres
- Input costs are high: steep terrain and small size of properties means that much vineyard work must be hand-done rather than mechanised and economies of scale are hard to achieve
- Labour is in short supply and accommodation can be expensive

7.2 Waiheke wine

A comprehensive range of wines is produced on the island, and many have received accolades. As an example, in 2009:

- Kennedy Point 2007 Syrah and The Hay Paddock 2007 Harvest Man Syrah won gold at the International Wine Awards in London and best of the best
- Mudbrick 2008 Chardonnay won gold at the Bragato Wine Awards while Mudbrick Cabernet Merlot 2008 won gold at NZ International Wine Awards in 2009
- Waiheke wines took 14 out of 17 medals awarded to wines from Auckland region at the Air New Zealand Wine Awards in 2009. Gold medals went to Mudbrick Vineyard Reserve Chardonnay, Mudbrick Vineyard Reserve Syrah 2008, Miro Syrah 2008 and Passage Rock Reserve Syrah 2008. Other varietals were commended: silver medals were awarded to Man O' War Waiheke Island Merlot, Cabernet, Franc Malbec 2008, Obsidian Waiheke Island Cabernet Merlot 2008, Passage Rock Sisters 2008, Passage Rock Syrah 2008 and Weeping Sands Waiheke Island Montepulciano 2008 (Obsidian Vineyard)(Allcock 2009).

¹⁴ Some wine producers source different varieties through a range of mechanisms such as leasing vineyards or buying contract grapes both on and off the island to contribute to their wines.

Wine pioneers on Waiheke focused on Bordeaux blends, some of which have gained enviable reputations (such as the Stonyridge Larose, which shot to prominence in 1987 and remains one of NZ's most sought-after and expensive wines). Many still produce Bordeaux blends although also gaining in popularity are Syrah, Chardonnay and smaller quantities of Viognier, Sauvignon Blanc and Montepulciano.

Most Waiheke wine producers emphasise Waiheke's distinctiveness as a wine region.

Where do Central Otago, Marlborough, or the Napa Valley end? There's no question with Waiheke. It's a crisply defined, unambiguous region (interview, Waiheke wine grower).

Winegrowers on Waiheke present Waiheke as a unique and ideal site for growing wine, emphasising its particular combination of latitude, climate, topography and soil (Waiheke Winegrowers' Association 2009). One of the most experienced and renowned winemakers on Waiheke gives this explanation for Waiheke's success as a wine region:

1. *Its location – it's beautiful. All the high-quality wine locations in the world are beautiful. It encompasses every aspect of NZ*
2. *Its size - it's small and special, like Burgundy, as opposed to Bordeaux*
3. *The individuality of the wines – the terroir. Aspect is really important on Waiheke, affecting the wine. Waiheke doesn't have dramatic changes in soil type (interview, Waiheke winemaker).*

Notable in that explanation is the reference to *terroir*, a dominant discourse in the wine world that provides a framework, language and set of references for talking about wines, their qualities and their relations to place. At its heart is a belief that a wine's qualities express the place where it is grown. Discussed narrowly this emphasises soil and climate, but in its French origins refers more widely to human agency and cultural understanding of the site, and the interplay of humans, plants and particular sites (Moran 1993). The discourse of *terroir* is the basis for making claims about distinctiveness in wine, and it is these claims (supported by awards and expert commentators) that add value to the wine.

Waiheke wine producers rely heavily on references to soil and climate in making their claims.

Saint Germaine said, "Wine symbolizes the alchemical marriage betwix Heaven and Earth..."

Waiheke Island is as close to heaven as you'll ever find, its unique soils and micro-climate favouring the grape like nowhere else. Destiny Bay Vineyards is a tiny, quintessential corner of Waiheke Island, gently contoured like an ancient amphitheatre, sheltering vines of impeccable lineage, where the alchemy of winemaking combines old world traditions, new world techniques, and a timeless passion for excellence (<http://www.destinybaywine.com/intro.html>).

References are also made by wine commentators, who tend to emphasise links to the climate and to grape varieties and styles of wine (see (Cooper 2002; Kelly 2009b; Kelly 2009a)). Several of our interviewees noted however that of all those grown on Waiheke, Bordeaux varieties are the most challenging to grow because of the island's windy conditions.

It has been to the island's detriment for new entrants that it was seen as a Bordeaux place: it's very site-dependent. Stephen [White at Stonyridge] was way ahead of everyone. Very smart, good quality, established brand, a good marketer. He's the only one of the first entrants still to be there now that Goldwater has been sold, and Peninsula has gone (interview, Waiheke winemaker).

Waiheke is the worst place in NZ to grow Cabernet – bad set, and only ripens properly once every five years. It tends to be planted because people like drinking it! Monte is great: it produces a big crop which is unusual for Waiheke – low vigour generally, it has a thick skin, a nice colour, and it makes good wine. Very different to Italian Monte, but then NZ Sauvignon Blanc is very different from the French. Also birds don't like it, compared with Cabernet, and berries don't rot on Waiheke. Syrah does well on Waiheke too. Merlot has problems with the set – its fickle, if it has a good spring it will ripen. Viognier does OK (interview, former Waiheke winemaker).

Whilst some Waiheke winemakers are actively trying to shift the reputation towards Syrah and other varieties, others still rely on the associations with Bordeaux. It is our view that they have yet to mobilise effectively some of the other claims made possible by a broader definition of terroir.

Waiheke winemakers have used a range of innovations to try to optimise their operations and add value to their wines through other associations. Several use organic methods (Stonyridge, Awaroa, Te Whau, Kennedy Point). Only Kennedy Point is certified while the others cite the onerous nature of the certification process:

We are not certified organic because it is such a pain to comply. Wine has to sell on its own merits but we know what we are doing is right (interview, owner, Waiheke wine enterprise).

Producing wine on Waiheke

We found several groups of wine enterprises exist on Waiheke who cooperate in different ways for mutual benefit.

An important part of it is the interaction between vineyards and winemakers: we compete but we also cooperate (interview, Waiheke winemaker).

- Some share expertise (for example Te Whau, Kennedy Point and Poderi Crisci use the same a winemaker)
- Some have formed peer review groups to assess each other's wine (such as Awaroa, Passage Rock and Obsidian)
- Some share equipment (for example winery equipment and bottling plants)

- Some share the cost of freight to the mainland (such as Miro and Jurassic Ridge, who freight their wine to Auckland for bottling)

In the production of wine on Waiheke, interviewees repeatedly mentioned difficulties including high freight costs, and the high cost of land.

In terms of the grapes themselves, growers emphasised the wind, the wild spring conditions, and the problems with birds that Waiheke growers confront. Each factor is however debatable: others stated that it is not necessarily harder to grow grapes and produce wine on Waiheke than anywhere else. One winemaker we interviewed emphasised that most winegrowing regions are remote and face similar problems to Waiheke in terms of freight cost. He drew attention to a further problem:

When we were planning it they talked about how hard it would be to grow grapes, but it isn't. This is not the main problem. Then, the financial planning was based on getting \$40-50 a bottle, which seemed OK at the time. Now this seems unrealistic (interview, Waiheke winemaker).

Questions of pricing feature prominently in our research. According to wine commentators, Waiheke wine ranges from “mediocre to outstanding” (Cooper 2002; Kelly 2009b). This was endorsed by a local resident and wine commentator:

Wine on Waiheke? When it's good, it's excellent, but you can count the good ones on one hand. You're paying a premium for a reputation of excellence, driven by Larose and Goldwater Esslin Merlot. But the reputation among the wine 'glitterati' is that Waiheke wine is overpriced. The wine has to justify the price (interview, Waiheke resident and wine commentator).

In justifying the expense, wine enterprise managers emphasised the unusually high cost of making wine on Waiheke, reflecting the small property sizes, high cost of land, and transport costs because of the ferry. All grapes are hand-picked on Waiheke and mechanisation is minimal because of the small section sizes and steepness of terrain and the commitment to high quality grapes.

The costs of production are huge on Waiheke, and there is a unique set of competitive challenges such as land cost and low yield – here you get 2.5 tonnes per acre or less, compared with 10 in Marlborough SB (interview, Waiheke wine business manager).

On Waiheke, input costs are higher on everything, and because it is so hilly it takes longer to maintain – there are 30 degree slopes (interview, former Waiheke winemaker).

The high input costs on Waiheke are recognised by Kelly, an influential wine writer, who acknowledges that Waiheke wines are high priced:

With just 216 hectares under vine... it is axiomatic that winegrowing on Waiheke is small-scale. Volumes are low and economic viability depends heavily on the ability to achieve quality standards that justify a loyal following at the price levels needed for mainly 'boutique' operations (Kelly 2009b).

High price points are necessary, but to sustain them requires wines of quality, reputations for distinctiveness, and (some argue) a tourism profile that brings buyers to cellar doors and restaurants and builds positive images of Waiheke. This challenge is posed by Kelly.

<i>Waiheke wine prices sourced from Waiheke Wine Centre, March 2010</i>	
The island's signature reds are the most expensive:	
Stonyridge Larose 2005	\$180
Destiny Bay Mystae 2006	\$112
Kennedy Point Syrah 2008	\$50
The Hay Paddock Syrah 2008	\$68
Obsidian Cabernet Merlot 2007	\$54
Passage Rock Reserve Syrah 2007	\$56
Chardonnay made from Waiheke grapes ranges from \$35 to around \$50:	
Mudbrick Reserve Chardonnay 2008	\$36
Kennedy Point Chardonnay 08	\$44
At the cheaper end of the spectrum of wine made from Waiheke grapes:	
Passage Rock Waiheke Island Rosé 2009	\$21
Passage Rock Waiheke Sauvignon Blanc 08	\$23
Cable Bay Waiheke Rosé	\$23

Responding to the quality challenge

Wine producers focus on particular characteristics to reinforce the point of difference of Waiheke wine. Several of Waiheke's wine operations use organic methods although some are not certified, and Te Whau goes still further using biodynamic principles in its viticulture. Destiny Bay in 2009 became Waiheke's first winery operation to gain certification 'from grape to glass', from Sustainable Winegrowing NZ (Gardner 2009).

It is the land and the terroir at Destiny Bay that allows us to produce distinctive wines sought by collectors around the world. The vineyard is our most important asset and it makes sense that we act as good stewards of the land (owner, Destiny Bay wines, 2009 (Gardner 2009)).

Production costs are clearly high, and this is reflected in the cost of the wine on Waiheke. However, wine-buyers will not pay premium prices if the product isn't 'worth it'. Waiheke wine generated a negative reputation in the 1990s for being expensive:

In the late 1980s and early 90s they were getting away with it [ie charging a fortune, following the success of Stonyridge's Larose]. Then [x] and that ilk thought that as the tide rose, all boats would be lifted. But the serpent turned... and it caved in, in the late 1990s. It's now in the process of reinventing and getting back to basics (interview, Waiheke resident and wine commentator).

A wine enterprise owner we interviewed noted that in the mid-1990s, Waiheke was the number one location for Cabernet Merlot. *Cuisine* magazine that year named Goldwater, Stonyridge and Peninsula 3 out of the 4 best in NZ.

Hawkes Bay was OK but Waiheke was magic. But since then, Hawkes Bay has surged and Waiheke hasn't. From 1995 to 2005 a new generation of Hawkes Bay grower has emerged – Trinity Hill and Craggy Range have raised the bar over and over again, and pushed red wine quality into new territory – and Waiheke hasn't followed. But just this year it has started turning heads again with some of the new producers – Kennedy Point, Passage Rock, Obsidian, Awaroa – all small producers but highly successful (interview, Waiheke winemaker).

Kelly (2009a) reflects that asserting superiority through pricing is a dangerous strategy that is vulnerable to wealth effect among consumers, competition from other regions, and sustaining the highest reputation.

That caters only to the snob market, never (sad to say) far from wine matters. It is good therefore that wineries such as Passage Rock and the Weeping Sands label of Obsidian are entered in wineshows, and compete on price.

The higher cost of production on Waiheke has to be borne, I fear, for the attentive will note that good European wines from undoubtedly high-cost production zones have lately (with our high dollar) been competitive in price with Hawkes Bay too – Bordeaux notably (Kelly 2009a).

While several wineries have pursued this strategy, underpinned by a commitment to generating the quality necessary to sustain top prices, others mix the strategy with complementary high end hospitality offerings, while others have employed different approaches.

Accolades suggest that recently some excellent wine has been produced on Waiheke. For most, Waiheke's distinctiveness provides the justification for the high prices that some of the wines command.

The only way to make money is to specialise and to try to make the very best and get the necessary price (interview, premium Waiheke wine producer).

Selling Waiheke wine

Our research suggests that it remains difficult to make money from producing wine on Waiheke. The narrative that there are only 'x' solvent wineries on the island was often repeated to us – although it was never clear which winery was in which group. It was clear that different respondents had different views.

Producers use a range of tactics also used in other wine regions to sell their wine. These include direct sales from the cellar door; *en primeur* sales while a vintage is still in a barrel (pioneered on Waiheke by Stonyridge, this involves selling wine before it is bottled, and rests on the reputation of the winemaker in ensuring quality); loyalty clubs (often run in conjunction with *en primeur* sales) that enable pre-release sales to repeat clients, such as the Hay Paddock Syrah Society, Obsidianados, Stony Ridge Loyalty Club). Some wineries have launched second labels

that capitalise on the established reputation of a vineyard/winemaker but are made from grapes sourced elsewhere (such as Stonyridge's Fallen Angel range). This enables sales to visitors who cannot or will not purchase the flagship wines to purchase wine from the vineyard. A further strategy is to buy in grapes or wine from other parts of NZ that cannot be grown on Waiheke which are then branded with the Waiheke vineyard's label in order to expand the range, such as Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Noir. This serves several purposes. First, it enables cellar door sales to visitors who do not wish to purchase Waiheke's signature varieties:

When we opened the cellar door we were just producing red wine, and visitors would ask for white on a hot day. We brought in Sauvignon Blanc from Marlborough (interview, Waiheke wine enterprise owner).

Second, some distributors require it.

This is a factor all over NZ: people take their wine to London, like Montepulciano – and the London distributor says that's nice but do you have any Sauvignon Blanc? That's why most of the Waiheke growers have SB. Distributors say we will take one pallet of your red if you give us five of SB (interview, former Waiheke winemaker).

You can't get a distributor unless you have Marlborough SB and also the volume – they won't take 200 cases. The inevitable dynamic is you need quantity and variety if you want to export (interview, Waiheke winemaker).

Waiheke does struggle. You need Sauvignon Blanc in the stable to survive (interview, Waiheke wine enterprise manager).

Some wineries explicitly seek to leverage Waiheke's distinctiveness to command premium prices in overseas markets. For example, Destiny Bay targets wine clubs and restaurants in the US. Finally, some have formed collaborative ventures to approximate some economies of scale or cachet in marketing: Destiny Bay and The Hay Paddock in 2009 along with three non-Waiheke wine producers launched an exclusive group called The Specialist Winegrowers of New Zealand Ltd: "an independent marketing alliance representing rare and exceptional wines from artisan producers who specialise in a single variety or style" (<http://tswnz.com/>).

Most of Waiheke's wine enterprises therefore depend on tourism in some form to sell their wine. Even the premium producers with export aspirations depend on Waiheke's image as a unique and highly distinctive wine region. As previously demonstrated, Waiheke is already a magnet for tourists, and these provide a potential market for the island's wine producers.

7.3 Wine tourism on Waiheke

Tourism is the obvious way out of the problem... When you sell a glass of wine on the vineyard, you make the most money (interview, Waiheke winemaker).

Waiheke has been promoted by the Waiheke Winegrowers' Association as the 'Island of Wine'. The collaborative effort has resulted in a comprehensive webpage

(www.waihekewine.co.nz) and a popular wine trail brochure, signalling the importance of wine tourism to the island's wine producers. Our visitor survey research revealed that almost one third of summertime visitors to Waiheke had visited at least one vineyard on the island (Baragwanath and Lewis 2009), qualifying them as wine tourists under the Ministry of Tourism definition.

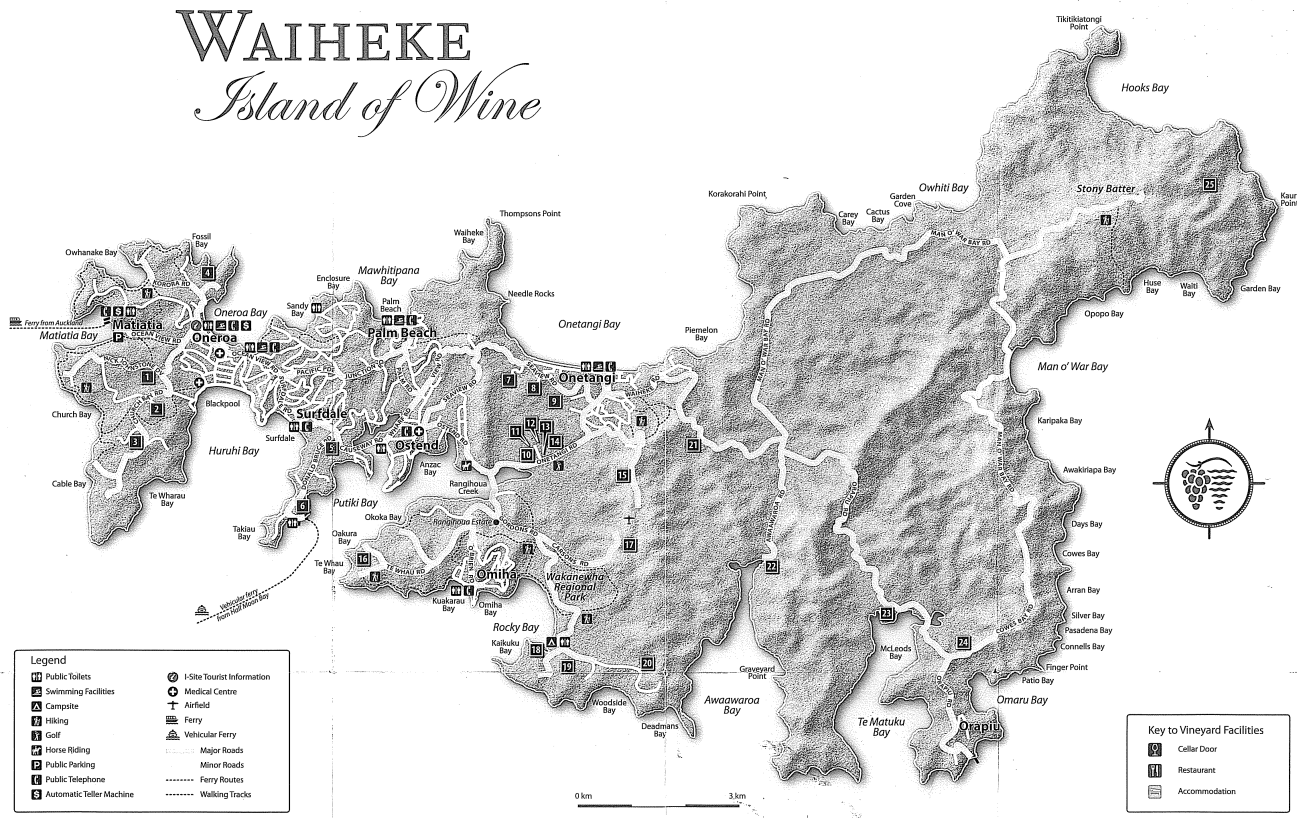


Figure 8: Waiheke wine trail map (Waiheke Winegrowers' Association 2009)

Wine and tourism have become inextricably linked on Waiheke. Individual wineries take advantage of Waiheke's stunning setting in different ways. Stonyridge's olive groves and architecture evoke a Mediterranean charm, Obsidian sits in a fold of hills beside a tractor shed and a raupo swamp, Kennedy Point's pohutukawa eyrie overlooks the turquoise sea below. Among the high-end restaurants, Mudbrick's French provincial terracing, Cable Bay's sophisticated modernity, and Te Whau's Le Corbusier-inspired oval (Figure 9) open up to magnificent harbour views back to Auckland. At the other end of the island Passage Rock's winery restaurant nestles among vines surrounding a picture-perfect tidal inlet and enclosed by native bush (Figure 10).



Figure 9: Te Whau looking west to Auckland (photo: Justin Westgate)



Figure 10: Passage Rock vineyard (photo: Justin Westgate)

Waiheke offers wine tourists a diversity of experience, in terms of both settings and architecture of individual enterprises, and in what they offer. For enterprises selling wine directly, tourist traffic is obviously critical.

- 16 producers sell their wine directly at the cellar door
- 10 ten offer food, ranging from simple platters to full scale fine dining
- 4 have established reputations as venues for weddings, conferences, corporate outings, parties and functions

- Many operate ancillary or complementary businesses at various scales such as selling olive oil, lavender, honey, food, accommodation, or the setting itself as a function venue

<i>Type of enterprise</i>	<i>Tourism connection</i>	<i>Relationship with tourism</i>
Small-scale (boutique imaginary, family, owner-operated etc)	Cellar door sales necessary	Need to sell certain proportion at some point during year
Hospitality enterprise centred on wine	Restaurant + cellar door, venue for functions and weddings	Sustaining business and reputation year-round; Waiheke aesthetic critical
High-end wine aspirations	May or may not sell direct from cellar door	Waiheke's distinctiveness key point of difference

Even wine producers who do not sell directly to the public derive benefit from tourism as it contributes to Waiheke's growing reputation in NZ and abroad. Enterprises producing wine aimed at the premium market are capitalising on Waiheke's distinctiveness as a unique selling proposition. The best example is Destiny Bay, which presents Waiheke as 'virtually its own country', leveraging this advantages to support its aim of selling 'the most expensive wine in NZ' (pers comm., owner, Destiny Bay).

One of our wine enterprise interviewees noted the problem of dissonance between mass tourism and successful wine selling.

Dry River in Martinborough is arguably NZ's most successful small vineyard. They built up a wine club – you couldn't get the wine if you didn't belong. They pulled out of the tourism scene because they didn't need it. If we get to the delicious phase of excess demand, we will pull out! Although brand position and maintenance is important and wine tourism is part of this. The challenge is to integrate wine tourism with highly desirable wine club (interview, owner, Waiheke wine enterprise).

Several distinct challenges emerged from our research facing wine tourists and wine tourism enterprises on Waiheke.

- The ferry ride to Waiheke is central to its distinctive appeal. However, inclement weather and winter reduces its allure as the ride can be bumpy and unpleasant, sharply reducing the tourist traffic

There is the challenge of perception: coming across the water – the sense of the cost, seasickness, fear of water. We have had conferences cancel because one person gets seasick who is indispensable (interview, Waiheke tourism operator).

- The tourist traffic to Waiheke declines sharply between Easter and October because of the inclement weather
- Transport between wine enterprises on Waiheke is difficult without a car as the island is large at 92 km², and 25 kms from end to end. Vineyards tend to be clustered in small groups in different locations across the island (see Figure 8). The majority of visitors to Waiheke use the passenger ferry and have no car. Public buses routes are not designed to service most of the island's vineyards, so the options are to walk (which can be onerous), to hire a bike (and Waiheke is hilly), or to hire a car (rental for one day costs around \$80). Taxis are an expensive option for visitors wanting to go further afield. Fullers in 2010 launched a new 'vineyard hopper' bus service, but this does not go to all the vineyards
- Opening hours of vineyard cellar doors and restaurants are not synchronised and advertised hours can be unreliable. The Waiheke Winegrowers' Association has worked to overcome this obstacle through the wine trail brochure and website, but problems of consistency remain. Two key issues are enabling tourists to find out reliably in advance:
 - When cellar doors/winery restaurants are open
 - When restaurants are full during times of peak demand
- It is expensive to produce wine on Waiheke but tourists will not necessarily want to – or be able to – purchase expensive wine, requiring wineries to expand their range with non-Waiheke wine, incurring more cost and risk
- Securing a distributor is difficult for small producers. Selling direct from the cellar door is the most cost-effective way to make money, but ties up valuable labour – and the peak tourism season coincides with some of the busiest periods in viticultural and winemaking year
- Quality of service and product are highly variable: it is difficult to find good local staff. Several of the restaurants rely on migrant labour, but face difficulties with high costs of accommodation

Waiheke wine tourism in the Auckland context

From a macro perspective, having three different but complementary wine areas in the Auckland region is a tremendous asset to the regional tourism proposition. For wine tourists with several days to spend in Auckland, visits to Waiheke, West Auckland and Matakana offer a glimpse of three very different landscapes, settings and experiences. However, if visitors have limited time and must make a choice, Waiheke and Matakana compete as composite destinations combining multiple attractions including wine. Our interviewees repeatedly drew comparisons between the two, debating the relative advantages and disadvantages of Waiheke and Matakana from a wine tourism perspective.

West Auckland wine

Wine-growing in West Auckland dates back to the 1930s. While the sprawling city has encroached on some of the early vineyards, many of the wine producing enterprises still carry the names of the founding families, most of Croatian origin: Nobile, Brajkovich, Selak, Soljan, Mazuran and Babich. The West Auckland winegrowers have formed a collective to promote 'Kumeu Wine Country' as a

'heritage wine region', providing a website with information on wineries, accommodation and food in the area (<http://www.kumeuwinecountry.co.nz/index.html>).

Taste the flavours of Kumeu Wine Country, Auckland's Heritage Wine Region. The area is steeped in history with wineries in the area dating back to the 1930's; ranging in size from boutique artisan winemakers to some of the best know names in wine. Kumeu Wine Country is renowned for unique cellar door experiences, offering, festivals, special events and summertime jazz to entertain you

(http://www.kumeuwinecountry.co.nz/catalog_66063/Wineries).

Matakana wine

The Matakana Winegrowers' Association have similarly sought to collectively promote 'Matakana Coast Wine Country' as a wine tourism destination (<http://www.matakanacoast.com/main.php>), again providing wine trail maps and a website with information on wineries, accommodation, art and food. The first grapes were planted at Matakana in 1978 (the year of the first plantings at Waiheke and Martinborough) and there are now about 17 vineyards in the area, producing a range of varieties. While some reputable wines have been produced in the area, Matakana's reputation as a wine destination appears to have more to do with tourism than the quality of its wine. The village of Matakana has become a focal point, with a range of sophisticated offerings including a gourmet farmers' market, boutiques, cinemas, cafés and a wine bar and shop dedicated to the sale of regional produce. Like Waiheke, Matakana sports a range of other attractions: art and sculpture, beaches, and four regional parks in close proximity, including the Leigh Marine Reserve¹⁵.

Matakana Coast Wine Country – where the good things in life are found in abundance...

Your quest might be a fine bottle of [wine](#), brunch in a [cafe](#) or an original piece of [art](#). It may be enjoying the Matakana Farmers Market, exploring the shops along the river in Warkworth or Matakana Village, snorkelling among the fish in the crystal clear waters at Goat Island, horseback riding along white sandy beaches, or a round of golf at one of the areas' 18 hole golf courses (<http://www.matakanacoast.com/main.php>).

Matakana attracts day trippers from Auckland, locals from the surrounding areas and holidaymakers from nearby beach settlements including Omaha, renowned for its large second homes ('Remuera on holiday', as one of our interviewees put it). It is also near the main northern route and easily accessible for tourists heading for the Bay of Islands.

By contrast, Waiheke's principal advantages are its accessibility from downtown Auckland without the need for a car; and its key point of difference is the ferry ride through the Hauraki Gulf. However, once on the island, transport between vineyards can be difficult and expensive. Further, the CEO of Fullers pointed out that domestic

¹⁵ The University of Auckland's marine science research and teaching laboratory is located at Leigh.

visitors in particular balk at the cost of a ferry ticket whereas they are less inclined to factor in the cost of a tank of petrol to drive to Kumeu or Matakana. And having driven to either, transport between vineyards is straightforward.

The comparison leads to further questions as to why people would choose to situate their wine enterprise on Waiheke as opposed to anywhere else, given the cost and inconvenience. Our interview data suggests that the answer lies in Waiheke's unique combination of features:

- It is beautiful
- It is close to Auckland
- It is possible to make good wine
- A range of commercial imperatives can be pursued

Other wine regions in NZ provide useful comparisons. One is Martinborough in the Wairarapa, which parallels in some respects the structure of Waiheke's wine industry. A small, elite, winegrowing 'island' located near a major urban centre, its first commercial vineyard was similarly planted in 1978, and there are now around 30 vineyards in the area. Badged 'New Zealand's only wine village' by the winegrowers' collective, Martinborough has developed a strong reputation around the quality of its wines, particularly Pinot Noir, and wine enterprises have used many of the same tactics as the Waiheke enterprises to capitalise on the burgeoning wine tourism industry (Baragwanath, Howland, and Lewis 2010).

7.4 Where the money comes from: the commercial sustainability of the Waiheke wine industry

There are so many all flogging the same horse: wine. Mudbrick, Stonyridge, Cable, Te Whau, Passage Rock – they all have restaurants and wine. Obsidian and Miro cream it over the three summer months but over the rest of the year find it hard to sell on the international market. And this snowballs: the cellars are full but the grapes keep growing (interview, Waiheke tourism operator).

We initially set out to explore the economics of wine production on Waiheke but found that many of the enterprises are cautious about sharing information.

It's hard to get the true story out of people. Anything going badly is met with mass deflection and fibs. If it's going well, it would be easier for people to say 'last year it wasn't so good and we made some mistakes', but when it's not going well, they won't admit to anything (interview, former Waiheke winemaker).

Wine businesses on Waiheke change hands regularly, attesting to the obvious difficulty in making money from wine on Waiheke.

There is the feeling of being locked into the situation: as the proprietor and landowner you don't have much choice. It's hard to escape! Common wisdom says that vineyards are not being snapped up at the moment. Saying that, 3 have changed hands in the past year: Peacock Ridge, Onetangi Road (now Topknot), and Ridgeview. Both Peacock and Ridgeview went to overseas buyers (interview, owner, Waiheke wine enterprise).

Key factors affecting the commercial viability of operations include when they entered the market (because of the escalating cost of land); the structure of their operations, the level of diversification, the wine experience of the principals. It is well-established in research of small wineries across the new world that a large proportion are non-viable according to standard business metrics (Deloitte 2006) but that the viability metrics applied are different. That is, whilst investors are seeking to make a return from their wine business, commercial success is not always the primary or sole motivator for investment. Each of the Waiheke wine enterprises emphasised that they are driven by commercial imperatives, the nature of which vary considerably.

Some of the key variables are:

- the extent to which vision matches experience: how well people understand and anticipate the challenges of their enterprise
 - the set-up costs (land, machinery, labour, compliance with regulations)
 - the ongoing costs (time as well as money)
 - past experience in the wine industry (length of time to first crop, marketing, selling)
- their motivation for becoming involved in wine
 - *why* they became involved
 - how realistic their ideas were
 - their capital backing
 - the extent to which they *need* to make money

Our research suggests five broad categories of operation based on the motivation for involvement, although these overlap.

a) Retirement/lifestyle imperative

It's passion that drives it: absolutely not the money (interview, owner, Waiheke wine enterprise).

Most small vineyard owners I think are like us. They dreamed a dream, they left their day-job, they went somewhere remote, they picked a site they thought would grow great grapes, they worked very very hard, all of them, to realise that dream (Barnett Bond, Miro Vineyard, RNZ Spectrum, 25 May 2010).

Some wine producers are attracted to Waiheke for unashamedly 'lifestyle' reasons and seek only to 'break even'¹⁶.

¹⁶ This motivation appears to hold more generally on Waiheke: our findings are consistent with Oliver's (2010) study of why an increasing number of people over the past decade have chosen to run businesses on Waiheke. Almost all responses reflected a combination of factors: wanting to live an environmentally sustainable life, Waiheke as a suitable business location close to Auckland; the sense of community on Waiheke; and valuing lifestyle over income (Oliver, 2010: 2).

Everything is piled back into the business. Reinvestment in business is essential – it's not a money spinner but a lifestyle (interview, owner, Waiheke wine enterprise)

Such operators like the idea of being on Waiheke making wine and the priority is to strike the balance of living and working in a beautiful place in an interesting and even 'glamorous' industry. However, such operators must still sell their wine. The most cost-effective method for small-scale producers is to do so directly from the cellar door. This is an important component of the experience for many wine-tourists, who value the interaction with the owner or winemaker. However, manning the cellar door diverts valuable labour needed in other parts of the operation.

Its perfect pruning weather and I've just spent two hours talking to a group of Brazilian tourists who didn't buy a single bottle (interview, owner-operator Waiheke wine enterprise).

The extent to which such enterprises can be sustained relates to how realistic their ideas were when they arrived. For example, one producer planted vines as a retirement project, but this has rapidly grown creating enormous amounts of work through unexpectedly high levels of production making it "too big to be a hobby and too small to be a business".

There are no economies of scale: everything works against us. The overheads are appalling – we HAVE to break even, even writing off the capital (interview, Waiheke wine producer).

Alternatively, others are attracted to Waiheke because of its beauty and proximity to Auckland, and produce wine because grapes are suited to Waiheke.

We came to NZ in 1994 [from Hawaii], looking for a property to grow grapes and make wine. We went all over NZ and were about to walk away when on the final day we visited Waiheke. We saw Kennedy Point and put in an offer immediately. We're used to living on an island (interview, owner, Kennedy Point vineyard).

Awaroa vineyard was set up in 1993 by a group that wanted to buy land near Auckland to establish a commercial organic farm and develop a community. They planted the grapes in 1996, and now produce 3 tonnes of their own wine a year which is likely to increase. They sell the wine en primeur through their loyalty club and through various wine outlets, but all the partners have day jobs.

We are not in it primarily to make money (interview, Awaroa winemaker).

The extent to which the retirement/lifestyle category can be commercially viable depends on debt levels, alternative income against which the costs of the wine operations can be set and tax offset, and capital appreciation of the land involved.

b) Making money from wine alone

The second category describes wine producers which focus on producing wine, mostly with export aspirations that seek to make quality wine on Waiheke and leverage the reputation of Waiheke as a distinctive, unique wine region.

This category includes fine/expensive wine enterprises – which are not necessarily the same thing: wine producers in this bracket endeavour to produce top quality wine, and/or wine that can command a premium price. Most of these operators do not have a cellar door on Waiheke, although some operate loyalty clubs and use distributors in Auckland and beyond to sell their wine. Wine shops on Waiheke are an important outlet, particularly the Waiheke Wine Centre located in Oneroa.

For wine businesses, the off-season isn't so bad: the North American summer season means that with Sauvignon Blanc and Rosé, you can do good business. The off-season can be profitable if you export (interview, Waiheke winegrower).

It is difficult to gauge the financial success of most of these operations given their reluctance to share information. However, we can draw some conclusions:

- Recent arrivals tended to emphasise the unanticipated difficulties in getting established: the cost of the land, the length of time to get set up, the costs of regulatory compliance, suggesting that timing of entry is an important factor
- Premium pricing does not guarantee financial success. As one of our premium producer interviewees put it:
Is it a profitable business? Well... Rothschild was asked: is it profitable to make money in wine? He answered Yes, it just takes 200 years... (interview, Waiheke winemaker).
- People engage in the wine business for multiple reasons

c) Wine as part of a broader enterprise

While ostensibly 'wine enterprises', many of the vineyards operate some form of hospitality ranging from cellar door sales, to simple vineyard platters and café-style food, sophisticated fine dining, and providing the venue for weddings and other functions.

Our main thrust is wine, and this takes time. We told friends we were opening a B&B because people understand this. We have 13.5 acres but 10 acres that is plantable. It's good grape land: north facing, but it's small – we needed other parts to the business to make it thrive. We have 300 olives and a guest house (interview, owner, Kennedy Point vineyard).

We would be in exactly the same boat as everyone else, without Casita Miro. Casita Miro is the enhancement that a small vineyard like this absolutely needs, to keep the economics working (Barnett Bond, Miro Vineyard, RNZ Spectrum 2010).

Some wineries have turned to hospitality to complement their lifestyle or winemaking enterprise. Offering hospitality ensures direct wine sales on the premises, representing the most efficient return to wine producers. However, restaurants are risky businesses in their own right and there is no guarantee that combining wine and hospitality will necessarily lead to success.

You can go down the hospitality route, but restaurants are surely the most risky business proposition of all. Why on earth do they do it? Its hard work, and inevitably seasonal (interview, former Waiheke winemaker).

Business is still difficult. Waiheke's tourism is strongly seasonal, and operators must choose whether to stay open across the 5 month winter season with minimal traffic (so as to ensure the retention of a reputation of quality and good staff), or to close across the winter and risk being unable to find good staff in the following season.

We make money for 7 months, but carry heavy losses for the 5 months. It's nasty, the winter season. We just grin and bear it – we work on a 1 April start to the financial year, and don't look at it til October, by which time we're well into the red (owner, wine hospitality enterprise, Waiheke).

The dog days are June and July – we go backwards fiscally, but if you don't open, you drop off the radar (interview, Waiheke wine and restaurant owner).

As is the case in other tourist destinations, attracting staff can be difficult particularly as accommodation can be expensive for low-wage workers.

The availability of good pool of workers is a problem for Waiheke: we can draw them here but accommodation is hard to find. Same as the Queenstown problem: it is hard to attract people (interview, owner, tourism enterprise, Waiheke).

Some hospitality enterprises rely on seasonal migrant labour, particularly from South America:

In the past staffing was a concern, but this is less so now. So long as the government doesn't hammer the casual migrants, we'll be OK. Without them, we would suffer (owner, wine hospitality enterprise, Waiheke).

Several of the enterprises target the Auckland corporate market for conferences, team-building as well as lunch or dinner functions.

The land is so expensive: if you are just going to mow it, why have it? Corporate team-building extracts more value from the land than viticulture alone. As revenue rises, so does capital gain. As for wine... There's no money in it: unless you have a restaurant to sell a huge volume of wine, you can't make money. Can't do it through the tasting room/cellar door, therefore you have to spend huge amounts of money marketing the wine. People are selling distressed wine at way below cost (interview, Waiheke tourism operator).

Pulling these aspects together, as an example, Stonyridge's early establishment in 1982 means that it is debt-free and it therefore is less vulnerable in times of economic downturn (pers. comm., general manager, Stonyridge). It is also a highly diversified operation offering weddings, dance parties, and festivals in addition to its wines, cellar door sales and restaurant. It produces its premium label Stonyridge wines and second label, Airfield. In addition, it provides an auxiliary range of cheaper wines under the Fallen Angel brand sourced from elsewhere in NZ and sold at the restaurant as well as more widely. Similarly, Mudbrick's owners bought their land in

1992 before the price explosion, virtually trading their cross-leased section in Epsom, Auckland, for 24 acres in Church Bay (pers. comm., owner, Mudbrick). Their operation incorporates a cellar door, fine-dining restaurant and growing reputation as a highly popular venue for weddings and functions with a spectacular view west over Auckland and the harbour. Both restaurants are open year round, and must weather the five winter months with vastly reduced income.

d) Winemakers

In all regions of NZ, there are winemakers who have chosen to locate themselves in particular wine regions. This category overlaps with some of the others. Examples include Stephen White who was attracted by Waiheke's climate and established Stonyridge; Neill Culley at Cable Bay who has been part of a wider enterprise with a range of motivations including winemaking; and David Evans at Passage Rock, who has started his own firm in the rural eastern part of Waiheke.

e) Oblique sources of wine enterprise income

As our research progressed we realised that many of Waiheke's wine enterprises depend substantially on completely unrelated income streams. This effect emerged through interviews with a non-Waiheke based wine investor and a winemaker who formerly worked on Waiheke. For those with substantial incomes, New Zealand's tax regime allows taxpayers to offset their tax against a loss-making wine producer. This can make a vineyard a far better investment than a yacht, bach or racehorse.

It's the last major bastion of tax deductibility. Why, the development costs are so high with such a lag time before the vineyard turns a profit... In the two vineyards I've invested I will effectively get my capital investment returned by way of tax saving due to the offset off my income (interview, vineyard investor).

[The owner] said he wanted it to be a commercial success, but it turned out to be a tax dodge. If you have hundreds of thousands income you can write it off as a LAQC [loss attributing qualifying company]. It turned out that it couldn't make money, and if [x] couldn't, as one of the most organised vineyards on Waiheke, how can anybody? (interview, winemaker).

In understanding the economic sustainability or otherwise of wine and wine tourism on Waiheke, it is therefore critical to appreciate the range of motives that lie behind each of the operations – success can be measured in a variety of ways.

Most people on Waiheke have vineyards for social rather than financial reasons (interview, former winemaker).

In practice, these types overlap and any one winery may embody different dimensions of each. To summarise, some excellent wine is produced on Waiheke, as is some expensive wine. Wine tourism has become an increasingly important mechanism for selling wine. While Waiheke's geophysical and climatic features and wine-growing conditions are an important component in the burgeoning industry, so are the aesthetic appeal of Waiheke and the reputation of its wines.

8. Imagining Waiheke: image and perception

Its all about perception: where do you want your wine to come from? A hip, funky island – or boring old somewhere else? So even if it doesn't actually come from there [as some Waiheke wineries sell wines that are not grown on the island], the perception holds: Waiheke is sexy, exotic, Mediterranean (interview, Waiheke resident and wine commentator).

So what does Waiheke's reputation comprise? What draws the tourists and catalyses the wine-buyers? To explore this further, we have analysed the images of Waiheke that have emerged during the course of our research. A clue emerged as we examined the effects of growth in the wine and tourism industries on Waiheke: aesthetic, environmental, social, cultural and economic. How these are evaluated depends on the ways in which Waiheke is imagined.

Our research demonstrated that people imagine Waiheke in a variety of ways. These 'imaginaries' – different images of what Waiheke is and should be – affect people's interaction with the island: for residents, the style of architecture they choose, the business in which they engage, their involvement in the community and with regulatory authorities, and their vision for the island in the future. For tourists, what matters is the extent to which their image of Waiheke is matched by the reality of their experience.

For example, a range of effects were noted by our interviewees and in the survey responses relating to the growth of the wine industry: water use, spray drift, stream contamination, bird netting, and modification of the pastoral landscape. These effects are interpreted in different ways: for some, the changes reflect an enormously positive transition toward economic land-use, as opposed to the previous marginal pasture covered in gorse and thistle.

20 years ago, Waiheke didn't have an economy. Retired people, DPB, hippies. Now it has a vibrant economy based on wine, wine tourism, beaches, art and olives. This is providing jobs (interview, Waiheke wine enterprise owner).

It's the signal that Waiheke is a serious place. It's not a hippy commune any more (interview, Waiheke wine and tourism enterprise)

There used to be an attitude on Waiheke that the service is bad because this is the Waiheke way. Part of being an international tourism destination is getting the act together (interview, Waiheke cultural tourism operator)

However, for others the changes represent an unwelcome shift associated with urban values and city sensibilities, nouveau riche diletantism and escalating land values, and a host of unwelcome effects including spray drift and noise.

There are still many hippies on the island. Look at the wine association with land – the café culture – many people hate it. They identify the island with something totally different. They see wine as a managed landscape. It's changing the image of the island itself: a lot of people have gone. It's the

tension between people trying to develop tourism and those who would rather have gorse. You can't have it both ways (interview, Waiheke wine enterprise owner).

There is a distinction between local Waihekeans, and Aucklanders. Many 'locals' don't like the commercialisation of Waiheke, and go to local haunts rather than new wineries (interview, CEO, Waiheke wine tourism enterprise).

Waiheke growers also confront problems with being located on the urban fringe. A recently-arrived wine enterprise worker explained that he found the attitudes on Waiheke hard to deal with.

I'm from the country, where people help each other. Here they complain – about the tractors, the spraying, the noise. It's the problem of operating where city meets country: people like to look at vineyards, but don't want them sprayed or mowed (interview, Waiheke winemaker).

To develop a better understanding of the dynamics we have adopted the notion of geographical imaginaries. We identified a range of imaginaries through our research. Our argument is that these imaginaries are built through association-making and storytelling in many different sites at different moments and through different means. They are then mobilised in different ways by different actors for different reasons. Here we focus on four imaginaries in particular that encapsulate the key stories mobilised in wine and wine tourism. These are not mutually exclusive and can be contradictory - hence it is how they are mobilised, when, where and by whom that it is important.

- a) Clean, green and natural – Waiheke as a summertime island, far removed from Auckland, valued for its open spaces, beaches, native bush, regional park and marine park

The winegrowers we interviewed were inclined to depict a positive image of Waiheke as clean and green and to paint winegrowing into this idyll. This included the production of neatly manicured vineyards, idyllic vistas from restaurants, wine labels, and claims in brand collateral. Interviewees from community groups and the public sector shared a view of Waiheke as clean and green, but were more circumspect about the position of wine and vineyards in this. Indeed, many saw it as 'out of place'. Their view of clean and green tends to be preservationist, mourning on one hand the modification of the 'old Waiheke' pastoral landscape (somewhat contradictory), and on the other the threat of development per se on Waiheke's remnant bush stands (particularly as Waiheke is free from possums which decimate northern coastal forest). In this imaginary, Waiheke's existing landscape is valued for environmental as well as aesthetic reasons: the landscape modification and 'managed landscape' that grape-growing entails encounters a deep-rooted imaginary of Waiheke as a pastoral setting with pockets of native bush. The wineries mobilise this imaginary in a particular way.

- b) 'Woodstock Reunion' – Waiheke as a bastion of counter-cultural diversity, political dissent, and alternative lifestyles – hippies, greenies, university lecturers, writers, artists – a vibrant, opinionated, noisy, culturally engaged and politically active community

Waiheke is portrayed by most as a peaceful, laid-back and relaxed sanctuary, worlds away from the hustle of the city. 'Slow down – you're here' is the slogan greeting passengers arriving from the car ferry. The gentle pace of 'island time' over the 20th century attracted a diversity of people, consolidating the image of Waiheke as a haven for 'alternative' types: artists, musicians, 'greenies', and others seeking inspiration from nature and often a cheaper, more natural way of life not possible in Auckland. This 'Woodstock Reunion' feeling¹⁷ of Waiheke (similar to that of Takaka in Golden Bay) is evident in the multiplicity of diverse small enterprises on the island – art studios, alpacas, lavender, organic fruit and vegetables, wine – and in institutions such as the Ostend market on Saturday mornings, and the Oneroa cinema (the seats are sofas and armchairs donated by locals upgrading their furniture). This imaginary generates significant amenity values for tourists and middle class residents alike. For those selling property and running tourism and wine businesses, it can be converted into economic value by strategic mobilisation and attachment to other imaginaries of Waiheke.

Waiheke is in transition – but it needs to retain the Woodstock reunion feel. I helped coin the phrase: Waiheke – we're 'far enough behind to be ahead' (interview, Waiheke resident).

- c) 'Isle of Capri' – escapism, tranquillity, sophistication and reflection in beautiful surroundings

A further imaginary stems from the layer of cosmopolitan sophistication emerging from both the cultural and economic deployment of the Woodstock Reunion imaginary, particularly as it has been converted into practices such as high end crafts, cottage industries and farmers markets and the amenity values of a globalised rural idyll. The increased flow of visitors and demographic shift on the island has resulted in increasingly 'middle class' sensibilities: professional people have brought increasingly sophisticated tastes to the island, supporting the proliferation of small businesses on the island to meet this demand. This Isle of Capri imaginary interpenetrates both the Woodstock Reunion and clean green representations of Waiheke and generates a distinctive idyllic that can be mobilised to sell high end products.

Some locals have been confused about the changes – that now there are people prepared to pay for better cut of meat, who are also wine-drinkers. The old guard need to realise that change is inevitable, but it can be better or worse – the new arrivals aren't all bad. We beautify the landscape, spend money, go to restaurants (interview, Waiheke resident).

¹⁷ I am grateful to John Hawkesby for this metaphor.

The image of Waiheke as NZ's 'Isle of Capri'¹⁸ – historically an island of strategic importance, more recently dedicated to 'otium and the art of hospitality'¹⁹ and a refuge for peaceful reflection, artists and writers – has gained traction in recent years with the increasing sophistication of the island's cultural attributes. The wine industry is an important component of this image.

- d) 'Martha's Vineyard of the South Pacific' – Waiheke as a sophisticated, 'reassuringly expensive', elite magnet for 'high net worth' travellers, celebrities wanting lavish second homes, and wine connoisseurs

While the Isle of Capri imaginary remains connected to and draws upon Woodstock Reunion and Clean Green imaginaries, some groups on Waiheke, including the aspirations of some wine enterprises, have contributed to the emergence of a new imaginary largely disconnected from the others. This is based on an image of Waiheke as an exclusive destination for 'high net worth' travellers: the Martha's Vineyard of the South Pacific.

The proposal to build a five-star hotel at Isola Estate in the Onetangi Valley, endorsed by the Langham hotel group, is one manifestation of this imaginary. Another is the way in which some of the wineries have explicitly targeted the ultra premium market for wines, building on the image of exclusivity.

Stonyridge Larose consistently set[s] out to be New Zealand's most expensive red – on the domestic market. Both Providence at Matakana, and now Destiny Bay at Waiheke Island, are seeking to topple Larose from this position, in their thus-far export-dominated efforts (Kelly, 2009²⁰).

Whilst Stonyridge as an enterprise has remained tightly connected to the other imaginaries, other wineries have sought to create and capitalise on the Martha's Vineyard imaginary. Indeed they are its most significant storytellers.

Discussion above draws attention to multiple lines of difference, even contradiction, in the diversity of images produced around Waiheke (both within the wine world and across Waiheke's different communities more widely). These are worked creatively by wine-tourism enterprises. However, there are fundamental contradictions. One line of distinction runs between the cachet of Waiheke as a distinctive, indeed unique, high-value brand proposition for wine exporters seeking leverage in a fiercely competitive international marketplace; and the tourism proposition which relies on winery tastings, numbers, and a cheaper experience.

Further, the ingrained 'beach and sun' summertime reputation, the 'island time' Bohemian image of Waiheke attracts different visitors who require different services. Others search for the cosmopolitan attractions of art, food and wine. The physical environment of Waiheke: golden beaches and rocky headlands, farmland, small-town New Zealand, Mediterranean-style vineyards and olive groves. It is also

¹⁸ I am grateful to Linda Goodin for this image

¹⁹ (<http://www.capri.com/en/storia>),

²⁰ <http://geoffkellywinereviews.co.nz/index.php?ArticleID=147>

reflected in the diversity of the Waiheke population. The implication does not have to be that there are irreconcilable contradictions (although land prices and rates make some tensions inevitable). Rather it might be that Waiheke's multiple personae are better recognised, along with the way they appeal differently to different people.

Both the physical and cultural experience of Waiheke can accommodate this diversity. Although this can cause problems for niche producers such as the high-value exporters who want to emphasise exclusivity and seek to minimise the impression of 'hippy counter-culture', Waiheke's cultural diversity is written into its terroir and almost always picked up by wine writers. A positive response might be to recognise that different consumers (tourists in general, wine tourists and wine-buyers) have different demands and expectations, and different enterprises see different opportunities to create and realise value in these expectations. Enterprises need to consider both their own brands the implication of their own initiatives for the collective 'Waiheke brand' to avoid killing the golden goose. This requires a collective response and broad recognition of the need to encompass diversity.

Imagining Waiheke in each of these ways has consequences, affecting people's understanding of the way in which the island is developing. These are not necessarily clear-cut or mutually exclusive, for example:

- greenies and longstanding residents may object to the monoculture, noise and spray that vines involve, but might need the work that such development requires
- tourism operators hoping to secure high net worth clients are frustrated at the down-at-heel aspects of Waiheke counterculture which is seen to imperil the image of exclusivity (for example those seeking to capitalise on Waiheke's exclusiveness are horrified at producers making cheap wine labelled Waiheke) but at the same time benefit from the exoticness of the Waiheke image
- unlikely groups align in the face of change. One example was the Love Matiatia campaign in which 'greenies' and the 'old guard' joined forces with wealthy newcomers in Church Bay to oppose a proposal by Auckland City Council to build a mall at Matiatia Bay

These imaginaries emerge and their implications are explored further in our parallel papers. For the purposes of this report, the key relevance of the Waiheke imaginaries is in the variety ways in which Waiheke's future development potential is understood and acted upon.

9. Waiheke's potential

Further development of Waiheke as a residential option and as a tourism destination is extremely likely if not inevitable. Rural open land on the fringe of growing cities faces an inevitable pressure for development, as do beautiful islands close to major cities. Waiheke provides an easily-accessible and appealing residential and holiday destination. As a suburb servicing the city centre, it does not clog the city's roads.

At the last Census in 2006, Auckland's population was 1,303,068: an increase of 12.4% since the 2001 Census (Auckland Regional Council 2009d). The population of Auckland region is projected to continue growing:

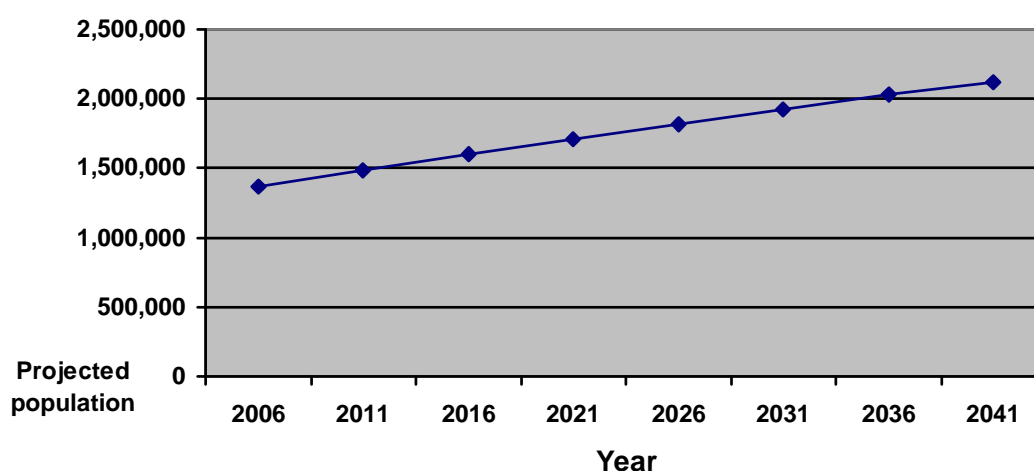


Figure 11: Auckland's projected population growth 2006 - 2041 (Auckland Regional Council 2009a)

Citing medium population projections for Waiheke from Statistics NZ, Auckland City Council estimates there will be 11,600 people on Waiheke by 2021. The high population projection suggests that the population would rise to 12,350 by the time the reviewed District Plan is operative (Auckland City Council 2010b).

There are myriad examples in NZ and beyond where ad hoc development has brought about unwelcome changes. Visual impacts, infrastructure overload, ribbon development and other negative effects are commonplace. Good and comprehensive planning is essential to ensure that development is appropriate. This requires understanding and valuing Waiheke's distinctiveness.

Essentially Waiheke (Auckland City Council 2000), mentioned above, suggested that a key time to consider growth management and even a new village when 90% of the sites zoned Land Unit 11 and 12 are occupied, and this occurred in 2005. It identified key considerations in the management of growth on Waiheke as:

- Its effect on the existing character and amenity of Waiheke.
- Its effect on ferry services and the flow-on effect to Matiatia in relation to, for example, parking.

- Its effect on land prices and the affordability of housing on Waiheke.
- Its effect on roading infrastructure - major upgrades of existing roads may be necessary and there may be new roading requirements.
- Wastewater disposal - the current system of on-site disposal of wastewater through septic tanks has implications for minimum lot sizes in residential development. Other wastewater considerations include:
 - Current support for on-island, individual responsibility for effluent disposal, as indicated in *Essentially Waiheke*.
 - The possibility of localised collection, treatment and disposal systems.
 - Potential health and environmental issues if on-site disposal systems fail.
 - The location of any proposed new ferry terminal (Auckland City Council 2010b).

This reinforces the significance of the issues of waste disposal, water consumption, roading, affordability, parking and land prices that emerged in the course of our research. In addition, projected trends in domestic and international tourism are also likely to exert additional pressure on Waiheke.

- Tourism is predicted to become increasingly important to NZ
- Tourism is also predicted to continue to grow in Auckland: it increased 66% over 10 years to 2006, and this is projected to continue (Auckland Regional Council 2009a)
- Waiheke is already positioned as a key element of Auckland's tourism proposition
- Waiheke is already a tremendously popular tourism destination
- Waiheke is already confronting problems relating to infrastructure, pollution, water use, crowding and community dissatisfaction in relation to tourism

Adverse effects of tourism and wine industries

Our research identified a range of negative aspects relating to Waiheke's infrastructure noted by visitors in the surveys and interviewees. These including dirty ferries, crowding on ferries and buses, rubbish, inadequate toilets, poor roading, sewage pollution, and so forth) (see Waiheke Visitor Survey Report).

Environmental effects:

- Water consumption – while the wine industry is well-suited to Waiheke's dry conditions, requiring irrigation only in the first few years, if at all, the processing of wine and the auxiliary enterprises such as hospitality put pressure on the island's groundwater supply. The Onetangi valley has particular potential for future problems with respect to water shortages, as the location of many vineyards and the proposed Langham hotel development, as well as sports grounds and the 9 hole golf course. Excessive extraction of groundwater risks salination of the island's groundwater (interviews, ARC Environmental Planning manager; Regional CEO, NIWA).
- Pollution and waste disposal – Waiheke's beaches are an important component of its attraction. However, several of the popular beaches periodically have water quality problems (such as Little Oneroa beach), often

through malfunctioning of septic tanks (interview, ARC environmental analyst).

- Environmental effects mentioned in the course of our research arising from the wine industry include spray drift, noise, visual pollution (interviews)
- Environmental effects have a social dimension, impacting on the quality of life of some residents as well as the experience of some tourists (interviews, survey data)

Infrastructure constraints

- Ferry service – conflict between the comprehensiveness of the service and its cost: visitors and residents have different requirements
- Bus service – conflict between the requirements of commuters and Waiheke locals, and visitors
- Footpaths – inadequate
- Sewage overflow and pollution problems suggesting the need for reticulation in some places
- Planning constraints – noted in *Essentially Waiheke* and still to be addressed

Of course, tourism is not guaranteed to continue to increase. The NZ Tourism Strategy 2015 notes that the further growth of tourism is constrained by two factors: NZ's distance from key markets and accordingly the growing perception of NZ as a carbon-unfriendly destination; and the environmental sustainability of tourism within NZ. If these factors continue to gain traction, Waiheke may experience increased demand because of its domestic popularity. In this case, preserving its distinctiveness is absolutely crucial for businesses on the island.

However, even if tourism does not increase rapidly, further development on Waiheke is inevitable because of its proximity to Auckland. How to ensure that this happens appropriately? What then are the implications for the future?

Just as the NZ Tourism Strategy 2015 identifies sustainability issues as a key challenge to the ongoing development of tourism, so this is the central question in relation to tourism on Waiheke. This can be seen in a number of ways:

- Financial viability of operators – high costs, seasonality, difficulty of attracting good workers
- Environmental sustainability – pollution from septic tanks, rubbish from tourists, pressure on the roads and footpaths, aesthetic effect of subdivision and implications for Waiheke's open space character, adverse environmental effects from wine
- Urban growth sustainability – how to retain Waiheke's distinctive character while providing for development

Tourists and residents want the same things from Waiheke and it is imperative to ensure that the things that attract people are not compromised by future development. Preserving Waiheke's distinctiveness is therefore a central consideration that needs to be recognised and provided for in planning and by the new regulatory authority.

The different ways in which Waiheke is imagined provide an insight into the range of possibilities: different visions are possible depending on the imaginary behind them. Some possibilities are outlined below, many of which leverage existing initiatives and past spending. These are presented in terms of the different imaginaries that condition them.

a) Clean, green and natural

- Building on the image of Waiheke as an environmental treasure with a diverse history, an application is currently being prepared that seeks to secure accreditation for Waiheke as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve²¹. Such recognition would place Waiheke at the forefront of environmental sustainability, capitalising on its environmental and social history
- Capitalising on Waiheke's natural assets, such as Whakanewha Regional Park and the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park
- Development that emphasises the unique combination of community and environment would reinforce NZ's 'clean green' 100% Pure reputation (leaving to one side the issue of how deserved this reputation actually is).
- Given that environmentally-conscious visitors might a) not visit at all because of carbon consciousness or b) find NZ environmentally unfriendly once they get here, Waiheke is potentially an important asset in mitigating both perceptions, providing an image of authenticity and credibility through its environmental history with scope for further development

The future of island is wine tourism: low impact, ecologically friendly. Community, economy, environment (interview, Waiheke wine tourism operator).

b) Woodstock Reunion and Isle of Capri

- Finding ways to ensure that the special character of Waiheke is maintained eg the cinema where people bring their old armchairs, Ostend market, etc...
- Building on reputation for sculpture and art – extending the Headland exhibition (currently runs for 3 weeks every 2 years), and better connecting with Cable Bay sculpture initiatives, Connells Bay sculpture park, and other initiatives on Waiheke to further develop its reputation as a unique cultural tourism location
- Waiheke as a complementary wine region – to increase the profile of wine tourism in Auckland by aligning the two other different but complementary wine areas in the region: Matakana and West Auckland
- Yachting: Auckland has an internationally-established reputation for yachting, and Waiheke is an important part of the Hauraki Gulf seascape. There is potential to leverage years of investment by central and local government in the America's Cup by emphasising Waiheke's maritime possibilities in

²¹ A group of Waiheke residents produced in March 2010 a document outlining the case for Waiheke to become a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve entitled *Waiheke Forever* (Waiheke Forever 2010). See Appendix for more detail.

attracting high-spending boaties from Auckland. Marine tourism would provide a further component of Waiheke's cultural appeal.

Auckland welcomes three prestigious international sailing events in March as part of the [Auckland Festival of Sailing](#) - the [Omega Auckland Match Racing Regatta](#) (3-6 March), the [Louis Vuitton Trophy](#) (7- 21 March) and the [BMW Sailing Cup World Final](#) (22 to 25 March). All Aucklanders have the chance to experience the thrill of this exciting festival - the biggest sailing event since Auckland hosted the America's Cup in 2003 (Auckland City Council 2010c).

- c) Martha's Vineyard of the South Pacific
- Waiheke as a destination for high net worth travellers – the proposal at Isola endorsed that was to be managed by Langham presented a Mediterranean-style five star hotel. Victim of the global recession, the development is currently on the market. However, Waiheke's potential as an exclusive destination remains, although considerable investment is required (for example the island has only a 9 hole golf course)
 - The image of Waiheke's exclusivity is being assiduously promoted by Destiny Bay and The Hay Paddock, for example through their new collective marketing group 'The Specialist Winegrowers of NZ'

The ways in which official agencies imagine Waiheke is a critically important dimension here; as are the ways in which Waiheke residents imagine the governance of the island. Official agencies must navigate these different imaginaries, as well as the 'real Waihekean' imaginary at work on the island. In addition, other work being carried out on Waiheke by other researchers in the School of Environment at the University of Auckland has drawn attention to the lives, struggles and different views of the island through the 'Good Homes for Good Lives' ageing in place research programme²².

Interactions among different groups on the island with the Auckland City Council are an important case in point. As the earlier discussion demonstrated, the Council is 'not well-loved' on the island (pers. comm., Planning Manager, ACC). This sentiment was repeatedly endorsed by wine and tourism operators (see Appendix):

It's the worst of all worlds: it's not beautifully managed, there's no vision and no initiative in local government. For example, Waiheke has to face reticulation of sewage, the ground is saturated, but it's NIMBYism (interview, Waiheke winegrower)

It's Auckland's busiest tourism destination, and look at the state of the roads. We are constantly told that Waiheke gets far more spent on it than the rate-take, but it's hard to say that because other areas are so difficult to demarcate. So you can't really say what the 'rate take versus outlay' is in other parts of Auckland – but we don't get much value for our tremendously high rates. Imagine if these streets were in Remuera: see how quickly the

²² <http://www.goodhomes.co.nz/>

council would act. Here, we dispose of our own sewage, gather our own water, have no footpaths, no traffic lights, and high rates (interview, Waiheke tourism operator).

This bureaucratic dyslexia at Auckland city – it's an attempt to impose an urban model on what is in essence rural (interview, Waiheke wine enterprise owner).

What the 'essence' of Waiheke is, however, is heavily contested: for example, whether it is part of Auckland's 'urban fringe', or whether it is 'rural'. *Essentially Waiheke* sought to accommodate these visions, recognising the 'open space' and distinct nature of Waiheke. Evidence of some of the different imaginaries of Waiheke:

- A petition was organised in 2009 by a member of the Waiheke Community Board which gathered 700 signatures in an attempt to have Waiheke secede from Auckland City Council and join Thames/Coromandel District, on the grounds that Waiheke is closer in spirit to the rural Coromandel than it is to Auckland. The proposal was rejected by the LGC but offers an insight into a different imagining of Waiheke as an alternative, rural community
- The Auckland City Council is required to treat Waiheke as part of its territory although its distinctiveness is recognised to some extent in the separate plan that covers the Hauraki Gulf Islands. One example of Waiheke being imagined as part of Auckland city is in the rubbish tender decision (see elsewhere)
- The Royal Commission on Auckland's Governance report recommended Waiheke to be included in the Rodney zone, imagining it as primarily rural
- Interviewees operating businesses on Waiheke emphasised that the island is linked in every meaningful sense to Auckland city (through supplies, people, the economy etc)
- The LGC boundaries set in March 2010 (discussed earlier) include Waiheke as part of the new 'Waitemata and Gulf Ward' which includes the CBD, suggesting an imaginary of Waiheke that is primarily urban

Whichever vision of the future, all require Waiheke's distinctive character to be recognised and provided for. This involves alignment of key agencies, institutions and stakeholders. Accommodating difference: must operate to protect its blend of imaginaries because it is this that makes Waiheke unique.

10. Analysis

Waiheke tourism

Tourism is a critical component of Auckland's – and NZ's – economy, and Waiheke is a key element in Auckland tourism proposition. Waiheke also serves as an exemplar of the challenges and possibilities that development presents for an area on the urban fringe that is already popular with tourists.

Within NZ, as international travel has declined, so domestic tourism is becoming proportionately more important, to the advantage of Waiheke and other popular domestic destinations. However in this context Matakana is 'breathing down Waiheke's neck' (as one interviewee put it), as domestic tourists are likely to use their own cars and therefore resist paying for a ferry fare. At the same time, Waiheke, like Matakana, is benefiting from as well as contributing to the growing popularity and reputation of Auckland as a wine region, creating regional solidarity.

Our research suggests that there is an opportunity for further development of tourism and wine tourism in Auckland and on Waiheke, but that this requires careful and appropriate planning. This is at present hampered by competitiveness and lack of unity of purpose among organisations involved in promoting tourism and the tourism operators themselves.

Waiheke wine

Wine plays a small part in Auckland's economy and Auckland's contribution to national wine production is also tiny. However, the wine industry has become an increasingly important component of tourism. Waiheke demonstrates the tensions, potential and risks that face the ongoing development of the wine industry and wine tourism, with implications for other wine regions.

Our research suggests:

- Widespread divergence between perception and reality in terms of the commercial possibilities, the types of enterprise, and the real nature of the businesses on Waiheke
- It is difficult to make money from growing wine on Waiheke, and a range of innovative strategies has been employed
- There may be potential in the high-end, premium strategy of the operators seeking to capitalise on the distinctiveness of Waiheke and pricing their wine accordingly
- For most producers, tourism is essential to their operations. We have noted that the commercial imperatives of wine production on Waiheke vary considerably, ranging from 'breaking even' to subsidising the operation through external income to tax deductibility

The connections between wine and tourism highlight the importance of perception or 'imaginaries' in marketing the areas. The diversity of operations, the landscape, the ferry ride and the other parts of the tourism package are critical components of

Waiheke's attraction. This also contributes towards the attractiveness of Auckland as a wine region.

Auckland governance

Resource management planning is a critical component of future development, underpinning the ongoing and future success of tourism and wine industries. Our research demonstrates the need for regulatory authorities to value and provide for local distinctiveness and unique requirements of particular locations.

Dissatisfaction with way in which regulatory authorities are handling competing development pressures at present is evident in widespread frustration with the Auckland City Council's handling of important issues on Waiheke.

There is clear tension between the Auckland City Council's attempts to provide for the particular requirements of Waiheke and its mandate to serve the broader needs of the city. This tension is likely to persist with the new Auckland Council, with the inclusion of Waiheke into the Waitemata and Gulf Ward. This accommodates the needs of some Waiheke residents (particularly commuters) and tourism operators. However, it provides little recognition of Waiheke's distinctive character quite different from the central city, beyond establishing a community board, the role of which is still unclear. The same applies to Great Barrier island, also included in the new ward.

Finally, our research suggests that there is further scope for the University of Auckland to engage in the debate and analysis of the impending 'Super City' and the role of the new Auckland Council.

Imagining the future: governance, wine and tourism

Understanding the ways in which Waiheke is imagined by different groups affects how development occurs. Drawing on our key imaginaries, the following possibilities emerge, relevant to both the tourism and the wine industries.

- Martha's Vineyard – Waiheke as an elite destination for high net worth travellers (tourism) and as a unique wine region that can command extremely high prices for its wine
- Isle of Capri – Waiheke as a retreat from the city encompassing the beautiful and tranquil setting (beaches, forest, anchorages) as well as the interesting and diverse community (art, sculpture, food). The tourism proposition spans a broader range of expenditure and experience catering for the jandal-wearing beach-goer as well as sophisticated tastes; the wine proposition emphasises the artisan boutique production, small batches, high prices. This incorporates a value on the retreat/isolation/remove of Waiheke from Auckland city.
- Woodstock reunion – Waiheke's diverse community provides a range of possibilities for tourism, as do its wine enterprises
- Clean and green – Waiheke as an exemplar for sustainable living, a UNESCO biosphere reserve

Importantly, our understanding of Waiheke suggests that it is the range of imaginaries that make Waiheke what it is, and these need to be recognised and sustained for its distinctiveness and appeal to be sustained in the face of ongoing pressure for development.

11. Recommendations

Research recommendations

The Waiheke study has demonstrated the need for comprehensive further research on:

- Waiheke’s physical infrastructure: roading, kerbing, water supply, sewage disposal, sewerage
- Spatial planning and ongoing development at the urban margin
- Social and environmental implications of tourism
- Consolidating existing information through collaborative secondary research on knowledge production within and beyond the University
 - Bringing together a trans-faculty urban research team to collate insights from Law, Planning, Geography
 - Building on connections between the University and the Auckland regulatory authorities to collate existing material and develop a better oversight of the issues
- Opportunity for further collaborative research building on the Waiheke methodology and findings, incorporating private and public sector stakeholders around issues relating to development and governance in Auckland. Establishing an Institute for Urban Research would make such research possible, but would require significant investment and carry the associated risks.

Waiheke tourism recommendations

- To achieve sustainable tourism that benefits Waiheke, it will need to protect its particular blend of imaginaries and the distinctiveness that makes it unique
- To understand Waiheke in all its dimensions requires that different values need be recognised and provided for
- Better cooperation is needed on Waiheke among wineries and between wineries and other tourism operators and governance agencies
- Active interventions would help to improve the tourist package – eg signalling opening hours at a central point; giving better information on bus timetabling
- Control of negative effects of tourism and balancing needs of community against tourists’ needs
- Better communication of accommodation options and expanding the range of possibilities through a scoping study of Waiheke tourism to understand labour demand, the community infrastructure for labour, accommodation opportunities

Regional recommendations

- Building on strength of regional wine proposition and improving connections among the different offerings of Waiheke, West Auckland and Matakana
- Integrating Waiheke into the central city, eg by providing better information on what is available on Waiheke for visitors such as publicising the “wine trail” on wharves

Governance recommendations

- Understanding how Waiheke is imagined and providing for its distinctiveness
- Considering the implications of:
 - The new Auckland ward boundaries for different communities within the city;
 - Sustainability in urban development
- Maintaining diversity: understanding that communities are made up of a variety of perspectives that must be balanced

Facilitating the development of the wine industry recommendations

- Ongoing improvement of relationships with local governance agencies
- Continued development of an understanding of the links between wine and tourism and the implications for improvement

12. The value of the Waiheke Project for the University of Auckland

- Deepened the engagement between the University of Auckland and the wine industry
- Developed closer relationships with wineries on Waiheke Island
- Developed closer relationships with other stakeholders in the region including central, regional and local government officials
- Developed a better picture of Auckland's institutional landscape and the connections to it (Auckland City Council, Auckland Regional Council and others)
- Engaged with public debate on key issues:
 - Wine industry and wine tourism through presentations to NZ Winegrowers' Association and the Bragato Conference
 - Wine tourism at the Agri-food Conference and International Academy of Wine Business Research
 - Wine tourism discussed on TV3 Business News
 - Governance issues confronting Auckland through NZ Herald dialogue article
- Developed closer connections within the University between the School of Environment, Business School and Wine Science Programme
- Contributed to the development of the University's Thematic Research Initiative on Sustainable Auckland and the drive to make the University more relevant to stakeholders
- Produced papers for journal publication and PBRF rating

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