



2026 – 2031

NORTH WEST AUCKLAND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Executive Summary	6
1. North West Auckland: Our Place	10
2. Why this plan, why now	11
3. A changing tourism environment	13
4. How this plan was developed	14
5. What we know	15
6. Our direction to 2031	18
7. Our identity and destination story	19
8. Our five strategic pillars	21
Pillar 1: Destination Marketing & Market Development	22
Pillar 2: Visitor Experience & Product Development	24
Pillar 3: Environment & Community Stewardship	27
Pillar 4: Visitor Access, Connections & Infrastructure	29
Pillar 5: Leadership, Delivery & Partnerships	31
9. From strategy to delivery	34
10. Resourcing delivery	36
11. Establishment Phase and Year 1 priorities	37
12. Measuring progress	40
13. Evidence and sources	42
Appendix 1: Detailed actions	43

Destination management for North West Auckland – a collaborative approach

Auckland's visitor economy plays a vital role in our region's economic, cultural, and social life.

As we look to the future, our opportunity is to grow the value tourism creates while ensuring growth strengthens the places, communities, and experiences that make Tāmaki Makaurau special.

North West Auckland plays a significant role in this mission. Its rural and coastal landscapes, outdoor recreation, food and wine, heritage and local communities offer a distinctive experience within easy reach of metropolitan Auckland. Better connecting experiences across the destination can broaden what Auckland offers visitors, encourage people to explore more of the region, and create economic opportunities.

More broadly, as Auckland continues to grow its visitor economy, success cannot be measured by visitor numbers alone. It is also about the value tourism creates for local businesses and communities, the experiences we offer visitors, and how we care for the natural environment, cultural identity, and character of the places people come to experience.

Good destination management is central to achieving this objective. It requires strong local leadership,

collaboration, and a shared understanding of what success looks like. The people who know and care for a place should help shape how its visitor economy develops, while staying connected to Auckland's wider opportunities and strategic direction.

This Destination Management Plan provides that locally led direction for North West Auckland through to 2031. It reflects the knowledge, aspirations, and priorities of businesses, mana whenua, communities, and partners who contributed to its development, and establishes a practical framework for turning that shared ambition into action.

Tātaki Auckland Unlimited is proud to have supported the development of this plan. As Auckland's Regional Tourism Organisation, responsible for destination management and marketing, our role is to work alongside local destination leaders, connect their ambition with Auckland's wider visitor economy, and support the development of compelling and sustainable visitor experiences. Strong local destinations make Auckland stronger as a whole.

I would like to acknowledge everyone who has contributed their time, knowledge, and ideas to this work. I look forward to seeing North West Auckland build on its strengths and realise its potential.

Nick Hill

Chief Executive, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited



A Message from Business North West

North West Auckland is a place of remarkable landscapes, rich heritage, vibrant communities, and unique visitor experiences. Through this Destination Management Plan, we share a vision for a united visitor economy and a strong, sustainable tourism industry that benefits everyone who calls this region home.

Our vision is for tourism to create lasting prosperity for our communities while celebrating and protecting the things that make North West Auckland special. We believe that a thriving visitor economy can support local businesses, provide opportunities for families, strengthen community wellbeing, and create pride in our place.

Business North West is committed to supporting tourism operators, their families, and the wider community to achieve greater financial sustainability. At the same time, we recognise our responsibility to protect and enhance our culture, heritage, environment, and society for future generations. Success will be measured not only by economic outcomes, but by the positive impact tourism has on our people, our places, and our identity.

This plan has been made possible through the collaboration, passion, and generosity of many individuals and organisations. We sincerely thank everyone who contributed their ideas, expertise, and encouragement throughout this process.

In particular, we acknowledge the volunteers who generously gave their time and knowledge in preparing the draft report. Their commitment demonstrates the strength of community leadership within our region. We also extend our gratitude to Tātaki Auckland Unlimited and the Rodney Local Board for their support, partnership, and shared commitment to building a sustainable future for tourism in North West Auckland.

Tourism succeeds when communities work together. This plan is an invitation for businesses, residents, community organisations, mana whenua, local government, and industry partners to unite behind a shared vision and work collectively towards common goals.

It is the wish of the Executive Committee of Business North West that this Destination Management Plan remains a living document, one that continues to evolve with our region, responds to new opportunities and challenges, and is inherited by future committees who will strengthen, enhance, and champion North West Auckland for generations to come.

Business North West Executive Committee



Executive Summary

The North West Auckland Destination Management Plan provides a shared framework to guide the destination's sustainable development, balancing economic, environmental, cultural and community outcomes.

North West Auckland is shaped by its unique landscapes, communities and cultural identity. The area encompasses Woodhill Forest, the Kaipara Harbour, the west coast and productive rural land. These places hold deep significance for Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara, whose enduring relationship with the whenua and moana continues to guide the principles of kaitiakitanga, guardianship and stewardship across the region.

This plan recognises Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara as mana whenua and a key partner in the destination's future development. Their mātauranga, aspirations, and leadership help protect cultural and environmental values, express local identity, and deliver visitor experiences that are authentic and uniquely connected to place.

This plan comes at an important time. National tourism policy is focused on growing the value of tourism and strengthening collaboration across government, regions and industry, while Auckland's approach to destination management and the visitor economy is also evolving.

For North West Auckland, this creates both opportunity and responsibility. The area already attracts significant numbers of visitors, but the connections between its places, attractions, and experiences could be stronger. The opportunity is not simply to increase visitor numbers, but to create greater value from visitation, encouraging people to explore more widely, stay longer, visit year-round, and spend more with local businesses. Visitor activity also needs careful management to protect the natural environment, community wellbeing, and distinctive character of the places people come to experience.

A stronger North West Auckland visitor economy can also improve wider Auckland outcomes by encouraging greater visitor dispersal, broadening Auckland's visitor reach, supporting longer stays, and distributing visitor value more widely across the region.

This Destination Management Plan has been developed through a locally led process, bringing together businesses, communities and destination partners, and drawing on local evidence to establish a shared direction through to 2031. Through partnership, the destination can grow in a way that supports thriving communities, protects natural and cultural assets, and delivers lasting benefits for current and future generations.

The plan will be implemented through governance, delivery and monitoring arrangements that recognise mana whenua's role in shaping the destination's future and measuring the success of its outcomes.

The DMP is locally led and sits within Auckland's wider visitor economy and destination management system. Tourism North West will lead and coordinate implementation locally, working with Tātaki Auckland Unlimited (TAU) in its regional destination management role, alongside mana whenua, Auckland Council, Rodney Local Board, industry, and communities.

Our vision to 2031

North West Auckland is Auckland's place to breathe; a destination where rural and coastal landscapes, living heritage, and authentic stories invite visitors to slow down, stay longer, and leave the city behind. Communities flourish, natural environments are protected, and authentic experiences are shared, creating lasting value for both residents and visitors.

Three guiding principles underpin how this vision will be pursued:

Kotahitanga: We rise together

North West Auckland works as one destination, with businesses and partners collaborating around shared outcomes.

Kaitiakitanga: Caring for place

We recognise and respect the role of mana whenua as kaitiaki and work collectively to care for the long-term wellbeing of the whenua, wai, communities and environments on which the visitor economy depends.

Manaakitanga: We welcome with intention

Visitors experience genuine warmth, respect, and hospitality.

Our direction to 2031

Vision, guiding principles and outcomes

Vision



North West Auckland is Auckland's place to breathe; a destination where rural and coastal landscapes, living heritage and authentic stories invite visitors to slow down, stay longer and leave the city behind. Communities flourish, natural environments are protected and authentic experiences are shared, creating lasting value for both residents and visitors.



Guiding Principles



Kotahitanga

We rise together



Kaitiakitanga

We are caretakers, not just promoters



Manaakitanga

We welcome with intention



Outcomes



Cultural

The stories and culture of this place are alive in the visitor experience.



Economic

Visitors stay longer, spend more and are enriched by experiences worth returning for.



Social

Tourism grows with community, not at its expense.



Environmental

The natural character of the destination is protected and enhanced.



Enabled by



A clear shared identity



A connected and collaborative destination

Our Destination Management Plan seeks four interconnected outcomes: a visitor economy that strengthens cultural, economic, social and environmental wellbeing, enabled by a clear shared destination identity and a connected, collaborative destination.

Five strategic pillars

Delivery of the vision is organised around five strategic pillars:

1. Destination Marketing & Market Development

Build recognition of North West Auckland, activate its shared destination story and use focused, insight-led marketing to reach the right visitors.

2. Visitor Experience & Product Development

Strengthen the reasons to stay, explore and return by addressing key accommodation and hospitality gaps, connecting the existing visitor offer and supporting distinctive, year-round experiences.

3. Environment & Community Stewardship

Grow tourism in a way that protects the natural, rural and coastal character of North West Auckland, encourages care for place and maintains community support for tourism.

4. Visitor Access, Connections & Infrastructure

Make North West Auckland easier to reach, navigate and explore, with priority access, navigation and infrastructure barriers progressively addressed through evidence, partnership and advocacy.

5. Leadership, Delivery & Partnerships

Establish the leadership, governance, coordination, resourcing and partnerships required to turn the plan into sustained action from Year 1.

Our five strategic pillars

Vision to 2031 – Auckland's place to breathe



From plan to action

Tourism North West will lead and coordinate implementation of the DMP, with Business North West providing its organisational and governance home. Delivery will require collaboration with tourism businesses, TAU, Auckland Council, Rodney Local Board, transport and infrastructure agencies, land managers, mana whenua, communities and environmental organisations.

Importantly, the DMP cannot simply be implemented through goodwill and existing activity alone. Year 1 will establish a realistic budget and multi-source resourcing approach to secure dedicated destination coordination capacity. Local leadership will be essential, but successful delivery will also depend on sustained engagement and practical support from Auckland-wide and local partners whose responsibilities influence destination development, marketing, infrastructure, investment and stewardship.

Investment in the DMP has benefits beyond North West Auckland. A stronger destination can broaden Auckland's overall visitor proposition, encourage visitors to explore more of the region, support greater local expenditure, strengthen visitor-ready businesses and experiences, and improve the management of visitor activity and pressure.

The first year

The first period of work will include an establishment period until 30 June 2027, and then Year 1 will commence from 1 July 2027 as a new financial year begins. Year 1 is deliberately focused. Rather than attempting to implement everything at once, activity will be sequenced through four phases:

Mobilise



Understand & connect



Activate



Progress larger projects



Early priorities include establishing governance and sustainable resourcing, securing destination coordination capacity, strengthening relationships with TAU and other partners, advancing the destination brand and visitor presence, improving operator connections, establishing key visitor and community baselines, addressing visitor information and wayfinding gaps, and advancing selected experience, stewardship, and infrastructure initiatives. The Priority Actions and Detailed Action Plan set out the wider recommended actions across the five strategic pillars, providing a practical framework to confirm and sequence future delivery priorities over time.

Measuring success

Progress will be assessed through a focused set of destination measures covering visitor awareness, overnight visitation and length of stay, visitor value, dispersal and seasonality, visitor experience, community sentiment, care for place, industry participation and DMP implementation.

Year 1 will establish practical baselines where none currently exist, enabling Tourism North West and its partners to track progress and adapt priorities over time.

The ambition is straightforward: create greater value from North West Auckland's existing visitor economy while caring for the people and places that make it distinctive, strengthening both the destination and Auckland's wider visitor proposition.

1. North West Auckland: Our Place

North West Auckland is a place where the relationship between whenua and tangata whenua is steeped in cultural heritage and rich natural resources.

Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara has deep connections across this landscape, including Woodhill Forest, the Kaipara Harbour, the west coast and the land between. Mana whenua connection, together with the principle of kaitiakitanga, shapes how the future visitor economy develops and how the destination's natural and cultural character is cared for over time.

North West Auckland is Auckland's rural, coastal and recreational edge, a large and diverse destination stretching from Taupaki in the south to Glorit in the north. Rather than being centred on one town, the region comprises a network of villages, rural communities and distinctive landscapes. Muriwai, Kumeū, Huapai, Waimauku, Riverhead, Helensville, Parakai, Kaukapakapa, Shelly Beach, Makarau and South Head each contribute their own character to the wider destination. State Highway 16 provides the primary connection through the area, linking North West Auckland directly with metropolitan Auckland.

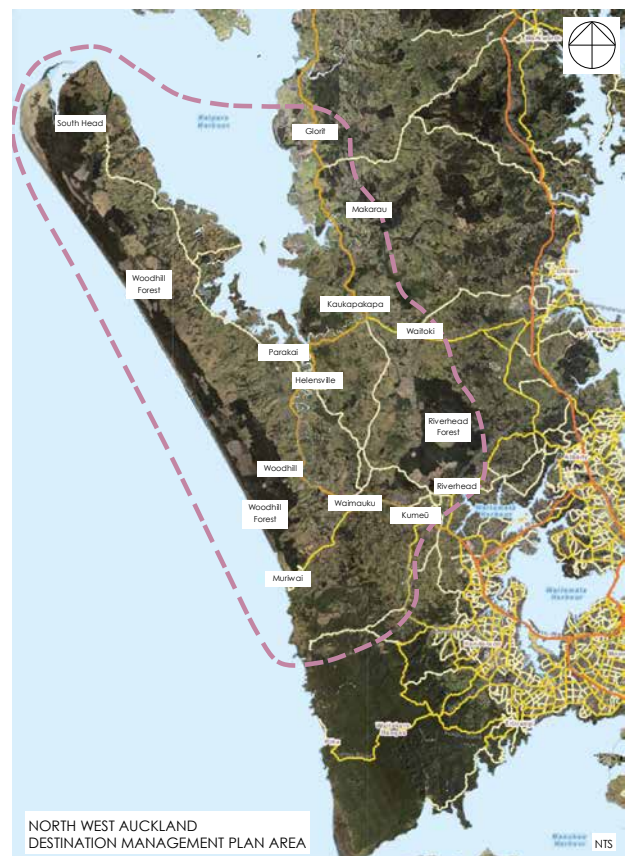
The landscape changes markedly across the destination. The black-sand west coast and Muriwai Regional Park sit alongside Woodhill Forest, Kumeū-Waimauku wine country, farmland and rolling hills, rivers, the Kaipara Harbour and small-town heritage. Together, these comprise a breadth of landscapes and experiences that are distinctive within the Auckland region. This combination of rural, coastal and nature-based settings offers visitors a different side of Auckland, within easy reach of the city centre.

This is also a working landscape. Farming, horticulture, winemaking and forestry sit alongside tourism, recreation, lifestyle communities and growing residential areas. Kumeū-Huapai functions as an important commercial and service centre. Helensville and Parakai serve the South Kaipara area. Riverhead is strongly associated with hospitality and river access.

Rural Waimauku is a popular function, hospitality and wine tourism destination, while Muriwai and Woodhill are major outdoor recreation and nature-based visitor hubs. Woodhill Forest is both a significant visitor and recreation destination and an operational working forest.

Auckland's rural edge: coast, countryside, harbour and communities within easy reach of the city.

North West Auckland's proximity to the city is one of its greatest strengths. The experience on arrival feels different from the adjacent urban areas: the area combines open space, coast and countryside, outdoor recreation, working landscapes, local food and wine, heritage and communities with a strong connection to place.



2. Why this plan, why now

North West Auckland is not starting from scratch. It already attracts significant numbers of visitors, has well-established visitor attractions and recreation areas, and offers a diverse mix of nature, outdoor activity, food and wine, arts, heritage, wellbeing and rural experiences.

The challenge is that these strengths do not yet consistently operate as a connected destination.

Much of the current visitor activity includes day trips and individual attractions. Visitors may come to Muriwai, Woodhill Forest, the hot pools, a winery or another experience, then leave without discovering what else North West Auckland has to offer. Businesses and experiences also often operate independently, limiting opportunities for cross-referral, collaboration and longer stays.

The opportunity is greater value, not simply more visitors

North West Auckland already has much of what it needs to become a stronger short-break destination.

The opportunity is not simply to increase visitor numbers. It is to make better use of the visitation that already exists by encouraging people to stay longer, explore more of the destination, visit at different times of the year and spend with more local businesses.

This means strengthening the connections between existing experiences, addressing gaps in accommodation and hospitality, developing a clearer destination presence and making it easier for visitors to understand and navigate what North West Auckland offers.

It also means being selective. North West Auckland does not need to become everything to everyone. Future development should build on the area's distinctive qualities and experiences and focus effort where it will create genuine value for visitors, businesses and communities.

This can also contribute to Auckland's wider visitor economy by encouraging greater visitor dispersal, broadening the range of experiences available, and distributing visitor value more widely across the region.

Growth needs to be managed with care

The same natural, rural and coastal environments that attract visitors are also places that local communities value deeply.

As Auckland continues to grow and visitation increases, some locations will likely face greater pressure. Sensitive environments, high-use visitor sites, changing land use, climate impacts and infrastructure constraints all reinforce the need to plan rather than wait for problems to emerge.

Destination management therefore needs to consider not only how North West Auckland attracts and serves visitors, but also how tourism contributes positively to community wellbeing, protects the character of place and supports the environment's long-term health.

Kaitiakitanga, community stewardship and maintaining local support for tourism are central to this approach.

A connected destination requires collective action

Many of the things that shape a visitor's experience sit beyond the control of any one business or organisation.

Transport, infrastructure, environmental management, planning, visitor information, destination marketing, investment and community development all involve different organisations and partners.

Developing this plan has already created a stronger foundation for working collectively. Businesses, communities and partners have come together around a shared vision. The opportunity now is to turn that alignment into sustained action, supported by Tourism North West in providing destination leadership and coordination.

This plan provides the framework for doing that through to 2031.

It sets out how North West Auckland can strengthen its visitor economy while protecting what makes the destination special, creating greater local value and building the capability, partnerships and leadership needed to deliver over time.



Why now?



The opportunity is not simply more visitors. It is to create more value from the visitors North West Auckland already attracts.

3. A changing tourism environment

Destination management is not new to Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Following the development of Destination AKL 2025 (Auckland’s original Destination Management Plan), local destination management plans were developed for Aotea Great Barrier Island, Waiheke Island, and the Matakana Coast, recognising that different parts of the region experience tourism differently and benefit from approaches shaped around their own communities, environments, and visitor economies.



North West Auckland represents the next step in this localised approach, but in a different operating environment. This DMP was developed through a locally led process, supported and facilitated by TAU. It places particular emphasis on local ownership, practical delivery, and building the destination’s capability to manage its own future. Tourism North West will provide local destination leadership and coordination, working within TAU’s wider role in destination management and marketing across Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.

The national tourism environment is also changing. The **Government’s Tourism Growth Roadmap** aims to return international visitor numbers to at least 2019 levels and double the value of 2023 tourism exports by 2034. The **Tourism Policy Statement** released in 2026 reinforces the need for tourism growth to deliver wider value, strengthen place-based outcomes and improve coordination across government, regions, mana whenua, councils and industry.

This creates both opportunity and responsibility for destinations such as North West Auckland. As visitor numbers and demand grow, destinations need to be ready to convert that growth into greater local value while managing the implications for communities, infrastructure and the environment. A holistic destination stewardship approach provides a framework to do both.

Auckland is also operating in a changing funding and delivery environment. The Destination Partnership Programme currently provides an interim industry-partnership funding model, while the wider approach to destination management and its integration with Auckland’s economic development strategy continues to evolve.

The Auckland Deal signed by Government and Auckland Council in April 2026 commits the parties to jointly develop a destination and major events strategy to grow tourism, events and hospitality. Future funding arrangements may also evolve, including Government consideration of an accommodation levy policy. These are not committed funding streams for North West Auckland, but they reinforce the value of being organised, evidenced and ready to respond to future opportunities.

Against this backdrop, a clear plan, effective local leadership, an active business network and agreed priorities strengthen North West Auckland’s ability to work with TAU and other partners.

The benefits extend beyond North West Auckland. Strengthening the destination can broaden Auckland’s visitor offer, support greater visitor dispersal and local spending, expand the quality and diversity of experiences across the region, and show how visitor growth can be managed in ways that benefit businesses, communities, and place.

4. How this plan was developed

This plan was developed through a structured, locally led process designed to build both the plan and the destination's capability to deliver it. The process brought together local businesses, community representatives, mana whenua, and public-sector partners to help shape the plan's direction and priorities.

The process followed a practical Destination Management Playbook. TAU facilitated the work, supporting stakeholders to work progressively through each stage, consider the evidence, make choices, and agree on the direction together.

The work began by building a shared understanding of North West Auckland as a destination: who visits, why they come, what the area offers, what is working well and where the gaps and opportunities lie. The group considered national and Auckland tourism trends alongside local visitor knowledge, operator experience, and workshop input.

From this evidence, the group worked progressively through the plan: agreeing the vision and guiding principles, defining North West Auckland's identity and positioning, identifying the outcomes sought for the destination, and shaping the five strategic pillars and priorities that will guide action through to 2031.

Importantly, the plan was developed iteratively. Each stage was explored through a workshop, refined through discussion, and then brought back to the group and wider participants for feedback before moving forward. The resulting plan therefore reflects the language, priorities, and aspirations developed through the process rather than introducing a new direction after the fact.

The final stage was to turn that shared direction into delivery. The team considered the full range of potential actions and prioritised them into a focused Year 1 programme, giving Tourism North West and its partners a practical starting point for implementation.

The result is a plan developed with the destination, not for it. The process has built shared understanding, strengthened relationships and established greater collective ownership of where North West Auckland is heading as a visitor destination.

How this plan was developed

Developed with the destination, not for it.



A grassroots, destination-led process facilitated by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited staff using the Destination Management Playbook.

5. What we know

The evidence gathered through the DMP process provides a clear picture of North West Auckland's current visitor economy: who is visiting, how they use the destination, and where the main strengths and gaps sit.

This section focuses on the facts and patterns that have shaped the strategic direction that follows.

North West Auckland sits within a large and growing visitor economy

Tourism remains a significant part of New Zealand's economy. In the year ended March 2025, total tourism expenditure reached \$46.6 billion, including \$28.5 billion in domestic expenditure and \$18.1 billion in international expenditure.

For North West Auckland, the Auckland market is particularly important. In the year ended January 2026, Auckland recorded \$13.3 billion in tourism spend and 7.85 million guest nights. Domestic tourism contributed \$6.32 billion and international tourism \$6.98 billion.

North West Auckland occupies a distinct position within this wider Auckland visitor economy. It offers a rural, coastal and nature-based experience close to metropolitan Auckland. It is at an earlier stage of destination development than established destination areas such as Waiheke Island and Matakana Coast.

This allows North West Auckland the opportunity to complement Auckland's urban and established destination experiences, while giving visitors more reasons to explore beyond the metropolitan area.

Who visits North West Auckland

Greater Auckland is the destination's largest visitor market.

Families and couples are important day-trip and short-break visitors, with the strongest visitation occurring on summer weekends. Evidence provided by tourism operators identifies a typical peak period between approximately 10:30am and 4:30pm.

Visitors from elsewhere in New Zealand include people travelling for weddings, events and conferences, self-drive visitors passing through the area, and motorhome travellers.

International visitors form a smaller part of the market and include cruise passengers on guided tours, self-drive visitors passing through the destination and some overnight visitors.

North West Auckland Visitor Segments

Who visits and when

 Greater Auckland	 Domestic (rest of NZ)	 International
 Visitor type Day trips; overnight and weekend stays – primarily families and couples.	 Visitor type Weddings, events, conferences; self-drive pass-through; motorhome travellers – primarily seniors.	 Visitor type Cruise day visitors on guided tours; self-drive pass-through and overnight stays.
 Timing and pattern Peak: summer weekends, 10:30am – 4:30pm	 Timing and pattern Variable; events-driven	 Timing and pattern Cruise: any day; self-drive: year-round



Strong visitation is concentrated around key visitor anchors

North West Auckland already attracts substantial visitor activity.

Muriwai is estimated to receive around 1.5 million visits each year, while Woodhill Forest receives around 500,000 visits. Local operator evidence indicates Kaipātiki Hot Springs accommodation is frequently fully booked across weekends, while Muriwai Horse Treks is understood to be operating at capacity.

The evidence identifies five established visitor anchors:

- Kaipātiki Hot Springs
- Muriwai gannet colony and beach
- Woodhill Forest
- Kumeū-Waimauku wine country
- Riverhead food and beverage.

These locations generate significant activity, but visitor movement remains predominantly day-use, pass-through or attraction-led.

The destination has a broad visitor offer

North West Auckland's visitor experience extends well beyond its best-known attractions.

The current offer includes:

1. Adventure and recreation

Surfing, mountain biking, horse riding, skydiving, paragliding, four-wheel driving, golf, hunting, fishing and forest recreation.

2. Health, wellbeing and nature

Kaipātiki Hot Springs, coastal and forest walks, Muriwai Regional Park, the gannet colony and wider natural landscapes.

3. Arts, culture and heritage

Art Centre Helensville, Kumeu Arts, Arts in the Ville, Kaipara Coast Sculpture Gardens, Gibbs Farm, Te Awaroa Museum, the railway museum and local heritage.

4. Food and hospitality

Wine, artisan food, local produce and a growing range of hospitality experiences.

This variety is significant because it means North West Auckland is not dependent on a single type of visitor experience.

The evidence also identifies some clear gaps

Several practical constraints also affect the current visitor experience.

Accommodation remains limited, particularly for larger groups and premium stays. Hospitality varies at peak times and at high-use visitor locations. Transport is strongly car-dependent, with no local ride-share or regular shuttle service, while wayfinding and visitor information vary across the destination.

The evidence also highlights limited winter activity, weak digital discoverability, and relatively low levels of cross-referral and packaging between operators.

These are not all issues for Tourism North West to solve directly, but they are important factors in understanding how the destination currently functions.



What the evidence tells us

1. North West Auckland already has significant visitor demand

The destination is not trying to generate visitation from scratch. Established attractions already draw substantial numbers of visitors.

2. The visitor offer is broader than current visitor behaviour suggests

The range of nature, recreation, food, wine, wellbeing, arts, and heritage experiences offers considerable depth, even though current visitation remains largely day-trip and attraction-led.

3. Natural assets sit at the heart of the visitor experience

The West Coast, Woodhill Forest, Kaipara Harbour, geothermal water and other natural environments are some of the destination's strongest and most-used visitor assets. They are also central to community identity and mana whenua connection.

4. Some destination foundations remain underdeveloped

Accommodation, hospitality, transport, wayfinding and visitor information all influence how easily visitors can use and move through the destination.

5. The visitor experience is not yet strongly connected

Cross-referral, shared information and packaging between operators remain limited. Visitors who arrive at one experience may have little visibility of what else is available nearby or elsewhere in North West Auckland.

North West Auckland already has significant visitor demand and a broad experience base. The opportunity lies in how well these assets connect, are supported and are managed.

Together, the evidence points to a clear strategic opportunity: to connect more effectively and strengthen what already exists, address the gaps that limit longer stays and year-round visitation, and manage future growth in a way that creates greater value for businesses and communities while strengthening sense of place.

These findings have directly informed the vision, outcomes and five strategic pillars that follow.

6. Our direction to 2031

The Destination Management Plan sets a shared direction for how North West Auckland's visitor economy will develop through to 2031.

The vision, guiding principles and destination outcomes were developed through the destination-led process and provide the foundation for the five strategic pillars that follow. Together, they describe the kind of visitor destination North West Auckland wants to become and the values that will guide how it gets there.

Our vision

North West Auckland is Auckland's place to breathe; a destination where rural and coastal landscapes, living heritage and authentic stories invite visitors to slow down, stay longer and leave the city behind.

Communities flourish, natural environments are protected, and authentic experiences are shared, creating lasting value for both residents and visitors.

Our guiding principles

These principles describe how we will work, rather than what we will deliver.

Kotahitanga: We rise together

We act as one destination, not a collection of individuals. Operators connect, co-promote and share accountability for what North West Auckland becomes. When one part of the destination does well, it strengthens the whole.

Kaitiakitanga: Caring for place

We recognise and respect the role of mana whenua as kaitiaki and work collectively to care for the long-term wellbeing of the whenua, wai, communities and environments on which the visitor economy depends.

Manaakitanga: We welcome with intention

The North West Auckland experience begins with how people are treated. We welcome all with genuine warmth and respect.

Our destination outcomes for 2031

Cultural: The stories and culture of this place are alive in the visitor experience

The history, stories, landscapes and living culture of North West Auckland are authentically woven into what visitors encounter here. Cultural participation is led by those who hold the stories.

Economic: Visitors stay longer, spend more and create greater local value, including opportunities for mana whenua

North West Auckland converts its large visitor base into genuine economic value. Visitors explore more of the destination, enjoy local accommodation and have experiences worth returning for. They add value to the community, supporting jobs, thriving Māori businesses and locally owned enterprises.

Social: Tourism grows with community, not at its expense

Growth in visitor activity strengthens North West Auckland communities. Residents retain access to the places they value, and the benefits of tourism are visible and local.

Environmental: The natural character of the destination is protected and enhanced

The landscapes, ecosystems and environmental assets that define North West Auckland are continually enhanced by everyone.

Enabled by

A clear shared identity

Operators and places align around a common positioning that strengthens the overall visitor experience.

A connected and collaborative destination

Businesses collaborate to create a well-connected visitor experience, supported by stronger connections between places, experiences and partners.

7. Our identity and destination story

North West Auckland has a distinctive character. The identity, positioning and narrative themes developed through this plan were agreed through the destination-led process and provide a shared foundation for how the destination presents itself, how experiences are developed and connected, and how businesses and partners tell the North West Auckland story.

They are not intended to replace the identities of individual towns, communities or businesses. Instead they provide a common thread that connects those individual places and experiences as part of a wider destination.



Kaipara Coast



Hallertau, Riverhead

Our place identity

North West Auckland is Auckland's rural edge: a landscape of black-sand beaches, a vast natural harbour, pockets of native bush and working farmland that feels genuinely separate from the city it borders.

It is a place defined by space, by openness, and by down-to-earth people with a strong sense of belonging and kaitiakitanga. The community enjoys outdoor activities, the businesses are family-built, and the character is unhurried.

The stories of this place are alive in the enduring relationship of mana whenua with the whenua and wai, as key contributors to its harbour communities, local commerce, rural production, forestry, farming, wineries, food, arts and creative expression.

Auckland's rural edge: a place defined by space, openness and a character that feels genuinely separate from the city it borders.

Our positioning

North West Auckland occupies a distinct position within the Auckland visitor landscape: a rural, coastal, and nature-based destination on the edge of New Zealand's largest city, offering a distinctive combination of scale, breadth, and genuine rural character that complements Auckland's wider visitor offer.

It suits visitors who want to slow down, move freely, and experience something unscripted. Day-trippers from greater Auckland, domestic self-drive travellers, and international visitors drawn by natural and cultural authenticity make up this audience, united by a desire for space, honesty, and the chance to experience what locals do.

North West Auckland offers something that is hard to replicate: a mix of unique rural and coastal landscapes, a community that is genuinely welcoming, and experiences ranging from the gannet colony and Kaipara Harbour to forest trails, artisan wine and food producers and local communities that express the essence of the destination.

The stories we will tell

Four narrative themes bring the identity and positioning to life.

Space to breathe

The central story of North West Auckland is the experience of arrival: leaving the city behind and entering somewhere that moves at a different pace. Open landscapes, natural environments, black-sand beaches and relaxed communities create a sense of space and openness. This thread connects the gannet colony, forest trails, hot pools, and rural foodscape, linking water, land, and people across the destination.



Village charm, local history

North West Auckland is a place where Auckland's rural heart, cultural heritage and history remain alive in today's landscape and communities. Māori trading and portage routes, harbour communities, farming families, historic townships, country roads, working farms and wineries, local arts and family-owned businesses all contribute to the place's character. Heritage is woven into everyday life, creating opportunities for visitors to connect with the stories and traditions that have shaped the destination.



Genuine people, real experiences

North West Auckland hospitality is grounded in the people who live and work here. Outdoor, down-to-earth, family-run and community-oriented businesses offer encounters that feel real. Food and wine are closely connected to place, the arts are community-built, and many outdoor experiences are led by people for whom these activities are part of everyday life.



Active outdoor adventure on Auckland's doorstep

North West Auckland has one of the Auckland region's most diverse outdoor and active leisure offerings, including surfing, mountain biking, horse riding, skydiving, fishing, kayaking, golf, sculpture trails and forest recreation. Much of this is within easy reach of metropolitan Auckland. Outdoor activity is not a niche part of the destination; it is part of everyday life.



How the narrative will be used

These themes provide a common narrative for destination marketing, visitor information, experience development, interpretation and storytelling. Not every business or experience needs to express every theme. Together, they provide a consistent framework that helps North West Auckland tell a stronger and more recognisable destination story.

8. Our five strategic pillars

The vision and outcomes for North West Auckland will be advanced through five interconnected strategic pillars.

Each pillar addresses a different part of the destination system. Together, they provide the framework for action through to 2031.

1. Destination Marketing & Market Development

Build recognition and reach the right visitors.

Activate the shared destination story, strengthen North West Auckland's market presence and use visitor intelligence to focus marketing and market development where it can have the greatest impact.

2. Visitor Experience & Product Development

Strengthen the reasons to stay, explore and return.

Address priority gaps, better connect the existing visitor offer and support distinctive experiences that build year-round appeal and create greater local value.

3. Environment & Community Stewardship

Grow tourism in a way that cares for people and place.

Protect the natural, rural and coastal character of North West Auckland, encourage responsible visitor behaviour and ensure communities continue to have a voice in how tourism develops.

4. Visitor Access, Connections & Infrastructure

Make the destination easier to reach, navigate and experience.

Improve visitor information and wayfinding, strengthen connections across the destination and advocate for the transport and infrastructure required to support a quality visitor experience.

5. Leadership, Delivery & Partnerships

Build the capability to turn the plan into action.

Provide clear destination leadership, dedicated coordination, appropriate resourcing and strong partnerships to ensure sustainable implementation.



Pillar 1: Destination Marketing & Market Development

What success looks like

By 2031, North West Auckland is recognised as a distinctive Auckland short-break destination. Its shared destination story is consistently expressed across relevant channels and partnerships, helping the right visitors discover the area, explore more widely, stay longer and visit across more of the year.

Marketing is focused, insight-led and appropriately scaled, with Tourism North West making effective use of its own destination presence alongside TAU's reach, channels and market activity within the broader Auckland visitor economy.

The opportunity ahead

North West Auckland already attracts significant visitor activity, particularly from Auckland residents. The marketing opportunity is to strengthen recognition of North West Auckland as a connected destination and help visitors discover more of the area.

The destination identity, positioning and story developed through this plan provide the strategic foundation. The next step is to activate that story consistently through destination marketing, visitor-facing channels and the activity of local businesses and partners.

There is a clear ambition to strengthen North West Auckland's destination presence, including through its own brand and website. These are important tools, but they are only part of how the destination will reach visitors. Marketing activity will need to use the channels that work best and adapt over time as visitor behaviour, technology and available resources change.

North West Auckland also operates within the wider Auckland visitor economy. Combining a distinctive local identity with the reach, market knowledge and channels of TAU and other partners provides an important opportunity to extend the destination's reach.

Marketing alone will not achieve the outcomes sought through this plan. Its effectiveness will depend on progress across the wider visitor experience, product, stewardship, access and infrastructure priorities.

With limited local resources, activity will need to remain focused, collaborative and realistic about what can be sustained over time.

Recommendation 1.1: Activate our shared destination story

What this means

The identity, positioning and narrative themes established through this plan provide a common foundation for how North West Auckland presents itself to visitors.

The priority now is to translate that foundation into a clear and consistent destination presence that connects individual places, experiences and businesses without undermining their own identities.

A dedicated destination brand and visitor presence can help bring this story to life, provided they are practical, maintainable and complementary to Auckland's wider destination positioning.

Actions

- Develop and activate a North West Auckland destination brand and storytelling toolkit that reflects the agreed identity and positioning and complements Auckland's wider destination positioning.
- Establish and maintain appropriate visitor-facing channels, including a destination website, to help visitors discover and explore North West Auckland.
- Enable local businesses and partners to use and reinforce the North West Auckland story through their own activity.
- Build a clear and recognisable destination presence across the channels and partnerships most relevant to North West Auckland's priority visitors.
- Develop an agreed mana whenua protocol for the use of mātauranga, cultural narratives, place names, te reo Māori, imagery and other cultural material in destination branding, interpretation and marketing, recognising mana whenua authority over what is shared, how it is shared and by whom.

Recommendation 1.2: Grow our reach through coordinated destination marketing

What this means

Tourism North West will achieve greater reach by combining focused local activity with the scale, expertise and channels of wider destination partners.

TAU is particularly important. A strong working relationship will help ensure North West Auckland is appropriately represented within relevant Auckland visitor marketing, media, trade and market-development activity and enable local businesses to participate in appropriate opportunities.

Businesses also gain value in working collectively where this can achieve greater impact than individual activity alone.

The focus should be on doing a small number of things well and directing limited resources towards the markets and opportunities most likely to advance the objectives of this plan.

Actions

- Develop and implement an annual destination marketing and market development programme aligned with the objectives of this Destination Management Plan.
- Maintain a strong destination marketing and market development relationship with TAU, ensuring North West Auckland is appropriately represented through relevant Auckland visitor, media, trade and market-development activity.
- Make effective use of North West Auckland stories, imagery and visitor experiences through destination and partner channels.
- Support collaborative marketing activity amongst local businesses where collective effort can achieve greater reach or impact.
- Focus marketing activity on the visitor markets, seasons and opportunities most likely to support the plan's objectives, reviewing priorities regularly as markets, resources and opportunities change.

Recommendation 1.3: Use visitor and market intelligence to focus our efforts

What this means

Effective destination marketing starts with understanding the visitor.

Tourism North West needs a stronger understanding of who is visiting, what motivates them, how they discover the destination, how they move through it and what influences decisions to stay longer, spend locally and return.

There is some relevant visitor intelligence available through TAU and national organisations, but important local knowledge gaps remain. The priority is to make effective use of existing information while selectively building better North West Auckland-specific evidence where it will improve decision-making.

Visitor and market intelligence should inform where Tourism North West focuses its marketing and market-development effort and help the destination respond as visitor behaviour and market conditions change.

Actions

- Build a stronger understanding of North West Auckland's priority visitor markets, motivations, behaviours and travel patterns.
- Work with TAU and other partners to access and interpret relevant visitor research, data and market insights.
- Identify and address priority local information gaps where better evidence is required.
- Monitor changes in how visitors discover, plan and experience destinations, including digital behaviour and emerging technologies.
- Use and share relevant visitor intelligence to inform destination marketing, market development and business decision-making.

Pillar 2: Visitor Experience & Product Development

What success looks like

By 2031, North West Auckland offers a diverse, distinctive and connected visitor experience, with the accommodation, hospitality and experiences that give visitors more reasons to stay longer, explore more widely and return year-round.

Visitors can experience the best of North West Auckland across its coast, forests, countryside, villages and communities, while local businesses benefit from stronger connections, greater visitor spending and a more resilient year-round visitor economy.

The opportunity ahead

North West Auckland already has a diverse visitor offer and strong demand for many of its established experiences. Outdoor recreation and nature, food and wine, rural character, arts and culture, heritage and wellbeing experiences provide a strong foundation for a compelling short-break destination.

The opportunity is not simply to create more products. It is to make better use of what already exists, strengthen the connections between experiences and address the gaps that prevent visitors from staying longer or experiencing more of the destination.

Unmet demand is evident in parts of the visitor offer, with some popular experiences reaching capacity at peak times. At the same time, gaps in accommodation, hospitality availability and transport connections constrain the destination's ability to convert significant day visitation into longer stays.

Accommodation presents an opportunity, but the answer is not necessarily conventional hotel development. North West Auckland should first understand the mix, scale and types of accommodation that best fit visitor demand and the destination's character. Distinctive, smaller-scale, rural and experience-linked accommodation may all have a role.

There is also an opportunity to connect the destination more effectively. Many businesses and experiences currently operate independently, meaning visitors may experience one attraction without discovering what else is nearby. Stronger collaboration, referrals and connections between complementary experiences can help turn individual attractions into a richer destination experience.

Connections beyond North West Auckland can extend the visitor journey. Stronger links with Matakana Coast and the Twin Coast Discovery Highway can help connect North West Auckland to wider touring routes, create opportunities for complementary itineraries and encourage visitors to spend more time exploring the North and West of Auckland.

Future experience development should build on what makes North West Auckland distinctive and respond to genuine visitor demand. This includes opportunities across outdoor and nature-based experiences, food and rural life, arts, culture and heritage, wellbeing, environmental conservation and restoration, business events and group travel, and activities that strengthen year-round appeal.

This plan supports mana whenua-led tourism, cultural and economic development opportunities where these align with mana whenua aspirations, priorities and timing, including but not limited to cultural visitor experiences.

Recommendation 2.1: Strengthen the foundations for longer stays

What this means

Visitors need places to stay, eat and spend time if North West Auckland is to grow from a predominantly day-trip destination into a stronger short-break destination.

The priority is to understand what kinds of accommodation are genuinely needed and support options that fit the destination, its visitor markets and its rural and coastal character. This may involve different forms and scales of accommodation rather than a single conventional response.

We recognise education-based and experience-linked accommodation as part of the future visitor offer, including opportunities for mana whenua-led school and group experiences that connect accommodation, recreation, environmental learning and local cultural knowledge. We also recognise the distinctive potential for South Kaipara mātauranga to contribute to a place-based visitor experience.

Food and hospitality are equally important. The issue is not necessarily the quality of what already exists, but whether visitors can readily find places to eat and spend time where and when they need them. Availability, opening hours and location are therefore particularly important.

North West Auckland's wine, local produce, artisan businesses and rural character also provide an opportunity to strengthen the connection between food, place and the visitor experience.

Actions

- Build a clear understanding of priority accommodation gaps and opportunities, including the mix, scale and types of accommodation best suited to North West Auckland's character and priority visitor markets.
- Support appropriately scaled accommodation development and innovation that responds to demonstrated gaps and enables longer stays.
- Strengthen the availability and diversity of food and hospitality, particularly where opening hours or location constrain the visitor experience.
- Strengthen the role of local food, wine, produce and provenance as part of the North West Auckland visitor experience.
- Explore opportunities with businesses and partners to progressively address priority accommodation and hospitality gaps as visitor demand evolves.
- Support the development of distinctive, place-based accommodation and visitor experiences, including opportunities for school, educational and group visitation. This will include mana whenua-led experiences that connect accommodation, recreation, environmental learning and cultural engagement, enabling manuhiri to learn about the whenua, histories, culture and local mātauranga of South Kaipara where this aligns with mana whenua aspirations and preferred ways of sharing knowledge.

Recommendation 2.2: Connect the visitor experience

What this means

North West Auckland has a diverse range of experiences, but they do not yet consistently operate as a connected destination offer.

The opportunity is to make it easier for visitors to move from one experience to the next, from outdoor recreation to food and wine, from arts and heritage to wellbeing, and from accommodation to local hospitality.

This requires stronger connections between businesses and visitor-facing information. Operators that understand and recommend the wider destination can encourage visitors to explore further, stay longer and spend with more local businesses.

It also creates opportunities for complementary businesses to work together on itineraries and connected experiences that are stronger than what any one operator can offer independently.

Connections with Matakana Coast and the Twin Coast Discovery Highway can extend the visitor journey further, particularly where North West Auckland complements rather than competes with nearby visitor experiences.

Actions

- Strengthen communication and cross-referral between tourism, hospitality, accommodation and other visitor-facing businesses.
- Encourage collaboration between complementary experiences and businesses across North West Auckland.
- Support connected visitor experiences and itineraries that encourage visitors to explore more of the destination and stay longer.
- Build stronger links between North West Auckland's different experience strengths, including nature and adventure, wellbeing, arts and culture, food and rural experiences.
- Encourage businesses to understand and confidently recommend the wider North West Auckland visitor offer.
- Strengthen connections with Matakana Coast and the Twin Coast Discovery Highway, and other relevant visitor routes, to develop complementary itineraries, extend visitor journeys and create mutual value.
- Where proposed visitor experiences, itineraries or destination marketing involve privately owned, Māori-owned land, engage with the relevant landowner and land manager at the outset and obtain agreement before promoting access or new visitor activity.

Recommendation 2.3: Grow distinctive experiences and year-round appeal

What this means

North West Auckland's strongest future opportunities lie in building on what makes the destination distinctive, rather than simply increasing the number of experiences available.

Existing strengths in outdoor recreation and nature, wellbeing, arts and culture, food and wine, heritage and rural life provide a strong platform for further experience development.

The destination's conservation and restoration work also offers opportunities for distinctive nature-based tourism. Experiences that connect visitors with biodiversity, restoration and care for place can deepen the visitor experience while supporting work already undertaken by environmental organisations and communities. These opportunities should be pursued only where visitor involvement is appropriate and adds genuine value to existing activity.

The destination could also make better use of daylight hours outside peak summer. Winter, evening and shoulder-period experiences can create additional reasons to visit and return while making better use of existing businesses and assets.

Business events, weddings, groups and other organised travel also present an opportunity to generate demand at different times, particularly where venues, accommodation, hospitality and visitor experiences can be connected.

Experience development should respond to genuine visitor demand, strengthen the destination story and create value for local businesses and communities. Mana whenua should lead opportunities involving Māori culture and develop them in accordance with their aspirations, priorities and timing.

Actions

- Support the development and enhancement of visitor experiences that build on North West Auckland's distinctive strengths, character and destination story.
- Prioritise experiences that support longer stays, repeat visitation, year-round demand and greater local value, including opportunities in winter, evenings and shoulder periods.
- Strengthen opportunities across arts, culture and heritage; food and rural experiences; wellbeing; nature and outdoor recreation.
- Explore opportunities in business events, group travel, and other visitor markets with proven demand and a clear fit for the destination.
- Engage with mana whenua and support mana whenua-led cultural visitor experiences where this aligns with their aspirations, priorities and timing.
- Support appropriate conservation and nature-based experiences, working with relevant environmental organisations and communities where appropriate, that connect visitors with biodiversity, restoration and care for place.



Pillar 3: Environment & Community Stewardship

What success looks like

By 2031, tourism contributes positively to North West Auckland's environment and communities. The natural, rural and coastal character that makes this place special is protected and enhanced, visitors understand their role in caring for place, and local communities continue to value and benefit from tourism.

Kaitiakitanga and stewardship are reflected in how the destination plans for growth, responds to change and makes decisions about the future.

The opportunity ahead

North West Auckland's natural environment and character are central to both the visitor experience and the quality of life of those who live here. Its west coast beaches, forests, Kaipara Harbour, rural landscapes and areas of native biodiversity are not simply a backdrop to tourism. They are fundamental to why people visit and why communities value this place.

As Auckland grows and visitation changes, some places will experience greater pressure. Sensitive natural environments, high-use visitor locations, changing land use, climate impacts and disruptions to infrastructure all reinforce the need to plan ahead rather than respond only when problems arise.

North West Auckland also has a strong foundation to build from. Environmental groups, restoration programmes, predator control, native planting and community-led initiatives already demonstrate a strong commitment to caring for place. Tourism can support this work by encouraging responsible visitor behaviour, strengthening understanding of the environment and creating opportunities for visitors to contribute where appropriate.

Stewardship is central to communities. Tourism needs to support local wellbeing, maintain access to the places valued by residents and create locally visible benefits. Maintaining community trust and support will become increasingly important as both North West Auckland and its visitor economy evolve.

Kaitiakitanga is an important principle underpinning this plan. Ongoing engagement and relationship-building with mana whenua will be important in ensuring that care for whenua, wai and people is reflected appropriately in North West Auckland's approach to destination stewardship.

Recommendation 3.1: Protect and enhance the environment and character of place

What this means

North West Auckland's landscapes, ecosystems and rural and coastal character are among its greatest assets. Protecting and enhancing them is fundamental to both the visitor economy and the wellbeing of local communities.

Visitor activity can increase pressure on places, particularly where infrastructure, access or environmental management is already constrained. Climate change, extreme weather and Auckland's continued growth will also affect the places and infrastructure which tourism depends on.

North West Auckland cannot address these issues alone. Its role is to understand where tourism creates or experiences pressure, work with the agencies and organisations responsible for managing these places, and advocate for the destination's long-term protection and resilience.

Actions

- Identify and monitor visitor pressures affecting priority natural environments, landscapes and high-use places.
- Work with Auckland Council, land managers and other partners to protect and enhance sensitive coastal, forest, harbour and biodiversity areas and advocate for appropriate environmental management and investment.
- Support the protection of North West Auckland's distinctive rural, coastal and open character as the wider Auckland region grows.
- Ensure destination planning and investment consider climate, environmental, and disruption risks, and connect with relevant resilience and adaptation initiatives already underway across Auckland.
- Support appropriate and authorised community and visitor access to valued natural places, recognising land tenure, mana whenua aspirations, operational land uses, environmental sensitivity and health and safety requirements.

Recommendation 3.2: Enable visitors and businesses to care for place

What this means

Visitors and tourism businesses both play a role in protecting the places the visitor economy depends on.

North West Auckland has an opportunity to make responsible visitor behaviour a visible and consistent part of the destination experience. Clear visitor information, storytelling and environmental interpretation can help people understand sensitive environments, why they matter and how to behave appropriately when visiting them.

Tourism can support existing conservation and restoration efforts. The priority is to support initiatives already underway rather than create parallel programmes, and to ensure visitor involvement adds genuine value to environmental and community outcomes.

For businesses, stewardship means understanding their own impact and making practical choices that contribute positively to place. Pillar 5 addresses more detailed sustainability capability and business support.

Actions

- Promote clear and consistent expectations for responsible visitor behaviour across North West Auckland.
- Work with relevant agencies, communities and operators to address visitor behaviours that place pressure on sensitive locations.
- Strengthen visitor information, environmental storytelling and interpretation where this can improve understanding of biodiversity, sensitive environments and care for place.
- Encourage visitors to contribute positively to existing conservation, restoration and community initiatives where appropriate.
- Support tourism businesses to reflect destination stewardship and Tiaki principles through their visitor communications and practices.
- Engage with mana whenua so that kaitiakitanga and care for place are reflected appropriately in destination stewardship activity.

Recommendation 3.3: Grow tourism with our communities

What this means

Tourism will only be successful in the long term if local communities continue to see its value.

As North West Auckland grows and changes, the destination needs to understand how residents experience tourism, where benefits are being created and where visitor activity may be placing pressure on community amenities or access.

Community stewardship means listening over time, not simply consulting when a new plan is developed. It also means ensuring tourism development supports the character, services, businesses and places that communities themselves value.

The aim is not to eliminate every tension associated with visitation, but to identify issues early, respond where possible and maintain community trust in the direction of tourism development.

Actions

- Build an ongoing understanding of resident attitudes towards tourism and how these change over time.
- Create opportunities for communities to contribute to destination decisions and raise emerging visitor-related issues.
- Support tourism development that creates clear local benefits and contributes positively to community wellbeing.
- Monitor pressures on community amenities and access to valued places, working with relevant partners on practical responses.
- Strengthen connections between tourism, local communities and existing environmental and community initiatives.
- Ensure community perspectives continue to inform implementation and review of this Destination Management Plan.

Pillar 4: Visitor Access, Connections & Infrastructure

What success looks like

By 2031, North West Auckland is easier to reach, navigate and explore, with priority access, navigation and infrastructure barriers progressively addressed.

Visitors can move more confidently between villages, natural attractions and experiences, supported by clearer information, stronger connections and infrastructure that responds to priority visitor and community needs.

Investment and advocacy focus on the places and issues that matter most, improving the visitor experience while supporting community needs and protecting the places people come to enjoy.

The opportunity ahead

North West Auckland has a significant advantage in its proximity to metropolitan Auckland. Yet its visitor experiences are spread across a large rural and coastal area and travelling between them remains predominantly reliant on private vehicles.

Once visitors arrive, gaps in wayfinding, visitor information, transport choice and supporting infrastructure can make the destination challenging and time-consuming to navigate. Pressure is also evident at some high-use locations, particularly where parking, amenities, road access or visitor flow have not kept pace with demand.

Improving these connections is more than building infrastructure. It requires understanding how visitors reach and move through the area, identifying the barriers that affect their experience and working with the organisations responsible for transport, infrastructure and public places to address them progressively. Over time, there are opportunities to strengthen cycling and active transport connections, explore practical shared and public transport options, respond to changing transport needs and make better connections with Auckland's wider transport network.

Many of the decisions that will shape these outcomes sit outside Tourism North West and the tourism sector's direct control. A key role will therefore be to build the evidence, set clear priorities and advocate effectively with Auckland Council, Auckland Transport, New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), land managers, infrastructure providers and other partners.

Transport and infrastructure priorities should reflect the visitor markets and types of experiences North West Auckland is seeking to grow, rather than pursuing infrastructure improvements in isolation.

Recommendation 4.1: Make North West Auckland easy to navigate and explore

What this means

Visitors should be able to understand where they are, where they can go next and how different parts of North West Auckland connect.

Clear wayfinding, practical visitor information and easy-to-use navigation reduce friction in the visitor journey and encourage visitors to explore more widely. These need to work together across physical and digital touchpoints rather than operate as disconnected pieces of information.

Visitor information should also respond to changing expectations and technology while remaining practical and maintainable for a destination of North West Auckland's scale.

Actions

- Develop an integrated approach to wayfinding, signage and visitor information across North West Auckland so visitors can more easily understand and move between villages, attractions and experiences.
- Address priority information and interpretation gaps where these affect the quality of the visitor journey.
- Keep visitor information and navigation approaches under review as technology and visitor behaviour change.

Recommendation 4.2: Improve access and transport connections

What this means

North West Auckland currently depends heavily on private vehicles. Road access will remain important, but a stronger destination should progressively provide more choices for visitors to reach and move through the area.

Better cycling connections, shared or public transport options and stronger links with Auckland's wider transport network could improve visitor access while also benefiting local communities.

Some improvements can be influenced locally, while others require long-term investment and decisions by transport agencies and infrastructure providers. North West Auckland's role is to clearly articulate visitor needs, build an evidence base and ensure the destination is considered in wider transport planning.

Actions

- Build a stronger understanding of how visitors reach and move around North West Auckland and where the most significant access barriers occur.
- Advocate for transport and access improvements that support priority visitor locations and the wider destination.
- Support stronger cycling and active transport connections where these improve access between communities, visitor experiences and transport networks.
- Explore opportunities over time for practical shared, public and alternative transport options that reduce reliance on private vehicles.
- Advocate for infrastructure that responds to changing visitor transport needs, including electric vehicle charging and other emerging requirements.
- Ensure North West Auckland's visitor access and transport needs are considered in relevant long-term Auckland transport and infrastructure planning.

Recommendation 4.3: Plan for the infrastructure a quality destination needs

What this means

A destination's quality is shaped not only by its attractions and experiences, but also by the infrastructure that supports the visit.

Parking, public amenities, road access, visitor flow and facilities at high-use locations all influence the visitor experience and can also affect local communities' quality of life. Where these are inadequate, residents, sensitive environments, and visitors often feel the impacts.

Planning ahead will help North West Auckland identify emerging pressure points and set clear priorities for future investment. The focus should be on infrastructure that responds to genuine visitor and community needs rather than simply accommodating greater visitor numbers.

Actions

- Identify priority visitor infrastructure gaps and pressures across North West Auckland and establish a clear basis for future investment and advocacy.
- Work with Auckland Council, transport agencies, land managers and infrastructure providers to progressively address priority needs.
- Advocate for appropriate parking, public amenities and visitor facilities at high-use locations.
- Support approaches to visitor flow and traffic management that reduce pressure on local communities and sensitive places.
- Prioritise infrastructure that supports both the quality of the visitor experience and wider community benefit.
- Use evidence of visitor demand, pressure and community impact to inform infrastructure priorities over time.

Pillar 5: Leadership, Delivery & Partnerships

What success looks like

From Year 1, North West Auckland has clear destination leadership, effective tourism governance and dedicated coordination in place, with capability, partnerships and resourcing strengthened and sustained through to 2031.

Business North West provides the organisational and governance home for Tourism North West. Tourism North West leads and coordinates implementation of this Destination Management Plan, supported by an active network of businesses, mana whenua, communities and delivery partners working towards shared outcomes.

This pillar provides the foundation for delivery across the other four pillars. Effective leadership, coordination, partnerships and resourcing will enable the destination to turn the priorities set out in this plan into sustained action.

The opportunity ahead

North West Auckland begins from a position of strength. Business North West is already established, tourism has an agreed place in its structure, and developing this plan has brought businesses, communities, local government, and other partners together around a shared direction for the destination.



The opportunity now is to turn that alignment into sustained delivery.

Destination management requires more than a plan. It needs leadership, coordination, resources and the ability to bring different organisations together around priorities that no single organisation can deliver alone. Dedicated capacity will be particularly important in maintaining momentum, coordinating implementation, supporting businesses, developing partnerships and securing funding and co-investment.

Local businesses also show strong willingness to collaborate. Building a more connected and capable tourism network will help turn this goodwill into practical action, stronger leadership and greater collective impact.

Success will depend on wider partnerships with Tātakei Auckland Unlimited, Auckland Council, Rodney Local Board, mana whenua, community and environmental organisations, industry, infrastructure agencies and funding partners.

North West Auckland also benefits from participating in wider Auckland destination-management collaboration and learning, including with Matakana Coast, Waiheke Island, and Aotea Great Barrier Island, with TAU playing an important connecting role where appropriate.

The plan will need to remain responsive. Priorities, markets, technology, resources and visitor needs will change over the life of the DMP. A disciplined cycle of annual planning, delivery, monitoring and review will help keep implementation focused and relevant.

Recommendation 5.1: Build the leadership, capacity and resources to deliver

What this means

Successful implementation will depend on clear leadership and sufficient capacity to turn strategic priorities into action.

Tourism North West will need effective governance, dedicated coordination, and appropriate resourcing to sustain momentum. These are not end-of-plan aspirations. They are foundations that need to be established early and then maintained over time.

Funding will be critical. A sustainable approach should distinguish between the core resourcing needed to maintain destination coordination and the project-based funding and support required to deliver initiatives. It should not rely on a single source, but combine local commitment with partner support, co-investment and external funding opportunities.

Actions

- Establish and maintain effective tourism governance within Business North West, with clear roles, responsibilities and accountability for delivery of the Destination Management Plan.
- Secure dedicated destination coordination capacity to drive implementation, maintain momentum and connect partners across the destination.
- Build and maintain a sustainable and diversified approach to resourcing destination management and priority initiatives.
- Translate destination priorities into a focused annual delivery programme and budget supported by appropriate resources.
- Maintain clear ownership and accountability for the Destination Management Plan and the destination assets and tools developed through it.
- Review delivery capacity, governance and resourcing regularly as the destination and work programme evolve.

Recommendation 5.2: Build a connected and capable tourism network

What this means

North West Auckland's tourism businesses and organisations have consistently shown a willingness to work together. Strengthening these relationships will help build a more mature destination network that can collaborate, share knowledge and respond collectively to opportunities and challenges.

Capability needs will change over time. Businesses and destination leaders will need to keep developing the skills required to improve visitor experiences, use market intelligence, adapt to new technology, strengthen stewardship practices and participate in relevant market, trade and business-development opportunities.

The focus should be practical and responsive to the needs of North West Auckland businesses, while also creating opportunities to learn from other destination areas across Auckland.

Actions

- Strengthen collaboration, knowledge sharing and relationships across the North West Auckland tourism network.
- Build the capability of businesses and destination leaders to contribute effectively to the plan's priorities. Work with TAU and other partners to connect businesses with relevant capability, market and industry support.
- Encourage collaborative leadership and shared responsibility for the destination's success. Support businesses to adapt as visitor expectations, technology, markets and operating conditions change.
- Participate in relevant Auckland-wide destination-management collaboration and shared learning, including opportunities with Matakana Coast, Waiheke Island and Aotea Great Barrier Island.

Recommendation 5.3: Work through partnerships to deliver shared outcomes

What this means

Many of the outcomes sought through this plan sit outside the direct control of Tourism North West or individual tourism businesses.

Infrastructure, environmental management, transport, planning, visitor marketing, community development and investment all depend on decisions and resources held across the wider destination system.

Strong partnerships will therefore be essential. Tourism North West's role is to provide clear destination leadership, bring evidence and agreed priorities to the table, maintain productive relationships and create opportunities for partners to contribute where their roles and interests align.

The relationship with mana whenua requires particular care and should continue to develop through engagement and relationship-building that respects mana whenua aspirations, priorities and preferred ways of working.

Effective delivery also requires transparency. Businesses, partners, and communities should monitor, share, and review progress regularly so they can see what is being achieved and adjust priorities as needed.

Actions

- Maintain strong strategic relationships with TAU, Auckland Council, Rodney Local Board and other organisations that influence destination outcomes.
- Build an ongoing relationship with mana whenua so their aspirations and perspectives can inform implementation of the Destination Management Plan.
- Clearly understand and communicate partner roles and use these relationships to align destination priorities with wider planning, investment, economic development, environmental and community initiatives.
- Seek external funding, co-investment and partnership opportunities that can accelerate delivery of priority actions.
- Establish a regular cycle of annual planning, monitoring, reporting and review to maintain accountability and adapt delivery over time.
- Communicate progress and achievements with businesses, partners and communities to maintain engagement and confidence in the plan.



9. From strategy to delivery

The DMP provides a shared direction for North West Auckland through to 2031. Delivering it will require sustained leadership, practical coordination and contributions from organisations across the destination.

No single organisation controls all of the outcomes identified in this plan. Some actions can be led directly by the tourism sector, while others will depend on partnerships, advocacy, investment or decisions by organisations responsible for transport, infrastructure, the environment, community development and wider Auckland visitor activity.

Tourism North West will lead and coordinate implementation of the DMP, with Business North West providing its organisational and governance home. Its role will be to maintain momentum, connect partners, coordinate priority activity, track progress and ensure the destination continues to work towards the shared direction.

Delivery will be a collective effort. Tourism North West will lead where it has the mandate and capability, partner or support where responsibilities are shared, and advocate where decisions sit with other organisations.

Delivery will be a collective effort:

- Tourism North West will provide local destination leadership and coordination and drive implementation of the agreed priorities.
- Business North West will provide the organisational and governance framework that supports delivery.
- Tourism and visitor businesses will play a central role through collaboration, experience development, destination storytelling, stewardship and business-led action.
- TAU will be an important regional partner in destination development, marketing, visitor and market insights, capability and connections with the Auckland-wide visitor economy.
- Auckland Council, Rodney Local Board, Auckland Transport, New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), land managers and other agencies will be important partners where priorities intersect with their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Relationships with mana whenua will continue to develop in accordance with mana whenua aspirations, priorities and timing. This relationship will include agreed points of engagement and participation in annual planning and relevant project decisions.
- Community, environmental and other local organisations will contribute local knowledge, stewardship activity and partnerships around shared priorities.



Actions requiring funding, investment or decisions from partner organisations remain subject to those organisations' respective mandates, priorities, planning and funding processes.

Implementation will be guided by a focused annual delivery programme. Priorities will be reviewed regularly as evidence, opportunities, resources and circumstances change, while maintaining the long-term direction established through this plan.

Delivery is a collective effort



A long-term strategy, delivered through focused annual action.

10. Resourcing delivery

Delivering this plan will require dedicated capacity and appropriate resourcing. The priorities identified for North West Auckland cannot be delivered through goodwill and existing activity alone.



Core Resourcing

A sustainable delivery model needs to recognise two different resourcing requirements. Core resourcing is needed to provide ongoing destination coordination, maintain partnerships, support governance, monitor progress and keep implementation moving. This needs to be sufficiently predictable to sustain the destination-management function over time.

Business North West provides the organisational home for Tourism North West and will be central to establishing the local resourcing base. However, implementation will require a broader funding partnership that reflects the benefits the DMP can create for both North West Auckland and the wider Auckland visitor economy.

Investment in North West Auckland can broaden Auckland's visitor proposition, encourage greater visitor dispersal and local expenditure, strengthen visitor-ready businesses and experiences, and improve how visitor activity and pressure are managed at place.

Tourism North West will work with Business North West, TAU, Auckland Council, Rodney Local Board, industry and other potential funding partners to build a sustainable delivery approach. Any funding or resourcing contribution from partners will be subject to their respective priorities, planning and funding processes.

The establishment phase and Year 1 programme will establish a realistic delivery budget and funding plan, identifying the core resources required, what can be supported locally, where co-investment is appropriate, and where external funding should be pursued.

Project Resourcing

Project resourcing will be required for specific initiatives such as destination marketing and digital activity, visitor research, experience development, stewardship projects, wayfinding and visitor information. This may include direct funding, co-investment and in-kind contributions from different partners depending on the project.

11. Establishment Phase and Year 1 priorities

The DMP process has identified the following key steps as a proposed starting point for implementation. They will be confirmed and sequenced with Tourism North West and delivery partners through the first annual delivery programme, taking account of available capacity, funding, dependencies and partner roles.

The proposed establishment phase and Year 1 programme is structured in four phases, recognising that governance, coordination and evidence need to be established early, while still creating visible momentum and progressing selected longer-term opportunities.



1. Mobilise

Put the delivery architecture in place and create early momentum. Confirm governance, establish the budget and funding approach, secure dedicated coordination capacity, agree partner working arrangements and begin priority marketing and brand activity.

2. Understand and connect

Build the evidence base while strengthening connections across the destination. Establish visitor, market, accommodation, community and access baselines, and improve collaboration and referral between operators.

3. Activate

Turn the strategy into visible visitor-facing activity. Progress the destination website, itineraries and seasonal offers, stewardship messaging, visitor information improvements and targeted capability activity.

4. Progress larger projects

Advance selected longer-term opportunities, strengthen infrastructure advocacy, pursue funding and investment opportunities and confirm priorities for Year 2.

Priority actions

Section 8 actions have been prioritised for the establishment and Year 1 phases. The following actions identify where effort should be concentrated across the five strategic pillars. Appendix 1 includes a full list of all possible action points.

Pillar 1: Destination Marketing & Market Development

Phase	Action
Mobilise	- Finalise destination brand and storytelling toolkit, and agree on the annual marketing programme with TAU. - Develop and launch a fit-for-purpose destination website and digital visitor presence.
Understand and connect	Establish a practical visitor and market intelligence baseline and confirm priority visitor markets.
Activate	Agree on an annual destination marketing and market development work programme with TAU.

Pillar 2: Visitor Experience & Product Development

Phase	Action
Understand and connect	Establish practical operator cross-referral and knowledge-sharing arrangements.
Activate	- Develop and test a small set of one, two and three-night itineraries and seasonal or evening offers, including connections with Matakana Coast and the Twin Coast Discovery Highway where appropriate. - Select and progress no more than three priority experience-development opportunities using clear criteria around distinctiveness, demand, longer stays, year-round appeal and local value.
Progress larger projects	Complete a focused accommodation and hospitality gap assessment, including the mix, scale, and types of accommodation required, and hospitality availability, location, and opening-hour constraints.

Pillar 3: Environment & Community Stewardship

Phase	Action
Understand and connect	Identify high-use and environmentally sensitive visitor locations and priority visitor-pressure issues, beginning with Muriwai and Woodhill Forest, recognising their different land tenure, management and visitor-use contexts.
Activate	Introduce a simple destination stewardship approach, including consistent responsible-visitor messaging and a practical pilot that enables visitors to contribute to existing conservation, restoration or community activity where appropriate.
Progress larger projects	Establish a baseline of resident sentiment and an ongoing community feedback mechanism.

Pillar 4: Visitor Access, Connections & Infrastructure	
Phase	Action
Understand and connect	Establish an access and infrastructure advocacy programme with the agencies and providers responsible for priority transport and infrastructure issues.
Progress larger projects	- Complete a visitor movement, access and infrastructure baseline, including priority constraints at Muriwai and other high-use locations. - Deliver wayfinding and visitor information improvements while preparing a longer-term navigation and wayfinding approach. Ensure visitor information and wayfinding clearly distinguish public-access areas from controlled-access, private, Māori-owned or operational land, and communicate relevant closures, restrictions and access conditions.

Pillar 5: Leadership, Delivery & Partnerships	
Phase	Action
Mobilise	- Confirm and implement the tourism governance arrangement within Business North West. - Establish a sustainable resourcing approach for DMP delivery, including a realistic Year 1 budget and multi-source funding plan, and use this to secure dedicated destination management coordination capacity. - Finalise the Year 1 delivery plan and establish a simple monitoring and progress dashboard. - Establish with mana whenua an appropriate ongoing mechanism for participation in DMP governance and implementation, particularly for matters affecting cultural identity, storytelling, whenua, environmental stewardship and mana whenua-led tourism development, in accordance with mana whenua aspirations and preferred ways of working.
Understand and connect	Map partner roles and establish practical working arrangements with TAU, Auckland Council, Rodney Local Board, mana whenua and other key delivery partners.
Progress larger projects	Undertake an operator capability needs assessment and begin a targeted capability and networking programme.

The detailed establishment phase and Year 1 delivery plan sits alongside the DMP as a living implementation tool. It can be updated as delivery progresses, resourcing changes and new opportunities emerge. A detailed list of actions can be found in Appendix 1. This list of actions should be reviewed as the plan progresses over future years.

12. Measuring progress

The success of this DMP will ultimately be judged by the difference it makes to North West Auckland as a visitor destination, its businesses, communities and places.

Progress will be monitored through a small set of whole-of-destination measures, supported by annual delivery indicators that track implementation of the priorities under each pillar. This keeps measurement focused while still providing accountability for delivery.

Core measures of success

Progress will be assessed through:

Destination awareness and consideration	Stronger recognition of North West Auckland as a distinctive Auckland short-break destination.
Overnight visitation and length of stay	More visitors choosing to stay overnight and progressively increasing the time spent in the destination.
Visitor value	Increased visitor expenditure and greater value retained by local businesses.
Visitor dispersal	Greater exploration across different parts of North West Auckland rather than visitation being concentrated at a small number of locations.
Seasonality	Stronger visitor activity outside peak summer periods.
Visitor experience	Positive visitor satisfaction with the quality, ease and overall experience of visiting North West Auckland.
Community sentiment	Local communities continue to view tourism positively and see value in the visitor economy.
Care for place	Evidence that priority visitor-pressure issues are being addressed and tourism is contributing positively to environmental and community stewardship.
Industry participation	Increased business engagement, collaboration and participation in destination activity.
DMP implementation	Demonstrable progress against annual delivery priorities, supported by appropriate leadership, resourcing and partnerships.
Mana whenua and cultural outcomes	Evidence that mana whenua aspirations are reflected in destination implementation, cultural stories and identity are appropriately managed, and opportunities for mana whenua participation and benefit are progressing. Develop the indicators with mana whenua.
Operator satisfaction	Evidence that the implementation of the DMP is leading to meaningful benefits for operators.



Annual delivery indicators

The annual delivery programme will use practical implementation indicators for priority actions, including outputs such as governance and coordination in place, progress on priority visitor information and experience-development projects, business participation, partner activity and funding secured. These indicators can be adjusted as the work programme evolves without disrupting the five-year strategy.

Measure what matters, establish the baseline, and track progress over time.

Establishing the baseline

Not all of the core measures currently have a reliable North West Auckland baseline. Establishing practical baseline information will therefore be an important part of Year 1.

The intention is not to create an overly complex monitoring framework. Tourism North West will use existing Auckland and national visitor information wherever possible, supplementing it with targeted local research where key gaps remain.

Measures and indicators will be reviewed as better information becomes available, with progress reported through the annual delivery and review process.

13. Evidence and sources

This DMP draws on a combination of official national and Auckland visitor information, locally gathered operator and stakeholder evidence, and the workshops and working papers developed through the DMP process.

Key sources include:

- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment tourism data and the Tourism Growth Roadmap.
- New Zealand's Tourism Policy Statement, released in 2026.
- TAU Auckland visitor and destination information, including the Destination Partnership Programme and emerging Destination AKL2035 work.
- The Auckland Deal between Government and Auckland Council, signed in April 2026.
- North West Auckland visitor context, operator evidence, workshop material and the DMP vision, principles, goals and place-identity working papers.

Treat local visitation and capacity figures, including estimates for Muriwai and Woodhill Forest and operator information on accommodation or experience capacity, as indicative unless otherwise supported by published source data.



Appendix 1. Detailed Actions

This section retains the wider tactical actions identified through the DMP process. Actions are grouped under the five strategic pillars and indicate their indicative timing and the organisations or groups likely to be involved. Annual delivery planning can refine priorities, leads, and sequencing.

Pillar 1: Destination Marketing & Market Development

Tactical action	Timing/ timeframe	Who needs to be involved	Guidance for Implementation
Finalise destination brand based on agreed positioning, identity and story	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW to work with BNW Marketing Manager and BNW Executive Committee to deliver brand, identity and story.
Develop a destination website/digital visitor presence and clarify its role alongside Auckland channels	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW to work with BNW Marketing Manager and BNW Executive Committee to deliver website hosted on BNW domain, in consultation with TAU.
Develop a practical brand/storytelling toolkit	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	Can fall out of the branding work developed in Phase 1.
Build a fit-for-purpose bank of imagery, stories and content	Later/ integrate into BAU	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW will establish a Microsoft Office environment to hold files within BNW.
Develop annual destination marketing and market development plan	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	With BNW Marketing Manager support if needed.
Confirm priority visitor markets	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW committee to decide which visitor markets should be prioritised first as resources are made available.
Establish visitor/market intelligence baseline and core measures	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW to seek support from TAU to develop these.
Identify priority research gaps and how they will be filled	Year 1/ ongoing	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW to seek support from TAU to develop these.
Establish practical working relationship with RTO for destination marketing	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW will work with TAU to agree to prioritise an ongoing relationship for destination marketing using all available resources and channels.
Establish manageable content/opportunity-sharing process with RTO	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW to seek support from TAU to develop these.
Identify relevant RTO campaign, media, trade and market opportunities	Year 1/ ongoing	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW to work with TAU to identify these (ongoing).
Identify collaborative marketing opportunities for local businesses	Year 1/ ongoing	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW to work with local businesses to develop a coordinated marketing approach/system. Potentially a page on the website on which all business marketing can be shown.
Develop a simple marketing performance/visitor-behaviour measurement approach	Year 1	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	Look at social media performance and website hits.
Consider Local Explorer Day or similar local advocacy initiative	Later/quick-win option	Tourism North West; TAU; Tourism operators	TNW to seek support from TAU to develop these.

Pillar 2: Visitor Experience & Product Development

Tactical action	Timing/ timeframe	Who needs to be involved	Guidance for Implementation
Complete accommodation gap analysis	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Accommodation sector; Potential investors/developers; TAU	TNW will seek support from TAU to develop these.
Investigate group, boutique/premium and recreation-linked accommodation gaps	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Accommodation sector; Potential investors/developers; TAU; Funding/investment partners	TNW will work with TAU to identify and explore opportunities.
Engage potential accommodation investors/developers around identified gaps	Year 1–2	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Accommodation sector; Potential investors/developers; TAU; Funding/investment partners	TNW will work with TAU around engagement opportunities.
Assess hospitality gaps at high-volume visitor locations, particularly Muriwai	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Hospitality/food and beverage operators	TNW will seek support from TAU to work out how to develop these.
Test mobile food provision during peak periods/events	Later / pilot	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Hospitality/food and beverage operators	TNW will seek feedback from event managers in this area.
Strengthen local provenance across food, wine and hospitality	Year 1–2	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Hospitality/food and beverage operators	Work with all businesses to better understand our connections.
Develop one-, two- and three-night themed itineraries/packages	Year 1	Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; TAU	Businesses can create these for display on the website.
Establish shared operator/experience database or referral tool	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; TAU	Look at options for how these systems/tools could be developed.
Strengthen operator cross-referral practices	Year 1	Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; TAU	Encourage and enable businesses to refer to others.
Develop winter/evening/seasonal visitor offers	Year 1	Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; TAU	Encourage and enable businesses to develop offers promoted on websites.
Explore a connected arts trail	Opportunity pipeline	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Arts, culture and heritage organisations	Work with Helensville and Kumeu Art Centres and Kaipara Coast Sculpture Gardens.
Explore increased horse-riding capacity	Opportunity pipeline	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Equestrian operators/land managers	Work with specific industry to support uplift.
Explore cycling plus wine/food/beverage experiences	Opportunity pipeline	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Hospitality/food and beverage operators; Auckland Transport/cycling partners; Relevant operators	Work with specific industry to support uplift.
Assess dark sky/stargazing and glow-worm experiences	Opportunity pipeline	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Environmental/conservation groups; Relevant land managers	Work with specific industry to support uplift.

Tactical action	Timing/ timeframe	Who needs to be involved	Guidance for Implementation
Explore dog-friendly visitor experiences	Opportunity pipeline	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators	Work with specific industry to support uplift.
Explore conference/group-hosting opportunities	Opportunity pipeline	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators	Work with specific industry to support uplift.
Support artisan producers, craft breweries and distilleries within the visitor offer	Year 1–2	Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators; Hospitality/food and beverage operators	Work with specific industry to support uplift.
Explore farm tours, farmstays and rural experiences	Opportunity pipeline	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism and hospitality operators	Work with specific industry to support uplift.

Pillar 3: Environment & Community Stewardship

Tactical action	Timing/ timeframe	Who needs to be involved	Guidance for Implementation
Undertake baseline resident/community sentiment survey	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Local communities; Rodney Local Board	TNW to work with TAU on how to structure and deliver this.
Establish ongoing community feedback mechanism	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Local communities; Rodney Local Board	Establish an annual survey for community members.
Map high-use and environmentally sensitive visitor locations	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups	TNW to work with TAU and Auckland Council Regional Parks.
Identify priority visitor-pressure issues	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups	TNW to work with TAU to develop this.
Develop practical responses to dogs, freedom camping and beach driving pressures	Year 1–2	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Local communities	Advocate to Auckland Council on the position of the industry on these issues.
Advocate for stronger pest control/environmental management on public land	Ongoing	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Local communities	Advocate to Auckland Council on the position of the industry on these issues.
Investigate visitor contribution/concession mechanism for high-demand sites such as Muriwai	Later/ feasibility	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Funding/investment partners	Advocate to Auckland Council on the position of the industry on these issues.
Map restoration, biodiversity and conservation initiatives	Year 1	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Environmental/conservation groups; Relevant land managers	Completed by Auckland Council Conservation Maps.

Tactical action	Timing/ timeframe	Who needs to be involved	Guidance for Implementation
Identify where visitor participation can add value to conservation work	Year 1	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Environmental/conservation groups; Relevant land managers	A collaboration with Auckland Council and TAU.
Improve biodiversity/conservation interpretation at priority sites	Year 1–2	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; environmental/conservation groups; Relevant land managers	Advocate to Auckland Council and Auckland Transport for these.
Develop consistent Tiaki/responsible-visitor messaging	Year 1	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups	TNW could work with Qualmark for this.
Test simple shared operator stewardship commitment/tool	Later/if needed	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups	Send tool to participating businesses and seek feedback.
Identify climate/disruption risks affecting priority visitor assets and access	Year 1–2	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Auckland Council resilience/planning teams; Infrastructure/land management agencies; Auckland Transport; Auckland Council	TNW to work with TAU to develop this.
Connect DMP implementation with Auckland resilience/adaptation planning	Year 1–2	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Auckland Council resilience/planning teams; Infrastructure/land management agencies	TNW to meet with AEM.
Engage Council/Local Board on protection of rural, coastal and open character	Ongoing	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Rodney Local Board; Auckland Council	TNW to meet with Rodney Local Board representatives regularly.
Engage Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara on kaitiakitanga and stewardship aspirations	Year 1/ongoing	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara	TNW to establish a working relationship with Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara.
Support appropriate and authorised community and visitor access to valued natural places, recognising land tenure, mana whenua aspirations, operational land uses, environmental sensitivity and health and safety requirements.	Ongoing relationship/opportunity	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/land managers; Community and environmental groups; Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara	TNW to establish a working relationship with Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara.

Pillar 4: Access, Connections & Visitor Infrastructure

Tactical action	Timing/ timeframe	Who needs to be involved	Guidance for Implementation
Establish visitor movement/ access/transport baseline	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators	TNW to work with TAU to develop this.
Map priority visitor access and infrastructure constraints, starting with Muriwai	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators	TNW to work with TAU to develop this.
Develop destination wayfinding/ signage/interpretation plan	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council, Auckland Transport; Tourism operators	TNW to work with a specialist to achieve this.
Establish practical visitor- information presence/hub model	Year 1–2	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/ Auckland Transport; Tourism operators	Use website to deliver this.
Develop interactive destination map or equivalent navigation tool	Year 1	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/ Auckland Transport; Tourism operators	Use website to deliver this.
Ensure consistent travel-time messaging from Auckland	Year 1 quick win	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/ Auckland Transport; Tourism operators	Use website to deliver this. Needs coordination with all businesses and their websites/marketing.
Investigate practical shared/ shuttle transport options	Year 1–2	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators; Funding/investment partners	Form a working group to achieve this.
Investigate local ride-share service or alternative	Year 1–2	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators; Funding/investment partners	TNW to work with TAU to work out how to start this
Investigate Riverhead ferry access constraints/ opportunities	Year 1–2	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators; Funding/investment partners	TNW to work with a range of transport providers to answer these questions.
Explore destination cycling network/trail and connections	Year 1–2	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/ Auckland Transport; Tourism operators; Cycling partners; Relevant operators	TNW to work with BNW, which is already involved in a cycling programme.
Explore cycling links from Kumeū station/transport nodes	Year 1–2	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/ Auckland Transport; tourism operators; cycling partners; relevant operators	TNW to work with BNW, which is already involved in a cycling programme.
Map and advocate for priority EV charging locations	Year 1–2	Tourism North West; Auckland Council/ Auckland Transport; Tourism operators; Cycling partners; Relevant operators	Link to existing maps from TNW website. Contact the energy providers and suggest recommended locations.
Engage AT/NZTA/Council on long-term Muriwai and priority- site access	Year 1/ ongoing	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators; NZTA	Must also engage Regional Parks in this discussion and all shuttle bus companies and licence holders.
Develop prioritised visitor infrastructure improvement programme	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators;	TNW to work with TAU and BNW to develop this.
Assess parking needs including coach and horse-float parking	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators; Equestrian operators/land managers	TNW to work with Auckland Council and Auckland Transport to develop this.
Assess gaps in public toilets and visitor amenities	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Auckland Council/Auckland Transport; Tourism operators;	TNW to work with Auckland Council Community Facilities department and TAU.

Pillar 5: Leadership, Delivery & Partnerships

Tactical action	Timing/ timeframe	Who needs to be involved	Guidance for Implementation
Confirm tourism governance arrangement within Business North West	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators	BNW General Manager to develop the structure for Tourism North West and call for board nominations at AGM 2026.
Confirm terms of reference, membership, delegations and reporting lines	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators	BNW General Manager to develop the structure for Tourism North West and call for board nominations at AGM 2026.
Clarify ownership of DMP, brand, website/domain, data and related assets	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; TAU	BNW General Manager to develop the structure for Tourism North West.
Define coordinator role and secure dedicated capacity	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators	TNW to define this and present to BNW for approval.
Prepare Year 1 Delivery Plan budget and multi-source funding plan	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; funding/investment partners	BNW General Manager to develop and allocate budgets for Tourism North West and seek approval at the 2026 AGM.
Establish annual planning/monitoring/reporting/refresh cycle and dashboard	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators	TNW can seek support from TAU to understand the costs of items.
Map partner roles and responsibilities	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators	TNW will be bound by Auckland Council BID Policy 2025.
Establish practical working arrangements with Tāhaki Auckland Unlimited	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; TAU	Work with TAU to establish a working relationship between TNW and TAU.
Establish practical working arrangements with Council and Rodney Local Board	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; Rodney Local Board; Auckland Council	Work with Auckland Council and Rodney Local Board to establish working relationships.
Establish ongoing implementation relationship with Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara	Year 1/ ongoing	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara	Work with Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara to establish a working relationship.
Undertake operator capability needs assessment	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; TAU; Relevant specialist providers	TNW can seek support from TAU to complete this.
Develop sequenced capability programme	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; TAU; Relevant specialist providers	TNW to assess skills needs of operators and establish a capability plan.

Tactical action	Timing/ timeframe	Who needs to be involved	Guidance for Implementation
Work with RTO on trade-readiness support	Year 1-2	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; TAU; Relevant specialist providers	TNW can seek support from TAU to complete this. Can look to get one or two businesses trade-ready and offer paid places at the next TRENZ event.
Establish regular operator networking/knowledge-sharing	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; TAU; Relevant specialist providers	TNW Coordinator can manage this.
Develop shared destination/event calendar where useful	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators	TNW Coordinator can manage this.
Assess support for capacity-constrained heritage/community assets such as Te Awaroa Museum	Later/ targeted	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators; Arts, culture and heritage organisations	Will need a specialist to undertake this work.
Develop a light-touch communications approach for progress and achievements.	Year 1	Business North West/Tourism North West; Tourism governance group; Tourism operators	TNW Coordinator can manage this.

Plan development and methodology

This Destination Management Plan was developed collaboratively by TAU and Business North West, with destination management advice, facilitation and plan development provided by Kiri Goulter Consulting. Kiri Goulter Consulting guided the process using the Destination Management Plan Playbook, which provided the methodology and structure for developing the plan.

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Hallertau Brewery	PCJ Tours	Vineyard Cottages
Helensville Golf Club	Pukeatua Farmstay	West Auckland Airport
Helensville Show	Rodney Local Board	Westbrook Winery
Kaipara Coast Sculpture Gardens	Shed 16	Woodhill Forest
Kaipātiki Hot Springs	Soljans Estate Wineries	Woodvale Lodge
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