

# Baring Head

## Recreation and Tourism Options Study

### FINAL



March 2011

Prepared for



greater WELLINGTON  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Prepared by



Tourism Resource Consultants

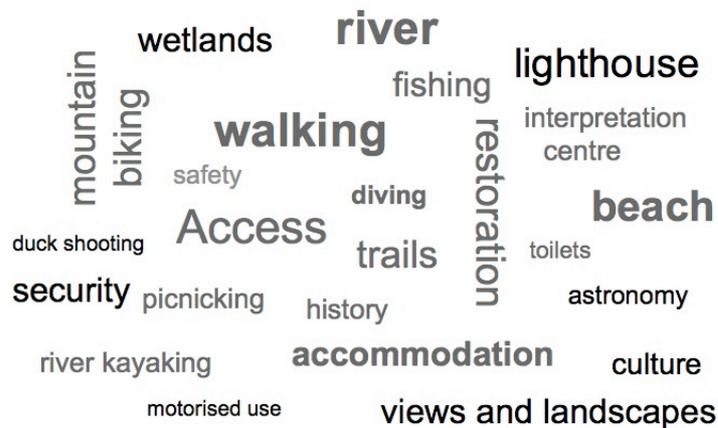


## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 240ha block of land at Baring Head, an iconic part of the Wellington Region's landscape, was purchased by a Greater Wellington Regional Council led consortium in June 2010. The consortium included the Department of Conservation, Nature Heritage Fund, Hutt City Council and a private contributor.

The research into recreation and tourism options at Baring Head is one of four work streams being undertaken for the block. This study along with other work assessing the cultural and ecological values of the block will feed into the management planning process for the area. A key component of the research was focused on the feasibility of using the lighthouse keepers' houses for commercial accommodation.

Public consultation, meetings with landowners and key stakeholders clearly outlined some of the priorities for the site. These included the types of activities, infrastructure, key issues and management options stakeholders would like to see considered. The theme cloud below provides a summary of discussion at the public workshop in November 2010.



## Trends and Regional Context

A key component of the study included a review of current trends in the recreation and tourism industries and an analysis of existing accommodation properties nearby and also comparable ones in other locations.

**Recreation** – walking is the number one recreational activity, with biking (5<sup>th</sup>) and fishing (6<sup>th</sup>) also featuring strongly in the top ten<sup>1</sup>. Wellington has a higher proportion of walkers and cyclists than the New Zealand average. Baring Head has the ability to cater strongly to these recreational activities and local use will account for the vast majority of demand.

<sup>1</sup> SPARC – Active NZ Survey 2007/08

**Tourism** – Wellington has a strong domestic tourism market, however, it is focused on the central city, Te Papa and the desire to have fun and socialise. In comparison with visitors to other regions, visitors are less likely to be motivated by a desire to see or experience a natural attraction (or to expect that Wellington will offer opportunities to do so).

**Accommodation** – lighthouses are a drawcard for visitors and add value to a destination. The opportunity to stay in authentic houses gives the product a greater appeal. Lighthouse keepers' cottages have successfully been converted into visitor accommodation in other places. The commercial success of these depends largely on their location, a combination of accessibility both to urban centres and tourists. Many of the successful Australian lighthouse properties are located in key tourism areas (e.g. Cape Byron). New Zealand's main examples are more remote (e.g. Cape Brett and Cape Campbell) and this is reflected in their low visitation.

**Publicly managed accommodation** in New Zealand also provides some good benchmarks for the Baring Head block. These include DOC houses on Mātū Somes Island, huts in the Orongorongo and Auckland Council baches and lodges. These types of facilities are generally very popular within their local markets and often near capacity during the summer, especially on weekends.

**Trusts** - The role of trusts in conservation and restoration projects in partnership with government (e.g. DOC, regional or local councils) plays a key role in achieving outcomes. The trust model is an alternative for Baring Head partners to consider. These partnerships are generally focused on conservation, but often expand to include tourism and recreation, with the development of visitor facilities.

Other types of experiences specifically associated with lighthouse tourism and storm watching will also enhance the appeal of Baring Head.

## **Connections to Baring Head**

The project also considered linkages and connections along the coast to the Parangarahu Lakes Area of East Harbour Regional Park, and east through Orongorongo Station to Palliser Bay.

Formalising legal public access along the coast will greatly enhance the recreation and tourism opportunities associated with Baring Head. There is considerable potential for the “*Big Coast*” route to be designated a New Zealand Cycleway Great Ride and also the opportunity to realise the vision of the *Great Harbour Way* route from Fitzroy Bay in the east to Sinclair Head in the west.

The realisation of legal public access would increase the number of users at Baring Head, support the economic viability of the accommodation, and create further opportunities for recreation and tourism along the south coast and in the Wairarapa. This should be considered a long term priority and goal for Baring Head.

## Key Challenges

The key challenges for the management of Baring Head block are related to access, safety and security. These are touched on in the report and would be explored further through the park management planning process.

The current access to the block through the river mouth and beach is causing problems for Hutt City Council. There is also some interest in vehicle access to the Baring Head block as part of this process. The perception exists that there is already a formed road from the entrance over to the coast so people want to know why they cannot use it.

The safety and security of vehicles parked in the vicinity of Wainuiomata Beach and also potentially by the park entrance could likely be an issue for future management. DOC have been dealing with this at Catchpool and also the parking area at the beach where people leave their cars prior to walking to Turakirae Head.

The illegal poaching of paua and livestock in the area is currently an issue, as is recreational four-wheel driving along the beach, which is not permitted.

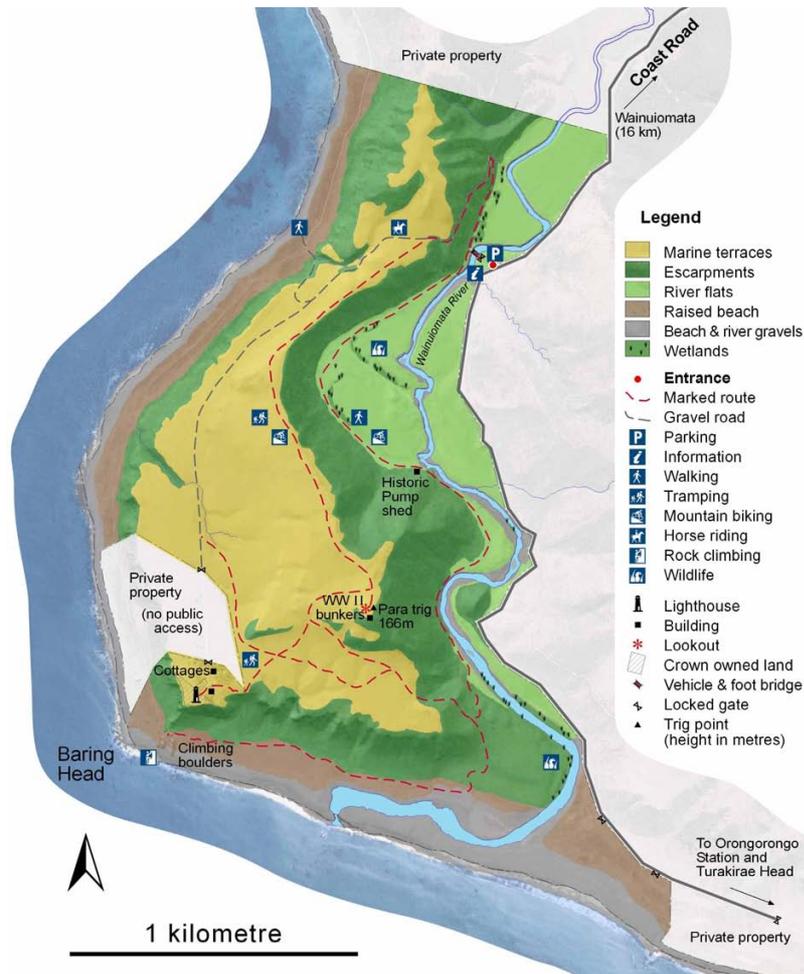
## Recreation and Tourism Options

The recreation and tourism options identified in this report focus on continuing to cater to existing uses such as fishing and rock climbing/bouldering, while new opportunities are centred around the core activities of walking and biking and the use of the lighthouse keepers' houses.

To facilitate walking and biking there is a proposed trail network (poled route only at this stage) that primarily consists of a five-kilometre loop track from the park entrance gate. The track connects the key areas of the block. Tracks will focus on loop circuits that appeal to both families and also the more adventurous.

**Day visitors** from within the Wellington region will be the main users, with the area likely to initially attract 25-30,000 visitors annually. The facilities needed to cater to the day use market are detailed under infrastructure. These numbers could be stronger if legal public access along the coast to Fitzroy Bay and east to Palliser Bay was achieved.

## Map of Proposed Tracks at Baring Head



## Commercial Accommodation

The two lighthouse keepers' houses are in good condition internally and are structurally sound, but they require restoration. There appears to be market demand for this type of accommodation based on a review of both DOC facilities in the region and similar types of properties in other parts of the country. The added appeal of the lighthouse complex makes this a more compelling experience. The houses also provide an opportunity to generate revenue in the order of \$24,000 to \$60,000 annually.

The development of the two houses and subsequent management as commercial accommodation can potentially be achieved under a number of models/structures that include:

1. Council owned and operated
2. Co-management council and iwi
3. Trust
4. Private sector

The key factors that will likely influence the selection of the management structure will be leadership/capability, community engagement and the financing of the infrastructure costs required for Baring Head.

### **Supporting Infrastructure**

The infrastructure proposed is a reflection of the anticipated use at Baring Head that will be focused primarily on day visits, the beach, lighthouse complex, walking, biking and overnight accommodation in the houses.

- **Interpretive centre and day use facility** – the use of the existing generator building as an interpretive centre that can communicate in some detail the history and stories of the lighthouse complex would add value to the visitor experience. The generator building could also provide shelter and toilet amenities for day visitors.
- **Foot Bridge access at river mouth** to Baring Head block. The existing use of the block is primarily focused on the beach area. This is currently accessed through the Wainuiomata River at the river mouth. Providing users with more direct access to the beach area of the block should be a key consideration in the planning. This could be achieved with the construction of a suspension bridge near the river mouth and the enhancement of the existing parking and staging area to the east of the river. This could be positioned as the main entrance to the block.
- **Interpretation and signage** – the visitor experience at Baring Head will be enriched by the use of interpretation that can communicate the many themes and stories associated with the site including: maritime history, culture, climate monitoring, military operations and the ecology. Good interpretation will make the difference between a good and a great experience. Directional signage for tracks/features and distance indicators are also an important component of the infrastructure that ensures users are aware of what the site has to offer and where to find it.
- **Picnic areas** – seating and tables in key locations such as the pump house and lighthouse complex will appeal to families and other users. Restoration of the pump house should also be undertaken to develop a key visitor destination and interpretation hub on the river.
- The possibility of a future **shuttle service** to the lighthouse complex should also be considered within the management plan, based on visitor numbers to Baring Head, once tracks and accommodation have been completed. The distance from the main entrance to the lighthouse will restrict the visitor market. The Parangarahu Lakes Area is a similar situation where there is a considerable distance (4-5 hours return) from the carpark to lakes block.

## Tourism Activities

Tourism within the Baring Head Block would be primarily driven by guided tours, filming and events, with the exception of the accommodation. There is potential for existing operators within the Wellington region, and those located nearby, to enhance their product offering with guided tours of the block themed around the many stories associated with the area. Events are a catalyst for raising the profile of an area and these could be either concessions based commercial events (e.g. sporting) or community-based initiatives. There is also the potential for filming concessions on the block.

Legal public access along the coast from Baring Head will greatly increase the opportunities for tourism operators to package experiences and offer further products as well as increasing the likely number of visitors.

## Potential Development Scenarios

Four development scenarios have been prepared to look at the implications of various options and how the decision of whether to provide accommodation and the likelihood of legal coastal access will affect the visitor use and opportunities at the block.

The implications range from:

- commercial accommodation and access to East Harbour available. Although the cost of development and maintenance is likely higher, so too are the potential revenue and visitor numbers. The opportunity for a Big Coast ride and multi day packages along the coast is a possibility; or
- a scenario where there is no accommodation available and no access to East Harbour, where activities at Baring Head are restricted to a stand alone day use location presents the least favourable outcome. The lack of access to Pencarrow via the coast would lower visitor numbers and use. There would still be costs associated with developing day use infrastructure and facilities and either maintaining or removing the houses.

## Recommendations

Tourism Resource Consultants have the following recommendations for consideration in the management planning process. These are based on the consultation and research undertaken during this recreation and tourism review for the Baring Head Block:

1. Focus on **non-motorised** recreation and tourism activities, with an emphasis on walking and biking
2. Cater for **existing use and plan for expanded activities**. The block will cater to both day and overnight visitors. Existing use focused around the beach, rock climbing and

fishing will continue along with new walking and biking opportunities and infrastructure such as picnic sites.

3. **Key infrastructure** to be centred on a dual use **trail network** (designed for biking) of loop tracks that caters to different markets. The network would connect key experiences/areas within the block (beach, river, wetland, pump house, lighthouse complex, summit and WWII bunkers).
4. **Develop picnic areas** to complement other infrastructure and enhance the experience for visitors. Restoration of the **pump shed** would be an integral part of creating an interpretation hub and destination for users near the river.
5. **Develop the generator building** to cater for day users and to provide an integral component of the experience. The generator building would provide day users with shelter and toilet amenities. As an interpretive centre it would provide all visitors with an engaging and informative presentation of the block and its associated history and significance.
5. Formalise secondary (potentially the primary) access from river mouth area into the block with the construction of a **pedestrian bridge**
6. **Renovate lighthouse keepers' houses** for use as commercial accommodation properties.
7. **The Trust operational model** with initial seed capital funding from key partners (e.g. GWRC, DOC and HCC) appears to be the best option for the development and subsequent management of the houses. This model enables the best community engagement and access to external funding sources.
8. **The Trust management model** in addition to managing the restoration and activities on the block should also seek to address concerns around safety and security within the area in partnership with local landowners and key agencies.
9. **Linkages** to and from the block will be integral to its success and ensure it is not an isolated experience, but interconnected. Formal public access along the coast to the existing Parangarahu Lakes Area of East Harbour Regional Park is critical.
10. **Interpretation** will be a critical part of the experience at Baring Head. The site has a wealth of stories and themes associated with it. If these can be communicated to visitors

through interpretation at key sites it will transform the experience.

11. Keep options open for **restricted vehicle access** to the lighthouse complex. It will be necessary for the accommodation and may also be used for a weekend service or as part of the GWRC parks programme offerings.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This recreation and tourism options project is one of four work streams for the Baring Head block that also includes archaeology and heritage, the environment and culture. This work will feed into the park's management plan process scheduled for 2011.

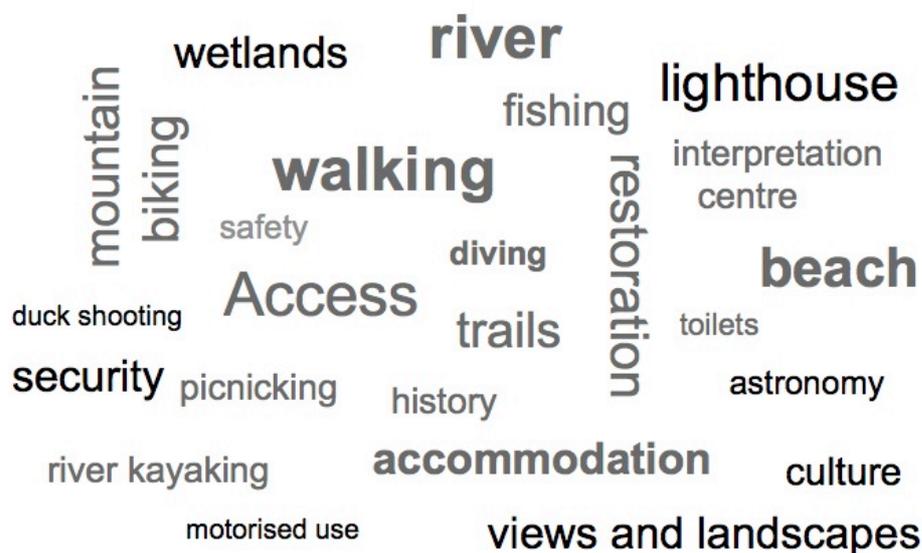
Tourism Resource Consultants' brief for the project was to examine the tourism and recreation opportunities within the block. This included the lighthouse and associated buildings, potential linkages beyond the park, options for management and an assessment of the feasibility of the commercial accommodation.

## 1.1. Public Workshop

The public workshop for the Baring Head recreation and tourism options study held at the Petone Workingmen's Club on 22 November 2010, was well attended (approximately 50 attendees) and yielded some good input for the study.

The following graphic (Figure 1) illustrates the major concepts and themes that were discussed. The larger and bolder the words the more frequently they were mentioned or emphasised by the attendees.

Figure 1: Word Cloud of Key themes from the Public Workshop



## 2. TRENDS

**Walking** – remains the number one recreational activity and a key reason for visiting parks and other recreational areas in New Zealand. It has led to the development of successful multi-day private walks (e.g. Tora Walk and Akaroa Walk) and of course DOC's Great Walks network.

**Biking** – there is strong growth in rail trails and similar cycling products internationally, with over 100 existing and 23 proposed trails in Australia. In New Zealand there are over 50 mountain bike parks and an increasing number of cycle tour operators offering adventure cycling activities.

The National Cycleway Project has committed \$50 million to construct 18 multi-day cycleways throughout the country.

Cycle events are key drivers for attracting cyclists to a destination and often have major economic spin-offs. Events such as the Karapoti Classic (over 1,200 participants) and the Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge (over 10,000) attract large numbers of cyclists and spectators. The Meridian Kids' Bike Jams attracted over 3,250 children across several events in 2009.

**Bach Holidays** - the accessibility of baches through websites like Book a Bach and Bach Care has created a real segment in the market for traditional kiwi holidays. These websites have developed to now drive promotions by themes and events to their large database of clients.

**Camping** - There appears to be a resurgence in camping that is driven in part by technological enhancements in equipment (e.g. cheaper products and improved designs), changing attitudes towards camping as a holiday option and the current economic climate.

- NZ Motor Caravan Association (NZMCA) has experienced solid growth in camping nights, 95% over the last five seasons (2005 – 06 to 2009 - 10), generated by its 40,000 individual members

### 2.1.1. Auckland City Baches and Lodges

The previous Auckland Regional Council (ARC) entered the accommodation business when Council decided to retain and upgrade three baches at Scandrett Regional Park that had previously been scheduled for removal.

This led to a decision to restore and preserve other properties on the regional parks, and to investigate expanding the offer of bach accommodation to the public in 2007. Dating from the 1930s to the 1950s the baches have been refurbished to reflect a simple Kiwi bach. A number hold significant heritage value.

The new Auckland Council now operate the 17 lodges and baches within their parks network. Annual occupancy across the entire network is 50%. However there are a number of baches that average significantly higher

than this, in the range of 65% to 85%. The most popular is Graham Bach, in Scandrett Regional Park, which is booked 310 nights per year.

### 2.1.2. Storm Watching

On the West Coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia Canada is a thriving industry based around storm watching in the winter months. This product was developed to address the low visitation to the west coast in the winter. The winter Pacific Ocean storms create an exciting spectacular that visitors can enjoy from the comfort of their accommodation or venture out onto the beaches for a more close up experience.



Baring Head has the opportunity to be an engaging and raw winter experience that exposes visitors to the wilds of the South Coast and Cook Strait.

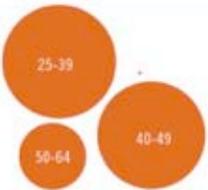
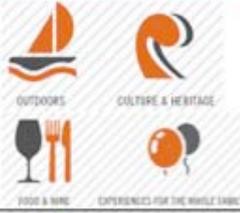
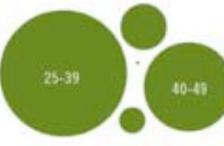
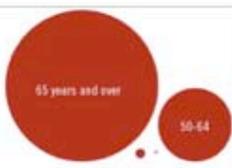
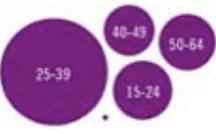
### 2.1.3. Domestic Tourism

Domestic tourism is worth \$12.4 billion to the New Zealand economy. Recent (2010) segmentation research has identified different domestic tourism markets within the country and provides key insights for attracting these segments.

Local and regional visitors will be the primary markets for Baring Head. However, the overnight accommodation and day activities will also appeal to the domestic traveller market. Additionally, there would likely be some international visitation, though this would be small and probably limited to those with a specific interest in lighthouses.

The four key domestic segments of most relevance to Baring Head, illustrated in Table 1, have interests in activities such as heritage, nature products, wildlife, family activities, camping, and mountain biking, walking and fishing.

**Table 1: Baring Head's Key Domestic Tourism Segments**

Segment and Size	Age	Travel Product Likely to Appeal	Origin	Number of Short Breaks
<b>EMBRACING LIFE</b>  			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Auckland</li> <li>Wellington</li> <li>Other South Island = Canterbury</li> </ul>	 2.5 short breaks
<b>CREATING</b>  			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over represented in the North Island</li> <li>Auckland</li> <li>Waikato</li> <li>Other North Island (excluding Wellington &amp; Manawatu)</li> </ul>	 2.3 short breaks
<b>BEING THERE</b>  			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More likely in provincial areas</li> <li>Auckland</li> <li>Canterbury</li> <li>Other North Island</li> </ul>	 1.6 short breaks
<b>IMMERSING</b>  			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Auckland</li> <li>Wellington</li> <li>Canterbury</li> </ul>	 2.2 short breaks

Wellington hosted just over 4.4 million visitors in 2009, made up of approximately 38% domestic overnight visitors, 44% domestic day visitors, 16% international overnight visitors and 2% international day visitors.

The domestic market is dominant in Wellington – accounting for more than 80% of all visitors. After local residents, domestic visitors are likely to be the secondary market for the accommodation and activities at Baring Head.

The majority of visitors to Wellington are either on holiday or visiting friends and relatives. In order to attract visiting friends and relatives (VFR) visitors it will be necessary to engage strongly with their local hosts (i.e. Wellington residents).

However, it is important to note that at present, holiday visitors to Wellington are most commonly motivated by urban attractions and the desire to have fun and socialise. In comparison with visitors to other regions, they are less likely to be motivated by a desire to see or experience a natural attraction (or to expect that Wellington will offer opportunities to do so).

Whilst there are 2-3 significant nature based products in the region (eg Kapiti and Zealandia) these attractions struggle to attract strong numbers.

#### 2.1.4. Trusts

Trusts play an important role in many conservation, community, recreation and tourism initiatives throughout the country. They provide a real connection to the community, have the capacity to fund raise for projects and often contain individuals with the leadership skills to drive large projects and change.

The concept of sharing conservation stories and initiatives with visitors to enhance and protect areas adds justification to recreation and tourism in natural areas.

Some examples of trusts that play a significant role in the Wellington tourism, recreation and conservation scene include:

- **The Rimutaka Forest Park Trust** has been successful with its kiwi project in the park; the project is in its fifth year with a trapping and tracking volunteer base of over 65 people. The trust was formed in 1988 to stimulate public interest in conservation areas, encourage interactive research and environmental programmes and to cooperate with DOC in the fullest development of the park. The trust is an Incorporated Society and supported by an entirely voluntary workforce.
- **The Karori Sanctuary Trust** is a not-for-profit community led organisation. The establishment of the trust was a major breakthrough in the conservation and recovery of native wildlife in New Zealand. Since its establishment in 1995 the trust has helped build a visitor centre (Zealandia) onsite where it is envisaged the profits from visitor revenue will feed back into the trust's conservation initiatives.

Other trusts such as the Tongariro Natural History Society (detailed below), Motutapu Restoration Trust and Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi have over the years each raised millions of dollars for restoration, infrastructure and visitor based initiatives within their local area.

#### **A model of a New Zealand conservation and recreation organisation (NGO) working collaboratively with Government**

Project Tongariro (Registered name: Tongariro Natural History Society Inc, [www.tongariro.org.nz](http://www.tongariro.org.nz)) is a not-for-profit community organisation with a vision of promoting a wide knowledge and appreciation of the unique natural heritage, historic, educational and recreational values of Tongariro National Parks and environs.

The society has four key goals – natural heritage, history, education and recreation. Formed in 1984 following a fatal helicopter accident involving park staff and a pilot in 1982, twenty six years on the Society is a healthy vibrant organisation.

The society has a long association with the Department of Conservation through a formal memorandum of understanding agreement. This special

agreement enables both parties to plan cooperatively and work towards meeting a wide range of conservation objectives and ideals. The inherent mutual benefits that are part of this relationship are ongoing and durable.

From inception, the organisation's patron was Sir Hepi Te Heu Heu, paramount chief of Ngati Tuwharetoa, the iwi of the Lake Taupo area. Following his death in 1997, his son Sir Tumu Te Heu Heu, one of the most influential figures in Maoridom, became patron. In an era where park managers are working towards co-management this active and enduring relationship with local Maori is highly valued.

The Society has strong support from a wide range of local stakeholders including tourism operators, recreationists and conservationists. The Society has over 200 members, two staff, an office at Turangi and a committed Executive.

Ever since Project Tongariro started they have focused on sourcing finances and providing volunteer support for projects. The initial seed finances were from a memorial fund. This fund continues today with rules to preserve the capital of the fund requiring it to be adjusted for inflation each year.

Donations and grants continue to be a key part of the Society's contribution to the Park. The Society regularly raises over NZ\$100,000 per year and in some exceptional years has raised double this amount for use on projects. In excess of \$2 million has been raised by the Society in the last 25 years.

In some cases the funds the Society raises leads to a considerable financial commitment from others. An example is the \$75,000 the Society raised for the restoration of the Hapuwhenua Viaduct in Ohakune, which led to a \$800,000 project being completed.

Projects over the last 25 years include:

- Producing a wide range of National Park related publications.
- Undertaking several significant biodiversity projects including protecting Lake Rotoponamu and coordinating the South Taupo wetlands restoration project (Te Matapuna).
- Contributing to several significant fauna surveys (e.g. blue duck, long and short tail bats) and revegetation projects.
- Assisting with several significant recreation projects and events including National Park summer holiday programmes and the Horopito to Ohakune Cycleway.
- Providing up to 800 volunteer days annually to the Department of Conservation for conservation projects in and around the National Park.

Key reasons for the success of Project Tongariro include:

- Motivated volunteers and Society Executive committed to Tongariro National Park.
- The Society's memorial fund was the source of seed funding for a number of highly successful publications which generated a large amount of funds to the Society in its first decade.
- In 2002, moving to have professional staff considerably increased the ability of the Society to make a positive contribution in and around the park in a variety of ways.
- The Incorporated Society (or Trust) status encourages sponsors, businesses, grant funders to contribute funds to the Park which would not normally go to the public sector.
- Considerable commitment and support from senior Department of Conservation staff.

### **2.1.5. Implications for Baring Head**

Baring Head has the potential to offer activities and experiences that mirror the trends discussed above. Biking and walking opportunities in a natural coastal setting are in high demand both recreationally for locals and as tourism products for visitors.

Affordable coastal accommodation is also a highly desirable product, and can be developed and managed by the private sector, regional government or a community group/trust. Each of the models has its own strengths and weaknesses. Clever marketing of opportunities like winter storm watching can also increase the park's appeal.

## **3. WELLINGTON RECREATION AND TOURISM**

### **3.1. Recreation**

Residents in the Wellington region have strong recreational habits and place great value on their recreational assets and spaces.

Recreational activities of the type that are potentially available at Baring Head are well supported in the Wellington region,

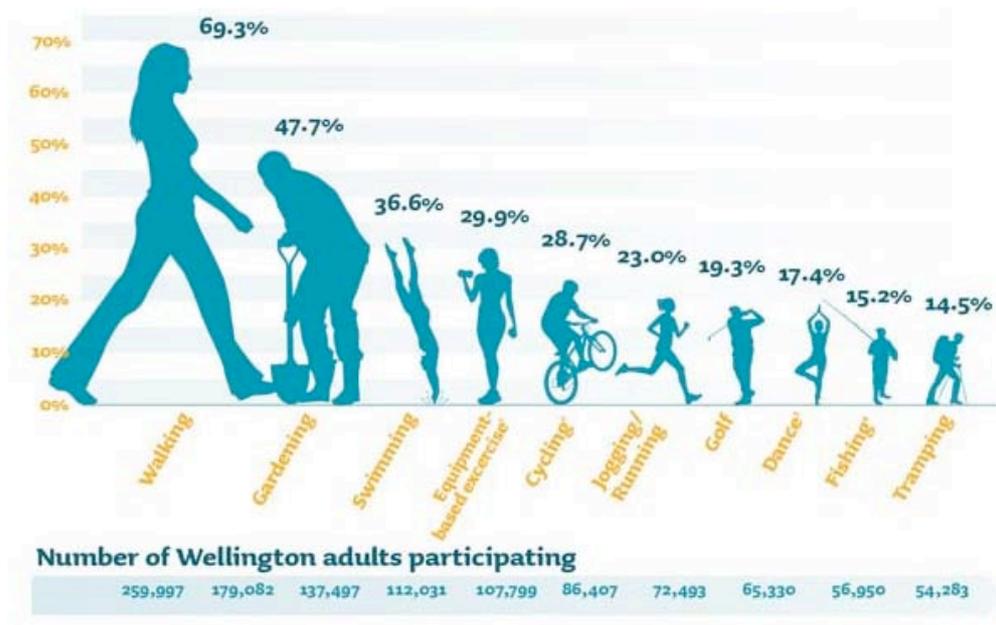
- Wellington has higher rates of participation for walking (69%, 259,997 people), cycling (29%, 107,799 people), and tramping (15%, 54,283 people) than the national averages of 64%, 23% and 9% respectively

- Walking was the most popular activity in the Wellington region and for New Zealand as a whole
- Wellington has over 56,000 people (15%) participating in fishing annually, which is below the New Zealand rate of 19%.

Wellington residents tend to be more recreationally active when compared to New Zealand as a whole. Their top 10 activities are shown below in Figure 2. Compared with New Zealand adults, a similar percentage of adults in the Wellington region<sup>2</sup>;

- Participated in at least one sport or recreation activity per week (New Zealand 79%, Wellington 80%) and per year (New Zealand 96%; Wellington 96%)
- Participated in at least one organised competition or event per year (New Zealand 37%, Wellington 40%)
- Were members of clubs or centres in order to take part in sport and recreation activities (New Zealand 35%, Wellington 38%)

**Figure 2: The 10 most popular sport and recreation activities participated in over 12 months in the Wellington Region**



Source: SPARC, 2007

### 3.1.1. Regional Parks

It is envisaged that the Baring Head site will become part of the regional parks network and be included as part of East Harbour Regional Park. This section provides a snapshot of activity within the Greater Wellington regional parks network.

<sup>2</sup> SPARC 2007/08 Active New Zealand Survey

## Visitors

During 2009/10 there were approximately 800,544 visits to the Wellington regional parks and forests. This was a decrease of 17% on the previous year, although it may be a result of the poor weather experienced in the Wellington region over that summer.<sup>3</sup>

- The Hutt River Trail receives an estimated 500,000 visits per annum
- Belmont Regional Park receives an estimated 90,000 visits per annum
- Results from a community survey based on regional parks indicate that the percentage of the population that has used the regional parks in the past twelve months (53%) is similar to that recorded in 2009. This, however, is down on the peak level registered in 2008 (57%).

## Activities within the Regional Parks

Greater Wellington's parks are used for recreational and promotional activities and as places for people to congregate. They are often the location of local events, films and tours that attract visitors to the region. Popular family activities within the parks, illustrated in Table 2, include walking, biking and picnics and more adventurous activities include mountain biking and four-wheel driving. The parks are also a place for more organised recreation such as club events.

**Table 2: Activities Undertaken in Regional Parks 2009 - 2010**

Activities	Regional Parks	
	2009 (%)	2010 (%)
Walking/bush walking	54	51
Picnics/barbeques	28	24
Mountain biking/cycling	24	20
Running/jogging	11	7
Walking/running with dog	9	10
Swimming	11	6
Camping	10	6
Tramping	7	4
Family outings/recreation	6	10
Outings with organised groups	5	4
Participated in organised sports event	-	2

Source: GWRC, 2010

<sup>3</sup> Regional Parks Annual report (YE June 2010)

## **East Harbour Regional Park**

More specifically the East Harbour Regional Park provides opportunities for walking, tramping, dog walking and picnicking. The area also allows for deer and pig hunting managed through a permit system.

A number of events were held at East Harbour Regional Park including Butterfly Creek night time madness (360 participants), Mt Lowery Challenge (265 participants), the Crazyman event (285 participants) and annual duck shooting.

The Burdens Gate is the primary access point for the coastal area of the park and it receives around 35,500 visits per annum. Numbers reach a peak of around 4,000 people per month in January and February, which is then contrasted with a low of around 500 people in June<sup>4</sup>

## **Greater Wellington Regional Council Events**

A variety of events are held in the regional parks throughout the year. The Great Outdoors summer event programme attracted 12,234 participants attending 66 events in the year 09/10, a decrease of 23% (3,620) from the previous year. Total attendance at GWRC led events was 4,730, an average of 91 people per event.

## **Kaitoke Regional Park Camping**

Camping in the Wellington regional parks is very weather dependent and attracts very low visitor numbers if the weather is poor. However, there has been a significant increase in camping revenue at Kaitoke Regional Park over the last ten years that indicates strong overall growth in camping numbers.

Revenue has grown from \$19,000 in 2000-2003 to its current level of \$44,000<sup>5</sup>. This equates to approximately 12,500 campers in 2009-2010.

### **3.1.2. DOC Parks and Reserves**

**Rimutaka Forest Park** – the Catchpool Valley is the most popular part of the park and receives approximately 40,000<sup>6</sup> visitors annually. The Catchpool area has a popular camping ground and is the primary entry point for tramping into the DOC and private huts in the Orongorongo Valley. There are also a number of popular walking tracks in the valley such as the Five Mile Loop Track and the Orongorongo Track, which has up to 4,000 (see Figure 3) users in January.

The Rimutaka Forest Park Visitor Strategy completed in 2009 promotes stronger links between the park and the coast.

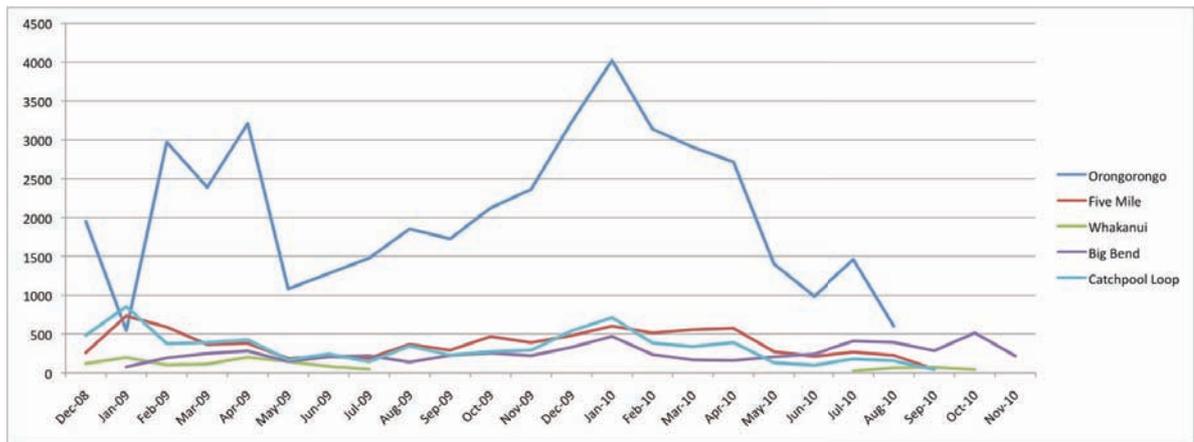
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<sup>4</sup> Greater Wellington Regional Council, 2010

<sup>5</sup> Note fees have remained static at \$5 per adult and \$2 per child over this period so the growth can be attributed to an increasing number of campers.

<sup>6</sup> The vehicle counter situated on the Catchpool Road entrance captures 20,000 vehicles on average annually.

**Figure 3: DOC Rimutaka Forest Park Track Counters**

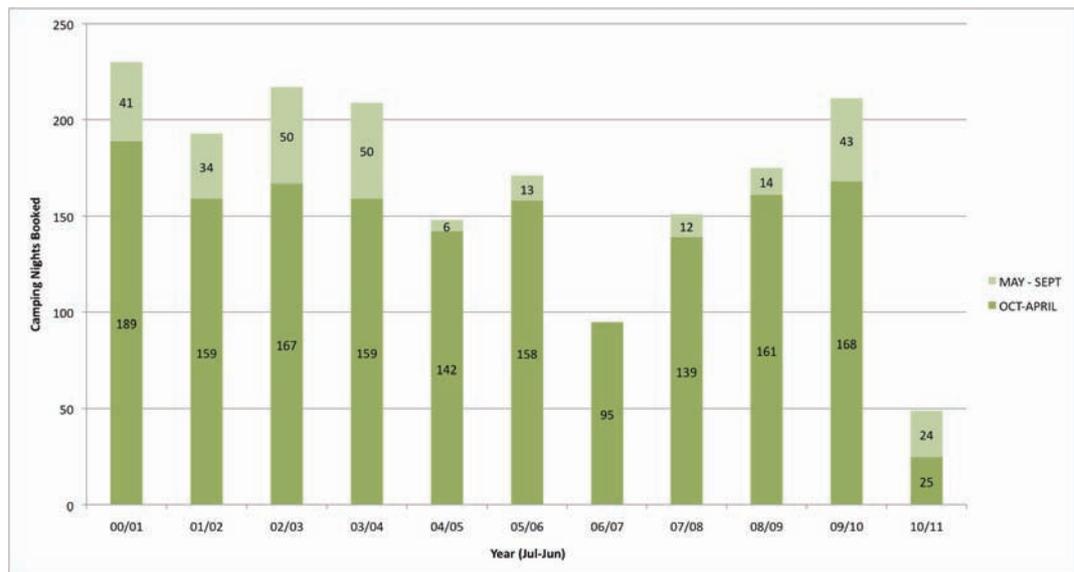


Source: DOC, 2010<sup>7</sup>

**Rimutaka Forest Park - Catchpool Camping<sup>8</sup>**

As illustrated in Figure 4, camping at Catchpool is most popular in the summer months primarily due to weather. On average over the last 10 years 83.7% of nights booked have been between October and April each year. The Catchpool caters to a local market, who generally decide at the last minute whether to go or not depending on the weather.

**Figure 4: Number of Camping Nights booked at Catchpool (2000 - 2010)**



Source: DOC, 2010<sup>9</sup>

**Turakirae Head Scientific Reserve** – mainly known for the fur seal colony of up to 500 in winter, the reserve is also internationally-renowned for the five earthquake-raised beaches. The public road ends 3 km short of

<sup>7</sup> The Whakanui track counter was broken between July 2009 and July 2010.

<sup>8</sup> There was a large flood in July 2006 and the area was closed until June 2007 when the flood damage had been repaired.

<sup>9</sup> The Whakanui track counter was broken between July 2009 and July 2010.

Turakirae Head and visitors use the public carpark 300 m before the end of the public road. Access to Turakirae Head is gained via a covenant area on private property.

**Matiu/Somes Island Scientific and Historic Reserve** – is a predator-free scientific reserve. It is also a historic reserve with a rich multicultural history. The island has tracks, accommodation (see Section 3.3), military installations, a visitor centre and a lighthouse. When the lighthouse became automated in 1924 the buildings of the settlement were removed. The island is accessed via a regular East by West ferry service that operates year round on Wellington Harbour.

### **DOC's Activity Focus**

The Wellington Conservancy is focused on developing<sup>10</sup> the following activities within the region:

- Short walks and day walks
- Beach access sites
- Picnic facilities

### **3.1.3. Wellington Mountain Biking**

Wellington is also well known for its biking culture and tracks and there is strong demand for mountain biking in the region. Family and child orientated biking is especially popular with the region hosting one of the national Meridian Kids Bike Jams, which attracted over 700 children in 2009 and the Hutt River Trail is well used by bikers.

Wellington is home to two mountain bike parks, Makara and Wainuiomata. The Makara park was created using a low impact trail design with a focus on native species restoration and the park now attracts approximately 100,000 users per year. The Wainuiomata Trail Project supported by Hutt City Council is developing a network of trails above Parkway on the eastern side of the hills between Lower Hutt and Wainuiomata.

Demand is strong for well-organised events and activities with the Wellington based Karapoti Classic Mountain bike race now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, and continuing to attract a field of over 1,200.

There are various existing opportunities for mountain biking in the regional parks the Akatarawa Forest, Battle Hill Farm Forest Park, Belmont Regional Park, Hutt River Trail, Queen Elizabeth Park, Pakuratahi Forest, and the East Harbour Regional Park (EHRP).

Existing mountain bike trails in EHRP include the Pencarrow Coast Road, Parangarahu Lakes Area, and the Rata Ridge Track, which can hopefully be linked to any potential mountain bike opportunities introduced at Baring Head.

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<sup>10</sup> Recreation Strategy for Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy (2010 – 2011)

### **3.1.4. Implications for Baring Head**

Baring Head with its location and unique attributes (e.g. lighthouse complex) will enhance the existing regional parks' network. The block also complements the Department of Conservation's adjacent Rimutaka Forest Park and Turakirae Head Scientific Reserve.

The current parks' network within the region caters to a wide range of recreational and some limited tourism activity. The proposed walking experience, mountain biking and accommodation at Baring Head will complement the existing offerings and in the case of the lighthouse keepers' houses create new product with a unique appeal.

Baring Head will provide a more accessible and coastal experience than the Orongorongo and Catchpool Valleys and give visitors another reason to visit the Wainuiomata coast.

## **3.2. Tourism**

Wellington is considered one of New Zealand's top three visitor destinations and boasted 4 million domestic visitor nights in 2009. Wellington is increasingly gaining attention as a world-class international visitor destination with the Lonely Planet recently labelling it the "Best Little Capital in the World" and naming it the fourth best city to visit.

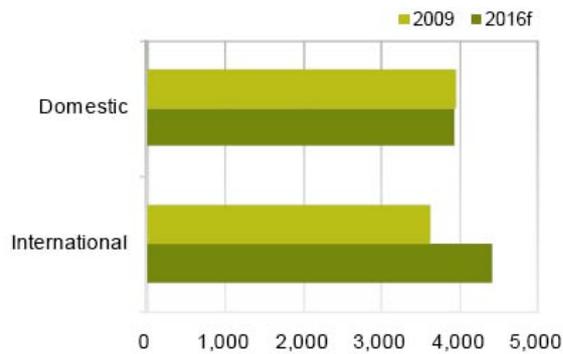
In the domestic visitor survey "The Mood of the New Zealand Traveller" Wellington has come in as the top New Zealand destination hotspot for both the autumn/winter season (August 2010 Survey) and the spring/summer season (December 2010 Survey).

However, Wellington's tourism experience is primarily focused on urban and downtown experiences in the cafes, bars and restaurants. Events are also a key driver of visitation. As a result Wellington attracts visitors that are looking for these types of experiences. Nature and the outdoors are further down the list or not the reason they are coming to the capital, which makes outdoor activities and attractions (for example Zealandia is struggling to gain traction in this space) a hard sell, particularly if they are located well outside Wellington.

### **Visits to Wellington**

Total visitor nights to the Wellington Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) reached 7.6 million in 2009 and are forecast to rise 742,000 (1.3%) to 8.3 million in 2016 (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Visitor Nights in Wellington RTO by Origin of Traveller (000s)**

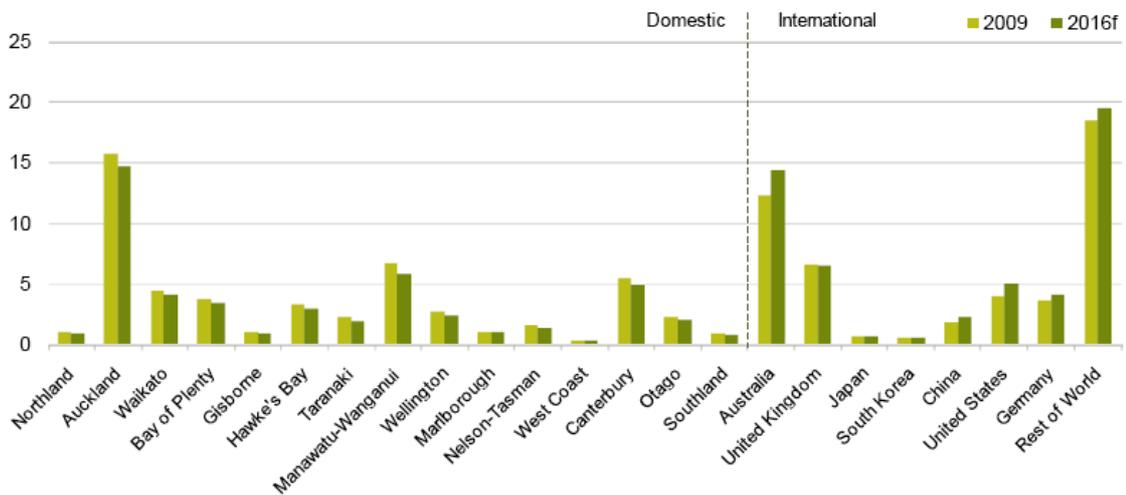


Source: New Zealand Tourism Strategy Group

Wellington’s largest market is the domestic market although international visitor nights are forecast to surpass domestic visitor nights by 2016.

As illustrated below in Figure 6 Auckland (30.1%), Manawatu-Whanganui (12.8%) and Canterbury (10.4%) are the largest domestic markets to Wellington and Australia (25.8%), United Kingdom (13.7%) and United States (8.4%) are the largest international markets to Wellington.

**Figure 6: Share of Total Visitor Nights in Wellington RTO by Origin of Traveller (% of all visitor nights)**



Source: New Zealand Tourism Strategy Group

In comparison to other Regional Visitor Monitor (RVM) regions<sup>11</sup> Wellington hosts the second highest proportion of Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) visitors and the highest proportion of business travellers overall.

- Wellington has a high domestic repeat visitation rate, 90% at YE Sept 2010, and roughly half of Australian visitors to Wellington

<sup>11</sup> Angus and Associates Regional Visitor Monitor – Regions include Wellington, Canterbury, Queenstown, Dunedin and Rotorua.

have been here before. Wellington has the highest proportion of returning visitors of all RVM regions

- To “have fun, socialise and enjoy myself” is the leading motivator for holiday visitors to Wellington, followed by “explore a uniquely different place” and “experience a must see destination”. “See natural or other attractions” was the fifth most frequent motivator at 31%.
- 13% of Wellington RVM respondents noted natural attractions as an activity/attraction that they participated in on their visit to Wellington (fifth most popular) with sightseeing, cultural/heritage/education, urban, concerts/events/shows being more popular.

Given the high repeat visitation in some markets and the high proportion of VFRs that Wellington receives there is potential for them to expand their experiences beyond the CBD and include other parts and destinations in the Greater Wellington area.

### **3.3. Accommodation**

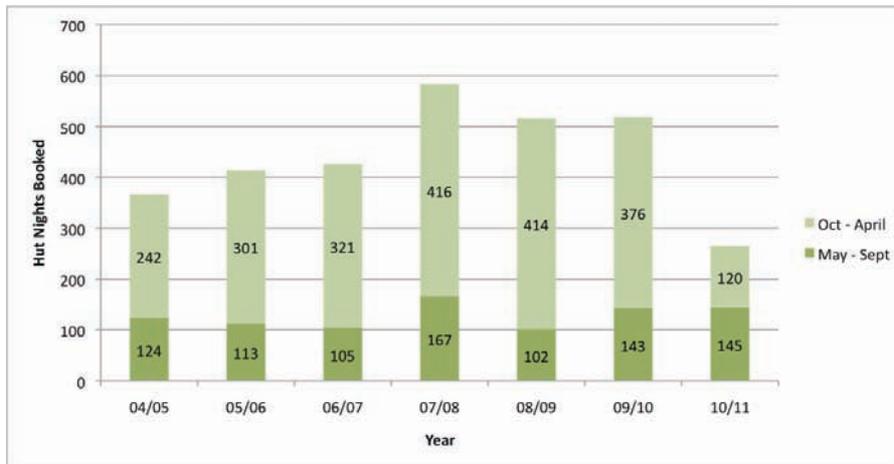
A key component of the recreation and tourism options review is the potential use of the two lighthouse keepers’ houses for overnight accommodation. This section reviews other comparable accommodation in the region.

#### **3.3.1. Orongorongo Huts**

The Orongorongo huts in the Rimutaka Forest Park are well used. The huts are located in the Orongorongo Valley and about a 90-120 minute walk from the Catchpool carpark. They are particularly popular in weekends over the summer months (categorised as Labour weekend to Easter weekend), but also maintain a steady usage over the winter. The huts are booked on an exclusive use basis, which means users pay a nightly price for the entire hut. Figure 7 shows hut nights booked by year.

Two huts have been replaced or upgraded in the Orongorongo Valley (Papatahi hut replaced Shamrock hut and the Haurangi hut has been upgraded) but it is not expected that the hut replacements will influence demand significantly aside from a small case of “new hut syndrome”.

**Figure 7: Orongorongo Hut Nights Booked (2004-2010)**



Source: NVBS DOC – This graph includes Oaks Hut, Jans Hut, Raukawa Hut, Haurangi Hut (figures not available between April 2009 – June 2010), Shamrock Hut (up until March 2009), Boar Inn (figures begin in October 2008) and Papatahi Hut (Only included from June 2010). Papatahi hut replaced Shamrock hut and the Haurangi hut has been upgraded.

- In total DOC's 6 huts account for 519 overnight bookings per year
- Jan's hut is currently the most popular with 160 nights annually, 120 of these over the October-April period. Jan's hut is \$61.30 and sleeps 9.
- Raukawa Hut is also popular with 108 nights booked over the summer months (October - April) and 35 nights booked over the winter. The larger Raukawa Hut costs \$132.80 per night and sleeps 18.

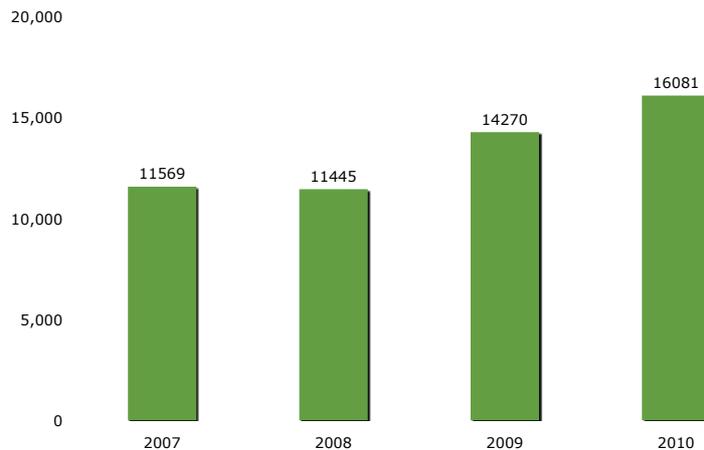
DOC will be building a new 32 bunk (four room) hut this summer in the Orongorongos that will cater to the demand from larger groups, but also enable separate rooms to be booked by groups. The Orongorongo huts have been available to book online since July 2007.

### 3.3.2. Matiu/Somes Houses

The houses on Matiu/Somes Island are similar to those located at Baring Head. The houses are in a prime location with views over Wellington harbour and not widely known about or promoted in terms of their availability.

Visitation to the island has increased (see Figure 8) over the last 4 years and grown by 37% since 2008.

**Figure 8: Visitor Arrivals for Matiu/Somes Island 2007-2010**

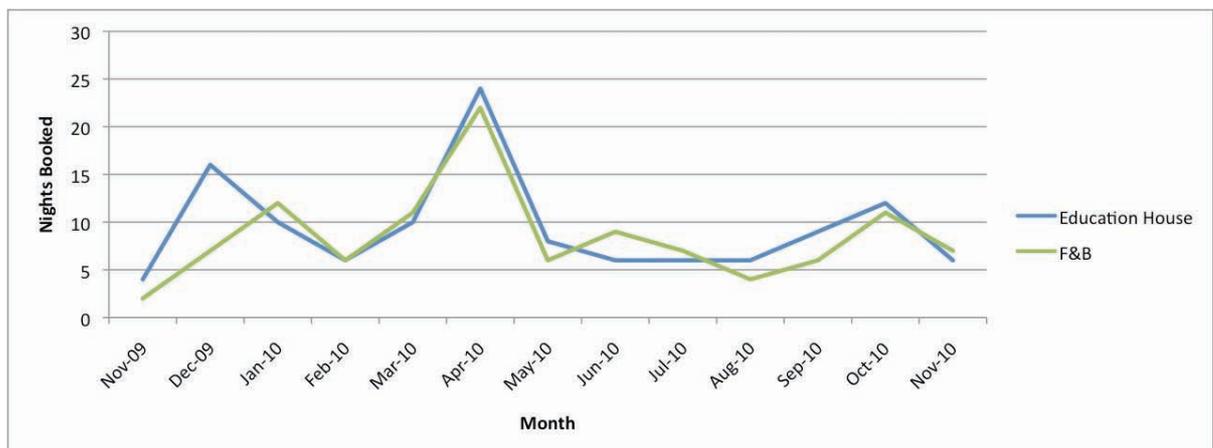


Source: East by West Ferries, 2011  
 Due to fire risk in 2008 there were fewer ferry services to the island

There are three houses in total (Forest & Bird, Tenth Trust and DOC) and the F&B and DOC houses have been bookable through DOC online since 2009. The other accommodation available on the island (three Motel units) are only used by DOC staff and contractors and not available to the public.

- For the year ended November 2010 the Education House (DOC house) was booked for a total of 123 nights and the Forest and Bird House for 110 nights). Note 54.6% of these nights were DOC Staff related bookings (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9: Nights Booked Matiu Somes Island DOC Houses**



Source: DOC  
 Note: 56.4% of these nights were those of DOC staff

### 3.3.3. Other Accommodation

Other DOC properties available on the Wairarapa coast had similar occupancies to the Orongorongo huts and included:

- Te Kopi Cottage - \$102 per night, sleeps 10, booked 120 nights (09/10)
- Waikuku Lodge - \$92 per night, sleeps 30, booked for 143 nights (09/10)
- Te Kopi Homestead - \$153 per night, sleeps 10, booked for 72 nights (09/10)

Other accommodation in the immediate vicinity of relevance to Baring Head includes Pencarrow Lodge and the Cottages at Orongorongo Station.

### **Pencarrow Lodge**

The lodge is mainly a day use facility that focuses on functions (e.g. weddings) and events. The Lodge is popular with cruise passengers who are bused via Eastbourne to the lodge to experience some farming demonstrations and refreshments in a dramatic coastal setting. The lodge's only accommodation is the "The Love Shack", an isolated luxury self contained cottage for romantic getaways.

### **Orongorongo Station Houses**

Orongorongo Station is moving into the tourism business, with two cottages now available for rent through the Book a Bach online site. The owners are also in the process of developing group and function facilities to cater to this growing market and partnering with a local operator to offer quad bike tours of the station.



### **3.3.4. Implications for Baring Head**

Wellington's tourism industry is geared towards and promoted as a largely urban experience (cafes, restaurants). It also focuses heavily on events, so many visitors are not aware of, nor coming to Wellington for, the other opportunities within the region.

The regional parks and DOC facilities in the region appeal largely to the local market and, to a lesser extent, visitors. This is reflected in the type of use (e.g. weekends and holidays) and user groups.

DOC's huts/houses and the private coastal baches available in the Wellington region illustrate the potential for commercial accommodation at Baring Head utilising the lighthouse keepers' houses.

While GWRC itself is not currently operating this type of service, there are other examples (e.g. DOC and private sector) and models (e.g. Trusts) that could enable this experience to be provided at Baring Head.

## 4. LIGHTHOUSE TOURISM

### 4.1.1. Trends

Lighthouse automation throughout the world in the 1950-70s led to the facilities associated with them becoming surplus to requirements (e.g. the lighthouse keepers' cottages). Many of these facilities remained disused for years, while locally concerns were often raised at the deterioration of these historic structures. Interest groups began to put forward cases to lease or take over management of many of these buildings. The maritime organisations maintained the access rights to operate the light itself.

This was particularly evident in the United States and Australia. Today many community and special interest groups now operate, manage and maintain lighthouse facilities. The sites are often in spectacular locations, but also often difficult to access. Proximity to markets can be the key to financial viability.

### 4.1.2. Demand

Lighthouses themselves are attractions in their own right. New Zealand's most visited lighthouses are believed to be Cape Reinga (136,000pa) and Castlepoint (45,000pa).

The most successful Australian ones are located in prime coastal sites in very high profile tourism areas such as Cape Otway on the Great Ocean Road in Victoria and Cape Byron, at Byron Bay in NSW.

#### Cape Reinga Lighthouse

- Located at the tip of New Zealand, the lighthouse receives around 136,000 visitors annually<sup>12</sup>
- There are visitor upgrades currently underway at the Cape Reinga site including; car parking, eco friendly toilets, power generation, new roading, walking tracks and replanting.
- Visitor numbers are expected to move towards 200,000 now that the final stretch of road has been sealed.
- The most common reasons for visiting Cape Reinga are sightseeing and other passive recreation uses, only 8% of respondents primarily went to Cape Reinga to see the lighthouse<sup>13</sup>
- 57% of respondents were international visitors mainly from Great Britain and Europe, and 43% were domestic visitors mainly from Auckland. This is in contrast to Northland visitation, which is primarily domestic.

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<sup>12</sup> DOC Destination Management Framework, 2010

<sup>13</sup> DOC Research & Development Series, Visitors to Cape Reinga: site use and management implications, 2006

## Castle Point Lighthouse, Wairarapa

Castle Point in the Wairarapa is a popular beach holiday destination in the lower North Island. The lighthouse is a prominent feature of the community and a popular attraction with visitors. It can be reached on foot from the settlement and is a popular day trip out of Masterton and to a lesser extent Wellington<sup>14</sup>

Castlepoint lighthouse is one of the most visited locations in the DOC Hawke's Bay Wellington Conservancy (out of the locations with counters installed) in both the summer and winter months and attracts 45,000 visitors per year<sup>15</sup>.

### 4.1.3. Accommodation

Following automation lighthouse cottages became surplus to requirements. Some were removed, others adapted to different uses, but many are now used by visitors for accommodation. These facilities are managed by a variety of entities including local/regional government, Parks Boards, Trusts and community groups.

In New Zealand there is limited opportunity to overnight in authentic lighthouse keepers' houses. The three options include:

1. Cape Campbell lighthouse - privately owned and operated ([capecampbelltrack.co.nz/accommodation/](http://capecampbelltrack.co.nz/accommodation/)) ;
2. Cape Brett - DOC managed house ([www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)); and
3. Tiritiri Matangi - the local trust operated cottage on the island ([www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz](http://www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz)).

### Cape Campbell lighthouse

The Cape Campbell lighthouse situated in Marlborough crosses over two pieces of private farmland. The two sets of owners of the private farmland operate the Cape Campbell Track (since 2005).



- Accommodation is available through either an organised multi day walk or horse trek in summer or through a private booking enquiry with the landowner in winter.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Maritime New Zealand, 2010

<sup>15</sup> DOC, 2010

<sup>16</sup> Maritime New Zealand, 2010

- Visitors stay at the old lighthouse keeper's cottages on the third night of their trip in one of three baches located below the lighthouse.<sup>17</sup>.
- Roughly 400 visitors undertake the multi day experience each year and it is the walking experience that is most popular.
- The horse trek and bike options have only recently been introduced.
- The main season for the track is in the summer months between October and April although the lighthouse keeper's house is in demand right throughout the year.

### **Cape Brett Lighthouse**

The Cape Brett Lighthouse in the Bay of Islands is managed by DOC as a trampers' hut. To reach the house requires an eight hour tramp or boat ride on a fine day. DOC is hoping to upgrade tracks and interpretation at the site but needs increased visitation to warrant it.

The Cape Brett Hut receives on average 2,000 visitors per year. Some features of the Cape Brett hut and lighthouse include:

- The fee is \$12 - \$15 to stay at the hut and \$30 to use the track (as a section of land on the track is Maori owned and jointly maintained by local iwi and DOC)
- The hut sleeps 21 people. It is generally full for four weeks over December/January, at other times there tends to be one group a week (schools, universities, scouts etc)
- The hut is visited mainly by domestic visitors and a very small number of international visitors
- There is one known concessionaire who takes walks/tours out to the lighthouse
- The lighthouse is registered with the Historic Places Trust as a category one, the keepers' houses are included in the registration to a lesser extent.
- The track is a challenging walk and there are six search and rescue operations on average per year, to help people on the walk



<sup>17</sup> Cape Campbell Track Website, 2010

## **Cape Otway, Victoria, Australia**

Cape Otway Lightstation is located near Melbourne and a 30 minute detour from the Great Ocean Road tourist highway. The lightstation is publically owned and privately managed by a company who has a 21-year lease from Parks.

- 85,000 paying (adults \$17.50) visitors a year visit the lighthouse precinct, and another 40,000 come only to the car park to see the lighthouse.
- Visitors can stay in the lighthouse precinct in six of the old keepers' houses, which sleep between two to sixteen guests in a range of accommodation options (bed and breakfast to bunkroom style). The houses range in price from \$300 for one night mid week to \$2,300 for a week over the Christmas New Year holiday period.
- Occupancy for these houses sits at 75% and they are looking to build further accommodation at the site.
- The main types of visitors to the lightstation are day visitors who come purely for the view and to see the lighthouse.

## **Cape Byron, NSW, Australia**

Cape Byron lighthouse is the most iconic lighthouse in Australia and is located at Cape Byron in New South Wales.

- Cape Byron lighthouse gets over 2 million visitors a year including both daytrippers and overnighters.
- There are seven accommodation options within the lighthouse precinct that include old lighthouse keepers' cottages at the foot of the lighthouse and bach style accommodation on the beachfront.
- The houses sleep between four and seven people and range in standard and price (\$900 for a week in the offseason and \$3,650 for New Year week).
- Occupancy of the keepers' houses sit between 85%-95%, a fall from the regular 95% due to the new bach cottages along the beachfront. 80% of accommodation bookings are repeat visits by regulars.
- The managers of the lighthouse site believe people come up to the lighthouse for three reasons, because it is an icon of Byron Bay, because of the lighthouse itself and for a special occasion to stay at the houses (50<sup>th</sup> birthday, wedding anniversary etc).
- Visitors can enter the lighthouses two days a week, ideally the managers would have it open every day but the associated costs of having it accessible at all times are too large.

The houses are owned by NSW Parks and managed by the Cape Byron Trust. A real estate booking agency in Byron Bay manages accommodation bookings of the houses.

#### **4.1.4. Implications for Baring Head**

Lighthouses are a drawcard for visitors and add value to a destination. The opportunity to stay in authentic houses gives the product a greater appeal. Accessibility and location are key to the commercial success of lighthouse accommodation, as demonstrated in Australia (e.g. Cape Otway and Cape Byron), however New Zealand's current lighthouse accommodation is quite isolated.

Baring Head provides the opportunity to create an authentic lighthouse accommodation product within close proximity to a large urban population.

## **5. CONNECTIONS TO BARING HEAD BLOCK**

### **5.1. East Harbour Regional Park**

Baring Head is likely to become a key part of the East Harbour Regional Park. The connection between the Baring Head block and the Parangarahu Lakes Area of East Harbour Regional Park is critical to the success of the park and to ensure Baring Head is not an isolated parcel.

Currently there are two pieces of private land through which the existing coastal formed road passes between the two blocks. This access needs to be resolved/formalised to enable users to travel between the two areas and physically connect the park.

### **5.2. Coastal Biking and Walking Trail**

The concept of a coastal trail that includes the Baring Head block has been in existence for some time. The purchase of the Baring Head block brought this vision one step closer to reality.

There are two complementary initiatives that if implemented would significantly increase the use of the Baring Head block.

1. **The Big Coast** – is a two day mountain bike ride event in which participants travel from the Hutt Valley to the Wairarapa, camp overnight and then bike around the coast back to the Eastern Bays community of Eastbourne.



Source: [www.bigcoast.co.nz/photo-gallery.html](http://www.bigcoast.co.nz/photo-gallery.html)

There have been discussions around this route being included as one of the Great Rides in the New Zealand Cycleway Network. Much of the trail and supporting infrastructure (e.g. accommodation) is in place, but it still requires formalised legal access across three private coastal land parcels to enable the route to be promoted to and used by the public.

2. **Great Harbour Way** – this concept also encompasses the coastal portion of the Big Coast ride. The vision is a 72-kilometre route for walkers and cyclists around the entire perimeter of Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington’s harbour), from Fitzroy Bay in the east to Sinclair Head in the west.

### **Implications for Baring Head**

The effect of formalised legal access along the coast will have a significant impact on the usage and commercial viability of activities at Baring Head. In particular the coastal link between Baring Head and Parangarahu Lakes in East Harbour Regional Park would ensure that Baring Head is not an isolated block and would encourage use between the two areas.

The broader concept of a Big Coast Great Ride promoted as and part of a National Cycleway Network would raise the profile of the area and likely attract thousands of multi-day rides annually. This in turn would create additional business for existing products and new opportunities in the Hutt Valley and Wairarapa regions.

## **6. KEY CHALLENGES**

A number of key challenges have emerged from the consultation process that will be addressed in more detail through the management planning process. They include:

## **Vehicle access**

The issue of vehicle access to the Baring Head block covers a number of different challenges that will require careful consideration and planning. The focus for recreation in the block is non-motorised.

- Controlling illegal access to the beach through the Wainuiomata Beach area.
- Restricting vehicle access to the block through the main entrance at the bridge of the Coast Road. This is related to existing private landowner use and service access for GWRC and NIWA.
- Considering controlled access for people staying in the lighthouse keepers' houses.
- One-off or event related access, which could be a sporting event or a GWRC parks programme event.

## **Security and safety**

The issues of security and safety were raised at the public workshop and through subsequent landowner and stakeholder interviews and meetings.

- The Baring Head block is fairly remote, so the question of whether a physical presence on site is needed has been raised. Currently there are no GWRC or NIWA staff based at the lighthouse complex.
- Is there potential for partnering and sharing management of the site in some way. DOC have an existing base at the Catchpool entrance of the Rimutaka Forest Park, which is located approximately 4-5km from the main entrance.
- Other issues related to safety and security referred to the illegal poaching activities that occur at the coast, mainly associated with paua and livestock.

## **Funding**

One of the key challenges recognised by the key stakeholders involved, including GWRC, is funding for improvement and developments at Baring Head. Most notably the upgrading of the lighthouse keepers' houses for accommodation purposes and of the existing vehicle bridge into the block.

The type of management structure established for Baring Head will have a significant influence on the potential funding models available to the block.

## **7. KEY RECREATION AND TOURISM OPTIONS**

This section focuses on the key recreation and tourism options for Baring Head. The implications of the trends and current usage of parks and facilities in the Wellington region discussed earlier in the report provide and context and focus for this section.

Day visitors from within the Wellington region will be the main users, with the area likely to initially attract 25-30,000 visitors annually. The facilities needed to cater to the day use market are detailed under infrastructure. These numbers could be stronger if legal public access along the coast to Fitzroy Bay and east to Palliser Bay was achieved.

### **7.1. Recreational Activities**

Catering to both existing and new activities will enhance the appeal of the Baring Head Block and ensure its success as a valuable addition to East Harbour Regional Park.

The emphasis is encouraged to be on non-motorised recreation and use, however some type of limited access will need to be put in place if the lighthouse keepers' houses are to be used as commercial accommodation.

#### **7.1.1. Walking**

Walking is the most popular recreational activity and one that should be provided for at Baring Head. Initially a network of poled routes (5-6km) will create tracks for visitors to use that connect the key sites on the block (see Figure 10). Other suggestions include:

- An emphasis on creating loop tracks of varying lengths for visitors:
  - The main track will be approximately 5-6km in length and start and finish at the main entrance/bridge. It will connect the river, pump shed, lighthouse, trig and formed road.
  - A shorter 1-2km loop on the flat to the pump shed and back along the river may be popular with families with younger children who are unable to walk the longer track up to the lighthouse.
- Connections to the beach are also very important, both from the existing river mouth carpark, lighthouse complex and at Fitzroy Bay (north of Baring Head lighthouse).

#### **7.1.2. Rock Climbing (bouldering)**

Baring Head has been a New Zealand mecca for bouldering for decades, and is regularly used as a site for the National Bouldering series. The rocks

are located on the beach below the lighthouse complex and are accessed from Wainuiomata Beach and through the river.

Improving access from the Wainuiomata River mouth to the climbing site below the lighthouse on the beach should be a key consideration for the site.

### **7.1.3. Fishing**

Wainuiomata Beach is one of many surfcasting points in the Wellington region. Popular catches include moki, mullet, kahawai and red cod.

The Wainuiomata River is a productive brown trout fishery. The best fishing is found in the middle section between the town and the beginning of the tidal section. There can also be good fishing in the tidal area between October and December as the fish often chase whitebait in this area.

Improving river and beach access for fishing will create an improved experience for fishers and likely encourage greater use. The Baring Head block purchase gives greater access to the lower reaches of the river that were previously off limits.

### **7.1.4. Mountain biking**

Given the increasing demand for mountain biking opportunities in the region and the growing popularity of the sport it makes sense to plan for this activity at Baring Head. While both walkers and bikers will use the tracks, they need to be designed and constructed with biking in mind (e.g. widths and gradients).

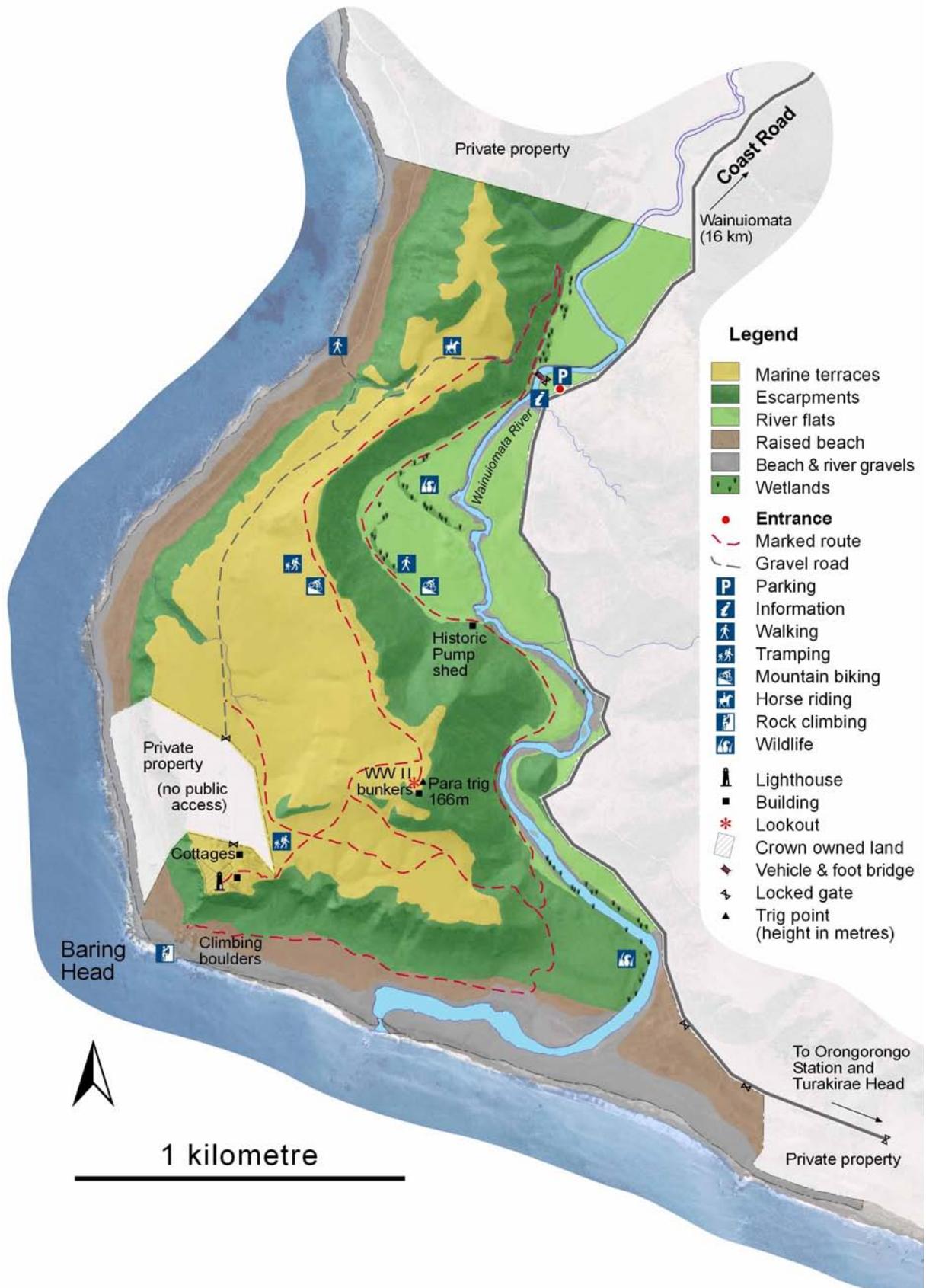
Two key sections where the track design will be critical:

- Southeast corner/powerline track – the existing gradient of this track that ascends from the river up to the marine terrace is very steep and a new alignment is required to lower the gradient on this section.

Lighthouse to trig – again this track/route heads directly up to the trig and would likely need to be switch-backed to maintain an appropriate gradient up towards the trig.

Cost estimates for developing mountain biking tracks in the Wellington region are approximately \$25,000 per kilometre for commercial contractors. However, volunteer labour has been used effectively on many projects in the region and would substantially lower costs.

Figure 10: Map of Potential Baring Head Opportunities



### 7.1.5. Other Activities

In addition to the main existing activities and new ones suggested above there are a host of other complementary non-motorised activities that could be permitted and encouraged at Baring Head. These include:

- Parasailing – parasailers are able to carry their equipment into locations and are compatible with the other types of activity being suggested. Hang gliders however, require vehicle access and this is likely to be restricted.
- Diving – the south coast is a popular diving area, with numerous shipwrecks, reef systems and kelp forests. Many are diving for crayfish, paua and kina.
- Swimming – opportunities are very limited given the potentially dangerous currents and swells that Wainuiomata Beach can receive. There may be potential for swimming in some of the lower reaches of the river.
- Canoeing – opportunities for canoeing on the lower reaches of the Wainuiomata River should be explored.
- Surfing – an existing activity at the beach though more for the experienced surfer due to strong currents and swells.
- Camping – while possible there is the potential to duplicate the services already offered at Catchpool campground by DOC.
- Horse riding – this may need to be restricted to certain areas
- Passive recreation such as picnicking (see Section 7.3.3) and simply contemplating the view will also be valid reasons for visiting Baring Head.

## 7.2. Commercial Accommodation

The focus of the tourism opportunity for Baring Head is the potential use of the lighthouse keepers' houses for commercial accommodation. As illustrated in the lighthouse tourism section there appears to be demand for this type of experience.



A positive Hutt City Council building inspection of the two houses has overcome one of the first hurdles to development and stated that they are structurally sound and in good condition. However, the cost of restoring the two houses will not be insignificant, and is likely to be \$300,000 or more for painting, roofing, water, sewerage, heating and insulation.

### 7.2.1. The Concept

The concept to be used to determine a high level of feasibility includes the two lighthouse keepers' houses being available for rent on a nightly basis. Key elements of this include:

- Exclusive use of the house (i.e. you rent the whole house not just a room or bed). This method is less problematic from a management perspective and can potentially yield greater revenue than a traditional DOC hut or backpacker lodge model.

However, if the coastal cycle trail becomes a reality a backpacker or Otago Rail Trail Hotel model may become necessary. This would require a hosted more all-inclusive experience, with meals and linen provided and rooms booked separately by groups.

- The standard of the accommodation would be a clean and tidy 2-3 star equivalent with a heritage and bach feel.
- Each house comprises of three bedrooms, living and dining rooms with a kitchen, a bathroom, a toilet, and a laundry. They could likely sleep 6-8 people.



- Pricing in line with comparable experiences in the region (e.g. Matui/Somes houses \$163 and Orongorongo huts \$61-\$130) and could be around \$150 per night per house.
- Vehicle access to the site would be permitted for a maximum of two vehicles per house. Further restrictions on trips in and out could also be considered.
- Additional services could be offered to generate further revenue including: bedding and linen, cleaning services and catering.

## 7.2.2. Management Models

There are a number of potential models for the development and management of the houses. Each of these has implications for funding, and management, which are summarised in Table 3 as follows:

**Table 3: Potential Structures for Development and Management of the Houses**

	Model Type	Pros	Cons
1.	Council Operated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Complete control</li> <li>• Expertise</li> <li>• Integrated day and overnight use</li> <li>• Long term commitment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financing required</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> <li>• Hosting/staffing</li> </ul>
2.	Co-management (Council and Iwi)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Partnership approach</li> <li>• Shared responsibility</li> <li>• Long term commitment</li> <li>• Cultural perspective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial experience</li> <li>• Financing required</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul>
3.	Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement</li> <li>• Fund raising ability</li> <li>• Lower financial risk to council</li> <li>• Sole focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegating control</li> <li>• Suitable leadership</li> <li>• Commercial experience</li> <li>• Competition for funding</li> </ul>
4.	Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial experience</li> <li>• Lower financial risk to council</li> <li>• Links to adjacent land/product</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited private sector options</li> <li>• Exclusivity</li> <li>• Financing capital upgrade or long term lease (20yrs)</li> </ul>

### 1. Council operated

This model gives Council the greatest degree of control over development and management of the Baring Head block. It can however limit the extent of community engagement and funding options for developing/upgrading the infrastructure. The general public and funding agencies are less likely to donate/contribute to local government than to a community based trust.

Although Greater Wellington Regional Council operate campgrounds at Battle Hill and Kaitoke, they do not operate roofed accommodation. However, Auckland Council (previously Auckland Regional Council) successfully operates 16 houses/lodges for public overnight use on Council owned land (see Section 2.1.1.).

## **2. Co-management (Council and Iwi)**

This structure has the same benefits and weaknesses as the Council Operated model discussed above. However, an effective partnership with local iwi could add more emphasis to a long term vision for the park and strengthen the cultural element.

## **3. Trust**

The trust model has proven itself in other areas of New Zealand for conservation, recreation and tourism projects. It provides a structure, with strong leadership, for better engagement with the community and access to funding agencies and donors.

The keys to success under this model are a clear understanding of the role of the trust in relation to the landowner, leadership and other expertise for the areas of focus (e.g. restoration, interpretation, tourism and business).

## **4. Private Sector**

The private sector should bring a business oriented approach to the development and management of the overnight accommodation. Private sector involvement may also lead to a more exclusive product and use.

However, it is important to note that operating the houses for accommodation on a stand alone basis is unlikely to be financially viable. As a result they would likely only appeal to existing operators in the immediate vicinity who could treat them as an add-on to existing operations.

Under this model Council would still need to either get the buildings fit for purpose or offer a long term lease that would provide a private operator with the ability to recoup their capital investment.

### **7.2.3. Feasibility**

An initial high-level feasibility for the commercial use of the two houses at Baring Head includes: cost of construction, estimated potential market demand, pricing and potential revenue.

As mentioned earlier the two keepers' houses were assessed by HCC<sup>18</sup> and believed to be in good condition and structurally sound. They identified \$150,000 of costs mainly associated with painting, roofing, water, sewerage, heating and insulation.

On reflection these are thought to be somewhat on the low side and stakeholders would be better to budget for approximately \$300,000 for the two houses.

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<sup>18</sup> Hutt City Council Building Inspection Report – Baring Head's Keepers Houses, December 2010

Note this excludes any work required to restore the generator building, which is also seen as a key part of the visitor experience and could be developed into an interpretive centre, providing toilets and shelter for day visitors.

## Visitors

The houses would appeal to the regional Wellington market, with broader appeal to special interest groups with a specific interest in lighthouses. The pioneers of early visitation at places such as Kapiti and Matiu/Somes were the restoration workers and volunteers. Members from these community-based groups form a good basis for developing a market in the region.

The low forecast is for Baring Head as a standalone block with no physical connection along the coast to East Harbour Regional Park (EHRP).

The high scenario assumes a connected piece of land that is an integral part of EHRP and a key stopping point and attraction on the Big Coast Great Ride. Table 4 illustrates the range of potential usage scenarios.

**Table 4: Potential Usage Estimate for Lighthouse Keepers Houses**

	Low	Med	High
Visitor nights per house	80 nights	120 nights	200 nights
Pricing per house	\$150	\$150	\$150
Total Potential revenue	\$24,000	\$36,000	\$60,000

Note: Revenue figure is for two houses. Vehicle access to the houses for visitors will be critical to achieve the estimated visitor nights indicated above.

## Pricing

The pricing and revenue under the high scenario could potentially be substantially higher if one or more of the houses moved to a room based bed and breakfast model (\$60-\$80 per room, or potentially per person). This would entail providing a more all-inclusive overnight experience for the bikers on the Big Coast Ride. This is the type of model used effectively by accommodation establishments on the Central Otago Rail Trail (e.g. Hyde Hotel).

## 7.3. Supporting Infrastructure

This section presents some of the options around significant supporting infrastructure for the Baring Head block. The items focus on enhancing the experience and catering to potential and existing user needs.

### 7.3.1. Interpretive Centre

The concept of an interpretive centre emerged from the public workshop and other key stakeholders. The facility could also provide the shelter and toilet facilities for day users.

The generator building appears the most likely candidate for conversion into an interpretive centre and day use facility. Interpretation could focus mainly on the lighthouse complex and an insight into life in this somewhat remote outpost. Note there has been no assessment of the building at this point.



No inspection or cost estimates have been prepared for the generator building, but a budget in the order of \$250,000 should be a good starting point.

### **Day Use facility**

The interpretive centre should also provide amenities for day visitors. The key ones are shelter, picnic tables and toilets.

## **7.3.2. New Foot Bridge near beach**

Catering for existing use and the likely potential user patterns of new visitors is important. The idea of constructing a foot bridge (e.g. suspension bridge) over the river near the beach could be explored:

- It would greatly improve access for existing users: rock climbers, divers, fishermen and people wanting more direct access to the beach area of Baring Head.
- The carpark area at Wanuiomata Beach will continue to be a key staging area for the beach and walks to Turakirae Head. Therefore making the connection to Baring Head easy from there is important.
- The bridge will give a future coast bike trail greater options and an off road route that avoids Coast Road. Riders would be able to push their bikes across the bridge.
- There is also the potential to develop this access point as the major entrance for the block. This would divert attention and focus away from the vehicle entry point at the existing bridge.

No costing or design as been undertaken for a bridge of this nature. However, cost estimates from cycleways around the country provide good indicators. For example, \$180,000 for an 80m suspension bridge, 1.2m wide with a 20 person load limit. Costs go up significantly for wider decks and if un-restricted loads are required.

## **7.3.3. Interpretation**

The visitor experience at Baring Head will be enriched by the use of interpretation that can communicate the many themes and stories associated with the site including: maritime history, culture, climate

monitoring, military operations and the ecology. Directional signage for tracks/features and distance indicators are also an important component of the infrastructure that ensures users are aware of what the site has to offer and where to find it.

#### 7.3.4. Picnic Areas

Developing infrastructure within the block for social gatherings and picnicking will lead to increased use and provide opportunities and different use options for local groups.

Some locations that lend themselves to this type of use include:

- **Pump Shed** – a key heritage feature (e.g. the pump shed) and a site with good river access. This location is an easy and flat walk from the vehicle bridge and also (if constructed) from the beach area. The revitalised pump shed and new interpretation would be a key feature of the picnic site.
- 
- **Lighthouse complex** – the development of picnic and day use facilities within the lighthouse complex is a necessity. This could be integrated with the shelter and other visitor amenities recommended.
  - **Another site** that could be considered in the future includes: Northern beach area directly west of the vehicle bridge and park entrance

#### 7.3.5. Shuttle Service

Appealing to a broad market at Baring Head is an important consideration. Existing parts of the East Harbour Regional Park (e.g. the Lakes) are already only accessible to the relatively fit although GWRC do operate bus tours to the lakes block as part of their parks programme and demand is strong.

Considering limited vehicle and/or shuttle access to the block during peak periods is something that could prove popular as well as address issues and goals relating to accessibility of the land for all Wellingtonians. This could be considered after 1-2 years, but will need to be an authorised activity under the management plan.

## **7.4. Tourism Activities**

### **7.4.1. Guided activities**

Guiding opportunities focus around both land and sea based activities. These would likely be tourism operators guiding and instructing clients within the Baring Head Block on activities such as:

- Walking
- Mountain biking
- Fishing (freshwater and saltwater)
- Scuba diving
- Rock Climbing

Guided tours of Baring Head could also be themed around:

- Culture and Heritage (Maori and European)
- Environment (flora and fauna, climate change monitoring/NIWA)
- History (Maritime and Military)

Demand for concessions to conduct these types of activities is likely to be low and would largely come from some of the existing operators who are looking for new locations/tours or add ons to existing products. However, the opening of a Coastal Great Ride could greatly increase the opportunity and viability of providing guided experiences in the area.

### **7.4.2. Events**

Events can serve as catalysts to raise the awareness of the opportunities at Baring Head. The ability to host events on a regular or one-off basis will help Baring Head tap into different markets and lift its profile.

Events can be sporting, cultural or arts focused. Existing events like the Big Coast already use part of the block as the route for their two day bike ride of the Rimutaka's and South Coast.

## **7.5. Potential Development Scenarios**

This section looks at some development scenarios based on the core recreation and tourism options available at the Baring Head site. The scenarios illustrate the implications for developing or not developing the lighthouse keepers' houses and the linkages to East Harbour Regional Park.

The issue of cost associated with repairing or replacing the vehicle bridge at the main entrance off Wainuiomata Coast Road has not been factored into these scenarios.

#### **7.5.1. Scenario 1 – Commercial accommodation available and access to East Harbour**

This illustrates the best possible scenario for higher visitor numbers and potential to generate revenue at Baring Head. There is overnight accommodation available for visitors and the block is accessible and connected to East Harbour Regional Park via the coast.

While there is considerable investment required to develop, enhance and maintain the infrastructure, there is also the opportunity to generate greater revenue. The opportunity for a Big Coast ride and multi day packages along the coast is a possibility.

#### **7.5.2. Scenario 2 – Commercial accommodation available and NO access to East Harbour**

Under this scenario the overnight accommodation will be available, but Baring Head is a stand alone destination and not physically linked to East Harbour Regional Park.

Visitation under this scenario would be more limited without the connection to Pencarrow via the coast. This would impact both day and overnight visitation to the block.

The investment required to develop, enhance and maintain the infrastructure would be similar to scenario 1, but the revenue generated will be less.

#### **7.5.3. Scenario 3 – NO commercial accommodation available and access to East Harbour**

If the decision is made not to proceed with the development of the houses for accommodation then activity will be restricted to day use. Under this scenario there would still be links to East Harbour which would provide good day use opportunities and opportunities for greater use.

Revenue streams would be limited to concession based activity (e.g. guiding) and relatively small. There would still be costs associated with developing day use infrastructure and facilities. There would also be either an ongoing cost to maintain the houses as is or a one off cost to remove them from the lighthouse complex.

#### **7.5.4. Scenario 4 – NO commercial accommodation available and NO access to East Harbour**

This scenario presents the least favourable outcome where activities at Baring Head are restricted to a stand alone day use location. The lack of access to Pencarrow via the coast would lower visitor numbers and use.

There would be no overnight visitation or major revenue sources for the block, there would be limited concessions potential.

And similar to scenario 3 above there would still be costs associated with developing day use infrastructure and facilities and either maintaining or removing the houses.

Table 5 provides a summary of the development scenarios for Baring Head and there likely implications.

**Table 5: Potential Development Scenarios for Baring Head**

Rent Houses	Access to East Harbour	Construction costs	Ongoing costs (e.g. Maintenance)	Potential Revenue	Day visits (#'s)	Total Overnight visits (#'s)
1. YES	YES	Houses \$300,000 Visitor Centre \$250,000 Tracks \$100,000 Interpretation \$100,000 Walking bridge \$180,000 TOTAL <u>\$930,000</u>	Houses Visitor Centre Tracks Bridge (5-10% capital value)	Houses \$60,000 Concessions \$10,000	40,000	400 nights <i>(total for both houses)</i>
2. YES	NO	Houses \$300,000 Visitor Centre \$250,000 Tracks \$100,000 Interpretation \$100,000 Walking bridge \$180,000 TOTAL <u>\$930,000</u>	Houses Visitor Centre Tracks Bridge (5-10% capital value)	Houses \$24,000 Concessions \$0-5,000	35,000	160 nights <i>(total for both houses)</i>
3. NO <i>Maintain or remove houses.</i>	YES	Visitor Centre \$250,000 Tracks \$100,000 Interpretation \$100,000 Walking bridge \$180,000 TOTAL <u>\$630,000</u>	Houses (yes or removed) Visitor Centre Tracks Bridge (5-10% capital value)	Concessions \$10,000	30,000	0 nights
4. NO <i>Maintain or remove houses.</i>	NO	Visitor Centre \$250,000 Tracks \$100,000 Interpretation \$100,000 Walking bridge \$180,000 TOTAL <u>\$630,000</u>	Houses (yes or removed) Visitor Centre Tracks Bridge (5-10% capital value)	Concessions \$0-5,000	25,000	0 nights

Concessions revenue includes activities such as guiding, events and film.

Note house revenue under scenario 1 could be increased if the operation moved from a house based rental to a room based rentals with additional services (e.g. meals).

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Baring Head block presents a great opportunity to create an engaging and exciting visitor experience set within Wellington's iconic coastal landscape. It can build upon the rich maritime history of the site centred around the lighthouse, military installations, cultural stories, ecological formations, as well as current use as an international climate monitoring site with NIWA.

The following recommendations are suggested for consideration in the park management planning process. These are based on the consultation and research undertaken during this recreation and tourism review for the Baring Head Block:

1. Focus on **non-motorised** recreation and tourism activities, with an emphasis on walking and biking.
2. Cater for **existing use and plan for expanded activities**. The block will cater to both day and overnight visitors. Existing use focused around the beach, rock climbing and fishing will continue along with new walking and biking opportunities.
3. **Key infrastructure** to be centred on a dual use **trail network** (designed for biking) of loop tracks that caters to different markets. The network would connect key experiences/areas within the block (beach, river, wetland, lighthouse complex, summit and WWII bunkers).
4. Develop **picnic areas** to complement other infrastructure and enhance the experience for visitors. Restoration of the **pump shed** would be an integral part of creating an interpretation hub and destination for users near the river.
5. **Develop the generator building** to cater for day users and to provide an integral component of the experience. The generator building would provide day users with shelter and toilet amenities. As an interpretive centre it would provide all visitors with an engaging and informative presentation of the block and its associated history and significance.
6. Formalise secondary (potentially the primary) access from the river mouth area into the block with the construction of a **pedestrian bridge**.
7. **Renovate lighthouse keepers' houses** for use as commercial accommodation properties.
8. **The Trust operational model** with initial seed capital funding from key partners (e.g. GWRC, DOC and HCC)

appears to be the best option for the development and subsequent management of the houses. This model enables the best community engagement and access to external funding sources.

9. The **Trust management model** in addition to managing the restoration and activities on the block should also seek to address concerns around safety and security within the area in partnership with local landowners and key agencies.
10. **Linkages** to and from the block will be integral to its success and ensure it is not an isolated experience, but interconnected. Formal public access along the coast to the existing Parangarahu Lakes Area of East Harbour Regional Park is critical.
11. **Interpretation** will be a critical part of the experience at Baring Head. The site has a wealth of stories and themes associated with it. If these can be communicated to visitors through interpretation at key sites it will transform the experience.
12. Keep options open for **restricted vehicle access** to the lighthouse complex. It will be necessary for the accommodation and may also be used for a weekend service or as part of the GWRC parks programme offerings.

## 9. PLANNING CONTEXT

This section reviews and summarises some of the key planning documents that were considered as part of the recreation and tourism review for Baring Head.

### Greater Wellington Regional Council Plans

This report, along with other research (heritage, culture and environmental values) will subsequently inform the creation of a Draft Management Plan for Baring Head in 2011. This management plan will become an amendment to the Greater Wellington Parks Network Plan.

#### Parks Network Strategy

The Parks Network Strategy outlines GWRC's commitment to the future of regional parks and is summarised in Table 6. GWRC's parks occupy an important niche between developed city parks and the wilderness of DOC parks. The parkland consists of 50,000ha and over half of the total land managed by GWRC has some of the highest value ecosystems in the region including; lowland forest, river systems, wetlands and dune lands. There are considerable community benefits to having readily accessible parks;

1. Parks reduce stress and improve mental and physical health
2. Outdoor classrooms to learn about history, cultural heritage & environment
3. Involvement in conservation activities (planting days, pest control operations)

**Table 6: Strategic Direction of the Parks Network Strategy**

GWRC Parks Network Strategy	
<b>Vision:</b>	Enriching lives by connecting people with healthy natural places.
<b>Mission:</b>	To provide a variety of large natural areas that conserves our natural environment and reflects our cultural heritage for everyone in the Region to enjoy.
<b>Goals</b>  This means that in our parks you will find...	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Healthy natural ecosystems and the varied landscapes that sustain them</li> <li>2. Heritage features which tell the stories of human interaction with our landscape</li> <li>3. A variety of easily accessible natural settings for people to experience and enjoy</li> </ol>

As Wellington becomes more urbanised regional parks are increasingly important and they must remain accessible and need to involve the general public, local councils, central government, volunteers, non government organisations and industry working in partnership.

### **Greater Wellington Parks Network Plan**

The GW Parks Network Plan is currently at the draft stage, but once approved by GWRC it will replace the, Regional Forest Lands Management Plan 2006, Regional Park network management plan 2003, Battle Hill Farm Forest Park 2008, Belmont Regional Park 1996, East Harbour Regional Park 2007, Kaitoke Regional Park 2005 and Queen Elizabeth Park 2006.

The consolidated network plan is designed to provide a coherent management regime for the network as a whole and specific management provisions for each park. The plan highlights the unique nature and values in the different parks, and addresses the need for specific management of these areas.

The Baring Head Draft Management Plan will become an amendment to the Greater Wellington Parks Network Plan.

### **Healthy Open Spaces Report – Regional Public Health**

Regional Public Health has published a report outlining the health benefits of open spaces<sup>19</sup>. The report identifies that there is a definite benefit to one's health in being exposed to open spaces. These benefits range from physical and mental health to environmental, economic, social and cultural well being. GWRC recognises that there needs to be greater integration of open spaces with the development of a network to connect up green spaces.

The NZ quality of life survey says that 9 out of 10 Wellington, Porirua and Hutt Valley residents find it easy or very easy to get to a local park in their city or local area. Another survey says that 57% of people in the region had visited at least one park or other green space in the past year and 22% use parks monthly or more often.

A GWRC survey states that the highest groups of users tend to be Pakeha 30-49 years with an income of \$50,000, as they are more likely to be physically able, have access to a car and live in close proximity to a regional park.

An Auckland survey states that in Auckland people who are better off have the best access to green spaces - while 41% of the better off communities have the highest access to green space, only 27% of the most deprived communities have high access.

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<sup>19</sup> Healthy Open Spaces, Regional Public Health, March 2010

## **Department of Conservation Plans**

### **Preliminary Draft – Vision 2020 – A Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) for the Wellington Region 2010 – 2020**

The Wellington Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) is currently undergoing a review and is in the form of a preliminary draft.

During the review the Wellington Conservancy has been extended to include Hawke's Bay and the next draft CMS will include the Hawke's Bay region. Due to this amalgamation the next stage of the CMS review is on hold until 2010/11.

The preliminary draft is the most recent assessment of the key conservation issues, values and priorities of the Wellington Conservancy over the next 10 years. It includes sections on; Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities, public participation in conservation management, conservation of natural resources, historic and cultural heritage, people's benefit and enjoyment, private accommodation, activities requiring specific authorisation, implementation plans, monitoring provisions and details of the areas that the Wellington Hawke's Bay conservancy manages.

### **Poneke Conservation Action Plan 2009 – 2014 (DOC)**

Parallel with the preliminary draft CMS the Conservancy has been developing conservation action plans for each area office that define aspirational goals and describe objectives and actions.

This aspirational plan is required to fulfil the Department's legislative functions, achieve the strategic direction of increasing the value that New Zealanders attribute to conservation and to implement the Conservation Management Strategy for each particular area. (Poneke covers Wellington, Lower and Upper Hutt, western part of the Rimutaka Forest Park, the South Wellington Coast from Owhiro Bay to Makara and the coast from Eastbourne to beyond Turakirae Head).

The plan is focussed on seven key themes of work for the Department in the Poneke Area:

1. Tangata Whenua
2. Community Participation
3. Natural and cultural heritage
4. Managing and disseminating information
5. Recreation
6. Statutory awareness
7. Fire

The plan identifies conservation zones that are most important to the Poneke area including many near or linked to Baring Head which are;

1. Rimutaka Forest Park (and adjoining catchments)
2. South Coast East (Turakirae Head to Pencarrow Head)
3. Matiu Somes Island
4. Wellington Urban
5. Eastbourne Hills

### **Recreation Strategy for Wellington Hawke's Bay Conservancy (2010 – 2011)**

The purpose of the strategy is to manage recreation assets in a way that is aligned with DOC's strategic intent, local, domestic and international demand for recreation facilities/activities and local supply of recreation facilities/ activities.

The strategy is a tool used to assist the conservancy with recreation asset decisions and suggests what type of recreation facilities should be developed and where.

The strategy will be informed by the Destination Management Framework and feeds into the Conservation Management Strategy.

Focussing on the demands of international, domestic and local users the conservancy should focus on short walks and day walks, beach access sites, picnic facilities, mountain biking and events/organised outings.

### **Rimutaka Forest Park Visitor Strategy 2009**

The Rimutaka Forest Park (RFP) Visitor Strategy was undertaken by Tourism Resource Consultants in July 2009 to provide a clear direction and focus for the area. The strategy has an emphasis on the Catchpool and Orongorongo Valleys and is centred around three core themes that address; the product/visitor assets, relationships with other stakeholders and the promotion of the park.

Emphasising links beyond the RFP is deemed important within the strategy to create a more integrated and improved visitor experience. The three main points suggested include;

1. Continue to examine opportunities associated with the Big Coast Bike Even and Coastal Access
2. Emphasise links to Coast, Turakirae and Baring Head
3. Explore potential to create a mountain bike single track from Wainuiomata to Catchpool Valley

# APPENDIX

## Interview List

Name	Organisation
Amanda Cox	Greater Wellington Regional Council
Sharon Lee	Greater Wellington Regional Council
Luke Troy	Greater Wellington Regional Council
Murray Waititi	Greater Wellington Regional Council
Ross Jackson	Greater Wellington Regional Council
Steve Edwards	Greater Wellington Regional Council
Gareth Cooper	Greater Wellington Regional Council
Kelly Crandle	Hutt City Council
Craig Cottrill	Hutt City Council
David Hancock	Hutt City Council
Duncan Chisholm	Hutt City Council
Alan Loan	Landowner Baring Head
Lee Hunter	Takarangi Block
Mike and Jane Curtis	Pencarrow Lodge
Grant Absalom and Jacinta Clarke	Orongorongo Station
Liz Mellish	Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust
Teri Puketapu	Te Runanganui o Taranaki Whanui
Michael Grace	Positively Wellington Tourism
Bronwyn Little	Hutt City Council
Rob Stone	Department of Conservation
Claudia Hill	Department of Conservation
Richard Nestor	Department of Conservation
Paul Hughes	Department of Conservation
Les Molloy	Nature Heritage Fund
Melody McLaughlin	Rimutaka Forest Park Trust
Alastair Smith	Great Harbour Way
Russell Bell	Forest and Bird
Jonathan Kennett	Kennett Brothers
Gwen McDonald	Friends of Baring Head
Colin Ryder	Friends of Baring Head
Evan Freshwater	Tourism Industry Association
Kevin Jones	Kevin Jones Archaeologist
Jim Foye	Maritime NZ
Gordon Brailsford	NIWA

Name	Organisation
Jeremy Ward	East by West Ferries
Dave Owles	CAT Tours
Mark Rogers	Flat Earth Tours
Peter Carter	Days Bay Boat Shed
Chris O'Meara	Fish and Game
Mariana Mutu	DOC Wairarapa
Andrew Blanshard	DOC Bay of Islands
Mike Morrissey	DOC Cape Campbell
Carol and Kevin Loe	Cape Campbell Walkway
Sally and Rob Peters	Cape Campbell Walkway
Neil Oslen	Auckland Council
Rob Black	Parks Victoria
Sue Walker	NSW National Parks
Paul Thompson	Cape Otway Lightstation, Victoria

## **Reference Group**

A reference group was established for the project to obtain formal input from a wide range of key stakeholders. These included:

1. Greater Wellington Regional Council
2. Hutt City Council
3. Department of Conservation
4. Nature Heritage Fund
5. Wellington Tenths Trust
6. Friends of Baring Head
7. Positively Wellington Tourism/WCC