

9. PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE HAURAKI GULF MARINE PARK

HE TUKU URUNGA ATU KI TĪKAPA MOANA / TE MOANANUI-Ā-TOI

Our experiences of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park take in a myriad of spaces, whether we are paddling along traditional waka routes, walking along the coast, snorkelling around an island, mooring in a cove, seeking out the best fishing spot, harvesting kaimoana, accessing ancestral wāhi tapu, learning to sail, surf or kayak, hiking up hills to experience the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park vista, or simply finding a tranquil patch to sit, relax and connect to Papatūānuku (Earth mother) and Tangaroa and Hinemoana (God and Goddess of the Sea).

Reducing the vulnerability of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park to the impacts of increasing population and visitors is essential, whilst at the same time recognising the importance of providing for mana whenua customary rights. This can be achieved through kaitiakitanga/guardianship driven management.

Objective 5.

A place-based decision making approach

A place-based decision making approach would enable mana whenua and local communities to guide the development of their places, ranging from creating busy hubs to the protection of quiet and secret places. It would identify the appropriate level of protection, scale of development and infrastructure for each place, as well as the level of accessibility and awareness that the community sees as appropriate.

Place-based management should take a precautionary approach to inform planning responses for particular places aimed at developing or retaining quality visitor destinations, providing the process for collective

discussion in a structure way, and assisting with transparency in decision-making and communications.

The values statements drawn from the Listening Posts, the Mātauranga Māori Survey and the Uses and Values survey underpin the development of this tool. The primary focus of place-based management for mana whenua and communities is to:

- Identify their values from their 'sense of place'.
- Identify the places that need to be protected.
- Identify the visions, goals and objectives for the area.
- Protect and provide for cultural landscape and sites/areas of importance.
- Define community based outcomes for education and restoration initiatives.
- Identify hubs of activities.
- Identify type of infrastructure associated with those hubs.
- Identify different experiences in different places and what infrastructure is required for those activities.
- Take stock of existing infrastructure, use, services and projected requirements.
- Identify appropriate management and legislative responses for the area.

Action:

- 6) By 2020 agencies should develop and implement a Place Based Initiative that provides a means for mana whenua and communities to plan for the future of their places by:
 - Identifying cultural landscapes, sites, areas and activities of significance to mana whenua.

- Undertaking a stock-take of what is available, current trends, and existing infrastructure.
- Setting the vision and aspirations for each place – from busy hubs to the ‘secret’ places that need protection.
- Considering appropriate management regimes to give certainty to future planning decisions.

Objective 6.

Managing visitor experience

Place-based management should inform specific planning responses for particular places that are aimed at maintaining and expanding quality visitor destinations, involving local communities and mana whenua in visitor-related discussions, ensuring transparency in decision-making, and effective communications. It would help with:

- Identifying the visions, goals and objectives for an area.
- Protecting mana whenua cultural landscapes, sites and areas.
- Taking stock of existing infrastructure, use, services and projected requirements.
- Appropriate management tailored for each area.

A Visitor Strategy should:

- Be developed with community and mana whenua input.
- Provide authentic experiences based on the unique values of each place within the park.
- Identify reasons for visitors to stay, to value the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park, and to support Gulf communities.
- Address the unique challenges facing some areas, for example capacity issues and the need to manage visitor numbers for the Coromandel Peninsula, and branding and marketing strategies for Great Barrier and Waiheke Islands.

Action:

- 7) By 2018, complete a Visitor Strategy for the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park, in association with mana whenua and communities, based on the place-based decision making approach. The strategy should set out a pathway that recognises and preserves the rights of mana whenua, the mauri of special places and protects the values of key destinations while creating important opportunities for expanding local economies.

Objective 7.

Create and implement a Hauraki Gulf Marine Park transport strategy

A transport strategy would provide for well-publicised and regular public transport options to the islands and to a range of locations throughout the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park. This would include passenger and car ferry services, buses/trains and mobility access and would support local community economic opportunities by connecting remote communities to markets. The transport strategy would be guided by the place-based decision making approach and embrace the concept of a ‘Blue Highway’ (see below).

Action:

- 8) By 2020 develop a Hauraki Gulf Marine Park transport strategy with the communities and mana whenua that plans for future population growth and economic prosperity and provides guidance on future infrastructure requirements.

Objective 8.

Create a ‘Blue Highway’

The Blue Highway goes hand-in-hand with the Transport Strategy and decisions about ‘what should go where’. There are a number of communities and locations that are difficult and/or expensive to reach for both locals and tourists. In large measure, the current approach to sea transport is focused on a central Auckland ‘hub and spoke’ model, which is a radial model of transport, where the city center is the hub of activity.

The potential exists to create a series of interconnected regional hubs - a ‘Blue Highway’. The creation of ‘hubs’ should enhance current access to the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park by creating an expanded infrastructure network. This is not a short-term project, as significant investment in infrastructure is required. An example of the current ‘hub and spoke’ model and the contrasting potential ‘Blue Highway’ network is shown in Map 9.1.

Action:

- 9) By 2020 integrate the Blue Highway concept into the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Transport Strategy.



Map 9.1 Elements of a Hauraki Gulf Marine Park transport strategy

Objective 9.

Supplement Blue Highway with 'Walking on Water' strategy

'Walking on water' runs alongside the Blue Highway and builds on the provision of easy access to the marine environment and islands of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park for walking, kayaking, cycling, and camping.

Walking on Water is aimed at developing low cost options for accessing the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park, marine hubs and the public parks along the coast while protecting areas of cultural significance. This would reduce possible cost barriers for lower socio-economic communities and also enable new migrant communities to access, and create a relationship with, the coast. Sustainably designed, high quality, well used and safe greenways/walkways and cycleways enable communities to access the coast, providing access to affordable play along the coast or in the water.

Action:

- 10) By 2018 develop a 'Walking on Water' strategy to promote coastal walking and provide easy access to islands and island hopping. This needs to include provision of walkways, cycle ways, and camping grounds.
- 11) By 2018 define and implement a 'Camping Strategy' to ensure access to sustainable and affordable extended stay options for the community.
- 12) By 2020, undertake a stocktake of public coastal land that can be made accessible, while protecting sites of cultural significance and natural values, to provide access to a wide range of quality destinations.

Population pressure

Recreation use data shows informal settings are important for the bulk of the population. However, with increasing population there is increasing demand and pressure to develop land and control/allocate use of land and water for private and commercial use.

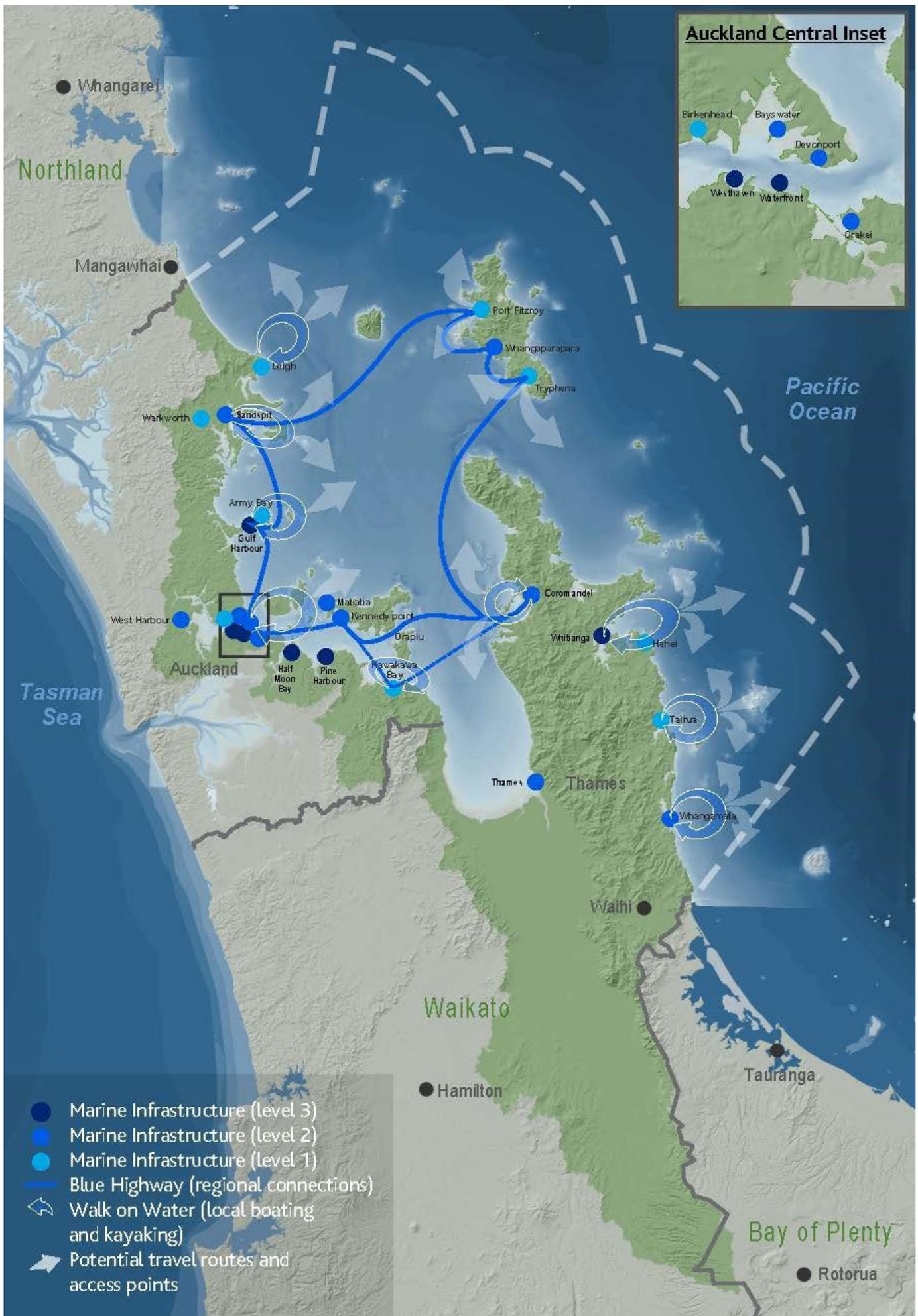
To secure access along the coastline means -

- de-cluttering spaces where possible – removing structures that are no longer needed
- planning to ensure that there are areas free of commercial activity (in so far as this takes away the opportunity for informal play)
- enable cheap/low cost/incidental play areas.

Share with care approach

Rules and regulations should generally be avoided in favour of a 'share with care approach' that is enabling and responsive to changing recreation demands in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park. Providing some spaces for particular recreation activities through spatial allocation in order to minimise on-water conflicts, may be appropriate. This could result in some rationalisation, such as the co-location or relocation of pole moorings for example which are an important and legitimate recreational use but none-the-less occupy space that impacts other activities.





Map 9.2 Example of 'Blue Highway' Showing Inter-Connected Transport Links and Access to Hauraki Gulf Communities

