



Ideas for  
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# Future-Proofing Implementation and Engagement Plan

## Pūrākaunui Block Incorporated

Prepared as part of the Our Land Water's Rural Professional Fund research project.

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## Document Version History

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## Introduction

Pūrākaunui Block Incorporated oversees the management of a block of Māori freehold land at Pūrākaunui near Ōtepoti/Dunedin.

In 2021, an Asset Management and Business Development Plan was developed as part of the Māori Agribusiness Pathway to Increased Productivity (MAPIP) programme funded by the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). Alternative land use ventures were assessed based on their suitability for the whenua, value addition potential, start-up capital requirement, and most importantly, the alignment of the potential opportunities with the goals of the Pūrākaunui Inc. Strategic Plan.

As a next step, the committee of Pūrākaunui Inc will be looking to explore key identified ventures with the shareholders, so to gain their perspectives and opinions on future-proofing opportunities for the whenua.

This communications and engagement workplan will serve as a guide for Pūrākaunui Inc to engage with its existing shareholders, reconnect with whānau about activities happening on the whenua, and support a new generation of shareholders/kaitiaki to get involved. It will also support the incorporation to implement the strategies identified through this research project, and to continue the work of strengthening the connection between whānau and their ancestral whenua.

### Current Situation

At present, while a panui has been explored, there has been no regular means of updating and interacting with shareholders who are spread across Aotearoa, with some located overseas. Shareholder meetings have been regularly run; however, group dynamics of attendees have played a role in influencing the level of engagement achieved.

This project assessed the processes, tools and resources required to develop breadth and depth in the future Trustee and kaitiaki pipeline, in the context of continuing whenua development and land use change.

The aim of this project was to work with whānau to strengthen cultural connectedness, especially whānau who have not lived on the whenua for a long time, or ever. To achieve this, different approaches to exercising traditional customary roles, as well as the development of innovation and decision-making were considered with Komiti. This was guided by strong environmental and cultural information, leadership relating to ancestral landscapes, and commitment.

## Implementation and stages

### Development process

The following section outlines the stages used to develop the implementation plan and succession pathways aimed at future proofing the whenua. A mixed-methods approach was utilised, consisting of qualitative data collection methods, such as in-depth interviews and hui with Komiti members, and a quantitative data collection method using the 1000minds decision-making tool.

#### **Goal setting and understanding drivers**

This section involved working with the Komiti to understand their values, influences, and priorities around the future goals for the whenua. It also includes the establishment of an environmental strategy and vision for the whenua, incorporating history, whakapapa, and ancestral guidelines.

#### **Establishing implementation stages and requirements**

In this section, a detailed assessment of skill requirements was conducted to support the implementation of each activity within the identified opportunities. Role identification and potential training requirements were also explored.

#### **Whenua management and pathways for knowledge transfer**

This section involved understanding the skillsets present in governance and leadership and identifying key areas/gaps to be filled by the next generation. It also explored pathways for the transfer of knowledge between generations of kaitiaki and building social capital (e.g., mentoring).

#### **1000minds model development**

The 1000minds tool is a web-based software application that enables the prioritization of options based on multiple criteria. Developed by Paul Hansen and Franz Ombler, the tool has been widely used in various fields, including healthcare, environmental management, and public policy. The 1000minds tool uses a process of pairwise comparison to generate individual priorities for each option and then aggregates these to rank the options according to their overall desirability. It allows for a large number of options and criteria to be analysed and can be adapted to suit specific decision-making contexts.

In this research project, the 1000minds tool was used to understand the perspectives of shareholders around the whenua vision and opportunities, to enable distant shareholders to share their feedback and perspectives with Komiti members.

### **Engaging with shareholders and finalising plan**

This section involves engagement with shareholders to understand drivers and potential barriers to involvement in Trusts via workshops and email to introduce proposed strategy, 1000minds, and survey. It also explores kin-accountability and influence on whenua planning.

### **Sharing findings with the community**

This section involves sharing the findings following the completion of the project, in collaboration with organisations such as MPI Māori Agribusiness and Te Puni Kokiri through online media and workshops to share the process and experience of developing the work plan and the challenges tackled.

## Komiti goals

The communication goals of the komiti are to showcase the completed work of future-proofing the whenua, share the report and opportunities identified from the MAPIP work, increase engagement with shareholders to get their thoughts and opinions and develop a vision for the whenua, showcase potential opportunities for the next generation to get involved in ventures, explore kin-accountability, and work towards the development of pathways for knowledge transfer.

These goals are aimed at ensuring effective communication with shareholders and stakeholders to facilitate decision-making around land use and activities and support the long-term sustainability and prosperity of the whenua. This is also critical in putting the Incorporation's business/strategic plan into action and ensuring the objectives are met.

Building on the goals set by the case-study incorporations in previous land feasibility projects, the shareholders were invited to share their perspectives via a survey on what future-proofing the whenua meant to them. The survey aimed to gather information on what the shareholders considered as the most critical components for the future sustainability of the land.

After analysing the responses, several common themes emerged, which are summarised below in order of priority:

1. Enhancing the mauri of culturally significant sites; and the growth of Māori-owned resources to generate increased equity.
2. Enhancing the mauri of native flora and fauna
3. The protection of traditional food gathering areas
4. Providing whānau/hapū based training and employment opportunities.

These themes represent the key areas that the participating shareholders believe are necessary to ensure the long-term viability and success of the land. The participants selected two themes as the top priorities for future-proofing the land, which were tied for first place in terms of overall importance; these were the enhancement of the mauri of culturally significant sites, and the growth of Māori-owned resources to generate increased equity.

## Existing skillsets

An assessment of the existing skillsets of the whanau were undertaken with the komiti.

- **Governance and Leadership Skills:** These were identified as crucial for the long-term success of whenua committees. These skills may include understanding the relevant legislation and regulations, financial management, strategic planning, and decision-making processes. In addition, a strong leader should be able to resolve conflicts, build relationships, and create a culture of transparency and accountability.
- **Financial and Accounting Skills:** These were identified as essential for effective management of the financial resources of whenua committees. These skills may include understanding Xero and accounting principles, financial reporting, cash flow modelling and forecasting, and post-harvest management.
- **Communication and Relationship Skills:** These were identified as important for building external relationships and networks, as well as for ensuring effective communication and collaboration within whenua committees. These skills may include preparing notices, managing internal and external communications, and leveraging institutional knowledge to promote positive outcomes.

## Future skillsets needed

An assessment of the future gaps in the skillsets required to future-proof the whenua was also then undertaken with the komiti and shareholders through the 1000minds survey.

- **Understanding of the historical and cultural importance of the whenua:** The future success of whenua groups will depend on a deep understanding and appreciation of the cultural and historical significance of the land. This may include knowledge of traditional land use practices, the importance of the whenua for mana whenua, and the unique cultural heritage associated with the land. By understanding the broader cultural and historical context, whenua groups can better position themselves to make informed decisions and plan for the future. The respondents highlighted the importance of understanding the land's past and present and its significance to the local community.
- **Social media and digital skills:** In the digital age, it is increasingly important for whenua groups to have a strong social media and digital presence. This may include using social media to promote the whenua and its activities, building a website or online portal to share information with the wider community, and using digital tools for effective communication and collaboration.



- Expertise and support from paid employees: The increasingly complex and demanding nature of whenua management may require additional expertise and support from a paid employee. This employee may provide support in areas such as financial management, organising mahi on the whenua, or community engagement.
- Ecological stewardship: Respondents emphasised the need for skills related to monitoring, research and restoration of land and ocean-based ecosystems. These skills are critical for ensuring the sustainable management of the whenua and protecting its ecological integrity.
- Multi-generational management: Skills related to multi-generational asset and real estate management are critical for ensuring the long-term sustainability of the whenua. The respondents emphasised the need for training and knowledge-sharing among current shareholders to pass on skills and knowledge to future generations.
- Māori cultural practices: Respondents highlighted the importance of skills related to kaupapa Māori, te ao Māori, tikanga practices, and te reo Māori. These skills are essential for preserving the cultural significance of the whenua and ensuring its management aligns with Māori cultural values.
- Community engagement: Skills related to people, communication and collaboration are critical for managing whenua. Respondents emphasised the importance of acknowledging the factions between whanau and allowing true whanau to utilise the land without being denied.
- Financial management: The incorporation's financial viability is also important for the management of the whenua. Respondents highlighted the need for managing the incorporation's finances while retaining the cultural and environmental significance of the land.

## Land use opportunities

This section builds upon the prioritised land use opportunities identified from the MAPIP work undertaken with the Komiti.

### Carbon, Forestry and Biodiversity Potential

Building upon previously completed mahi, potential sites for retirement into forest were considered based on the implications of their current land use and potential environmental benefits for the landscape. As part of this evaluation, the slope of the whenua was also assessed, with sites of higher erosion risk identified through spatial analysis conducted using GIS.

Taking into consideration the potential limitations on land use from stock exclusion and farm management regulations, 7 sites were then identified as being potential areas for establishment of indigenous and/or exotic forestry.

#### **Skill requirements**

- **Understanding of local ecosystems:** Before undertaking any restoration work, it is important to have a good understanding of the local ecosystem and the native plant species that are suitable for restoration in that area. This knowledge can be gained through attending local workshops and/or working with local conservation groups and iwi.
- **Plant propagation and nursery skills:** Being able to propagate native plants from seeds and cuttings is important in ensuring a sustainable supply of plants for restoration projects. This includes skills in seed collection, plant propagation, and nursery management.
- **Weed control and pest management:** Controlling weeds and managing pests is critical in ensuring the survival of newly planted native species. This requires knowledge of different weed and pest control methods and techniques.
- **Planting and seedling care:** Successful planting and seedling care requires knowledge of the best planting techniques, as well as appropriate aftercare to ensure the long-term survival of the plants.

## Horticulture

Sustainable horticultural practices can help improve greater farm ecological diversity, create new income streams, and provide opportunities for whānau and others to return to the land and develop skills in agronomy and kai production. By leasing out smaller plots within the identified horticultural site, this can provide opportunities for members of the community and returning whānau to farm and utilise the land for food production; helping to revitalise the local food economy, as well as passing down the art of farming to younger generations eager to get involved in the sector.

### **Skill requirements**

There is overlap between the skills required for a horticultural activities and the carbon and restoration land use opportunity highlighted in the previous section. In addition to skills around plant propagation, knowledge of the local ecosystems present, weed control, pest management and planting, these are some additional skillsets identified:

- **Understanding of soil:** Soil health is a critical component of sustainable horticulture. This includes practices such as reducing tillage, using cover crops to improve soil organic matter, and minimising the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Growers across New Zealand are increasingly adopting regenerative agriculture practices, including prioritise soil health and biodiversity.
- **Crop management:** Knowledge of crop management practices, including planting, watering, and pest management, is essential. This includes understanding the nutritional requirements of different crops and how to manage pests and diseases.

### **External training opportunities**

Formal horticultural qualifications can provide rangatahi with a strong foundation of knowledge and practical experience in relevant areas of knowledge. The following are some examples of courses run by Southern Institute of Technology (SIT) and the Otago Polytechnic.

- **Certificate in Horticulture** - This is a one-year, full-time course that covers various aspects of horticulture such as plant propagation, pest and disease control, soil management, plant identification and culture, and machinery operation.
- **Diploma in Horticulture** - This is a two-year, full-time course that covers a range of horticultural practices and management skills. Students learn about plant production, pest and disease management, plant identification, soil science, and plant nutrition.

- New Zealand Certificate in Land Based Sustainability Practices – This is a short course run over three months, covering sustainable practices associated with water, riparian margins, native plants, composting and conservation.

## Koura Farming

The potential for koura farming was assessed as a potential venture and alternate land use for the whenua. Freshwater crayfish aquaculture is in an early development stage with no farm currently producing large volumes of saleable stock. Under the Freshwater Fish Farming Regulations 1983, a license must be obtained from MPI to farm koura. Once established, the day-to-day operational requirements are focussed on monitoring of ponds and water quality parameters, feeding, and lastly harvesting, when required. This can provide an opportunity for whānau to return back to the whenua and develop skills in aquaculture.

### **Skill requirements**

- Freshwater management: Understanding of freshwater quality and managing water conditions in ponds for koura.
- Disease and pest management: Knowledge of common pest and diseases faced by koura, such as white tail disease which is caused by parasites.
- Habitat management and breeding: Creating and maintaining a suitable environment for koura to live and reproduce.
- Harvesting and processing: Knowing when and how to harvest koura and properly processing them for sale.
- Record keeping and compliance: Keeping detailed records of all operations and adhering to regulations and standards set by regulatory bodies such as MPI.

### **External training opportunities**

There are number of aquaculture courses available with can provide rangatahi with a range of skills and knowledge on routine operations in a fish farm, such as New Zealand Certificate in Aquaculture (Level 3) with strands in hatchery, fish, and shellfish by SIT.

MPI are also in the process of developing several workshops for whenua Māori blocks, with the aim of providing participants more information on the knowledge and skills they need to operate a successful koura farming business.

## Whenua management and pathways for knowledge transfer

This section involved understanding the skillsets present in governance and leadership and identifying key areas/gaps to be filled by the next generation. It also explored pathways for the transfer of knowledge between generations of kaitiaki and building social capital (e.g., mentoring).

In the context of succession planning, incorporating customary leadership values into kaitiaki roles and structures can help to promote a greater sense of shared responsibility and ownership among different generations of whānau.

By creating an environment in which younger members of the whānau can learn from and be mentored by older members who have a deep understanding of customary values, it is possible to ensure that these values are passed on and retained over time. This, in turn, can help to promote greater continuity and sustainability in the management of whenua and enhancement of te Taiao, as the next generation of kaitiaki is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively manage these important resources.

There are several pathways for the transfer of knowledge between different generations of kaitiaki:

- Establishing a junior komiti: The establishment of junior komiti provides a mentoring opportunity for the current komiti to engage with the next generation. This will help ensure the longevity and success of the whenua incorporation, by providing opportunities for knowledge transfer and leadership development.
- Hands-on experience: One of the most effective ways to transfer knowledge between generations of kaitiaki is through hands-on experience. Rangatahi can learn by working alongside elders on mahi on the whenua, such as restoration planting and preparing kai.
- Cultural history hikoi: Opportunities for whanau to learn more about the history, traditions, and values associated with the whenua, as well others in the community who may be interested in learning more about the cultural importance.
- Formal education: Formal education, such as courses in agriculture, business, or environmental studies, can provide younger kaitiaki with the knowledge and skills they need to manage the land effectively. This can be complemented by hands-on experience and cultural immersion programs to ensure a well-rounded education.

## Opportunities for connecting and identifying whanau

The following section highlights the opportunities identified by the Komiti to connect whanau, in particular rangatahi and future shareholders, with activities and plans for the whenua.

- **Developing a whānau database:** To identify and connect with whānau members, it can be useful to create a database or list of current members of the whenua. This can include contact information, whanau connections, and any specific skills or expertise that can be useful for future plans and mahi.
- **Use social media platforms:** Social media platforms can be an effective way to connect with whānau, especially for younger generations. Posts can be made to provide updates on plans and activities for the whenua, and to encourage korero and engagement.
- **Regular communications:** Regular communications such as panui/newsletters can be sent to whānau members to keep them informed about upcoming events and plans for the whenua.
- **Working bees and mahi on the whenua:** Working bees and other events can be held to provide opportunities for whānau to get involved with the whenua. These events can be structured to allow for participation and engagement, and to build a sense of community around the whenua.

## Summary of wider project outputs

As part of this research project, a number of outputs have been developed to share the insights and learnings gained throughout the process. The first of these is a short video series that documents the journey, issues, challenges, and development of approaches from Komiti members and whānau in their efforts to strengthen the connectedness of whānau to whenua. This video series serves as a way to share the experiences and lessons learned, and to provide inspiration and guidance for other Māori trusts and incorporations facing similar challenges.

In addition, a summary template has been created, which is specifically geared toward other whenua Māori trusts and incorporations. This template outlines the work undertaken during this project, as well as the key insights and potential approaches for addressing commonly shared challenges. This template can serve as a useful tool for other Māori trusts and incorporations to consider when developing their own strategies for engaging with their whānau and managing their whenua.

## Communications plan example

A sample plan was developed with the objective of supporting the komiti in helping whanau reconnect with the whenua, and to also share important updates and educational opportunities with the community.

### Target audience:

Rangatahi and whānau members of the whenua incorporations.

### Channels:

- Monthly newsletter sent to all members via email or physical mail.
- Social media platform (e.g., Facebook or Instagram) - Social media channels will be established for Pūrākaunui to provide updates to its shareholders, whānau, and the wider public about the existing work happening on the whenua.
- AGM held once a year, both in-person and online.
- Website: A website has been created using WordPress (Divi) to tell the story of Pūrākaunui Inc. This includes background information on the organisation, local history and stories, and activities happening on the whenua.

### Messaging:

- Cultural practices and stories that are relevant to the whenua and its history.
- Updates on any mahi, such as upcoming projects or land management plans.
- Educational resources that connect the community with the whenua and its natural and cultural significance.

### Engagement:

- Quarterly panui/ newsletter which will include a whanau member spotlight section where a member will be interviewed and share their connection to the whenua.
- Social media platform will include interactive elements such as surveys, polls, and sharing opportunities for stories and experiences on the whenua.
- Educational workshops and events will be designed to engage rangatahi and whānau members and include opportunities for feedback and input.



**Metrics:**

- Number of panui/newsletters opens and clicks.
- Social media engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and comments.
- Number of attendees at educational workshops and events.

**Panui #1 – example**

Kia ora [NAME],

Here's what we have been up to.

- Ngā Whenua Rāhui Fund. Funding to fence wetland areas. To allow for native regeneration of vegetation.
- Rural Professional Fund project findings

This is why our whenua is important.

- Story about the history of whenua.

Call to action

- Opportunity to get involved on mahi