

INVEST IN Taranaki

A GUIDE TO INVESTING IN THE
REGION 'LIKE NO OTHER'

venture
TARANAKI
Te Puna Umanga

FOREWORD

We acknowledge the tangata whenua of Taranaki, kaitiaki of the whenua/lands and wai/water of our region, and pay our respects to kaumātua past and present.

Taranaki is a special place, rich in culture and history. At its heart, both geographically and spiritually, is Taranaki Maunga/ Mount Taranaki. The central landmark has given the region its identity as well as its temperate climate, plentiful rain, and fertile volcanic soils.

*Tu ke Tongariro,
Motu ke Taranaki,
He riri ki a Pihanga,
Waiho i muri nei,
Te uri ko au-e!*

Tongariro stands apart,
Separated off is Taranaki,
By the strife over Pihanga,
Leaving in after times,
Its descendant in me!

CONTENTS

Introducing Taranaki	2
Why invest in Taranaki?	4
Strategic vision	6
Transition frontrunner	8
Innovating	10
Game-changing investments	12
An enviable lifestyle	14
Taranaki investment stories	16
How to invest in Taranaki	35



STEWART ISLAND

New Zealand



INTRODUCING TARANAKI

Note: The following regional statistics were captured pre-COVID-19 and pre-alert levels. Post COVID-19 statistics will be published as soon as they are available via the Investment website. Pre-COVID statistic have been provided here to help investors understand some key information about the region.

REGIONAL POPULATION:

117,561

(Census 2018)

POPULATION GROWTH:

up 1.4%

since 2017

PERCENTAGE OF NEW ZEALAND'S POPULATION:

2.4%

REGIONAL GDP:

\$7.7B

(year to March 2018)

GDP GROWTH:

up 2.7%

since 2017,
3.2% of New Zealand's GDP

GDP PER CAPITA:

\$68,432

2nd highest in the country

PRODUCTIVITY (GDP PER FILLED JOB):

\$132,655

in 2018 compared to NZ \$97,174

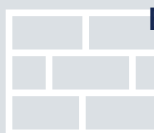
EMPLOYEES IN TARANAKI:



59,030

filled jobs (2018), up 1.1% since 2017

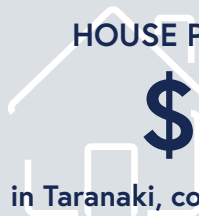
BUILDING CONSENTS:



\$334M

issued in year to June 2019

HOUSE PRICES: Median house price of



\$377,263

in Taranaki, compared to NZ average of \$687,099

LOW STAFF TURNOVER:

consistently one of the lowest turnover rates in New Zealand: Q4 2018 rate of 14.6% compared to NZ average of 17.1%

SKILLED WORKFORCE:

13,555

people in knowledge-intensive employment

RETAIL SPENDING:



\$1.9B

retail sales value in 2019, up 3.2% on 2018

TOURISM:



\$428M

annual tourism spend
(year to January 2020)

(Note: Taranaki tourism spend is split 80% domestic, 20% international)

SUNSHINE HOURS:



New Plymouth historical average of

2,197 hours

annually – 7th highest place in NZ (5th highest centre)

TARANAKI – A REGION WITH A BRIGHT FUTURE

In our ever-changing world, there is no better place to do business right now than in Taranaki. Ours is a region of unlimited potential, a place where the power of its varied industries, enterprises and natural resources is matched by the energy of the innovative, entrepreneurial, and passionate people who make it successful. Taranaki is well positioned to make a swift and inclusive recovery from the economic effects of COVID-19.

The region has long been a vital contributor to New Zealand's economic wellbeing, forged on a buoyant food industry and a prosperous energy and production sector. Both have taken Taranaki to the world. With the advent of COVID-19, that world has now changed but Taranaki's strong foundations in food, agriculture, engineering, energy, IT, logistics, hospitality, manufacturing, and the visitor industry, coupled with a can-do attitude 'like no other' will ensure the region not only recovers but lays the foundation for an even stronger and better future.

Global expectation for greater sustainability practices, social procurement, low-emission, green or renewable energy solutions, and regenerative, low-carbon footprint food and drink production are helping to shape Taranaki's direction and growth.

Visitors looking for authenticity and a connection to culture, history and people through immersive natural experiences are shaping the region's story. Those looking to invest, whether through calling Taranaki home or establishing a commercial presence, are helping to define its future. Digital connectivity and the ability to conduct business globally with a click of a mouse are cementing its desirability as a lifestyle choice. Taranaki has huge potential in this new environment.

People from the Taranaki community, along with local government, business and iwi leaders have united in planning around opportunities, coming together to develop a long-term vision of a modern, high-value economy – detailed in the *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap*. This includes actively encouraging investment and innovation. It is this enduring vision that places Taranaki in a good position for swift economic recovery.

New initiatives are already underway in Taranaki. Hydrogen, smart grids, and a range of renewable energy technologies are being investigated and implemented. Investments are being made in providing high-value premium food and fibre products. The number of visitors to the region had almost doubled in the past decade, prior to COVID-19, as a result of infrastructure development, enterprise start-ups, and increased awareness of the region as a unique and compelling visitor destination.

The New Zealand Government is investing in the region's long-term vision through a number of key projects, including the National New Energy Development Centre, a major upgrade to the region's hospital, roading infrastructure enhancements, and the development of the Taranaki Crossing, a significant visitor offering. At a regional level, local government has invested in a contemporary new airport terminal to better service the region's accessibility.

In this Investment Prospectus you will learn more about the boldness of the region's vision and the opportunities on offer. Like all good businesses, Taranaki has a plan and is delivering it.

Opportunity abounds.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted economies all around the world. Taranaki has been swift to respond with an ambitious and exciting economic tactical recovery plan to lead a 'return to better'. The plan can be viewed at www.investment.taranaki.info.





WHY INVEST IN TARANAKI?

STRATEGIC VISION

Taranaki has a growing population and resilient economy. The region's sound economic foundations combined with the development of a holistic plan for future prosperity post COVID-19 and beyond ensures the region will swiftly recover and continue to grow, continuing its contribution to positive national outcomes.

TRANSITION FRONTRUNNER

Taranaki has significant opportunity to lead New Zealand's transition to a low-emissions energy future. The region is the base for the National New Energy Development Centre and held New Zealand's first Just Transition Summit in 2019, bringing innovators, industry experts and strategic leaders together with Taranaki at the forefront.



INNOVATIVE

An endemic spirit of pragmatic innovation prevails in Taranaki, with flexible solutions-focused people dedicated to making the region a success. Taranaki boasts a diverse range of enterprises, formed by people identifying problems, needs, and demands, then devising and implementing solutions. It is these innovative and driven people that will stand Taranaki in good stead in a post-COVID world.

GAME-CHANGING INVESTMENTS

Significant investment by central and local government is transforming a number of local infrastructure and biodiversity projects and fostering regional connectivity. These projects are also attracting additional investment in a range of high-value industries.

ENVIABLE LIFESTYLE

Taranaki offers an affordable, enviable lifestyle for the region's globally connected, high-achieving workforce. With a vast natural playground at both front and back doorsteps, and world-class amenities that match those of much larger centres, Taranaki provides a work-life balance like no other.

STRATEGIC VISION

With a population among the fastest growing in New Zealand, and an economy that has consistently outpaced all other regions, Taranaki is the perfect place for business to thrive.

More than 117,000 people live in Taranaki, and this is forecast to continue to grow as the region's enviable lifestyle, high average pay, and new business opportunities (stemming from the move to a low-emissions economy) attract more and more people.

New Plymouth (Taranaki's largest urban centre) is among the fastest growing cities in New Zealand, attracting international skilled migrants and people from New Zealand's metropolitan areas.

The population has boomed and so has the economy. Taranaki has continually led regional GDP and productivity per capita and is one of the highest paying regions in the country, leading to an increase in knowledge-based jobs, exports and household income.

Despite the current economic climate, Taranaki's extensive food industry has experienced little interruption, with solid demand for dairy products, meat, honey, and coffee – all products that are made or manufactured locally. Digital technology and innovation have facilitated the region's digital connectivity, showing first-hand how Taranaki is able to successfully operate remotely, and demonstrating the ease and ability for business connectivity, both nationally and internationally, providing a sound platform for future development.

Taranaki is in a good spot to help revive New Zealand's economy with a range of sectors growing strongly pre-COVID-19. One of those being tourism, which almost doubled in value during the past decade. Annual tourism expenditure in 2019 was \$425 million, up 13% in a year, as visitors become aware of the region's natural attractions and growing array of visitor events, amenities and products.

With this growth has come increased demand for products and services, providing ideal conditions for investors and prospective enterprises to 'set up shop' in the region and tap into the diverse skills, knowledge and can-do attitude that has made Taranaki a success.

As Taranaki leads the global transition to a low-emissions economy, opportunities exist across a range of sectors, with local and central government support at hand. Both have signalled their determination to make Taranaki's transition a success through investment in core and transformational infrastructure.

A clear economic blueprint for the regional economy for the near-term has been developed by Taranaki's councils and leading enterprise, iwi and community representatives. *Tapuae Roa: The Taranaki Regional Economic Development Strategy* looks to improve the resilience and strength of the regional economy and help Taranaki retain its position as one of New Zealand's leading regions. Beyond this, the *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* sets out a longer-term vision for the region in a low-emissions future.

As a response to COVID-19, a regional recovery plan was created. This centralises the regional response, and integrates key actions from *Tapuae Roa* and *Taranaki 2050* to identify the actions the region will take to achieve regional growth and development under the new economic conditions, including a commitment to social procurement to ensure investment strengthens the region as a whole.

With every major economic event there is always opportunity, and Taranaki plans on leveraging its strengths to seize these opportunities. The economic recovery plan can be viewed at www.investment.taranaki.info.



TRANSITION FRONTRUNNER

Long regarded as New Zealand's premier energy region, the experience, skills and collective ambition of Taranaki's residents are fuelling the drive to become the country's premier low-emissions energy centre.

As New Zealand sets about transitioning to a low-emissions future, forward-thinkers from Taranaki quickly recognised the leadership role they can play and the significant opportunities that exist through the utilisation of Taranaki's high-quality infrastructure, wide skills base across manufacturing, engineering, IT and food production, depth of knowledge, and world-class health and safety practices.

Motivated and committed to ensuring Taranaki is at the forefront of the transition, local government, enterprise, and the community have joined together to map out a plan for Taranaki's long-term sustainability and success.

Building on *Tapuae Roa*, the *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* has been co-designed by the region, for the region, and considers not just how the economy will change, but all aspects of the lives of those who live and work in Taranaki. The 2050 Roadmap establishes tangible, real-world opportunities that will exist for enterprise, investors and the community in a low-emissions economy.

In May 2019, Taranaki hosted New Zealand's first Just Transition Summit. The summit brought together a diverse range of people and organisations, including key stakeholders from around New Zealand, to facilitate discussion and to hear from local and global experts.

The Government's investment in the National New Energy Development Centre will support Taranaki to lead New Zealand's transition to a low-emissions economy, by becoming a national hub of low-emissions energy knowledge and supporting the development, testing and commercialisation of new energy technology.

A Westpac report¹ estimates that a new energy economy in New Zealand can provide opportunities that generate up to \$3 billion of benefits, of which Taranaki has the chance to capture a large proportion. The region is embracing its natural position at the forefront of the transition – innovative enterprise is already investing in new energy solutions, such as hydrogen.

Taranaki has enormous potential for extended growth and development of new energy and food production through its existing and extensive oil and gas infrastructure and skills, natural land, wind and water resources, and connectivity to national and global markets via its international deep-water port, rail, road and air links.

There are myriad opportunities for investment in this exciting, untapped future.





INNOVATING

Taranaki is a centuries-old innovative hub – boasting entrepreneurial thinking, world-class technical skills and progressive leadership.

Taranaki's pioneering spirit stretches back to the birth of the country's oil and gas industry in the 1860s and the commercial dairy industry in the 1880s. The region has seen innovation thrive across manufacturing, engineering, IT, and food production.

The region is home to a globally connected workforce with an influential collective skillset. Taranaki has the second highest rate of manufacturing jobs to total regional employment, and more than 23% of the workforce is employed in knowledge-intensive roles.

Pushing Taranaki to the forefront of the move towards a low-emissions environment is an aptitude for innovative thinking, technical skills, drive, dedication and ambition, all of which are supported by infrastructure that enables ideas to happen. It is these pioneering abilities, seen in many Taranaki enterprises, that places Taranaki in an opportune spot for a rapid recovery post-COVID-19.

From wind farms to wave energy, hydrogen fuel to biofuel, organics to regenerative food production, niche technology to online global start-ups, the region's innovators, entrepreneurs and enterprises are developing ideas, testing them and putting them into action and production.

These new industries are providing a platform for business to launch, develop and adapt – driving new services, products and solutions that support and enhance the region's move to a low-emissions economy. The opportunities are wide and varied, and Taranaki has the skills, infrastructure, and leadership to support new investment in these areas.

The region's leadership – across businesses, councils and the regional development agency, Venture Taranaki – are enthusiastic enablers of innovation, providing support, knowledge and connections with local, national and international enterprises, and central government.

Innovation is taking Taranaki into a new and sustainable future, and opportunity is alongside.



GAME-CHANGING INVESTMENTS

Taranaki's stride into the future is being supported by a number of major infrastructure projects that will enhance the region's position as a vital contributor to New Zealand's economic growth.

Substantial investments into roading, air travel, commercial development, the visitor industry and new energy will improve connectivity, provide modern floor space for business development, encourage more visitors, and help attract and retain skilled workers in technical industries.

These infrastructure investments also provide opportunity for new enterprise and high-value industry to be developed across a range of sectors, and are examples of Taranaki's drive to be a forward-thinking, action-oriented region that is open to investment and an enabler of growth, sustainability and success.

A CONNECTED REGION

Taranaki is already highly accessible. Regular daily flights connect the region to Auckland and Wellington, while State Highway 3 also links the region to the north and south (Wellington and Auckland are both a 4.5-hour drive to the city of New Plymouth). Rail freight services run south to the national main trunk line, and Port Taranaki offers the only deep-water port on New Zealand's west coast.

Building on this, the Government is investing over \$200 million into State Highway 3, north of the region, to improve travel times to Auckland for people and freight. A new 4,000 m² airport terminal has just been completed at a cost of \$28 million, doubling the capacity of the current terminal to service the fourth busiest regional airport in New Zealand. These investments are supported by extensive fibre rollout,



ensuring competitive digital connectivity.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Bell Block, north-east of New Plymouth, has the region's greatest concentration of manufacturing enterprises, and land for future growth. Development sites are also available in towns throughout the region, with active networks to support industrial and manufacturing development. Work is currently underway to develop an industrial/business hub in Hāwera.

Significant commercial development is taking place throughout the region, extending the opportunities for

short- and long-term leased or purchased premises.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSE DESTINATION

Taranaki has significant remaining potential as a visitor destination. Judged the world's second-best regional destination by Lonely Planet in 2017, the visitor industry and investment in visitor infrastructure have grown sharply since. At the centre of the region, both geographically and spiritually, Taranaki Maunga is receiving investment in track and facility upgrades that will encourage both short- and long-stay visitors, and an iconic 41-kilometre Maunga ki te Moana – Taranaki Crossing – multi-day experience is also under development. Significant investment into predator control and restoring the Maunga and surrounding landscapes' biodiversity is also underway, with the objective of creating a predator-free Taranaki. Beyond the mountain, developments across the visitor and events sectors will further cement the region's attractiveness as a destination.





AN ENVIABLE LIFESTYLE

Skiing in the morning, surfing in the afternoon ... Taranaki's lifestyle has become the stuff of legend, and it's all true!

With a natural playground at the doorstep, and urban areas that boast world-class amenities, affordable housing, and quality employment opportunities, Taranaki is attractive to enterprises and their staff.

At the region's heart – both geographically and spiritually – stands Taranaki Maunga, a proud regional icon. The surrounding Te Papakura o Taranaki national park offers countless recreational opportunities – skiing, walking, tramping, climbing – close to the region's population centres.

Beneath the mountain, Taranaki's black-sand beaches and point breaks offer a haven for surfers, fishers, boaties, swimmers and campers, with many of the region's surf breaks ranking among the best in New Zealand and internationally.

Nestled along the coast is the progressive city of New Plymouth. The CBD is compact, easy to navigate, and alive with vibrant cafés, award-winning restaurants, a stunning architecturally designed contemporary art museum, craft breweries and distilleries, designer retailers, and forward-thinking, tech-savvy businesses.

It is also home to the charming, much-photographed Pukekura Park and the iconic Coastal Walkway along the city's foreshore. With an abundance of biodiversity and stunning flora and fauna, New Plymouth has the highest amount of natural bush in any CBD within New Zealand. The region's renowned fertile climate is showcased in the annual Taranaki Garden Festival and Taranaki Fringe Garden Festival, featuring numerous internationally recognised gardens around the region.

A jam-packed major events calendar, which includes the annual WOMAD world music festival at the Bowl of Brooklands, as well as other international music acts, arts festivals, and national and international sporting events, keeps residents entertained.

Stratford, Hāwera, Inglewood, Ōpunake and Pātea (to name but a few of the towns that make up Taranaki) are equally well-equipped with first-class amenities, natural beauty and cultural activities on offer. It is easy to circumnavigate the good-quality roads around the Maunga, with New Plymouth to Hāwera only an hour's drive along the scenic and iconic Surf Highway 45.

Taranaki has a major hospital, soon to undergo significant development, as well as noteworthy tertiary institutions in the form of Western Institute of Technology (WITT) and the Pacific Institute of Hotel Management School (PIHMS). There is no shortage of excellent primary and secondary schools, non-denominational or Catholic, as well as the recently opened international Green School.

As the premier energy region in New Zealand, Taranaki's energy industry has attracted major international players and a highly skilled multi-cultural workforce. This has further fostered global connectedness, providing opportunity for career expansion, and the building of international commercial relationships.

With New Zealand's main centres just a short flight away, and Taranaki's fibre broadband internet rivalling that of any international city, it is easy to run a global business from the region, and still have the time to head outside to enjoy the enviable lifestyle that comes with living in Taranaki.

Or if a short commute is still on the cards, being just minutes from the office means the region provides a great work-life balance, without compromising business or career aspirations.

Add to that the varied employment opportunities, quality schooling and healthcare, a temperate climate, and clean air and water, people soon see why this safe and stimulating community is the perfect place to call home.

AFFORDABILITY:

The median house price in New Plymouth is a third of that in Auckland, and in Hāwera, South Taranaki, it is a fifth.

CLIMATE:

Lush and fertile with temperate climate, 5th highest NZ centre sunshine hours, and abundant rainfall.

SO MUCH TO DO:

Walking trails, cycling adventures, art galleries and museums, 70 surf breaks along SH45, outstanding events and a myriad of family fun.

TARANAKI INVESTMENT STORIES

The Taranaki region has a strong history of successful inward investment and innovation. The following stories capture some of the innovators, the investors, and the interesting ways in which the region's enterprises are leveraging investment to push the boundaries of their respective fields. Within each of these featured sectors – energy, food, technology and innovation, manufacturing and engineering, the visitor industry, and property and infrastructure – there are many more opportunities for partnership and growth.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted economies all around the world, and although Taranaki is not immune, the region's ambitious and aspirational recovery plan not only looks to the region's resilience but also an economic 'return to better'. The economic tactical recovery plan can be viewed at investment.taranaki.info.



ENERGY

Taranaki is uniquely positioned to lead New Zealand's transition to a low-emissions energy future. The region is New Zealand's largest exporter of energy; and energy makes up a quarter of the region's economic output.

When combined with the region's world-class energy infrastructure assets, well-developed global networks, and progressive local authority leadership, Taranaki has quality, well-established features that new energy investment can quickly and easily leverage. It also has more than 7,000 highly skilled people working in the energy and supply chain sector, holding a wealth of expertise and knowledge.

The Government has allocated \$7 million per year to establish a National New Energy Development Centre in Taranaki. The mission of the Centre is to facilitate New Zealand's energy transition to a low-emissions future through fostering a new energy eco-system, leveraging national and global knowledge and expertise to reduce the time, cost and risk associated with the development and commercialisation of new energy innovation.

The Government has also allocated a further \$50 million for research into cutting-edge energy technology, including organic photovoltaics, super conductors, nanotechnologies and inductive power. In addition, there is ongoing government support for initiatives to leverage Taranaki's existing infrastructure assets; for example, re-purposing the gas pipeline owned by First Gas for hydrogen distribution.

The investment from central government and the support of Taranaki's local authorities provides the private and research sectors with assurance of the commitment and intent to develop commercially viable new energy solutions for New Zealand and export. The energy sector will not be immune to the effects of COVID-19 and the global oil price reductions, but there are significant opportunities to accelerate the pursuit of innovation in this field, with renewables and energy innovation and diversification a key focus, cementing Taranaki as a global leader in new energy development.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- **Wind generation:** potential for onshore and offshore wind electricity generation
- **Renewables technology:** build existing technologies and pioneer new ones, including wave, solar and biofuel
- **Hydrogen:** production and distribution infrastructure, downstream hydrogen via manufacturing industrial products traditionally made with natural gas, such as urea and methanol
- **Electricity technology and products:** new products and services for electricity consumers looking to generate their own electricity, smartly manage their consumption, and transition to electric vehicles; technologies to support the transition of the electricity market for electricity infrastructure companies
- **Decommissioning:** As Taranaki transitions to a new energy future and current oil and gas wells reach the end of their productive life, decommissioning of offshore assets will need to be undertaken



Hiringa Energy

Working from a beautiful villa on a quiet New Plymouth street, a group of energy professionals are busy helping to shape New Zealand's energy future.

Husband and wife Andrew and Cathy Clennett chose Taranaki – the heart of New Zealand's traditional energy sector – to establish Hiringa Energy, the first company in New Zealand dedicated to the supply and development of green hydrogen energy. The company is focused on establishing the nation's first commercially viable hydrogen refuelling network.

Green hydrogen uses renewable electricity to split water into oxygen and hydrogen through electrolysis. Hiringa aim to provide fuel solutions for industry, the public sector, and transport operators nationwide. Their work has already received local and national governmental support, strong international interest, and attracted commercial and investor backing.

In July 2018, the New Zealand Government announced a \$950,000 Provincial Growth Fund investment in Hiringa to scope the design and engineering of hydrogen production facilities, mobile storage and distribution infrastructure, and hydrogen refuelling stations.

In May 2019, Hiringa and Ballance Agri-Nutrients joined forces in a \$50-million project to produce hydrogen fuel using wind power at the ammonia urea producer's South Taranaki plant. The process is expected to produce enough hydrogen to power 6000 cars, or 300 trucks or buses. In March 2020, the Government announced a \$19.9 million investment to support the establishment of the world-first hydrogen energy facility in Taranaki.

"It's a real solution – hydrogen helps make it possible to decarbonise our economy – and it's a high growth industry globally. There's a real opportunity right now to create jobs, increase productivity and have better, more sustainable, outcomes," Andrew says.

In Andrew's opinion, Taranaki has all the attributes to be the centre of New Zealand's new energy future, and not just limited to hydrogen energy production.

"We could have done this overseas, but we decided early on Taranaki was a good place to base the company," Andrew continues.

"Taranaki is a region of doers – we know how to get from the idea to a plan and then do it – and there's a reliable workforce that can deliver to schedule and deliver to cost.

"Taranaki also has important strengths with the infrastructure, resources and technical skillsets already here through the oil and gas and broader energy sectors. This combines with the innovative commercial environment, established partnerships, and excellent connectivity.

"These strengths can also be used across other energy solutions, such as synthetic fuel, other gas-related projects, and even onshore and offshore wind and wave energy."

"And Taranaki also has very good natural renewable resources to utilise, such as wind, wave and run-of-the-river hydro. At the moment we don't harness our natural renewable resource, so I think there's an opportunity for a number of different energy types to be developed in the region."

Andrew says the region's local authorities have been energetic enablers of Hiringa's progress. Hiringa partnered with regional development agency Venture Taranaki and the New Plymouth District Council to produce the H2 Taranaki Roadmap, launched in March 2019, which focused on Taranaki's potential to become a global leader in hydrogen production and utilisation.

While Covid has been a challenge, Hiringa Energy have been very fortunate to have already built their business around a more cloud-based model, utilising the high-speed connectivity available in the region to continue their planning and grow their partnerships. They have seen strong momentum building from their partners around the desire to come out of the crisis with more sustainable businesses and ambitious plans.



Tilt Renewables

On coastal South Taranaki farmland, a New Zealand company is making a long-term commitment to New Zealand's new energy future.

Tilt Renewables (NZX: TLT), a developer, owner and manager of renewable energy generation assets in Australia and New Zealand, is building the 133-megawatt (MW) Waipipi Wind Farm.

Placed along 980 hectares of coastal land between Waverley and Pātea, the wind farm will comprise 31 Siemens Gamesa turbines, each with a capacity of 4.3 MW and a 130m rotor diameter – the largest ever installed in New Zealand.

Once complete and operational in February 2021, the wind farm will generate an annual average of 455 gigawatt hours of green electricity – enough to power about 65,000 homes and save the emission of 250,000 tonnes of carbon.

With a 30-year operating design life and at a cost of \$277 million, the wind farm is a significant investment in the region's future, and is among the first physical signs that Taranaki is leading New Zealand's shift to a low-emissions economy.

"There's been a real lull in wind farm development in the past six or seven years, but the market has changed in New Zealand now," explains Tilt Renewables project manager Jim Pearson.

"There's more demand and desire for renewable energy and it's a positive statement to move into renewables.

"Wind farm sites are chosen first and foremost on wind resource and the second important thing is the transmission connection – how close you are to connecting into either a local network or national grid. Both are ideal here."

Jim says the desire by Taranaki landowners, iwi, and local and regional councils to engage constructively during the consenting phase had impressed Tilt Renewables.

"We have worked very closely with the stakeholders and they have been very supportive and pragmatic to get it under way. As we are a member of the community for the next 25–50 years, we take a long-term view on relationships and want to build that as best we can."

Taranaki's depth of experience across engineering, civil works, and electricity will play a significant role in the 18-month project.

"Taranaki has a good skills base, good technical support services and infrastructure to support the operating phase and life of the wind farm. We are very focused on using local contractors as much as possible, which supports the community and lowers our own cost base," Jim says.

In fact, the project will be a contributing factor in Taranaki's swift economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, with Tilt Renewable already employing 80 onsite workers, with another 80 to be onsite when the turbines are erected, as well as an emphasis on utilising local contractors.

"This will be huge for getting the economy moving post-COVID-19," Jim says.

"One of the advantages of South Taranaki is it's a rural district and there is an appreciation of working the land. Building something like a wind farm is a positive development and you are using a natural resource to provide a local and national benefit."

During construction, it's expected the project will inject \$70 million of expenditure into the Taranaki economy and employ 80–100 people. Once completed, up to 10 people will be directly and indirectly employed for the wind farm's operation.



FOOD

With lush green fertile soils, regular rainfall, and a temperate climate, Taranaki comprises the perfect ingredients for the production of high-quality, natural food products.

Taranaki has long been a key contributor to New Zealand's food sector, having helped position the country as a global dairy heavyweight, and driving the red meat, poultry, and plant food industries with production of value-added goods for domestic and international markets.

It is Taranaki's food sector that has helped to minimise the effects of COVID-19 on the local economy, with exports of food products remaining strong. Major names in food production have established production facilities in Taranaki, and an increasing number of agile, innovative companies have chosen the region to carve their mark in this sector. Buoyant coffee, honey, craft alcohol, fresh produce and baked goods enterprises are on the regional menu – leveraging Taranaki's unique story and good growing conditions to produce high-quality products that are capturing the attention of global markets and connecting with customers.

As Taranaki's food story evolves, the region's natural attributes, experience, knowledge and collaborative approach ensure it will continue to be the home of more new, exciting and creative food products and experiences.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- **Honey:** opportunities in mānuka honey production, as well as product development
- **Dairy:** a wide range of specialty dairy products (including pharmaceuticals) and opportunities to innovate or develop new products for the high-end global market
- **Product innovation:** national and global artisan consumer market, from chocolates, to nuts, spices and smoothies
- **Alcohol:** quality craft and distinctive drinks
- **Horticulture:** ripe for growth, capitalising on the microclimates under Taranaki Maunga
- **Red meat:** top-quality meats and value-added products, including patties, jerky and specialist broths
- **Coffee:** locally roasted, award-winning coffee, nationally and internationally acclaimed



Egmont Honey

The world is abuzz about the health properties of mānuka honey, and a Taranaki company is building a strong international market for its unique Kiwi brand.

Award-winning South Taranaki-based Egmont Honey, founded by father and son Toby and James Annabell in 2015, has grown rapidly from one hive – a Christmas gift from son to father – to more than 4000 hives.

The company now exports its range of health, skincare, and honey superfood products to more than 20 countries, including China, Korea, Japan, the United Kingdom, France and Australia, and has carved out a strong position in the highly competitive wellness brand and supermarket sectors.

To enhance its global presence, in 2017, Egmont Honey sold 51% of its shares to The Better Health Company, a New Zealand enterprise that is majority owned by Singaporean hedge fund CDH, which has US\$20 billion under management.

Since 2018, Australian supermarket giant Woolworths has exclusively stocked Egmont Honey's Waimete Honey Co label, further adding the company's New Zealand Clover brand, putting both brands in 900 Woolworths stores across the country. Egmont Honey also has contracts with two large Chinese supermarket chains that have more than 1000 stores between them.

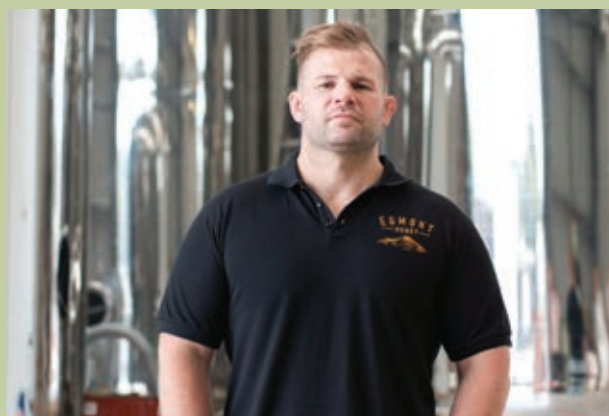
James Annabell says it's the company's story of an all-natural, sustainable product sourced from remote Taranaki forests that has hit a sweet spot with international markets, and has enabled Egmont Honey to grab a good-sized spoonful of the \$348 million (2017–18) New Zealand pure honey export industry.

"There's something like 200 New Zealand honey brands in China, so I guess what makes us unique is we get to sell the great story of this region and where we're from. The people in the company are driven and pretty passionate about the region, which is a key part of our branding – the mountain is on our label," he says.

"We have invested quite heavily in a virtual reality experience, so we can take a bit of Taranaki around the world with us and use it as a tool for selling. You can put on a set of goggles and fly in a helicopter all over the Taranaki hill country and right into the middle of where our hives are placed in the mānuka, and then into our factory."

The hives are not used for commercial pollination, which means the bees are never exposed to pesticides or other chemicals. This allows Egmont Honey to market its honey as among the most natural, pure and pristine in the world.

The company's success was recognised in 2018, with Egmont Honey clinching Taranaki's top business



accolade, the Supreme Award, at the TSB Taranaki Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards. The same year, James was named as a finalist for the New Zealand entrepreneur of the year.

James says there is large scope for further development in the food and health product sector in Taranaki.

"Taranaki is fast becoming an attractive place for highly skilled people who want to move to the regions – we have a lot of applications for jobs from outside the region. That brings opportunity for further investment and I think Taranaki is doing a good job in pooling resources and having a presence at the food shows in Auckland and around the country."

As a natural product, Egmont Honey experienced unprecedented demand during the peak COVID-19 period, particularly in Australia, Japan and Europe. To keep up with demand while maintaining social distancing at different alert levels, Egmont Honey had to retrofit their production process to run in split shifts to continue desired output levels. Supply chain planning for packaging materials was a significant challenge, as were freight delays (sea) and huge increases in airfreight prices.



ANZCO Foods

For one of New Zealand's largest exporters, it's the relationships and business connections made across Taranaki that play a vital role in the company's ongoing success.

ANZCO Foods, which procures, processes, designs, creates and markets New Zealand beef and lamb products, has production facilities in Eltham (South Taranaki) and Waitara (North Taranaki). Both sites contribute significantly to the company's annual sales of more than \$1.45 billion.

The Eltham plant processes beef, sourced from Taranaki and the lower North Island, and employs 580 staff during the peak season. The Waitara operation makes value-added products, including burger patties for McDonald's restaurants in New Zealand and Australia, and gourmet foods, including soft beef jerky for a customer in the United States. More than 140 people work at the Waitara plant.

"We have a strong connection with the dairy industry, the transport industry and community throughout Taranaki," says ANZCO Foods' Eltham site manager Troy Lambly. "All play key roles in our operations.

"Our Eltham plant is critical to our overall operation; it has the biggest beef throughput in the group and is one of the largest beef processing sites in the North Island. The Taranaki dairy industry is a large part of that production – probably 55% of the 170,000 head of cattle we process at Eltham come out of the regional industry."

The Eltham plant produces about 50,000 tonnes of meat and by-products a year, worth about \$350 million.

"About 90% is exported to 170 countries, particularly China and the United States. Eltham is pivotal in terms of our customer base in the beef market," says Troy.

The bulk of the remaining raw meat is trucked to Waitara, where it is turned into prepared foods and gourmet products, including more than 460,000 meat patties a day for McDonald's. The Waitara plant also supplies the global McDonald's market when there is demand.

Being a predominantly export company, ANZCO relies on secure, reliable connectivity between Eltham, Waitara and export ports.

"We have to target getting product by certain dates to meet vessels all around the North Island, so reliable transport is vital. The transport infrastructure in Taranaki is good. We have strong relationships with trucking companies, particularly Uhlenberg Haulage, who we use for all of our finished product movements that are going to export, and also in the shuttle runs between plants," says Troy.

"The inland container hub in New Plymouth is also important. We use that heavily, getting containerised product on rail and either held at an internal hub or sent direct to ports around the North Island."

In December 2017, Japanese company Itoham Foods, which had been a key partner and shareholder in ANZCO since it began in 1989, bought ANZCO Foods outright.

Troy says there is opportunity for further national or international investment in Taranaki's growing and changing food industry.

"There is always demand for, and interest in, New Zealand products. There are good established relationships within Taranaki and doing business here is very good," he says.

"I also think it's important that we build on the connectivity between existing business and ensure we add value and enhance what we have already."

During the Alert Level 4 lockdown period, ANZCO operated as an essential service, providing employment to staff, service to farmers and export of product to overseas partners, and New Zealand.

"Our export markets during the COVID pandemic have steadily opened up, and we are seeing demand for our products from our export partners, which is pleasing to see", explains Troy.

Looking ahead, ANZCO hopes to expand upon employment opportunities in the new beef season, which would have a positive effect on the community at a time when unemployment could be higher, post COVID-19.

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Taranaki has developed a burgeoning technology and innovation ecosystem, attracting like-minded people to ideas and start-ups and providing scope for further development and investment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, technology and innovation became more prevalent than ever before, as Taranaki enterprises raced to collaborate and transform quickly to support productivity and functionality during the restrictions introduced around the country.

Innovation is coming to the fore across all sectors, backed by the region's world-class fibre broadband, which enables online business to grow, connect and communicate with collaborators and markets around the world.

Existing local networks, innovation events, incubators, and co-working spaces can help kick-start ideas or provide connections to help ideas grow. These include Technology Taranaki, Taranaki Software Developers, and meet-up events on a range of topics, such as blockchain and cloud computing. A range of support facilities are also available, such as connecting entrepreneurs with investors via the angel investment entity Launch Taranaki.

Taranaki has a range of events where ideas can be proffered, picked up, nurtured and supported, including Start-Up Weekend Taranaki, Hack Taranaki, TechWeek and IdeaSummit/incubation support.

The region also has a wealth of well-established innovation and IT knowledge across specialist engineering, manufacturing, energy, and food companies. This enables the engagement of talented and skilled specialists from within the region – people with established local knowledge and connections.

As Taranaki's economy expands, technology and innovation are helping the region plot an exciting path into a future full of opportunities for new enterprise and investment.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- **Industry-specific automation:** leveraging the region's established strengths
- **Digital and professional services:** supporting activity across multiple sectors
- **Surveying and mapping:** harnessing the region's central location
- **Computer systems design and related services:** maximising lifestyle and affordability advantages





Dan Radcliffe believes the successful global online business he started from his parents' remote Taranaki farm has only scratched the surface of what's possible.

International Volunteer HQ (IVHQ) links travellers with volunteer opportunities across the planet in a range of fields from teaching, childcare, medical and refugee support, to construction, environment and wildlife conservation, sports, art and music.

A former volunteer traveller himself, Dan believed he could build a company offering a better experience at a more affordable rate – an attractive proposition for cash-strapped young travellers.

Founded in 2007 and consisting of Dan, a computer, dial-up internet and a \$30,000 loan, prior to COVID-19, IVHQ was the world's leading volunteer travel company. The New Plymouth central-city office employs 32 staff and another eight are in the tech team in Auckland.

Since its humble beginnings, IVHQ has placed more than 110,000 volunteers in programmes across 52 countries.

"We're placing around 20,000 people a year, but we see the opportunity being a lot larger than where we are at. We think we're really only scratching the surface," says Dan.

Hit hard by the New Zealand borders closing during the COVID-19 pandemic, IVHQ worked quickly to create new initiatives to ensure continued success of the company during a time when international travel was not permitted. Online internships and online language classes were two initiatives rolled out to ensure the company stayed on its feet.

Dan's success and that of his growing company has drawn attention both nationally and internationally.

In 2014, the Taranaki man was named New Zealand Entrepreneur of the Year and, in 2016, IVHQ was named Taranaki's best business at the region's annual Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Awards.

The following year, Sydney-based investment company Mercury Capital bought 77% of IVHQ, enabling Dan to step away from the day-to-day running of the company but remain as a director.

"I was clear that I would love to continue to have the company based here and they recognised there are advantages to basing the company in regional New Zealand," he says.

"You can build a good workforce here relatively affordably. A lot of our competitors are based out of the likes of London, Los Angeles, and Sydney, and they're at a disadvantage to us because the wages and rent are much higher.

"There's a great lifestyle here too; the city is easy to get around and it's a simple way of living. That's a big attraction for a lot of people."

Dan says the world-class fibre broadband infrastructure and connectivity in Taranaki has enabled the company to grow without being constrained by location.

"Running an online business, the technology infrastructure here is as good as any of the big centres – London, New York, anywhere. The beauty is that you can be based anywhere these days, compete globally and grow at the same time. We've relied heavily on our online channels to market ourselves, such as Google Ads and our social media channels. By nailing those key marketing channels we've been able to grow effectively from a small provincial city."

A champion for Taranaki, its lifestyle and enterprise opportunities, Dan sees untapped potential across Taranaki, and is investing further in the region.

In 2019, he entered the thriving New Plymouth hospitality sector, establishing craft brewery and brew pub Shining Peak – a "passion project" with a focus on brewing Taranaki beer that tells Taranaki stories.

He also has farming interests and is looking at diversification.

"We're doing feasibility studies around bringing kiwifruit into Taranaki and also growing avocados," he says.

"We want this province to go well into the future. I think we need to start looking ahead and work out how we can use the fertile land we have here."

Automio

An entrepreneurial Taranaki lawyer's innovative idea has taken her out of the courtroom and into the boardroom.

Claudia King is the chief executive and founder of legal tech company Automio, which helps lawyers scale their law firms using automation. Automio designs and builds software that lawyers can use to automate repetitive and time-consuming tasks, such as drafting contracts and legal documents.

Using an interview 'bot' and document builder, Automio asks clients a series of questions that quickly generates a customised automated document. The bots are multi-lingual – they can be created in any language – and can be sold in more than 130 currencies.

Since it launched in 2017, Automio has experienced rapid growth and gained international attention. It has more than 200 law firm customers in Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada, and parts of Asia. In 2018, it was included in influential magazine *Forbes'* list of 60 international women-led start-ups. Automio was the only New Zealand company to feature.

"No one else in New Zealand is doing what we're doing," says Claudia, who leads a team of 15, six of whom are based in the New Plymouth head office. Several others work remotely throughout New Zealand, Sydney, Manila, and Sofia, Bulgaria.

"We do have competitors further afield, but most of them target big law firms, whereas we focus on law firms of up to four partners, and sole practitioners.

"We also developed a training programme to go alongside the software. A lot of lawyers want to innovate and be more efficient and go online, but they often don't know how. So the step-by-step programme helps them to roll it out into their business and implement it successfully," Claudia says.

"Since doing that, we've started to see big growth – it has become our competitive advantage."

Claudia's transformation from a practising lawyer, to a tech company boss, began with the launch of her online law firm Legal Beagle in 2012. Legal Beagle was a nationwide online service that sold online legal services and documents.

This led to the creation of her own automation software, which became Automio.

Over a series of capital raisings to develop and expand, the company has attracted more than 30 investors, most from within Taranaki.

"A lot of investors are based here – people who knew me through my law firm and whom I had built professional relationships with. A lot invested when we didn't have a product – it was just an idea and a vision – so it was amazing to have that local support," Claudia says.

"Being in a smaller place, a lot of people know who you are, and often Taranaki-based people like to invest in a Taranaki company."

She says working from a smaller city hasn't been a hindrance to Automio's ability to grow and succeed.

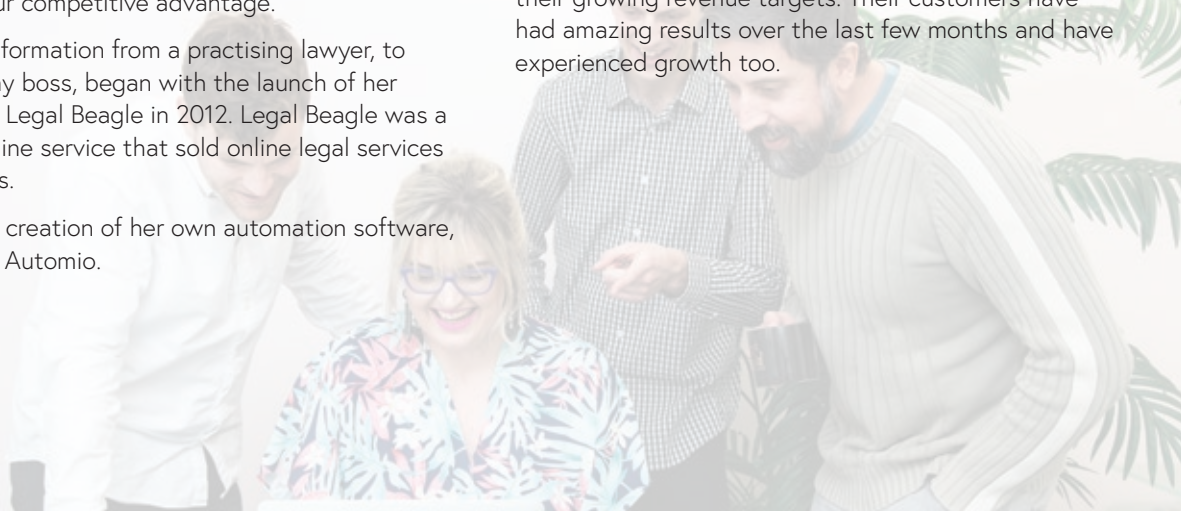
"Our company is an online company, so everything's done through webinars, video conferencing, and collaborative online work spaces where we meet with our team and customers online.

"We can operate from anywhere we can get a wifi connection, and the broadband connectivity here is as good as anywhere," Claudia says.

"The software can be applied to any professional business that has processes where information needs to be collected from team members or customers – we've already got financial advisors, a bank, and insurance companies as customers, so there's room for a lot of growth.

"There's also scope around related products to complement what we're doing now, and service add-ons. We are always open to opportunities."

As Automio is an online business, with the structure and systems already set up for online, and with the majority of the team already working remotely, COVID-19 has had a mostly positive impact on the business. Their target audience of sole practitioners and small law firms are suddenly inspired to take their firms online and automation, so Automio have continued to hit their growing revenue targets. Their customers have had amazing results over the last few months and have experienced growth too.



MANUFACTURING AND ENGINEERING

Taranaki has a world-class pedigree of manufacturing and engineering that prospective investors can tap into and leverage.

Taranaki's engineering talent is well placed to support the emergent post-pandemic manufacturing sector. Underpinned by innovation, entrepreneurship and exceptional standards honed on its food and energy sectors, Taranaki engineers have tackled some of the world's most logistically and technically challenging projects. Accommodation modules for international offshore oil and gas facilities, pressure vessels and complex piping systems, and the design and construction of an all-glass underwater restaurant for an island resort have all originated in Taranaki. Several manufacturing plants for the food, pharmaceutical and petrochemical sectors have also been developed.

Taranaki's food manufacturing sector accounts for nearly 5% of GDP, and is already supporting the region's economic recovery process. There is huge potential to further leverage the strength of Taranaki's food sector to make value-add products.

With Taranaki leading New Zealand's shift to a low-emissions economy, and being in a strong position within the food sector and food production, there is opportunity for investment in manufacturing and

engineering enterprise to support high-value food and beverage products and new energy initiatives across hydrogen, wind, biofuel, solar and other renewables. Furthermore, the infrastructure and support expertise exists to help deliver projects of all scales.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- **Engineering and design consultancy:** supporting established and emerging enterprises and projects
- **Marine services:** leveraging the deep-water knowledge, port and west coast location
- **Industrial production:** developing and deploying the systems and support to enable other projects to succeed
- **Food and beverage manufacturing:** advanced production facilities and services
- **Strong track record:** Taranaki is renowned for its strong Health, Safety and Environment track record

DIALOG Fitzroy Ltd

DIIALOG Fitzroy's success has, literally, been forged in steel.

The Taranaki multi-disciplined engineering and heavy fabrication company, formerly known as Fitzroy Engineering, has been operating for more than 50 years and has built a strong international reputation for its work across the oil and gas, petrochemical and energy sectors.

The company has designed, fabricated and constructed some high-profile international projects, such as the Northern Oil Refinery in Queensland, the 650-tonne, 19m-high accommodation and utilities modules for the 'Yolla' offshore gas platform in the Bass Strait in Australia, and the remarkable all-glass underwater restaurant – the largest in the world – for an island resort in the Maldives.

In 2011, its global reach grew when DIALOG Group Berhad, one of Malaysia's leading integrated specialist technical service providers to the oil and gas and petrochemical industries, bought a 90% stake in the company. DIALOG is headquartered in Kuala Lumpur and is listed on the Bursa Malaysia stock exchange.

Having had a working relationship for a number of years before the acquisition, DIALOG Fitzroy business development and marketing manager Mark Arnold says DIALOG saw Fitzroy Engineering's high-quality work and reputation as the "perfect vehicle" for expansion in Australia and New Zealand.

With close to 500 permanent staff in offices and depots in New Plymouth, South Taranaki, Whangarei, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Brisbane and Chinchilla, in regional Queensland, DIALOG Fitzroy is a truly international company, but Mark says Taranaki remains a crucial base.

"We love it here and are extremely proud to call ourselves a Taranaki company," he says.

"We have offices and people spread all over New Zealand and parts of Australia but remain first and foremost a Taranaki-based organisation.

"Being principally an oil and gas and energy engineering company, based in the heart of that industry in New Zealand, there are advantages in being here, such as a concentrated workforce of qualified and experienced people. The people, local bodies and industry have a fantastic can-do attitude, which helps us to achieve.

"From a practical perspective, Taranaki and New Plymouth offer outstanding transport corridors to our markets via road and sea, which is an important component of our competitive ability in international markets."



Mark says the company's success has been built on a desire to find better solutions for clients, and continued technological innovation, which has allowed DIALOG Fitzroy to work more efficiently and effectively.

"We have always looked for the best people, offered them the best training and opportunities for personal growth. We're always looking to add good people to our company and often they come from outside of Taranaki so, importantly, the province has a lot to offer in terms of a quality lifestyle."

DIALOG Fitzroy is also looking to the future and the role of the company and Taranaki in a low-emissions economy.

"We are committed to the development of renewable and green energy sources, such as hydrogen, biofuels, wind, water and geothermal, and aim to have a significant role with the National New Energy Development Centre in Taranaki," Mark says.

"Taranaki has great local resources with available industrial land, and forward-thinking local government and regional development agencies ready to assist. There are outstanding opportunities available for investment in traditional and renewable energy sources."



Argyle Performance Workwear

For decades, a company based in a small Taranaki town has been helping workers across New Zealand and Australia stay safe on the job.

Argyle Performance Workwear, which develops and supplies safety and performance workwear and footwear products, has been operating from Hāwera, in South Taranaki, for more than 30 years.

Through user insights and trials, the company designs workwear, then contracts factories in Asia, India, and Australia to manufacture the Argyle-branded gear to its own specifications. The products are sold through safety workwear retailers and are worn at building sites, forestry blocks, industrial plants, and factories across New Zealand and Australia.

Started as a small, family company, Argyle has grown to become a market leader, employing more than 40 staff in total at its Hāwera head office and bases in Wellington and Christchurch.

Its success has also made it attractive to buyers. In 2014, Argyle was bought by Most Excellent Investments Ltd of Wellington, the investment arm of Most Excellent Holdings Ltd.

In late 2019, Argyle was sold to Paramount Safety New Zealand, the Auckland-based branch of privately owned Paramount Safety Products, one of Australia's leading wholesalers of industrial and personal safety items. Paramount Safety Products employs more than 100 people and has offices and distribution warehouses in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Auckland.

Argyle Performance Workwear chief executive Craig Broomhall says the company's success highlights that a quality, international business can be established in, and operated from, rural Taranaki.

"There's nothing to stop good businesses developing here. And if you have a good business, it's attractive to

investors from wherever they are – investors who are looking to spread their portfolio across cities, regions, markets and industries," he says.

"There are a lot of further opportunities for us in Taranaki," Craig says. "Paramount really like the operation we have in Hāwera and want to grow the staff and the business. We have planned for expansion and that's where we're heading."

Craig says there are ample opportunities for further enterprise investment and development in South Taranaki, and the business environment and connectivity are as good, if not better, than metropolitan New Zealand.

"Take, for example, property prices. We operate from a fairly new 2500sqm warehouse and 500sqm office in Hāwera. To get comparable floor space in Auckland or Wellington would be incredibly expensive. So we're running our overheads on a lower base.

"We also have good transport links in and out of Hāwera, and reliable overnight service around the whole country, which is better delivery than what many companies have out of Auckland."

Aside from a manager in Wellington, all of Argyle's leadership team is based in Hāwera. Craig says the business has never struggled to attract talent.

"We have skilled, hard-working staff. Having a good business attracts good talent, wherever you are. The lifestyle in Taranaki is fantastic; it's easy to get around if you commute, and the region is a great place to establish a business and operate from."

VISITOR INDUSTRY

With its iconic mountain, acclaimed surf beaches, and world-class gardens, galleries, events and walkways, Taranaki offers the best of New Zealand in a single regional destination.

In 2017, Lonely Planet judged Taranaki the second-best region in the world to visit, lifting the lid on the largely undiscovered region. The result of this accolade rapidly built Taranaki's reputation as a destination hotspot; one that provides something a little different as visitors look to connect with its rich Māori culture and history, enjoy authentic experiences, and sample its laid-back, relaxed but sophisticated culture.

Tourism has almost doubled in value during the past decade, but it is still relatively underdeveloped. In a post-COVID-19 travel climate, Taranaki's visitor industry is well placed to respond and recover, and there remains huge potential for growth.

Central and local government and local authorities are laying the foundation for this by investing in the region. More than \$19 million will see upgrades to hiking tracks and facilities in the national park that surround Taranaki Maunga, to enhance the more than 200km trail network and establish The Taranaki Crossing. This will introduce an iconic multi-day 41km Maunga ki te Moana – mountain to sea – walking experience, increasing both domestic and international (when borders reopen) visitor numbers.

Taranaki is becoming more accessible and attractive to visitors, aided by major development of the northern route of State Highway 3 to New Plymouth and State Highway 43 – the 'Forgotten World Highway'

– to Taranaki's east, a new modern airport terminal, investigations into extending the airport runway, and Port Taranaki working on bringing more cruise ships to the region (which will resume at an appropriate time).

Investment opportunities across accommodation, visitor tours and experiences, and hospitality are waiting to be explored.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- **Nature-based tourism offerings:** showcasing the region's natural landscape
- **Arts, culture and heritage attractions and tours:** tapping into Taranaki's rich creative sector and history
- **Health and wellness offerings:** many opportunities throughout the region
- **Soft-adventure tourism:** leveraging investment in trails and outdoor facilities
- **Eco-tourism and biodiversity:** working alongside the region's many projects
- **Hotels and accommodation:** from hosted to major hotel developments



Ngāmotu Hotels Limited Partnership

Taranaki's increasing reputation as a top holiday destination prompted three separate Māori commercial entities to join together and invest in the region's growing visitor industry.

Ngāmotu Hotels Limited Partnership, a joint venture of Parinihi ki Waitōtara Inc, Te Atiawa Iwi Holdings, and Taranaki Iwi Holdings, bought the 85-room Novotel New Plymouth Hobson Hotel from successful entrepreneur Phillip Brown on 1 January 2019.

Brown built the \$25 million, 4.5-star premier hotel in 2015, which was part of the international Accor Hotels Group, to service the growing demand for tourist accommodation in New Plymouth.

Taranaki has become a popular destination for visitors wishing to connect with the environment and culture in a region that boasts a stunning national park, outstanding art and culture gatherings, modern cafés and restaurants, craft breweries and food producers, and world-class events.

And it was this growing reputation and the unlimited potential for Taranaki to expand on its tourism offerings that encouraged the three iwi commercial entities to invest together.

"It's a good investment," says Ngāmotu Hotels Limited Partnership chair Warrick Tauwhare-George. "It is local, it is substantial, and it is working with a lot of people – staff, Accor, and a growing customer base both domestically and internationally.

"When the opportunity came up, it could have been easy for just one of the entities to buy it in their own right. But the parties built the relationships, trust and confidence to look beyond and know that, over time, shared multiple investments and multiple opportunities are better for the whole than the individuals," Warrick says.

Statistics from Tourism New Zealand show that between 2002 and 2019, guest nights in Taranaki increased from 380,000 to 675,000 – a 78% growth. In the year to January 2020, visitor spend in the region was an estimated \$429 million – the third highest growth rate in the country.

The COVID-19 pandemic may push that growth backwards, creating an unpredictable hospitality market.

"Ngāmotu Hotels Limited Partnership entered the pandemic in a financially strong position, and as with any such investment, we have a strategy founded on a long-term view, thereby ensuring we're not forced into short-term suboptimal decisions."



During Alert Level 4, the Novotel Ngāmotu Taranaki Hotel went into hibernation with a skeleton crew. Once the country moved to Alert Level 3 the hotel re-opened with bookings and occupancy almost immediately following.

"While occupancy numbers were certainly not as per pre-COVID, the Queen's Birthday weekend after lockdown saw occupancy levels exceed 80% of capacity, which is encouraging and reinforces the view that the partnership invested in a sound, well-performing asset."

Taranaki has a lot to offer potential visitor industry and hospitality investors, including Māori.

"Looking from an outside-in perspective, I've spent enough time here to appreciate that Taranaki has great offers. It's a little gem. Whether it's the Taranaki Garden Festival, WOMAD, the tattoo festival, or whether it's the waterfront, or the beauty and majesty of the maunga – Taranaki has a lot to offer and it can differentiate itself from a lot of other parts of New Zealand.

"And there's definitely more opportunity for iwi to invest in Taranaki. I think there's enough capacity for those within Taranaki to do more, so I think there will be further commitments made here. But it's not exclusively Taranaki iwi dependant – there is an openness to outside Māori investment."

He says there is also a real drive and willingness by local authorities to engage with investors to ensure regional progress and development is ongoing.

"The private sector and councils work really well together. The city and region are a credit to that in how they present themselves, which is a drawcard to visitors," Warrick says.

"Venture Taranaki is also structured well and operates well, and is one of the few regional development organisations in New Zealand that can be held up as a good example. I see Taranaki as not only having fantastic features that appeal to visitors and investors, but it also has a coordinated approach among council, the private sector and Venture Taranaki that works well."

WOMAD

On a late summer's evening each March, as the gates open and a sea of happy faces rush into Brooklands Park marking the start of another WOMAD festival, Emere Wano watches on with a mix of disbelief and elation.

"I have to pinch myself that a region this size puts on a world-class event like WOMAD every year," says the event director and New Zealand programme manager of the annual three-day international festival of music, arts and dance.

"We're the smallest city in the world to host a WOMAD, and everyone thinks it shouldn't be possible. But we have a fantastic connection with the community and our corporate partners, an amazing group of more than 300 volunteers who want to be involved, and a hard-working festival team that makes it happen every year," she says.

Established in 1980 by well-known English musician Peter Gabriel, whose desire was to showcase music from other cultures, WOMAD is now a global phenomenon, held in more than 20 countries.

In 2019, WOMAD International announced that TAFT, in partnership with the New Plymouth District Council, had secured the festival for at least another 10 years, through to 2029, although the festival will adapt its delivery in 2021 due to COVID-19.

WOMAD's value to Taranaki is immense – the festival is a key part of the region's identity and has a sizeable impact on the economy and visitor industry.

The Taranaki Arts Festival Trust (TAFT) secured the event (initially held in Auckland) in 2002. In 2019, more than 17,000 people danced their way through 100 hours of music across seven stages at the stunning central city location of Brooklands Park. The event, and associated accommodation, food and general spend, generated \$6.5 million for the regional economy. All up, across the event's history in Taranaki, more than \$125 million has been generated, with 70% of the festival's attendees coming from outside the region.

"First-time visitors to Taranaki often come for WOMAD, but then return to the region bringing family or friends," Emere says.

Emere, who has been involved with WOMAD in Taranaki since day one and is the only TAFT staff member to work fulltime on the festival, says the region's size is a key to the success of the event.

"When WOMAD did their first site visit back in the early 2000s, they were looking for two things – the venue's proximity to facilities, amenities and transport, and the



community feel and look, which is important in terms of the WOMAD ethos and values," she says. "Our size is a real advantage as there is no outside noise of other things going on, unlike bigger cities."

The investment from corporate partners is crucial to WOMAD's long stay in Taranaki.

"They are integral to the festival's success. We call them the WOMAD whānau, because they are more like family than partners and sponsors, and many of them have been with us since the beginning, which provides stability," Emere says.

"They see it as being really beneficial – they help us financially and, in turn, we help provide them with an international platform and a connection with our large audience. The fact we're a global festival and we have connections to other WOMAD festivals, means our partners see that as being an incredible alliance."

TAFT has gained a reputation nationwide for its ability to develop, organise and run successful annual events and festivals, including the internationally recognised Taranaki Garden Festival, and the Taranaki Arts Festival. In 2017, WOMAD was named Best National Event of the Year at the New Zealand Event Awards.

"By working on many events annually and having skilled people, we've developed the capability and capacity to deliver world-class events," Emere says.

PROPERTY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Taranaki is being transformed by government and private sector investments, which in turn are creating emergent infrastructure and property development opportunities.

Historically there has been under-investment in this space, which has created a huge need for new development.

Defying predictions, commercial property activity in New Plymouth has been on a growth surge since April 2018. There is substantial demand for smart development spanning retail, office and industrial use, while new hub developments in both Hāwera and Stratford offer ground-floor opportunities.

Established buildings offer an accessible entry point in towns around the mountain, while greenfield development sites remain available throughout the region.

Residential accommodation investment is also on the rise, with a growing demand for quality rental properties throughout the region driven by the globally connected energy sector and strong inward migration.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:

- **Commercial property:** opportunities across the spectrum
- **Industrial property:** development and management
- **Infrastructure:** energy, transportation and connectivity



Augusta Capital

Successful Taranaki businessman and philanthropist Bryce Barnett believes there is opportunity for large corporate companies to cut costs by establishing offices in regional New Zealand.

"I find the possibilities for Taranaki exciting," says the Augusta Capital executive director, who works from the New Plymouth and Auckland offices of the property funds manager.

"There is opportunity for corporates based in Auckland to set up some of their business functions, such as accounting and administration, in Taranaki. The region is a good place to be based to do business from – the rent is half of Auckland, there is good connectivity to other centres, staff are happier because they only have five minutes to drive to work, and the lifestyle here is great."

Augusta Capital, a New Zealand stock exchange-listed property funds manager that specialises in commercial and industrial property, looks after \$2.3 billion of real estate throughout New Zealand and Australia for individual investors and investment syndicates.

It has a large presence in Taranaki, managing about \$60 million worth of property in the region, including the large Valley retail shopping complex in New Plymouth, supermarket properties, and other commercial and industrial properties.

Despite having offices in Auckland and Christchurch, it is the New Plymouth office that manages the company's Taranaki buildings, its Australian portfolio, and properties in Hamilton to Wellington.

"We have 12 staff here – accounting staff, two asset managers who fly to Australia every two months, and the operations manager for the whole Augusta group," says Bryce.

That strong Taranaki connection was developed by Bryce, who established property investment company KCL in 1994 and built up a successful business that managed more than \$750 million worth of property in New Zealand and Australia.

In 2014, Augusta Capital bought KCL for \$15 million.

"We were competing, so it worked to join forces and a lot of our investor base crossed over," says Bryce. "It was a case of economies of scale too, particularly around stringent FMA (Financial Markets Authority) regulations, which would cost us more than \$500,000 in legal compliance a year now."

KCL had a large group of Taranaki investors, prompting Augusta Capital to maintain a New Plymouth office.

"The company is regionally focused. Of our investors across the whole country, 23% are from Taranaki, second only to Auckland, so we stayed here because of that strong investor base," says Bryce, whose governance and philanthropic commitment and contribution to Taranaki saw him made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2018.

"We had key staff who wanted to stay here where they were more financially secure – each one of our staff in New Plymouth owns their own house, which wouldn't be the case in Auckland."

Bryce says with Taranaki going through a "readjustment stage" as the region shifts to a low-emissions environment, there is the opportunity for property in the region to be utilised in new ways – such as "upmarket medical facilities, or an upmarket day surgery" – and for corporates in the major centres to invest in or lease office space in Taranaki to house various parts of their operations, including accounting and administration.

"There is the opportunity to get the message out to the investing community that Taranaki is changing and there are opportunities here."



First Gas

Headquartered in the heart of New Zealand's premier energy region, First Gas Group owns and operates some of the country's largest and most important infrastructure.

Snaking up the west coast of the North Island and branching out across the island, are thousands of kilometres of gas transmission and distribution pipelines that supply major industrial plants, power stations, dairy factories, homes, enterprises and essential services, such as hospitals.

"They're vital pieces of infrastructure for the day-to-day operations of some of our major industries and for hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders," says First Gas Group chief executive Paul Goodeve, at the company's head office in New Plymouth.

First Gas was created in 2016 when Australian-based First Sentier Investors bought the gas transmission and distribution network of electricity and gas distribution company Vector Limited for \$952.5 million. This included the Kāpuni natural gas transmission pipeline, which runs from Kāpuni, in South Taranaki, to Auckland, and south to Wellington.

First Gas then purchased the Māui natural gas transmission pipeline from oil and gas companies Shell, OMV and Todd (collectively known as the Māui Mining Companies) for \$335 million. The Māui pipeline is New Zealand's main gas transmission line; more than half of the gas that flows along it supplies the Huntly Power Station and the two Taranaki methanol plants owned by Methanex.

All up, First Gas has more than 2,500km of high-pressure gas transmission pipes and about 4,800km of gas distribution pipes in the North Island.

The pipelines are supplied by Taranaki's offshore and onshore natural gas fields. Having the majority of those assets in the region and the expertise of those involved in the oil and gas industry is what prompted First Gas to have its headquarters in Taranaki.

"There's a fantastic eco-system of businesses that exist in Taranaki," says Paul. "Growing out of the oil and gas industry and Think Big, there's a real bubble of technical expertise in the oil and gas industry and associated disciplines, which stretches from welders and engineers to our councils and lawyers."

"There's also an exceptionally high level of health and safety expertise – probably at a level that you don't see anywhere else in New Zealand."

The First Gas Group is owned by funds managed by First Sentier Investors, a global asset management



enterprise that manages more than AU\$200 billion in assets on behalf of a range of investors, including pension funds and institutional investors.

In 2017, First Gas Group furthered its investment in gas infrastructure, with affiliate company Gas Services New Zealand (GSNZ) buying the Ahuroa gas storage facility, near Stratford in central Taranaki. Further investment has followed with the facilities upgraded to enable increased storage capacity.

In 2018, GSNZ bought New Zealand's largest LPG retailer Rockgas, from Contact Energy, for \$260 million.

"Our shareholders like investing in New Zealand and infrastructure-type assets. Both Ahuroa and Rockgas were seen as investment opportunities that complemented the First Gas business and fit well with our long-term investment approach, which is to diversify our domestic gas offering and grow our business," Paul says.

First Gas is also looking to the future and has received Government support, through the Provincial Growth Fund, to investigate whether its existing gas pipelines can support hydrogen or hydrogen-blend gas transmission.

"The trial is really exciting for us as we see it as a real opportunity for gas and for New Zealand. Our trial is not going to answer whether hydrogen's made, it's going to answer whether we can transport it in our pipelines, and we're pretty sure we can," Paul says.

"There's opportunity for the likes of hydrogen projects to kick the region on. The expertise is here, the infrastructure is here, there's a strong workforce here, and councils and the regional council have a lot of experience and well-understood processes by which projects are well considered."

As an essential service during the COVID-19 pandemic, First Gas have been able to continue operations relatively unaffected. Flexible work practices have been in place for some time, and their IT systems are set up to allow access from anywhere, allowing staff to effectively work from home, with little disruption.

HOW TO INVEST IN TARANAKI

WHO IS VENTURE TARANAKI?

Venture Taranaki is the region's development agency and works in partnership with private enterprise, industry, local authorities, community and government agencies to connect investors with investment opportunities.

Venture Taranaki encompasses a wide range of activities, spanning local and regional economic development and strategy, enterprise innovation and growth, regional promotion and marketing, sector development, and major event attraction. As a Council Controlled Organisation of the New Plymouth District Council, Venture Taranaki is governed by an independent Board of Trustees, and guided by the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Venture Taranaki is working towards the long-term impact of a Taranaki economy that supports the well-being of our people and environment, underpinned by resilient enterprises, economies and communities. We do this by promoting Taranaki as a great place to learn, live, learn, create and play; providing enterprise support

and enablement; fostering innovation and resilience; and promoting investment in Taranaki.

Our work is also guided by *Tapuae Roa: Make Way for Taranaki*, Taranaki's regional economic development strategy, and by the *Taranaki 2050 Roadmap* for transitioning to a low-emissions economy.

Venture Taranaki is well positioned to be the port of call for potential investors looking at opportunities within our region. We have our finger on the pulse of the prospects for Taranaki, and we have the necessary connections in place to help turn opportunities into reality. For a confidential discussion on opportunities in the Taranaki region, contact the team at Venture Taranaki directly.

For much more detail, including resources and statistics, visit www.investment.taranaki.info.

CONTACT US

Venture Taranaki

25 Dawson Street
PO Box 670
New Plymouth 4310
New Zealand

Stephanie Laird

Investment Advisor
stephanie@venture.org.nz
06 759 5150

www.taranaki.info



OTHER SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Venture Taranaki is equipped with the knowledge and tools to help enterprises of all stages and scales to succeed. Whether you're looking to invest in a new or existing venture, at idea-stage, or established and looking to expand, Venture Taranaki offers services, resources and connections that can help. What's more, almost all of our services are free.

Venture Taranaki can assist you by:

- offering a free, confidential and commercially neutral point of contact for investors to discuss ideas and obtain information and referrals
- providing free business start-up clinics, networking events, information, and assistance with R&D funding
- providing entry to training/capability building grants, and exporter and industry cluster groups such as food, energy, and engineering
- enabling access to business mentors, feasibility studies and regional economic market intelligence
- drawing on extensive regional intelligence products, services, and connections.





TRAVEL TIMES FROM TARANAKI

New Plymouth to Auckland:
4.5-hour drive or 40-min flight

New Plymouth to Wellington:
4.5-hour drive, 50-min flight

New Plymouth to Christchurch:
1.5-hour flight



venture
TARANAKI
Te Puna Umanga

Taranaki's Regional Development Agency

25 Dawson Street, PO Box 670
New Plymouth 4340, New Zealand

T+64 6 759 5150
E info@venture.org.nz

www.taranaki.info

An initiative of



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu

**New Plymouth
District Council**