Research Article

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Agritourism and the adaptive re-use of farm buildings in New Zealand

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Abstract: This paper reports findings from a study of the adaptive re-purposing of farm buildings for a wide array of agritourism activities. The research is being conducted in New Zealand where the international visitor sector is thriving. In response, an increasing number of farmers are attempting to boost their farm incomes by adding tourism ventures to their business portfolios. In doing so, many of them are using and preserving rural cultural heritage, particularly old agricultural and other rural buildings, while also diversifying farm activity. This element of agritourism therefore has an important role in the protection and adaptive re-use of farm buildings, farm landscape change, and the creation of new value and values in the countryside. In the cases we have studied, this entrepreneurial activity is largely farmer-driven and undertaken with some, but limited, financial support from central and local government. In considering the policy implications of our work, we call for the provision of advisory services to facilitate and enable New Zealand farmers to create profitable and sustainable high-quality tourism services that simultaneously preserve farm buildings.

Keywords: Agriculture, tourism, farm buildings, adaptive re-use, New Zealand

1 Introduction

This paper arises from a research programme exploring entrepreneurial experimentation on multigenerational family farms in New Zealand, including but not limited to the development of a wide range of agritourism ventures. New Zealand's agritourism sector is growing in importance and attracts a significant share of the country's burgeoning overseas visitor numbers: in 2016, 27 per cent of 3 million tourists who travelled to New Zealand visited a farm or orchard, and 20 per cent visited a winery or wine trail (MPI and ANZ 2016). In this paper we focus on one element of New Zealand's agritourism: the repurposing of farm buildings for tourist activities and accommodation. Very little has been written from a New Zealand perspective on this form of farm building adaptation, and so our objective in this paper is to link the New Zealand experience with international debates and theorising. In conducting this work, we have sought to answer three main research questions:

1. What motives underpin this process of farm building adaptation?
2. What is the nature and form of farm building repurposing for agritourism in New Zealand?
3. What are the policy implications inherent in this element of agritourism growth?

It is important to begin by clarifying what we mean by 'agritourism' as the concept is not all that easy to define. The main difficulty arises from the close relationship between agri and rural tourism. Rural tourism is generally thought of as the broader of the two concepts, accounting for *all forms* of tourism taking place in rural areas, including farm-based agritourism, but also film tourism, rural cycle tours, community festivals and events, golf tourism, adventure experiences, horse-riding, wine tasting, orchard and vineyard tours, and ecotourism (Mackay et al. 2014; Phillip et al. 2010; Silva and Prista 2016). Agritourism is best understood as a subset of rural tourism and is mainly concerned with visits to and holidaying on a *working farm* (Lane and Kastenholz 2015; Potočnik-Slavič and Schmitz 2013).

Agritourism can, however, also take place on non-working farms and off the farm, for example visiting an agricultural interpretation or research centre, consum-

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ing farm products in farm retail outlets located in nearby towns, and visiting farm museums or farmers markets (Mackay et al. 2014). It is worth noting here that research conducted in nine European countries found an increasing trend of farms ceasing agricultural production to concentrate solely on agritourism, thus further problematizing the links between agritourism and *working* farms (Potočnik-Slavič and Schmitz 2013; Phillip et al. 2010; and Flanigan et al. 2014). For the purposes of this study, and following Wiscombe (2017: 40-41), we define agritourism as: "...visiting a working farm ... for the purpose of enjoyment, entertainment, education, or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation." In our definition, we include staying overnight on a farm.

Our next step is to provide a review of the international literature on agritourism, beginning with coverage of the reasons why farmers engage in agritourism development, and then studies that explicitly address the process of adapting and preserving old farm buildings. The review is followed by an outline of our research methods (also see Mackay et al 2018). We then present the main findings of our secondary and primary data analysis. We do this by elaborating the context in which agritourism has developed in New Zealand, and the reasons farmers have developed tourism enterprises, and by making the first steps in the development of a typology of the adaptive repurposing of farm buildings for tourism in New Zealand. In our conclusion we discuss our results in light of the extant literature and address the policy implications of our research.

2 Literature Review

There are many reasons *why* farmers engage in agritourism and in this process invest in the adaptive repurposing of old farm buildings. This has been the key focus for a number of researchers. In a survey of Australian agritourism entrepreneurs, Ecker et al. (2010) found that most respondents were primarily motivated to invest in an agritourism business to increase or maintain their income. This finding connects particularly strongly to discussions of rural commodification (Cloke 1993; Perkins 2006; Mackay, et al. 2009). The central idea here is that rural actors are continually searching for new opportunities to generate profit and in this process create new and valuable commodities, including a plethora of rural tourism products based on new forms of attraction and experience. As we have argued elsewhere (Mackay et al. 2014: 43):

> In combination, these rural tourism products are exemplified by the sale of new and 'boutique' local foods and beverages, often at the point of production; farm tours, activities and stays; outdoor adventure and thrill-seeking experiences; nature and cultural heritage viewing; small town events and festivals; and, the provision of a significant array of passive and active recreation activities based on the re-making of the rural as a set of places which are attractive to those with money to spend on outdoor recreation, consumption goods and fashionable experiences. Thus, the countryside has changed from being a place mainly of primary production to one *also* arranged for the sale of an increasing array of non-traditional rural commodities, services, lifestyle products and experiences.

While ideas about commodification emphasise the rise of new profit-driven entrepreneurial activities, other researchers point to a more complex and intertwined set of motives, with the economic playing only a partial role. Talbot (2013), for example, in a study of Welsh farm diversification, shows how in the process of agritourism venture creation a new income stream *and* sense of place for the farm was developed. The farm in question:

> ...had attractive traditional style farm buildings next to the railway line which were no longer fit for the purpose of housing livestock and developed these into holiday cottages named after the steam engines that travel on the line past his farm. The use of traditional buildings and the incorporation of a railway theme to the accommodation have helped to create a 'sense of place' on the farm (Talbot 2013: 10).

Ainley's (2013) study of farm families with agritourism ventures in Ontario, Canada, illuminated further multi-dimensional motives for involvement in agritourism: to help preserve the farming way of life, create meaningful jobs for their children and be able to continue to make a living from the land. Similar findings were reported in a study of 226 agritourism operators in Italy (Cassia et al. 2015), in which the researchers explored whether heritage preservation and enhancement were a motive for agritourism entrepreneurs. In that study, personal and family-related factors emerged as being most important and economic motives the least. Also focused on heritage preservation, LaPan and Barbieri (2014) examined Missouri farmers' motives to preserve and protect tangible heritage on farmlands. They found that many farmers operating agritourism ventures that utilise old farm buildings do so primarily to preserve such heritage, with economic motives much less important to them. This led the authors to conclude that farmers might be missing the opportunity to *maximise* income directly from these resources.

Other studies focus on agritourists and community residents, rather than the motives of providers. Bocz et al. (2012), report a study of visitors' views about the adaptive

re-use of old agricultural buildings in Sweden, finding that visitors valued "atmosphere" and "style/character" above all else. This finding led them to promote a cautious approach to the use of new materials and technology in building renovation projects, so as not to destroy the elements that visitors found most attractive. In an online survey of residents in Missouri, Pennsylvania and Texas that examined preferences for landscape features on agritourism farms, natural features (such as wildlife) emerged as being the most popular, with historic elements, such as log cabins and antique tractors also highly valued; intensive monoculture landscapes were the least preferred (Gao at al. 2014).

A further perspective is provided by Bamert et al. (2016), who undertook two case studies of the perceptions of local people of their local cultural heritage in two contrasting regions in rural Switzerland and Austria. The researchers concluded that context-specific solutions were required for the maintenance of cultural heritage. In regions where traditional economic activities such as agriculture remain, the emphasis should be on the *adaptive reuse* of traditional buildings. By way of contrast, in regions where rural change has led to a move away from such traditional economic activities, the emphasis should be on the *preservation* of historic traditional buildings.

The literature also reports research on the process and outcomes of building adaptation, offering advice for planners and those investing in the adaptation of buildings. Part of this literature expresses concern that the conversion process could threaten a building's cultural and environmental characteristics (Porto et al. 2012). The use of Cultural Heritage Interpretation (CHI) methods and tools is suggested by Porto et al. (2012), as a means to publicise the advantages of 'good' conversion as well as build awareness of the need to preserve the distinctiveness of vernacular buildings.

Fuentes (2010) suggests a methodology for classifying and documenting old European farm buildings, also making suggestions about their *potential* for re-use, providing information for local and regional public authorities on which to base management of rural heritage. Researchers in this area agree that new economic uses of such buildings are one way to save them, favouring use for agricultural tourism because this is close to the building's original use and hence there is less likelihood of loss of their heritage character (Fuentes 2010). By way of example, Fuentes et al. (2010) outline how traditional wine caves in rural Spain can be reused for new types of ventures including the production of artisanal foodstuffs, cultural activities, and restaurants. The authors, however, caution that such reuse should take care not to negatively affect the caves' identity and aesthetic appeal and should conform to planning and building regulations.

Much of the protection of old farm buildings in Europe, including those on private land, is actively facilitated, supported and financed by various supranational, national and regional government and non-governmental organisations. Many European heritage buildings are in public or trust ownership and on display for visitors. For example, about 400 Hungarian rural heritage houses have been protected and opened to the public with the aim of illustrating the history and culture of the houses and their location, helping to signify distinctive local identities in response to globalisation (Bassa 2013). A similar programme exists in Italy's South Tyrol where an extensive network of culturally significant and privately-owned farmhouses is opened to visitors. Support for these houses and their residents are part of a significant state investment in rural heritage and cultural tourism, accredited under the Red Rooster brand (www.redrooster.it/en/).

In New Zealand, the limited literature on heritage farm buildings is part of research into industrial heritage, with few connections made to agritourism (Thornton 1982, 1986, 1996; Smith 2001; Thomson c2005; Smith & Straight 2015). The situation with respect to heritage management and agritourism in New Zealand is nowhere near as well developed as the international research literature suggests is the case in Europe. Farm buildings displaying notable heritage value – illustrating or symbolising important 19th Century colonial events, processes or cultural forms – are protected in New Zealand. In those cases some funding is available for heritage protection from a variety of government sources, such as the National Heritage Preservation Incentive, and via the support of local community trusts and fundraising efforts (Figure 1). There is also a range of regulatory and non-regulatory incentives to protect heritage buildings, such as conservation lots, waivers of zone provisions, transferable development rights, grants and rates/local taxes relief (www.heritage.org.nz/protecting-heritage/funding-for-heritage-protection).

While local authorities are permitted by law to protect and manage heritage buildings within their jurisdictions, they often do not have the resources or capability to systematically protect vernacular heritage farm buildings. They also recognise the difficulty of convincing farmers to be regulated in this way and, additionally, many such buildings were not constructed to stand for more than a generation or two, and there are often not the resources to pay for their upkeep. Without formal protection, it is therefore a matter of farmer discretion as to whether buildings are preserved. A major transition in agricultural

Figure 1: A restored and now protected late 19th century rural cottage, South Canterbury, New Zealand. Image provided by Author (Mike Mackay)

land use in New Zealand, since the 1990s (Mackay and Perkins 2018), is also part of the picture. In the process of farm system conversion, many buildings from earlier times have either been demolished to make way for new farm priorities, designs and functions, including irrigation infrastructure, or left to degrade and collapse in situ (Figures 2 and 3). Farmers wishing to alter old buildings on their farms may do so if they meet the requirements of general building codes (Harper 2015).

Figure 2: An unused historic farm building crumbling in situ, Central Otago, New Zealand. Image provided by Author (Mike Mackay)

Figure 3: An iron farm barn rusting in situ, Collingwood, South Island, New Zealand. Image provided by James Gibson (under Creative commons licensing CC-BY-NC)

3 Methods

Consistent with the tenets of qualitative naturalistic research methods (Blumer 1969) and a relational analytical perspective (Bathelt 2006; Jones 2013), we began our research by familiarising ourselves with the research setting and the literature discussed above. This contextual work was a crucial starting point given the lack of recent studies of agritourism in New Zealand. To further elaborate these secondary data, we conducted 12 interviews with entrepreneurial farmers and their families designed "to gain richer insights into the socio-spatial experience of new tourism venture creation on family farms" (Mackay et al. 2018: 171). We began by interviewing farm family members in their homes. These interviews helped identify how farm tourism opportunities were recognised; the reasons for their development; the ways economic and human resources were harnessed in the process; and the challenges family members encountered as they set up and then managed their new businesses. The farms were sampled to represent a range of farm types and sizes, and tourist activities.

During these interviews, it became apparent that our research participants wanted to elaborate their stories by having us walk the farm. We thus turned to the use of walking interviews (see Mackay et al. 2018 for a full account of our use of this method). As these mobile interviews unfolded, we found ourselves in, and looking at, an array of farm buildings, some dating from the period of 19th Century European settlement that had been or were in the process of being converted into agritourist spaces.

While historically interesting, none of these had formal heritage protection.

Our interviews were conducted on free-hold pastoral family farms ranging in size from 260 hectares (642 acres) to 1200 hectares (2975 acres). All interviews were digitally recorded. The mobile interviews also relied on field notes including notations on pre-prepared farm property maps, aerial photographs and photography for more elaborate data capture. This helped us understand the terrain, the scale of the operation and the amenity and tourism resources on the farm. The digital recordings were transcribed and combined with the field notes. The resulting data was subjected to within-case and across-case thematic analysis. This led us to our current focus, the connection between agritourism and the adaptive repurposing of farm buildings.

4 Rural change, farm buildings and agritourism in New Zealand

Overall, our secondary and interview data show that the adaptive repurposing and conservation of farm buildings for tourism and other non-traditional farm-based activities is part of the story of rural change in New Zealand as it progresses through wave after wave of commodification. In telling their building conversion stories, some of our research participants traced the first significant wave of farm tourism activity in New Zealand to 1980s neoliberal restructuring, that included the removal of longstanding agricultural subsidies. In the ensuing "difficult decade for farmers", as one of our research participants put it, there was a *need* to bolster farm incomes leading to a great deal of experimentation with new non-traditional land use options, including farm tourism (Taylor et al. 1997).

Making this story of restructuring and the search for alternative land uses more specific, some of our research participants also talked about the collapse of course wool prices, brought about by the rise in synthetic fibres in garment and floor carpet manufacture (Pawson and Perkins 2013). They noted that the impact of this on their farms has been the under-utilisation of sheep shearing facilities and the accommodation once used by shearers and shepherds. In these terms, the buildings were interpreted by farmers as representing material and symbolic forms of mainly past agricultural production that had become un-profitable. However, in their new manifestations, as tourism resources, these former agricultural resources are a new form of valuable farm asset.

> ...we're a good case in point in that until the '80s we were strong sheep farmers, then in the 1990s after the big collapse, we became deer farmers, then we were dairy grazing, and then like so many of us [farmers] we got on the farm tourism bandwagon to bring in the extra cash flow. We really needed it. Others did similar things, but they all started around here as traditional sheep farmers. Over my lifetime, everything has changed. We're still into tourism, and our daughter is too. She's started up a little side-business bringing tourists to the farm and it's all going exceptionally well. The difference is that she is passionate about tourism and got into it out of interest, whereas we were doing what we had to do with the resources we had – the farm! (Male research participant, farm accommodation provider, and trout fishing guide).

Another farmer interviewee said:

> ...you're probably aware that sheep farming went through a pretty hard and challenging time a while back now, and the local [sheep meat processing] plant closed and we had to work hard as a community and group of individuals to find alternative land uses that would keep us afloat, and in a way that's still happening with the tourism thing ... so in one way the change drove a lot of the innovation and diversification you saw. It's not all that different today ... we're mainly dairy now ... the old [wool] shed wasn't getting a lot of use other than for storage. So, we thought, let's give the tourism thing a go – the building is basically already there, we just need to fix it up for guests, and it's part of our legitimate history and we should probably push that a little bit more in our marketing. We're a dairy farm too though and we've thought about having a glass window in the cow shed so the tourists can come in and watch the cows being milked, in conjunction with a café, but that idea hasn't got off the ground ... just yet (laughs) (Male research participant, farm accommodation provider).

Consistent with the literature reviewed above, and in addressing one of our guiding research questions, we discovered that our research participants' tourism-related building conversions and activities were not driven *only* by economic imperatives. While their new businesses needed to be financially viable – "stand on its own two feet" as one research participant put it – as for Ainsley (2013), several of the farmers we spoke to also emphasised family-orientated thinking when discussing their agritourism activities and building conversions: in these processes they were using farm resources to create a business portfolio that offered diverse career prospects for the next generation of family members, particularly those who were not keen on agriculture alone. As three of our respondents explained:

> ...part of the thrill is the new succession possibilities we're creating ... Rather than having our son or daughter take on the farm, there's now the opportunity for them to be involved in marketing or communications ... endless opportunities! (Male research participant, luxury farm accommodation provider).

> ...my daughter and son help. I want them to have ownership of the new [business] because it might be theirs in five to ten years ... it's cool to have built a new option for their future (Female research participant, cycle tourism services and farm accommodation provider).

> When you have children, you start thinking about the future a bit more. You join the dots together about where everything is heading and think about things like sustainability. So, you sit and ask yourself, how can I make the farm a better place for them? We're not hung up on our kids being farmers, but we'd like them to be here in some capacity and the place [farm] now offers [alternative career] choices for them (Male research participant, farm accommodation provider).

In addition to talk about motives for involvement, our interviews also traversed the elements of the building conversion *process*. The stories provided to us by farmers and their families on this process emphasised several common factors:

1. Searching for appropriate uses for old farm buildings;
2. Finding ways of resourcing the building restoration process;
3. Encountering and working with local government building codes;
4. Getting the work done using family and community labour; and then attempting to operate an agritourism business in the restored space.

As a way of understanding this creative process we turned to the rural entrepreneurship literature. Westhead and Wright (2013: 7) note that "the entrepreneurial process involves all the functions and activities associated with perceiving opportunities and pursuing them." A process-orientated study of entrepreneurship requires attention be given to the combined elements of opportunity recognition, information and resource acquisition, and networking. In order to illustrate this process in the context of our study, we now turn to a typical story of a conversion process and its context, as provided to us by one of our farmer participants.

The farm in question, located in New Zealand's South Island, combines winter dairy grazing with a tourist accommodation enterprise. The growth of tourism in the local area, driven mainly by the development of a new cycle way, offered the family the opportunity to expand their business into on-farm accommodation. Fortuitously, one of their blocks of land contained a run-down colonial villa and historic limestone woolshed. In the process of exploring the agritourism potential of these existing

Figure 4: Glamping cottages constructed using recycled farm materials, Waitaki District, South Island, New Zealand. Image provided by Author (Tracy Nelson)

farm resources, a local builder classified the villa as uninhabitable and it was subsequently demolished, but ultimately provided the materials used to build the seven new "glamping" (glamourous camping) huts of unique design (Figure 4). The historic limestone woolshed was saved, restored and converted into shared guest facilities including a high-end commercial kitchen, dining room and ablution block. Building strong and effective connections to the local council and community were key elements of this process. These relationships were described as critical to the success of the venture.

While there was some initial concern from the 'locals' when the villa was demolished, they appreciated that some of the material salvaged from it was being reused and thus preserved. This encouraged some local farmers to donate items of historic value to the project, such as vintage farm machinery which are now permanent features at the site. Crucial connections were also made with local tourism operators, such as the owner of a 4WD company who agreed to bring his clients to the site. This new relationship helped to raise the profile of the business and generate a strong client base. As with all our interviewees, the building conversion process, particularly the woolshed adaptation, and the development of a successful business provided these farmers with a deep sense of satisfaction, achievement and enjoyment.

Our review of on-line resources showed that the building process often becomes part of the communications and marketing of the new agritourism site, with each stage of its development described and sometimes displayed in a series of photographs. These images and the associated narratives commonly celebrated the resourceful do-it-yourself approach taken by farm family

members, friends and community. The following example taken from our review of websites highlights how select elements of the building conversion process were captured in the place-marketing process:

> The original woolshed on the farm has been converted into accommodation, using largely recycled materials. The aim was to maintain the original character of the building, the history and essential Kiwi-ness of it, as well as making it as eco-friendly and sustainable as possible.

> We have retained various of the original woolshed features – the wool-press now houses the hot water cylinder, a shearing plant graces the wall, and one wall is covered by corrugated iron previously cladding the outside of the woolshed. The living area floor is natural timber, and the remaining living area walls are clad with native rimu [a decorative native timber] taken from the exterior of a demolished woolshed at Whitehall (https://www.cassiesfarm.co.nz).

Our review of on-line resources also pointed us to three main types of building adaptation for agritourism in New Zealand. We outline these below.

4.1 Type I: Farm accommodation

By far the most common form of agri-building repurposing in New Zealand has been for the provision of on-farm tourist accommodation. It has involved the adaptive re-use of a wide range of former agricultural buildings – shearing sheds, hay barns, former farmworker accommodation and utility sheds – for short-stay tourist accommodation including budget and luxury facilities, Airbnbs (entire houses or single rooms), and sophisticated lodges. As we have touched on above, a recent trend is the conversion of unused woolsheds into modern standalone accommodation. The size of these buildings enables accommodation complexes to be developed with multiple rooms, capacious common rooms, and large, often commercial-grade kitchens.

A very good example is of a former woolshed made redundant in processes of rural restructuring which saw a century-old sheep farming regional economy change to large herd, intensively managed dairy farming. The woolshed in question is located on an 1100-hectare, 1300-cow dairy farm in the South Island of New Zealand, and reflects a conscious farm diversification strategy. The family farmers have converted the woolshed into modern, fully self-contained accommodation, comprising two well-appointed self-contained apartments catering for nine people. The woolshed exterior appears largely unchanged (Figures 5 and 6), but inside a complete transformation has occurred.

Part of the attraction of such accommodation for many visitors is that it provides an opportunity to participate in activities on and off the farm. In this case, the farm and accommodation facility is located beside a major multi-day cycle trail and is also only two minutes ride from a local rural servicing town and associated shopping and cafés. Children and their carers can also visit the farm petting zoo that is home to miniature horses, highland cattle, rare breed bantams, sheep, goat, and baby calves. These latter activities take us to our second agri-tourism building type.

Figure 5: Waitaki woolshed conversion (front view) – from sheep shearing building to tourist accommodation, Waitaki District, South Island, New Zealand. Image provided by Author (Mike Mackay)

Figure 6: Waitaki woolshed conversion (rear view), Waitaki District, South Island, New Zealand. Image provided by Author (Mike Mackay).

4.2 Type II: Supporting tourism activities

The second type of re-purposed agritourism building supports specific tourist activities, such as: interpretation centres for visitors to the farm, small museums, art galleries, cafés, restaurants, weddings, and spaces to test one's hand at a variety of farm practices. These activities are almost always marketed in association with a wider range of those available on- and off-farm, including accommodation.

The exemplar typical of this type of building and farm can be found at the 1200-hectare Mt Potts High Country Station in Canterbury (http://mtpotts.co.nz/about/), a working cattle farm and recently the backdrop in the *Lord of the Rings* films. The station hosts visitors in the repurposed homestead, shearers' quarters and woolshed capable of holding weddings, private functions and corporate retreats. The Station's website describes the offerings available to agritourists, both on the farm and in the surrounding hinterland, in the following way:

> In 1964 the original Mt Potts homestead, shearers' quarters and woolshed were converted into an accommodation, events and function centre. Today, Mt Potts Lodge is Canterbury's most remote lodge-style accommodation on a working high country station, nestled in the heart of the harsh and hauntingly beautiful Southern Alps. The lodge is sited in the world-famous Ashburton Lakes District, only 20 minutes' drive to Lake Clearwater – an outdoor recreational playground offering fishing, kayaking, ice skating, 4W driving, horse riding, tramping, climbing, photography, birdwatching and more. Bordering the Main Divide and Mt Cook National Park, the Mt Potts region is world-renowned for alpine game hunting, and the nearby headwaters of the mighty Rangitata River is famous for salmon and rainbow trout fishing (http://mtpotts.co.nz/about/).

4.3 Type III: Farm retailing and produce display

Some farmers have converted old farm buildings into consumption sites where on-farm retailing and produce display allow visitors to view, sample and purchase fresh produce, handmade crafts, and food and beverages made on site. A well-known and award winning example is Black Hills farm – a 250 acre, fourth generation sheep and beef property located in the Canterbury region of New Zealand's South Island (https://www.blackhills.co.nz/). Between 1999 and 2004, the owner, with the help of a group of local enthusiasts, carefully and resourcefully restored the (then deteriorating) farm's original mid-19th century buildings, including a limestone cottage, woolshed and stables. These buildings are now a key element of the owner's natural dye free yarn and designer knitwear business where, in addition to featuring in the marketing of the business venture, are:

> ...used as display and information areas depicting the workings of [the] business showcasing the sequence from fleece to yarn to finished garment. The buildings are also a popular wedding venue ...In the shed a collection of farming paraphernalia includes tack, wagons and carriages. The old stables are used as a display area to educate visitors about the business of wool, how it is grown, shorn and spun. [There is] also a small shop there selling patterns, knitting kits, skeins of wool and finished garments including sweaters, jackets, hats, gloves, scarves and booties (Warwick, 2014: 39-40).

5 Conclusion

In studying New Zealand farmers' tourism-orientated entrepreneurial activity, we have encountered the considerable potential of their pluriactivity to conserve built heritage while simultaneously diversifying farm activity and streams of income. Theoretically, the adaptive repurposing of farm buildings for tourism can be thought of in terms of the working out of rural commodification (Cloke 1993). The farmers involved have identified the exchange values that can be created by entrepreneurial private property investment – an important element of the "re-resourcing" of rural areas in the restructuring process (Perkins 2006). Following Ecker et al. (2012), it illustrates the search by farmers for new and assured sources of income in an agricultural regime where government support is limited. More than that, and consistent with the arguments made by Ainsley (2013), Cassia et al. (2015) and LaPan and Barbieri (2013), sustaining intergenerational family farm ownership is also a consideration, as is enhancing community well-being, identity, and senses of historical connection and place (Talbot 2013). So, in New Zealand the adaptive repurposing of farm buildings for agritourism is an example of economic and cultural activity in combination.

The dominance of European scholarship in this field is clear with its focus on cultural heritage, landscape, and land use policy and planning (e.g., Bamert et al. 2016; Barrett and Mitchell 2017; Fuentes 2010; Fuentes et al. 2010; Van der Vaart 2005; Verhoeve et al. 2012). Rural heritage is clearly very important to the identity of many Europeans and so the protection of old agricultural buildings is seen as vital, not least because it protects the character of traditional rural landscapes which provide "rich

ethnographic evidence about rural technologies and ways of life in the countryside" (Fuentes 2010: 119). This is very different from the situation in New Zealand. Given the very limited formal protection of most vernacular farm buildings in New Zealand, it is on-farm tourism developments that are ensuring the survival of some of those that have fallen into disuse. It is important therefore to recognise the valuable work currently being done by farmers in agritourism with respect to rural heritage preservation.

In policy terms, our research points in New Zealand to possibilities for stronger protection of farm buildings and the cultural and built heritage they embody. Fuentes (2010: 121, but also see Picuno 2012) provides a possible approach: a six-step method for systematically studying, documenting and evaluating a district's vernacular rural architecture, beginning with a preliminary scoping study of the area's history, and ending with the development of a local building re-use scheme. Until New Zealand policy makers fully recognise the value of preserving vernacular rural built heritage, and adopts a process such as that suggested by Fuentes (2010), preservation activity will likely remain patchy and many older farm buildings will be lost as land use priorities change. Going further and taking a lead from European and North American researchers and their policy-relevant work (e.g., LaPan and Barbieri 2013), there is a need in New Zealand to provide advisory services to facilitate and enable farmers to create profitable and sustainable high-quality tourism services that will simultaneously preserve vernacular heritage farm buildings.

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