Event tourism and event imposition: A critical case study from Kangaroo Island, South Australia

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HIGHLIGHTS

- A case study of the 2011 Kangaroo Island Pro-Surf and Music Festival is presented.
- Event tourism is used by government and industry for neoliberal agendas.
- Events imposition occurs to secure growth, branding and political goals.
- Current event practice gives too little consideration to community interests.
- Event failure can occur if the community opposes the imposition of such an event.

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Events are increasingly a focus for destination marketing organisations because of the tourists numbers and spending they attract. As a result, an event tourism phenomenon has emerged which seeks to exploit events as tourism assets for growing tourism. Such practices may have significant consequences for local communities. This article offers a case study analysis of the 2011 Kangaroo Island Pro-Surf and Music Festival to illustrate how such dynamics can play out. This event was developed by event tourism authorities without pre-consultation with the impacted community, which led to community opposition. This opposition undermined the event's success and future. This work offers a detailed case study that provides some insight into the policy dynamics of the event instigators operating under a neoliberal policy paradigm. This article contributes to efforts to build knowledge resulting from critical deconstructions of political and economic dynamics that shape tourism policy and planning (Dredge & Jamal, 2015).

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1. Introduction

'Kangaroo Island is one of South Australia's strongest tourism assets. It has the potential to grow even further without sacrificing its consumer appeal as "Australia's Galapagos" … In the short to medium term, Kangaroo Island will remain a priority for marketing activities, domestically and internationally' (South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) and Tourism Kangaroo Island (TKI), 2012, p. 3).

Event management is an emerging field of study, with knowledge expanding through empirical and conceptual analyses. Certain trends in research are discernible. Reflecting the concerns of government and commercial interests, extensive focus on the economic benefits of hosting events are clearly evident (Mair & Whitford, 2013). Additionally, extensive study is given to the event-goers' motivations, needs and experiences and to the supply and management of events by professional event managers supported by enabling government policy environments (Getz, 2008). These predominant tendencies mean that the complex dynamics of events and the policy and politics of events are still incompletely understood as certain gaps remain (Mair & Whitford, 2013). Little work has been undertaken which provides an in-depth view of the political dynamics and controversies that may accompany event tourism which is pressed on communities as tourism growth and branding is sought by destination marketing organisations and

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tourism industry stakeholders. Additionally, the journal of *Tourism Management* has seen a recent call for more critical deconstructions of the political and economic structures that shape tourism policy and planning (Dredge & Jamal, 2015). This case study offers rare insight into event planning dynamics that demonstrates how event tourism organisers may impose events on communities in the pursuit of tourism growth.

This article narrates the story of the controversy that erupted over plans to hold a world-class surfing event and music festival at Vivonne Bay, Kangaroo Island (KI) in 2011. This small community of some 40 people living in a beautiful spot on the southern coastline of KI became host to more than 3800 people after a heated battle was fought over the proposed event. Key players included: 1) the peak surfing body Surfing South Australia (SSA), coaxed into organising the event by 2) Events SA of the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC), who called themselves major sponsors of the event along with 3) Sealink, a key business force on the island operating a monopoly ferry service and integrated travel service. The community learned about the event through the local newspaper which announced "surfing pro tour comes to Vivonne Bay" and anticipated some 5000 attendees (Black, 2011a, p. 1). The event fostered community tensions as some members of the local community opposed the event for several reasons, including the lack of consultation, the choice of location and time of year and the question of who stood to benefit from the event. Others in the local community expressed concerns about the planning and management of the event; while others expressed support for the event for its economic and social opportunities. While the event was held without any major problems, it was deemed a failure for a number of reasons including the fact it lost money and also it was not run for the three year cycle that was planned.

The conflict surrounding the event will be analysed through case study methodology to develop some understandings about contemporary events and the pressures that are exerted to harness events for their tourism benefits that may be to the detriment of the communities where they occur. Hall and Rusher (2004) argued 'there … remains relatively little analysis of the political context of events and the means by which events come to be developed and hosted within communities' (cited in Mair & Whitford, 2013, p. 10). This article provides unique insights that demonstrate that under neoliberal agendas, events may be forced on communities resulting in serious consequences. While other work has examined such theory applied to mega-events (e.g. Rojek, 2014), this analysis demonstrates that this is also applicable to more minor events. The results of this research suggest that event tourism should be examined through political lens to ask questions of who benefits, how power is asserted and what rights do communities have when their landscapes are designated as event tourism destinations. This analysis offers a concept of 'event imposition' to describe the ways in which events may be pressed on communities in the interests of powerful tourism/event tourism stakeholders.

2. Literature review

This study is situated at the interface of events, tourism, regional development and community participation in planning. Events, event management and event impacts have been a relatively recent focus of study in the academy (Getz, 2008; Rojek, 2014). But it is the recent emergence of event tourism which is the crucial development of concern here. This literature review focuses on the failure to identify the community as a key pillar of event tourism and the impacts of neoliberalism on the policy and planning of event tourism, both of which are important contexts for understanding the case study that follows.

Events and festivals have been occurring for millennia, as people gather for religious, cultural and social purposes. In recent times, when events have become the subject of focused academic study, maturation of knowledge is evident as reviews of progress occur (e.g. Getz & Page, 2016; Mair & Whitford, 2013). Simultaneously, events have been industrialised and professionalised; with event studies, event management and event tourism emerging to drive significant change in events and their purposes (Getz, 2008). As Getz has stated, event tourism is 'the systematic planning, development and marketing of planned events as tourist attractions, and for their benefits to place marketing, image-making, and development' (2010). In this way of looking at events, we are offered two possible perspectives: a supply side and a demand perspective. According to Getz:

> On the supply side, destinations develop, facilitate and promote events of all kinds to meet multiple goals: to attract tourists (especially in the off-peak seasons), serve as a catalyst (for urban renewal, and for increasing the infrastructure and tourism capacity of the destination), to foster a positive destination image and contribute to general place marketing (including contributions to fostering a better place in which to live, work and invest), and to animate specific attractions or areas (2008, pp. 405–6).

For the latter, Getz suggests:

> A consumer perspective requires determining who travels for events and why, and also who attends events while traveling. We also want to know what 'event tourists' do and spend. Included in this demand-side approach is assessment of the value of events in promoting a positive destination image, place marketing in general, and co-branding with destinations (2008, p. 405).

Seen through an event tourism lens, places where events occur are destinations to be marketed and branded to attract tourists to visit. What is absent from this perspective is the local community where the event occurs; when previously the enjoyment and participation of the local community was the key driver of events, with the transition to event tourism they are almost erased from consideration. In fact, local community are represented only indirectly in Getz's framework for understanding event tourism (see Fig. 1).

In examining this framework, one is hard pressed to discern the local community and their interests, whereas it is much easier to identify the event goer and the event planners and managers. Community perhaps may be found amongst the stakeholders cited on the left, amongst the participants mentioned in the centre and would clearly be part of the 'outcomes and the impacted' seen on the right-hand side of this model. However, none of these give them any secure position of power and authority, and may in fact relegate them to being seen as problems to be managed. But this case study suggests that with a community rights perspective on events, community could be seen as a key third pillar.

Getz (2008) expands on this framework by mapping what key questions might be addressed by each facet of the model and possible research methods to employ. Fig. 2 provides Getz's (2008) framework for 'outcomes and impacted'.

The questions posed in this list are potentially more attentive to community interactions with events but essentially start from the premise that events are to be held and that event organisers should consider ways to engage the local community to avoid difficulties. This brief survey suggests that the local community where events are held are seldom studied as a distinct entity and rather are usurped in the categories of participants and/or stakeholders.

**A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING AND
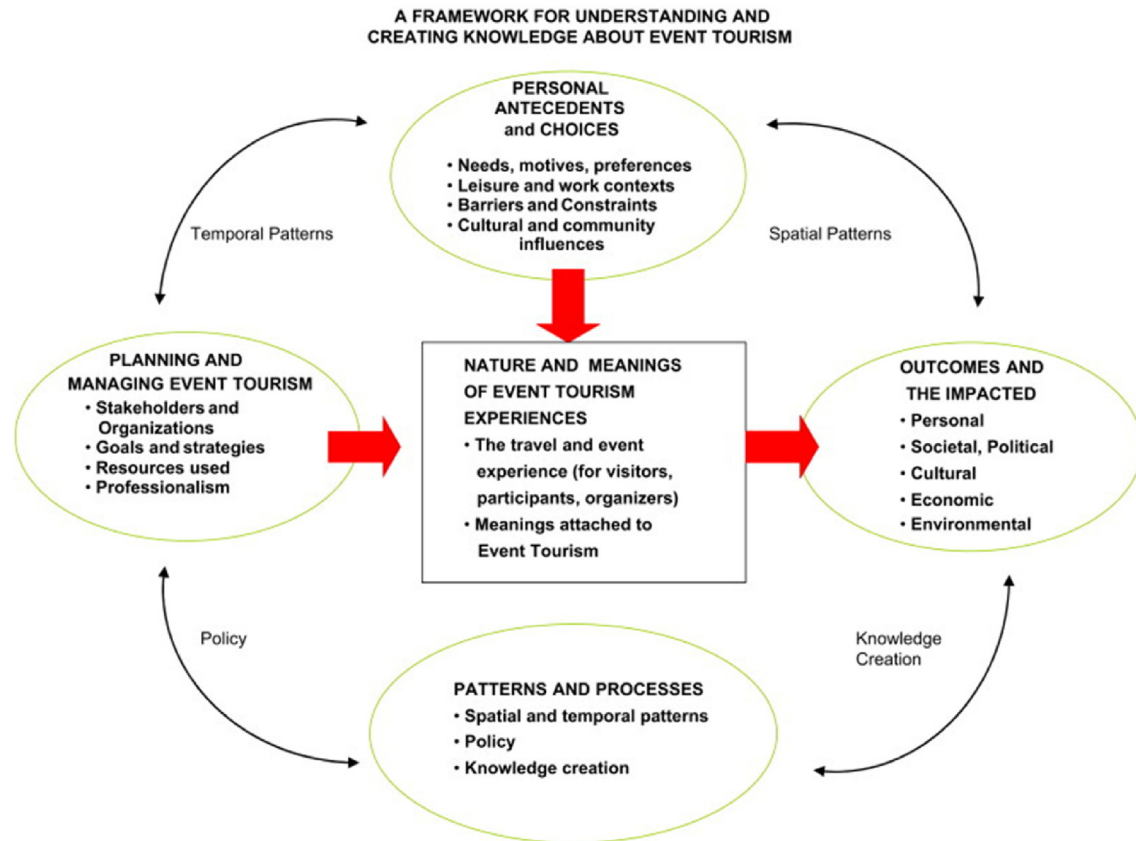CREATING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT EVENT TOURISM**

Fig. 1. A framework for understanding and creating knowledge about event tourism. (From: Getz, 2008, p. 413).

As a result, the events literature which has considered the community has largely been focused on impacts and their management. For instance, two decades ago Chacko and Schaffer (1993) argued that social and cultural impacts of events should be assessed continuously and advised that a festival should be evaluated by its success in fostering community development. Another study by Delamere noted that ' … the potential for conflict between the festival and the community exists … [and] the dependence of the festival on the goodwill of the community' (2001, p. 26). Delamere proposed adapting tourism impact scales for assessing festival impacts on residents.

Advice and strategies emerged for event organisers to assist them in ensuring that the local community was 'involved' in certain ways in events. For instance, Rogers and Anastasiadou (2011) studied how festivals involve the local community and as a result proposed a 'community involvement framework' (see Table 1).

However, such analysis presumes involvement in an event that is already planned to proceed. It does not stipulate pre-consultation where real decision-making influence can be asserted, any policy of prior informed consent and most importantly the right to say no. The event literature contains studies which address ways to leverage greater community benefit from events and festivals (e.g. O'Brien, 2007; Chalip, 2004) but this work largely assumes events are uncontested and accepted as positive opportunities. Other work has examined community reactions to events with high impacts, such as motorsports, with a view to manage 'perceptions' (e.g. Fredline, 2004). The need for more critical stances and a challenging of basic assumptions is needed. In particular this work raises concerns about the recognition of the local community as a more significant factor than just one of the numerous stakeholders

of events and also the political nature of events and their management.

A recent review of event topics, themes and emerging trends by Mair and Whitford (2013) revealed that the political environment and policy agendas relating to events is under-studied. Their work reinforced earlier work by Hall and Rusher (2004) and Dredge and Whitford (2010; 2011) that highlighted the dearth of analysis on the political contexts and impacts of events. Hall and Rusher (2004) suggested there had been insufficient analysis of 'the political context of events and the means by which events come to be developed and hosted within communities' (cited in Mair & Whitford, 2013, p. 10). Dredge and Whitford (2010) argued that power, influence and values in event policy were worthy of greater attention. In another work, Dredge and Whitford (2011) analysed events governance through a case study analysis of the 2009 World Rally Championship which found transparent and accountable governance has become more difficult as public-private partnerships for events privilege corporate and state interests. This article makes a contribution to addressing this identified gap in research by revealing the political and policy contexts through an in-depth case study of one event held at an important tourism site, Kangaroo Island. It demonstrates how transitions from events to event tourism under neoliberalism have made it possible for events to be imposed on communities by forces seeking to profit from the advantages events can offer to tourism industry interests, revealing seldom seen power dynamics through the investigative research undertaken.

Additionally, Getz has recently adopted a more critical stance on events and event tourism and offered an ontological mapping and discourse analysis (2012). In this work, he examined discipline

	Key Research Questions: Outcomes	Possible Research Methods
-Personal Social, Cultural and Political -Economic -Environmental	-How do people describe & explain why event tourism experiences are satisfying, memorable & transforming? -What are the personal & social consequences of negative event tourism experiences? -What performance measure exist & are needed for the social, cultural & environmental policy domains? -How does exchange theory influence various stakeholder perceptions of event impacts? -How are social representations of events formed? -How does the nature of & extent of community involvement influence event tourism success & outcomes? -Under what circumstances are events commodified & authenticity lost, versus traditions renewed & culture revitalised? -How are the benefits & costs of events tourism distributed through the population? What strategies work best for maximizing local economic benefits? -Who are the high-yield tourists and how should they be attracted? -How can events & event tourism be made more sustainable? -What are the cumulative impacts of an event & events in general, within a community or ecosystem? What is the value of any given event?	-focus groups -in-depth interviews -consumer & social surveys -media content analysis -stakeholder consultations -ethnography -comprehensive cost-benefit evaluations -business surveys -market research -environmental audits & formal impact assessments -valuations

Fig. 2. Getz's framework for Outcomes and Impacted in Events.
(From: Getz, 2008, p. 220).

Table 1
Community involvement framework.

Principles	Involvement Methods	Examples of Indicators
Involvement of Schools	Festival shows performed in schools; school trips to see shows	Number of shows/schools visited; Number of trips/children attending
Volunteering Opportunities	Opportunities in: box office, stage management, programming, marketing, etc.	Breakdown of local & nonlocal volunteers/total number of local volunteers; Feedback from volunteers
Participation in decision-making	Board membership diversity (e.g. age, gender, race, occupation); Liaison with other festivals, community groups, and interested bodies	Breakdown of board membership in the categories outlined; Membership of liaison committee/number of meetings attended
Accessibility	Shows in public places & community venues; Festival ticket & travel discounts for residents	Number of shows. Community venues used; Value of discounts offered/take-up of offers
Business cooperation	Sponsorship & provision of in kind services; Promotion of pride & involvement in festivals	Amount of financial and in kind support provided; Commitment shown to promotional schemes

(from Rogers & Anastasiadou, 2011, p. 397, p. 397).

based discourses on events and analysed the policy implications of these. Of most relevance here is the examination of event tourism and the evolution of discourse and analysis in this domain. He argued:

This is an instrumentalist discourse focused on the value of events to the tourism/hospitality industry, and to the policy domains of economic development and place marketing—encompassing, to a degree, urban development. Often industry and government are in partnership to develop event tourism through destination marketing organizations, capital investment in event venues, bidding on events, and serving the needs of event organizers and attendees (including security) (2012, p. 177).

However, in his discussion of the policy implications of this segment of events, Getz suggested that mega-events are the main focus and debate concerns their economic impacts and ongoing legacies (2012, pp. 179—180). He argued that smaller events are not appreciated sufficiently; 'within the context of an event tourism portfolio, most small events have little value—they simply cannot attract enough tourists to make them the object of industry attention' (Getz, 2012, p. 180). This article demonstrates that this is not the case in certain circumstances and it also suggests that Getz continued to overlook the interests of the community in his analysis of events/events tourism.

Other critical analysis has also recently emerged. For instance, Hall (2006) outlined the ways government, corporate and media interests coincide in using events for place promotion and 'urban entrepreneurship'. Waitt (2008) provided a valuable analysis of the dynamics of festivals and events that are driven by tourism agendas under neoliberal ideologies in urban contexts. Waitt suggested that such urban festivals generate a hype of marketing and branding places, a helplessness through disempowerment of local communities and yet at the same time hope in the possibilities of resistance: 'while urban festivals may disempower localities through converting them into tourist attractions, simultaneously they are conceptualised as offering possibilities for reflective action and radical critiques of marginalisation, dispossession and invisibility' (2008, p. 532). Waitt's analysis is very important for this work and suggests being attentive to the dual tensions evident in events where power is asserted by some and resisted by others resulting in complex and unpredictable outcomes. However, a crucial task to develop understanding is giving adequate attention to structural conditions that may favour the assertion of power.

Thus, the dynamics of this case can be better understood through recent theorisation on neoliberalism. Harvey suggested:

> Neoliberalism is a theory of political economic practices proposing that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices (2007, p. 22).

Harvey stated: 'The corporatization, commodification, and privatization of hitherto public assets have been signal features of the neoliberal project' (2007, p. 35). What will be shown in the case study of this event is the way that event promoters sought to utilise the draw of 'best beach in Australia' (as declared by Professor Andrew Short; see Darby, 2004) to develop a sporting and music event with little consideration of the local community. The dynamics of a profit-driven events tourism industry pushed a manufactured event on a community without their consent and strong resistance as a result was catalysed. Harvey's analysis of neoliberalism also highlights strategies for resistance sparked by appropriating acts of neoliberalism. He noted:

Analysis also points up exploitable contradictions within the neoliberal agenda. The gap between rhetoric (for the benefit of all) and realization (for the benefit of a small ruling class) increases over space and time, and social movements have done much to focus on that gap (2007, p. 42).

Rojek argued that events are 'part of the neoliberal turn' (2014). The objective of Rojek's analysis was to address an argument that leisure studies was dying and would be replaced by the more fashionable field of event management. In Rojek's view, leisure studies is a site of progressive and radical analysis and in its more critical sectors is concerned with transcending capitalism. To this end, Rojek submitted event studies to critical analysis and employed small case studies to demonstrate that event management mixes neoliberal market logic with communitarian philosophy which results in the dilution of concerns with structural challenge and radical change.

Rojek distinguished mega-events, major events and minor events; his main concern was to demonstrate that mega-events 'play into the hands of established, semi-invisible social and economic interests' (2014, p. 33). Reviewing the development of the events discipline, Rojek critiqued the works of Getz and others and suggested they have largely emphasised the positive outcomes of events and event management competencies. Rojek claimed: 'while the possibility of negative outcomes are recognised, dealing with them is presented as a challenge for Event Management teams rather than wider agents of influence' (2014, p. 38).

Rojek offered the concept of 'event appropriation':

> The term Event Appropriation refers to the seizure, by external or contingent interests, of the goodwill and spirit of escapism and transcendence that is attached to Global Events. It involves exploiting and developing the Event for separate economic or political ends (2014, p. 41).

Rojek offered an analysis of mega and major events like Live 8 and Sydney Mardi Gras to demonstrate his point that radical agendas for change have been abandoned as these events have been appropriated by powerful political and economic interests. This analysis has benefited from Rojek's pioneering critique and demonstrates that even minor events are sites of appropriation and assertions of power. Here, the term 'event imposition' is used to designate the practice of outside events authorities and stakeholders imposing an event on a community for securing their own economic, political, prestige and branding agendas against the interests and agreement of the population where the event is held.

3. Methodology

This research project has employed a case study approach to study a sporting and music event held on KI in 2011. 'A case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin, 1994, p. 13). Stake argues the goal of case study research does not have be 'producing generalizations', as the 'uniqueness' and 'particularization' of the case with its rich insights and lessons foster deep understanding about the case itself and also that from which it differs (1995, pp. 7—8). Such a research approach may have limitations such as lack of generalisability, but its strengths arise from the rich descriptive insights that it offers which can be utilised to develop tentative hypotheses to help guide future research (Flyvberg, 2006).

This work is based on a critical research methodology for tourism governance for sustainability (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). Key features of the work in the 'critical turn' include challenging conventional ways of knowing tourism, doing tourism research and relating to tourism stakeholders (Ateljevic, Morgan, & Pritchard, 2007). According to Wilson, Harris & Small, 2008, p. 16):

> those employing a critical approach would generally be concerned with resisting positivist modes of enquiry, unmasking power relations, seeking emancipation, addressing inequalities, or calling for change or action within the field they are exploring … Critical tourism and hospitality scholars are also drawn to these ideals.

Tribe (2008, p. 253) asserted that 'critical research is uniquely placed to contribute to better management and governance of tourism' because it foregrounds the roles of ideology and power relations.

Research methods included: participant observation, document analysis and semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted with 28 informants from the local community, the event organisers, concerned environmental organisations, local government councillors, event stakeholders and sponsors. Informants were purposively selected according to their organisational roles or in the case of community informants, by a snowball sampling technique. The research questions for these interviews addressed the policy, planning and management of the event and asked interviewees to explain their views, insights and concerns (see appended research questionnaire). Documents analysed included media reporting, community comment in the opinion section of the local newspaper, council minutes, policy and planning documents obtained through freedom of information processes and social media pages. Participant observation was conducted at the event for a period of four days in November 2011 to obtain insights into the running of the event and stakeholder reactions. Research efforts extended from September 2011 until November 2013 which allowed an opportunity to gain longitudinal insights into the event, its impacts and the aftermath (the event was originally planned to run annually for three years).

Researching in such a heated context is not without its difficulties. Key people were unavailable for interview; for instance, an interview with the Executive Officer of Events SA could not be secured despite numerous efforts over more than a year. Ironically, the Managing Director of Sealink refused to be interviewed saying she was aware the researcher was seeking an interview with Events SA and thus an interview with Sealink was not necessary from her perspective. As a result of this refusal to inform the research, insights were gained through accessing inter-governmental communications on the event obtained through freedom of information (FOI) processes.

In circumstances where government agencies are involved, FOI requests can be essential for accessing information that otherwise may remain hidden; however, FOI processes can be very difficult, costly and time-consuming. It took more than one year to secure needed documents through FOI and some of these important documents were redacted to varying degrees. These documents together with extensive interviews and research proved essential in piecing together stakeholder positions, understanding the dynamics of the event and identifying essential drivers of the process. A technique of building understanding through corroboration of insights through multiple interviews, multiple data sources, researcher reflexivity and reference to the literature helps ensure plausibility of the analysis (see Higgins-Desbiolles, 2011).

4. The case study

4.1. The Kangaroo Island context

KI is an area of SA which has grown to depend on tourism as the agricultural sector suffered downturns from the 1970s. It is known for its beautiful nature and wildlife. Its community of some 4500 residents play host to some 185,000 visitors per year (TOMM, 2009). A mass tourism segment developed from the 1990s as a result of the monopoly ferry operator, Sealink, developing a day-tripper market from Adelaide. As a result, community concerns with the negative impacts of tourism led to the development of a community-driven tourism management model called the Tourism Optimisation Management Model (TOMM) in 1997 (Jack, n.d.). Despite developing this innovative approach to integrated tourism management based on community values, KI has suffered a number of conflicts over proposed tourism developments (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2011).

The SA government and its tourism arm, the SATC, have pinned their tourism hopes on KI for its iconic qualities in recent years. Illustrative of this is a media release from 24 July 2011 entitled 'Government backs growth for Kangaroo Island' in which former Premier Mike Rann stated 'the island was an outstanding asset that had been under-resourced for generations'. He claimed:

> In truth Kangaroo Island is up there with the Great Barrier Reef and Uluru as a recognised destination for international tourists seeking the opportunity to enjoy our nation's unique flora and fauna, beaches and bush all within one package. Yet research shows that nearly half of interstate travellers to South Australia had little or no awareness of Kangaroo Island as a destination. As a result the South Australian Tourism Commission is making the island the star attraction in this year's multi-million dollar interstate tourism campaign (Government of South Australia, 2011).

This coincided with the release of the *Paradise Girt By Sea* document which called for the doubling of tourist numbers to KI within a decade (South Australian Economic Development Board (SAEDB, 2011, p.10).

4.2. Neoliberal tourism and events policy in SA

The SATC is a government body that frames tourism policy in the neoliberal, growth model; as one document states 'the South Australian Tourism Commission is focused on delivering long-term growth for South Australia's tourism industry' (SATC & TKI, 2012, p. 1). The SATC has shifted from a focus on promoting SA as a model of sustainable tourism development in its 2003–2008 Tourism Plan (SATC, 2003) to a focus on the economic goal of securing A\$6.3 billion in tourism expenditure by 2014 in its 2009–2014 Tourism Plan (SATC, 2009) and A\$8 billion by 2020 (SA Government, n.d.). The Destination Action Plan (DAP) for KI which followed on from this argued KI could make a substantial contribution to this economic target by 'potentially growing 79%' by 2020 to reach a goal of A\$180 million (SATC & TKI, 2012, p. 2). Importantly events were designated as a key component and commitment was made to explore one major new event concept, with a view to attracting inter-state tourists (SATC & TKI, 2012, p. 5).

Designating itself as 'the festival state', events form an important part of the mix in attracting visitors, increasing their length of stay and associated spending. SA has faced competition with other Australian states and has lost important events such as the Grand

Prix to Melbourne. The attraction of world class events have become a tool of political conflict in state government, with opposition ministers criticising the Labor government for its record (Puddy, 2011).

DAPs have been developed to operationalise these growth goals. As the South Australian Tourism Industry Council describes them:

Destination Action Plans are driven by SA Tourism Commission, and developed in consultation with regional stakeholders who have direct financial and/or regulatory influence over whether the projects in the plan can be completed: Regional Tourism Organisations (representing the tourism industry), local government and Regional Development Australia (South Australia Tourism Industry Council (SATIC, n.d.).

It is important to note that events are designated for an important role in attracting new visitor markets in the KI DAP. This plan stipulates goals to:

Target 8: additional current and significant KI events to be listed on the ATDW [Australia Tourism Data Warehouse] by June 2013; support 1 existing event on KI that capitalises on KI's natural assets and food and wine; explore 1 major new event concept to run not in Nov—Mar. in following themes: food & wine, music, sporting, others tbd by TKI events subcommittee (SATC & TKI, 2012, p. 5).

When understanding the pressures for the KI Surf Music Festival, this policy context is vital.

4.3. The event

'If this event is permitted to proceed at this site then a major, rare and virtually pristine natural coastline environment will suffer immense damage. To even consider this location to conduct such a program is beyond comprehension' (Graham Rees letter to Coastal Management Board, 26 May 2011).

The event was announced on 26 May 2011 to the community of KI through *the Islander* newspaper with a headline that read 'surfing pro tour comes to Vivonne'. Here it was reported that a world surf tour event would be held at Vivonne Bay over ten days in November, former world champion Mark Occhilupo was to compete and an associated music festival would attract some 5000 people (Black, 2011a, p. 1). Held under the auspices of Surfing South Australia (SSA), it was a six-star surf tour event, one of the highest level, sporting events held in the country. The Surf event was known colloquially as the KI Pro-Surf and Music Festival but eventually took the name of the Fantastic Noodles Kangaroo Island Pro after sponsorship naming rights. In the end, the event ran over ten days between 29th October and 6th of November and the music festival was held between the 2nd and the 5th of November, featuring top band Eskimo Joe. The event brought complex and multiple concerns because of its sports and music components, each of which presented its own potential problems; the surf event attracted concerns with poor surf quality and the potential impacts of spectators, while the music component involved up to 5000 people camping over a long weekend. While events may be thought of as less damaging than tourism as they are brief and often one-off, this event also raised concerns of longer term impacts that derived from the infrastructure developed for the event and the precedent it set.

4.4. Event tourism agendas behind the event

The event arose from a relationship that had developed between Events SA (a section of SATC) and SSA which saw these organisations in symbiosis as the SATC gave sponsorship funding for surfing events and SSA gave access to the youth demographic through media and marketing. Steve Reddy, CEO of SSA, claimed surfing gave a return on investment for marketing of 100:1 and as a result Events SA were keen for more events (pers.comm., 5 November 2011) and so KI was settled on as the next location for cooperation. Events SA wanted to promote KI to the youth market, outside of peak visitation season and to capitalise on global coverage a world-class surf event would attract (Steve Reddy, pers. comm. 5 November 2011). Tim Doman, events manager for SSA, stated that 'we've wanted to hold an ASP [Association of Surfing Professionals] event in SA for five years. KI is a major focus and flagship for SATC so it's all come together' (Black, 2011a, p. 1). It was Events SA that stipulated to SSA that the event should be held in November as the shoulder season for tourism (Steve Reddy reported from the public meeting, pers. comm. 17 December 2011). The state government reportedly gave $300,000 in initial sponsorship (Homfray, 2012).

Another key sponsor and beneficiary of the event, Sealink, was a source of significant controversy. One aspect was Sealink ownership of the property where the surfing competition was to be held. Sealink had bought the Outdoor Education Centre of Vivonne Bay; the owner that sold it expected the outdoor education work and habitat restoration would continue (Graham Rees pers. comm. 20 December 2011). Instead, Sealink changed the Outdoor Education Centre to Vivonne Bay Lodge and made it an accommodation for its mass tourism market. As the planning of the event unfolded from late May, it became clear to the community that rather than the Vivonne Bay township being the site of the event, instead this Sealink property would be the access point for the surf event. The notes from the meeting of the Vivonne Bay Progress Association on the 4th of August 2011 reveal community concerns with such developments and a belief that some held that this land was being prepared for listing under a heritage agreement. It alleged:

Sealink land is in the interim of a Heritage Agreement (Already an indicative place). They have received several grants and breeched the contract of sale by not following conditions in relation to the completion of the agreement. The council should take this into careful consideration before granting any form of development approval [for event plans under its jurisdiction] (meeting notes Vivonne Bay Progress Association, 4 August 2011).

As a vertically integrated company, Sealink stood to benefit from many aspects of the event, including selling travel packages, ferry fares, accommodation and tours. Sealink was a major sponsor of the event giving free transport and some cash support for the event (Black, 2011c, p. 3). It is also important to note there has been on-going criticism of Sealink for its ferry monopoly and simultaneous to these events, some accommodation owners were complaining about special deals Sealink was doing which worked to direct business to their linked accommodation providers (Royal, 2011).

The event briefing reports drawn up by SSA and submitted to SATC (obtained through FOI) noted there was 'a belief that Sealink owned the event and that most of the benefits will flow to Sealink' and responds 'The event was a Surfing SA initiative and event, backed by the State Government' (SSA Update Week Ending 5 August 2011). Nonetheless, this report goes on to make two important revelations: the planned campsite was moved from its planned location on Sealink property to an adjacent farmer's

paddock which was noted 'may alleviate the issue of Sealink perceived bias'; and 'Sealink have suggested we vary their naming rights to remove "presented by" and include more as a major supporting sponsor to shorten the title and show the community they are assisting not driving the event' (SSA Update Week Ending 5 August 2011).

Most importantly, Sealink got approval to build infrastructure as its land was declared the site of the surfing competition, resulting in two sets of stairs and a viewing platform. Some of the opponents of the event felt that approval was facilitated due to the pressures of holding the potentially high impact surfing and music event. An application was submitted for approval through the Kangaroo Island Council (KIC) and was classed a Category 1 or minor form of development, 'a kind of development which, in the opinion of the relevant authority, is of a minor nature and will not unreasonably impact on the owners or occupiers of land in the locality of the site of the development' (Kangaroo Island Planning Assessment Report, 1 August 2011 obtained through FOI). This angered some opponents as it meant that the public had no right of notification or consultation on the proposed infrastructure development (see Planning SA, 2002, p. 29). The approval process included Coastal Protection Board (CPB) and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) under the Development Act of 1993 as the infrastructure was proposed for both private and crown lands. The CPB's response noted it opposes development in sand dunes but stated in brackets the need for the stairs and the platform because of the increased visitation that the surf and music event would bring (letter from CPB to KI Council 14 September 2011, obtained by FOI). DENR said the infrastructure was built on a blowout on the dune and did not remove vegetation; however, this was disputed by local residents. The CPB document also noted 'the proposed development will also provide improved beach access and coastal viewing opportunities for other visitors to the property, which contains an outdoor education and adventure business [owned by Sealink]' (letter from CPB to KI Council 14 September 2011, obtained by FOI). The KI Council documentation stated: 'DENR position is that the proposal is considered to mitigate impacts and in fact improve the conservation of land in the areas, and in that respect is considered to be a sustainable form of development' (KI Council Planning Assessment Report, 1 August 2011, document obtained through FOI).

While these event authorities and stakeholders were the key drivers of the event and its management, it is also important to briefly address the evolving position that environmental protection authorities held in the event approval and management process. As the event was being first discussed in May 2011, it would seem the CPB held a concerned view on the event. An email obtained through FOI between DENR's Coastal Scientific Officer and its Regional Manager for KI suggested the CPB was the first to raise concerns and it was this Coastal Scientific Officer who raised these with the DENR Regional Manager. This email quoted the views of the Coastal Planner as claiming 'Vivonne Bay has nowhere near the infrastructure and facilities needed … and the coastal environment will surely be damaged. I am also stunned that Vivonne has been chosen in terms of wave quality … I did hear a tourism SA rep talking it up but … Terrible decision!!' (DENR, 2011a, email communication 27th May, obtained through FOI process). This email communication reveals an interesting dynamic whereby the CPB pushed for action: 'the Board are concerned about the scale of such an event and potential impacts on CPB land not to mention DENR coastal land and has requested that we investigate this matter and establish dialogue with the Region, event organisers, Council, VB [Vivonne Bay] Progress Assoc., Tourism SA, etc.' (DENR, 2011a email communication obtained through FOI process). However, DENR and CPB did change their view over time. In its operational plan of

October 2011, DENR noted the event ' … is predicted [to lead to] financial benefits for our commercial sites including Seal Bay Kelly Hill Caves, Flinders Chase National Park and potentially Cape Borda and Cape Willoughby due to increased visitors, accommodation requirements and Commercial Tour operations' (DENR, 2011b, p. 4, obtained through FOI). Environmental authorities arguably must be relevant to tourism authorities in the neoliberal era to address falling budgets and bureaucratic competition (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2011).

Representatives of some key environmental organisations were willing to criticise the tourism dynamics behind the event. Tim Kelly of the Conservation Council of South Australia (CCSA), the peak body in SA for conservation, countered an argument that the platform infrastructure mitigated event impacts. He stated:

> There was talk about causing less damage because of the viewing platform, but I don't necessarily accept that. I think it just adds to the general traffic and to the development of Vivonne Bay. And ultimately I think that's where this is going. You've got aggressive tourism being marketed on Kangaroo Island (pers. comm. 4 December 2012).

This brief exploration of the event tourism agendas displayed in the policy approval process for the event is demonstrative of neoliberal practices where agencies of government are seen to be acting to advance the interests of business and enable market dynamics. However, this event was imposed on a community and some in that community resisted this imposition.

4.5. Community reaction and opposition

It was the choice of the Vivonne Bay location rather than a developed area such as Kingscote and the time of year that were key catalysts to the community's opposition. KI resident Deb Sleeman speaking for the CCSA stated 'events of this scale should not be held in areas not already developed' (Black, 2011b, pp. 1–2). However, there were a number of other concerns that members of the community raised and these are outlined in Table 2 (as identified through the document analysis, participant observation and interviews undertaken for this research project).

Connected to the locational concern, was the lack of timely community consultation on the event. The community meeting eventually convened on the 8th of September only came about when KI Councillor Graham Walkom pressed the KI Council (KIC) to intervene. Walkom stated he did this because:

> It became apparent to me that there seemed to be a few gaps in the lead up planning (or lack of planning) … So I took a fairly keen interest as to what was happening and particularly because of the number of emails and phone conversations that came in. It was just simply unprecedented … They were all one-sided, saying that it's inappropriate to have it at that location (pers. comm. 16 December 2011).

Criticism of the consultation process run by SSA included when the information was released, how the information was released, who was included in consultations, attempts to control how people could participate and protection of information under 'commercial, in-confidence' labelling. Some recognised a dividing tactic, as KI business owners were offered meetings on business opportunities at the event and sporting clubs were offered fund-raising options associated with the event.

At its meeting of 17 August 2011, KIC placed six conditions on the event organisers, including:

Table 2
Key concerns about the event.

Community concern expressed	Specific manifestation	Associated issues
Lack of consultation	Consultation process undertaken with hand-picked players initially; the community learned of event through the newspaper	Very short timeframe − the community learned of event in May and event was scheduled for November- "fait accompli"
Location of event	Impacts on local residents' way of life	
	Bushfire risk	
	Impacts on wildlife like hooded plovers	Both immediate and long-term impacts
Question of who profited	Concerns event served Sealink's corporate interests; concerns over the role of SATC	Loss of control to external forces
Impacts on community	Commodified surfing culture	Undermines unique Island surf cultures
	Community divisions exacerbated	
	Loss of VB's aesthetic of living in nature	Event has created infrastructure on remote part of VB's beach, undermining its integrity
	Concern with event-related crime	Concerns with drug and alcohol abuse
Event approval process	Call for a full environmental impact assessment of the event as a condition for approval	SSA developed an environmental management plan (not made available to public)
Building of infrastructure in inappropriate area	Building of viewing platform and walkway	Clearance of native vegetation; sand blow-outs; precedent
Impacts on planning regulations	Community values in documents like the KI Development Plan and TOMM	Event occurring in remote, intact coastal habitat arguably undermines these planning values

- That CEO of SSA, Steve Reddy, attend a public meeting facilitated by KIC in order to inform the community about the event and for Reddy to respond to any questions and concerns from the community.
- SSA to provide the community with regular updates about the proposed event via *The Islander* and also place this information on public display at Vivonne Bay (KI Council, 17 August 2011).

This research revealed the members of the community who opposed the event for the form that it took turned to a number of tactics to influence its planning and conduct (See Table 3).

4.6. Story of community reactions

'In future all event planning needs to be much more transparent. We, as a community, need to know what is going on' − Neill Bell, Eco-Action ('Eco-Action can't back surfpro', 2011, p. 3).

There were several fields of contestation over the event, including: the opinion section and other parts of the local newspaper, *The Islander;* social media; informal interactions in the lead up to the event; and in the community meeting held in September 2011. This section will use the media as a resource for understanding community reactions to the event (names of authors of opinion letters to *the Islander* are removed, but letter date and the page of the newspaper are given in the in-text citations; detailed information provided in a separate section of the reference list).

The key problem with the event which resulted in significant community concern and protest was the lack of timely community consultation: 'I felt absolutely disgusted and angered by the lack of community consultation and apparent disregard for the cultural and environmental values upheld by local residents' (16 June 2011, p. 4). If the event organisers had done early consultations with the community, their advice would have indicated that Vivonne Bay was not an appropriate location for such reasons as: the poor surf, the lack of infrastructure to support thousands of event-goers, the pristine location with all of its vulnerabilities, and the shore-nesting of the hooded plovers at that time of the year.

The level of opposition was also clearly the result of a number of years of conflict over tourism and associated developments. In discussing community reactions to proposed developments on KI, there are clear dividing lines between those that hold strong conservation values (sometimes these are newer residents who have migrated for a 'sea-change'), those that are keen on economic development opportunities for this rural economy and those who want to see KI remain attractive to young people through employment opportunities and social life so that they are not pulled away to the distant cities. An indicative statement showing these battlelines: 'opportunists and developers are always looking to exploit wilderness areas and natural beauties, while Island residents and groups such as Landcare and Eco-action battle on with resilience, taking care of the environment for future generations' (16 June 2011, p. 14).

The appropriate form of tourism was one focus of heated

Table 3
Community action in response to the event.

Seeking full information	Continually requested information from SSA, KIC
	Undertook a small attitudinal survey with residents of VB
Education campaigns	Communicated on the facebook page for the event
	Created their own facebook site, posting letters, analysis, photos of building of the infrastructure
	Talked to people in the community
	Wrote letters to the editor in the local paper
	Produced brochure calling for an event boycott with slogan "great event, wrong place, wrong time"
	Interviewed by surfing publications
Public protesting	Carried out public protests
	Vocal at the public meeting
Policy interventions	Initiated a petition
	Demanded event environmental impact assessment and comprehensive ecological survey of the area
	Challenged the Council's approval of the building of event infrastructure
Negative approaches	Allegedly made threats and inappropriate acts of protest

debates. One example of this from the event website is from an exchange on 11 October 2011:

> First posting: 'the island is not dying! Ill [sic] still live here if there is no more tourism and im [sic] sure most islanders would as well!'

> The response: 'And how would they survive [name deleted]? We need Tourism, a lot of Islanders indirectly or directly make their living from it. Of course we could always become an Island of dole recipients and retirees' (Kangaroo Island Pro, n.d.).

Since the push to reduce red tape from the 2000s with implementation of neoliberal values, some in the community demonstrated great concern with the way such events and developments are conducted: 'as an environmental officer with extensive training I feel this analysis has been a rushed, "behind closed doors" procedure with the interests of industry at heart rather than local environment and community' (28 July 2011, p. 4). Particularly in this conflict, there was some strong concern about corporate interests lying behind the event:

> Unfortunately KI seems to be a pawn in the promotional strategies of Tourism SA [SATC], and fodder for Sealink's ongoing expansion and vertical integration. I urge council to show leadership on this issue. Tell Sealink, Tourism SA and Surfing SA to come back in 12 months or two years when the proposal and its implications have had appropriate consideration (1 September 2011, p. 4).

One KI local described as a 'former ranger and bird lover' was reported to comment: 'Surfing SA "cooked up a deal" with Sealink and the SA Tourism Commission without consulting Kangaroo Island locals' (Peddie, 2011). But those who were on the side of greater investment, development and events, held little sympathy for the arguments of the event's critics:

> Surely if you want better schools, services, roads and support from the mainland governments that you need to become relevant to more people. This means promoting events like the pro surf tour. It is appropriate to raise issues, but to effectively put up a 'closed for business' sign at such an early stage in the negotiations for the event is very short-sighted (16 June 2011, p. 4).

Another stated:

> If we gave way to every bird, animal, plant, dunes, etc. there would be nowhere left on this planet for any of us to inhabit … this event is a great opportunity for some lucky people to cash in on the invading mass horde and prosper; any concerns over dunnies and the likes can surely be dealt with by the organisers if you request (23 June 2011, p. 12).

In an *Islander* article businessman and KI Racing Club Chairman Roger Williams was quoted as saying: 'the benefits to the community are immeasurable in employment, spending and visitors. We need to be fair. There are those of us who would like to see the event happen' (Black, 2011b, p. 2).

As the controversy unfolded between the announcement of the event in late May until the heated community meeting of 8 September, writers debated how the event and its opposition should be viewed. Just before the community meeting was convened, the *Islander* newspaper offered this in its editorial:

> The KI Surf Pro event … will go ahead, at least this year. Despite genuine concerns about the environment, crowd management, logistics, quality of the waves and commercial exploitation, the planning is too advanced for the event to be cancelled or moved … 2000 tickets … have been sold, at least 500 of them to KI residents. Some say it only a noisy minority opposing the event — surfers, environmentalists, Vivonne Bay residents, even conspiracy theorists. However, this vocal minority should not be dismissed, despite some extreme views. Though many others have not spoken up, there is a larger group of residents also concerned about these issues. Perhaps if this group of protesters had not spoken up, issues such as the hooded plover, rare plant species, fire danger, drug and alcohol abuse, might not have been so closely attended to by the event organisers ('Hed here and here', p. 4).

The community meeting was held on the 8th of September, controversially chaired by the mayor of KI Council. It was reportedly a heated affair, ending early as one member of the community was evicted by the police. One attendee at the community meeting claimed it was disrupted by a small group of people with no interest in listening and she argued they should 'put their energy into working with organisers to get best outcome for festival goers and the environment in an event that is welcomed by the majority of Islanders' (15 September 2011, p. 4). Another held different concerns: 'for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction- SSA actions has led to these reactions … we want to see a good event in an appropriate place so it benefits the island in economic and cultural terms … [we should] reflect island culture by standing up for KI and each other' (15 September 2011, p. 4).

It should also be noted that SSA held a different view of what its consultative obligations entailed; rather than convening a community consultation early in the process, it invited small groups of special interests to discuss how they might benefit from the event. In its FAQs in *the Islander* newspaper, SSA claimed:

> Surfing South Australia has taken the time to meet with peak bodies, spoken with individual islanders and Vivonne Bay locals and we have formed the view that the majority of people are in support of a properly managed event. We want locals to be involved and benefit financially, socially and environmentally. SSA welcomes positive input and assistance, this is a large under-taking and represents a huge investment in time, effort and money on behalf of the surfing pathway in South Australia ('Kangaroo Island Pro FAQs', *The Islander*, 27 October 2011, p. 11).

Tim Kelly of the Conservation Council of SA (CCSA) said the KI Pro Surf lacked a 'social license to operate' because of its poor consultation practices (pers. comm. 4 December 2012). In a press release, Kelly asserted 'This is not the right sort of tourism for Kangaroo Island. It will harm the natural assets and biodiversity as well as risking Kangaroo Island's reputation as one of the world's great environmental tourist attractions' (CCSA, 2011). As shown here, the event generated an unusual amount of controversy and opposition but it did run in 2011. The outcomes deserve some attention.

4.7. Outcomes after the event

> *'Surfing SA believes that this event will become an iconic Australian surfing event of which all Australians can be proud' — Tim Doman, events manager Surfing SA (Black, 2011a, p. 1).*

Unfortunately, this prediction made on 26 May 2011 was not to be and the dividing lines did not change after the event was held. Proponents emphasised the successes while opponents argued their predictions were fulfilled. For instance, Managing Director of Sealink was reported to have stated 'it is great to see the branding for the island and a new market. We'd like to see more of this type of event on the island and we will be up for it again next year' (Black, 2011c, p. 3).

However, in the final aftermath the event could be termed a failure in both finances and futures. It was reported in February 2012 that the SA government had bailed out the event for $400,000 to pay off debts SSA incurred, on top of the $300,000 in initial sponsorship; this was drawn from the SATC budget (Black, 2012a, p. 1; 9). In explaining the event's failure, a tourism spokesperson listed the reasons as the short time frame to organise the event, the remoteness of the location and unanticipated costs and time needed to deal with holding the event in such an environmentally sensitive location (Black, 2012a, p. 9). These factors illuminate planning failures. Sealink was also reported to have written off an undisclosed sum owed it with the general manager Donna Gauci saying it was a 'sign of goodwill to the SATC which is a very good supporter of Kangaroo Island tourism' and 'we also want to send a signal that doesn't deter other event managers from considering the island as a venue' (Black, 2012a, p. 9).

The deed between SATC and SSA terminating the sponsorship arrangements for 2012 and 2013 and committing SATC to the provision of $400,000 to pay SSA creditors was obtained through FOI. It claimed 'the 2011 Kangaroo Island Surf Music Festival was well patronised, received positive media coverage and achieved SATC's promotional objectives'. But this deed notes that SSA experienced 'financial difficulties as a result of losses incurred by the staging of the event' and attributes blame to SSA's management of the event. Most interesting though is clause five which states SSA 'must do all things necessary … to enable SATC to have an unencumbered right to produce, sponsor or licence another event'. In particular, the deed requires SSA to 'use its best endeavours to seek funds from other major sponsors and Surfing Australia to assist SATC in the staging of future events'. The newspaper announcing the bailout also had the new SSA acting manager Craig Potgieter stating 'we hope Events SA will put it on [the event in 2013], I think they are more qualified to put on an event like this' (Williamson, 2012).

There were also some resignations and job losses in the aftermath. In 2012, SSA CEO Steve Reddy and Event Organiser Tim Doman resigned from SSA as a result of these problems (Homfray, 2012). The head of the SATC, Ian Darbyshire, had his contract terminated nine months early. The key reason was the controversy over the privatization of the state's visitor information centres which resulted in two inquiries, however media also contextualised in terms of the taxpayer-bailout of losses for the KI event ('Change at top for troubled Tourism Commission', 2012). Additionally, the event did not run again even though it was planned to run another three years originally.

Arguably, one tourism outcome was the infrastructure. In an interview, KI Mayor Jayne Bates identified one good outcome from the event was ' … the fact that we got long-term infrastructure down there, it is a tourism site anyway, so that's long-term infrastructure … ' (pers. comm. 16 December 2011). Using the event as leverage, ironically Sealink argued the infrastructure aided conservation. Without the pressure of the event, it might have been more difficult to navigate the process of such a development in the coastal protection zone. This matters as this part of Vivonne Bay was less developed in terms of infrastructure. The infrastructure will make that part of the coastline more accessible and possibly increase impacts on the dune system and on the vulnerable birds.

On the other hand, many in the Vivonne Bay and KI communities were deeply affected by the event and its aftermath. For instance, environmental artist Lara Tilbrook described her feelings on observing the event:

> When I first saw the event from the stairway from the housing estate from west of the Sealink property through the usual beach access I stood on the hill and I was in dismay, absolute horror, I felt sick, it was disgusting. I felt I was at … Glenelg [a developed seaside site]. You know it's the essence of Vivonne … it had been raped and the wilderness was taken from Vivonne (pers. comm. 16 December 2011).

Another issue is the post event evaluation. In the lead up to the event, many in the community, as well as Eco-Action and CCSA called for a post-event evaluation on impacts ('Eco-Action can't back surfpro', 2011, p. 3); in its agreements with Events SA, SSA was required to draft a 'post-event report' detailing financial and marketing values of the event (SATC & SSA, 2011b; document accessed through FOI). Possibly because of the resignation of the CEO and the events manager of SSA in the aftermath of the financial blowout and subsequent bailout of the event, the environmental evaluation was apparently not undertaken (email communication with Ben Roberts FOI Project Officer of DENR, 6 December 2012). However, there were two post event evaluations obtained through freedom of information requests. One document entitled 'Kangaroo Island Surf Music Festival Post Event Report 2011' bore the logos of the key sponsors SSA and SATC. The evaluation in this document was largely concerned about economic impact, visitor experience and media interest generated by the event. The document was surprisingly positive considering all of the controversy that occurred both pre and post event, declaring:

- attendance at 3888
- total economic impact of $2,941,744
- return on investment of $7.5 to 1
- media value of $3,200,000 (SATC & SSA, 2011a, p. 1).

This emphasis on the economic value of event tourism is not unusual and is a feature of the neoliberal era. Fredline noted this tendency in tourism impact evaluations, claiming these ' … have shown little interest in the evaluation of tourism impacts beyond an assessment of the economic benefits which is frequently undertaken to justify substantial public investment … ' (2005, p. 276). More recently the benefits of triple bottom line event assessment and evaluations (economic, social and environmental) have been recognised for the more holistic insights they provide as well as for the enabling of consideration of possible trade-offs between different types of event impacts (Fredline, 2005, p. 277). Unfortunately, this significant event was not subjected to a comprehensive evaluation despite the fact it presented a valuable learning opportunity.

An *Islander* editorial of 23 August 2012 entitled 'Vivonne's big picture' illuminated the existential questions posed by these events:

> Until a Sydney professor named it the 'best beach in Australia' a few years ago, until the KI Surf Music Festival put it on the radar last year, it had remained very much a coastal hideaway with a few holiday houses. More and more people are seeking accommodation there and once the current economic climate improves it will not be hard to imagine a resurgence in building activity. The community there must now wrestle with what every other growing township has faced: What makes a town? What does a town need? What do we want to be? The surf

festival provided a focus for residents to think about what they wanted in their town (Black, 2012b, p. 5).

The delay in publication of this analysis was the result of a number of factors, including awaiting FOI requests to be fulfilled and a longitudinal approach awaiting a re-occurrence of the event (which never eventuated). As a result a re-examination of events supported on KI since 2011 has been made and a follow-up attempted with several interviewees to gauge their current views on the event and its aftermath. One of the critical points of opponents to the KI Pro Surf and Music Festival was having a professional surfing event co-located with the music event attracting large numbers of people in a remote and undeveloped location on KI, rather than the main town of Kingscote. Since that time, no other event of a similar nature has been run. Instead, KI has hosted its long-standing racing event called the KI Cup Carnival at its racecourse near Kingscote and ongoing farmers' markets, as well as introducing new events such as gourmet wine and food events and athletic events like a marathon and an iron distance race event in 2017.

Only two interviewees responded to the request for an update on their views. One in leadership of KI Eco-Action responded to a question on what lessons have been learned from the event:

> Depends on who you ask. Some Islanders often see any investment as automatically a good idea, and a lot still think that. Maybe some of the businesses may have learned. As for me, I thought it was a money making exercise for Sealink, and Surfing SA was just a conduit for that. I still think that (Bob Huxtable, pers. comm. 20 June 2017).

Another, a leading ecotourism operator and someone of extensive service to TOMM, the Natural Resource Management Board and other bodies, stated:

> With regard to tourism the SATC has made no real positive contribution to KI for 20 years and has been responsible for many debacles — including this one (and Southern Ocean Lodge, helicopters [in the western national parks], golf course proposals, etc.) and basically destroyed the development of ecotourism and also the application of TOMM — all for Sealink and the mass tourism market. We have shut down our ecotourism business after 20 years because of the complete inability of the SATC and TKI to support a long-term sustainable ecotourism industry (Fraser Vickery, pers. comm. 30 June 2017).

It is clear that the KI Pro-Surf and Music Festival was a failure that left lasting impacts on the community as well as the running of event tourism on KI. Whether lessons have been learned seems unclear when event evaluations ignored the conflict and issues generated by the event and instead myopically focused on the metrics and media the event generated. However, the high costs recounted here suggest that event imposition is not a successful strategy and should be avoided through a committed strategy of community involvement.

5. Conclusions and implications

This article has endeavoured to unravel the complicated and at times hidden dynamics of the story behind the KI Pro Surf and Music Festival of 2011 to understand how poor community relationships in part resulted in the failure of this event. As shown, the problem was not with the surf or music events themselves but rather with the lack of effective community consultation and the short timeframe which blocked identification of problems with the chosen location and the season of the year. Such dynamics were viewed as an attempt to make the event a fait accompli. This article has relied on event theory and concepts of neoliberalism to assist in explaining how this case can be viewed as a case of event imposition.

This article suggests how the pressures of neoliberalism might compel destination marketing organisations and tourism industry interests to impose event tourism on communities against their will. In this case, rather than event appropriation, as described by Rojek (2014), event imposition on community through a small event is evident. The reasons this was done was to secure economic value from event tourism to contribute to the growth goals set by destination marketing organisations and the opportunities it gave powerful tourism businesses, confirming previous analyses by Rojek (2014) and Waitt (2008).

It is also important to identify how the local community was largely ignored as a key pillar of sustainable event tourism. In this case, the damaging controversy could have been avoided if the event planners had consulted and secured prior informed consent from the people of Vivonne Bay before settling on it as a site for this event. Had they done this, they would have been advised to hold the music event in the main town, Kingscote, and to choose a more suitable beach for the surfing competition. When the analysts and professionals of event tourism omit or underplay communities as key pillars of event tourism it may have material impacts such as these and thereby undermine the sustainability of tourism and event tourism.

What this case demonstrates is the loss of sovereignty that occurs when tourism authorities designate an event as a tourism asset. When tourism policy-makers claim a place such as KI as a 'critical asset' for the state's tourism industry, what capacity does the community have to demand protection, sovereignty and rights over their home? Few analyses to date have addressed community in this way; most simply discuss community participation in tourism planning. A rare case has been Hall who has looked at the power dimensions of tourism and reviewed a case from British Colombia:

> Cooke's study recommended that all tourism planning be based on the goals and priorities of residents. Indeed she even went further and recommended local attractions be provided only when endorsed by residents (cited in Hall, 2008, p.60).

It is apparent that pro-tourism development pressures external to KI are driving agendas that are resulting in significant community opposition. Policy developed during the heat of this conflict promoting greater tourism growth suggests such trends are set to continue. Considering that the KI community co-developed one of the best practice models in community-driven tourism (the TOMM), it is unfortunate that the KI community is being divided by disagreements on this tourism growth agenda. A rethinking of the events field is required to ensure that community becomes a key pillar of the phenomenon and the almost exclusive focus on events' managers and events-goers as the main actors of significance is over-turned. The derailing of the plans to re-run the event in subsequent years and the resignation of key officials leading the event palpably demonstrate that the community may fatally undermine events that are imposed.

At a minimum this research suggests that event organisers should consider ways to pro-actively engage the local community to prevent alienating them, and thereby avoid fomenting discontent and jeopardising event sustainability. However, this critical analysis indicates event tourism sustainability could be better underpinned by a different paradigm of governance. Current thinking in event tourism does not give equal status to community

that it gives to event-goers and event managers. This research indicates that the vital role of community in event tourism is often overlooked and events may be imposed on them as events are harnessed for tourism growth agendas. Such neoliberal agendas can result in community resistance to events (Waitt, 2008) resulting in detrimental outcomes that could and should be avoided. While communities are complicated and there are diverse views and factions, this does not absolve planners and managers of the need to work with them to develop consensus decisions and co-created futures.

This work has offered contributions to knowledge in terms of both theory and practice. While a single case study has limitations in terms of generalisability, the detailed case study presented here that has resulted from forensic and longitudinal investigation offers rare insights into the politics of tourism/event tourism planning and practice. While the event occurred only once and in 2011, the value in analysing its example remains of timeless importance to understanding how events may be imposed on communities if sustainable governance is not adequately addressed.

This work has helped address the gap in research identified by Mair and Whitford (2013) on analysis of events from a political and policy perspective. It has also contributed to the agenda for critical progress in tourism policy and planning as per Dredge and Jamal's recent call (2015). However, much further work is needed to understand these dynamics under the growing pressures of neoliberalism in the cultural sphere. Good governance and community support are essential if events are to remain supported in the long-term.

Acknowledgement

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data related to this article can be found at http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2017.08.002

Research questions- Kangaroo Island surf festival 2011

1. What is your general view on the tourism policy environment and management of tourism impacts on Kangaroo Island currently?
2. Do you or does the organisation you represent play a role in tourism policy-making and/or management of tourism on KI? What is the nature of this role? What is the organisational position on how tourism should be planned for and managed on KI?
3. How/when did you become aware of the Surf Festival held on KI in November 2011? Did you attend/participate? Were you a part of the pre-planning for the event?
4. What is your view/organisational view on the event and the benefits it offered?
5. There was some controversy concerning the convening of the event at Vivonne Bay. Would you like to comment on the diverse views held among the stakeholders?
6. From your knowledge, could you outline the benefits and drawbacks of the event?
7. Could you comment on how the event was managed and how negative impacts were prevented or mitigated?
8. What is your view on the plan to hold this as an annual event on the event calendar for KI? Is there anything that you think

should be done if this event becomes a regular feature of the event calendar?
9. Is the policy environment sufficient to ensure that KI manages such events effectively for maximising the benefits and minimising the problems of such an event? If not, what policy aspects require attention?
10. Are there management practices that need to be modified or augmented to effectively maximise the benefits and minimise the problems of such an event?
11. Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

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