

# Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – <b>WHANGARURU HARBOUR MARGINS</b>
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
<b>Land Types</b>  Estuarine / inlet land type	Bordered by periodically exposed mud flats and low clay banks, this land type comprises low undulating hills clad with forest and shrubland. On its northern side the type forms a sequence through terrestrial vegetation to saltmarsh and mangrove.
<b>Geology</b> (including geopreservation sites)	Predominantly steep hill country of Waipapa Terrane greywacke, with minor areas of Te Kuiti Group sedimentary sequences, allochthonous Mangakahia Complex sedimentary rock units, and Kerikeri Volcanics basalt flow remnants. The main rock types are Paleozoic–Mesozoic Waipapa Terrane greywacke and minor chert. Thin cover sequences of Eocene–Oligocene Te Kuiti Group and Northland Allochthon (Brook 1996).
<b>Soil Types</b>	The majority of the unit is overlain with Marua clay loam, with much of the coastal edge comprising Marua light brown clay loam. Gully bottoms comprise Whakapara mottled clay loam.
<b>Ecology</b> (including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)	<p>The area includes two Level 1 sites, identified in the Whangaruru Ecological District PNAP report as Q05/019 (called 'Punaruks Parorerarahi Bay'). It contains a sequence of habitat types, ranging from shrubland, coastal forest and wetland, to estuary and coast. The wetland is large and unmodified with a stable catchment area. It provides habitat for fernbird (Sparse) and is one of the few of its type in the Ecological District.</p> <p>The site is reported as being representative for the tanekaha-totara coastal forest type, pohutukawa coastal forest, kanuka-manuka-pohutukawa-tanekaha coastal forest, and totara-puriri coastal forest.</p> <p>These types are rare in the ecological district.</p>
<b>Archaeological sites</b>	It is anticipated that numerous archaeological sites exist on the margins of the harbour.
<b>Heritage Landscapes</b>	None known.
<b>Landscape characterisation</b> (including the identification of any specific characteristics)	
<p>The Whangaruru Harbour unit includes an area of coastal forest and adjoining mangrove / saltmarsh which is located to the east of Punaruks. The balance of the harbour coastline is dominated by low and steeply dissected hills under pasture, but with margins that are frequently vegetated with pohutukawa and shrubland coastal associations. Inlets often display a succession from marine to terrestrial vegetation.</p> <p>The upper harbour is dominated by tidal flats.</p> <p>Bounded by Russell Road on its western side, by pine plantations to the south, and by the coast and wetland to the east and north, the unit is virtually contiguous with the Russell Forest which extends east as far as Russell Road. The flow of forest from ridge to harbour is particularly striking and displays a high level of naturalness and coherence.</p>	

Apart from scattered bach-type development on the coast, the unit contains little built development and displays little modification, although the settlement at Ohawini Bay adjoins the unit in its south east corner.

**EVALUATION**

Criteria	Rank	Comment
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**Natural Science Factors**

<p><b>Representativeness</b>          Natural landscapes are clearly characteristic of the area, district or region. The key components of the landscape will be present in a way that defines the character of the place and distills its character and essence. Endemic associations.</p>	<b>4</b>	The unit is highly representative in terms of its coastal forest vegetation associations and the relationship between the Punaruku Estuary and adjoining forest.
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<p><b>Rarity</b>          Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.</p>	<b>5</b>	The PNAP report states that the composite ecological types are rare in the ecological district.
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**Aesthetic Values**

<p><b>Coherence</b>          The patterns of land cover and land use are largely in harmony with the underlying natural pattern of the landform of the area and there are no significant discordant elements of land cover or land use.</p>	<b>4</b>	With little modification to either landform or vegetation, the unit displays a high level of coherence with vegetation patterns reflecting the underlying topographical features.
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<p><b>Diversity &amp; Complexity</b>          The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.</p>	<b>5</b>	The unit displays a high level of ecological diversity and complexity, with a variety of vegetation types reflecting the topography, drainage patterns and slope aspect.
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<p><b>Vividness</b>          Natural features and landscape are widely recognised across the community and beyond the local area and remain clearly in the memory; striking landscapes are symbolic of an area due to their recognisable and memorable qualities.</p>	<b>4</b>	Being located within the Whangaruru Harbour, the unit displays a generally sheltered character and the relationship between the harbour the unit and the backdrop of the Russell Forest makes the area highly memorable and vivid.
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<p><b>Naturalness</b>          How affected by human activity is the landscape? Does human activity intrude on the landscape?          Eg.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of buildings and associated built development.</li> <li>• Presence of infrastructure services.</li> <li>• Extent of indigenous forest cover.</li> <li>• Homogeneity of exotic vegetation.</li> <li>• Presence / extent of modified agricultural land use.</li> <li>• Strength of natural processes / ecological patterns.</li> <li>• Unmodified and legible physical relief and landform.</li> <li>• Presence of water.</li> </ul>	<b>4</b>	<p>The majority of the unit displays a high level of naturalness with only limited evident human activity.</p> <p>The presence of built development within Ohawini, and pine plantations on the southern edge of the unit tends to diminish the apparent naturalness, but this affect is slight and confined to the context of the unit rather than within the unit itself.</p> <p>Vegetation types and patterns are clearly representative of topography, drainage patterns and slope aspect, and this suggests a high level of strength of natural processes.</p>
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<p><b>Intactness</b>          Natural systems are intact and aesthetically coherent and do not display significant visual signs of human modification, intervention or manipulation, visually intact and highly aesthetic natural landscapes.</p>	<b>4</b>	The unit displays a high level of intactness.
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<b>Experiential Values</b>		
<b>Expressiveness</b> The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.	<b>4</b>	The unit displays a high level of legibility in terms of the hydrological processes that have shaped its component elements. The complexity and spatial arrangement of vegetation reflects the underlying topographical form of the hills and estuary.
<b>Sensory qualities</b> (These are landscape phenomena as directly perceived and experienced by humans, such as the view of a scenic landscape, or the distinctive smell and sound of the foreshore).	<b>4</b>	Views of the unit in its context between the Russell Forest and the harbour are particularly striking. The flow of vegetation from the distant ridge to the water contributes strongly to the sense of place.
<b>Transient Values</b> The consistent and repeated occurrence of transient features that contributes to the character, qualities and values of the landscape; landscapes are widely recognised for their transient features and the contribution that these make to the landscape.	<b>4</b>	Strongly influenced by the tide, the rivers display marked changes in character over the tidal cycle.  Seasonal changes are also notable, with flowering plants such as pohutukawa, providing seasonal display.

<b>Remoteness / Wildness</b> Does the landscape display a wilderness character, remote from and untouched by human presence? Eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of remoteness</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Distance from built development</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>	The proximity of the Ohawini settlement, Russell Road and the presence of scattered baches along the coastal edge of the unit diminish the potential remote experience.
<b>Shared and recognised values</b> Natural features and landscape are widely known and valued by the immediate and wider community for their contribution to a sense of place leading to a strong community association with, or high public esteem for the place.	<b>4</b>	The Whangaruru Harbor is valued by the community and by the people who visit the Ohawini, Oakura and Bland Bay settlements. The unit is a component part of that landscape and a part that contributes strongly to its sense of place.
<b>Spiritual, cultural and historical associations</b> Natural features and landscapes can be clearly and widely known and influenced by their connection to the spiritual, cultural and historical valued in the place and includes associative meanings and associative activities valued by the community. These can include both activities and meanings associative meanings are spiritual, cultural or social associations with particular landscape elements, features, or areas, whilst associative activities are patterns of social activity that occur in particular parts of a landscape, for example, popular walking routes or fishing spots.		Consultation was initiated during the mapping process, but has not led to any feedback within the required period.  The harbour is highly valued by the community for recreation and this can translate to a spiritual affinity

Rank scale between 1 (low) and 5 (high)

<b>Land Types</b>
Coastal cliffs / escarpment
Low escarpment
Bays and headlands
Beach
Dune complex
Reefs and islands
Estuarine / inlet
Open harbour
Coastal plain
Rolling hills
Steep hills; moderate to high relief
Ranges; high relief
Strongly rolling land
Low rolling land

Valley floors and flats
Plains
Volcanic cones
River mouth
Wetland
Watercourses
Lakes and water bodies

### Photographs of unit



View north west towards Tutaematai



View west across the Punaruku Estuary towards the Russell Forest



View north west towards Punaruku