

Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – MAUNGANUI BLUFF
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
Land Types <small>(refer to list overleaf)</small> Coastal cliffs / escarpments.	Forming a prominent feature of some 459 metres in height that is visible for a long distance along the beach and from the ocean, the unit is less apparent from inland to the east. The eastern slopes are relatively mild, whilst on the seaward side the cliff is dramatic and precipitous.
Geology <small>(including geopreservation sites)</small>	Maunganui Bluff consists of a sequence of 45 — 50 basalt flows with interbedded subaerial pyroclastics. These are cut by north-east trending basalt dykes, especially in the lower parts of the sequence. These rocks belong to the Waipoua Basalt Formation, which together with the Omapere Conglomerate and Pukorukoru Formation are here placed within the Waipoua Subgroup (new) of the Waitakere Group.
Soil Types	The majority of the unit is overlain with Te Kie steepland soils, stony clay loam, whilst at the northern end, behind a backbeach strip of drift / recently stabilized sand, the soil comprises Te Koporu sand and Tangititi sand loam and sand.
Ecology <small>(including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)</small>	The Maunganui Bluff Scenic Reserve (O07/009) is a Level 1 site noted in the Tutamoe PNAP survey as comprising 319.1 ha of forest, and 106.8 ha of shrubland (coastal associations). The site is said to be of significance as a outstanding, diverse coastal ecosystem and unique landform which has high biodiversity values. It supports many threatened species including kiwi and kauri snail which have both been recorded as being in high numbers, three site endemic Land snails and 13 threatened and 12 regionally significant plants including the nationally endangered titirangi which only occurs in this Ecological District in Northland. Maunganui Bluff is also the only recorded west coast site for <i>Chionocholea bromoides</i> .
Archaeological sites	The unit is of significance to maori and it is anticipated that archaeological sites are present on and around the unit.
Heritage Landscapes	The unit has significant heritage values .
Landscape characterisation <small>(including the identification of any specific characteristics)</small> Maunganui Bluff forms the elevated western end of a 300m high ridge that extends to the coast from the southern end of Tutamoe Plateau. Its 4 km wide coastal margin forms high cliffs that drop almost vertically to the sea below. The ridge slopes steeply down on either side to long sandy beaches backed by recent dunes. The Waikara and Pupuia Streams drain these northern and southern slopes respectively and Waitapu Stream flows eastwards from the cliff tops through a wide alluvial valley perched 150 m above sea-level; seeming to hang between the northern and main 'summits', before draining via the Kaihu River into the Kaipara Harbour.	

The impact of the landform is heightened by the predominant horizontal simplicity and linear scale of the beach. Viewed from the beach to the south, the scale of the Bluff is impressive, rising vertically from the sea and dominating the view. Dwellings within the Aranga Beach settlement are visible at its foot and these structures, massively dwarfed by the Bluff, provide a sense of its size.

Indigenous vegetation, sculpted by the wind clings to the slopes and the unit encompasses the extent of this vegetation, including a finger of bush which extends to the east at the northern end of the unit.

On the landward side of the Bluff the landform shelves more slowly and these slopes, under pasture are excluded from the unit.

The Northland Geopreservation Inventory identifies Maunganui Bluff basalt as being of significance as the best exposure of Waipoua Basalt.

Maunganui Bluff Scenic Reserve has high ecological values supporting many threatened species of flora and fauna including kiwi and kauri snail, which have both been recorded as being in high numbers.

EVALUATION

Criteria	Rank	Comment
Natural Science Factors		
Representativeness 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.	5	A well known and prominent feature, the unit is a feature that has strong endemic associations and is one of a number of elements that characterises the exposed west coast.
Rarity Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	5	The unit is unique due to its scale, ecological values, vividness and cultural associations.
Aesthetic Values		
Coherence 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.	4	The unit displays a high level of coherence with respect to the lack of modification and patterns of vegetation. Whilst the surrounding landscape retains its natural form, it has been modified in terms of vegetation cover and much of the contextual landscape is under pasture. This detracts to a small degree from the coherence of the unit.
Diversity & Complexity The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	3	The ecological diversity of the unit is compromised by the limited scale and narrowness of remnant areas of vegetation, although a moderate level of ecological diversity is still evident.
Vividness 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.	5	The unit comprises a dramatic and prominent feature that is visible from the beach and ocean. Looking north or south along the beach towards the unit, it forms a backdrop of significant scale, which contrasts starkly with the surrounding landform and seascape and draws the eye. The steepness of the coastal cliffs also contrast with the shallower angle of the main beach scarp. Often seen through a haze of sea spray, this accentuates the perception of scale and drama. Viewed from the south the feature displays a high level of continuous vegetation. From proximate locations to the north the pastoral coastal slope is visible, although from more distant northern locations the pasture is partially screened by landform
Naturalness How affected by human activity is the landscape? Does human activity intrude on the landscape? Eg.	4	Dominating the surrounding area, the unit appears highly natural when viewed from the coast and beach. Small settlements are located at either end of the feature, with

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of buildings and associated built development. • Presence of infrastructure services. • Extent of indigenous forest cover. • Homogeneity of exotic vegetation. • Presence / extent of modified agricultural land use. • Strength of natural processes / ecological patterns. • Unmodified and legible physical relief and landform. • Presence of water. 		<p>dwelling in Aranga Beach settlement being visible from the south, but built development within these settlements is dwarfed by the feature itself which is unmodified by built development or infrastructure services.</p> <p>Indigenous vegetation covers approximately 50-60% of the feature. Pasture is contained within the hanging valley and also on the seaward slope of the ridge.</p>
<p>Intactness 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>	4	<p>The natural systems of the unit have been compromised to some extent by clearance of the native vegetation cover from the surround landscape. A sizable area of vegetation is still present within the unit, on the escarpment face, on the escarpment crest, and within the areas of forest / shrubland at the north end of the unit flatter. These areas are however likely to be affected by their small scale.</p>
Experiential Values		
<p>Expressiveness The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.</p>	5	<p>Coastal erosion and deposition processes are clearly evident.</p> <p>The 'wind shorn' vegetation cover evidences the exposure of the site in terms of the intensity and frequency of the wind.</p>
<p>Sensory qualities (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).</p>	5	<p>Views to and from the unit are dramatic and powerful. In combination with the sound of the sea and wind and the smell of the sea, it is considered that the sensory qualities of the unit are very high.</p>
<p>Transient Values 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.</p>	4	<p>Time of day (sun angle), weather and atmospheric conditions affect the character of the unit, particularly when viewed along the beach. Changes in these conditions affect the apparent scale and dominance of the feature.</p>
<p>Remoteness / Wildness Does the landscape display a wilderness character, remote from and untouched by human presence? Eg.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of remoteness • Accessibility • Distance from built development 	3	<p>A strong sense of remoteness is provided by the exposure and elevation of the unit.</p> <p>At the foot of the feature, the presence of nearby settlements diminishes the remote experience to some degree, but even on the beach near these settlements the sense of remoteness is tangible.</p> <p>The feature is accessible by footpath, but challenging.</p>
<p>Shared and recognised values 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.</p>	5	<p>The unit is a widely recognized feature and is highly valued by the community.</p>
<p>Spiritual, cultural and historical associations</p>	5	<p>Consultation was initiated during the mapping process, but has not led to any feedback within the required period.</p>

<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>The unit does however have significant spiritual and cultural associations.</p> <p>The walking track is frequently used by local and regional visitors, and by international tourists.</p>
--	---

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

Land Types
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 of Maunganui Bluff from north east



View of Maunganui Bluff from north