

# Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

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|   | Unit name – <b>MAUNGATANIWHA RANGE</b>  |
| <b>DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION</b>   |   |
| <b>Component</b>  | <b>Comment</b>  |
| <b>Land Types</b><br><small>(refer to list overleaf)</small><br><br>Ranges; high relief   | A substantial area of steep, dissected hill country ranging in altitude from 140m to almost 750m. This broken contour gives rise to an even network of generally minor watercourses contributing to larger catchments that then drain to either the upper Hokianga or east coast rivers that fall to the Whangaroa and Mangonui harbours and Taipa.   |
| <b>Geology</b><br><small>(including geopreservation sites)</small>  | Hill country derived from Tangihua Complex igneous rock units.  |
| <b>Soil Types</b>   | Predominantly Te Kie steepland soils, comprising stony clay loam, light brown stony clay loam and reddish clay loams. Large areas of Awapuku clay loam, particularly to the eastern portion of the ONL. Small pockets of Mangakahia silt loam and clay loam, along with Kohumaru clay.  |
| <b>Ecology</b><br><small>(including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)</small>  | <p>Contains a wide range of habitats and ecologies, being classified into 20 different ecological units. Predominant “canopy” species include taraire, towai, totora, puriri, kahikatea, tawa, kanuka, manuka, bracken-ring fern, tutu shrubland, swamp maire and kauri. There are also areas of hardwood shrub association.</p> <p>The significance of this area is noted as being its large scale, and including the northernmost area in NZ of unmodified forest. It is also recognised for its emergent kahikatea forest, which is rare in New Zealand. The forests of this area feature northern rata, along with a wide diversity of species that include some that are regionally and nationally threatened. The wider Maungataniwha range is considered to be a very important site for the long-term maintenance of North Island brown kiwi and NZ pigeon populations.</p> <p>It is recognised as a representative site for many of the various canopy associations recorded for the composite ecological units, and recorded as the only site of high-altitude hardwood shrub association in the Ecological District. The short-jawed kokopu, a threatened freshwater fish, has been found within this unit; this being one of the few sites in Northland where it has been seen.</p> |
| <b>Archaeological sites</b>   | Very few archaeological sites recorded in this elevated, inland area.   |
| <b>Heritage Landscapes</b>  | Past site of extensive native logging and forestry industry.  |
| <b>Landscape characterisation</b><br><small>(including the identification of any specific characteristics)</small><br><br>A bold belt of bush-clad, elevation land that runs across central upper Northland, spanning from the upper Hokianga to immediately inland of Whangaroa Harbour. In this position it pairs with the Omahuta / Puketi Forests to form something of a divide between the terrain centred around Kaikohe and the upper regional extent that runs north from Kaitaia. The path of State Highway One over the range via the Mangamuka is some of the most spectacular on the main highway’s route through Northland – and indeed over its entire corridor nationwide. Here the combination of the adjacent Mangamuka River, the steep, imposing landform, substantial and diverse indigenous forest cover and the winding, intimate character of the highway itself are very distinctive and memorable. A lookout at the apex of the highway pass gives an impressive view north and a sense of the elevation of the terrain. |   |

The scale of the underlying landform sees the Maungataniwha Range and related hill country act as defining element in the small valleys and lowlands that surround. A number of small settlements, such as Mangamuka, Broadwood, Parmapurua, and Otangaroa, feature the landmass as a backdrop. It fulfills a similar, but more distant role in the same way for parts of the Hokianga Harbour.

Whilst there are a range of ecological units present in the Outstanding Landscape, with resulting variations in vegetative compositions, the blanketing of an indigenous cover that reflects that variety is a key characteristic of this landscape. In some areas the vegetation is at a less advanced stage of development from colonisation or recovery from past clearance, but that less lofty vegetation is contiguous with the main body.

Whilst the Department of Conservation administers the substantial majority of this landscape, there are portions around the perimeter which share the same characteristics and which are privately owned.

## EVALUATION

| Criteria  | Rank | Comment  |
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| <b>Natural Science Factors</b>  |      |  |
| <b>Representativeness</b><br>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.  | 4    | Very strong indigenous character and a steep elevated landform. Features many species, such as northern rata, that are typical and characteristic of Northland (if no longer common).  |
| <b>Rarity</b><br>Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.  | 4    | Contains large areas of substantial canopy of a scale that is not commonly found across large extents. Involves a number of distinctive ecological associations and hosts numerous uncommon and threatened species.  |
| <b>Aesthetic Values</b>   |      |  |
| <b>Coherence</b><br>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.  | 5    | Generally very cohesive, displaying a strong relationship between terrain, soils, elevation and vegetation association. Collectively these provide a seamless continuity of indigenous character. Diminished on some edges where adjoining exotic plantations.   |
| <b>Diversity &amp; Complexity</b><br>The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.   | 4    | Ecologically and topographically diverse. A complex landform and a wide range of ecological associations, which intermesh.   |
| <b>Vividness</b><br>Natural features and landscape are widely recognized 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.  | 4    | Much of the unit is very distinctive, particularly some of the steepest terrain that backs Broadwood, and the very scenic landscape that the State Highway passes through on its route north of Mangamuka.   |
| <b>Naturalness</b><br>How affected by human activity is the landscape? Does human activity intrude on the landscape? Eg. <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</li> </ul> | 5    | <p>Highly natural, with an almost complete absence of buildings and infrastructure. Notable exceptions are the communication masts on Ratea and Maungataniwha, the State Highway corridor with its related structures and the course of some smaller metalled local roads.</p> <p>Generally natural patterns of indigenous vegetation and related processes are functional after historic timber extraction and the continuing pressure of plant and animal pests.</p> <p>Numerous small streams and the more major (but small) rivers are generally a subtle element, but appear clear and natural, bringing an added dimension through their appearance, sound, and ecologies.</p> |

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| <p>physical relief and landform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of water.</li> </ul>   |            |   |
| <p><b>Intactness</b></p> <p>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>5</b>   | Generally very intact other than the localised intrusions mentioned above. The positioning of communication masts on two of the highest peaks in the range brings an extent of impact that far outweighs the scale of the structures themselves.  |
| <b>Experiential Values</b>  |            |   |
| <p><b>Expressiveness</b></p> <p>The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.</p>   | <b>4</b>   | Very expressive and legible, although geomorphic influences are less evident than the more graphic examples found on the coast or near major watercourses.  |
| <p><b>Sensory qualities</b></p> <p>(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>  | <b>4</b>   | The ONL creates a strong impression when travelling through the Mangamuka Gorge, which is where the majority of people would experience it from. Has a strong sense and smell of "bush" that is particularly heightened in more mature and diverse forested areas.                                |
| <p><b>Transient Values</b></p> <p>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>   | <b>3</b>   | Subject to subtle seasonal changes in plants, and shifting patterns of light and shadow within a day and between seasons.   |
| <p><b>Remoteness / Wildness</b></p> <p>Does the landscape display a wilderness character, remote from and untouched by human presence?</p> <p>Eg.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of remoteness</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Distance from built development</li> </ul>   | <b>4</b>   | Much of the unit is relatively inaccessible due to the spatial nature of road access and the terrain of the place once there. Has the Mangamuka Gorge walkway running through, and the state highway corridor, but these "open up" only small parts of the wider ONL.                             |
| <p><b>Shared and recognised values</b></p> <p>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>   | <b>4</b>   | In connection with the Mangamuka Gorge part of the unit and those areas that lie as a backdrop to local settlements or road corridors, these values are expected to be high. In relation to the less accessible extremities of the unit, these are anticipated to be much less known and admired. |
| <p><b>Spiritual, cultural and historical associations</b></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. 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> | <b>***</b> | <p>Closely related to the distinctive experience of travelling along the State Highway, which has the sense of being something of a lifeline to Kaitia.</p> <p>Consultation was initiated during the mapping process, but has not led to any feedback within the required period.</p>             |

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









