

Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – HENDERSON BAY AND RARAWA BEACH SANDY COAST
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
Land Types (refer to list overleaf) Beach Dune complex	A pair of semi-extensive ocean beaches backed by dunefields. Contained by rocky headlands to either end. Strong similarities with Kowhai Beach to the south, which could equally have been included in this unit.
Geology (including geopreservation sites)	Holocene dunes over Pleistocene leached consolidated sand.
Soil Types	Ohia sand, Waikare silt loam, and Okaka silty clay.
Ecology (including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)	Henderson Bay is recognised as a thriving area of nationally threatened pingao sedgeland and sandfield. Rarawa an excellent example of dune and tidal stream habitat with a shrubland buffer supporting threatened flora and fauna. Only eg of harakeke-pohuehue association in ecological district.
Archaeological sites	No recorded sites in association with Rarawa Beach, but Henderson Bay has a distribution through its backdune zone and a focusing of activity around the southern end of the beach near Grenville Point.
Heritage Landscapes	
Landscape characterisation (including the identification of any specific characteristics) <p>Very shallow embayments where a coastal indentation between headlands has filled with sand deposited as dunefields. In the case of Henderson Bay, the active field rises to a significant height, whereas Rarawa has its inner dune clad in shrubland (much of it exotic species) that then sequences to private pastoral farmland over the more gentle relic dunes further inland. Foredune vegetation is largely indigenous and relatively extensive, contributing to an atmosphere of elevated natural character.</p> <p>This unit has a semi-expansive character, where there is a sense of considerable space and connection with the open sea, but without the extent of larger beaches like Great Exhibition and 90 Mile, where the shore disappears into the mists of breaking waves, seemingly endless.</p> <p>Settlement and land development patterns are such that both beaches bring a character of being largely free of human influence. Pedestrian / quad access tracks and a small road at Rarawa are the only signs of habitation and use directly connected to the beaches themselves.</p>	

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.	4	Good examples of semi-expansive dune beaches with relatively intact indigenous vegetation. Both have a sense of being somewhat isolated and symbolic of the lightly populated character of the northern-most parts of the region.
Rarity Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	4	Special, and slightly different, ecological characteristics are present. East coast exposed coast beaches are well represented elsewhere, but these have a low level of modification and built development whilst remaining reasonably accessible in their proximity to SH1.

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.	5	Highly cohesive and unified through a combination of coastal landform, development patterns (lack thereof) and vegetation associations. Somewhat diminished at Rawara as a result of the relatively high component of invasive exotic species amongst the backdune vegetation.
Diversity & Complexity The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	5	Subtly diverse as a result of the complexity of the natural sand dune terrain and interplay with vegetation patterns and associations. The freshwater lagoon and stream at Rawara are an added aspect of its diversity.
Vividness 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.	5	Highly distinctive and representative of this part of the upper north eastern coastline. Henderson Bay is particularly striking when seen from the end of Henderson Bay Road.
Naturalness How affected by human activity is the landscape? Does human activity intrude on the landscape? Eg. <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. 	4	Free of buildings and infrastructure, although subtly overlooked in parts by a very limited number of visible dwellings located on the margin of the unit. Small access tracks through the dunes indicate a human presence, but are relatively minor in their presence. Vegetation patterns and composition is largely natural and indigenous, although the backdune shrubland at Rawara is compromised by a large component of invasive exotic species. Robust and uncompromised natural processes of wave action, longshore currents and dune building/erosion phases. Integral relationship with exposed and dynamic section of open coast seas.
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.	5	Highly intact, with the exception of the intrusion of weed species into the backdune vegetation at Rawara.
Experiential Values		
Expressiveness The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.	5	Boldly representative of the coastal processes and influence of exposure to wave, current and wind patterns.
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).	4	An engaging portion of coast where the dynamism of natural processes is strongly perceived. Subject to salt spray and the sound of breaking waves during common easterly sea conditions.
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.	4	Experience of this landscape is closely related to sea state and time of day, with the sun rising over the sea to warm this coast.
Remoteness / Wildness Does the landscape display a wilderness character, remote from and untouched by human presence? Eg.	4	Although quite close to SH1 and served by an adjacent access road, both areas have sense of isolation due to a lack of immediately buildings, roading and infrastructure.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of remoteness • Accessibility • Distance from built development 		Seasonal changes at Rawara when the DoC camp is more heavily utilised over summer.
Shared and recognised values Natural features and landscapes 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.	3	Anticipated to be known by those living in the vicinity or who use the DoC camping ground on a repeated basis. Despite their strong identity and appeal, it is thought that both areas have a relatively low presence in a wider psyche.
Spiritual, cultural and historical associations 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. 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.		Likely familiarity and sense of deeper connection amongst those who return to camp at Rawara regularly. Similar relatedness likely for those who live at or near these landscapes or regularly use these portions of coast for surfing, fishing and other recreation. Consultation was initiated during the mapping process, but has not led to any feedback within the required period.

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







