

# Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – <b>PURERUA PENINSULA – WAIROA BAY TO ROCKY POINT &amp; RELATED ISLANDS</b>
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
<b>Land Types</b> (refer to list overleaf) Coastal cliffs / escarpment Bays and headlands Beach Reefs and islands	<p>A substantial peninsula, typically steep-sided and with a bluffed, rocky coastline prevailing. Apex elevation at Mt Pocock – which is very close to the seaward end of the peninsula is 258m.</p> <p>Small islands a particular feature of Wairoa Bay and Cape Wiwiki areas. Includes sandy beaches at either end of the unit, although these are atypical of the prevailing theme of coastal character.</p>
<b>Geology</b> (including geopreservation sites)	Valleys and coastal hillslopes in hill country of Waipapa Group greywacke.
<b>Soil Types</b>	Marua light brown clay loam, Te Ranga steepland soils, light brown clay loam and sandy clay loam.
<b>Ecology</b> (including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)	<p>Mainland part of ONL has areas of manuka/kanuka shrubland with occasional puriri, cabbage tree and gorse. Scattered pohutukawa and hardwood associations in small gully pockets.</p> <p>Purerua Peninsula has some of the highest number of kiwi calls per hour recorded in Northland. The shrubland areas are important for kiwi and the nearby wetland areas (outside of this ONL) are potentially important for spotless crane, bittern and fernbird.</p> <p>The area supports several threatened and regionally significant species of shore and wetland birds, and is a representative site for manuka shrubland.</p> <p>Wiwiki group of islands include flax and pohutukawa commonly dispersed. Kanuka, hangehange, houpara, bracken, cutty grass, and coastal astelia are frequent. Cabbage tree, kawakawa, karaka, coastal tussock, rengarenga lily, toetoe, rushsp and gorse are occasional.</p> <p>Islands are a representative site for flax, one of only three examples in the Ecological District of taupata dominance, and the only site representing houpara dominance and pohutukawa-houpara association. The island closest to the mainland (Harakeke Is.) displays a diverse forest including coastal maire, a relatively uncommon species, and prostrate kowhai. Tikitiki Island is an unmodified mainly bare island but habitat for several threatened bird species.</p>
<b>Archaeological sites</b>	Abundance of sites found along coastal brink and flanks relating to the shoreline. Sequence of pa sites on headlands around Howe Point and Rangihoua Bay. Visible terraces elsewhere on coastal spurs.
<b>Heritage Landscapes</b>	Nationally important memorial and site contained within the Marsden Cross Historic Reserve. Long history of pastoral farming preceded by native forestry.

## Landscape characterisation

(including the identification of any specific characteristics)

A very powerful and substantial headland form that acts as a landmark over a large inland area and area of coast. Serves as the northern gateway to the Bay of Islands, and Kerikeri/Te Puna inlets. When seen from a distance, Purerua has a very simple, bold signature comprising the loom of the landmass overlaid with a simple pastoral cover. In summer that grassland dries off to a very graphic golden colouring. When seen from closer locations, a level of detail in both landform and vegetation patterns become clear. So too do the scattered dwellings and related access tracks that have been developed on the site as part of a management plan subdivision that commenced approximately a decade ago.

The coastal margin of the peninsula is convoluted and diverse, with sequences of small bays and coves, caves, narrow reefs and small islands standing just clear of the rocky shore. A notable cluster of islands is strung off of Cape Wiwiki at the apex of the peninsula, including the well-know Ninepin Island. These feature dramatic forms and, being isolated for a history of pastoral use that has prevailed on the nearby mainland, are in a much more intact and natural state.

The main body of the peninsula tends to be sheered where it meets the sea, leaving elevated rocky cliffs and bluffs dropping to the water. Typical terrain over this unit eases little from those coastal cliffs, being very steep and fragile, with numerous areas of slipping and erosion scars, particularly in association with access tracks. Restorative planting associated with the Mataka subdivision are steadily converting many of the steepest coastal flanks into native shrubland from their former pastoral cover.

The coast in this area typically features very clear, dark blue ocean waters. It is also subject to severe sea conditions, as demonstrated by the extensive faces of bare rock that rise from sea level in the most exposed areas.

## EVALUATION

Criteria	Rank	Comment
<b>Natural Science Factors</b>		
<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.	4	One of the defining landscapes for this part of the coast and inland terrain. Acts as a defining pillar to the northern edge of the Bay of Islands. Has high kiwi habitat values and associated offshore islands are noted for their ecological values.
<b>Rarity</b> Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	3	Relative rarity is hinged on species found on remote coast and associated offshore islands. Overall, the coastal landform and profile of Purerua relates to the distinctive loom of Mataka and relatively small pockets of ecology, rather than a broader pattern.
<b>Aesthetic Values</b>		
<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.	4	Unified primarily by the consistent form and parent materials of the majority of the coastal flank. Vegetation patterns assist in some areas and restorative planting on Mataka Station will assist further as they develop.
<b>Diversity &amp; Complexity</b> The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	4	Coastline configuration, small islands and rocky coastal flanks all contribute. Overall – and only partially within the ONL - the simple, bold character of the main landmass is somewhat lacking in these qualities as a result of intensive pastoralism,
<b>Vividness</b> Natural features and landscape are widely recognized across the community and beyond the local area and remain clearly in the memory; striking	5	Evocative and powerful, with the Cape Wiwiki, Harakeke Island and Tikitiki Rock (The Ninepins) being particularly vivid.

landscapes are symbolic of an area due to their recognisable and memorable qualities.		
<b>Naturalness</b> 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 physical relief and landform.</li> <li>• Presence of water.</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>	<p>Whilst the majority of the unit is in an “unbuilt” state, adjacent parts of the land have been developed for housing. Those structures tend to be large and the access drives to reach them are typically accompanied by scarring of the clay soils.</p> <p>Vegetation patterns are limited in terms of current expression, although planting on the subdivision will add to that natural extent and create broader sweeps that are more in scale with the landform.</p> <p>The coastal margin and flanks embodied in the ONL are considered to be the most intact parts of the broader site.</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.	<b>3</b>	<p>Whilst a relatively high measure of coherence applies to the portion of the peninsula that is within the ONL, it is currently impacted by scarring and building on adjacent land as mentioned above. That prominence is likely to diminish as mitigation measures and wider planting initiatives on the subdivision progress further.</p>
<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>	<p>A strong coastal identity and expression of the interaction between – predominantly – hard coast and wave action on this exposed shoreline. Remaining natural vegetation patterns and compositions also contribute.</p>
<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>3</b>	<p>The sounds of wave action, smell of resulting salty air and general exposure to the elements are present, but not as influential as in some other areas of Northland’s coast.</p>
<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>3</b>	<p>Primarily related to sea state and early morning lighting of the landform and seaward contour. Colour changes in pasture are a feature of the wider peninsula in summer months, but those areas are largely outside this ONL.</p>
<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>	<p>Whilst lightly settled and not readily accessed by the public, the presence of substantial buildings and the prominence of many access corridors brings a moderately developed sense of broad-scale domesticity to the landscape of the outer peninsula.</p>
<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>	<p>A prominent and well know landmark guarding the northern edge of the Bay of Islands. The Ninepins area is a very popular boating destination and the turning point for vessels entering or leaving this side of the wider embayment.</p>
<b>Spiritual, cultural and historical associations</b> Natural features and landscapes can be clearly and		

<p>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.</p>	****	<p>Consultation was initiated during the mapping process, but has not led to any feedback within the required period.</p> <p>Role of Mataka and Purerua as a local landmark and orientation point is likely to give this area some prominence in local minds.</p> <p>Presence of the Marsden Cross memorial and related reserve area.</p>
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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











