

Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – MAUNGARU RANGE AND REMNANTS
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
Land Types <small>(refer to list overleaf)</small> Steep hills: moderate high relief.	Visible as an elevated vegetated landform, the unit forms a recognisable feature within the landscape and one of a number of similar elevated landform features, which contributes to the character of the lower part of the region.
Geology <small>(including geopreservation sites)</small>	Steep hill country underlain by Cretaceous-Paleocene ophiolitic volcanics (Tangihua Complex).
Soil Types	The majority of the unit, including the ridge and upper slopes is overlain by Te Kie steepland soils, stony clay loam and reddish clay loam. The soils of the lower western slopes comprise Takitu gravelly clay loams.
Ecology <small>(including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)</small>	The Tangihua Ecological District PNAP survey identifies the unit as South Houto Forest and Mangaru Range (P07/037). This Level 1 site comprises 783.2 ha. It lies to the south of Tangihua ED and comprises one of the District's largest remaining contiguous areas of indigenous forest which may support at least two threatened fauna species (brown kiwi (Nationally Vulnerable) and kukupa (regionally significant)). The forest also provides habitat for one regionally significant plant species Northern rata). The unit contains a diverse range of forest types including Puriri-taraire forest, Kahikatea-totara forest, Puriri-totara forest, Puriri-taraire-totara forest, Towai forest, Taraire forest, Kohekohe-puriri-taraire forest and Kohekohe forest. The dispersal of forest types displays a strong altitudinal sequence.
Archaeological sites	None known.
Heritage Landscapes	None known.
Landscape characterisation <small>(including the identification of any specific characteristics)</small> The Maungaru Range comprises a long narrow range of hills located to the north east of Dargaville. The range rises steeply from the surrounding rolling farmland at a contour of 80m to a maximum of 465m. It forms a highly prominent feature, when viewed from the west, rising steeply from the Tangowahine Valley floor. The range is visible along the full length of Tangowahine Valley Road on its western side, and Kirikopuni Valley Road and Sommerville Road to the east. The scale of the feature is striking, and displays a combination of steep and rugged bush clad slopes, ridges and gullies, and steep, dissected and angular topography under pasture. At the southern end of the range, on the western side, the pastured slopes extend up to the skyline ridge The lower slopes of the ranges are predominantly under pasture with fragmented patches of bush and	

scattered totara on steeper slopes and within gullies. This vegetation forms a transition between the forested upper slopes and pastured valley floor and lower slopes and the resulting landscape patterns present a moderate to high level of amenity.

Earthworks associated with tracks, cutting across the steeper slopes are a visible component of the landscape and in places detract from the view.

Scattered buildings associated with agricultural activities, including dwellings are located on the lower slopes of the range, and tend to be elevated slightly above the valley floor.

Geologically, the steep hill country is underlain by Cretaceous-Paleocene ophiolitic volcanics (Tangihua Complex).

The range is aligned on a north west – south east axis, and is partially vegetated with native forest and scrub vegetation, with at its northern end the Houto Forest. The high point; Maungaru is located at the southern end of the range and rises to 418m.

Approximately 50% of the unit is protected: 375 ha are within Northland Conservation Park land and 34.2 ha designated as a Queen Elizabeth II Open Space Covenant.

EVALUATION

Criteria	Rank	Comment
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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	The landscape is strongly representative of the sequence of ranges vegetated with native forest that occurs between the Tangihua Ranges and the Parataiko Ranges to the north west. These features characterize the landscape within this part of the region, and are representative of Northland as a whole.
Rarity Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	4	Whilst a number of examples of this land type exist, the strength lies partly in the repeated occurrence within the region. They are characteristic of Northland and rare in a national sense.

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 main body of the range displays a high level of coherence, with the forest clearly reflecting and emphasizing the underlying landform. The vegetation on the south western flanks of the ranges is more fragmented, however the natural patterns still display a level of coherence where vegetation has been retained on steeper valley sides and within gullies.
Diversity & Complexity The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	4	The ranges display a high level of ecological diversity and complexity, with a variety of vegetation types reflecting the topography, drainage patterns and slope aspect.
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.	4	<p>The steepness and scale of the ranges is striking, particularly when seen in the context of the surrounding flatter valley floors. The dissected slopes have a rugged angularity, which emphasizes that scale.</p> <p>The contiguous nature of the forest on the entirety of the ranges increases the strength and unified character of the feature.</p> <p>The ranges contain views and provide a dramatic backdrop</p>

		when viewed from the surrounding landscape.
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. 	3	There is an absence of built structure on the upper slopes, however scattered agricultural buildings and dwellings are reasonably visible on the lower slopes above the valley floor. Earthworks associated with tracks are prominent on the steeper slopes. Present along the entire length of the ranges, the contiguous nature of the forest is more apparent when viewed from the eastern side of the ranges. Viewed from the west the bush appears more fragmented when viewed from the west. Pastoral land, both under grass and including scattered forms an integral component of the character of the ranges, albeit it scarred by localized slips and earthworks associated with tracks.
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.	3	The main body of the unit displays a moderate level of intactness.

Experiential Values

Expressiveness The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.	4	The presence of primary growth vegetation with good succession growth and a multi layered structure demonstrates the operation of ecological processes. Natural ecological processes and unmodified character are strongly evident
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).	3	The forest presents relatively subtle qualities, such as the scent of the bush and the sound of wind in the trees rather than dramatic qualities.
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	The unit is strongly influenced by light and weather conditions, although light conditions on the southern side tend to be more muted in scope. Seasonal influences of blooming and fruiting of trees, shrubs and climbers are also of note.

Remoteness / Wildness Does the landscape display a wilderness character, remote from and untouched by human presence? Eg. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of remoteness • Accessibility • Distance from built development 	2	The feature is relatively isolated within a rural and pastoral context, however the prevailing character of the area is rural. The unit is accessible via the road network, although access to the feature itself is limited. Scattered rural development and dwellings are visible in relative proximity to the unit.
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.	2	The unit is a highly visible feature and is likely to figure reasonably highly in terms of awareness at a local level. Otherwise, it is considered that the unit is not a feature that is recognised by the wider community.

<p>Spiritual, cultural and historical associations</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>Consultation was initiated during the mapping process, but has not led to any feedback within the required period.</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



View of Maungaru Range from north with Mangatipa in the foreground