

Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – WHANGAROA HARBOUR HEADLANDS
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
Land Types (refer to list overleaf) Coastal cliffs / escarpment Reefs and islands	A pair of bold headlands that are coupled with rugged rocky cliffs to enframe the entrance to Whangaroa Harbour.
Geology (including geopreservation sites)	Coastal cliffs of Tupou Complex greywacke to the north of the harbour mouth and Whangaroa Group andesitic breccia to the south. NZ Geopres Inventory: Whangaroa North Head ring plain deposits – best exposures of Miocene ring plain deposits in northern New Zealand, including several paleogullies and their walls. Runs 1.5km to west from Whangaroa mouth's northern headland. Taupo Bay ring plain deposits – best example of easily accessible exposures of laharic ring plain breccias. Found in cliffs and intertidal zone at southern end of Taupo Bay. Jellicoe Cave – a 50m long narrow sea cave that passes through a small point to the seaward side of Whangaroa North Head. Named after Lord Jellicoe who holidayed in the area. Tauranga Bay channelised flow - a geopreservation site of regional importance, is exposed in the cliffs behind the Tauranga Bay campground.
Soil Types	Huia steepland soils, stony silt loam, and Bream clay loam.
Ecology (including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)	Taupo Bay cliffs have manuka 2–4 metres tall with frequent pohutukawa and occasional kohekohe, <i>Astelia banksii</i> , kawakawa, and tutu. Remnant of uncommon coastal vegetation, including a species of local distribution (<i>Fuschia procumbens</i>). Heading towards Whangaroa North Head this merges to low manuka–kanuka shrubland, occurs on coastal cliffs with locally frequent mamangi, flax, rengarenga lily and <i>Astelia</i> . Karaka, pohutukawa, puriri and kowhai occur occasionally. This is part of the the larger North Whangaroa ecological area that has a high level of significance and is described more fully in the worksheet for the Manganui Forest range and Pekapeka Bay ONL. The southern head cliffines are characterised by Manuka shrubland on coastal hillslopes, <i>Astelia</i> –rengarenga lily on coastal cliffs, and pohutukawa treeland in coastal gullies. Coastal shrubland is now uncommon in the ecological district. Habitat for a plant species of local distribution (<i>Fuschia procumbens</i>).
Archaeological sites	None identified on this paired portion of coast.
Heritage Landscapes	Relationship with Lord Jellicoe.

Landscape characterisation

(including the identification of any specific characteristics)

A system of substantial rocky cliffs and bluffs that define either side of the Whangaroa Harbour mouth. It is not until approaching vessels are relatively close that the entrance to the harbour becomes clear between these landforms. False Head to the north is testament to this ambiguity. The cliffs therefore appear to act as an imposing guarding structure to the sheltered waters of the harbour within.

The vegetation patterns and landcover of the northern half of the unit is highly intact, whereas the cover of the southern portion is more fragment and there are a couple of buildings evident. Within the scale of the setting and magnitude of the geology of the entrance however, those intrusions are relatively minor and the unit presents a strong level of natural character.

Interaction with the sea is an essential part of this area's landscape character. The battering inflicted by large seas is evident in the exposed rock faces and restrained distribution of vegetation on the outer faces. This contrasts with the more placid nature – despite tidal flows – of the water in the harbour mouth, which in turn transitions to the greater shelter afforded by the protected harbour.

Closely related to the “Manganui Forest range and Pekapeka Bay” outstanding landscape that adjoins the northern part of this harbour mouth landscape.

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	Intrinsically linked to the mouth of Whangaroa Harbour, expressed through the hard geology of the location. Indigenous vegetation patterns, particularly on the northern headland, reinforce the structural component created by the exposed parent material.
Rarity Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	4	Whilst coastal bluffs, cliffs and scarps are not uncommon around the Northland coast, the assemblage of this area and its relationship to the harbour within, makes it an unusually and rare coastal landscape.
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	Very coherent, as a result of a consistency of exposed rock, patterns of native vegetation cover and lack of unnatural disruption within the ONL
Diversity & Complexity The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	4	A complex and varied coastline. Bold and simple from a distance, but greater subtle complexity arises from closer inspection, arising from the form and texture of the weatherworn rock, alignment of the coast and natural vegetation composition and pattern.
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.	4	Quite strongly vivid and expressive. Likely to be very memorable amongst mariners who use the harbour for fishing bases, shelter and a home base.
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. 	4	Some influence from occasional houses sited on the apex of the southern headland spurt, along with grazed pasture in that area (all of which is outside of the ONL). Areas closer to the water and on the northern head are more natural, with natural rock formations and vegetation in an intact state.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>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	Generally very intact – due to reserve status and lack of accessibility
Experiential Values		
<p>Expressiveness The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.</p>	5	Highly expressive and dramatic. Acts as a barrier gateway when accessing or leaving the Whangaroa Harbour.
<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	Brings a strong sense of being highly influenced by the sea and its forces. Clear water and dark colouring contrasts with the more turbid estuarine waters with their pale colour.
<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>	5	Highly responsive to early morning light picking out these cliffs and to the varied sea conditions experienced here,
<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 	4	Whilst not far from Tauranga Bay and the more accessible inner waters of the Whangaroa Harbour, this landscape stands somewhat in isolation. It is accessible by boat only.
<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>	4	One of the Northland coastline's well know landmarks, it is likely that this landscape is recognised and valued by a large sector of the boating fraternity.
<p>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. 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>Probable that these will be high in recognition of their role as a threshold, their durability and protecting role at the harbour mouth and all that lies within.</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)

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





