Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name **– PUKEKARORO**

DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION

Component	Comment
Land Types (refer to list overleaf) Volcanic cone (remains).	Clearly visible as from State Highway 1, this feature presents a typical cone form. Notable as an individual feature, it is also a component of the sequence of volcanic and elevated landform features present locally including Pukearenga, Bald Rock and the Brydnerwyn Ranges.
Geology (including geopreservation sites)	The Pukekaroro Dome is noted in the New Zealand Geopreservation Inventory as being regionally significant, but one of best preserved examples of an early Miocene volcanic dome landform in New Zealand. Geologically, Pukearenga is one of a group of early Miocene dacite domes and associated altered tuff (Pukekaroro Dacites) form dome-like hills protruding above the soft Allochthon lithologies. These outcrop along the Brynderwyn Fault and an apparent WSW-trending splinter fault to the south.
Soil Types	The unit is overlain by Pukekaroro steepland soils, clay loam.
Ecology (including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)	The draft Rodney PNAP report identifies this site as ROD004 (Pukekaroro Scenic Reserve and surrounds), with an area of 235.6 ha. It is a Level 1 site. Most of this site is characterised by abundant kauri forest, including both rickers and mature trees. Mature kauri is more prevalent in eastern gullies and on the upper slopes of the western side of the site. On the steep upper slopes of the northern side, mostly ricker and mature kauri is abundant with occasional tanekaha, rimu, and some kanuka/manuka and totara towards the very top. On the lower northern slopes kauri and tanekaha are common with frequent rimu and kanuka/manuka. Occasional species include rewarewa and *Clematis* sp. was evident in the canopy. On the western side kauri is abundant with occasional rewarewa and kanuka/manuka and totara on the toeslopes, whilst on the eastern side kauri (mostly rickers) occurs with occasional taraire, totara, rimu, mature kauri, mamaku, and puriri. The draft PNAP report states that the presence of Kawaka, *Schizaea dichotoma*, and *Hypolepis dicksonioides* (all Naturally Uncommon) contribute to the significance of the site.
Archaeological sites	Not known.
Heritage Landscapes	Not known.

Landscape characterisation
(including the identification of any specific characteristics)

The unit is a Scenic Reserve with footpath access to the summit. It is bypassed by State Highway 1 on its western side, and by Bald Rock Road to the north. It is located some 2 km to the north of Kaiwaka and is a prominent feature, visible to travelers on the State Highway within a contrasting context of pasture.

The unit includes the vegetated portion of the dome, which extends from the foot of the steep slopes at its margins. The dome rises to a height of 301 metres and has a dense covering of native forest, mainly kauri which is relatively young and growing in dense thickets.

The Pukekaroro Stream encircles the unit on its southern and south eastern side, and vegetation flowing down the western slopes abut this watercourse. To the south, the stream is separated from the unit by areas of pasture.

Travelling past the unit on the State Highway, the observer gains an appreciation of the dissected landform of the its southern flanks, with steep sided gullies and intervening spurs. These elements, and the clustered kauri rickers that clothe the slopes add to the appreciation of the scale of the unit.

The relationship of this unit with the other elevated and forested features (Bald Rock, Pukearenga and the Brynderwyn range) in the immediate area is also important in terms of their 'cumulative' and collective affect on the character of the area.

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**	The unit is highly representative of volcanic landforms that characterise the Northland region. These occur in defined areas, locally, and also including clusters further north around Whangarei and Kaikohe. Because of their distinctive form, they tend to be immediately recognizable and are valued by the community. Where they retain a cover of native vegetation, as represented by this unit, the endemic associations are particularly strong.
Rarity Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	**5**	Although relatively common locally and within the region, in a national sense the unit is rare.
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**	The unit retains its cover of native vegetation, and the patterns of species associations are clearly visible, reflecting the underlying topographical patterns and aspect. No discordant elements are evident.
Diversity & Complexity The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	**5**	The site displays a high level of ecological diversity, and includes the presence of significant species and species associations.
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.	**5**	The scale and height of the unit contrasts with the surrounding landscape and landform and assumes a certain prominence, which draws the eye. It is highly visible when travelling along the State Highway. The elevation of the feature, in conjunction with the contiguous covering of native forest lends it a strength and

		simplicity that dominates the surrounding landscape and when viewed from proximate locations it provides a dramatic backdrop. The forest is largely contiguous and is linked into the wider landscape via riparian vegetation and remnants outside the boundaries of the feature. This vegetation is important in helping to visually integrate the feature.
Naturalness How affected by human activity is the landscape? Does human activity intrude on the landscape? Eg. • 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.	**5**	The feature is devoid of buildings although built development is visible within the surrounding landscape. With the exception of infrastructure associated with built development within the surrounding landscape, no infrastructure intrudes on the feature and it is almost entirely forested. Furthermore, although surrounded by pasture and scattered trees, the unit displays a measure of containment and visual independence due to its 'dome' form, with the entirety of the dome being forested. The diversity of the forest cover bears witness to the strength of ecological and natural process.
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.	**4**	The unit appears highly intact with no visible recent human modification.
Experiential Values		
Expressiveness The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.	**5**	The feature is clearly volcanic in its geological origin with its form, scale and the prominent rock faces evidencing this fact. 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 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**	Views of the unit are available from an extensive catchment and its scale and form, in conjunction with the attractive surrounding pastoral landscape create an attractive and striking vista.
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**	Flowering and fruiting of plants coinciding with feeding by native birds. Time of day (sun angle), weather and atmospheric conditions affect the character of the forest area.

Remoteness / Wildness Does the landscape display a wilderness character, remote from and untouched by human presence? Eg. • Sense of remoteness • Accessibility • Distance from built development	**2**	The unit displays a limited sense of remoteness. The summit is accessible by foot and when viewed from the State Highway, the feature is seen in the context of relatively proximate built development. A sense of remoteness is attainable when climbing the track to summit and when on summit of the feature.

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.	**3**	The feature is highly visible, well known and valued by the community.
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.		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

Photographs of unit

View of Pukekaroro from north west

View of Pukekaroro from south west

View of Pukekaroro from State Highway 1