

Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – TARATARA
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
Land Types (refer to list overleaf) Volcanic cones	A powerful butte landform that rises from surrounding lowlands and capped by a massive, flat-topped and angular block of exposed stone. Rises to 300m above the adjacent shoreline.
Geology (including geopreservation sites)	<p>The most exposed and largest of a number of local Miocene era plugs found in the local area. The resistance Whangaroa Group andesite breccia of the plug has been left following the erosion of softer surrounding rock materials. Sitting on the upper slopes are colluvial boulders of the same breccia material.</p> <p>NZ Geopres Inventory: An extremely well defined landform of scientific/educational and scenic value, deemed to be of regional significance.</p>
Soil Types	Huia steeppland soils, stony silt loam on elevated portion, fringed with Bream clay loam.
Ecology (including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)	<p>The overall ecological area that is composed of a mosaic of shrubland, scrub, wetland and forest (some of which extends into lower lying areas that are beyond the area of the identified ONL).</p> <p>Of relevance to the ONL are units characterized by manuka shrubland on moderate to steep hillslope, pohutukawa treeland on rock face, taraire forest on hillslope, kanuka-tanekaha forest on hillslope, kanuka forest on hillslope and secondary kaihikatea forest on hillslope. An association of pohutukawa with kauri and northern rata is unusual and considered to be of considerable interest.</p>
Archaeological sites	There are no archaeological sites recorded on the NZ Archaeological Associations records within the ONL area.
Heritage Landscapes	Evidence of past quarrying. Anticipated to be strongly related to past cultural relationships with the Whangaroa Harbour and its related lowlands.
Landscape characterisation (including the identification of any specific characteristics) <p>Taratara has an imposing and distinctive presence at the head of Whangaroa Harbour, commanding an area of related low-lying land to the north. A mixed cover of grassland and bold blocks of indigenous vegetation bring a mix of cultural land use and more natural themes. Whilst there are a couple of small buildings set within the ONL, the scale and siting of these is such that they have a very subtle presence and do not compete with or undermine the integrity of the broader landform or landscape composition.</p> <p>The angular and massive form of the butte is not thought to be matched elsewhere in Northland. The vertical thrust of the rock projecting from the more gentle form of the foothills is particularly dynamic and dramatic.</p> <p>The very distinctive form and profile of Taratara makes it a feature of the wider landscape that is specific to Whangaroa. That landmark role is experienced from the upper harbour and approaching stretches of the adjacent State Highway, with some parts of that corridor almost focused on the landform.</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.	5	A very distinctive landform that is specifically related to the upper harbor and related lowland. Relates to a number of similar but more modest andesite-founded landforms in the adjacent area.
Rarity Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	5	Unique to this location.
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	A moderately high level of cohesiveness. The pattern and relationship of pastoral and indigenous cover is quite unified, with a minor intrusion from a residential site and its access drive on the upper northern slopes.
Diversity & Complexity The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	5	The combination of geological forms, shrubland/forest and pastoral areas are at one level apparently simple and cohesive, but are fundamentally more complex than they first appear.
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 focusing in its capped, conical profile. Closely related to the upper harbor area more broadly and a well-recognised landmark of Whangaroa generally.
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	<p>The landform is very natural and only modified in its lower slopes outside the ONL. It is extremely legible as a result.</p> <p>Indigenous vegetation forms a “backbone” to the broader unit that the pastoral cover sits within, with that native cover occupying over 2/3 of the unit.</p> <p>The built development that is present is relatively unobtrusive and doesn’t unduly impose upon the “products of nature” (including pasture)</p> <p>Water only present in the form of very small and largely ephemeral streams, but at a broader scale the landform is experienced with a foreground of the upper Whangaroa Harbour from its eastern shoreline and the inner estuary itself.</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.	4	The landform within the ONL is entirely intact. Vegetation cover is modified from its original, natural state, with a significant portion of the midslope devoted to pasture.
Experiential Values		
Expressiveness The ‘legibility’ of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.	5	Highly legible. Geological origins are clearly demonstrated and processes of natural colonisation and forest development – where present – continue outside of the areas of productive landuse.
Sensory qualities (These are landscape phenomena as directly perceived and experienced by humans, such as the	5	Visually evocative in a way that inevitably draws attention to Taratara. A very scenic and interesting feature within the

view of a scenic landscape, or the distinctive smell and sound of the foreshore).		wider landscape frame.
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	Highly influenced by light conditions and seasonal changes in brightness, with the contrast between the rock and grassland highlighted in clearer conditions. Also subject to reflecting the light of the rising and setting sun on vertical rock faces, along with shading patterns that emphasise strata, the presence of the boulders and the overall form of Taratara..
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 	4	The steepness and elevation of the landform makes it both imposing and apparently inaccessible. Southern and eastern parts of the unit that have a more consistent vegetation cover bring a higher sense of remoteness. Spatially, Taratara is in reasonably close proximity to the SH10 corridor, so doesn't have the isolation of more remote ONL's.
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.	5	A well-known landform that is synonymous with the upper harbor. A focus of travel through this area on the State Highway.
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. The imposing nature of Taratara and its relatedness to Whangaroa as an area acknowledged as having a strong cultural heritage in both Maori and European dimensions..

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



