

# Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – <b>WAIPOUA FOREST AND REMNANTS</b>
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
<b>Land Types</b> (refer to list overleaf)  Ranges: high relief Steep hills: moderate high relief. Strongly rolling land	The elevated and forested ranges associated with this unit are representative of the forested ranges of the upper Northland region and have an association with other forested ranges such as Tutamoe, and Waima. The unit includes the Parataiko Range which rises to a maximum height of some 585 metres.
<b>Geology</b> (including geopreservation sites)	Waipoua Basalt Formation is closely associated with coeval mid Miocene sediments of Waipoua Subgroup. The formation consists of lava flows (2–25 m thick), typically separated by layers of tephra (up to 2 m thick), and intruded by dike swarms in a zone extending 15 km north from Maunganui Bluff. Lava from both flows and dikes is a glomeroporphyritic plagioclase-olivine-augite basalt. In the Kaihu area Whatoro Breccia Member is a breccia of assorted igneous lithologies, mostly of Waipoua Basalt origin, in a tuffaceous matrix.
<b>Soil Types</b>	<p>Waipoua Forest Sanctuary (O06 635 199) is a soil site of international importance for:</p> <p>Large area containing a diverse range of brown granular • clays under indigenous vegetation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only example of Parataiko and Waimamaku soils in Arand <i>et al.</i> (1993).</li> <li>• Contains good examples of uncommon soil types, Hihi, Waipoua, and Katui.</li> </ul> <p>The large majority of Katui soils have been developed for dairy and sheep farming. Most other Waimamaku soils have been developed for sheep farming.</p> <p>Waima Forest (O06 593 328) is a soil site of regional significance for containing a large area of diverse brown granular clays under indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Mataraua Forest (P06 728 260) is a soil site of regional significance because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It contains a large area of a moderate range of brown granular clays under indigenous vegetation.</li> <li>• It contains good examples of Waipoua soils which are uncommon. (Arand <i>et al.</i> 1993).</li> </ul>
<b>Ecology</b> (including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)	<p>The unit is identified as being within the Waipoua/Mataraua/Waima forest tract and is (O06/001). This area comprises 29,349.9 ha of forest, 2,538.4 ha of shrubland, and 45.8 ha of wetland)</p> <p>The Tutamoe Ecological District PNAP survey report identifies the wider Waipoua/Mataraua/Waima forests as being of international significance being the single largest forest tract left in Northland with an area of some 32,000 ha.</p> <p>The ecological values of the forest are very high. The wider forest</p>

	<p>supports the largest NI brown kiwi population in Northland, it is a refuge for the last functional kokako population in Northland and the forest includes 36 nationally threatened and 64 regionally significant plants, 46 threatened and 4 regionally significant animals.</p> <p>The forest tract occupies approximately 38.9% of the entire Tutamoe Ecological District and is of significance for containing the highest number of native plant species of any Northland forest.</p> <p>In addition, the continuum represents the best altitudinal sequence in Northland—from its highest point to sea level, and nationally, it represents the largest tract of old growth kauri forest in New Zealand.</p> <p>The Waipoua River, contained within the area, is the most pristine full catchment river system in Northland.</p> <p>Mataraua Forest contains one of the best examples of upland plateau forest in Northland with other examples occurring at Marlborough and Kaihu Forests in this Ecological District and Warawara Forest in the Ahipara Ecological District.</p>
Archaeological sites	The area has a long history of settlement and use and numerous archaeological sites are contained within the unit.
Heritage Landscapes	Not known.

### Landscape characterisation

(including the identification of any specific characteristics)

The unit includes both the Waipoua Forest, and Mataraua Forest to the north east. It is an extensive area of native forest, including areas of predominantly pristine forest and is contiguous with the Waima Forest to the north and closely associated with the forest associated with the Marlborough and Kaihu Forests to the south.

The topography of Waipoua is moderately elevated and broadly rolling with a very simple horizon and a generally undramatic landform. The edge of the upland is, however dissected with deep gullies and this contrasts with the steeper, more elevated and more rugged appearance of the Waima Forest.

The forests tend to occupy the steepest and most elevated topography and therefore act as a backdrop and focus for a considerable area of lower terrain. Accordingly the outer flanks are visible over a wide expanse and are extremely sensitive and where pasture or plantation forestry ascends these flanks this weakens the overall coherence of the unit.

The forest is probably best known for the stands of large kauri, which are widely promoted as tourist attractions. Good walking tracks give easy access to these the trees, which include Tane Mahuta, Te Matua Ngahere and Yakas. This offers the, relatively rare opportunity for visitors to experience old growth forest with ease.

A few tramping tracks and routes provide the opportunity to venture deeper into the forest, especially in the high plateau and ranges.

Geologically the unit comprises a dissected plateau formed on deeply weathered Lower Miocene Waipoua Subgroup basalt flows.

Highly visible both due to elevation, scale and due to being bisected by SH12. This road access – being part of the ‘Twin Coast Discovery Highway’ is promoted as visitor experience in itself.

The Tutamoe Ecological District PNAP survey report identifies the wider Waipoua/Mataraua/Waima

forests as being of international significance being the single largest forest tract left in Northland with an area of some 32,000 ha. The Waipoua Forest was dedicated as a sanctuary in 1952.

## 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.	5	The landscape is strongly representative of the sequence of ranges vegetated with native forest that occurs to the north and west. These features characterise the landscape within this part of the region, and are representative of Northland as a whole.  The presence of areas of near pristine forest with stands of old kauri provides a strong endemic association.
<b>Rarity</b> Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	5	Whilst locally 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.
<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	The unit displays a high level of coherence, with the forest clearly reflecting and emphasizing the underlying landform, despite the encroachment of pasture and plantation forestry up the outer flanks of the unit.
<b>Diversity &amp; Complexity</b> The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	5	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.
<b>Vividness</b> 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 contrast between the flat and modified valley bottoms, and the steep vegetated slopes of the unit are particularly striking with the scale of the ranges clearly evident. This characteristic is heightened both by the contiguous vegetation cover.
<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>	5	The majority of the unit displays a high level of naturalness with minimal evident human activity.  Past clearance for agriculture is evidenced on the margins of the forest, but the contiguous character of the forest lends the unit a very high level of natural character. The unit also includes areas of unmodified stands of mature kauri.  Vegetation types and patterns are clearly representative of topography, drainage patterns and slope aspect, and this suggests a high level of strength of natural processes
<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.	4	The unit as a whole displays a high level of intactness despite being bisected by State Highway 12.

<b>Experiential Values</b>		
<b>Expressiveness</b> The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.	<b>5</b>	The unit displays a high level of legibility in terms of the hydrological processes that have shaped the valleys and ridges. The complexity and spatial arrangement of vegetation reflects the underlying topographical form of the ranges.
<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>5</b>	Viewed from a distance, the unit appears as a dominant backdrop for a wide area and is striking in this regard. From more proximate locations, and from within the unit, the scale and ecological diversity of the unit is apparent. Individual components, such as the stands of kauri are of particular significance in terms of sensory experience.
<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>4</b>	Strongly influenced by light and weather conditions, although light conditions on the southern side tend to be more muted in scope. Ridges create extremely distinctive silhouettes during dawn and dusk. Seasonal influences of flowering trees and other plants.

<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>5</b>	The roading network in the area provides reasonably easy access to limited areas of the unit, and the prevailing sense from the margins is of a rural landscape although dominated by the forest. A significant sense of remoteness can be gained from within the forest.
<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>5</b>	The Waipoua Forest is an recognized site of importance and attracts tourists from within the country and from overseas. In this regard the natural values of the unit are highly recognised.
<b>Spiritual, cultural and historical associations</b> 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.	<b>5</b>	<p>Consultation was initiated during the mapping process, but has not led to any feedback within the required period.</p> <p>The forest does have significant cultural and spiritual values, with much of the attention being focused on the well known and popular large kauri; Tane Mahuta, and Te Matua Ngahere.</p>

Rank scale between 1 (low) and 5 (high)

<b>Land Types</b>
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



Waipoua Forest



Waipoua Forest



Waipoua Forest looking south east towards Tutamoe