

Northland Regional Landscape Assessment Worksheet

	Unit name – OHAEWAI AREA VOLCANIC FIELD
DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION	
Component	Comment
Land Types (refer to list overleaf) Volcanic cones	A field of volcanic cones that are frequently inter-related through lowland elements of volcanic origin such as lava flows, rock outcrops, agricultural stone walls and stonefields.
Geology (including geopreservation sites)	NZ Geopres Inventory: Pouerua (Pakaraka Mountain) scoria cone and lava fields - well preserved crater and volcanic form. Largest pa and stonefields (possibly outside ONL) prehistoric site remaining in NZ. Tarahi scoria cone – breached scoria cone thought to be the highest centre in Kaikohe area. Maungaturoto volcanic cone – well preserved volcanic form typical of the younger centres in Northland. Te Ahuahu volcanic cone – a well preserved volcanic cone. Basaltic bombs can be found in a small quarry at the site.
Soil Types	Papakauri silt loam (hill country)
Ecology (including protected vegetation / features, PNAP Level 1 and 2 sites)	Largely grazed with some small pockets of forest on Pouerua, Tarahi and Maungaturoto. Typically hardwood species such as puriri, taraire, along with totara and towai. Pouerua Cone – small forest remnant with the crater of this basaltic cone. Contain puriri-taraire forest with frequent kohekohe and karaka with occasional totara and <i>Griselinia lucida</i> . Has two species of endemic snails. Main body of landform clad in gorse, flannelweed and patches of rank pasture.
Archaeological sites	All but Tarahi were pa sites, and each cone has extensive archaeological evidence. Archaeological sites exist on each cone and there is a proliferation of records on Pouerua. The wider volcanic landscape that these ONLs sit within also contains a large number of recorded sites.
Heritage Landscapes	An integral part of an extremely important wider landscape that was intensively used by Maori and Pakeha cultures. Evidence of that manipulation and habitation is still clearly expressed through earthworks, stone walls and historic buildings.
Landscape characterisation (including the identification of any specific characteristics) <p>An inter-related field of volcanic cones, with those identified within this ONL being the most prominent and graphic of a larger number that exist. These stand strongly above lower rolling land or small flats, their conical form standing typically against the skyline. Pouerua is the largest and signals the existence of the field for those travelling from the south. Many views through the wider landscape feature two or three of the cones within the same vista.</p> <p>Most of these individual cones are grazed pasture, but some have small remnant pockets of indigenous forest (but secondary growth). Tarahi has a telecommunications facility installed upon it.</p> <p>The volcanic field is an area of very rich historical activity, with abundant pa sites (including upon 3 of the 4 ONL sites), terraces, stonefields and early European agriculture. That history is graphically portrayed in the contemporary landscape, particularly in the low light levels of early and late in the day. Pouerua pa terracing has lost much of its legibility as the mountain has been overtaken by weed species from its former pastoral cover. The cones are a significant component of the character of the area around Ohaewai, making it a unique area that is not replicated elsewhere.</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	Entirely representative and determining of the Ohaewai area landscape and its volcanic origins.
Rarity Natural features are unique or rare in the region or nationally, and few comparable examples exist.	5	Distinctive within mid/upper Northland and rarely found elsewhere in New Zealand. Similarities with the numerous peaks around Whangarei.
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	Highly cohesive and connected through consistencies in the rolling lowlands (outside of the ONL) that lies between the cones. Consistencies in landform, profile and land cover (except Pouerua) draw these areas together
Diversity & Complexity The elements contributing to overall landscape character are diverse and complex (particularly in ecological terms) without creating disharmony.	4	Ecologically simple, but geologically diverse and complex. The interplay between the cones and their settings (and related geology) has numerous dimensions.
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	Very graphic and memorable. The cones define the area and act as spatial “markers” within a wider landscape where volcanic origins are expressed in many forms.
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	<p>Whilst the form and profile of the cones is typically complete and uncompromised by buildings, earthworks and infrastructure, the land cover is typically one of agricultural production. In these terms it brings a measure of “naturalness” compared with more intensive and disruptive land uses.</p> <p>Some of the cones are affected by linear shelter-belt plantings and another by a communication mast.</p> <p>The productive and lived-in rural landscape that the cones sit within is largely a result of human interaction, including houses often sited near the toe of the peaks, so more raw forms of ecological and natural processes are rather suppressed by those activities. This in turn reflects upon the naturalness of the ONL.</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 cone landforms are predominantly intact, although typically largely clear of natural vegetation cover. Almost all have been subjected to substantial historic earthworks during the formation of pa and other Maori earth structures. However, those formations tend to relate to the natural contour of the landforms as distinct from more intrusive earthworks.

Experiential Values		
Expressiveness The 'legibility' of the landscape. Natural features clearly demonstrate the natural processes that formed them.	5	Highly expressive and legible. The elevation of the cones above the surrounding landforms and their evocative forms are a clear expression of the volcanic processes that formed them and shaped the surrounding landscape.
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).	4	Strong sensory signals and meanings generated by the conical volcanic forms. The repetition of that theme by the number of cones present reinforces those sensory experiences.
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.	3	These landforms, and particularly the pre-European earthworks that overlay them, are heavily influenced by light angles, being most expressive during the early and latter parts of the day, and during winter months.
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	Situated within a working agricultural landscape and in close proximity to road corridors.
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	The volcanic fields are an essential part of the local areas character and are major landmarks (or waymarkers) for those travelling. It is considered likely that the ONL will be highly valued for their distinctive nature and contribution to local identity.
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. 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 It is probable that there will be strongly established spiritual and cultural values associated with this area as a reflection of intensive past use and settlement, with that history still being portrayed by the wider landscape as it exists today.

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







