

OUTSTANDING NATURAL LANDSCAPES IN THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

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LANDSCAPE UNIT 1

Unit Name: Cape Runaway to Matakaoa Point
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Y14, Z14
Landscape Type: Cape
Map: 2A.1; 2A.2; 2A.3

Physical Description:

This unit faces due north and comprises a long dramatic landform separating the Bay of Plenty from the Gisborne coastline. The unit is characterised by steep hills and escarpments often with an apron of flatter plateau land stretching out to a rugged coastline. The coast around Matakaoa Point contains a series of marine terraces that have been recognised by the Geological Society for New Zealand as being of regional significance. The strong east west orientation of the range which forms the backbone of this unit is a dramatic landform feature as is the entire unit.

The land cover of the unit comprises good pasture on the lower, flatter land and rough pasture and regenerating bush on the steeper slopes and gullies. The unit is exposed and there is little tree cover. There is a limited coastal fringe of Pohutukawa. The coastline is dramatic, rugged with rocky fingers extending out into the sea.

Visibility: Low.

The unit has a relatively low visibility due to very limited road access. The main road, State Highway 35, passes through the valley to the south of this landform.

Visual Quality: High.

Visual Absorption Capability: Low

Enhancers:

Rocky coastal edge
Dramatic landform

Detractors:

Extent of bare pasture slopes.

Visual Sensitivity:

This unit has a high visual quality and very little existing opportunity for the integration of visual change, apart from the reinforcement of natural landscape patterns through revegetation. Visual sensitivity is high due to the steepness of much of the terrain and the nature of its land cover.

Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes:

Entire unit 1.

LANDSCAPE UNIT 2

Unit Name: Hicks Bay, Te Araroa
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z14
Landscape Type: Cape
Map: 2A.3; 2A.4; 2A.5

Physical Description:

This unit encompasses three sandy duneland bays and the two headlands separating them. In the north Hicks Bay is the outlet for the Wharekahika River and smaller Te Kapa Stream. The Wharekahika River is notoriously unstable and has in the past migrated from one side of the bay to the other. The bay itself has a history of accretion.

Hicks Bay was also formerly the scene of a busy frozen meat industry. The wharf at the northern end of the bay and derelict buildings further inland remain as testimony to this former era. Fishing boats habitually moor in Hicks Bay. Separated from Hicks Bay proper by a small rocky headland is the small enclosed Onepoto Bay. There is a small bach settlement located here, much of it on low-lying land. The beach is also accreting here, although there is no substantial foredune to protect the settlement.

The Haupara Point, rocky headland protrudes strongly eastward separating Hicks Bay from Kawakawa Bay and Te Araroa. This rocky headland, covered predominantly in native vegetation, is a dramatic landform feature. Kawakawa Bay is the outlet for the Karakatuwhero and Awatere Rivers. The beach in the north has a history of accretion whilst in the south, near to the township of Te Araroa there has been a reversal to erosion.

Coastal erosion has exposed geological features of some importance along the coast both at Hicks Bay and in the cliffs at Te Araroa. Both Hicks and Kawakawa Bays have a deep coastal plain with strong enclosure provided by the surrounding hills and escarpments. There are three marae within the unit; one within the settlement of Hicks Bay, one at the northern end of Kawakawa Bay near the camp ground and one in the settlement of Te Araroa. The pohutukawa in Te Araroa, Te Waha-o-Rerekohu is reputed to be one of the largest in New Zealand.

Visibility: High

The unit's visibility is due to the relatively flat bay landscape and high vantage point provided by the road transversing the Haupara Point headland. There is also a public lookout at a high point although the path to the lookout requires maintenance.

Visual Quality: Moderate High.

Visual Absorption Capability: Moderate Low

Enhancers:

Landform.
Rivers, lagoons.
Natural flatland vegetation
Bush covered headland.
Rock outcrops.
Wharf.

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Detractors:

Visual prominence of Hicks Bay Motel units. Lack of building integration with landscape.

Visual Sensitivity:

This unit has a moderate-high visual sensitivity. Some opportunity for successful integration of Visual Change is offered at the back of the bay by the variable landform at the foot of the enclosing hills. Mature vegetation also provides integration.

Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes:

Haupara Point.
Entire unit 2.

LANDSCAPE UNIT 3

Unit Name: East Cape
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z14, Z15
Landscape Type: Cape
Map: 2A.5; 2A.6; 2A.7; 2A.8

Physical Description:

This unit has a narrow coastal environment with steep hill faces and scarps providing a clearly defined inland edge. The coastline alternates between rocky shores with rock terraces extending out into the sea and sandy shores and dunelands. The width of flatland also varies with at times a narrow strip between hill and sea whilst in other areas there is a wide coastal plain. The Te Awakari stream and numerous other small streams flow out to the sea within this unit.

The predominant land use is pastoral farming with small areas of exotic forestry, and regenerating native bush cover. The land is exposed and the duneland forms are susceptible to wind erosion and 'blow outs'.

The East Cape lighthouse - now decommissioned - and East Island are highly memorable components of the unit.

The area of East Cape and East Island was identified by DOC as an ASCV.

Visibility: Moderate

A no exit road follows tightly around the coastal edge of this unit between Te Araroa and East Cape. Beyond this there is no public road access and the unit is difficult to experience except by air. The road to the lighthouse is a popular tourist experience with a high number of visitors especially during the summer period.

Visual Quality:

Visual Absorption Capability:

Enhancers:

Landform.
Rock shelves.
Streams.
Pohutukawa.
East Island.
Distant headlands.

Detractors:

Power lines. Settlement without integrating vegetation. Masts at lighthouse.

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LANDSCAPE UNIT 4

Visual Sensitivity:

The unit has a high visual sensitivity due to the nature of the landform, lack of integrating features and high visibility.

Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes:

East Island.
Otiki (Lighthouse Knoll).
Rock Shelves.
Entire Unit 3.

Unit Name: Waiapu River Estuary
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z15
Landscape Type: Hill Country
Map: 2A.8

Physical Description:

This unit is dominated by the wide, braided Waiapu River and smaller Waikawa Stream mouth and a long low hill landform with a north east, south west orientation which parallels the coast in the south of the unit. Both the Rangitukia, north of the river mouth, and Te Wharau beaches are accreting. They are sandy beaches with large drifts of log flotsam carried down the Waiapu River. The lagoon/estuary at the river mouth was identified by DOC as an ASCV. The sea cliffs south of Te Wharau Beach Road have a number of active landslides.

Landuse on the hill country consists of grazing whilst on the river flats cropping prevails. There is scattered housing throughout with the township of Tikitiki located further west up the Waiapu River valley.

The silt plume at the river mouth is very marked with strong banded colouration of the immediate coastal waters.

Visibility: Moderate-High.

The Rangitukia Beach and Te Wharau Beach Roads provide access to the beach although both are no exit roads.

Visual Quality: Moderate

Visual Absorption Capability: Moderate-Low

Enhancers:

Long sweep of beach.
Enclosing headlands.
River/Habitat.
Central isolated hill landform.
Bush backdrop and hills
Scattered gravestones.

Detractors:

Patterns of landuse. Weed species. Erosion. Lack of integration for built structures.

Visual Sensitivity:

Moderate. The open flatness and relatively steep and eroding hills provide limited opportunity for integration of visual change. However, on the upper dune terraces, with planting, development can be integrated successfully.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Waiapu River Estuary.

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LANDSCAPE UNIT 5

Unit Name: Koutunui Head to Koutunui Point
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z16
Landscape Type: Mountain Ranges
Map: 2A.12; 2A.13

Physical Description:

This unit divides Waipiro from Tokomaru Bay. It is rugged, steep and incised with an indented coastal edge. Cliffs rise abruptly from rocky shelves to steep bushed slopes and peaks of up to 500 metres in height. Streams serving these ranges have eroded deep ravines and punctuate the coast at regular intervals. There is evidence of a major land slip immediately below the Upoki where two gently sloping terraces contrast sharply with the landform elsewhere on this section of coastline.

Much of the unit is inaccessible and difficult to farm, so it still benefits from significant native bush cover and all but the steepest and most rugged slopes are heavily vegetated. One or two small areas have, however, been cleared. These bushed headlands and coastal hill slopes in the north of the unit have been recognised as having particular ecological value and are designated as Areas of Significant Conservation Value. The Waimatau Bay Forest Heritage Fund Acquisition and the Koutunui Head Conservation Area comprise the largest catchment system under indigenous forest on the east coast and the adjacent inter-tidal and sub-tidal habitats exhibit good examples of marine habitat succession.

The unit is remote, one of the most inaccessible areas of the Gisborne Coast and consequently has no settlements within the coastal environment.

Visibility: Low.
 No vehicular access to the coastal edge.

Visual Quality: High
Visual Absorption Capability: Low-Moderate

Enhancers:

Intact Bush.
 Landform.
 Coastal Edge.
 Islands.

Detractors:

None.

Visual Sensitivity:

Moderate-High. Much of the unit has protection from its various designations, whilst the inaccessibility and topography makes development difficult.

Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes:

Entire Unit 7.

LANDSCAPE UNIT 6

Unit Name: Mawhai Point
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z16
Landscape Type: Mountain Ranges
Map: 2A.14

Physical Description:

The unit consists of Mawhai Point. The headland is dramatic with its naturally eroding face. The area has a long history of European habitation. The coast is rocky and cliffed forming part of Mawhai Headland.

The enclosing hills contain a mix of pasture, erosion, regenerating native bush and exotic trees with the northern part of the unit having a more intact and diverse pattern of landuse and land cover and the southern part being steeper and more barren.

Mawhai Point itself is a dramatic rocky Headland with a bulbous seaward knoll and thin low-lying connection back to the land.

Visibility: High

Roads access the coastal edge around the northern and central bay and provide good visual access to the unit. The southern side of the bay has no public vehicle access but is clearly visible at a distance across the bay.

Visual Quality: Moderate
Visual Absorption Capability: Moderate

Enhancers:

Dramatic headland.
 Bay enclosure.
 Fine sandy beach.
 Vegetation.

Detractors:

Some erosion.

Visual Sensitivity:

Moderate. There is some opportunity for enhancement with a moderate visual quality and moderate visual absorption capability.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Mawhai Point.

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LANDSCAPE UNIT 7

Unit Name: Nuhiti
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z16
Landscape Type: Mountain Ranges
Map: 2A.14; 2A.15

Physical Description:

This unit is relatively remote with public access extending from Anaura Bay in the south just over the ridge. It stops however at the private entry to Nuhiti Farm on the hills above the coast. The coastline is gently indented with a sandy bay located behind Motuhina, a small picturesque island.

Visibility: Low.

Access to the coast is only available across private land with public access limited to the hills overlooking the southern part of the unit. From the north Mawhai Point screens views of the unit from Tokomaru Bay.

Visual Quality: Moderate-High
Visual Absorption Capability: Moderate-High

Enhancers:

Dramatic coastline.
 Headlands.
 Remnant bush.
 Motuhina.
 Sandy bays.

Detractors:

Erosion.

Visual Sensitivity:

Moderate. The bay areas within this unit have considerable opportunity for the integration of change whilst the northern, steeper and more hilly coastline has little opportunity to integrate change.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Motuhina Island.

LANDSCAPE UNIT 8

Unit Name: Motuoroi Island / Marau Point
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z16, Z17
Landscape Type: Island
Map: 2A.15

Physical Description:

This unit comprises two bays with extensive golden sandy beaches enclosed by prominent headlands at the northern and southern extremes of the unit. Marau Point which defines the southern edge is a large promontory of sedimentary rock, its strata clearly visible tilted up toward the north presenting a fractured and eroded scarp face backed by a more gentle-slope. Morutoroi Island, lying a short distance offshore was once part of this truncated range and its present separation from the mainland bears witness to the erosive nature of the sea on this coast. This island was once inhabited by Maori, renowned by their skill in the art of working greenstone, brought up from the South Island.

Bush remnant vegetation is scattered throughout the unit although larger areas are in evidence in the north. Here the Anaura Bay Scenic Reserve extends to the shore. It is designated as such by virtue of its rare mountain - coastal vegetation succession. In addition the bay as a whole is recognised by DOC as a site of National Historic and Cultural importance. A monument has been erected on the beach by the Historic Places Trust to commemorate Cook's visit in 1769.

The predominant land use is pastoral with some crops grown on the coastal stream flats. Dispersed groupings of exotic forestry species are located in three discrete areas on the hilltops but otherwise the unit is exposed with soil creep and patches of erosion apparent on the grassed hill slopes.

Access to the unit is limited with only the Anaura Road extending, part metalled, to the narrow coastal strip behind Anaura beach. Here, the small settlement is dispersed along the coast edge. It includes the Anaura Marae named Hinetamatea after the wife of the grandson of a famous Hauri from Uawa. Here too is located a school and an attractive camp ground.

Marau Point extends almost 2 km out from the shoreline.

Visibility: (Anaura) High

Access to the coast is provided by Nuhiti Road. The road skirts the coastal flats to give access to Nuhiti Farm and homestay.

Visual Quality: Moderate-High
Visual Absorption Capability: Low-Moderate

Enhancers:

Motuoroi Island.
 Headlands.
 Golden Sandy beach.
 Camp ground.
 Road position.

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LANDSCAPE UNIT 9

Detractors:

Pattern of land use. Erosion.

Visual Sensitivity:

Topography and a lack of vegetation cover around Anaura allow little scope for large scale integration of development. Sensitive small scale change may be accommodated.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Motuoroa Island.
Marau Point.

Unit Name: Karaka Bay
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z17
Landscape Type: Hill Country
Map: 2A.17

Physical Description:

Tokatea Rocks have, in the past, experienced major land slips as a result of coastal erosion. This has given rise to the 'slumped' appearance of the headland.

Around Karaka Bay the topography appears more denuded, broad stream flats and low rounded ridges provide extensive areas for pasture.

Partly due to the lack of tree and shrub cover (only isolated kanuka and weed species such as gorse remain), erosion of the hillside is a notable problem. Large land slips caused by coastal erosion are relatively frequent, but more apparent are the areas of bare rock, exposed by minor slippages and sheet erosion.

The lack of tree cover means that shade and shelter are scarce - a problem recognised by the users of the camp site and beach.

Visibility: (Karaka Bay) Low
No road or vehicular access to the coastal edge.

Visual Quality: Low-Moderate
Visual Absorption Capability: Low-Moderate

Enhancers:

Beach.
Enclosure provided by headlands.

Detractors:

Erosion.

Visual Sensitivity:

Little opportunity for integration exists with Kaiawa Bay, part due to the high visibility of the area, part to the steep topography and low levels of vegetation cover.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Island off Te Karaka Point.

LANDSCAPE UNIT 10

Unit Name: Tolaga Bay North
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z17
Landscape Type: Hill Country
Map: 2A.17

Physical Description:

The unit is relatively small, confined to the discrete by area. Its edges are clearly defined by the towering white cliffs to the south and the upthrust strata of Te Karaka Point which continues inland as a narrow ridge visually separating the coast area from the inland flood plain of the Uawa River. The river, meandering across the broad flood plain has been unable to breach this ridge. It swings briefly to the west prior to passing through a break in the ridge and entering Tolaga Bay. Around the river mouth the bay is sheltered from the erosive forces of the open sea and has been an area of significant deposition. The extensive coastal flats, the long sandy beach, lagoon and spit all point to an accumulation of material both from the Uawa River and from littoral action.

Much of the estuarine margins of the Uawa River estuary are zoned in the Cook County Scheme as Conservation Zones by virtue of its Moderate - High Site of Significant Wildlife Interest (SSWI) rating. The rush sedge estuarine wetland, mud flats and adjacent dune lands support diverse birdlife and the river supports one of the most notable Whitebait fisheries in the region.

Vegetatively, the area is denuded of native bush cover. Small pockets cling to the steeper gully slopes on the higher land inland from the coast, but elsewhere pasture is dominant. Around the settlement of Tolaga Bay some amenity planting has been carried out in the past.

A number of settlements are scattered around the mouth of the Uawa River. Hauti, across the river from Tolaga, has developed along Highway 35. Predominantly a farming settlement, Hauti draws on the coastal and valley flats where vineyards, extensive pasture and more intensive cropping are in evidence. Titirangi is a small settlement at the base of the steep coastal ridge on the southern side of Tolaga Bay, spreading onto the sandy spit enclosing the lagoon.

The area is well served by the road network. Highway 35 skirts the coast at the mouth of the Uawa River and minor roads on both sides of the bay give access to the base of the cliffs.

Visibility: Moderate-High

Roads extending from Tolaga Bay allow visibility throughout most of the unit.

Visual Quality: Moderate

Visual Absorption Capability: Moderate

Enhancers:

Cliffs.
 Beach.
 River.

Detractors:

None.

Visual Sensitivity:

The settlement of Tolaga Bay, and nearby settlements offer potential for integration of new development. Elsewhere, however, the topography has discouraged development and the open aspect of the unit would make change difficult.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Te Karaka Point Escarpment.
 Uawa River Estuary.

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LANDSCAPE UNIT 11

Unit Name: Pourewa
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z17
Landscape Type: Hill Country
Map: 2A.17; 2A.18

Physical Description:

This unit divides Tolaga Bay from Waihou Bay. It has a continuous rocky and cliffed shore line and includes the offshore Pourewa Island.

The cliffs vary in height and appearance considerably as the land rises and falls and are deeply eroded with gullies, reflecting the heavy run-off from the pasture above. Scattered bush remains on the steeper coastal scarp slopes but elsewhere the area is denuded of trees and scrub vegetation. At the base of the cliffs broken water indicates offshore rock outcrops and wave cut platforms. They become more pronounced around Pourewa Island and the unnamed headland that defines the southern edge of the unit.

The area around Pourewa Island has been designated an Area of Significant Conservation Values in recognition of its breeding populations of seabirds, forest vegetation on Pourewa Island and scenic value. A monument at Cook's Cove commemorates Cook's visit in October 1769.

The steep and rugged topography has prevented both settlement and access into the coastal area of this unit.

Visibility: Low

The unit is only visible from the sea or by air.

Visual Quality: Moderate-High

Visual Absorption Capability: Low-Moderate

Enhancers:

Rugged coastline/Landform.
Islands.
Cliffs and Rock Outcrops.

Detractors:

Pattern of vegetation clearance.
Erosion.

Visual Sensitivity:

Low-Moderate. Visibility is low throughout the unit, however, there is little vegetation cover to offer opportunities for integration of development but the steep topography, whilst making construction difficult, does provide the possibility of concealing development amongst the landform.

Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes:

Entire unit 13 (including Pourewa Island).

LANDSCAPE UNIT 12

Unit Name: Waihou Bay, Waiharehare Bay
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Z17
Landscape Type: Hill Country
Map: 2A.18; 2A.19; 2A.20

Physical Description:

This unit, some 13 kilometres in length is enclosed at either end by massive rocky promontories, their rugged cliffs fall sheer for more than 100 metres to broken rocky shelves at sea level. Between these two headlands the curving sweep of the coast is interrupted by shallow sandy bays and smaller rocky outcrops. The continued erosion of this coastline has resulted in extensive wave cut platforms being formed at the base of the cliffs.

Along this coast the north-east, south-west geological pattern reflects the predominant orientation of the Raukumara Range which forms the spine of the peninsula. At intervals, outcrops of a more resistant sand stone intersect the coast. These outcrops are marked by the incidence of wave cut platforms, between which bands of less resistant rock are characterised by the shallower bays of Puatai and Waiharehare. The Geological Society of New Zealand has identified their shore platforms as being of particular value.

The coastal strip tends to be very narrow, the scarp slope rising sharply from the beach of the upland areas. Here, the hills are frequently punctuated by deeply cut stream valleys flowing rapidly down to sea level.

Vegetation cover comprises mainly grassland with regenerating Manuka scrub on some valley slopes. Erosion is a problem and attempts have been made to address this by establishing plantations of soil conservation trees.

Access to the area is poor, Highway 35 runs some distance inland, behind the coastal ranges and only the Waihou Road provides vehicular access to Waihou Beach.

Visibility: Low-Moderate

Road access is only feasible to the north of Waihou Bay, terminating at Loisel's.

Visual Quality: Moderate to High

Visual Absorption Capability: Low-Moderate

Enhancers:

Long visible coastline.
Headlands.
Remnant Bush.
Beach.
Surf.

Detractors:

Erosion. Lack of vegetation.

Visual Sensitivity:

Moderate.

Outstanding Natural Features:

None identified.

LANDSCAPE UNIT 13

Unit Name: Whangara, Waiomoko
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Y18
Landscape Type: Hill Country
Map: 2A.20; 2A.21; 2A.22

Physical Description:

Within this unit three distinct landform types are in evidence, influencing the character of the coastal edge. The coast between Gable End Foreland to the Pakarae River is similar in character to that of previous units; steep cliffs and denuded scarp slopes rising from a rocky wave cut platform to eroded and dissected hills and a coastal edge that alternates between craggy headland and sheltered bay. To the west of Pakarae River, a series of several holocene terraces formed by uplift due to earthquake activity, has been identified as an important geological feature.

The low-lying plain across which the Pakarae and Waiomoko Rivers meander presents a very different coastal edge. The marine/land interface comprises a narrow beach behind which sand dune systems have developed. The two alluvial flood plains are divided by a low ridge composed of mudstones. The Waiomoko River estuary has been designated by DOC as an Area of Significant Conservation Value by virtue of its fauna, flora and wildlife values.

From the edge of Waiomoko flood plain, south to Turihaua Point, the landform increases in height once more. Parikonohi Point is a striking feature; a flat topped headland edged by scarp cliffs which are deeply furrowed with gullies and clad with scattered native vegetation. Below this feature, the Pouawa River flows into a small lagoon created by littoral action damming the river mouth.

Throughout this unit the land use is predominantly pastoral. The hill slopes are denuded of vegetation with fragmentary remnants remaining in the gullies and steeper slopes around Parikonohi Point.

Access to the unit is restricted to Pah Road which serves Whangara. This settlement contains Whitireia Meeting House. On this building a carving commemorates Paikea, who travelled to New Zealand on the back of a whale. Access to the coast is also possible at Turihaua Point via Highway 35.

Visibility: Moderate

Visual Quality: Moderate

Visual Absorption Capability: Low-Moderate

Enhancers:

Beaches.

Islands.

Detractors:

Poorly integrated housing development.

Visual Sensitivity:

Moderate.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Whangara Island.

Reefs.

Waiomoko River mouth, Pouawa.

LANDSCAPE UNIT 14

Unit Name: Tatapouri, Makorori
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Y18
Landscape Type: Hill Country
Map: 2A.21; 2A.22

Physical Description:

The unit comprises a short section of uniform coastline dominated by Tatapouri Point. The headland has in the past been subject to bedding plane failure resulting in a major land slip. This demonstrates the high sheer stress experienced by the cliffs of the coastline induced by coastal erosion. Tatapouri Point divides the unit into two sections. A long sandy beach extends south to Makorori Point whilst, to the north, the narrow coastal edge is traced by Highway 35. The road is confined to an artificial causeway sandwiched between the steep coastal hill slopes and the beach. It skirts Turihaua Point and continues along the coastal edge before climbing on a direct route over Tatapouri Point. The road surface is visible for some distance from the beach as it climbs over the headland despite sitting comfortably within an existing valley. The wider planer shore platform at Tatapouri has been identified as a landform of scientific, educational and scenic value by the Geological Society of New Zealand.

Patches of remnant karaka cling to the steeper slopes and mature plantings of exotic tree species are associated with homesteads. More recent native planting has taken place at Tatapouri but elsewhere the rugged landscape is primarily pastoral.

The settlements have generally developed on flat, sheltered land associated with the headlands. Makorori and Tatapouri occupy opposite sides of Tatapouri Point whilst other scattered settlements and homesteads cluster on the more exposed hillsides.

Access along the coastal edge is maintained by Highway 35 providing a high visibility to the entire unit.

Visibility: High.

Visual Quality: Moderate

Visual Absorption Capability: Low-Moderate

Enhancers:

Beach.

Rock Shelves.

Detractors:

None.

Visual Sensitivity:

Low-Moderate.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Reefs.

Tatapouri.

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LANDSCAPE UNIT 15

Unit Name: Wainui/Tuahine
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Y 18
Landscape Type: Hill Country
Map: 2A.22; 2A.23

Physical Description:

This unit comprises a long sweeping sandy bay, terminated by Tuahine Point, an isolated and rocky finger of sand stone projecting out from the coast.

Immediately back from the beach, a low foredune, under considerable erosive pressure as a result of unrestricted access, extends the length of the bay. Beyond the coastal edge a swathe of residential development runs along Highway 35 making up the settlement of Wainui. In Wainui the majority of residential development has taken place along the coastal edge largely to take advantage of the beachfront location. The hills here are low and rounded with deeply cut and attractively bushed valleys.

Behind Tuahine Point the urban area spills out onto the flat reclaimed dune land, now primarily under pasture. Whilst little vegetation remains on the open hill slopes, the settlements have extensive amenity planting. Semi-mature Pohutukawa, Norfolk Island Pine and other coastal species thrive in the maritime environment. On the agricultural land behind Tuaheni Point, mature exotic shelter belts delineate the field boundaries.

Visibility: High.
Visual Quality: Moderate
Visual Absorption Capability: Moderate

Enhancers:

Amenity planting.
Sandy Beach.
Tuahine Point.

Detractors:

New subdivision on ridge.

Visual Sensitivity:

Moderate.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Tuahine Point.

LANDSCAPE UNIT 16

Unit Name: Tuamotu Island
NZMS 260 Map Ref: Y18
Landscape Type: Island
Map: 2A.23; 2A.24; 2A.25; 2A.26

Physical Description:

This unit is striking in its contrast to those flanking it primarily due to the heavily populated settlement of Gisborne, but also as a result of its extensive spectacular view and wide sweeping bay, exaggerated by the low-lying flood plain of the Waipaoa River. Two dramatic rocky headlands - both with sheer cliffs enclose the bay, delineating the extent of the unit.

The city of Gisborne has developed around the mouth of the Turanganui River. It is limited in its growth to the east by sand stone uplands of which Tuaheni Point is composed, however, to the west, on the extensive flood plain there are no such restrictions on its growth. Only a small proportion of the city is in contact with the coastal edge.

Titirangi Park, originally a Maori Pa site, has recently been established as a recreational reserve. It screens much of the east of the city from the coast, rising about 129 metres above sea level.

Whilst a small park with some mature tree cover at the river mouth provides some screening, unattractive industrial and wharf storage areas still intrude on the coastal zone. On the east side of the river an area of reclaimed land accommodates timber storage yards and petro-chemical silos.

To the west of the city the beach extends in a broad crescent, traced by Centennial Marine Drive which terminates at the mouth of the Waipaoa River. Much of the flood plain is devoted to intensive agricultural cropping, although nearer the coast, salt marshes dominate the landscape. Between the Waipaoa River and Young Nicks Head, a large area of sand accretion has developed in the lee of the headland.

The Wherowhero and Waipaoa estuaries are particularly notable for the ecological value of their wetland, estuary and coastal lagoon habitats. The Wherowhero estuary comprises a 200 hectare coastal lagoon estuary and in addition an associated 30 hectare tidal mud flat occurs at the mouth of the Waipaoa River. The site has been designated as a Priority One Recommended Area for Protection (RAP) in the Turanga Ecological District PNA Survey report. Wherowhero lagoon has a high SSWI rating for its coastal wader population and the Waiapu River mouth has a SSWI rating of Moderate - High.

Wherowhero lagoon, separated from the bay by a long sand spit was once a section of the river before coastal erosion provided a shortened route to the sea. Consequently this section was abandoned and gradually became silted up and isolated.

Taller vegetation is scattered in sparse pockets around the unit. Little exists on the flood plain with the exception of the occasional shelter belt but within Gisborne, native and exotic trees have been established in the cities coastal parks.

G7C Schedule: Outstanding Natural Landscapes in the Coastal Environment

LANDSCAPE UNIT 17

Access to the coast is comprehensive throughout the unit by road, and Gisborne's port allows easy access by sea.

Visibility: High

The unit contains a centre of population.

Visual Quality: Low/moderate-Moderate

Visual Absorption Capability: Low/moderate-Moderate

Enhancers:

Headlands/Cliffs.

Beach.

Amenity planting.

Detractors:

Some industrial scale/activity and associated works.

Visual Sensitivity:

Low-Moderate.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Tuaheni Point.

Young Nicks Head - Te Kuri.

Sponge Bay Island.

Unit Name: Whareongaonga

NZMS 260 Map Ref: Y18, Y19

Landscape Type: Mountain Ranges

Map: 2A.27

Physical Description:

This unit, the most southerly in the study is one of the more extensive, including 16 kilometres of coastline. Generally the landform is fairly uniform throughout the unit, steep hills with deeply eroded stream gullies falling to dissected coastal cliffs and rocky shelves. Intermittently this pattern is broken by small rocky headlands and shallow sandy bays. Occasionally exceptions interrupt this general pattern. Whareongaonga, for example is a large stratified headland edged by sheer indented cliffs which enclose small bays. This headland has been designated an Area of Significant Conservation Value by virtue of its scenic value and is recognised as being representative of the coastal features and landforms in this region. At a number of locations along the cliffs bedding plane failure and other slippages are evident indicating a coastal system in erosive retreat.

Vegetation cover is predominantly pastoral with encroaching blocks of exotic forestry in some areas. Indigenous bush vegetation is regenerating on many of the valley sides and on the steeper coastal edge slopes.

There are no settlements along the coastal edge and little vehicular access. In the south of the unit the railway runs briefly parallel to the coast, its cut platform clearly visible from the sea and air. Forestry tracks allow limited access to the back of the coastal zone.

Visibility: Low

Visual Quality: Moderate

Visual Absorption Capability: Low-Moderate

Enhancers:

Landform.

Coastal Edge.

Detractors:

Pattern of land use.

Visual Sensitivity:

Low-Moderate.

Outstanding Natural Features:

Taungaatura to Waiparapara (including Whareongaonga)

