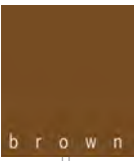


# COROMANDEL PENINSULA LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

PREPARED FOR Thames Coromandel District Council  
DATE September 2011 / STATUS Draft



## ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

**COROMANDEL PENINSULA** LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT  
STATUS **DRAFT** . SCALE as shown @ A3 . DATE September 2011 . PAGE 2

INTRODUCTION			
OUTSTANDING & AMENITY LANDSCAPES	<b>Coromandel Peninsula Map</b>		
LANDSCAPE UNIT 1	<b>Northern Peninsula Tip</b>	P4	
LANDSCAPE UNIT 2	<b>Moehau Range</b>	P5	LANDSCAPE UNIT 45
LANDSCAPE UNIT 3	<b>Stony Bay</b>	P6	LANDSCAPE UNIT 46
LANDSCAPE UNIT 4	<b>Moehau Range - Western Foothills</b>	P8	LANDSCAPE UNIT 47
LANDSCAPE UNIT 5	<b>Moehau Range - Western Coastline</b>	P12	LANDSCAPE UNIT 48
LANDSCAPE UNIT 6	<b>Sandy Bay</b>	P14	LANDSCAPE UNIT 49
LANDSCAPE UNIT 7	<b>Moehau Range - Southeastern Foothills</b>	P16	LANDSCAPE UNIT 50
LANDSCAPE UNIT 8	<b>Mt Onekura &amp; Eastern Coastline</b>	P18	LANDSCAPE UNIT 51
LANDSCAPE UNIT 9	<b>Waiaro Stream Inlet</b>	P20	LANDSCAPE UNIT 52
LANDSCAPE UNIT 10	<b>Te Kawau, Turipeka &amp; Otautu Point</b>	P22	LANDSCAPE UNIT 53
LANDSCAPE UNIT 11	<b>Waikawau River Inlet</b>	P24	LANDSCAPE UNIT 54
LANDSCAPE UNIT 12	<b>Waikawau Beach</b>	P26	LANDSCAPE UNIT 55
LANDSCAPE UNIT 13	<b>Little Bay</b>	P28	LANDSCAPE UNIT 56
LANDSCAPE UNIT 14	<b>Little Bay - Coastal Foothills</b>	P30	LANDSCAPE UNIT 57
LANDSCAPE UNIT 15	<b>Tuateawa - Coastal Slopes</b>	P32	LANDSCAPE UNIT 58
LANDSCAPE UNIT 16	<b>Northeastern Islands</b>	P34	LANDSCAPE UNIT 59
LANDSCAPE UNIT 17	<b>Te Whau Point</b>	P36	LANDSCAPE UNIT 60
LANDSCAPE UNIT 18	<b>Coromandel Range - Northwest</b>	P38	LANDSCAPE UNIT 61
LANDSCAPE UNIT 19	<b>Coromandel Range - Northeast</b>	P40	LANDSCAPE UNIT 62
LANDSCAPE UNIT 20	<b>Kennedy Bay Inlet</b>	P44	LANDSCAPE UNIT 63
LANDSCAPE UNIT 21	<b>Kennedy Bay Beach</b>	P46	LANDSCAPE UNIT 64
LANDSCAPE UNIT 22	<b>Motukawao Island Group</b>	P48	LANDSCAPE UNIT 65
LANDSCAPE UNIT 23	<b>Papaaroha to Tucks Bay - Coastal Slopes</b>	P50	LANDSCAPE UNIT 66
LANDSCAPE UNIT 24	<b>Coromandel Harbour Islands</b>	P52	LANDSCAPE UNIT 67
LANDSCAPE UNIT 25	<b>Coromandel Harbour Islands</b>	P54	LANDSCAPE UNIT 68
LANDSCAPE UNIT 26	<b>Ruffin Peninsula Tip</b>	P56	LANDSCAPE UNIT 69
LANDSCAPE UNIT 27	<b>Preece Point</b>	P58	LANDSCAPE UNIT 70
LANDSCAPE UNIT 28	<b>Te Kourma &amp; Manaia Headlands</b>	P60	LANDSCAPE UNIT 71
LANDSCAPE UNIT 29	<b>Te Kourma &amp; Manaia Harbours</b>	P62	LANDSCAPE UNIT 72
LANDSCAPE UNIT 30	<b>Pukewhakaratarata - Coastal Slopes</b>	P64	LANDSCAPE UNIT 73
LANDSCAPE UNIT 31	<b>New Chums Beach</b>	P66	LANDSCAPE UNIT 74
LANDSCAPE UNIT 32	<b>Whangapoua Beach &amp; Te Rehutae Point</b>	P68	LANDSCAPE UNIT 75
LANDSCAPE UNIT 33	<b>Whangapoua Harbour Escarpment</b>	P70	LANDSCAPE UNIT 76
LANDSCAPE UNIT 34	<b>Whangapoua Harbour</b>	P72	LANDSCAPE UNIT 77
LANDSCAPE UNIT 35	<b>Matarangi Beach</b>	P74	LANDSCAPE UNIT 78
LANDSCAPE UNIT 36	<b>Matarangi Bluff, Rings &amp; Kuaotunu Beach</b>	P76	LANDSCAPE UNIT 79
LANDSCAPE UNIT 37	<b>Black Jack Hill</b>	P78	LANDSCAPE UNIT 80
LANDSCAPE UNIT 38	<b>Otama Beach</b>	P80	LANDSCAPE UNIT 81
LANDSCAPE UNIT 39	<b>Kauwera Point &amp; Whaorei Bay</b>	P82	LANDSCAPE UNIT 82
LANDSCAPE UNIT 40	<b>Opito Bay</b>	P84	LANDSCAPE UNIT 83
LANDSCAPE UNIT 41	<b>Great Mercury Island</b>	P86	LANDSCAPE UNIT 84
LANDSCAPE UNIT 42	<b>Great Mercury Islands</b>	P88	LANDSCAPE UNIT 85
LANDSCAPE UNIT 43	<b>Hole in the Wall Islands</b>	P90	LANDSCAPE UNIT 86
LANDSCAPE UNIT 44	<b>Tahanga &amp; Coastal Escarpments</b>	P92	LANDSCAPE UNIT 87
		P94	LANDSCAPE UNIT 88
		P96	
			<b>Devils Point &amp; Humbug Bay Headland</b> P98
			<b>Mauhuatawhiri &amp; Waitaia Coastal Hills</b> P100
			<b>Waitaia Bay &amp; Coastal Hills</b> P102
			<b>Wharekaho &amp; Ohuka Headlands</b> P104
			<b>Buffalo Beach</b> P106
			<b>Whitianga Harbour Headland</b> P108
			<b>Whitianga Harbour</b> P110
			<b>Whitianga Harbour Escarpment</b> P112
			<b>Maramaratotara Bay</b> P114
			<b>Shakespeare Cliff</b> P116
			<b>Cooks Beach</b> P118
			<b>Purangi River</b> P120
			<b>Purangi River Escarpment</b> P122
			<b>Cook Bluff</b> P124
			<b>Hahei Beach</b> P126
			<b>Mercury Bay Islands</b> P128
			<b>Hahei &amp; Hot Water Beach Headlands</b> P130
			<b>Hot Water Beach</b> P132
			<b>Coromandel Range - Castle Rock</b> P134
			<b>Coromandel Range</b> P136
			<b>Central Western Coastline</b> P140
			<b>Southwestern Coastline</b> P142
			<b>Thames Foothills</b> P144
			<b>Waihou River - Eastern Banks</b> P146
			<b>Coromandel Range - Southeastern Foothills</b> P148
			<b>Tapuetahi &amp; Kohungahunga</b> P150
			<b>Tairua Beach</b> P154
			<b>Paku</b> P156
			<b>Tairua Harbour</b> P158
			<b>Pauanui Beach</b> P160
			<b>Pauanui Headland</b> P162
			<b>East Coast Islands</b> P164
			<b>Opoutere Beach</b> P166
			<b>Wharekawa Harbour</b> P168
			<b>Wharekawa Harbour Escarpment</b> P170
			<b>Momoparaua - Northern Slopes</b> P172
			<b>Momoparaua - Southern Slopes</b> P174
			<b>Wharekawa River, Paritu &amp; Kaituna Stream</b> P176
			<b>Southern Escarpments</b>
			<b>Southeastern Coastline</b> P178
			<b>Whangamata Harbour Escarpment</b> P180
			<b>Whangamata Harbour</b> P182
			<b>Whangamata Beach</b> P184
			<b>Southeastern Islands</b> P186
			<b>Otahu River</b> P188

Brown NZ Ltd has been engaged by the Thames Coromandel District Council to carry out an assessment of the landscapes within the District, with the aim of consolidating existing landscape assessments of the Coromandel Peninsula (including the Coromandel Peninsula Landscape Assessment (August 2008), by Mary Buckland of LA4, and a peer review of that assessment by Stephen Brown Environments in 2008, for the Thames Coromandel District Council).

This report takes the following structure, the landscape has been broken down into 88 Landscape Units representing the Outstanding and Amenity landscapes of the district (refer map on following page). These Landscape Units areas have been determined using a combination of criteria including geomorphologic and biological characteristics, similar appearances and reflections of common perceptions. The character area boundaries may take in any adjacent landforms or landscapes that inform the particular area. Unit boundaries will follow one of the following:

- Ridgelines of spurs whose slopes contain landscape features such as river valleys, harbours or basins etc,
- The edge of a particular landform / land type such as a harbour or river terrace or escarpments, riverbed, base of a hill or mountain range.
- The edge of an area of modification or type of land cover, ie. residential settlement, exotic forestry, or pasture etc...

Each of these Landscape Units has been individually mapped, assessed, described and photographed. The following five aspects have been addressed in the discussion of the landscapes key physical elements:

- Landform,
- Vegetation,
- Water Bodies,
- Human Activities/Structures, &
- Natural Processes.

The following four aspects have been addressed in the discussion of Landscape Characteristics:

- Naturalness
- Cohesion/unity
- Landmarks
- Key views

**Amenity Landscapes:**

Section 7(c) of the Resource Management Act states that those exercising power under the Act shall have regard to (among other matters) “The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values”. Such values are defined as being “those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people’s appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes”.

In practice, the concept of “amenity” is often bound up in the identification and maintenance of values that have even more to do with local qualities and dynamics than “landscape”. For instance, whereas the concept of landscape may pertain to a wide ranging mixture of beach and coastline, open pasture, remnant bush and forest, mountain ranges and foothills, rolling topography, shelterbelts and buildings that create a certain bucolic imagery and distinctive sense of place, amenity values may relate to the outlook to a single beach, hill, ridge, stand of trees, river or stream course or other feature that might be lost to most visitors, and also to a much more subtle array of local features and elements.

The essence of all amenity landscapes, however, regardless of their underlying nature (coastal, montane, rural peri-urban etc) and related audiences, is an existing character that is ‘glued together’ by a certain cohesion of expression and unity of elements that gives rise to it being ‘pleasant’, aesthetically cohesive’ and having cultural or recreational appeal. The essence of maintaining such values is usually the retention of the status quo, or at least the maintenance of the major ‘building blocks’ that contribute most to a locality’s present-day appearance and imagery – in this case the balance between built development, open space and the natural features that define the Coromandel Peninsula.

**Outstanding Landscapes:**

Section 6(b) of the Resource Management Act identifies “The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development” as a matter of national importance. Landscape values are a reflection of both the biophysical environment and human beings’ perception of that environment. At its most basic, the perceived (visual) landscape can be categorised and interpreted in terms of the features, elements and patterns evident within it. However, the composition and visual coherence found in landscapes, together with their 3D spatial structure, have also been long associated with the attachment of values to different landscapes

The landscape values against which the Proposal has been assessed are derived from the factors identified in the Pigeon Bay Aquaculture Limited v Canterbury Regional Council case, and the subsequent Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc v Queenstown Lakes District Council case. These factors are now largely accepted as a starting point for the identification of Outstanding Natural Landscapes and have become known as the “modified Pigeon Bay Criteria”:

- Natural science factors
- Aesthetic values including memorability and naturalness
- Expressiveness (legibility)
- Transient values
- Whether these values are shared and recognised
- Its value to tangata whenua
- Its historical associations

Adopting a different approach, Professor Simon Swaffield and John Fairweather (of Lincoln University) have carried out a substantive body of research into public attitudes towards different landscape types in various parts of New Zealand (from 1997 onwards). An analysis of those studies, ranging from Kaikoura in 1998, through Westland in 2000, to the Auckland Region in 2004<sup>1</sup> reveals a remarkable degree of consistency in the appreciation of, and attachment of values to, New Zealand’s landscapes, based on repeated “Q Sort” testing of public attitudes to different landscape types. This testing and analysis has led to the identification of a number

<sup>1</sup> *Public Perceptions of Outstanding natural Landscapes In The Auckland Region, Research Report No. 273, John R Fairweather, Simon R Swaffield, David G Simmons. 2004*

*Understanding Visitors’ Experiences In Kaikoura Using Photographs Of Landscapes & Q Sort. Report No. 5. John R Fairweather, Simon R Swaffield, David G Simmons. 1998*

*Understanding Visitors’ And Locals’ Experiences Of Rotorua Using Photographs Of Landscapes & Q Sort. Report No. 13. John R Fairweather, Simon R Swaffield, David G Simmons. 2000*

*Visitors’ And Locals’ Experiences Of Westland, New Zealand. Report No.23. John Fairweather, Bronwyn Newton, Simon R Swaffield, David G Simmons. 2001*

*Public Perceptions Of Natural And Modified Landscapes Of The Coromandel Peninsula, New Zealand. Research Report No. 241. John R Fairweather, Simon R Swaffield. October 1999*

of key landscape ‘traits’ that consequently correlate with high preference in general, including:

- Naturalness- correlated with apparent levels of development or lack of development
- Endemic Values/ ‘NZness’ (relating to sense of place)
- Strong Landscape Structure- related to landform & the interaction of land with sea/water
- Strong Landscape Patterns- typically related to vegetation and land uses
- Visual Drama (memorability)
- Visual Diversity

**Assessment Criteria:**

The table below outlines the process and criteria developed for the assessment of individual landscapes. It is based on a combination of the factors described above and incorporates following three steps:

**Step 1:** Assessment of ‘Key Landscape Factors / Variables’ with reference to the modified Pigeon Bay Natural Science Factors, Aesthetic Values and Expressiveness factors, together with its 2D compositional characteristics and 3D spatial structure;

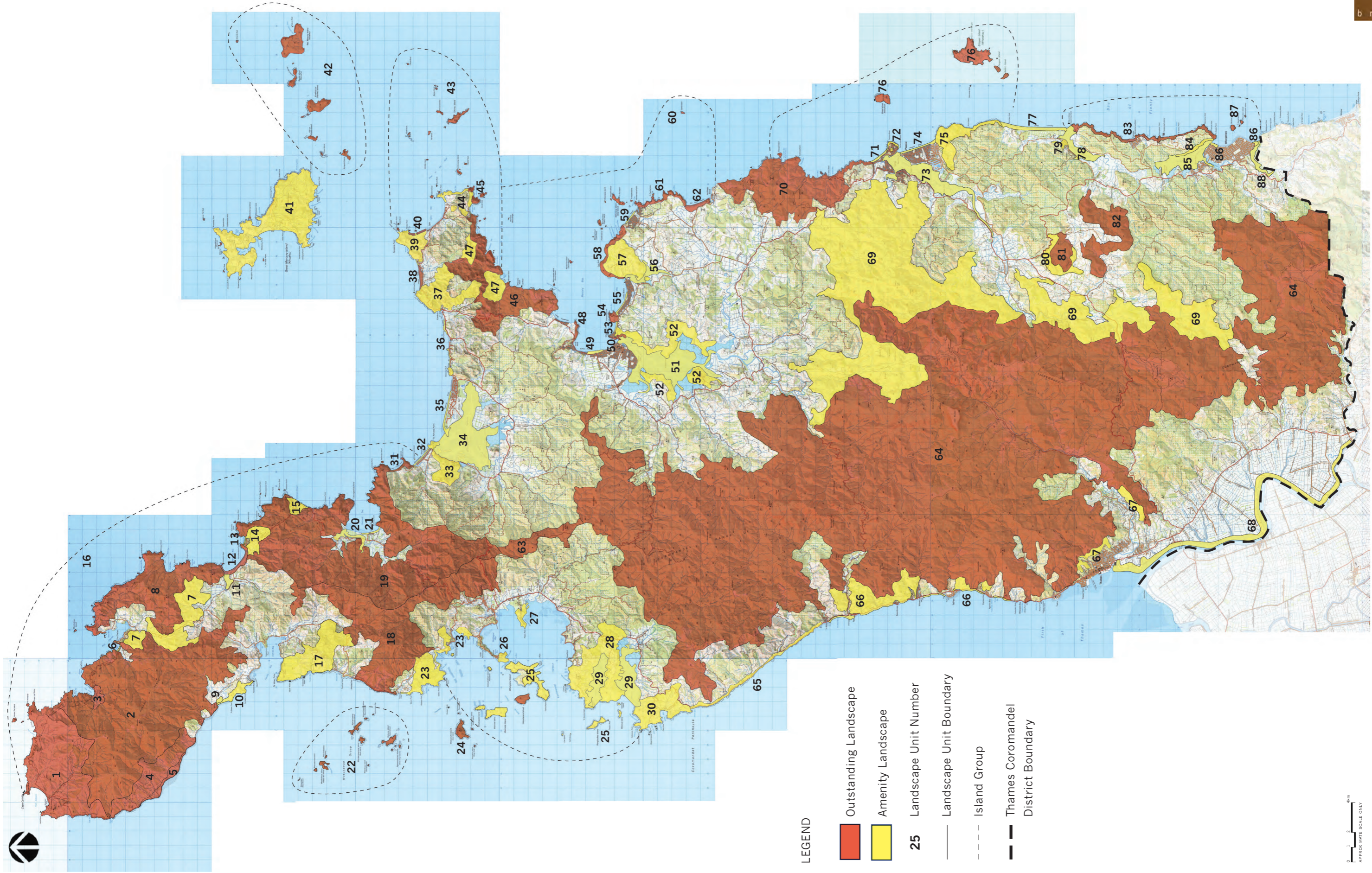
**Step 2:** Assessment of ‘the landscape as a whole’, related to research into public perception of landscapes and their values by Swaffield and Fairweather, &

**Step 3:** ‘Rating’, An assessment of the landscape in terms of key thresholds that help determine whether it is an Outstanding or Amenity landscape, with reference to relevant environment court decisions.

KEY LANDSCAPE FACTORS / VARIABLES						
The Bio-physical Landscape		Perceptual / Associative Values				
	Naturalness / Natural Science Factors	Aesthetic Values / 2D Composition	3D Articulation			
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Forms</li> <li>• Land Cover / Activities</li> <li>• Vegetation Types(s)</li> <li>• Sea / Water Bodies</li> <li>• Natural Processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived Naturalness</li> <li>• 2D Definition / Patterns</li> <li>• Vividness / Memorability</li> <li>• Coherence / Unity</li> <li>• Sense of Place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3D Spatial Structure / Layers</li> <li>• Expressiveness / Legibility</li> <li>• Landmarks</li> <li>• Key Views</li> <li>• Enticement into Landscape</li> </ul>			
LOW						

THE LANDSCAPE AS A WHOLE					
Wild Nature / Cultured Nature		Outstanding Natural Landscape / Feature Descriptors	Rating:		
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naturalness / Endemicity (Wild Nature)</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• Perceived / Relative Naturalness (Cultured Nature)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remarkable / Exceptional</li> <li>• Eminent</li> <li>• Exemplary</li> <li>• Conspicuous</li> </ul>	AMENITY	OUTSTANDING	
LOW					

ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT



0 1 2 km  
APPROXIMATE SCALE ONLY

ANALYSIS OF THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

**COROMANDEL PENINSULA** LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT  
 STATUS **DRAFT** . SCALE as shown @ A3 . DATE September 2011 . PAGE 5