

New Plymouth District Plan Review

Coastal Policy Area

1 Introduction

This report makes recommendations for the location and extent of a Coastal Policy Area for the New Plymouth District Plan (NPDP).

In making these recommendations, this report reviews and considers the following documents:

Current New Plymouth District Plan, Coastal Policy Area

New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS), 2010

Regional Landscape Study of the Taranaki Coastal Environment, November 2015 (TRC)

Landscape Assessment and Assessment of Coastal Strategy Actions, 2010 (Mary Buckland)

Proposed South Taranaki District Plan Section 32 Report - Coastal Environment

Inventory of Coastal Areas of Local or Regional Significance in the Taranaki Region

Each report has been reviewed and assessed as to the appropriateness of their findings, and or relevance in determining a Coastal Policy Area for the New Plymouth District.

This recommendation for a Coastal Policy Area uses existing assessments of coastal character, supplemented with additional field work. In particular, consideration is given to the findings of the TRC *Regional Coastal Study 2015*, and methodology and principles used by the South Taranaki District Council coastal environment section 32 report, in order to achieve regional consistency with regard to protection of coastal values.

2 Existing NPDP Coastal Policy Area

In determining a Coastal Policy Area for the District Plan review, it is useful to consider the existing Coastal Policy Area in order to determine to what extent it is suitable for the new Plan. Is the existing Coastal Policy Area still appropriate?

The current District Plan primarily deals with the coastal environment within its Management Strategy, under *Natural Values, Issue 14: Adverse effects of subdivision, use and development of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins*.

The NPDP defines the 'coastal environment' as an environment in which the coast is a significant part or element, varying from place to place depending on the extent to which is affected by coastal processes.

The NPDP Coastal Policy Area gives effect to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (1994) which placed emphasis on landscapes, seascape and land forms, characteristics of special spiritual, historical or cultural significant to Maori, and significant places or areas of historical and cultural significance.

In addition, the NPDP refers to the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki (1994) in determining the natural character of the coastal environment, which includes the following additional matters to be considered:

- The degree of modification from a natural state.
- Amenity values, with particular emphasis on aural and visual amenity.
- The functioning of ecological and physical processes.
- The natural quality of water and air, natural biodiversity and productivity and the intrinsic value of ecosystems.
- The degree of integration of human use, development and subdivision with the above components.

The Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki (1997) identifies areas within the coastal marine area that are of value for natural character, ecological, landscape, social or cultural reasons and recognises the need for integrated management within the coastal environment to protect these features.

The NPDP states that the degree of natural character remaining in the coastal environment is predominantly determined by the degree of modification by land use, noting that the districts' coastline is valued for recreation and lifestyle and is predominantly rural, intersected with small urban centres, with urban development centres in New Plymouth where coastal modification has been extensive.

The NPDP states that the most likely threats to coastal natural character are intensification of urbanisation resulting in more built structures, loss of vegetation or alteration of landform, with

loss of habitat, amenity, heritage or landscape values, loss of recreational opportunity and an increase in natural hazard events as associated effects.

The Objectives and Policies pertaining to the preservation and enhancement of the natural character of the coastal environment is primarily delivered through its Coastal Policy Area (NPDP Appendices 2)) and Significant Coastal Area (NPDP Appendix 20).

This policy recognises that the natural character of the coastal environment is a matter of national importance. While neither “coastal environment” nor “natural character” is defined, both the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and the Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki provide some guidance.

The coastal environment of the New Plymouth District can be considered to comprise three main areas: urban development, open space areas and rural land. The natural character of each of these areas is very different. Urban development often has little remnant natural character, consisting of built form of a utilitarian nature, softened in some areas (especially residential) through planting or open space. Open space areas (such as reserves) are often managed for aesthetic and conservation purposes and therefore have a higher level of natural character.

The COASTAL POLICY AREA provides a mechanism to protect natural character by delineating the area where the impacts of inappropriate subdivision, use and development will be greatest. It does not determine the extent of the coastal environment nor the extent of natural character.

Because the existing natural character is largely a result of present land use practices, such uses are accordingly allowed provided they meet the standards for the underlying ENVIRONMENT AREA. It is only those activities that are likely to adversely affect the natural character in the context of the district that will be controlled.

An adverse effect is considered to be one that will reduce the ability of the dune, wetland or estuarine ecosystem to be self-sustaining in the long term and would include consideration of impacts on the stability and quantity of material (such as sand), vegetative cover and species composition. This is not a blanket prohibition, and recognises that there will be some circumstances where the modification of the natural environment is appropriate (for example, to provide directed public access or for “dune care” programmes). Standards that are designed to ensure the rural character of an area is protected (Issue 4) will also help to protect natural character.

Identification of the Coastal Policy Area (Appendix 2)

The NPDP Coastal Policy Area is an overlay that has been established using the following criteria.

1 Landscape values

This criterion has provided the main basis for determining the landward extent of the COASTAL POLICY AREA in the New Plymouth District.

The reason for this is because natural landscapes and visual outlooks of the seascape (e.g. the sea, dune areas, coastal cliffs) tend to be what most people associate with the coastal environment.

Two key public ROADS are used for viewing the coast:

- *State Highway 3 from north of the Mohakatino River to New Plymouth.*
- *State Highway 45 from New Plymouth to Okato.*

A good portion of the COASTAL POLICY AREA actually follows the seaward boundary of these ROADS as they provide extensive public views of the coast and they also provide a good physical delineation mark for administrative purposes.

2 Presence of geological landforms which are the result of the processes of marine erosion or deposition

This criterion extends to geological features, such as dunes, dune lakes, marine terraces, estuaries, and coastal cliffs. South from the northern boundary of the district, marine terraces are prominent to Tongaporutu. In the Pukearuhe to Mt Messenger area, active marine erosion has removed any marine terrace deposits and therefore criterion 3 has largely been used.

From Pukearuhe to Waitara, the marine terraces tend to extend inland several kilometres. The extent of this area is balanced against criterion 1 and therefore the COASTAL POLICY AREA will generally extend 500m back from Mean High Water Springs. From New Plymouth to Okato volcanic flows and ash deposits from Taranaki, Pouakai and Kaitake overlay marine deposits and therefore this criterion has not been able to be used. In some areas, the line extends inland to include specific geological features such as the Waipu Lagoons and the lagoons adjacent to the Omata tank farm.

3 Indigenous flora commonly associated with the coastal environment

This criterion is based largely on the coastal bioclimatic zone previously determined through two separate survey reports undertaken as part of the Protected Natural Areas Programme (PNA) for the North Taranaki District and the Egmont Ecological Region (1986 and 1991 respectively). In describing ecological districts and regions for survey in the PNA Programme, bioclimatic zones were delineated, recognising the correlation between the distribution of species and ecosystems and climate. The coastal bioclimatic zone for both the Egmont Ecological Region and the North Taranaki Ecological District is

described as that area generally within 1km of the coastline, where the vegetation is exposed to salt-laden winds and where temperatures are mild and relatively uniform, both diurnally and seasonally, compared with inland areas. Typical indicator species for this bioclimatic zone are taupata, pohutukawa, karo, houpara and coastal TREE daisies.

This bioclimatic zone has been used largely to define the landward extent of the COASTAL POLICY AREA between Tongaporutu and Pukearuhe. This area contains the largest remnant of native forest along the coastline. The rest of the district tends to contain small remnants of coastal forest, and is to a large extent given over to pasture.

4 Coastal reserves

This criterion has been used to determine the extent of the COASTAL POLICY AREA in the urban settlements of the district. The line to a large extent follows the boundary of COUNCIL owned reserves in Urenui, Waitara, Bell Block, New Plymouth and Oakura. A number of these reserves will also be zoned as OPEN SPACE ENVIRONMENT AREAS.

Assessment of existing Coastal Policy Area

The existing District Plan Policies and Objectives provide an excellent description of the district's coast in order to preserve and enhance coastal values. The Plan's emphasis on natural character values, including perpetual and cultural, are still valid with regard to the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010. However, in light of current best practice and actual coastal development over the life of the District Plan, the existing Coastal Policy Area can be reconsidered.

Firstly, the Coastal Policy Area while valid in its criteria for identifying the area of land that represents coastal values, its inland extent is largely driven by the assumption that the seaward edge of the state highway provides a good Coastal Policy Area boundary because there are extensive public views from these roads and that its easy to define. In considering where the Coastal Policy Area boundary should be, **it is necessary to identify where the coastal experience becomes sufficiently reduced that a person's primary experience is no longer coastal.**

Secondly, there are few rules pertaining to the Coastal Policy Area. This makes the Coastal Policy Area boundary somewhat of a 'paper tiger', its extents rarely tested as a means of protecting the coastal environment.

Thirdly, coastal values are split into a hierarchy of Regionally Significant Landscapes that overlap the Coastal Policy Area. Explicit in this hierarchy, and the stronger rules that apply to them is that they are more worthy of protection than the Coastal Policy Area. While this may be true, it does have the effect of reducing the status of the Coastal Policy Area to a strip that while coastal, is not important enough to require protection through rules.

In summary, the Coastal Policy Area that currently sits within the Plan represents a half way house. Its inland boundary is either arbitrary or pragmatic albeit does adequately cover natural character through the rules pertaining to dunes. Other aspects of natural character are afforded little if any protection by the existing Coastal Policy Area.

3 The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010

In determining the appropriateness of, or recommending a new Coastal Policy Area, effect must be given to the NZCPS 2010. This requires the identification of the *coastal environment*, understanding the natural character values of the coast, understanding the risks of natural hazards and the pressures from subdivision, land farming activities and other coastal activities. However, the NZCPA doesn't provide specific methodology for assessing the coastal environment.

As described in the district plan discussion, the existing Coastal Policy Area is based on the 1994 NZCPS.

A difference in the NZCPS 2010 is that it includes more policies that make direct provision for human use of the coastal environment. While the NZCPS still clearly protects the natural environment, there is increased provision for development.

The implication for creating a Coastal Policy Area is that greater clarity is now required as to what coastal values you are really trying to protect, particularly those values other than natural character. Furthermore, monitoring takes on increased importance. In other words, under the NZCPS 2010, the Coastal Policy Area needs to be more tightly controlled and therefore more tightly defined.

The NZCPS 2010 includes a policy on the extent and characteristics of the coastal environment to provide guidance on nationally consistent matters to local authorities. This policy identifies nine matters to be included in defining the coastal environment. Given that the district has an established Coastal Policy Area, the council is well placed to continue with a Coastal Policy Area as a way of dealing with these nine matters. This approach is reinforced by the greater requirement on Councils to conduct mapping or other identification processes to identify high values areas and provide associated management objectives. A spatial approach such as that required to identify a Coastal Policy Area has the advantage of providing more certainty over what activities go where.

Therefore in defining a Coastal Policy Area, the following aspects of the NZCPA 2010 are considered by this report. (It is assumed that other matters such as Policy 11 biodiversity, have been identified).

Policy 1

1. *Recognise that the extent and characteristics of the coastal environment vary from region to region and locality to locality; and the issues that arise may have different effects in different localities.*
2. *Recognise that the coastal environment includes:*
 - a. *the coastal marine area;*
 - b. *islands within the coastal marine area;*
 - c. *areas where coastal processes, influences or qualities are significant, including coastal lakes, lagoons, tidal estuaries, saltmarshes, coastal wetlands, and the margins of these;*
 - d. *areas at risk from coastal hazards;*
 - e. *coastal vegetation and the habitat of indigenous coastal species including migratory birds;*
 - f. *elements and features that contribute to the natural character, landscape, visual qualities or amenity values;*
 - g. *items of cultural and historic heritage in the coastal marine area or on the coast;*
 - h. *inter-related coastal marine and terrestrial systems, including the intertidal zone; and*
 - i. *physical resources and built facilities, including infrastructure, that have modified the coastal environment.*

Natural Character, features and landscapes (Preserving the Natural Character of the Coastal Environment)

Preservation and protection of natural character from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance under s6(a) of the RMA. This cuts to crux of coastal protection as subdivision, use and development can significantly change the character of the coast.

In identifying a Coastal Policy Area, it is recognised that natural character presently exists along much of district's coastline, albeit, it ranges from pristine to highly modified. Consideration needs to be given to matching the level of protection with the degree of modification. For

example urban areas will be able to absorb subdivision more readily than a rural area bound by sand dunes.

The NZCPS 2010 requires that in order for plan provisions to be effective, a consistent approach in assessing natural character, including outstanding coastal landscapes is necessary.

Policy 13: Preservation of Natural Character

- 1. To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and to protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:*
 - a. avoid adverse effects of activities on natural character in areas of the coastal environment with outstanding natural character; and*
 - b. avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on natural character in all other areas of the coastal environment; including by:*
 - c. assessing the natural character of the coastal environment of the region or district, by mapping or otherwise identifying at least areas of high natural character; and ensuring that regional policy statements, and plans, identify areas where preserving natural character requires objectives, policies and rules, and include those provisions.*
- 2. Recognise that natural character is not the same as natural features and landscapes or amenity values and may include matters such as:*
 - a. natural elements, processes and patterns;*
 - b. biophysical, ecological, geological and geomorphological aspects;*
 - c. natural landforms such as headlands, peninsulas, cliffs, dunes, wetlands, reefs, freshwater springs and surf breaks;*
 - d. the natural movement of water and sediment;*
 - e. the natural darkness of the night sky;*
 - f. places or areas that are wild or scenic;*
 - g. a range of natural character from pristine to modified; and*
 - h. experiential attributes, including the sounds and smell of the sea; and their context setting.*

Policy 13 (Preservation of natural character) and Policy 14 (Restoration of natural character) requires that natural character be assessed in order to preserve natural character of the coastal environment and protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

Policy 13 (2) establishes that natural character is not the same as natural features and landscapes or amenity values. Natural character may include a wide range of matters, including biophysical and geological aspects, , natural landforms and wild scenic areas, all of which relate to naturalness but which include experiential attributes, such as the sounds and smell of the sea. Having said that, there is considerable conjecture as to just how natural character is assessed in the light of no consistent methodology. Despite this, an assessment of natural character is required, including identification of areas that have outstanding natural character. To this end, The Regional Council have identified four coastal *Areas of Outstanding Natural Character* within the New Plymouth District.

Defining natural character (in order to include it within a Coastal Policy Area), requires recognition that is not defined in the RMA, and that it is location specific. It is accepted as best practice that the degree or level of natural character depends on:

1. The extent to which the natural elements, patterns and processes occur.
2. The nature and extent of modification to ecosystems and landscape/seascape;
3. The degree of natural character (greatest naturalness) occurs where there is least modification;
4. The effect of different types of modification upon natural character varies with context and perception.

Natural character is vulnerable to degradation and loss, often incremental. Likely impacts that development can have on coastal character include the following list compiled by the Environmental Defence Society.

- modification of natural landforms through earthworks
- removal of indigenous vegetation
- destruction of important indigenous habitats such as wetlands, dunes and riparian margins
- disruption of natural drainage patterns
- disruption of natural coastal processes including through activities such as beach replenishment, reclamations and coastal structures
- increased sediment runoff from land clearance and earthworks
- buildings and structures which are singly or cumulatively visually intrusive or dominant within the landscape
- disrupting natural patterns through inappropriate landscaping and/or the planting of non-indigenous local species.

Within the New Plymouth District, all these impacts have occurred at some level or other in recent times and can realistically be assumed to continue as likely future threats.

Protecting Coastal Landscapes

Policy 15: Natural features and natural landscapes

To protect the natural features and natural landscapes (including seascapes) of the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:

- a. avoid adverse effects of activities on outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes in the coastal environment; and*
- b. avoid significant adverse effects and avoid, remedy, or mitigate other adverse effects of activities on other natural features and natural landscapes in the coastal environment; including by:*
 - I. natural science factors, including geological, topographical, ecological and dynamic components;*
 - II. the presence of water including in seas, lakes, rivers and streams;*
 - III. legibility or expressiveness – how obviously the feature or landscape demonstrates its formative processes;*
 - IV. aesthetic values including memorability and naturalness;*
 - V. vegetation (native and exotic);*
 - VI. transient values, including presence of wildlife or other values at certain times of the day or year;*
 - VII. whether the values are shared and recognised;*
 - VIII. cultural and spiritual values for tangata whenua, identified by working, as far as practicable, in accordance with tikanga Māori; including their expression as cultural landscapes and features;*
 - IX. historical and heritage associations; and*
 - X. wild or scenic values;*

Policy 15 places further obligation to assess elements of the coastal environment, albeit with different criteria to Policy 13. In both cases (based on effects), the results form the basis for determining the degree of protection necessary. Adverse effects are to be avoided in areas that are 'outstanding' but some degree of adverse effects are permissible in other areas. Therefore, the Coastal Policy Area in the District Plan will tolerate adverse effects that are simply below the threshold allowable in the TRC identified Areas of Outstanding Natural Character. This

criteria has the advantage of freeing up the Coastal Policy Area to include a broader extent, as the controls within in will permit some adverse effects.

In the process of protecting coastal character, District Plan policies, objective and rules are required to relate to pre-identified (through maps or otherwise) natural features and natural landscapes. This of course requires consideration of the nature of threats to the coastal landscapes. Needless to say, a fundamental determinant of the Coastal Policy Area is that is **captures that area of land adjacent to the coast where it is considered appropriate to control activities to ensure the natural character of the coastal environment is preserved.**

4 Regional Landscape Study of the Taranaki Coastal Environment. November 2015 (Review of the Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki)

This recently completed study represents a preliminary assessment to identify within the Taranaki coastal environment:

- areas of high and outstanding natural character; and
- outstanding natural features and natural landscapes;

The Regional Landscape Study is specifically oriented to Policies 13 and 15 of the *NZCPS 2010* and is intended to contribute to the Taranaki Regional Council's review of the *Regional Coastal Plan for Taranaki*.

The report uses industry best practice methodology, including targeted consultation with Tangata whenua, and

- Department of Conservation
- Fish and Game New Zealand
- Forest and Bird
- Ngā Motu Marine Reserve Society
- Ngati Tama
- Ngati Mutunga
- Te Atiawa
- Taranaki iwi
- Ngāruahine
- Ngati Ruanui
- Ngaa Rauru
- New Plymouth District Council
- South Taranaki District Council Surfing Taranaki.

The Regional Landscape Study divides the Taranaki Coastline into 12 coastal units through 'landscape characterisation' which identifies and characterises landscape character - the interrelationship of landform, landcover and land use.

The units relevant to the New Plymouth District are described as follows;

Coastal Unit 1 Waihi Stream to Pariokariwa Point

The coastal environment from Waihi Stream to Pariokariwa Point is dominated by a narrow marine terrace comprising sedimentary mud and silt stones.

The cliffs of the marine terrace, with heights ranging from 10-20 m, are subject to undercutting and result in a retreating coastline. This is more evident where the sedimentary material is softer and the retreat line is irregular. The surface of the terrace consists of gently undulating contours. Two large rivers (Mohakatino and Tongaporutu) which form estuaries near their mouths, and numerous smaller streams, dissect the terrace.

A 3 km section of the coastline extends into the hill country exposing Mount Messenger sedimentary material. Here the cliffs rise up to 245 m at their highest point. The exposed mud- stones of the cliff face create an obvious coastal feature known as Parininihi or the White Cliffs. Parininihi Marine Reserve, situated in the shadow of the White Cliffs, contains abundant and diverse marine life.

Much of the marine terrace and foothills behind have been cleared for pastoral farming, however, some important coastal wetlands and herbfields remain. Indigenous vegetation is also found along the riparian margins of some watercourses and along some sections of the frontal edge of the terraces. Active erosion processes prevent vegetation from colonising on the majority of the cliff faces.

The hill country backing the terraces is predominately covered in indigenous forest, the majority of which is protected through conservation areas. This indigenous forest borders the coast in three main areas – at Mohakatino and Tongaporutu estuaries, and at Parininihi (White Cliffs), which is a rare feature for the region's predominately pastoral landscape.

Expansive views of the marine terrace, Parininihi (White Cliffs) and the significant backdrop of Mount Taranaki are offered from SH3 and various areas which can be accessed by the public along the coastline.

Coastal Unit 2 Pariokariwa Point to Waiau Stream

The coastline extends in a similar pattern from Pariokariwa Point to Waiau Stream. It comprises uplifted sedimentary marine terraces that are wider than Coastal Unit 1. Cliff heights are on average 15 m but drop in elevation from Onaero to the southern extent of

the unit. Extensive areas of softer material give rise to frequent cliff erosion. However this erosion is irregular due to sections of harder material and dense vegetation.

The surface of the marine terrace consists of very gently undulating contours particularly where the terrace is dissected by three large rivers (Mimi, Urenui and Onaero) which form estuaries at their mouths and numerous smaller streams.

Agriculture now dominates the landscape. Apart from small fragments of indigenous vegetation along the terrace edge, stable cliff faces and the riparian margins of some watercourses, productive land has been cleared.

Coastal Unit 3 Waiau Stream to Bell Block

Near Waiau Stream, the geology transitions into the volcanic ring plain formation and comprises a cliffed coastline. Average cliff heights are 5 m and the region's most extensive reef systems – some extending up to 5 km - are offshore.

The surface of the laharic terrace consists of very gently undulating contours. The frontal edge of the terrace is overlain by cliff-top dunes in some sections which are largely modified by agricultural and urban development. Narrow active frontal dunes are pushed up against the toe of the cliffs and where the cliffed terrace edge is lower the dunes dominate and extend inland.

The entire section is subject to occasional erosion although the laharic reef systems offer some protection.

The Waitara River, one of the region's most significant rivers, is subject to up to a 4 m tidal range which contributes significantly to the estuarine characteristics of its lower reaches. The Waitara township is centred around the river.

The land here has also been cleared for agriculture and urban/industrial development. Some indigenous vegetation remains on sections of the frontal dunes, stable cliff faces and the riparian margins of some watercourses. A small pocket of estuarine vegetation is present within the Waitara estuary.

Coastal Unit 4 Bell Block to Paritutu

The coastline extends in a similar pattern from Bell Block to Paritutu. It comprises lower relief laharic deposits with no evidence of cliffs. The surface of the laharic terrace is gently undulating. Extensive laharic reefs extend offshore.

From Mangati Stream to the East End Surf Life Saving Club, a narrow high tide beach exists along the coastline backed by a stable and low - lying frontal dune system. The

dunelands are much more extensive at major river mouths, namely the Mangati and Waiwhakaiho. Urban development exists around the township of Bell Block and at Fitzroy Beach.

From the East End Surf Life Saving Club to Paritutu, the coastal environment is heavily modified due to the location of New Plymouth city and the region's port. A continuous rock protection structure extends along the coastline to control erosion.

The unit is devoid of indigenous vegetation apart from the narrow band of duneland between Mangati Stream and the East End Surf Lifesaving Club and the margins of some coastal waterbodies.

The Coastal Walkway, popular with locals and tourists, is a sea-edge promenade stretching from the eastern side of Bell Block Beach to Pioneer Park at Port Taranaki.

Coastal Unit 5 Paritutu to Oakura River

The coastal environment between Paritutu and Oakura River, and including Ngā Motu/ Sugar Loaf Islands, is dominated by lava and laharic formations as a result of volcanic activity.

Paritutu and its neighbouring Sugar Loaf Islands are the remnants of an old volcano and are thought to be volcanic plugs (lava extruded in a nearly solid form). Considerable modification of several of these islands has resulted from historic use of material for port construction.

Nga Motu/Sugar Loaf Islands Marine Protected Area and the adjoining Tapuae Marine Reserve contain abundant and diverse marine and bird life.

On the peninsula/mainland, moderately to strongly sloping wind deposited sands are wedged up against the cliff face of the laharic terrace and have been subsequently vegetated by predominately indigenous shrubs and grasses.

Although this formation is relatively stable, the toe of these dunes is subject to occasional erosion by the sea. Extensive laharic reef systems offer some erosion protection.

In the very northern section of the unit at Centennial Park, the surface of the laharic terrace comprises a narrow band of stable cliff- top dunes which are well vegetated with indigenous species, backed by either residential and industrial development. For the remainder of the unit, pasture is grown right up to the terrace edge. The surface of the laharic terrace is gently rolling. Several small streams, originating from the ring plain, dissect the laharic terrace.

Given that vegetation has been cleared for agricultural land use purposes, the indigenous vegetation that remains is that of the un- modified cliff-top dunes, stable cliff

faces, riparian margins of some watercourses including a few regionally significant wetlands, Paritutu and some of the Sugar Loaf Islands.

Coastal Unit 6 Oakura River to Hangatahua (Stony River)

The coastline extends in a similar pattern from the Oakura River to the Hangatahua River (Stony River). It comprises lower relief cliffs up to 5 m in height with a narrow and patchy frontal dune system wedged up against the cliff face. Where present, the dunes are relatively stable and are largely covered in indigenous vegetation.

Immediately south of the Oakura River is the Oakura township. The township is situated behind a narrow band of frontal dunes at the base of the moderately rolling foothills of the Kaitake ranges.

South of Oakura, the surface of the ring plain is relatively flat with the exception of areas where streams dissect the laharic terrace. The land has been cleared for agricultural purposes and, remnant indigenous vegetation is largely confined to the frontal dunes, cliff faces and the riparian margins of some watercourses. Maitahi Scientific Reserve near

Leith Road has a small strip of coastal vegetation and has been described as the largest coastal forest remnant on the main ring plain.

These descriptions of coastal landscape character neatly encapsulate the New Plymouth district coastline into 6 broad landscape types. This is useful in identifying the criteria for the establishment of a Coastal Policy Area. The Regional Landscape Study, focus's on the merits of the 6 character areas in order to identify areas of outstanding natural character. Within the New Plymouth District, four areas have been identified as having outstanding natural character (ONC) and three are identified as an outstanding natural feature and landscape (ONFL).

The study also notes which are existing within the Regional Plan and which are new.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Character (ONC) within the New Plymouth District

ONC 1	Parininihi	(New)
ONC 2	Mimi Estuary	(Existing)
ONC 3	Paritutu, Ngā Motu (Sugar Loaf Islands) and Tapuae	(Existing)
ONC 4	Waikirikiri - Komene Lagoon	(New)

Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes (ONFL) within the New Plymouth District

ONFL 1 Waihi Stream to Pariokariwa Point	(Existing)
ONFL 2 Paritutu, Ngā Motu (Sugar Loaf Islands) and Tapuae	(Existing)
ONFL 3 Hangatahua (Stony River)	(New)

Interestingly, not all of the Significant Coastal Areas identified in the NPDP are listed within either ONC or ONFL's within The Regional Study. Those identified as significant in the NPDP but NOT The Regional Study are;

Urenui River mouth
Onaero River mouth
Waitara River mouth
Waiongana Steam mouth
Waiwhakaiho River mouth
Oakura River mouth

However, the ***Inventory of coastal areas of local or regional significance in the Taranaki Region, 2004***, lists and describes 35 sites assessing amenity values, recreational values, cultural/historical values and ecological/scientific values.

1 Mokau-Mohakatino (Epiha Reef)	16 Motunui
2 Mohakatino Estuary	17 Waitara Estuary
3 Te Kawau Pa	18 Waitara, Waiongana and Airedale Reefs
4 Te Puia	19 Waiongana Estuary
5 Rapanui	20 Bell Block Beach and Waipu Lagoons
6 Tongaporutu Estuary	21 Waiwhakaiho Estuary
7 Tongaporutu Coast	22 Fitzroy Beach
8 Whitecliffs (Parininihi)	23 East End Beach
9 Pariokariwa Reef and Opourapa Island	24 New Plymouth Foreshore
10 Pukearuhe	25 Kaweroa Park
11 Waiiti Beach	26 Ngamotu Beach
12 Mimi Estuary	27 Sugar Loaf Islands Marine Protected Area
13 Urenui Estuary and Beach	28 Paritutu/Back Beach
14 Onaero Estuary and Beach	29 Lloyds Ponds (Tank Farm Ponds)
15 Buchanans Bay	

30 Tapuae Stream Mouth

33 Tataraimaka

31 Oakura Beach

34 Leith/Perth Road Beaches

32 AhuAhu, Weld and Timaru Road
Beaches

35 Stony River

There is no subsequent report or otherwise that suggests that values assigned to these 35 sites are any less significant now than they were in 2004. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that these areas are sufficiently high in coastal character to be included within the Coastal Policy Area.

In defining an inland boundary for the Coastal Policy Area, it is appropriate that it include as a minimum;

- The same inland boundary as the ONC and ONFL's identified in the Regional Landscape Study, and the inland boundaries of the relevant sites listed in *Inventory of coastal areas of local or regional significance in the Taranaki Region, 2004*.

5 New Plymouth District Council Rural Review Landscape Assessment and Assessment of Coastal Strategy Actions 2010 (Mary Buckland)

The Buckland Report reviews the NPDC 2006 Coastal Strategy and the Coastal Policy Area and provides useful commentary in terms of their effectiveness in providing coastal protection.

The report states that there has been an obvious change in rural and natural character. In defining the coastal environment, the Buckland report notes that the while coastal environment is not defined in the RMA, the Coastal Strategy 2006 states *that the inland terrestrial limits to the "coastal" area fall either at the first point of change in landscape character behind MHWS (frequently the seaward edge of urban or industrial development) or at the first major ridge beyond the coastal edge. In some places, the inland limits of the coastal area vary from this depending on the topography, vegetation, elevation and visibility.*

The report states that the Coastal Strategy identifies a number of opportunities and challenges to the management of the coastal areas and those that relate to landscape are;

Sense of Place: *this considers the values in the coastal environment with respect to natural character, historic heritage, and the special characteristics of the area that coastal communities value and enjoy. These are changing as a result of subdivision, development and the recreational use of the coastal environment. Some of the coastal towns are beginning to spread so that there is a concern that their specific characteristics will be lost. The unique character of settlements along the coast is currently not acknowledged. Nor is there effective control over subdivision in the rural*

areas between the coastal towns. These rural areas contribute the “country look and feel” to these coastal parts of the District.

Environment: this considers the importance of our ecosystems, green spaces, rivers, climate and flora and fauna and the values placed on them. The district’s coast has a special natural character, and landscape values, that provide a platform for sustainable growth and unique lifestyle opportunities. There are important landscape values that are under threat from changes in land use – for example the location of some recent coastal subdivision, and the effects on regionally significant river mouths. The community is also concerned about the need for riparian margin planting along rivers and streams that flow through the Coastal Policy Area to the sea.

The Coastal Strategy sets out a number of goals to help council and the community reach the long term vision for the coastal area. The goals that are related to landscape in the Sense of Place section are:

SG3 Identify and protect areas of high amenity value, landscape value and environmental quality that contribute to a sense of place, e.g. areas of wilderness, significant natural ecosystems, habitats, heritage places and areas.

Whilst the District Plan does identify areas of outstanding and regionally significant landscape and a Coastal Policy Area on the planning maps, there are only planning controls on the Coastal Policy area. These controls do not have direct regard to landscape impacts and relate to restrictions for structures, excavation and filling and vegetation clearance in dune areas. Otherwise the provisions are very much the same as what applies to all the rural areas. This lack of differentiation in the rules between the various landscape types, the Coastal Policy Area and the rural areas, has the potential to result in adverse effects on landscape values and the natural character of these landscapes.

EG1 Ensure that outstanding landscapes and significant natural ecosystems are not destroyed or degraded by residential and lifestyle development.

The rules relating to outstanding landscapes are the same as apply to all the rural areas. More stringent controls are needed in coastal areas, and those landscapes that are regionally significant. This lack of differentiation is already resulting in adverse effects on coastal landscapes and natural character values.

Ms Buckland’s report clearly expresses concern that landscape protection is inadequate, and suggests that protection of coastal landscapes can be best achieved through the application of district plan rules. The report claims that lack of controls in coastal areas is already creating adverse impacts on coastal natural character.

Ms Buckland goes on to review the Coastal Policy Area and in particular, considers the landscape issues associated with the width of the Coastal Policy Area in the Rural Environment Area. She explicitly states that the primary aim of the Coastal Policy Overlay is to ensure that the natural character of the coastal environment is preserved. However, she notes that;

The Coastal Policy Area has no specific requirements for subdivision and is treated the same as the wider rural area, except that there is a requirement for an esplanade strip regardless of lot size.

Ms Buckland outlines the additional land use rules relevant at the time of her report to the rural area that would result in resource consent being required. 9As at 2016, the rules are virtually the same, as those listed in her report).

When addressing the *Coastal Strategy Actions*, Ms Buckland states that *it can be seen that in some places in New Plymouth new subdivisions and individual dwellings have been allowed in inappropriate locations in rural areas between existing coastal settlements in the Coastal Policy Area.*

She goes on to say that because much of the district's coastline is exposed visually, impact from development is not able to be reduced by way of natural landform or vegetation and that there are a number of locations whereby development has occurred with scant regard for *location, height, design, or landscape screening.*

Ms Buckland's report provides numerous examples where buildings/houses have been insensitively located in the landscape thereby creating adverse impacts on coastal character.

Clearly Ms Buckland considers that inappropriate development is occurring within the district's coastal environment because of lack of planning controls. As the Coastal Policy Area line is a critical tool in identifying the 'coastal environment' Ms Buckland reviewed the Coastal Policy Area line and the controls relating to it. She considered the width of the Coastal Policy Area in light of Policy 1 of the NZCPS and considered that the key aspects of the Coastal Policy Area line were

- *The protection of the natural character of the beach and coastal escarpment;*
- *Marine erosion and coastal processes;*
- *Coastal vegetation and habitat;*
- *Protecting views out to sea and up to the mountains;*
- *Travelling down the roads to the coast particularly in the southern portions of the District, there is a point where the landform drops and from there to the coast, the land relates more to the sea. This is seen in the vegetation, and views to the sea on both sides.*

Importantly, Ms Buckland considers that the Coastal Policy Area line that lies in the rural environment area is a suitable width in terms of landscape and natural character protection.

She recommends that additional controls are placed on the Coastal Policy Area to deal with the landscape impacts of development. In order to retain the qualities of the coastal environment she recommends;

- building set-backs should be introduced to prevent houses and buildings dominating (visually and physically) the beach and coastal environment.
- planning controls for subdivision should be introduced so that the Coastal Policy Area is treated the same way as the wider rural area (except the requirement for esplanade strip regardless of lot size).

It is worth noting the Ms Buckland's report was prepared prior to the 2011 rural review. She states the subdivision rules at the time were responsible for some adverse cumulative effects on coastal character. It is reasonable to assume that under the new rural rules whereby a minimum 20ha balance is required (as opposed to 4ha) as a controlled activity, that development and subsequent effects on coastal character will be lessened.

Having said that, we agree with Ms Buckland that more stringent controls are needed for the Coastal Policy Area than those that currently apply to underlying environment areas.

6 Proposed South Taranaki District Plan Section 32 Report - Coastal Environment

The STDC Section 32 report on the coastal environment sets out the trends and issues for the Coastal Environment and provides an overview of the statutory and policy context, as well as consultation. *The report also includes a review of the existing Plan provisions and evaluation of alternatives to determine the most appropriate way(s) in achieving the purpose of the Act in relation to Coastal Environment matters.*

Under *Issues and Trends*, the report lists the values and attributes which contribute to South Taranaki's natural character. These include;

- *Natural coastal processes, marine life and ecosystems including indigenous flora and fauna (including those distinctive to the Taranaki coast) and indigenous biodiversity values.*
- *Coastal landscapes, areas of forest, shrub land, open space and farmland.*
- *Wāhi tapu and other sites of spiritual or cultural significance to Māori, and places or areas with special historical, scientific, ecological or other heritage values.*
- *Recreational, open space and other amenity values also contribute to the natural character of the coastal environment.*

The report goes on to note that the South Taranaki coastline is relatively undeveloped compared to other coastal environments in New Zealand, including New Plymouth. Despite there being some urban and small-scale residential development on the coast, the effects of urban and industrial development on the coast's natural character are not currently considered significant.

However, the STDC considers it important to preclude potential future inappropriate development by considering how the coastal environment should be used, protected and developed.

As part of the Operative District Plan review, one of matters identified is *whether the location and extent of the inland boundary of the Coastal Protection Area is appropriate*.

To this end the STDC considers that their Coastal Protection Area should be redefined by giving particular consideration to Policy 1(2) "*where coastal processes, influences or qualities are significant*". In analysing local topography, in many locations no clear inland extent of significant coastal processes, influences or qualities were identifiable, therefore a distance of 100m from MHWS springs was considered the limit to which the significance of the coast was no longer apparent (due to the scale and nature of the underlying landform). Subsequently, the STDC Coastal Policy Area line follows a 100m offset from cliff tops except where there are landscape features such as unmodified dunes or river mouths.

In determining the location and extent of the Coastal Policy Area for the New Plymouth District, our assessment and identification of where the coast is no longer the predominant landscape characteristic, concurs with the 100m offset used by the STDC. This is not surprising, given that the two districts form one continuous coastal landscape resulting from the same geological processes - only separated by arbitrary political boundaries. Despite the similarities, the New Plymouth District contains larger coastal urban areas, and the northern portions of the district are beyond the ring plain. This is reflected in the Coastal Policy Area as shown in the plans attached.

Where there is a lack of obvious or definable coastal characteristics, the adoption of a 100m offset for the inland extent of the Coastal Policy Area within the New Plymouth District may go some way in providing regional consistency to the protection of the Coastal Environment.

7 Areas of High Natural Character

The Regional Council has identified Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes (ONFL) and Areas of Outstanding Natural Character (ONC).

The TRC review of the Coastal Plan states under 4.6 the *“Areas of high natural character occur where nature predominates, but not to the same degree as the more pristine areas of outstanding natural character. They may include areas of pasture and a minor level of modification, but the overall lack of built development and modifications to the landscape means they retain a high natural character value.”*

The review of the Coastal Plan does not go on to explicitly ‘map or otherwise identify’, areas of high natural character, rather relying on the contention that, *“setting aside the more pristine areas of outstanding natural character, much of the remaining Taranaki coastal environment has retained its high natural character”*, noting the coastal environment includes large areas with little or no development or modification, and under no significant pressure.

Despite not explicitly identifying areas of high natural character, the review of the Coastal Plan does develop draft policies, which broadly identifies areas of high natural character - draft Policy 1.1.

Draft Policy 1.1 (vii) states that Coastal Management Area A *“is largely of high natural character, including the adjoining land dominated by the coast, except for in the vicinity of the New Plymouth urban area and other discrete areas where built form dominated such as coastal subdivisions and settlement, and in areas of substantial river mouth or coastal protection works;*

This section of this Coastal Policy Area recommendation report identifies, as required within NZCPS 13(1)(c) and (2), coastal areas that are high in natural character.

In order to identify high natural character areas, coastal sectors are identified that have similar landscape characteristics. Within each sector the degree of naturalness is assessed based on a continuum of modification. In the interests of consistency and efficiency, the sectors (coastal units) used in the TRC review of the Coastal Plan are also used here to identify areas of high natural character.

Each sector or unit has been evaluated for natural character.

- Waiti Stream to Pariokariwa Point
- Pariokariwa Point to Waiau Stream
- Waiau Stream to Bell Block
- Bell Block to Paritutu

- Paritutu to Oakura River
- Oakura River to Hangatahua (Stony River)

In line with best practice, the degree of natural character is ranked on a seven point scale ranging from very low (greatest amount of modification) to very high (least amount of modification). This report uses the same criteria for assessing the degree of natural character as the review of The Coastal Plan.

This assessment of areas of high natural character confirms the review of the Coastal Plan's statement that *"much of the remaining Taranaki coastal environment has retained its high natural character"*.

Areas of high natural character are not mapped, but are described Table 1 appended to this report.

8 Coastal Policy Area - Recommendations

Assessment Methodology

Having taken into consideration the reports described above, we consider the following assumptions and criteria to be appropriate in determining the Coastal Policy Area.

1. The definitions in the existing NPDP for 'coastal environment' are relevant and valid.
2. The assessment criteria in NZCPS 2010 are to be used in assessing landscape character.
3. The areas identified in the TRC Regional Coastal Study as ONC or ONFL's should be automatically included within the Coastal Policy Area.
4. The negative landscape impacts that are identified into Mary Buckland's 2010 review are relevant and valid.
5. The Inventory of coastal areas of local or regional significance in the Taranaki Region 2004 should be automatically included within the Coastal Policy Area.

In addition to the above, and in light of the NZCPS consideration of human use, the Coastal Policy Area line is not so much about identifying a line that represents the edge of coastal character, (it's not a delineation of coastal/rural or coastal/urban), but represents the 'tipping point' or edge whereby the **primary character and experience is coastal**, as opposed to the adjacent inland landscape that is partially coastal character, and partially rural/urban/industrial. Hand in hand with defining the Coastal Policy Area is the assumption that development allowed in the underlying zoning may not adequately protect coastal values. Conversely, it is assumed that outside the Coastal Policy Area the underlying zoning will determine development and in doing so will not impact on coastal character.

Coastal Policy Area - Location and Extent

Refer to Coastal Policy Area Review Maps Sheets A-E, attached which show the location and extent of the Coastal Policy Area. The Coastal Policy Area is annotated with descriptors that provide the rationale for the Coastal Policy Area in any given location. These are based on the criteria described in the NZCPS.

The inland extent of the Coastal Policy Area is represented by a blue line that runs more or less parallel with the coast. In general terms, the inland extent of the line coincides with the inland boundaries of the four Outstanding Natural Character AONC's identified in the *TRC Regional Coastal Study* as well as the 34 areas identified (with minor exceptions) in the *Inventory of Coastal Areas of Local or Regional Significance in the Taranaki Region 2004*. The line also encompasses the NPDC dune overlay. In other locations, the inland extent includes locations

where there are public vistas to the sea, future coastal amenity areas such as the unformed Coast Road, areas of topographic delineation, estuaries and river mouths, recreation areas, areas of high coastal amenity, cultural/historical areas and locations where there is public access. Where road delineate the Coastal Policy Area boundary, such as SH45, the inland side of the road is shown as the Coastal Policy Area edge. Like other activities highway development can create adverse landscape impacts.

Where landscapes are open and continuous, with no obvious natural or cultural features to distinguish the coastal edge (experiential/physical), 100m has been offset from the sea/land edge, as this distance provides sufficient setback from the natural edge (usually dunes or cliff top) where development and or structures may be obvious to the point that coastal character could be impacted. While 100m may appear to be an arbitrary distance, in my experience it provides an approximate sufficient distance for the user of a coastal landscape to feel removed from development so that their primary experience remains coastal. Remembering that the 100m is only used whereby no other inland boundaries are present.

Recommendations

In order that the Coastal Policy Area protect coastal natural character, the Coastal Policy Area line as shown on the attached plans should be adopted. Where development is proposed within the Coastal Policy Area it should be subject to rules and controls, bearing in mind that the purpose of controls and rules is to balance the competing demands of providing certainty for land owners and the need to protect natural character as required by the RMA and NZCPS 2010.

Taking into consideration likely impacts, rules within the Coastal Policy Area should focus on controls pertaining to ;

- bulk, location, height, colour and form of structures and buildings
- density (subdivision)
- earthworks
- vegetation clearance / loss of habitat
- dune management and restoration
- recreational opportunity
- industrial development

Rules should be developed within the district plan to **not** allow development within the Coastal Policy Area that may create adverse effects on coastal character. This could be achieved either through a 'stringent regulatory approach' whereby rules restrict development and activity within the Coastal Policy Area, or a 'permissive regulatory approach' whereby some activities and

development are permitted in the Coastal Policy Area, but other activities require resource consent. There are advantages and disadvantages to both options but in either case the location and extent of the Coastal Policy Area becomes important as the 'trigger line'. The Coastal Policy Area recommended in this report defines an area that represents the minimum area required to protect coastal character, in order that whichever regulatory approach is used, obligations on landowners are unambiguous in the requirement to protect the Coastal Environment.

It is also assumed that there will be cases where an activity outside the Coastal Policy Area may impact on the Coastal Policy Area. For example an industrial complex located near the Coastal Policy Area is likely to be visible from the Coastal Policy Area. Despite this, we are mindful of the NZCPS direction that while adverse effects are to be avoided in areas that are 'outstanding' some degree of adverse effects are permissible in other areas. We consider that an effect created from outside the Coastal Policy Area is tolerable so long as the Coastal Policy Area itself remains intact as an area of coastal protection. To this end, we consider that the Coastal Policy Area as defined in this document can tolerate 'external' effects.

Richard Bain

Registered Landscape Architect

February 2016

Amended 1/7/2018

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Natural Character Assessment Table

Areas of very high natural character (ONC’s and ONFL’s) have been identified by the TRC and so are not reassessed or repeated here.

Acronyms used in this table:
CAI - Inventory of Coastal Areas of Local or Regional Significance in the Taranaki Region,TRC 2004
ONFL - Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes as identified in Regional Landscape Study of the Taranaki Coastal Environment TRC 2015
ONC - Area of Outstanding Natural Character as identified in Regional Landscape Study of the Taranaki Coastal Environment TRC 2015

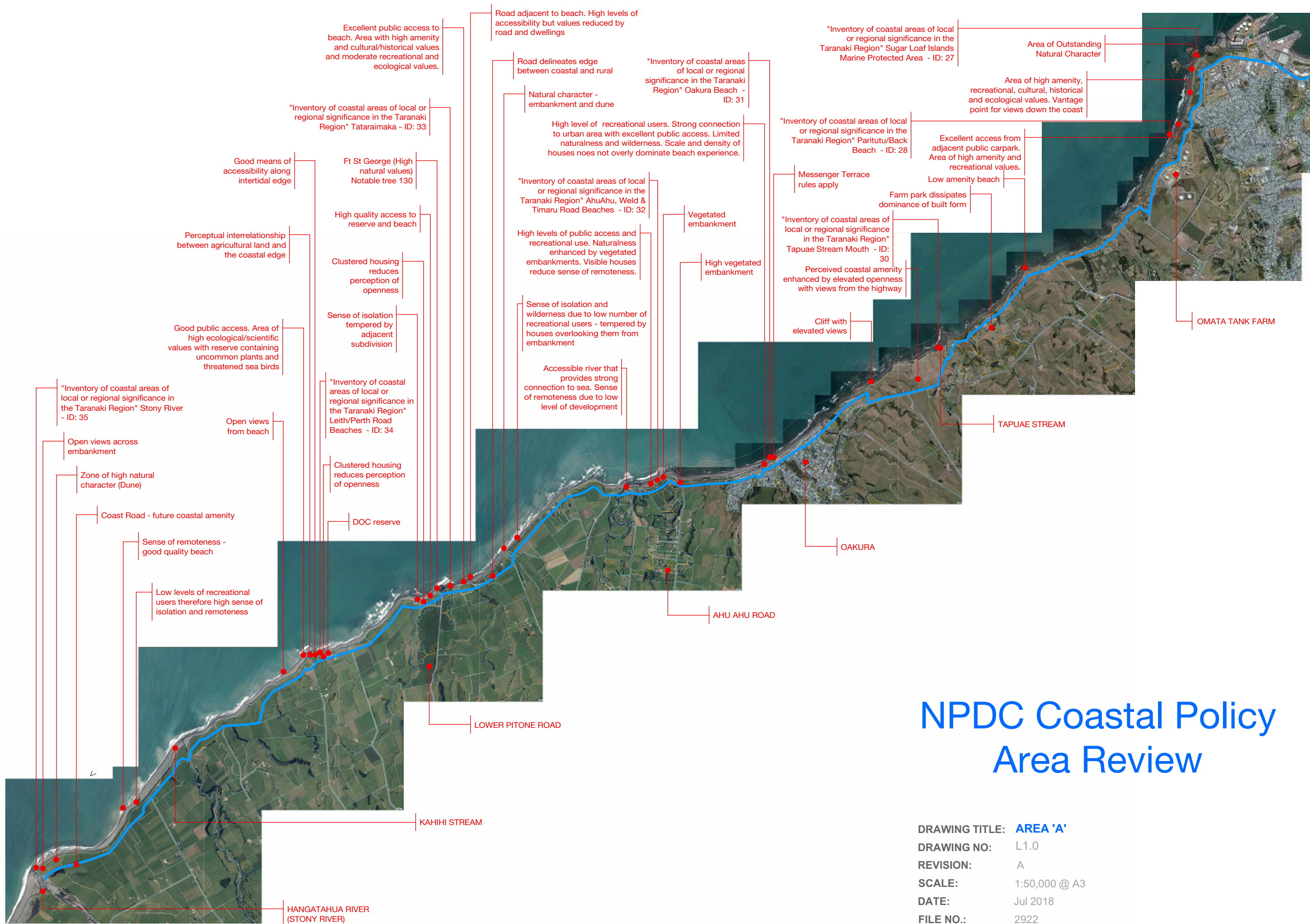
Seven point scale for assessing the degree of natural character:
Very Low, Low, Low-Moderate, Moderate, Moderate-High, High, Very High

Coastal Environment Sector		Landforms	Natural Systems & Processes	Land Cover & Land Use	Ecological	Cultural/Associative	Perceived Naturalness	Overall Natural Character Rating
Waihi Stream to Pariokariwa	Whole sector							ONC and ONFL
Pariokariwa Point to Waiau Stream	Sector excluding areas specifically listed below	Marine terraces with high cliffs.	Areas dissected by three rivers (Mimi, Urenui, Onaero). Eroding cliffs.	Fragments of native vegetation, but mostly pastoral landuse.	Fragments of native vegetation along cliff tops.	Not known.	Relatively remote, cliffs accessed by fishers. Coastal edge largely unmodified.	
		Rating: Moderate	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: Moderate	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: N/A	Rating: Moderate-High	Moderate-High
	Pukearuhe (CAI No.10)	Coastal cliffs, road accesses Historic Reserve.	Eroding coastal cliffs, natural processes generally unaffected by human intervention.	Land cover primarily pastoral.	Scenic reserve nearby.	Historic Reserve, military redoubts, waahi tapu sites.	Good public access and start of Whitecliffs walkway. Access to a natural area.	
		Rating: High	Rating; High	Rating: Moderate	Rating: Low	Rating: High	Rating: High	High
	Waiti Beach (CAI No. 11)	20-30m cliffs and papa boulders either side of open beach.	Road access to beach and many bachs. Beach and cliff natural processes.	Mixed land cover, esplanade reserve and marginal strips in place.	Buried forest visible on beach, protected kahikatea, dune ecosystem.	Tribal boundary, waahi tapu sites, heritage building (Chapman - Taylor).	Popular beach, many bachs visible.	
		Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: High	High
	Mimi Estuary							ONC
	Urenui Estuary and Beach (CAI No.12)	Tidal mudflats, beach modified by sea wall. Extensive beach camp.	River mouth, seawall affects natural processes. Dune faces subject to erosion.	Beach camp and golf course covers much of river flat area.	SNA at river mouth.	waahi tapu and pa sites Historic sites around estuary.	NPDC Significant Coastal Area. High amenity area.	
		Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: High	High

Coastal Environment Sector		Landforms	Natural Systems & Processes	Land Cover & Land Use	Ecological	Cultural/Associative	Perceived Naturalness	Overall Natural Character Rating
	Onaero Estuary and Beach (CAI No. 14)	Rugged coastline with protruding cliffs, open beach.	Eroding cliffs.	Beach camp and surf club building. Domain used for camping. Farmland adjacent except for Pukemiro Reserve.	Pukemiro Reserve.	Pukemire pa site, waahi tapu sites, ancient Maori pathway.	NPDC Significant Coastal Area. High amenity area.	High
		Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: High	Rating: High	
Waiau Stream to Bell Block	<i>Sector excluding areas specifically listed below</i>	Cliff coastline and extensive reef system. Dune system extends inland where cliffs lower.	Narrow active frontal dunes pushed against toe of cliffs.	Cliff top dunes largely modified by pastoral and urban development.	Many dunes modified. Occasional cliff-top vegetation.	Waahi tapu.	Cliffs and beach perceived as natural. Several road ends and Methanex highly visible.	High
		Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate	Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate	
	Buchanans Bay (CAI No.15)	Cliffs and beach.	Tidal reef system, cobble beaches and eroding cliffs.	Pastoral.	Boundary between debris from Pouakai eruptions and tertiary mudstones. Rich marine life.	Pa sites, waahi tapu.	Esplanade Reserves Turangi Road only access point to this section of coast.	High
		Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: High	
	Motunui Beach (CAI No. 16)	Sand and cobble beaches below cliffs.	Typical north Taranaki cliff edged coastal processes.	pastoral and industrial.	Low vegetation on volcanic cliffs.	Ancient canoe launch, pa sites, urupa, waahi tapu.	Esplanade Reserve, access from Epiha and Otaraora Roads. Area dominated by Methanex industrial complex.	Moderate
		Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: Low	Rating: Moderate	Rating: High	Rating: Low	
	Waitara Estuary (CAI No. 17)	Largest River in Taranaki, mudflats.	Extensive tidal reef system, river mouth partially modified.	Waitara Urban Area.	Regionally significant protected wetland, small area of native vegetation near river mouth.	Pa and waahi tapu sites, shipwrecks, associative values for Maori.	NPDC Significant Coastal Area. River mouth partially modified. High amenity values.	Moderate-High
		Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: Low	Rating: Moderate	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate-High	
	Waiongona Estuary (CAI No. 19)	Estuary adjacent to flat to rolling land. Cobble beaches and tall cliffs.	Sand and stream system including low coastal foreseen and lagoon. River diversion works in past.	Horticulture and pastoral farming.	Lagoon is regionally significant wetland.	Puketapu pa .	NPDC Significant Coastal Area and regionally significant landscape. Close to New Plymouth airport.	High
		Rating: High	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate-High	

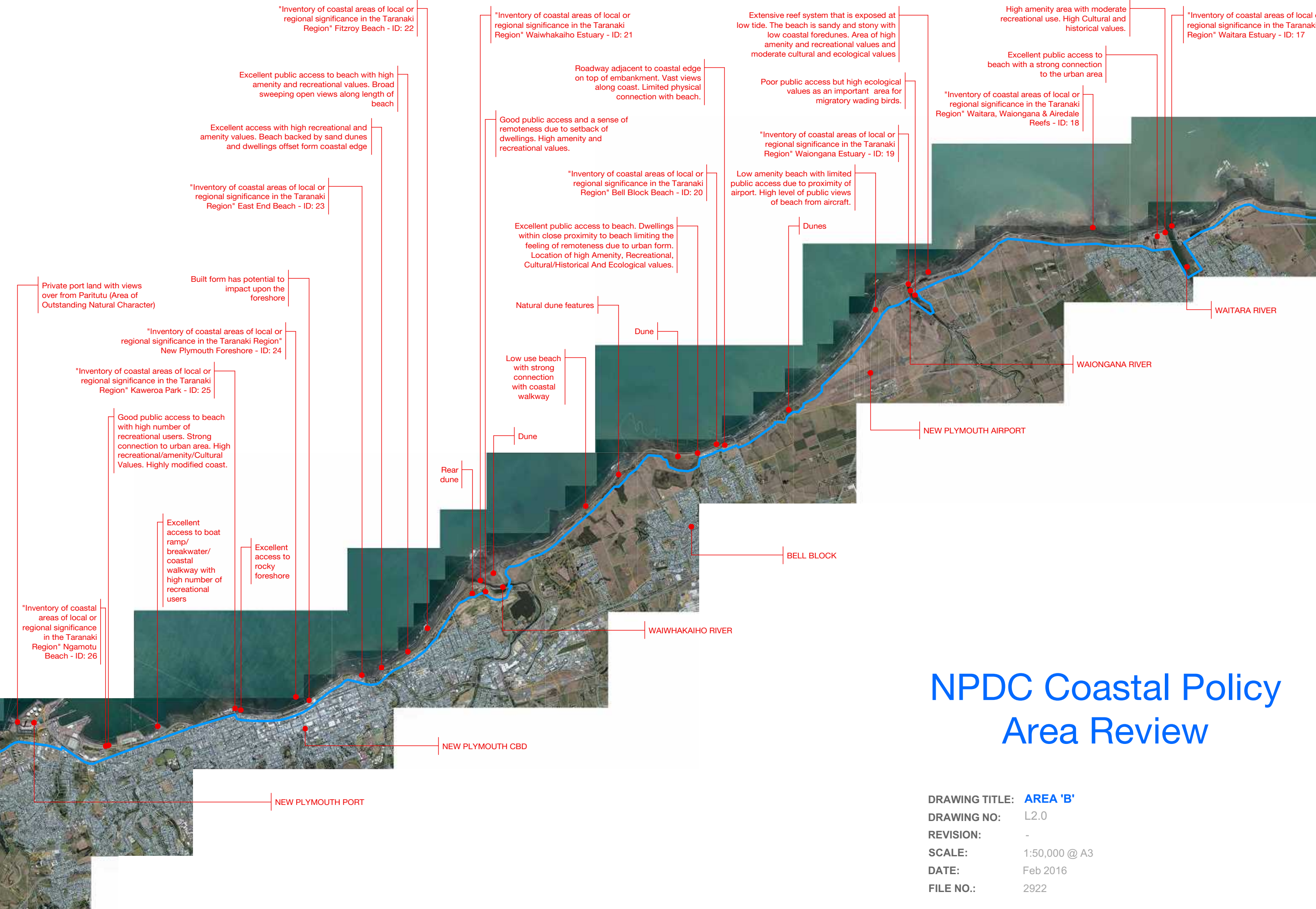
Coastal Environment Sector		Landforms	Natural Systems & Processes	Land Cover & Land Use	Ecological	Cultural/Associative	Perceived Naturalness	Overall Natural Character Rating
	Bell Block Beach & Waipu Lagoons (CAI No. 20)	Boulder beach backed by tall cliffs and sand dunes Road close to beach.	Seawalls and fences constructed in response to erosion.	Urban area up to beach. Lagoons set within reserve.	Sand dunes planted in marram. Waipu lagoons wildlife habitat.	Pa and midden sites.	High amenity values, adjacent to Bell Block urban area.	Moderate-High
		Rating: Moderate	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Moderate	Rating: High	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate	
Bell Block to Paritutu	<i>Sector excluding areas specifically listed below</i>	Coastal cliff and beaches, and urban areas.	Rivers, beaches, many modified by seawalls, roads.	Urban and reserves, coastal walkway , port Taranaki.	Some dunes planted with spinifex.	Waahi tapu, pa sites associative values around streams and promontories.	Highly modified by urban development. Generally good access to coast for recreation. Extensive reserves.	Low-Moderate
		Rating: Low	Rating: Low	Rating: Low	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate	
	Waiwhakaiho Estuary (CAI NO. 21)	Extensive river mouth, modified by groyne, boulder and sand beaches.	Large river mouth, influenced by artificial structures.	Reserve, native planting and pasture.	Bird nesting area on eastern side.	Rewa rewa pa shipwrecks.	NPDC Significant Coastal Area, High amenity Te Rewa rewa bridge, coastal walkway.	Moderate-High
		Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: High	Rating: High	
	Fitzroy & East End Beach (CAI No. 22 & 23)	Sandy beach backed by sand dunes, Several buildings close to beach.	Coastal processes affected by groyne and seawalls.	Reserve land some mown, some vegetated with natives at eastern end.	Native regeneration at eastern end, spinifex on some dunes.	Associative values with Te Henui stream.	High amenity values, urban beach.	Moderate
		Rating: Moderate	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Moderate	Rating: Moderate	Rating: Moderate-High	Rating: Moderate	
	New Plymouth Foreshore (CAI No. 24)	Concrete promenade and grassed area connecting the coast to CBD.	Coastal processes affected by extensive rock armoured seawall.	Grass and walkway seaward of railway line. Open coastal views.	No significant ecological areas known.	Adjacent to Puke Ariki, associative values with Huatoki stream.	High amenity area, providing connection between coast and CBD.	Moderate
		Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Moderate	Rating: Low	Rating: High	Rating: Moderate	
	Kawaroa Park (CAI No. 25)	Rocky foreshore backed by recreation reserve which includes amenities such as swimming pools.	Coastal processes affected by extensive rock armoured seawall.	Grass and walkway seaward and buildings/ pools.	No significant ecological areas known.	Associative values with rock pools.	High amenity area, providing coastal views.	Low-Moderate
		Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Low	Rating: Moderate	Rating: Moderate	
	Ngamotu Beach (CAI No. 26)	Extensive Beach within modified harbour.	Processes modified by port structures.	Open grass and trees behind beach.	Highly modified but supports seabirds and seals within harbour.	Pa site, associative historical and spiritual values.	Highly modified within port context. High amenity values.	Low-Moderate
		Rating: Low	Rating: Low	Rating: Low-Moderate	Rating: Moderate	Rating: High	Rating: Low-Moderate	

Coastal Environment Sector		Landforms	Natural Systems & Processes	Land Cover & Land Use	Ecological	Cultural/Associative	Perceived Naturalness	Overall Natural Character Rating
Paritutu to Oakura River	Sector excluding areas specifically listed below	Dominated by lava and lahatic formations, coastal cliffs. Rating: High	Narrow active frontal dunes pushed against toe of cliffs. Rating: High	Cliff top dunes largely modified by pastoral activity, houses on some areas of cliff top. Rating: Moderate	Minor areas of cliff top vegetation. Rating: High	Pa sites, Waahi tapu sites. Rating: High	Cliff top offers extensive views, high amenity area especially at Oakura River mouth. Rating: Moderate	High
	Paritutu, Ngā motu (Sugar Loaf Islands) and Tapuae							ONC and ONFL
	Oakura River Mouth	River central to a large river bowl with Maori land to the south and public domain to the north. Rating: Moderate-High	Coastal processes modified by river armouring and modifications to Corbett Park. Rating: Moderate	Grass reserve and building. Rating: Moderate	Native planting in Corbett Park. Rating: Moderate	Pa sites. Rating: High	NPDC Significant Coastal Area, High amenity area. Rating: Moderate-High	Moderate-High
Oakura River to Hangatahua (Stony River)	Sector excluding areas specifically listed below	Extensive coastal strip of low cliffs and narrow frontal dune system. Rating: High	Processes unaffected by urban development except at Oakura beach. Rating: High	Pastoral landscape at top of cliffs, little urban development except for Oakura. Rating: High	Dunes largely covered in indigenous vegetation. Rating: High	Pa sites, waahi tapu. Rating: High	High level of naturalness due to remoteness and lack of urban development. Rating: High	High
	Oakura Beach (CAI No. 31)	Wide sandy beach backed by small dunes. Urban development behind dunes except at western end. Rating: Moderate-High	Coastal processes subject to human intervention on land behind dunes. Rating: Moderate	Urban development behind foredunes. Rating: Low-Moderate	Dunes west of motor camp actively managed Dunes in front of houses modified. Rating: Low to Moderate	Pa and redoubt sites. Rating: High	High amenity area, modified by urban and recreational development. Rating: Moderate-High	Moderate-High
	Ahu Ahu, Weld & Timaru Road Beaches (CAI No. 32)	Wide sandy beach backed by small dunes. Rating: High	Processed unaffected by human intervention except for some dune modification. Rating: Moderate-High	Pastoral with occasional small Bach communities. Rating: High	Gold striped gecko habitat, historic trees. Rating: Moderate	Pa and redoubt sites, shipwrecks. Rating: High	High amenity areas perceived as remote and natural. Rating: High	Moderate-High
	Tataraimaka (CAI No. 33)	‘Crows nest’ is prominent coastal feature. Coast is low lying with coastal forest headlands. Rating: High	River mouth and beach processes lately uninfluenced by human intervention. Rating: High	Some coastal forest but mostly pastoral. Rating: Moderate-High	Patches of coastal forest notable pohutukawa trees. Rating: Moderate	Military site, Pa site, four mill, wake landing site. Rating: High	Relatively unmodified and remote, good public access to remote beach. Rating: High	High



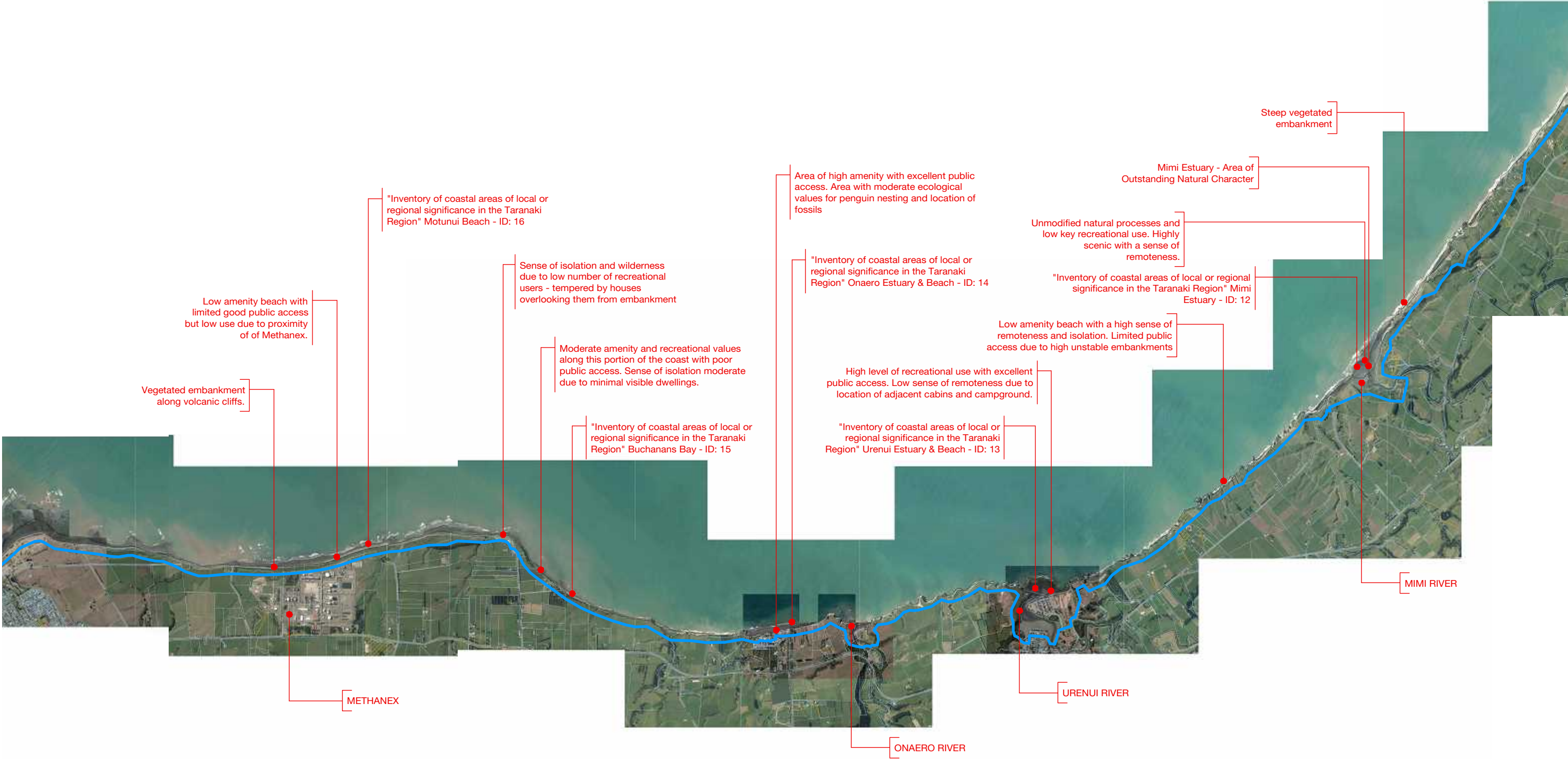
NPDC Coastal Policy Area Review

DRAWING TITLE: **AREA 'A'**
DRAWING NO: L1.0
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SCALE: 1:50,000 @ A3
DATE: Jul 2018
FILE NO.: 2922



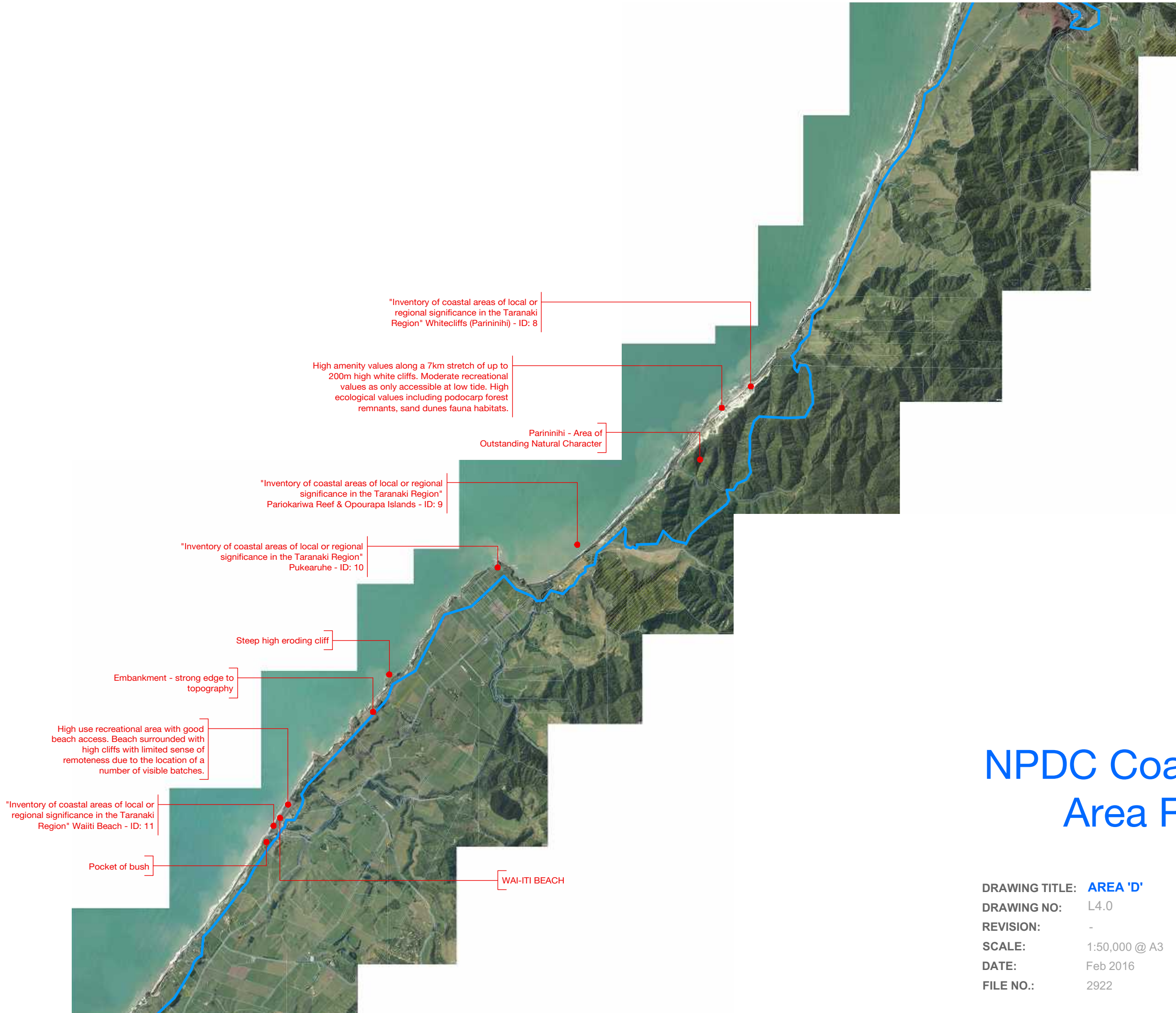
NPDC Coastal Policy Area Review

DRAWING TITLE: **AREA 'B'**
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DATE: Feb 2016
FILE NO.: 2922



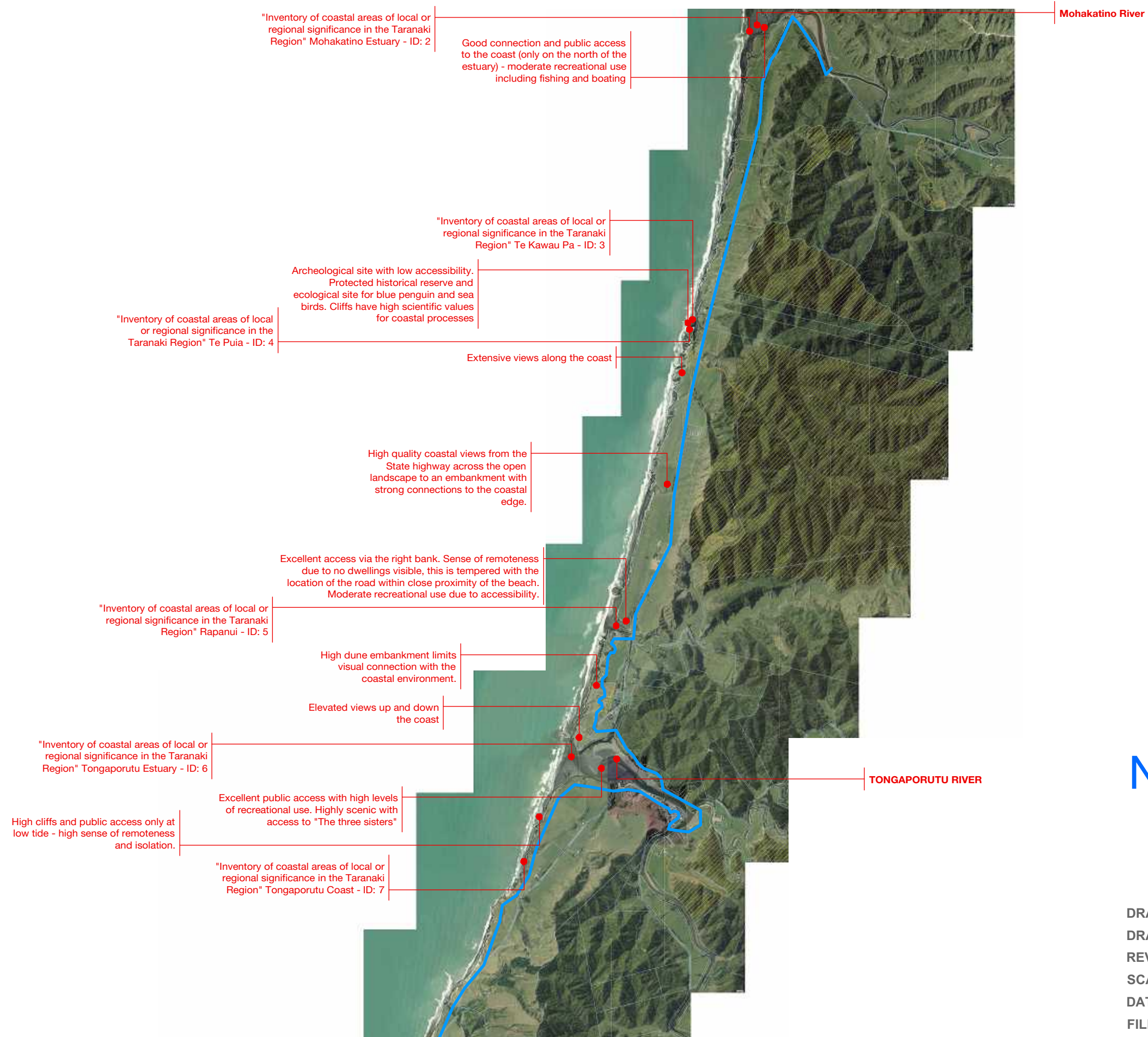
NPDC Coastal Policy Area Review

DRAWING TITLE: **AREA 'C'**
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DATE: Feb 2016
FILE NO.: 2922



NPDC Coastal Policy Area Review

DRAWING TITLE: **AREA 'D'**
DRAWING NO: L4.0
REVISION: -
SCALE: 1:50,000 @ A3
DATE: Feb 2016
FILE NO.: 2922



NPDC Coastal Policy Area Review

DRAWING TITLE: **AREA 'E'**
DRAWING NO: L5.0
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DATE: Feb 2016
FILE NO.: 2922