

Surf Break Identification and Protection in the Gisborne District



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For the Gisborne District Council
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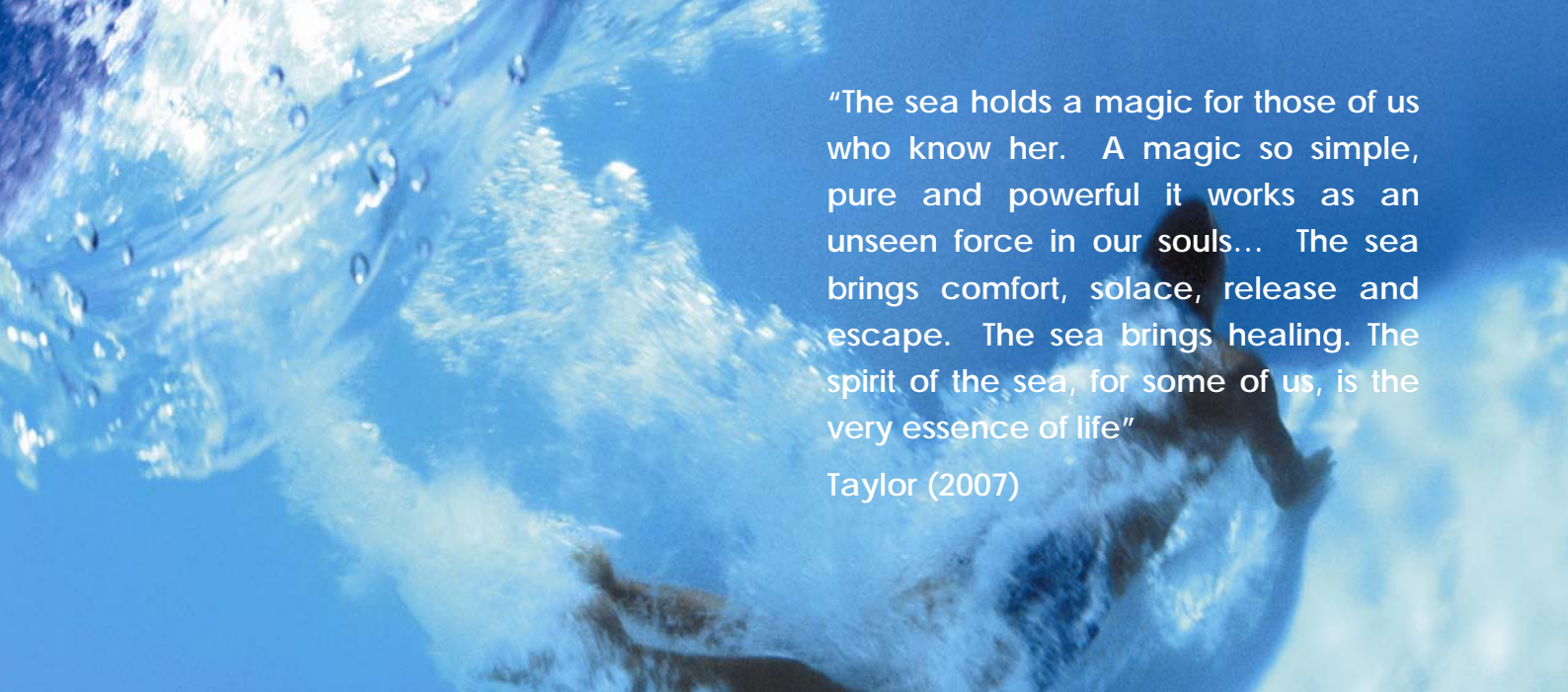
This background research report was prepared by Bailey Peryman for the Gisborne District Council in the summer of 2010/11.

The report was part of a summer student internship.

The report has not yet been peer reviewed, however, in the interests of releasing the information to those who contributed to the study, Council has decided to publish the document as it stands.

This report does not reflect current Council policy.

Further work will be carried out by Council staff to meet the requirements of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 as soon as is practicable. At that time the information in the report will be considered as part of the planning process.



"The sea holds a magic for those of us who know her. A magic so simple, pure and powerful it works as an unseen force in our souls... The sea brings comfort, solace, release and escape. The sea brings healing. The spirit of the sea, for some of us, is the very essence of life"

Taylor (2007)

Executive Summary



This study investigates what is necessary to identify surf breaks and their associated values to provide for their sustainable management in the coastal environment under the RMA.

Surf breaks are a finite natural resource and a source of recreation for a diverse and increasingly large range of participants. Approximately 7% [310,000] of New Zealanders are estimated to surf on a regular basis¹. Surf-riding contributes to the well-being of participants by promoting health and fitness and cross cultural and intergenerational camaraderie. All this is based on a very simple experience - riding a wave, in particular a wave with the right characteristics - a “surf break”. It is said that “only a surfer knows the feeling”.

Gisborne is as close as New Zealand comes to a surf town, famous for its high quality, stress-free waves (Bhana 1996; Brunskill and Morse 2004). The town is made for surfing as far as surfers are concerned; a wide range and intensity of beach breaks, points, river mouths and reefs, for big waves and small, learners to ‘crusty old seadogs’ – Gisborne has it all. The town has a number of surfboard manufacturers, retail outlets and surf ‘schools’, and is also known for the number of world class competition surfers it has produced over the decades (Brunskill and Morse 2004).

The need for recognising surf breaks in policy is important in light of rapidly increasing demands influencing land and water (fresh and marine) usage and ultimately affecting the integrity of the coastal environment. Surf breaks and their users provide a unique lens for viewing these competing interests given their location in the ‘mixing zone’ – the confluence of both land and aquatic based effects on the environment.

In order to recognise and protect surf breaks effectively an understanding of the values, features and characteristics of surf breaks is required. This is achieved through consultation with experts familiar with the natural qualities of surf breaks and consulting people with experience and knowledge about surf breaks. This process is illustrated through this study.

¹ Figures sourced from Surfing New Zealand.

Consultation was mainly carried out within the surfing fraternity. However, it also included input from coastal experts, tangata whenua, and in general many members of staff at the Council are informed of the study through informal conversation, presentations and group discussions.

The issues and options are presented for protecting surf breaks as a significant part of the natural character of the coastal environment. Key findings are:

- A combination of nationally and regionally significant surf breaks provide for a wide range of social, cultural, environment and economic values that support significant recreational and community health and well-being throughout the District.
- The importance of protecting surf breaks as regionally significant natural resources, particularly for local communities in the Gisborne district. Some surfers were cautious about protection due to potential media exposure of surf breaks, non-consultative Council management outcomes and for what purposes surf breaks were being protected.
- A diversity and representative range of surf breaks needs to be recognised.
- The interests of a wide range of activities that use surf breaks need to be recognised in providing for surf breaks. This includes, but is not limited to, surfing, surf life saving, paddle boards, body surfing and kite surfing.
- Surf breaks provide amenity value for passive on-lookers who often watch activities in the surf or the waves for their aesthetic value.
- Respondents supported a collaborative approach with the community for further policy development and implementation. This is as opposed to maintaining the status quo that relies on costly challenges to ad hoc decisions made through the consenting process where surf breaks are not provided for in plans.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the study

The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010² (NZCPS) requires local authorities to provide for surf breaks in planning documents and decisions made under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). However, to date there is no consistent, agreed method by which policy makers and planners identify and provide for surf breaks in New Zealand.

This study investigates what is necessary to identify surf breaks and their associated values to provide for their sustainable management in the coastal environment as a natural resource under the RMA. The study area for doing this is the Gisborne District³. The study builds on existing knowledge of surf breaks, drawing on existing work by Councils and the development of NZCPS surf break policy; and presents findings on public consultation undertaken over the 2010/11 summer period.

The need for recognising surf breaks in policy is important in light of rapidly increasing demands influencing land and water (fresh and marine) usage and ultimately affecting the integrity of the coastal environment. Surf breaks and their users provide a unique lens for viewing these competing interests given their location in the 'mixing zone' – the confluence of both land and aquatic based effects on the environment.

This report contains a background on surf breaks, existing knowledge and the mandate for their protection. The methodology and a record of consultation are also included. There is a results section, leading to a discussion which provides an overview of Gisborne surf breaks. It includes the nationally significant surf breaks recognised in the NZCPS and further breaks within the District. A set of 'surf break assessment criteria' are proposed for further identification and description of surf breaks in the District.

The issues and options are presented for protecting surf breaks and preserving the integrity of the coastal environment and the culture of surf-riding in the Gisborne District. And finally, recommendations for progressing policy provisions are included.

The author is developing the findings of the study further in post-graduate research based at Lincoln University⁴.

1.2 What are surf breaks and why are they important?

Surf breaks are a finite natural resource and a source of recreation for a diverse and increasingly large range of participants. Approximately 7% [310,000] of New Zealanders are estimated to surf on a regular basis⁵. Surf-riding contributes to the well-being of participants by promoting health and fitness and cross cultural and intergenerational camaraderie.

² Gazetted 4 November 2010; Operative from 3 December 2010

³ See: <http://www.gdc.govt.nz/assets/Files/Land-Data/District-map-showing-12-nautical-miles.pdf>

⁴ For more on the research theme see: <http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/Research-Centres/LEaP/Leisure-Activity-and-Well-being/Projects/>

⁵ Figures sourced from Surfing New Zealand.

All this is based on a very simple experience - riding a wave, in particular a wave with the right characteristics - a "surf break". Although the catch-phrase is the marketing product of global surf-wear company, Billabong, it is said amongst surfers that "only a surfer knows the feeling".

Internationally, surfing is recognised as one of the foremost lifestyle sports. The international surf industry was estimated to be worth \$8 billion in 2003. There are estimated to be around 20 million surfers world wide. The sport and its lifestyle have experienced rapid growth over the last three decades with the advent of professional surfing and its popularity as a recreation. Surfing and use of surf breaks for recreation will only continue to grow. This is increasing the demand for the allocation of space for surf riding as a recreation.

Competition for space in the coastal marine area coupled with conflict over coastal activities hindering surf breaks has prompted developments in the field of surfing science and social research on surf breaks (Scarfe et al 2009a; Scarfe et al 2009b; Scarfe, Healy and Rennie 2009). Although not traditionally considered as expert literature, similar work is increasingly apparent in surfing magazines and online material. Together with an emerging academic focus they provide a broad understanding to a new field in coastal management. This has resulted in an increased understanding of the coastal dynamics of surf breaks and the social, cultural, environmental and economic values they have (Peryman 2011b; Peryman and Skellern 2011).

1.3 Local Context

Gisborne is as close as New Zealand comes to a surf town, famous for its high quality, stress-free waves (Bhana 1996; Brunskill and Morse 2004). The town is made for surfing as far as surfers are concerned with a wide range and intensity of beach breaks, points, river mouths and reefs, for big waves and small, learners to 'crusty old seadogs' – Gisborne has it all. The town has a number of surfboard manufacturers, retail outlets and surf 'schools', and is also known for the number of world class competition surfers it has produced over the decades (Brunskill and Morse 2004).

There is a swathe of well-known breaks in close proximity to the town's urban areas. From the Waipaoa River Mouth in the southern end of Poverty Bay, through the 'town beaches' of Waikanae and Midway, across the reef-beach combinations at the foot of Kaiti Hill, Sponge Bay, Tuamotu Island, and out onto the 'coast beaches' of Wainui, Okitu and Makorori. With a swell corridor open from the south around to the north-east and favourable prevailing weather conditions, this stretch of coastline is one of New Zealand's most consistent areas for uncrowded, surfable waves (Bhana 1996; Brunskill and Morse 2004).

The rest of the district hosts hundreds of breaks, to the north as far as Hicks Bay in the East Cape; a range of beach breaks, river mouths, points and reefs lie amongst the highly scenic and remote headlands, rocky shores and sandy beaches (Bhana 1996; Brunskill and Morse 2004). These waves are ridden by locals from settlements such as Tolaga, Tokomaru and Waipiropo Bays. They provide an altogether different surfing experience for Gisborne locals wanting to escape the 'bustle' of the town breaks, or in search of more favourable conditions. To the south of the town, heading towards the Mahia Peninsula is lesser known for waves, but still offers a range of breaks for locals and the adventurous.

Surf-riding is interwoven within Māori cultural heritage including within the stories about Maui. The art of wave riding/surfing, was a necessary skill for any and all waka navigation. Early Maori rode waves for leisure, regularly having kaitiaki like whales or dolphins. Te Papa Tongarewa Museum has written evidence on their website stating the use of Poha (blown up kelp bags) for recreational riding of waves. These traditions are believed to have been practiced as early as 1200 AD up to the 1700s.

Modern surf-riding continues to evolve in its own right and is well established in parts of the Gisborne District. It has a unique language and a widely accepted (though intentionally informal) universal code of ethics that surfers voluntarily subscribe to (see Appendix 1).

2. Mandate for surf break protection

Local authorities with jurisdiction over the coastal environment are required to provide for the protection and preservation of surf breaks of national significance under the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS). This is in regard to functions under the RMA relating to the sustainable management of the coastal environment. The section outlines the mandate under the NZCPS 2010 for surf break protection in New Zealand.

2.1 New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010

There are three policies in the NZCPS that provide a mandate for surf break protection.

Policy 16 requires surf breaks of national significance to be protected for surfing:

Policy 16 Surf breaks of national significance

Protect the surf breaks of national significance for surfing listed in Schedule 1, by:

- (a) ensuring that activities in the coastal environment do not adversely affect the surf breaks; and*
- (b) avoiding adverse effects of other activities on access to, and use and enjoyment of the surf breaks.*

A 'surf break' is defined as:

A natural feature that is comprised of swell, currents, water levels, seabed morphology, and wind. The hydrodynamic character of the ocean (swell, currents and water levels) combines with seabed morphology and winds to give rise to a 'surfable wave'. A surf break includes the 'swell corridor' through which the swell travels, and the morphology of the seabed of that wave corridor, through to the point where waves created by the swell dissipate and become non-surfable.

'Swell corridor' means the region offshore of a surf break where ocean swell travels and transforms to a 'surfable wave'.

'Surfable wave' means a wave that can be caught and ridden by a surfer. Surfable waves have a wave breaking point that peels along the unbroken wave crest so that the surfer is propelled laterally along the wave crest.

The 17 surf breaks of national significance in Schedule 1⁶ are:

Northland

Peaks – Shipwreck Bay

Pines – Super tubes – Mukie 2 – Mukie 1

⁶ The list was drawn from the Wavetrack New Zealand Surfing Guide. This was accepted by the Board of Inquiry as the most authoritative guide to New Zealand surf breaks and a legitimate proxy in the absence of any established assessment criteria for surf breaks.

Waikato

Manu Bay – Raglan
Whale Bay – Raglan
Indicators – Raglan

Taranaki

Waiwhakaiho
Stent Road – Backdoor Stent – Farmhouse Stent

Gisborne

Makorori: Makorori Point – Centres
Wainui Beach: Stock Route – Pines – Whales
Tuamotu Island ('the Island')

Coromandel

Whangamata Bar

Kaikoura

Mangamaunu
Meatworks

Otago

The Spit (Aramoana)
Karitane
Murdering Bay
Papatowai

Policies 13 and 15 of the NZCPS provide a mandate to preserve/protect further surf breaks of regional or local significance or importance. These policies recognise surf breaks as part of the natural character of the coastal environment and important aspects of natural features and landscapes (including seascapes).

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*

- d. *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 or setting.*

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:*
- c. *identifying and assessing the natural features and natural landscapes of the coastal environment of the region or district, at minimum by land typing, soil characterisation and landscape characterisation and having regard to:*
 - 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;*
- d. *ensuring that regional policy statements, and plans, map or otherwise identify areas where the protection of natural features and natural landscapes requires objectives, policies and rules; and*
- e. *including the objectives, policies and rules required by (d) in plans.*

2.2 Implications for Gisborne District Council

All Councils are required to give effect to the NZCPS as soon as practicable.

Six of the Schedule 1 nationally significant surf breaks to be protected fall within the Gisborne District. There is Tuamotu Island, also known as 'the Island'. At Makorori there is: Makorori Point and Centres. And, on Wainui Beach: Stock Route, Pines and Whales. It is a mandatory requirement that Council provide for the protection of these surf breaks in assessing resource consent applications and preparing policy and planning provisions⁷.

There is also a requirement in Policies 13 and 15 to protect and/or preserve further surf breaks, whether nationally significant or otherwise, based on natural character, natural features and natural landscapes.

The recognition and protection of both nationally and regionally significant surf breaks as features in themselves or as core elements of a natural landscape are another consideration for surf break policy development.

The Board of Inquiry report on the NZCPS supports further investigation into surf breaks under these policies:

We agree that the matters of national importance – particularly preserving the natural character of the coastal environment and outstanding natural features from inappropriate subdivision, use and development – involves more than protecting surf breaks of national significance. Surf breaks not identified and protected as nationally significant under policy [16] are also likely to require consideration under other policies, such as natural character, outstanding natural features and landscapes, public open space and public access.

⁷ For more on this mandate see: <http://www.gp.org.nz/plan-development/structure-organisation-plans/key-rma-documents.php>

3. Existing tools for surf break protection

3.1 Taranaki Regional Council

Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) was the first local authority to provide for surf break protection under the RMA. The Taranaki Regional Policy Statement 2009 recognises 81 surf breaks that are important to the region. The list of breaks was based on TRC's Inventory of Coastal Areas of Local or Regional Significance in the Taranaki Region (2004), the *Wavetrack New Zealand Surfing Guide* (Brunskill and Morse 2004) and on consultation with local board-riding clubs (TRC 2009).

The 81 breaks are mapped showing the location of an individual surf break or by a line extending along the coast where there is a protected surf zone. Some breaks are within a yellow shaded area identified as a "coastal area of local or regional significance" but it is not clear if the extent of the shading reflects the spatial area of the surf break. No information is provided within the Taranaki RPS 2009 regarding the values of the different breaks or whether some are more significant than others.

In terms of the policy approach TRC has taken to protect these breaks they are referred to in RPS explanations, but not in objectives, policies or methods. This approach has some advantages and disadvantages. The explanations can include examples, a description of what is meant by policies and provide useful context for them. In addition, having more general objectives and policies allows a more concise form of RPS than is created if a greater level of specific detail is included within the statutory provisions.

However, it is the objectives, policies and methods that actually have statutory weight and this approach does not give any greater statutory recognition of surf breaks than was present before the amendments were made in response to submissions. This approach could result in a lack of recognition of surf breaks unless plan users continually refer back to the background sections of the RPS. There is also no statutory link between the wording of the policies and the surf breaks shown in the RPS maps (ARC 2010).

3.2 Auckland Regional Council

The former Auckland Regional Council (ARC) carried out a report to inform their draft RPS. It has not resulted in any public policy to date.

The ARC report was conducted by experts in the field of coastal science and coastal planning, with knowledge and experience in surfing and surf breaks within the Auckland region. It was an in-house, background report for policy development that did not go out for public consultation.

The report came up with a list of criteria for rating (numerically) a range of factors specific to the unique characteristics of surf breaks. Once aggregated, the individual ratings for each criterion gave the break an overall rating.

3.3 Surfing Reserves⁸

The environmental movement is growing within the surfing community and is perhaps exemplified by the World Surfing Reserves initiative. These reserves are symbolic, however, their strength arguably lies in the education and celebration of unique surf breaks. This is important for locals in feeling that their special places are recognised as such. The vision involved in surfing reserves is essentially to dedicate and respect iconic surfing areas for future generations.

Surfing reserves are well established in Australia through the National Surfing Reserves programme recognised by the BOI during the NZCPS process (DoC, 2009a). These reserves are protected by law, with coastal waters gazetted under legislation. There are currently eleven reserves of this kind in Australia, with many more being planned. Hawaii has also passed legislation creating surfing reserves of similar status in Waikiki and the North Shore.

On a wider level, reserves can have functional benefits in letting visiting surfers know the important cultural aspects of the place. They also can also serve as a reminder of the surfers' universal code of ethics to follow for an enjoyable surfing experience for all. It is important to note this 'code' has largely remained unwritten and regardless of how it is recognised, will be enforced by surfers according to their localised interpretation. Formally enshrining such a code would constitute an insensitive recognition of surf culture. There are also a number of concerns surrounding the influence of the surfing 'industry' (i.e. commercial interests) in the wording of policy derived from the values embodied in surfing reserves (see Appendix 2).

3.4 Lessons for developing surf break policy

Overall, analysis of the NZCPS Board of Inquiry recommendations and existing approaches to surf break protection policy display a number of key learnings:

- a) The requirement for explicit recognition of surf breaks between relevant statutory provisions rather than relying on consideration of general values/issues (e.g. water quality, access, natural character).
- b) The need for a robust methodology for identifying and rating a representative range of surf breaks.
- c) General values (e.g. water quality, access, natural character) are important but there is a need to recognise where natural processes create an important recreational resource that has social, cultural and economic benefits for the wider community – i.e. as a greater/additional value created by the unique feature that is a surf break.
- d) That these general values associated with surf breaks are not limited to the predominantly high performance breaks identified as nationally significant in policy 16 – i.e. scope for recognising local breaks that foster surfing communities and cater for all levels of surfers is also important at a regional level. These could include 'nursery' breaks that have high recreation value for a variety of reasons (e.g. 'regionally significant' breaks may also include popular town beaches).

⁸ For more see the following websites:
<http://www.surfingreserves.org/>
http://www.savethewaves.org/WSR_faq

- e) That specific aspects of the definition of 'surf break' are important concepts to include in policy development. For example: swell, currents, water levels, seabed morphology, and wind are all components of surf breaks and any activities that impact these physical processes could adversely effect surfing wave quality and consistency.
- f) The definition of a surf break covers a large spatial extent, far beyond the location of water riding. The swell corridor of a surfing break could extend far out to sea (beyond the 12 nautical mile mark), and activities such as aquaculture, dredge spoil disposal and wave energy infrastructure at certain scales could block or modify waves travelling through the swell corridor.
- g) That avoidance of effects is appropriate for policy making, as mitigation or remediation of a surf break is impracticable. Further to this, the precautionary approach should be taken toward management of breaks when considering threats because there is a lack of scientific information about coastal processes affecting surf breaks.
- h) Surf break protection must cover the coastal environment, and not be restricted to the confines of the Coastal Marine Area (CMA). This is another key development tested in the BOI process that accepted submissions to this effect (DoC, 2009a). This is because activities beyond the CMA can potentially effect surf breaks such as land based discharges effecting water quality and sedimentation, and restriction of public access to a break.

4. Method

A range of engagement techniques were used for collating and synthesising information on surf break protection, Gisborne surf breaks and their use by surf-riding communities.

The complete methodology for public consultation is laid out in the 'community engagement plan' drafted in the scoping stage of the project to guide (see Appendix 3). A consultation record is included in Appendix 4. This includes a summary of all the consultation undertaken throughout the study. Material used during public consultation to gather input and promote the study is included in Appendix 5.

A comprehensive range of people, knowledge and documentation on Gisborne surf breaks and surf culture was drawn to the attention of the author throughout community engagement. Formally recognising the full extent of this information is beyond the scope of the project. This may also be viewed as an indicator of the significant breadth and depth of existing local knowledge on the subject matter in the Gisborne District.

4.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 19 respondents. These were individuals identified through a snow-balling sampling technique as having extensive experience of surf-riding in Gisborne. Interviews employed visual aides in the form of aerial maps (see Appendix 5; NB. not to scale) to prompt discussion that focused on three main points:

- Developing an understanding of surf breaks in the Gisborne region, starting with those recognised as nationally significant;
- The important values, features and characteristics associated with the breaks and their use; and,
- Preserving surf breaks and surf-riding culture in Gisborne.

4.2 Group meetings

Formal meetings were held with two local boardriding organisations to inform them of the study and distribute surveys (included in Appendix 5). Group meetings were also held with in-house planning staff, and staff that surf or have an interest in surfing to calibrate the direction of the study and pilot various tools employed during engagement.

4.3 Informal engagement

Throughout the duration of the study a number of informal discussions were held with individuals involved in formal engagement. These discussions largely revolved around the scope and direction of the study, as well as surf break protection in general.

4.4 Desktop studies

Much of the existing knowledge on the identification and protection of surf breaks was compiled through desktop studies and the author's existing network of resource material. This is referenced and footnoted where appropriate.

5. Results

The following is a summary of information gathered throughout the study. The consultation record in Appendix 4 includes a summary of interviews, survey responses and other data compiled during the study.

5.1 'Nationally Significant' Surf Breaks

Respondents agree that all the local breaks identified in Policy 16 hold a unique place within the surfing community of Gisborne. These breaks have an appeal stretching well beyond the region, domestically and internationally. All the breaks have been utilised for some level of competition in the past which may be viewed as a basic reflection of their quality.

Although still offering favourable conditions for learners to intermediate level surfers, these breaks represent the high performance range of wave quality in the Gisborne region. This is consistent with the methodology used to identify them during the process of releasing the NZCPS 2010⁹. When considered as the fluid, interconnected system utilised by local surfers, these breaks (as known to locals) make up the northern sector of a complete 'town' surfing setup unique to this country. Any distinct separation is more a social or cultural construct¹⁰ than a simplified reflection of natural character.

Hence, the term 'socio-spatial extent'. Respondents agree the general rule for beach breaks is that naming the spot is primarily a reference to some geographical or historical feature within the general vicinity of where surfable waves can be found. Wainui Beach is a prime example of this. At any one time a beach may contain numerous surfable breaks subject to underlying reef formations and natural variations across hourly, through seasonally, to yearly time scales and beyond.

Understanding the coastal processes at all surf breaks requires further scientific investigation before a conclusive trend can be identified¹¹. For many respondents, attempts to define the characteristics that shape these waves and the people that use them will never provide absolute certainty. The most important principle highlighted during community engagement was a combination of a precautionary approach and development targets that have no or minimal impact on natural processes.

5.1.1 Tuamotu Island ('the Island', 'Sponge Bay Island')

'The Island' as it is widely known offers a unique surfing experience. Capable of handling large swells, the island produces excellent quality surfable waves in the right conditions. Tuamotu Island is widely considered a world class wave setup consisting of a variety of reef breaks that operate (or 'work') in a wide range of conditions. Respondents consider this break worthy of all protection, although stating that it offers more values than just a high wave quality.

⁹ For a review of this process, see Peryman, P. B. (2011). Identifying Surf Breaks of National Significance. *Lincoln Planning Review*, 3:1. in review.

¹⁰ See Timbs (2008), for research project on this subject specific to Wainui Beach.

¹¹ For in depth studies see Gibb (1995): <http://www.gdc.govt.nz/assets/Files/Planning-Policy/Part-I-Background-Gibbs.pdf>. And, Dunn (2001). Coastal Erosion at Wainui Beach, Gisborne. Hamilton, New Zealand: The University of Waikato, Master's thesis, 244p.

Cultural significance of the site for tangata whenua extends well beyond the more recent use as a surf break. This highlights another general rule about socio-spatial constructs; the naming of a place is central to the integrity of culturally significant values for both tangata whenua and pakeha.

For the range of surf breaks located at Tuamotu Island, respondents identified ongoing erosion of the island as the primary issue concerning access to, use and enjoyment of this area. Respondents connect this to the influence of historic removal of vegetation and rock blasting in adjacent areas. The relative insecurity of the car park at Sponge Bay is another issue for surfers. This is where you have to leave your car for access to the break without a boat or jetski. Access traditionally consists of a paddle or walk (at low-tide) across the reef.

5.1.2 Wainui Beach: Stockroute, Pines and Whales

The Wainui Beach breaks identified within Policy 16 are generally considered to be token representations of the entire beach system as a whole. A scenic, sandy beach and blue waters; the sand bars formed all along this stretch of coast are renowned for producing excellent quality surfable waves. The consistency of a wide range of swell conditions combined with a favourable prevailing climate is a large factor in quality of the breaks on offer. Each section of the beach is important for multiple reasons culturally, socially, environmentally and economically – particularly for the local communities of Wainui Beach and Okitu.

Coastal erosion is a concern for some residents of southern Wainui, although many accept the fate of the coastline and the associated sand banks is beyond human influence. Long-term residents have observed the increasingly rapid erosion of the headland at Tuahine Point and believe it to be a critical factor in the integrity of the beach system along southern Wainui Beach (e.g. roughly Lloyd George end to the 'Schools' access). Respondents consider erosion will more than likely affect the surf breaks, particularly at Stockroute, but again, is largely an unknown quantity.

Stormwater is seen as the number one issue facing the Wainui Beach breaks. This is a combination of housing intensification and agricultural land-use in the surrounding catchments of the Hamanatua Stream, Wainui Stream and an unnamed stream/drain emptying at the northern end of Wainui Beach. Respondents identified stormwater as the major factor entering the coastal environment through human influences.

Development is seen as inevitable, although respondents agree unanimously that the concentration of stormwater will have an effect on the surf. Whether this is negative or advantageous is a complex and highly variable effect to measure. Respondents consider the safest option is to adopt the precautionary principle and aim for low impact urban development and design¹².

5.1.3 Makorori: 'the Point' and Centres

Makorori Beach offers a combination of high quality waves for a wider range of users than the neighbouring Wainui Beach. Much like the identification of several iconic spots along Wainui Beach, 'the Point' and Centres are inseparable from the processes shaping the whole beach.

¹²http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/built/liudd/documents/Principles_methods_framework_vanRoon.pdf

Known breaks stretch as far as 'Northern Reef'. Respondents consider the entire setting of the beach, surf and surrounding landscape as a complete package for the overall surfing experience. The beach is important for multiple reasons culturally, socially, environmentally and economically.

The Point and Centres offer some of the most consistently surfable waves in the Gisborne region. The Point is a 'right-hand' (see glossary for definition) reef break which generally offers long, mellow waves suitable for longboarding. It is also known to produce a fast and at times intense wave in the right swell conditions. Centres is a variable combination of reef and sand bottom that breaks both left and right. It regularly offers a range of conditions suitable for a wide range of users from the intermediate level up.

The breaks identified at Makorori Beach consist of a more obvious underlying reef formation than that influencing the sand bank formations on Wainui Beach. Makorori Point is a distinct surf break. The break identified as Centres is also more spatially defined due to the prevalence of the reef and its effect on the seabed morphology and therefore the position of the 'line-up' (see glossary for definition). Once again however, they are inseparable from the dynamics influencing the access to, use and enjoyment of each and every surf break at Makorori Beach and form parts of a greater whole.

For Makorori Beach a significant issue has developed during the compilation of this study. The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) is undertaking road works along the entire stretch of the beach. For respondents, the speed of trucks through the area presents a significant safety issue. Some respondents also raised concerns over modifications to the road, roading alignment and the impact on watercourses. A similar development had an arguably adverse effect on the well-known surf break, Blacks Beach, in the Mahia region. Overall, it appears what NZTA consider to be a minor adjustment to roading infrastructure can result in a major change for the coastal environment; such is the fragility of the factors influencing the natural character of the area.

The relationship between GDC (especially for reserves management), NZTA and the community is almost non-existent beyond statutory resource consent processes. As a 'Network Utility Operator', the general framework of the Combined Gisborne Regional and District Plan is largely permissive for the maintenance of infrastructure. Assessment criteria are important in this sense where Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of a surf break is triggered. Although the car park is the area where works are predominantly changing the natural character of the coastline, parking is not the issue. Rather, respondents argue the final resolution of the changes is what users of any area subject to maintenance, development or protection are interested in.

5.2 Identification of further breaks

5.2.1 Overview

A schedule of 'regionally significant' surf breaks in the Gisborne District is included in appendix 6.

The schedule of surf breaks is not exhaustive. Although the schedule is a comprehensive list of surf breaks that are well-known in the region, there are other breaks that are not identified. This may be for two reasons –

Other surf breaks in the region may have been overlooked by the Wavetrack (and other published surf guides) and those consulted; or

Breaks have intentionally not been identified as they are 'secret spots'.

Secret spots are breaks where their location is removed from public exposure. This concept is of cultural significance for surf-riding communities. This tradition in surfing is intended to preserve the existing values of a unique break to ensure the integrity of their access, use and enjoyment is not detracted from. In resource management practice, the concept has similar parallels to wahi tapu sites, where the location of some sites remain intentionally undisclosed for cultural purposes. In consultation with surfers it was established that secret spots do fall within the areas identified in this schedule. However, specific reference to their geographical location is reserved. For the management of surf breaks in policy, the notion of secret spots should be eluded to. Or alternatively, there should be provisions for future identification of surf breaks, so that regionally significant breaks are not restricted from being identified in the future.

For all respondents, there are a number of other breaks that are integral to the recreational pursuits of the Gisborne community as a whole, not just the interests of surfers. Respondents agree unanimously with the concept of recognising a representative range of surf breaks accessible for the use and enjoyment of the increasingly diverse range of recreational interests.

For surf-riding alone this includes shortboards, longboards, stand-up paddleboards, bodyboards, body surfers, kayakers, wave-skis, and surf lifesaving craft – all of whom enjoy equal opportunities to share in the fun of playing in the waves. The practice of waka ama, in part, requires the ability to ride surf into the shore.

Overall, respondents offered a number of creative responses to how surf breaks can be recognised throughout the District – from statues to sculptural installations carrying historic and safety information. Either way, the depth of interest and scope for local collaboration in management options for surf breaks is strong.

5.3 Surf Break Assessment Criteria

5.3.1 Overview

Justification for developing a more robust method and set of criteria for identifying breaks is addressed in the Board of Inquiry working papers:

We conclude that there should be no criteria in the policy [NZCPS 2010] for selecting further surf breaks of national significance given that there could be developments in the methodology in identifying and rating natural surf breaks. For example, we note the strong plea by many submitters for ensuring diversity of surf breaks so that all surfing skill levels are provided for (DoC, 2009b).

Survey respondents were asked about the different values most important when considering surf breaks. Those are largely discussed in the following section. The following are the criteria identified during engagement. They are ranked in order of importance based on average weightings assigned by survey respondents (1 being lowest, 5 being highest).

Criteria	Importance (1 = lowest, 5 = highest)
Wave quality (in optimum conditions)	5
Wave type (e.g. breaking intensity)	4.5
Unique features of a break	4.5
Rare features of a break	4.5
Vulnerability to physical change that may threaten a break	4.5
Suitability as a 'nursery' break for 'breeding' surfers	4
Scenery	4
Consistency	4
Break type (e.g. reef, point, etc.)	3.5
Water quality (visual aesthetic)	3.5
Social/community interaction	3.5
Seasonal variations	3
Heritage/Cultural values	3
Significance to tangata whenua	3
Public access	3
Suitability to all skill levels	3
Services (e.g. public toilets, carpark)	2
Level of use / popularity	2
Proximity to settlement	2
Economic influence (e.g. value for surfing industry, professional competition, tourism)	1

Community engagement has demonstrated the use of criteria is important as a robust tool in the methodology for protecting surf breaks. They are best applied at the identification stage in developing surf break policy through consultation with users and local interests connected with each break. This process of identification through consultation is important for a number of reasons:

- Surf breaks have different importance dependent on the views of different users. How a break is perceived is variable depending on the eye of the beholder. For example, average wave quality offered at a learner break would be highly valued by a beginner, but less valued by an experienced surfer looking for high quality waves.
- Local knowledge is currently the most authoritative source of information on the various values of surf breaks in terms of access to, use and enjoyment of a surf break.

Therefore a break may be significant for a diverse range of reasons. A recommended assessment criteria is included in Appendix 7.

5.3.2 Developing effective surf break assessment criteria

'Surf Break Assessment Criteria' were developed through consultation with members of the Gisborne surfing community and amongst coastal experts involved with surf break protection. They are for use as a guide to identifying the significant values, features and characteristics of a surf break. Criteria consider these aspects for surf breaks as part of both the natural character and as natural features and landscapes (including seascapes) of the coastal environment.

The ARC report (see section 3.2 of this report) first came up with criteria because it is preferable to explicitly recognise surf breaks within policies so not to rely on more general values as adequate provisions. Surf breaks should be recognised as unique locations where natural processes create an important recreational resource that has social, environmental, economic and cultural benefits for the wider community (ARC Study 2010).

Surf break users tend to frequent a select range of breaks within a localised region, at times venturing farther afield to breaks which they have developed a favourable experience of. Commenting on breaks they have not surfed, or do not surf regularly, is considered to be beyond the rights or expertise of that individual. Surf break assessments are not likely to be credible or accurate if conducted without input from people with some prior experience or observation of the break. This is because they are the people who frequently access the breaks, know their history, understand the inherent qualities and how they contribute to the fabric of the local surfing community and surf industry (J. Mead, personal communication, 8 February, 2011).

Respondents highlight the need to separate the evaluation of overall wave quality, wave consistency as the most important aspects in assessing a break. They are less subjective values and consultation shows they are generally able to be rated numerically. The same applies for break type which can be easily recognised and categorised in terms of rarity (Scarfe 2008).

Respondents also highlighted the need for qualitative analysis in the assessment of a break beyond simply assigning numerical values. This suits the identification of other aspects of a surf break that provide values associated with access to, use and enjoyment. In light of this, criteria are worded to reflect the different aspects of the NZCPS policies directing the mandate to provide for surf breaks. For example, criteria #6 directly addresses Policy 15 (c)(iv) *aesthetic values including memorability and naturalness* and (c)(x) *wild or scenic values* (DoC 2010).

Given the variation in perception of values by users and the different attributes surf breaks have, comparing the quality or significance of different surf breaks presents difficulties. Based on lessons on application of the ARC approach to assessing surf breaks, it would be arbitrary to rate an attribute that is not applicable to a surf break. Therefore, the study has developed an assessment criteria model that enables the individual merits of each break to be assessed. This assessment criteria includes the important standardised criteria of wave quality, consistency and rarity to be factored into the assessment of any surf break, and then includes other optional criteria to be attributed to a break on a case by case basis.

Consultation established the legitimacy of the *Wavetrack Guide* as a starting point for the dialogue necessary to develop a clear enough understanding of surf breaks and their associated use. It should be noted the guide has a nation-wide scope that rates breaks on this basis.

Regionally significant surf breaks should be assessed in respect to context of the Council's jurisdiction. This is so that a wave is rated in respect to how good it is in Gisborne surfing terms, not in comparison to the rest of the country.

Finally, it is important to distinguish between use of the criteria as a guidance tool for identifying the natural character, features and values of a break and its associated use; as opposed to application for the purposes of conducting an environmental impact assessment. Although criteria may evolve or be malleable to suit this purpose, this has not been explored within this study.

In summary, criteria are designed to identify what are the components of outstanding value of regionally significant surf breaks as part of natural character of the coastal environment. For the experienced surfer it is undoubtedly the quality of the waves, the type of break it is and the consistency of high quality surfable waves it offers. For the wider recreational community, surf breaks possess many other values. Overall, the criteria represent the varying aspects of why a break is significant to the region.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study are relevant to a wide range of Council functions including reserves management; development of water plans, stormwater infrastructure; urban design; community engagement and participation. Overall, surf breaks provide a unique lens for viewing a range of increasing pressures on the coastal environment in the Gisborne District.

6.1 Overview of Gisborne's nationally significant breaks

The general consensus on these surf breaks listed align with the lessons from the development of surf break protection knowledge and techniques to date. Although still offering favourable conditions for learners to intermediate level surfers, they generally represent the high performance range of surf breaks. However, when considered as the fluid, interconnected system utilised by surfers, these breaks (as known to locals) make up the northern sector of a complete 'town' surfing setup unique to this country.

General issues of spatial definition are prevalent in Gisborne. Variation in wave conditions and its affect on the overall surfing experience is diverse and highly place-specific. In this sense, respondents have a deep understanding of the concept of 'natural character'¹³ as it is provided for in the NZCPS 2010. Many of the cultural, social and economic values found through community engagement are derived from this inextricable link between surf break users and the natural character of the coastal environment.

6.2 Identifying a range of significant breaks

There is good guidance on providing for a range of surf breaks across the region. Identifying further surf breaks within policy and plans requires recognition of three key points.

1. It important to distinguish between application of policy 16 with its focus on surf breaks for surfing and policies 13 and 15 with their focus on surf breaks as part of natural landscape/ character.

¹³ "The following definition of natural character is the outcome of evaluations of a suite of naturalness interpretations derived from literature and assessed using a specially constructed set of criteria, appropriate reference conditions and baselines, and the complexities of human perception.

Natural character occurs along a continuum. The natural character of a 'site' at any scale is the degree to which it:

- *is part of nature, particularly indigenous nature*
- *is free from the effects of human constructions and non-indigenous 'biological artefacts'*
- *exhibits fidelity to the geomorphology, hydrology, and biological structure, composition, and pattern of the reference conditions chosen*
- *exhibits ecological and physical processes comparable with reference conditions*

Human perceptions and experiences of a 'site's' natural character are a product of the 'site's' biophysical attributes, each individual's sensory acuity, and a wide variety of personal and cultural filters.

This definition has been compared with New Zealand Court interpretations and commentaries on natural character, particularly Court decisions on cases appealed under the Resource Management Act 1991 (Froude 2010, PhD in prep.). It is being used to develop a methodology to measure natural character and its change in the context of the long-standing New Zealand statutory policy goal to preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and various freshwater environments and their margins. The development and use of methodology will facilitate evaluations of the effectiveness of a variety of measures intended to preserve the natural character of the coastal environment" Froude et al (2010, p339).

2. With policies 13/15 surf breaks are not in their own right to be protected but as part of a wider array of natural values. This also means that public participation in identifying those areas including surf breaks under policies 13 and 15 goes well beyond people who surf.
3. Surf breaks are recognised as natural features worth preserving in their own right. They occur within areas with significant values associated with a diverse range of features and characteristics that influence access to, use and enjoyment of a surf break. They serve as a focal point for these values that are important to the health and well-being of surfing communities in Gisborne.

Significant knowledge of these values is held within surfing communities and their broader connection to the Gisborne region. Channelling this requires a staged process designed to be inclusive and achievable at all levels of governance provisions for surf breaks. This should also include the adoption of best practice principles when considering the appropriate tools to guide effective management in the coastal environment.

A trend for identifying surf breaks beyond the breaks listed in Policy 16 is emerging through the input of surf break protection interests during statutory processes. The focus of this study is aimed at beginning the necessary dialogue required to begin developing an overall picture of the place surf breaks hold within this community. Beginning with the breaks GDC is mandated to protect as Nationally Significant, the responses offered by those involved naturally shifted to the identification of other breaks in providing for all surf breaks users.

6.3 Key drivers for development of surf break policy in Gisborne

6.3.1 Sustainable Management

The study has identified that there is a statutory mandate to protect surf breaks of national significance in the Gisborne District. There are further requirements for identifying surf breaks as areas of natural character and natural features and landscapes (including seascapes) in the coastal environment.

In order to recognise and protect surf breaks effectively, identification and understanding the values, features and characteristics of surf breaks is required. This is achieved through consultation with experts familiar with the natural qualities of surf breaks and consulting people with experience and knowledge about surf breaks.

In Gisborne, surf breaks currently receive limited statutory recognition through reserve management plans. Recognising the significance of reserves in the coastal environment through planning rules is important to encourage more effective communication between interested parties.

Surf breaks could be managed using spatially allocated coastal marine zones, with controls over activities using rules. This presents a robust, approach for policy makers to ensure surf breaks are adequately provided for through the current resource management framework.

Statutory provisions arguably lack effectiveness due to the displacement of resources focused on formulation of plans rather than their monitoring and implementation. Statutory provisions for joint management options provide significant scope for GDC to develop a more integrated and collaborative approach to planning.

Enabling such an approach is heavily favoured for protecting surf breaks as regionally significant natural resources, particularly by local communities in the Gisborne region.

6.3.2 Environmental

Surf breaks are a finite natural resource with a specific set of natural characteristics. They provide environmental values that are effectively the energy source for a high level of individual health and community well-being. This is evident in the significant social, cultural and economical values identified in this study.

As dynamic areas of the coastal environment, surf breaks and the well-being they afford require a more specific statutory approach across both land and aquatic environments. In the CMA, this includes identifying a number of physical attributes including swell corridor, sediment paths, access points, seabed features, and hydrological features.

Surf breaks are also influenced by activities beyond the CMA. These might be land-based discharges effecting water quality, sedimentation, restriction of public access to a break, or extend beyond the sea-ward limit of the CMA as the concept of a swell corridor highlights. The surf break identified at the Waipaoa River Mouth is an example of how effects on surf breaks may also extend beyond the coastal environment overlay. Water entering the surf break at the Mouth is influenced by land use activities within a catchment that extends beyond coastal zoning provisions.

Surf breaks fall within the 'mixing zone' – the confluence of both land and aquatic based effects on the environment. They provide a unique lens for viewing a range of interconnected factors that determine the quality and overall integrity of the coastal environment. This includes amenity value derived from surf breaks as features of the landscape.

6.3.3 Social

A diverse range of representative surf breaks require provisions to cater for a broad range of recreational interests. The concept of a 'nursery break' stems from this and is exemplified by the surf breaks known at Roberts Road, Waikanāe Beach. Currently, Policy 16 only protects breaks for their quality as high performance waves and provides for a restricted range of experienced users.

Surf-riding is rapidly growing in popularity as a healthy, family-orientated activity and community-based lifestyle. A coherent vision for the future of the region's surf breaks is required to avoid issues of over-crowding and impacts on the integrity of the coastal environment.

Preserving the social values associated with the use of surf breaks also requires some education on the ethics and culture of the place. This is largely a safety issue, although maintaining positive relationships and attitudes in the water is an important factor in the overall enjoyment of the surfing experience.

Ultimately, surf breaks enable a diverse range of interactions that contribute to the resilient social fabric evident in Gisborne's surfing communities. The length to which this extends into the wider community is yet to be uncovered, although it should not be underestimated.

6.3.4 Cultural

The cultural value of surf breaks in the Gisborne district is highly significant and extends beyond the jurisdiction of the Council. It is sensitive to issues arising from new management approaches that alter the connection local surf break users have to their beaches.

Enabling meaningful participation of local surf break users in the resolution of management outcomes is fundamental to preserving cultural values. Maintenance of access points, such as the definition of parking areas along Lysnar Reserve, is a prime example of this issue.

Surfers in Gisborne have been left to their own devices in the past, carving out their own infrastructure. This study reveals they appreciate the Council's intentions to preserve the dune system along Lysnar Reserve in response to rising environmental impacts from increasing interest and irresponsible use. They fear the flow-on effect of these 'management outcomes'.

By removing involvement of users in the final resolution, Council risks irreversible damage to the sense of ownership and responsibility created by participation in such decision-making processes. In the past this was a natural undertaking for surfers who generally respect the integrity of the natural environment to the point where it has become a part of the culture.

Ultimately, the connection between culture and place is fundamental in the access to, use and enjoyment of surf breaks (or any use of the coastal environment – recreational and customary). This enters the spiritual realm for some users, and is widely recognised as the 'vibe', essence or wairua that binds the overall surfing experience.

6.3.5 Economic

Sustaining the economic benefits provided by surf breaks in Gisborne requires the preservation of culture values inextricably linked to natural character as the prime asset underwriting the attractiveness of the region's surf breaks. Use of Makorori Beach as a contest area on an international scale has the potential to elevate the Gisborne surfing community to a whole new level¹⁴. Pressures on these assets identified during engagement include, but may not be limited to:

- The growing popularity of surf culture, both domestically and globally
- Increased exposure through media attention
- Use for surf industry and competitive purposes

Economic benefits linked to surf breaks identified through the study include:

- High levels of domestic and international tourists coming for the surf
- Significant socio-economic well-being for Gisborne communities through the healthy, family orientated and locally based lifestyle surf breaks provide.

¹⁴ For more on this see: <http://surf.co.nz/news/local-news/2011/1/1811-oneill-cold-water-classic-series-returns-2011-brin> And; <http://www.gisborneherald.co.nz/article/?id=21457>

- Healthy demand for surf industry products, services and benefits (e.g. retail outlets, surf schools, professional surfing careers, domestic scale competition).

6.3.6 On progressing surf break policy provisions

Surf break protection must cover the coastal environment, and not be restricted to the confines of the Coastal Marine Area (CMA). This is another key development tested in the BOI process that accepted submissions to this effect (DoC, 2009a). This is because activities beyond the CMA can potentially effect surf breaks such as land based discharges effecting water quality and sedimentation, and restriction of public access to a break.

These are general issues that need to be provided for by land use controls in Regional and District Plans, as well as using management areas in Regional Coastal plans. Respondents recognised the general threats to surf breaks, 'upstream' effects and the potential for flow-on impacts from decisions made concerning surf breaks.

The BOI recommendations also highlight this as follows: "the quality of the wave can potentially be compromised by developments in the swell corridor seaward of the break, and the enjoyment of surf breaks by surfers compromised by discharges, limitations on access, and changes to natural character" (DoC 2009b). These are physical attributes of a surf break specifically provided for in the definition included within the NZCPS 2010.

Swell, currents, water levels, seabed morphology and wind are all components of surf breaks and any activities that impact these physical processes could adversely affect the quality and consistency of surfable waves – and therefore the overall surf-riding experience. For example, the swell corridor (including its seabed morphology) of a surf break could be affected by dumping of dredging spoil. The impact on a surf break must be considered to an extent that reaches beyond the specific location of surf-riding.

Implementation of surf break policy requires a greater understanding of the factors that determine the spatial extent of a break. For the overall purpose of implementing surf break policy, accurate spatial mapping also requires the ability for definitions to address a high level of variation both within a region *and* each surf break location i.e. different characteristics will require varying responses that are site specific.

Trying to do too much at the RPS level, particularly with a lack of expert information, is potentially a futile exercise. The details of surf break provisions ought to emerge at the Regional, Coastal, District and Community plan levels. In this sense, understanding and effectively integrating the planning hierarchy within the RMA framework is important.

Scarfe *et al.* (2009b) emphasised the need for consideration of surf breaks in strategic planning and in baseline environmental monitoring, as well as in one-off assessments of environmental effects for particular developments near a surfing break. The RPS is an important means of requiring such consideration as it can influence planning for the land and the coastal marine area, and guide decision making in resource consents and other processes.

There are questions for whom the responsibility for monitoring, resourcing and appropriate methods for establishing baselines falls with. In light of this, respondents all spoke passionately about their interest and place in the local surfing community and how the topic of the study resonated as important and something they ought to take some ownership and responsibility for by being involved.

Local authorities have the ability to mandate combined management. Where policy implementation is often restricted and lacking effectiveness is the ability to fund management strategies. Given an existing level of community ownership inherent in the cultural connection between users and their natural resource – there is an existing incentive for enabling community-based co-management.

7. Issues

- Need to recognise culturally and socially defined spatial extent of surf breaks – ‘socio-spatial extent’ – as well as connections to other natural characteristics. Information gathered on significant surf breaks throughout the region is limited in its specificity and requires wider community consultation to involve a representative range of public, private and customary interests.
- There is a fragile link between the cultural values underpinning significant community well-being is dependent on maintaining the integrity of access to, and natural character of the coastal environment. Culturally insensitive media exposure/ hype/ commercial interests also pose a challenge.
- A shift in emphasis and better resourcing of engagement with local communities may be necessary when resolving public maintenance, development and/or protection outcomes. Lysnar Reserve bollard positioning is one example of Council works based on mutually agreeable principles, but unfavourable design resolutions. Conflict with New Zealand Transport Agency work programmes; impacts of inevitable growth and development in the coastal environment¹⁵; stormwater concentration through the Wainui Stream; effects on water quality particularly from farm and forestry runoff in the landward extent of coastal catchments – all are prominent examples.
- This is commonly viewed as a focus on outputs (i.e. planning process) not outcomes (i.e. design resolution) and the impact on the sense of ownership and thus responsibility the ‘removal of control’ has on local users and the vibe of the place. When changes occur without effective communication with locals then it more often leads to vandalism – this is a consistent mentality for New Zealanders overall.

¹⁵ For references on LIUDD see the following: <http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/built/liudd/economics.asp>
http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/built/liudd/documents/Principles_methods_framework_vanRoon.pdf
<http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/built/liudd/documents/Bios.pdf>

8. Options

When a break is threatened the response could be formed on two fronts: protecting natural character and natural features and landscapes (seascapes); understanding the outstanding values derived from the access to, use and enjoyment of the break in making decisions affecting the coastal environment. This study finds a wide range of drivers for developing specific surf break policy.

8.1 Statutory

The location, socio-spatial extent and natural character of the nationally significant surf breaks serve as anchors for recognising the significance of all breaks serving the immediate local Gisborne town community – Waipaoa River Mouth in the south to Northern Makorori Reef in the north. Council is mandated to develop management options for each of the nationally significant surf breaks. The close proximity of the breaks to other highly valued breaks offers an opportunity for a holistic approach to providing for a range of surf breaks significant to the local community of Gisborne.

Surf breaks could also be managed using spatially allocated coastal marine zones, with controls over activities using rules. This may present a robust, approach for policy makers to ensure surf breaks are adequately provided for through the current resource management framework.

Surf breaks could be managed through spatial planning tools, including policies and methods in statutory plans. For example, the District Plan could establish landward amenity areas and description of values (e.g. as 'coastal environment reserves') through Integrated Catchment Management/Structure Planning methods. The water plan currently in development could include where surf breaks fall within a catchment's receiving environment.

The spatial extent of surf breaks could be mapped using GPS references by including a number of natural characteristics including swell corridor, sediment paths, access points, seabed features, hydrological features.

A change to the coastal plan could map swell corridors and describe coastal dynamics for the purpose of triggering assessment for existing and proposed marine activities.

Further consultation with the wider public in the Gisborne District is necessary to engage with a wider range of coastal interests. This is particularly so in relation to township plans for regional population centres (e.g. Tokomaru, Tolaga and Waipiro Bays). These areas host known surf breaks with local communities who surf as well as assign other values to coexistent natural character in the coastal environment.

Recognise the surfing community as significant 'stakeholders' in the Gisborne District, particularly as possessing deep understanding and knowledge of a wide range of social, cultural, economic and environmental values affecting surf breaks as part of the natural character of the coastal environment. This could support development of a sustainable vision for surf breaks and surf culture in the Gisborne region.

Activities for developing policy on monitoring and for establishing baseline data have potential to bridge into non-statutory functions of the Council. This may be through a range of education, advocacy and joint management options.

8.2 Non-statutory

Integrating and aligning existing work programmes within the Council may present an effective option for engaging with local communities on issues affecting the natural character of the coastal environment. For surf breaks, this is particularly important in the areas of stormwater management, planning and urban design, recreation and community facilities management, natural resources policy.

The 'Surfing Reserves' programme outlined in section 3.4 of this report provide an example of a participatory and increasingly popular way of bringing an interdisciplinary approach to coastal management. They are a potential tool for combining education, advocacy and joint management, approaches that existing local community organisations known to the Council currently employ to varying degrees¹⁶.

Community based plans may be a good way for the wider public participation to actively manage and take ownership of their surf breaks. The surfing reserves concepts offers a good model, or umbrella, for integrating all Council functions (i.e. including urban design, stormwater, recreation and community facilities management, district planning and natural resources policy) where they engage with local communities.

Integrating statutory and non-statutory policy development and management tools could better align resourcing that often falls short of implementation programmes that potentially require education, advocacy and joint management options.

¹⁶ For examples, see <http://www.gdc.govt.nz/expert-to-help-save-our-dunes/>; <http://www.envbop.govt.nz/sustainable-communities/care-groups/coast-care.aspx>; <http://www.teungamai.com/>

9. Recommendations

As a result of the study findings, the following are recommendations made to the Gisborne District Council:

Nationally Significant surf breaks

In response to the statutory mandate and further consultation on the values, features and characteristics of surf breaks recognised as 'nationally significant' – the full extent of the following areas of natural character of the coastal environment should be protected under NZCPS Policy 16:

Tuamotu Island

Wainui Beach

Makorori Beach

Recognising further surf breaks in the Gisborne district

Should the findings in this report be accepted, a schedule of regionally significant surf breaks could be developed to guide regional, district and community plan changes. An initial schedule is included in Appendix 6 and could be used as a starting point for wider community engagement.

Developing this schedule could employ the surf break assessment criteria in determining the outstanding components of areas contributing to significant natural character of the coastal environment. Criteria are included in Appendix 7.

10. Conclusion

In order to recognise and protect surf breaks effectively an understanding of the values, features and characteristics of surf breaks is required. This is achieved through consultation with experts familiar with the natural qualities of surf breaks and consulting people with experience and knowledge about surf breaks. This process is illustrated through this study.

Consultation was mainly carried out within the surfing fraternity. However, it also included input from coastal experts, tangata whenua, and in general many members of staff at the Council are informed about the study through presentations and discussions.

Key findings are:

- A range of nationally and regionally significant surf breaks provide for a wide range of social, cultural, environment and economic values that support significant recreational, community health and well-being throughout the District and beyond to international arenas¹⁷.
- The importance of protecting surf breaks as regionally significant natural resources, particularly for local communities in the Gisborne district. Some surfers were cautious about protection due media exposure of surf breaks, non-consultative Council management outcomes and for what purposes surf breaks were being protected.
- A diversity and representative range of surf breaks needs to be recognised.
- The interests of a wide range of activities that use surf breaks need to be recognised in providing for surf breaks. This includes, but is not limited to, surfing, surf life saving, paddle boards, body surfing and kite surfing.
- Surf breaks provide amenity value for passive on-lookers who often watch activities in the surf or the waves for their aesthetic value.
- Respondents supported a collaborative approach with the community for further policy development and implementation. This is as opposed to maintaining the status quo that relies on costly challenges to ad hoc decisions made through the consenting process where surf breaks are not provided for in plans.

¹⁷ CWC link

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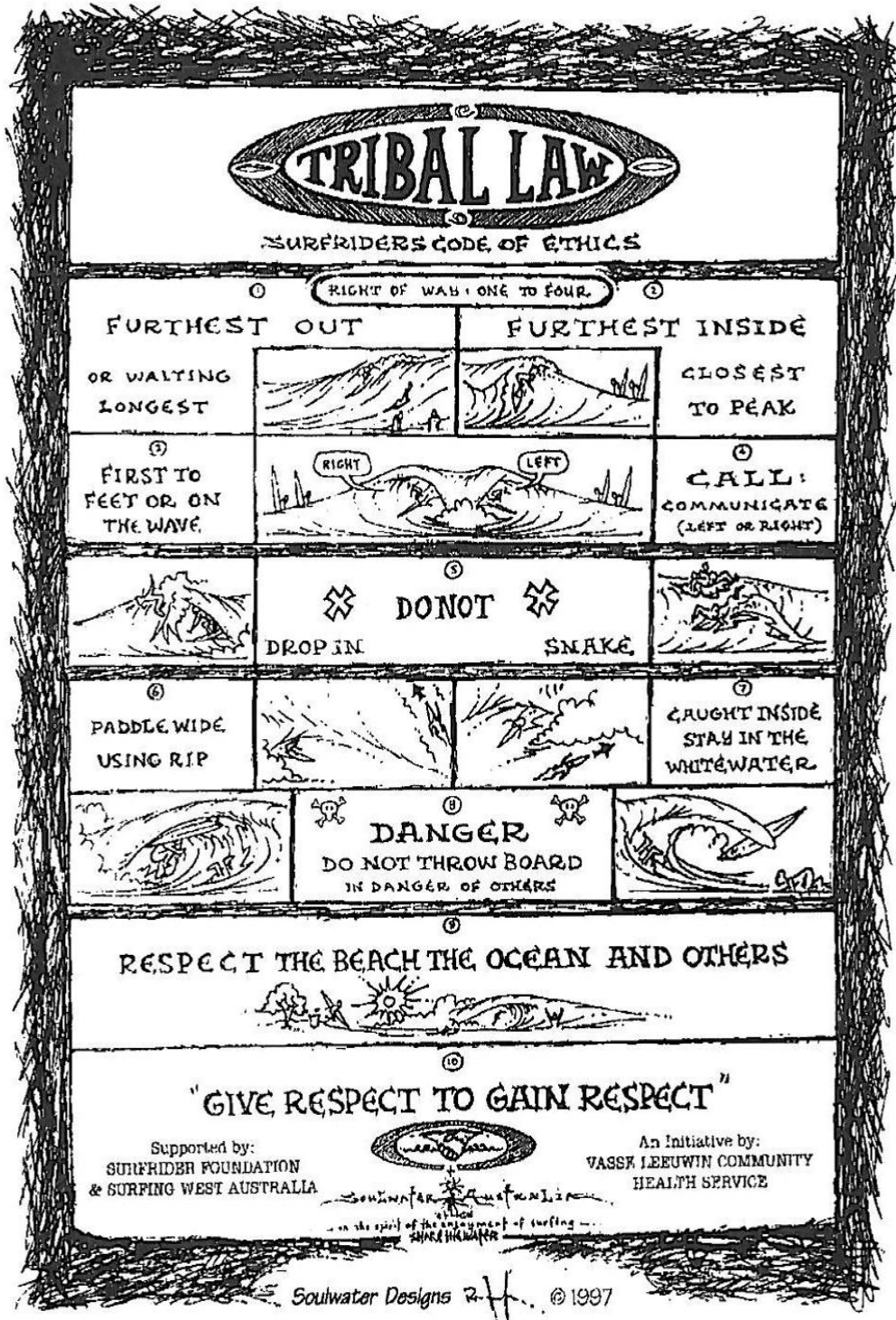
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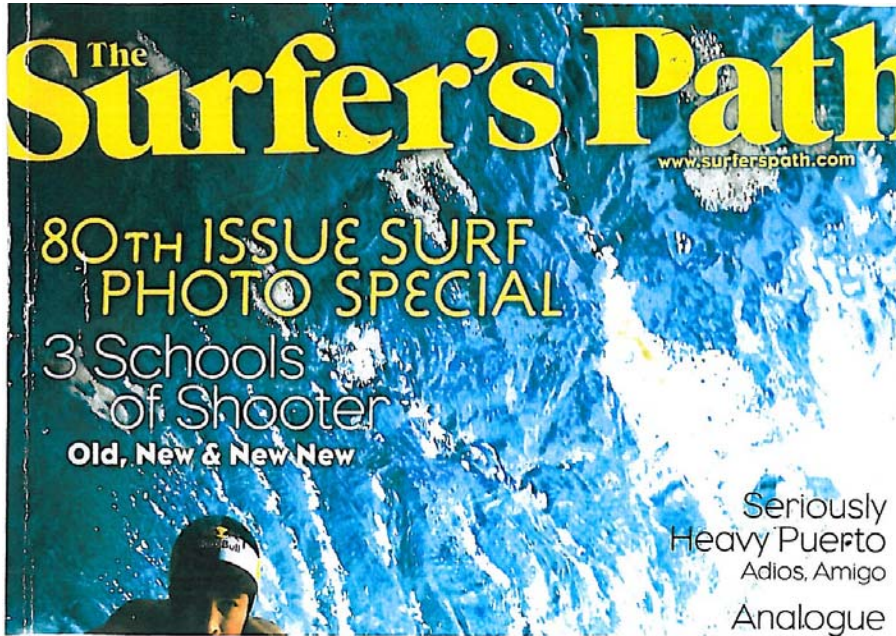
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Appendix 1 - The 'Tribal Law' (Young, 2000)

A graphic example of the informal universal code of ethics for surfers.



Appendix 2 – “Surfers Path” articles on surfing reserves



Plenty of people will be pleased about Malibu being enshrined as a protected surfing reserve. Here's some.

Page 16

ON MAILBU AS A WORLD SURFING RESERVE

I think this is a great idea but as usual I am always sceptical when profit making businesses use the word "preserve". To me that means efforts will be made to stop changes, to the break, beach, rocks, trees etc. This will cost money and where will this come from. Sponsorship from surf brands, large companies and anything needing publicity. I fear privatisation of places like this. Shortly followed by coloured wristbands and an hourly charge.?

PLEASE PROVE ME WRONG.

Dylan Middleton

Via www.surferspath.com comments

Rest assured, Dylan, you're not the only one worried about this. See George Downing and SOS story inside, page 28.



SURF PRESERVATION – 5 TAKES

TAKE 1: HAWAIIAN CONFUSION

Why would anyone oppose the protection of ancient surf breaks?

Last issue we mentioned the ups and downs of Senator Fred Hemmings' attempt to have certain parts of Hawaii designated Surfing Reserves. Hemmings – a surf legend as well as a senator – was hoping to end his long political career in the Hawaii State Legislature with a symbolic, non-contentious bill that would simply enshrine Waikiki and the North Shore as places of importance in the history and future practice of Hawaiian surfing.

The bill passed all hurdles until at the very last minute the Democrats (Hemmings is a Republican) stopped it for reasons that seemed more personal than anything else.

No worries, Republican Governor Lingle was on hand to invoke special powers and, kowabunga, the bill suddenly passed. All those in favour cheered

the obvious good sense of the Governor, and boo-hissed those who opposed the bill. "Democrats are against surfing!" they cried.

Not according to one of the main opponents of the bill, Save Our Surf, headed by a surf legend of similar stature, George Downing. In an article published in *The Ocean* magazine, Downing insists that his decades-long feud with Senator Hemmings is not the issue. It's about Average Jo surfer v commercial interests and contests.

"Last winter," wrote Downing, "60% of the good, warming level surf, was allocated to surf contests. This effectively shut out the lifeblood of our sport, the 'recreational' surfer."

SOS and others objected to the inclusion of the words "competitive surfing" in the bill, for instance that the bill is for: "The promotion of the long-term preservation of Hawaii surfing for recreation and competitive surfing." According to opponents, the enshrinement of these areas specifically for competitive surfing would set up a conflict between the average recreational surfer and commercial



The Senator (white shorts) with The Duke (white threads).

interests. If competition was as important in the law as weekend fun, what chance do recreational surfers stand against surf companies taking over the waves every weekend, or every time there's a good swell?

They asked for three amendments (removing "competitive surfing" from three places) "to ensure that the people of Hawaii are not put in conflict with surf contest promoters".

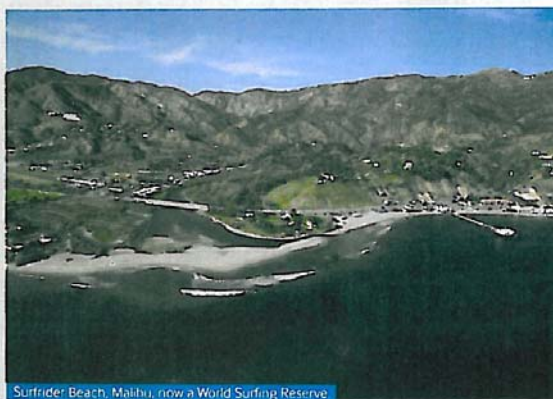
According to Downing, the backers of the bill refused, proving that far from being 'symbolic', this was in fact a stealth attempt to promote the promoters and ensure that commercial interests had as much right to a break as the

average Hawaiian recreational surfer. "All Hawaii's surf communities are concerned with the large number of surf contests now," he writes, adding that the inclusion of the competitive surfing clauses "represents a stepping stone to more contests."

Hard to disagree with, isn't it? Should waves be protected as much for contests as for the recreational surfer? Do 'We The People' have more right to waves than Mountain Dew, or Monster Energy or Quik or Bong? When you consider these minutiae, the whole concept of surfing reserves suddenly gets a more confusing and complicated.

And, just to add to the confusion, supporters of Ms Lingle and Mr Hemmings now say that they *did* take the offending words out of the bill before it became law.

Either way, it's clear that while preserving spots for future generations is universally accepted as good thing, we might have to watch out for exactly *how* we preserve them.



Surfrider Beach, Malibu, now a World Surfing Reserve

TAKE 2: MALIBU

First on the WSR list, "the 'bu" gets enshrinement.

The World Surfing Reserves movement will make its first move in October when it designates Malibu's Surfrider Beach as its first protected surf spot. Enshrinement by the WSR is different to designation by say, the Hawaii State Legislature. The WSR, being a non-governmental organization, has no legal control over surf spots, but it can firmly establish the surf and local community's desire for a spot to be protected. WSR plans to

enshrine numerous surf breaks around the world but Malibu was seen as a fitting first one. "Malibu makes any shortlist of the world's most famous beaches," says Michael Blum, President of the Malibu Surfing Association. The WSR is "the UNESCO of surfing" aiming to "educate the world on the tremendous universal value of waves and surf zones", and is a partnership of Save The Waves, National Surfing Reserves Australia, the International Surfing Association (ISA) and Stanford University's Center for Responsible Travel (CREST).
worldsurfingreserves.org



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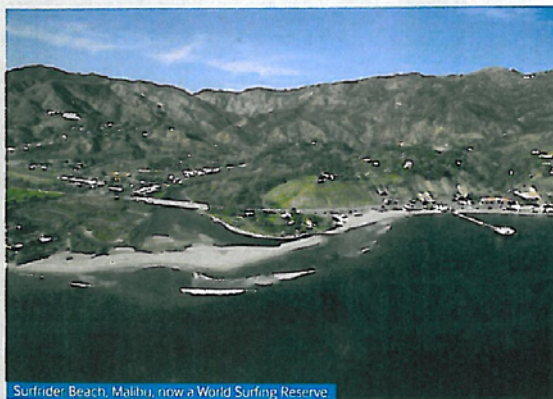
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worldsurfingreserves.org

Appendix 3 – Community Engagement Plan

Community Engagement Plan

Development of criteria for identifying the different values of surf breaks to feed into break protection policy

Introduction

Coastal planning and coastal science experts have begun developing a criteria-set for identifying a range of values associated with surf breaks. The criteria-set is to serve its primary purpose as a means for identifying the qualities and inherent characteristics of different surf breaks. Subsequently, these breaks are to be protected using the appropriate planning provisions, as per the project plan.

Public Engagement Objectives

The objectives of the public engagement are to:

- Engage the key partners, tangata whenua and communities of the Gisborne District and BOP region effectively in the preparation of planning provisions for protecting surf breaks in both regions. This includes:
 - Development of a robust criteria-set for identifying surf breaks; and
 - Identifying elements of natural character that are intrinsic to each surf break in the regions, and their associated community values.
 - Identify the desired outcomes for protecting these breaks.
- Engender community ownership of the objectives for surf break protection.
- Ensure a range of interests are represented during discussions and in the resultant provisions.
- Ensure consultation methods meet the needs of the communities.
- Engage key stakeholder groups/affected parties in the process from inception.

Principles of Public Engagement

The following principles are core in the preparation of planning provisions for protecting surf breaks in the regions, and staff are committed to putting these into practice:

- Ensure adequate time for contributions from key partners and communities.
- Remain open at all times to input from key partners and communities.
- Ensure engagement suits the needs of key partners and communities.
- Show respect for all people seeking to engage in development of the engagement objectives.
- Follow principles of tikanga Māori.
- Inform key partners and communities of outcomes of engagement.

- Actively encourage contributions from key partners, tangata whenua and communities.
- Demonstrate integrity in your work.
- Embrace a culture of learning – commit to continuous improvement and adaptation to key information received during the engagement process and remain open to feedback on the overall process.

Public Engagement Methods

To ensure full engagement with a range of interests and meets community needs, a range of methods of public engagement will be used as appropriate to the context and methodology as it develops:

- Focus groups/workshops.
- Interviews.
- Hui.
- Surveys (potentially online – survey monkey).
- Advise public on the process and timeframes for submitting on RPSs and Plans. Public advertisement of participation opportunities.
- Media (e.g. council web pages, displays).

Communication methods

- Community notices on relevant radio stations, BOPFM.
- Newspaper articles in Gisborne Herald, Bay of Plenty Times.
- Articles in GDC publications, BOPRC Backyard region wide publication.
- Fliers and posters at key events and locations (surf shops).
- Direct contact with known stakeholders, communities and other potential interests (e.g. email, telephone, mail).

Appendix 4 – Consultation Report

1. Purpose

Carry out consultation with surfing interests in the Gisborne area to enable Gisborne to effectively provide for surf break protection in response to the new NZCPS provisions.

2. Deliverable

Consultation record of engagement with surfing community and other parties.

3. Contacts

A list of contacts collated over the course of study is included in GDC Records.

4. Engagement

Engagement included the following methods:

- Targeted interviews
- Two group meetings
- Staff focus groups

5. Summary of engagement outcomes:

5.1 Breaks identified during engagement

The following are the breaks and associated values respondents identified for a range of reasons. Ratings are the average level of importance to the Gisborne District identified by survey respondents. This list of breaks is by no means conclusive and merely the result of very limited formal engagement given the scope of the study.

Waipaoa River Mouth ('Big River'): 9 / 10

Longest right-hander in Gisborne area. Only for confident, experienced, fit surfers and strong swimmers. Best break in NZ when it is working according to Maz (Quinn).

Roberts Road (Waikanae Beach): 9 / 10

Beach break that caters for all abilities – close to town. Suited to beginners and experienced surfers. Area well used by surf schools/surf lessons. Can be a perfect break in the right conditions. Safe for family, patrolled area. Starting place for most aspiring surfers in our region.

The Pipe ('Gissy Pipe', Midway Beach): 9 / 10

Can hold solid swell and produce barrelling waves. For experienced surfers only when surf is large. Good for average surfer. An awesome wave in the right swell direction, close to town – everyone can access it. Intermediate to advanced break with a range of 'peaks' that spread out the crowds.

Makorori Beach (Northern Reef, 'Nanas', 'Farmhouse', 'Creeks', 'Red bus'): 9 / 10

Not seeing any buildings is a significant characteristic of what is unique about this part of the coast. An area rich in history for both tangata whenua (as a hospice) and pakeha (modern surf culture), in a cultural sense and also with pockets of indigenous biodiversity. The range of breaks along the beach help to dissipate crowds, offer a range of challenges across a variation of sand, sand and rock, reef and point setups suitable for all skill levels. Consistently offering waves of some variety for the majority of the year, across a broad range of conditions. Generally a well-used area for competitions. Gateway to the coast, the point where one becomes separated from the urban environs of Gisborne. The sense of being in the wilderness, yet in such close proximity to a significant township is the essence of the place.

Tokomaru Bay (Waima): 9 / 10

"Consistent" on SE and E swell.

Waipiro Bay (Creek): 9 / 10

Solid wave for serious surfers. Provides a challenge. Fast, bowling wave for expert surfers.

Waipiro Bay (Frog Rock, including 'Kiddies Corner'): 8 / 10

Unique rock formation providing a unique surfing experience. Great wave on dead low tide. Very hollow. Iconic East Coast break. Advanced surfers – just an amazing wave, true kiwiana style up there.

Tolaga Bay Riverbar: 8 / 10

Nice long rides, river break. Area to surf when Gisborne having southerly conditions. Perfect river mouth break with east coast appeal.

Cooks Cove: 8 / 10

Long paddle, long walk, good waves. Works when others aren't. Historically significant. When it works its amazing – I mean, who wouldn't want to surf where Captain Cook once landed!

Three Points (Kaiaua Bay): 7 / 10

Isolation – high quality wave with three distinct take off points. Beautiful setting within protected bay area. For surfers who want to go on a walking safari adventure – uncrowded. Fickle, but great. Long walls.

Waiapu River Mouth: 7 / 10

No other break like it around. Breaks on shingle.

5.2 Further breaks identified in Wavetrack NZ Surfing Guide

The Cliff (Sponge Bay)	Te Araroa
Sponge Bay	Tokata
Pouawa Beach	Horseshoe Bay
Waihau Beach (Loisel's)	Hicks Bay
Kaiaua Bay	

5.3 Surf Break Assessment Criteria

Respondents were also asked about the different values most important when considering surf breaks. Those are largely discussed in the following section. The following are the criteria identified during engagement. They are ranked in order of importance based on average weightings assigned by survey respondents (5 being highest, 1 being lowest).

- Wave quality (in optimum conditions) - 5
- Wave type (e.g. breaking intensity) - 4.5
- Unique features of a break - 4.5
- Rare features of a break - 4.5
- Vulnerability to physical change that may threaten a break - 4.5
- Scenery - 4
- Suitability as a 'nursery' break for 'breeding' surfers - 4
- Consistency - 4
- Break type (e.g. reef, point, etc.) - 3.5
- Water quality (visual aesthetic) - 3.5
- Social/community interaction - 3.5
- Seasonal variations - 3
- Heritage/Cultural values - 3
- Significance to tangata whenua - 3
- Public access - 3
- Suitability to all skill levels - 3
- Services (e.g. public toilets, carpark) - 2
- Level of use / popularity - 2
- Proximity to settlement - 2
- Economic influence (e.g. value for surfing industry, professional competition, tourism) - 1

5.4 Overview of significant values expressed during interviews

First and foremost, Council must recognise the depth and significance of the culture and their duty to ensure the integrity of its future. Respondents agree this requires a set of guiding principles otherwise required in National-level resource management and local government policy: maintain access to and preserve the natural character of the coastal environment (i.e. RMA matters of national importance); communication with communities on the final resolution of *outcomes* (LTCCPs).

Over the years, the Gisborne surfing community have asked for little more than respect for the culture and its connection to the place. Respondents consider that through this connection, surf breaks afford immense health and well-being to a large proportion of the Gisborne region. Disturbing the wairua/spirit, or the true substance of a culture effects the cohesiveness of any established community. A possible comparison might be the role of oil in lubricating an engine and keeping it running smoothly; or, the soaps and detergents we use to clean things to ensure they are functional and healthy.

The practice of surfing cleanses the body, mind and soul of the surfer. Everybody practices their own way of attaining this balance – the profusion of high quality surf breaks in the area allow many people in the Gisborne community to do this together. All respondents consider that surf breaks will change and so too will the practice of the culture in the communities that form around them, but both have a right to occur naturally.

Respecting and facilitating the diverse range of recreational pursuits we enjoy in this country is important. Respondents often searched for parallels to the different ways we enjoy our coasts to justify the significance of surfing and surf breaks as a legitimate part of that. In general, New Zealanders identify strongly with an 'outdoorsy' culture, particularly the 'beach-life', all the kiwiana that surrounds it, and the different ways we act out that culture. In a certain sense, surfers take this beach culture one step further than your average beach-goer who prefers to paddle and just get their feet wet. A surfer interacts with the ocean on a different level. This is often a source of great entertainment for onlookers who cringe at the falls of the less experienced and admire the ability of more skilled surf-riders.

A number of respondents articulated well the apparently strange ways of the surfer – potentially a large factor in the historic social isolation of surfers, and the root of the saying, "only a surfer knows the feeling...". The best example came from an internationally renowned surf photographer who proposed quite an ironically paradoxical view on the supposed perversity of surfers¹⁸. Where the average young male hangs posters of cars and 'worship' scantily clad females, young surfers hang posters of waves on their walls and idolise their favourite surfers. With the car comes the girl; with a surf board comes a ride on the pulse of Mother Nature. The point is there are some defining characteristics about certain ways of being that are more familiar than others, but generally harmless and entertaining. Surfers are not your average human beings; neither are teenagers.

It is crucial not to consider surf break protection as an attempt to proffer Gisborne as a surf city, as opposed to any other image and it's supposed 'competitive advantage'. The people who really care about whether it is a surf city or not already know its significance to surfing and the value it brings to the region, and will continue to develop that. These values comprehensively span the four well-beings. A working partnership between local communities and local government will be the most effective and efficient strategy for preserving surf breaks and the wide range of values associated with their use and enjoyment. Effective communication is paramount to the success of these relationships.

'Partnerships' often evoke feelings of laboured or cumbersome processes required to establish a set of widely agreeable principles. As established in this report, these principles already exist. What is missing are the tools to facilitate implementation which is understandable given providing for surf breaks is a new area of resource management. One outcome of this study for local authorities is the understanding opened up by asking the surfing community what they think of the whole issue. This approach has been commended unanimously by respondents. The findings are relevant to a wide range of Council functions including reserves management; development of water plans, stormwater infrastructure; urban design.

¹⁸ A study by Colleen McGloin on Australian cultures sheds light on some of these views (McGloin 2005)

Overall, surf breaks provide a unique lens for viewing a range of increasing pressures on the coastlines that are so iconic to this region.

Surfers use the coast in all weathers, all year round, and more so than any other user. Respondents all communicated strongly that recognition surf culture is not so much about respecting the surfer as an individual, more the contribution the sport makes to the town. Understanding the major factors influencing the quality of surf in Gisborne may be difficult, but if society can practice preventative driving for example, then it ought to do the same for surf breaks. It is not about non-surfers having to humble themselves to anyone with a surfboard under their arm, or giving individuals any power. It is respecting the culture of surfing.

There is no other sport in the world that has taken as a big a hold globally than what surfing has. There are surf shops in Kansas City, the middle of the USA. In Gisborne there is no football shop, no volleyball shop, no basketball shop – all huge sports in the world but they do not have one of their shops in town. If the respect is not forthcoming then surfing will continue, but the town will miss out. Respondents again, collectively, consider that it does not require any major investment, rather give it space and let it happen as it has successfully done long before any NZCPS come into effect.

In terms of then applying regulations, for surfing, this has evolved as an informal, unwritten etiquette, or ethical foundation for how to engage in the activity of surf-riding. This is largely a safety construct, like a golfer might call 'fore' after hitting a wayward shot. It is based on good communication and the simple display of respect; between fellow surfers and for the natural environment as provider. On this subject, all respondents agree the culture of surfing should never be regulated as it is the vibe and natural order of the place that does this – not some concrete set of rules. If enshrined in law, conflict will inevitably lead to litigation. This would be anathema to the wairua/spirit of surfing that can only be learned and adopted through experience and intergenerational learning – not by picking up a rule book. For those unfamiliar with the culture and ways of the local 'tribe' (e.g. tourists), then a polite reminder may be as simple as some signage. The Gisborne Boardriders' Club are developing a proposal much along these lines.

Many of the respondents put forward a set of high principles for protecting surf breaks that are (unknown to most respondents) explicit in the NZCPS. These principles are matters of integrity; respecting cultural integrity and the integrity of the natural character of the coastline should be the aim when providing for surf breaks. In this sense, respondents generally recognise that surfers, although predominant in Gisborne, are a subset of interests in the coastal environment and involving all competing interests in decision-making processes is important.

Respondents generally felt the need to inform Council of where surf breaks and surf culture fit in this region. They were unanimously conveyed as priceless natural assets (i.e. taonga for both tangata whenua and pakeha), a recreational activity more than a commercial entity, as a community activity it is probably the largest in town, and as a culture it is bigger than any individual. Surf breaks are big assets, in conjunction with the beaches. Put succinctly by one respondent, "if you were a ski resort, you wouldn't use your mountain as a landfill".

For many respondents the matter of protection is one of identifying the highest standard of ethics, and the NZCPS 2010 does that. "As taonga, surf breaks are treasures, we should not have to wait until someone discovers oil under them to regard them as taonga".

The naming of places is integral in developing the current picture and putting a number of 'stakes in the ground' for preserving all that surf breaks are to the local community (more so for the awareness of outsiders than for any local purpose beyond the 'celebration of place'). Surf breaks are considered as taonga for tangata whenua, and the equivalent for pakeha. In general, modern surf-riding has brought the two cultures closer together through the common interest in many coastal practices. Several respondents felt that surfers participate in, relate to and celebrate many values parallel with Tikanga Māori. In this light, most respondents feel there is a fine line between knowing enough in order to preserve a culture and doing too much and not respecting it simply as a way of being.

Users of surf breaks share them in many different forms of recreation with many positive qualities for the physical and mental health for people of all ages and walks of life. At the grass-roots level, a mixture of formal and informal measures is required to mitigate the increasing pressures on surf breaks. At the core of this issue appears to be a need for a broad, well-rounded vision for what surf break protection is aiming to achieve. This is especially so given the subject (surf breaks and our very precious coastal environment) is likely to become popular and exposed to wider media coverage. This attention was experienced first hand in the media coverage afforded this study.

This cohesion is crucial in order to maintain both the integrity of the natural coastal environment; but also the integrity of the 'vibe' within a line-up. This 'vibe' is critical to enjoyment of a surf break, if the local etiquette is increasingly being disrespected then like a gridlocked inner-city street, a free-flowing situation can turn into a nasty case of 'surf rage' (Young, 2000). Social capital is integral to this, through the relationships that are built in the surf, on the beach, in the car park and beyond. Surf breaks are the gathering points for surfers to participate, catch up, encourage young learner surfers, hold contests, and hang out. In the words of one respondent, "they provide a kind of loom from which the social fabric and culture of surfing and surfers is woven" (J. Mead, personal communication, 8 February, 2011).

As much as surf-riding is perceived as an individualistic pursuit there is a lot of camaraderie as a grass-roots activity that remains largely unknown to the general public. Despite this, surf-riding has a massive influence on our social constructs, behaviours and consumer choices. From a non-surfer's perspective surf culture is perhaps largely misunderstood through the distortion or hyperinflation of the core values and culture that surf-riders truly appreciate.

In light of this, there is also what appears to be a common discrepancy for who this social construct represents. One respondent presented evidence of social marketing efforts by non-surfing companies aimed at changing behaviour, commodity sales and enhanced product meaning through association with 'cool' or healthy lifestyles. This often employs imagery from very visual action sports of which surfing is a highly respected discipline. This image of surfing differs substantially from exposure focused on surfing professionals to the reality of its practice for the average recreationalist.

An important point of difference for this subject was made by another respondent who sought to clarify the difference between the surfing industry and the surfing *community*. The 'industry' being more the competitive and commercial sector of surf-riders indicated as perhaps only 5-10% of known 'surfers'; and, the surfing community as the general recreational users of surf breaks largely removed from 'the cool image'. The underlying issue here is the potential for capture of surf break protection by well-organised interests (i.e. 'key stakeholders') for commercial purposes, versus the values of the wider coastal recreation community interested in family, friends and fun.

The uniquely positive thing about surf-riding culture is its broader reach socially beyond the realm of exploitive use of 'cool constructs' – seeing as a wide range of ages take part in using surf breaks (J. Mead, personal communication, 8 February, 2011). Again, this identifies with surf breaks and their use that relies on natural characteristics preserved for many generations. A coherent recognition across all user-groups is fundamental to maintaining the integrity of the social values derived from the access to, use and enjoyment of surf breaks.

From an economic perspective, the value of surf breaks for tourism alone is significant enough to warrant stand alone provisions ensuring their preservation. The danger is ruining the seclusion of the place is a primary concern associated with attempts to market the region and capitalise on the quality of its surf breaks through increased exposure. A similar example might be the integrity of the world-class spear-fishing setups around the East Cape. Hying up natural assets for commercial purposes is the quickest way to go about destroying them. Respondents commented on the difference between surf culture in Australia and New Zealand, primarily being the recognition of surfing to the point of economic exploitation by the surfing 'industry'. Exploiting surfing hijacks the image, distorts it for commercial gain and ultimately desecrates what is real about the sport as a recreational pursuit – something that a surfer only knows. The 'realness' is the essence of well-being in ways beyond physical health, into spiritual well-being or 'hauora'.

Surfers were once subject to much unfair treatment as a result of their behaviour. They have largely only become more accepted when those inflicting the punishment came to realise surfing was simply a really fun way of being. Now surf break users come from all walks of life and are thus integral to the region's labour force. Without surf breaks, the fun and enjoyment in people's lives is significantly eroded back to the reality of tiresome labour. Many respondents expressed this sentiment, and the relative lack of attraction Gisborne might have as a place to live should anything happen to the quality of the surf.

Appendix 5 – Consultation Material

1. Gisborne Surf Break Survey
2. Maps used in interviews
3. Media Release
4. Cover letter for vetting interview transcriptions

1. Gisborne Surf Break Survey

Your answers to these questions will help Gisborne District Council to understand which surf breaks are important nationally and locally and how they can protect them. The information will be used by the Council planners in developing options for protecting surf breaks. I will also be using the information as part of my university study. Feel free to make extra comments and *all responses are confidential*. Thank you for your time.

Section A: Nationally significant surf breaks

1. The government has declared the following local surf breaks as 'nationally significant'. In your own words describe what makes the following surf breaks significant.

Tuamotu Island

Comments: _____

Stockroute

Comments: _____

Pines

Comments: _____

Whales

Comments: _____

Makorori Point

Comments: _____

Makorori Centres

Comments: _____

2. Are there other breaks not listed above that you think are nationally significant? If so, what are they and what makes them nationally significant?

Section B: Regionally significant breaks

3. There may be other breaks that are significant locally, or to the region, for any number of reasons. List below what you consider to be ten of the most important surf breaks in the Gisborne region (excluding those recognised above). Please also give a rating for how important they are and details of why or what factors contribute to your decision. A map of the study area is included with this survey sheet.

Break 1: _____ Rating: _____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 2: _____ Rating: _____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 3: _____ Rating: ____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 4: _____ Rating: ____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 5: _____ Rating: ____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 6: _____ Rating: ____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 7: _____ Rating: ____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 8: _____ Rating: ____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 9: _____ Rating: ____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Break 10: _____ Rating: ____/ 10

Why is it important? _____

Section C: Criteria for defining surf break values

4. On a scale of one to five (five being the highest), rate the factors below on how useful they are for understanding how important a surf break is in general (not just for Gisborne). Please list any other missing factors or gaps in the space provided below.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wave quality (in optimum conditions) | <input type="checkbox"/> Services (e.g. public toilets, carpark) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consistency | <input type="checkbox"/> Level of use / popularity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Break type (e.g. reef, point, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Suitability as a 'nursery' break for 'breeding' surfers. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wave type (e.g. breaking intensity) | <input type="checkbox"/> Suitability to all skill levels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unique features of a break | <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to settlement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rare features of a break | <input type="checkbox"/> Public access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal variations | <input type="checkbox"/> Vulnerability to physical change that may threaten a break |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water quality (visual aesthetic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic influence (e.g. value for surfing industry, professional competition, tourism) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scenery | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social/community interaction | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage/Cultural values | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Significance to tangata whenua | |

Other factors / comments: _____

5. What other information would be important to this study? _____

6. On a scale of one to five (five being the highest), how effective is this survey for understanding the importance of Gisborne surf breaks? **1 2 3 4 5**

Comments: _____

Thanks for taking the time to fill in the survey.

Bailey Peryman (email: bailey.peryman@lincolnuni.ac.nz)

C) Wainui Beach: Pines



d) Wainui Beach: Whales



e) Makorori Beach: Makorori Point and Centres



3. Gisborne District Council Media Release

Media Release

Release date:

Fitzherbert Street, Gisborne, New Zealand. www.gdc.govt.nz



Knowledge about iconic local surf breaks to be collected

Gisborne District Council wants to talk to locals who know the district's surf breaks best.

A study by Lincoln University student, Bailey Peryman is underway to find out about makes Tairāwhiti's great surf breaks work. He will be focusing on the six breaks that were recently registered as nationally significant as well as others that are particularly well known and loved by the local surfing community.

"I will be meeting informally with surfers who understand how the break works from a technical point of view," says Mr Peryman. "I need to know what influences it, what conditions are favourable and why surfers value it. Until we really know about a break we can't consider what needs to be done to protect it."

Under the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement Council now needs to protect our best surf breaks when developing regional plans or making decisions on coastal development. This law came into effect earlier this month.

Council must ensure that what is done on or near the beach doesn't have a negative impact on the use or enjoyment of a surf break. Activities that could impact on a particular break may include sand removal, rock protection work, aquaculture, stormwater management or even sand dune planting.

"A well publicised example of development arguably having a negative affect on a surf break is the Whangamata Marina," says Mr Peryman. "Constructing the marina has involved the removal of thousands of cubic metres of sand one kilometre from the famous 'Whangamata Bar' surf break."

"Waves break along a sand bottom at this spot and it is vulnerable to developments such as the marina. By understanding that the Whanagmata Bar is sand break we can see that sand removal will affect it. If it was a reef break then sand removal may not be such an issue."

Mr Peryman's initial study will include criteria to identify the local breaks that should be protected. Management options for these breaks will be then be developed in conjunction with surfers and the wider community.

Anyone with in-depth knowledge and experience of surf breaks in the Gisborne/ East Coast region who would like to share their knowledge are asked to contact Council's Yvette Kinsella. Email yvette@gdc.govt.nz or call 867 2049.

Three of the Gisborne surf breaks registered as nationally significant in the National Coastal Policy Statement are at Wainui Beach; Stock Route, Pines and Whales. Two are at Makorori; the Point and Centres and one at Sponge Bay Island.

ENDS

4. Cover letter for vetting interview transcriptions

Dear _____,

First of all, I want to thank you for giving up your time to contribute to this study.

The following is a transcription of our interview. Please read through this and let me know by Friday 11 February whether you are happy with what has been recorded.

If you wish to make any changes, talk further about the study or make any further suggestions / comments, please feel free to do so. Edit the document attached, get in contact with me via email bailey.peryman@gdc.govt.nz or using the following phone numbers:

Work: 06 867 2049 (extn: 8523)

Cell: 021 122 7638

All information gathered will be used by the Council planners in developing options for protecting surf breaks. I will also be using the information as part of my university study. *All responses are confidential.*

Again, many thanks for you time and consideration.

Regards

Bailey Peryman

Appendix 6 – Schedule of Regionally Significant surf breaks in Gisborne

These are the surf breaks and associated values respondents identified for a range of reasons other than their value solely as high performance breaks. Ratings show the average level of importance to the Gisborne District where identified by survey respondents. Descriptions are a brief summary derived from surfing guides and all community engagement.

Common Name	Importance (1=lowest, 10=highest)	Brief Description
Waipaoa River Mouth ('Big River')	9	Fickle, but high performance left and right-hand river mouth break. Only for confident, experienced, fit surfers and strong swimmers. Legendary status.
Roberts Road (Waikanae Beach)	9	Beach break that caters for all abilities – close to town. Suited to beginners and experienced surfers. Area well used by surf schools/surf lessons. Can produce high wave quality in the right conditions. Safe for family, patrolled area. Starting place for most aspiring surfers in the region.
The Pipe ('Gissy Pipe', Midway Beach)	9	Can hold solid swell and produce barrelling waves depending on certain conditions. For experienced surfers only when surf is large. Good for average surfer. An awesome wave in the right swell direction, close to town – everyone can access it. Intermediate to advanced break with a range of 'peaks' that spread out the crowds.
Makorori Beach (including 'Northern Reef', 'Nanas', 'Farmhouse', 'Creeks', 'Red bus')	9	Not seeing any buildings is a significant characteristic of what is unique about this part of the coast. An area rich in history for both tangata whenua (as a hospice) and pakeha (modern surf culture), in a cultural sense and also with pockets of indigenous biodiversity. The range of breaks along the beach help to dissipate crowds, offer a range of challenges across a variation of sand, sand and rock, reef and point setups suitable for all skill levels. Consistently offering waves of some variety for the majority of the year, across a broad range of conditions. A well-used area for competitions. 'Gateway to the coast', the point where one becomes separated from the urban environs of Gisborne. The sense of being in the wilderness, yet in such close proximity to a significant township is the essence of the place.
Tokomaru Bay	9	Combination of breaks on offer, including a known reef break and a collection of beach breaks. Can offer more favourable conditions when Gisborne 'town breaks' are not working.
Waipiro Bay (Creek)	9	Solid, fast wave for serious surfers. Provides a challenge. Access is often difficult and subject to heavy weather systems.
Waipiro Bay (Frog Rock, including 'Kiddies Corner')	8	Unique rock formation providing a unique surfing experience. Great wave on dead low tide. Can be very hollow. Iconic East Coast break, authentic 'kiwiana' experience.

Common Name	Importance (1=lowest, 10=highest)	Brief Description
Tolaga Bay Riverbar	8	Nice long rides, river and beach breaks. Can offer more favourable conditions when Gisborne 'town breaks' are not working. Another East Coast area for a surf break with an authentic feel.
Cooks Cove	8	Long paddle, long walk, high quality waves. Historically significant. Can offer more favourable conditions when Gisborne 'town breaks' are not working. Another East Coast area for a surf break with an authentic feel.
Three Points (Kaiaua Bay)	7	Isolated, but high quality wave with three distinct take off points. Highly scenic setting within a protected bay area. For surfers who want to go on a walking safari adventure – uncrowded. Fickle consistency, but offers long, surfable 'walls' in the right conditions.
Waiapu River Mouth	7	Variety of break types with setups relatively unique to the District.
The Cliff (Sponge Bay)	n/a	Left-hand reef break which works in large swell conditions.
Sponge Bay	n/a	Mellow, more family-orientated spot with a range of average quality waves offering sheltered conditions where other nearby spots are wind-affected.
Pouawa Beach	n/a	Range of short and punchy beach breaks with wave quality dependent on swell and wind conditions. Good for all levels of experience.
Waihau Beach (Loisel's)	n/a	Open ocean bay with a range of beach breaks and rocky outcrops. Open to lots of swell and Good for all levels of experience.
Kaiaua Bay	n/a	Exposed and isolated beach break of variable wave quality dependent on sand bank formation.
Te Araroa	n/a	Combination of point and beach breaks that can produce high quality waves, largely for more experienced surfers.
Tokata	n/a	Good for all surfers, can produce more intense, hollow waves.
Horseshoe Bay	n/a	Scenic spot offering a range of beach breaks that can produce good quality waves in the right conditions. Good for all levels of experience.
Hicks Bay	n/a	Beach break, good learners wave, often uncrowded.

Appendix 7 – Surf Break Assessment Criteria

Surf Break Assessment Criteria

A. Standardised criteria for assessing physical wave attributes

1. **Wave Quality** (height, shape and length of ride). Performance of the surf break in optimum conditions – rate out of 10 in comparison to other breaks in the region, 10 being highest.
2. **Consistency** of **surfable** wave conditions of any quality – rate out of 10 in comparison to other breaks in the region, 10 being highest.
3. **Consistency** of **high quality** surfable wave conditions at or near full potential – rate out of 10 in comparison to other breaks in the region, 10 being highest.
4. **Break type** (reef break, point break, ledge, river mouth or beach break). How representative is the surf break in terms of its type in the region, i.e. is it a common type of surf break within the region or is it rare.

B. Standardised criteria for assessing physical wave attributes

5. **Line-up accommodation**. How many recreational users the break can accommodate at once, including where a break offers several surfable areas at any one time given suitable conditions.
6. **Naturalness/Scenery**. The contribution of the surrounding natural landscape toward the enjoyment of the surfing and overall recreational experience.
7. **Level of use**. How regularly the break is used for recreation. This applies to the breaks suitability for a range of users from beginner to advanced levels in terms of all activities that use the break, including, but not limited to surfers, surf life saving, kite boarding, canoeists and paddle boards.
8. **Amenity value and access**. Value of the break for its ease-of-access, proximity to a township, associated facilities, services and other amenities (e.g. surf clubs, toilets, car parks, shelters, nearby accommodation and shops). This category also includes the users of surf breaks as a part of the seascape, in providing amenity value for onlookers.
9. **Community values**. Influence of a break on the social fabric of the surf community and the health and well-being associated with surf-riding (e.g. family-orientated lifestyle, local economic activity, surf training and competition).
10. **Value as a national / internationally recognised break**. The significance of a break beyond the region for a wider domestic or international range of users, interests or audience – for general tourism and / or purposes specific to surf-riding.
11. **Cultural values**. Consideration of culturally significant values. This includes tikanga Māori and the arrival, growth and evolution of 'modern' surf culture from Hawaiian and Californian influences that included surf lifesaving.