

SCHED4 - Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes

Outstanding Natural Features

| ONF-1 | Turakirae Head ONF |
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| Description Turakirae Head is a prominent headland comprising a sequence of well-defined earthquake raised beaches and marine terraces. Contained within the South Coast Outstanding Natural Landscape, the terraces are bound by the Orongorongo River to the west and the Kotumu Stream to the east. Turakirae Head extends inland to the toe of the slopes that form the southern extent of the Remutaka Range. The headland is protected as a Department of Conservation Scientific Reserve. | |
| Relevant values under Policy 25 of the RPS | Natural Science Values - Very High Sensory Values - Very High Shared And Recognised Values - Very High |
| Key Values | <p>Natural Science Values</p> <p>The series of raised beaches and marine terraces are internationally renowned as a model for tectonic education and is identified as a Geopreservation Site.</p> <p>Parts (128 hectares) of the landform were gazetted as a scientific reserve in recognition of their geological importance (Department of Conservation, N.D.).</p> <p>The large area of contiguous indigenous coastal vegetation, including the nationally threatened shrubby tororaro (<i>Muehlenbeckia astonii</i>) form important ecological connections.</p> <p>The ecology of the landscape supports large populations of fur seals, at risk birds, and endemic lizards.</p> <p>The ONF lies within an area identified as having outstanding natural character (Boffa Miskell Ltd, 2016).</p> <p>Turakirae Head wetland is identified as having outstanding indigenous biodiversity values (Wellington Regional Council, 2015).</p> <p>Sensory Values</p> <p>The expressive landform exhibits a continuous record of uplift through a series of raised beaches and marine terraces.</p> <p>The visually striking feature can be seen throughout the region due to the headland's prominence into Cook Strait, and is recognised both locally and regionally as an iconic and memorable landscape.</p> <p>The feature is highly natural with little modification as evidenced by an absence of roads, structures, and small areas of introduced vegetation. Disturbance is limited to occasional grazing.</p> <p>There is a rich association with transient coastal experiences due to shifting tides, wave patterns, light conditions, aromatic and auditory elements, and the presence of marine mammals.</p> <p>Shared And Recognised Values</p> <p>Highly valued for both terrestrial and aquatic recreational opportunities. The cycleway through this area is part of the Remutaka Cycle Trail. Its proximity to the Nicholson Trench also makes it a popular destination for surfcasting.</p> <p>Significant in Māori culture, it served as the tribal boundary between Te Atiawa, Ngati Kahungunu, and Rangitane, and was on the coastal route to Wairarapa. Middens, pits, and pa sites provide evidence of early Māori settlement.</p> <p>It is historically significant as a route for early European settlers traveling between the Wellington and the Wairarapa Region (Wellington Regional Council, 2007).</p> |

| ONF-2 | Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui ONF |
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| Description Shingle and sand beaches, raised marine terraces, cliffs, and escarpments form the prominent headland, Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui. This ONF, contained within the South Coast Outstanding Natural Landscape, is bound by the Okakaho Stream to the north and the Wainuiomata River to the east. The flat land above the escarpment includes a lighthouse reserve with a collection of buildings and other structures surrounding the lighthouse. Collectively, these landscape elements are contained in Wellington Regional Council's East Harbour Regional Park. | |
| Relevant values under Policy 25 of the RPS | Natural Science Values - High Sensory Values - Very High Shared And Recognised Values - Very High |
| Key Values | <p>Natural Science Values A series of raised beaches, marine terraces, and escarpments are representative of the South Coast Outstanding Natural Landscape.</p> <p>The headland is home to a NIWA clean air monitoring station that contributes to global knowledge of greenhouse gases. A number of naturally uncommon ecosystems consisting of coastal turf (nationally critical); stony beach ridges, shingle beaches, dune slacks, stable sand dunes, coastal lagoon (all nationally endangered), and estuary (nationally vulnerable) are found throughout the ONF (Wellington Regional Council, 2014).</p> <p>The habitat supports a large population of at risk birds and rare lizards and invertebrates.</p> <p>Seepages containing the naturally uncommon Kirk's crassula (<i>Crassula kirkii</i>) and the nationally endangered pygmy clubrush (<i>Isolepis basilaris</i>) are present on the headland (Wellington Regional Council, 2014).</p> <p>Sensory Values The expressive landform exhibits a continuous record of uplift through a series of marine terraces and pronounced escarpments.</p> <p>Although parts of the headland are highly modified by farming practices, its remote location and exposure to coastal conditions means that it retains a high level of natural character. The highly unmodified escarpments and shingle beach support many important endemic fauna and threatened indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>It is a vivid and memorable landform at the entrance to Wellington Harbour.</p> <p>The feature contains a vivid contrast between productive land and extensive areas of indigenous habitat.</p> <p>There is a rich association with transient coastal experiences due to shifting tides, wave patterns, light conditions, aromatic and auditory elements, and the presence of marine mammals.</p> <p>Shared And Recognised Values The headland is highly valued for both terrestrial and aquatic recreational opportunities. A large greywacke rock formation is a popular bouldering destination.</p> <p>It is significant in Māori culture as the site of the first landfall by Māori navigators.</p> <p>Significant to Wellington's maritime history as the site of several shipwrecks, which prompted the establishment of the lighthouse reserve. The Baring Head/ Ōrua-pouanui lighthouse served as the second to last manned lighthouse in New Zealand and is one of only three New Zealand lighthouses where the associated buildings remain in situ (Wellington Regional Council, 2011a).</p> |
| ONF-3 | Parangārahu Lakes ONF (Lake Kohangapiripiri and Lake Kohangatera) |
| Description At the easterly entrance to Wellington Harbour, cliffs, escarpments, marine terraces, and shingle beaches form Pencarrow Head/Te Rae-akiaki. Directly east of the headland along the South Coast Outstanding Natural Landscape | |

are Lake Kohangapiripiri and Lake Kohangatera. Collectively known as Parangārahu Lakes¹, these freshwater lakes fed by Cameron's Creek and Gollans Stream, are part of a drowned valley wetland system cut off from the sea by beach ridges. The Parangārahu Lakes are protected and managed along with Pencarrow Head/Te Rae-akiaki as both a Department of Conservation Reserve and as a part of Wellington Regional Council's East Harbour Regional Park.

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| Relevant values under Policy 25 of the RPS | Natural Science Values - Very High Sensory Values - Very High Shared And Recognised Values - Very High |
| Key Values | <p>Natural Science Values The lakes, wetlands and raised beaches together support a wide range of native and regionally threatened flora and fauna.</p> <p>The lake and wetland system is the largest and sometimes only breeding habitat for several species of waterfowl. One of the only weed-free, macrophytic native lake communities remaining in New Zealand.</p> <p>The lakes are recently designated as a Department of Conservation scientific reserve used for research and education.</p> <p>Both lakes are identified as outstanding water bodies² for having outstanding indigenous ecosystem values (fish diversity and threatened fish species). Both lake wetlands are identified as having outstanding indigenous biodiversity (Wellington Regional Council, 2015).</p> <p>Sensory Values The raised beaches separating the lakes from the sea are expressive of the seismic activity that led to the formation of the lakes.</p> <p>Although the vegetation along the hill slopes of the lakes is highly modified from years of burning and grazing, the wetlands and beaches support highly indigenous plant communities in a relatively unmodified state. The absence of roads and structures contributes to a high natural coastal character.</p> <p>There is a rich association with transient terrestrial wetland and coastal experiences. The shifting tides, wave patterns, light conditions, and aromatic and auditory elements are prevalent at the southern reaches of the lakes. The sensory wetland experience of the northern reaches provide intimate views of migratory waterfowl and reflections of the rising hills are captured in the open water of the lakes (Gibbs, 2002).</p> <p>Shared And Recognised Values While the tracks along the lakes are not well used the headland is highly valued for both terrestrial and aquatic recreational opportunities. The coastline walkway from Eastbourne to the lighthouses is especially popular with bikers and walkers.</p> <p>Remnants of Māori settlement are evidenced in the upper reaches of both lakes. Extremely rare karaka tree dendroglyphs are found at the head of Lake Kohangapiripiri (Gibbs 2002).</p> |
| ONF-4 | Mākaro /Ward Island ONF |
| <p>Description This is one of three small islands in Wellington Harbour. The island is located due west from the Eastbourne shoreline and serves as a deep channel guide for ships entering and exiting the harbour. The island is part of the same submerged valley system as Matiu/Somes.</p> | |
| Relevant values under Policy 25 of the RPS | Natural Science Values - Very High Sensory Values - Very High Shared And Recognised Values - High |
| Key Values | <p>Natural Science Values The island is designated as a Department of Conservation scientific reserve, important for research and education. Hardy coastal indigenous vegetation and rocky shoreline provide habitat for a number of threatened or at risk seabird species. The island is one of the few large and secure nesting habitats for blue penguin (<i>Eudyptula minor</i>) in the Wellington region (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, 2012).</p> <p>Sensory Values</p> |

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| | <p>The island is a visually striking feature, central to the Wellington Harbour. Visible from a wide area, the island is recognised as a memorable feature.</p> <p>The high cliffs and shore platform along the coastal edge create an expressive landform exhibiting uplift from previous seismic activity.</p> <p>The island is highly natural with little modification as evidenced by an absence of roads, structures, and introduced vegetation.</p> <p>There is a rich association with transient coastal experiences due to shifting tides, wave patterns, and light conditions, aromatic and auditory elements, and the presence of marine mammals.</p> <p>Shared And Recognised Values</p> <p>The island is highly valued as a destination for recreational watercraft.</p> <p>The island, named by Kupe, is culturally significant to Māori for several reasons; Kupe was the first Polynesian to discover New Zealand, the island is believed to be named after one of his daughters, and while many place names from other ancestors have been lost, this name was preserved by several generations of Māori (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, 2012).</p> <p>There are historical associations related to both world wars. These include the construction of a wooden piled anti-submarine barrier between the island and Robinson Bay and a suspended net from buoys on the western shore to Kau Point on the Miramar Peninsula (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, 2012).</p> |
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Outstanding Natural Landscapes

| ONL-5 | South Coast ONL |
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| Description | <p>The South Coast Outstanding Natural Landscape extends from a point just south of Inconstant Point on the east side of Wellington Harbour along the coastal edge to Mukamuka Stream in Palliser Bay. A series of exposed headlands and sandy and shingle beaches rising to steep coastal escarpments and hill slopes comprise the coastal landscape. Four outstanding natural features (ONFs) are contained within the South Coast landscape; these are Turakirae Head, Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui, and the Parangārahu Lakes (Lake Kohangapiripiri and Lake Kohangatera).</p> |
| Relevant values under Policy 25 of the RPS | <p>Natural Science Values - Very High</p> <p>Sensory Values - Very High</p> <p>Shared And Recognised Values - Very High</p> |
| Key Values | <p>Natural Science Values</p> <p>The series of raised uplifted beaches and marine terraces are internationally renowned as a model for tectonic education.</p> <p>Several outstanding natural features along the South Coast are designated as Department of Conservation scientific reserves used for research and education.</p> <p>A number of naturally uncommon ecosystems consisting of coastal turf (nationally critical); stony beach ridges, shingle beaches, dune slacks, stable sand dunes, coastal lagoon (all nationally endangered), estuary (nationally vulnerable), and weed free, macrophytic freshwater lakes (nationally rare) are found within the landscape (Wellington Regional Council, 2014).</p> <p>The ecology of the landscape supports large populations of fur seals, at risk birds, and endemic lizards and invertebrates.</p> <p>Sensory Values</p> <p>The expressive landscape exhibits a continuous record of uplift and wave action through a series of raised beaches, marine terraces, and dune associations.</p> <p>Recognised both locally and regionally as an iconic and memorable landscape, the visually striking coastline can be observed at considerable distances.</p> <p>The feature is highly natural with little modification as evidenced by a limited presence of roads, structures, and communities of introduced vegetation. Disturbance is generally limited to occasional grazing and structures associated with the Baring Head and Pencarrow</p> |

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| | <p>lighthouses.</p> <p>There is a rich association with transient coastal experiences due to shifting tides, wave patterns, light conditions, aromatic and auditory elements, and the presence of marine mammals.</p> <p>Shared And Recognised Values The coastal landscape is highly valued for both terrestrial and aquatic recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Significant in Māori culture, the landscape served as the tribal boundary between Te Atiawa, Ngāti Kahungunu, and Rangitāne, and was the site of the first landfall by Māori navigators. Middens, pits, and pa sites provide evidence of early Māori settlement.</p> <p>Rare karaka tree dendroglyphs can still be found in the freshwater lake region within the landscape (Wellington Regional Council, 2015).</p> <p>Historically significant as the site of several shipwrecks and subsequent establishment of lighthouses, the landscape also served as the route for early European settlers traveling between the Wellington and the Wairarapa Regions (Wellington Regional Council, 2007).</p> |
| ONL-6 | Matiu/Somes Island ONL |
| <p>Description The Matiu/Somes ONL includes Mokopuna Island at its northern tip. Matiu/Somes Island is both a historic and scientific reserve and is pest free. Mokopuna is also designated as a Department of Conservation. Centrally located within the harbour, the island is part of a now submerged valley system. The island is encircled by a shore platform cut by the sea, together with sea caves and rock arches.</p> | |
| Relevant values under Policy 25 of the RPS | <p>Natural Science Values - High Sensory Values - Very High Shared And Recognised Values - Very High</p> |
| Key Values | <p>Natural Science Values It is a Department of Conservation scientific reserve used for not only research, but as a site for school environmental education programmes as a part of the National Environmental Education Strategy.</p> <p>The predator-free status and restoration efforts have resulted in a habitat that supports a variety of threatened bird species and endemic reptiles. Notable birds include the red crowned parakeet (<i>Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae</i>) which only inhabit predator free islands and the blue penguin (<i>Eudyptula minor</i>) (Department of Conservation Wellington Conservancy, 2009).</p> <p>The coastal cliffs provide nesting habitat for several coastal bird species.</p> <p>Sensory Values The island is a visually striking feature, central to the Wellington Harbour. Highly visible from many areas, the island is recognised as an iconic and memorable feature.</p> <p>The high cliffs and shore platform along the coastal edge create an expressive landform exhibiting uplift from previous seismic activity.</p> <p>Although the island has a history of human use, as evidenced by the collection of structures, exotic vegetation, and grazed pasture, there have been extensive efforts to eradicate pests, significant restoration work to establish vegetation indigenous to the coastal environment, and the reintroduction of endemic fauna, all of which contribute to a high level naturalness.</p> <p>There is a rich association with transient coastal experiences due to shifting tides, wave patterns, light conditions, and aromatic and auditory elements.</p> <p>Shared And Recognised Values Archaeological sites such as middens, pits, and pa sites provide evidence of early Māori settlement (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, 2012).</p> <p>The island, named by Kupe, is culturally significant to Māori for several reasons; Kupe was the first Polynesian to discover New Zealand, the island is believed to be named after one of his</p> |

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| | <p>nieces, and while many place names from other ancestors have been lost, this name was preserved by several generations of Māori (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, 2012).</p> <p>There are several historic European settlement associations unique to the island. Once serving as a human and animal quarantine station, the island was earlier used as an internment camp for 'enemy aliens' during both world wars. Several of the animal quarantine buildings and gun emplacements remain on the island today (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, 2012).</p> |
| ONL-7 | Remutaka Range ONL |
| Description | <p>Tectonic and glacial processes led to the formation of the Remutaka Range. The range serves as the far eastern backdrop and skyline to the Hutt Valley and creates a substantial barrier to the Wairarapa Valley to the east. Running north-east/south-west the ranges rise from Turakirae Head on the south coast and extend to the Hutt City boundary. The Remutaka Forest Park extends along nearly the entire length of the range, however the Wainuiomata/Orongorongo Water Catchment Area is confined to the northern reaches of the range within Hutt City. Along the southern edge of the Remutaka Forest Park there is clear transition from indigenous forest landcover to matagouri and regenerating bush. While, the regenerating landcover is of lower ecological value, it is included within the bounds of the Remutaka Range ONL as it is part of the ridge and valley system forming the Orongorongo watershed catchment. Modification to this part of the ONL is limited to grazing, therefore, the landscape retains its expressive and visually striking values.</p> |
| Relevant values under Policy 25 of the RPS | <p>Natural Science Values - Very High Sensory Values - Very High Shared And Recognised Values - Very High</p> |
| Key Values | <p>Natural Science Values Topography consisting of varying slopes, aspects, and elevations and bioclimatic zones ranging from coastal to alpine give rise to a variety of ecosystems contributing to a highly biodiverse, species-rich environment. The extensive contiguous corridor of protected forest contain original tracts of indigenous vegetation consisting mainly of beech and kamahi communities with pockets of podocarp communities.</p> <p>The Orongorongo Valley within the southern reaches of the range is the site of one of the longest running ecological studies about the impacts of possums and forest health in New Zealand. Knowledge gained from this research was used to develop curriculum for school groups (Wellington Conservancy, 2006).</p> <p>Due to the highly functioning, healthy ecosystems present in the range, a portion is designated as a water catchment area for parts of the Wellington region.</p> <p>Sensory Values The expressive landform exhibits characteristics of continual geological uplift and down-cutting of stream systems through easily fractured rock.</p> <p>The range provides a visually striking forested backdrop to the eastern Hutt Valley. Visible from many areas, the range is recognised as both iconic and memorable.</p> <p>Large contiguous areas with little modification, as evidenced by an absence of roads and limited structures and communities of introduced vegetation, contribute to a high level of naturalness.</p> <p>An abundant presence of wildlife and diversity of climatic zones that highlight seasonal changes are important transient values of this feature.</p> <p>Shared And Recognised Values Highly valued for a diverse range of recreational opportunities, the long-established network of tracks and huts are especially popular with hunters and trampers.</p> <p>While there is little evidence of Māori settlement, the range served as a key resource for collection of food (kai), medicinal plants and animals (rongoā) and weaving materials (taonga raranga).</p> <p>The range has strong regional historical value as the site for the first rail link between the Wellington and Wairarapa regions (Department of Conservation Wellington Conservancy, 2009).</p> |