

Far North Holdings Limited

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT OF THE NATURAL CHARACTER OF THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT OPUA MARINA

19 JULY 2024





LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT OF THE NATURAL CHARACTER OF THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT OPUA MARINA

Far North Holdings Limited

WSP
Level 3 The Westhaven
100 Beaumont St
Auckland 1010
+64 9 355 9500
wsp.com/nz

REV	DATE	DETAILS
1	05/07/2024	WIP Draft sent to client, planners and other specialists
2	19/07/2024	Final

	NAME	DATE
Prepared by:	Catherine Hamilton	19/07/2024
Reviewed by:	Stefan Steyn	19/07/2024
Approved by:	Alan Whiteley	19/07/2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	DISCLAIMERS AND LIMITATIONS.....	1
1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	. LIMITATIONS.....	2
1.2	2022 MASTERPLAN CONTEXT.....	3
1.3	DEFINED TERMS.....	4
1.3.1	COASTAL ENVIRONMENT.....	4
1.3.2	NATURAL CHARACTER.....	4
1.3.3	LANDSCAPE EFFECTS.....	5
1.3.4	NATURAL CHARACTER EFFECTS.....	5
1.3.5	ASSESSING NATURAL CHARACTER EFFECTS.....	5
1.3.6	VISUAL EFFECTS.....	6
2	METHODOLOGY.....	7
3	EXISTING LANDSCAPE.....	9
3.1	WIDER LANDSCAPE CONTEXT – BAY OF ISLANDS.....	9
3.2	LOCAL LANDSCAPE – OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA, OPUA MARINE PARK, OPUA COMMERCIAL ESTATE AND COLENZO TRIANGLE.....	10
3.2.1	LANDFORM AND CHARACTER ALONG THE OPUA COASTAL EDGE AND SURROUNDS.....	10
3.2.2	LANDFORM AND CHARACTER, LANDWARD.....	11
4	THE PROPOSAL.....	13
4.1	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL.....	13
5	STATUTORY PROVISIONS.....	16
6	NATURAL CHARACTER, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS.....	17
6.1	NATURAL CHARACTER EFFECTS.....	17
6.1.1	OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA.....	17
6.1.2	OPUA COMMERCIAL ESTATE.....	17
6.1.3	MARINE PARK.....	18
6.1.4	COLENZO TRIANGLE.....	18
6.1.5	OVERALL.....	18
6.2	LANDSCAPE EFFECTS.....	19

6.3	VISUAL EFFECTS	20
6.3.1	VISUAL CATCHMENT AND VIEWING AUDIENCE	20
6.3.2	VISUAL EFFECTS FROM REPRESENTATIVE VIEWPOINTS	21
6.3.3	SUMMARY OF VISUAL EFFECTS	27
6.4	SUMMARY OF NATURAL CHARACTER, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS, WITHOUT MITIGATION	28
7	PROPOSED MITIGATION	29
7.1	PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES	29
7.2	SUMMARY OF NATURAL CHARACTER, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS, AFTER MITIGATION.....	29
8	CONCLUSION	30
9	RECOMMENDATIONS	31
	APPENDIX A	32
	GRAPHIC SUPPLEMENT: MAP SERIES, VIEW POINT PHOTOS AND PHOTO ESSAY LIST BULLET	32
	APPENDIX B	33
	FNHL SUBMISSION ON THE PROPOSED FAR NORTH DISTRICT PLAN 2022.....	33
	APPENDIX C	34
	SEVEN POINT SCALE OF EFFECTS	34
	APPENDIX D	35
	STATUTORY PROVISIONS	35
	RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991 (RMA).....	35
	NEW ZEALAND COASTAL POLICY STATEMENT 2010 (NZCPS).....	35
	PROPOSED REGIONAL PLAN FOR NORTHLAND 2024	36
	REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR NORTHLAND 2016 (RPS)	38
	OPERATIVE FAR NORTH DISTRICT PLAN 2009 (OFNDP).....	38
	PROPOSED FAR NORTH DISTRICT PLAN (PFNDP)	39

DISCLAIMERS AND LIMITATIONS

This report (**'Report'**) has been prepared by WSP exclusively for Far North Holdings Limited (**'Client'**) in relation to a Landscape Assessment (**'Purpose'**) and in accordance with the Short Form Agreement for Consultant Engagement – Opuia Marina Landscape Architecture and Urban Design SME Services dated 19/07/2024.

PERMITTED PURPOSE

This Report has been prepared expressly for the purpose of a Landscape Assessment for a plan Change for Opuia Marina Development Area, Marine Business Park, Opuia Commercial Estate and Colenso Triangle ('Permitted Purpose'). WSP accepts no liability whatsoever for the use of the Report, in whole or in part, for any purpose other than the Permitted Purpose. Unless expressly stated otherwise, this Report has been prepared without regard to any special interest of any party other than the Client.

WSP accepts no liability whatsoever for any use of this Report, in whole or in part, by any party other than the Client. Unless WSP agrees otherwise in writing, any use or any reliance on this Report by a third party is at its sole risk without recourse to WSP. Third parties must make their own enquiries and obtain independent advice in relation to any matter dealt with or any conclusion expressed in this Report.

QUALIFICATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The services undertaken by WSP in preparing this Report were limited to those specifically detailed in the Agreement and the Report and are subject to the scope, qualifications, assumptions and limitations set out in the Report and/or otherwise communicated to the Client. Except as otherwise stated in the Report and to the extent that statements, opinions, facts, conclusion and/or recommendations in the Report ('Conclusions') are based in whole or in part on information provided by the Client and other parties ('Information'). The Information has not been and have not been verified by WSP and WSP accepts no liability for the reliability, adequacy, accuracy and completeness of the Information.

The data reported and conclusions drawn by WSP in this Report are based solely on information made available to WSP at the time of preparing the Report. The passage of time; unexpected variations in ground conditions; manifestations of latent conditions; or the impact of future events (including (without limitation) changes in policy, legislation, guidelines, scientific knowledge; and changes in interpretation of policy by statutory authorities); may require further investigation or subsequent re-evaluation of the Conclusions.

USE AND RELIANCE

This Report should be read in its entirety and must not be copied, distributed or referred to in part only. The Report must not be reproduced without WSP's prior approval in writing. WSP will not be responsible for interpretations or conclusions drawn by the reader of the Report. This Report (or sections of the Report) must not be used as part of a specification for a project or for incorporation into any other document without WSP's agreement in writing.

1 INTRODUCTION

WSP has been engaged by Far North Holdings Limited (FNHL) to prepare a Landscape Assessment (The Assessment) of the natural character of the coastal environment as it relates to FNHL's submission to the Far North District Council (FNDC) Proposed District Plan (PDP).

The landholdings subject to FNHL's submission are four sites (The Sites) located in the settlement of Opuia, Te Tai Tokerau/Northland. These sites, collectively referred to as the Opuia Marina Development Area (OMDA) are contained in separate but interconnected landholdings as illustrated in Figure 1-1 below. They are:

- Opuia Marina Development Area
- Marine Business Park
- Colenso Triangle
- Opuia Commercial Estate

The FNHL submission is seeking to make changes to the PDP to realise the potential identified in the 2022 Opuia Marina Masterplan for a vibrant mixed-use precinct. Changes being sought are to transition the current PDP zoning from Light Industrial to a more versatile Mixed-Use Zone across all four sites.

Further changes are sought to the Mixed-Use zone permitted height limits and building coverage. Specifically, FNHL's submission seeks to change the height of Opuia Marina Development Area / Mixed Use Zone at the Opuia Marina from 5 m to 16 m, and to change the permitted height limit in the Marine Business Park, Commercial Estate, and Colenso Triangle from 5 m to 12 m.

The PDP 5 m height limit over the ODMA is imposed because the sites are contained wholly or partially within the Coastal Environment overlay. This overlay seeks to preserve and protect the natural character of the Coastal Environment, including amenity values, while at the same time providing for appropriate, subdivision and development. Hence the need for this report to assess the likely effects of the FNHL submission on natural character values within the Coastal Environment.

It is noteworthy that the s42A planners report recommends a softening of some development restrictions relating to the urban settlement of Opuia. This includes a recommendation to remove the 5m Coastal Environment height limit from the Opuia Settlement, in recognition that the natural character values at the edge of Opuia have already been compromised by the built environment.

Specifically, this assessment focuses on:

- Definitions of natural character and the coastal environment.
- An analysis of the existing natural character of the Opuia settlement landscape.
- FNHL's submission to the PDP, proposed Plan Change.
- The relevant statutory provisions.
- An assessment of the likely effects of FNHL's submission on the natural character of the Coastal Environment.

1.1 . LIMITATIONS

The following limitations apply to this Landscape Assessment:

- Cultural landscape values have not been included. It is assumed that these will be addressed in the Cultural Impact Assessment.
- A site visit was only undertaken during daylight hours and in the winter on Monday, 1 July 2024, Tuesday, 2 July 2024 and Saturday, 6 July 2024. The site was viewed from on land and on in-shore water areas.
- Cumulative effects have not been assessed as part of this assessment.
- This report is intended to be read in conjunction with the Opuia Marina PDP Hearing Urban Design Assessment, WSP Ltd, dated 12 July 2024.



Figure 1-1: Proposed sites location plan (The Bay of Islands Marina / Marine Park / Commercial Estate Masterplan) WSP Ltd.

1.2 2022 MASTERPLAN CONTEXT

FNHL is proposing that all four Sites illustrated in Figure 1-1 are rezoned from their PDP zoning (Table 1-1) to Mixed Use Zone and that the permitted height limitation be increased. This will allow for The Bay of Islands Marina / Marine Park / Commercial Estate Masterplan (The Masterplan) developed in October 2022 to be implemented.

Table 1-1: Current PDP zoning.

SITE	PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN ZONING
Opua Marina Development Area	Coastal Environment Overlay Light Industrial Zone Mixed Use Zone High Natural Character Overlay (partially over the Mixed Use zone only)
Marine Park	Rural Lifestyle Zone - Coastal Environment Overlay (partially)
Commercial Estate	Mixed Use Zone Coastal Environment Overlay (partially)
Colenso Triangle	Rural Production Zone Coastal Environment Overlay (partially)

The sites, nestled within the visitor triangle of Paihia, Opua and Russell, hold untapped potential to evolve into a vibrant, mixed-use hub that complements the region's existing attractions. There is a desire to transform Opua Marina Development Area into a dynamic, mixed-use environment that blends place-based waterfront design with residential, retail and community spaces. This is at odds with the PDP, which envisions Opua Marina Development Area as a light industrial zone only. Furthermore, the Coastal Environment overlay would see the height of development limited to 5 m. This maximum height will limit the landholdings to reach their potential as an integrated mixed-use development.

To achieve this vision, the Marine Business Park, Opua Commercial Estate and Colenso Triangle sites will support the Opua Marina Development Area to reach its potential as part of the socio- economic ecosystem of Opua.

Opua Marina Development Area could foster a diverse community while enhancing the existing maritime character through residential and commercial offerings. This proposed shift in land use aligns with the Proposed Regional Plan for Northland (PRP) which has land at Opua Marina Development Area designated as a mixture of Marina Zone and Coastal Commercial Zone.

To enable The Masterplan, FNHL are seeking the following amendments/relief:

- To change all of the Landholdings from their respective operative and proposed zoning (Refer Table 1) to a Mixed Use Zone, including retaining Opua Commercial Estate as a Mixed Use Zone.
- A Bay of Islands Marina Development Area overlay that applies to the Bay of Islands Marina Landholdings.

- To retain the Maritime Exemption Area of the Operative District Plan as currently mapped in relation to the Bay of Islands Marina.
- To promote changes / deletions / additions to those provisions found in the Attachment 1 and 2 of Appendix B.

1.3 DEFINED TERMS

The following key definitions are explained as they relate to this assessment.

1.3.1 COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

The term 'Coastal Environment' is not defined in the RMA nor is it defined in the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010 (NZCPS). The coastal environment is however described in Policy 1 of the NZCPS as (amongst other things) "areas where coastal processes, influences or qualities are significant...".

A landscape interpretation considers the coastal environment holistically as a system including both the coastal interface as well as the area of coastal influence. The land and the sea are interconnected in such landscapes, encompassing the area where coastal processes, influences, or distinctive features play a significant formative role. To put it differently, the coastal environment represents the dynamic interface between the sea and the land.

The extent of the coastal environment is broadly determined by biophysical patterns and processes. It may be defined by coastal watersheds, inshore waters, estuaries, tidal flats and the shoreline (front dunes, back dunes coastal wetlands).

Inland extents including rivers, coastal escarpments and ridges can provide a clearly defined and logical inland boundary to the coastal environment. Where built environment elements such as roads and buildings exist, these can vastly reduce the significance of coastal processes, influences or qualities of the coastal environment. In flat coastal areas, the significance of coastal influences increasingly decreases moving further inland.

1.3.2 NATURAL CHARACTER

Preserving natural character within the coastal environment requires identifying the extent and characteristics of the coastal environment itself. Policy 1 of the NZCPS recognises that the coastal environment will vary from location to location and includes the nine matters including:

- Coastal and marine landforms (headlands, peninsulas, cliffs, dunes, reefs, spits, bays, seabed)
- Coastal and marine biota and ecosystems
- Coastal processes
- Coastal human features
- Land use patterns oriented to the sea
- Coastal activities
- Coastal water patterns
- Views to and from the sea

- Other experiential aspects (the sound and smell of the sea, lap of the tides, reflected light on the sky)¹.

Clearly the NCPS recognises the three overlapping dimensions of landscape - physical, associative and perceptual – as relevant to defining natural character. In terms of the physical dimension of natural character there are three fundamental components:

- Natural elements: These refer to the physical features, such as rocks, vegetation, and wildlife, that exist in the coastal area.
- Natural patterns: These are formations observed in the coastal environment, such as headlands, tidal areas and dune systems.
- Natural processes: These encompass the dynamic interactions occurring within the coastal system, including wave action, sediment transport, and ecological processes.

1.3.3 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Landscape effects relate to the physical change of the landscape which may or may not be seen but are otherwise understood to exist. Effects include positive or adverse (negative) effects.

Landscape effects are also concerned with the effects on landscape character and levels of amenity derived from this character i.e., whether a change to the landscape setting is appropriate or not.

1.3.4 NATURAL CHARACTER EFFECTS

Natural Character is focused specifically on the Coastal Environment, pursuant to S6(a) of the Resource Management Act and does not apply to landscapes in general. Decision makers are required to recognise and provide for, as a matter of national importance, *“the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, lakes and rivers, and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development”*. Naturalness is assessed as the ‘naturalness’ or degree of modification of an area and the distinct combination of natural characteristics and qualities within the area.

1.3.5 ASSESSING NATURAL CHARACTER EFFECTS

The assessment of natural character effects involves considering the change to attributes which indicate levels of natural character. This can be assessed by measuring and qualifying post development condition against current condition (Figure 2). Adverse effects reflect a reduction in natural character condition.



Figure 1-2: Diagram explaining the relationship between the current condition and the post development condition.

¹ Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (July 2022). Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines, p.92 & 93.

1.3.6 VISUAL EFFECTS

Visual effects are a subset of landscape effects. The assessment of visual effects is the analysis of a visual change to the landscape because of a proposed development. Visual sensitivity is influenced by several factors including the Proposal's visibility, the number of viewers (referred to as the viewing audience) and viewing time, the visual qualities of the proposed change, and the ability to absorb the development into the existing visual landscape. The visibility of a landscape change can either have a positive, neutral, or adverse (negative) visual effect.

Visual effects can be temporary (e.g. during construction) or permanent and/or cumulative (arising over time or in combination with the effects).

2 METHODOLOGY

This assessment adopts best practice guidance for Landscape Assessment as provided by 'Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines', Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, July 2022 (TtatM).

TtatM defines landscape character as comprising each landscape's distinctive combination of physical attributes (e.g. landform and ecological aspects), associative attributes (e.g. heritage and cultural values) and perceptual attributes (e.g. legibility of landcover patterns and aesthetic qualities). These three overlapping attributes are relevant to the assessment of the natural character of the coastal environment.

Visual effects are considered a subset of landscape effects, rather than of separate or greater value than other landscape considerations, in accordance with TTatM best practice. Effects arise from change in the values associated with the landscape, not simply as a result of the change itself. Visual impacts are the result of change to the landscape and are a consequence of that change.

The specific methodology followed for this landscape assessment was:

- A brief to undertake an assessment of the natural character of the Coastal Environment in relation to the OMDA was received from FNHL following a meeting on the 11/06/2024. FNHL made a submission on the Proposed Far North District Plan in October 2022. This submission was reviewed as part of this assessment.
- Desktop research was undertaken, including document and mapping overlay reviews. The following documents were reviewed:
 - Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (2022) Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines
 - Tuia Pito Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (2010) Best Practice Guide: Visual Simulations BPG 10.2 NZILA
 - Resource Management Act 1991
 - New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 2010
 - Proposed Northland Regional Plan 2024
 - Regional Policy Statement for Northland 2016
 - Operative Far North District Plan 2009
 - Proposed Far North District Plan
 - Section 32 Report: Coastal Environment, *Far North District Council*, May 2022.
 - District Plan Review: Coastal Environment, Outstanding and High Natural Character Areas, Outstanding Natural Landscapes, *Melean Absolum Limited Landscape Architects*, March 2020
 - Submission on the Proposed Far North District Plan 2022, Bay of Islands Planning, October 2022
- A site visit was carried out on 01/07/2024 by Catherine Hamilton and Maddie Aharon. During this visit, the landscape character of the site and its surrounds were assessed in terms of the existing conditions (baseline) the Proposed Plan Change enabled development, and the FNHL submission. The Four Sites were viewed from boat within the Opuia in shore waters, and by car from within the

surrounding visual catchment to ensure that both water and land-based viewers were taken into consideration.

- A further site visited was carried out on 2/07/2024 by Maddie Aharon. This site visit followed up on the prior day's selection of representative locations for viewpoint photos.
- A subsequent site visited was carried out on 5/07/2024 by Catherine Hamilton to obtain further representative viewpoint photographs. Ten representative viewpoints were identified from publicly accessible locations. Photographs were taken from a 50mm lens camera in order to assess the likely visual effect of the proposal in the landscape in relation to the transitory and fixed viewing audiences. Visual simulations have not been produced. Instead, the extent and nature of the proposal is described in the written report and annotated on the photographs. This has been included in Appendix B.
- The S42a planners report and supporting information was received and reviewed for Hearing 4 – Natural Environment Values and Coastal Environment.
 - An assessment of landscape issues was undertaken. This included:
 - Landscape effects, including visual effects
 - Natural character effects
 - Consideration of measures to avoid, remedy and mitigate potential adverse effects, and to promote positive effects.
- The TTatM seven-point scale of effects has been used in this Landscape Assessment when assessing the potential adverse landscape effects arising from the Proposal. The effects scale ranges between: 'Very Low' to 'Low' to 'Low-Moderate' to 'Moderate' to 'Moderate- High' to 'High' to 'Very High' (Appendix C).

3 EXISTING LANDSCAPE

3.1 WIDER LANDSCAPE CONTEXT – BAY OF ISLANDS

Opuia is located in the Bay of Islands on the East Coast of Te Tai Tokerau Northland. Culturally the area is recognised as tūrangawaewae for successive generations who whakapapa to the area and for newer communities who have settled and call this place home.

The physical landscape encompasses 144 islands between Cape Brett and the Purerua Peninsula, the boutique towns of Opuia, Paihia, Russell, Kerikeri and Waitangi and a stunning coastline rich in natural beauty and resources. The region is known for its pristine waters, undeveloped beaches and is internationally known as a top boating location.

The landscape comprises a cluster of predominantly rocky coastal escarpments, cliffs, islands, reefs, islets headlands and sandy beaches. The islands located within the 'bay' create a breakwater, forming sheltered water with a complex shoreline featuring of small indented coves, beaches, channels & headlands.

The distinctive landforms found within the Bay of Islands are formed in response to geomorphological and ocean processes including wave exposure, tidal movement, deposition of sediment.

The Bay of Islands is valued as a top boat cruising destination, both within New Zealand and internationally. The landscape is strongly memorable and is often used as part of New Zealand's identity. The area is widely used for recreational purposes and is one of New Zealand's key maritime landscapes.

Human settlement is present across the Bay of Islands while built development is concentrated around the townships of Haruru, Paihia, Russell, Okiato and Opuia on the coastal edge. There is limited intensive development outside of these towns. Common buildings include single and double storey dwellings, retail shops, industrial buildings and hotels which range from one to four stories high.

The landform naturally constrains development, with most buildings occurring on the coastal plains or on the hillslopes looking out towards the ocean, connected by roads and services infrastructure.

The coastal environment of the Bay of Islands possesses a wide range of natural character attributes on a sliding scale from high natural character in areas devoid of human intervention, through to highly modified landscapes where natural character is compromised. Vegetation clearance and the introduction of exotic species result in a light to moderate modified landscape, while manmade structures like riprap walls, reclaimed land, bridges, wharfs, boat ramps and marina infrastructure create highly modified landscapes.



Figure 3-1: Opua Context Map.

3.2 LOCAL LANDSCAPE – OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA, OPUA MARINE PARK, OPUA COMMERCIAL ESTATE AND COLENZO TRIANGLE

Opua is situated approximately 6.5 km southeast from Paihia, 12 km northeast from Kawakawa and 8.5 km southeast from Waitangi. Connecting these townships is State Highway 11 and local roads maintained by the Far North District Council.

The settlement is located at the intersection of three in-shore water bodies, with the Waikare Inlet to the east, the mouth of the Kawakawa River situated to the south and Veronica Channel located to the northwest.

3.2.1 LANDFORM AND CHARACTER ALONG THE OPUA COASTAL EDGE AND SURROUNDS

The landward portion of the Opua settlement comprises dissected hill slopes rising to ridges from the foot of the coastal escarpment. The coastal interface is distinguished by a heavily modified flat strip of reclaimed land with built development nested into the escarpment behind.

When viewing the Opua settlement from the water, the hill slopes present a generally intact coastal landform, while the shoreline is in varying states of naturalness from heavily modified around the marina to less modified along the flanking indented shoreline and headlands.

The areas of coastal edge that most strongly express natural coastal processes are located further away from the Opua settlement. Of note are the indented shorelines punctuated by headlands with intact native vegetation that flank either side of the Waikare Inlet to the east.

The Opua shoreline exhibits considerable complexity with significant variation comprising a mosaic of the following elements:

- Heavily modified areas for boat storage (moorings, jetties, marina berths).
- Estuarine margins featuring mangroves and wetland areas.
- Coastal cliffs descending steeply into the sea.
- Indented beach embayments.
- Small sheltered coves.
- Exposed edges that experience more dynamic conditions with some eroded faces.

Vegetation around the Opua settlement is representative of prevailing Northland themes which typically feature young native shrublands on land that has been cut over for various land uses – especially farming. Land cover is typically characterised by an interplay of exotic forest plantation, some grazing pastureland, and garden amenity planting. Exotic tree and weed species are dominant in large areas. As such, the vegetation does not express a high degree of natural character.

Building incursions in the coastal environment include residential/holiday homes on hillslopes in varying densities from sparsely distributed dwellings associated with rural lifestyle development patterns to higher density subdivisions associated with suburban development patterns.

Commercial and industrial buildings are concentrated in high densities within Opua Marina Development Area beside the shoreline and at the Commercial Estate

The residential buildings nested within the hillslopes vary greatly in terms of their visual intrusion into the coastal environment. Those buildings painted in recessive colour values, with non-reflective glass and sensitive articulation of built form generally integrate harmoniously with the coastal landscape setting. Some of these buildings are large, with over 500m² footprint. Whereas some buildings with reflective colour values and glass are visually intrusive and prominent in the landscape even if they are small in scale. By contrast, most commercial and industrial buildings within the settlement are visually prominent and therefore compromise the natural character of the coastal environment.

Overall, when viewed from water and land, Opua presents as a highly modified landscape where human settlement interplays strongly with the more natural attributes of the coastal environment. It is reasonable to conclude that this coastal character is highly representative of the settled pattern of coastal landscapes around Aotearoa New Zealand.

3.2.2 LANDFORM AND CHARACTER, LANDWARD

When experienced on land, the landscape is characterised by a variety of surrounding land uses such as existing residential and commercial activities in the general Opua township, State Highway 11, The twin coast cycle trail, various marine related activities such as moorings, a marina and a car ferry terminal, and commercial/light industrial activities at Opua Commercial Estate.

Each of the four sites has their own unique character, which has been heavily influenced by the proximity to the coast.

Opuia Marina Development Area comprises of an existing marina with light industrial buildings that serve maritime industries, offices, a cafe and marina administration. It offers a range of activities both on land and at sea, including services like engineering firms, boat repairs, charters and marine supply stores. These buildings have large footprints.

The landscape is highly modified with a significant portion of the marina built on reclaimed land. The coastal edge is defined by the hardscaping of the wharves and marina infrastructure. The yachts located within the marina providing vertical infrastructure through the tall masts.

At the rear of the site, a road (Baffin Street) is located at the toe of the hills. These hills are densely vegetated with both exotic and native vegetation and dotted with residential dwellings. In some areas there are very steep embankments which meet the edge of the road. These hills provide a vertical backdrop to the marina, situating the built development with the broader landscape.

Opuia Marine Park is an undeveloped site located adjacent to SH11. The site is characterised by its flat, open terrain which contrasts with the densely vegetated hills to the northwest. These hills not only provide a natural backdrop when viewed from SH11 but also create a distinct border for the Park. The land is a modified coastal inlet that has been severed from natural tidal movement by the construction of State Highway 11 on a bunded causeway. The land has been converted from land to pasture.

Opuia Commercial Estate is a commercial/industrial business park that supports local maritime industries. This site features a variety of existing one and two storey buildings and warehouses and is separated from the coastal edge by SH11. The nearby coastal area to the southeast predominantly comprises of mangroves and an estuarine environment. Within the Commercial Estate there is extensive hardscaping, and commercial and industrial activities take place. Similar to Opuia Marina and Opuia Marine Park, this site has a range of vegetated and open paddock hills located behind the site to the northwest.

Colenso Triangle is a flat site currently used as a storage and tipping area with no buildings. The current land use has resulted in it being unsightly for passing audiences. The site is bordered by the coast and SH11. Separating the site and the water is an estuarine environment with tall mangroves.

4 THE PROPOSAL

4.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

FNHL seeks to change all of the landholdings (Figure 3) from their respective operative and proposed District Plan zoning as indicated in Table 1 to Mixed Use Zone, including retaining Opuia Commercial Estate as a Mixed Use Zone.

The 5m height limit imposed under the PDP is due to The Sites being contained wholly or in part within the Coastal Environment overlay. FNDC has a responsibility under the RMA, the NZCPS and the RPS to protect and preserve the natural character of the coastal environment, including amenity values, while at the same time providing for appropriate, subdivision and development. The mapped PDP Coastal Environment is identified in the attached "Appendix A: Graphic Supplement, MS-03 Page 6 of 6.

It is important to note that the 5m height limit imposed by the Coastal Environment overlay is recommended to be removed for the Opuia settlement in the S42a reporting planners report. This is because natural character values are already compromised in Opuia due to human modification.



Figure 4-1: FNHL Land Holdings.

As well as changes to the zoning, FNHL is seeking the following changes to building heights permitted within the respective zones:

- Mixed Use: from 12 m to 16 m
- Coastal Environment: from 5 m to 16 m

Heights are summarised in Table 4-1:

Table 4-1: Comparison of the ODP Zoning, PDP Zoning and FNHL Preferred Zoning heights.

SITE	OPERATIVE DISTRICT PLAN ZONING (2009)	PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN ZONING	FNHL PREFERRED ZONING
Opua Marina Development Area	Industrial Zone – 12m Recreational Activities Zone – 8m Commercial Zone – 10m Maritime Exemption Area: Opua Marina	Coastal Environment Overlay – 5m height limit Light Industrial Zone – 12m height limit Mixed Use Zone – 12m High Natural Character Overlay (partially over the mixed use zone only)	Mixed Use Zone – 16m height limit Bay of Islands Marina Development Area Maritime Exemption Area
Marine Park	Coastal Living Zone – 8m height limit	Rural Lifestyle Zone – 8m Coastal Environment Overlay (partially) – 5m height limit	Mixed Use Zone – 16m height limit
Commercial Estate	Commercial Zone – 10m height limit	Mixed Use Zone – 12m	Mixed Use Zone – 16m height limit
		Coastal Environment Overlay (partially) – 5m height limit	
Colenso Triangle	General Coastal Zone – 8m height limit	Rural Production Zone – 12m Coastal Environment Overlay (partially) – 5m height limit	Mixed Use Zone – 16m height limit

A Masterplan was developed for three of the sites Opua Marina Development Area, Marine Park and Commercial Estate in October 2022². This masterplan took into consideration, but didn't provide additional design for Colenso Triangle, which already has a variety of activities, including a railway terminus and associated activities and a landing facility for marine farming and barging activities. covered under existing resource consents.

It is anticipated that the Mixed Use environment would include the following as indicated through the Masterplan:

Opua Marina Development Area

- Retail stores

² Bay of Islands Marina / Marine Park / Commercial Estate Masterplan, WSP, 31/10/2022.

- Residential buildings
- Sailing club
- Hospitality including cafes and restaurants
- Offices
- Activated Promenade Link
- Open green spaces including trees
- Provision of space for market stalls
- Fresh grocer/provisions
- Public boat ramp
- Marina services
- Dinghy storage and trailer parking
- Carparking
- Light industrial for marine services including hard stands, boat storage/dry stack, slipway, boatyards

Opua Marine Park

- Light industrial buildings
- Commercial buildings including offices and warehouses

Opua Commercial Estate

- Light industrial buildings including warehouse
- Boat storage facilities

Colenso Triangle

- A railway terminus and associated activities for the Bay of Islands Vintage Railway Trust.
- A landing facility for marine farming and barging activities.

5 STATUTORY PROVISIONS

The s32 Report on the Coastal Environment sets out the legislative framework underpinning the Coastal Environment provisions within the PDP. Documents summarised include the RMA, the NZCPS and the RPS. The following statutory provisions are relevant and expanded upon in Appendix D.

Council has obligations under section 6(a) of the RMA to preserve the natural character of the Coastal Environment as a matter of national importance, for:

“the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development”

‘Natural Character’ interpretations vary. A landscape interpretation, as guided by Te Tangi a Te Manu, is that natural character is the distinct combination of an area’s natural characteristics and qualities. Following this logic, areas that vividly express natural biotic and abiotic patterns and processes possess high natural character. Whereas areas that have been changed through human modification possess the least natural character attributes.

A wide suite of provisions within the NZCPS, The Proposed Regional Plan for Northland, the Northland Regional Policy Statement, ODP and PDP provide objectives and policies that seek to preserve the natural character of the coastal environment.

The Draft PDP provisions recognise that there is a natural character spectrum that ranges from the highest natural character in areas that are unmodified by humans, to the least natural character in urban areas that have been more heavily modified by humans.

The objectives and policies of the PDP further seek to consolidate development in coastal areas that are already characterised by urban development and therefore possess the least natural character attributes.

The logic behind consolidating development in already urbanised areas is to constrain potential sprawl into areas of productive land, high value landscapes including ONL’s and areas of high natural character areas within the coastal environment. Contrary to this objective, the Coastal Environment overlay extends over most of the OMDA and imposes 5m height restrictions which limits intensification and works against the objective of consolidating development

42A report

The recommendation of the Landscape Subject Matter expert, MLA Ltd, in their 2020 report, supported the Coastal Environment height limit of 5m for the Opuia settlement. In the 2024 MLA landscape report the stance for Opuia was softened and it is recommended that the underlying zoning take precedence over the Coastal Environment height limit.

6 NATURAL CHARACTER, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

6.1 NATURAL CHARACTER EFFECTS

The existing Coastal Environment contains the following natural character attributes which have been modified by human activity in the Opuia Settlement area:

- Coastal and marine landforms - headlands, bays, mudflats
- Coastal and marine biota and ecosystems
- Coastal processes and water patterns (tides)
- Views to and from the sea
- Other experiential aspects (the sound and smell of the sea)

Collectively, the four OMDA sites contribute to a modified Coastal Environment that possess an urban character within the settlement of Opuia. Each respective site, however, has its own natural character nuances, which exist to a lesser or greater degree as described in Section 3 above.

Potential effects of the FNHL proposed change on existing natural character are assessed individually for each site, and cumulatively as they relate to the Opuia Coastal Environment.

6.1.1 OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA

Opuia Marina Development Area beside the shoreline is located on reclaimed land and is an artificial landscape. The degree of modification in the area between the base of the escarpment and active coastal shoreline is high. This man-made character is further reinforced by the marina incursion into the in-shore waters. Natural patterns, processes and elements of the coastal interface have been replaced by human structures. Further reduction in natural character is likely to occur from the consented residential subdivision in the hillslopes above the marina.

There remains, however, a degree of 'naturalness' associated with the less developed hill slopes, active shoreline and tidal environment in the wider setting beyond the marina area. This 'borrowed landscape' offers natural character that contrasts sharply with, and adds positively to, the Opuia Marina Development area.

In my opinion, the proposed changes in the FNHL submission will integrate with the prevailing character of this area due to the highly modified, man-made character of the existing landscape. Effects on the natural character of the Coastal Environment are assessed as **very low neutral**.

6.1.2 OPUA COMMERCIAL ESTATE

Opuia Commercial Estate is separated from the coastline by the SH11 bunded road, severing the direct influences of the coastal patterns, processes and elements. The site is heavily modified by a conglomeration of buildings, roads, signage, infrastructure as is typical of a commercial setting. presents as an urban landscape. Views from this site to the coastal setting are not available due to locally constraining landform. As such there is little evidence that this site is within the Coastal Environment.

In my opinion, the proposed changes in the FNHL submission will integrate with the prevailing character of this area due to the highly modified, urban character of the existing landscape.

Proposed built height and density can be accommodated with the intense conglomeration of buildings that dominate the site currently. Effects on the natural character of the Coastal Environment are assessed as **very low neutral**.

6.1.3 MARINE PARK

As with the Commercial Estate, the nearby Marina Park is severed by SH11 causeway and is not expressive of dynamic coastal processes. Unlike the Commercial Estate, this parcel of land is contained in pasture for rural production. Modification to the landform has occurred to drain the site to surrounding channels with an elevated plateau in the centre. As a filled coastal inlet, the area shows signs of reverting to its original wetland condition, with native wetland plants and wetland bird species present. Furthermore, the vegetated hillslopes flanking the west and north of this land parcel provide a vivid coastal setting that contributes to the natural character of the site.

In summary, the Marine Park is a highly modified landscape with low natural character attributes. The coastal processes are, however, more vivid on this site when compared with the other three landholding due to the lack of buildings, the hillslope backdrop and the presence of reverting wetland and associated bird species.

The proposed changes as a result of the FNHL submission for this area will alter the natural character of the Coastal Environment for this setting. While natural character attributes have been heavily modified, it is still possible to observe some aspects of coastal elements, due to the lack of built elements. Effects on the natural character of the Coastal Environment are assessed as **low adverse**.

6.1.4 COLENZO TRIANGLE

Colenso Triangle is contiguous with the coastal land on the shore side of SH11. The area has been heavily modified as a storage and utility site with significant alteration to landform, vegetation and natural coastal processes. This area does not possess high natural character values. As with the reclaimed land at the Opuā Marina site, part of Colenso Triangle towards the shore edge borrows from the surrounding natural character of in-shore waters and landform.

The proposed changes resulting from the FNHL submission for this area will introduce built form of a greater height and density when compared with the array of low built elements that currently exist on the site. The proposed built form will read coherently with the prevailing urban character of the Opuā Settlement. Some opportunity exists to reinstate the natural patterns and processes, particularly towards the shore edge. Effects on the natural character of the Coastal Environment are assessed as **very low neutral**.

6.1.5 OVERALL

Developing the sites as mixed use ensures that the undeveloped coastal areas remain relatively untouched. The development will occur in existing highly modified areas ensuring that development is intensified rather than sprawling.

Overall, the collective effect of FNHL's proposed changes on the natural character of the coastal environment is assessed as **very low neutral** due to the modified natural character of the existing landscape and the extent to which the proposed development will be coherent with this prevailing character.

For all four sites, the development process during construction is likely to have minimal adverse natural character effects related to alterations of the existing environment. It is anticipated that all work would occur on existing land, with limited earthworks therefore minimising the impact of the coastal and marine landforms and the coastal processes and water patterns.

There are, however, likely to be some adverse effects that would need to be mitigated. These effects will be temporary in nature, indicating that they will not have a long-term effect on the natural character of the Coastal Environment. They include but are not limited to:

- disruption of soil and vegetation which may lead to increased erosion and sediment run off into nearby water bodies,
- noise, dust and vibration which may impact wildlife behaviour, disrupt ecosystems and affect nearby residents
- change in microclimates which can impact coastal and marine biota and ecosystems.

6.2 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

It is anticipated that the physical changes to the landscape arising from FNHL proposed plan change will occur over a number of years and the changes will occur at a relatively slow pace. Landscape Effects may include but are not limited to:

- Temporary effects arising from new development such as establishment and disestablishment of construction plant and machinery, noise and dust which may impact wildlife and nearby residents, changes to water runoff and habitat disruption. These effects will be temporary in nature, indicating that they will not have a long-term impact on the landscape.
- Removal of existing established vegetation.
- Landform modification for establishment of building platforms and infrastructure.
- Demolition of existing buildings.
- Development of the sites into a mixed use zone from proposed zoning in the PDP. The proposed zoning is as follows:
 - Opuia Marine Development Area - Light Industrial Zone and Mixed Use Zone
 - Opuia Marine Park - Rural Lifestyle Zone
 - Opuia Commercial Estate - Mixed Use Zone
 - Colenso Triangle - Rural Production Zone
- Increase of building height within the site from 12 m and/or 5 m to 16 m.

The following key factors will moderate the extent of landscape effects:

- Located in a highly modified coastal landscape: The sites are located within a highly modified coastal landscape. The changes which will occur to the landform are negligible in the context of this coastal landscape.
- Benefits to the Landscape Character: The development at Opuia Marina Development Area shifts the landscape from an industrialised site to a site that embraces its location along a coastline. At Colenso Triangle, there is a shift from a storage area to an area that is likely to be maintained and

used by members of the public.

- Benefits to the Landscape Values: The provision of a Mixed Use zone at the water's edge may have benefits to the Landscape Values of The Sites. This could occur through aesthetic enhancement, pedestrian-friendly features and provision of social interaction through shared spaces fostering a sense of community and connectivity.
- Changing the proposed zoning from light industrial to mixed use at the Opuia Marina Development Area allows for a range of uses to occur on the land. This will provide a positive effect and allow for a variety of people to use the site and for walking connections to be improved both providing access to and along the shoreline, thus meeting one of the objectives of the RMA. Development can also occur at the water's edge to allow for improved connection with the ocean.

The Landscape Effects without mitigation have been assessed as Low adverse for the following reasons:

6.3 VISUAL EFFECTS

6.3.1 VISUAL CATCHMENT AND VIEWING AUDIENCE

To determine the visual catchment and viewing audiences, desktop mapping and site visits were undertaken. Two Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) maps were prepared to assist with assessing the viewsheds in relation to three alternative scenarios. One ZTV mapped the visibility of development extents and heights at 5m in accordance with the PDP Coastal Environment overlay. The second ZTV mapped 16m heights in accordance with the FNHL's submission, Refer to **Appendix A**.

The following key viewing audiences were identified:

Opuia Marina Development Area:

- Residential dwellings looking out over the water from the township of Okiato, along Deeming Road, Kakapu Road, Aucks Road, Tirairaka Terrace, Okiato Road and across the harbour from the sites on Te Raupo Road, Waikino Road and Ranui Road.
- Due to intervening vegetation and landform there are unlikely to be any fixed viewing audiences on the Opuia Hills behind the Opuia Marina Development Area.

Opuia Marine Park:

- Residential dwellings looking out from SH11, Oromahoe Road, Ross Street and Marina Rise.

Opuia Commercial Estate:

- Residential dwellings looking out from SH11 and Oromahoe Road.

Colenso Triangle:

- Residential dwellings looking out from SH11 and Marina Rise.

Transient viewing audiences consist of:

- Boat users on in-shore waters
- People travelling along the roads via car, bike or foot
- Beach users and coastal fossickers.

Ten viewpoints across the site were then selected to assess the existing visual qualities and the likely visual effects of the proposed development on fixed and transient viewing audiences.

The representative viewpoints are defined in the plans titled “Viewpoint Reference Plan” and are described below, along with an assessment of visual effects. The plan and photographs are located in **Appendix A**

Three scenarios were modelled and mapped onto the 10 representative viewpoint photos. These are:

- 1 The height and mass of the Operative District Plan underlying zoning
- 2 The height and mass of the Proposed District Plan. Note that this has not been mapped to show the Coastal Environment 5m limit due to the S42A recommendations to remove this from Opuā settlement
- 3 The height and mass of the proposed change in FNHL’s submission

6.3.2 VISUAL EFFECTS FROM REPRESENTATIVE VIEWPOINTS

Representative views were taken from within in-shore waters and surrounding land. It is evident that some viewers who have a direct line of sight to the OMDA will experience a change to their views, while others will have limited changes to views due to intervening landform or vegetation.

It is likely that there will be some degree of visual effects associated with the changes to the existing environment. Temporary effects will result from construction machinery, access tracks, earthworks, lights, security fencing, site management practices such as watering and visual effects associated with increased dirt and dust components within the atmosphere. All of these effects are consistent with a construction site and may be adverse but are temporary.

Visual effects on the fixed, or permanent viewing audience are considered to have greater importance than effects on transient viewers due to the greater length of viewing time.

6.3.2.1 VPI: VIEW FROM THE VERONICA CHANNEL, WEST OF OKIATO POINT, LOOKING SOUTHEAST TOWARDS OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA

Viewpoint Description

This view illustrates the visibility of Opuā Marina Development Area from a water-based view on the Veronica Channel. The view is representative of fixed viewing audiences on Okiato Point and transient viewing audiences travelling through the Veronica Channel to Opuā Marina.

The ocean is in the foreground, with a jetty on the lefthand side of the image and moored boats in the fore to midground. Mooring bouys are also present. In the mid to distant ground the landform of Okiato and Opuā can be seen. Various headlands and coves can also be seen. This landform is covered by a mix of exotic and native regenerating species. A collection of dwellings are located on the Opuā side and a limited number of dwellings can be seen on the Okiato side of the harbour. A road going up the hill in Okiato is also visible. There is limited development on the very distant hills.

Opuā Marina can be seen in the centre right of the view. This development is set against the hillslopes behind with buildings nested into the hillside.

Visibility of Development

This viewpoint presents a distant view of the northern part of the Opuā Marina Development Area. There is no existing screening present, however the moored boats provide visual interest and a focal point before the eye views Opuā Marina. The FNHL proposal would see a slight increase in the mass and height of development from this viewpoint, however it will not rise above the ridgeline of hills behind. The building forms and mass will be contiguous with the existing buildings and consented housing subdivision on the hillslopes behind.

Summary

Opua Marina Development Area is faintly visible from this viewpoint. As indicated on images VP-01 pages 1-3, the ODP existing permitted baseline is 12m whereas FNHL's proposes a change to 16m.

From VP1 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**

6.3.2.2 VP2: VIEW FROM AUCKS ROAD, LOOKING SOUTH TOWARDS OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA

Viewpoint Description

This view illustrates the visibility of Opua Marina Development Area from a land-based view from Aucks Road, Okiato. The view is representative of fixed viewing audiences on Aucks Road and transient viewing audiences travelling along Aucks Road.

The foreground comprises of the mixture of exotic and native regenerating vegetation which cover the hills of Okiato. In the midground the ocean can be seen with moored boats. Behind the moored boats, Opua Marina is present. The hills of Opua act as a backdrop to Opua Marina.

Clusters of dwellings can be seen nestled into the Opua hills. These are intermixed with exotic and native vegetation. In the distant view, hills covered in a mixture of exotic and native vegetation and pastureland can be seen.

Visibility of Development

This viewpoint presents a mid to distant view of Opua Marina Development Area. There is limited existing screening present through the vegetation located in the foreground of the Key change to this view is that development may rise up to obscure the body of water behind the OMDA. However, it will not intrude on the view of the backdrop hills which possess a high natural character.

Summary

The northern end of Opua Marina Development Area is partially visible from this viewpoint. As indicated on images VP-02 pages 1-3, the ODP existing permitted baseline is 12m height whereas FNHL's proposes a change to 16m height.

From VP2 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**

6.3.2.3 VP3: VIEW FROM THE OPUA - OKIATO CAR FERRY, LOOKING SOUTHEAST TOWARDS OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA

This view illustrates the visibility of Opua Marina Development Area from a water-based view from the Opua - Okiato Car Ferry. The view is representative of users of the Opua - Okiato Car Ferry.

Viewpoint Description

The foreground comprises of ocean, while the midground shows the wharf and associated wharf infrastructure. There are moored boats located to the left and right hand side of the view. In the midground the hills of Opua can be seen. Dwellings can be seen on the lefthand side of these hills. At the toe of the hills, a beach is present with colourful dinghys lined up on the grassed embankment behind the beach. A stone retaining wall is situated at the top of the beach with a white fence located

at the top of this. In the distant view, hills covered in a mixture of exotic and native vegetation and pastureland can be seen.

Visibility of Development

This viewpoint presents a close to mid view of the northern extents of the Opuia Marina Development Area. There is no existing screening present.

Summary

Opuia Marina Development Area is prominently visible from this viewpoint. It is a view that is highly urbanised and dominated by built form and marina structures and boats.

From VP3 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**.

6.3.2.4 VP4: VIEW FROM THE OPUA WHARF LOOKING SOUTH TOWARDS OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA

Viewpoint Description

This view illustrates the visibility of Opuia Marina Development Area from a land-based view from the Opuia Wharf. The view is representative of viewers working on the wharf and moored boats. Transient viewers include those moving along the wharf.

The foreground comprises of Marina related infrastructure such as dock pilings, aluminium dock gangways and an intertidal area which is viewed in this image as a beach with oyster covered rocks. In the midground, Beechey Street can be seen alongside the associated road infrastructure. A building is located to the righthand side of the image. Towards the rear of the midground, a building is located however this is mostly screened from the existing landform and existing native and exotic vegetation. Native and exotic vegetation is in the distant view of the image. Light poles in midground and yacht masts in the distant view provide vertical infrastructure.

Visibility of Development

This viewpoint presents a close view of the northern extents of the Opuia Marina Development Area. There is no existing screening present.

Summary

Opuia Marina Development Area is prominently visible from this viewpoint. It is a view that is highly urbanised and dominated by built form and marina structures and boats.

From VP4 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**.

6.3.2.5 VP5: VIEW FROM THE INTERSECTION OF KAWAKAWA RIVER AND WAIKARE INLET, TO THE WEST OF MOTUTOKAPE ISLAND, LOOKING WEST TOWARDS OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA

Viewpoint Description

This view illustrates the visibility of Opuia Marina Development Area from the inshore waters at the intersection of Kawakawa River and Waikare Inlet to the west of Motutokape Island. The view is

representative of fixed viewing audiences along Ranui Road and private jetties and transient viewing audiences travelling on either Kawakawa River or Waikare Inlet.

The ocean is in the foreground with moored boats in the fore to midground. In the distance the dissected hillslopes rise to a distinctive ridge contrasted against the open sky. The hills are covered by a mix of exotic and native regenerating species. A collection of dwellings are nestled into the slope and are clearly visible. At the toe of the hills, Opuia Marina lines the water's edge.

Visibility of Development

This viewpoint presents a distant view of the entire extent of the Opuia Marina Development Area. There is no existing screening present however the moored boats provide visual interest and a focal point before the eye views Opuia Marina.

Summary

Opuia Marina Development Area is very visible from this viewpoint. The proposed change would see the development heights and bulk increase in the context of a highly developed coastal edge. The proposal will not breach the skyline and will be visually coherent with the grouping of existing built form.

From VP5 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**.

6.3.2.6 VP6: VIEW FROM THE KAWAKAWA RIVER, LOOKING NORTHWEST TOWARDS OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA

Viewpoint Description

This view illustrates the visibility of Opuia Marina Development Area from a water-based view from Kawakawa River. The view is representative of fixed viewing audiences along Waikino Road and private jetties, and transient viewing audiences travelling on the Kawakawa River.

The foreground comprises of the ocean, with moored boats in the midground. In the background the dissected hillslopes rise to a distinctive ridge contrasted against the open sky. The hills are covered by a mix of exotic and native regenerating species. A small number of dwellings are nestled into the slope and are clearly visible. At the toe of the hills, Opuia Marina lines the water's edge.

Visibility of Development

This viewpoint presents a midrange view of the entire extent of the Opuia Marina Development Area. There is no existing screening present, however the moored boats provide visual interest and a focal point before the eye views Opuia Marina.

Summary

Opuia Marina Development Area is very visible from this viewpoint. The proposed change would see the development heights and bulk increase in the context of a highly developed coastal edge. The proposal will breach the skyline at the northern end is breached under the permitted heights and this will be increased slightly. Proposed development will be visually coherent with the grouping of existing built form.

From VP6 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**.

6.3.2.7 VP7: VIEW FROM SH11, LOOKING NORTHEAST TOWARDS OPUA MARINE PARK AND COLENZO TRIANGLE

Viewpoint Description

This view illustrates the visibility of Opuia Marine Park and Colenso Triangle from SH11. The view is representative of transient viewers travelling northeast along the highway.

The foreground is dominated by the road corridor. Power poles and power lines, together with a dense border of native regenerating and exotic vegetation, flank the right side of the road corridor bordering Colenso Triangle. To the left of the image is Opuia Marine Park. The land is an open pasture site with evidence of land reverting to wetland conditions. In the distance, the dissected hills of Opuia rise to form a distinctive backdrop and ridgeline which extends to the east and west, forming a contained and somewhat intimate landscape setting. The hills are covered with an interplay of pasture, native regenerating and exotic tree species.

Visibility of Development

This viewpoint presents a close view of Opuia Marine Park and Colenso Triangle. The Marine Park is highly visible in the foreground, while Colenso Triangle is screened by roadside vegetation, allowing only glimpsed views. The visual quality is characterised by an openness featuring an interplay of flat land and hillslopes, pasture and bush cover.

Opuia Marine Park is prominently visible from this viewpoint while Colenso Triangle is screened with glimpsed views available. The permitted baseline allows built form to be introduced to this landscape which will fundamentally change the visual quality to become less natural. The FNHL proposed change will increase considerably the extent of buildings in the visual landscape, further reducing the perception of 'naturalness' in this landscape, albeit that the site is heavily modified.

Summary

From VP7 it is anticipated that changing the height and coverage limits for Opuia Marine Park and Colenso Triangle as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Moderate Adverse Visual Effects**.

6.3.2.8 VP8: VIEW FROM SH11, LOOKING SOUTHWEST TOWARDS OPUA COMMERCIAL ESTATE

Viewpoint Description

This viewpoint illustrates the visibility of Opuia Commercial Estate from SH11. The view is representative of transient viewers travelling southwest along SH11.

The foreground comprises SH11, and the vertical infrastructure of the powerlines located to the right of this. Road signs and commercial naming and advertising signs line the roadside. Opuia Commercial Estate is dominant. Some buildings are partially screened by native and exotic vegetation while a heavy stand of trees forms a backdrop. Distant hills form a vivid backdrop and ridge to the skyline.

Visibility of Development

Opuia Commercial Estate is dominant in this view, presenting a highly urban visual character. Vegetation helps to somewhat nestle the development into the surrounding rural landscape character.

Summary

Opua Commercial Estate is prominently visible from this viewpoint and has a highly urban character. The FNHL proposed change will increase the dominance of built form to a small degree compared to the permitted baseline.

From VP8 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**.

6.3.2.9 VP9: VIEW FROM THE INTERSECTION OF KAWAKAWA RIVER AND WHANGAE RIVER, LOOKING NORTHWEST TOWARDS OPUA MARINE PARK AND COLENZO TRIANGLE

Viewpoint Description

This view illustrates the visibility of Opua Marine Park and Colenso Triangle from a water-based view on Kawakawa River. This view is representative of fixed viewing audiences along Te Raupo Road and private jetties, and transient viewing audiences travelling on either Kawakawa River or Whangae River.

The ocean forms the foreground view while the distant view is filled with dissected hillslopes, headlands, coastal cliffs and a distinctive ridgeline framing big sky views. The coastal interface comprises mangroves, mudflats, exotic and native regenerating species. Roading infrastructure (Te Raupo Road bridge) is visible to the left of the image and dispersed pockets of housing are visible.

Visibility of Development

Opua Marine Park and Colenso Triangle are visible in this view, though partially screened by intervening mature vegetation including mangroves. The FNHL proposed change will increase the visibility of development within this view, especially for Colenso Triangle. The extent of development above existing permitted levels will not greatly increase the visual impact of built form on existing visual qualities of the coastal environment. Development is low lying, and the skyline will not be breached.

Summary

From VP9 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**.

6.3.2.10 VP10: VIEW FROM THE KAWAKAWA RIVER, LOOKING NORTHWEST TOWARDS OPUA MARINE PARK, COLENZO TRIANGLE AND OPUA MARINA DEVELOPMENT AREA

Viewpoint Description

This view illustrates the visibility of Opuia Marine Park, Colenso Triangle and Opuia Marina Development Area from a water-based view from Kawakawa River. The view is representative of fixed viewing audiences along Waikino Road and private jetties, and transient viewing audiences travelling on the Kawakawa River.

The ocean fills the foreground. Distant views of hilly landforms with coastal cliffs, headlands spurs and ridges are all evident. The landform sits low on the horizon while ridgelines frame big sky views. Marinas and coastal edge development line the shore. In the centre of the view, Opuia can be seen alongside Opuia Marina and the moored boats. Vegetation cover is intact across most of the hills, punctuated by built form.

Visibility of Development

This viewpoint presents a distant view of the entire extent of the Opuia Marina Development Area except for the Marine Park which is screened by landform.

Summary

Opuia Marine Park, Colenso Triangle and Opuia Marina Development Area are faintly visible from this viewpoint. The FNHL proposed change will barely increase the visibility of built form from this distance compared to the permitted baseline

From VP10 it is anticipated that changing height and coverage limits as sought through the FNHL submission will have **Low Adverse Visual Effects**.

6.3.3 SUMMARY OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Visual effects are summarised in Table 6-1 below:

Table 6-1: Table 3 Summary of Visual Effects before Mitigation.

VISUAL EFFECTS		MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS BEFORE MITIGATION	NATURE OF EFFECTS BEFORE MITIGATION
VIEWPOINT	VP'S 1,2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10	LOW	ADVERSE
	VP 7	MODERATE	ADVERSE

6.4 SUMMARY OF NATURAL CHARACTER, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS, WITHOUT MITIGATION

It is considered that without mitigation, the natural character, landscape and visual effects are likely to be as outlined in Table 6-2:

Table 6-2: Table 4: Summary of Effects before Mitigation.

EFFECT	MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS AFTER MITIGATION	NATURE OF EFFECTS AFTER MITIGATION
Landscape Effects	Low	Adverse
Natural Character Effects	Low	Adverse
Visual Effects - VP's 1 - 10	Low	Adverse

7 PROPOSED MITIGATION

The following additional mitigation and remediation measures are recommended as proposed conditions of consent and have been considered when determining the levels of Natural Character, Landscape and Visual effects throughout this Landscape Assessment.

7.1 PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation of Natural Character, Landscape and Visual Effects can be achieved through:

- Provide a Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- Locating construction yard compounds, stocking piling areas and machine storage areas away from roads and residential dwellings as far as practicable.
- Provide an alternative footpath through the Opuia Marina Development Area to ensure that the public is able to continue to walk along the coastline with minimal disruptions. If this includes crossing any roads, adequate safety measures should be allowed for.
- Implementation of an Urban Design and Landscape Management Plan.
- Development of design principles in collaboration with Mana Whenua.
- Remedial planting including:
 - Planting for native wildlife habitat provision
 - Planting for screening of proposed buildings
- Integration of storm water management and treatment devices into the landscape, including any visual mitigation of any infrastructure.
- Consideration of safety in design principles.
- Consideration of the reflectivity of materials including windows. Ensure that exterior finishes have a reflectance value of less than 30% and is within Groups A, B or C of the BS5252 colour palette.
- Integration of low impact design principles to reduce site impermeability.

7.2 SUMMARY OF NATURAL CHARACTER, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS, AFTER MITIGATION

With the implementation of proposed mitigation measures outlines in section 7, it is anticipated that the magnitude and nature of effects will be as indicated in Table 7-1:

Table 7-1: Summary of Effects after Mitigation.

EFFECT	MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS AFTER MITIGATION	NATURE OF EFFECTS AFTER MITIGATION
Landscape Effects	Very Low	Positive
Natural Character Effects	Very Low	Positive
Visual Effects - VP's 1 - 10	Very Low	Positive

8 CONCLUSION

This assessment evaluates the likely effects on the natural character of the Coastal Environment in relation to FNHL's submission to the PDP in relation to Opuia settlement. The submission seeks a Mixed Use Zone across four sites: Opuia Marina Development Area, Marine Business Park, Opuia Commercial Estate and Colenso Triangle, and changes to permitted development heights and site coverage.

The natural character of the Coastal Environment sits on a spectrum from high to low. The highest natural character exists where physical patterns, processes and elements of the coastal landscape are highly expressive and dynamic. These landscapes are unmodified by human interventions. At the other end of the spectrum are highly modified landscapes which possess low natural character attributes. Incursions by humans into these landscapes are evident and, in some cases, dominant.

All four OMDA sites are highly modified by human activity. Further contributing to their man-made character is the wider setting which features a marina, car ferry ramp, reclaimed edge and an array of industrial, commercial and residential buildings supported by roads and infrastructure. As such, the sites and their setting are assessed as having very low natural character attributes overall.

Consequently, the ability for these sites to accommodate the development heights and densities as set out in the FNHL's submission, with minimal adverse effects on the natural character of the Coastal Environment, is assessed as high.

The opportunity to go beyond minimising adverse effects on the natural character of the Coastal Environment of Opuia cannot be overstated. There exists untapped potential for FNHL's sites - and indeed the wider settlement of Opuia, to evolve into a vibrant, mixed-use precinct that complements the region's existing attractions and Coastal Environment.

The interplay of concentrated settlement and unmodified coastal landscape is a familiar vernacular around the coastline of Aotearoa New Zealand and indeed within the Bay of Islands itself. Concentrating and containing greater levels of development within Opuia, with the right controls and standards in place, will ensure that both the built environment and the unmodified coastal landscape contribute positively to the natural character of Opuia's Coastal Environment.

In conclusion, my assessment of the FNHL sites, after mitigation, is summarised in the table below. It is my opinion that the proposed changes as set out in the FNHL submission will have **very low effects** on the natural character of the Coastal Environment and will be **positive** in nature.

Table 8-1:: Assessment of Effects.

EFFECT	MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS AFTER MITIGATION	NATURE OF EFFECTS AFTER MITIGATION
Landscape Effects	Very Low	Positive
Natural Character Effects	Very Low	Positive
Visual Effects - VP's 1 - 10	Very Low	Positive

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

The four OMDA sites are distinct in terms of their respective existing landscape character (baseline) and the proposed development limits set out in the FNHL submission. A nuanced approach to the development of each site is therefore appropriate. A precinct plan is recommended to set out an integrated approach to development with appropriate design standards, in a way that will impact positively on the natural character of the Coastal Environment of Opuā.

The FNHL proposed plan changes raise potential opportunities due to the following factors:

- The NZCPS recognises the importance of infrastructure to the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of people and communities. The development of the sites into a mixed use zone has the potential to improve the site’s landscape values, enhancing the overall quality of life for all users.
- The NZCPS encourages the consolidation of existing development to avoid sprawling or sporadic patterns of settlement and urban growth. The rezoning of the sites will allow for development to occur in areas that are already highly modified, minimising any additional sprawling or sporadic patterns of settlement.
- The sites are located within the coastal environment. In accordance with the RMA, public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers is to be maintained and enhanced. Mixed-Use development at the sites could allow for this to be achieved.
- Enablement of the masterplan would also allow for good design principles and integration of the built form into the wider landscape context to be achieved. In particular, the masterplan looks to:
 - Enhance the relationship between the green networks (nature, bush and landscape) and blue networks (water, ocean and marine landscapes). This could improve the existing landscape values through creating a more harmonious relationship between humans and the blue-green landscape. This would be achieved through better physical connection and access to both green and blue networks.
 - Create a ribbon of built form, framing the water’s edge and providing for built amenity along the waterfront. The development of built environment along the water’s edge could promote and provide for access to the water, improving the site’s landscape values. Thoughtful development could also allow for the coastal edge patterns to be retained through high quality built form.
 - Form a memorable Gateway Entry to the Bay of Islands Marina.
 - Develop a community heart and place for people to gather.
 - Integrate green spaces into the development, connecting them to the broader vegetation patterns and softening the visual envelope of the proposed buildings.

APPENDIX A

GRAPHIC SUPPLEMENT: MAP SERIES, VIEW POINT PHOTOS AND PHOTO ESSAY LIST BULLET

APPENDIX B

FNHL SUBMISSION ON THE PROPOSED FAR NORTH DISTRICT PLAN 2022

APPENDIX C

SEVEN POINT SCALE OF EFFECTS

Scale of Effects (7 Point)

From Tuia Pita Ora New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects Te Tangi a te Manu, Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines: 2021.

The below seven-point scale is used to describe effects:

- Very High: Total loss to the key attributes of the receiving environment and/or visual context amounting to a complete change of landscape character
- High: Major change to the characteristics or key attributes of the receiving environment and/or visual context within which it is seen; and/or a major effect on the perceived amenity derived from it.
- Moderate-High: A moderate to high level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/or the visual context within which it is seen; and/or have a moderate-high level of effect on the perceived amenity derived from it.
- Moderate: A moderate level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/or the visual context within which it is seen; and/or have a moderate level of effect on the perceived amenity derived from it. (*Oxford English Dictionary Definition: Moderate: adjective-average in amount, intensity or degree*).
- Moderate-Low: A moderate to low level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/or the visual context within which it is seen; and/or have a moderate to low level of effect on the perceived amenity derived from it.
- Low: A low level of effect on the character or key attributes of the receiving environment and/or the visual context within which it is seen; and/or have a low level of effect on the perceived amenity derived from it. (*Oxford English Dictionary Definition: Low: adjective-below average in amount, extent, or intensity*).
- Very Low: Very low or no modification to key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline or available views, i.e. approximating a 'no-change' situation.

APPENDIX D

STATUTORY PROVISIONS

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991 (RMA)

- Section 2 of the RMA which outlines the interpretation and application of the act.
- Section 6(a) of the RMA which requires decision makers to have regard to “the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development”.
- Section 6 (d) of the RMA which requires decision makers to have regard to “the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers”.
- Section 7(c) of the RMA which requires decision makers to have regard to “*the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values*”.
- Section 7(f) of the RMA, which requires decision makers to have regard to “*the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment*”.

NEW ZEALAND COASTAL POLICY STATEMENT 2010 (NZCPS)

- The NZCPS seeks to “safeguard the integrity, form, functioning and resilience of the coastal environment and sustain its ecosystems, including marine and intertidal areas, estuaries, dunes and land”.
- Objective 2 of the NZCPS seeks to preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and protect natural features and landscape values through:
 - Recognising the characteristics and qualities that contribute to natural character, natural features and landscape values and their location and distribution;
 - Identifying those areas where various forms of subdivision, use, and development would be inappropriate and protecting them from such activities; and
 - Encouraging restoration of the coastal environment.
- Policy 6 of the NZCPS states:
 - (l) In relation to the coastal environment:
 - (b) *consider the rate at which built development and the associated public infrastructure should be enabled to provide for the reasonably foreseeable needs of population growth without compromising the other values of the coastal environment;*
 - (c) *encourage the consolidation of existing coastal settlements and urban areas where this will contribute to the avoidance or mitigation of sprawling or sporadic patterns of settlement and urban growth;*
 - (e) *consider where and how built development on land should be controlled so that it does not compromise activities of national or regional importance that have a functional need to locate and operate in the coastal marine area;*
 - (f) *consider where development that maintains the character of the existing built environment should be encouraged, and where development resulting in a change in character would be acceptable;*
 - (h) *consider how adverse visual impacts of development can be avoided in*
areas

sensitive to such effects, such as headlands and prominent ridgelines, and as far as practicable and reasonable apply controls or conditions to avoid those effects;

(2) Additionally, in relation to the coastal marine area:

- *(b) recognise the need to maintain and enhance the public open space and recreation qualities and values of the coastal marine area;*
 - *(c) recognise that there are activities that have a functional need to be located in the coastal marine area, and provide for those activities in appropriate places;*
 - *(e) promote the efficient use of occupied space, including by:*
 - (i) requiring that structures be made available for public or multiple use wherever reasonable and practicable;
 - (ii) requiring the removal of any abandoned or redundant structure that has no heritage, amenity or reuse value.
- Policy 13 of the NZCPS seeks 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.
- 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.

PROPOSED REGIONAL PLAN FOR NORTHLAND 2024

- D.2.17 Managing adverse effects on Natural Character, Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Outstanding Natural Features

Manage the adverse effects of activities on Natural Character, Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Outstanding Natural Features by:

- *1) avoiding adverse effects of activities of:*
 - Natural Character – Freshwater bodies outside the coastal environment
 - Effects to be avoided: significant adverse effects on the characteristics, qualities and values that contribute to Natural Character or which make the Natural Character or landscape outstanding.

- 2) recognising that, in relation to Natural Character in water bodies and the coastal environment (where not identified as Outstanding Natural Character), appropriate methods of avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse effects may include:
 - a) ensuring the location, intensity, scale and form of activities is appropriate having regard to natural elements and processes, and
 - b) in areas of High Natural Character in the coastal environment, minimising to the extent practicable indigenous vegetation clearance and modification (seabed and foreshore disturbance, structures, discharges of contaminants) and
- 4) recognising that uses and development form part of existing landscapes, features and water bodies and have existing effects.

– D.5.15 Marinas - managing the effects of marinas

Marinas must:

- 2) Provide shore-based facilities, including parking, public toilet, boat racks, public access.
- 3) Mitigate any loss of public access to, along and within the coastal marine area, including the provision of facilities such as public boat ramps and alternative access for other users.
- 4) Be designed and constructed in a manner that reflects the benefits of landscaping and urban design treatment.

– D.5.16 Marinas - recognising the benefits of marina development

Recognise that the benefits of marina development include:

- 2) Responding to demand for boat storage and associated services
- 3) opportunities to enhance public facilities and access to the coastal marine area
- 4) socio-economic opportunities through construction and ongoing operation

– D.5.17 Marina Zones - Purpose

Recognise that the purpose of Marina Zones is to provide for the development and operation of marinas.

– D.5.8 Coastal Commercial Zone and Marsden Point Port Zone Purpose

Recognise that the purpose of the Coastal Commercial Zone and Marsden Point Port Zone is to enable the development and operation of existing and authorised maritime-related commercial enterprises or industrial activities located within these zones.

– D.5.9 Coastal Commercial Zone and Marsden Point Port Zone

Development in the Coastal Commercial Zone and the Marsden Point Port Zone will generally be appropriate provided it is:

- 1) consistent with:
 - a) existing development in the Coastal Commercial Zone or the Marsden Point Port Zone
 - b) existing development on adjacent land above mean high water springs
 - c) development anticipated on the land above mean high water springs by the relevant district plan

– F.1.12 Natural Character, Outstanding Natural Features, Historic Heritage and places of significance to tāngata whenua

Protect from inappropriate use and development:

- 1) *the characteristics, qualities and values that make up:*
 - b) Areas of Outstanding and High Natural Character in the coastal marine area and in freshwater bodies within the coastal environment, and
 - c) Natural Character in freshwater bodies outside the coastal environment.

REGIONAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR NORTHLAND 2016 (RPS)

– 5.1.2 Policy – Development in the Coastal Environment

Enable people and communities to provide for their wellbeing through appropriate subdivision, use, and development that:

- *a) consolidates urban development within or adjacent to existing coastal settlements and avoids sprawling or sporadic patterns of development.*
- *b) ensures sufficient development setbacks from the coastal marine area to:*
 - (i) maintain and enhance public access, open, space and amenity values; and
 - (ii) allow for natural functioning of coastal processes and ecosystems;
- *c) takes into account the values of adjoining or adjacent land and established activities (both within the coastal marine area and on land);*
- *d) ensures adequate infrastructure services will be provided for the development.*

OPERATIVE FAR NORTH DISTRICT PLAN 2009 (OFNDP)

– Industrial Zone

Objective:

- *To avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects of new industrial activities on existing activities in the Industrial Zone, and on activities on adjoining land, and on the natural and physical resources of the District.*

– Recreational Activities Zone

Objective:

- *To ensure suitable and adequate area is available for the recreational needs of people.*
- *To ensure that the effects of the use and development of recreational areas are compatible with the surrounding environment.*

– Commercial Zone

Objective:

- *To achieve the development of commercial areas in the District accommodating a wide range of activities that avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of activities within the Commercial Zone and on the natural and physical resources of the District.*

– Maritime Exception Zone – Opuā Marina

An area identified on the Plan maps exempt from the setback provision to enable development that is functionally related to the coastal marine area. Maritime Exemption Areas are provided along parts of the coastal marine area where riparian margins are not required.

– Coastal Living Zone

Objective:

- *To provide for the well being of people by enabling low density residential development to locate in coastal areas where any adverse effects on the environment of such development are to be avoided, remedied or mitigated.*
- *To preserve the overall natural character of the coastal environment by providing for an appropriate level of subdivision and development in this zone.*

– General Coastal Zone

Objective:

- *To provide for the appropriate subdivision, use and development consistent with the need to preserve its natural character.*
- *To preserve the natural character of the coastal environment and protect it from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.*
- *To manage the use of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) in the general coastal area to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations,*

PROPOSED FAR NORTH DISTRICT PLAN (PFNDP)

– Light Industrial Zone

Objectives:

- *LIZ-O1: The Light Industrial Zone is utilised for the efficient operation of light industrial activities and is managed to ensure its long-term protection, including from:*
 - a) Land fragmentation.
 - b) land sterilisation; and
 - c) reserve sensitivity effects
- *LIZ-O2: The Light Industrial zone accommodates a range of light industrial activities that:*
 - a) efficiently use the physical resources of the zone
 - b) are characterised largely by light manufacturing, contractor depots, automotive and marine repair and service industries
 - c) are not unreasonably constrained by surrounding activities, and
 - d) avoid compromising the operation of future light industrial activities within the zone.
- *LIZ-O3: Enable land use and subdivision in the Light Industrial zone where there is adequacy and capacity of available or programmed development infrastructure to support it.*
- *LIZ-O4: The adverse environmental effects generated by light industrial activities are managed in particular at zone boundaries.*

– Rural Lifestyle Zone

Objectives:

- *RLZ-O1: The Rural Lifestyle Zone is used predominantly for low density residential activities and small scale farming activities that are compatible with the rural character and amenity of the zone.*
- *RLZ-O2: The predominant character and amenity of the Rural Lifestyle Zone is characterized by:*

- a) Low density residential activities
 - b) small scale farming activities with limited buildings and structures
 - c) smaller lot sizes than anticipated in the Rural Production Zone
 - d) a general absence of urban infrastructure
 - e) rural roads with low traffic volumes
 - f) areas of vegetation, natural features and open space
- *RLZ-O3: The role, function and predominant character and amenity of the Rural Lifestyle zone is not compromised by incompatible activities.*
 - *RLZ-O4: Land use and subdivision in the Rural Lifestyle zone does not compromise the effective and efficient operation of primary production activities in the adjacent Rural Production Zones.*

– Rural Production Zone

Objectives:

- *RPROZ-O1: The Rural Production zone is managed to ensure its availability for primary production activities and its long-term protection for current and future generations.*
- *RPROZ-O2: The Rural Production zone is used for primary production activities, ancillary activities that support primary production and other compatible activities that have a functional need to be in a rural environment.*
- *RPROZ-O3: Land use and subdivision in the Rural Production zone:*
 - a) protects highly productive land from sterilisation and enables it to be used for more productive forms of primary production;
 - b) protects primary production activities from reserves sensitivity effects that may constrain their effective and efficient operation;
 - c) does not compromise the use of land for farming activities, particularly on highly productive land;
 - d) does not exacerbate any natural hazards; and
 - e) is able to be serviced by on-site infrastructure.

– Mixed-Use Zone

Objectives:

- *MUZ-O1: The Mixed Use zone is the focal point for the district's commercial, community and civic activities, and provides for residential development where it complements and is not incompatible with these activities.*
- *MUZ-O2: Development in the Mixed Use zone is of a form, scale, density and design quality that contributes positively to the vibrancy, safety and amenity of the zone.*
- *MUZ-O3: Enable land use and subdivision in the Light Industrial zone where there is adequacy and capacity of available or programmed development infrastructure to support it.*
- *MUZ-O4: The adverse environmental effects generated by activities within the zone are managed, in particular at zone boundaries.*
- *MUZ-O5: Residential activity in the Mixed Use zone is located above commercial activities to ensure active street frontages, except where the interface is with the Open Space zone.*

– Coastal Environment Overlay

Objectives:

- *Objective CE-01: "The natural character of the coastal environment is identified and managed to ensure its long-term preservation and protection for current and future generations".*

- *Objective CE-02: Land use and subdivision in the coastal environment:*
 - a) preserves the characteristics and qualities of the natural character of the coastal environment;
 - b) is consistent with the surrounding land use;
 - c) does not result in urban sprawl occurring outside of urban zones;
 - d) promotes restoration and enhancement of the natural character of the coastal environment; and
 - e) recognises tangata whenua needs for ancestral use of whenua Māori
- *Objective CE-03: Land use and subdivision in the coastal environment within urban zones is a of scale that is consistent with existing built development.*
- *CE-P4: Preserve the visual qualities, character and integrity of the coastal environment by:*
 - a) consolidating land use and subdivision around existing urban centres and rural settlements; and
 - b) avoiding sprawl or sporadic patterns of development.

Policies:

- *CE-P8: Encourage the restoration and enhancement of the natural character of the coastal environment.*
- *CE-P19: Manage land use and subdivision to preserve and protect the natural character of the coastal environment, and to address the effects fo the activity requiring resource consent, including (but not limited to) consideration of the following matters where relevant to the application:*
 - a) the presence or absence of buildings, structures or infrastructure;
 - b) the temporary or permanent nature of any adverse effects;
 - c) the location, scale and design of any proposed development;
 - d) any means of integrating the building, structure or activity;
 - e) the ability of the environment to absorb change;
 - f) the need for and location of earthworks or vegetation clearance;
 - g) the operational or functional need of any regionally significant infrastructure to be sited in a particular location;
 - h) any viable alternative locations for the activity or development;
 - i) any historical, spiritual or cultural association held by tangata whenua, with regard to the matters set out in Policy TW-P6;
 - j) the likelihood of the activity exacerbating natural hazards;
 - k) the opportunity to enhance public access and recreation;
 - l) the ability to improve the overall quality of coastal waters; and
 - m) any positive contribution the development has on the characteristics and qualities.