



NATURAL CHARACTER EVALUATION TABLE

Biophysical Characteristics

Landforms | intact landform with a steep and rugged profile. Characterised by headlands, bluffs, escarpments, and a rocky shoreline featuring several sandy beaches. Motukakarikitahi (Rat) Island is one of many islands which punctuate the flat expanse of the Firth of Thames.

Vegetation type, Cover & Patterns | windswept coastal indigenous vegetation clings to steep slopes reinforcing the exposure and rawness of the landscape.

Sea / Estuarine Water Bodies | the flat nature of the outer Coromandel Harbour and McGregor Bay contrast with the sudden rise in elevation of the two landforms. The tidal nature of Little Passage is highly expressive of coastal processes imparting a sense of naturalness.

Land Uses / Activities / Structure | dwellings, marine farms, exotic vegetation, power lines and pastoral slopes on Ruffin Peninsula remain subservient to the raw state of the landscape, atmospheric conditions and the strong connection to the sea.

Habitat Value | there are a range of habitat opportunities, a result of indigenous vegetation cover, sandy beaches, a variety of aspects, sheltered bays and the rocky shoreline.

Natural Processes | characteristics including headlands, escarpments, coves and sandy beaches tell of the interplay between formative processes and coastal erosion.

Rating of Biophysical Characteristics



Perceptual Characteristics

Wildness / Wilderness / Remoteness | patterns of regenerating and remnant vegetation and the landforms strong engagement with the Coromandel Harbour imbue a sense of wildness.

Experiential Attributes | the interplay of evident coastal processes and tidal rhythm of the Coromandel Harbour impart a sense of naturalness.

Context / Setting | Motukakarikitahi (Rat) Island forms part of a sequence of volcanic remnants that surround the Coromandel Harbour. The landform contrasts with the flat surface of the sea. Proximity to nearby dwellings on Ruffin Peninsula impact on the sense of remoteness.

Transient / Dynamic Attributes | the peninsula and island engage with the dynamic ebb and flow of the sea and display ephemeral qualities resulting from atmospheric conditions, variations of day / year, tide and wildlife. Little Passage is particularly dynamic and sand bars are manipulated by the strong pull of the tidal current.

Night-time Values | the presence of dwellings and marine farms, both within the character unit and nearby, impact on the perceived intactness of the perceived naturalness of the coastal environment.

Rating of Perceptual Characteristics



Overall Natural Character Evaluation

(Biophysical and Perceptual Values)

HIGH