



NATURAL CHARACTER EVALUATION TABLE

Biophysical Characteristics

Landforms | intact and clearly articulated dune system flanking an extensive white sandy beach. At the central/eastern end of the beach the sinuous tidal flow of the Otama River breaches the dune system creating an inlet, which is flanked by a small escarpment along its southwest edge.

Vegetation type, Cover & Patterns | spinifex and pingao dune grasses cover the majority of the dune sequence. Coastal scrub shelters in between dune sequences and along the rear of the dunes. Salt marsh and other wetland species line the edges of the Otama River inlet. Giant pohutukawa spill over the inlet along its southwest edge.

Sea / Estuarine Water Bodies | the Beach is very strongly focused toward the expanse of the Pacific Ocean due to the enclosing landforms and its pronounced dune sequence.

Land Uses / Activities / Structure | limited modification within the unit - Pasture abuts the landscape from the south, separated by a gravel road. Several dwellings occupy the high ground above the beach to the west, while a cluster of dwellings are located at the base of the headland at the eastern end of the Beach.

Habitat Value | rare intact dune and estuarine habitat benefiting from low modification.

Natural Processes | very obvious combination of natural elements and dynamic natural processes, in particular related to the beach and dune corridor.

Rating of Biophysical Characteristics



Perceptual Characteristics

Wildness / Wilderness / Remoteness | despite the incursion of the farming backdrop and limited pockets of development the unit's naturalness is derived from an amalgam of its natural elements, the dynamic and obvious natural processes at play along the beach and its relative remoteness and wildness.

Experiential Attributes | arising from the combination of the beach's expansive aesthetic length, elevation of the dune corridor together with openness, remoteness and wildness.

Context / Setting | flanked by prominent elevated landforms at the west and eastern ends of the beach which clearly reinforces coastal processes. Pasture dominated backdrop to the south impacts on the cohesion and relative intactness of the coastal environment.

Transient / Dynamic Attributes | interplay of beach dune corridor and Pacific Ocean affected by weather and light conditions, time of year / day. Other transient factors such as wading birds also emphasise the coastal environments natural processes.

Night-time Values | a high degree of naturalness is derived from limited exposure to lights within the unit given the absence of dwellings and structures. Lighting from isolated dwellings affects the perceived intactness of the adjoining coastal environment.

Rating of Perceptual Characteristics



Overall Natural Character Evaluation
(Biophysical and Perceptual Values) **HIGH**