



NATURAL CHARACTER EVALUATION TABLE

Biophysical Characteristics

Landforms | extensive sequence of exposed, steep coastal bluffs and escarpments, comprised primarily of volcanic rock, interspersed with small stony beaches and rocky outcrops. Opito Point is a prominent feature which rises sharply to a distinctive flat top, flanking the eastern end of Opito Bay. An intact dune system backs a short length of Opito Bay beach at its eastern end.

Vegetation type, Cover & Patterns | a range of indigenous coastal scrub cling to coastal escarpments interspersed by remnant pohutukawa and patches of pasture (primarily near Opito Point). Regenerating to mature coastal forest cover the headlands between Humbug Bay, giving way to coastal scrub on exposed ridgelines and coastal slopes.

Sea / Estuarine Water Bodies | the headland and exposed escarpments maintain a direct and expressive interaction with the Pacific Ocean, providing a dramatic setting that defines the coastal landscape.

Land Uses / Activities / Structure | with very little development within the coastal environment, the open areas of pasture on Opito Point become subservient to the interplay of landforms, remnant coastal forests, escarpments, exposed cliffs and the open waters of Harbours.

Habitat Value | ranges of coastal habitat due to the established nature and sequence of vegetation from coastal scrub through to remnant indigenous vegetation on elevated coastal slopes and craggy shoreline.

Natural Processes | strongly expressed coastal processes evident in the sequence of landforms and their dramatic interaction with the Pacific Ocean.

Rating of Biophysical Characteristics



Perceptual Characteristics

Wildness / Wilderness / Remoteness | absence of building and structures and the raw and exposed character of the coastal environment impart a strong sense of wildness.

Experiential Attributes | the raw and exposed character of the coastal environment is accentuated by the exposed rocky outcrops, windswept vegetation on coastal slopes as well as the relationship with the Pacific Ocean all contributing to a very endemic landscape.

Context / Setting | pine plantations crest the inland ridge and dominate the western margins. The intrusion of the forestry negatively affects the perceived intactness and cohesion of the coastal environment as a whole, however the lack of built development and structures heightens the coastal environments sense of remoteness.

Transient / Dynamic Attributes | interplay of headlands, exposed slopes and open waters of the Pacific Ocean including variation resulting from weather and light conditions, time of year / day.

Night-time Values | a high degree of naturalness is derived from very limited exposure to lights within the unit given the absence of dwellings and structures.

Rating of Perceptual Characteristics



Overall Natural Character Evaluation

(Biophysical and Perceptual Values)

HIGH