

TWP_14 – Abut Head (62.8357 ha)

Protected Area(s)	Area (ha)	NaPALIS #	# of Primary Parcels
Conservation Area – Abut Head	62.8357	2805255	3

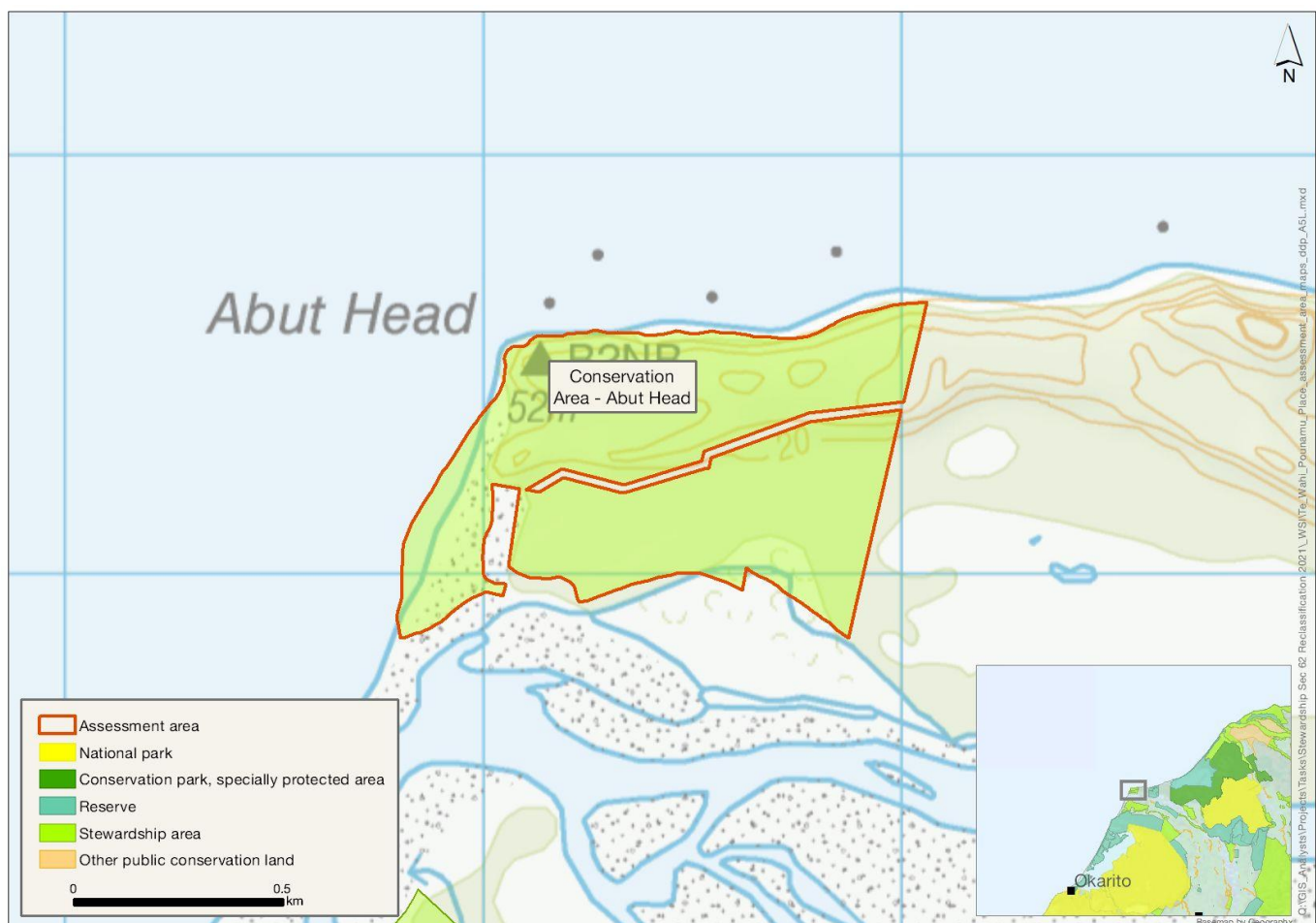
Location

Abut Head, immediately north of the Whataroa River mouth and south of Saltwater Lagoon.

Brief Description

An area of forest on moraine and alluvial flats at Abut Head including sections of beach and the Whataroa River and estuary. The area is only accessible by jetboat and is used by whitebaiters, walkers and hunters. The area is largely intact coastal and lowland forest, and also contains sandy and rocky coastal environments and swamp. A representative suite of native avifauna and invertebrate fauna is highly likely to be present. The area is part of the Te Wāhipounamu – South West New Zealand World Heritage Area.

Map



Ngāi Tahu Values and Interests

Mo tātou, a, mo ka uri, a muri ake nei – for us and our children after us

From the preliminary desk top assessments, there do not appear to be any site specific Ngāi Tahu values identified. However, there is a deep connection between Ngāi Tahu and all of the whenua in the Ngāi Tahu takiwā, and the absence of site specific values in the preliminary analysis does not detract from that connection, nor does it confirm that site specific values are not present. Further, a section 4 Conservation Act and Te Tiriti principles perspective is required as well, and it may be that areas of land are significant to Ngāi Tahu from that broader perspective. To avoid doubt, nothing in the proposed classification affects, limits or derogates from the rangatiratanga of Ngāi Tahu over its takiwā, including in relation to freshwater; and/or any other rights or interests Ngāi Tahu may have.

Ecological Values

Representativeness

The area is largely intact coastal and lowland forest, and also contains sandy and rocky coastal environments and swamp, typical of the Harihari Ecological District. A representative suite of native avifauna and invertebrate fauna is highly likely to be present. Abut Head is a Marine Mammal and Bird site under the West Coast Regional Coastal Plan. The coastline has an intertidal and shallow rocky reef and is a kekeno (fur seal, *Arctocephalus forsteri*) haul out (Neale et al. 2007).

The assessment area is surrounded by indigenous vegetation with areas of swamp wetland within and around. Satellite imagery indicates a high level of naturalness there is a high predicted water quality, represented by a high Macroinvertebrate Community Index score.

Diversity and pattern

Areas of forest, coastal and wetland ecosystems within this assessment area support a suite of native flora and fauna. There is not a diverse array of freshwater fisheries values, but īnanga (*Galaxias maculatus*), kōaro (*Galaxias brevipinnis*) and common bully (*Gobiomorphus cotidianus*) have been recorded here.

Rarity and distinctiveness

The assessment area contains naturally rare ecosystems: sand dunes and estuary. An observation of the southernmost nīkau (New Zealand palm, *Rhopalostylis sapida*) has been recorded in here. A suite of threatened and at-risk sea and shorebird species are likely to use the intertidal flats, including oystercatchers (*Haematopus*) (At Risk: Declining), terns (At Risk), pied stilt (poaka, *Himantopus Himantopus*) (Not Threatened), banded dotterel (tūturiwhatu, *Charadrius bicinctus*) (Nationally Vulnerable) and gull species.

While bat surveys have not been done, bats are possibly present given the habitat available within and adjacent to the conservation area. Forest gecko (*Mokopirirakau granulatus*) (At Risk: Declining) are possibly present. Both īnanga and kōaro are At Risk: Declining.

Ecological context

The assessment area is a moderately regular polygon of 63 ha connected to other indigenous ecosystems and has intact ecological functioning. It is part of Te Wāhipounamu – South West New Zealand World Heritage Area. On the south side of Whataroa River are the conservation areas of TWP-15 Waitangitāhuna River Mouth and Roto Road. Separated by an area of private land is Abut Head Scenic Reserve.

Recreation Values

Setting

This area is in a Backcountry-remote zone, with no tracks and facilities in the area.

Visitor type and activities typically undertaken

The river is used by jet boaters and whitebaiters during the whitebait season. People may walk the coast and hunt in the adjoining forest.

Access

Only access is by jetboat.

Heritage Values

Sites recorded

None recorded, but the coastal location at a major river mouth means that there is the likelihood of previously unidentified sites being present.

Heritage values

No value statement possible.

Modifying factors

None recorded.

Permissions summary

None recorded. There is a derelict bach, with no concession but some local interest in using it for private use.

Map (aerial photo)

